

Speech Analysis of Bengali Speaking Children with Repaired Cleft Lip & Palate

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ABSTRACT

The present study aims at analyzing speech samples of four Bengali speaking children with repaired cleft palates with a view to differentiate between the misarticulations arising out of a deficit in linguistic skills and structural or motoric limitations. Spontaneous speech samples were collected and subjected to a number of linguistic analyses (analysis of phonetic inventory, analysis of substitutions and analysis of phonological processes). Linguistic skills were evaluated using Receptive-Expressive Emergent Language Test and Linguistic Profile Test (in Bengali).

The results revealed that, out of the four subjects, two had delayed linguistic skills with respect to their age. However, the phonetic inventories of all the four participants were similar to each other with no significant delay. The four children differed in the frequency and type of phonological processes used. This may be due to the variations in their linguistic skills. The data therefore suggests that all the articulatory problems might not be solely attributed to their present or past structural deficits; linguistic deficits may play a crucial role.

Keywords: Phonetic inventory, substitution analysis, phonological process analysis, REELS linguistic profile test

1. INTRODUCTION

Initially cleft palate treatment focused on the anatomical closure of the cleft and consequently yielded very unsatisfactory speech output. However, from around 1925, speech performance became one of the criterias by which the operative procedure was judged (the other being