Main Issues of Pedagogy and Psychology
e-ISSN 1829-1295 (Online)
miopap.com/en

Volume 4 · Issue 2 · 2026
Pages 1452–1460

Autism Spectrum Disorder and Cognitive-Linguistic Processes: A Theoretical Review of Cognitive and Neural Foundations and Intervention Implications

Zohra Boukaoula

Department of Speech and Language Therapy , Faculty of Social Sciences , University of Algiers 2, Algeria, Clinical and Psychometric Psychology Laboratory, Email: zohra.boukaoula@univ-alger2.dz ; Orcid : 0009-0007-0828-8183

Received: 22/02/2026 | **Accepted:** 25/05/2026 | **Published:** 27/10/2026

ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the cognitive processes responsible for language acquisition, comprehension, and production. It first outlines the diverse linguistic characteristics of individuals across the spectrum, then reviews the most prominent explanatory cognitive models: Theory of Mind, Weak Central Coherence, Executive Functions, Neural Connectivity, and Predictive Processing. The study also discusses the most affected linguistic aspects, particularly the pragmatic level, in comparison to the phonological and grammatical levels, which are affected to varying degrees from one individual to another. The study concludes that language in this population does not follow a single trajectory, that its interpretation requires a multi-factor model, and that the most effective interventions are those targeting the early social and cognitive foundations of communication, rather than isolated verbal skills.

Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder, cognitive processes, language, pragmatics, Theory of Mind, neural connectivity.

1. Introduction

Autism Spectrum Disorder is a neurodevelopmental condition characterised, according to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition, by persistent deficits in communication and social interaction, accompanied by patterns of behaviour, interests, or activities that are restricted and repetitive (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Data from the 2020 American surveillance network indicate that approximately one in thirty-six children aged eight years has been diagnosed with this disorder (Maenner et al., 2023), making the understanding of language mechanisms in this population an urgent research and educational priority.

Although communication is central to the diagnostic criteria, language is not an independent diagnostic criterion. Some individuals have a verbal repertoire of only a few words, while others possess extensive vocabularies and intact grammatical structures but find it difficult to use them within social situations (Tager-Flusberg, 2015). This highlights the need to deconstruct the cognitive processes underlying this variation, rather than describing language as a homogeneous unit.

The study aims to achieve three main objectives: first, to describe the linguistic variation among individuals across the spectrum and identify the most affected linguistic levels; second, to present and compare the most prominent cognitive and neural models that explain this variation; and third, to draw out the implications for assessment and intervention, with a dedicated focus on Arabic and Algerian studies. The study employs a narrative review methodology, gathering foundational studies, theoretical reviews, and relevant empirical work.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: COGNITIVE-LINGUISTIC PROCESSES

2.1 The Concept of Cognitive-Linguistic Processes

Cognitive-linguistic processes refer to the sum of mental mechanisms that enable an individual to receive, process, store, retrieve, and use linguistic stimuli in expression. These include auditory and visual perception, attention, working and long-term memory, linking phonological form to meaning, constructing syntax, and inferring the speaker's intentions. These processes do not operate in isolation; conversational comprehension, for instance, requires joint attention, a memory that retains what has been said, anticipation of what will be said, and an appraisal of the interlocutor's mental state.

Language can be viewed as a system with relatively distinct components: phonological structure, morphosyntactic structure, semantics, and pragmatics. This distinction is useful for understanding autism, as the components of language are not equally affected, as evidence presented in subsequent sections will demonstrate (Rapin & Dunn, 2003; Tager-Flusberg et al., 2005).

2.2 Early Acquisition and Joint Attention

In typical development, language acquisition passes through stages beginning with attention to faces and sounds, and babbling, then joint attention with an adult towards a third object, followed by first words and simple structures. Reviews indicate that children with autism often show a delay in the emergence of their first words, and that joint attention skills predict later language level (Eigsti et al., 2011).

