

The Apple™ WWDC Keynote Address 6/10/13

Hi. My name is Penina Rybak MA/CCC-SLP, TSHH, and I am an Apple™ techie. And a pediatric speech therapist. And an Autism specialist. And an educational technology consultant for my own company, Socially Speaking LLC. I have been a Mac since I was a child. I tell people that with pride, and a bit of a strut. I was one of the first participants of the precursor to the Apple Educator's Program, the NY TRAIID Project of 1995-2000. I just spent the last year lecturing around North America on the *"Developmental Integration of iPad Apps into Treatment in Early Childhood Special Education: Which Apps to Use When"*. I am working on incorporating content from those seminars into my upcoming book about social communication strategies for special educators in the twenty first century. I guess it's a good thing that the publishing was delayed; my niche market is growing, and the iOS boom is fully underway.

I am an App developer. My ©2012 **Socially Speaking™ iPad App** is the first digital, developmental, fully customizable, and user friendly, play based, collaborative social skills assessment for children at risk for behavioral issues. You can learn more about it, me, and my love for Apple™ tech, especially iOS tech, from my social media sites.

I have been a huge Apple™ fangirl for years. I have always dreamed of attending the WWDC live. Unfortunately, that hasn't happened yet, and I am not alone. There is a paucity of women at this event. I even posted an "Open Letter to Tim Cook" on my social media sites on 6/7/13, in anticipation of today's keynote address. For those who didn't get to see it, don't want to scroll down the timelines of my previous posts online, or have no idea of what I am talking about, here it is again:

[An Open Letter to Tim Cook Before the WWDC: On Behalf of All Women](#)

Hello Mr. Cook,

I understand how busy you are, especially with the looming 2013 WWDC in San Francisco, CA. I would like to point out that as a woman, in a niche but potentially profitable market i.e. special education, we have much to contribute to the trajectories of future Apple™ projects involving educational technology.

Technological literacy and educational technology in particular, which is used for the customization of educational curriculums around the world, are becoming widespread "must have" skills for today's professional, especially those in education. Many of the innovators, linchpins, and pioneers in this field are women, because many of us are already in this field, in some capacity. Our professional backgrounds and experiences, help us better understand how to pair best practices in education, with new technology trends such as iPad Apps etc. Interestingly, the internet is filled with articles about the declining numbers of women pursuing higher education in the fields of computer science, technology, and engineering.

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I know from personal experience, that Apple™ values education, and has implemented some valuable programs. I myself was trained by an Apple™ Educator years ago in the late 90s, when I learned, and then trained other educators in the NY public school system, in Apple™ tech integration into curriculums, under the auspices of the NY TRAIID Project (in conjunction with the Westchester Institute for Human Development). I was trained by women, and in turn, trained many women, in Apple™ OS Basics at that time. Why women? Because then and now, we make up the majority of the workplace in many educational settings!

So why are there still murmurs about the WWDC appearing to be an "all boys club" in the news media? It seems that reportedly and allegedly, the percentage of women invited to attend/who actually attend the WWDC vs. the men, has been historically skewed. I knew this for years, and many people and are reading about this again. Here is an example:

WWDC and Women: Article from ZITE 5/13

<http://www.cocoanetics.com/2013/05/wwdc-and-women/>

I know that the agendas for the WWDC are set way in advance, and that Apple™ has many niche markets to consider when unveiling new products and new initiatives. Yet what is more important than gender equality, and education of children, around the world? I just hope that forums like the WWDC, which garner much attention worldwide, would take these things seriously.

I also hope that you will take this Email seriously, and consider the issues I have raised. I would be happy to further this discussion with the relevant Apple™ team member(s) you have designated for like projects.

If we human beings have allocated precious resources for the environmental preservation of our world's land, animals, and flora, in "niche settings" such as national parks and museums, don't we owe it to allocate resources for our even more precious legacies, **our children**? Especially those in a "niche category" i.e. special children in need? Doesn't it make sense for Apple™ to join the movement, and advocate for these children's mothers, future mothers, teachers/therapists, future teachers/therapists, and future engineers, entrepreneurs, App developers and Apple™ consumers?

