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EVALUATION OF FLUENCY IN DIFFERENTIAL DIAGNOSIS

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Objective: To compare the ability of cognitive measures versus behavioral ratings to predict two measures of fluency: processing speed (from the WISC-IV) and academic fluency (average of reading and math fluency). ADHD is associated with deficits in academic fluency.

Methods: A group of 85 undiagnosed children referred for academic difficulties were administered a psychoeducational battery, which included both cognitive measures and behavioral rating scales.

Results: Multiple regression analyses showed that cognitive measures accounted for approximately 24% of the variance in the Processing Speed Index (sig. at $p < .001$) and 37% of the variance in Average Fluency (sig. at $p < .001$); on the other hand, the Behavioral Rating Measures accounted for approximately 6% of the variance in the Processing Speed Index (not statistically sig.) and 17% of the variance in Average Fluency (sig. at $p < .05$).

Conclusion: These findings point to a statistically significant correlation between the cognitive measures and measures of processing speed and fluency. The absence of explicit fluency items on rating scales is not compensated for by a strong correlation between fluency and other items in these rating scales. Since academic fluency is an important part of functioning in the classroom, rating scales should include items that measure this skill.

Key Words: ADHD, Assessment, Fluency