

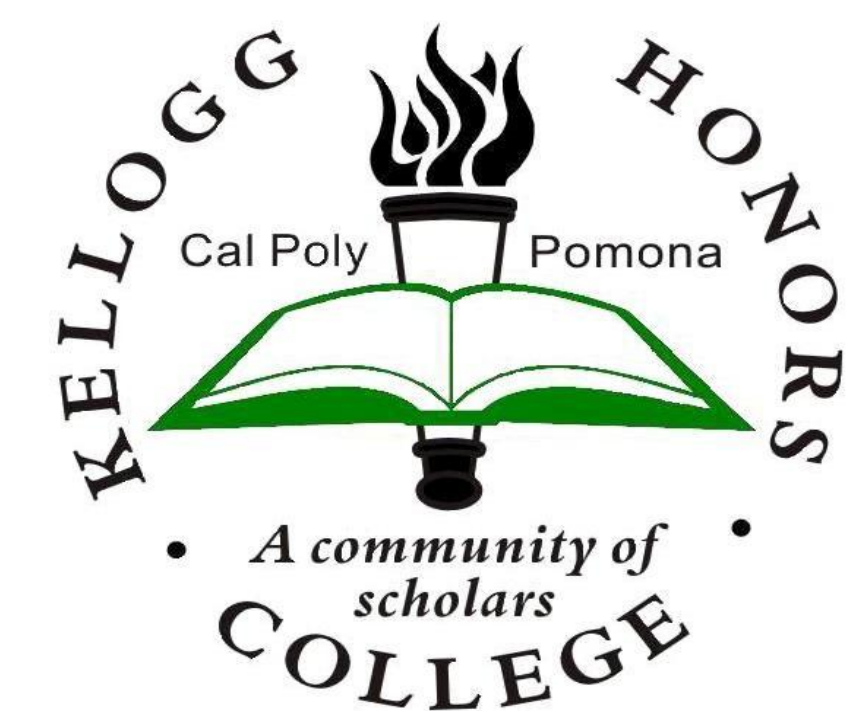
# Speech-impaired Children's Challenges During Daily Communication Process



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