

READING

Read the article. Have you ever heard of “foreign accent syndrome”?

What Is Foreign Accent Syndrome?

The idea of waking up one morning and speaking with a different accent sounds like something from a science fiction or horror movie. But this is the reality faced by a number of people who are suffering from a condition called foreign accent syndrome or FAS. Foreign accent syndrome is a rare medical condition—around 100 individuals are believed to have had the condition since it was first diagnosed in 1907 by the French neurologist Pierre Marie. People with the condition develop speech patterns that make what they are saying sound like they are speaking with a foreign accent. This accent is usually different from their native accent and can even sometimes combine accents from different countries or regions.

Most unusually, patients often can't speak the language associated with their accents, so a person who can't speak French may actually suddenly develop what sounds like French pronunciation when saying certain words.

A person's natural accent comes from a system of sound patterns in their native language that they learn as they grow up. This is known as the phonetic system. Although it's possible that your accent can change early in life as you experience different accents and speech patterns, after your teenage years, your phonetic system mostly stays the same. That's what makes FAS so puzzling. Its symptoms affect the whole pattern of a person's phonetic system. People affected by the condition:

- have trouble pronouncing groups of sounds like *str* in words like *strike*.
- have trouble with sounds that require them to touch the top front teeth with the tongue, such as *t* or *d*.
- pronounce vowels differently, such as saying *yah* instead of *yeah*.
- may have a different pitch or tone on certain sounds.

FAS usually results from damage to parts of the brain caused by a stroke. In a small number of cases, it develops from head trauma following an accident or from severe and painful headaches called migraines. FAS patients usually suffer some damage to the left side of their brains which is the side of the brain that controls speech in most people.

One person who described her experience of FAS is Ellen Spencer, a graphic designer from Indianapolis in the USA. In an article in the journal *Psychology Today*, Ellen revealed how she believes she suffered damage to part of her brain when she had a minor stroke at home. Despite visiting the Emergency Room of her local hospital, doctors found no evidence that Ellen had had a stroke, but after returning home from the hospital and sleeping for 16 hours, she woke up alone in the house. She called to her dog and instantly knew something was wrong—the voice that came out of her mouth didn't sound like her voice at all. Ellen's particular condition means that she has problems with pronouncing certain words: *mother* and *father* become *mudder* and *fadder* and she “cuts up” her words into syllables so that the word *comfortable* becomes *com-for-tah-bul* and *doctor* becomes *doc-tore*. Ellen describes her accent as a mixture of French, Dutch, and German, with hard consonants which sound like a South African or Caribbean accent.

Another unusual example of how the brain can behave after severe trauma is the case of Helen Rudd, a British woman, who was involved in a car accident on her way home from work. She was in a coma for three weeks after the accident, but when she woke up, she spoke fluent French even though she had last studied French 30 years earlier at school. Helen says of her experience: “Before my coma I'd never heard of foreign accent syndrome ... What happened to me is different, because I really was speaking French, and not just for a few seconds—for two weeks.”

be associated with (phr): to be connected with something in some way

coma (n): a state in which a person is asleep for a long time after being injured or ill

evidence (n): facts that help to prove that something is true



fluent (adj): able to speak a foreign language very well

native language (n): the first language you learn (usually the language of the place where you are born)

rare (adj): not happening or occurring very often

science fiction movie (n): a movie about imaginary places or characters often set in the future or on other planets

syllables (n, pl): words or parts of a word that have only one vowel sound

syndrome (n): a medical condition that affects a person's body or mind

VOCABULARY

Choose the correct option.

- The doctor asked me what my ... were before he examined me.
a signs b situations c symptoms
- Petra has been suffering from ... anxiety and stress since her father died.
a strong b severe c heavy
- A ... happens when blood can't reach the brain or there is bleeding in the brain.
a headache b stroke c migraine
- Asthma is a medical ... that affects breathing and the lungs.
a condition b situation c state
- This hospital specializes in the treatment of head and neck ...
a trauma. b hurt. c wound.

COMPREHENSION

Choose the correct option.

- "Foreign accent syndrome" is ... medical condition.
a a common
b an unusual
- A person with FAS usually speaks ...
a with different speech patterns and pronunciation.
b in a different language to his or her native language.
- Patients with FAS typically ...
a forget how to pronounce certain words.
b find it difficult to use particular sounds.
- FAS often occurs as a result of ...
a severe headaches.
b a bleed on the brain.