Joint attention is particularly important because it represents the bridge between social cognition and the lexicon. A child who shares a focus on a specific object with a conversational partner can link the heard word to its referent. When this attention is weak, opportunities for learning from natural daily situations decrease. A randomised controlled trial demonstrated that training young children with autism in joint attention and symbolic play led to improvements in both skills (Kasari et al., 2006), supporting the view of joint attention as an intervention target, not merely a diagnostic indicator.

It is noted that some children do not develop speech, while others acquire good structural language after an early delay, making prediction of an individual child's trajectory difficult (Tager-Flusberg et al., 2005). Therefore, longitudinal follow-up, rather than a single measure at an early age, is essential.

3. VARIATION IN THE LINGUISTIC PROFILE

A study by Kjelgaard and Tager-Flusberg (2001) showed that children with autism do not belong to a single linguistic level; they split into groups ranging from near-typical performance to poor performance on phonological, lexical, and grammatical tasks. This has led some researchers to speak of a partial overlap between autism and developmental language disorder in a subset of children, as opposed to a clear distinction in another subset (Rapin & Dunn, 2003).

Developmental reviews confirm that delay in the emergence of first words is common, and that early joint attention skills are among the strongest predictors of later language level (Eigsti et al., 2011). Other work draws attention to the fact that certain phenomena, such as echolalia, should not be viewed as a meaningless activity; they may serve communicative or regulatory purposes for the speaker (Gernsbacher et al., 2016).

4. EXPLANATORY COGNITIVE MODELS

4.1 Theory of Mind

Baron-Cohen and colleagues proposed that the autistic child suffers from a deficit in perceiving the mental states of others, such as beliefs and intentions, as evidenced by their performance on a false-belief task (Baron-Cohen et al., 1985). This deficit has a direct impact on language, as effective communication requires gauging what the interlocutor knows and does not know. However, Happé (1995) demonstrated that performance on these tasks is linked to age and verbal ability.

4.2 Weak Central Coherence

This theory posits that processing in individuals across the spectrum tends to focus on local details at the expense of forming global meaning (Frith & Happé, 1994). In the domain of language, this manifests as difficulty in selecting the appropriate meaning of a polysemous word based on context, and a preference for literal meaning. Happé and Frith (2006) reviewed the supporting and opposing arguments, concluding that the detail-focused processing style is closer to a preferred cognitive style than a fixed deficit that appears in all circumstances.

4.3 Executive Functions

Planning, cognitive flexibility, and response inhibition are linked to the ability to manage conversation, switch topics, and modify discourse according to the interlocutor's responses. A review by Hill (2004) shows that executive deficits, particularly in flexibility and planning, are common in autism, which may explain some of the rigidity in conversation and the insistence on specific topics.

4.4 Enhanced Perception and Predictive Processing

Mottron and colleagues argue that cognitive performance in this population is enhanced in certain tasks, and that this affects the way linguistic and auditory information is processed (Mottron et al., 2006). In a related context, Pellicano and Burr (2012) offered a Bayesian explanation: prior expectations play a weaker role in the perception of individuals with autism, so each stimulus is treated as relatively novel. If this concept is applied to language, it could be argued that a reduced reliance on predicting the next word or the speaker's intention makes rapid comprehension of social discourse more cognitively costly.

4.5 An Integrative Reading of the Models

The models presented appear more complementary than competitive. Theory of Mind explains difficulty in inferring mental states, Weak Central Coherence explains the style of context processing, Executive Functions explain weak flexibility and planning in conversation, and the neural connectivity hypothesis suggests a biological basis for the failure of integration between language and social cognition components. Frith and Happé (1994) argued that Theory of Mind alone does not explain all features of autism, and thus proposed considering these models and their linguistic effects.