Mr. Cook, please take action to actually implement change for two vital, indispensable, and potentially profitable "niche" markets: women, and children with Autism and other special needs. Please heed the women who want to attend the 2013 WWDC yet can't, or haven't yet been invited, and women like myself, who have voiced concerns re: education, which we request be addressed. Please consider the children with special needs, who cannot voice their concerns, yet are the ones I am advocating for, and speaking for, in this Email.

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I sincerely look forward to your response, and thank you again for your time, consideration, and attention to this Email. I wish you success in making the upcoming WWDC memorable, productive, and most of all, educational, to all the attendees.

Best Regards,

Penina

Join the Journey for Change!

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In my opinion, the WWDC is one of the most important events for professionals in both the fields of special education and technology to follow. Even if you are not an Apple™ fan. Even if you hate tech. Tickets sold out literally 2 minutes after they were released. The App Store will turn 5 next month. Apple™ is literally changing global markets and public policy, one store at a time. An informed person needs to stay current and “in the know” about things like this, and what it means for the Big Picture. What it means for you.

It is time for more women to join the Tech Revolution and it's sibling; the Entrepreneurial Revolution. That time is now. A movement begins with people teaching others, in their fields of expertise. For years, speech-language pathology has been all about inter-personal communication, social trends, emerging technologies to integrate the two, and public advocacy for change. Yet I am still amazed when people in my field, who embrace eclectic approaches to treatment, the teaching aspect of our jobs, and the networking features indigenous to the profession, continue to tell me that they are technophobic, or better yet, “not into Mac”. Huh???? This does not compute!

Instead of bringing readers over to the “dark side”, let me recap for you the big reveals from today's Keynote Address, through the lens of a speech therapist/educational technology consultant, who happens to be very “into Mac”. Many others; better writers, more seasoned bloggers, and much more knowledgeable computer whizzes, will be covering this event. Many will post a plethora of articles, Op-Ed pieces, and tweets, about the 2 hour kickoff presentation for a week of Apple™ centric workshops and

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collective bartering of information. It is my hope that I have something to contribute to the “stream”.

Watching the live feed at Apple.com, and looking at the audience on my iMac’s big screen, before the Keynote Address began, made me realize that:

1. I was right.....there really were very few women attending the Keynote, and probably the WWDC as a whole!
2. I had a valuable opportunity to prepare my colleagues for the new world order, and how to transition, something difficult for many or our students to do! Those who have attended my *Socially Speaking™ Seminars*, know my opinion about the importance of moving away from a crisis intervention paradigm (when teaching children with Autism), to one of proactive, preventive intervention. That actually bridges the gap between readiness to learn and actual performance. This is true of our students. It is also true of special education service providers, especially fellow speech therapists, for our future success in addressing social communication goals in treatment. Our success will be directly affected by our understanding of the cultural and technological trends shaping our future as a whole. The future that is almost upon us, where the Apple™ ecosystem “closes the loop” and device syncing and integration across platforms becomes the norm.

So here I am now, giving my unvarnished, possibly unasked for, accounting of the Keynote Address, through my Socially Speaking™ viewfinder, to those still reading this. If you agree with it, and especially if you don’t, please drop me a line! I thrive on collaboration! I am a student on the road, always eager to learn new things and expand my own Theory of Mind. Something I hope I have in common with many of you, and with Tim Cook, who said today, “Our goal is to make amazing products that enrich people’s lives”.

Powerful words, from the CEO of one of the most powerful companies in the world. A company known for starting one of the most publicized marriages, the one between education and tech. Like all marriages, there are memorable moments; some good, some bad, and some totally cringe worthy. I will share random snippets of today’s presentation, that is etched in my episodic memory, for better or for worse. You can read someone else’s impressions of today’s Keynote Address, in proper timeline order, with a different perspective, somewhere else.

I choose to report the big reveals using jargon and concepts more familiar to me, and many of you, working with young children with Autism and other special needs. As they do on planet Pandora, in the movie Avatar, take a ride with me and see what I see.....

