

The Roots of Oral-Motor Therapy: A Personal View

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Time: The 1970's was a time when SLP's begin to work in multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary teams with OT's, PT's and other professionals. For the first time, SLP's and motor specialists were sharing their thoughts and ideas regarding therapy with one another. The oral-motor movement began in this decade in schools, hospitals, and clinics. These were clinical ideas born of the exchange of information, not research results.

Terms: At that time, OT's and PT's already were using the terms *gross motor* and *fine motor* to discuss the development, disorders, assessment, and treatment of whole body movements. The term *oral motor* came along as we added the discussion of oral movements for feeding and speech into the mix. The term came about as a natural outcome of team discussions. The term *non-speech oral-motor exercise* – NS-OME – was not used, and did not exist, at that time. The NS-OME is a new term made up AFTER the evolution of oral motor therapy. It has no part in this history.

New Information: The decades of the 1970's and 1980's also was a time when speech and motor therapists in the US began to have broad access to information about feeding, dysphagia, motor speech therapy, orofacial myology, sensorimotor integration, neurodevelopmental treatment, and the structure of the infant oral mechanism. Therapists were attending many multiple-day seminars on this material, they were sharing information across disciplines, and they were reading whatever publications came along. This was a time of tremendous expansion of ideas related to oral movement. Again, this was clinical information, not research reports.

Key Seminars: There were several key seminars that took place in the 1970's that had nation-wide influence on the thoughts of OT's, PT's and SLP's. Some of these seminars were recorded, transcripts were produced, and the bound material was sold to tens of thousands of therapists who were working worldwide.

The key person around whom all the early oral-motor/feeding seminars were based was Dr. Suzanne Evans Morris. Dr. Morris was a speech-language pathologist who had studied dysphagia under Jerilyn Logemann, did her doctoral research on infant feeding development, and studied neurodevelopmental treatment (NDT) with Karl and Berta Bobath (the developers of NDT) in England. Dr. Morris was the one who brought NDT back to the US.

As Dr. Morris finished her PhD on feeding development, she began to teach seminars and the term *oral-motor* began to have regular use. Many of these training seminars were taught through a grant program at the Curative Workshop of Milwaukee, WI (first known as the Kiwanis Children’s Center). According to Dr. Morris, “The grant program was to develop a demonstration project for feeding and pre-speech development for children from Birth to 3 years with a diagnosis of cerebral palsy. It was referred to by our group simply as “The CP Project.” It began in 1969. In approximately 1973 we went into the demonstration phase of the project in which we selected 10 (?) centers throughout the USA to replicate the program. Each center sent a team of therapists to Milwaukee for a week-long series of training workshops” (personal correspondence, March, 2011). From there a variety of therapists were teaching oral-motor seminars nationwide.

The following seminars and publications represent important publications of Dr. Morris’ early work–

- 1977- Wilson, J. M. (Ed.) (1977) *Oral-motor function and dysfunction in children*. Conference proceedings. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina. This was perhaps the most important beginning to oral-motor. This 3-day conference focused on feeding development, disorders, assessment and treatment, and there was one section on speech. The seminar was multi-disciplinary and included presentations on structure, function and neural control of the oral and pharyngeal mechanism. The presenters included Suzanne Evans Morris, Ph.D., Suzann Campbell, Ph.D., Joan Werner, Ph.D., James Bosma, M.D., Constance Evans, M.A.C.T., Sandra Radka, M.A.C.T., and Janet Wilson, L.P.T. This was a 4-day seminar presented on May 25-28. [This transcript was bound in green and became known as “The Green Book.”]
- 1977- Morris, S. E. (1977) *Program guidelines for children with feeding problems*. Edison: Childcraft. This set of program guidelines developed out of therapy with families. It was intended to help therapists to problem solve the causes of, and to design remediation plans for, feeding problems. It discussed the topics of limited food preferences, oral-tactile hypersensitivity, frequent gagging, drooling, and so forth.
- 1981- Morris, S. E. (1981) *The normal acquisition of oral feeding skills: Implications for assessment and treatment*. Seminar handbook. NY: Therapeutic Media. This 4-day seminar was presented on June 20-23, and was taught exclusively by Dr. Morris. It included information on normal oral-motor development, differential diagnosis of feeding problems, anatomy and physiology review, assessment, and treatment of feeding problems. This seminar also included information on “parallel patterns” of oral-motor development in feeding and speech production, a pre-speech assessment questionnaire and scale, and a section on “the development of stability and mobility in the oral-pharyngeal system.” This transcript set the stage for transferring information

about oral-motor development, assessment, and remediation from feeding to speech.
[This transcript was bound in blue and became known as “The Blue Book.”]

