

Thesis Title The Preliminary Study of Speech in
 Autistic Children

Name Nittaya Rumruay

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Thesis Supervisory Committee

 Associate Professor Rochana Dardarananda
 Assistant Professor Sumalee Dechongkit
 Associate Professor Dr.Nantana Ronnakiat

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to study the speech of verbally autistic children, aged 4 to 11 years. The speech of 10 verbally autistic children from Yuwapasartwaithayopatham Hospital (Child Psychiatric Hospital) and Mental Health and Child Guidance Center was videotaped and recorded for analysing during normally scheduled activities with their teacher, classmates, and speech therapist in the classroom and during lunch time. The children's speech was orthographically transcribed and then analysed. The results of this study indicate that most of the verbally autistic children displayed echolalic speech more often than spontaneous speech, and that immediate echolalia was evident more often than delayed echolalia. Two types of speech disorders, articulatory defects and voice disorders, were also indicated. Lastly, the analysis of their vocabularies demonstrated that in

both echolalic and spontaneous speech, the grammatical categories used can be ranked according to their frequency of usage as follows: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, conjunctions, and prepositions. Of the nouns, the most frequently used grammatical category, the names of objects were used the most while the names of body parts, the least. These results may be useful in providing speech and language stimulation and speech therapy program for autistic children.