Auditory Processing Disorder Case Study

Bonnie is nine years old. Her parents both work, her father in middle management and her mother part-time in a secretarial position. Bonnie reads words accurately, but sometimes does not fully understand the content. She struggles to make connections with the language that she reads and the language that she hears. Sometimes it’s as if words go in one ear and out the other.

A standard hearing test when she was seven showed no hearing loss.

Bonnie’s parents were aware that she had motivation and attention problems, and it was even suggested that she had behavioural issues. Despite trying a few comprehension strategies, Bonnie is still struggling to understand her environment – not just in school, but also at home and with friends. She is frustrated, and is beginning to believe that there is something wrong with her.

The regional school speech pathologist suggested an Auditory Processing Screening Assessment by an audiologist and it was found that Bonnie had difficulties in the following areas:

- **Auditory Figure-Ground Processing**: where a person has higher than normal difficulty paying attention in the presence of background noise (e.g. finding it hard to listen to instructions or converse with friends in the playground).

- **Auditory Attention Problems**: where a person can only focus for a short time, usually never being long enough to complete a task (e.g. listening to a teacher explaining something, paying attention during assembly etc.).

- **Auditory Cohesion Problems**: where a person cannot accurately draw conclusions, make inferences, predict outcomes, or generally use more than one comprehension skill at a time (e.g. where it is important to select the correct meaning from a choice of meanings, such as in jokes, riddles, personal comments etc.).

Bonnie was referred to Linguist Learning.

Bonnie was given a short, medium and long-term learning plan. This included:

- immediate commencement of the *Visualizing and Verbalizing Program*,
- the gradual introduction of classical and then Bonnie’s preferred music at increasing volume during all sessions and gradually during homework sessions.

Bonnie had two weekly 45-minute sessions for 18 months and worked through the Visualizing and Verbalizing texts right up to and past her year level. Her parents and teachers report a definite shift in Bonnie’s behaviour. She exhibits less frustration at school and at home, has developed a network of close friends that she previously did not have and can now complete much of her schoolwork on time even when the classroom is noisy.

She comes to Linguist Learning on a fortnightly basis for specialised focus on her longer school assignments and expects to continue to access this support in high school.