

Selective Mutism Behavioral Observation Coding System

Person	Code	Description	Example
ADULT or OTHER	UC	Uncodable because the speaker's face is hidden and the coder cannot tell if he/she attempted to talk. UC-CO should be coded if compliance with a command cannot be determined due to camera perspective.	Someone walks in front of camera. Speech is obscured and the coder cannot tell, even from the other's reaction, what kind of verbalization was made.
	Q	Question requiring discrete verbal other than yes/no	"What's this guy's name?"
	YNQ	Yes/No Questions	"Is this good here?" "Can you tell me what this is?" "Do you want to tell what he's doing?"
	FC	Forced choice question with ≥ 2 specific alternatives	"Do you want the red one, or the blue one, or maybe the yellow one?" Must provide specific referents from which to choose.
	QEM	Question about emotions or motivations or thinking (of the child); if asking about another person, code QUK.	"How did you feel about that?" "How come you ain't talkin'?" "Why you so quiet all of a sudden?" "What were you thinking?" "What made you think to have a party?" "What do you think Daddy felt?" (NOTE: "What did Daddy feel?" would be scored QUK)
	QUK	Question with Unknowable answer (includes questions about others' motivation and/or emotions)	"How much is 20 bazillion plus 20 quatrillion?" "Why didn't Daddy want to take you?" "How did Billy feel about that?" A question with a knowable answer for some person, but not the child (e.g., due to age) would be coded QUK.
	RFQ	Reflective Questions are a subset of YNQs. The parent repeats what the child says, with a questioning tone.	CHILD: "I like the dog picture." PARENT: "You like the dog picture (inflection)?"
	PNG	Pointing Question. Code only when question begs for a location; does not include a counting question where child chooses to hold up fingers rather than answer verbally; yes/no questions are coded separately but are conceptually a subset of this type of question.	"Where do you want this Lego piece to go?" If specific referents are provided, code FC. E.g., "Do you want this one or that one?" = FC
	BD	Behavioral Descriptions by adult of what parent or child are <i>doing</i> at that instant, i.e., no specific prompt for a reply.	"Oh I see, he's climbing into the house." "You're making a tower."
RF	Adult verbally reflects, parrots, or extends something child said, i.e., does not prompt for reply. Note: voice must go down at the end - not up. When in doubt, code conservatively as a question and not as a reflection. NOTE: Answers to child's question is coded as ACK not RF.	Child says, "He's climbing up." Parent says, "Yes, he's climbing way up there." (note: if voice goes up at the end (as if asking a question), it's not a Reflection. NOTE: RF and ACK can be coded within 2 verbalizations of the child's speech. E.g., CHILD: I made a tower. (SS) PARENT: Okay. (ACK) A tower! (RF)	

ACK	Audible acknowledgement of something the child said, other than reflection, including answering the child's questions; if not specifically directed to the child do not code. Acknowledgement of something the child communicated by head nod, pointing, or other nonverbal gesture.	CHILD: "Where does this Lego piece go?" PARENT: "Over here I think." Child says, "He's climbing up." Parent says, "Yes, he's climbing way up there." NOTE: RF and ACK can be coded within 2 verbalizations of the child's speech. E.g., CHILD: I made a tower. (SS) PARENT: Okay. (ACK) A tower! (RF)
LPV	Labeled praise specifically targeting child's verbal behavior	"That's great Brave Talking." "I like the way you told me that."
UP	Unlabeled praise, even if the coder thinks it is praise for speaking, but the person is not specifically reinforcing talking or talking attempts	"Great job" after child struggles to answer a question, but adult does not specify the great job was for answering/talking/responding/verbalizing; (e.g., parent says "great job!" after child responds "seven" to parent's question "how old are you now?"). "Great try."=UP. "Great try talking." = LPV. NOTE: When neutral words (e.g., Alright! Yes!) are accompanied by nonverbal gestures that clearly indicate approval of a child's behavior (smile, clapping, high-5), it should be coded as UP, not TA. E.g., CHILD: (building a block tower) PARENT: Dude! (high-5 and smile) = UP.
LPNV	Labeled praise for non-verbal behaviors, including labeled praise that appears to be for talking but is not labeled as such.	"Great job with that building." "I like how you're sitting so nicely in the chair"
DC	Direct command, when parent tells child to do something (other than talking request) in the room, presently. If the act cannot be done now, in the room, code as DC+NOC-NV. If the time at which the command is to be complied with is unclear, code DC+NOC-NV.	"Please hand me the orange marker." "Put this Brave Buck with the others so we can count them." "Clean up your room when we get home" should be coded DC+NOC-NV.
IC	Indirect command, when parent hints at something child should do (other than talking request). The parent suggests that the child take some action in the room, presently. If the act cannot be done now, in the room, code as IC+NOC-NV. If the time at which the command is to be complied with is unclear, code IC+NOC-NV.	"Let's start putting these away." "How 'bout we ____" "Why don't you ____" "Do you think you should ____" "Let's practice on the weekend" should be coded IC+NOC-NV.

