

The purpose of this project is to investigate three cognitive abilities (working memory, speed of processing, executive function) in people who stutter across the lifespan. Results will reveal whether these cognitive abilities develop, mature, and decline along the same trajectory in people who stutter versus people who do not stutter from childhood to senescence. Results will have implications for understanding long-term cognitive plasticity in people who stutter. Results of this project will contribute to a larger set of pilot data (currently being collected at the University of South Florida) that will be used to craft a large-grant (R01) application to the National Institutes of Health, NIDCD. The aim of that large-grant project will be to investigate cognitive plasticity in people who stutter. Cognitive plasticity is requisite for therapeutic change. However, relatively little is known about cognitive plasticity in people who stutter, who are prone to relapse after therapy for stuttering. Results of this pilot study and (if funded) the larger grant project will help us to understand how cognitively plastic people who stutter are at different points along the age span, and whether intervention is needed (e.g., cognitive training) as a precursor to therapy for stuttering to optimize therapy outcomes, reduce relapse and foster carry-over.