

# What's going on in France in the field of cluttering?

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In France, cluttering was historically misunderstood by Speech and Language Therapists. In 2012 some French speech therapists went to the international conference on cluttering, in 2013 a two-day workshop on cluttering was organised with Dr Yvonne Van Zaalen (40 participants), and in 2016 Dr Florence Myers did another two-day cluttering workshop (60 participants). Since then, this fluency disorder began to be better understood and treated.

For the last 10 years there has been increasing interest in cluttering and the French stuttering association APB began to make room for this "new cousin": since 2018, its conference held every 2 years includes talks about cluttering. Since 2013 cluttering courses are also included in training for SLT students at university in most of the 21 speech therapy schools in France.

Some articles were published, among them an article from Yvonne Van Zaalen and Isabella Reichel (2013), translated into French for a speech therapy review of fluency disorders.

Ten years after the first workshop, it was time to review cluttering practices in France.

First, an online questionnaire was sent to the 5 French trainers in cluttering, to the APB association and to speech therapists on social media. The questionnaire was designed for SLTs who are trained, having attended at least one cluttering workshop or their undergraduate training.

In our estimation, this questionnaire reached 500 speech-therapists interested in stuttering and cluttering. 104 SLTs answered the questionnaire, and four are out of the cohort (they aren't trained and never had people who clutter (PWC) on their caseload). Please note that in 2019, 25,607 graduated SLTs were working in France.

## Who are they?

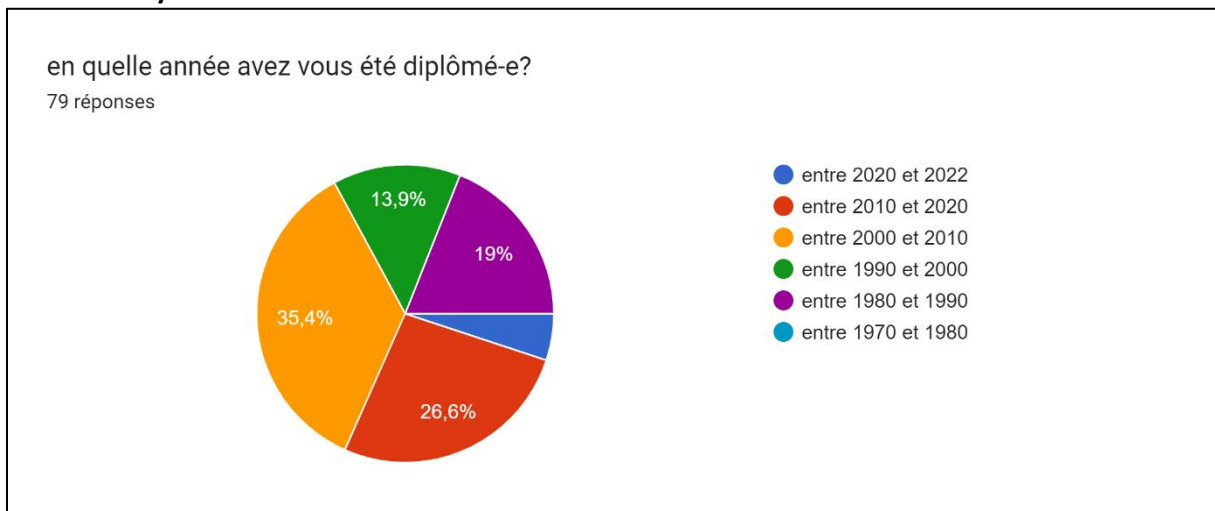


Fig. 1: Year of graduation (79 respondents). In blue: 2020-2022, in red: 2010-2020, in yellow: 2000-2010, in green: 1990-2000, in purple: 1980-1990.

35% graduated between 2000 and 2010.

26% graduated between 2010 and 2020.

19% graduated between 1980 and 1990.

14% graduated between 1990 and 2000.

5% are new graduates in speech therapy.

87% are working in private practice, 8% in both private and public services, 3% in public services.

**When were they trained in cluttering?**

To our knowledge, 5 SLT’s provided courses and workshops in France about cluttering for the past 10 years. Unfortunately, we couldn’t manage to gather precise statistics about these workshops. We gathered some information from a colleague, claiming that she trained approximately 80 SLTs in cluttering each year since 2012. A fluency-shaping program inspired by Camperdown and Namasivayan’s research has been developed by M. Pendelieu in France (2G2A; some SLTs were trained with this program.

I trained 209 SLTs from 2016 to 2023 during two-day or three-day workshops (10 sessions in total), based on the work of Yvonne Van Zaalen & Isabella Reichel and Kathleen Scaler-Scott & David Ward.

One SLP reported being trained since 2003, with another having trained in 2016.