What I Learned as a Speech Therapist From the 2013 WWDC Keynote Address

1. Orientation to Person-The First Line of Defense for Socially Savvy Children: Theory of Mind Is Indeed Shaped by Environmental and Biological Factors

I was actually very impressed with the overall tone, and both the content and delivery of the Keynote Address. I took several mental notes of what I want to emulate, or not, when giving my own future seminars. I want to emulate senior vice president of Software Engineering at Apple™, Craig Federighi, who in my opinion stole the show. I want to commend him for his laid back speaking style (a speech therapist knows that part of communication is nonverbal and involves body language and prosody, especially rate!) and sense of humor. It really helped him achieve empathy and Emotional Attunement with the audience. Like many in the crowd, when Craig spoke, (and demonstrated revised Apps, and soon to be added new features of Apps for iOS 7), I laughed so hard when he joked, “Your friends never looked so attractive”.

I also appreciated his reference to the layperson, when he said he would demonstrate what he was talking about, right after talking about it. He did, each and every time, and with such grace and humor, that it made me adamant about trying to really work the development of humor into my speech therapy goals with my students with Autism. Humor really is the key to a person’s ability to transition from being a Me to a We, as evidenced by Craig’s delivery. I write more about facilitating a sense of humor in children with Autism in my upcoming book, my seminar handout, and in my article for ADVANCE, which can be referenced here:

<http://speech-language-pathology-audiology.advanceweb.com/Features/Articles/Development-of-Humor.aspx>

I was less impressed with the very first “on stage act” provided by Anki’s guru Boris Sorfman. Apple™ fanboys will sing his praises. I will not. As a woman who abhors violence, cannot watch most of the procedural cop shows on TV, and who is an Early Childhood Educator and somewhat concerned with humanitarian efforts, I took issue with his portion of today’s presentation. I was surprised and a bit dismayed that Apple™ chose his video game as “exhibit A”. Boris is cool, I’m sure, and his ideas are cool, to be sure, but not in keeping with the Theory of Mind I have, or of the many others in my field. Boris demonstrated the Artificial Intelligence (AI) features of his video game of the future, including the “weapons enabled” one, that made many people clap. Not me. I was too busy pondering the ramifications for increased bullying

of our students with Autism in mainstreamed settings, and wondering if road rage will become an accepted part of the teenage boy's rite of passage, once this game is released.

2. Orientation to Place: The Second Line of Defense for Socially Savvy Children: Categorization is a Pre-Literacy Goal Which Must Be Mastered By Our Students!

I talk a lot about categorization skill development (inclusion and exclusion) in my various *Socially Speaking™ Seminars*, and why they are such a crucial stepping stone for later social communication proficiency. From the buzz generated by Mac's OS X Maverick's new features, to the catch phrase "customization", the message and concept of sorting and storing information, kept being demonstrated. Part-whole relationships and categorization are indeed two pre-literacy concepts needed for future academic performance, and frankly technological performance. I saw that again today:

- In OS X Mavericks, we were shown how the **Finder** would be able to create a Master Window for all other open windows and tabs. Merging windows and their content, would go a long way in organizing the viewing protocols for students, and the way we interact with the user interface of our computers, for better visual scanning and time management.

- In OS X Mavericks, we were shown how a new feature, **Tags**, would keep track of items better for searches, and for storing content in categorized "holding pens". For example, speech therapists would be able to store and search more easily for content in folders they would create and name themselves, such as "evaluations in progress", "completed evaluations", "drafts of progress reports", "letters to parents-templates", and "incomplete articulation drill worksheets for students".

- In OS X Mavericks, we were shown how 2 new features, **App Nap** and **Compressed Memory**, can be used to optimize power, memory, battery life, and the screen's ability to sort between open Apps and those on "standby", and more quickly exit "sleep mode". This is terrific news, and can help us with our time management, as well as that of our students. Think about those impulsive students who can't wait for a program to load, and help themselves to the mouse or keyboard, to hurry things along, or not!

- **iBooks** is coming to OS X Mavericks, which means that speech therapists can sort their exported and Emailed PDF documents and store them, across devices, and sync with iCloud!

