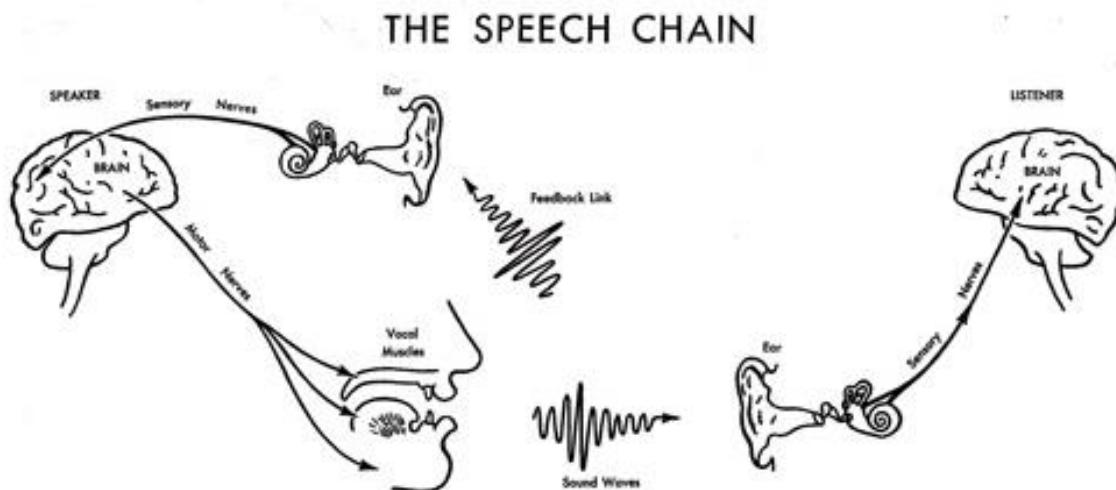


Verbal Dyspraxia

Verbal dyspraxia, or childhood dyspraxia of speech, is a speech disorder that occurs due to a difficulty placing the muscles in the correct position in order to produce speech and sounds. The muscles and nerves have not been damaged, but instead the messages that travel from the brain to the muscles to inform them how to move to make a sound have been affected. This may also occur due to a stroke or another brain injury.



Signs and symptoms of verbal dyspraxia:

- Knowing what they want to say but struggling to say it
- Not being able to speak or gesture
- At times they may be able to produce automatic speech, such as repetitive speech, including common phrases or counting
- Making physical movements to try and find the sound
- Getting stuck on a sound or word
- Speech sounds become jumbled up so words can become difficult to understand
- Having pauses or hesitations in speech
- Taking a lot of effort to speak
- Having a limited range of vowel and consonant sounds
- Overusing one sound
- Inconsistent production of speech and unusual errors
- Experiencing a break down in sequencing of words, especially multisyllabic words
- Speech may appear monotone: they may struggle with rhythm, stresses on certain sounds and inflections of speech
- Delayed onset of speech
- A limited amount of spoken words
- Separation of syllables in or between words
- Voicing errors, where the intended word sounds like another word

Other conditions to consider:

- Speech sound disorders – this can look like having trouble saying certain sounds and words past their age
- Articulation disorder – this can look like having trouble saying sounds the right way
- Dysarthria – this can look like regularly having difficulties with certain word speech muscles
- Glue ear – this is where the middle part of the ear fills with fluid, usually taking 3 months to clear, or if it is persistent, will need grommets inserting. This can cause temporary hearing loss, which can impact on how the brain learns sounds and stores sounds for future use
- Auditory Processing Difficulties – this is where the brain and ear do not fully coordinate, so there is a difficulty understanding sounds and spoken words
- Autism Spectrum Disorder – this can look like delayed speech, no speech, or significant difficulty understanding sounds and spoken words
- Dyslexia – this can look like struggling with phonological awareness and recognition of language sounds, phonological memory (forgetting words), jumbling up words, delaying speech and language acquisition, stuttering or speech irregularities
- Sensory Processing Difficulties/Disorder – if a child is hyposensitive (under sensitive) within their mouth, there is a lack of oral awareness and ability for the muscles and brain to work together (a bit like talking after having a local anaesthetic in the mouth!)
- A lack of muscle development due to a lack of early oral movement – such as Nasogastric tube fed

Notes: