OCS-R

Questionnaire for
Observing
Communicative
Skills

Revision

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Questionnaire for Observing Communicative Skills
(OCS-R version 1.06) – 2019

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Preliminary remark

Thank you for downloading OCS-R version 1.06. This instrument is based on the *Observation Questionnaire on Communicative Skills* (German: BKF) from the LMU Munich and is now available in an English version, which is the result of an extensive revision and evaluation process. We want to continuously improve the instrument and thus look forward to your feedback.

Before you begin, we would like to provide you with general information on the structure and usage of the OCS-R to facilitate your application. You can find further information in the manual, which can be downloaded at www.ocs-r.com.

General matters

The OCS-R is an observation based tool for assessing the communicative competencies of children, adolescents, and adults. Its basic idea is a multi-perspective approach. A core component of the OCS-R is capturing situation-specific communication (module 1) and assessing basic communicative skills (module 2).

The OCS-R is not suitable for recording observations on a one-off basis. The concept is to make an assessment based on experiences in many different situations.

The instrument achieves its full potential when all modules have been worked through by several observers (maximum 4).

Structure

The OCS-R is modularized. Each sub-module can be filled out and analyzed on its own. This applies in particular to module 1. Due to the scope of the OCS-R, it is not recommended to work through all modules at once. It makes sense to split the questionnaire over a longer period of time.

Besides collecting general data (module 0), the OCS-R consists of five modules: *situation-specific communication (1), basic communication skills (2),* and, as optional additional modules, *perception (3), orientation (4),* and *motor skills (5).*

In the core area, *situation-specific communication* (module 1), the caregivers should assess the nature and frequency of certain forms of expression in specific situations. The structure is based on communicative functions following Wetherby and Prizant (1989, 2011). The underlying question is which intentions (what?) are expressed with what forms of communicative expression (how? - e.g., posture, facial expressions, spoken language) and how this can be observed by the caregiver (how exactly? - e.g. lifting the arm). The aim of this module is to document communicative competencies in given situations. The results can be used directly, for example to produce an *About me Book* for the person concerned, which describes their individual forms of expression in important communication situations.

Closely associated with this is module 2 *basic communication skills*. It deals with signal production, signal perception, and interaction, following Bullowa's (1980) classification.

Scale and general instructions

The questionnaire uses a four-point scale. Please note the following when filling out:

"Always" (sometimes also "Yes") should be selected if the item describes a skill or a behavior that the person is always successful in performing and thus can almost always be observed in the described situation.

"Frequently" should be checked if the behavior has been mastered and can therefore be observed in principle. However, the person might not always succeed in performing it in certain situations.

"Rarely" should be chosen if the behavior is shown in single situations but cannot be observed in most cases. Accordingly, the skills can only be seen in individual situations.

"Never" (in sub-questions also "No") should be checked if a behavior or skill cannot be observed at all.

These notes apply to the entire questionnaire – except for module 1 *situation-specific communication*. In this module, the instrument only offers the options "always", "frequently", and "rarely". Further hints for filling out this module can be found on the corresponding pages.

Basic Data

Last name

First name

Date of birth

Age

Data collected by

Survey periods

Role (e.g. teacher, preschool teacher, father, mother)

Institution currently visited

Important predilections/interests of the person

Which communication aids are currently used?

Situation-specific communication Module 1

Instructions

This module is filled out in three steps:

1. Note how the person expresses the requested aspect (e.g. raises his arm, squints his or her eyes).
2. Assign the corresponding form of communication (e.g. gesture/manual sign) to the expression.
3. Estimate how reliably the person can use this form of expression (e.g. how frequently).