- **Safari** is getting truly revised and updated for OS X Mavericks, which will make it a dream to use with our older, more literate students, and even for ourselves. Some newsworthy features include:

- ☞ New *Sidebar* for Bookmarks and Reader, friends to those facilitating categorization and Executive Functioning skills in our students

- ☞ One Click *Bookmarks* for later reference and sorting

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- ☞ Redesigned *Top Sites*, and an easier way to revise them for increased teachable moments about categorization and time management
- ☞ Less memory and energy usage when browsing, giving us more time and power when using Safari to do what we want to do with this browser
- In OS X Mavericks, we were shown how the **iCloud Keychain** can further teach categorization in a more functional, self motivating manner by managing storage for
 - ☞ Website passwords
 - ☞ Credit card information when shopping online
 - ☞ WiFi network passwords when on the go with a laptop
 - ☞ Autofill information for online forms and accounts to websites
- In OS X Mavericks, we were shown how the **Calendar** can help us categorize our events for Real Time, by using the revised Inspector to note the duration of travel time to the event (therapy session, conference, or home visit, if you work with the EI population) and even the weather predicted during that event.
- In OS X Mavericks, we were shown how **Maps** can now provide turn by turn directions, save those mapped routes, and even export those directions to your iPhone, even if it's locked, giving us ease of mind about travel, for the therapy session, conference, or home visit, if you work with the EI population

3. Orientation to Time: The Third Line of Defense for Socially Savvy Children: Sanitizing the Environment, an ABA Term, Facilitates Behavior & Time Management

When we hear this term in ABA, when working with behaviorally challenged children with Autism, we think about saturation points, pairing the reinforcer to encourage longer attention spans, and even de-cluttering our therapy “area” for the next student to prevent a meltdown due to “sensory overload”. In Apple™ speak, this term took on a broader connotation, as evidenced by the presentation video about iOS 7.

The second presenter who really impressed me did so in a video, where his clear articulation, “hot” British accent (a female speech therapist notices these things!), and simple prose, really hit his message home. Sir Jony Ives, senior vice president of Industrial Design at Apple™, is reportedly shy about public speaking. Yet his words were some of the most eloquent I heard, almost as eloquent as his innovative designs for iOS 7. He summed up his revisions, the most important updates seen since the iPhone was unveiled in 2007, in this sentence: “The design recedes to elevate your content”. You have to see iOS 7 in action to see what he is talking about. I did, and the demo literally blew me away.

It also made me think about the ramifications for our Autistic students, who tend to be visual learners, and have difficulty performing time sequenced movements. In my

Socially Speaking™ Seminars, I also discuss how these children neurologically seem to have a different internal body clock than neurotypical children, resulting in a cognitive need to be visually detail oriented, visually anchored to the present to stay focused on the environment, and have a more concrete Time Duration Map to better understand the passage of time and how their world, and those in it “work”. Steve Jobs was attributed this enlightening quote: “Design is a funny word. Some people think design means how it looks. But of course, if you dig deeper, it’s really how it works”.

Here are the big reveals about the newly designed, visually appealing, innovative iOS 7 as seen during today’s Keynote Address:

- **Home Screen** will look different. The move away from skeuomorphism, i.e. the “flattening” of the Apps on the screen, may actually be a welcome change
- **Tabs** in Safari will be more visually and prominently displayed, another welcome change
- **Photos** has been revamped, to get tagged and streamed according to Moments, Collections, and Years. Tap and scrub, edit, and share right away....the implications for assigning photos for Visual Supports, if you use Linda Hodgdon’s Visual Strategies™ technique like I do (Visual Schedules, Reinforcer Rosters, Task Organizers, Transition Helpers etc.), to homework sheets, and Social Stories, are staggering!
- **Airdrop** for iOS will certainly sanitize my environment, my cluttered desktop of documents, PDFs, photos, and MindMaps, that I can now transfer across all my devices and share/store via iCloud
- **iCloud for iWork** is the biggest and best news for me, someone who constantly uses Pages for my word processing needs (including this article), and Keynote for my presentations. The fact that I will be able to buy extra storage, go to iCloud.com, open and edit my files from there, and use WiFi to do so, across my devices? Priceless! Will this make Mirroring Apps for iOS, and my need to take my MacBook Air with me to my seminars (because of battery life issues with the iPad), obsolete? Will we be lugging our iPhones to meetings now, instead of our laptops? Time will tell....

