

## Book Review

### *Children's Speech Sound Disorders*

By CAROLINE BOWEN  
(Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)  
[Pp. 430.] ISBN 978-0-470-72364-7, £39.50 (pbk)

In a period where, across the world, speech-and-language therapists are trying to show that practice is evidence based, this book provides an outstanding collection of research backing up many of the techniques used in the clinical setting for children with Speech Sound Disorder (SSD). For new and experienced clinicians alike, this book provides a clear overview of 'good' practice and a clear reminder of the theory that supports, as well as questions and challenges, many of the techniques often used routinely in clinic. It also provides many new ideas for both assessment and treatment techniques to use with children with SSD. A large part of the book comprises key answers by several distinguished speech-and-language therapists working across the world to questions set by the author with the intention of getting a better understanding of their field of expertise and some of the results of their research. Although this format, as it is not explicitly explained, may be confusing at the start, as soon as the reader gets used to it, it is very interesting as well as informative.

The book starts by providing an enlightening discussion on the evolution of current practices (Chapter 1). Chapter 2 discusses the terminology and classification of speech difficulties. It also includes a comprehensive discussion of the assessment techniques for children with speech difficulties. Chapter 3 includes a valuable discussion of children with speech difficulties that require special consideration, for example children with co-occurring speech and language disorders, children with limited stimulability or with speech impairments in culturally and linguistically diverse settings. In Chapters 4 and 5, different researchers provide a thorough discussion of different approaches to treating children with speech impairments, always keeping in mind whether the approach is supported by research findings or not, for example, Traditional Articulation Therapy, Cycles (Patterns) Therapy, the Nuffield Programme, Minimal Pair Approach, Auditory Input Therapy, Psycholinguistic Model, Phoneme Awareness Therapy, and more. Although some of the above approaches are discussed with enough detail for a clinician to be able to implement the stated methodology

in a clinic, for others the methodology is only overviewed and the reader is referred to further literature for more detail. Chapters 6 and 7 focus on the assessment and differential diagnosis between moderate and severe SSD and Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS) as well as their treatment options. Chapter 8 provides 'tips' for clinicians to determine if a child's speech difficulties are phonological in nature and gives an overview of the traditional and newer criteria used for the selection of therapy targets. A chapter (Chapter 9) is dedicated to the principles of PACT (Parents and Children Together), a family-centred phonological approach devised by the author of this book (Bowen, 2010) as well as a case study where this approach was used. The final chapter includes discussion of issues such as links between hearing and SSD, sociophonetics, and clinical decision-making among others.

Overall, I found the book motivating to read as well as being very informative. As shown in the overview of the chapters, it includes a variety of topics, so most clinician working with children with SSD are likely to find areas of interest. As an only drawback, I felt it included too many abbreviations, and I often needed to refer to the Index to remind myself of their meaning.

To conclude, this book can be used both by experienced clinicians as a useful reminder of 'good' practice, as well as by speech-and-language therapist students, as it provides a lot of information on assessment and therapy techniques supported by the much needed evidence for which the profession is looking. The book inspired me so much that as soon as I finished reading it, I felt the need to continue with some of the literature mentioned in the chapters.

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### Reference

- BOWEN, C., forthcoming 2010, Parents and children together (PACT) intervention for children with speech sound disorders. In A. L. Williams, S. McLeos and R. McCauley (eds), *Interventions for Speech Sound Disorders in Children* (Baltimore, MD: Paul Brookes).