

Enhancing Fluid Speaking Skills

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Pre-Modification Skill Building

1. Body awareness” skills: The ability to “feel” fluid, forward speech movement while speaking.
 - a. Ability to feel and discriminate forward movement sequence from recoil and avoidance
 - b. Ability to feel smooth inhalations, exhalations, mid-lung volume, airflow through the vocal tube, and gentle valving of air to create sound at the vocal folds and articulators.
2. Pace perception and manipulation skills: The ability to perceive and shift communication Pace along a 1-5 scale psychometric rating scale with 1 = smooth slow 2 = controlled smooth 3 = uncontrolled smooth 4 = uncontrolled rapid 5 = uncontrolled very rapid).
 - * Key is to speak only as fast as you can “feel” and shape fluid speech movements while you are making them.
3. Optimum breathing skills: The ability to feel and use natural and effective lung volumes and inhalation/exhalation transitions during relaxed breathing and speech. This is particularly important when starting, stopping, and restarting speech. This includes:
 - a. Identifying and using mid-lung volumes during relaxed breathing and initiation of speech
 - b. using smooth inhalation and exhalation movements
 - c. feeling and keeping stomach and chest muscles (including diaphragm) relaxed during quiet breathing and speech. Avoid rapid contractions of neck, chest, and stomach muscles
4. Starting and stopping skills: The ability to start and stop speech movements smoothly and in forward manner. This occurs at the beginning of utterances and at pause boundaries during continuous speech.
5. Blending skills: The ability to feel and blend (transition) speech movements forward smoothly both within and between utterance boundaries.

Modification Skills

1. Increase ability to feel how to start and stop talking within and between utterance boundaries smoothly and in a forward manner using pace 2-3. This includes appropriate breathing onset and offset transitions and relaxed mid-lung volumes.
2. Increase ability to feel and make smooth movement transitions forward into the next movement (without recoil) using pace 2-3. If stuck, stay where you are in the sequence until you can move forward again smoothly. Never push or recoil.
3. Increase ability to enter and stay in (freeze) a stuck movement past trigger point without hesitation or recoil. Resist time pressure (to push, recoil, change words, etc.) while increasing a sense of movement awareness

- and calm. Test and identify how long the feeling of being stuck actually lasts when you stop trying to push the word out or recoil from it.
4. Increase the ability to restart smooth forward speech after becoming stuck. This involves learning to “Reduce Energy” of the stuck movement
 - a. Slow the stuttered movement down to pace 1-2 of 5
 - b. Reduce force and pushing movement and muscles to level 1-2 of 5
 - c. Gradually and smoothly restart air, sound, and movement forward at a slowed pace (1-2 of 5).
 - d. Continue to feel forward movement of air, sound and movement at reduced pace. Stay at a pace that you feel you can stay in charge of what your doing

Establishing Speech Modification Skills (*examples under construction)

1. Movements in isolation
2. Single words lists (single syllable then multisyllabic words)
3. Combined single words lists
4. Single sentence lists
5. Client generated single sentences from word list
6. Brief (3-5 min) monologue on select topics (with clinician)
7. Extended monologue on select topics (with clinician)
8. Client-clinician dialogue on select topics (with clinician)
9. Client presentation (10 min) on select topics (with clinician)

Transfer of Speech Modification Skills (*examples under construction)