The College Experience of Stuttering: An Ethnographic Study

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ASHA: American Speech-Language Hearing Association

CA: Conversational Analysis

CBT: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

CWS: Children Who Stutter

ECD: Ethnography of communication disorders

IRB: Institutional Review Board

OASES: Overall Assessment of the Speaker's Experience of Stuttering

PWS: Persons Who Stutter

PWNS: Persons Who Don't Stutter

PFSP: Precision Fluency Shaping Program

SSI-4: Stuttering Severity Instrument

SLP: Speech-Language Pathologist

ULL: University of Louisiana at Lafayette

WHO: World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Every year, college students from around the world gather in Norfolk, Virginia to participate in a stuttering clinic titled the Precision Fluency Shaping Program. Over the course of several weeks, students are instructed to re-learn the motoric skills of speech with the primary objective to eliminate stuttering. Eliminating stuttering is easier said than done, but by augmenting speech patterns, changing rate of speech, and implementing specific strategies (easy onsets, prolongations, continuous phonation) students are able to achieve a high degree of fluency while in the clinic.

In the Fall of 2002, I moved to Virginia to begin an internship within this specific clinic in hopes to broaden my understanding of the theoretical knowledge of stuttering and improve my clinical skills as a speech-language pathologist. I had not planned on staying in Virginia for more than one summer internship; however, my stay in Norfolk ultimately lasted for 5 years, which was the time it took me to graduate from college at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia. I did not know that my time in Virginia would change my perception of stuttering and treatment forever.

As stated above, the Precision Fluency Shaping Program is a stuttering treatment program that bases its theoretical underpinnings of stuttering as a motor speech disorder, thus their treatment is delivered from a framework of augmenting speech patterns in order to not stutter. Specific fluency skills are taught at the respiratory, phonatory, and articulatory levels with biofeedback measures providing reinforcement. If a sound is not properly augmented, then a "re-do" of that sound is required until the accurate sound along with no stuttering is produced. Fluency techniques are taught for eight hours a day in a cubicle and group setting, and briefly in real-life situations. This type of therapy can be rigorous at times due to the

repetitive nature of the program. In theory, this seems logical for someone attempting to not stutter; many of the patients who attended the program expressed difficulties of transferring the newly acquired speech skills into authentic speaking contexts. In fact, many of the patients come back for a "refresher" course or re-enroll in the two-week program altogether in hopes to more fully embed the shaping techniques into their speech patterns. Since stuttering is viewed from a motor speech disorder in this context, the mindset is the harder one practices, the better the outcome will be for that patient.

Some of my more memorable times in Virginia were not spent in the speech clinic, but rather spent with the patients outside of the clinic for one of the many meals shared together over the course of the two-week program. It was during this time that friendships were made, tears were shed, drinks were consumed, and most importantly, stories were told. Many of the stories told were about the life impact of stuttering and how difficult it was to navigate conversation in a fluent world. I did not know the importance of stories at the time, nor the impact they would have on my life almost a decade later, but listening to these different "stories of stuttering" started an insurgence of the behavioral and artificial stuttering treatment I had participated with for so many years in Virginia.

In the Summer of 2012, in my first semester of my PhD program at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette (ULL), I was exposed to stuttering therapy at the university's "Semi-Intensive Stuttering Program" that was much different than my previous tenure in Virginia. It defied many of the previous theories I had about stuttering treatment in that stuttering was not only a motoric speech disorder, but a multi-factorial disorder that affects individuals and families in a variety of ways. The emphasis of treatment was not placed on drilling and rigorous behavioral strategies but on understanding the essence and nature of stuttering for

each individual through acceptance of stuttering, effectively navigating the emotions related to stuttering (stress, anxiety, guilt, etc.), and successfully learning strategies to help reduce the overt stuttering behaviors (prolongations, blocks, repetitions). To understand stuttering was to understand the complexity of human communication and the many variables involved. One vital component of this process of change were yet again "stories of stuttering. These stories were told by the PWS throughout the treatment process and used to help an individual gain insight on how stuttering has affected them in the past and present. The ideology behind the stuttering intervention at the University of Louisiana Lafayette is that stuttering is a part of the individual so curing is not an option but through cognitive restructuring and implementation of client-centered behavioral strategies a person learns to stutter with more ease in every facet of life. They learn how to effective navigate communicative contexts that are constructed for the non-stutterer.

What interested me the most during that summer was the value placed on life experiences and personal triumphs when dealing with stuttering. Previously, my time spent with the Precision Fluency Shaping Program (PFSP) did not place value on the meaning behind these life experiences for persons who stutter (PWS), rather, life experiences were discarded in order to make room for the regimented behavioral strategies that were to be implemented in an attempt to cure stuttering. I might also state the relapse rate for these behavioral programs such as PFSP is at least 70%, sometimes as high as 90% (Craig & Calver, 1991; Craig & Hancock, 1995; Daylu & Kalinowski, 2002). The behavioral approach is clearly able to modify superficial behavior but does not deal with such nebulous concepts as personal growth, self-esteem, and anxiety (Luterman, 2008, pp. 14); however, these concepts have considerable effect on communication behavior and may be very useful for

accomplishing a therapeutic change (Plexico, Manning, & DiLollo, 2005). Stories were an integral part of the stuttering intervention program because they laid the foundation of treatment for each individual. That is, their story came with a wealth of information that was meaningful to them and thus meaningful to the treating therapist. Their stories laid the foundation for where to begin treatment and also where treatment was headed.

Stories were not limited to my time in Louisiana, in fact, many of the participants at PFSP were college students and so often the stories shared were of their experiences in college or at the universities. The difference in the two contexts though were stories were organically constructed in Virginia as two like-minded stutterers took part in discourse but were recognized as an integral part of the therapeutic process in Louisiana. Sometimes these stories were positive in nature, such as overcoming adversity by speaking up during class discussions, but typically the stories shared were filled with the obstacles involved at the university level. For them, stuttering in the universities was quite challenging and often filled with negative experiences such as teasing, exclusion, and even academic penalty as a result of stuttering. But what captivated me most about these stories were the great lengths they went through in order to maneuver conversation and to overcome communication barriers that existed.

Many of the PWS spoke about the different strategies that helped them communicate such as word swapping, judiciously placed interjections, and strategic positioning in the classroom. They spoke about how social partners did not understand the rules of stuttering and thus took their turns at talk, spoke over them, and even took the dominant role at times in discourse, which ultimately affected their identity as a speaker. These stories were not consistent to one stuttering group but existed in many of the narratives told in both settings. I

4

didn't know it at the time, but I was discovering the language of stuttering through story telling.

Stories of stuttering and taking numerous classes about stuttering during my doctoral studies at ULL helped me discover that stuttering was so much more than just stuttering. Stuttering was the life impact of stuttering. Through the many stories of stuttering I heard over a decade of treating stutterers and in different contexts around the United States, I began to discover stuttering as a complex language of its own embedded with socially shared rules and individual systematicity. To understand stuttering was to understand the complex interactions of various kinds of structures, behaviors, and strategies implemented by stutterers. And to understand stuttering was also to understand the collaborative process of language, as stuttering not only affects the stutterer but also affects the social partner, as they too have devised their own set of strategies to interact with stutterers.

The more I sought to understand the complexity of stuttering, the more I reflected on the college stutterer's stories of adversity and the many beers that I shared with them. From what I've gathered from this decade of stories is nothing short of remarkable. They are filled with individual triumphs and hardships that all point to human communication as a social action. That is, communication is filled with repeated occurrences of behaviors that serve a specific purpose at a given point in time (Damico & Mackie, 2003). As a PWS myself, these stories that seem to describe the true essence of stuttering are almost absent from serious academic outlets. I was intrigued to develop a study to shed light on their stories and the strategies implemented by PWS. The purpose of this study is to add to our understanding of stuttering through these "real-life" stories that cannot be duplicated in any research

laboratory. Our improved comprehension of the true disorder can help fill the much-needed

hole in the research for PWS.

As my passion grew to examine the language of stuttering within the many different

contexts within universities (classrooms, cafeterias, restaurants, bars, student union centers,

etc.) I needed a specific framework to capture the multi-faceted nature of stuttering. Within

the university system, a method that could focus on communication as a collaborative effort,

and also understand the contextual influence in human communication was required. For this

reason, I referred back to my training in qualitative methodologies at the University of

Louisiana-Lafayette.

My time spent at the University of Louisiana Lafayette was not only consumed with

understanding stuttering, but also spent in learning about qualitative research and the

strengths associated with this method of inquiry. Qualitative research is a method of inquiry

that has its roots in the fields of anthropology and sociology and seeks to understand the

underpinnings of human development by accounting for variables in naturalistic contexts.

Unlike behavioral paradigms that attempt to control for these variables and lose ecological

validity in the process, qualitative research seeks to determine how a specific social

phenomenon (stuttering) operates by understanding the procedural affairs involved in it. In

other words, by implementing this research paradigm, I could examine the systematic and

judicious strategies that PWS and their social partners employ through an observable and

descriptive processes. This can help us understand the experience of stuttering within the

universities from the lens of the PWS. As I would take on a learner's role as a researcher and

embed myself in the university context, I would observe the multi-faceted nature of the

disorder. Through a qualitative research lens, I would begin my journey of understanding the true experience of stuttering within the university setting.

Choosing a research paradigm that aligned with my philosophical beliefs about stuttering and my preliminary research questions was a vital component in the initial stages of this study. During the Spring 2014 semester, I was enrolled in a qualitative research class taught by Dr. Jack S. Damico at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette where I studied the many traditions of inquiry within qualitative research that helped me make an informed decision in this research process. One of my most meaningful assignments that term was employing ethnographic data collection methods of participant observations in order to capture the essence of a Mardi Gras parade in Louisiana. In this assignment, I embedded myself in the parade itself and became an active agent in this culture. By observing the parade through a broad and observer lens, the social culture of Mardi Gras was revealed and believe it or not, as all social phenomena reveal, there was a systematicity to the language of Mardi Gras. The depth of understanding of the culture of Mardi Gras further came to a realization in the cyclical nature of expansion of field notes that was accomplished later in the process. This depth and model of "learner's role" using ethnographic methods would allow me the flexibility to capture the university experience for PWS. In fact, to discover the meanings of a specific culture (university) and gain the desired understanding of how the social action under focus is accomplished, an immersion into that context is essential (Nelson, Abendroth, & Lynch, 2014). Further, the foundation of ethnography is concerned with understanding contextually sensitive, complex phenomena that require interpretation in an empirically defensible manner (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Lofland, 2001). This appears to be the ideal methodology to understand the college experience of PWS.

In addition to my life experiences playing a major role in my decision for this current study, there is limited research to document the life impact on PWS within educational institutions. One could argue that the lack of research and limited knowledge in how PWS achieve social action in general is a results of ill-suited research methods implemented that do not account for the complexity of human communication. A study by Tetnowski (2004) showed that a clear majority of stuttering research still comes from an experimental research paradigm that stresses the importance of laboratory controls (Tetnowski, 2004). This disconnect between much of the current research regarding stuttering in educational institutions and lack of ecological validity that exists may limit our true understanding of stuttering. For this reason, a qualitative research design with ethnographic methods will prove useful information in the field of stuttering. Understanding the unique communication barriers associated with stuttering and attending a university, as well as the strategies implemented to manage these challenges, would enhance SLP's abilities to enable positive communicative interactions between PWS in universities and other social partners involved within this context. It is my hope that through this study, that we can expand the knowledge base in this area and add to the understanding of PWS patterns of socialization and the construction of identity in the universities.

This dissertation is divided into six chapters that reveal the background, methodological design, results, and conclusions of this study. Chapter One serves as a basic introduction that helps describe the purpose of the study. Chapter Two includes a review of the literature relevant to the investigation including two opposing philosophical beliefs about stuttering assessment and treatment and the culture for people with disabilities within the university setting. Chapter Three describes in detail the methodology used for this

investigation along with descriptions of the four participants. Chapter Four details the individual results of the study for each of the four participants as related to the specific research questions. Chapter Five will discuss how the individual results of all participants can be compared and contrasted with the other PWS involved in the study. Additionally, the common themes that emerge will be defined and described as part of Chapter Five. Lastly, Chapter Six will conclude with a discussion of the results, the clinical and research implications of these findings, as well as limitations of this study and future directions.

In conclusion and in keeping with the essence of qualitative research and stepping into the learner's role, Stefanie Wiesman explains what it's like to be in a college classroom and be a Person Who Stutters, (USA Today Campus Life, July 2013). This further solidifies the need for research in stuttering within the university setting, in hopes to broaden our understanding of social action for PWS.

> Like all the occasions in which I stuttered badly, this one is forever ingrained
> in my memory. It was the beginning of the semester and a professor had just
> asked my name, when suddenly my vocal cords closed up. In a moment that
> took all of five seconds but seemed to last an eternity, I found myself hissing
> like a snake: "S-S-S-S-S-Stefanie." Embarrassment flooded over me in hot
> waves as my classmates exchanged glances and my teacher tried to look
> nonchalant. Shortly thereafter, I dropped the course because I didn't like the
> professor's teaching style—or so I told myself (2). School is hard enough for
> the average student, but for a person who stutters, it can be downright torture.
> Basic tasks like saying your name and using the phone become terrifying
> ordeals. Many students with this problem avoid speaking in class. For them,

making a presentation can be a traumatic experience. When they leave school,

they face discrimination in the workplace and in life. (5)

<center>**CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**</center>

This chapter contains a review of the literature relevant to the dissertation. There are four sections that detail stuttering and its various effects on life participation along with a literature review of stuttering in educational institutions. Part One defines stuttering from two philosophical beliefs in order to explain the contrasting paradigms of treatment and assessment, which are behaviorist paradigm and social constructivist paradigm. This study is oriented towards a social model of stuttering so part one provides a description of the social model along with treatment approaches that operate from this philosophical belief. Part Two provides a review of the educational culture for persons with disabilities and the role of identity within those institutions. Part Three discusses the culture for person(s) who stutter (PWS) within educational institutions, including universities. Lastly, Part Four provides a summary of the chapter and the particular importance this study may provide to the field of stuttering and the lives of PWS.

What is Stuttering?

Attempting to define stuttering is almost as complicated as finding a cure for stuttering. Maybe at some point in time scholars will be able to have a universal definition of stuttering but in present day this is not the case. In fact, the more we discover about stuttering, the more complicated defining stuttering has become. The many challenges that exist in defining stuttering all point to the different perspectives from researchers and clinicians that drive individual theory, research, and practice. These different perspectives also all point to the complicated tasks of finding common ground in the field of stuttering. Two of the more common philosophical beliefs in stuttering are a) a behaviorist paradigm and b) a constructivist paradigm.

Behaviorist Paradigm. Stuttering is not new to the world of speech pathology and in fact one could argue that it was the first discipline in the field to emerge as a quantifiable disorder. This information dates back to the first PhD program that was conceived at the University of Iowa in 1929 with its first graduate being Lee Edward Travis (Siegel, 1999). From many accounts Travis is considered the father of speech pathology and given credit for establishing the first major theory of stuttering through his cerebral dominance theory (Siegel, 1999). Travis was not new to the disordered population and in fact studied in the field of clinical psychology for several years before finding a niche in stuttering research. The rise of post-positivistic methods in psychology (scientific method) during this time influenced many of the ways researchers attempted to quantify stuttering and thus further explain the cause of stuttering. Although Travis and many of the early pioneers of stuttering such as Wendell Johnson and Robert West did not describe stuttering with only the observable features, they were experimentalists and much of their early work validates this claim (Johnson, 1942; Travis, 1931; West, 1958). Experimentalists design controlled experiments in which they identify and isolate independent and dependent variables so as to prove or disprove their research hypothesis (Duchan, 2014). The premise is that if they control for enough causes, there is only one outcome that exists (Tetnowski & Damico, 2004). Since the inception of research in stuttering, experimental design has been viewed as the gold standard and has permeated the stuttering literature (Bothe, Ingham, Finn, Langevin, & Onslow, 2002; Tetnowski & Damico, 2004); it is likely the influence of psychology in the early years played a large part in defining stuttering.

As the post-positivist view is largely based on numeric observations in a controlled setting, stuttering is viewed from that which can be clearly defined and measured. That is,

they study what they can only see or what is observable. From this behavioristic perspective, stuttering is defined by the overt characteristics or observable features (e.g. repetitions, blocks, prolongations). It is this superficial aspect segment of stuttering that is typically understood by society as stuttering and many movies (Fish Called Wanda, Waterboy, Pearl Harbor) that have portrayed stuttering this way help solidify this perspective. In fact, for many years textbooks and researchers defined stuttering as being only the physical disruptions that manifested themselves during speech. One of the most common definitions of stuttering and still used today "is a disruption in the fluency of verbal expression, which is characterized by involuntary, audible or silent repetitions or prolongations in the utterance of speech" (Wingate, 1964). If researchers subscribe to a definition such as this, then how they quantify and explain stuttering will be grounded in this belief. As such, experimental researchers typically collect data within a clinical context apart from authentic settings as they are not concerned with generalization but measuring specific behavioral changes. These behavioristic beliefs about stuttering are presumably why many of the first assessments of stuttering such as the stuttering severity instrument (Riley, 1972) Iowa Scale (Johnson, Darley, & Spriestersbach, 1963), and Sherman-Lewis Scale (D. Lewis & Sherman, 1951) measured the physical characteristics of stuttering and were seen once again as the gold standard in quantifying stuttering.

Social constructivism paradigm. The opposing view, in attempting to define stuttering and in alignment with this current study, is the social constructivist perspective of stuttering. Social constructivism is the belief that people develop through social encounters and make meaning based on these encounters. Social constructivists believe the way in which a person interprets the world is derived through social interactions and lived experiences. So

stuttering, from this perspective, is defined through how it hinders their overall quality of life

or the life impact it may have on an individual. Stuttering is not defined by only the overt

characteristics but takes into account the emotions and contextual influence of

communication.

The constructivist researcher is concerned with collecting data outside of the

laboratory or clinical context, in as natural of a setting as possible. This allows the researcher

to look at the complexity of issues rather than narrowing down questions into clearly

definable categories and measures (Tetnowski & Damico, 2004). Constructivists believe that

conversation is contextual, thus persons will respond differently in a host of settings.

Therefore, a persons lived experiences and validation from those lived experiences effect

every interaction and social partner involved. For example, a PWS may choose not to speak

in a large class due to the anxiety he/she may experience based on past experiences but that

same person may choose to speak in a much smaller setting due to the comfortability that

exists. Describing the nuances involved in these two social contexts and why and how the

person chose to speak is what interest constructivists. This is not to say that social

constructivists are not concerned with the overt behaviors of stuttering (part-word repetitions,

prolongations, blocks, physical concomitants) but the emphasis is not solely on them. Social

constructivists are more interested in the internal fears, avoidances, frustration, or reluctance

to speak with others as a result of stuttering – and how they impact social interaction

(Tetnowski & Scaler Scott, 2010).

The rise of social constructivism and its attendant methods of inquiry in the 1960's

and 1970's (Dalton, 1983; Fransella, 1972) in the field of stuttering had a major impact on

changing the trajectory of the disorder and where the field is today as many of the previous

ill-suited measures were not able to account for the complex of factors that conspire to result

in stuttering. Experts such as Fransella and Sheehan and their theories of *personal construct*

theory (Fransella, 1972) and *role conflict theory* (Sheehan, 1970), respectively, proved

monumental in shifting the paradigm from a behavioral, or experimentalist, view to a more

social model of stuttering. These researchers also helped pave the way for qualitative

methodologies to emerge in the field of stuttering and continue to have a major impact on the

overall perception and treatment of stuttering today (e.g., DiLollo, Neimeyer, & Manning,

2002; DiLollo, Manning, & Neimeyer, 2003; Plexico, 2005). Even though these theories are

being studied more extensively and gaining ground as a viable method of inquiry, there has

been little research that examines stuttering from a social model of disability.

Social Model of Stuttering

A "social model" of stuttering operates under the assumption that the environment of

the PWS and the people whom PWS interact with are equally important in the successful

understanding and treatment of stuttering. With a social model understanding, the difficulties

that a PWS experiences in life are due to a process of disability separate to the impairment.

That is, the disability is due to the particular barriers the person faces rather than due to their

stuttered speech (Bailey, Harris, & Simpson, 2015). Some physical barriers can include not

being able to speak during automated calls or provide intelligible speech when ordering

pizza. Relevant to this study, a physical barrier might include not answering a question when

called on during class or not able to order food at the university cafeteria. However, some of

the more formidable barriers are attitudes, both the external barriers fueled by negative social

attitudes to stuttering and the self-limitation of internalized oppression due to the PWS

forming negative constructs about self. Discrimination, marginalization, and social exclusion

are also formidable obstacles that the social model defines. The term "social model" in terms of stuttering research is a broad term used to explain how a certain culture or social system is structured and has recently been used to develop approaches to intervention (DiLollo et al, 2002; Gerlach & Subramanian, 2016; Fransella, 1972). Social approaches in stuttering are focused on understanding stuttering and its impact from the lens of the PWS. The approach is less interested in the transmission of information and more interested in the socialization that takes place with PWS. This model aims to decrease the environmental and interactional barriers present in society in order to improve the communicative experience of PWS.

Recently, the World Health Organization has recognized the need to redefine how we view disability and has moved towards a more social model. The previous model stated by the WHO (1980) helped to operationalize disability from a medical perspective, primarily focused on the observable features of disability and devoted little focus to social or environmental factors. In response to researchers and the disability movement that emerged in the 1960's, the WHO revealed a new framework for defining disability that takes into account other contributing factors outside of the individual (WHO, 2001). This new framework classifies information in two primary components 1) functioning and disability, which include body structures and functions, activities, and participation in life 2) contextual factors which include environmental and personal factors (WHO, 2001, p. 10).

Yaruss and Quesal (2004) outlined how this model might be expressed in the field of stuttering in hopes to unify how assessment and treatment should be implemented and to provide a definition that accounts for all experiences of stuttering. According to Yaruss and Quesal ((2004), *body functions*, included the overt stuttering (part-word repetitions, prolongations, blocks) or the actual impairment itself. Under *body structures* would be the

neuroanatomical differences in PWS and PWNS, which constitute a structural impairment of the nervous system. Under activities and participation would include how stuttering affects quality of life, ability to participate in daily life activities, and/or participate in verbal communicative exercises. Since verbal communication is such a vital part of being human, the specific limitations with verbal output would hinder a person's ability to participate in life, thus affecting their overall quality of life. Lastly, *contextual factors* refer to the vastly different and individual experiences PWS have that may lead to disabling characteristics. Some PWS may stutter mildly yet it severely hinders their ability to participate in life, and some may stutter severely yet it mildly impedes their daily activities. These contextual differences regarding communication disability are personal (emotions) and environmental (reactions from social partners) (Yaruss & Quesal, 2004). In light of the changes in the construct of disability, more therapeutic approaches and research methods that account for the complexity of disability, and thus stuttering, as defined by the WHO must be implemented. However, the most widely studied treatment approaches to stuttering are still based on behavioral models (e.g. Onslow et al, 2016; Nippold, 2012).

In keeping with a socially oriented view of stuttering, there are several intervention methods that have emerged in the field of stuttering that subscribe to this philosophy and help to prove the relevance of this study. Most operate under the framework of cognitive restructuring methods but all operate from a constructivist philosophy. As stated earlier, the personal construct theory of stuttering was the first to bring this social model paradigm to the literature. The personal construct theory was first developed by G. A. Kelly (1955) in the field of psychology and operates under the theory that all people have the ability to modify perspectives of themselves and the social world around them (Kelly, 1955). Kelly viewed

"people as scientists" and saw people as being engaged in a continuous process of creating hypotheses about their environment and seeking evidence to test that hypothesis (DiLollo et al., 2002). These hypotheses, either affirmed or rejected by lived experiences, were how persons interpreted their feelings and values as well and ultimately formed individual constructs of themselves and the world in which they navigated. Any new experiences required an appraisal and possibly a modification to an already determined construct; an evolving and changing system. Fransella (1972) later brought this framework into the field of stuttering in hopes to redefine the dominant role of speaking. She believed the "stutterer role" or construct dominated and thus a PWS would continue to stutter until a shift occurred to that of a "fluent role." In order to change perspectives, a person must be able to develop new ways of thinking and acting that are validated with experiences as a fluent speaker and not a disfluent speaker. In a study performed to prove her theory (Fransella, 1972), she attempted to increase the meaningfulness of 16 PWS using a technique called "controlled elaboration." The treatment focused on assisting the participants to develop a more meaningful construction of their experiences with fluent speech by responsive feedback and repertory grids. Results revealed as the PWS increasingly viewed themselves as a fluent speaker and aligned with a fluent speaker, stuttering decreased (Manning, 2010).

Complementary to Fransella's (1972) application of personal constructs is the constructivist-narrative approach to stuttering (DiLollo et al., 2002; DiLollo & Manning, 2007). The chief objective of this approach is to support the speaker in developing his/her core constructs in order to accommodate treatment induced episodes of fluency (Manning, 2010). The clinicians goal is to actively listen to the narrative of the PWS and seek to understand the complex relationship between the persons' current, problem-saturated story

and the influence of the stuttering on the person's life and relationships. Once an understanding of the story is achieved, the clinician can assist in deconstructing the dominant themes that negatively impact the individual. Externalization and disclosure are key elements in narrative therapy as the clinician must assist in separating the person from the problem. In a study that explored this treatment approach, results were shown to help construct a new identity and shape a positive narrative about stuttering (Leahy, Dwyer, & Ryan, 2010). The SLP's role in personal construct therapy and narrative therapy often surpass those associated with traditional treatment and venture into roles that are more secondary and even "counselor related." In most cases, the clinician is a facilitating agent in helping the client achieve change or create a deeper awareness in one' life. In fact, two of the goals of these approaches is to instill empowerment and self-agency in life.

As the WHO has moved towards a more social model of disability, more treatment approaches are being explored that help PWS become meaningful communicators in hopes to avoid negative quality of life implications. One approach, which is new to the literature in the field of stuttering, is the implementation of bibliotherapy. Bibliotherapy is an evidence-based technique used to facilitate cognitive and affective growth in children and adults coping with personal problems. Bibliotherapy refers to the process of reading, reflecting upon, and discussing literature, in hopes to promote cognitive shifts in the way clients and clinicians conceptualize the experience of disability (Gerlach & Subramanian, 2016). A study done by Gerlach & Subramanian (2016), examined the effectiveness of this approach with PWS and graduate clinicians. The qualitative study examined the journey for both clinician and client as they read a book titled "*Out With It*", which is a story of a PWS named Catherine Preston, who wrote about her journey towards acceptance of stuttering. The results revealed major

implications for the social model of stuttering. Through the process of bibliotherapy, the clinicians were able to better understand the experience of being a PWS, thus which shifted their treatment perspective and improved the therapeutic alliance between the client. Also, PWS improved their overall understanding of stuttering and their self-awareness of stuttering, which in turn afforded more effective coping strategies (Gerlach & Subramanian, 2016). Their findings support the social model of stuttering which defines expected roles for long-term success (Plexico, Manning, & DiLollo, 2005).

　　　　Social approaches to stuttering have been a step in the right direction because they have helped clinicians understand the social impact of stuttering and ways to support PWS in communicative contexts. Sometimes these supports come in the form of specific therapeutic methods that help to restructure beliefs and sometimes the support entails attending stuttering support groups. Stuttering support groups have also been shown to improve self-worth and overall confidence (Trichon, 2007; Trichon & Tetnowski, 2011). Despite these approaches, there is still little focus on the actual, describable interactions between PWS and their communication partners. These actions and verbalizations of PWS and their social partners in communicative events can help to explain why each speaker judiciously and strategically implements a linguistic or social device to connect with others or save face. As some researchers recognize the need for more social action studies, Tetnowski & Damico (2004) propose conversational analysis as a means of exploring how social action is accomplished for PWS. Conversational analysis is based upon an understanding actions that occur next to each other influence one another. Conversational analysis is performed by describing the way that participants use interactive strategies, mechanisms, or resources during their conversational interactions to accomplish their meanings. Much of this work has helped to

better understand how language and communication are employed strategically to accomplish social action (Tetnowski & Damico, 2001). In fact, conversational analysis has proved a valuable assessment and treatment tool in other areas of speech pathology, most notably aphasia (Damico, Oelschlaeger, & Simmons-Mackie, 1999; Wilkinson, Bryan, Lock, Bayley, Maxim, Bruce, & Moir, 1998). But even though there was a call for more social studies, to this author's knowledge there are only two articles one documented regarding the clinical implications of using conversational analysis in the field of stuttering. (Leahy, 2004; Tetnowski, Tetnowski, Denardo, & Azios, 2016). It is evident more evidence is needed that accounts for the complexity of conversation and also follows the social model of stuttering.

History of Disability Culture Within Educational Institutions

Since this dissertation is concerned with the disability culture in the educational institutions, a discussion about the disability population in the educational institutions is needed. A brief discussion on the history of the disabled population will be presented so that the reader will come to understand where the disability culture is headed and prove the need for more applicable studies for this population. This will further make the claim of the relevance of this current study of the university experience for PWS within the university setting.

Disabled students benefited greatly from the civil rights movement. Before the 1970s, more than half of the children with disabilities in the United States did not receive appropriate educational services that would allow them full equality of opportunity including access to college (Henderson, 1999). In fact, more than one million of these children with disabilities were excluded from educational institutions altogether and did not go through the educational process with their nondisabled peers (Hirsh, 1994 & Henderson, 1999). They

were isolated and/or ignored. However, with the passage of the first federal eligibility program which provided funding for special education, now titled Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), more children with disabilities were integrated into regular educational institution contexts.

The laws that protected students with disabilities in the primary and secondary institutions directly influenced their accessibility into higher education as well. Before the end of the 1970s, there were only a small number of colleges and universities that provided access for students with disabilities. Many of these institutions were segregated colleges and universities that specialized in serving students with a particular type of disability, such as Gallaudet University, whose primary focus has been deaf students (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1998). It wasn't until federal laws of higher education were implemented, such as Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and American Disabilities Act of 1990, that transformation fully materialized (Henderson, 1999).

This transformation has continued throughout the years and the number of students transitioning from high school to higher education has continued to increase as a result of federal laws and self-advocacy in the area of disability. According to the 1999 data collected by the American Council on Education, the percentages of students with disabilities enrolling in four year colleges and universities were more than ever before with 428,280 students with disabilities enrolled at two and four year postsecondary educational institutions. This number is expected to increase every year according to the National Center for Education Statistics (1998).

But even though students with disabilities have access to higher education there are numerous challenges and obstacles they must overcome at the university in order to graduate.

Some of these obstacles are profound and likely contribute to dropout rates that are much higher than their non-disabled peers (Carter, Sisco, Brown, Brickham, Al-Khabbaz, 2008). Traditionally, dropout rates have been predicted by high school GPA, socioeconomic status, education of parents, and ACT/SAT test scores (Haviland, Shaw, & Haviland, 1984; Brooks & DuBois, 1995; Foster, 1998). Recently, emotional (i.e., stress, anxiety, fatigue, low self-confidence, and depression) and social factors (i.e., peer support, part of campus organizations, social groups, and family support) have been shown to predict success and dropout rates for college students (Brooks & DuBois, 1995; Foster, 1998). This is pertinent to the disability literature because students with disabilities have been shown to exhibit greater levels of stress (Rodriguez & Routh, 1989; Huntington & Bender, 1993; Carroll & Iles, 2006) and need more social support when compared to their peers (Rodriguez & Routh, 1989; Huntington & Bender, 1993) in order to succeed.

Some students need extra support, and the support that universities are supposed to provide for students with disabilities has not proven to be effective or adequate (Hartman & Haaga, 2002). Much of the research has also shown that universities do not provide adequate disability training for employees or accessibility for students with disabilities (Hartman & Haaga, 2002; Murray, Lombardi, Wren & Keys, 2009). Recently, Dowrick et al. (2005) found that students with disabilities experience difficulty obtaining basic accommodations and supports in postsecondary settings. One of the key findings was that disability policy does not necessarily lead to practice in real world settings and students expressed the need to self-advocate for basic accommodations and described encounters with faculty members who were unwilling to accommodate or lacked knowledge about disability law (Dowrick et al., 2005).

Pertinent to this current study, Meredith, Packman, & Marks (2012) explored, if a student who stutters who wanted to explore the accommodations the university had for persons who stutter, could make a knowledgeable choice about the available support at the university based upon website information. The results showed the student was not able to access any helpful information on websites revealing significant areas of needed improvement for universities in Australia when it came to stuttering. The authors expanded upon these findings to propose that universities provide additional information for students about services and approaches for accommodating stuttering in order to account for the hardships students who stutter may encounter at the university (Meredith, Packman, & Marks, 2012). With the growing number of disabled students attending university it is imperative that researchers understand the difficulty students encounter within this specific context.

Disability research also has shown that students with disabilities often have qualitatively different social and school experiences than their peers. These findings may stem from the fact that society is more likely to treat people with disabilities differently than people without disabilities (Goffman, 1963; Smart, 2001). This belief has implications for the school setting because students with disabilities must socially interact with others in a school culture that may be predisposed, through stereotypes, stigmas, and practices to viewing them differently than people without disabilities.

Stuttering Relative to Context

        Stuttering in the Educational Sectors Pre-K – 12. As this dissertation relates to university experiences of stuttering, it is vital to understand the overall educational experience for PWS before attending college as these earlier positive or negative experiences

often carry over into their university as all lived experiences related to stuttering affect PWS. As such, it is important to include the literature related to students who stutter in elementary school.

Educational institutions, ranging from pre-school to the university setting, place a major emphasis on verbal communication and participation. The degree of participation and the manner in which they engage in these contexts is the question at hand. Nearly every child who stutters in a developed country will attend school at some time in their life yet there is still little evidence to reveal the implications of stuttering within the school settings (Ribbler, 2006). Further there is an even smaller amount of evidence that examines the PWS experiences within the school system. In fact, educational institutions are not constructed for persons with verbal communication difficulties but hard wired for participants to engage in a fluent manner. This is evident in the degree that fluent speech is a part of classroom structure, activities, and benchmarks. As early as pre-school, children are asked to participate in story time, engage in play based activities, and even begin the early stages of relationship building with other children (Langevin, et., 2009); all centered around verbal communication. These inherent structures place undue stresses on children who stutter(CWS) and sometimes may negatively impact their educational experience (Ezrati-Vinacour, Playsky, and Yairi, 2001; Lavgevin, Packman, & Onslow, 2009). A recent study (Langevin, et al., 2009) observed the interactions between fluent preschoolers and non-fluent preschoolers by videotaping and taking field notes at their pre-school and found that even as early as age 4, fluent speakers react negatively to stuttering with interruptions, ignoring, and walking away from stuttering children. The CWS were also shown to have difficulty leading peers in play, partaking in social interactions, and resolving conflicts (Langevin, Packman, & Onslow, 2009). One of

the major themes from this study revealed that preschoolers who stutter can experience social

exclusion and isolation in these early years of education. During these early school years

bullying is also known to be a common behavior experienced by CWS and can have a lasting

negative impact as the child progresses throughout school (Hugh-Jones & Smith, 1999).

Additionally, there is a substantial amount of evidence to suggest that negative conditioning

for stuttering begins in the pre-school years (Vanryckeghem, Brutten, & Hernandez, 2005).

This negative conditioning transcends the pre-school years and has been shown to

have a negative impact during the elementary years (Langevin, 2009 & Bernstein-Ratner,

1997). Some authors have explored the attitudes and interactions of children who do not

stutter toward their stuttering peers and found evidence to suggest rejection and exclusion

were common elements for CWS (Davis, Howell, & Cooke, 2002). This study was

accomplished by observing reactions and interviewing non stuttering children across sixteen

different classrooms, who had at least one stuttering child in the classroom with them. The

evidence revealed that overall CWS were viewed more negatively by their peers, less likely

to be popular or nominated as leaders, and more likely to be victims of bullying.

The bullying and teasing experienced by CWS (Blood & Blood, 2004) in the early

years has even been shown to have lasting negative consequences with adolescent and teen

PWS, particularly in high school, in areas of increased communication apprehension,

increased levels of anxiety, and an overall fear of speaking (Daniels, Gabel &, Hughes,

Blood, Blood, Tellis & Gabel,2001). A recent study (Daniels, et al., 2012) explored,

retrospectively, the high school experiences of PWS, and it was noted that stuttering

interfered significantly with their high school education. Participants noted that stuttering

limited their social interactions, which inhibited their ability to make friends and join social

clubs because of their overall fear of stuttering. This fear of stuttering in high school carried

over into their career choices and confidence in attending college. Participants also noted that

stuttering resulted in lower grades, limited classroom participation, and increased levels of

anxiety throughout the day. Stuttering has also been linked to decrease educational

attainment with a positive correlation where the more severe the stutter, the lower education

achieved (O'Brian, Jones, Packman, Menzies& Onslow, 2011).

