

Common Articulation (Pronunciation) Errors

Speech sounds develop at different times during childhood. Some sounds develop in early childhood, while others take a longer time to master.

Sometimes sound errors and patterns persist beyond the age that would be expected, necessitating treatment by a speech-language pathologist (SLP) or communicative disorders assistant (CDA). SLPs and CDAs provide intervention to a child until they can say a target sound at the word and simple sentence level. Generalization to spontaneous speech requires more time and practice at home and school, than dedicated speech therapy sessions.

ERROR TYPE	DESCRIPTION/EXAMPLES	WHEN TO TREAT
Assimilation	A sound at the beginning or end of a word, influences the pronunciation of another. e.g., Dog -> <u>G</u> og Truck -> <u>K</u> ruck	After 3 years of age
Backing	A sound that is typically produced at the front of the mouth (e.g., b, m, p, t, d, n), is produced at the back of the mouth. e.g., Baby -> " <u>G</u> agy" Toe -> " <u>K</u> oe" Donut -> " <u>G</u> onuk" Papa -> "Kaka"	After 3 years of age
Consonant cluster reduction	We often encounter two consonants together, these are called consonant cluster or blends e.g., sm, sp, st, sw, sl, tr, kr, pr, gr, gl, kl. Children will often simplify or <i>reduce</i> blends to one consonant. In other words, they say one consonant but not the other. e.g., Swim -> " <u>_</u> wim"	Depends on consonant cluster type. After 5 years of age for S-blends, After 6 years of age for L-blends, After 7 years of age for R-blends

	Clown -> "C_own" Brick -> "B_ick"	
Distortion	Sound distortions can occur on any sound at any time. They become a problem when they impact a child's overall clarity. e.g., distorted vowels, /t/, /f/, etc.	After 3 years of age, or when deemed necessary by the SLP
Final consonant deletion	The last consonant sounds on words are left off. e.g., Frog -> Fro_ Mouse -> Mou__ Truck -> Tru__	After 3 years of age
Fronting	A sound that is usually produced using the back of the tongue (i.e., k including "Hard C," g, "ng") is produced using the front of the tongue. e.g., C <u>o</u> okie -> "T <u>o</u> otie" C <u>a</u> ke -> "T <u>a</u> te" G <u>o</u> ose -> "D <u>o</u> ose" G <u>o</u> ogle -> "D <u>o</u> odle" F <u>i</u> nger -> "F <u>i</u> nn <u>e</u> r" D <u>o</u> g -> "D <u>o</u> d" L <u>a</u> ke -> "L <u>a</u> te"	After 3 years of age
Gliding	The R and/or L sounds are produced using a W or Y sound. e.g., Rabbit said as "Wabbit" or "Yabbit" Lemon said as "Wemon" or "Yemon"	After 6 years of age for L After 6-7 years of age for R
Initial consonant deletion	The first sound in a word is left off.	After 3 years of age