Table 1: Summary of Explanatory Cognitive Models and their Expected Linguistic Effects

Model	Core Idea	Expected Linguistic Effect	Reference
Theory of Mind	Difficulty in representing others' beliefs and intentions	Weakness in understanding intentions, pragmatics, and conversation	Baron-Cohen et al. (1985); Happé (1995)
Weak Central Coherence	Preference for detail-focused processing	Difficulty in extracting global meaning and using context	Frith & Happé (1994); Happé & Frith (2006)
Executive Functions	Weakness in flexibility and planning	Rigidity in conversation and difficulty in switching topics	Hill (2004)
Enhanced Perception & Predictive Processing	Enhanced perception with weak influence of prior expectations	Higher cognitive cost in processing rapid social discourse	Mottron et al. (2006); Pellicano & Burr (2012)
Neural Connectivity	Weak connectivity between brain regions	Difficulty in integrating linguistic and social information	Just et al. (2004); Kana et al. (2011)

However, these models vary in their empirical strength; some originated to explain social features and were later extended to the field of language, and many observed correlations do not determine the direction of causality. Therefore, it is preferable to treat each model as a lens that illuminates one aspect of the phenomenon, not as a final truth about it.

4.6 The Reciprocal Relationship between Language and Social Cognition

Theoretical thinking tends to portray the relationship between Theory of Mind and language as unidirectional, as if a deficit in understanding mental states is the cause of language weakness. However, evidence points to a more complex relationship. Happé (1995) found that performance on Theory of Mind tasks in individuals with autism is linked to age and verbal ability, and that individuals with higher verbal ability were closer to passing these tasks. This means that language may be one of the tools an individual uses to compensate for difficulties in representing mental states.

Consequently, a child with good structural language tools may succeed in some social-cognitive tasks through compensatory strategies, which differ from the automatic strategies used by typically developing children and may be slower and more costly. This explains why some individuals may appear to perform well on formal tests while still facing real difficulties in rapid, live conversation. This reinforces the need to combine formal testing with naturalistic observation during assessment.

5. LINGUISTIC LEVELS MOST AFFECTED

5.1 Phonological and Grammatical Levels

These levels vary greatly among individuals; while some show near-typical performance, others exhibit difficulties similar to those observed in developmental language disorder (Kjelgaard & Tager-Flusberg, 2001). Therefore, it should not be assumed that the structural level of language is identical for all individuals on the spectrum.

5.2 Semantic and Lexical Level

A child may possess a good vocabulary, but the organisation of concepts and their linking to context remains weaker, which is consistent with the Weak Central Coherence hypothesis. This is manifested in difficulty understanding metaphor, sarcasm, and idiomatic expressions, as the listener tends towards the literal meaning of words.

5.3 Pragmatic Level

The social use of language represents the most prominent area of shared weakness within the spectrum, including turn-taking in conversation, consideration of the listener's knowledge, and understanding unstated intentions. Norbury (2014) distinguished between autism and Social (Pragmatic) Communication Disorder, noting that the latter shares with the former difficulties in use, but does not include restricted interests and repetitive behaviour, and that this distinction remains a subject of clinical and research debate.

5.4 Discourse Comprehension and Inference

Understanding language is not limited to decoding words and sentences; it extends to building a coherent representation of text or dialogue, which requires linking disparate information and inferring what is not explicitly stated. The tendency towards detail-focused processing (Happé & Frith, 2006) is expected to affect this level, with the individual finding it difficult to link sentences together or choose the most appropriate interpretation of a given phrase. Conversely, some individuals may show remarkable accuracy in the formal aspects of language. Therefore, assessment needs discourse and conversational tasks, as relying on isolated sentences may hide the actual difficulty (Norbury, 2014).

Literature shows that a group of individuals on the spectrum do not acquire sufficient speech and language, and this group requires special attention in research and intervention because familiar assessment patterns may not suit them (Tager-Flusberg et al., 2005). It is a mistake to assume that the absence of speech necessarily means an absence of understanding or a desire to communicate: an individual may communicate through gesture, gaze, movement, and non-verbal sounds, and the adult needs to pay special attention to catch these messages.