Relevant to the PWS lived experiences in educational institutions, there is ample

evidence to suggest PWS are at a disadvantage perceptually by those attending these

institutions. That is, persons or social partners within the educational institutions view PWS

more negatively than other peers. How PWS are perceived by others and how they are treated

by all social partners within educational contexts contribute to their experiences of overall

quality of life in that specific context. According to past research, teachers viewed PWS more

negatively (Lass, Ruscello, Schmitt, Pannbacker, Orlando, Dean, Ruziska, & Bradshaw,

1992; Silverman & Marik, 1993). Lass et al. (1992) surveyed 103 teachers in the school

systems across several states and asked them to list adjectives that described PWS. Results

revealed the majority of schoolteachers described PWS as being shy, insecure, and nervous.

Silverman and Marik (1993) replicated Lass et al. (1992) by sampling 58 teachers in the

Wisconsin area and found comparable results. Adjectives were assigned to PWS as insecure,

frustrated, shy, anxious, and self-conscious. These studies hold grave significance as teachers

are responsible for setting the standard in the classroom for students to follow and are often

times admired by their students. In another study that examined a specific subgroup of

teachers, special educators, who are responsible for educating the majority of the disabled

population, Ruscello, Lass, Schmitt, & Pannbacker (1994) found that special educators too

27

described PWS as nervous, frustrated, and self-conscious. This holds grave significance as special educators are the liaison for advocacy for students with disabilities.

Another relevant population which students who stutter encounter in the educational context are other students or peers. Peers play a pivotal role in classroom exchanges, group activities, social encounters, and relationship building. Peer perceptions even help construct identities as an individual sense of identity arises through the process of validation in relation to a peer group (Sarbin & Scheibe, 1983). Franck, Jackson, Pimentel, & Greenwood, (2003) investigated the peer perception of 4th and 5th grade students by viewing a videotape of PWNS and PWS speaking. The students rated the speaker's intelligence and personality traits after watching the video. Results showed the PWS were viewed more negatively and less intelligent. Informal measures also noted laughing and expressing inappropriate comments when stuttering occurred. Similar negative teen perceptions have also been documented (Evans, Kawai, Healey, & Rowland, 2007).

With the volume of evidence suggesting PWS' educational journey can be an experience filled with many obstacles along the way, it is imperative that more studies explore the experiences and perceptions of PWS as they continue into higher education settings.

Stuttering in the universities. There is very little documentation of what happens to PWS as they enter higher education settings. A local New Jersey paper exemplified what it may be like for PWS in the university setting in an article published in 2012 titled, "Professor who told stuttering student not to speak." This article stated that a professor at a community college told a student who stuttered not to speak during class because he used up valuable important time for the other students when he stuttered. The professor then told the student to

write down questions and save his questions for the end of class, which would benefit the students and him as the student was identified as a disturbance. This student would later explain that he wanted to answer questions during class and not hide behind his stuttering although the instructor would not permit it.

Apart from stuttering in grade school, stuttering within the universities is a context not widely researched which is why persons invested in treating stuttering rely on knowledge that is extrapolated from this younger population. The stakeholders then assume that much of same school experiences described in grade school will be similar owing to the embedded structure inherent to the institution which creates obstacles for PWS (Eckes & Ochoa, 2005; Getzel & Thoma, 2008). In fact, Meredith & Packman (2015) explored the experiences of 102 university students who stutter in Australia by using an online survey questionnaire distributed through Facebook, online stuttering forums, and some members of the Australian Speak Easy Association. Although a portion of the results did note some overall positive experiences, (e.g. low dropout rates, choosing majors regardless of stuttering) much of the qualitative data found stories of dissatisfaction in the university experience. The participants noted lost opportunities of social interactions due to stuttering, difficulty with engagement, and even purposeful underperforming as to avoid a large number of social encounters due to the fear of stuttering. Clearly more detailed examination of the college experience is needed for PWS.

University settings are contexts in which verbal communication is a vital component of success, both within and outside of the classroom. As with grade school, many classroom benchmarks are measured by verbal communication. Many university professors implement class participation points as outcome measures for classroom success or require oral

presentations as a portion of assessments. Tasks such as speaking during class discussions, reading aloud in class, answering questions, discussing assignments with peers in groups, and speaking in front of the class are typical requirements in many college classrooms. Like, grade school there is an embedded structure within universities that require communicative competence for academic success and relationship building. An example of these inherent structures that pose difficulty for PWS is the first day of class introductions. PWS recall their first day of college as one of the worst due to the activities centered around communication (e.g. stating your name and where you are from in front of the class, icebreaker introductions, etc.). These speaking tasks place excessive demands on PWS within the classroom due to time pressure and fear of stuttering experienced, all of which have been shown to elicit undue stress on PWS (Perkins, Kent, & Curlee, 1991). PWS may simply choose to miss the first day of class in order to avoid this stress. But avoiding those classes that might involve verbal communication is difficult to predict and would limit the potential for academic success.

Additionally, college professors are under a great deal of pressure to perform as requirements for tenure and merit raises. Their class management and student responsiveness can sometimes be dictated by student evaluations and departmental policies. This information is significant because there is much data that correlates student success and subject competency with pedagogies of classroom engagement (Kuh & Hu, 2001; Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Student engagement has been shown to predict high quality learning outcomes, retention of students, and foundations for academic success for university students (Krause et. al, 2005). According to the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE, 2005a), student engagement can be divided into five dimensions: level of academic challenge, active and collaborative learning, student-faculty interaction, enriching

educational experiences, and supportive campus. Coates (2006) extends these practices to include beyond-class collaboration (relationship building). Although these student engagement practices are valid and essential teaching methods for enhanced learning opportunities, they create a classroom culture that PWS find challenging as most of the engagement practices encourage even more verbal communication and communicative exchanges. Additionally, if professors and classmates are unfamiliar with stuttering, negative reactions and stigmas are established (Daniels, Panico, & Sudholt, 2011), which can make the overall college experience even more challenging.

Besides overcoming the classroom challenges, PWS must battle stigmas and stereotypes that exist as well in the university setting (Ruscello, Lass, Schmitt, & Pannbacker, 1994; Lass, Ruscello, Schmitt, Pannbacker, Orlando, Dean, & Bradshaw, 1992). The stigmas that exist play a pivotal role in creating much of the reactions or perceptions that exist. 212 university professors completed an open ended questionnaire about their perception of PWS and concerns working with them in the classroom (Daniels et al, 2011). The results revealed the less knowledge they had about stuttering, the more negative perspective existed. This lack of knowledge has shown to not only affect university professors but also college counselors and classmates (Hughes, Gabel, Irani, & Schlagheck, 2010; Walker, Mayo, & St. Louis, 2016). The participants also noted a need for more information about stuttering to help them better accommodate them in the classroom.

Dorsey and Guenther (2000) asked university professors' and students to fill out a questionnaire that rated a "hypothetical PWS" containing 20 personality items. They judged, on a scale from 1 to 7, the degree to which either a hypothetical college student who stutters or a hypothetical average college student possesses the personality trait in question. The

results revealed in general, participants rated the student who stutters more negatively on the personality traits than they rated the average college student. Another interesting finding was the professor participants rated the hypothetical student who stutters more negatively than did the student participants in the study. The possible reasons for these negative stereotypes may be the participant's generalizations of their own normal disfluencies, and how they individually feel during those communicative events (e.g. nervousness, shy, anxious) (White & Collins, 1984). Thus, they assume all disfluent events are caused by emotional arousal. Although no explanation was provided on why professors rated PWS less competent and more negative, these pre-conceived attitudes could potentially make college more disabling for PWS, as professors act as the standard bearers for the university setting. It is possible that if a professor has a negative stereotype about a particular student, his bias may result in academic consequences for PWS.

Hughes et al. (2010) provided useful data in the university setting by exploring the opinions of 149 undergraduate students who listened to the speech of PWS. This study provided a different perspective than what was offered in the literature because after they completed an open-ended questionnaire describing PWS, an explanation for their descriptions was given. The results were divided into responses from the descriptions and the explanations given for their responses. Specific to the descriptions, results showed similar data as the previous studies, showing a negative view of PWS (e.g. frustrating, annoying, shy, quiet, reserved, etc.) but also noted *PWS have learning disabilities* or *are mentally impaired*. Positive descriptions were also noted and included statements such as *normal, just like anybody else, caring, kind*, and *accepting*. More notable descriptions related to communication difficulties included *hard to understand* and *have a hard time getting a clear*

message across. The explanations for these descriptions were divided into three categories of 1) emotional effects of stuttering on PWS 2) listener difficulty with PWS and 3) observations of PWS and self. Some of the examples of emotional effects of stuttering on PWS explained were *they have most likely been teased and stereotyped, they feel people will judge or laugh at them*, and *they try to avoid speaking so that they are not singled out by people for ridicule*. Notable examples related to listener difficulty with PWS were *the stutter itself is obnoxious and causes me to become increasingly agitated, stuttering can make it actually difficult to care what the person is saying as the listener is more focused on the stuttering*. Lastly, some notable examples related to observations of PWS and self were *two of the three people I know who stutter have a mental disorder*, *I have stuttered before when I am nervou*s, and *I get frustrated myself when I cannot express myself*. Although positive and negative descriptions of PWS were noted, the findings point to an overall misconception about stuttering in the university setting. These misconceptions accompanied with stigmas and stereotypes previously noted are important to paint a picture of what PWS encounter in university daily.

But the university is not restrained to the classroom context either. In fact, "the university" is a vast network of social gatherings and clubs all of which are centered on verbal communication. Most universities embrace the social fraternity/sorority system in which incoming students are selected to join a club based on previous and ongoing interactions with current members, during the "rush" process which can be best described as serial, successive speed dating at the group level. Membership is dependent upon how well a person "fits" into a specific social group. If befriending others in this scenario is the expected outcome, it may be more difficult for PWS due to difficulties with verbal communication and

social interaction. In addition, there are other social interactions associated with college life that may require significant communication. The university system embraces and encourages students to take part in to connect with other peers in service clubs such as AmeriCorps and Beacon club, governing clubs such as student government association and graduate student council, religious groups such as Baptist student union and Jewish student association, and much more. These organizations could be difficult to maneuver for PWS being that stuttering suggests negative reactions from peers (Ezrati-Vinacour, Platzky, & Yairi, 2001; Langevin, Packman, & Onslow, 2009). Because PWS are perceived more negatively in general than fluent speakers, and given that PWS exhibit an overall fear of speaking and have a significantly greater fear of speaking in group discussions and interpersonal conversations (Blood, Blood, Tellis, & Gabel, 2001), they are less likely to join clubs, putting themselves at risk for failure in the college setting as there is strong evidence to suggest a greater involvement in these social groups is linked to better emotional health, higher GPA, and lower dropout rates for students in general (Brooks & DuBois, 1995; Foster, 1998).

   With the challenges of college students increasing, the growing body of evidence that points to college student's success rates are linked to emotional and social factors, and the evidence that PWS are at a disadvantage emotionally and socially as a result of their lived experiences, it is essential to understand the ways in PWS navigate their university experience and what strategies they employ to avoid social exclusion and stigma associated with stuttering.

   Stuttering in the vocational sector. It is important to review the literature with regards to the vocational sector being many PWS, as do many students in college, work their way through college. Like educational institutions, most workplaces expect fluent

communication for everyday tasks such as answering and making telephone calls.

Communication expectations for PWS can be extremely challenging at times due to the

aspect of time pressure related to performance expectations at work. The work sector is also a

social environment typically, with many opportunities for verbal exchanges and even a

context to build relationships and make friendships. This author assumes that the lived

experiences for PWS in all communication settings affect one another. So, if PWS

experiences challenges at school, then these same challenges could be present at work as we

do not compartmentalize our interactions from context to context. In order to get an accurate

depiction of the university experience for PWS and the lived experiences as they attend

university, a brief review of the literature related to stuttering in the workforce will be

discussed.

Investigations into PWS as they live out stuttering in the workplace has shown to be

quite a challenge (James, Brumfitt, & Cudd, 1999; Logan & O'Connor, 2012). These

challenges derive from the effect of the variety of employment demands upon the lived

experiences and also the perspectives of the people they work with. Persons lived

experiences in the workplace have revealed much of the same stigmas and stereotypes that

are present in the educational institutions. Klein & Hood (2004) surveyed 232 PWS and

found that over 70% of the participants noted stuttering interfered with their chances to be

hired. Participants also reported that negative stereotyping influenced their ability for

employment advancement. They reported additional obstacles being feelings of discomfort

and stress related to public attitudes about stuttering and performance expectations. The

researchers also noted PWS perceived themselves to be limited in what role at work they

may have and the types of jobs they were able to have. These negative perspectives of self at

35

work may influence what they think they are capable of within the classroom and in many other speaking tasks.

Crichton-Smith's (2002) investigation of the communicative experiences of 14 PWS revealed participants felt that their stuttering had significantly limited their employment, education and self-esteem. According to Klompas and Ross (2004), participants reported that stuttering affected their job performance, their relationships with people in authority at work and their opportunities for advancement. Rice & Kroll (1994) also contributed to the research by showing stuttering led to poor choice of jobs which led to a low sense of self-worth for PWS as they are at a job they do not enjoy.

Another relevant study that examined PWS-reported lived experiences was done by Bricker-Katz, Lincoln, and Cumming (2010). The study was a qualitative study that explored the work experience for PWS by asking them specific questions related to their work (i.e. can you tell me what you do at work, how do you feel when you have a bad speech day at work, etc.) The data was transcribed and analyzed and four superordinate themes and eleven subthemes emerged from the data set. The four superordinate themes were 1) *stuttering is always there* 2) *stuttering at work reveals a problem* 3) *stuttering impacts communication* & 4) *stuttering limits occupational progression*. Some interesting notes from the study revealed that PWS perceived stuttering to be a major problem at work due to the fast pace of interactions that happen at work and the demands that work places put on PWS for verbal communication. Participants noted when stuttering occurred they were thought to be perceived as less competent and not normal (Bricker-Katz, Lincoln, & Cumming, 2010). Many work places expect PWS to be able to accomplish the same communicative exchanges

as PWNS and at times this can be challenging as PWS communicative exchanges at times need support and accommodations.

A survey of employer attitudes towards PWS (Hurst & Cooper, 1983) found that 40% of participants perceived stuttering as an interference to employment and 75% believed that stuttering impacted negatively on employability. Fifty percent of the employers surveyed also indicated that they would select a nonstuttering candidate instead of a stuttering applicant if both were applying for the same job and even noted PWS may present challenges for potential employers (Hurst & Cooper, 1983).

Overall PWS do face great challenges in the workplace and these challenges can significantly affect their overall quality of life, self-worth, intrinsic abilities, and even university experience. The difficulties that may emerge in the workplace can adversely affect their educational experience and even determine the trajectory of their life goals. It is imperative that attention be given to minimizing the negative experiences and attitudes for both PWS and their peers, employers, and professors to minimize the vocational, financial, and social consequences of stuttering. One such solution would be that PWS develop advocacy skills at an early age so that they will be able to present information to the public when needed in order to change the culture of stuttering from a negative to a positive perspective.

Identity

Identity can be defined and explored in a variety of ways but to understand a person's identity one must understand the role society plays in identity construction. Identity is defined by properties based on the uniqueness and individuality which makes a person distinct from others (Erickson, 1959). These identity constructing properties emerge from

successive interactions where in what you say and do as a speaker is dependent upon an immediate evaluation of what your listener perceives. (Goffman,1967). The concept of identity has been examined in great lengths over the years in the fields of anthropology and sociology. Although it has not been widely researched in the field of speech language pathology, it is an important concept when describing the social implications for PWS within the university setting. It has been shown that early adulthood (college years) are the formational years in which people question themselves from a social perspective (.e.g. "Who am I) and also are questioned by others (e.g. "Who are you") (Daniels & Gabel, 2004; Sarbin, 2000). These questions can have a major impact in how an individual views him/herself within a group context and also how others perceive an individual within a group, all pointing to identity construction during this time. And as noted earlier, PWS are viewed primarily negatively within the university setting by professors, classmates, and college counselors. The social contexts that occur in universities, are a vital part of this process because it is within these contexts that interactions take place leading to identity assessments from all social partners. The concern for PWS of course is their inability to construct meaningful interactions that lead to healthy relationships and ultimately a healthy construction of identity. It could further be assumed then, constructing a positive identity for PWS within the university setting will be quite the challenge.

Identity construction is further explored by Tajfel (2010), in which he argues that identity is a relationship between the social context and cognition and in order to understand the social world the individual must evaluate him/herself alongside other people and social groups. Tajfel and Turner (1979) propose the motives for these social assessments between the individual and social group memberships is motivated by the individual's need for a

positive social identity. Social identity then results from actions taken with others in cultural contexts, and an individual's sense of identity arises through this process of validation in relation to a social group (Sarbin & Scheibe, 1983).

For PWS, this process of validation from individuals and social groups is undermined by the stereotypes and stigmas that infiltrate the university setting (Blood, Blood, Tellis, & Gabel, 2003; Boyle, 2013; Boyle, 2015; Woods, 1978), all negatively impacting identity construction. Because of the overt challenges for PWS, they often have a difficult time executing the speech tasks they need to express their opinions and beliefs and become misconstrued and marginalized by society (Daniels & Gabel, 2004). Goffman explains this marginalization of impaired communication persons well in his description of discredited behaviors and stigmas (Goffman 1963, 42).

The pressure of idealized conduct is most clearly seen in marginalized people, whose deviance forces them into "discredited" or "discreditable" groups, based on the nature of their stigma (42). The importance of impression management is most visible with these individuals, as those who are discredited must mitigate the tension their stigma causes in order to successfully interact with others, while those suffering from a discrediting stigma are forced to limit the access of others to information about the stigma or assume the character of a discredited individual. The emphasis on idealized, normative identity and conduct limits the ability of the discredited individual to achieve full acceptance by the population that he or she is forced to assimilate into. For the discreditable individual who attempts to "pass" and employ "disidentifiers" to establish him/herself as "normal" (44), feelings of

39

uncertainty and alienation emerge as a result of limited social intercourse.

Ultimately, the existence of a stigma of any type, a part of the existence of a

large segment of the population, changes the nature of impression

management and, hence, interaction. (Goffman, 1963)

Although Goffman was not discussing PWS specifically, he was speaking to

the groups of people who at times are marginalized by society due to a deviant

behavior that is atypical or that does not meet the standards of society, such as

stuttering. The impact that stuttering has on relationship making, social inclusion by

groups, creation of stigmas and stereotypes by people affiliated with the university

setting can illustrate the challenges PWS face towards a healthy identity construction.

Despite the need to understand the challenges to identity for PWS, In-depth

ethnographic studies of PWS in university settings are absent in the current literature.

Summary

PWS are a group of people that experience unique hardships when engaging in

communicative contexts. PWS often are marginalized in specific speaking contexts and

treated unfairly, either due to the "unknown of stuttering" or to the harsh reality that

individual difference is still viewed negatively in society. Stuttering is different and it defies

social norms of verbal expression. As PWS negotiate their roles in social encounters, often

they are faced with reactions from their social partners that affirm their internalized sense of

oppression and the stigma associated with stuttering. These conditioned responses over time

lead to a construction of identity that is usually embedded with negative views of self and

often suggests disabling characteristics as their ability to participate in life is challenged.

When studying PWS in educational institutions, communication appears to be a complex and laborious event. As a result of the culture inherent in universities, PWS find themselves in a context that is filled with pre-determined rules either set by the instructor or the institution itself, and stuttering does not fit into these rules. Stuttering is viewed as the "red-headed step child" which leads to social exclusion, marginalization, and often times teasing emerge from all conversational participants. PWS in universities have few opportunities for communicating due to the exclusion that takes place or the inability for social partners to provide conversational support when needed. PWS qualitatively experience university differently from a PWNS and these different experiences can lead to changes in self-worth and identity, often manifested in selecting a degree that is centered around non-communication.

The long-term implications of these identity shaping experiences and practices of PWS have not been examined. The ways in which PWS engage in and maintain social interactions in this culture have been largely ignored. This is likely due to the fact until recently, stuttering was only defined overtly and not how it affects them in social interactions. Also, for many years' persons with disabilities did not attend university, as universities were only for those who could afford it. and so understanding their needs within universities has been neglected. Now with student loans becoming easier to access for all persons, disabled or not, more students who typically would never consider a college are attending college.

Studies of PWS in universities are sparse in the stuttering research. The studies that do exist do not focus on the details of everyday life for the college student who stutters. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to use in-depth ethnographic methodologies to study

the real-life experiences of people who stutter as they navigate the university setting. It is often assumed by professors, peers and students within the universities, that PWS function and interact in the same manner as other university students and are thus managed in the same fashion in communicative contexts. Through inspecting the complex phenomena of stuttering from a social model in the university setting, the mechanisms and strategies that PWS and others in the university context implement in communicative exchanges, can be understood. This new found understanding will assist speech-language pathologists and all social partners who participate in the university system (students, professors, workers, volunteers, etc.) in how to effectively provide the much needed support for PWS in the university context.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

PWS experience specific challenges within higher educational institutions that often manifest in the form of social exclusion. Linguistic barriers, interactional barriers, and infrastructural barriers all contribute to the unique challenges PWS face while attending higher educational institutions. Current research in the field of stuttering remains concentrated on the impairment of stuttering as it relates to the individual with little emphasis on the interactional components of stuttering. Despite the fact that stuttering has been shown to have negative consequences within some educational institutions, little research has been done to truly identify the social implications of stuttering and the effects it has on patterns of interaction in higher educational institutions.

The infrastructure that makes up the culture within the university has been largely ignored for PWS. This is partly due to the pervasiveness of behaviorism in the field of speech language pathology and the use of methodologies that are ill suited for investigating authentic phenomena (Damico & Ball, 2010). Another reason could be the research paradigms chosen for investigating PWS within the university setting are done from survey based inquiries or questionnaires and neglect social action in real-time interactions (Dorsey & Guenther, 2000). Therefore, to explore the PWS' ability to navigate the university experience and enter into and sustain interactions with other constituents, research patterns that unfold in natural contexts are required. For these reasons a qualitative research methodology is best suited to explore this phenomenon.

Qualitative research is based on the philosophy of constructivism which suggests multiple realities exist in the world and these realities are context-bound (Creswell, 1998; Glesne, 2006; Kvale, 1996; Maxwell, 2005). It is of relevance to investigate the wide range

of strategies used by PWS to achieve social action in the university setting and how these strategies vary as the context of the interaction changes.

Within a qualitative research paradigm, ethnographic methods are most appropriate for investigating individuals within a specific culture (i.e. university) because they allow for examination of social and cultural phenomena as they naturally occur while descriptively examining the variables that allow these phenomena to unfold (Nelson, Abendroth, and Lynch, 2014). Ethnographic methods have been used within the discipline of speech-language pathology to understand the nature of communicative disorders by analyzing the clinical discourse of assessment and intervention, and have more recently emerged as a technique for learning how individuals with communication disorders communicate and participate in their own worlds (Kovarsky, 2014). The methodology and a description of its application are presented in the next six sections. The first section will present the primary research question and subsequent questions that were used to direct data collection and analysis. The second section will discuss the primary principles of qualitative research paradigm and the advantages of implementing this paradigm. The third section will expand upon the features of ethnographic methods and provide the motivation for its selection in this study. Next, section four will give a detailed description of the participants, along with the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Section five will outline the procedures chosen for data collection and include the specific contexts and the rationale behind each university related context that was chosen. And section six will discuss the procedures used for data analysis and explain the emergent patterns and themes. Subsequently, a discussion of the individual participant findings with a comparison across the four participants will be provided in Chapters Four and Five.

Research Questions

   As noted in Chapter Two, there has been a movement as of late in the stuttering literature to understand stuttering by looking into the lived experiences of the PWS. Although this movement is significant and has resulted in a growing body of qualitative research, there is still an insufficient amount of work that investigates the actual, describable interactional patterns of PWS. This could be further demonstrated when describing the experiences of PWS within the university setting and the embedded culture that exists within that context. Presently, there is a scarcity of information from which SLP's can gather knowledge about their clients who stutter within higher educational institutions. Only recently have PWS stated how challenging college can be if not provided with the right support (Walker, Mayo, St. Louis, 2016).

   As noted earlier, college is a challenging environment even for PWNS. This is largely due to the new environment that exists, making new friends, and adjusting to the college life and demands of the classroom (Meredith, Packman, & Marks, 2014). For PWS in the university setting, the adjustment may be even more challenging because the primary tool for engaging in the college culture, speech, can impede them from having meaningful interactions that can ultimately create the support they need for social inclusion. The ways in which PWS in universities navigate interaction and the strategies they use to participate in college life have not been thoroughly investigated. Research is needed that explicitly looks at language and communication from social and interactive positions within the communicative events that emerge in the authentic contexts, in this case universities. And so, this investigation seeks to explore the ways in which PWS are included or excluded in social activities and the devices they use to sustain these interactions.

The primary research question in this investigation is: *How do PWS navigate the overall college experience?* This research will explore the different ways in which PWS engage in different types of classroom encounters and social activities within the university setting and how other characters of the social activity initiate and sustain these interactions. Sub-questions include:

1. How do PWS interact with other characters (i.e. peers, professors, authoritative figures) in university settings?

2. How does the university culture influence social encounters?

3. How do PWS view their identity in communication with other characters at universities?

4. How do PWS cope with the added pressures of being a university student and being a PWS within the university?

5. What strategies do PWS employ to overcome communicative barriers in various contexts?

6. How do the other social agents view PWS within the university?

Qualitative Research Design

Qualitative research is an approach used for discovering and understanding the meaning individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2014). The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in a participant natural context, data analysis inductively building from specifics to broader themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the data that he/she is given. Researchers who employ this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that respects an inductive style, an emphasis on individual meaning, and the importance of

understanding the complexity of a specific situation (Creswell, 2014). Qualitative research

has helped us understand human behaviors through a variety of methods of inquiry and have

helped pave the way for understanding phenomenon that post positivism measures fail to

capture.

Qualitative research methodologies are not new to speech-language pathology field

nor to the discipline of stuttering. These methodologies have been used to study such areas as

aphasia, language development, childhood language disorders, and practice of public school

speech-language pathology (Tetnowski & J. S. Damico, 2001). Qualitative methodologies

have also been used as method of inquiry throughout the 20th century in studying social

phenomena in such fields as anthropology, sociology, and education (Creswell, 1998;

Maxwell, 1996) and can be helpful in investigating complex social phenomena such as the

university experience for PWS.

Properties of qualitative research relevant to current study. Attempting to

describe and measure human communication is a difficult and complex endeavor. In fact,

human communication in its simplest form is an attempt to be understood in some manner

but to deny the complexity of communication and strip away the human condition and the

interacting variables involved is to inadequately understand communication. For PWS, the

inability to verbalize desired utterances is a fairly common burden they must bear and

experimental studies do not capture this complexity but rather attempts to control for this

complexity and in reality negates the true essence of human communication. To truly

understand stuttering we must account for the synergistic nature of communication, the

multifunctional nature of communication, the systematicity in human communication, and

communication as social action (Damico & Mackie, 2003). We must also understand the

contextual role in communication, the social partners involved, the emotions of all interactants, and the strategies strategically employed by all interactants, not just the PWS.

As one of the primary aims of qualitative research related to communication is to capture the complexity of communication as described above and to examine the interactive variables, this study chose a qualitative paradigm to uncover the synergistic and relational aspect of communication for PWS as related to the university setting.

Ethnography

Ethnography is a tradition of inquiry in qualitative research in which the origins are derived from the fields of anthropology and sociology. Ethnography was developed due to the need for an empirical line of research that examines social and cultural phenomena as they naturally occur while descriptively examining the variables that allow these phenomena to unfold (Nelson, Abendroth, & Lynch, 2014). Ethnography is a form of methodology where researchers take an in-depth look at a specific phenomenon while in the specific culture being examined. Performed by early anthropologists as a form of fieldwork, ethnography stands apart from other methodologies by its emphasis on culture and the gained insight of what happens in that culture. In ethnographic studies, researchers study a cultural group or particular phenomenon in a naturalistic setting, using primarily observational data to gather information over a period of time (Madison, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999, Patillo-McCoy, 1999) and provide a more nuanced description of what is revealed in that context. One advantage for ethnographers is that research is adaptable, sanctioning the lived realities of participants to evolve in their natural context (Creswell, 2003), in order to prevent contrived results.

Ethnography is particularly interested in finding out how social interaction is created and sustained within the culture and the mind of the individuals under study (Spradley, 1980). Ethnography has found a useful place in the field of communication sciences and disorders for researchers who are interested in learning more about the social implications of communication disorders and the ways in which people accomplish social interaction in spite of certain impairments. Based upon the work in the social sciences, the ethnography of communication disorders (ECD) was launched as a named field of inquiry within the discipline of speech-language pathology (Kovarksky, Damico, Maxwell, Panagos, Prelock, & Keyser, 1988).

ECD has primarily been used within the discipline of speech-language pathology to understand the nature of communicative disorders by analyzing the clinical discourse of assessment and intervention, but is now emerging as a technique for learning how individuals with communication disorders communicate and participate in the world (Kovarsky, 2014). The use of ethnographic methods allows researchers to fully appreciate and understand the happenings within an environment or context. Specifically, ethnographic methods seek to explain the overall structure of the interaction; the roles that individuals take on as they interact; and the behaviors that individuals use to overcome breakdowns (Agar, 1986; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1983). Ethnography is a tool that can be used for "explicating the dynamics of social institutions and organizational practices" (Simmons- Mackie & Damico, 1999, p. 9), and therefore, ethnographic methods allows a detailed account of these goings-on within the context of nursing homes while still preserving the authenticity of the interaction. Although this study is not a true ethnography, it makes use of ethnographic methodologies to answer the key research questions.

Participants

This section will detail the inclusion criteria to be involved in this study and the process of recruiting individuals for participation. This investigation was interested in comprehensive descriptions of the behaviors and strategies used to achieve and maintain social action within the university settings. Therefore, instead of recruiting large quantities of participants and examining predetermined and controlled variables of interaction, a small number of participants were selected in order to get a detailed analysis and description of their individual characteristics. Accordingly, four PWS were chosen to participate in this study.

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette (ULL) provided ethical oversight for this investigation. In accordance with the IRB guidelines, each participant signed a consent form prior to the start of the study. Additionally, the instructors in each classroom were informed of the investigation and its intended purpose and gave consent for the researcher to be in the classroom for data collection. In order to protect against breach of confidentiality, data were kept using initials of each the participants during the field notes stage. These initials of the participants were in turn created into pseudonyms for purposes of this dissertation and future publications in order to designate each of the four participants.

Participants were all recruited through the University of Louisiana Lafayette Speech and Hearing Clinic in Lafayette, Louisiana. Initial contact was made through the clinical supervisors at the University Speech and Hearing Clinic along with a description of the study. Once possible participants were noted an email was sent to each of them with a description of the study. The email was sent to the potential PWS prior to the initial meeting

describing in detail their role in the study and also to give a brief overview of the study prior to the first meeting. This procedure was thought to provoke less anxiety from the PWS and provide a platform to ask any questions or request clarification through email prior to the initial meeting. If the PWS agreed to participate, the consent form was signed at the initial meeting along with a brief overview of the possible risks and benefits of being in the study.

Criteria for inclusion. Participants were not chosen for inclusion based upon a severity level of overt stuttering (i.e. mild, moderate, severe) race, gender, or age. Instead, the primary characteristics that united the participants in this study was the fact that they all were university students who were currently attending college at the time of the study and all were persons who stutter. This distinguishing trait made them similar to each other in ways that would be more responsive to the research questions proposed. The differences in stuttering overt severity level, gender, race, and age are all intended to strengthen the findings of the research and expand the outcomes of the population of PWS in the university setting. Heterogeneity of participant characteristics is considered a strength in qualitative research (Schofield, 2002). The following criteria for participant selection were employed in this investigation:

1. The individual presented with behaviors commonly associated with stuttering that could be empirically documented through the Stuttering Severity Instrument 4 (SSI-4)(Riley & Baker, 2009) or the Overall Assessment of the Speaker's Experience of Stuttering (OASES)(Yaruss & Quesal, 2006) by a certified speech language pathologist with experience in the assessment of adult stuttering. Participants had to be diagnosed with stuttering. Participants were excluded if they had a concomitant diagnosis of language disorder, psychological impairment,

or any other disorder that would inhibit accurate data of the sole experience of stuttering within university settings (e.g., autism).

2. The individual must meet the university requirements for full time status, which was being registered for at least 12 credit hours for undergraduate studies and 9 hours for graduate studies. These criteria were selected in order to elicit data associated with the college student who is immersed within the culture of the university (i.e. social clubs, dorm life, study groups) rather than a part-time student who may not be fully immersed in the college experience.

3. The individual had experienced stuttering since childhood and followed the typical patterns of early onset of stuttering. This typically means onset between 2.5-6 years of age. This criterion was chosen to differentiate typical stuttering, rather than stuttering with a later onset (i.e. psychogenic and neurogenic stuttering) that are different from the more typical "developmental" stuttering experience.

4. The individual demonstrated adequate communication efficiency to participate in semi-structured interview settings.

5. The individual was proficient in speaking English due to the primary researcher's native tongue of English.

6. The individual agreed to participate in this study through informed consent and agreed to be evaluated, audiotaped, observed in daily interactions and routines, and interviewed.

Description of the participants. Consistent with a qualitative research design, it is vital to provide a rich description of the participants and their environment so that the

findings from the study may be contextualized and made clear. Of utmost importance to this study is to obtain the essence of stuttering within the university setting. The social and personal history of each participant will be explained in the following section in an attempt to create an illustration of the abilities and personalities of each PWS. Much of this information was gathered during the initial evaluation or through repeated conversations with each of the PWS and friends of the participants who agreed to do an interview with the primary researcher. It is important to note any information gathered during the non-participant interviews (e.g. girlfriends, friends, classmates) was agreed to by the participant prior to adding it to the description of each of the participants in this section.

   Participant one (designated Ivey). At the beginning of data collection, Ivey was a 20-year-old black female who started stuttering at the age of 4. Ivey was first made aware of her stuttering when a boy teased her in school. Ivey was born in the southern region of Texas where she lived until she was five years old and then moved to Nigeria to be with her mother and brother. She lived in Nigeria until she was 14 years old and then moved back to the southern region of Texas with her family. Ivey does have a positive family history of stuttering on her father's side. Upon her arrival in the United States at the age of 14, Ivey enrolled in public school until her graduation at which time she moved to attend college in the South.

   Ivey was pursuing an undergraduate degree in speech-language pathology with a minor in psychology. Ivey stated she planned to apply to graduate school somewhere in the area in order to help other people with communication disorders. At the time of the interview, Ivey worked as a community leader on campus in the dorms. Her job responsibilities were to answer the phone, monitor dorm rooms, and check ID's upon entry of

the dorm room. Ivey was active in the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association (NSSLHA) and served as the secretary for two consecutive years. She also enjoyed exercising and lifting weights and was a regular at the gym on campus. Ivy noted most of her friends were either made through work or within the classroom. She described it as "challenging" to have boyfriends due to stuttering and in fact stated she only had one relationship for a very brief time and that stuttering was one of the reasons for the break-up. She also described the difficulty of stuttering within the college culture due to simple tasks such as ordering food in the cafeteria and being labeled as a stutterer in the classroom. According to Ivey, she ate ramen noodles her entire freshman year because she would rather avoid stuttering in public (cafeteria) than be identified as a PWS. The university experience, according to Ivey, was going to work, attending class, hanging out with friends, and going to the gym.

Ivey had not received therapy for stuttering at the time of initial contact and in fact stated, "my parents did not want me to pity myself and so therapy was not an option growing up." Ivey noted she did want therapy but was timid due to the evidence she read on stuttering outcomes and listening to other people's viewpoint about stuttering. In her opinion, therapy would disregard the strategies she has learned on her own to hide her stuttering from others (word substitution, avoiding words, increasing intonation) but she was curious about what therapy had to offer. Ivey also stated how hard it was to grow up in Nigeria because most Nigerians viewed stuttering as a curse and so therefore she wasn't allowed to stutter.

Informal analysis of communicative behaviors would suggest that Ivey presented with stuttering in the forms of blocks, part word repetitions, whole word repetitions, in addition to disfluencies in the form of frequent pauses and interjections (e.g. uh,um,etc.) A nervous tic in

the form of a hand tremor was observed during initial contact along with an obvious uncomfortableness talking about stuttering. Ivey described aspects of her stuttering with her major complaint being that she hated using the telephone because people hung up on her. She also hated talking to cute boys on campus and ordering food in the cafeteria.