2 reported training in 2007, one in 2010 and 3 in 2011

Since 2012:

2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	5	1	6	5	9	4	5	9	3	15	2

TOTAL:65

**What kind of cluttering clients?**

First, it’s important to note that 27 respondents (25% of the total) didn’t treat any people who clutter (PWC), 77% because they hadn’t any referral, 29% because they feared doing wrong when treating PWC.

Since they were trained, most of the respondents treated less than 5 clients who clutter.

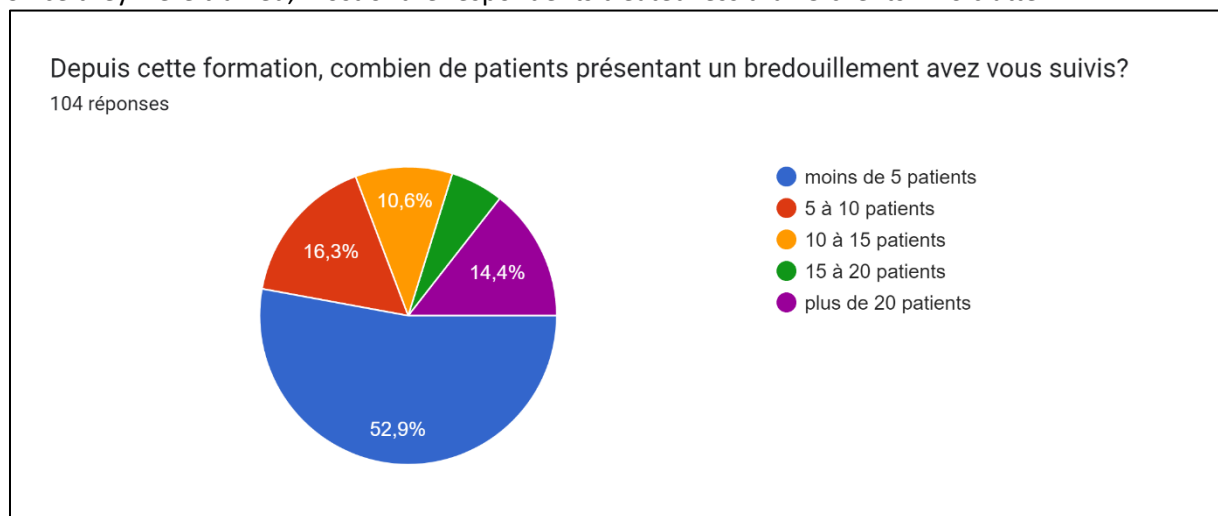


Fig. 2: Number of clients who clutter in caseload since training (104 respondents). In blue: less than 5, in red: 5 to 10, in yellow: 10 to 15, in green: 15 to 20, in purple: more than 20.

These clients were mostly adolescents.

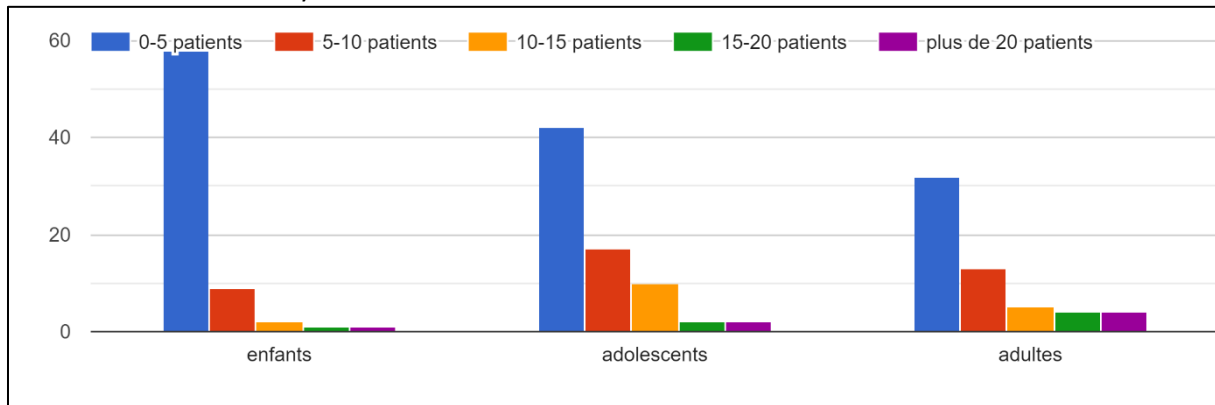


Fig. 3: Ages and number of clients who clutter in the caseload since training

Concerning co-occurring conditions, not surprisingly most clients had a stutter and a clutter (83% of the respondents observed stuttering features in their client's speech), and many had ADHD or expressive language disorders (37% and 40%). Respondents also noticed high intellectual abilities (36%) and apraxia (17%) were present.

