


*Consent letter to the principal of the mainstream school*

**Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication**  
**Sentrum vir Aanvullende en Alternatiewe Kommunikasie**  
**&**  
**INTERFACE**

2006 Laureate Award, Education Innovation for the Fofa Project  
2004 T-Systems Age of Innovation & Sustainability Awards: Excellence in Innovation and Sustainability: Social  
2003 National Science & Technology Awards: Corporate Organization over the last ten years.  
2002 Shirley McNaughton Award for Exemplary Communication received from the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication  
1998 Rolex Award for Enterprise: Associate Laureate  
1995 Education Africa Presidential Award for Special Needs



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA  
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

**Faculty of Humanities**  
**Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe**

20 July 2011

The Principal and Trustees of

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**RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT YOUR INSTITUTION**

I hereby request permission to conduct a peer panel review as part of my proposed research study at your institution.

**Research topic:**  
The iconicity of Picture Communication Symbols (PCS) for children with English additional language (EAL) and intellectual disability.

**Rationale for the study:**  
Normal communication involves speech and reading and writing. However, many individuals with intellectual and/or motoric disabilities have little or no functional speech (LNFS). Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) provides methods to communicate using other means, such as pictures, symbols, signs and gestures. Picture and symbol sets form a very important part of most AAC systems, and there is a wide range of picture and symbol sets available for AAC.

Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication (CAAC), Communication Pathology Building University of Pretoria, Lynnwood Road PRETORIA, 0002 Republic of South Africa	Fax/Faks: +27 86 719 2666 Tel: +27 12 420 – 2001  <a href="mailto:juan.bornman@up.ac.za">juan.bornman@up.ac.za</a> <a href="http://www.caac.up.ac.za">www.caac.up.ac.za</a>	Sentrum vir Aanvullende en Alternatiewe Kommunikasie (SAAK), Kommunikasie Patologie gebou Universiteit van Pretoria, Lynnwoodweg PRETORIA, 0002 Republiek van Suid Afrika
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Choosing an appropriate picture/symbol set is one of the most important considerations when implementing AAC for individuals with LNFS.

Iconicity refers to the degree to which a picture/symbol looks like what it is representing. There is evidence that iconicity enhances the learning and retention of pictures/symbols for communication in individuals with LNFS. Also, information regarding the iconicity of picture/symbol sets is important in countries where there are low levels of literacy, such as South Africa. Literate communication partners of individuals using picture/symbol sets to communicate can read the word under the picture/symbol and therefore understand what is being communicated. However, illiterate communication partners will have to rely on the iconicity of the picture/symbol to understand its meaning.

Picture Communication Symbols (PCS) is a commercially available symbol set consisting of about 3000 pictures that can be used for communication. It is readily available and widely used in South Africa, as it can be used with inexpensive, low technology AAC systems. Therefore, information regarding its iconicity within the South African context is valuable. Also, there is a need to identify picture/symbol sets that are highly iconic for learners with disabilities, to reduce the learning time it may take to teach the picture/symbol set.

This study, into the way in which children with EAL and intellectual disabilities relate to PCS, could provide valuable information regarding the use of PCS within a South African context for children following atypical development.

#### **What are the objectives of this study?**

The main objective of this study is to determine how iconic PCS are to children with EAL and intellectual disability.

The following sub-aims were formulated to attain the main objective:

- To design a survey tool in the form of a 16 PCS A4 overlay within the bed-making theme which does not contain concepts alien to the participants with EAL and mild intellectual disabilities.
- To apply the survey to determine the number and percentage of participants that chose the correct PCS in response to its spoken label. That is, to determine how iconic each of the 16 PCS is to the participants.

#### **What will be expected of us as an institution?**

Upon approval of this request, you will grant the researcher permission to conduct a peer panel review of the PCS to be used in this study with 6 typically developing, 9-year-old children with EAL in Grade 3.

