

Case Report

The role of lachesis in speech disorders: insights from a homeopathic case study

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ABSTRACT

Speech disorders in children range from language delays to articulation issues, affecting their social, academic, and emotional development. Lachesis, a homeopathic remedy derived from bushmaster snake venom, is examined for its potential in treating these disorders. This article explores its benefits, particularly when conventional treatments are inadequate, offering an alternative approach to pediatric speech challenges.

Keywords: Lachesis, Speech disorders, Pediatrics, Delayed speech, Homeopathy

INTRODUCTION

Estimating speech delay prevalence is challenging due to beliefs that it runs in families, leading to a “wait-and-watch” policy and late intervention.¹ Primary care clinicians and family physicians play a key role in early identification and address parental concerns. In India, speech and language delays are significant, with varying prevalence across studies and regions. A study conducted in North India reported a prevalence of 6.2% among children aged 0-3 years.² Another study found a prevalence of 16.27%, with a higher occurrence in males (male to female ratio of 2.76:1).³ In Gujarat, a survey encompassing 28,954 individuals identified that 0.79% had speech and language disorders, with a higher prevalence in males (0.60%) compared to females (0.24%).⁴ These variations underscore the need for region-specific studies to accurately assess the prevalence and inform targeted interventions.

Speech and communication are fundamentals for child development but disorders like articulation, fluency, voice and language disorder can impact social and

academic growth. Conventional treatments include speech therapy, behavior modification and occasionally pharmacological interventions, but they may not always be effective, leading to interest in alternative approaches including homoeopathy. Homoeopathy, with its personalized approach, provides alternative options. Lachesis, a homeopathic remedy, has been used to address various speech and communication issues, offering potential benefits for affected children.

According to different authors Lachesis seems different but there are some common characteristics which are present directly or indirectly to the Observer. Similarly, here in this case Lachesis characteristics were seen by the homoeopath leading to this remedy. Lachesis Mutus (Bushmaster or Surucucu/Surukuku) (Ophidia) cannot bear tight anything anywhere. Want to talk all the time. Here in this case report Woman who has not recovered from the change of life in pregnancy having a strong fear of getting infection or having contagious disease, have never felt well since that time.⁵ Great/extraordinary loquacity and also has indistinct speech, inarticulate sound, amative, restless and uneasy, suspicious, mischievous, increased mental power, dogmatic, easily

frightened greatly inclined to mockery, satire and breaking out into laughter, hideous. Having habit of stool after eating, mapped tongue, desires fruits.⁶⁻⁹ This all are some Materia medica symptoms which are also present in our case along with affected speech.¹⁰ These symptoms are also presented in different repertoires as rubrics which are also taken here in this case in repertorial totality of the case.

CASE REPORT

A 3-year-old boy with a history of disordered speech was brought in for homeopathic consultation. Initially, he started uttering a word at the age of 2 years e.g.: baa...dada...daddy. Speech is indistinct at a time. First word is distinguishable, last word cannot be heard and it's silent so that, we cannot understand his language. Fluency, voice, and language of speech is proper, the only problem is articulation here.

Sometimes talks with the help of hand gestures. He is very restless and hyperactive child. He does not listen or follow others commands. He is always busy. He does not sit in one place. Milestone: walking: 1 year, teething: after 10th month, feeding up to 1.5 years. Patient is left-handed. He offends very easily. He is mischievous, teasing others by mimicking on everything.

He behaves with his friends as if dominating. He used to show that I'm much powerful than you so you all should be agree with me in every decision, if someone does not agree than he used to hits. He throws everything during anger. He likes travelling, feels better at outside the home. He likes to wear loose and old clothing. He wants change in everything esp. in toys. He used to answer roughly on questioning by doctor.

Personal history

App: diminished. Desires: fruits +++, paneer ++, ice-cream++, chocolate. Thirst: small quantity at short interval, prefers cold water. Tongue: mapped. Stool: soon after eating. Perspiration: droplets + on forehead. Palm: cold perspiration, clammy. Sleep: startled during sickness, muttering during sleep. Fear of injection and pointed things, cat, loud noise (crackers). Mouth: ulcer < summer. Thermal: hot, having heat rashes in summer. Birth history: cord around neck at the end of 9th month, have to do LSCS

Mother's history during pregnancy

Her pregnancy was during 1st wave of corona virus. She had diagnosed with hyperthyroidism at 3rd month of pregnancy and having low Hb count which leads to too much weakness. She was afraid of getting infected with corona constantly and became too much cautious for health. She was afraid of going out & didn't like social interaction. She was not even interested to talk to people

and constantly lived in fear that one of my mistakes can be fatal for me and my child's life.

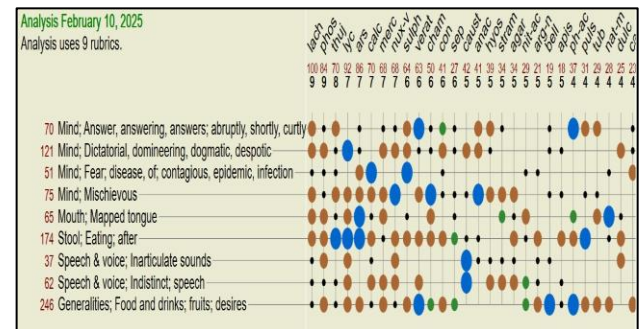


Figure 1: Repertorial chart.