The SSI-4 (Riley & Baker, 2009) was administered to Ivey and all of the participants along with the OASES-A (Yaruss & Quesal, 2006) for comparative purposes. The SSI-4 is a standardized procedure in the field of stuttering for assessing the physical components of stuttering e.g. part word repetitions, whole word repetitions, prolongations, blocks, and the physical concomitants of stuttering. The SSI-4 is also a tool used to assess the overall overt severity of stuttering which uses three scores related to frequency, duration, and physical concomitants by extracting two different speech samples (reading task, and a conversational task). The scores are calculated in order to yield a total overall severity score. The OASES-A is a self-assessment tool shown to be a reliable source to examine the overall quality of life for adults who stutter. The OASES takes scores from four categories about stuttering i.e., *general information about stuttering, reactions to stuttering, communication in daily situations, and quality of life*, and then calculates an overall impact score related to how stuttering affects an individual's daily life. The participants score each question in each of the above sections on a scale of 1-5, 1 indicating a low score and 5 a high score. These two standardized tests combined were used to capture the overall essence of stuttering at this time in their lives. Scores and percentile ranks for Ivey are listed below.

Table 3.1 SSI-4 Overt Stuttering Behaviors Assessment. Raw Scores and Percentile Ranks for Ivey.

TASK	DATA	COMMENTS	TASK SCORE
Frequency	1.3% (speaking task) 2.6% (reading task)	4 out of 303 8 out of 300	4
Duration	2.0-2.9 seconds	average of the three longest stuttering moments	8
Physical concomitants	1 (distracting sounds) 2 (facial grimaces) 2 (head movements) 0 (extremity movement)	Not noticeable unless looking for it Barely noticeable to casual observer Barely noticeable to casual observer None	5
TOTAL OVERALL SCORE	5-11th percentile	Severity Rating: Very Mild	17

The data from the SSI-4 indicated that Ivey's overt stuttering is very mild in nature in comparison to other adults who stutter. It should be noted that this scale is based primarily on observable behaviors only and does not deal with emotions or attitudes related to stuttering. Nonetheless, it verified that her stuttering is indeed present. It is also important to note Ivey's stuttering was accompanied with secondary behaviors such as eye blinking, looking away, and using interjections (uh, um, etc.). Ivey self-reported troubled sounds of /w/, /i/, /a/, /h/, and/t/ and this was confirmed during the assessment along with a few other sounds. Most of Ivey's stuttering was at the beginning of the utterances as she attempted to initiate voicing. Ivey's stuttering mainly consisted of part word repetitions and blocks, which lasted as long as four seconds during the assessment. Also of interest is that Ivey's speech rate was perceptually fast throughout the interviews and later stated word swapping was a tool she diligently used to avoid stuttering.

In addition to the assessment of speaking behaviors, another measure was used that allowed Ivey to describe her attitudes and feeling about stuttering, the Overall Assessment of the Speaker's Experience of Stuttering-Adults (OASES-A) (Yaruss and Quesal, 2006). The OASES-A is meant to determine the impact of stuttering on the life of people who stutter. The total impact score is derived of multiple questions that are broken into four different categories. The answers to questions are provided by the client making this a self-assessment profile. The overall results and the subsection scores are below:

Table 3.2 OASES - Evaluation of Attitudes & Feelings Related to Stuttering. Raw and Impact Scores related to Ivey.

SECTION	TOTAL POINTS	IMPACT SCORE	IMPACT RATING
I. General Information	39	3.0	Moderate/Severe
II. Reactions to stuttering	90	3.0	Moderate/Severe
III. Communication in daily situations	80	3.07	Moderate/Severe
IV. Quality of life	71	2.84	Moderate
TOTAL IMPACT SCORE	280	2.97	Moderate

Overall, the OASES results indicated that stuttering moderately impacts Ivey's life. In the first section of the OASES, *General Information,* Ivey scored moderate/severe meaning her overall knowledge of stuttering or being identified as a PWS affects her negatively. For instance, when asked "how she feels about being a person who stutters" and "how do you feel about the way you sound when you speak", she responded with "somewhat negative", which is a score of 4 on a 5-point scale. Ivey also noted a *somewhat negative* (score of 4) response when asked about her overall speaking ability. In section II, *Reactions to Stuttering,* Ivey scored moderate/severe meaning her reactions to stuttering are more negative in nature than positive or neutral. For example, Ivey noted she felt helpless, embarrassed, frustrated,

and ashamed when she thought of stuttering. Ivey also agreed with the following statements of "she did not want people to know she stuttered", "I cannot accept the fact that I stutter", and "people's opinions about her are based primarily on how I speak." In section III, *Communication in daily situations*, Ivey scored moderate/severe meaning she expressed difficulty in communication in general. Ivey noted difficulty with talking while under time pressure, in front of a large and a small group, talking on the telephone, and introducing herself. It is also important to note that Ivey expressed *severe difficulty* with talking on the phone at work, giving oral presentations, and talking with a supervisor or boss. In section IV, *Quality of life*, Ivey scored moderate meaning her overall quality of life was affected significantly related to stuttering. Ivey noted that stuttering interfered with her ability to make friends, intimate relationships, ability to do her job, and her overall confidence and self-worth. She also expressed how much the reactions of others affect her when she stutters.

Interpretation of these scores as a whole indicated that Ivey stutters very mildly overtly but is significantly affected by her stuttering in daily life. Ivey had a significant fear of stuttering or being labeled as a PWS and would avoided stuttering at all costs. This was evident in the observation of word substitution, avoiding words/sounds that may elicit stuttering, and other avoidances (e.g., interjections) used in speaking situations. This was also revealed in her overall OASES score. Based on these assessments, it was determined that Ivey met the criteria to be a participant in this study.

Participant two (designated Nick). At the beginning of data collection, Nick was 19-year-old Caucasian male who started stuttering at age 6. Nick was born in the south and has remained there his whole life. He attended all public schools in the Louisiana area until

graduation, in which he enrolled in a public college in the area. Nick did have a positive family history of stuttering due to his sister and father both identified as PWS.

Nick was pursuing an undergraduate degree in computer science and was starting his junior year at the start of the initial meeting. Nick always wanted to have a job in computers because he was fascinated by the way computer code functions and interacts with machines. Nick enjoys video games, hanging out with his three (stated he only has three) friends, and doing schoolwork. Nick reported not having many friends throughout school and described the difficulty in making friends due to his extended moments of overt stuttering. His friends described him as a quiet and intelligent person who did not talk much but was fun to hang out with. Nick reported that he tried to get a job on numerous attempts but was unsuccessful due to his severe stuttering problem. Nick stated that he never had a girlfriend at the age of 19 and he noted it was largely due to his stuttering and ineffective speech pattern. He found ordering food in the cafeteria on campus a challenge and told several stories about making lunches in order to avoid interactions in time pressure situations. Some of his professors had told him he should use a machine in order to help him speak. Nick described his college scene as hanging out with friends, playing video games, doing classwork, and preparing for a future job.

Nick received therapy for one year as a second grader in the public schools but did not remember anything about treatment due to his age at the time. He started treatment for the second time at the local university speech and hearing clinic one week before the start of data collection. He hoped therapy would "help him be more efficient when speaking." Nick described his stuttering as disjointed hang-ups, pauses, and a break down in speech that was

analogous to a machine not working properly. He hated talking on the telephone and speaking in class due to the amount of time and effort is required for communication.

Informal analysis of communicative behaviors would suggest Nick presented with over stuttering in the forms of long extended blocks and extended part word repetitions. Nick implemented interjections such as "um,uh" quite often, which were accompanied with a long silent pause afterward. He avoided eye contact with the researcher during the initial meeting and typically spoke with his head down. Nick's speech at times was highly unintelligible due to his stuttering, which had to be repeated for comprehension.

The SSI-4 (Riley & Baker, 2009) and OASES-A (Yaruss & Quesal, 2006) were administered to Nick, which produced information regarding his overt stuttering behaviors and overall quality of life related to stuttering. Specific scores and percentile rank are listed below in the tables.

Table 3.3 SSI-4 Overt Stuttering Behaviors Assessment. Raw Scores and Percentile Ranks for Nick.

TASK	DATA	COMMENTS	TASK SCORE
Frequency	21.6% (speaking task) 28.6% (reading task)	77 out of 355 86 out of 300	17
Duration	3.0- 4.9 seconds	average of the three longest stuttering moments	10
Physical concomitants	4 (distracting sounds) 4 (facial grimaces) 4 (head movements) 4 (extremity movement)	Very distracting Very distracting Very distracting Very distracting	16
TOTAL OVERALL SCORE	96-99th percentile	Severity Rating: Very Severe	43

The data from the SSI-4 indicated Nick's overt stuttering behaviors were *very severe* in nature. It should be noted that this scale is based primarily on observable behaviors only and does not deal with emotions or attitudes related to stuttering. Nonetheless, it verified

stuttering is indeed present. It is also important Nicks' stuttering was accompanied with extensive secondary behaviors of poor eye contact, turning away during speech, arm and head movements, and eye blinking. Nick self-reported the effort that was required of him when speaking and it was obvious Nick struggled in communicating. Nick demonstrated stuttering behaviors ranging from 0% up to 44%. The majority of his stuttering during the assessment can be characterized as blocks and prolongations with some extending in duration up to 5 seconds. Although, there were several instances of whole word repetitions and part word repetitions. He did exhibit disfluencies consisting of interjections (uh, um) regularly throughout the assessment and stated word avoidances were common to avoid stuttering moments. An interesting note is Nick spoke very slow and self-corrected periodically when a stuttering episode emerged.

The OASES-A is meant to determine the impact of stuttering on the life of people who stutter. The total impact score is derived of multiple questions that are broken into four different categories. The answers to questions are provided by the client making this a self-assessment profile. The overall results and the subsection scores are listed on the following page:

Table 3.4 OASES - Evaluation of Attitudes & Feelings Related to Stuttering. **Raw Scores and Percentile Ranks for Nick.**

SECTION	TOTAL POINTS	IMPACT SCORE	IMPACT RATING
I. General Information	41	3.11	Moderate/Severe
II. Reactions to stuttering	115	3.83	Severe
III. Communication in daily situations	112	4.31	Severe
IV. Quality of life	73	2.8	Moderate
TOTAL IMPACT SCORE	341	3.63	Moderate/Severe

Overall, the OASES results indicated that stuttering moderate/severe impacts Nick in daily life. This can be further explained by examining each of the sections in the OASES.

In section I, *General Information*, Nick scored *moderate/severe* meaning his overall knowledge of stuttering or being identified as a PWS affected him negatively. For instance, when asked "how often do you speak fluently" and "how do you feel about being a person who stutters," a negative response was tallied. Nick also noted negative responses about his ability to speak and the way he sounds when he speaks. In section II, *Reactions to Stuttering*, Nick scored *severe* meaning his reactions to stuttering are almost all negative in nature. For example, data from this section revealed Nick often felt helpless when stuttering and left situations when he thought he might stutter. Nick also always felt ashamed, anxious, embarrassed, and frustrated when stuttering moments emerged. Nick felt that stuttering held him back from achieving life goals. In section III, *Communication in daily situations*, Nick scored *severe* meaning he self-reported grave difficulty in communicating daily. The results noted that it was *very difficult* (score of 4 out of 5) when talking with a person one on one, talking in front of a small group of people, and continuing to speak regardless of how the listener responds. *Extremely difficult* (score of 5 out of 5) was tallied for almost half of the 24 situations assessed in this section of the OASES-A e.g. talking while under time pressure, in front of a large group of people, on the telephone, introducing yourself, giving oral presentations, asking for information, ordering food in a restaurant and drive-thru, etc. In section IV, *Quality of life*, Nick scored *moderate* meaning his overall quality of life was affected moderately due to the fact he stuttered. Some notable responses indicated that stuttering interfered with his ability to make friends, have intimate relationships, and ability to advance in a career. However, in section E of this section, which is related to increased

62

emotional arousal and sense of self-worth, Nick reported mild scores indicating a low affect response to stuttering in general.

Interpretation of these scores as a whole indicated Nick stutters *very severe* overtly and was affected by his stuttering in daily life. Nick had significant fears of speaking in general but did not seem to be affected by his stuttering, which suggests the *moderate* score under Quality of Life section. Nick did not have many friends and felt his relationship challenges were due to his stuttering and inability to keep up in conversation.

Participant three (designated John). At the start of data collection, John was a 21-year-old Caucasian male who had been stuttering since the age of four. John did not have a positive family history of stuttering. He was born in the south but moved around often and resided in 7 homes throughout the states of Missouri, Mississippi, and Louisiana until setting up roots once again in Louisiana. He noted most of his life he was not a social person despite being involved in football and other extracurricular activities during school, which he later attributed to his fear of being picked on due to his stuttering.

John was pursuing a degree in psychology in order to help children cope with emotional aspects associated with bullying. This degree choice was chosen due to some of the complications he had as a child and adult who stutters. John initially entered the university pursuing a degree in petroleum engineering but found it unfulfilling and so he changed his major to psychology during his sophomore year. He enjoyed attending the university football games and cooking for his girlfriend. He stated he did not have many friends in college due to his busy schedule and overall shyness. John reportedly worked at Olive Garden as a cook and found it difficult to relay the food orders at times due to his stuttering. John was reportedly teased at work for stuttering quite often up until his boss fired

the employees who made fun of him. John was also teased by his professors and classmates during his freshman and sophomore years, which lead to feelings of low self-worth and isolation. During his freshman year in college, John reportedly attempted suicide in the freshman dorms due to his struggle with depression and according to John, stuttering contributed to his negative quality of life at that time. He described his college experience as being alone his freshman year, going to class, hanging out with his girlfriend, studying, playing video games, going out to eat, and having an occasional beer.

John received speech therapy on and off throughout grammar school, junior high school, and high school, describing it as successful because it taught him helpful tools such as *butterfly talk* and *light contacts.* He also noted that therapy helped him deal with his anxiety and fear of speaking. At the time of initial contact with John, he had started therapy for one week at the university clinic.

Informal analysis of communicative behaviors indicated would suggest that John presented with stuttering in the form of part word part word repetitions, short blocks, and secondary characteristics of eye blinking and minor head movements. John also looked away during moments of stuttering and were often accompanied with a flustered response. John reported that he has trouble with /j/, /l/, /m/, and all vowel sounds and this was confirmed during the informal analysis.

The SSI-4 (Riley & Baker, 2009) and OASES-A (Yaruss & Quesal, 2006) were administered to John, which produced information regarding his overt stuttering behaviors and overall quality of life related to stuttering. Specific scores and percentile rank are listed in the tables on the following pages.

Table 3.5 SSI-4 Overt Stuttering Behaviors Assessment. Raw Scores and Percentile Ranks for John.

TASK	DATA	COMMENTS	TASK SCORE
Frequency	1.89% (reading task) 6.67% (speaking task)	7 out of 360 20 out of 300	8
Duration	.5-.9	average of the three longest stuttering moments	4
Physical concomitants	0 (distracting sounds) 1 (facial grimaces) 1 (head movements) 1 (extremity movement)	None Not noticeable if not looking Not noticeable if not looking Not noticeable if not looking	3
TOTAL OVERALL SCORE	5-11th percentile	Severity Rating: Very Mild	15

The data from the SSI-4 indicated John's overt stuttering behaviors were very mild in nature. It should be noted that this scale is based primarily on observable behaviors only and does not deal with emotions or attitudes related to stuttering. Nonetheless, it verified stuttering was indeed present. John's stuttering was accompanied with secondary behaviors of minimal facial grimaces, poor eye contact, and shifting of his legs during moments of stuttering. John demonstrated stuttering behaviors ranging from 0% up to 9%. The majority of his stuttering assessment can be characterized as blocks, prolongations, and part-word repetitions with some extending in duration up to 1 second. Although, there were several instances of single syllable word repetitions noted during the speech samples. He did exhibit other disfluencies consisting of interjections (uh, um) regularly throughout the assessment in order to avoid stuttering at times, which was later confirmed with John after the assessment.

The OASES-A is meant to determine the impact of stuttering on the life of people who stutter. The total impact score is derived of multiple questions that are broken into four

different categories. The answers to questions are provided by the client making this a self-assessment profile. The overall results and the subsection scores are below:

Table 3.6 OASES - Evaluation of Attitudes & Feelings Related to Stuttering. **Raw Scores and Percentile Ranks for John.**

SECTION	TOTAL POINTS	IMPACT SCORE	IMPACT RATING
I. General Information	33	1.65	Mild/Moderate
II. Reactions to stuttering	67	2.23	Mild/Moderate
III. Communication in daily situations	57	2.38	Moderate
IV. Quality of life	45	1.80	Mild/Moderate
TOTAL IMPACT SCORE	165	2.04	Mild/Moderate

Overall, the OASES results indicated that stuttering impacts John in daily life at a mild to moderate degree. This can be further explained by examining each of the sections in the OASES-A.

In section I, *General Information*, John scored *mild/moderate* meaning his overall knowledge of stuttering or being identified as a PWS mildly affected him in a negative fashion. For instance, when asked "how do you feel about your speaking ability" and "how do you feel about being a person who stutters," a *somewhat negatively* response was tallied, which is a score of 4 on a 5-point scale. John also noted another *somewhat negatively* responses about his ability to communicate, which again is a score of 4 on a 5-point scale. In section II, *Reactions to Stuttering*, John scored *mild/moderate* meaning his reactions to stuttering are mildly negative. John noted he sometimes felt angry, ashamed, and depressed when he thinks about his stuttering but also noted *rarely* (score of 2 on a 5-point scale) responses of guilty and helpless. He also noted neutral responses in how people's opinions about him affect him and if he spoke as well as other people. In section III, *Communication*

in daily situations, John scored *moderate* meaning he self-reported some difficulty in communicating daily. Some notable responses were *very difficult* (score of 4 out of 5) when talking under time pressure, introducing yourself, and talking with a person one on one, talking in front of a small group of people, and continuing to speak regardless of how the listener responds. In section IV, Q*uality of Life*, John scored *mild/moderate* meaning his overall quality of life was somewhat affected due to the fact he stuttered. Some notable responses indicated Bob felt stuttering interfered *some* (3 on a 5-point scale) with his ability to make friends, ability to advance in a career, have confidence in himself, and communicating in daily social situations.

Interpretation of these scores as a whole indicated John stutters *very mild* overtly and was affected *mild/moderate* by his stuttering in daily life. John did have fears of speaking in general due to his increased emotional arousal during communication and concern with how others viewed his stuttering. He noted difficulties when speaking under time pressure but past therapy techniques have helped in communication abilities during these contexts. It seemed John's many years of stuttering therapy had improved his overall quality of life and ability to communicate effectively in daily interactions when compared to other PWS.

Participant four (designated Bob). At the beginning of the data collection, Bob was a 24-year-old first year graduate student pursuing a degree in speech-language pathology in the south. Bob was born in the Midwest regions where he resided for all of grade school until his enrollment at a college in the Midwest. He started stuttering at the age of 3 and was frequently teased growing up. He reported several incidents of bullying throughout school, which ultimately led to him saying that he grew up in fear of speaking. Bob enjoyed playing video games and watching thought provoking television series.

He received an undergraduate degree in speech language pathology and then was accepted into a graduate program upon which he moved to the south. Bob pursued a degree in speech-language pathology in order to help people with other communication disorders in hopes they would not experience the same challenges he faced in school. Bob found socializing in college challenging and so he did not have many friends or meaningful relationships. He stated that his parents were his best friends. The few friends he had would describe him as weird and awkward. He avoided interactions in the classroom by not raising his hand and keeping his head down when the instructor was searching for an answer. He described the college experience as going to class, studying hard, and learning how to branch out into the community. Bob also noted his time in college was about learning to take on more responsibility by budgeting money, shopping for his own food, and cooking meals for himself.

Bob received speech therapy on and off throughout grade school, junior high school, high school, and even college. His therapy consisted of fluency shaping techniques, stuttering modification, and learning how to cope effectively with stuttering. He also received cognitive behavioral therapy at a private SLP that helped him integrate some of his learned strategies into real world settings.

Informal analysis of communicative behaviors would suggest that Bob presented with stuttering in the form of part word repetitions, blocks, single syllable word repetitions, and prolongations. Bob also presented with secondary behaviors in the form of hand movements, re-starts, eye blinking, and poor eye contact. Extended prolongations were observed along with a slow speech rate, probably due to his many years of stuttering therapy. Bob reported

trouble having trouble with vowel sounds and /b/ and /p/ and this was confirmed in the informal analysis.

The SSI-4 (Riley & Baker, 2009) and OASES-A (Yaruss & Quesal, 2006) were administered to Bob, which produced information regarding his overt stuttering behaviors and overall quality of life related to stuttering. Specific scores and percentile rank are listed below in the tables.

Table 3.7 SSI-4 Overt Stuttering Behaviors Assessment. Raw Scores and Percentile Ranks for Bob.

TASK	DATA	COMMENTS	TASK SCORE
Frequency	9.2% (speaking task) 8.3% (reading task)	34 out of 360 25 out of 300	14
Duration	1.0- 1.9 seconds	average of the three longest stuttering moments	6
Physical concomitants	1 (distracting sounds) 2 (facial grimaces) 1 (head movements) 2 (extremity movement)	Not noticeable unless looking for it Barely noticeable to the casual observer Not noticeable unless looking for it Barely noticeable to the casual observer	6
TOTAL OVERALL SCORE	41-60th percentile	Severity Rating: Moderate	26

The data from the SSI-4 indicated Bob's overt stuttering behaviors were *moderate* in nature. It should be noted that this scale is based primarily on observable behaviors only and does not deal with emotions or attitudes related to stuttering. Nonetheless, it verified stuttering is indeed present. Bob' stuttering was accompanied with secondary behaviors of poor eye contact, turning away during speech, minimal arm and head movements, and eye blinking. Bob self-reported the struggle that was required of him with speaking. This was observed as

it was obvious that Bob had numerous re-starts and frustrations during speaking tasks. Bob

demonstrated stuttering behaviors ranging from 0% up to 12%. The majority of his stuttering

during the formal assessment can be characterized as part and whole word repetitions and

prolongations with some extending in duration up to 2 seconds. He did exhibit disfluencies

consisting of interjections (uh, um) regularly throughout the assessment and stated that he did

not use word avoidances but would attempt to stutter through his moments of break down.

An interesting note is that Bob spoke very slowly and controlled during the assessment,

likely using strategies that he had learned in speech therapy.

The OASES-A is meant to determine the impact of stuttering on the life of people

who stutter. The total impact score is derived of multiple questions that are broken into four

different categories. The answers to questions are provided by the client making this a self-

assessment profile. The overall results and the subsection scores are below:

Table 3.8 OASES - Evaluation of Attitudes & Feelings Related to Stuttering. Raw
Scores and Percentile Ranks for Bob

SECTION	TOTAL POINTS	IMPACT SCORE	IMPACT RATING
I. General Information	37	2.84	Moderate
II. Reactions to stuttering	80	2.6	Moderate
III. Communication in daily situations	77	2.96	Moderate
IV. Quality of life	73	2.92	Moderate
TOTAL IMPACT SCORE	267	2.84	Moderate

Overall, the OASES results indicated that stuttering *moderately* impacts Bob in daily life.

This can be further explained by examining each of the sections in the OASES.

In section I, *General Information*, Bob scored *moderate* meaning his overall knowledge of

stuttering or being identified as a PWS affected him negatively. For instance, when asked

"how often do you speak fluently" and "how do you feel about being a person who stutters,"

a somewhat negative response was tallied (score 4 out of 5). Bob did report positive scores in

overall general knowledge about stuttering. This can possibly be explained due to his

undergraduate degree and graduate coursework in speech-language pathology. Bob also

noted *somewhat negative* (score 4 out of 5*)* responses about his ability to speak and the way

he sounds when he speaks. In section II, *Reactions to Stuttering*, Bob scored *moderate*

meaning his reactions to stuttering consisted of were typically near the middle of the 5-point

scale. For example, data from the section revealed Bob sometimes felt helpless when

stuttering and left situations when he thought he might stutter. Bob also sometimes felt

ashamed, anxious, embarrassed, and defensive when stuttering moments emerged. Bob felt

that stuttering sometimes held him back from achieving life goals, although, Bob did note he

could accept the fact he stuttered. In section III, C*ommunication in Daily Situations*, Bob

scored *moderate* meaning he self-reported difficulty in communicating daily. Bob reported

having *somewhat difficult* (3 on a 5-point scale) time when talking with a person one on one,

talking in front of a small group of people, and talking on the telephone in general. *Extremely*

difficult (5 on a 5-point scale) was noted for talking with adult clients, giving oral

presentations, and ordering food at a drive-thru. In section IV, Q*uality of Life*, Bob scored

moderate meaning his overall quality of life was affected due to the fact he stuttered. Some

notable responses include that Bob felt stuttering interfered *a lot* (4 on a 5-point scale) with

his ability to make friends, sense of self-worth, and satisfaction in communication in social

situations.

Interpretation of these scores as a whole indicated Bob stutters *moderate* overtly and

was affected *moderately* by his stuttering in daily life. Bob had reservations of speaking in

general due to his increased emotional arousal during communication and overall belief that stuttering does interfere with daily interactions. Although a moderate score was posted with both assessments, Bob did believe he could accept his stuttering.

Data Collection

This section will discuss the various forms of data collection, why they were chosen, and how they were implemented. In keeping with the practices of qualitative research, the accumulation of data was always carried out in natural contexts with a thorough description of the behaviors manifested within each interaction.

Several data collection procedures were employed in order to capture the full scope of the participants' experiences in the university setting and to gain multiple perspectives of all involved in the lives of the participants. As is customary in qualitative research methodologies data were collected from broad and narrow perspectives. The broad perspective allowed the researcher to uncover patterns within the data and directed future data collection procedures (Damico & Mackie, 2003).

Procedures. In order to carefully describe and explain social action in all of its complexity, the data that is acquired must be collected in authentic contexts and be demonstrative of the actual behaviors that take place within an interaction. These behaviors are not pre-determined based upon the priorities of the researcher, but instead emerge from the data to depict how social action is achieved and sustained (Agar, 1986; Spradley, 1980).

Therefore, the process of data collection and analysis has been described in a cyclical process in which results from initial observations help to guide future observations in order to provide thorough and focused accounts of the phenomena of interest (Creswell, 2007). In order to confirm that results were representative from the actions of the participants, several

data collection procedures were implemented and data were collected across different time spans and in variable contexts throughout the university setting. In some cases, interviews were held with professors, friends and other significant individuals. It is important to note that not all variable contexts were identical for each participant as the researcher attempted to individualize each participant's college experience based upon the data from the participants that revealed their college experience. Although the university classroom was a common context for each of the participants due to the weighted role that classrooms have in college, other data collection settings were unique to each individual. The data collection procedures were implemented in order to establish the highest degree of methodological rigor and in turn created a higher degree of authenticity within the data. This procedure of data collection is used to triangulate research findings so that the deductions drawn from investigations are valid (Damico & Tetnowski, 2014).

Four data collection procedures typically associated with qualitative research and ethnography were implemented in order to reveal the multifaceted relationship between social action for PWS and the university setting. The first two procedures, *semi-structured interviews* (with PWS and relevant characters) and *participant observations*, were intended to be the primary data sources. The other two procedures served as secondary data sources and included *individual lamination sessions* and *artifact analysis*, which were used to contextualize, validate, and add another layer to the data generated from participant observations and semi-structured interviews.

A schedule for each participant was employed during the initial meeting and then followed by the researcher to the best of their ability. The initial meeting consisted of collecting the informed consent and perform the participant semi-structured interview. The

73

interviews were done in an open-ended stance and were guided by the participants as they told their college experiences. In keeping with the qualitative research paradigm, the researcher allowed the participant to tell their story and only probing when expansion was required. After the interview, the participant also provided his/her classroom schedule and other contexts related to their college experience so individualized observations could be obtained. It was the goal of the researcher to visit as many college applicable contexts for each participant in hopes to capture the essence of college. These contexts consisted of restaurants/bars, places of employment, classrooms, cafeterias, and university public settings. The second meeting consisted of administering the formal assessment measures using the OASES and SS-4. The second meeting was also a time in which the researcher noted any important details that were observed or not extracted during the initial meeting (e.g. more details emerged about the classroom experience, new information that emerged about college between first two meetings). The first observations began approximately 1-2 weeks after the second meeting and followed the general schedule of weekly visits depending on the availability of the researcher and participant. During the course of the weekly observations, interviews with professors, classmates, family members, friends, and artifact analysis were conducted simultaneously. Lamination sessions were also implemented periodically throughout data collection to accurately depict the phenomena in discovery. These periods of lamination were routinely held with each participant as data emerged and involved a discussion of the behaviors used within interactions and the intention behind the use of those behaviors.

Semi-structured interviews. One of the two primary data sets for this investigation was derived from semi-structured interviews (Spradley, 1979; Westby, 1990). Semi-

structured interviews have been used extensively in ethnographic methodologies in order allow the investigator to collect in-depth information on selected topics related to the research questions, obtain personal histories, and learn about the cultural knowledge and beliefs of those participants being observed (LeCompte & Schensul, 2010). In this specific case, the university culture as defined by a PWS was most relevant. Interviewing allowed the participant to discuss the impact of stuttering within the college setting from their own perspective. In keeping with the methodological principles of semi-structure interviewing, the researcher began the interview with a grand tour question to elicit a conversation of their experience of being a person who stutters in the university setting. An example of a grand tour question was, "I have my own story about college but I would like to hear yours, tell me about what is was like your freshman year at the university." A question such as this lead the participant on a linear journey through college, which helped gain insight into their perspective. One of the primary goals of the interview was to strategically explore the various ways in which stuttering impacts them from a general perspective and daily perspective while attending college. Participants were only asked reflective and responsive questions to expand upon notions already acknowledged.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted at the initial meeting of data collection, which provided the researcher a resource to begin data triangulation and lamination in subsequent data collection procedures. All participants engaged in semi-structured interviews. An outline of the lengths of semi-structured interviews is found in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9. Interview Times in Hours, Minutes, and Seconds.

Participant	Time
Ivey (PWS)	1:22:20
Nick (PWS)	1:10:47
John (PWS)	1:34:01
Bob (PWS)	38:00

Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with persons relevant to the college experience for each of the participants. As noted earlier, these participants were made known during the initial interviews and then also during the observations. Some examples of these participants were the PWS' college professors, PWS' classmates, PWS' girlfriends, PWS' friends, and PWS' work related acquaintances. These specific semi-structured interviews were implemented in order to answer overarching questions and secondary questions relevant to this study. They also proved to be a valuable data source for data triangulation and as a data source for verification. Participants engaged in these interviews are listed below. All original names of the participants in this section have been altered for this section and assigned a pseudonym in the appendix in order to ensure confidentiality. An outline of the semi-structured interviews is found in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10. Interview Times in Minutes and Seconds.

Participants	Time
Sally (SB) (Ivey's classmate and co-worker)	42:47
Mr. Dupont (DU) (Nick's professor)	51:15
Bennett (BE) (Nick's classmate and friend)	33:15
Kiki (K) (John's girlfriend)	41:53
Miss Bailey (BA) (John's professor)	23:06
Mr. Piper (P) (John's professor)	29:48
Miss Nunn (NU) (Bob's professor)	39:21
Miss Doyle (DO) (Bob's professor	33:32
Miss Donna (DA) (Bob's therapist)	28:35
Ann (A) (Bob's classmate)	17:53
Lisa (L) (Bob's classmate)	37:43

Participant observation. One of two primary data sources for this investigation was derived from observations of each of the PWS as they navigated the college setting. Participant observations have been used extensively in ethnography (Anton, 1996; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) and is typically viewed as one of the key data collection methods (Spradley, 1980). Participant observations were conducted at varying times of the

day and on different days of the week in order to capture patterns of socialization that occurred across numerous contexts that encapsulated the college experience. The researcher entered the context and operated from both an outsider and insider perspective, acted appropriately for the situation, and maintained the disciplined subjectivity necessary to function as the researcher (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Lofland, & Lofland, 2001). Due to the required permission to attend college classrooms, the researcher emailed the sought out professor prior to entry. Once email confirmation was confirmed, the researcher visited the designated classrooms sporadically throughout data collection in order to capture the most authentic interactions. The researcher did not let the participants know when the classroom observations would occur rather had each classroom schedule prior to data collection. The researcher was typically viewed as an outsider within the classroom and so blending into the environment was of grave importance. Normal college attire was worn along with a baseball cap in order to fit in the college scene. A university speech and hearing clinic was also another context in which permission was required. The researcher was given consent by both the client and clinicians within this setting. Other relevant contexts did not require permission due to their public accessibility (e.g. restaurants/bars, college cafeterias, places of employment on and off campus, gathering with friends in the courtyard, and places of residence.

All participant observations were from the mindset of what Spradley (1980) defines as passive participation observer. This observer is present at the scene of action but does not participate or interact with other people to any great extent. The researcher is ultimately a *spectator* in the background (Spradley, 1980). College classrooms were a shared context for each of the participants due to the frequent attendance and role the classroom plays in

77

college. The other relevant contexts listed above were different for each participant as each

college experience was different for each participant. In order to know specifically when and

where the participants may be on and off campus, text messages were sent from the

participants that identified contexts and times for the other observations. For example, John

sent a text stating, "I am going out to eat with my friends at 6:30 pm at Agave." The

researcher would then arrive a few minutes early and find an area close enough to observe

but far enough to avoid becoming a part of the interaction as to not become an active

participant. Each of the contexts outside of the classroom were performed in this manner.

Therefore, all of the observations were scheduled around university applicable activities in

order to observe the PWS as he/she engaged in activities that were social in nature. Table

3.11 lists the time spent and general activity the PWS were involved in for the majority of

each participant observation.

Table 3.11. General Activity Information for Each Participant

Participant	Activity	Time Spent
Ivey	Classroom	50 minutes
	Campus employment (Dorm Advisor)	40 minutes
	Restaurant and Bar	30 minutes
	Classroom	50 minutes
Nick	Classroom	75 minutes
	Classroom	60 minutes
	Friend's apartment	35 minutes
	Gathering with Friends by Park	35 minutes
John	Classroom	50 minutes
	Classroom	50 minutes
	Restaurant and Bar	45 minutes
	Place of employment (Olive Garden)	30 minutes
	University Cafeteria	35 minutes
Bob	University Clinic	30 minutes
	Classroom	60 minutes
	Classroom	60 minutes

Due to the nature of these participant observations and in order to capture the complexity of the social interactions that took place in natural contexts all behaviors from all interactants were detailed in field notes. For example, within the classroom context, the professors and classmates were also observed along with the participant in order to gain a deeper understanding of the dialogic nature of interaction and how the behaviors of one participant helped to shape the following, sequential behaviors of the other participant in the observation. This same format was followed for each of the contexts that were observed.

As noted earlier, participant observations were composed from both a broad perspective and narrow perspective. The broad observations were gathered initially which allowed for a focused approach on larger participatory frameworks with concentration on the overall make-up within the classroom and emotions and attitudes of individuals interacting in the classroom. As data emerged and was examined, initial patterns of communication were uncovered, which allowed the researcher to focus on the narrow observations of specific linguistic and interactive strategies used during the interactions.

Artifact analysis. The collection of various artifacts that each PWS created or used as the result of their journey of stuttering within the university setting were used as a data source for this study. Information in this category was obtained from diagnostic protocols (OASES, SSI-4), therapy documentation, assignments in class, and personal journals some of the PWS kept during their time in college. Other artifacts included text messages and email between friends/colleagues interviewed for this study. These data were used to support and extend the findings from the primary data sources listed above.

Lamination. In keeping within the qualitative research paradigm, lamination is a commonly used verification strategy in ethnography which helps establish a thickness of data

interpretation (Agar, 1986: Nelson et al, 2014). During the data collection process, the participants were asked to evaluate statements and observations from previously collected data in order to substantiate claims made by the researcher. These periods of lamination were held with each participant and involved a discussion including what types of behaviors were being implemented within an interaction and the reason behind the use of those behaviors.

Data Analysis

Qualitative research usually begins with an immersion into the data in order to become familiar with important beliefs, actions, or events that have taken place within a cultural scene, in this case the university setting (Spradley, 1980). Qualitative research is based on the philosophy of constructivism and suggests that multiple realities exist in the world and these realities are context-bound. (Creswell, 1998; Maxwell, 2005). Within a qualitative research paradigm researchers are able to establish connections or patterns within the cultural domain of investigation by cyclically reviewing all data sets available. Because of the intense immersion coupled with the cyclical process of analysis, data analysis should therefore reveal an authentic image that uncovers the perspective of the researcher and also that of the participants. For this reason, the researcher must remain objective and cautious to not form biased interpretations and rely on data triangulation.

