Accuracy + Automaticity + Prosody ➔ FLUENCY
Effects of Fluency on Reading Comprehension

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Oral Presentation—Workshop—Professional—Clinical View

Purpose—What is your workshop about?

Prosody is appropriate expression (intonation) combined with meaningful phrasing. There is growing consensus that accuracy, automaticity, and prosody all make contributions to fluency; together, they influence comprehension. Oral reading fluency is demonstrated through ease of word recognition, appropriate pacing, chunking of words into meaningful phrases, and intonation. Appropriate intonation is associated with better reading comprehension.

Accurate and automatic word identification is essential for fluent reading, but speed is overemphasized—perhaps because it is so easy to measure. Excessive rate can impede comprehension by shifting focus away from understanding or by interfering with comprehension. While it is true that exceedingly slow word recognition hinders comprehension, skilled readers vary their pace depending upon text difficulty, the complexity of ideas encountered in the text, and the reason for reading. To become a skilled reader, it is important to learn to be flexible, not simply fast.

Conclusions

Prosody may support the process of parsing sentences into syntactically and semantically correct chunks. When reading aloud, readers need to combine morphemic, pragmatic, syntactic, and semantic cues. “The prosodic representation of a sentence may provide the backbone on which the unification of a sentence depends” (Frazier, Carlson & Clifton, 2006). Studies have shown that text reading prosody is a key factor in the construct of reading fluency—over and above decoding efficiency and language comprehension.

Affiliations

- Clinical Professor—Division of Adolescent Medicine—Department of Pediatrics—University of California—San Francisco (UCSF)—Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry—School Consultation
- UCSF Dyslexia Research Team—http://dyslexia.ucsf.edu
- Certified Structured Literacy Dyslexia Specialist—International Dyslexia Association—www.dyslexiaida.org
- Board Certified Educational Therapist #10041—Association of Educational Therapists (AET)—www.aetonline.org
- Certified Academic Language Therapist (CALT) and Qualified Instructor (QI) of MSLE Teacher Training #1133
- Academic Language Therapy Association—www.altaread.org
- Certified Instructor of Slingerland Institute Teacher Education (Instructor of Teaching Level)
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- Licensed Dyslexia Therapist (LDT) #1750/Control Number 1753—Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation
- Past Member, Board of Directors—The International Dyslexia Association
- Past President, Northern California Branch—The International Dyslexia Association
- Dyslexia Evaluation and Remediation Clinic (DERC)—private practice
- Special Education Teacher and Program Consultant—Department of Special Education [Retired]—San Francisco Unified School District
References


