

**Integrating Language Therapy with
Neuropsychology
in the Treatment of Adolescents**

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Introduction to Key Neuropsychological Concepts

Considering the nature of fundamental concepts in learning

- Relevant across tasks and topics
- Relevant across modalities
- Understanding Neuropsychological constraints
- Facilitating effective learning

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**Fundamental Neuropsychological Concepts
in Learning**

- Numerosity
- Familiarity
- Selectivity

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**Fundamental Neuropsychological Concepts
in Learning**

- Clarifying the nature of difficulties

- Clarifying the nature of interventions

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PROFILES OF STUDENTS

- For which students do we use this neuropsychological framework model?

- Why are these students involved in language therapy?

- How can we address their processing and language deficits?

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**STUDENTS NOT RECEIVING SPEECH AND LANGUAGE
THERAPY AND RESOURCE SPECIALIST
INTERVENTION**

- Does not qualify for SLP – testing not below 7th percentile or 1.5 SD's below mean
- Attends a private school – no specialized services available
- Resistant to services in school, particularly at middle and high school level due to perceived stigma.
- Conversational capabilities generally consistent with peers

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READING SKILLS

- Slow but generally accurate decoders
- Tends to read word by word
- Rigid skills – does not like not knowing a word; won't "let it go temporarily"
- Poor meaning from context

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READING SKILLS (continued)

- Poor use of prior knowledge in reading – every reading experience is a new event
- Reading is laborious and unpleasant for many students
- No leisure reading which would help gain skills and confidence
- Easily overwhelmed by length and quantity of reading assignments – reduced engagement in any reading

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**Fundamental Neuropsychological Concepts
in Learning**

Comment on reading skills profile

- Numerosity, familiarity, selectivity

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WORK AND STUDY SKILLS

- Students are working hard but not efficiently. Lots of revisions, repairs and false starts. Often ripping up work and starting over several times.
- Hours spent on even simple tasks and short assignments
- Poorly organized studying. Notes are incomplete, poorly written. Students often can not read their own notes for test preparation.

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WORK AND STUDY SKILLS (continued)

- Does not understand saliency for studying. Textbook setup is very difficult for these students. They are often unable to decipher the key issues and terminology.
- Writing is difficult. Lack of clear concepts of the message in any writing assignment. Poor planning and brainstorming.

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Fundamental Neuropsychological Concepts in Learning

Comment on work and study skills profile

- Analyzing the nature of the difficulty
 - cascading effects
- A window into the student's experience
 - Approach to learning
- Numerosity, familiarity, selectivity

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LANGUAGE SKILLS

- Poor lexicon
- Does not learn vocabulary easily for almost any subject
- Does not incorporate prior learning and related subjects, i.e. English and history connections
- Semantic learning is too subject specific – does not cross over.

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LANGUAGE SKILLS (continued)

- Reduced skills with word families
- Abstract and multiple meanings are very difficult
- Overwhelmed by language and complex terms
- Syntax skills for reading are reduced. Reduced ability to complete a sentence in reading.
- High intensity of language. Too much is registered at the same level of importance.

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**Fundamental Neuropsychological Concepts
in Learning**

Comment on language skills profile

- The relationship between language competence and numerosity, familiarity, and selectivity

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THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Key Questions:

- What approaches are taken to change the perspective on the material that the student has always had?

- In what way can we teach and enhance saliency skills in language and learning disabled students?

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THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Addressing the student's approach to learning

- The conditions of learning

- The therapist's dilemma

- The targets of intervention

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THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

Key Approaches:

- Familiarity – text layout, phonemics, vocabulary/semantics, syntax- lot of previewing, cross referencing of material.

- Patterns – commonalities in literature, layout of textbooks across subjects.

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**THERAPEUTIC APPROACHES AND
INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

Key Approaches:

- Monitoring and reducing numerosity
- Making use of familiar topics and materials
- The connection between salience and purpose

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