This will involve providing the researcher with the Learner Profiles of each 9-year-old learner to enable the researcher to identify possible participants. Only relevant information regarding the age, date of birth, gender and home language will be



accessed by the researcher. In addition, once possible participants have been selected, the relevant teachers will be asked to confirm that as far as he/she can tell, the selected children do not have a possible hearing loss or uncorrected visual problem, and have never failed a Grade. All information will be treated as strictly confidential.

Once possible participants have been selected their parents will be sent consent letters explaining the research and what will be required of their children. The children will also be asked if they would like to participate, to which they may refuse with no penalty. During the peer panel review the participating children will be asked to look at each of the 16 PCS (pictures), one at a time and they will be told the meaning. They will be asked if they understand the meaning of each picture, the words for each picture and each picture itself.

Furthermore, you will also be granting the researcher permission to use your premises for the peer panel review. It will take about 1 hour per child and will be done at a time and day deemed appropriate by you, as principal.

**Will we have access to the research results?**

The research results will be made available upon request following the completion of the project. The research data will be stored both as hard copy as well as in electronic format at the University of Pretoria for 15 years as part of the ethical requirements of the University. Results may also be shared with other professionals in article format.

**Who can be contacted if we have any further questions?**

Should you require any further information, you are welcome to contact the researcher at \_\_\_\_\_ (South Africa) or \_\_\_\_\_ (France) or [alicehuguet19@gmail.com](mailto:alicehuguet19@gmail.com).

I trust that this letter has provided you with sufficient information to allow you to make an informed decision regarding your institution's participation in this study.

Please inform me in writing of your decision.

Yours sincerely,

Alice Huguet  
Researcher

Dr Shakila Dada  
Supervisor

*Consent letter to the parents of the peer panel review participants*

Centre for Augmentative and Alternative Communication  
Sentrum vir Aanvullende en Alternatiewe Kommunikasie

&  
INTERFACE

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YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Humanities  
Fakulteit Geesteswetenskappe

12 August 2011

**Parental Informed Consent Letter**

THE ICONICITY OF PICTURE COMMUNICATION SYMBOLS (PCS) FOR CHILDREN WITH ENGLISH ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE (EAL) AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY.

**Background**

Typically communication involves speech. However, many children with disabilities find it difficult to talk and to understand. Speech therapists can help these children to communicate using other means, such as pictures, symbols, signs and gestures. Choosing the correct pictures is important when helping these children to communicate.

Iconicity means the degree to which a picture/symbol looks like what it is representing. If a picture looks very much like what it is referring to, then it is easier to learn, remember and use for communication.

Picture Communication Symbols (PCS) is a picture symbol set consisting of that can be used for communication. This study would like to determine how easy it is for children who speak English and other languages and have an intellectual disability, to understand these pictures.

**Why is your child's participation important?**

Your child's participation in this research project will have no direct benefit to him/her.

Your child's input will, however, help to improve the service delivery and therapy for children with intellectual disabilities.

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(CAAC), Communication Pathology Building  
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(SAAK), Kommunikasie Patologie gebou  
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PRETORIA, 0002  
Republiek van Suid Afrika



Your child does not have intellectual difficulties. Therefore, he/she can provide useful information about the pictures to be used in the main study.

### **What is expected of my child and I as participants?**

Your child is asked to participate in a review of the pictures to be used in the main study.

To enable your child's participation in this study, you are requested to complete the attached *Parental Informed Consent Slip* giving permission for your child to participate in the research. You are also requested to complete the attached *Biographical Information Form*. All information will be treated as strictly confidential.

Your child will be asked if he/she would like to participate in the research. He/she can refuse, with no consequence.

If your child agrees to participate he/she child will partake in a 1 hour session at school, during school hours. He/she will be asked to make sentences with certain words and phrases. He/she will also be asked to look at 16 pictures, one at a time and rate how much each picture looks like the word/s it represents.

