

## Speech and Language Therapy A Primer

Providing a comprehensive introduction to speech and language therapy, this book introduces students to the linguistic, medical, scientific and psychological disciplines that lie at the foundation of this health profession. As well as examining foundational disciplines, the volume also addresses professional issues in speech and language therapy and examines how therapists assess and treat clients with communication and swallowing disorders. The book makes extensive use of group exercises that allow SLT students opportunity for practice-based learning. It also includes multiple case studies to encourage discussion of assessment and intervention practices, and end-of-chapter questions with answers to test knowledge and understanding. In addition to providing a solid theoretical grounding in communication disorders, this volume will equip students with a range of professional skills, such as how to treat patients, how to diagnose and assess clients, how to help parents support children with communication disabilities, and how to assess the effectiveness of the various practices and methods used in intervention.

LOUISE CUMMINGS is Professor in the Department of English at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. She teaches and conducts research in pragmatics and clinical linguistics. She is the author of several books, including *Case Studies in Communication Disorders* (2016), *Pragmatic and Discourse Disorders: A Workbook* (2015) and *The Communication Disorders Workbook* (2014). She has also edited a number of books including *Research in Clinical Pragmatics* (2017) and *The Cambridge Handbook of Communication Disorders* (2014).

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## A Primer

LOUISE CUMMINGS

*The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*



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## Preface

I have very clear recollection of my time as a student of speech and language therapy. When I began my course, my initial thoughts could be summarized in a single question: How would I ever get to grips with the large range of subjects that this course was demanding of me and my peers? I was continually moving between lectures in phonetics and syntax, anatomy and physiology, developmental and cognitive psychology, and the physics of speech, sound and hearing. Evenings and weekends were also devoted to many hours of study in different linguistic, medical and scientific disciplines. I felt that much more was demanded of a student of speech and language therapy in terms of disciplinary breadth and scope than of students in other subject areas. And so it continued for four years, with classes in neurology and cognitive neuropsychology occurring alongside lectures in pragmatics, psychiatry and audiology. Clinical practice brought additional challenges, with all manner of knowledge relating to assessment and intervention demanded during our assigned placements. My classmates and I knew what it was like to have to find our feet quickly in diverse subject areas and juggle different disciplinary terminology and frameworks.

We did, of course, find our feet. But it occurred to me any number of times that we could have done so more easily if we had had access to a single, self-contained resource that served as a comprehensive introduction to each of the disciplines that we were studying for the first time. This book is intended to be that resource. The student who reads this volume and works through its questions and exercises will receive the best possible grounding in all the linguistic, medical, scientific and psychological disciplines that a degree course in speech and language therapy (or speech-language pathology) has to offer. The same student will also be well versed in techniques of assessment and intervention in all six areas of concern to SLTs: speech; language; fluency; hearing; voice; and swallowing. Ultimately, students of speech and language therapy enter a profession that must respond to agendas in healthcare, such as evidence-based practice, and deal with the challenges of a growing elderly population with complex health needs. Professional issues ranging from continuing professional development to models of service delivery are ever present for SLTs. This volume will also introduce students to the profession that they will join upon graduating from their studies at university.

To convey all of the above in a clear and accessible manner, this volume includes a wide range of pedagogical features. These features are listed below.

Most of these features are designed to facilitate student learning by providing opportunities to rehearse knowledge and to explore clients and their communication disorders in more detail. Other features are designed to ensure easy navigation around the volume and to reduce the need to consult other sources for definitions of terms and background information. The combination of these features provides a complete learning package for students who are approaching a course of study in speech and language therapy for the first time:

- Key points boxes at the end of each section, which summarize main points
- Special topics boxes for further exploration of SLT and communication disorders
- Case studies that encourage discussion of assessment and intervention practices
- Group exercises that permit reflection and problem-solving among students
- End-of-chapter questions with answers to test knowledge
- A glossary with over 600 entries
- Bold terms throughout the text that relate to entries in the glossary
- Annotated suggestions for further reading
- [www.cambridge.org/9781107174665](http://www.cambridge.org/9781107174665) with 140 self-test questions and answers and other resources
- A detailed index

Every author wants his or her book to make a significant and original contribution to the literature in a certain field. The contribution that I would like this volume to make can best be described in terms of the perceptions of its student readers. I would like the readers of this book to have a ‘one-stop shop’ that they can use to obtain a thorough grounding in all the disciplines that they will encounter in an SLT course. If this volume accomplishes this task well, it will go a substantial way towards reducing the feelings of disciplinary overload that are experienced by many new students of speech and language therapy.