The two major data sets analyzed for this study were participant interviews and also participant observations. Secondary data sets included interviews with relevant social partners of participants, artifact analyses, and lamination sessions. Artifacts that were deemed relevant included journal entries of participants, interactive text messages with social partners and subjects, and therapy notes included for those participants who were receiving therapy services at the time of investigation. The thorough analysis of this cumulative data sets for

each participant followed the process of analysis and interpretation well documented in qualitative inquiry and research design. The two major data sets were analyzed first, followed by the secondary data sets that not only contributed to the knowledge base established but also were used to verify analyses. The next section will discuss the specific steps of data analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) and how they were implemented for this inquiry.

Phase 1: familiarizing yourself with the data. This stage is the initial immersion into the data set. A researcher must become familiar with the data and often cyclically reviews all data sets in a systematic manner. Since one of the primary data sets and secondary data sets for this investigation entailed interviews, an accurate and detailed transcription of all the interviews was completed by the researcher in order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomena in question. Even though the researcher conducted all interviews, the reflective nature of interviewing and transcribing proved vital for increased comprehension and further understanding of the essence of university experience for each participant. Once interviews were transcribed and initial notes were tallied, observations were then systematically and repeatedly reviewed and if needed, further elaboration was completed. Next, artifacts and any other relevant data points were noted reviewed and analyzed. This phase also included noting phenomenon of interest in all data that were relevant to each of the research questions and overall scope of this investigation.

Phase 2: Generating initial codes. During this stage and after the researcher was familiar with all the data and the relevant points in the data, initial codes were administered. These codes were derived based upon features of the data that appeared interesting to the researcher but also answered specific research questions previously established. For example,

81

one of the research questions examines the specific behaviors PWS implement at times of interaction within the classroom, and so the researcher inspected the data sets for these behaviors. The researcher for this study used different color pens to help identify codes and for later recognition. Coding requires full attention to each data item in order to identify aspects that may form the basis of repeated patterns across all data. The process of coding is a part of analysis as researchers organize the data into meaningful groups but not to be confused with thematic analysis, which is a much broader view of the data. If codes were determined to have a pattern of usage and were used systematically, they were assimilated into the third phase of data analysis.

Phase 3: Searching for themes. This stage of analysis began when all data were initially coded and a list of different codes were identified across all data sets. During this stage, the researcher focuses the analysis on a broader level in order to identify patterns that emerge. Once the patterns were identified, the researcher examined the relationship of these themes and with the codes, and between the different levels of themes. It is during this stage that the researcher also identifies possible main themes along with the subordinate themes that help bring realization to these patterns. Some of these themes included items such as social partner reactions and behaviors, PWS specific compensatory strategies implemented, classroom culture, and conversational roles for social partners. The function of the phenomena became more apparent and identified that allowed the researcher to move to the next phase of reviewing themes. It is important for the researcher while in this phase to not discard any possible themes as they may prove relevant for future reference.

Phase 4: Reviewing themes. At this phase of the analysis, it was vital to refine the initial themes from phase 3 and to verify that all themes were representative of the ways in

which PWS navigated the university culture. This refinement was accomplished in several ways. First, categories that emerged from the data in Phase 3 were compared to data across all data sets, which included primary and secondary sources. Next, lamination sessions were administered with each participant during data collection and at the conclusion of data collection. These lamination sessions were either in person, over the phone, or emailed to the participants and sent back. Lamination over the phone occurred by sending the results to the participant via email and discussing them over the phone. Lamination in person entailed simply discussing the results with the participant in order to verify the results as valid. Finally, once lamination sessions were accomplished, further refinement consisted of cyclically and systematically reviewing all data sets that align with the lamination sessions in order to ensure all data is credible with what the participants' viewpoints were.

Phase 5: Description and explanation. The final phase in the data analysis is an overall gather of the evidence to examine any patterns identified individually and across all four participants. A detailed description of each phenomenon was created and compared to the groupings found in each of the four participants. Identified variances between the findings from each participant and any patterns that varied from those identified in the literature were also described during this phase of the analysis. It was also at this phase that the researcher judiciously identified examples from the data in order to properly identify each of the major themes and subthemes in the next chapter. Chapter 4 will identify individual results and Chapter 5 will identify group results.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

The overarching purpose of this study was to investigate *how PWS navigate the college experience*. Secondary questions were used to guide data collection and analysis and to narrow the focus to three concentrated areas of inquiry: the impact of the university culture, behavioral manifestations present in various university contexts, and identity construction and negotiation. Each of these areas will be described in greater detail to explain the findings that will be presented in this chapter. Because social action is constructed mutually, it was important to investigate not only the PWS but also other partners and social actors that acted as communication partners in each context. Consequently, the behaviors of other students, professors, and friends were documented in order to capture what motivated the actions of the PWS.

The first area, the impact of the *university culture*, dealt with understanding how social action was achieved for PWS within various university contexts. By doing this, the culture of universities could be conceptualized and a description of the environmental factors that contributed to social participation could be specified. It was important to appreciate these factors because of their inseparable relationship with the behaviors and emotions present in PWS. That is, the contextual makeup of university activities, in the classroom or outside of the classroom, drove the actions of PWS and other interactants and helped to shape the identity of each PWS. Participant observations were the primary data source for this area of interest, but interviews and artifacts were also used to supplement and extend the findings.

The second area, *behavioral manifestations* of PWS, studied the specific actions of PWS as they communicated with others in various university activities. These were divided into three major types of analyses: 1) strategies used to cope with or avoid instances of

stuttering, 2) strategies that functioned to induce fluency, and 3) strategies used to increase support for speaking within a given context. For purposes of this investigation the coping definition used throughout this chapter is consistent with definitions found in the stuttering literature (e.g., Folkman & Lazarus, 1980; Plexico, Manning, & Levitt, 2009).

It should be noted that this division is one of discovery over objectivity as many strategies worked to serve multiple purposes when PWS communicated with others. For example, Ivey often used a breathing technique to work through her stuttering as they happened. She used the same breathing technique as a support strategy to decrease fear and anxiety when she knew her turn to speak was approaching. Participant observations and interviews were both important data sources to uncover these strategies as both PWS and peers recognized these patterns of behavior and were able to speak to their functionality in surprising detail.

Identity construction and negotiation were the final foci of the investigation. The primary data source for this area were interviews of PWS, peers, and professors. Artifacts, such as peer evaluations and therapy records, were a valuable secondary source for understanding the views of others and how these ideas shaped the identity of PWS. Taken together, these data allowed for a complete picture of identity that takes into account the views of not only the PWS but also other participants who consistently interacted with the PWS. Additionally, reflections of past experiences in interviews were able to reveal shifts in identity and a better understanding of how each PWS changed over time.

This chapter details the results of the data collection and analysis for each PWS according to the methodologies outlined and described in Chapter Three. In this chapter, the findings of each of the four PWS are presented separately with sections detailing 1) culture

of the university, 2) behavioral manifestations, and 3) identity, respectively. Despite the fact that these patterns and behaviors are presented separately, they should not be conceptualized as independently functioning entities. The behaviors and patterns that described for each PWS were contextually dependent as the makeup of the university or activities inside and outside of the classroom prompted both the selection of strategies and the views that shaped the identity of each PWS. In Chapter Five, the data from each PWS was compared so that patterns that were consistent across each individual data set were defined and described.

Participant One (Designated Ivey)

Ivey was the only female participant in this study. At the start of data collection, she was 21 years old. Ivey's profile was presented in Chapter 3. The data that contributed to these themes were Ivey's interview, Sally's (Ivey's classmate interview), and 4 observations.

Impact of University Culture. As data were analyzed from an individual perspective, several patterns or themes began to emerge from the data that defined the contextual makeup and the overall ethos of the university. These patterns represented the views and practices of the people that operated within the university so that the customs, values, and rules within the setting could be studied. There were five major patterns that represented the cultural construct of the university setting for Ivey: *unfamiliarity about stuttering, experiential learning, relationship dynamics, departure from normalcy, and environmental obstacles.* Varying indicators within these five major patterns surfaced from the data which acted as subthemes and served to further describe the means by which the primary themes were shaped. A list of the major themes and subthemes are in Table 4.1 on the following page.

86

Table 4.1. Themes and Subthemes for University Culture.

Major Themes	Subthemes
Unfamiliarity about stuttering	Lack of support
	Misconceptions about stuttering
	Ramifications from stuttering
Journey towards agency and management	Experimentation
	Experiential learning
Relationship dynamics	Social partner needs and frustration
	Change over time
Departure from normalcy	Requires accommodation/acceptance
	Uncertainty from others
	Violates expectations
Environmental obstacles	Rigidity of obstacles/classroom tasks
	Impact on academic performance
	Influence of classroom context

Unfamiliarity about stuttering. Within the university classroom context, restaurants, and work related observations, Ivey encountered and engaged with numerous individuals who were unfamiliar with stuttering. These individuals included waitresses, cafeteria workers, classmates, and colleagues. This unfamiliarity lead to many awkward social encounters and even increased emotional arousal for Ivey at times. During her interview, Ivey also spoke about some of the ignorance or unfamiliarity towards stuttering growing up in Nigeria, from current and previous classmates within the university, professors, and some of her current friends. This unfamiliarity of stuttering was made evident through three subthemes: *lack of support*, either communicative, emotional, or personal, *misconceptions about stuttering, and ramifications from stuttering.*

Lack of support. The subtheme *lack of support* was a manifestation of the major theme *unfamiliarity about stuttering.* The lack of support was noted during observations and also described from Ivey during the interview. A lack of support manifested from a personal level for Ivey, a communicative level with others, and an educational level. Lack of personal support was evident as Ivey had no meaningful relationships to help her cope with her

stuttering nor to generate discussions that would assist in effective cognitive restructuring. People in Ivey's life did not understand stuttering or the emotional issues associated with her stuttering and so she was unable to develop constructive coping mechanisms to help overcome the obstacles associated with stuttering. An example from the interview transcripts highlights this theme:

> **Example 4.1, Ivey speaking about a time when she was teased in class by a university professor and her Dad attempted to provide inadequate support (I=Ivey).**
>
> I: (Talking about the incident) Oh yea, I was balling. I was stuttering the whole time when I was telling my Dad. And then my Dad was trying to come and talk to the teacher and bring the cops involved and send someone to jail and then I was like.....to stand up for me and be hands on...gees. I was like don't do that and threaten my teacher and involve the cops. It's too much. But I was on the phone crying my eyes out and so I think that is what made it worse, although the teacher was making fun of me....my glass was shattered. I thought that if I came to college, I wasn't going to be made fun of anymore. Once the glass shattered it was like oh shit I'm still in my poop, I haven't stepped out of it yet.

This excerpt reveals the lack of meaningful emotional support at home from her father and the emotional toll stuttering had on her life while in college. As a result, Ivey reported that she did not disclose the many hardships she experienced in college such as teasing/bullying for fear of what action her father may take towards the offenders. Ivey would later elaborate that instances noted in Example 4.1 is why she quit disclosing anything to her parents about stuttering and ultimately quit talking about stuttering to others for a time. Lack of support was evident throughout the data and in all contexts that Ivey was observed. At times, Ivey required more time to speak or needed some form of support during a specific interaction (i.e. understanding from professor or classmates, friends, accommodations) for her to engage in conversation. Due to this lack of support, Ivey reported that she sometimes reverted to avoiding speaking altogether, word swapping, or implementing a self-taught

strategy (e.g. increased intonation) to save face. She also did not have professionals in her

life (e.g. speech pathologists) who could educate her about stuttering and the negative

consequences associated with the disorder, which ultimately lead to a negative view of

stuttering.

   Misconceptions about stuttering. This subtheme is another manifestation of the major

theme *unfamiliarity about stuttering.* Based on interviews, artifacts, and observation data,

people who interacted with Ivey in the university setting had grave misconceptions about

stuttering. This often lead to difficulty in communicative contexts. These misconceptions or

misunderstandings of stuttering were revealed during some of the classroom observations

and work related observations. As a result of this lack of knowledge of stuttering, Ivey was

demanded to speak in situations in which she almost had no chance of successful

communication. In one example during an interview with one of Ivey's work colleagues at

the dorms, her colleague speaks about a time at work when she asked Ivey to answer a phone

abruptly in front of several people because she was overwhelmed with her own tasks.

Example 4.2, excerpt from Ivey's classmate interview as she discusses a situation in which she put Ivey in a difficult speaking situation at work (at work behind the counter) (SB=Ivey's classmate).

SB: In the workplace there was one moment where I caught her off guard and someone had called me saying they were going to come to the dorms to see the model room. Well an email popped up, so I'm responding to an email and my phone is ringing to someone who wants to come for a tour. So I say Ivey can you talk to her really quick and tell her what time to come. So the lady on the phone says hello, and Ivey doesn't say anything, so I look up and she had a block. And it was a really long block too so I was just looking at her, but I was holding my breath with her. And so I blocked myself too and after 10 seconds I took over and said hello and then they are like (people on the phone) "oh hey I'm sorry, was there something wrong with the phone?" And you can tell Ivey was overwhelmed and she said "I couldn't say hi". But that was a big turning point for her. I think that was right before she started seeking treatment. But it was a big turning point, and I was like I'm sorry something was wrong with my phone and she's looking at me and shaking her head in

disappointment and ashamed because she couldn't say hi. And she (Ivey) says, "you can't just catch me off guard like that in a joking manner." But I know she was serious and I was like "I'm so sorry I didn't know that was going to happen." I'll never do that again."

In this instance, the lack of understanding of stuttering and of Ivey's needs in communicative tasks, she was put in a difficult speaking situation in which she could not handle. One of the key culprits in the expression of stuttering is the aspect of time pressure and anyone who had an understanding of the underpinnings of stuttering would have likely handled this situation much different.

Apart from Ivey's work environment on campus, this misunderstanding of stuttering was also exhibited by her professors in the classroom, her classmates, and restaurant employees. Many times she was called upon by her professors to read in class and perform extemporaneous speeches, all of which are challenging for many PWS. Ivey's classmates often completed her sentences and treated her different due to the fact she stuttered. In fact, Sally's interview reveals just this.

Ramifications from stuttering. The final subtheme from the major theme *unfamiliarity about stuttering* is largely based on interviews and observations in which Ivey experienced a consequence as a result of stuttering. It was observed through several observations in the classroom and at work that Ivey was mimicked, laughed at, and even bullied. Observation #2 illustrates this theme. Ivey was working on campus as a resident advisor and happened to "work the door" as she called it on the day of the observation. "Working the door" was later clarified as checking student ID's as they walked into the dorms to confirm residency or if the student needed to check out something behind the counter. Within this observation, a male student approached and asked Ivey for a key as she sat behind the counter and upon her initiation of speech she blocked, which was then followed by a smirk and giggle by the

90

student. Another example of this theme was noted during the interview with Ivey when she

described a college classroom experience between her and a professor.

> **Example 4.3, excerpt from Ivey's interview as she discusses a classroom situation where she encountered ramifications as a result of stuttering (I=Ivey).**
>
> I: "we came back with our paper and we had to do a peer review in class and we are supposed to hand the papers off to other people to trade papers but instead he wanted to switch it up and say, "do not return the papers back, how about you read out the corrections you made on your paper." So I'm like this is not the way it goes sir. This is not how peer review works. So we went around in a circle and I was so mad like what is wrong with you (the professor). So when it got to my point and I was trying to get through… ok I made correction on the title, I said "I need an extra comma," and he was like "what was the name of the title", and I was like Jesus man can you just let me get through this. So the title was long…..that didn't need to be there. So I was trying to read the title and I had a repetition and of course you cannot word switch something on the paper, so you are going to have to say it. So I have a repetition and it was obvious so I was just like, this is ridiculous and I hear the guy (classmate) and he burst out laughing and the teacher is trying not to laugh but you see that he is laughing so I get this ball in my throat because the teacher is laughing. So I'm just like this is a bastard right here and he's in his 50s and after I'm done reading and he said well, "when we ask you to read, make sure you get your words right and make sure you know how to speak at that moment." And I'm like you took shots at me. Come on now. So that was a bad day for me.

This example exemplified the ramifications Ivey experienced because she stutters

within the university setting. It was unsure whether this action from her professor was

malicious or out of ignorance but nonetheless it clearly affected Ivey. She was mimicked and

bullied during this story and would later elaborate that she suffered emotionally due to this

encounter. Due to the professor's unfamiliarity with stuttering, it is possible that Ivey felt

violated and was not seen as an equal in the classroom. Clearly this professor and classmate

viewed the differences in Ivey's speech as an aspect of her that required change; a

challenging viewpoint to overcome as a university student.

Journey Towards Agency and Management. The second major theme that emerged within this data set was this overarching journey towards agency and management for Ivey. Even though Ivey experienced hardships at times within the university, there were also many examples in which Ivey attempted to be proactive in life and stuttering in specific speaking contexts. Because Ivey spent the majority of her childhood and teenage years in Nigeria, Ivey did not have access to the typical services that are afforded in countries like the United States such as speech therapy services. This and because Ivey's family believed she would outgrow stuttering, directed her to construct specific mechanisms that would help her manage and cope with stuttering and ultimately begin her journey towards agency and management. The subthemes *experimentation* and *experiential learning* help to explain this major theme further.

Experimentation. There are many ways in which someone can influence and control their own life that will provide a sense of agency. These include striving for personal health or creating reasonable and attainable goals for yourself. Ivey demonstrated a sense of agency by developing specific strategies to cope with stressful situations by *experimentation* and at times decreased her fear and avoidance of speaking. This decrease in fear also boosted her self-confidence. These experiments that she did in order to manage fluency did not happen only in the university context but Ivey spoke about developing these in high school and implementing them also in the college context. An example from the interview illustrates this subtheme.

> **Example 4.4, excerpt from Ivey's interview as she discusses her "homebrew" of strategies to help her navigate social interactions (I=Ivey, II=Investigator).**
>
> I: After I kept silent I realized that it wasn't going away, now I have to ask myself what am I going to do to fix it.

II: Fix it?
I: Not fix it yes, but manage it. So at that point at in my life I didn't know that there was anything that could be done for stuttering, I didn't have therapy. So I was like it's on you, you have to do what you have to do. So that's when I started to word swap, and breathe and increase inflections in my tone. I never thought they were actual strategies, I thought it was just something I did to cope and something I did at the house. Like a homemade recipe, home brewed recipe. So it forced me to come up with these strategies to make myself ok with my stuttering. But to manage it a little better and it was bad because I didn't have anyone to vent to. I didn't have anyone to talk about what I was going through. Being sad and crying and hating myself…to talk about that with someone. It was all still in my head and bottled up all the time. So it was good and bad, I have to do what I have to do."

Ivey's homebrew of recipes is an example of trying to manage her stuttering. Based on her life situation and where she grew up, Ivey took it upon herself to develop tools to enter into and sustain interactions with other people in her life. Although these tools can be looked negatively within the stuttering community, in Ivey's case they were vital ingredients in her overcoming speaking fears and taking ownership and managing her life.

As stated above in the interview, Ivey's use of experimentation was observed as a troubleshooting mechanism for her to navigate difficult interactions. The mechanism of increased inflection was a tool Ivey experimented with in order to come to a discovery; either one of verification or rejection. Nonetheless, this experimentation was a meaningful way for Ivey to manage discourse throughout her day and discover what works for her in the time sensitive interactions. An excerpt from observation #1 is listed below.

Example 4.5, an excerpt from Participant Observation #1 that illustrates experimentation – (Ivey at work behind the counter)

There were many students who came up to the window, some of which Ivey hugged and spoke to and some of those she smiled at. I had interviewed Ivey extensively and spoke to her a few times before and I had not noticed her speak with an increased intonation as I did during her job. Ivey did note during the interview she spoke with a higher pitch to conceal her stuttering and this was apparent. Her speech almost seemed "valley girl." Upon my sit down I noticed Ivey run around from behind the counter and hug a guy who

she apparently knew and say, "it is so good to see you" in a high pitch, not typical to her usual voice.

Experiential learning. Ivey also demonstrated agency in her reliance on experiential learning or familiarity with contexts/people. This subtheme builds upon the aforementioned subtheme of experimentation but nonetheless is different in how agency was achieved. Ivey started her journey towards management and agency through experimentation and once these trials were affirmed, experiential learning was realized. Experiential learning was often spoken about as a device of self-discovery through trial and error. Ivey implemented experiential learning as her way to achieve some form of control in her interactions. Wanting control is a prime example of her journey towards management and agency.

This concept of wanting control was also noted by Ivey's work colleague and captured during the interview with her as she described Ivey's high pitch as a way for her to gain control of the "phone" at work. The phone was a nuisance for her at work but her colleague (Sally) observed her experiment with the high pitch while answering the phone and noted it helped her overall. Her colleague had noticed Ivey struggle on the phone without using the high pitch and even encouraged her at times to use the high pitch in order to not stutter. This high pitch was often used when Ivey introduced herself and even when she spoke to people of authority within the university as noted by Sally and observed during Observation #1.

Relationship dynamics. Because conversation is constructed through at least a dyad, relationship dynamics emerged throughout the data set for Ivey. These dynamics were similar to that of any relationship one may encounter as they describe what the interactants were experiencing during that specific moment, the reactions that took place within a specific context, and the specific needs of the individual who was engaged in the conversations. The

94

understanding of a relationship in conversation is not new and in fact is often understood as a vital component in how interactants save face and negotiate their role during specific interactions. For example, Ivey noted during moments of stuttering that occurred in the classroom, her professors at times would talk over her if she stuttered too long. Because of the professor's constructs that he/she brings to the classroom interaction, Ivey in some way did not meet that need and thus a breakdown occurred from the professor's perspective (stuttering) and also from Ivey's perspective (talk over her). Once the breakdown occurred, emotional arousal occurred also in the forms of agitation from the professor and shame from Ivey. Three subthemes help bring to light these relationship dynamics: *social partner needs, reactions of others,* and *change over time.*

  Social partner needs and frustration. Because much of the university experience for Ivey was interwoven through friendships and people, either at work or within the classroom, there were specific needs from all interactants that emerged in the data. That is, all parties required something from the other person and if those needs were not met, a breakdown in the relationship dynamics occurred. These needs described from all parties were in alignment that conversation is a negotiated relationship and requires nurturing and finesse much like any other relationship one may have. Ivey required patience, calmness, and empathy from her social partners due to restraints stuttering elicited. For unknown reasons or unfamiliarity with stuttering, rejection often occurred. In fact, in moments of stuttering Ivey was cut off mid-sentence and interrupted all of which illustrate rejection. An excerpt from observation #1 is listed on the next page.

Example 4.6, Participation Observation #1 – Ivey is speaking to a work colleague about autism while sitting behind the counter.

During a discussion about autism, Ivey picked up her drink and used it to conceal several stuttering episodes she couldn't avoid. One in particular was noted when they started talking somehow about watch links and Ivey had a significant block on the "w" in watch. Ivey picked up the large drink cup, held it to her mouth while she stuttered, and then placed the cup away from her mouth once the stuttering episode had passed. The girl attempted several times to complete Ivey's sentence during this moment but could not come up with a word that fit with what Ivey was trying to say. This lead to an awkward guessing game between social partners. Ivey also turned away from her conversational partner during these times as to not be seen stuttering.

Based upon these field notes, both social partners' needs were not met during this interaction which prompted an "awkwardness" but also frustration from both interactants. Ivey looked frustrated due to her inability to keep up during the interaction, which resulted in turning away during moments of stuttering as to not be seen stuttering. Ivey's social partner exhibited frustration due to her inability to comprehend the intended message and guessed the proposed word from Ivey. This example is a clear illustration of the relationship factor in conversation and stuttering not only affects the PWS but also the social partner involved.

Social partner needs were also discussed in the interview with Ivey's classmate as she expressed agitation and frustration at times when Ivey was stuttering while speaking. Ivey's classmate spoke about the challenge in speaking to Ivey at moments of stuttering and that the frustration generalized into many communicative exchanges with Ivey. Like any relationship, the feelings of agitation and frustration do not terminate immediately but often manifest in future events. A portion of the interview with her classmate helped to illustrate this relationship dynamic further and the emotions involved in discourse. In the example below, Ivey's classmate is discussing her own experiences when speaking to Ivey during moments of stuttering.

Example 4.7, An example from SB's transcript that details an illustration of the complex nature of conversation and the needs of the social partner in discourse. (SB=Ivey's classmate and co-worker, II=Investigator).

SB: So I'm trying to understand that more, and I don't get as aggravated as much, but in the beginning I was like come on! Ok let's go! Get it out! Get your point across and I know she's getting frustrated with herself. And I think it was this one instance where she told me about a grade she made in a class and this girl was asking her a bunch of questions the night before and she wasn't able to study that much. And she made it a lot longer than it should've been (because of stuttering).
II: the story?
SB: the story, and I was like ok I get it and she could tell that I was getting frustrated. But now that I'm more aware and more informed about stuttering I've been more patient and understanding. But before I was like whoa I don't even know what is going on before. It was just very aggravating at the beginning.

Change over time due to exposure. Immediately evident in the data was the idea that

even though there were challenging encounters for all social partners involved that often lead

to emotional arousal. Like many relationships, the more exposure someone had to stuttering,

the more comfortable they were with being around it and also how to act around it. Many

PWS do not have the skillset in early adulthood (college) to be an advocate for themselves

and other PWS, so it is not unusual for social encounters to be difficult for everyone

involved. The data revealed, with or without proper advocacy training, the more exposure to

stuttering, the more comfortable people were as listeners. An excerpt from Ivey's classmate

expresses this idea.

Example 4.8, Interview between investigator (II) and Ivey's classmate (SB) as Ivey's classmate discusses the more exposure she has had to stuttering, the more adept and empathetic she has become.

SB: Yes, it's confusing because it's kind of like an awkward silence because I know she's going through that (stuttering) and so I just learn to just nod my head in between, but at the beginning I just didn't know. And then during her blocks I would stop breathing. I couldn't breathe when she was going through it. When she would stutter I would just look at her mouth. But I wouldn't

make a sound. It was terrible at the beginning but now that I've learned, it's
better. Education has helped me…um be more empathetic.

II: I see.

SB: Yes, more empathetic.

II: That's a good word……….

Ivey's classmate spoke about the challenge in the beginning when she first met Ivey but the more she learned about what Ivey needed from her, the easier it became for both speaker and listener. The feelings of frustration and agitation shifted towards a more empathetic and understanding role and ultimately improved the communicative exchanges for them both. The change came from the misconceptions about stuttering that lead to improper handling of stuttering. This changed over time and with familiarity in this case.

Becoming comfortable with stuttering after exposure was also observed during *observation # 3* by the waitress at a restaurant. The waitress' first encounter with Ivey's stuttering elicited a negative reaction of smiling and raised eyebrows, which ultimately affected Ivey negatively. Ivey looked embarrassed and ashamed after her first encounter with the waitress. After repeated exposures to stuttering during the course of the meal, comfort and even patience was observed by the waitress during communication exchanges. The waitress began to anticipate stuttering and her negative reaction was replaced with proper eye contact and a sense of compassion as described in observation #3.

Departure from normalcy. Because Ivey's stuttering did not fit into the typical mold of what communication should sound or look like, the communicative exchanges were atypical for the listener. The atypical exchanges required some form of accommodations from the listener in order to comprehend the intended message or for turn taking to continue during the interaction. Ivey often times would stutter for extended periods of time with physical concomitants present (e.g. eye blinking, running out of air while speaking), which

left the listener in a state of limbo, not knowing how to proceed. Listeners were uncertain how to engage Ivey when stuttering was present, thus prompted behaviors they felt would aid the atypical encounters. Three subthemes of *requires accommodations, uncertainty from others*, and *violates expectations* help to further elaborate on this major theme below.

Requires accommodations. Throughout the interviews and observations related to Ivey, stuttering was discussed as a deviant behavior. This perspective of stuttering was observed through interactions and discussed in interviews with Ivey and her classmate. From the interactor's perspective, stuttering was perceived as a deviant behavior that demanded accommodations or remediation in some form. These accommodations were observed in the form of "speaking for behaviors" (noted above), multimodal forms of communication (gestures), and additional time in speaking contexts. Accommodations were seen as an undesirable but essential task in order for communication to succeed between interactants. The aforementioned encounter with a professor as described in Example 4.3 is an illustration of this subtheme. Ivey's professor asked the class to read their peer reviews out loud and when it was her turn, Ivey stuttered throughout the reading. He demanded Ivey read fluently if she was going to partake in class activities. From his perspective, Ivey's stuttering was not welcome in his classroom and was a behavior that needed to be altered. It was deviant.

Another example is found in the following transcription from Ivey's interview. Ivey attempted to talk about a positive experience she had from stuttering but had a difficult time due to her negative perception and past experiences of stuttering. Instead, she shifted the conversation to her past negative experiences in the home context, which she believes impacted her current perception of stuttering.

Example 4.9, Interview between investigator (II) and Ivey (I) as Ivey discusses stuttering is a problem that needs fixing.

I: No one in my family really talked about stuttering. Like they knew I stuttered but it was no real conversation about it. There were no options, it was just do what you got to do, this is your problem, you have to do what you got to do. Everyone has a problem and this is your problem. You are smart, strong, so just live your life and do what you have to do to get through your problems. People have worse problems so you have to deal with it. And that's how it still is.

This example reveals that at the time of the interview, Ivey perceived stuttering as something that has to be fixed and she has to deal with for the rest of her life. It was viewed as a problem or a deviant behavior. Because of her negative perspective, she was not able to find any positive experiences, which affected her overall quality of life at the university. Ivey's classmate (SB) also noted the importance of achieving a high degree of fluency for someone who stutters due to her negative perception of stuttering. She reported on numerous occasions stopping Ivey during moments of stuttering in order to help her stop stuttering. She also observed other co-workers assisting Ivey during moments of stuttering when they tried to speak to students and people of authority. Again, her co-workers viewed her abnormal speaking pattern as a behavior that needed accommodation as opposed to her communicating on her own.

Uncertainty from others. Ivey's stuttering pattern typically consisted of mild to moderate blocks, mild to moderate part word repetitions, and accompanied with eye blinking and air gasping. Because this pattern of speech is an atypical speech pattern and most communication partners are not familiar with stuttering, her communication partners were uncertain in how to communicate with her during stuttering episodes. For example, Ivey's classmate (SB) described her interactions with Ivey as challenging during moments of stuttering because of the atypical speech pattern. She further described this challenge at work

100

and how stuttering openly at work would be a problem due to residents and her uncertainty

with stuttering and not knowing how to handle it. An example from the transcript sample

below elaborates.

> **Example 4.10, Interview between investigator (II) and Ivey's classmate (SB) as Ivey's classmate discusses the period of limbo that occurs during moments of stuttering.**
>
> II: Would you be ok if she stuttered openly at work?
> SB: Like just full on stuttering?
> II: Like full on stuttering?
> SB: In the workplace, it would probably aggravate me a little bit. Because a resident may want to come up and get a point across and you usually help them right away. But that time gap (blocking) that she has, when she stutters it's just like……. (long pause) time that could've been taken to do something else. Because I'm like here's the goal, tackle it. *I don't want the resident to stand there and wait because they don't know how to properly respond.* And I don't like it when residents feel uncomfortable especially *when they don't know how to respond to someone that works there.* That's my opinion. Now that I understand it, I get mad at residents when they respond negatively and tell them "Hey don't do that to her." But if I didn't know her and was just solely her supervisor I would be aggravated.

The italics above describe this uncertainty with stuttering. Even though towards the

end of the sample, SB shows some sympathy towards Ivey, stuttering in the workplace

presents a problem for her and for the residents from her perspective. The period of

uncertainty or uncomfortableness during moments of stuttering is a major issue for the social

partners involved. Another interesting note is the impression that stuttering may be tolerable

in other contexts but in work contexts it should be fixed.

Violates expectations. The last subtheme that supports the major theme *departure

from normalcy* is Ivey's stuttering violates communication partner's conversation

expectations. Conversation is systematic in nature and follows certain rules in discourse such

as appropriate pause time and length of pauses during interactions. Since humans are

conversation in nature, we learn these rules through conversing with others over the course of

our lives. For example, a fluent speaker who communicates with other fluent speakers has learned appropriate turn taking strategies through conversing with other fluent speakers. Due to Ivey's atypical speech pattern of blocks, abnormal hesitations, and repetitions listener expectations were violated. The data reveals Ivey's stuttering violates these conversational expectations, which in turn generated negative responses or periods of violated expectations for her communication partners. Example 4.10 from Ivey's classmate is an example of this violation of expectations. Ivey's classmate, who is also her superior at work, has a pre-determined way that conversation should play out at work and stuttering does not fit within that mold. Rather, it violates "rules at work."

Example 4.11, Interview between investigator (II) and Ivey's classmate (SB) as she explains   how stuttering violates her concept of normal communication at work.

II: Would you be ok if she stuttered openly at work?
SB: Like just full on stuttering?
II: Like full on stuttering?
SB: In the workplace, it would probably aggravate me a little bit. Because a resident may want to come up and get a point across and you usually help them right away. But that time gap (blocking) that she has, when she stutters it's just like……. (long pause) time that could've been taken to do something else. Because I'm like here's the goal, tackle it. *I don't want the resident to stand there and wait because they don't know how to properly respond. And I don't like it when residents feel uncomfortable especially when they don't know how to respond to someone that works there.* That's my opinion. Now that I understand it, I get mad at residents when they respond negatively and tell them "Hey, don't do that to her." But if I didn't know her and was just solely her supervisor I would be aggravated.

Again, the text in italics reveals the inherent rules that are established for communication at work and stuttering violates those rules, thus does not belong within that context according to Ivey's classmate and boss.

Environmental obstacles. There was a consistent amount of data that revealed because Ivey was a PWS within the university setting, she encountered numerous obstacles.

Specifically, within the classroom Ivey dealt with the rigidity of the classroom structure that encouraged specific activities difficult for PWS (e.g. in-class reading activities, class presentations) and ultimately lead to increased anxiety. This increased anxiety and fear of speaking impacted her academic performance by taking subordinate roles in group projects and limiting her spoken and written vocabulary due to the possibility of increased stuttering. Ivey also took subordinate roles for student government positions in order to avoid speaking engagements. At work, Ivey encountered these same time pressure tasks of answering the phone, talking to people of authority (police officers, supervisors), and speaking to students who came up to her desk. Since Ivey's desk at work was in the flow of student traffic, speaking to students was a part of her job description. All of these environmental obstacles contributed to her overall experience within the university. Three subthemes of *rigidity of obstacles*, *impact on academic performance*, and *influence of classroom context* are secondary themes within this major theme.

    Rigidity of obstacles. The first subordinate theme *rigidity of obstacles* was a manifestation of the major theme *environmental obstacles.* Because Ivey stuttered there were specific challenges she encountered within the classroom and outside of the classroom that conflicted with the embedded structure of the university. For instance, as a part of her grade for many college courses oral presentations and in class readings were often a requirement for assessment. As Ivey discussed throughout her interview, reading aloud in class was challenging for her because she was not able to implement the self-taught strategies of word swapping, increased pitch, and gestures that helped her communicate more effectively. She described that there was a certain time and a place for these strategies depending on the social partner and context and her self-taught strategies did not work when she read or

presented in front of the class. The inflexibility of the classroom tasks accounted for her

difficulties. The inherent structure at work also presented a challenge for Ivey. According to

Ivey, she had a specific strategy for answering the phone and talking to students at work that

involved taking a deep breath followed by an increased pitch (observations confirmed this

strategy) that she found useful. Although the telephone tasks can be flexible, Ivey discussed

several rigid tasks at work that were problematic. An excerpt from Ivey's transcript illustrates

this task rigidity at her work.

Example 4.12 interview between investigator (II) and Ivey (I). Ivey is describing some of the tasks she has to perform at the university and at work that are flexible and inflexible.

