

Abstract Title:-

Strategies for Parents of Children with ASD and Depression

Keynote Speaker – Mr. Alan Vu – CEO, Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)



Abstract:

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) technology is entering a transformative era, driven by rapid advances in artificial intelligence (AI) and the growing movement toward multilingual and culturally responsive communication supports—particularly Arabic language accessibility. This presentation explores how next-generation AAC innovations can address long-standing barriers to implementation, improving access, inclusion, and communication outcomes for AAC users and their families. The session also highlights practical strategies for service providers to adopt these emerging tools in real-world clinical and educational settings.

A key focus will be how AI-powered AAC features—such as word and phrase prediction—can significantly increase communication efficiency, reduce user burden, and enhance overall usability. Research in the field has demonstrated promising results, including findings that AI-enhanced AAC can reduce keystrokes and improve communication speed. The presentation will further explore how AI can simplify and personalize vocabulary development, allowing AAC systems to more quickly adapt to an individual's daily communication needs.

In addition to AI-driven efficiency, the presentation emphasizes the importance of evidence-based AAC design. User-centered principles—including layout organization, spatial cues, and engagement-focused displays—are essential for encouraging consistent use and long-term success. These design components can directly influence motivation, independence, and communication participation across environments.

Finally, the session highlights linguistic inclusion as a critical element of equity in AAC access. Special attention will be given to the availability and impact of Arabic-language support within AAC tools and how AI may enhance multilingual implementation. A real-world case study will illustrate how heritage language access can strengthen identity, participation, and meaningful communication for AAC users from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Keywords:

AAC • Assistive Technology • Arabic • Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- **Identify three major barriers** that commonly prevent successful AAC implementation.
- **Describe three modern AAC solutions** (including AI-based tools) that can reduce these barriers and improve outcomes.
- **List three multilingual AAC tools or strategies** that support non-speaking users from non-English or multilingual backgrounds.

Short Professional Biography:

Alan Vu, MA, CCC-SLP, is the founder and CEO of Flexspeak. He is a licensed speech-language pathologist and a person who stutters, specializing in the development of multilingual, accessible communication technologies. His work focuses on breaking barriers to AAC implementation by designing culturally responsive tools—especially for Arabic-speaking and multilingual communities—so individuals with speech disabilities can communicate with dignity, independence, and inclusion.