Work by Gernsbacher and colleagues (2016) also draws attention to the fact that some speech behaviours considered atypical, such as echolalia, may serve communicative or regulatory functions for the individual.

6. ARABIC LANGUAGE AND THE ALGERIAN CONTEXT

6.1 Bilingualism and Multilingualism

The Arab child is typically exposed to the local dialect at home and to Modern Standard Arabic at school and in the media. In the Algerian context, Amazigh and French often intersect with these in many situations. This raises practical questions about the language of assessment and the language of intervention, and about the effect of multilingualism on the development of a child with autism—questions that available evidence cannot yet answer.

6.2 Morphological Structure and Writing

Arabic is based on a root-and-pattern system, a system rich in morphological relationships, which raises the question of the child's ability to extract and generalise morphological patterns—a matter that requires direct empirical testing.

In conventional writing, diacritics are absent, so the reader relies on context to determine pronunciation and meaning. It is a reasonable hypothesis that this represents a challenge for those who tend towards detail-focused processing (Happé & Frith, 2006), although this hypothesis still needs to be tested.

6.3 Assessment Tools and Cultural Bias

The use of adapted assessment tools requires verification of their psychometric properties in the target population, and avoiding the assumption of their validity for every dialect and age group. The family's culture and expectations of the child, and society's view of disability, may also influence the timing of seeking help and the way the family describes the goals, which in turn affects the accuracy of diagnosis and the intervention pathway.

7. EVIDENCE FROM ARABIC AND ALGERIAN STUDIES

Published evidence in this field is mostly concentrated in English-speaking contexts, but a number of recent Algerian studies allow for a local reading of some of the issues raised above. Belazouz and Jaber (2020) addressed the issue of differential diagnosis, noting in their study's abstract that field visits to some specialised centres in Algeria revealed recurrent diagnostic errors and confusion between autism and language disorders, including dysphasia. This reinforces the previously mentioned overlap in the linguistic profile between the two conditions and highlights the importance of multi-dimensional assessment.

Table 2: Summary of Presented Algerian Studies

Study	Sample and Performance	Key Points from the Abstract
Belazouz & Jaber (2020)	Field visits to specialised centres: subject is differential diagnosis	Diagnostic errors and confusion between autism and language disorders (dysphasia)
Tsouri ben Tsouri Abd al-Baqi (2022)	Assessment of Theory of Mind in the Algerian context	Links deficits in communication and social interaction to possible Theory of Mind deficits
Ben Slimane (2024)	Cases of autism accompanied by epilepsy: Khomsi test	Distinction between oral comprehension and language production, and that acquisition is affected regardless of degree of impairment
Ben Slimane & Ouzdaou (2025)	Children with autism (7 years): Khomsi test	Statistically significant differences in favour of typically developing children in reception and production

8. NEURAL FOUNDATIONS

A study by Just et al. (2004) found that high-functioning autistic individuals showed greater activation in Wernicke's area and less in Broca's area during sentence comprehension, along with weak functional synchronisation between anterior and posterior regions, which was interpreted as underconnectivity. This was later developed into the Disrupted Cortical Connectivity model (Kana et al., 2011), which posits that problems in integrating neural networks underlie difficulties in tasks requiring the integration of linguistic and social information. It should be noted that current neural findings are mostly correlational and are not sufficient on their own to establish a causal mechanism.

9. ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

Good language assessment requires measuring both structural and pragmatic levels, and not relying solely on vocabulary and grammar tests, as they may mask deficits in the social use of language. Assessment should preferably include reception and production, joint attention, non-verbal communication, and discourse comprehension, alongside non-verbal cognitive abilities that help interpret the child's true level.

