

Title

Is There Still a Place for Pseudo-stuttering Assignments for Speech-Language Pathology Students?

Primary Researcher(s)

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Rationale

Pseudo-stuttering assignments are assigned by Speech-Language Pathology (SLP) faculty with the aim of developing empathy for People Who Stutter (PWS) by SLP students (Ham, 1990). Klinger (1987) stated that “if clinicians are to be viewed as a vital link in the treatment of stuttering, then more should be known about clinicians and their own emotional reactions to PWS and stuttering situations”. Recently, SLP faculty have observed that students reported a level of discomfort with this assignment. This resistance ranged from students expressing discomfort to refusal to do the assignment, for example, “It feels insensitive. I could be the worst person in their eyes by pretending. It is rude to people who stutter. I am not going to understand them completely”. Preliminary results indicated that 78% of students would be willing to participate in pseudo-stuttering assignments if there was evidence indicating PWS were not offended. Faculty indicated surprise at the negative reactions as most had personally engaged in pseudo-stuttering as part of their training. Disability simulation assignments are common in other allied health professions such as psychology (Wurst & Wolford, 2009).

Aim

The purpose of this study is to examine attitudes toward pseudo-stuttering assignments. Three different groups of participants will be sampled. These include PWS, students taking SLP fluency classes, and faculty teaching these classes.

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