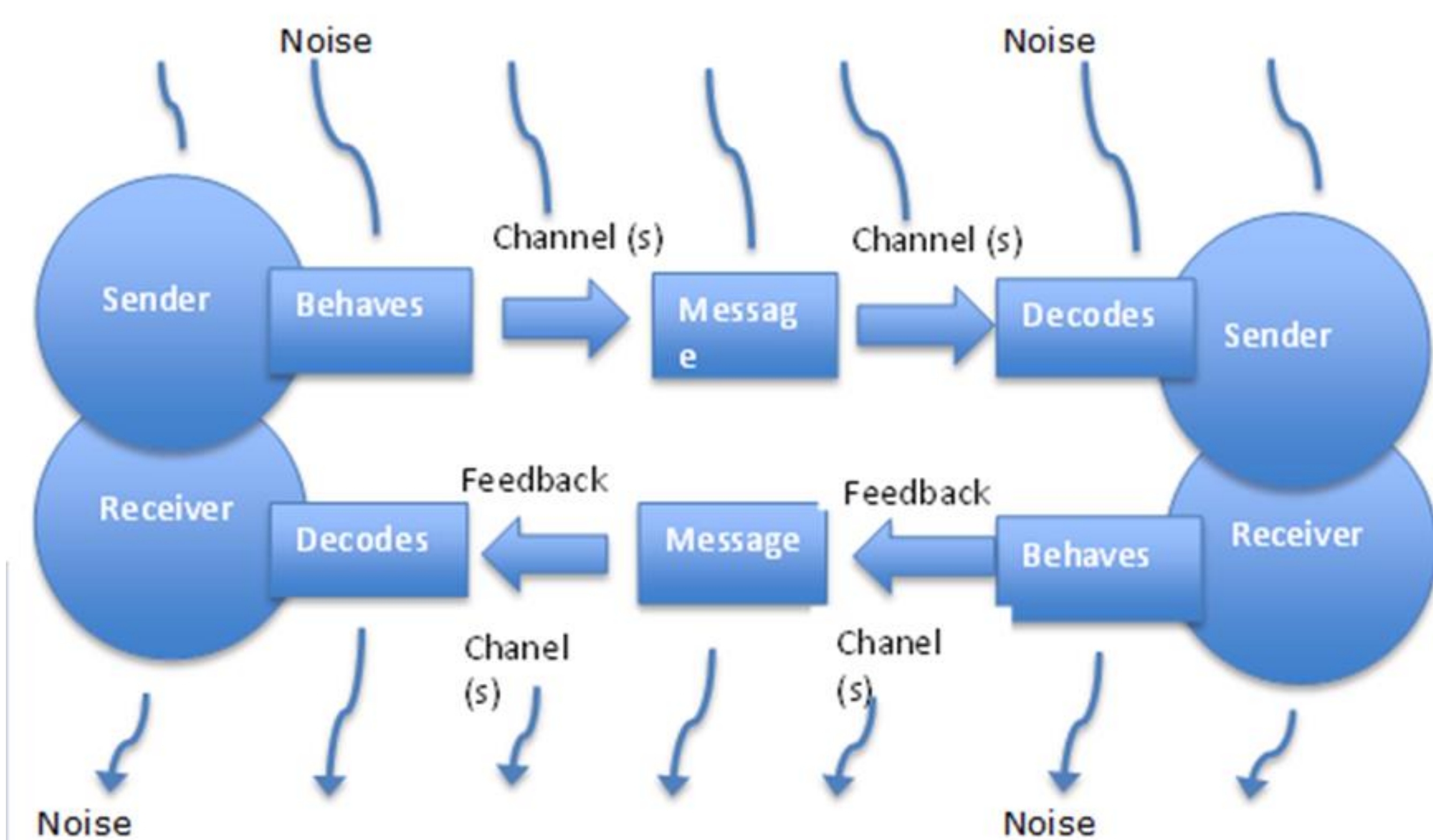
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Kellogg Honors College Capstone Project



