

Phonological Processes

Phonological processes are patterns of sound errors that children use to simplify speech as they learn to talk. These processes are a normal part of speech development and are generally eliminated as children grow older, and their speech skills mature. They involve systematic substitutions, deletions, or additions of sounds to syllables or sound patterns and are used to make words easier to pronounce. Use the chart below as a reference for phonological processes.

Substitution

Substitution	Definition	Example	Should be resolved by...
<i>When one sound is substituted for another</i>			
Backing	When a sound that is supposed to be produced in the front of the mouth (T, D) is produced in the back of the mouth	“cap” for “tap”	Age 4
Fronting	When a sound that is supposed to be produced in the back of the mouth (k.g) is produced in the front of the mouth	“tat” for “cat”	Age 4
Gliding	When the R sound is substituted for a W sound and/or the L sound is substituted for W or Y	“wed” for “red” or “yearn” for “learn”	Age 6
Stopping	When a fricative (S, F) or affricate (CH, J) is replaced with a stop consonant (G, D, T, K, B, P)	“tee” for “see”	AF, S: Age 3 Z, V: Age 4 SH, CH, J, TH: Age 5
Vowelization	When the ER or L sound is replaced with a vowel	“appo” for “apple”	Age 6
Affrication	When a non-affricate is replaced by an affricate	“joor” for “door”	Age 3
Deaffrication	When an affricate is replaced with a fricative	“ship” for “chip”	Age 4
Depalatalization	When a non-alveolar sound is replaced with an alveolar sound	“tea” for “she”	Age 5
Alveolarization	When a palatal sound is replaced with a non-palatal sound	“fit” for “fish”	Age 5
Labialization	When a nonlabial sound is replaced with a labial sound	“poe” for “toe”	Age 6

Assimilation

Assimilation	Definition	Example	Should be resolved by...
<i>Consonant harmony: One sound becomes the same as another sound in the word</i>			
Velar assimilation	When a consonant sounds like another sound in the word	“guck” for “duck”	Age 3
Nasal assimilation	When a non-nasal sound changes to a nasal sound due to a nasal sound in the word	“nanny” for “candy”	Age 3
Coalescence	When characteristics of two features from two adjacent consonants are combined so that one sound replaces two sounds	“file” for “smile”	Age 6

Syllable structure

Syllable structure	Definition	Example	Should be resolved by...
<i>Changes that affect the syllable structure of a word</i>			
Cluster reduction	When a consonant cluster is simplified into a single consonant	“kown” for “clown”	With S: Age 5 Without S: Age 4
Final consonant deletion	When the final consonant in word is deleted	“bu” for “book”	Age 3
Weak syllable deletion	When an unstressed syllable in a word is deleted	“tato” for “potato”	Age 4

References

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