- 5 Ellen Spencer's doctors ... that she had had a minor stroke.
- a couldn't find proof
 - b were able to tell

READING

Read the text. What does a sports psychologist do? Identify and underline the topic sentence in each paragraph.

Psychology in Sports

Combining an interest in psychology with a love of sports and fitness, a sports psychologist's job is all about improving the performance of anyone who takes part in a sport. This could include helping a professional athlete deal with the trauma of a sporting injury, encouraging a sporting amateur to take up a new and exciting sport, or helping a soccer referee face their fear of appearing in front of large crowds of people.

Within the profession, there are two different career areas to choose from—sports psychology and exercise psychology; and, although the jobs are similar, there are some important differences.

A sports psychologist focuses on how psychology affects sport and how it can improve performance, in other words, working to make sure that the mental approach to the sport is as strong as the physical approach to it. The aim of a good sports psychologist is to prepare sporting professionals for the demands of their job, such as taking part in competitions or dealing with the long hours and physical demands of their training schedule. They may work with individual athletes to help them develop strategies to deal with anxiety, self-confidence, and concentration but also work with teams and team coaches.

Exercise psychologists, on the other hand, typically work with ordinary members of the public to increase their motivation and encourage them to exercise. The aim of their work is the improvement of health and well-being, not how they perform. An exercise psychologist might work with people who have been ill or injured and encourage them to use exercise to help them recover or they may work on setting up exercise programs in workplaces, prisons, or hospitals.

If you're someone who likes variety, then this career would suit you perfectly. Every day as a sports or exercise psychologist is likely to be completely different because of the range of people that you come into contact with. This can include medical professionals, healthcare workers, nutritionists, educators, or health club owners. National and international travel is also a feature of both jobs—you may find yourself working on college campuses, in hospitals, at athlete's villages (especially if you are working on an event such as the Olympics or Paralympics), and sports training grounds.

Sports and exercise psychology is also becoming a more "in demand" profession as the mental and physical challenges faced by athletes increases. More individuals, teams, and nations now take part in major sporting events and the pressure to succeed is great. There is also an increase in medical conditions caused by poor diet and a lack of exercise—problems which an exercise psychologist would be able to work toward solving.

One of the questions that are often asked is "Is it possible to do work experience as a sports psychologist?" The answer is a "Yes." Work experience is extremely important for students who wish to train to become sports or exercise psychologists. You can do this through a work placement organized by your school or college, vacation work, or a "shadowing" position where you follow a sports psychologist for a period of time to see exactly the kind of work that they do. It might also be possible to ask at your local sports club about opportunities to help out. Until you have qualified, you might not be able to gain specific sports psychology experience, but you can still get useful experience in an area such as taking fitness or exercise classes. You could also get involved in coaching a local or university sports team.

a lack of (phr): a situation where there isn't enough of something, e.g., money, food, etc.

come into contact with (phr): to be in a place where you meet someone



crowds (n, pl): large groups of people

members of the public (phr, n): ordinary people rather than those who belong to a particular group

motivation (n): a feeling that makes you want to succeed at something very much

referee (n): a person in a sport whose job is to make sure that the players follow the rules

well-being (n): a state which includes being happy, healthy, and safe

VOCABULARY

Match the definitions to the words.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1 a worrying feeling you have because you think something bad will happen ... | a mental |
| 2 plans for doing something or dealing with something ... | b pressure |
| 3 related to the body rather than the mind ... | c strategies |
| 4 the feeling of being forced or expected to do something ... | d physical |
| 5 related to the mind rather than the body ... | e anxiety |

COMPREHENSION

Choose *True* or *False*.

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| 1 A sports psychologist helps people face the mental challenges of their sport. | True / False |
| 2 An exercise psychologist's job is to help people improve their sporting performance. | True / False |
| 3 Sports psychologists are more likely to travel as part of their job than exercise psychologists. | True / False |
| 4 People's lifestyle choices have created a demand for exercise psychologists. | True / False |
| 5 Sports psychologists must graduate from college before they can do work experience. | True / False |

READING

Read the text. Is there a science to sleeping?

