

Stuttering in Struggling Adult Readers

What was the goal of the study?

The researchers wanted to determine whether stuttering impacts reading skills and oral language fluency in adult learners.

Why was the study conducted?

Though stuttering affects 1% of the general population, the relationship between stuttering and reading skills in the adult literacy field has not been examined.

What did the study find?

The researchers found that 18% of the studied sample met the standards for stuttering, which is much higher than the general population. Compared to the participants who did not stutter, the adult learners who met the criteria for stuttering demonstrated lower oral language fluency and weaker relationships between their literacy skills, but did not show any difference in their reading comprehension or other measured reading-related skills.

Who participated in the study?

The participants in this study were 123 adult learners in the U.S. who were native speakers of English.

How was the study conducted?

Participants engaged in a brief interview in which they were asked two questions: 1) "Tell me about a negative or bad experience you had with reading in the past. Pick one that has stuck with you over the years," and 2) "Tell me about a positive or really good experience you have had with reading in the past. Just like the last one, pick one that has stuck with you over the years." Participants' responses to these questions were transcribed and the transcriptions were coded for oral disfluency features.

How can people use the results?

Practitioners may want to emphasize instruction on oral language and literacy skills for adult learners who stutter.

Reference

Choo, A. L., Greenberg, D., Li, H., & Talwar, A. (submitted). Prevalence of stuttering and factors associated with oral language fluency characteristics in adult struggling readers.