



SPEECH THERAPY TERMINOLOGY

Adapted from Various Sources

Speech Therapy (ST), formally known as Speech-Language Pathology is a health care profession specializing in the detection and treatment of communication as well as swallowing disorders. Speech-Language pathologists (SLP's) provide services including assessment and treatment related to cognitive aspects of communication, speech, language, swallowing dysfunction, voice, and sensory awareness related to communication.

Article: a noun modifier that denotes specificity; i.e., a, an, the

Articulation: the way phonemes are formed in speech

Articulators: organs of the speech mechanism, which produce meaningful sound; i.e., lips, lower jaw, velum, tongue, and pharynx

Aspiration: breathing in a foreign object

Audition: the sense or act of hearing

Auditory Processing: the ability to fully utilize what is heard

Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC): any approach designed to support, enhance or supplement the communication of individuals who are not independent verbal communicators

Babbling: verbal conduct of infants during the first year of life

Barium Swallow Study: an evaluation employing videofluoroscopy to monitor each stage of a swallow after barium-infused liquids and/or solids have been ingested

Bilabial: pertaining to the two lips

Bilingual: the ability to utilize two languages with equal facility

Bite: the forcible closure of the lower teeth against the upper teeth; to seize or grasp with the teeth; a) Mature Bite: the teeth close easily on the food, biting through it gradually; b) Phasic: a rhythmical bite and release pattern seen as a series of jaw openings and closings occurring when the gums or teeth are stimulated. Present at birth and continues until 3 to 5 months of age in the typical infant; c) Tonic: a forceful or tense biting pattern that interferes with all aspects of feeding

Block: in stuttering, the stoppage or obstruction at one or several locations--larynx, lips, tongue, etc.; experienced by the stutterer when trying to talk which temporarily prevents smooth sound production

Bolus: the rounded mass of food prepared by the mouth for swallowing after chewing

Carryover: in speech, the habitual use of newly learned speech or language techniques in everyday situations outside of therapy

Cause-Effect: performing one behavior in order to achieve a further objective, e.g. hitting a switch to activate a toy

Cluster Simplification: occurs when one or more consonants is deleted from a sequence of consonants, e.g. blue = bu

Cueing: a function to assist or obtain a desired response, e.g. giving the command while also pointing



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Deaffrication: the deletion of the stop feature of an affricate, e.g. matches = meshes

Deglutition: the act of swallowing

Dental Arch: the curved structure formed by the teeth in their normal position

Dentition: natural teeth, considered collectively, in the dental arch

Diadochokinesis: in speech, the ability to execute rapid repetitive movements of the articulators

Diadochokinetic Rate: the speed with which one can perform contrasting (or repetitive) movements, as in saying the following syllables: puh-tuh-kuh

Epenthesis: the insertion of an additional phoneme in a word or in a group of sound, e.g. tree = taree

Eye contact: looking at person in the eye while talking to the listener; generally a natural, although not a constant, interaction of the speaker's eyes with those of the listener

Final Devoicing: the substitution of a voiceless consonant for the final voiced consonant, e.g. bed = bet

Fluency: the smoothness with which sounds, syllables, words and phrases are joined together during oral language; lack of hesitations or repetitions in speaking

Frenum: the small cord of tissue extending from the floor of the mouth to the midline of the inferior surface of the tongue blade; if too short it may restrict the elevation and extension of the tongue

Grammar: the rule-oriented system of organizing spoken and written language

Idiosyncratic: used to describe a structural or behavioral characteristic peculiar to an individual

Intelligibility: the degree of clarity with which one's utterances are understood by the average listener

Initial Voicing: inappropriate voicing of initial voiceless consonants, e.g. pen = ben

Intonation: culturally specific parameters within a language concerning vocal stress, pitch, and the rising and falling (melodic) quality of the flow of speech

Jargon: verbal behavior of children, beginning at about 9 months and ceasing at about 18 months, which contains a variety of syllables that are inflected in a manner approximating meaningful connected speech

Jaw Grading: the ability to vary the extent of jaw depression in small amounts that are appropriate for biting foods of different thicknesses

Jaw Stabilization: active, internal jaw control with minimal up/down jaw movements especially significant in cup drinking; initially obtained by biting on the cup rim at about 13 to 15 months of age; gradually develops using active jaw musculature by 24 months of age