Your child will not miss out on academic learning time. The 1 hour session will be conducted during non-academic learning periods.

It would be of great value if you should agree to have your child participate in this study, as your child's input is highly valued. All information will be treated as strictly confidential. Kindly return the reply slip to your child's teacher in the envelope provided.

### **Will my child experience any risk or discomfort during this study?**

All the information obtained from you and your child during the study will be handled confidentially, as your child will be assigned a respondent number. Your child will not be subjected to any risks.

### **What are my and my child's rights as participants in this study?**

You and your child may, at any given time throughout this study, decide to withdraw. Should you or your child decide to withdraw, your decision to do so will in no way penalise you, or the services the school offers to your child. During all procedures a sign indicating 'STOP' will be provided to your child so he/she can indicate at any time that he/she would like to withdraw.



**Will I have access to the research results?**

The research results will be made available upon request following the completion of the project. The research data will be stored both as hard copy as well as in electronic format at the *Department of Library Services* at the University of Pretoria for 15 years.

**Who can be contacted if I have any further questions?**

Should you require any further information, you are welcome to contact me at [redacted] (South Africa – 10 July – 9 September 2011) or [redacted] (France – 10 September onwards) or [alicehuguet19@gmail.com](mailto:alicehuguet19@gmail.com) or my supervisor, Dr. Shakila Dada at the Centre for Alternative and Augmentative Communication at 012 420 2001.

**Thank you in advance for your time and co-operation!**

Yours sincerely,

Alice Huguet  
Researcher

Dr. Shakila Dada  
Supervisor

Prof. Juan Bornman  
Co-supervisor

*Biographical information form*

Please complete this form and return it to your child's teacher with the reply slip in the envelope provided. All your answers will remain strictly confidential. Thank you very much.

Please circle your answer.

Official Use

Respondent number: \_\_\_\_\_

		1-2
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**1. How old is your child?**

- |                               |   |                            |  |
|-------------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| 1. 11;00 – 11;11 years;months | / | 09;00 – 09;03 years;months |  |
| 2. 12;00 – 12;11 years;months | / | 09;04 – 09;06 years;months |  |
| 3. 13;00 – 13;11 years;months | / | 09;07 – 09;09 years;months |  |
| 4. 14;00 – 14;11 years;months | / | 09;10 – 09;11 years;months | <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: inline-block;"></div> 3 |
| 5. 15;00 – 15;00 years;months |   |                            |  |
| 6. 16;00 – 16;11 years;months |   |                            |  |

**2. What is your relationship to your child?**

- |                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| 1. Mother                      |  |
| 2. Father                      |  |
| 3. Grandparent                 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: inline-block;"></div> 4 |
| 4. Aunt                        |  |
| 5. Uncle                       |  |
| 6. Other: Please specify _____ |  |

**3. What language does your child speak the most at home?**

(Please circle one)

- |              |                                 |  |
|--------------|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. English   | 7. Xitsonga                     |  |
| 2. Afrikaans | 8. Tshivenda                    |  |
| 3. IsiZulu   | 9. Sepedi                       |  |
| 4. IsiXhosa  | 10. SiSwati                     | <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 30px; display: inline-block;"></div> 5 |
| 5. Setswana  | 11. IsiNdebele                  |  |
| 6. Sesotho   | 12. Other: Please specify _____ |  |

**4. What language do you speak to your child the most at home?**

(Please circle one)

- |              |                                 |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. English   | 7. Xitsonga                     |
| 2. Afrikaans | 8. Tshivenda                    |
| 3. IsiZulu   | 9. Sepedi                       |
| 4. IsiXhosa  | 10. SiSwati                     |
| 5. Setswana  | 11. IsiNdebele                  |
| 6. Sesotho   | 12. Other: Please specify _____ |

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**5. What other language does your child speak daily at home?**

(Please circle one)