The Importance of Sleeping

For something that we spend almost a third of our lives doing, sleep is still not completely understood by scientists and researchers. While the former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher claimed to only need 4 hours sleep a night, and pop star Mariah Carey claims to need 15 hours a night, the majority of people require around 8 hours in order to be able to function during the day. But the question is: what is sleep and why is it so important?

A good way to answer that question is to look at what happens if we don't sleep. Scientists have begun to understand that sleep is essential because it plays an important role in brain function and helps us maintain normal levels of speech, memory, and thought. A lack of sleep can also affect our mood and cause us to be irritable and forgetful. After just one night without sleep, concentration becomes more difficult and the ability to concentrate is affected. In fact, being awake for 24 hours leads to a decrease in performance the same as having drunk two glasses of wine.

Research shows that sleep deprivation has a major impact not only on brain function but also on our emotional and physical well-being. Being very tired during the day has been linked to stress and high blood pressure. Research has also suggested that going without sleep can affect our weight negatively because chemicals that play a part in controlling how hungry we feel are released during sleep.

So, what exactly happens when we sleep? Sleep happens in cycles of 90 to 110 minutes and is divided into two types of sleep; non-REM and REM sleep (REM stands for "Rapid Eye Movement"). During non-REM, or the first stage of sleep, we are half awake and half asleep. Our muscles start to relax and we may twitch or move slightly, but we can be easily woken up. After about 10 minutes of light sleep, we enter "true sleep" which lasts around 20 minutes. Our breathing and heart rate slows down. The third and fourth stages are "deep sleep" where there is very little movement and slow breathing. This is REM sleep when our brains are very active. This is the point in sleep when we dream and our eyes move backward and forward quickly under our eyelids. If someone is woken up during deep sleep, they may feel confused or drowsy for several minutes after waking up. After REM sleep, the whole cycle begins again with a typical night involving four or five sleep cycles. Scientists used to think that REM sleep was the most important sleep stage for learning and memory, but newer research suggests that non-REM sleep is more important for these tasks, as well as being the more restful stage of sleep. This is why taking a short nap of up to 20 minutes can help people feel re-energized.

It is generally believed that there is no fixed amount of time that everyone needs to sleep, because it differs from person to person. Results from sleep studies indicate that people like to sleep anywhere between 5 and 11 hours, with the average being 7.75 hours. Perhaps the best way to think about your own amount of sleep is to have enough so that you don't feel tired during the day.

If you are feeling tired, consider the fact that the world record for the longest period without sleep is 11 days, set by a 17-year-old schoolboy called Randy Gardner in 1964. He and a friend decided to try and go without sleep as part of a school science project. Three days into the experiment, they were joined by sleep researcher William Dement who was able to study the effects that a lack of sleep had on Randy. Surprisingly, he was still functioning quite well at the end of the experiment, although he had trouble doing basic mathematics. At the end of his sleepless marathon, Randy went home and had 14 hours and 40 minutes of sleep.



blood pressure (n): the pressure at which blood moves around your body to your heart

decrease (n): to fall to a lower level than before

have a (major) impact on (phr): have an important effect on something

maintain (v): to make something stay the same

rapid (adj): fast; quick

re-energized (adj): feeling full of energy again after a period of feeling tired

sleep deprivation (n): the state of not getting enough sleep over a long period of time

VOCABULARY

Complete the sentences with words from the box.

drowsy irritable mood nap restful

- 1 I find long bus journeys very _____. I usually sit back, relax, and fall asleep.
- 2 You can usually tell what kind of _____ Mitch is in by the look on his face when he comes through the door.
- 3 My grandparents always took a/an _____ after lunch, but my parents never do.
- 4 I woke up in the recovery room after the operation feeling very _____ from the anesthetic.
- 5 Being stuck in the house on rainy days makes the kids very _____ so they argue a lot.

COMPREHENSION

Choose the correct option.

- 1 Mariah Carey reported she needs much **more** / **less** sleep than the average person.
- 2 Going without sleep can make people **put on weight** / **drink alcohol**.
- 3 People are slightly more active when they are in a **true** / **deep** sleep.
- 4 **Non-REM** / **REM** sleep is now believed to be more important for brain function than in the past.
- 5 Going without sleep for 11 days **slightly affected** / **didn't affect** Randy Gardner's mental ability.