Labial: pertaining to the lips

Labialization: lip rounding; pursing or protrusion of the lips

Labiodental: relating to the lips and teeth



SPEECH THERAPY TERMINOLOGY

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Language: any accepted, structured, symbolic system for interpersonal communication composed of sounds arranged in ordered sequence to form words, with rules for combining these words into sequences or strings that express thoughts, intentions, experiences, and feelings; comprised of phonological, morphological, syntactical, semantic and pragmatic components. a) delayed- failure to comprehend and/or produce language at the expected age; b) expressive- ability to communicate via the spoken or printed word; c) prelinguistic- behaviors that are thought to precede the acquisition of true language; e.g., crying, cooing, babbling, echolalia; d) receptive- words one understands

Language Sample: the systematic collection and analysis of an individual's utterances used as part of a regular speech and language evaluation

Linguadental: pertaining to the tongue and teeth

Liquid Simplification: the substitution of /w/ or /j/ for /l/ and /r/, e.g. rock = wok

Lingual: pertaining to the tongue

Lisp: defective production of one or more of the six sibilant consonants (i.e. /s/, /z/); usually caused by improper tongue placement or by abnormalities of the articulatory mechanism; types- dental, frontal, lateral

Localization: the ability to identify the location of a sound source exclusively with auditory information

Mean Length of Utterance (MLU): the average length of oral expressions as measured by a representative sampling of oral language; usually obtained by counting the number of morphemes per utterance and dividing by the number of utterances

Morpheme: the smallest meaningful unit of language

Morphology: the study of how morphemes are put together to form words; indicates how words are formed and provides a bridge between phonology and syntax

Munching: the earliest form of chewing

Myringotomy: surgical incision into the tympanic membrane to allow drainage of fluid from the middle ear

Nasal Emission: airflow through the nose, usually audible and indicative of an incomplete seal between the nasal and oral cavities; typical of cleft palate speech

Nasality: general symptom classification that includes all voices that acoustically have an excessive nasal component

Negation: denial or refusal that may be noted in syntax or semantics; e.g., no, not

Object Permanence: the awareness that an object is relatively permanent and is not destroyed if removed from sight

Occlusion: the relationship between the various surfaces of the upper and lower teeth

Oral Cavity: in speech, the mouth

Oral Peripheral Examination: inspection of the mouth to determine its structural and functional adequacy for speech and chewing/swallowing; also known as an oral motor examination



SPEECH THERAPY TERMINOLOGY

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Palatal Fronting: the substitution of palatal consonants with nonpalatal consonants, e.g. shovel = sovel

Palate: the roof of the mouth, includes the anterior portion (hard) and the posterior portion (soft)

Perseveration: the tendency to continue an activity, motor or mental, once it has been started and to be unable to modify or stop the activity even though it has become inappropriate

Phoneme: the shortest unit of sound in a given language that can be recognized as being distinct from other sounds in the language

Phonological Processes: techniques used by children to simplify speech when attempting to produce adult words; Developmental processes that are frequently produced; characteristic of normal speech development in children: a) Deletion of Final Consonants; b) Syllable Reduction; c) Stopping; d) Cluster Simplification; e) Liquid Simplification; f) Velar Fronting; g) Palatal Fronting; h) Deaffrication; i) Initial Voicing; j) Final Devoicing

Phonology: the study of the sound system of a language, including pauses and stress

Pitch: the subjective quality primarily associated with frequency; e.g., high or low

Pragmatics: the set of rules governing the use of language in context; e.g., to comment, request (objects, actions, attention), inform, etc.

Prosody: the melody of speech determined primarily by modifications of pitch, quality, strength and duration; perceived primarily as stress and intonational patterns

Rate: the speech with which phonemes, syllables, and words are uttered

Respiration: the act of breathing

Semantics: the study of meaning in language, includes relations between language, thought and behavior

Speech Mechanism: the structures involved in the production of speech; includes: a) articulators (lips, tongue, velum, pharynx and lower jaw); b) larynx; c) resonators (pharyngeal, laryngeal, oral and nasal cavities); d) respiratory system (lungs and air passages)

Stopping: the replacement of fricatives with a stop consonant, e.g. soup = dup

Syllable Reduction: the deletion of a syllable from a word e.g. banana = bana

Syntax: the way in which words are put together in a sentence to convey meaning

Tongue Thrust: when, in a resting position, the anterior or lateral portions of the tongue contact more than half the surface area of either the upper or lower incisors, cuspids or bicuspid or protrude between them

Utterance: any vocal expression

Velum: the soft palate, comprised of the uvula and palatoglossal and palatopharyngeal arches

Velar Fronting: the substitution of /t/ and /d/ for /k/ and /g/, e.g. cat = tat

Voice: the sound production created by the vibration of the vocal cords and sustained by airflow