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## Spatial Analysis

- [Geographic Information System \(GIS\) Technology](#)

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## Spectral Analysis

- [Quantitative EEG Including the Five Common Bandwidths \(Delta, Theta, Alpha, Sigma, and Beta\)](#)

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## Speech and Language Pathology

- [Speech and Language Therapy](#)

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## Speech and Language Therapy

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### Synonyms

[Speech and language pathology](#); [Speech therapy](#); [Speech, language, and communication therapy](#)

### Definition

Speech and language therapy is an evidence-based discipline that anticipates and responds to the needs of individuals who experience speech, language, communication, or swallowing

difficulties. Speech and language therapy works in partnership with individuals and their families and with other professions and agencies to reduce the impact of these often isolating difficulties on well-being and the ability to participate in daily life (Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists, 2005).

Speech and language therapists (SLTs) are the lead experts regarding communication and swallowing disorders. This does not mean that others do not work within these areas or that others do not have many skills that may overlap with or complement those of SLTs. Rather, SLTs, through their preregistration education, and later experience, have greater depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding of these clinical areas and associated difficulties. This enables SLTs to lead on the assessment, differential diagnosis, intervention with, and management of individuals with communication and swallowing disorders.

Speech and language therapy assistants and bilingual co-practitioners are integral members of the speech and language therapy team, employed to act in a supporting role under the direction of a professionally qualified SLT.

### Description

A wide range of individuals can potentially benefit from speech and language therapy, including:

- Babies with feeding and swallowing difficulties
- Children (from neonates to school age), adolescents, and adults with special needs in communication, communication disability, and/or swallowing disorders associated with diagnosed impairments, genetic and medical conditions, trauma, developmental delays, mental health problems, and learning disability
- Children (from neonates to school age), adolescents, and adults with special needs in the following areas: speech, voice, fluency, language, psychologically based communication disorders, social skills, problem solving, literacy, swallowing functions, and alternative and augmentative communication (AAC)

- Parents and families, caregivers, communication partners, friends, and colleagues of people with communication and swallowing disorders

Speech and language therapists work in and across a variety of settings.

Within education, these settings include:

- Local education authority nurseries and schools (mainstream and special)
- Language and communication units and colleges of further education
- Independent nurseries and schools
- Play groups
- Government-funded initiatives

Within health and social care, settings include:

- Hospitals inpatient and outpatient centers and hospices
- Specialist centers: child development centers, rehabilitation centers, specialist joint consultative clinics
- Primary care: community clinics, community day centers
- Supported living homes
- Mental health services
- Initiatives in areas of social deprivation (such as Sure Start)

Speech and language therapists have an increasing role within the legal system, including within the penal system/prisons, in court tribunals, and as part of adult and child protection services.

They also work in independent practice, as part of social enterprises and for the voluntary/charitable sector.

All speech and language therapy intervention is delivered on the basis of ongoing assessment and review of progress with the individual (and/or carer as appropriate) as measured against targeted outcomes. Various approaches or models of working have been developed to meet the needs of individuals and context.

The following are key principles guiding the provision of services:

- The rights, wishes, and dignities of each individual and their carers are respected at all times.
- Effective intervention is based on a holistic understanding of the individual, including

their social, cultural, economic, political, and linguistic context.

- The safety of the individual is paramount.
- Speech and language therapy intervention aims to be efficient and effective, i.e., best results against targeted outcomes within given resources.

Speech and language therapy services may operate at the level of the person (working with individuals); the level of their environment (working with people, processes, or settings); and the level of the wider community (influencing attitude, culture, or practice). The form of intervention will vary according to the changing needs of the individual and contexts.

### Benefits

Speech and language therapy can contribute to the following health, educational, and psychosocial benefits:

- Improvement in general health and well-being
- Increased independence
- Improved participation in family, social, occupational, and educational activities
- Improved social and family relationships
- Reduction in the negative effects of communication disability and the harm or distress this may cause to the individual and others
- Reduced risk of surgical intervention and poor nutrition in the case of individuals with swallowing disorders
- Reduced health risks and length of hospital stay through the prevention of respiratory problems associated with swallowing difficulties
- Reduced risk of surgical intervention by maintaining healthy voice mechanisms
- Reduced risk of educational failure
- Reduced risk of social isolation
- Prevention of certain speech, language, and communication disorders

### Outcomes

The outcomes of speech and language therapy include:

- Diagnosis of communication and/or swallowing disorders
- Maintenance of optimal communication and/or swallowing abilities

- Improvement in the speech, language, and communication abilities of individuals
- Improved use of existing function
- Reduction of communication anxiety and avoidance
- Provision and use of AAC where oral communication is limited or precluded by a physical condition
- Improvement in interaction and effective social communication
- Increased awareness of others about communication and/or swallowing disorders, intervention, and management
- Improved communication environment
- Greater opportunities for communication
- Improvement in the individual's understanding of the nature and implications of a communication and/or swallowing disorder

In 2010, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) commissioned analysts Matrix Evidence to review the existing evidence and undertake an economic evaluation of the provision of speech and language therapy to four specific client groups. The aim of this was to pinpoint the benefits generated by speech and language therapy in relation to the costs of provision. The result was the UK-wide study "The economic case for speech and language therapy" (Marsh et al., 2010).

