

Reframing the Goals of Stuttering Therapy

A Literature Review of Clients' Outcomes in Stuttering Therapy

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Abstract

- Stuttering therapy is a distant cousin to many other subfields of Speech and Language Pathology. Incorporating many client feelings, beliefs, and attitudes compared to other subfields we practice.
- These differences can manifest as mistakes that well-meaning clinicians make.

Introduction

- Clinician-centered approaches to intervention can be useful in many settings. Stuttering therapy is not one of those settings.
- Client goals surrounding stuttering therapy rarely align with clinician goals.
- **The misalignment between client and clinician goals can create negative therapy outcomes for the client.**

Methodology

- Research-based articles related to Stuttering and stuttering-related counseling were identified through scholarly databases.
- Inclusion criteria for articles include being published in the English language, centered on the results of disfluent clients, and must be peer-reviewed.
- Exclusion criteria include incorporation of non-stuttering research subjects, individual case studies, and systematic reviews.

Research Question

- What outcomes of stuttering therapy are most valued by people who stutter?

Results and Discussion

- Pitfalls of Clinician-centered goals
 - Clinicians can display negative implicit attitudes towards stuttering (Walden 2020).
 - A majority of Clinicians are not optimistic about individually carrying out stuttering therapy (Mavis 2013).
 - Clinicians rate disfluent speech as less pleasant than fluent speech (Walden 2020).
- What goals do people who stutter value?
 - Confidence, acceptance, and knowledge of their stutter (Coleman 2012).
 - 90% of stutterers report utilizing self-help techniques related to **quality of life** (Bielby 2012).
 - Stuttering negatively impacts social acceptance, school competence, close friendships, and global self-esteem (Adriaensens 2015).
- What goals are *not* valued by people who stutter?
 - **Individual speech techniques**
 - Only 25% of feedback following intensive Stuttering treatment was related to speech techniques (Irani 2012).
 - **% stuttered syllables decreases**
 - 78% decrease in stuttered syllables → 38% decrease in negative feelings (Yaruss 2010).

Conclusion

- Client needs and goals vary from client to client and no amount of research should override any individual client expectations from therapy.
- Goals should be individually tailored to the greater needs of the client rather than their direct fluency.
- **Intervention should target the underlying emotions surrounding stuttering; including shame, self-confidence, and socialization.**

Client-Centered Approaches

- Avoidance-Reduction Therapy for Stuttering (ARTS)
 - Reduce the learned reactions to stuttering, resulting in willingly stuttering speech (Sisskin 2022).
- Transcending Stuttering
 - Utilizing self-adjustment, advocacy, acceptance, and knowledge to address maladaptive behaviors

Works Cited