DCV	Direct command to verbalize. Parent tells child to talk. Different than Q, YNQ, VQ, and PNG which are all questions; these are commands to speak. If the adult's command is not specific to speech but speech is implied (such as, "Practice"), code DC. This is a command to speak in the room, presently. If the act cannot be done now, in the room, code as DCV+NOC-V. If the time at which the command is to be complied with is unclear, code DCV+NOC-V. If the command seems "inherently flawed" for some other reason (e.g., response to the command cannot be measured objectively), code DCV+NOC-V even if the child gives some answer.	"Tell me what this is." "Tell Dr. Kurtz where we went today." "Say thank you." "Practice your letter sounds every day when you get home" should be coded DCV+NOC-V.
ICV	Indirect command to verbalize. Parent hints at something child should say or only suggests they should talk rather than giving a direct command or request to talk. If the adult's command is not specific to speech but speech is implied (such as, "Let's practice"), code IC. This is a command to speak in the room, presently. If the act cannot be done now, in the room, code as ICV+NOC-V. If the time at which the command is to be complied with is unclear, code ICV+NOC-V. If the command seems "inherently flawed" for some other reason (e.g., response to the command cannot be measured objectively), code ICV+NOC-V even if the child gives some answer.	"If you tell me what this is you'll get a Brave Buck."
NTV	Negative talk verbal. All parent verbalizations that convey disapproval of the child's verbalization (or lack of speech). If an adult gives a command not to say something or to stop being quiet, code NTV instead of DC/ICV.	"That was the wrong answer." "People will think you're stupid if you don't talk." "Don't be so quiet!"
NT	Negative talk. All parent verbalizations that convey disapproval of the child's nonverbal action (or lack of action). If an adult gives a command not to do something, code as NT instead of DC/IC.	"No!" "Don't do that!" "Stop it!" "Quit kicking me under the table." "Not that way!"
TA	Talk. All parent verbalizations not otherwise categorized. Conversations between adults should be coded TA.	"This is interesting." "I'm gonna draw a mountain."

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CHILD	CV	Child verbally answers question (other than YNQ) with word(s); does not include non-word verbalizations such as mumbling, humming, laughing, but does include whispering, even whispering that is hidden from the observer if it is obvious the child communicated in a way the other could understand. If the person prompts the child to repeat it is coded as VA (verbal attempt). What is critical here is that the listener understood the child, not the coder. Also includes verbal response to command to verbalize (DCV).	PARENT: "Where should we go after here?" CHILD: "to the park"
	YN	Verbal yes or no. Will often follow YNQ from adult.	"Yes" "No"
	SL	Slang for yes or no. The child makes an affirmative response other than "yes" such as "yep," "yeah," or "uh huh" or a negative response other than "no" such as "nope," "nah," or "uh uh." Will follow YNQ from adult.	"Yep" "Yeah" "Uh hum" "Ummhmm" "No" "Nope" "Nah" "Uh uh"
	VA	Verbal attempt in response to adult prompt/question that is not understood by the intended listener but is not thought to be simply mumbling, humming, but an attempt to use spoken language. Can be inferred from intended listener signaling they did not understand.	PARENT: "How many crayons do you see?" CHILD: "Smph." PARENT: "What?"
	NS	Nonspeech vocalizations (includes humming, sound effects, and laughing) as responses to prompts to speak, including when a child tries to talk audibly with his/her mouth closed. Does not include a verbalization that indicates yes or no (e.g., yeah).	PARENT: "What does a car sound like?" CHILD: "Zoom zoom!"
	SS	Spontaneous speech, not prompted by parents. SS is coded if a verbalization occurs >3" after a previous verbalization.	"Look mom, this is the nose." "I have to go pee-pee." "What's that?" (pointing to the video camera) Note: SS** is coded if a child responds to an adult's prompt to speak in the not-immediate future (DCV+NOC-V-M**).
	SVA	Spontaneous verbal attempt that is not understood by the intended listener but is not thought to be simply mumbling, humming, but an attempt to use spoken language. Can be inferred from intended listener signaling they did not understand.	PARENT: "I like your tower." (4 sec later) CHILD: "Recca." PARENT: "What?" CHILD: "Red car."
	SNS	Spontaneous nonspeech vocalizations, includes humming, sound effects, and laughing, including when a child tries to talk audibly with his/her mouth closed.	"Zoom" "Ha ha"

NCV	Noncompliance to a prompt for verbalization. Child <i>ignores</i> a prompt to speak (must be given 5" to respond; code command/question as NOR-V if < 5"). Code NCV at the end of the 5" interval. Do not code if child responds with nonverbal gesture. Code NCV even if adult's prompt to speak is "inherently flawed" and would be coded as NOC-V.	Parent: "Where should we go after here?" Child is given \geq 5" and doesn't respond.
HD	Head gesture. Child nods head to indicate yes or shakes head to indicate no. This may be spontaneous or in response to YNQ from adult.	Child nods yes when asked "Would you like this one?" Child shakes head no when asked "Are you ready to leave?"
PT	Child points or gestures spontaneously or in response to adult question instead of answering verbally. If the child points and speaks about the object he is referring to, use the appropriate code for his speech and do not code PT.	Child points when asked "Which block do you want next?" Child shrugs when parent asks, "Do you want the green car or the red one?" The parent understands the shrug as an answer and says, "Ok, if you can't decide I'll choose for you."
CO	Complies to a direct or indirect command for something other than a talking command; must be given 5" to comply. Code CO at the time when the child complies or, if the complete behavior will take >5", code when the child begins to comply. Code CO even if the adult's DC/IC is inherently flawed and will be coded DC/IC-NOC-NV.	Child is told to hand therapist a crayon and does so.
NC	Noncompliance to a direct or indirect command for a non-verbal behavior (must be given 5" to comply; code command as NOR-NV if < 5"). Code NC at the end of the 5" interval. Do not code if the adult's DC/IC is inherently flawed and will be coded DC/IC-NOC-NV.	Child is told to hand therapist a crayon and does not do so in < 5".

