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**MOTOR SPEECH LEARNING** What is more important to a growing child than learning to speak? Speech is how humans communicate with one another and share life's tragedies and joys. Without speech, a child is isolated. That is why a great deal of clinical research has arisen focusing on the best ways to teach children who have problems speaking properly. Some researchers believe that only oral exercises can help, others believe that non-oral motor exercises can also be useful in assisting children to learn to speak. That is the subject of this fascinating article.

There are a number of problems that may affect a child's ability to speak: a cleft palate, for example. These kinds of physical limitations may require special training in order to overcome them. But need the training be focused entirely in the mouth? Some suggest that strength training can assist in these matters. As the authors argue in this article, the key lies in assessment. How can we determine the efficacy of non-traditional methods of improving speech? We need to be very careful to distinguish between scientific and pseudo-scientific techniques. There is a distinction to be made between clinical researchers and general theorists. We need to carefully understand that knowledge in this field requires careful methodology and should bear repeating. Clinical scientists are often best trained in these methods; their principles should be brought to bear on those who practice non-oral motor exercises.

Human knowledge increases through a combination of small steps and large leaps. In order to know what is effective we need to be able to understand methodology and reproduce results. This useful article underlines these principles with regard to non-oral motor exercises.

Work consulted

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