SPHR 6251: Fluency Disorders Seminar

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Getting a feel for what stuttering is like

Stuttering is a multifactorial disorder that has affective, behavioral, and cognitive components. *Affective* components include fear, anxiety, and other emotional reactions related to speaking and stuttering. Behavioral aspects include the actual stuttering itself as well as avoidance of words, speaking situations, and/or speaking partners. Cognitive aspects include one’s thoughts about stuttering and being a person who stutters, as well as how one views oneself as a communicator. These reactions are often referred to as “the ABCs of stuttering.”

This assignment is designed to give you a sense of what stuttering looks, sounds, and feels like. You will be listening to a series of interviews with adults who stutter; these interviews are part of the Fluency Bank, an NIH-funded initiative to collect samples of persons who stutter for research and teaching purposes.

The same questions (what impact has stuttering had in your life, summarize treatment experiences and outcomes, what does successful communication mean, what causes stuttering, if you didn’t stutter what would be different, what do you want to tell students) were posed to each interviewee, giving some consistency across interviews. I chose these particular interviews to illustrate a range of stuttering behaviors and reactions.

To view the interviews, go to: <https://fluency.talkbank.org/teaching.html>

Then click on: *Teaching with Fluency Bank* in bottom left corner

Then click on: *Browsable transcripts* in top left

Then click on: *Interview* in the top left corner

This gets you to a screen with a series of transcribed interviews and associated media files. Click on the file itself and you will see a video screen in the bottom left corner, and the transcript of the interview on the right side of the screen. As the interview progresses, the cursor moves down the transcript.

The files you should listen to are:

019.cha (12:07 min)

024.cha (15:18 min)

046.cha (9:00 min)

071.cha (6:53 min)

076.cha (13:31 min)

Turn the page to see a list of questions to think about while listening to the interviews. Jot some notes and any questions you have and bring them to class. We will begin our first class together with a discussion of these interviews.

Questions to think about while reviewing the interviews:

1. What behavioral features do you see and hear? Write down some examples. Do the interviewees stutter all the time? If not, how does their fluent speech sound to you?
2. What affective components are mentioned by the interviewees? Write down some examples.
3. What cognitive components are mentioned by the interviewees? Examples:
4. Characterize the impact that stuttering has had on the interviewees’ lives. Has the stuttering impact changed over time? In what ways?
5. Are there aspects of stuttering that the interviewees seem to agree on? Provide some examples.
6. How did the interviewees characterize their prior stuttering treatment? What do they say about goals for stuttering treatment? Do these goals differ from what you expected?
7. What do these interviewees say about self-efficacy and acceptance and their role in treatment? How would you, as a therapist, go about assisting clients in increasing their self-efficacy and acceptance of their stuttering?
8. What surprised you the most about these interviews?
9. Any questions you wish to ask during the class discussion? Write them here.