1983- Morris, S. E., and Klein, M. D. (1983). *Pre-feeding skills: A comprehensive resource for mealtime development*. Austin: Pro-Ed. This book immediately became the ultimate reference for concepts of oral-motor and feeding therapy. First published in 1983, it remains today the Bible of feeding therapy worldwide. The latest edition was published in 2000.

Transfer to Articulation Therapy: Since Van Riper, SLP’s have known that certain clients had mouths that simply did not function well. Van Riper called them “clumsy-tongued individuals” and “the slow of tongue.” Therefore, once therapists began to understand basic concepts about oral-motor development, assessment, and treatment in regard to feeding, they immediately began to translate this information into articulation therapy. Some began to present continuing education seminars on these ideas.

Pam Marshalla was the first to take the concepts of oral-motor that were being taught in regard to feeding, and to bring them publicly into articulation therapy in the seminar format. Her company, Innovative Concepts, was formed in 1982 and was based in Urbana, IL. It was the first ASHA-approved continuing education company to present seminars on oral-motor and articulation. She taught two-day seminars called “Tactile-Proprioceptive Stimulation Techniques in Articulation Therapy” and “Oral-Motor Techniques in Articulation Therapy.” Eventually her company also offered seminars by Sara Rosenfeld-Johnson, Charlotte Boshart, and others interested in oral motor. Marshalla’s early presentations and publications on oral-motor include the following:

1978- Marshalla (Rosenwinkel), P., & Kleinert, J. E. O., & Robbins, R. L. (1978)
“Tactile-proprioceptive stimulation techniques and the frontal lisp.” Paper. Illinois Speech and Hearing Association Convention. Chicago, IL.

1979- Rosenwinkel, P. (Marshalla), & Kleinert, J. E. O., & Robbins, R. L. (1979)
“Remediation of severe speech and language disorders: A pre-speech sensorimotor developmental model.” In *Selected papers: Current trends in the treatment of language disorders presented at the 1979 annual convention of ASHA, Atlanta, GA*. M. S. Burns & J. R. Andrews (Eds.) Evanston: Institute For Continuing Professional Education.

1982- Marshalla, (Rosenwinkel), P. (1982) “Tactile-proprioceptive stimulation techniques in articulation therapy.” Seminar handbook. Champaign, Illinois: Innovative Concepts in Speech and Language Therapy. [First ASHA-approved seminar on oral-motor and articulation therapy.]

1982- Marshalla, P. (1982) *The Innovative Concepts Speech and Language Therapy Newsletter, Vol. 1 No. 1*. Urbana, IL: Innovative Concepts. Published from 1982-

1989. [Pam began to publish her ideas about oral-motor and articulation therapy in this bi-monthly newsletter. Available today as published archives.]
- 1985- Marshalla, (Rosenwinkel), P. (1985) “The role of reflexes in oral-motor learning: Techniques for improved articulation.” *Seminars in Speech and Language*. Pp. 317-336. NY: Thieme. [Marshalla suggested this issue of *Seminars* that was devoted to the relationship between speech and swallowing. It was edited by Jerilyn Logemann.]
- 1992- Marshalla, P. (1992) “Oral-motor techniques in articulation and phonological therapy.” Seminar handbook. Seattle, WA: Innovative Concepts.
- 1992- Marshalla, P. (1992) *Oral-motor techniques in articulation and phonological therapy*. 2-day seminar recorded in Huntington Beach, CA. Seattle, WA: Innovative Concepts.
- 1995- Marshalla, P. (1995) *Oral-motor techniques in articulation and phonological therapy*. Kirkland, WA: Marshalla Speech and Language. [This book was written to include the information discussed in the original 1992 seminar of the same title.]

References: The following books, articles, and seminar transcripts have been instrumental in developing the concept of *oral-motor techniques* in the minds of thousands of therapists. These have been put into chronological order to show the development of ideas throughout the decades. [This list does not include references to the modern and unrelated concept of the *non-speech oral-motor exercise*.]

