

Some examples of types of thought disorder:

Circumstantiality

A pattern of speech which is indirect and delayed in reaching its goal idea. The speaker is long-winded and brings in many tedious but related details before getting to the point

Clanging

Words are chosen for sounds not meanings (e.g. "I ate my food, mood, rude.") Includes punning and rhyming.

Distractable speech

Repeated changes of topic in response to nearby stimuli.

Echolalia

Repetition (echoing) of other people's words or phrases, often with mocking or staccato intonation. As distinct from perseveration which is the repetition of the client's own words or ideas.

Flight of ideas

The person cannot express ideas as quickly as they come into his or her head, thus leading to fragmented thoughts, abrupt changes in topic and general incoherence. Often associated with mania.

Illogicality

A pattern of speech in which conclusions are reached which do not follow logically.

Incoherence (word salad)

Speech may be so disordered that it is not possible to make any sense of the conversation.

Irrelevance

Replies to questions are not at all related to the main topic of discussion.

Neologisms

The creation of completely new words or expressions that have no meaning to anyone other than the individual (e.g. "I have a helopantic under my foot").

Perseveration

Persistent repetition of the same words or ideas in response to different stimuli (not including filler like "You know what I mean"). Often associated with organic brain disease.

Thought disorder

A term describing a disturbance in the way thoughts are expressed, affecting structure, grammar, syntax or logic of thinking. Sometimes also refers to the content of the thoughts. Communication is disorganised and senseless and the main idea cannot be understood (e.g. "All is nothing and under nothing twists"). A disorder in the logical progression of thoughts where unrelated and unconnected (or loosely connected) ideas shift from one subject to another. There is no meaningful relationship between the ideas that are being expressed. Derailment and Loosening of associations are terms used to describe this. Tangentially is another feature and is when replies to questions are irrelevant or oblique. The reply usually refers to the appropriate topic but fails to give a complete answer. (e.g. when asked about the type of medication taken today; "Yes, I take medication but I exercise as well.

Word approximations

Re-stringing words together in new and unconventional ways to represent a specific meaning (e.g. 'handcoat' to mean glove). Often associated with organic brain disease.