**4. Best Practices in Speech Therapy Involves Bridging the Gap Between Readiness to Learn & Actual Performance:
Cause & Effect Is Indeed a Pre-requisite of Problem Solving**

Apple™ unveiled plans for more seamless communication between devices, in the guise of revamping both operating systems; OS X Mavericks for Mac, and iOS 7 for iPads and iPhones. What is noteworthy is that the user interfaces of both platforms will truly start to mimic each other. The implications are vast, and include these factors:

- **New OS = Increased Availability of Teachable Moments for the “Causality Loop”**

Apple™ tech, like other tech, has always been intrinsically able to teach children with Autism and special needs about Causality, the first rule of behavior management. (It is also one of the first cognitive milestones needed to start the road to generalized performance, in a more multi-sensory, naturalistic, and “hands on way”.) Causality comprehension, a readiness indicator to address tantrums, and even social communication goals, has always been a developmental milestone to be concerned about (The If...Then Contingent” which emerges in neurotypical children at 18 months). This goal can be implemented more functionally, and with increased student motivation, by simply using a Mac or iPad in treatment with the child! This will be become even more evident as both operating systems are released to the public.

● **New Multiple Displays Feature = Increased Opportunities for Group Learning**

Craig Federighi demonstrated a “supercharged mission control” for the Mac, where “drag and drop” content, Air Drop, and literal screen sharing and interaction will be implemented across devices. This will solve thorny issues about the efficacy of recommending group therapy sessions to improve carryover of performance. It will also serve us better when educating colleagues about Readiness Indicators needed for specific skill sets and performance, by implementing presentations and CSE meetings using Multiple Displays for more “hands on” learning. More “hands on” learning means an increase in productivity. An increase in productivity means an increase in episodic memory. Episodic memory can be defined as the pairing of vocabulary, experienced during the execution of an event, with the event one went through, and stores in the brain’s memory banks, for later retrieval. Episodic memory, more than semantic memory, is needed for later Executive Functioning and overall social communication performance.

The excuses about broken/missing LCD projectors, lack of a VGA adaptor for the iPad, insufficient WiFi signal rendering that expensive mirroring App useless, or concerns about decreased episodic memory or Cortical Visual Impairment (CVI) in students, can significantly decrease. I for one, would love to see this implemented in a classroom, where we more fluidly and methodically implement the curriculum, while appealing the the students’ learning style, multiple intelligences, and self motivation to carryover learned skills.



There you have it, folks. My take on today’s announcements at the much anticipated, highly publicized, massively referenced, and historically relevant Keynote Address for the Apple™ WWDC of 2013. Time will tell if people’s predictions and impressions, including mine, are consistent with the actual performance of both soon to be launched operating systems, for my beloved Apple™ tech.

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In the meantime, I hope I have actually helped some of you in the field of education, let alone special education, bridge that gap between readiness to use Apple™ Tech, and actual performance, when the time comes. Good Luck!

About the Author:

Penina Rybak, MA/CCC-SLP, TSHH, CEO Socially Speaking LLC, is an Educational Technology Consultant and an Autism Specialist. She is also a practicing, pediatric speech-language pathologist, who earned her master's degree from New York University. She has been practicing for two decades, and has provided treatment to young children with Autism/special needs, in home-based early intervention, center-based preschool intervention, self-contained school-age classrooms, and private practice. Penina participated in the 1995-2000 *NY TRAIID Project*, in conjunction with the Westchester Institute of Human Development, which worked to integrate Apple™ technology into special education classrooms. She also spearheaded *The Boardmaker™ Initiative*, from 2008-2010, which worked on customizing curriculum needs and implementing behavior management strategies at a charter school in New York. It resulted in her launch of her **Socially Speaking™ Social Skills Curriculum**, seminars, and iPad App. Penina lectures nationally and internationally, about customizing social communication strategies, the developmental integration of iPad Apps into treatment of Autism/Special Needs, and Early Childhood play based assessment and intervention. She advocates the use of an eclectic, multi-sensory treatment approach, using customized lesson plans involving toys and tech. For more information, visit her social media sites:

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