



Assessing pragmatics in adults with brain injury

Three standardized assessment tools:

1. The Pragmatics Rating Scale (MacLennan et al, 2002).
2. The Adapted Measure of Support in Conversation (Togher et al, 2010).
3. The Adapted Measure of Participation in Conversation (Togher et al, 2010).

NOTE: These assessment tools are available from:

<https://eatspeakthink.com/assess-pragmatic-skills-in-adults-with-brain-injury/>

Seven conversation sampling tasks to choose from:

1. Free conversation.
2. Relationship Closeness Induction Task (RCIT; Sedikides et al, 1999).
3. Purposeful Conversation Task (Togher et al, 2010).
4. Joint Problem Solving Task (Kilov et al, 2009).
5. Structured conversation task (video) (MacLennan et al, 2002).
6. Narrative discourse (MacLennan et al, 2002).
7. Procedural discourse (MacLennan et al, 2002).

Free Conversation

- Unstructured, non-standardized, affected by many factors.

Relationship Closeness Induction Task

- Three sets of increasingly deep questions (see page 3).
- You and your patient ask and answer each question.

Purposeful Conversation Task

- Engage in a deeper conversation on one topic (see page 4).
- Ideally, your patient would discuss with a family member or friend.

Joint Problem Solving Task

- Ask your patient to work with a family member or friend to figure out what an unusual household item is.
- A few examples: a tap turner, a belliclamp, the plastic ring that clear tape is wrapped around, a knitting gauge.
- Provide a clue and five minutes discussion to start with, and a clue every two minutes until the team figures out the object or 11 minutes has passed.
- If a familiar communication partner isn't available, you can support your patient in figuring out the object.

Structured Conversation Task (video)

- Watch a short video (up to four minutes) and discuss (up to five minutes).
- Ideally, the conversation would be between your patient and a family member or friend.

Narrative discourse

- "Tell me what you usually do on Sundays."

Procedural discourse - choice of tasks

- "Tell me how you go about doing dishes by hand."
- Teach your patient a simple (dice) game, and then ask them to describe how they would teach it to someone else.
- If possible, watch them teach it to a family member or friend.

On the next two pages, you'll find the scripts for the Relationship Closeness Induction Task and the Purposeful Conversation Task.

Read "How to assess pragmatic skills in adults with brain injury" for more details.

<https://eatspeakthink.com/assess-pragmatic-skills-in-adults-with-brain-injury/>

The Relationship Closeness Induction Task

- List 1 (one minute):
 - What is your first name?
 - How old are you?
 - Where are you from?
 - Where else have you lived?
 - Who else is in your family besides you?

- List 2 (two minutes):
 - What are your hobbies?
 - What is one of your favorite books? Why?
 - If you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?
 - What is one habit you would like to break?

- List 3 (three minutes):
 - If you could have one wish granted, what would that be?
 - What is one thing about yourself that most people would consider surprising?
 - Is it difficult or easy for you to meet people? Why?
 - What is one recent accomplishment that you are proud of?
 - What is one of your happiest early childhood memories?

Adapted by Heidi Iwashita, MS, CCC-SLP and colleagues from “The Relationship Closeness Induction Task” by Constantine Sedikides and colleagues, published in *Representative Research in Social Psychology* (1999).

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The Purposeful Conversation Task

Choose one topic to discuss.

- Working together, come up with a list of situations you're expecting to face over the next month where communication is important to you both. It might be something routine like a family dinner or a social event. Discuss these situations together and why they are important.
- Imagine that we're collecting information about TBI for people with TBI and their families, friends, and caregivers. We'd like you and your communication partner to discuss what you think might be helpful for a person with TBI in their recovery. This may be information about: therapy, ways of dealing with stress, depression, practical ideas, how to deal with your family, how to deal with the medical system, financial or legal matters, or anything that patients might wish to know after a head injury.

Adapted by Heidi Iwashita, MS, CCC-SLP and colleagues from “Measuring the social interactions of people with traumatic brain injury and their communication partners: The adapted Kagan scales” by Leanne Togher and colleagues, published in *Aphasiology* (2010).

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