Sound judgement requires multiple sources of information; the specialist should combine standardised tools with observation in natural settings and reports from family and teachers. Differential diagnosis is particularly important here, as the study by Belazouz and Jaber (2020) highlighted field-level confusion between autism and language disorders, and the distinction between autism and Social (Pragmatic) Communication Disorder remains a subject of debate (Norbury, 2014). This confirms the need for a detailed developmental history and long-term follow-up before making a diagnosis.

Tools must also be adapted linguistically and culturally, with verification of their validity for the child's dialect and age, and avoiding the interpretation of poor performance on a verbal test as conclusive evidence of general cognitive impairment.

10. INTERVENTION IMPLICATIONS

Available evidence suggests that the social-cognitive foundation of communication is an important intervention target. A randomised controlled trial showed that training in joint attention and symbolic play improved these skills in young children (Kasari et al., 2006), supporting the initiation of intervention with early foundations before focusing on isolated verbal skills.

One practical principle is to leverage cognitive strengths, such as attention to detail (Mottron et al., 2006; Happé & Frith, 2006), in building language skills, with the use of visual supports and clear routines. Intervention should preferably take place in natural contexts and with family involvement, as generalising skills outside the therapy session remains one of the most difficult challenges.

Since pragmatic skills may not be acquired spontaneously, they may require direct and structured teaching, such as turn-taking in conversation, interpreting figurative expressions, and linking speech to intentions. For minimally verbal children, alternative or augmentative communication methods should be viewed as a support for speech, not a replacement for it, with continuous measurement of the child's progress and modification of the plan accordingly.

11. ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

To illustrate the ideas presented, a hypothetical example is provided that is not based on a real case, intended to clarify how the theoretical framework can be applied. Imagine a nine-year-old boy with a good vocabulary and intact grammatical structures, but who finds it difficult to converse with his peers; he talks at length about his favourite topic without noticing his interlocutors' interest, and he understands a phrase like 'Can you open the window?' as a question about ability, not a request.

According to a Theory of Mind reading, part of this difficulty can be explained by a deficit in appraising what the interlocutor knows and wants. According to Weak Central Coherence, the child may be focused on the literal meaning of the phrase at the expense of its intent. According to Executive Functions, he may be unable to change the topic or inhibit a response. These interpretations are not mutually exclusive; all may contribute to varying degrees. At the assessment level, it is not enough that his score on a vocabulary test is good; conversational observation and discourse comprehension tasks should be conducted. At the intervention level, the programme could be based on direct training in turn-taking and interpreting indirect requests within natural situations, leveraging his interests as a gateway to communication.

12. RECOMMENDATIONS

12.1 For Parents and Caregivers

It is beneficial for the child for the adult to respond to all his communicative attempts, including gestures, gaze, and non-verbal sounds, and to share his interest in what draws his attention, because joint attention is one of the most important predictors of language development (Eigsti et al., 2011; Kasari et al., 2006). It is advisable to use simple and consistent language, not to rely solely on direct questions, to allow sufficient time for the child to process speech and respond, and to turn daily life situations such as play, eating, and bathing into natural opportunities for dialogue.

12.2 For Practitioners

Instructions should be clear and specific, and figurative and idiomatic expressions should be explained rather than assumed to be understood, given some children's tendency towards literal meaning (Happé & Frith, 2006).

12.3 For Multi-disciplinary Teams

Working with this population requires collaboration between multiple disciplines, such as speech-language therapy, psychology, special education, and medicine, because the linguistic profile intersects with cognitive, social, and emotional aspects. The specialist should avoid making a diagnosis based on a single test, document results at intervals, and distinguish between what reflects a structural language difficulty and what reflects a difficulty in the social use of language (Norbury, 2014; Belazouz & Jaber, 2020).

12.4 For Researchers

It is useful for studies to describe sample characteristics precisely, in terms of age, non-verbal ability, language level, and the presence of comorbid conditions such as epilepsy; to report effect sizes and not just the significance of differences; and to publish their tools and procedures so they can be replicated. Using larger, multi-site samples and longitudinal designs would address some of the limitations previously noted.

13. CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF THE EVIDENCE

The evidence presented deserves a critical reading before being built upon. On the one hand, it is difficult in many studies to separate the effect of verbal ability from the effect of the disorder itself, as participants' performance on Theory of Mind tasks is linked to their language level, as Happé (1995) noted. This necessitates controlling for verbal ability when comparing groups, otherwise the difference in performance might be interpreted in a way that reflects the true mechanism.

On the other hand, most studies rely on cross-sectional designs comparing groups at a single point in time, whereas developmental questions require longitudinal designs that follow the child over time. The samples in the Algerian field studies presented are small, such as seven children per group in Ben Slimane and Ouzdaou (2025), which limits the generalisability of results and the power of statistical inference.

Regarding neural studies, the results of Just et al. (2004) were associated with high-functioning participants, so it is not known with certainty to what extent they apply to individuals with more severe language needs. Moreover, correlational evidence does not determine whether differences in neural connectivity are a cause of language difficulties or a result of a different developmental trajectory (Kana et al., 2011).

14. LIMITATIONS OF THE REVIEW AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Finally, accepting a single model may obscure individual diversity. It is better to view these models as working hypotheses to be tested in each case, and to base assessment and intervention decisions on the child's own data, not on group averages. In this sense, theoretical knowledge transforms from a general explanatory framework into a tool for guiding practice.

This review faces several limitations. It is narrative rather than systematic, and most of the evidence it relies on is drawn from English-speaking studies. The Algerian studies were presented based on their abstracts, and their samples are mostly small, and their results do not allow for broad generalisation. Additionally, the multiplicity of factors contributing to language within the spectrum makes it difficult to isolate the effect of a single factor.

There remains a need for longitudinal studies in Arabic that follow children from early diagnosis, for comparisons between performance in Modern Standard Arabic and dialect, and for studies combining behavioural and neural measurement to test causal hypotheses. Hypotheses regarding morphological structure and unvocalised writing in Arabic also remain in need of direct testing, alongside the standardisation of assessment tools on larger samples and the involvement of families in designing and evaluating interventions.

CONCLUSION

The review shows that the relationship between autism and language is complex and multi-layered, and that no single cognitive model—whether Theory of Mind, Central Coherence, or Executive Functions—can alone explain the diversity of linguistic profiles. It is most likely that these factors interact with individual neural and developmental differences. The Algerian studies presented support this varied picture, although they remain limited in size. The study recommends further long-term Arabic studies that address the Arabic language with its morphological characteristics and the diglossia between Modern Standard Arabic and dialects, because most available evidence is derived from English, and generalising it to other contexts requires caution.

APPENDIX: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Arabic References

Belazouz, F., & Jaber, N. (2020). The problem of differential diagnosis between Autism Spectrum Disorder and language disorders: A field study on a sample of dysphasia cases. Journal of the Researcher in

Term	English Equivalent	Brief Definition
Theory of Mind	Theory of mind	The ability to attribute mental states such as beliefs and intentions to oneself and others.
Central Coherence	Central coherence	The tendency to integrate information into a global meaning, contrasted with a focus on details.
Executive Functions	Executive functions	The processes of planning, flexibility, response inhibition, and behaviour regulation.
Joint Attention	Joint attention	Sharing focus with another person on a specific object or event.
Pragmatics	Pragmatics	The social use of language, considering context, interlocutor, and intention.
Echolalia	Echolalia	Repetition of speech heard by the individual, either immediately or delayed.
Neural Connectivity	Neural connectivity	The degree of synchronisation and functional integration between brain regions.
Dysphasia	Dysphasia	A term used in some contexts to refer to a developmental or acquired language disorder.

Human and Social Sciences, 12(7), 383–390.

Ben Slimane, N. H. (2024). The relationship of oral language production and comprehension in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder accompanied by epilepsy using the Khomsi test. Journal of Law and Human Sciences, 17(1), 319–331.

