

The Rate of Inner Speech in Persons who Stutter
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Speech production for typical speakers is a seemingly effortless transition from thoughts or emotions to words and sentences. For persons who stutter (PWS), this transition can be effortful and emotionally distressing. Typically, fluent speakers develop a verbal thought and express it without conscious effort. Such spontaneous speech is not rehearsed, while other forms of speech are rehearsed. The rehearsals take place with “inner speech” (talking to yourself inside your head). In the present study, the rate of spontaneous speech of PWS and typical (TYP) participants was determined from inner (covert) speech and spoken (overt) speech. Compared to the overt condition, both groups produced more syllables per second (SPS) in the covert condition. In the overt condition, the PWS group tended to be slower than the TYP group. Six of the seven PWS reported they were 100% fluent with inner speech, and the seventh PWS reported they were 90% fluent with inner speech.