- |              |                                 |
|--------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. English   | 8. Tshivenda                    |
| 2. Afrikaans | 9. Sepedi                       |
| 3. IsiZulu   | 10. Siswati                     |
| 4. IsiXhosa  | 11. IsiNdebele                  |
| 5. Setswana  | 12. No other language           |
| 6. Sesotho   | 13. Other: Please specify _____ |
| 7. Xitsonga  |                                 |

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**THANK YOU**



*Peer panel review questionnaire*

*The researcher will write the sentences on the form.*

I will read you some words and I want you to make a short sentence with the words. So, if I say 'cat', you could make a sentence like 'I have a cat at home.' I will write down the sentence you say.

*Official Use*

Respondent No.

**Blanket**

--	--

---

---

	8
--	---

**Help**

---

---

	9
--	---

**Put**

---

---

	10
--	----

**On**

---

---

	11
--	----

**Dirty**

---

---

	12
--	----



**Hold**

---

---

 13

**Looks bad**

---

---

 14

**Washing basket**

---

---

 15

**Forgot**

---

---

 16

**Mess**

---

---

 17

**Made the bed**

---

---

 18



**Looks like**

---

---

 19

**Pull**

---

---

 20

**Pillow case**

---

---

 21

**Let me**

---

---

 22

**Nice and soft**

---

---

 23

**Looks good**

---

---

 24



**Uh oh**

---

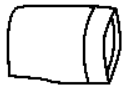




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*The researcher will complete the table.*

“I am going to show you some pictures now and ask you a question about them. You can point to one of these 3 pictures to answer my question. I will write down your answers.”

“Look at this picture. It means ‘The pillow case’. How much does this picture look like ‘the pillow case’? A lot, a little or not at all?”

Symbols	Rating	Comments by the researcher	Official Use
<b>The pillow case</b> 	<b>1</b> = A lot. <b>2</b> = A little. <b>3</b> = Not at all.		26
<b>The blanket</b> 	<b>1</b> = A lot. <b>2</b> = A little. <b>3</b> = Not at all.		27
<b>Uh oh</b> 	<b>1</b> = A lot. <b>2</b> = A little. <b>3</b> = Not at all.		28
<b>They're dirty</b> 	<b>1</b> = A lot. <b>2</b> = A little. <b>3</b> = Not at all.		29
<b>It looks bad</b> 	<b>1</b> = A lot. <b>2</b> = A little. <b>3</b> = Not at all.		30
<b>Put it in the</b>	<b>1</b> = A lot.		



Symbols	Rating	Comments by the researcher	Official Use
washing basket 	2 = A little. 3 = Not at all.		
We forgot 	1 = A lot. 2 = A little. 3 = Not at all.		32
What a mess 	1 = A lot. 2 = A little. 3 = Not at all.		33
Let's get the bed made 	1 = A lot. 2 = A little. 3 = Not at all.		34
Help me please 	1 = A lot. 2 = A little. 3 = Not at all.		35
Need to pull it 	1 = A lot. 2 = A little. 3 = Not at all.		36



Symbols	Rating	Comments by the researcher	Official Use
<p><b>Let me</b></p>	<p>1 = A lot.</p> <p>2 = A little.</p> <p>3 = Not at all.</p>		
<p><b>Put it on</b></p>	<p>1 = A lot.</p> <p>2 = A little.</p> <p>3 = Not at all.</p>		38
<p><b>It's nice and soft</b></p>	<p>1 = A lot.</p> <p>2 = A little.</p> <p>3 = Not at all.</p>		39
<p><b>Looks good</b></p>	<p>1 = A lot.</p> <p>2 = A little.</p> <p>3 = Not at all.</p>		40
<p><b>Hold this please</b></p>	<p>1 = A lot.</p> <p>2 = A little.</p> <p>3 = Not at all.</p>		41

**THANK YOU!**

## Appendix L

### *Likert scale pictures used in the peer panel review*

