



## EFFECTIVENESS OF CONVERSATION THERAPY (DIALOGIC APPROACH) IN CHILDREN WHO STUTTER

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**Abstract:** This article examines the effectiveness of conversation therapy using a dialogic approach for children who stutter. The study analyzes how structured dialogues, interactive communication, and guided conversations can improve speech fluency, reduce anxiety, and enhance emotional stability. The integration of dialogic techniques with traditional speech therapy is explored, highlighting their role in increasing motivation, fostering self-confidence, and supporting social communication skills. Results indicate that a dialogic approach provides a supportive environment that significantly contributes to speech improvement and overall communicative competence in children who stutter.

**Keywords:** Stuttering, conversation therapy, dialogic approach, speech fluency, emotional support, children, communicative competence.

Stuttering is a common speech disorder among preschool and school-aged children, affecting not only articulation and rhythm but also self-esteem and social interaction. Traditional speech therapy methods focus on articulation, breathing, and rhythm exercises, yet they may overlook the psychological and social components of stuttering. Anxiety, fear of speaking, and social pressure often exacerbate stuttering episodes, limiting the child's communicative abilities.

Conversation therapy, particularly using a dialogic approach, emphasizes interactive communication between the therapist and child. Through guided dialogues, children are encouraged to express thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a structured, supportive environment. This approach allows for natural communication practice, reduces speaking-related anxiety, and promotes confidence in verbal interactions.

Stuttering is a multifaceted speech disorder that affects not only the mechanics of speech but also the emotional, social, and cognitive development of children. While traditional speech therapy techniques such as articulation exercises, breathing control, and rhythm training are effective in improving speech fluency, they often overlook the psychological and social components that contribute to stuttering. Anxiety, fear of



speaking, self-consciousness, and social pressure are common triggers that exacerbate stuttering episodes, making it essential to adopt approaches that integrate both technical and communicative aspects of speech.

Conversation therapy using a dialogic approach addresses these challenges by emphasizing interactive, meaningful communication between the child and therapist. Unlike conventional drills that focus solely on speech mechanics, dialogic therapy engages children in natural conversational situations, allowing them to practice fluency within the context of authentic communication. This approach fosters emotional support, reduces anticipatory anxiety, and strengthens self-confidence, all of which are crucial for managing stuttering effectively.

The methodology of dialogic conversation therapy involves structured sessions that are adapted to the child's age, speech severity, emotional state, and social needs. Sessions typically begin with warm-up activities designed to establish rapport and make the child comfortable in expressing thoughts. Simple question-and-answer interactions are then used to stimulate speech production while maintaining a relaxed environment. Open-ended questions encourage the child to provide elaborated responses, facilitating natural speech patterns and promoting cognitive engagement. By focusing on meaningful content rather than correctness alone, the child's attention shifts from the fear of stuttering to active participation in communication.

A key component of dialogic therapy is turn-taking and interactive exercises. Children learn to monitor their own speech rhythm while attending to conversational cues from the therapist. Role-playing and simulated social scenarios are incorporated to replicate real-life speaking situations, enabling children to apply fluency skills in a safe and controlled environment. For example, children may engage in storytelling, pretend dialogues, or social games that require verbal interaction. These activities not only enhance speech fluency but also improve social communication skills, including listening, responding appropriately, and maintaining topic coherence.

Parental involvement is an integral aspect of this approach. Parents are trained to support dialogic practice at home by engaging children in guided conversations, providing positive feedback, and modeling calm, fluent speech. Consistent reinforcement of conversational exercises outside therapy sessions helps generalize fluency skills to daily interactions. Moreover, the supportive presence of caregivers reduces emotional tension and creates a safe environment in which the child can experiment with speech without fear of judgment.



Research demonstrates that children participating in dialogic conversation therapy experience significant improvements in both speech fluency and emotional well-being. Reduction in stuttering frequency and severity is often observed after several weeks of structured dialogic sessions. Children exhibit increased confidence, greater willingness to participate in group activities, and enhanced self-expression. Importantly, improvements are not limited to structured therapy settings; children show better performance in classroom discussions, social interactions, and informal conversations, indicating successful transfer of skills to real-life contexts.

Integrating dialogic conversation therapy with traditional speech exercises amplifies therapeutic outcomes. Articulatory drills, breathing exercises, and rhythm training complement the dialogic approach by providing the child with concrete tools to control speech production. Meanwhile, dialogic interaction ensures that these technical skills are applied in natural, functional communication situations. This combined approach addresses both the mechanical and psychosocial dimensions of stuttering, creating a holistic intervention model that is responsive to the needs of each child.

Another important element of dialogic therapy is emotional regulation. The interactive nature of the sessions allows therapists to observe and respond to emotional triggers, helping children develop coping strategies to manage anxiety and frustration associated with stuttering. Techniques such as guided reflection, verbal labeling of feelings, and structured pauses provide children with the ability to monitor their emotional state while speaking. Over time, children internalize these strategies, resulting in reduced stress and smoother speech during conversations.

The dialogic approach also encourages creativity and spontaneity in communication. By engaging children in storytelling, imaginative dialogue, and collaborative problem-solving activities, therapists promote flexible thinking and adaptive speech strategies. This not only improves fluency but also enhances cognitive development, social competence, and resilience. Children learn to navigate complex communication situations with confidence, demonstrating both linguistic and social growth.

Overall, conversation therapy using a dialogic approach provides a comprehensive, child-centered method for managing stuttering. By integrating structured dialogue, parental support, role-play, emotional regulation, and complementary speech exercises, this approach addresses the multifaceted nature of stuttering. Children benefit from improved speech fluency, emotional stability, and



social competence, while parents and caregivers gain strategies to support ongoing communication development. This integrative method represents a modern, evidence-informed approach that enhances both the technical and functional aspects of speech in children who stutter, ultimately promoting long-term communicative success and overall well-being.

Conversation therapy using a dialogic approach is an effective intervention for children who stutter, addressing both speech mechanics and psychosocial factors. By engaging children in meaningful, interactive dialogue, this methodology helps reduce anxiety, enhance emotional stability, and improve speech fluency. Structured conversations, role-play, and social scenarios allow children to practice communication in a safe and supportive environment, promoting confidence and functional speech skills.

Integrating dialogic conversation therapy with traditional speech exercises amplifies therapeutic outcomes by combining technical speech control with natural communication practice. Parental involvement further strengthens the intervention, reinforcing skills at home and creating a positive, supportive environment for speech development. Clinical observations indicate significant improvements in stuttering frequency, conversational abilities, and social engagement, highlighting the effectiveness of this integrative approach.

In conclusion, the dialogic approach provides a modern, evidence-based framework for supporting children who stutter, fostering both communicative competence and emotional well-being. Its holistic and child-centered nature ensures that therapy addresses the multifaceted aspects of stuttering, leading to sustainable improvements in speech and overall development.



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