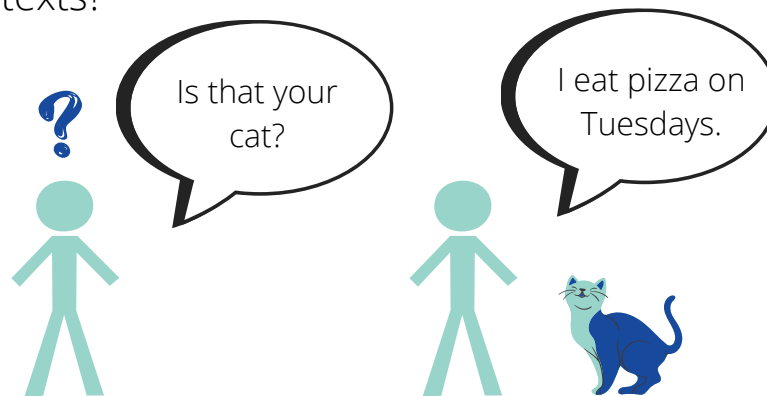


Let's Talk:

? Pragmatics !

What is Pragmatics?

- The **USE** of language; i.e. can your child use language appropriately in different contexts?



FACT:

Research shows that **children with hearing loss** have particular difficulties with pragmatics (the social use of language) even when other areas of language are in normal range.¹

What do pragmatic language difficulties look/sound like? ²

- Difficulty sharing
- Not using appropriate eye contact
- Trouble initiating and maintaining conversations
- Difficulty joining in structured and/or pretend play with peers and adults
- Not understanding their emotions and acting on them inappropriately
- Trouble with perspective-taking (understanding how someone else feels)

What are the three major pragmatic skills involved in social communication? ³

● **Using language for different reasons**

- greeting (saying "Hello" or "Good-bye")
- informing (saying "I'm going to get a cookie")
- demanding (saying "Give me a cookie right now!")
- promising (saying "I'm going to get you a cookie.")
- requesting (saying "I want a cookie, please.")

● **Changing language for the listener or situation**

- communicating differently to a baby than to an adult or a friend
- giving more information to someone who does not know the topic
- knowing to skip some details when someone already knows the topic
- communicating differently in a public place than at home

● **Following rules for conversations and storytelling**

- taking turns being a talker and being a listener
- letting others know the topic when you start talking
- staying on topic
- trying another way of saying what you mean when someone did not understand you
- using gestures and body language, like pointing or shrugging
- knowing how close to stand to someone when talking
- using facial expressions and eye contact

What can I do to help my child improve their pragmatic language skills at home? ⁴

- **Practice greetings!** Each morning, greet your child and encourage them to say a good morning greeting to everyone you see in the morning. This enforces using language for a regular social use!
- **Use puppets/stuffed animals!** Mimicking social situations with toys can help children learn social cues and understand that others have emotions and perspectives.
- **Play board games!** Games like Connect Four or Battleship teach turn-taking and good sportsmanship!
- **Have your child evaluated by a Speech-Language Pathologist** for further help! Services are often available through your child's school, or you can visit <https://www.asha.org/profind/> to search for a qualified professional in your area!

References

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3. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. (n.d.). Social Communication. American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Retrieved June 23, 2022, from <https://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/social-communication/>
4. British Council. (n.d.). How to build your child's Social Communication Skills. British Council Malaysia. Retrieved June 23, 2022, from <https://www.britishcouncil.my/english/courses-children/resources/child-social-communication-skill>

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