The Matrix research aimed to determine the costs and benefits for four common speech and language therapy client groups:

- Adults with dysphagia post stroke
- Adults with aphasia post stroke
- Children with speech and language impairment (SLI)
- Children with autism

Matrix Evidence undertook an evaluation of the costs and benefits of speech and language therapy intervention for each condition and compared either the effects of speech and language therapy with the effects of alternative forms of treatment, or the effects of intensive against less intensive therapy. Specifically, the analysis evaluated:

- Speech and language therapy for stroke survivors with dysphagia compared with "usual" care

- Enhanced NHS speech and language therapy for stroke survivors with aphasia compared with usual NHS therapy
- Enhanced speech and language therapy for children with SLI compared with existing therapy provision
- Enhanced speech and language therapy for children with autism compared with usual SLT treatment

The results of the Matrix report show that speech and language therapy for all four cohorts and conditions represents an efficient use of public resources. The net benefits of the interventions – including health and social care cost savings, quality of life, and productivity gains – are positive and exceed their costs. The report shows the total annual net benefit across aphasia, SLI, and autism is £765 million; it excludes dysphagia from the calculation since the two poststroke conditions are not mutually exclusive.

## The RCSLT

Established as the College of Speech Therapists in 1945, the Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists (RCSLT) is the membership organization for UK SLTs, providing and promoting:

- Support and professional leadership for members, including the setting of standards
- Strategic direction for the profession
- Consistent, effective, and accurate professional representation to external bodies and the government
- Heightened public awareness of the medical, social, and emotional effects of communication, eating, drinking, and swallowing difficulties
- Heightened awareness of the contribution of speech and language therapy with the public, government, other professions, and the media

The RCSLT provides leadership so that issues concerning the profession are reflected in public policy and people with communication, eating, drinking, or swallowing difficulties receive optimum care.

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## Cross-References

- ▶ [Alzheimer's Disease](#)
- ▶ [Brain Injury](#)
- ▶ [Brain Tumor](#)
- ▶ [Chronic Disease Management](#)
- ▶ [Cognitive Impairment](#)
- ▶ [Cost-Effectiveness](#)
- ▶ [Neurological](#)
- ▶ [Neuromuscular Diseases](#)
- ▶ [Neuromuscular Disorders](#)
- ▶ [Nutrition](#)
- ▶ [Occupational Therapy](#)
- ▶ [Rehabilitation](#)
- ▶ [Stroke Burden](#)

## References and Readings

For more information, visit the RCSLT website: [www.rcslt.org](http://www.rcslt.org)

Marsh, K., Bertranou, E., Suominen, H., & Venkatachalam, M. (2010). *An economic evaluation of speech and language therapy: Final report*. December 2010. Matrix Evidence.

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## Speech Therapy

- ▶ [Speech and Language Therapy](#)

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## Speech, Language, and Communication Therapy

- ▶ [Speech and Language Therapy](#)

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## Sperm Donation

- ▶ [In Vitro Fertilization, Assisted Reproductive Technology](#)

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## Sperm Donor

- ▶ [In Vitro Fertilization, Assisted Reproductive Technology](#)

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## Spiritual

- ▶ [Religion/Spirituality](#)

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## Spiritual Beliefs

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## Synonyms

[Religious beliefs](#); [Spirituality](#)

## Definition

The concept of spiritual beliefs is a critical component of the broader terms *spirituality* or *religiousness* and is to some degree inseparable from them. The meanings of these terms, however, remain elusive. In fact, the paramount importance, and difficulty, with defining spiritual concepts has proven a prominent obstacle to establishing a cohesive body of literature. The empirical research is littered with varying, and sometimes incompatible, ways of understanding spiritual constructs (Hill & Pargament, 2003; Kapuscinski & Masters, 2010). Researchers disagree, for example, regarding the relationship of religiousness and spirituality. This issue takes on special significance when *beliefs* in particular are the subject of consideration because Western notions of religion often differentiate believers from unbelievers based on their convictions (beliefs), rather than behaviors. Historically, spirituality and religiousness were considered to be,