



Stuttering Research and Medical Updates
 Thursday, July 9, 2020, 4:30-6p Eastern
 Slides for presentation by J. Scott Yaruss

1

J Scott Yaruss, PhD, CCC-SLP, BCS-F




- Michigan State University
 - Professor and Director of PhD Programs
 - BA, Linguistics and Psychology, University of California Berkeley
 - MS, PhD, Speech-Language Pathology, Syracuse University
 - Former member of the board of directors, National Stuttering Association
- Research Interests
 - Increasing understanding of the lived experiences of people who stutter / Documenting the impact of stuttering on people's lives
 - Exploring how individual differences relate to treatment experiences
 - Evaluating treatment efficacy; improving treatment to reduce adverse impact
 - Measuring the variability of stuttering, comparing real-world experiences to laboratory and clinical measures, and developing new ways to evaluate stuttering
- Lab Website: <https://stutteringlab.msu.edu>. Email: jsy@msu.edu

2



3

What is stuttering, anyway?

- Most definitions of stuttering are based on the perceptions of *listeners*
 - The specific observable behaviors that clinicians, parents, and others hear or see
 - E.g., repetitions, prolongations, blocks, and so-called “secondary” characteristics
- **This is not how many people who stutter report experiencing stuttering**
 - Many people who stutter reflect on the internal feeling that goes with moments of stuttering – a sensation of being “stuck” or “unable” to move forward
- This sensation is not reflected in current definitions or classifications, and this has implications for research and clinical work
 - Classification of severity based on what a clinician/researcher can see *in the moment*
 - Determination of therapy success based on observable features

4

Defining Stuttering in Terms of Adverse Impact



- In 2004, **Bob Quesal** and I described the experience of adverse impact in stuttering based on the World Health Organization's *International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF)*
- This model describes how the impact of stuttering (i.e., limitations in daily activities and restrictions in participation) involves an interaction between the *impairment, personal and environmental factors, and daily life experiences*
- This work forms the foundation for the **OASES**

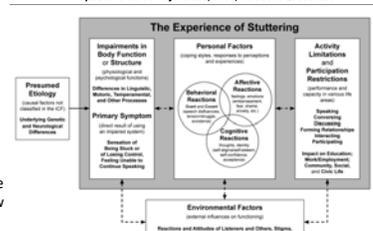
Robert W. Quesal, PhD, CCC-SLP, Professor Emeritus, Western Illinois University

Yaruss & Quesal, 2004

5

Stuttering as Defined by People Who Stutter

Update to the ICF by Yaruss, 1998; Yaruss & Quesal 2004



- We asked 430 adults who stutter what they experience during the moment of stuttering
- They uniformly reported that stuttering involves more than just observable disfluencies
 - They emphasized the importance of the sensation of feeling “stuck”
- So, *we changed our definition!* (Tichenor & Yaruss, 2019) and we hope that others will change how they think about stuttering, too!

6

The NSA Makes a Difference

- Much of this work was conducted with the help of the NSA Research Committee for recruitment
 - We are grateful to Drs. Lee Reeves and Tony Caruso for starting the NSARC years ago
 - We are grateful to the NSA Board of Directors for continuing to support the NSARC
 - We are grateful to Dr. Kathy Scaler-Scott for chairing the NSARC and helping us with the review of these many projects
- Some of you may have participated in these studies
 - We are, above all, grateful to YOU!
- Please consider participating in our ongoing studies about the experiences of people who stutter

7

<https://StutteringLab.MSU.edu>

8

Some of our ongoing studies at: <https://StutteringLab.MSU.edu>

- Self-perceptions and self-awareness related to stuttering
 - with Dr. Shelley Brundage from George Washington University
- Experience of suicidal thoughts amongst people who stutter
 - with Rod Gabel from SUNY Binghamton & Scott Palasik from Univ. of Akron
- Temperament and how it relates to therapy experiences
- Social Isolation and Stuttering
 - with Katie Gore from SpeechIRL & Scott Palasik from Univ. of Akron
- Stuttering Severity: *what is it? how should we measure it?*
- *And many more to come!*

9

And, that's *not* all...

- PhD student **Caryn Herring** is studying desensitization in stuttering therapy: what methods work, if they do?
 - This work involves biophysiological measures and virtual reality!
- MA student **Angelica Wozniak** is examining whether societal attitudes toward stuttering are related to impact of stuttering and self-stigma
- MA student **Danielle Zukowski** is examining how SLPs decide whether, when, and how to treat children who stutter in groups
- And...I have a few projects of my own going on, as well...

10

Variability of Stuttering

- Everyone knows that **stuttering varies**.
 - Few studies document it and *very few studies that take it into account*
- **What we don't know is...**
 - How widespread variability is (probably *very*)
 - If everyone experiences the same degree of variability (probably *no*)
 - What causes some people to experience more or less variability than others (?)
 - How variability is related to adverse impact (?)
 - What causes variability to vary over time (probably *experiences*, but which ones?)
 - Basically, everything else about variability!

Constantino et al., 2016

Chris Constantino, PhD
Assistant Professor
Florida State Univ.

11

Variability of Stuttering

- **This is a problem!** Virtually every study that has ever been done on stuttering has been based on within-clinic or within-laboratory speech samples, even though we know that those samples are not representative of the real world!
 - I want to change that!
- **Starting July 1**, I am conducting an NIH-supported study examining variations in observable and self-perceived stuttering behaviors in the real-world
 - The goal is to evaluate whether existing measures are sufficient (probably *they aren't*) and to develop new ways of measuring stuttering that are:
 - Reliable, valid, and reflective of variability in the real world
 - Based on the *speaker's experience* not just the *listener's perceptions*
- I was planning on starting recruitment at the NSA conference (Here we are!)
 - **Please contact info@StutteringLab.MSU.edu or jsy@msu.edu to learn more!**

12