This study discovers which challenges speech-impaired children face during their daily communication process. Qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the forum "Babies and Kids with Disabilities and Special Needs," which is managed by both Essential Kids and Essential Babies. Posts and comments from August 2017 to August 2018 were gathered and after analyzing the data three main themes appeared to be communication process challenges for speech-impaired children which were delayed pragmatic language, lack of self-confidence, and being nonverbal. This study uncovered that the main challenge for speech-impaired children was not their speech-impairment itself, but rather a delay in pragmatic language. Implications as to what could potentially help speech-impaired children suffering from these challenges were also included.

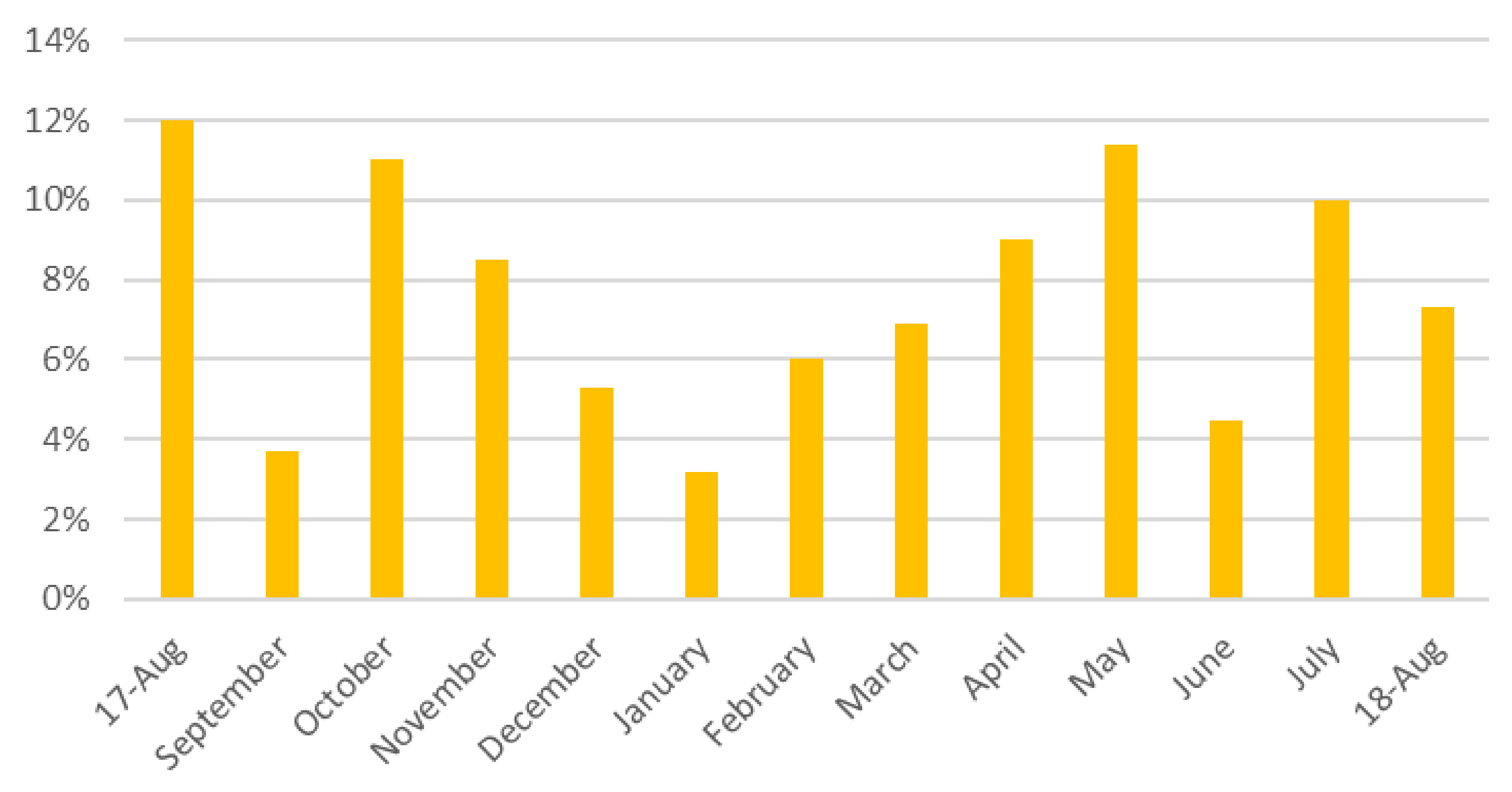
Communication Process



Sample

- The sample includes the top five most commented posts of each month and when a tie for the most commented post appeared, the most viewed post was included
- The population was the 245 posts made in the 2017-2018 year from August to August

Forum Posts from August 2017-2018



Results

Delay in pragmatic language	Lack of self-confidence	Being nonverbal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "had no social language, and struggled with appropriate play"</li> <li>• "deficits in social communication across multiple contexts"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "being taken advantage of by being outright bullied on the regular"</li> <li>• "For children to fit in with their peers, they necessarily need to hide this deficit"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "ASD [Autism Spectrum Disorder] meant non-social, no eye-contact and non-verbal."</li> <li>• "barely any language at all"</li> </ul>