II: Has there been anything else where you had to read something in class or speak in front of someone?
I: No not where I had to actively participate it was just that one class. Most of the time it is just who wants to do this who wants to do that. Yesterday we had a time to speak at work because we are hiring new RA's. So yesterday my boss asked me to speak because we had an informational at 8:00 and she asked us if some of the old RAs would talk. She said you would only talk if the new people had questions to ask you specifically. That would be the only time you would talk. So I was like okay that's fine because it was an option to speak and I will be able to prepare my answers. So I said, "no problem I'll go." So I'm heading there and the boss, the big boss…. because we have a direct supervisor and then we have a supervisor that's over our direct supervisors. So she was there (big boss) and then the next thing you know everyone arrives for the informational. The kids with their bright eyes that just want to be RA's that are excited to hear about the information. So then they are coming in and they close the door and she says, "these are our RA's and I'm going to start them off and get them to introduce themselves." And so I'm thinking to myself, "wait I thought this was optional, why are we introducing ourselves." The first person states their first name and last name and I'm like "oh no." Then it was my time and I kind of made it quick and short. I said, "my name is Ivey and I work in Campbell Hall." And that's it. And then she said, "now we are going to have our community leaders tell you their experiences and how it is to work as an RA." So I'm like I thought this was an optional speaking, I didn't know I had to speak. I was thinking to myself going back and forth trying to think about what I'm saying and then I'm like, "this is not an option." My boss is telling me that I have to tell these people what it is like to work as an RA, and I'm just like if I would've known this I wouldn't have come.

Ivey first chooses to participate in the work activity because of the flexibility within that task. That is, she agreed to go because she would not have to speak as told by her supervisor; she had a way out of communicating. But once at the activity, Ivey found herself confined and forced to speak. The rigidity of this task (by making each RA speak) clearly shows some of the environmental challenges Ivey faced at work.

Impact of academic performance. It was clearly stated in both interviews (Ivey and classmate), that stuttering impacted her academics through avoiding classes, walking out of oral presentations, and limiting her vocabulary, which in turn affected her writing assignments. As noted earlier, one of Ivey's most desired strategies for improving communication was word swapping. One of the cautions with word swapping is limiting your ability to express yourself and even practice more complex words in conversation. Ivey's classmate in this example discusses the differences and academic obstacles she has observed related to Ivey's stuttering.

Example 4.13 Interview between investigator (II) and Ivey's classmate (SB). SB is explaining the challenge of stuttering and how it affects her performance in the classroom and writing ability.

II: So you observe, if I understood you correctly, you would observe her where she would not ask questions in class but she would thus wait until the end of class to present her question to Dr. Smith.
SB: Yes, I've also noticed when we have to write papers she….and I thought this was interesting, but how stuttering limits people vocabulary and I thought it was really cool because she was explaining to me how she modifies her speech to prevent herself from speaking and how it affects her vocabulary because she likes the short and sweet words. So a lot of things that she's gotten from our online classes like assignments and grades… we meet weekly to watch the lectures together and she said Dr. Smith said her papers are too short and not elaborate enough and not explaining in detail, which affected her grade. And I'm like, "why don't you put these words in," and she's like, "I don't even know what those words mean!" And I'm like, "why don't you look it up?" and she says, "it's not like I'm going to say them. I said, "you should research that because that would be cool to find out more." And she said,

"well why would I research it if I don't even practice it." It was a cool thing to see but it was also sad because I don't want her to limit herself since she's hopefully going to grad school. Yeah for class and even in conversation you can tell it's very short and sweet. Straight to the point.

In this example, Ivey's classmate (SB) illustrates how stuttering limits her vocabulary, thus impacting her academic performance with a specific writing assignment. This illustration also reveals the challenge in increasing syntactic complexity for this PWS and the difficulty implementing complex words into real world contexts.

Another example of stuttering impacting academic performance is detailed in Observation #4, which is the second classroom observation for Ivey. In this observation, Ivey was giving an oral presentation to the class and after 15 minutes of speaking and stuttering, she starts crying and has to sit down. Her presenting partner then has to complete Ivey's portion of the presentation. The field notes detail this observation.

Example 4.14, Participant observation #4 – Classroom observation in which Ivey and her partner are presenting a chapter to the class.

At 11:37 am, I noticed Ivey starting to get tired and as a result, more stuttering episodes emerged. Although her classmates did not laugh, the more Ivey stuttered, the more negative reactions that ensued (raised eyebrows, awkward facial expressions, irritability with hearing stuttering). The class began to shift more in their chairs, look down at their notebooks towards the end of her speech, which was far different than earlier, as they looked directly at Ivey. Clearly, they are not comfortable with excessive stuttering, maybe it makes them uncomfortable. After several minutes of this, I noticed Ivey getting emotional while speaking. This emotion lead to more stuttering, more reactions, and eventually Ivey sat down. Ivey was clearly distraught. The majority of her classmates stared at her as she walked to her seat not knowing what expression to reveal.
Once at her seat, Ivey began to cry. Even as her presenting partner finished up her part, the class stared at Ivey not interested in hearing the presentation at this point.

A key aspect of this observation is the emotional toll stuttering has on Ivey, which ultimately forces her to sit down during a presentation. The class was not comfortable

hearing severe stuttering and their body language and facial expression expressed this irritability with stuttering. These reactions along with Ivey's inability to cope effectively impacted her academic abilities.

Influence of classroom context. Another obstacle the data revealed was the influence of the classroom context. In small and large classrooms, Ivey sat in the back in order to avoid being called on by the professor. She reported that if a professor would call on someone, it would typically be the people in the front. Although Ivey did not speak often in the classroom or at work, only if he had to for some reason, she did note the bigger classrooms allowed her to hide more effectively. The size of the classroom presented challenges because size of the classroom dictated the number of people in the classroom. While Ivey could hide in larger classroom sizes, she stated she would never talk in any of her large freshman courses due to "more eyes looking at her." Speaking was not an option for her. Ivey further elaborated on the influence of classroom context when she discussed why she never speaks in class and explains the meaning of "all eyes on you."

Example 4.15, an excerpt from Ivey's transcript as she explains the challenges in speaking in the university classroom (I=Ivey, II=Investigator).

II: And you had said earlier that you don't ever speak in your classes.
I: I don't, I don't ever choose to speak.
II: Can you expand on that a little more. What is it about speaking in class?
I: It's more the pressure you have, because when you raise your hand to say something in class, all eyes turn to you and now it's like, "what are you going to say? Are you going to sound smart or dumb? Is it going to be a smart or stupid question?" So now you have all the pressure built up. Kind of like on the phone. Just huge pressure, now you are nervous and I might think, "Oh my god I'm going to stutter, do not stutter, what is wrong with you? Are you freaking stupid? Just sit down and not talk." So now you have to speak and makes the stuttering sound worse because you have all the negative thoughts in your head knowing that the question is not that big of deal or you tell yourself that you should've emailed the question and that's what makes it worse because all these thoughts in your head.

II: Well that's very detailed answer. So you brought up the idea of pressure of speaking, of being smart, you brought up not stuttering, and bothers you, and…..
I: All eyes on you
II: Yea all eyes on you. So when you choose to speak in a classroom it's the fear that everyone is going to turn around, as you said?
I: Yes, everyone turns around and looks and now you also have to worry about is my question smart or is my answer the right one. And then after that you are going to have to worry about "do not stutter, do not stutter, do not stutter, do not stutter, you just stuttered, what is wrong with you, you just had a block."

Ivey demonstrates the obstacle of classroom influence by explaining in detail what she experiences or has experienced when choosing to speak in class. Speaking is not just speaking in the classroom but it is the thoughts that consume the mind and also the eyes of peers that orient towards stuttering, the deviant behavior. The setting of the classroom clearly is a challenge for Ivey and a major obstacle she must overcome in order to be a university student. The context of "being in a classroom" was described by Ivey as an obstacle to communication.

Behavioral manifestations. In order to communicate in the specific contexts related to the university experience, Ivey implemented specific behavioral manifestations as she interacted with persons at the university. The behavioral manifestations were divided into three major types of strategies: 1) strategies used to cope with or avoid instances of stuttering, 2) strategies that functioned to induce fluency, and 3) strategies used to increase support for speaking within a given context. These behavioral manifestations were employed judiciously and strategically and were dependent upon the context of the interaction. These devices not only allowed for "saving face" but also helped construct Ivey's identity.

The *coping strategies* used by Ivey consisted of *excluding self* from certain communicative events in order to escape stuttering and the fear of stuttering, *adjusting*

108

posture to avoid interactions, and *alter syntax* to avoid stuttering. Ivey also used specific

devices to *induce fluency* such as *deep breathing*, *pull-outs*, *using gestures* and *increasing*

pitch to promote fluency. She spoke about developing many of these devices on her own but

also learned some through her short time in speech therapy. Finally, Ivey incorporated

supportive behaviors into her everyday discourse in order to assist in communication. These

behaviors included *preparatory strategies* of thinking about word usage and deep breathing

before speaking, implementing *alternate modes of communication* (emails, gestures,

speaking to professors one to one as opposed to asking questions), and *relying on others* for

speaking tasks. Participant observations and interviews were both important data sources

used to discover these devices as both Ivey and peers recognized these patterns of behavior

and were able to speak to their functionality in detail.

Table 4.2 Behavioral Manifestations for Ivey.

Coping Strategies	Excludes self
	Physical posturing
	Changes to syntax/semantics
Fluency Inducing Strategies	Deep breathing
	Pull-outs
	Gestures
	Increased pitch
Supportive Strategies	Preparatory strategies
	Alternate modes of communication
	Reliance on others

   Coping strategies. Ivey often implemented coping strategies in order to assist with

communicating her intended message throughout the various contexts within the university.

Ivey judiciously and strategically introduced these behaviors into daily interactions in order

to manage the stress and anxiety stuttering had on her life. This section is not intended to

detail whether one coping strategy is more relevant than another or to determine positive and

negative coping skills, but it is intended to detail, according to Ivey, how she copes with the

impact of stuttering in her life. Ivey's coping strategies were vital for her functioning in daily

interactions and often determined after she appraised a speaking situation and implemented a

strategy based upon her available resources at the time of data collection. That is, Ivey's

coping strategies were context and speaker oriented.

   Excludes Self. Due to the negative impact that stuttering had on Ivey's life at the time

of data collection, Ivey at times, coped with stuttering by removing herself from specific

contexts. This was not a surprise due to the participant profile detailed in Chapter 3 about

Ivey's childhood. Ivey did not have an adequate support system during her childhood and

was not allowed to speak about stuttering in her home, thus did not recognize the importance

in externalizing and confronting stuttering. Ivey discussed some of these exclusion strategies

as she spoke about her choosing specific student government roles to avoid speaking. She

also deliberately avoided classroom interactions such as speaking in class, if she had a

question, she waited after class as opposed to during class, avoided groups of people and

specific contexts (cafeteria) due to the amount of conversation that may ensue. An excerpt

from Ivey's classmate transcript provides an example of this subordinate theme.

> **Example 4.16, excerpt from Ivey's classmate transcript as she explains "excludes self" in the classroom. (SB=Ivey's classmate, II=Investigator).**
>
> II: And so is there anything else that comes to your mind from the classroom? When thinking about classes over the years and interactions. You brought up some good points of things that you have observed.
> SB: In the classroom setting, *she doesn't, she talks to one or two people* around her but *she doesn't really engage in conversation* if they have a question like, "What did Dr. Smith say?" *It's like in three words*, her response of "I don't know." So she tries to limit that too, and when people ask a lot of questions *she gets overwhelmed because she doesn't know how to respond properly* and she covers her mouth but then later on she'll vent to me and she stutters along the way but it's a very limited amount.

This example proves the social partners in Ivey's life have observed exclusion behaviors in conversation as a result of stuttering. This example further illustrates Ivey's feeling of discomfort when communicating in the classroom as she does not engage with classmates and even convers her mouth to conceal stuttering. Ivey also did not choose to participate in class due to the feeling of "all eyes on her," which was previously discussed in Example 4.15. The fear of stuttering and exposing herself was too much for her. It is important to note the feeling of belonging in groups has been linked to positive identity construction (Tatum, 1999). It would seem from this excerpt that Ivey felt a sense of "difference" within the university classroom, which according to Goffman (1959) is linked to stigma.

Changes to syntax/semantics. In order to conceal stuttering from her social partners in the university setting and to save face, Ivey and her classmate, and the observation data described coping strategies that involved changing syntax and word choice during speaking tasks. Ivey repeatedly discussed her strategy of word swapping as something she developed on her own in order to navigate conversation. Although word swapping (i.e., substitution) in the stuttering community is often looked down upon as a negative coping tool, Ivey found it meaningful and a vital skill she used to communicate. An example of word swapping according to Ivey is switching the word you feel you are about to stutter on and inserting a substitute word. Finding the right word in a short period of time that conveys her message may present a challenge at times. Ivey also noted a strategy of ending sentences early if she felt a severe stuttering moment was about to occur. There were times in conversation Ivey felt as if she would not be able to complete the utterance and so she would abandon the utterance altogether. It is important to note this tool was implemented only in specific

111

contexts, typically large groups or social partners of authority. This strategy if not initiated

properly sometimes would cause the listener to question if she had completed speaking and

so in order to cope with the reaction from the listener, Ivey discussed a strategy of "fake

word finding" or what she titled a "brain fart." An example from Ivey's transcript details the

"brain fart discussion."

> **Example 4.17 excerpt from Ivey's transcript as she elaborates on the rare opportunities when she chooses to speak in class and what strategies (brain fart) she implements to conceal her stuttering (I=Ivey, II-investigator).**
>
> II: So when you did choose this time to speak in class it was a subject that you thought was definitely worth speaking up about. What about when you did, did you stutter during that time?
> I: I did but not obvious stutter. It was more of a stutter that I could kind of make look like I had a "brain fart". So I did a lot of word switching but it felt natural and it didn't feel like I had to word switch. Or I could feel the stutter as I was talking so I automatically moved my sentences around and formed new sentences and I was breathing to add on to that, breathing helped.

This example provided several instances of the tools Ivey chose to use that are

effective for her during interactions. Ivey discussed what she feels lead her to speak up in

class; it was a topic that was worth stuttering for (i.e. women stereotypes). Two other

relevant strategies that were meaningful to Ivey and that helped to illustrate this subordinate

theme were limiting vocabulary to give herself the best possible opportunity to not stutter and

shortening utterances. Sally (SB) noted Ivey explained to her that she modifies her speech to

say the short and sweet words. Sally also noted from her perspective it limited her

vocabulary. Again, all the data sets revealed these strategic mechanisms.

Physical posturing. Another coping strategy utilized throughout Ivey's oral

communication and under the major theme *excludes self* was physical posturing. Physical

posturing didn't exclusively pertain to her body posturing but it also related to the positioning

of her body and props throughout the university setting to exclude herself from interactions. For instance, Ivey discussed avoiding eye contact in order disengage from social partners in hopes they would avoid communicating with her. Avoiding eye contact was also observed during the observations during moments of stuttering as to conceal her mouth and ultimately stuttering.

Another posturing strategy noted during the observations was "body turn". Throughout communicative events, Ivey positioned her body as to let the social partner know she was not interested in conversing. This body turn is not homogenous to PWS and one would assume fluent speakers implement this same tool in order to avoid speaking to people at times. But what was different about Ivey's body turn is it was utilized in contexts in which she should be conversing (i.e. classroom, speaking to work colleagues, and friends). Ivey used this in times of stuttering or anticipation of stuttering.

The next physical posturing strategy noted was the use of props (i.e. cups, hands) when speaking. Ivey strategically used her hands and drink cups to cover her mouth when stuttering moments occurred. Ivey's intent was to conceal the stuttering but Ivey's classmate reflected on the use of props as an awkward encounter from the listener perspective.

Finally, it was observed in the two classroom observations and also discussed during both interviews Ivey positioned herself in the back of the university classroom to exclude herself from speaking engagements. An example from observation #2 details this observation and also affirms what was noted in Ivey and SB's interviews.

Example 4.18, field notes from Observation #2 that details the layout of the classroom and first observations in the classroom.

The classroom is a large undergraduate classroom totaling 26 students. 7 African American, 14 Caucasian, and 5 Middle Eastern. The classroom is designed in a L shape with the projector at the front of the class with two

white boards. Ivey sat in the back on far left. She stated in her interview she sits in the back to avoid being called on and to conceal herself because of her fear of stuttering and this was confirmed.

Fluency Inducing Strategies. During communicative events, Ivey at times relied on a specific tool that assisted her in generating fluent speech. As told throughout Ivey's narrative, she grew up in Nigeria where there were no speech pathologists and disability as she stated, was viewed as a curse. This perspective altered the availability of fluency inducing strategies and forced Ivey to develop tools on her own to navigate discourse. In order for Ivey to navigate conversation and keep up in a fluent world she devised (what she called a home brew) tools such as *deep breathing, increased pitch, and speaking in unison in classroom* that assist in the production of speech. Ivey discussed these fluency inducing strategies as meaningful and valuable in her ability to build confidence and improve self-worth. It was through these tools that Ivey was also able to enter into and sustain conversation. For example, Ivey found it challenging to speak in the classroom but would speak when others spoke (speak in unison) in order to participate in class and feel connected as a college student. Ivey also learned other strategies (*pull-outs*) from her limited time spent at the university speech and language clinic that she stated helped her. SB and Ivey both discussed the use of these strategies in their interviews. The first example though illustrated her increased pitch.

Example 4.19, field notes from Observation #1 that details the use of Ivey's increased intonation in everyday interactions at work.

There were many students who came up to the window, some of which Ivey hugged and spoke to and some of those she smiled at. I had interviewed Imo extensively and spoke to her a few times before and I had not noticed her speak with an increased intonation as I did during her job. Imo did note during the interview she spoke with a higher pitch to conceal her stuttering and this was apparent. Her speech almost seemed "valley girl." Upon my sit down I noticed Imo run around from behind the counter and hug a guy who she

114

apparently knew and say, "it is so good to see you" in a high pitch not typical to her usual voice.

It is important to note this use of increased intonation was atypical from her typical voice. Ivey stated in the interview it is used strategically in order to generate fluency when she deemed appropriate.

The second example illustrates another use of increased intonation from SB's perspective as she discusses Ivey's altered speech pattern to generate fluent speech.

Example 4.20, an excerpt from SB's transcript that details the use of Ivey's increased intonation in everyday interactions at work along with other strategies. (SB=Ivey's classmate and co-worker)

SB: ….well when I first met her I didn't really notice it (stuttering) because she had modified her speech to where her utterances, like her sentences are a lot shorter and she uses, she's modified her words to where she uses words that don't cause her to stutter (word swapping). And I didn't know she stuttered at the beginning when I went into the supervising job that I got. She introduced herself with this really preppy high pitched voice. And later she told me she had to change the pitch of her voice to push through her stutter. And now that I've been working with her and seeing how she talks to her other coworkers at the dorms, she's become comfortable about it and we know that she stutters, but we accept it.

This was a prime example of how using strategies that altered her usual voice may have drawn more attention than stuttering itself. However, Ivey implemented this tool strategically to not stutter and save face in certain interactions. Obviously, stuttering was not viewed as acceptable due to her past interactions.

The third example is Ivey's personal description of deep breathing and how she strategically implements this tool to enhance fluency.

Example 4.21, an excerpt from Ivey's transcript that details the use of increased intonation as a context dependent fluency inducing strategy. (I=Ivey, II=Investigator).

II: So going back to the phone, what were some other techniques you used on the phone?

115

I: After it rings a few times that's one thing I do. I let it ring and then I answer. I also do the high pitch because it gets me through the rest of the sentences I have to say.

II: Use an example.

I: Like for my job?

II: Ring ring. (Role playing phone conversation)

I: And then it rings again, "Hi this is Student Hall and this is Ivey speaking." (she spoke in a very high pitch voice) that high pitch hi. It pushes the rest of the thing that I need to say out. That's pretty much all I do on the phone.

II: Do you ever use that same increase inflection in any other speaking? Environment?

I: Yes, with my residents. When I'm doing homework in the office and they come up and tap the window. I'm like, "Hi." I have that high pitch high because it works because they think I'm friendly and they love me and it's always there to help me get my words out. I can't use that with every situation. I can't use that with a teacher because it's too much.

II: Please explain.

I: It's the wrong setting. It's too much for the setting. I can't use that with my boss's boss boss. Wrong setting so I can't use that with a cop, it's the wrong setting, I can't use that with an authority figure either.

II: So what do you use Ivey in those other settings?

I: Usually I say "hey." (deep voice) I have this deep "hey" and then I just go on and usually when I say hey if they called me in, they will start talking. But if I'm starting the conversation I get nervous, and my voice gets shaky and I can feel it. Because I can't use my high pitch and you know it's the first introduction and first words.

This example described Ivey's strategic use of specific skills based on contexts and social partners. According to Ivey, she restrains the high pitch to work and only on the phone, while in other contexts she uses other tools from her toolbox, such as a deeper voice. She correlates the high pitch as a friendly strategy and the deep voice as suitable substitute in other interactions.

Supportive strategies. The last subordinate theme that supports the major theme *coping strategies* is Ivey's use of *supportive strategies* in conversation. In order for Ivey to cope with stuttering within the university setting, Ivey deliberately implemented strategies to improve speaking within a given context. For example, Ivey discussed the relevance of "deep breathing" before she was to speak in class. Deep breathing allowed her to relax and prepare

her mind for the up and coming communicative event. Thus, it acted as a support for communication. Other examples of support strategies included other preparatory strategies, such as thinking about the responses ahead of time or before she speaks and gathering thoughts. The subordinate themes include *deep breathing, preparatory strategies, reliance on others*, and *alternate modes of communication*. An example from Ivey's transcript provides an example of support strategies.

> **Example 4.22, an excerpt from Ivey's transcript that details the use of preparatory strategies in the classroom (I=Ivey, II=Investigator).**
>
> II: You brought up dreading because you were the fifth person to speak, is that difficult knowing that you're not the first one to go? But you're down, you're way down of the line.
> I: I mean it is kind of dreading but I'm much happy that I'm not the first one to speak. Because if I'm the first one to speak I don't have time to calm myself down before I speak. Because it takes those few minutes for the person in front of me so I have to be like ok Ivey breathe now, breathe now, breathe now, and she stops talking and I'm like go, "Hi I'm Ivey and I work in the Hall and then I'm breathing and breathing. Working in the dorms you have to learn to adapt meaning you have to adjust to change and you are going to have to, and I draw out the "and". So it's…...but it's a lot better than knowing.
> II: And that's alright Ivey because some persons who stutter would say that they would prefer to go at the beginning because they don't have to think that they are the one coming up.
> I: It's hard to have that thought that you are up next, but I would rather get my breathing down and calm my nerves just a tad bit and say, "breathe, breathe, you are up next, up next, then they say let's start with you." Then I'm like, "goodness, you could've given me some time to gather my thoughts and calm myself down a tad bit to see the first thing I'm going to do." I can feel a stutter come on before it even starts so when I'm waiting and I'm thinking of what word to say I can feel the stutter coming on and I can word switch but if I'm the first one I don't have time to word swap or even say that word is going to start a stutter.

This example provided several examples of the process Ivey would go through in order for her to participate in class. For Ivey, speaking is not only about speaking but a systematic task that had pre-determined strategies in place such as deep breathing, gathering thoughts, and calming herself down. These preparatory strategies were noted several times

117

during the interview and implemented within the classroom, at work, and when speaking to friends and/or classmates. The observations proved a valuable source of data triangulation with these strategies as the researcher noted the use of these tools also in the classroom and eating at a restaurant.

Another set of supportive strategies found within the data sets were the use of alternate modes of communication such as emailing and use of gestures. During moments of stuttering, Ivey intentionally used gestures as a support in order for the social partner to gain better comprehension. One instance found during observation #3, revealed Ivey using gestures so the waitress was able to understand the communicative event. An excerpt below explains.

Example 4.23 excerpt from Observation #3 field notes, at a restaurant. Ivey is telling the waitress her order but because of stuttering, the waitress does not understand. Ivey then uses a gesture as a support for improved comprehension.

After several minutes of conversing, the waitress walks back over to the table and asks the women "are you ready to order?" Both girls reply in unison with "I think so." The waitress shifts her gaze towards Ivey's friend and grabs her notepad. Her friend quickly responds with "I will have the cobb salad." Ivey then shifts in her chair a bit as the waitress turns towards her obviously nervous. There is another long pause and Ivey uses the menu as a prop and points to the item on the menu simultaneously as she replies "grilled chicken sandwich." The waitress has to come around to her side of the table to view what the intended order is. The waitress did not smile this time but did seem a bit confused on how to handle Ivey's use of gestures. The waitress did not have a negative reaction towards stuttering this time. In fact, the waitress patiently waited for Ivey to speak during this exchange. Ivey's friend started to say something to help Ivey but stopped because Ivey pointed. Her friend has helped Ivey before it seems. The waitress was able to comprehend the order because of the menu being used as a supplement.

Even though the waitress was taken back by the use of gestures as a support, the waitress eventually understood the function of Ivey's tool. In fact, because of the gesture, Ivey accomplished what she intended on expressing. It can be assumed without the use of

gestures in this specific context, the interaction would have played out much different. Often times PWS avoid ordering a specific drink or food they want at restaurants because of stuttering but Ivey in this case did not avoid ordering what she wanted, but with the assistance of gestures and other props.

The final example of support strategies discovered were Ivey's reliance on others in communicative contexts. Ivey's friends at times would act as a mediator for her in certain speaking events and often times explain utterances to others that may be unintelligible. It was already discussed earlier how it seemed that the more exposure to Ivey's stuttering, the more social partners were able to understand her wants/needs. So, at times Ivey's friends/co-workers who were familiar with Ivey's speech pattern, interceded for Ivey in conversation with others. This intervening was observed during observations and also discussed during the interviews. An example below illustrates this phenomenon.

> **Example 4.24 an excerpt from Ivey's classmate transcript that details the use of mediation as a strategy at work (SB=Ivey's classmate/co-worker, II=Investigator).**
>
> SB: And so when they see her, and actually stutter, they don't know what's going on and are not aware of what an actual stutter is. They just think a stumble over words is a stutter.
> II: Do you observe any actions from them? (social partners)
> SB: I saw one person cut her off because she was taking a long time to get out her words but there is usually another coworker with her so thy are able to mediate. Everyone in our office knows about her stutter.

Identity construction. Ivey experienced an ongoing construction of identity due to stuttering. Identity was constructed through the numerous interactions and lived experiences Ivey encountered within the university. These interactions often lead to either positive or negative reactions from her social partners, which helped to construct identity. There was an overarching infrastructural identity the university and her place of employment disseminated

119

and Ivey abiding within those restrictions, maintained an effort to construct her personal identity. Themes emerged from the data sets and will be further explained in the following sections. The primary data source for this area was the interview with Ivey, her classmate and co-worker, and four observations. Artifacts, such as peer evaluations and therapy records, were a valuable secondary source for understanding the views of others and how these ideas shaped the identity of Ivey. Major themes included 1) decreased self-worth 2) stigmatization 3) powerlessness, and 4) negative affective reactions.

Decreased Self-worth. Although identity is constructed across a lifespan, late adulthood (college years) is considered a significant time because individuals start to question themselves from a social perspective (Erikson, 1968). A large part of identity construction is shaped by how a person is perceived by others and thus how a person perceives themselves and so Ivey's identity was cultivated in how she evaluated her self-worth by all of these experiences. To illustrate identity construction across a lifespan and reveal how past experiences influence present day identity construction, two examples will be given from Ivey's interview, from early childhood and present day in order to further explicate Ivey's low self-worth. It was evident that Ivey was negatively by others negatively and perceived herself negatively, which in turn impacted her self-worth. Ivey's low self-worth was confirmed as she fought to conceal her stuttering in a university that did not understand atypical speech patterns, all contributing to her view of herself.

> **Example 4.25, excerpt from Ivey's transcript as she explains her experiences growing up in Nigeria and how it impacted her current perspective of stuttering and herself.**
>
> I: It would have been nice to talk about some things that I was going through like bullying but at the same time I knew I couldn't tell someone like my mom that I was getting bullied. Because she wasn't the normal type to say, "ok my kid is getting bullied, let me go talk to the parent now." No, she was more of

the I'm going to beat your kid for you since you can't train your kid to be nice. And that's pretty embarrassing when your mom comes to your school. Like one time because I did most of my schooling in Nigeria. I was born here in the states but I did most of my schooling in Nigeria because my mom had some legal issues so we had to move. So when we moved to Nigeria the school system has a different outlook on discipline that was different from my mom and dad's outlook. The teacher has the right to discipline if you got a question wrong or something wrong happened in class. So one point I thought I was a very dumb kid. Growing up I didn't have the best grades. I had D's B's C's but all throughout the rest of school it was B's and one C in there and in the 2nd grade, a teacher told everyone to stand up and he would ask a question. So if you got it right you got to sit down. Of course I didn't get the questions right. But if you didn't get it right, he had one of the rulers that he would beat you at the back of your leg. And of course I didn't get the questions right so I'm getting beat, 15 questions later I'm getting beat and after a while I'm just numb. Because I'm not that smart of a kid, school was just not my area because I was a D student in school until 6th grade so that was just horrible.

According to this excerpt, the beginnings of Ivey's identity construction were embedded with a lack of emotional support, bullying, and feelings of stupidity which were confirmed by her teacher. The perception of her classmates and her teacher in these early and pivotal years, lead Ivey to believe that she was not smart enough for school. To further complicate her identity construction, Ivey was bullied as a child due to her stuttering.

Example 4.26, excerpt from Ivey's transcript as she explains how she hates herself at times due to her stuttering. (I-Ivey, II-Investigator)

II. You called it your stuttering poop hole earlier. But you used a different word here of shit. So you had brought up anxious earlier when stuttering….so what are some things that you inwardly deal with related to anxiety?
I: Anxiety is there and hatred is there too as well.
II: From you?
I: Hatred from me on myself.
II: So how you view yourself.
I: Self-hate is there as well. I view myself very negatively because of my stuttering. But it's……I have a lot of self-hate, a lot of wishing. A whole bunch of wishing. I wish I did this, I wish I didn't have this, I wish I wish I wish. It's a lot of wishing that cannot come true. Because it's just not reality. It's a lot of disappointment too because when I realize that the wishing cannot come true I'm disappointed. I hate myself more.

This example demonstrates the impact stuttering has had on Ivey's life over a lifespan. Ivey would not have developed hatred towards herself unless there were grave past negative experiences confirmed with present day experiences related to her stuttering. Not only does Ivey have negative emotions related to stuttering but she clearly did not have the emotional support growing, which negatively impacted her identity construction. Again, Example 4.25 briefly illustrated the beginning of identity construction and the current example illustrated low self-worth at the time of data collection.

Stigmatization. Due to the atypical speech pattern that Ivey's stuttering manifested, Ivey experienced social stigma during childhood and also within the university. Social stigma can be defined as disapproval of someone or some group brought about by judgment or negative stereotypes. Ivey's classmate often spoke about Ivey's stuttering as a behavior that wasn't welcome either around her or while at work. She often interrupted Ivey when she had abnormal pauses, finished her sentences for her when she blocked, observed others laughing at her when she stuttered, and even discussed the agitation of stuttering within the workplace. It is perspectives such as these that can stigmatize PWS. In this case, Ivey was stigmatized in a way that resulted in her feeling devalued and different from the "group." Stigmatization was observed in the classroom as well (smirks, laughing, negative facial expressions, etc.).

Example 4.27, from Ivey's classmate (SB) interview that portrays stigma within the university setting. (I=Investigator, SB=Ivey's classmate)

I: Would you be okay if she stuttered openly at work?
SB: Like just full on stuttering?
I: Like full on stuttering?
SB: In the workplace, *it would probably aggravate me a little bit.* Because a resident may want to come up and get a point across and you usually help them right away. But that *time gap (blocking) that she has, when she stutters it's just like……. (long pause) time that could've been taken to do something else.* Because I'm like here's the goal and tackle it. I don't want the resident to stand there and wait because they don't know how to properly respond. *And I*

don't like it when residents feel uncomfortable especially when they don't know how to respond to someone that works there. That's my opinion. Now that I understand it, I get mad at residents when they *respond negatively* and tell them "hey don't do that to her." But if I didn't know her and was just solely her *supervisor I would be aggravated.*

I: And that is your perspective, thanks for being honest.

SB: And I understand why *stuttering has this negative stigma*. But I've seen her emotional about it. And she's just "why do I have to have something that everyone can see?" because I told her that everyone has a struggle. And she says, "why is mine so public?" and I didn't know what to say to that. And so I just stayed quiet after that.

This example had been used to describe other themes, but in this case, it is an example of how stigma develops within a specific context. The italics help to illustrate the attributing stigma behaviors. Ivey's classmate clearly has a negative stereotype towards stuttering and does not want to be around stuttering and even states she would have a problem if she stuttered openly because of the negative stereotype attached to stuttering. Then, she elaborates on the agitation stuttering brings to the conversation and we can assume if she is agitated by stuttering she is agitated by Ivey. SB even used the specific word "stigma". These negative perceptions about stuttering are centered around her speech that is different than the cultural norm of communication.

Negative affective reactions. Reactions from listeners play a major role in identity construction. For PWS, constructing a positive identity can be very challenging because of the effect that stuttering has on communication and social interactions. Often times people who are unfamiliar with stuttering or have a negative stereotype about stuttering react negatively when stuttering is present. These negative reactions by listeners affirm their attitude about that individual. So, if a listener has a negative reaction, then their attitude about the individual is usually negative in nature. Since identity construction is rooted in how an individual view him/herself within a specific group, the reactions Ivey receives intrinsically

affirms she is different but in a negative way. An example from Ivey's transcript details one of these instances.

Example 4.28, excerpt from Ivey's transcript as she discusses negative reactions at the university (I=Ivey, II=Investigator).

II: The reactions you were speaking about earlier, from others, you had spoken about that when you first were explaining to me I believe your freshman year and then you just now brought up the responses…is there anything else that others may do at college that react to stuttering?
I: When I'm in the class and I have to read, then someone will laugh. That was my first experience with mocking in college. I mean I've dealt with mocking outside of college. But when I came to college I thought I would be done with that because everyone is an adult at least after freshman year but sophomore because just last spring someone laughed at me in class and I was like, "aw darn," it's still following me everywhere? I thought I was through with that. But people laugh or they give this look like they had this look that they are like taken back like something is wrong with me but you get used to it after a while.

In this transcript, Ivey provided an example of negative reactions in college. She assumed once she was in college, the mocking and teasing would cease; but it did not. In fact, as previous examples have shown Ivey experienced mocking from classmates and professors, similar to her childhood experiences with stuttering in Nigeria. Since identity construction is validated by peer reactions and people who you respect, such as teachers, one could assume the negative peer and professor reactions had a profound impact on her life. As identity construction is an ongoing process, it would seem at the time of data collection, Ivey continued to struggle with positive identity construction due to negative reactions by persons within the university setting.

Powerlessness. How people cope is another vital component in identity construction. In fact, proper coping skills are often linked to a healthy identity construction (Manning, 2001). Ivey discussed periodically that she never had the support she needed to develop healthy coping skills during childhood, which impacted her as she matured in life. Ivey's

mother was often combative with people who belittled her no matter what the age of the person or circumstance and frequently embarrassed her in the process. Ivey's father was no different and sought retribution against his daughter's adversaries at the university. As a result, Ivey did not trust individuals with her emotions, thus concealed much of the emotional impact of stuttering. Feelings of powerlessness and inadequacy emerged throughout her life and came to full expression during her college years. Ivey elaborated on these issues several times during the interviews explaining in detail her inability and frustration of inadequate emoting skills, which were linked to her childhood and teen experiences. According to Ivey, the feeling of powerlessness was demonstrated through social partners assuming the superior role, exercising control over her during interactions, and encouragement from partners to get help for stuttering and to cope better. A sample from Ivey's interview details this sense of powerlessness as she discusses a traumatic experience when a professor and classmate singled her out because of her stuttering.

Example 4.29 excerpt from Ivey's transcript as she discusses a time she called her Dad when she was mocked at the university by a classmate and a professor (I=Ivey)

I: Oh yea, I was balling. Most of the time I was stuttering the whole time when I was telling my dad on the phone. And then my dad was trying to come and talk to the teacher and bring the cops involved and send someone to jail and then I was like, "you know what that's why I don't call you." But the fact that he was trying to stand up for me and be hands on. I was like don't do that and threaten my teacher and involve the cops. It's too much. But I was on the phone balling and crying my eyes out. Because I think what made it worse, although the teacher was also making fun of me, my glass was shattered. I thought that if I came to college, I wasn't going to be made fun of anymore. Once the glass shattered it was like oh shit I'm still in it. I'm still in my poop, I haven't stepped out of it yet.

In this example, Ivey expected college to be the time in her life where her perception of stuttering would change but due to inadequate coping skills and emotional support, Ivey

felt powerless at college. In fact, Ivey's powerlessness at college contributed to her

challenging times during her freshman and sophomore year. Ivey's use of meaningful

descriptors (it's too much, my glass was shattered, I'm still in the shit) helps to paint the

picture of her powerlessness. Another example of powerlessness can be illustrated in Ivey's

classmate interview as she describes some of what she thinks are helpful behaviors to assist

Ivey. Although Ivey's classmate (SB) assumes her behaviors are aiding Ivey in some way,

Ivey demonstrates her frustration with her friend by walking out of the interaction. The

excerpt below, told from Ivey's classmate (SB) perspective is a good example of Ivey's

powerlessness in interactions, all attributing to her identity construction.

