

Abstract

Conture, E.G. & Pellowski, M.W. (2002). Characteristics of Speech Disfluency and Stuttering Behavior in 3-4 year olds. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research*. 45, 20-34

Purpose:

The purpose of this intervention was to quantitatively and qualitatively characterize speech dysfluencies exhibited by 3- and 4 year old children who do and do not stutter.

Method:

Five measures of speech dysfluency (e.g. percentage of total, other and stuttering-like dysfluencies, number of repetition units, and weighted SLD measure) were used in attempts to differentiate children who stutter (CWS) from children who do not stutter (CWNS). Similar measures of stuttering (e.g. percentage of stuttering-like dysfluencies consisting of dysrhythmic phonation) were used to characterize speech dysfluencies in 3 and 4-year-old CWS in relation to time of stuttering onset (TSO).

Hypothesis:

It was hypothesized that such measures of speech dysfluency should significantly differ between CWS and CWNS, as well as 3 versus 4-year-old CWS in relation to TSO.

Results:

Results indicate that 4 out of the 5 dependent measures (measures of speech dysfluency) significantly differed between CWS and CWNS, and within the CWS group there was a significant relationship between TSO and percent of stuttering-like disfluencies when the effect of chronological age were partialled out of the regressing analyses. Furthermore, 4-year old CWS exhibited a moderate correlation between TSO and the percentage of stuttering-like dysfluencies consisting of dysrhythmic phonations, whereas 3-year-old CWS exhibited no such relationship between these variables. Findings were taken to suggest that certain measures of speech dysfluency appreciably differentiate between CWS and CWNS and that 4-year-old CWS exhibit changes in nonreiterative forms as a function of time since stuttering onset (TSO).