Intelligibility in Context Scale (ICS)	
Child's name: ASA	Child's date of birth: 25/12/2020
Male/Female: MALE	Language(s) spoken: GUJARATI
Current date: 12/02/2025	Child's age: 4 YEARS
Person completing the ICS: MOTHER AND FATHER	Relationship to child: PARENTS

Figure 2: Intelligibility in context scale

Analysis

Analysis done by classifying all important features which can help to select remedy through studying the person as a whole with diseases condition and disposition of patient.

Repertorial totality

Mind; answer, answering, answers; abruptly, shortly, curtly. Mind; dictatorial, domineering, dogmatic, despotic. Mind; fear; disease, of; contagious, epidemic, infection. Mind; mischievous. Mouth; mapped tongue. Stool; eating; after. Speech & voice; inarticulate sounds. Speech & voice; indistinct; speech. Generalities; food and drinks; fruits; desires

Reportorial analysis

Prescription

Lachesis 1M 6 pills1 dose stat, Saclac 6 pills TDS 15 days

Assessment

By "Intelligibility in context scale (ICS)" which is a parent-reported questionnaire used to assess a child's speech intelligibility by rating how well they are understood by different communication partners.¹¹ The following questions are about how much of your child's speech is understood by different people. Please think about your child's speech over the past month when answering each question. Circle one number for each question. ICS score before the treatment was 2.28

indicates low intelligibility. Speech is difficult to understand in most contexts while after the treatment is 3.71 indicating moderately intelligible-speech is

understood most of the time but may need some clarification.

Table 1: Case analysis.

Disease	Disposition
Inarticulate speech	Domineering, answer curtly, Irritable, Mischievous
Indistinct speech	Hyperactive, Restless: changes one place to another
Talks in hand gesture	Mocking, Mimicking, stool: eating after
	Desires fruits+++, Perspiration: droplets + on forehead, Tongue: mapped
	MHDP: Strong fear of getting infection throughout the pregnancy

Table 2: Assessment chart before the homoeopathic treatment.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do immediate members of your family understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do extended members of your family understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do your child's friends understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do other acquaintances understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do your child's teachers understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do strangers understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Total score	16/35				
Average total score	2.28/5				

¹This measure may be able to be adapted for adults' speech, by substituting child with spouse. ²The term strangers may be changed to unfamiliar people

Table 3: Assessment chart after the homoeopathic treatment.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you understand your child ¹ ?	5	4	3	2	1
Do immediate members of your family understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do extended members of your family understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do your child's friends understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do other acquaintances understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do your child's teachers understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Do strangers ² understand your child?	5	4	3	2	1
Total score	26/35				
Average total score	3.71/5				

Table 4: follow up chart dated with prescription.

Date	Follow up	Prescription
16/5/2024	Much improved in speech, tries to makes sentences, previously he speaks only words, obstinacy, irritability: SQ, restlessness much less, no use of gestures, prickly heat all over the body, having c/o: itching < night, perspiration	Saclac 6 pills TDS 1 month
12/6/2024	Snappish answers, Speech improved 20%, can speak small sentences properly, obstinacy decreased, itching increased at night	Saclac 6 pills TDS 1 month
13/7/2024	Better in speech, stool: offensive smell, once/day, appetite diminished since last 2-3 days, occ. Slurred speech, angry+	Lachesis 1M 6pills 1 dose stat, Saclac 6 pills TDS 1 month

DISCUSSION

This case study highlights the promising role of Lachesis in managing articulation-based speech disorders in pediatric patients. The child presented with indistinct and inarticulate speech, coupled with a domineering, mischievous temperament and hyperactivity-feature aligning well with the Lachesis remedy picture. After administration of Lachesis 1M, a significant improvement was observed in speech intelligibility, as measured by the intelligibility in context scale (ICS), Which rose from a baseline score of 2.228 to 3.71 post treatment.

This improvement suggests better articulation and comprehension by communication. These findings align with previous studies that highlight the role of psychosocial factors in speech delays.¹ While conventional therapies remain essential, this case suggests that individualized homeopathic treatment can serve as a supportive approach in managing pediatric speech disorders. This case highlights homeopathy's holistic approach, addressing both speech symptoms and emotional patterns. The child responded well to Lachesis, showing improved speech intelligibility.

In India, speech and language delays are significant, with varying prevalence across studies and regions. A study conducted in North India reported a prevalence of 6.2% among children aged 0-3 years.² Another study found a prevalence of 16.27%, with a higher occurrence in males (male to female ratio of 2.76:1).³ In Gujarat, a survey encompassing 28,954 individuals identified that 0.79% had speech and language disorders, with a higher prevalence in males (0.60%) compared to females (0.24%).⁴ These variations underscore the need for region-specific studies to accurately assess the prevalence and inform targeted interventions.

CONCLUSION

From a homeopathic perspective, Lachesis addresses emotional and psychological factors contributing to speech disorders by stimulating the body's vital force and restoring nervous system balance. This holistic approach can improve speech, behavior, and social interactions. While further research and clinical trials is needed, Lachesis shows potential as a supportive remedy alongside conventional therapy. Parents seeking holistic treatments may consider homeopathy to enhance communication skills and overall well-being in children

with speech disorders like delayed speech onset, stuttering and stammering, selective mutism, and speech with aggression or loquacity.

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