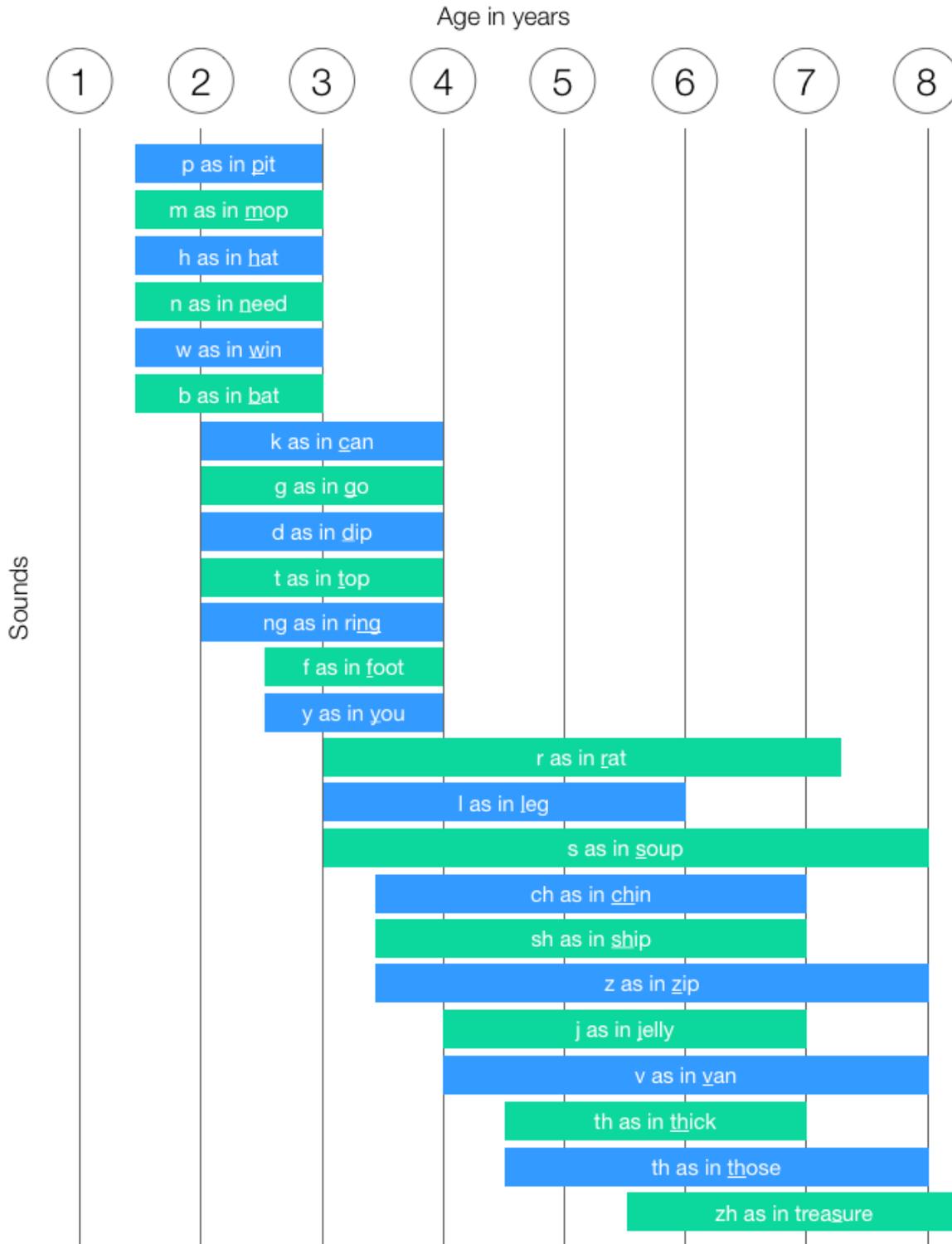
	e.g., Window -> “_indow” “Cat” -> “_at”	
Lisp – Frontal	The S sound, and often its sound cousins Z, SH, and CH, are produced with the tongue sticking out between the front teeth, and the jaw slightly open (frontal). The sounds have a distorted, almost “TH”-like quality, which interferes with speech clarity.	After 7 years of age
Lisp - Lateral	The S sound, and often its sound cousins Z, SH, and CH, are produced with air pushing out and over the sides of the tongue (i.e., lateralization). The sounds often have a slushy quality, which interferes with speech clarity.	This is considered an atypical error at any age, and should be addressed by a SLP
Nasality	Some sounds are pronounced with too much or too little air flow through the mouth and nose. Often observed in children who have issues with tonsils & adenoids, hearing difficulties, and/or cleft lip and palate	Depends on error type. SLP may recommend referral for a hearing test and/or doctor to rule out other issues first.
Omission	A child is missing a sound, or an entire sound category, in all positions of words. In other words, a child does not have the sound in their repertoire. e.g., Omission of S sound in all word positions, might look like “_oup” for “Soup,” “Ba_ement” for “Basement,” “Goo_” for “Goose.”	Depends on which sound is being omitted, and the age it is typically expected to be mastered. See sound development chart further down.
Stopping	An error pattern where sounds which require continuous airflow (e.g., h, f, v, s, z, sh, zh, th voiced and voiceless) are produced with stopping, or interrupted airflow. Multiple sounds types are usually affected by this pattern.	After 3 years of age

	<p>e.g., House -> “<u>G</u>ouse” Fish -> “<u>P</u>ish” Van -> “<u>B</u>an” Sun -> “<u>T</u>un” Zipper -> “<u>D</u>ipper” Shell -> “<u>T</u>ell”</p>	
Substitution	<p>A sound is substituted for another.</p> <p>e.g., Man -> “<u>B</u>an” Nose -> “<u>D</u>ose” Soup -> “<u>T</u>oup” Zig Zag -> “<u>D</u>ig <u>D</u>ag” Fan -> “<u>P</u>an” Victor -> “<u>B</u>ictor” Shoe -> “<u>T</u>oo” Scissors -> “<u>S</u>ci<u>d</u>ors” Measure -> “<u>M</u>ea<u>d</u>ure” Boss -> “<u>B</u>ot” Keep -> “<u>K</u>ee<u>m</u>”</p>	<p>Depends on the sound and the age it is typically expected to be mastered. See sound development chart further below.</p>
TH Errors	<p>Errors impacting the pronunciation of voiced (e.g., “<u>T</u>hey”) and voiceless TH (e.g., “<u>T</u>humb”)</p>	<p>After 8 years of age – typically targeted with a single session and home program only</p> <p>Note: This sound is the last to develop in the English language. It is common for it to be pronounced differently in English as a Second Language speakers, and in such cases is not considered an error in need of therapy.</p>
Voicing	<p>A sound that should be produced with the voice turned on is not, or vice versa.</p> <p>E.g., “Van” said as “Fan” “Zipper” said as “Sipper” “Dan” said as “Tan” “Book” said as “Pook”</p>	<p>Depends on the sound and the age it is typically expected to be mastered. See sound development chart further below.</p>

<p>Vowelization</p>	<p>Producing a vowel sound in place of a consonant sound. Most often affects production of R-sound when adjacent to a vowel, known as “R-coloured vowels” as in “air,” “ur,” “ire,” “or,” “are,” “ear,” “er”</p> <p>E.g., “Car” said as “Ca-ah” “Mark” said as “Ma-ahk” “Purple” said as “Pu-uh-ple” “Pair” said as “Pa-ah” “Zipper” said as “Zipp-uh”</p>	<p>Often observed in conjunction with gliding of R sound. Treated at 6 to 7 years of age.</p>
<p>Weak Syllable Deletion</p>	<p>The weaker syllable in a word with multiple syllables is deleted.</p> <p>E.g., Banana -> “__nana” Magnetic -> “__netic” Watermelon -> “Wa__melon” Ladybug -> “La__bug” Basketball -> “Bas__ball”</p>	<p>After 3 years of age</p>

Sound Development Chart

Ranges of typical sound development in children



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