

## II. Impairments in Language Skills

**A. Impairment in the *pragmatic* use of language. This refers to the inability to use language in a social sense as a way to interact/communicate with other people. It is important to observe the individual's use of language in various settings with various people (especially peers). Since the impairments are in pragmatic language usage**

<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>1.</b> Uses conversation to convey facts and information about special interests, rather than to convey thoughts, emotions, or feelings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>2.</b> Uses language scripts or verbal rituals in conversation, often described as “nonsense talk” by others (scripts may be made up or taken from movies/books/TV). At times, the scripts are subtle and may be difficult to detect.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>3.</b> Has difficulty initiating, maintaining, and ending conversations with others. E.g.:
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>a.</b> Focuses conversations on one narrow topic, with too many details given, or moves from one seemingly unrelated topic to the next.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>b.</b> Once a discussion begins it is as if there is no “stop” button; must complete a predetermined dialogue
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>c.</b> Knows how to make a greeting, but has no idea how to continue the conversation; the next comment may be one that is totally irrelevant.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>d.</b> Does not make conversations reciprocal (has great difficulty with the back-and-forth aspect), attempts to control the language exchange, may leave a conversation before it is concluded.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>e.</b> Does not inquire about others when conversing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>4.</b> Is unsure how to ask for help/make requests/make comments.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>a.</b> Fails to inquire regarding others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>b.</b> Makes comments that may embarrass others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>c.</b> Interrupts others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>d.</b> Engages in obsessive questioning or talking in one area, lacks interest in the topics of others.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>e.</b> Has difficulty maintaining the conversation topic.
<b>B. Impairment in the <i>semantic</i> use of language. This refers to understanding the language being used.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>1.</b> Displays difficulty understanding not only individual words, but conversations and material read.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>2.</b> Displays difficulty with problem solving.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>3.</b> Displays difficulty analyzing/synthesizing information presented.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>a.</b> Does not ask for the meaning of an unknown word.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>b.</b> Uses words in a peculiar manner.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>c.</b> Is unable to make or understand jokes/teasing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>d.</b> Creates jokes that make no sense.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>e.</b> Interprets known words on a literal level (concrete thinking).
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>f.</b> Has a large vocabulary consisting mainly of nouns and verbs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>g.</b> Creates own words, using them with great pleasure in social situations.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>h.</b> Has difficulty discriminating between fact and fantasy.
<b>C. Impairment in <i>prosody</i>. This refers to the pitch, stress, and rhythm of an individual's voice.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>1.</b> Rarely varies the pitch, stress, rhythm, or melody of his speech. Does not realize this can convey meaning.

<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Has a voice pattern that is often described as robotic or as the “little professor”; in children, the rhythm of speech is more adultlike than childlike.
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Displays difficulty with volume control (too loud or too soft).
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Uses the voice of a movie or cartoon character conversationally and is unaware that this is inappropriate.
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Has difficulty understanding the meaning conveyed by others when they vary their pitch, rhythm, or tone.
<b>D. Impairment in the <i>processing</i> of language. This refers to one’s ability to comprehend what has been said. The Asperger individual has difficulty absorbing, analyzing, and then responding to the information.</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1. When processing language (which requires multiple channels working together), has difficulty regulating just one channel, difficulty discriminating between relevant and irrelevant information.
<input type="checkbox"/>	2. Has difficulty shifting from one channel to another; processing is slow and easily interrupted by any environmental stimulation (seen as difficulty with topic maintenance). This will appear as distractibility or inattentiveness. (Note: When looking at focusing issues it is very difficult to determine the motivator. It could be attributed to one or a few of the following reasons: lack of interest, fantasy involvement, anxiety, or processing difficulty.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	3. Displays a delay when answering questions.
<input type="checkbox"/>	4. Displays difficulty sustaining attention and is easily distracted (one might be discussing plants and the Asperger individual will ask a question about another country — something said may have triggered this connection or the individual may still be in an earlier conversation).
<input type="checkbox"/>	5. Displays difficulty as language moves from a literal to a more abstract level (generalization difficulties found in the Asperger population are, in part, due to these processing difficulties).