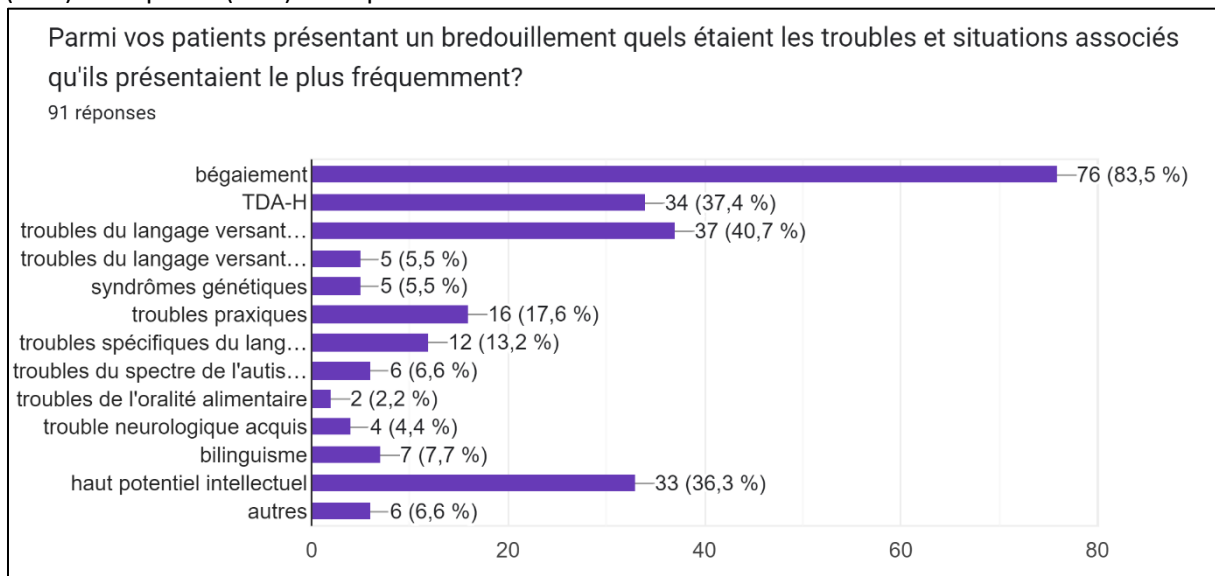


Fig. 4: Co-occurring conditions in clients who clutter (91 respondents). From top to bottom: stuttering, ADHD, expressive language disorder, receptive language disorder, genetic conditions (ex: Down syndrome), apraxia, dyslexia, ASD, Feeding issues (picky eaters, gag reflex), neurological acquired conditions, bilingualism, high intellectual functioning, other.

### How did the respondents evaluate cluttering?

Two Screening tools are used: Predictive Cluttering Inventory Revised PCI-R (Van Zaalen et al. 2009) and Cluttering Severity Instrument (Bakker & Myers, 2011, translated by C. Aunis-Oumghar).

Yvonne Van Zaalen & Isabella Reichel's Fluency Assessment Battery (2015) has been translated by N. Brejon-Teitler and V Aumont-Boucand in 2013 and it is widely used by respondents.

Articulatory rate measures (in syllables per second) and retelling a story (Wallet story) are the most frequently used assessments, OMAS and SPA tests are also widely used (39% and 43%). 46% of the respondents also assess the impact on daily life, Sheehan's Iceberg (32%) and qualitative evaluation (34%). Please note that there was an error in the questions (OMAS appeared 2 times, 41 respondents use it during assessment).