Pre-1950– Early Underpinnings

- 1928- Stetson, R. (1928) *Motor Phonetics*. USA: North Holland Publishing.
- 1937- Gessell, A. & Ilg, F. L. (1937) *Feeding behavior in infants*. Philadelphia: Lippincott.
- 1938- Stinchfield, S. M., & Young, E. H. (1938). *Children with delayed or defective speech: Motor-kinesthetic factors in their training*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- 1939- Van Riper, C. (1939) *Speech Correction: Principles and methods*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall. [Van Riper talks about “clumsy-tongued individuals,” and the “slow of tongue.”]

1950’s– Basic Concepts

- 1952- Gessell, A. (1952) *Infant development*. NY: Harper and Brothers.
- 1952- Froeschels, E. (1952) *Dysarthric speech: Speech in cerebral palsy*. Magnolia, MA: Expression.
- 1954- Fairbanks, G. (1954) “Systematic research in experimental phonetics: A theory of the speech mechanism as a servosystem.” *JSHD*, p. 133–139.
- 1954- Fay, T. (1954) “The use of pathological and unlocking reflexes in the rehabilitation of spastics.” *American Journal of Physical Medicine*, 33, p, 347-352.
- 1955- Young, E. H., & Hawk, S. S. (1955) *Moto-kinesthetic speech training*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- 1957- Morley, M. (1957) *The development and disorders of speech in childhood*. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins. [This book had a principle focus on children with motor speech disorders. The author was practicing in England where she was exposed to the treatment procedures of the Bobaths who develop neurodevelopmental treatment – NDT. Morley was encouraged to write this book by Van Riper himself who wanted to see these ideas brought to the United States.]

1960’s– Building Ideas

- 1962- Illingworth, R. S. (1962) *An introduction to developmental assessment in the first year: Little Club Clinics in developmental medicine #3*. London: National Spastics Society in association with William Heinemann (Medical Books).

- 1963- Illingworth, R. S. (1963) *The development of the infant and the young child: Normal and Abnormal, 2nd edition*. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins.
- 1964- McDonald, E. T., & Chance, B. (1964) *Cerebral palsy*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- 1964- McDonald, E. T. (1964) *Articulation testing and treatment: A sensory-motor approach*. Pittsburgh: Stanwix House.
- 1965- Ronson, I. (1965) Incidence of visceral swallow among lispers. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 30, p. 318-324.
- 1966- Crickmay, M. C. (1966) *Speech therapy and the Bobath approach to cerebral palsy*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- 1967- Bosma, J. (Ed.) (1967) *Symposium on oral sensation and perception*. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas.
- 1967- Gibson, J. J. (1967) The mouth as an organ for laying hold of the environment. In Bosma, J. (Ed.). (1973). *Oral sensation and perception*. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas. (p. 111–136).
- 1967- McDonald, E. T. & Aungst, L. F. (1967) Studies in oral sensorimotor function. In Bosma, J. (Ed.). *Oral sensation and perception*. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas. (p. 202–220).
- 1968- Mysak, E. D. (1968) *Neuroevolutional Approach to Cerebral Palsy and Speech*. NY: Teachers College.

1970's– Exploding Ideas

- 1970- Cratty, B. J. (1970) *Perceptual and motor development in infants and children*. Los Angeles: McMillan.
- 1970- Dunlap and Streicher Institute for Speech and Hearing (1970) *A new theory based on oral habits as causal factors in speech development*. Monograph.
- 1970- Weinberg, B., & Liss, G. M., & Hillis, J. (1970) A comparative study of visual, manual, and oral form identification in speech impaired and normal speaking children. In J. Bosma (Ed.), *Second Symposium on Oral Sensation and Perception*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
- 1971- Bobath, K. (1971) “The normal postural reflex mechanism and its deviation in cerebral palsy.” *Physiotherapy*, 57 (11).
- 1971- Powers, M. H. (1971). “Functional disorders of articulation: Symptomatology and etiology.” In L. E. Travis (Ed.), *Handbook of speech pathology and audiology*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, p. 837-875.

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- 1971- Sakada, S. (1971) “Response of Golgi-Mazzoni Corpuscles in the Cat Periosteum to Mechanical Stimuli” in Dubner, R. & Kawamura, Y. (Eds.) *Oral-Facial Sensory and Motor Mechanisms*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
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1980's– Broadening Ideas

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1990's- Focusing on Speech and Feeding

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2000's– Continued Therapy Input / Studies on Jaw, Lip, and Tongue Movements

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