Ben Slimane, N. H., & Ouzdaou, N. (2025). Assessment of the linguistic repertoire of a child with Autism Spectrum Disorder: A comparative study. Linguistics, 31(2), 159–174.

Tsouri ben Tsouri Abd al-Baqi. (2022). Autism Spectrum Disorder and assessment of Theory of Mind in the Algerian clinical context. Journal of University Studies in Psychology and Education, 7(2), 223–241.

REFERENCES

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th ed.). https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596

Baron-Cohen, S., Leslie, A. M., & Frith, U. (1985). Does the autistic child have a “theory of mind”? Cognition, 21(1), 37–46. https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277(85)90022-8

Eigsti, I.-M., de Marchena, A. B., Schuh, J. M., & Kelley, E. (2011). Language acquisition in autism spectrum disorders: A developmental review. Research in Autism Spectrum Disorders, 5(2), 681–691. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rasd.2010.09.001

Frith, U., & Happé, F. (1994). Autism: Beyond “theory of mind.” Cognition, 50(1–3), 115–132. https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0277(94)90024-8

Gernsbacher, M. A., Morson, E. M., & Grace, E. J. (2016). Language and speech in autism. Annual Review of Linguistics, 2, 413–425. https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-linguistics-030514-124824

Happé, F. G. E. (1995). The role of age and verbal ability in the theory of mind task performance of subjects with autism. Child Development, 66(3), 843–855. https://doi.org/10.2307/1131954

Happé, F., & Frith, U. (2006). The weak coherence account: Detail-focused cognitive style in autism spectrum disorders. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 36(1), 5–25. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-005-0039-0

Hill, E. L. (2004). Executive dysfunction in autism. Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 8(1), 26–32. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2003.11.003

Just, M. A., Cherkassky, V. L., Keller, T. A., & Minshew, N. J. (2004). Cortical activation and synchronization during sentence comprehension in high-functioning autism: Evidence of underconnectivity. Brain, 127(8), 1811–1821. https://doi.org/10.1093/brain/awh199

Kana, R. K., Libero, L. E., & Moore, M. S. (2011). Disrupted cortical connectivity theory as an explanatory model for autism spectrum disorders. Physics of Life Reviews, 8(4), 410–437. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.plrev.2011.10.001

Kasari, C., Freeman, S., & Paparella, T. (2006). Joint attention and symbolic play in young children with autism: A randomized controlled intervention study. Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 47(6), 611–620. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-7610.2005.01567.x

Kjelgaard, M. M., & Tager-Flusberg, H. (2001). An investigation of language impairment in autism: Implications for genetic subgroups. Language and Cognitive Processes, 16(2–3), 287–308. https://doi.org/10.1080/01690960042000058

Maenner, M. J., Warren, Z., Williams, A. R., et al. (2023). Prevalence and characteristics of autism spectrum disorder among children aged 8 years — Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 11 sites, United States, 2020. MMWR Surveillance Summaries, 72(2), 1–14.

Mottron, L., Dawson, M., Soulières, I., Hubert, B., & Burack, J. (2006). Enhanced perceptual functioning in autism: An update, and eight principles of autistic perception. Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders, 36(1), 27–43.

Norbury, C. F. (2014). Practitioner review: Social (pragmatic) communication disorder conceptualization, evidence and clinical implications. Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 55(3), 204–216.

Pellicano, E., & Burr, D. (2012). When the world becomes 'too real': A Bayesian explanation of autistic perception. Trends in Cognitive Sciences, 16(10), 504–510.

Rapin, I., & Dunn, M. (2003). Update on the language disorders of individuals on the autistic spectrum. Brain and Development, 25(3), 166–172.

Tager-Flusberg, H., Paul, R., & Lord, C. (2005). Language and communication in autism. In Handbook of autism and pervasive developmental disorders (3rd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 335–364). John Wiley & Sons.