 Fluency

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Many types of fluency challenges exist. The one most have studied or heard about is typical stuttering when a speaker repeats initial sounds or syllables, has prolongations and/or blocks. Other fluency challenges, though, include things like cluttering, atypical stuttering, and excessive nonstuttering like dysfluencies (NSLDs). Excessive NSLDs contain frequent restarts, revisions, and fillers. Cluttering characteristics are when someone speaks with a rapid or irregular rate of speech, omitting or combining sounds and words, and may include language formulation issues. Sometimes repetitions or blocks occur in the middle or end of words referred to as atypical stuttering.

These dysfluencies result from both known and unknown factors creating complex and multifactorial challenges to speaking effortlessly and efficiently. Research has shown that linguistic difficulties may be one underlying factor for these challenges. (See Scaler Scott, 2015). Additionally, other studies have shown that some people with these fluency challenges may also have a difference in their syntactic skills. (Scaler Scott et al., 2018; Veneziale et al. 2017). Specifically focused on treatment strategies, our study found that structured syntactic skill building resulted in increased communication efficiency in students with autism and other fluency disorders. (Scaler Scott et al., 2022).

Consequently, for students and clients who have excessive NSLDs, atypical stuttering and cluttering, research supports working on developing syntactic skills with a structured and developmental model.

**What are some things I can do to get started?**

1) Try having your student place pauses in natural places when they tell a story. This will help them compensate for underlying difficulties with formulation time. They might also practice by reading rhythmic poetry and pausing at the end of a line.

2) Practice saying sentences where you put the clause at the start of the sentence. Then reverse the word order to putting the clause at the end of the sentence. This will help build their brain’s flexibility to rearrange sentences for faster and more efficient formulation. The goal is to quickly rearrange the sentences.

Student (generate sentence): **During the summer//I like to swim in the pool.**

SLP (reverse sentence): **I like to swim in the pool//during the summer.**

SLP (generate sentence): **I like to go on vacation//during the summer.**

Student (reverse sentence): **During the summer//I like to go on vacation.**

3) After a student writes a sentence, ask questions to help them expand it, such as “what kind” “where” and “when.” This helps them lean how can they include more details in their sentences.

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