> **Example 4.30, excerpt from Ivey's classmate transcript as she discusses a situation at college in which Ivey was broken down due to her stuttering (SB=Ivey's classmate).**
>
> SB: I know she's self-conscience about it though (stuttering) and it kills her sometimes. Like the bad day (cried during presentation) we have talked about before. She cried in the bathroom for an hour and she was scared to come out because she was so embarrassed at what happened during her deaf studies class. I didn't know that happened when she came in my office asking if I got my grade back from Dr. Smith's class. And I've been pushing her to practice the techniques she was told to do. She's been doing the breathing techniques she learned and how she has to push through the blocks…... (easy onset), I thought that was cool. And I've been helping her a lot with that. "I'm like stop, you are short of breath and like take a deep breath for a second." So when she came to my office she was out of breath and she was stuttering every other sentence and I was like, "stop, for a second." I was like, "Ivey take a deep breath," and she got overwhelmed and walked out my office. And so I know her self-esteem is way below"

In this excerpt Ivey's classmate demonstrated her control over Ivey's communication

abilities by telling her to stop when she stuttered, which can negatively affect identity

construction. This consistent subordinate speaker role Ivey assumes no doubt has impacted

her identity construction and contributed to feelings of powerlessness in communicative

events.

Summary. Ivey made use of several strategies in order to interact with others within the university setting. Strategy selection was relative to context and interactants and dependent upon the real-time demands of each interaction. Ivey was concerned with upholding an image of a fluent speaker and engineered a set of behaviors that helped preserve this identity. Even though Ivey was able to enter into conversations, she was often treated as a person with a deviant behavior and barred by her peers and professors. Ivey experienced negative reactions from her social partners at times which made it complicated to form a positive identity at the university setting. Ivey contributed to her overall fear of speaking by avoiding certain places and people. Ivey implemented several coping strategies because of the lack of emotional, physical, and communicative support, that ultimately helped her navigate the university context to the best of her ability.

Participant Two (Designated Nick)

Nick was one of the three males who participated in this study. At the start of data collection, he was 19 years old. For a more detailed examination of Nick's profile please refer back to Chapter 3. The data sets that contributed to these results were Nick's interview, Nick's computer science professor (Mr. DuPont) interview, Nick's best friend and classmate (Bennett) interview, and four observations related to the university such as classroom, friend's apartment, and gathering with friends by the park.

Impact of University Culture. As data were analyzed from an individual perspective, several patterns or themes began to emerge from the data that described the contextual makeup and the overall ethos of the university. Similar to participant 1, these patterns represented the views and practices of the people within Nick's university experience, so that the values and rules within the specific setting could be reviewed. There

were four major patterns that represented the cultural beliefs of the university setting for

Nick: *unfamiliarity about stuttering, relationship dynamics, departure from normalcy, and*

environmental obstacles. Varying markers within these four major patterns appeared from

the data which acted as subthemes and served to further describe the means by which the

primary themes were shaped. A list of the major themes and subthemes can be found in

Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3. Themes and Subthemes for University Culture

Major Themes	Subthemes
Unfamiliarity about stuttering	Lack of support
	Misconceptions about stuttering
	Consequences from stuttering
Relationship dynamics	Comfort in familiar partnerships
	Partner supports
	Reactions of others
	Relationship changes due to exposure
Departure from normalcy	Requires accommodation
	Uncertainty from others
Environmental obstacles	Lack of resources
	Rigidity of classroom environment
	Influence of classroom context

   Unfamiliarity about stuttering. Similar to participant one, Nick's experience within

the university was compiled of individuals who were unfamiliar with stuttering. This

unfamiliarity in the classroom and at contexts outside of the university (friend's apartment)

resulted in many social encounters embedded with inadequate handling of Nick's

communicative pattern of speech. For instance, professors socially excluded him, friend's

spoke for him during turns of talk, and communicative partners were entrenched in periods of

limbo as they waited for Nick to complete his utterance. Because Nick's speech pattern

consisted of deviant behaviors, social partners were perplexed in how to respond, thus

performed a specific task they felt either helped him or eased the tension during

conversation. This unfamiliarity of stuttering was made evident through three subthemes:

lack of support, either communicative, emotional, or personal, *misconceptions about stuttering, and ramifications from stuttering.*

      Lack of support. The subtheme *lack of support* was a manifestation of the major theme *unfamiliarity about stuttering.* The lack of support was noted during observations and also explained during both relevant interviews (Nick & Bennett). A lack of support manifested from a communicative level and an educational level. Lack of communicative support was evident as Nick discussed numerous situations with his friends or in the classroom that social partners interrupted him, spoke over him, and even avoided him due to his stuttering, thus did not provide him with adequate communicative support that he needed at times. Lack of educational support was apparent in the data as Nick had no one in his life that knew about stuttering and thus could provide self-advocacy training. Nick discussed receiving speech therapy services in elementary school but in order for him to remain in regular education classes, he was not able to receive special education services (speech therapy) in Louisiana. Clearly, lack of educational support was apparent in Nick's life. An example from the interview transcripts highlights this theme.

      Example 4.31, Nick speaking about a time when he was teased by his professor in a computer engineering class for stuttering on the first day of class. Because Nick was stuttering, the professor laughed at him and called him "broken" and this transcript below illustrates a portion of that discussion (II=Investigator, N=Nick).

      II: You go into the blackboard and you have to write your name and that's happen a few times?
      N: It's only happened once.
      II: So the other classes you don't do the introduction?
      N: Uh in all the other ones, I just kind of try as hard as I could and it was in that one lab in which he really didn't have any patience for it and I just decided like I'm just going to write on the board.

During the first day of class most professors ask the class to introduce themselves and when it came to Nick's turn, he stuttered severely on his name. Nick described the block as very intense during his interview. After an extended period of time, the professor called him names like "broken" and asked if he was "okay" (meaning is something wrong with him). So to avoid any other disruptions in the class Nick got up and wrote his name on the board in order to avoid more embarrassment. This example illustrates lack of communicative support within the classroom. Other examples were noted in all data sets that revealed taking Nick's turn at talk, speaking for behaviors, and even exposing Nick when he avoided a topic because of stuttering.

Misconceptions about stuttering. This subtheme is another manifestation of the major theme *unfamiliarity about stuttering.* People who interacted with Nick within the university setting had serious misconceptions about stuttering and these beliefs resulted in actions or behaviors that affected Nick to some degree. Nick's friends viewed stuttering from a medical model of disability, so they spoke about his stuttering as a speech pattern that would go away at some point in his life if he worked hard during speech therapy. So, they encouraged Nick to use some of his newly learned tools during communicative events but applying these strategies in real world settings was difficult for him. This is common knowledge in the field of stuttering. Also, during moments of stuttering his friends patted him on the back in the past in order to help him get the words out but anyone who had a basic understanding of stuttering knows this is not an effective supportive strategy. An excerpt below illustrates this example.

Example 4.32, excerpt from Bennett's interview as he discusses some of the behaviors he has done and currently does with Nick that reflect a misconception about stuttering. (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).

II: How would you describe stuttering? Because stuttering is a very general term and it's like me trying to tell you about computer science.
BE: The way his is, it's kind of like when you speak to different people that stutter, they stutter differently. His sounds like it's just caught in the back of his throat. You kind of want to just pat him on the back but that's something that he hates. Also, don't finish his sentences. He hates that. It kind of depends on who he's talking to and how long it takes to get that stutter out.

Because Bennett assumes Nick's stuttering can be resolved by a pat on the back is an obvious misconception about stuttering. These misconceptions drive listener actions toward PWS and create inadequate or inappropriate responses from listeners. It is behaviors such as these that initiate and then validate negative identity construction and stem from an unfamiliarity with stuttering.

Other misconceptions about stuttering were observed during the observations as his friends talked over Nick during intense blocks and even spoke for him at times to hurry the conversation along. If his friends would have given Nick sufficient time to speak he would have been able to participate more effectively in conversations with them. Nick's computer science professor also compared stuttering to autism and suggested Nick's behavior could be treated by the same approaches used for autistic behaviors. All of these misconceptions point to minimal exposure to stuttering and a considerable unfamiliarity to stuttering.

Ramifications from stuttering. Similar to participant one, because there was an overall unknown about stuttering and an inadequate knowledge of communicative supports for Nick within the university setting, he experienced ramifications for stuttering that were brought about by ignorance. Some notable consequences were

laughing, teasing, and marginalizing Nick for stuttering. In one instance, on the first

day of a class, Nick's professor asked him to introduce himself and Nick had a long

block. During the block, which lasted over ten seconds according to Nick, the

professor, in a moment of teasing, marginalized Nick by poking fun at him for

stuttering. An excerpt from Nick's transcript illustrates this subtheme.

> **Example 4.33, excerpt from Nick's interview as he discusses an instance of teasing that occurred in the classroom for stuttering. (II=Investigator, N=Nick).**
>
> II: So you bring up some things that I want to go back and get you to elaborate on. We will bring these up one at a time. The professor you spoke about and said was your pet peeve and we all have them, like when they call roll. So when you go up and speak to them, what is that interaction like?
> N: I would go up and just be like, "Hey, I'm here, I'm sorry if you hadn't actually heard me," and the reaction is always like, "Oh, I'm sorry." And alright we are good. It was usually pleasant and I really haven't had a situation in which a professor was like hostile or even neutral, its always like, "I'm so sorry, I'm so sorry." I just remembered one happening and it was in Spring 2015, and for my EECE, I had a lab course. The professor for it didn't really speak English well and we all had to introduce ourselves and when I was trying to I stuttered and he was like, "Are you ok? Are you all messed up? Are you broken?" And everyone laughed and I was like I'm just going to write it on the chalkboard and I did.

The professor teased Nick for stuttering in front of the class which resulted in

laughing and giggling. In order to save face during this interaction, Nick got up during class

introductions, after he first tried to speak and wrote his name on the board. One can only

imagine the embarrassment for Nick during this interaction. Because of this behavior

initiated by the professor, Nick was perceived as the outcast by the class for the rest of the

semester. Nick also discussed being marked absent numerous times because he was not able

to speak "present" when his name was called. He had to speak to the professors after class in

order to clarify.

Relationship dynamics. Nick's data sets were similar to participant one, and in alignment with the belief that conversation constructed a relationship with specific needs and beliefs entrenched in the relationship by all social partners involved. For example, Nick discussed the challenge in talking to new people because he wasn't comfortable around them but once he became comfortable, it was easier to communicate. Three subthemes illustrated this major theme of relationship dynamics: *comfort in familiar partnerships, partner supports, reaction of others,* and *change over time.*

Comfort in familiar partnerships. As mentioned above, Nick discussed his comfort in speaking to people who he knew well and also that were accepted by his group of friends. Nick and Bennett both explained in their interviews they had a core group of friends that often accepted new members depending on which group member adopted new friends at that time. So the group was always evolving according to them. Nick noted it was difficult to speak to these new members of the group and it took an extended period of time before he accepted them himself. Once he did accept them though, he would speak to them because he felt comfortable around them. He also noted he did not feel comfortable speaking to people who he did not know and his friends spoke for him during these uncomfortable moments.

Bennett also contributed to this theme by stating if Nick didn't know someone he wouldn't speak to them usually. But if he had to speak to someone he didn't know, he would most likely stutter severely and take a long time to complete his utterance because he did not feel comfortable and was most likely anxious around them. So the more exposure Nick had to a person, the more comfortable he was and stuttered less, according to Bennett. An excerpt from Nick's and Bennett's transcript below illustrated this theme.

Example 4.34, excerpt from Bennett's interview as he discusses Nick's comfort of speaking with people he knows (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).

II: Would you classify, and again, how would you? Give me a few words that you could tell me what stuttering is. You had said, "in the back of your throat."

BE: Stuttering is knowing what you are going to say but you can't make the words. Cause' that's how I feel when I watch him when he speaks. I know and he knows, but he just can't say the word. He's just not physically capable. It's weird cause he's a very funny guy and to us (the group), he's very social. He's the kind of guy that doesn't want to stop talking but when he gets around other people, he gets very conscious about it and won't want to speak.

Example 4.35, excerpt from Nick's interview as he discusses why he avoids a lunchroom but also addresses his comfort of speaking with people he knows (II=Investigator, N=Nick).

N:……If I also have to study, it's cramped and it's just like I always say it's extremely inefficient. If I go to the smaller one, I can walk to it on an average maybe 5 minutes then I can have my food and eat it in roughly 15 minutes and have an extra 20-30 minutes to see friends or study and it just makes a lot more sense plus I never have to speak with anyone who isn't a friend which means that I'll be actually fluent.

Partner supports. The data revealed while attending university, there were people in

Nick's life who adequately provided him some type of support in order to converse. This

theme was unlike any theme discussed because so far the social partners involved in both

participants did not provide adequate support in conversation and performed actions that

resulted in ramifications. But Nick had a group of social partners who provided him with

accommodations such as being patient when he stuttered, ordering food for him when Nick

asked them, speaking for him at social engagements when asked by Nick, and providing

emotional support when Nick externalized concerns about stuttering. Both interviews and

observations contributed to this theme. An excerpt from Bennett's transcript illustrated this

subtheme.

Example 4.36, excerpt from Bennett's interview as he discusses their group interactional strategies for Nick (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).

II: "Patience" is a word that you said earlier and is something you and your friends need to exhibit around Nick. And you brought it up earlier that it's difficult to know when to take a turn of talk. Can you elaborate?
BE: The major rule of thumb is etiquette. When he starts stuttering we usually look at him and acknowledge that we are listening. No one picks up their phones or does anything else. We have this "Hey I'm listening, take your time" situation. We don't try to pat him on the pack to get words out anymore. But the major times when we step in, is when he's talking to someone new and not to a friend. If he's talking to us, we won't try to finish his words, but if he's talking to someone else, we might answer something that he skips or clarify things. And he's ok with that. He's not ok with it when he's with us. I'm not gonna say hate, but it rubs him the wrong way when we do.
II: Do ya'll talk about it? Have you guys… guys sometimes don't to do and not do?
BE: Actually for the group, we don't talk about it as a group. It's usually one on one and we will ask questions about it and he will talk about it. We usually wait for opportunities when he opens up about it. For example, him in therapy and several other things that he has brought up. We don't want to make him feel pressured by the group.

In this excerpt, Bennett explicitly explained that the core group of friends provided

support in the form of eye contact. They let Nick complete his utterances and provided

contextual support of assisting him when needed. They also provided emotional support.

Because stuttering was a topic discussed among them and not hidden, Bennett and their

group of friends helped Nick manage stuttering effectively.

Observation #3 also provided an example of this theme. The excerpt below illustrates

partner supports for Nick.

Example 4.37, Participant observation #3 - Nick's group of friends gather at Bennett's house for a night of video games

During the 5 minutes before they started playing the video game, Nick tried to keep up with the conversation but it was difficult. The conversation was fast paced and filled with many turns at talk and accompanied with time pressure responses. In one instance, Nick spoke up, saying "….let's do teams" but stuttered on his initial response. Alex took over Nick's attempted turn of talk and answered but after apologized to Nick once he heard him speak. He then deliberately asked Nick what he

said which allowed Nick to get his response in. Nick then responded and stuttered but this time all of his friends waited for Nick to respond in this instance and then reinstated the conversation. The looked directly at Nick when he spoke and even maintained eye contact. Nick's friends seem to include him as much as possible.

Even though Alex spoke over Nick in this instance, he then corrected himself by allowing Nick to speak. His friends then let Nick engage in the conversation and wait on him to complete his sentence. These partner supports allowed Nick to engage and even sustained interactions when his friends got together.

Reactions of others. Even though Nick had a support system through his friends he did experience negative reactions at times, some even from his core group of friends. People's reactions played a role in identity construction but people's reactions also constituted their intrinsic beliefs about stuttering. These beliefs affected the relationship dynamic that emerged throughout the data. During the observations, there were only two instances of negative reactions by his friends and they were during moments of teasing at Bennett's apartment, which could be interpreted as playful banter. The two interviews, though, had several examples that contributed to this theme.

Bennett discussed an instance in which his Mom reacted to Nick's stuttering during a recent New Year's party. Bennett's grandfather was being introduced to all his friends and when it came time for Nick to introduce himself, his mother stepped in and said his name for him. Although this may be viewed as a helpful reaction to some, Nick later confirmed it embarrassed him in front of several people and it was discovered later through lamination sessions, Bennett's mother reacted in order to avoid embarrassment of herself. That is, she did not want people to hear Nick speak at her New Year's eve party at that specific time since everyone was around.

Nick also provided details of an instance when his professor and class laughed at him during the first day introductions, which set the mood for how Nick was perceived by that class.

Departure from normalcy. Similar to participant one, because stuttering did not fit into the typical mold of what communication should sound or look like, the communicative exchanges were atypical for the listener which resulted in awkward social interactions. Sometimes the listeners did not know how to proceed during moments of stuttering and completed Nick's utterances or spoke for him when he did not want them to. Nick would stutter for extended periods of time with physical concomitants present (e.g. eye blinking and ticking), which left the listener in a state of limbo. Listeners were then uncertain how to engage Nick when stuttering was present, therefore provoked behaviors they felt would aid the awkward atypical encounters but in reality created distance between both social partners. The two subthemes of *requires accommodations* and *uncertainty from others*, further elaborate on this major theme below.

Requires accommodations. Throughout the interviews and observations related to Nick, stuttering was discussed as a behavior that needed to be fixed. Even though Bennett and their core group of friends supported Nick at times, they still thought stuttering was a problem and needed therapy. From their perspective, stuttering was a speaking pattern that required accommodation. These accommodations were observed in the form of "speaking for behaviors" and additional time in speaking situations. Accommodations were seen as an essential task in order for communication to succeed between all interactants. The above-mentioned encounter with the professor is a great illustration of this subtheme. Nick's professor asked him to introduce himself on the first day of class but called him names when

137

he heard Nick stutter. So from the professor's perspective, his stuttering was not welcome in his classroom and was a speaking pattern that needed remediation.

Mr. Dupont (Nick's computer science professor) provided another example when he compared Nick's speaking pattern to that of Dr. Stephen Hawkins. Dr. Hawkins does not have the ability to speak due to his condition but instead uses a sophisticated text to speech device. Mr. Dupont stated Nick should find a device to assist him in communicating just as Dr. Hawkins had in his life. The sample transcript illustrated this subtheme.

Example 4.38, excerpt from Mr. Dupont's interview as he compares Nick's speech to Stephen Hawkins' speech. (DU=Mr. Dupont).

DU:…. But here is a man (Stephen Hawkins) who granted, did his seminal work before his disease got to the point where it's so bad now, but since then has done groundbreaking work and has been a wonderful educator. He has to use an incredibly slow device to talk. I wouldn't presume to tell Nick that he's got to do this, but for example, I think he should have a text to speech device and use that in situations that are demanding. And I know there are therapies to attempt to deal with the stuttering and I don't know the state of the art stuff but I suspect it's still an art and not a science. The programming is mostly an art, its not an engineering state at this age. What I would like to see him doing is use these electronic devices just like Steven Hawkins would in order to get himself integrated, but that's my preferences not his. And I would never impose it onto him but the truth is, either use one or have a laptop with him at all time that he can type in and it can speak for him. This should have more success than Dr. Hawkins' device, because Dr. Hawkins has very small motor control. This will be pretty real time. You want something with a keyboard so it would be fast. I would love to see him try something like that.

With regards to Nick's speaking pattern, Mr. Dupont stated that something had to be done about it. Mr. Dupont may not have explicitly stated that Nick's stuttered speech was a problem but it was obvious it affected him due to his elaborate discussion on what Nick should do about his stuttering.

Uncertainty from others. Nick's stuttering pattern typically consisted of mild to moderate to severe blocks, moderate to severe part word repetitions, was accompanied with

eye blinking and ticking, which often times resulted in stages of limbo for social partners. Social partners were unfamiliar with this speaking pattern and did not know how to respond during Nick's moments of stuttering.

This subtheme can be illustrated by referring back to the New Year's party example discussed in Bennett's transcript when his mother interceded for Nick. Afterwards, Bennett's grandfather spoke to Bennett specifically about the interaction because of the uncertainty that took place during that interaction. The transcript excerpt below further demonstrates this subtheme.

> **Example 4.39, excerpt from Bennett's interview as he elaborates on an instance at a New Year's Eve party when his mom interceded for Nick due to his stuttering. (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).**
>
> II: So his past party that ya'll went to, the New Year's party, he met your grandfather and you said that it was pretty tough for him (Nick)?
> BE: Yea, my grandfather was ex-military, Vietnam. So he was a very intimating guy who still had full color in his hair. He's just this healthy older man and he speaks with a deep voice and it's pretty intimidating even to me as his grandson. He was basically getting the names who never met him at the party and so when he got to Nick, my mom stepped in and said his name, and he showed appreciation by giving a gesture of saying thank you, because she knew it was coming.
> II: What did your grandfather do?
> BE: He just asked but he pretty much accepted it. He asked me much later what happened to your friend. I said, "he stutters." So he said, "oh that makes a little more sense."

The awkward social encounter when Bennett's mother stepped in to speak for Nick had to be explained by Bennett because it departed from the normal social encounter. So much so that Bennett's grandfather asked his grandson about it later during the party. Not only did stuttering result in a moment of uncertainty for everyone involved in this social interaction but so did the action by Bennett's mother of speaking for Nick to avoid embarrassment for Nick and her.

Mr. Dupont's transcript also contributed to this subtheme when he discussed his current and past challenges with dyslexia. Mr. Dupont said he learned people, including teachers, wanted him to write things down because his handwriting was not legible and Nick should educate his teachers on some compensatory strategies he may use due to the unfamiliarity with his speech pattern. Mr. Dupont's statements suggested that people want to learn how to communicate with him but it was difficult because it was atypical. Also, it was noted during observation #3 when Nick had long extended moments of stuttering, his friends who were familiar with his stuttering, still showed difficulties communicating with him and sometimes spoke for him or finished his sentences.

Environmental obstacles. Similar to participant one, there was a consistent amount of data that revealed because Nick was a PWS within the university setting, he encountered numerous environmental obstacles. Specifically, within the classroom, Nick dealt with the rigidity of the classroom structure that encouraged specific activities difficult for PWS (e.g. in-class roll call, first day of class introductions) and ultimately lead to increased anxiety at times. Nick, unlike participant one, did not seem bothered in the same degree by the classroom activities but stated "he rolled with the situations." His apathetic nature was observed and described during the interviews and played a role in his overall identity construction. The data also revealed a lack of resources available to Nick because he stuttered and the size of the classroom and classes taken played a factor. Three subthemes of *lack of resources, rigidity of classroom environment*, and *influence of classroom context* helped to expand this major theme.

Lack of resources. People involved in Nick's university setting, such as his professors, discussed the challenge of speaking to Nick because of the lack of resources

available to them. Mr. Dupont expressed because of the lack of resources available to him during advising sessions, he was not able to provide Nick with the adequate time needed and rushed him through his advising session. Nick required extra time in advising due to his severe stuttering moments but Mr. Dupont had a schedule to keep. The excerpt below reflects this subtheme.

> **Example 4.40, excerpt from Mr. Dupont's interview as he discusses why he is not able to give Nick the extra time for proper advising. (II=Investigator, DU=Mr. Dupont).**
>
> DU: I don't think he's really considered it (using compensatory strategies), and I certainly in advising sessions haven't had time to discuss this. I have advising this semester and I have folders this high, I'm not kidding. Because we have 400 majors and there's 5 student advisors. Next year we will have 6. And we have a TA who helps us. I advise for 3 weeks before the break and still have people coming in.it just my direct interaction with him and I don't want to compare my problems to him but I want him to know that I had to do things in my life that are necessary for compensation.

Because of the workload Mr. Dupont had as a professor, including advisory roles, he had to keep to a schedule, and Nick's slow speech pattern did not fit within his schedule. The extra time required to accommodate Nick's stuttering was not available to Mr. Dupont so he rushed his advisory time. Nick also addressed the lack of resources available to him when he discussed the challenge in going to the cafeterias on campus. Nick stated he was not able to order the food he wanted because the cafeteria workers rushed him through his order in order to serve all the students in line. Nick required more time during his order but the lack of resources permitted him from ordering his food.

Rigidity of classroom context. The second subordinate theme *rigidity of classroom environment* was a manifestation of the major theme *environmental obstacles.* Because Nick stuttered there were specific challenges he encountered within the classroom that clashed with the structure of the university. For example, Nick discussed in several of his classes he

141

would have a roll call in order to check attendance but because of the time pressured activity

of saying "present", he stuttered and was counted absent. In fact, because of the large

classroom size, he had to speak to the professor after class in order to verify his attendance.

Nick stated this occurred quite often. The inflexibility of this everyday classroom task

accounted for his difficulties.

Influence of classroom context. Similar to participant one, the classroom context

presented as an environmental obstacle due to the size of the classrooms and also the

activities constructed within the classroom. Both classroom observations (Observations #1,

Observations #2) were in large classroom size and so observing Nick interact within the

classroom did not occur. Nick stated that all of his classes for the year would be in large

classrooms at the time of data collection and that he would not encounter smaller classrooms

until his junior and senior year. Mr. Dupont confirmed Nick's statement but in his interview

added concern because of his stuttering episodes. Mr. Dupont indicated, at the time of his

interview, Nick hadn't taken any classes that have put his stuttering to the test but he would

encounter group projects and working in teams next year, which would present a challenge

for him. Mr. Dupont elaborates below.

> **Example 4.41, excerpt from Mr. Dupont's interview as he discusses the
> upcoming challenges Nick will face in the classroom because more
> speaking demands will occur. (II=Investigator, DU=Mr. Dupont).**
>
> DU: … It's pretty sequential for him right now. It will get less so as he moves
> along. But we've done a lot of work on our program over the last 5 years to
> avoid taking unnecessary classes and basically he hasn't flunked anything.
> Major courses, that's math, engineering, ECE in computer science and plus
> concentration courses he hasn't taken yet. Have to be C's or better but I don't
> know if he has a C. (Looks at Nick's transcript) It's all A's and B's at this
> point. My concern comes when he takes 310 or operating systems or
> something like that or a class you regularly get assigned things in teams. Or IT
> applications courses like 358 and 360 where he's expected to work in teams.
> Small teams or database where it's team and projects that he has to take.

142

As a professor in Nick's field of study, he predicted the upcoming classroom obstacles Nick would encounter. According to Mr. Dupont, his concern about Nick's stuttering would be when he was required to speak more and engage within the classroom, something he had not had to do as of yet. The excess speaking demands could have an effect on academic performance, which would be another obstacle Nick had to overcome as a PWS.

Table 4.4 Behavioral Manifestations for Nick

Coping Strategies	Avoiding contexts
	Making judgments
	Altering syntax
Fluency Inducing Strategies	Accent change
Supportive Strategies	Different modalities
	Relying on others

Behavioral manifestations. In order to communicate in the specific contexts related to the university experience, Nick implemented specific behavioral strategies to assist him during communicative events. The behavioral manifestations were divided into three major types of strategies: 1) strategies used to cope with or avoid instances of stuttering, 2) strategies that functioned to induce fluency, and 3) strategies used to increase support for speaking within a given context. These behavioral manifestations were employed strategically and were contingent upon the context of the interaction. These devices allowed for "saving face" and helped construct identity as identity construction and the ability to sustain and enter into interactions could not be detached from one another.

The *coping strategies* consisted of *avoiding certain contexts* because of the difficulty in speaking, *making judgments* of a place and person before choosing to speak, and *altering syntax* to avoid stuttering. Nick also used a specific device to *induce fluency* such as *augmenting his accent* in order to pass as fluent. Finally, Nick integrated *supportive*

143

behaviors into his conversation in order to assist in communication. These behaviors included *using different modalities* (e.g. writing) and *relying on others* for speaking tasks. Participant observations and interviews were both important data sources used to discover these devices as both Nick and peers recognized these patterns of behavior and were able to speak to their functionality in detail.

   Coping strategies. Nick often implemented coping strategies in order to assist with communicating his intended message throughout the various contexts within the university. Nick implemented these behaviors strategically throughout his daily routine as a means to navigate the university context to his choosing. In other words, these coping strategies allowed Nick to participate to the best of his ability, in university and were vital for his functioning in daily interactions.

   Avoiding contexts. In order for Nick to maneuver the fast paced life of a university student, he stated he avoided certain contexts because of his stuttering. Unlike participant one, Nick noted many of his avoidances were also a result of him being more efficient throughout the day. Nick discussed his daily college routine as all about efficiency and the way he utilized his time was very important to him because of his academic responsibilities and demanding schedule. In other words, Nick knew he stuttered severely and he knew his stuttering at times prohibited him from utilizing his time effectively, so to make things more efficient, he strategically avoided contexts that demanded him to speak. The contexts Nick avoided were cafeterias, large meeting places, and crowded places. An excerpt from his transcript details these findings.

144

Example 4.42, excerpt from Nick's interview as he discusses why he avoids certain places at the university (N=Nick).

N: …. When I want to eat here (at college) I always go to the smaller food court because 1) it's cheaper and 2) it has a way smaller line, and 3) I only have to walk up and pay for it and then I leave and that's it (no talking). So the one in the student union, you have lines and lines and it's extremely hectic and I don't like it there.

Nick later stated he also chose the small cafeteria over the large cafeteria because he only had to speak two words, "yes" and "no", which helped him keep his schedule throughout the day. The example above also noted that Nick avoided hectic crowds because it was difficult for him to communicate effectively within that context. Bennett's interview also contributed to this theme of avoiding contexts. Bennett noted Nick also avoided large social gatherings or simply did not speak during these situations.

Example 4.43, excerpt from Bennett's interview as he discusses what him and Nick to together on the college campus (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).

II: What other things have you observed anywhere on the campus? Is there anything that you guys do together? As a group or just you two?
BE: Whenever my English class gets cancelled, we usually meet up in Wharton. Something that I noticed is that he sits on a bench alone away from everyone. He pretty much just avoids any conversation you can spark with people. You pretty much have to come to him. Around the college, he's very work focused. He will often study. I usually find him looking at notes or preparing for test or something of that sort. I feel like when it comes to college, it's a nice place to be himself and be quiet. But he doesn't want to join a major group or anything you know for speaking. It is very different for him in the college. He pretty much secludes himself sometimes.

In this transcript, Bennett believed Nick excluded himself from social gatherings on campus and keep to his efficient schedule, as what was noted in Nick's transcript. The coping strategy of avoiding contexts revealed in both transcripts and revealed Nick's effective way of participating in the university at his discretion.

Making judgments. In addition to avoiding contexts, Nick also coped by making

personal judgments of when to speak based upon his assessment of a person. Nick's

judgments were completed through a cautious appraisal of an individual that was largely

determined by the group (his core group of friends) acceptance of the person. Once the group

accepted a person into their friendship circle, Nick judged him/her safe to speak around. Both

interviews contributed to this theme. Below is an example from Bennett's transcript as he

described what it is like to be a friend to Nick.

> **Example 4.44, excerpt from Bennett's interview as he discusses what him and Nick to together on the college campus (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).**
>
> II: And to see the others reactions that could be there. Is that hard for you?
> BE: I worry for him but it's not awkward. When he talks, it's kind of like he talks in a bubble or script. He talks to friends, but if it's someone's new, he'll switch over not speaking much.
> II: Script?
> BE: Right, yea, and once we finally get talking to this person, and establishes that the person is cool, he then starts trying to speak. Some people will ask, "well does he stutter or what (because he is so quiet)?" And I'll say, "Yea, he's a good person." So, it's pretty much if someone enters into our group, that he doesn't know he switches over. It's got to be someone new. If it's someone he knows, he will just flow on in with conversation

In this transcript, Bennett illustrated how Nick judiciously spoke to social partners

only if he was comfortable with them and the group had accepted them. According to

Bennett, the use of this strategy also resulted in people thinking he was shy or awkward but

to Nick, it was a part of his coping with stuttering.

Changes to semantics/syntax. The last subtheme under behavioral manifestations was

similar to participant one in that Nick augmented his responses in order to avoid elaborating

or answering more questions in fear he may stutter in an unfamiliar context. This way Nick

was able to pass as fluent in a context he felt fluency was needed in order to save face. The

changes to semantics noted were stating an inaccurate response to a question and stating

something different than his intended response. Both interviews contributed to this theme.

Below is an excerpt from Nick's interview as he explained this theme.

> **Example 4.45, excerpt from Bennett's interview as he discusses what him and Nick to together on the college campus (II=Investigator, N=Nick).**
>
> II: So new people are hard for you not just in college but in general. New speech is difficult. Have you ever been to the new one (cafeteria)? The new student union.
> N: I went there three times either last semester or the one before that. So definitely within the year, three times.
> II: What was your experience?
> N: I had to speak twice and I'm trying to remember because it was awhile ago. I think I went to get a hamburger twice and then I just had to say "I want one plain" and that was all and nobody had like reacted weird or really anything.

In a lamination session, Nick clarified that he said a "plain" burger because he

avoided saying what he intended to say, which was "cheeseburger". Because the lines were

long and there were crowds of people, he wanted to hurry and rush through the line, so in this

instance he altered his response and settled for a plain burger.

Another example of this subtheme was discovered in Bennett's transcript in his

explanation of once again, the New Year's party. Since the party was at Bennett's house, a

large amount of his family was present at the party. His aunt asked Nick if he had any

brothers and sisters and he altered his response so he would not have to answer anymore

questions from her. The excerpt below describes this situation.

> **Example 4.46, excerpt from Bennett's interview as he discusses an instance that Nick changed his syntax in order to avoid speaking further (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).**
>
> BE: He's the kind of guy that doesn't want to stop talking but when he gets around other people, he gets very conscious about it (stuttering) and won't want to speak.
> II: And you've observed this?

BE: Yes. He would kind of duck out or make gestures when he doesn't want to speak.

II: Give me an example of that.

BE: Prime example, at the New Years' gathering.

II: So that was this past year?

BE: This past year we were all at my aunt's. Well, that aunt goes and asks him, "So do you have any brothers or sisters?" and he says, "No!" Well, he actually has an older sister. It's just that he didn't want to continue the conversation because he knew stuttering was going to start and he was going to sit there trying to describe. Usually, what was going to follow was "how old is she" etc. because he knew the conversation was going to keep going. I joked with him.

In this transcript, Bennett described a change in syntax in Nick's speech in order to hault the conversation from continuing further. According to Bennett, Nick knew if he answered "yes", more questions would follow as in any conversation but Nick strategically said "no" to save face in that context.

Fluency inducing strategies. The data revealed Nick employed only one fluency inducing strategy during his time at the university. Nick's fluency inducing strategy of *accent change*, operated as a tool to save face during interactions with people he did not know and also produced fluency in a context he self-determined required fluent speech. During the observations it was not observed, but Bennett's interview was a source for this theme followed by a lamination session with Nick in order to confirm the findings. The excerpt below from Bennett's transcript exemplified this theme.

Example 4.47, Bennett's responds to a question from the investigator about strategies Nick uses to help him with his stuttering (BE=Bennett).

BE: He's very good about it (his stuttering). He does really well with friends, family, and stuff like that. But if someone is completely new, it will definitely increase how often and how long he stutters. It's a very self conscious thing for him. I've observed him and realized that. I don't know why it triggers around friends at all but I do know that he forms an accent around people he may not know to help him speak better. If he does an accent he won't stutter.

This example revealed the strategic use of the *accent change* strategy that Nick implemented at times to enhance his fluent speech as told by his friend Bennett. This example also highlighted the weight Nick placed on speaking only to people who he knew or felt comfortable around. It would seem from this data set Nick rarely engaged anyone unless they spoke to him first.

Supportive strategies. The last subordinate theme that supported the major theme *coping strategies* was Nick's use of *supportive strategies* in conversation. In order for Nick to cope with stuttering within the university settings, he purposely executed strategies to improve his speaking support within a given context. For example, it was observed and discussed that Nick employed the use of gestures to assist him when his stuttering permitted him from communicating effectively. Bennett discussed the use of this strategy during his interview as an effective tool and it was also observed during Observation #3. Nick also relied on his friends as a support strategy when stuttering halted his speech. His friends spoke for him when they needed to and even ordered his food if the lines were long. The subordinate themes included *use of different modalities* and *reliance on partners*.

