

University Lecture: Clinical Psychology (Level: 3rd Year)

Subject: English for Psychology

Topic: Language Disorders

1. Introduction to Language Disorders

A language disorder is defined as a significant difficulty in the **comprehension** (receptive) and/or **use** (expressive) of spoken, written, or other forms of language. These disorders can impact various aspects of communication, including vocabulary, grammar, sentence formation, and pragmatic skills. The study of language disorders is highly **multidisciplinary**, involving fields such as developmental psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and linguistics.

2. Types of Language Disorders

According to the sources, language disorders are generally categorized into:

- **Expressive Language Disorder:** Difficulty in expressing thoughts, ideas, and needs through speech or writing. Individuals may struggle with word retrieval and forming grammatically correct sentences.
- **Receptive Language Disorder:** Affects the ability to understand and process language. People may have trouble following instructions or grasping the meaning of words.
- **Mixed Receptive-Expressive Disorder:** A combination of both difficulties in understanding and producing communication.
- **Specific Language Impairment (SLI):** A developmental disorder where children exhibit persistent language difficulties despite normal cognitive and physical development.
- **Pragmatic Language Disorder:** Also known as social communication disorder, characterized by challenges in using language appropriately in social contexts, such as turn-taking and understanding nonverbal cues.

3. Causes and Risk Factors

Language disorders can arise from multiple factors:

- **Genetic Factors:** Many disorders run in families due to gene mutations.
- **Neurological Factors:** Brain injuries from head trauma, stroke, or conditions like Autism and ADHD.
- **Environmental Factors:** Lack of exposure to a language-rich environment or neglect during critical developmental periods.
- **Hearing Impairment:** Difficulty perceiving auditory information significantly impacts language acquisition.

4. Clinical Assessment and Diagnosis

Diagnosis typically involves a comprehensive evaluation by a **Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)**. This includes:

1. **Standardized tests:** To measure vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension.
2. **Observations:** Watching communication skills in natural settings.
3. **Case History:** Understanding developmental milestones and family background.
4. **Hearing evaluation:** To rule out hearing loss as a cause.

5. Treatment Approaches

- **Speech-Language Therapy:** The primary intervention focusing on specific deficits like vocabulary or social skills.
- **Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC):** Using tools like symbol boards or speech-generating devices for severe impairments.
- **Parent and Caregiver Involvement:** Training families to support language development at home.

Terminology Table

English Term	Arabic Translation
Receptive Language Disorder	اضطراب اللغة الاستقبالي
Expressive Language Disorder	اضطراب اللغة التعبيري
Pragmatic Language Disorder	اضطراب اللغة البراغماتي (الاجتماعي)
Specific Language Impairment (SLI)	ضعف اللغة النوعي
Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP)	أخصائي أمراض النطق واللغة
Lexical Retrieval	استرجاع المفردات
Dyslexia	عسر القراءة
Dysgraphia	عسر الكتابة
Aphasia	الحبسة الكلامية (الأفازيا)
Semantic Memory	الذاكرة الدلالية
Syntax	النحو / قواعد بناء الجملة
Phonology	علم الأصوات
AAC Systems	الوسائل المعززة والبديلة للتواصل