

Chapter 7

Proloquo2Go (P2G) in the Classroom: Providing Speech, Communication, Behavioral Support, Academic, and Social Support for Students

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ABSTRACT

Proloquo2Go is an alternative/augmentative communication device that uses pictures, written words, and text-to-speech to provide a means of communication for those without adequate verbal communication skills. Proloquo2Go can be used across all settings and is commonly used in educational settings with students who need assistance with personal communication. This system can be personalized to meet the individual's needs and icons can be organized by category and topic. Proloquo2Go is beneficial for building social skills, participating meaningfully in class discussions, and for leisure and employment-related skills. Users of the system can choose from five languages to meet individual needs.

INTRODUCTION

Augmentative or alternative communication (AAC) is a method of communicating language for those who do not use verbal speech. Unaided AAC can be accomplished through sign language, gestures, or photos, while aided AAC combines these with some form of speech output. In this chapter we'll explore the use of AAC for students

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who benefit from AAC and will focus our learning on a specific AAC program called Proloquo2Go (P2G).

AAC devices have long been used with children who have expressive (use of language to share ideas with others) or receptive (understanding the language used by others) language challenges. These children may have co-occurring physical disabilities that make the use of sign language impossible, or cognitive processing disorders that make learning and applying sign language so difficult that it is not an effective means of communication. Regardless of the reason for the need for an AAC output device, children with language use impairments typically display increased psychosocial impairment, reduced academic performance, and diminished social opportunity as compared to typical peers (Berenguer et al., 2022). Most AAC devices provide pictures or symbols that, when tapped by the user, provide a speech output of the corresponding word (Langarika-Rocafort et al., 2021).

Proloquo2Go

One AAC option for iPhone or iPad users is Proloquo2Go (P2G). The P2G system provides a text-to-speech feature using a natural human-sounding voice and features symbols for basic word use, automatic verb conjugation, and expandability of the programmed vocabulary, and features over 25,000 words (Proloquo2Go, 2009). P2G is currently only available for iOS devices and comes with a price tag of \$249.00, though discounts are available for school districts and some insurance companies will pay for the software. The P2G software provides a range of skin tones for human figure icons, icons that are paired with words to enhance learning, and the ability to type words or phrases to send to the text-to-speech feature (Proloquo2Go, 2009).

Many AAC users in a classroom setting are children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). The primary forms of early communication skills for children with ASD are tacting (labeling common items – nouns), manding (making requests/asking for something), and verbal completion (i.e., filling in a missing word in a song; providing a rhyming word when a word is given; stating the opposite of something). The use of P2G for students with ASD enhances the student's ability to interact with educational content, participate in class discussion, and increase social interaction with peers. P2G can also enable students to interact with others in public and to increase independence in the community (Kleinstiver, 2018).

Putnam (2021) describes the use of AAC devices as “a lifeline for communication for so many individuals” (p. 3). Early implementation of AAC programming is most beneficial, with early use of language being associated with optimal language development and learning as the child grows. Children who are not able to communicate or express themselves with some form of language are at risk of developing a language deficit that contributes to a learning and achievement gap (Putnam, 2021).

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