Assistive Technology Lab
COMMUNITY VISION

Learning Partner Assisted Auditory Scanning (PAAS)

There are 2 main components to scanning through choices:

- Content (what the choices are)
- Learning the Motor Responses to indicate 'No, not that one' or 'Yes, that's it'

Learning Content

'Content' is simply introduced through naming choices in natural context (experience).

> For example, it is clear that the activity we are playing is called 'Ball', when playing ball; 'Bubbles' when blowing bubbles, etc. We should also name songs, book titles, colors, foods, etc. If you are using visual supports, you would introduce those at this time.

Once a child's interest in activities (or other choices) is established – through fun, engaging experiences – you can begin *modeling* scanning.

Learning Motor Responses

If the child is not able to vocalize Yes/No and has difficulty naturally moving their head in a standard Yes/No pattern, small "Personal Talkers" can be placed at the chin (for Yes) and to one side of the head (for No). This will give the child a target, which is easier than moving the head 'alone in space'. If this pattern is not feasible, other responses can be shaped over time. It is important to try to read 'positive' vs. 'rejection' responses, as this can be a starting point for shaping Yes/No over time.

> *NOTE: If using Personal Talker switches, the child does NOT have to activate! You can activate for them since the point is learning the movement, not activating a switch.*

You should first model Yes/No using the same motor response that the child is going to use (or likely to use, if you are still exploring this). They need exposure and to see/hear what this is going to look like.

Learning Scanning

You should model scanning using *familiar* content, so that the child is only learning one new component.

> Here is an example of what you might say to model choice-making (for a child who is familiar with playing ball, bubbles, and music):
>
> "Let's play! Hmmm, what do I want to play? Ball, Bubbles, Music, or Something else? Ball (brief pause – model yes or no), Bubbles (brief pause – model yes or no)…." You stop the 'scan' once you have selected 'Yes' to an item, then phrase the components together: "Let's play bubbles!" or "I want to play bubbles!"

Once you have modeled familiar choices within natural contexts, you can begin to offer the choices to the child.

Important Notes:

- This is an exploration for the child to learn this new 'thing' (it is not a test) so…
- Make all the activities *fun & errorless* (no bad choices)
- If the child's response is not clear or there is no response, tell the child that *you* didn't get it or maybe they are 'trying to decide' and offer the list again. (Keep this low pressure.)
- If they don't seem interested or there is no response after 2 – 3 opportunites, you could say "How about I pick this one? Maybe you want to pick next time" and then model the choices and select.
- If you *can read* the child's preference but they don't 'do the scan' in the way you hoped, honor that nonverbal communication by selecting the child's choice and modeling a 'Yes' to that choice. For example, if they are excited or smile and you *know* what they want, you could say 'You smiled (or whatever the reaction was), you are telling me "Yes, that's what I want, I want to play ball."
- Try to keep the *same order* each time you do the scan so the child becomes familiar with the order and can use anticipation to prepare their motor responses.

Example script for offering the child choices for scanning:

> "Let's play. Here are some ideas of what we could do: Cars, Swing, Books, Something Else."
>
> "When you hear the one you want, say Yes by _____." (Describe child-specific response, e.g.: say 'yeah', nod head, raise hand, click Yes switch, etc.) Child may also have a No response but if not, it is not necessary for PAAS.)
>
> "Here we go: Cars..…(wait)…...Swing..…(wait).…Books (wait).…Something Else (wait)." Same as above, stop when a selection is made with 'Yes.'

Choice-making Leading to Accessing Language System

Learning the motor responses for scanning and understanding the *process* of scanning paves the way for *access* to a communication system for a child who will be an auditory (or visual) scanner. While a child is learning to scan, the communication system/book should be modeled (without scanning) to *familiarize content.*

If the child is working toward a communication device, PAAS words and phrases can eventually go into their device.

Examples of Auditory Scanning Communication Books on next page.

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Example of page 1-2 in an early PAAS book:

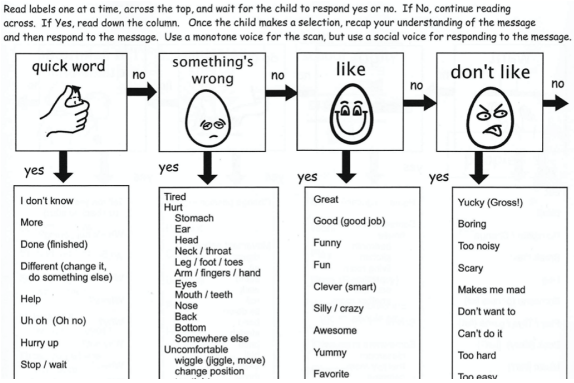
Communication Book

1. I want (activities) p.2
2. I need p.3
3. Let's do something (actions) p.4
4. I think p.5
5. Something's wrong p.6
6. I'm telling you something p.7
7. I have a question p.8
8. Let's go p.9
9. It's not in my book.

I want (activities)

1. Toys
2. Books
3. Art
4. Music
5. Something else

Example of a PODD Auditory Scanning Early Functions:



**For more information on PODD (Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display), please contact Linda Burkhart/ Gayle Porter and/or find a PODD training near you.

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