



Comorbidity of Speech-Language Disorders and Related Conditions



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Abstract

This study evaluates the comorbid symptoms between speech-language impairments or difficulties along with related conditions. Communication is how humans, who are innately social beings, express emotions and ideas as well as receive and process information. When the ability to communicate well is affected, quality of life can be also. Identification of patterns and/or behavior of comorbid symptoms could advantage individuals. This study examines common comorbid functions of autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and cerebral palsy. It is concluded that early intervention or support is beneficial.

Background

Primary versus secondary disorders

It is common for disorders to be comorbid. Speech-language impairments and difficulties is one of those disorders that is commonly perceived as the secondary disorder. The primary disorder is the disability that holds prevalence against all or another current disorder. It would be considered the more extreme of the disorders. This is important to note since in most cases the secondary disorder will be a speech-language impairment.

How speech and language affect individuals

- Difficulty communicating impacts social, emotional, and educational or work aspects of an individual's life
- McCabe and Meller (2004) state children with speech-language impairments exhibit complexities regarding key aspects of social competence
- Emotional impacts of speech-language difficulties potentially result in frustration that could harvest stress, anxiety, depression, and other negative feelings towards communicating or themselves and others
- The work place and school can be areas that communication is necessary to be successful
- There are various ways to improve communication skills with services provided by instructors and specialists, along with support of modifications and accommodations

Findings

Autism Spectrum Disorder

- Diagnosis of ASD pertains to the development of communication and social interaction as abnormal or impaired
- Social-communicative difficulties are most common such as few gestures, failure to make eye contact, and engaging in conversation
- Linguistic complexities could occur by confusion of pronominal forms and affected ability to express prosody

Intellectual Disability

- According to Marrus and Hall (2017), although language delays occur often, there is a small percent, approximately 3-8%, of individuals with an intellectual disorder that show consistencies of a true speech-language impairment
- Linguistic complications for individuals with ID could be shorter, less complex sentences, delay of morphemic and syntactic development, and slower rate of vocabulary acquisitions
- Social complications potentially include difficulty with referential skills and initiating and maintaining conversations

Learning Disability

- LD has a significant impact on the processes involved understanding or using language which manifests related factors
- Majority of troubles regarding LDs relate to language such as, delayed development of sounds and difficulties concerning morphology and syntax

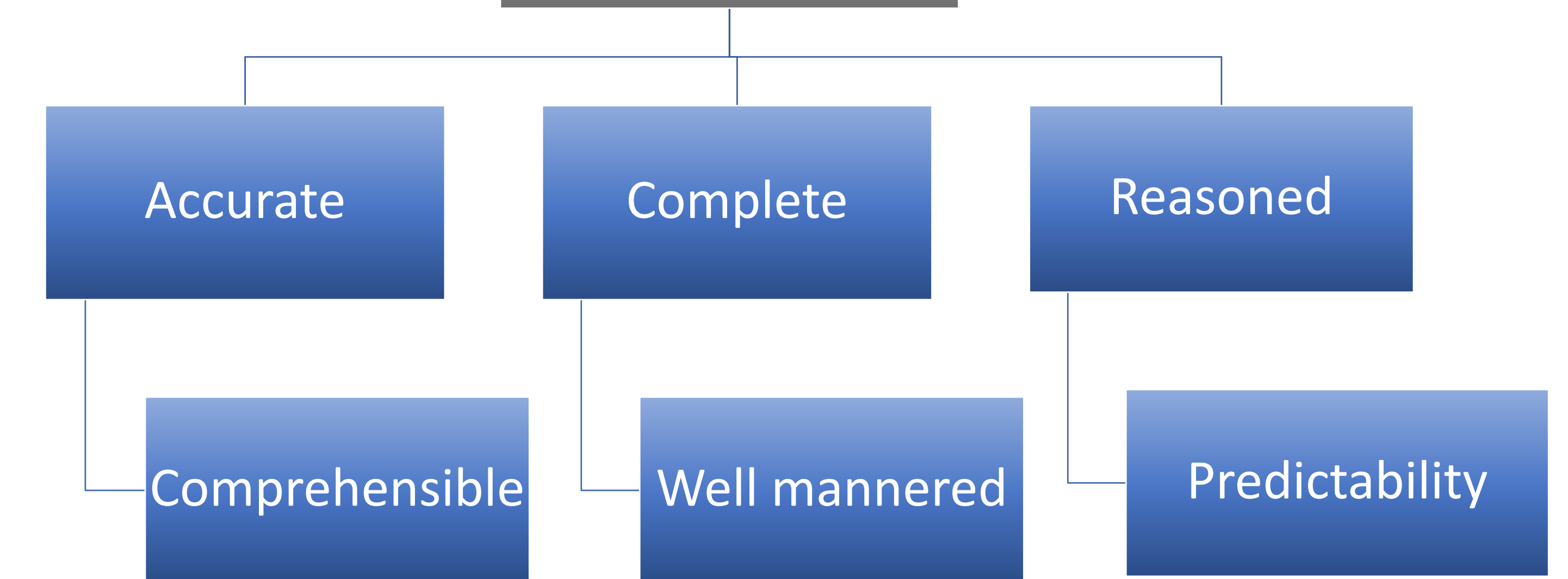
Cerebral Palsy

- Research by Plural and Redstone (2014) states that this motor impairment has a direct influence on muscles related to speech production systems and swallowing mechanisms
- Instability of the hips, trunk, shoulders, and head and associated movements can cause difficulty with oral manipulation for speech and feeding as well as respiration which is important for speech production

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

- According to Myers and Johnson (2007), individuals with ADHD, struggle with language delays and listening comprehension
- Becoming distracted easily can cause conversation to be less effective and individuals with ADHD can often struggle with grammatical errors and to find the right words and put thought together coherently

Characteristics of Effective Communication



Discussion

Communication is vital in order to participate in society. This participation is the goal for all humans, but this opportunity is not made equal for everyone. Disabilities such as autism spectrum disorder, intellectual disability, learning disability, cerebral palsy, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder can impair an individual's speech and language. These difficulties in speech and language and when associated with other conditions creates an adverse affect on communication that impacts all aspects of life by reason of the importance of communication in society. Being able to recognize comorbid behaviors between SPIs or speech-language complexities and related conditions, a significant impact can be made on individuals and make specialists and instructors more prepared and better equipped to help. Research recommends early intervention but if the option is not accessible, evaluating other means of support and services is beneficial as well.

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