The following forms of expression are available:
behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language

1.1 Behavior regulation

Form of communication
behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language

1.1.1 What forms of expression are used to request items/objects within the field of vision?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.1.2 What forms of expression are used to request items/objects outside the field of vision?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

<div style="border:1px solid; padding:10px;">

Form of communication
behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language

</div>

1.1.3 What forms of expression are used to request actions in the specific situation?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.1.4 What forms of expression are used to request actions outside the specific situation?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.1.5 What forms of expression are used to refuse objects/items?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.1.6 What forms of expression are used to refuse actions?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.2 Social interaction and communication

> ## Form of communication
> **behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language**

1.2.1 What forms of expression are used to request a joint action (e.g. starting a joint game)?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.2.2 What forms of expression are used to request social or emotional support (e.g. comfort)?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.2.3 What forms of expression are used to greet people?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.2.4 What forms of expression are used to say goodbye to people?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

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> # Form of communication
> **behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language**

1.2.5   What forms of expression are used to thank people?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.2.6   What forms of expression are used to ask for permission?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.2.7   What forms of expression are used to begin/initiate communication?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.2.8   What forms of expression are used to resolve misunderstandings, e.g. to express "being misunderstood" or "not being understood"?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

> ## Form of communication
> **behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language**

1.2.9   What forms of expression are used to terminate/end communication?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.3 Joint attention

1.3.1   What forms of expression are used to draw other people's attention to events/objects?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.3.2   What forms of expression are used to comment on events/objects in the current situation?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

> ## Form of communication
> **behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language**

1.3.3   What forms of expression are used to ask for information about situations, people, or objects?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.3.4   What forms of expression are used to tell you about something outside the current situation?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.4 Emotions

1.4.1   What forms of expression are used to express well-being?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.4.2   What forms of expression are used to express discomfort?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

> ## Form of communication
> **behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language**

1.4.3   How is pain expressed?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.4.4   What forms of expression are used to express affection?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.4.5   What forms of expression are used to express aversion?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.5 Needs

1.5.1   What forms of expression are used to express hunger?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

> ## Form of communication
> **behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language**

1.5.2   What forms of expression are used to express thirst?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.5.3   What forms of expression are used to express tiredness?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.5.4   What forms of expression are used to indicate that the person has to go to the toilet or requires incontinence care?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.5.5   What forms of expression are used to express the need for a change in position?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.6 Decisions

> ## Form of communication
> **behavior, posture, vocalization, gaze, facial expressions, gestures/manual signs, photos/images, spoken language, written language**

1.6.1   What forms of expression are used to decide between given alternatives?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.6.2   What forms of expression are used to express agreement ("yes")?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

1.6.3   What forms of expression are used to express refusal ("no")?

Note the exact expression	Assign the form of communication	Always	Fre-quently	Rarely
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐
		☐	☐	☐

Basic communication skills Module 2

2.1 Signal production

vocalizations/spoken language

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
2.1.1	Can articulate individual vocalizations	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.2	Uses conventional terms	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.3	Can speak single words intelligibly	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.4	Can name objects or people	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.5	Can name properties of an object	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.6	Can name activities	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.7	Can speak simple sentences intelligibly	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.8	Can recount events	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.9	Uses pronouns (I, he, she, my, your, his)	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.10	Can express relationships (e.g. cause & effect)	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.L1	How many words does the person actively use?	
2.L2	In your estimation, what are the words the person uses most frequently?	

gestures/manual signs

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
2.1.11	Can point to objects purposefully	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.12	Uses conventional gestures/manual signs	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.13	Can express the names of objects or people with gestures/manual signs	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.14	Can express activities with gestures/manual signs	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.15	Can express the properties of an object with gestures/manual signs	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.16	Can recount events using gestures/manual signs	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.17	Can express pronouns (I, he, she, mine, yours, his) with gestures/manual signs	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.18	Can express relationships (e.g. cause & effect) with gestures/manual signs	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.G1	How many gestures/manual signs does the person actively use?	
2.G2	In your estimation, what are the gestures/manual signs the person uses most frequently?	

photos/images

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
2.1.19	Can express the names of objects or people with photos/images	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.20	Can express activities with photos/images	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.21	Can describe the properties of an object with photos/images	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.22	Can recount events using photos/images	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.23	Uses photos/images for pronouns (I, he, she, mine, yours, his)	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.24	Can express relationships (e.g. cause-effect) with photos/images	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.B1	How many photos/images does the person actively use?	
2.B2	In your estimation, what are the photos/images the person uses most frequently?	

written language

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
2.1.25	Can write the names of objects or people	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.26	Can report about activities in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.27	Can describe the properties of an object in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.28	Can report events in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.29	Uses pronouns in written descriptions (I, he, she, mine, yours, his)	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.1.30	Can express relationships in writing	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.S1	How many written words does the person actively use?	
2.S2	In your estimation, what are the written words the person uses most frequently?	