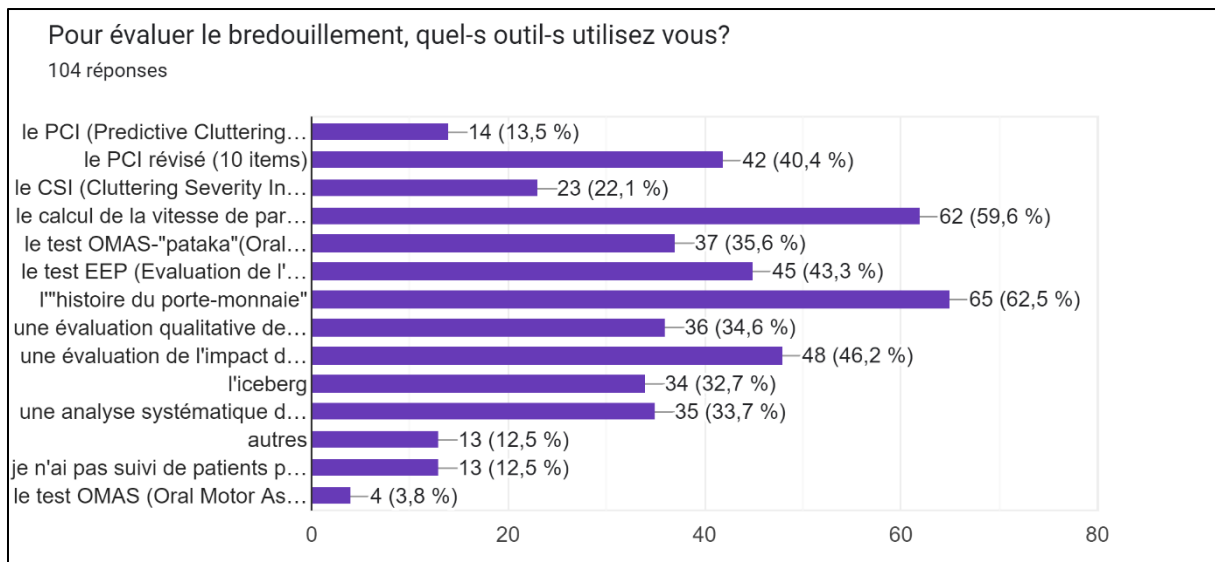


Fig. 5: Assessment tools used (104 respondents). From top to bottom: PCI, PCI-R, CSI, speech rate, OMAS, SPA test, Wallet story, qualitative evaluation, assessment of the impact on daily life, Sheehan's Iceberg, SDA, others, I had no clients who clutter, OMAS

### What are the main treatment goals?

Participants had to cite their 3 main therapeutic goals for cluttering treatment. Ninety participants provided their main goals.

71% of the respondents answered increasing awareness was their main goal, 63% cited work on speech rate and 28% cited work on pragmatics and overall communication. The other therapeutic goals cited are articulatory accuracy (27%), work on thoughts and feelings (17%), work on pausing (16.5%) and work on adjustment to listeners' attitudes (13%). Some participants mentioned working with 2G2A and fluency shaping techniques (6% and 7%). A few others cited working with relatives or addressing attentional and executive functions. *issues.*

### What do participants suggest for increasing awareness of cluttering?

Seventy participants suggested some ideas for increasing awareness of cluttering. The main idea is to have more representation of cluttering in general media and social media (48%), to educate doctors and healthcare professionals (37%), and schools (22%). 17% of the respondents said better informing SLTs and students is important as well. 14% of the respondents suggested producing information leaflets and posters for waiting rooms could be useful while seven percent noticed celebrities talking openly about their cluttering could be useful.

### Conclusion

Cluttering is becoming better known among SLTs but they don't have many referrals compared to stuttering. This comes from the fact that cluttering is still unknown in the general population and mainstream media. Even though eloquence contests included PWC this awareness remains to be developed. Many PWC are facing incomprehension and stigma because their speech disorder is not known to their listeners. We hope to continue training courses for students and SLTs and to spread knowledge about cluttering in the media: APB podcast includes an episode about cluttering, and at every stuttering awareness day, APB events include information about cluttering. It also produces books and leaflets to inform doctors and teachers about cluttering. We hope these publications will be better known in the future.

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**Resources:**

"On me dit que je bredouille, ça veut dire quoi ?"

A l'attention des collégiens qui bredouillent et de leurs proches



Information leaflet for adolescents: <https://www.begaieement.org/wp-content/uploads/depliant-bredouillement-ado.pdf>

Poster for teachers: <https://www.begaieement.org/wp-content/uploads/plaquette-prof.pdf>



QU'EST-CE QUE LE BREDOUILLEMENT ?



Source d'incompréhension et de souffrance, le bredouillement est une entrave à la communication.

Faisons en sorte qu'il ne perturbe pas nos vies.

Information leaflet for medical doctors and healthcare professionals: <https://www.begaieement.org/wp-content/uploads/depliant-bredouillement.pdf>



Handbook for students and SLTs: Aumont-boucand V., Pendelieu M. (2022). Bégaiement, bredouillement de l'enfant, Ortho Editions

Podcast produced by APB, episode 5 is about cluttering : <https://www.begaieement.org/les-episodes-du-podcast-begue-et-toi-begue-et-moi/>



Video about cluttering (A. Toth and C. Lombard) 8'42 minutes : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L3hqfBsD14Q&t=41s>



video produced by APB about cluttering (2'09mn): <https://www.begalement.org/bredouillement/>

A leaflet for school-aged children is available:



An app allows to calculate speech rate automatically:  
It's useable in therapy, even though it needs some improvement (stops recording if speaker pauses, which can be a problem if you want to work on pausing): <https://speak-control.com/>



A novel for school-aged children, about a Russian young prince doing everything very fast, to my knowledge the only French-speaking novel about cluttering.

