

Speech and Languages Tests: Assessment Measures for Communication Disorders

A variety of speech and language tests are available for use in assessing children and adults with communication disorders. Although norm-referenced speech and language assessment measures are helpful, they often do not provide sufficient information to identify children with true disorders. Cultural differences, limited language exposure, and a variety of other factors can influence the learning of language skills.

Samples of the individual's natural communication should always be included in the assessment. What does the child do that calls attention to the way in which he/she speaks? Some children, for example, have word retrieval problems - difficulty recalling words that they know and use frequently. A child who knows the word "table," for example, may struggle in some situations when he needs to use this word. Other children with communication disorders have difficulty remembering what was said and need frequent repetition.

Children who are learning English as a second language often have difficulties resulting from their limited experience in using English. These "problems" can affect learning if a culturally and linguistically appropriate program of instruction is not provided. These children, however, do NOT have communication disorders. Their needs can be met within the general education curriculum.

The [*Sourcebook for Speech and Language Assessment*](#) (Mattes, 2015) includes a variety of informal measures that can be helpful in identifying individuals with communication disorders. Many of the resources in this book may be reproduced. The [*Bilingual Communication Assessment Resource*](#) (Mattes & Saldaña-Illingworth, 2009) includes tools for assessing students from bilingual backgrounds. Detailed descriptions of a variety of tests are included on this website.