

While related, **language** and **speech** are distinct aspects of communication. Let's have a closer look:



Language is the main method of human communication. It is expressed by speech, gesture, sign or writing. Language is an organized, rule-governed system that includes five parts:

- Phonology: sounds and sound combinations,
- Syntax: rules for combining words,
- Semantics: meanings associated with words,
- Morphology: word arrangement and formation, and
- Pragmatics: how meaning is constructed in social contexts.

Language is dynamic. This means that it is constantly changing, evolving, and adapting to the needs of its users. **Language** is also subjective. The way it is used reflects a speaker's identity, culture, and, at times, values. Language allows us to share our ideas and thoughts with others. It is a tool that we use to interact with the world around us. **Language** includes both receptive and expressive skills. Receptive language skills include listening, understanding and reading, while expressive skills include speaking and writing.



Speech: It takes about 100 muscles to speak!

If language is a system, then **speech** is a physical activity. To speak means to talk, to utter words using the muscles of the tongue, lips, jaw and voice in a precise and coordinated way to produce words.

Speaking is a complex physical process that involves air, vibration and extensive muscle use. The production of speech involves three bodily systems (respiratory, larynx, articulatory) that are regulated on the conscious and the unconscious levels by the nervous system. The vocal apparatus involved in speaking includes: lips, tongue, teeth, top of the mouth and the voice box found in the throat. There are muscles in the lips, tongue and throat as well as the cheeks and jaw. It takes about 100 muscles to speak or produce spoken language. (Berko Gleason & Bernstein Ratner, 2022).

Reference

Gleason, J. B, and Ratner, N. B. (2024). *The Development of Language*. San Diego, CA: Plural Publishing