

When a speech therapist receives some patients, children or adults, accompanied or alone, he or she hears their word, it reveals their relationship to the world and to the others.

Speaking, however particular it may be, always indicates a personal progression. It is not possible, as we often assume, to cure speech difficulties without both the patient and his therapist take the time to « build » together a new speech, a new voice, a new tongue. This art of building is the same when there is a physical disorder associated to the speech trouble : deafness , neurological disorder, throat surgery....

In the meantime, it often occurs that those in the waiting room lose their patience, get worried because changes are slow to come or differ from their expectations. What is going on behind that door ? What are these laughs, these silences, these shouts or games ? Many things spoken and unspoken remain secretive...many smiles, many tears...

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**To these and those in the waiting room** is a periodical publication offered by your speech therapist. It is written by the organisation *Les Ateliers Claude Chassagny*, which gathers speech therapists and people interested in the issues of language.

If you need more information about speech difficulties and their treatment, If you'd like to answer this letter back,

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Ateliers Claude Chassagny

## *To those and these in the waiting room*

*Basics of speech therapy*

*April 2013*

Very often, language is considered as a tool that we can take and leave.... When it is faulty, we can change it or fix it. Hence the well-spread idea that, when it doesn't work well, we need to find a mechanical explanation : a lisp, an additional or missing gene, defective neuronal connections...

Speech therapists are often put at that place, the place of the specialist in speech mechanisms, as a plumber is the expert in the flow of fluids.

But language is not a simple instrument. Language is part of Mankind. All day long, it enables us to think, to imagine, to create, to protest... Everyone builds up their own participation to the world and relation to others. Speech is the link between the individual and the collective, between one's body and one's mind. Language cannot be taught, but one takes it from someone else, it is felt through each relationship.

The speech therapist's job lays here, in the meeting point between the body and the psyche, between the particular and the universal, between the technique and the relationship.