

## *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



- Spontaneous reading before age 5
- Impaired reading and listening comprehension
- Word recognition far beyond expected for age and IQ
- Often intellectually challenged
- Speech, language, social, motor deficits
- Compulsive reading

(Sparks, R.L. (November 13-16, 2002). Orthographic Awareness Phonemic Awareness, and Working Memory Skill in Hyperlexic Children. 53<sup>rd</sup> Annual International Dyslexia Association International Conference, Atlanta, GE.)

## *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



- “A precocious ability to read words, far above what would be expected at their chronological age or an intense fascination with letters or numbers.
- Significant difficulty in understanding verbal language
- Abnormal social skills, difficulty in socializing and interacting appropriately with people” (p. 1).

From American Hyperlexia Association website; <http://www.hyperlexia.org/>, p. 1

## *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



- “Learn expressive language in a peculiar way, echo or memorize the sentence structure without understanding the meaning (echolalia), reverse pronouns
- Rarely initiates conversations
- An intense need to keep routines, difficulty with transitions, ritualistic behavior
- Auditory, olfactory and / or tactile sensitivity
- Self-stimulatory behavior
- specific, unusual fears...”

# *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



- Normal development until 18-24 months, then regression
- strong auditory and visual memory
- Difficulty answering "Wh--" questions, such as "what," "where," "who," and "why"
- Think in concrete and literal terms, difficulty with abstract concepts
- Listen selectively, appear to be deaf" (p. 1)

From American Hyperlexia Association website; <http://www.hyperlexia.org/>, p. 1

# *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



## **Often found in people with:**

- Nonverbal Learning Disorders
- Asperger's Disorder
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Pervasive Developmental Disorders
- Tend to be weak in concept formation, analysis-synthesis of information, strategy generation, prosody and functional language

(Lorry, B.P. (1998). Language Based Learning Disabilities. In M. Gordon and S. Kieser (Eds.), Accommodations in Higher Education Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): A No Nonsense Guide for Educators, Administrators and Lawyers. New York, NY: Guilford, pp. 130-153.)

## *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



- Some with Hyperlexia may have fascination with numbers and math.
- Volkmar spoke of a man who solved all WAIS Block Design items using matrix algebra as verbal mediation.
- This man with Asperger's Disorder also tried to make algebraic equations to predict other's feelings.

(Volkmar, F. (April 23, 2003). Asperger Syndrome: Clinical Features, Assessment, and Intervention Guidelines. Seminar Presented by the New England Educational Institute, in Phoenix, AZ.)

## *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



“I used to believe that I was stupid. Attention span was inconsistent, comprehension was weak, I can recall such things as phone numbers without looking in the book, but if you took a book after I read a certain portion and asked me what I read, I could only tell you bits and pieces.” – 38 year old Hyperlexic man.

(Miller, S.M. (1996). The Voice of Experience: Reflections and Advice from older Hyperlexics. Newsletter of the American Hyperlexia Association. (From website: [www.hyperlexia.org/aha\\_fall96.html](http://www.hyperlexia.org/aha_fall96.html))

## *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



### **Richman spoke of 2 possible types of Hyperlexia**

#### **1. “Hyperlexia Language Disorder”**

- Autistic-like language problems-comprehension problems-may not be caught in elementary school
- Impulsive and distractible due to language deficit
- Processing speed problems
- Treatment-intensive language therapy is recommended



## *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



### 2. “Hyperlexia Visual-Spatial Disorder

- More Asperger’s-like, may have letter/word reversals, but may have good reading comprehension overall.
- May not have Social Reading Comprehension.
- Treatment: Social skills training, and behavior modification; avoid visual teaching.

(Richman, L. (1997). Peaceful Coexistence: Autism, Asperger’s, Hyperlexia. In S.M. Miller (Ed.), Hyperlexia Handbook: A Guide to Intervention Strategies and Resources. Elmhurst, IL: American Hyperlexia Association.)

## *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*



Klin, et.al. (2000) suggested interdisciplinary assessment and transdisciplinary treatment of those with such disorders is the best approach. This would include neuropsychological, neurological, psychiatric, psychological, speech and language and occupational therapy assessment and treatment.

(Klin, A., et. al. (2000). Assessment Issues in Children and Adolescents with Asperger's Syndrome. In A. Klin, F.R. Volkmar and S.S. Sparrow (Eds.), Asperger Syndrome. New York, NY: Guilford, pp. 210-228.)

# *Reading Disorder-Hyperlexia*

American Hyperlexia Association

479 Spring Road

Elmhurst, IL 60126

Voice: 630-415-2212

Fax: 630-530-5909

Web: [www.hyperlexia.org](http://www.hyperlexia.org)

