The Speech Needs Questionnaire: Preliminary data from a spasmodic dysphonia sample C. Baylor, K. Yorkston, T. Eadie, D. Amtmann

The field of speech pathology lacks instruments for studying the social components of communication disorders such as how communication disorders interfere with life participation; and how different aspects of the social environment may interact with communication disorders to influence participation. One factor that may influence participation is an individual's speech needs. "Speech needs" are things that people want or need to do with their speech to fulfill life roles and goals. Documenting speech needs is critical for understanding how communication disorders impact participation, and for identifying and prioritizing individual intervention targets. A few voice-use classification systems exist; however they are limited in scope (e.g. focus almost exclusively on occupation) and applicability beyond voice-disordered populations. The purpose of this presentation is to introduce the Speech Needs Questionnaire, a self-report instrument intended for community-dwelling adults with voice or motor speech disorders. Initial testing was completed in a sample of 208 adults with spasmodic dysphonia (SD). Results showed an essentially normal distribution of speech needs across participants. Full-time job status appeared to be a strong indicator of speech needs regardless of job type. Data exploring relationships between speech needs and demographic variables, SD characteristics, and a measure of communicative participation will be presented.