Person	Code	Description	Example
OTHER	NOR-V-M/F/T	No Opportunity to Respond to a question or command to speak (due to Mother/Father/Therapist). This is an additional code applied to a question or command to speak when it is invalidated by a second prompt to speak given within 5" of the initial prompt.	Adult does not wait full 5" for a verbal response before saying something or doing something incompatible with child responding either verbally or with a gesture (i.e., pointing, nodding). If the adult answers for the child the question/command should get the additional code NOR-V. When multiple prompts to verbalize are given in <5", code NOR-V with the first prompt (the child is not expected to respond) but do not code NOR-V with the second prompt (the child is expected to respond and should be coded accordingly). (NOTE: Do not code NOR-V with a prompt to speak if it is followed within 5" by a command to behave that is not incompatible with the child responding to the initial prompt to speak.)
	NOR-NV-M/F/T	No Opportunity to Respond to a command to enact a nonverbal behavior (due to Mother/Father/Therapist). This is an additional code applied to a behavioral command when it is invalidated by a second command given within 5" of the initial command.	Adult does not wait full 5" for compliance before saying something or doing something incompatible with the child complying. If the adult behaves for the child the command should get the additional code NOR-NV. When multiple commands are given in <5", code NOR-NV with the first command (the child is not expected to comply) but do not code NOR-NV with the second command (the child is expected to comply and should be coded accordingly). (NOTE: Do not code NOR-NV with a command if it is followed within 5" by a prompt to speak that is not incompatible with the child complying to the initial behavioral command.)
	NOC-V-M/F/T	No Opportunity to Comply to a question or command to speak (due to Mother/Father/Therapist). This is an additional code applied to a prompt to speak that indicates that the question or command is somehow "inherently flawed."	Code NOC-V** with all prompts to verbalize that request talking to be performed in the not-immediate future (>5"; ** indicates this is a special type of "flawed" prompt). If a child responds after this command to speak, code the child's verbalization as Spontaneous Speech. E.g., MOTHER: Let's practice your sounds when we get home (ICV+NOC-V-M**). CHILD: Okay (SS**). Code NOC-V with all commands to speak now that do not provide sufficient information for the child to perform

		<p>the expected verbalization or are too vague to evaluate compliance objectively. NOTE: Despite the fact that the prompt is "flawed," the child may or may not respond. Code the child's response (CV, YN, etc.) or NCV as if a valid prompt was given. E.g., FATHER: How did your sister feel when you said that? (QUK+NOC-V-F) CHILD: She was happy (CV); MOTHER: Talk louder next time (DCV+NOC-V-M) CHILD: Is this better? (CV).</p>
NOC-NV-M/F/T	<p>No Opportunity to Comply to a command to enact a nonverbal behavior (due to Mother/Father/Therapist). This is an additional code applied to a behavioral command that indicates that the command is somehow "inherently flawed."</p>	<p>Code NOC-NV** with all commands that request a behavior be performed in the not-immediate future (>5"; ** indicates this is a special type of "flawed" command). Since the child is not expected to comply now, neither CO nor NC need to be coded. E.g., MOTHER: Give it to me as soon as you get home (DC+NOC-NV-M**). CHILD: (no code). Code NOC-NV with all commands that do not provide sufficient information for the child to perform the expected behavior or are too vague to judge compliance (including commands to enact internal or unobservable behavior). E.g., FATHER: Pretend it's true (DC+NOC-NV-F); MOTHER: Be patient (DC+NOC-NV-M). NOTE: Despite the fact that the command is "flawed," the child may or may not attempt to comply. Code the child's CO or NC as if a valid command was given. If compliance is unclear, code CO-UC.</p>
IA	Inaudible	<p>Child's speech cannot be heard by the adult or the coder. Code IA if the child mouths a word (i.e., moves his lips) but no sound is made. If the adult understands the mouthing, code the verbalization (SS/CV/etc.) + IA. If the adult does not understand the child and asks the child to repeat or speak louder, code as verbal attempt (SVA or VA) + IA.</p>
A	Clearly audible, low-to-normal volume	<p>Child's speech can be clearly heard by the adult (it may be inaudible to the coder). The adult may acknowledge the child's verbalization or continue the conversation. If the child's speech has low volume but is audible to some degree, the adult</p>

		may ask him/her to repeat but the child's volume should still be coded A.
LG	Long latency	Child begins to respond verbally to adult question or command to speak after 3".
ST	Short latency	Child begins to respond verbally to adult question or command to speak within 3".
BB	Brave Buck awarded	Code under the person that awards the brave buck to the child.
Prize	Prize awarded	Code under the person that awards the prize to the child.