

THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVORITE THINGS

CHILD DISFLUENCY ANALYSIS USING 20 QUESTIONS FOR TESTING

Basically, a verbal autopsy needs to be done on the production skills.

1. What types of disfluencies does the child do ?
2. Where within the word does the repetition or prolongation or motoric breakdown or stoppage of air flow/voicing occur ?
3. Describe the words on which disfluency occurs. For example, number of syllables, position of word in the utterance, phonology; number of repetitions on the mildest stuttered word and on the most severely stuttered word; duration in seconds of typical and of longest prolongation; number of silent and filled pauses, average duration of silent pauses and duration of longest pause.
4. If the breathstream is mismanaged, what behaviors do you hear ?
5. What indications do you see in the child's body and especially face of increased effort ?
6. What indications do you hear as child stutters which signal increased effort ?
7. What does the child do to cope or assist himself in talking, for example, ESCAPING from the stuttered moment, STARTING the word, or in AVOIDING the stuttering ?
8. What vocal behaviors indicate misuse of voice ?
9. What effect does CHANGE IN RATE OF TALKING have on the level of fluency ?

10. What effect does the LENGTH OF THE RESPONSE have on the level of fluency in single words, phrases, short sentences, paragraphs, stories ?
11. What effect does the complexity of the topic or idea have on the level of fluency ?
12. What difference, if any, is there in his self-generated speech VS reading aloud VS answering questions VS asking questions of others VS interrupting others ?
13. What occurs if the child cannot generate the label (name/noun; action/verb; descriptor/adjective or adverb) ?
14. What occurs if the child cannot organize thoughts quickly in order to convey message ?
15. What occurs if the child has difficulty explaining concepts or describing events ?
16. What differences, if any, occur in relation to the child's speaking more than one language ? Or, speaking the language of his culture VS. academically acceptable language ?
17. What differences, if any, occur during monologue, conversation turn-taking and topic changing, with parents and other adults, with teachers and care-givers, with peers, or with younger children ?
18. What effect do family dynamics have on the emotions of the child and what impact does that have on the child's fluency ?
19. How clearly can the child's speech be understood when he is speaking fluently ?
20. How does the child react to the stuttering when it occurs ?

CHARACTERISTICS OF SPEECH-MOTOR BREAKDOWN

1. The three types of possible SPEECH-MOTOR BREAKDOWN are *repetition, prolongation, and inability to initiate voicing or airflow (can't get started)*.
2. Additional clues of possible SPEECH-MOTOR BREAKDOWN are

Abrupt onset of voicing or hard attacks on initial sound of word.
Producing voiced for voiceless sounds and vice versa (g/k, p/b).
Difficulty in making transitions between sounds—phonation and/or airflow is stopped.
Interjections (“uh, um” etc.)
Silent pauses (esp. pauses that are longer than his typical pauses)
Breathstream mismanagement including breath holding, quick exhalation, or inhalation.
Difficulty with pitch control or unexpected pitch changes or “vocal quavers”.
Difficulty with intensity control or unexpected changes in intensity.
Unexpected rate changes just before or just after the stuttered word.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COGNITIVE-LANGUAGE FLUENCY BREAKDOWN

1. Thought organization difficulties. Does spontaneous language indicate lack of appropriate order of events/information or omit main ideas and supporting details? Is there difficulty explaining or conceptualizing ?
2. Vocabulary difficulties. Does spontaneous language have inadequate vocabulary (nouns, verbs, descriptors) or finding/retrieving or storing words ?
3. Revisions, false starts, mazing

4. Whole word or phrase repetitions (esp. at clause boundaries)
5. Filled pauses or interjections (“um, ah, uh” etc.)
6. Silent pauses (esp. those that are longer than other pauses).
7. Imprecise and non-specific language (such as “thing, stuff, this, it” etc).
8. Describes or gives an example rather than labels object or action.

**SPEECH-MOTOR BREAKDOWN & COGNITIVE-LANGUAGE
FLUENCY BREAKDOWN CAN CO-EXIST IN SOME CHILDREN.**

Source: Judith Eckardt, SLP, Board Recognized Fluency Specialist, USA,
1/04