Different modalities. Nick used different modalities of writing and gestures in order to increase his comprehension and to support his stuttered speech. Nick's social partners stated they had to be patient when speaking to him and at times when Nick's speech was unintelligible, writing and gestures were utilized to improve comprehension. Mr. Dupont and Bennett's interview contributed to this theme. In time pressure situations, he would often write out what he wanted to say in order to be more efficient throughout the day. Again, Nick compared his stuttering to that of an inefficient machine and when intense stuttering moments emerged, his job was to find a way to make the machine of communication work

again. Some examples that supported this theme were when Nick had to write his name on the board during the first day of class because he was not able to say his name during class introductions. Mr. Dupont discussed another example of writing during his advising sessions, in that Nick was having difficulty communicating and resorted to writing in order to complete the task. The excerpt below from Mr. Dupont's transcript explains this situation.

> **Example 4.48, Mr. Dupont compares his challenges with dyslexia to Nick's challenges with speaking and describes an encounter with Nick in which he used writing as a support strategy. (DU=Mr. Dupont).**
>
> DU: … But I went to long presses of learning so Nick and I actually discussed that briefly so I understand that he has to use compensating behaviors to deal with certain situations. During one advising session, I had to basically, he was having great difficulties and I just had to hand him a pad of paper and that's how we got into that discussion of what I had to do to compensate.

This example further illustrated the difficulty at times when speaking with Nick as a social partner. Mr. Dupont was in a hurry to meet his advising goals and did not have the patience to wait on Nick to communicate, so a context relevant support strategy was implemented in order to speed up the process of communicating. Writing was not observed due to the context relevance of this support strategy but it seemed this support strategy was executed in time pressure situations as explained.

Reliance on partners. Interwoven throughout the data was Nick's continued use of friends for support in speaking activities. Nick depended on his core group of friends, such as Bennett, to speak for him when his stuttering prohibited the intended message from completing. Such situations discussed in the data were ordering food at a drive-thru, ordering food at a restaurant, introductions at a large social gathering, introductions to a new member of the group, or the casual conversation among friends. An excerpt from Bennett's transcript illustrated this subtheme.

Example 4.49, Bennett explains some of the actions he and others have to perform in order to assist Nick in communication (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).

II: I'm hearing you talk and I'm hearing you tell me about how your mom stepped in and now you tell me about about you stepped in to talk to your aunt…
BE: Right.
II: Is that something that you do often, as a good friend of his?
BE: It all depends (context relevant). If he is ordering at a restaurant, he'll ask us to make the order for him. You know, and say "Can you order for me? I don't want to stutter while I'm up there." So I'll do that for him.
II: Is that ok with you?
BE: Yea, it's always fine. It would be one thing if he was making me pay for it.

Bennett explained the use of partner reliance in this situation as a way his friends and others assisted Nick in his communication needs. The statement by Bennett of "it depends" reflected the context relevance and strategic use of these support strategies for Nick. It was not in all speaking situations that Nick requires support but it depended on who the social partner was at the time and the speaking situation. Bennett and the group of friends also seemed to think it was not a hassle to speak for him when required.

Identity construction. Similar to Ivey, Nick experienced an ongoing construction of identity related to stuttering while he attended university. Identity was constructed through the many interactions and experiences Nick encountered within the university as well as his previous lived experiences. Social contexts are an integral part of identity construction and affirm many beliefs an individual may have about themselves, so all of Nick's data sets played a role in developing this major theme. Nick's social partner reactions, his apathetic nature, his intrinsic belief of daily efficiency, and his support system, all played a role in positive and negative identity construction during his time at university.

151

According to the data, Nick's overall college experience was much different than Ivey's. A large part of this distinction was due to Nick's apathetic nature revealed during his interview and observations. As stated above, Nick saw his stuttering as a problem but didn't have the emotional baggage that is typically present with PWS. In fact, as stated above, Nick simply saw his stuttering as an an inefficient machine and tried to find ways to make the system more efficient. Nick did not seek therapy until he was in college and the reason was related to planning for future jobs, not to fix a problem. Nick predicted he would have difficulty performing his job because he stuttered, so he needed to find more efficient ways to converse in order to complete his job. During Nick's interview, he used the words "efficient" and "inefficient" ten times.

Nick's friends also played a major role in Nick's identity construction. His friends for the most part, spoke for him when needed, included him in conversations, allowed him to speak by showing patience, maintained eye contact, and even provided emotional support. Because of Nick's atypical belief about his stuttering and his support system while in college, his identity was more positive in nature. This is not to say Nick did not have negative experiences, but because of his support and his apathetic nature, these experiences did not severely impact him. Minor themes that contributed to Nick's identity construction are: 1) *apathetic nature* and 2) *focus on efficiency*

Apathetic nature. Nick's apathetic nature was revealed throughout the data and played a role in his identity construction. Throughout Nick's interview and discovered in the observations, Nick had an attitude of indifference about his stuttering that contributed to his emotional reactivity to situations, which was minimal. During episodes of teasing he spoke about, he did not elude to the emotional impact these events had on his life. To put it in

Nick's own words, he just "rolls with it." In the instance of the professor calling him

"broken" in front of the class because of his stutter, he stated he was bummed for a short time

but then he got over it. He further elaborated on this instance and stated he liked the teacher

and that he was a cool guy. He also spoke of the negative reactions that occurred in the

classroom, such as laughing by his classmates when he stuttered, but again talked about his

classmates as his friends and enjoyed being in class. This attitude of indifference was seen in

the observations as well when speaking to his friends at Bennett's apartment. Because his

friends gave him the communicative supports he needed and made it a priority to include

Nick in conversations, when Nick stuttered around them, it seemed the emotional baggage

that usually accompanied stuttering was not present. This also coincided with OASES-A data

from Chapter 3, which revealed a severe difficulty communicating daily but moderate impact

on his overall quality of life. Nick's apathetic spirit had more of a positive impact on his

identity construction than negative one. An example from Nick's transcript below illustrates

his apathetic nature.

> **Example 4.50, Nick is ending his discussion on the first day of class incident and then transitions into how he feels when he stutters (II=Investigator, N=Nick).**
>
> N: Uh in all the other ones (classes), I just kind of try as hard as I could and it was in that one lab in which he really didn't have any patience for it and I just decided like I'm just going to write on the board.
> II: When you try as hard as you can that may mean something for me. What does that mean for you?
> N: I just try to say what I have to say as long as it takes. I just try to speak as well as I can and even if I hang up which I always do, I just kind of roll with it.

When describing some experiences of exclusion in the college classroom, Nick did

not seem bothered by the situation but instead spoke about his stuttering as something he just

had to deal with throughout the day. When Nick got stuck on a sound, as he said happened

often, he simply found a way to get his point across, which sometimes meant writing his

message on paper. Implementing these strategies did not seem to affect him negatively,

rather, it was a part of his daily routine.

Another example of Nick's apathetic nature was found at the conclusion of Bennett's

interview and when prompted by the investigator what he thought Nick's experience was like

in college. Bennett's response is tallied below.

Example 4.51, Bennett explains from his perspective, how Nick's college experience is thus far (II=Investigator, BE=Bennett).

II: What do you think his experience in college is like, in a summarized fashion?
BE: I think all in all, he's having a lot of fun. He says that a lot. It's a different experience for him. It's much easier than high school was and all in all he enjoys it. Even though it can be hard at times we never find him complaining too much, he's always laughing about it. He talks to the computer science professors a little bit, he has a good relationship, and knows them by first name. So he's enjoying it here.

So from the perspective of his best friend Bennett, Nick's experience in college was

good thus far. Bennett eluded to Nick's apathetic nature when he discussed the hard times

Nick experienced but that he never complained and laughed a lot about his stuttering. These

comments lay further claim to Nick's apathetic nature, thus shaping Nick's identity about

college.

Focus on efficiency. The second theme under identity construction within the

university settings centered on his focus on efficiency. This theme was a part of Nick's

identity construction because efficiency was at the cornerstone of his daily routine and

actions. That is, being efficient in college was why he chose specific strategies in

conversation, why he avoided contexts, how some communicative and emotional supports

were administered, and even illustrated how he coped with some of the relationship dynamics

that emerged. As mentioned already several times, Nick referred to his communicative

abilities as that of an inefficient machine and to get the machine operating efficiently he

needed to apply speaking and support strategies so he could communicate. It is this belief

Nick had about machines, that orchestrated his life and contributed to his identity

construction. The next three samples from Nick's transcript describe this theme.

> **Example 4.52, Nick explains some speaking tasks he would prefer to be better at and then discusses why he sought out speech therapy (II=Investigator, N=Nick).**
>
> N: Jobs, interviews, general socializing and then otherwise, ordering food is nice. That's all I'm worried about. It's all of those things. It isn't quite life, it's more of like I want to say adulthood except it isn't quite there.
> II: Adulthood huh?
> N: It's more of adult skills and tasks that I'll actually have to do that I can't right now.
> II: You can't quite right now? So ordering food, socializing, and interviews are tasks you can't do right now?
> N: It's tough, in which I technically can but I'll stutter like a lot with it and it's to the point where it's almost a hassle and it's like extremely inconvenient. That might be the right word for it and that's about it really.

As Nick was maturing in life and asked to speak more frequently, he came to the

realization that stuttering did not fit in with his life goals. Nick stated he would like to be able

to perform more adult speaking tasks but his inconvenient stuttering behavior prohibited him,

so in order to accomplish less inconvenient speaking behaviors he needed to find a solution

and in this narrative, it was speech therapy.

> **Example 4.53, Nick eludes to stuttering as an inconvenient behavior and inefficient for all social partners involved (II=Investigator, N=Nick).**
>
> II: … You speak on inconvenience and the hassle to stutter and speaking about college and a few instances where it was, in your perception a hassle because you went to the board to write down your name. Is that how you view that?
> N: Well I do view it as an inconvenience. It is at the most like technical sense, it is. I'm not really sure how to explain it right now.
> II: Ok.

N: But easy is considered normal and when you actually can't it's like an inconvenience and it's extremely……. the right word might be inefficient.
II: For who?
N: For everyone. It's the speaker and the listener.

As the investigator asked for more detail in this situation, Nick's "efficient mentality" was explained. Because of Nick's stuttering pattern, and the patience from all social partners that had to take place when he talked, he noted it was inconvenient for everyone involved. Nick's construct of personal efficiency provided the foundation for his choice of context relevant strategies. For example, in time pressure situations, it would seem Nick was not concerned with his emotions, rather keeping the machine of communication moving for all interactants.

Example 4.54, Nick eludes to stuttering as an inconvenient behavior and inefficient for all social partners involved (II=Investigator, N=Nick).

II: …. And why would you think that it would it be inefficient for the one hearing you?
N: An example would be if let's say I am ordering food and there's a really huge line of like 20 people and I'm up to actually order. If it takes me awhile, it will delay everybody else and the people who are actually working because if it's like a lunch rush then it would be just holding everything up. And if it's a particularly not good day for my stutter it may be like around 2 minutes on one sentence and if it's ordering food and a rush I'm holding everyone else back.
II: Gotcha.
N: In the sense of if you think of everything like it's a, if you would classify it as a machine… it would be an inefficient one.

These examples served as examples demonstrating that while Nick did experience some hardships related to his stuttering, his overarching concern about his stuttering was to make his communication more efficient for everyone involved, thus shaped his identity within the university.

Summary. The environment of the university for Nick was overall a good experience for him as what was told by Nick and his friends and noted in the observations. This

156

was surprising due to the negative reactions and ramifications that emerged in the data directly linked to his stuttering. Even though Nick was not able to participate in meaningful conversations at times, it did not seem to negatively impact him because of the emotional and communicative supports that were in place. Nick's core group of friends included him in activities and made Nick feel connected to their group and to the culture of the university, which diverted much of the emotional baggage that is typically present for PWS. Nick's apathetic nature also played a role in how Nick reacted and responded to the stigmatizing behaviors that were present in and outside of classroom. Nick's perspective of efficiency drove much of the strategies he implemented and choices he made throughout the day related to his stuttering.

Participant Three (Designated John)

John was one of the three males who participated in this study. At the start of data collection, he was 21 years old. For a more detailed examination of John's profile please refer back to Chapter 3. The data sets that contributed to these results were John's interview, John's Spanish professor (Mr. Piper) interview, John's psychology professor (Ms. Bailey) interview, John's girlfriend and classmate (Kiki) interview, and four observations related to the university such as classroom, work, and a restaurant/bar.

Impact of University Culture. As data were analyzed from an individual perspective, several patterns or themes emerged from the data that defined the contextual makeup and the overall attitude of the university. Similar to participant 1 and 2, these patterns represented the views and practices of the people that operated within the university so that the customs, values, and rules within the setting could be reviewed. There were five

major patterns that represented the cultural construct of the university setting for John:
unfamiliarity about stuttering, journey towards agency, relationship dynamics, departure
from normalcy, and environmental obstacles. Varying indicators within these five major
patterns surfaced from the data which acted as subthemes and served to further describe the
means by which the primary themes were shaped. A list of the major themes and subthemes
can be found in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5. Themes and Subthemes for University Culture

Major Themes	**Subthemes**
Unfamiliarity about stuttering	Lack of support
	Misconceptions about stuttering
	Consequences from stuttering
Journey towards agency and management	Experimentation
Relationship dynamics	Knowledge-seeking behaviors
	Change over time
	Empathy/Compassion
	Partner challenges
Departure from normalcy	Violates expectations
	Uncertainty from others
Environmental obstacles	Rigidity of classroom
	Influence of classroom context
	Impact on academic performance

Unfamiliarity about stuttering. Within all of the interviews and observations in
university classroom contexts, restaurants, and work related observations, John encountered
and engaged with numerous individuals who were unfamiliar with stuttering. These
individuals included professors, classmates, co-workers, waitresses, and cafeteria workers.
Because of this unfamiliarity to stuttering, stuttering lead to many awkward social encounters
and even increased emotional arousal for John. During his interview, John discussed his past
school and personal experiences that greatly influenced how he operated within the
university context and noted many of the consequences that resulted from stuttering was due
to a misunderstanding of stuttering. Social partner's unfamiliarity about stuttering lead to

many coping strategies and negative identity construction for John within the university as identity construction is largely affected by a person's understanding and perception of how people perceive them. This unfamiliarity of stuttering was made evident through three subthemes: *lack of support*, either communicative, emotional, or personal, *misconceptions about stuttering, and consequences from stuttering.*

   Lack of support. As with the previous participants, there was an overall lack of support for John within the university setting. John often times explained to family and friends what he was experienced because of stuttering such as depression, stress, and anxiety, and ways to help him communicate more efficiently but they did not listen. This lack of support brought about many negative consequences as he had no personal or emotional support for many years. During his freshman year in college, John discussed an incident with his Mother in which he sought out emotional support from her but his Mother sent him to a psychotherapist and blamed his academic struggles on laziness and lack of effort. The support John was seeking from his Mother at that time was for her to understand the impact stuttering had on his everyday interactions at the university. John stated because of stuttering he did not have many friends his freshman or sophomore year and stayed in his dorm the majority of the time. In fact, John discussed his freshman year as the worst year of his life emotionally and physically due to stuttering and the fear of communicating in general, which ultimately lead to severe depression and an attempted suicide. An excerpt from John's transcript detailed this life experience and lack of support.

> **Example 4.55, John speaking about the emotional toll stuttering had on his life during his freshman year due to a lack of emotional support from family and friends. (J=John).**
>
> J: ……..Freshman year for me was probably the worst year of my life because I didn't talk to a single person at all because I was so just petrified of speaking

and petrified of people's reactions to my stuttering. Like a typical day, I would go to class sometimes. Just to put this in perspective, freshman year was so bad I failed. I got straight F's because I didn't go to class because I was that scarred of interacting with people. That was the main reason I tried to explain it to my mom. She brought me to a therapist and I tried to explain it to them and they really didn't understand. They thought I was just being lazy and didn't want to study. Like that wasn't the case at all. Even though I didn't like to go to class, I still tried to study on my own. But it wasn't the same because I didn't go to class. I didn't know what was going on and so a typical day if I didn't go to class, I would wake up, go to class and go straight back out. I wouldn't even eat for days because I was petrified.

Example 4.56, A few minutes after John discussed the emotional toll of stuttering he discussed his attempted suicide

II: It was just tough (dealing with stuttering)
J: It was extremely tough. Like if you want me to be honest with you, I tried to commit suicide. I did. (tearing up) I tried to hang myself in my dorm room.
II: So what happened?
J: The rope broke.
II: Thank God.
J: Yea, I know.

The first example discussed the lack of emotional support from his Mother as he attempted to explain to her what he was experiencing mentally and physically in college. After one semester of not being heard, the depression grew and ultimately (example 2) lead to the attempted suicide. These examples paired with each other reveal how vital support is for PWS, especially while attending college. College success and emotional well-being are linked to social involvement (Brooks & DuBois, 1995; Foster, 1998) and the ability to participate and connect in university settings and John's story is no different.

John's lack of support did not conclude with emotional support but also he discussed the challenges in communicating in classrooms and speaking to professors because of his stuttering. Professors and classmates did not provide John with adequate communicative support in conversations, such as extra time or not finishing sentences, which lead to a fear of speaking and isolation in the classroom. In many instances the lack of communicative

support was not given maliciously but out of ignorance or unawareness. An example below

taken from John's psychology professor (Ms. Bailey) interview exemplifies the professor's

unawareness to John's stuttering, which lead to lack of support in class and intimate

educational settings such as labs.

> **Example 4.57, Ms. Bailey discussing her ignorance towards John's stuttering (II- Investigator, BA- Ms. Bailey)**
>
> II: Did you know that he stutters?
> BA: Yes, and mostly I found that out through working through my research lab. He became the lab manager for one semester. Working more intimately that's when I realized because I don't think I did before when he was in my class.

Misconceptions about stuttering. A subtheme correlated to the above subtheme of lack of

support was misconceptions about stuttering. Persons in John's life within the university such

as professors and classmates did not understand the emotional impact of stuttering, which

lead to specific behaviors or actions that hindered John's ability to enter into and sustain

interactions while attending university. Many negative reactions stem from a lack of

knowledge or awareness of stuttering and John discussed classmates who smiled and giggled

when he stuttered in class. John's Spanish professor (Mr. Piper) described below awkward

moments of discomfort for John and himself when he stutters in class.

> **Example 4.58, Mr. Piper discussing his preferred response during John's awkward moments of stuttering and discomfort (P=Piper, II=Investigator)**
>
> II: What happens when stuttering occurs?
> P: Maybe there are moments of discomfort where you know he's uncomfortable and it makes you uncomfortable and like if I'm looking at him and he starts to stutter, I have to look away, because I don't want to stare. I don't know what that does to him. It's just a reaction sort of. Like someone that's staring at you, it puts more stress on him.

This example of looking away and not staring during moments of stuttering revealed a misunderstanding of John' desires or wants in speaking contexts. Mr. Piper based his reaction on his understanding of stuttering but John, like many other PWS, considered it rude or disrespectful when social partners look away during moments of stuttering. John would later elaborate on this excerpt during a lamination session and explained looking away during his stuttering moments created feelings of shame and guilt for speaking. On the contrary, maintaining eye contact helps him feel worthy and less anxious during speaking tasks.

John also discussed a situation his freshman year at college that involved another professor who required him to speak in front of the class for a project even though John pleaded with him not to speak. John explained to him that he stuttered but since John was so nervous at the time he had a difficult time when he communicated his message, and was ultimately mandated to speak. Clearly, if this professor had minimal knowledge of stuttering and the life impact of it, he may have offered some form of accommodation for John like other professors have done. Due to a lack of understanding by his professor, John was put in a difficult speaking context that he could not handle and forced to be exposed to negative reactions by his classmates and intrinsic negative emotions at the time. John described this public speaking experience as one of the worst days of his life.

The observations also revealed John's classmates speaking over him and creating awkward moments of silence during stuttering episodes, all of which stems from misconceptions.

Ramifications from stuttering. The final subtheme from the major theme unfamiliarity about stuttering is largely based on interviews and observations in which John experienced specific consequences as a result of stuttering, either at the university or while at work. Stuttering was not readily understood or observed by PWDS, so when moments of stuttering did emerge, listener reactions or facial expressions were typically perceived negative in nature. These negative reactions of smiling, giggling, and smirking were observed during all of the classroom observations, while John ate at a restaurant, and while he worked at Olive Garden. One example of these ramifications was explained by John when he described a time period during his freshman year that he stopped talking because of the negative reactions.

Example 4.59, John is discussing the impact of negative reactions at the university (J=John, II=Investigator).

II: Ok so you're talking about your experiences before high school that have shaped your perspective coming in. I'm sorry, during grade school, things that have shaped your perspective coming into college…..
J: Right.
II: So freshman year as you spoke about earlier, did you experience any of those same reactions here while you were at college?
J: From a professor no but from students yes. A lot more than I remember. But it got to a point where I…… it's not that I didn't talk because I was afraid, I didn't talk because I was afraid of their reaction. To me it didn't matter who the person was…..whether it was a professor or peer, I just didn't talk at all. It was the reactions.
II: You didn't talk at all?
J: Yea I generalized it to everything and I just didn't talk.

This example revealed the severe ramifications John experienced during his freshman year because of stuttering which ultimately impacted his desire to participate in class or any other context within the university. These ramifications were also noted at work as John discussed being bullied his sophomore year by an

163

employee who eventually lost his job because of the bully instance. Although many

of John's ramifications came in the form of negative responses by social partners,

John also received academic penalty for stuttering. During an introduction to

petroleum engineering class, he received an F for a class presentation because he

walked out of a presentation in order to avoid speaking. John described this situation

below:

Example 4.60, John discussing the time he received a failing grade for not participating in a class presentation (J=John, II=Investigator).

J: And something that I just thought of. I had a project for a group, it was a semester long project. It was like the only grade in the class. So I was taking it and we had… it was me and two people. Like I talked to them, I was fine. But then we had to present this project in front of the class of 150 people or something like that. And then a few days before I hear our professors are going to record it. So I was like, "oh my god." So I was like guys, "What if I…" because we had to do a bunch of stuff, "Write a 10 paper and then they present." And so they were like, "Sure." So I wrote the paper, but I still stood up with them to speak and then we were the first group to go because I wanted to be done. And then like my two classmates spoke and then my professor said, "Ok you two are done now it's time for him to speak." And I was like, "Oh no I wrote the paper." And he was like, "No you have to speak too." I had a B in the class before but then I failed the class because I didn't speak. I walked out. I tried to tell him then but at that time I was extremely nervous so I don't know if he understood me or not and he is foreign so he might have, I don't know. English was not his first language so I was trying to tell him that I stutter but yea. I don't think he understood me. I tried to contact him again, and I spoke to him, and I tried to contact the dean but it didn't really work. He didn't want to talk to me nor did the dean.

This example exemplifies not only the academic ramifications that PWS

experience at times but also the lack of empathy by professors and people of authority

within the university. Even though John wrote the 10-page paper, which was the bulk

of the assignment, he did not get credit for his work but was scrutinized because he

stuttered. The lack of support by his professor and administrators was a deciding

factor in John receiving an academic penalty due to his fear of speaking.

John's girlfriend Kiki also confirmed these results as she noted during her interview John was often judged and negatively stereotyped by their classmates and friends for stuttering. She noted these consequences are focused on people who are different and thus are discriminated against because of their differences.

Journey Towards Agency and management. The second major theme that emerged within this data set was John's movement towards independency and agency. There was no doubt much of John's data set revealed significant hardships and challenges at the university but also, as the other participants, there are examples of John's proactive behavior with regards to his stuttering. And since stuttering was not confined to only overt behaviors but impacted many facets of an individual and quality of life, John's attempts at agency penetrated his view of self and self-esteem. John often spoke of his first two years of college as being challenging due to lack of meaningful relationships, family troubles, fear of speaking, depression, and all of which he blamed on stuttering. John stated he felt helpless during this time. But according to John and his girlfriend, his junior year brought positive changes in his life, associated with making friends, meeting his girlfriend, and changing majors from petroleum engineering to psychology. One could interpret from the data sets, his life improved as he took risks and engaged in the world. He even spoke highly of speech therapy services he received his junior year that helped him improve his overall confidence when speaking and view of himself. All of these life events played a major role in John's attempts at agency and understanding he was an active agent in his world. One subtheme that exemplifies John's journey towards agency was *experimentation*.

Experimentation. As John took risks and experimented with learned strategies from therapy, he was able to fine tune strategies that helped him communicate throughout the

university. John's use of experimentation was revealed in his attempts at self-disclosing his

stuttering and stuttering openly. Self-disclosing is defined by John as telling people he

stutters, which John discussed helped him build confidence and participate in class without

fear of speaking. An interesting finding, which will be reported later under *support*

strategies, was disclosure resulted in a positive experience for John. Disclosure lead to

accommodations from his professors and even building relationships within the university.

John noted disclosure was difficult for him in the beginning but once he took risks and

practiced vulnerability by disclosing, it became easier with each attempt. An example below

illustrated this use of experimentation.

> **Example 4.61, John discussing the first several attempts at disclosing and the positive results that ensued. (J=John, II=Investigator).**
>
> J:…….I remember the first day of that class in the Fall, the first time that I took the Spanish class he was like "ok guys" he wrote all the stuff on the board and said "everyone stand up in front of the class and read what's on the board." And I was like "Crap!" So I go and try my best, he just looked at me, he didn't laugh or nothing. They were a few smiles but not much at all, not much where it affected me at all. But then he was like, "ok we are going to have a few presentations in this class." So after that class I went to his office and I spoke with him about it. I was like "hey, I stutter I don't know if you know what is is but basically, I just need more time. It might seem like I don't know some things but I am just buying time." Because you get that a lot, and some people get up there and say um, and just thinking. So I spoke with him and wanted him to be know that when I got up there that I would know my stuff and that my stutters don't show that I wasn't prepared. He was like, "well for all the big presentations, would you mind just being in my office, just us? Just doing that? Would that make you more comfortable so that I know that you do know your stuff." And I was like, "I don't mind presenting in front of the class, but if that's what you rather do then sure." The teacher and I actually have a good relationship now and I make sure to get him for each Spanish class.

John recognized he was in control of his own life and understood his limitations in

communicating at that time and then voiced his fears and concerns to the professor. Once

disclosure occurred, they both came to an agreement on speaking expectations for Spanish

166

class, which began a relationship with the professor. This illustrated the effectiveness in taking risks and also helping persons who are unfamiliar with stuttering, learn more about stuttering and the life impact of stuttering.

John later elaborated on the effectiveness of disclosing at the university and stated how disclosing has brought him from bad experiences with stuttering to great experiences with stuttering. He also noted through experimenting with disclosing, speaking in class became easier because the professor was aware he stuttered.

Relationship dynamics. As with the other participants, due to the complexity of conversation and emotions that develop within any relationship, specific dynamics emerged throughout all of the data sets that point to relationship dynamics within the university. The four minor subthemes that explicate the major theme are *knowledge-seeking behaviors, empathy/compassion, social partner challenges,* and *change over time*.

Knowledge-seeking behaviors. Because of self-disclosure that took place later in John's university journey, more intimate relationships developed with his professors as compared to the other participants. Maybe this was a manifestation of John becoming an active agent in his life or maybe because he was involved in a degree that promoted emotional rawness (psychology). Whatever the reason, it was evident from John's interviews, there was a deeper emotional narrative that emerged. Because of these meaningful relationships in John's life within the university, *knowledge-seeking behaviors* occurred. That is, persons in John's story sought to understand John on a deeper level and his journey with stuttering. And like any relationship, if we bond with an individual we want to learn more about him/her and because stuttering was the scaffold in building the relationships for John,

people wanted to learn more about stuttering or something related to stuttering. In fact,

John's Spanish professor discussed this knowledge seeking behavior during his interview.

> **Example 4.62, Mr. Piper discussing the impact John has had on his life in the year he has known him (P=Mr. Piper, II=Investigator).**
>
> II: Anything else that comes up? (Investigator asking at the end of the interview)
> N: I had in mind for a couple of years to maybe take some speech pathology classes and part of it is because I know someone that goes through it (stuttering) and that makes me keep learning about it. But also a lot has to do with what I do. My job has a lot to do with speech pathology and I think because and I don't know how common of a notion, but I feel second language learners have speech problems. The trilled /r/ for a native speaker, that's a speech impairment if they don't produce that phoneme. But John sparked my interest in the field to learn more for sure.

As the interview detailed, because of his relationship with John and his exposure to

stuttering, he desired to learn more about stuttering and the broader understanding of speech

language impairments in the Spanish speaking population.

Although Ms. Bailey did not explicitly note the desire to learn more about stuttering,

she noted John helped her become conscious about her own speech and sought to understand

how language works. Kiki noted that her relationship with John has helped her want to

understand communication disabilities more and even her own disability.

Empathy/compassion. The second subtheme under relationship dynamics was the

development of empathy/compassion towards John. It was noted throughout the data, the

more people who got to know John, the more empathy/compassion that was allotted to him.

This did not mean he received special treatment in any way but as their understanding of

John's stuttering grew, they were able to accommodate him and give him the support he

needed to participate effectively in class. For instance, once Ms. Bailey knew John stuttered

she made sure to give him time to speak and made sure to not finish his sentences when

communicating with him. John and Mr. Piper at the time of the interview had taken two

classes together (Spanish I and II) and so when asked by the investigator if stuttering

presented an awkwardness in the classroom, his answer is a perfect example of empathy

towards John.

Example 4.63, Mr. Piper discussing the impact knowing John and understanding his wants/needs in the classroom. (P=Mr. Piper, II=Investigator).

II: And so when John was in your class, was it ever awkward?
P: I don't think so. I feel like he was less uncomfortable because just the dynamic of having all the students around him hanging on his every stutter you know. It wasn't an issue. And he already knew me and he knew I understood his issue. He knew I would support him working hard regardless. The discomfort that's usually in class when he speaks, wasn't there at that point I don't think. But that was through experience and getting to know him and him knowing me.

Through John and Mr. Piper's relationship, there was an understanding of stuttering

and John's needs within the classroom. It is important to note this empathy towards John

though did not happen on its own. And in fact it took time and effort from both PWS and

professor as they learned about one another and their own individual needs in

communication. Mr. Piper also described the many different supports he gave to John not out

of pity but out of empathy towards John's stuttering.

Partner challenges. Similar to the other participants, the third subtheme under

relationship dynamics is stuttering presented *partner challenges* from all social partners

involved. John like any conversationalist had needs and when those needs were not met, a

breakdown occurred. And because conversation was dictated by a set of rules, PWDS had

needs as well in conversation. Even though John had many positive experiences that were

described, he also had challenges that came as a direct manifestation from stuttering. Within

the classroom setting, John often had to re-state his intended message for clarification and

classmates often spoke over him due to intelligibility issues. While at work (Olive Garden), it

was observed John's stuttering impeded his oral transfer of food orders to the cooking staff

and servers, which prompted clarification from John for increased understanding. Kiki even

noted the challenge at times when John stuttered but also for others such as servers at

restaurants. An example below illustrates partner challenges at a restaurant.

> **Example 4.64, Kiki discussing the challenge at times for all social partners involved when John stutters. Kiki is describing what may happen when her and John go eat at a restaurant. (K=Kiki, II=Investigator).**
>
> II: Where do ya'll go?
> K: Random places and a lot of times I'm hungry and I don't feel like cooking. So we will go somewhere we never gone before and so we just kind of look and pick a place.
> II: Yea
> K: (laughs) And so we've been all over Lafayette. Sunday we went to Cheddars and then…. uhh as he was ordering, uh a lot of times when he orders…. I think because I feel like the more nervous he is the more he stutters and the more comfortable he is the less he stutters. So a lot of times when we order, he starts to stutter and they (waitress) just kind of start to finish for him. And um that's a habit I try not to do. I've done it occasionally but he tells me, "man that really bugs me because when you get it wrong I have to start all over again." A lot of times, most of the times, they get it right as far as what he's trying to say but um, yea most of the time we go out to eat he'll try and order like more of the pasta or something. He was ordering on Sunday and he got stuck on the /n/ in New Orleans pasta. After a long pause and wait, the waitress giggled and was like "oh you want New Orleans pasta, ok." So that happens a lot of times. I mean I don't really say anything because I don't know what to say. It's difficult.

Because of the atypical speech pattern and abnormal structure stuttering abides by,

Kiki described the challenge for her not to complete his utterance at times but also discussed

the challenge for others when John stutters. Kiki would later elaborate that the challenge with

John's stuttering came from her desire to complete his sentences and her inability to help

him.

Observation #3 provided another great example of partner challenges. During this observation, John and Kiki were eating at a local restaurant and when John tried to say his drink order he stuttered on "tea." The waitress responded with a comedic reply unaware to his stuttering.

Example 4.65, Participation Observation #3 – John and Kiki are eating at a restaurant and John attempts to say his drink order.

The first encounter with the waitress is almost immediate. She (waitress) first made eye contact with John and asked him, "Can I get you anything to drink?" Jacob (blocked) stuttered and the waitress giggled and said, "Did you forget what you wanted?" John looked upset and then he held his breath and forced out his response of, "….tea please." Kiki also looked agitated at the waitress.

John was unable to communicate his order at the specified time given by the waitress, which resulted in her comedic response. The waitress' negative response triggered a reaction from John and Kiki and further resulted in an awkward encounter as she realized he stuttered and later apologized.

Change over time. One common and occurring theme in all of the participants was the more exposure persons had to stuttering, the more comfortable they were with stuttering which included how to properly respond. Mr. Piper discussed it was through experience with John and them both getting to know one another, why he was able to assist him effectively in class. John's girlfriend noted in the beginning it was challenging to communicate with him but it took her time to adjust to his stuttering. She also stated because of her own disability (eyesight) she was able to develop empathy quicker, which helped her understand his stuttering. Observation #3 below provides another example of positive change over time.

Example 4.66, Participation Observation #3 – John and Kiki are eating at a restaurant and discussing their plans for the weekend.

During the 10-minute talk between John and Kiki, Kiki waited patiently for John to finish when he stuttered and maintained eye contact throughout the interaction. She even waited to laugh, when he stuttered, at the funny moments of the conversation, until after he had completed his turn at talk. It is obvious both her and John communicate quite often because it seems she knows when John is blocking and when he is finished speaking. She does not interrupt him or finish his sentences as she said she sometimes did by accident. John seems very comfortable around her.

Departure from normalcy. Similar to the data analysis from the other participants, John's speech pattern deviated from the typical fluent speech pattern. Stuttering did not fit into the typical mold of what communication should sound or look like and at times social partners reacted negatively or were uncertain how to proceed when stuttering emerged. John's communication partners discussed uncertainty in these moments, which prompted a negative reaction and they looked away or finished his sentences. looking away or finishing his sentence. The two subthemes of *uncertainty from others* and *violates expectations* helped explain this major theme further.

Uncertainty from others. John's stuttering pattern typically consisted of mild to moderate blocks, mild to moderate part word repetitions, and accompanied with eye blinking and lip quivers. Because this pattern of speech is an atypical speech pattern and most communication partners were not familiar with stuttering, a period of limbo was noted in the data sets. That is, his communication partners were uncertain how to communicate with him during stuttering episodes. For example, John's girlfriend (Kiki) described her interactions with John as challenging at times because she did not know if she should help him during moments of stuttering. She stated most times John did not want her assistance but there were moments of profound stuttering in specific contexts that he relied on her support for

172

communication (e.g. introductions, large group situations). These periods of uncertainty were

atypical and required time and effort from social partners, in this case Kiki. Another example

of uncertainty was discussed in detail from Mr. Piper who in his interview explicitly spoke to

this challenge. An example from the transcript sample below illustrated this theme.

Example 4.67, Mr. Piper discussing what he tries to do during John's moments of stuttering in the classroom. (II=Investigator, P=Mr. Piper).

II: So the discomfort that you just spoke about, is that from your perspective?
P: It's like living kind of his discomfort. I think that's what it mostly is and I never want to, I'm always afraid I'm going to show some body motion. I'm going to make some face that makes him think, I'm thinking "spit it out." Because I'm never thinking that. Because your face does things that may not portray what you thinking. That's why I look away. I don't want him to think I'm thinking, "come on man, just fucking say it."

Mr. Piper portrayed the uncertainty during John's moments of stuttering and how it

could be challenging from a listener perspective. In order to avoid what he thought upset

John (eye contact), he looked away during stuttering moments so John didn't see his

unwanted facial expressions. Mr. Piper's periods of uncertainty came from a compassionate

perspective as described in his interview but nonetheless he was unsure how to proceed.

Ms. Bailey also provided an excellent example of this subtheme. When asked to

describe her first encounter with John's stuttering, Ms. Bailey discussed how she felt during

his stuttering (heightened sense of self awareness).

