

The American Speech Language Hearing Association defines speech as the oral form of language. Speech can be divided into the following general categories.

Articulation refers to the production of speech sounds. Articulation disorders result in reduced intelligibility, which significantly interferes with communication and/or can attract adverse attention to the student. The reduced intelligibility must be deemed to adversely affect the student's educational performance as related to Arizona Academic Standards. Significant interference occurs when the student's production of speech sounds, or phonological processes, on a developmental scale of articulation competency is below that expected for his or her chronological age. The identification of articulation deviations must not be in conflict with the student's racial, ethnic, and or cultural background.

Symptoms of Articulation Disorders

- Omitted Sounds poon for spoon
- Substituted Sounds tat for cat
- Distorted sounds wun for run
- Poor intelligibility

Possible Causes of Articulation Disorders

- History of ear infections
- Cleft Palate
- Cerebral Palsy, dysarthria
- Cognitive delays
- Developmental Apraxia
- Developmental Articulation Disorders

Fluency refers to the natural flow of speech. Fluency disorders are characterized by disruptions in the normal flow of verbal expression that occurs frequently, or are markedly noticeable and are not readily controllable by the student. These disruptions occur to such a degree that the child and/or listener's reactions to the manner of speech impedes communication.

Symptoms of Fluency Disorders

- Repetition of individual sounds or whole words
- Prolongation of initial speech sounds
- Frequent hesitations in speech
- Halting speech

Voice refers to the quality of the voice in terms of resonance, pitch, and volume. A voice disorder is present when the voice is characterized by inappropriate vocal quality, pitch or loudness, or inappropriate use of the vocal mechanism.

Symptoms of Voice Disorders

- Hoarse, raspy, breathy, or harsh voice
- Vocal pitch that is too high or too low
- Volume that is too loud or too soft
- Hypernasal or hyponasal voice quality

Possible Causes of Voice Disorders

- Vocal Nodules
- Cleft Palate
- Trauma
- Vocal Abuse

Augmentative and Alternative Communication

Augmentative and alternative communication refers to ways (other than speech) that are used to send a message from one person to another. This may include gestures, sign language, written communication, pictures symbols or electronic devices that speak.