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Hypnosis as a technique for the treatment of stuttering

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Abstract

Various recorded studies have found that it is possible to reduce the severity of stuttering through the use of hypnosis. Yet, there have been very limited studies on the effect of hypnosis as a means of stuttering treatment. Some studies concluded that hypnosis reduces the severity of stuttering in the long term (Moss & Oackley, 1997), while others claim to a short term effect (Bloodstein, 1995). Most studies do not elaborate on the measures or techniques used to evaluate the impact of hypnosis treatment on stuttering. This study examined the influence of hypnotic therapy on a PWS volunteer. The stammering was analyzed in two ways:

- 1) Measurement of the overt stammering: a. percentage of stammering syllables- ss%, b. Stuttering like dysfluency SLD (Yairi, 1996). c. average number of repetitions (Ambrose & Yairi 1999) .
- 2) Measurement of covert stammering was done by: a. Speech Situation Checklist-SSC (Brutten, 1985). b. State Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) (Spielberger, 1966).

During the hypnosis the participant was offered suggestions of ego strengthening, treating past traumas, and enhancing his sense of control. The treatment took place through 8 treatment sessions and one follow up session. The suggestions were offered to try to reduce the severity of both the overt and covert features of stammering. The stuttering was recorded while reading and spontaneously speaking in the beginning and ending of each session. In addition, two questionnaires were filled in at the beginning and ending of therapy. The results showed that the stammering severity was reduced at the end of each session compared to the beginning. The results also showed that some of the improvements only lasted a short period of time while others lasted until the follow up session. Moreover, the covert features of stammering pointed to a change in the subject's feelings and perceptions.

Keywords: Hypnosis; Stuttering; Stammering

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