2.2 Signal perception

Ways of perceiving information

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
2.2.1	Can gather information from situations	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.2	Can gather information from gestures/manual signs	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.3	Can gather information from photographs	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.4	Can gather information from pictorial symbols	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.5	Can gather information from spoken language	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.6	Can gather information from written language	☐	☐	☐	☐

Speech comprehension

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
2.2.7	Understands their own name	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.8	Understands words that designate people	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.9	Understands words that designate objects	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.10	Understands words that designate actions	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.11	Understands words that designate properties of people or objects	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.12	Understands simple prompts	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.13	Understands pronouns (I, he, she, mine, yours...)	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.2.14	Understands causal connections (if-then)	☐	☐	☐	☐

2.3 Interaction

Conversation

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
2.3.1	Can focus their attention on a person or object	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.2	Can divide attention between people/objects	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.3	Can start a conversation with someone of their own initiative	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.4	Can maintain a conversation (switching between speaking and listening roles)	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.5	Can point out misunderstandings and breakdowns in the conversation	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.6	Can end a conversation	☐	☐	☐	☐

Situation

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
2.3.7	Can make themselves understood to well-known people	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.8	Can make themselves understood to unfamiliar people	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.9	Can communicate in a one-to-one situation	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.10	Can communicate in a group situation	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.11	Can communicate in familiar situations	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.12	Can communicate in unfamiliar situations	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.13	Can communicate within structured situations (e.g. shopping situation - clear division of roles and clear sequence of events)	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.3.14	Can communicate in unstructured situations (e.g. ask for directions on the street - unclear communication objective and no predetermined sequence of events)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Perception Module 3

General perception

		Yes	No
3.1	Can hear with no impairments	☐	☐

If "No," what restrictions are there?

		Yes	No
3.2	Can see with no impairments	☐	☐

If "No," what restrictions are there?

Specific perceptual competencies

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
3.3	Can fix their gaze on objects or persons	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.4	Can track people or moving objects with their eyes	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.5	Can recognize real people and objects	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.6	Can make out real objects from a larger set	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.7	Can recognize people and objects in photos	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.8	Can make out an object from several on a photo	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.9	Can recognize shapes	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.10	Can make out a shape from several/distinguish shapes	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.11	Can recognize pictorial symbols	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.12	Can make out one pictorial symbol from several	☐	☐	☐	☐

Orientation Module 4

Spatial orientation

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
4.1	Can distinguish between right and left	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.2	Can distinguish between front and back	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.3	Can distinguish between up and down	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.4	Can understand spatial relationships (on, under, in front of, behind, between)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Temporal orientation

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
4.5	Can understand very short temporal relationships (later, soon, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.6	Can understand longer temporal relationships (yesterday, tomorrow, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.7	Can understand long temporal relationships (at the time, next year, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐

Motor skills Module 5

Motor skills (for controlling communication aids)

		Always	Fre-quently	Rarely	Never
5.1	Can move around independently	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.2	Can point accurately	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.3	Can purposefully grasp an object	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.4	Can grasp with a pincer grip	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.5	Can move at least one arm beyond the center of their body	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.6	Can move at least one leg beyond the center of their body	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.7	Can hold an object	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.8	Can use a pen	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.9	Can press a switch	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.10	Can trigger switches using motor activity (blinking, muscle contraction, pressing, ...)	☐	☐	☐	☐
If so, what kind of switch is triggered and how?					
5.11	Can activate several switches in a coordinated manner	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.12	Can move their head in a controlled manner	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.13	Can purposefully look in a direction	☐	☐	☐	☐
5.14	Can fix their gaze	☐	☐	☐	☐

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