AAC & GLP - Supporting Gestalt Language Processors with AAC

What is GLP?

Gestalt Language Processors (GLPs) acquire language in **chunks or scripts** rather than word-by-word. Over time, these gestalts can be mitigated and broken down into more flexible, generative language. The Natural Language Acquisition (NLA) framework outlines this process into stages:

1. Echolalia (gestalts/scripts)
2. Mitigated gestalts
3. Single words/word combinations
4. Original, self-generated language

Model Gestalts - Not Just Single Words

- Provide full meaningful phrases during modeling (e.g., 'Let's go play!'' instead of 'go' or 'play').
- Scripts from songs, routines, or media are valid starting points-use what the child already loves.

Build Systems that Support Scripting

- Include icons or folders for frequently used **scripts or phrases.**
- Allow for scripting from favorite shows, family routines, or therapy activities.
- Organize content in a way that allows **motor planning consistency**, but also reflects how the child thinks and communicates.

Respect Delayed Echolalia

- Phrases like 'It's time!' or 'No way!' might seem out of context but could carry emotional meaning.
- Ask yourself: *What does this mean to the child?* and *When do they use it?* before trying to extinguish or replace it.

Don't Rush to Grammar

- GLPs aren't learning language in a linear, rule-based way.
- Prioritize **functional, meaningful** chunks of language rather than grammatical constructions.
- Focus on co-constructing language over correcting it.

Use Aided Language Input with Intent

- Match your modeling to the child's current NLA stage.
- Use natural intonation, routines, and repetition.
- Avoid reducing modeling to isolated core words- model phrases that reflect what they would say.

Mitigation can happen on AAC

- If a child says 'I want to go outside', you can later model: 'go outside' or 'outside please'.
- Encourage remixing and reusing phrases across contexts.

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