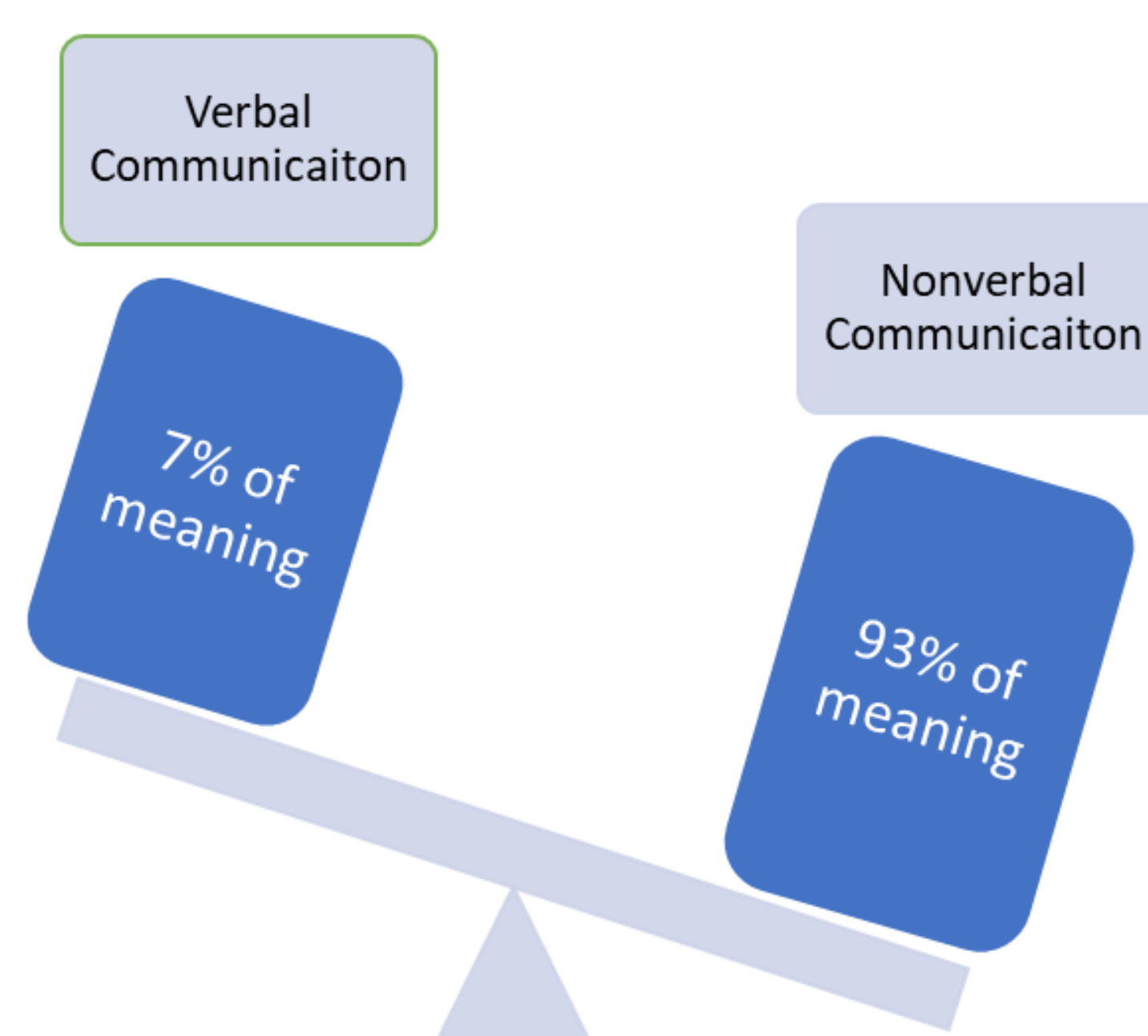
Interpretation of Results

- Pragmatic language was the biggest challenge
- Autistic children tend to be blunt which is mistaken for rudeness
- Speech-impaired children tended to be shy and lacking of friends
- Speech-impaired children were at risk for social pariah
- If social pariah occurred, children tended to shut down all social interactions
- Speech-impaired children lacked self-confidence because they feared being teased for their speech
- Lack of self confidence created too much internal noise to comfortably communicate, so speech therapy often helped
- Hiding speech impairments did help children make friends
- **High social skills accompanied high verbal skills, so when speech-impaired children refused to socialize, their verbal skills never increased, which would in return increase their social skills**
- Socializing with others is the only way to increase social skills, yet it is what makes children the most insecure
- Other children such as those with autism do not recognize social cues
- Children were noted to be disliked and teased without their knowledge because they did not understand nonverbal language
- Nonverbal children had difficulties with both verbal and nonverbal communication



Discussion

- An emphasis on pragmatic language development should be made to during speech therapy help speech-impaired children communicate properly
- Parents should understand that speech pathologists can help with more than just physiological speech, as they can help teach children how to enhance their social language
- Speech therapy has been sought out by parents of children who exhibit no speech-impairment and is used to help their child gain social skills, so parents should not be embarrassed to seek help
- It is important to know that speech-impaired children are aware of their disorder and other children are too, which should be addressed before any form of bullying begins and the speech-impaired child begins to lose self-confidence
- Steps to prevent the deterioration of a child's self-confidence should be utilized as soon as the child is diagnosed with a speech disorder



Limitations

- Participants were homogenous as they were mainly Australian and mothers to disabled children
- This study was based on the limited sample size of posts made by members of the "Babies and Kids with Special Needs" forum on Essential Kids and Essential Babies
- These posts were also made by the parents or guardians of disabled children, not the children themselves, so it is impossible to know the accuracy of information provided and the extent of any bias posts