Example 4.68, Ms. Bailey discussing her feelings and reactions during John's moments of stuttering. (II=Investigator, BA=Ms. Bailey).

II: So, what was your first encounter like with stuttering?
BA: Well I think to me, I knew what it was so that wasn't surprising, but I think my reaction is that I do get a bit nervous because I want to give John enough time to finish whatever their train of thought is. And I'm never certain when I'm talking to someone who is stuttering when they are actually finished with their turn. So I don't actually know if I gave them the appropriate amount of time get finished. So I think I tend to be very introspective when I'm

communicating and that I'm always thinking to myself in the background.
Like slow down, give it enough time, don't try to rush things.

Because John's stuttering was not a typical speech pattern Ms. Bailey encountered

often, she discussed her confusion of when John is finished and when to take her turn of talk.

She also highlighted her heightened sense of awareness that occurred when she talked to

John that revealed the cognitive effort required in speaking to John from a professor's and

listener's perspective.

All four of the observations highlighted this subtheme as well. Uncertainty was noted

in the observations in the forms of gestures, facial expressions, mimicking, and physical

posturing (avoiding eye contact, turning body away from John). That is, John's social

partners within a specific university context reacted in some way due to a sense of confusion

and unfamiliar conversational norms exhibited by John. An example from Observation #1

illustrated this period of uncertainty.

Example 4.69, Participation Observation #1 – The class is taking turns speaking in front of the class as they conjugate Spanish verbs.

Again, there is an odd belief for the students, one of almost disfluency is fun. There is no struggle or effort with their own speech, only extra mental effort and laughter by the class when they stumble (disfluent). During the classroom presentation, John waits to take his turn presenting on the verb conjugation of "compre". John is the fifth person in the class to present. Laughter and joking occurs when the other students are disfluent as almost an enjoyment with being disfluent in this class as noted above. Two to three questions are asked after each speaker. When it is John's turn he anxiously gets up to present. John begins stuttering on "Llllla" and is disfluent by saying "um" often. The class avoids eye contact with him and even looks down. No laughter is observed. No questions were asked after his presentation was completed. Something odd happened when John stuttered, the class suddenly did not know how to respond when he was disfluent and stutters because what was once a fun environment for them now becomes a period of uncertainty. So their response was to remain quiet, almost stagnant.

Before John presented, disfluency was seen as an enjoyable event and most of the class laughed at each other throughout the presentations. But when John took his turn to present, the class obviously did not want to laugh at him as that could be perceived as teasing, so a contrastive reaction transpired as a result of uncertainty.

Violates expectations. Similar to the other participants, the final subtheme that supported the major theme *departure from normalcy* was a violation of social partner's conversation expectations. Because conversation rules and norms, such as appropriate turn taking moments and pause times, were learned through experience, once listeners were exposed to John' atypical speech pattern, listener expectations were violated. The data revealed John's stuttering violates these conversational expectations, which in turn generated negative responses or periods of uncertainty for his communication partners. John's observations in the classroom demonstrated this subtheme and classmates often leaned in for comprehension or reacted negatively because of the sudden violation of expected norms. The waitress' reaction in observation #3 and her apology after she realized her stuttered was an example of this subtheme also.

> **Example 4.70, Ms. Bailey discusses how John's speaking pattern violates her expectations as compared to her usual conversation. (II=Investigator, BA=Ms. Bailey).**
>
> BA: So I think that that's something that's important and I knew in a session talking with John a lot of times it's the start that takes awhile, so I would want to give him time, where maybe I'm not realizing he's trying to start a sentence. I want to give him that time to start so I might delay my turn to make sure that he gets.
> II: That is important to you to make sure that he gets his turn at talk, but what you also said earlier is that its difficult.
> BA: Right. Because I think that becomes automatic over time. You start learning how language works and when you encounter someone who stutters that there's this…. makes you sit back and say "oh wait this is different." I think for me I stop and think more about the situation.

Due to John's speech pattern, Ms. Bailey discussed the tasks she had to perform in order to communicate with John (give him more time, make sure he is done speaking), in which she explicitly stated is different from the automatic or typical conversation patterns that occur in fluent speakers speaking patterns. This again, like in the previous example spoke to the effort that was required for communicating with John from a listener and professor perspective.

Environmental obstacles. Similar to the other participants, there was a substantial amount of data that revealed John's stuttering within the university setting presented numerous obstacles for him to overcome. For example, within the classroom John dealt with the rigidity of the classroom structure that encouraged pedagogical practices that were difficult for PWS and eventually resulted in depression, increased anxiety, shame, and academic penalties. These pedagogical practices included class participation points, oral presentations, and group interactions. Although there is a large amount of evidence these practices improve comprehension for many students, John discussed the difficulty in participating in these activities without the proper support. Inadequate support and classroom obstacles contributed to John's decision to change majors from petroleum engineering to psychology, in which he stated psychology provided more flexibility and acceptance of his disability (stuttering). In Spanish class, John was required to present orally but because the instructor provided accommodations (presenting in front of professor only), he was able to participate without an academic penalty. However, this was not the case in petroleum engineering classes. John discussed an instance that he received a failing grade because the professor penalized him for his failed attempt at an oral presentation because he stuttered. It was classroom obstacles such as these that contributed to the challenges for PWS to

participate fully in the college experience. At work, John experienced these same obstacles because communicating orders was a part of the job description for a cook at a restaurant. John experienced teasing and emotional hardships in order to participate at his work context while attending university. Three subthemes of *rigidity of classroom, impact on academic performance,* and *influence of classroom context* highlight this major theme.

Rigidity of classroom. As stated above, John was required to engage in a university classroom structure constructed for a fluent speaker, which presented major challenges for PWS. John described his freshman and sophomore years as the hardest years of his life and the rigidity of the classroom structure played a major role. For example, during his freshman year John was required to present orally in front of a large class but because he stuttered, he asked for another assignment or assistance and the professor declined his offer stating that he had to speak. The professor stated everyone had to speak, no exceptions. The example below from John's transcript illustrated this experience.

> **Example 4.71, John discusses his freshman experience with his first attempt at disclosing and asking for assistance with an oral presentation. (II=Investigator, J=John).**
>
> J: Yea because I didn't speak (oral presentation), I tried to but I couldn't due to stuttering. And even when I tried to explain why I didn't speak, he didn't even respond.
> II: He didn't hear you out.
> J: No. So then a few days when I, and I'm just like, I failed all my other classes I don't care. That's how my life was, it was miserable and stuttering was at front and center.
> II: When was this?
> J: In the Fall of freshman year. Because in the Fall I made a 1.2 GPA and then in the Spring I made a 1.0
> II: So it seems that when you were first coming in it was pretty rough dealing with all that. And having instances like this where the professor doesn't respond.
> J: Right. And just that fact that I spoke to him in person, and he still didn't like hear me out of anything. That just kind of made me feel even more like I should not even speak.

John discussed later in the interview that the demand to speak in class resulted in

missing class quite often. He simply could not mange his anxiety and stress effectively. And

the fact his freshman professors were inflexible with classroom assignments contributed to

his overall depression during this time in his life. Even though John's overall experience in

his Spanish (junior year) class was mostly positive, he did note there were periods of

heightened anxiety and daily stress due to the excessive speech demands and inherent

structure. A large percentage of the class were group discussions and oral communication

tasks but the key difference was the support he received from the Spanish professor as

discussed earlier. Observation #2 demonstrated this subtheme even further.

Example 4.72, Participation Observation #2 – John is grading his neighbors paper orally.

After the papers are exchanged, the professor starts speaking the answers out loud and asks the class to answer out loud as they grade their neighbors paper. So, as they answer out loud, they marked the answer right or wrong. Almost all of the class answered out loud in unison except Jacob. He did not speak up during this exercise only graded his neighbor's paper as instructed. Another interesting note, during this activity, most of the students were mingling with each other and asking each other questions about the quiz. John on the other hand kept to himself, almost deliberately did not engage with classmates unless he is required to.

After answering a few questions in Spanish class, even more oral tasks were required

of him but John chose not to participate during this activity. The classroom tasks proved

overwhelming for him during this instance, which was reasonable due to the effort that was

required of him to engage during class discussions.

Impact on academic performance. The second subtheme in this data set revealed

John's stuttering had an impact on his overall academic performance. Kiki and John's

interviews contributed to this subtheme. John received numerous academic penalties his

freshman and sophomore year as a result of stuttering and the impact it had on his mental health played a role as well. John was often depressed during these times and failed to confront his anxiety and fear of speaking, which affected his academics. He received failing grades for oral presentations and frequently volunteered to do more work during group projects in order to avoid speaking in class. Not to mention he attempted suicide and missed several weeks of class in order to heal and recover. During John's interview, he stated stuttering and the burden of speaking was at the apex of his suicide attempt. It wasn't until John received adequate stuttering therapy and emotional support that his quality of life improved, including academics.

Influence of classroom context. Another obstacle the data revealed and similar to other participants was the influence of the classroom context. Observations 1 and 2, John's interview, Kiki's interview, and Mr. Piper's interview contributed to this subtheme. Even though John only spoke when necessary, in small and large classrooms John sat in the front in order to avoid seeing the laughs and facial expressions that occurred when he stuttered. Even though he knew there was a greater chance for him to be called on by the professor because he sat in the front row, he preferred to be called upon than seeing the laughs and facial expressions. An example from John's transcript illustrates classroom context.

Example 4.73 John discusses why he sits in the front row of university classrooms (II=Investigator, J=John).

II: So you brought up the classroom. So far in school you haven't had any instructor as of yet react as they did in high school but is that it? And I'm just bringing this up because you brought it up earlier, what is it about the classroom? Talk me through some of the things.
J: Before then, it was I guess just the experience of being forced to be in a close proximity around people. And then I sat in the front all the time just to… because like I wasn't able to focus in class at all so I sat in front on purpose to focus. But then sitting in the front the teacher stares at you and expects you to raise your hand and answer questions. So that made me a lot more petrified

because I wouldn't raise my hand at all. And then sometimes I would just get called on and when we get called on you can't just say no. You have to talk.
II: So when you got called what did you do?
J: I would answer it, I would stutter, I would hear a few muffled laughs and stuff behind me but that was it. Also, I sat in the front so I wouldn't have to see the people laugh and stuff. As terrible as that sounds but yea I always sat in the first row.

John also discussed sitting in the front row was the only way he was able to attend in any classroom. Obviously, this was his way he coped with the increased anxiety and negative reactions that ensued in the classroom. John's judicious choice of sitting in the front row was observed in both of the classroom observations. Just like the other participants, the setting of the classroom presented a challenge for John and was a major obstacle he had to overcome in order to participate as a university student.

Behavioral manifestations. As with each of the other participants, John implemented specific behavioral manifestations in order to participate and communicate in the university context. The behavioral manifestations were divided into three major types of strategies: 1) strategies used to cope with or avoid instances of stuttering, 2) strategies that functioned to induce fluency, and 3) strategies used to increase support for speaking within a given context. John's behaviors were employed judiciously and were dependent upon the context of the interaction. These maneuvers allowed for face saving strategies and contributed to John's identity construction at the university as these behaviors played a role in how he viewed himself and how others perceived him.

The *coping strategies* entailed *excluding self* from certain communicative events in order to escape stuttering and the fear of stuttering, *physical posturing* to avoid interactions, *silencing self*, and *alter syntax* to avoid stuttering. John also used specific devices to *induce fluency* such as *continuous phonation* and *easy onset.* John's fluency inducing strategies were

learned though stuttering therapy at the university he attended. John also integrated

supportive behaviors for assistance in communication in the form of *reliance on others* and

self-disclosure. Participant observations and interviews were both important data sources

used to ascertain these devices as both John and peers recognized these patterns of behavior

and were able to speak to their functionality in detail.

Table 4.6. Behavioral Manifestations for John.

Coping Strategies	Physical posturing
	Changes to syntax/semantics
	Silencing self
	Excludes self
Fluency Inducing Strategies	Continuous phonation
	Easy onset
Supportive Strategies	Reliance on others
	Self-disclosure

Coping strategies. Similar to each of the other participants, John implemented coping

strategies in order to aid with communication throughout the various contexts within the

university. The contexts observed and discussed in the interviews were his work place,

classrooms, university cafeteria, restaurants, and dorm room. These strategies were context

and social partner dependent and often times used in multiple contexts. John's coping

strategies were meaningful and played a vital role in his ability to enter into and sustain

interactions at the university.

Physical posturing. It was observed and discussed John would position himself in a

specific way as a means of avoiding communication at times. He would also avoid the

negative reactions by classmates and social partners. During Observation #1 and #2, John sat

in the front of the class so that if he stuttered he would not observe the laughs and negative

reactions from his classmates. He stated it was much easier to hear their reactions than

observe them. John also would turn his body away from people who he did not want to

181

communicate with at a specific time. This body turn was observed during group discussions and partner interactions. In a lamination session, John confirmed the body turn as a way for him to regain his composure due to the excessive speaking demands of college and avoid interactions at times.

Changes to syntax/semantics. Consistent with findings from John's data and the way he maneuvered conversation was changing socially expected responses to a minimal response. For example, Kiki discussed times when she would say "thank you" and expect a response of "your welcome" from John but instead received "your uh huh." Details of this story are transcribed below.

Example 4.74, Kiki discusses John's altered expected responses in order to save face (K=Kiki).

K: ……And we talked about when we first got together in college, he would tell me certain things, like if there were certain words that were harder for him to say or annunciate he would change them up. Like whenever we first got back together my mom was a huge stickler on "thank you" and "you're welcome" and I told him thank you once and he went, "you're uh huh," and I was like, "no your suppose to say your welcome." And he was like "that's sometimes really hard." Like the /w/ kind of messes me up. And I was like "oh my God, I'm sorry."

This example illustrated John's attempt to avoid stuttering in order to save face in a specific interaction. John had a difficult time pronouncing /w/ words so he would change the expected response to a word he wouldn't stutter on. John would later explain he does this strategy with new people or when he was uncomfortable with stuttering openly. Because John and Kiki were a new romantic couple, John avoided stuttering as often as he could at that time.

Silencing self. Similar to swapping word order or altering expected responses, John's data revealed he silenced himself during communicative events in order to not stutter. This

182

silencing strategy was a strategy John developed on his own as he progressed through life but nonetheless it was a strategy he implemented often during his freshman and sophomore years, his most challenging college years. This subtheme also encompassed John's silencing of emotions, in which he and Kiki discussed he did often in order to avoid talking about his stuttering. Two examples are listed below that contribute to this subtheme.

> **Example 4.75, Kiki discusses John's silencing of emotions when asked expected responses in order to save face. (II=Investigator, K=Kiki).**
>
> K: Umm and as far as school, I mean for the most part, he'll just tell me, I mean there's not really a whole lot that he really verbalizes because, like me, he's lived with it for twenty-two years and he's kind of learned how to deal with it.
> II: Yeah
> K: But I mean I feel like sometimes it upsets him more than it should.
> II: Probably so.
> K: Because I know, I feel like sometimes to deal with stuttering, he just pushes it to the back of his head and doesn't talk about it.

In order for John to cope with stuttering at times, he silenced himself in order to avoid speaking about stuttering or reliving the hurtful experiences he may have encountered at the university. John discussed silencing himself also in classroom discussions and when speaking to his friends as a way to avoid stuttering and also the negative reactions.

Excludes self. Similar to the other participants, John avoided contexts and people at times that he felt contributed to his fear of speaking and increased anxiety. This exclusion of self was linked to the negative impact that stuttering had on John's life at the time of data collection and the inherent structure of the university already discussed. John experienced depression and an intense fear of speaking as a direct result of his high school and university experiences. At times John tried to ask for help from his professors but he was denied accommodations and even penalized academically for stuttering. He was teased and laughed at when he spoke during class and often perceived as the deviant student as a result of his

183

stuttering. All of these experiences within the university played a major role in John's

avoidance of contexts and people. A transcript from John's interview reflects this subtheme.

Example 4.76, John discusses an instance of excluding self when telling a story about his Mother (II=Investigator, J=John).

II: …. When we are talking about our experience in school, I'm sorry, college, all of this comes into play doesn't it? I mean everything does because school isn't just attending school. I mean you brought up classroom, you brought up instructor, your reactions, your earlier reactions from high school, you brought up the cafeteria and so on. What was it about the cafeteria?
J: Well because of the very few people that I did go to high school with, that did come here it seemed like every single time I went to the cafeteria they were there and they wanted to talk to me. At that point it's not that I didn't want to talk I just didn't want to talk in general. So if they were sitting over here, I would make sure I was sitting way across the building away from them. Because I knew them from high school but at that point it didn't matter to me who it was I just didn't want to talk. And then it even got to the point where my mom would try to call me and I would just be like, "hey just text me I'm busy." Because I didn't even want to talk to her. It's not that I didn't want to, I just didn't want to speak.

In this excerpt John discussed some of the people he avoided in the cafeteria because

he did not want to speak to them due to his fear of stuttering. John often stayed in his dorm

room for days and wouldn't come out because he feared speaking so much and did not want

to experience the negative reactions he so often did. This exclusion and fear he exhibited his

freshman and sophomore year was a factor in his depression and significantly impacted his

overall quality of life at the university. John discussed other various contexts he would avoid

such as the copy room because he had to say his name, large gatherings because they made

him nervous, and certain class days because of a specific communication activity that

occurred that day. Excluding self was a coping strategy that John implemented in order to

navigate his life during his time at university.

Supportive strategies. The second theme that supported the major theme *coping*

strategies was John's use of *supportive strategies* in conversation. In order for John to cope

with stuttering within the university setting and keep up in fluent and fast paced conversations, John relied on others to assist him in communicating and he utilized the strategy of self-disclosure. The two subordinate themes are *reliance on others* and *self-disclosure*.

Reliance on others. Similar to Ivey, John's friends and/or social partners acted as mediators in certain communicative events in order to help him complete utterances and also make friends in a variety of new social contexts within the university setting. Previously, it was discussed that exposure to John's stuttering facilitated adequate support and empathy for his communication partners. So, at times, John's friends/co-workers who were familiar with his speech pattern, interceded for John in conversation with others. Although this aggravated John at times, he did state sometimes it was helpful depending on the person, situation, and even context. An example below explains this phenomenon.

> **Example 4.77, Kiki discusses what her and John do for fun (eat at restaurants) and how she occasionally assists John by completing his utterances. (II=Investigator, K=Kiki).**
>
> K: (laughs) And so we've been all over Lafayette (eating at restaurants). Sunday we went to Cheddars and then…. uhh as he was ordering and a lot of times when he orders…. I think because I feel like the more nervous he is the more he stutters and the more comfortable he is the less he stutters. So a lot of times when we order, he starts to stutter and they just kind of start to finish for him. And um that's a habit I try not to do. I've done it occasionally but he tells me, man that really irks my nerves because when you get it wrong I have to start all over again.

Even though this example showed completing utterances as a strategy that sometimes irked John, Kiki nonetheless performed this strategy and when she did guess the intended message appropriately, John was satisfied with her decision to speak for him. The investigator later questioned John about this statement from Kiki and the use of this strategy and he noted the aggravation that occurred when the strategy was abused, but this depended

185

on the context and situation. He further explained that introducing his name was difficult when there were large crowds so sometimes Kiki or other friends introduced him when he stuttered, which did not bother him and, in fact, helped him.

The other implementation of this strategy was discussed during John's interview several times when he described the importance of having one or two friends because they helped him engage in the university culture. The example below reflects this idea.

> **Example 4.78, John discusses how relying on friends for his communication needs helped him emotionally and physically. (II=Investigator, J=John).**
>
> II: So your friend comes up and then things as you said began to change, and that helped you?
> J: My best friend and my cousin, they both came up. So that helped a lot. Like they don't even know how much they helped. Because I shared a room with my cousin and that went fine. That helped a lot.
> II: You're saying helped.
> J: It helped me not be depressed. It helped me a lot. Because like he's my age and the only cousin that I have. So we've always been extremely close. And he is one of the only people at the time that knew what happened my Freshman year (attempted suicide) so he helped me stay busy and not really think too much about depression. And he's a lot more social than I am, so he made friends for us both and I became close with him so that helped. I had someone to talk to. There was like an understanding between us. I mean yea, he would do stuff with his friends but the times I was left alone I was fine because it wasn't a permanent thing, he would come home.

During John's emotionally challenging freshman and sophomore year, it was difficult for him to make friends, which made his college experience lonely. It wasn't until some of his friends from high school joined him at the university that he had a more positive experience. Because of John's fear of speaking, he relied on his only two friends to make other friends for him, which as he stated, helped him come out of his depression and gave him people to communicate with. If it wasn't for John's relying on other for communication support, John's college experience might have gone much different.

Self-disclosure. A new subordinate theme that emerged was the impact of self-disclosing. Unlike the other participants, John utilized self-disclosing or telling people he stuttered, as a way to minimize his anxiety, inform others about stuttering, and informing professors of his speaking needs in the classroom. Self-disclosing at first was a strategy John did not want to perform but after he received stuttering therapy, he saw the potential and power in utilizing it. Two examples below illustrate the use of this support tool.

> **Example 4.79, John previously discussed self-disclosing in Spanish class, which resulted in building a positive relationship with his professor and receiving speaking accommodations. Then when asked again by the investigator if he had disclosed again, John explains the outcome (II=Investigator, J=John).**
>
> II: So disclosing, you did this! Have you done it since (Spanish class)?
> J: Yes, I have.
> II: So it was a good experience.
> J: So I have done that. I did that with one of my psychology teachers and that's the class that's with 10 people in it. I was like, "I don't mind discussing but I do have a speech impairment." He (psychology professor) was like, "oh that's completely fine, we all deserve our time to speak and voice our opinion." It's definitely been from bad experiences to great experiences with stuttering. I'm putting myself out there and at first I thought that would be a bad thing, it would just be bad, but now that I'm starting to do that it makes talking in class a lot easier, because yea, the students may not know, but the professor knows.

John had several positive outcomes that came from self-disclosing and clearly, self-disclosing mitigated listener unfamiliarity with stuttering and also reduced his anxiety in the process. Mr. Piper also noted John's self-disclosure strategy and the positive impact it had on this life stating that John was courageous and brave. Because John self-disclosed in Mr. Piper's class, he was granted speaking accommodations during class and an alternate class presentation format. Clearly, self-disclosure impacted not only John but the persons involved in John's college experience.

187

Fluency inducing. Besides implementing support and coping strategies into his repertoire, John also utilized fluency inducing strategies as a means to enhance fluency by easing the tension in his speech. Both fluency inducing strategies of *continuous phonation* and *easy onsets* were learned during his stint at speech therapy at the university clinic. John noted the value in these strategies as he described them as helpful in reducing anxiety and improving confidence in speaking situations he encountered, such as in the classroom, speaking to professors and classmates, and at work. It was through these tools that John was also able to reduce the fear of speaking and ease tension at times. The excerpt from John's transcript provides an example of these strategies.

> **Example 4.80, John discusses what strategies he uses in class sometimes to speak with less tension and anxiety (II=Investigator, J=John).**
>
> II: You brought up earlier your freshman year and being in group projects, how's that now?
> J: Fine, like those don't bother me at all now, I am not as nervous.
> II: On a scale of 1-10, 1 being they don't bother and 10 being they bother you, where are you?
> J: Probably like a 3 because I still get nervous but not for stuttering but just nervous in general. The prolongations help and continuous phonation, those techniques I learned. They help speaking in class when I need to use them.

The strategies John implemented in certain speaking situations were learned while he received stuttering therapy at the university clinic. Although John did not use these in all contexts, they were strategically implemented when he felt they were needed.

Identity construction. Similar to Ivey and Nick, John experienced an ongoing construction of identity related to stuttering. Identity was constructed through the many interactions and experiences John encountered within the university as well as his previous lived experiences. Because social contexts are a vital part of identity construction and affirm

many beliefs an individual may have about themselves, all of John's data sets played a role in developing this major theme. The interactions, depending on the reaction from the listener, contributed to the positive or negative identity concepts John construed about himself. Similar to Ivey, John experienced a challenging first two years of college which negatively impacted his view of himself but through support systems (family, friends, girlfriend, psychology classes, stuttering therapy) that emerged his junior year, a more positive identity was constructed. Through self-disclosure and other strategies already discussed, John' acceptance of stuttering became easier as he became self-aware and learned how to navigate the university context effectively. Themes emerged from the data sets and will be further explained in the following sections. The primary data source for this area was the interview with John, interview with his two professors, his girlfriend, and four observations. Artifacts, such as therapy records, were a valuable secondary source for understanding the views of others and how these ideas shaped John's identity. Minor themes included 1) *stigmatization* 3) *confidence boosting*, and 4) *negative affective reactions.*

   Stigmatization. Because of John's atypical speech pattern, John experienced social stigma throughout his life but also during his time at the university. When John discussed his previous school experiences, he described several events of teasing and bullying that transpired during his childhood. In one high school instance, he recalled an event that a teacher openly mimicked his stuttering in front of the class that resulted in his classmates laughing and mocking him for the rest of the school year. Once the teacher mocked John for stuttering, the classmates saw that as an opportunity to imitate his malicious behavior, as teachers set the mood for the class. Hurtful events such as these were examples of stigmatization that occurred in John's life prior to university. These negative experiences also

occurred at the university. John discussed many instances in which he was laughed at by classmates in the classroom and also times he felt isolated in the classroom due to his stuttering. These feelings of isolation contributed to his depression and negative self-worth he experienced at college. At work while attending university, John was bullied by a co-worker repeatedly until one day another co-worker spoke to the manager about the ongoing instances. This resulted in the oppressor losing his job. Although these were just a few instances of stigmatization that were discussed, they do illustrate the negative perceptions people had toward John because he stutters. An excerpt from Kiki's transcript describes this theme.

Example 4.81, Kiki discusses how she has observed people judge John because he stutters. (II=Investigator, K=Kiki).

K: Umm but I mean I thoroughly respect him for just like dealing with it. Because like if I don't tell people that I'm disabled and I'm just talking to them no one really knows, but a lot of times as soon as he starts talking to someone, they automatically start judging him because he starts stuttering and I know that's the way our society is.
II: Uh huh.
K: And the way that people are. Especially our age (college), they'll look for a new thing to make themselves feel better. And he's told me that like in high school all his football friends made jokes, made stutter jokes, and he hated it but he couldn't tell them anything, and if he tried they called him a pansy. So if his friends did it I'm know that other people would too and they do.

Kiki saw and understood the stigmatization of stuttering that occurred because of John's atypical speech pattern. She stated that people, even friends, judge him because he stutters, which is an example of social stigma.

Another example of stigma was noted by John's psychology professor, Ms. Bailey. In Ms. Bailey's interview she gave an explanation of the stigma that she knew existed with stuttering and made a comparison to racial biases, meaning because people are different we

treat them differently at times without even knowing we do. The excerpt below from Ms.

Bailey's interview explains this.

> **Example 4.82, Ms. Bailey discusses the issue of stigma and stuttering (II=Investigator, BA=Ms. Bailey).**
>
> II: Is there anything else that you do besides giving him time to finish? You did also bring up that you get nervous because of what's happening to you introspectively.
> BA: Not that I'm aware of. I mean, I think a lot of things are probably going on in the background that I'm not aware of. A lot of things that even like as just as a psychologist I know that there are stigmas associated with stuttering and that some people interpret it as something other than the production of speech that there is something else happening. So they might attribute things that are not true. Like they are not processing things quickly (less intelligent) which is not the case. But I hope that I don't do that. But I don't think that I don't think I would be aware if I was doing that. It's like those little biases. As psychologists we are aware of information, but knowing that we may not know when we do the things we do. I may not be aware if I treat John differently. Even like with racial biases, when I'm looking at people applying to the program and stuff like that. If I see a name that looks different, do I take longer to look at some of the information. But maybe I don't know if I do, but maybe it's something that I do.

Ms. Bailey explained that there were stigmas associated with stuttering and she might have done things that stigmatize John that she was unaware of during her interactions with him. She then compared the stigma of stuttering to racial stigmas that exist. Even though she herself had not observed the stigmas because John's speech is different from the norm, she understood people, maybe even herself, treated John differently.

Negative affective reactions. Reactions from listeners played a major role in identity construction because identity is largely based on the way a person views himself grounded in other people's reactions to him/her. People who have a negative stereotype about stuttering react negatively when stuttering is present and based upon John's narrative, constructing a positive identity was difficult due to these reactions that occurred. John discussed numerous times the impact these negative reactions had on him throughout life and especially during

191

university which resulted in helplessness, sadness, and depression. In one example, John

noted negative reactions were the one behavior he could not cope with adequately and

ultimately lead to an avoidance of people and interactions. The reactions were also the reason

why he isolated himself for two weeks during college. A few examples from John's

transcript detail some of these instances.

Example 4.83, John discusses he was afraid to speak at college because of people's reactions. (J=John).

J: Freshman year for me was probably the worst year of my life because I didn't talk to a single person at all because I was just petrified of speaking and petrified of people's reactions to my stuttering. Like a typical day, I would go to class sometimes. Just to put this in perspective, freshman year was so bad I failed. I got straight F's because I didn't go to class because I was that scared of interacting with people.

John explained that people's reactions were the reason he did not go to class, which

resulted in poor grades his freshman year. These reactions also caused a significant fear of

speaking for John, which all affected his identity in a negative way.

Later during the interview John elaborated more on the impact of negative reactions

and discussed an instance from high school and college that affected him significantly. The

example below illustrates this explanation.

Example 4.84, John discusses an instance from high school and college in which people reacted negatively to his stuttering. (II=Investigator, J=John).

II: So the reactions from people you just now said like smiling and then you earlier said something like laughing. Would you categorize those as a good thing of bad thing?
J: A bad thing because like to me when I'm trying to talk to someone and I'm stuttering and they smile or laugh, to me it's like their making fun of me in a sense and in high school particularly I had teachers straight up tell me, "if you are going to stutter just don't talk." The teacher that did that was fired by the way, but yea.
II: So the reactions you experienced…..

J: Throughout my life and then that's all I expected (freshman year). So all the negative reactions that I received made me just not want to speak at all.

II: What were some other ones. You brought up the smiles, give me some of the ones that stick out that may have had experienced your freshman year?

J: Right. I remember like one instance with Steve actually (therapist). We would just like walk around campus how we did in therapy and like, we would stop and talk to people and then we went into the subway on campus and I got Steve food and as I was stuttering, the person busted out laughing. The person didn't even apologize. She was just rude. She just kept laughing while I was speaking and we walked out and Steve said, "John that was my first experience with a person who stutters and a reaction like that." He was trying to apologize for that person and he was like, "Wow." Like that was the first time he saw that and it affected him a lot more than it affected me. But it stood out how a person who didn't stutter can experience that (embarrassment) experience as well.

This example further illustrated some of the negative reactions John experienced during his life and also while attending university. The interesting part of this interview was the therapist who was with John (Steve), who was also was a witness to one instance and noted the impact as well. It was clear by these few examples that negative reactions were a part of John's daily routine.

Negative reactions were also captured during many of the observations. During the classroom observations, John experienced smirks and instances of avoidance by classmates when he stuttered. At work, John was bullied and teased by other co-workers and one instance it resulted in the firing of the employee. An excerpt below from observation #3 reveals a negative reaction by the waitress when she heard John stutter for the first time.

Example 4.85, Participation Observation #3 – John sits down to eat at a restaurant and the waitress approaches him and reacts when he stutters.

The first encounter with the waitress is almost immediate. She first made eye contact with John and asked him, "Can I get you anything to drink?" Jacob stuttered (repetition) and the waitress giggled and said, "Did you forget what you wanted?" I can tell this made John a little upset, which he held his breath and forced out his response of, "….tea please." Kiki also looked agitated at the waitress. I am sure the waitress did not know he stuttered.

Even though the waitress did not know he stuttered initially and apologized later because she realized he stuttered, her first reaction did entail giggling and a comedic response. Based upon these field notes, her response offended him and Kiki and lead to awkward encounters with the waitress thereafter. Again, these were just glimpses of what John dealt with everyday but nonetheless they did capture his experiences in real world contexts, which contributed to his identity construction while attending university.

***Confidence boost*.** The last theme that supported identity construction was one of the first themes in this large data set that reflected a positive identity construction within the university setting. It pertained to the idea that people who got to know John respected him and viewed him as courageous for taking the risks he did with his stuttering. These positive perspectives helped to construct a positive identity and illustrated a confidence boost for John in his daily interactions. Although John encountered challenging obstacles to overcome, this theme did reflect the outcomes when people look past the stuttering behavior and take the time to get to know the person. All of the interviews contributed to this theme. An example below from Kiki's transcript describes this *confidence boost*.

> **Example 4.86, After Kiki discusses some of the challenges of speaking to John, she elaborated on why she admires him. (II=Investigator, K=Kiki).**
>
> K: But other than that I mean his speech is well developed. I don't know another way to say it, like he knows how to handle it and to tries to minimize it I guess.
> II: Uh huh
> K: But like I thoroughly respect him for pushing through it and like he gets out whatever he needs to say no matter how long it takes and he gets really determined. He's like "No, I'm going to tell you this" and if he can tell people are getting kind of irked and annoyed because he's taking too long then I feel he steps it up and like actually consciously thinks of ways to make it go by faster. But I mean I thoroughly respect him for just dealing with it (stuttering).

Even though Kiki understood some of the challenges John encountered throughout the day, she also looked up to John for not giving up and pushing through his difficult times. In one section of John's interview, he discussed that Kiki helped him feel more comfortable talking to people because she understood what he went through everyday and helped him feel better about speaking. It would seem her respect and belief in John improved his overall confidence in speaking situations within the university and shaped a positive identity for John.

Mr. Piper also contributed to this theme of *confidence boost*. Mr. Piper and John developed a relationship over the two semesters they knew each other, which was noted during the interviews and also in the observations. Mr. Piper spoke about John in a positive nature and looked upon John as a man who was courageous for managing stuttering. Because of his respect for John, Mr. Piper took the time to learn about stuttering during their talks in his office and even re-enrolled in university to broaden his understanding of language. Because Mr. Piper invested in John, he was also able to provide him with adequate classroom support that helped him communicative more effectively within the classroom. All of these learned accommodations enhanced John's confidence as he felt empowered and viewed himself as an equal in the classroom. Two excerpts below speak to Mr. Piper's belief of John and to this current theme.

Example 4.87, Mr. Piper discusses some of the differences he observes in John as compared to his other students. (P=Mr. Piper).

P: I mean he stutters, that's fine, I've known of it. But I don't think it slows him down. The only thing is he's having a speech and language issue at the same time. But he deals with it pretty decently. That kid has damn near brought a tear to my eye. It's a good feeling.

Example 4.88, Mr. Piper discusses why he let John perform all of the in class presentations in his office as opposed to in class (P=Mr. Piper).

P: …. and I think in Jacob's case it would've been a different uncomfortable feeling but it would be one that I would prefer as a teacher because you can get a positive message from it. But then, there's a flip side because this dude is overcoming a serious obstacle and that's truly inspiring.

These two examples from Mr. Piper's transcript illustrate his positive belief about John. Because Mr. Piper was sympathetic to John's needs as a PWS, a relationship developed and then an understanding of each other and their needs. Mr. Piper spoke about John as an inspiration to his class and someone who his class needs to admire, which was different from the earlier experiences with professors that ultimately caused depression and intense sadness in John's life. After Mr. Piper granted John accommodations in his class, John had the confidence to ask other professors for assistance, all of which were granted at the time of data collection.

Summary. John experienced severe emotional issues that were directly linked to his inability to initiate and sustain interactions all linked to moments of stuttering. According to the data sources, John's first two years of college were marked with depression and intense sadness because of the many negative reactions he experienced and his failure to cope effectively during these instances. These negative reactions were rooted in an unfamiliarity with stuttering thus resulting in actions that penalized John for stuttering. Classmates and professors stigmatized John because of his stuttering. John spent the majority of his freshman and sophomore year in isolation and exclusion. At the beginning of his junior year, John switched majors from petroleum engineering to psychology, which exposed him to coping strategies and people who understood disorder and were open to deviant behaviors. That is, they did not look down on John for speaking differently. These experiences encouraged John

to initiate stuttering therapy at the university clinic where he also learned about stuttering and how to cope effectively in moments of despair. As a result of these new experiences, John was able to reengage in the world and make new friends and began dating his girlfriend, Kiki. Through experimentation and other agency behaviors in the classroom and within the university, John discovered successful strategies that helped him participate in the classroom as well as other university contexts. Even though John encountered obstacles, his construction of identity was more positive than negative.

Participant Four (Designated Bob)

Bob is the last participant and one of the three males who participated in this study. At the start of data collection, he was 24 years old. For a more detailed examination of Bob's profile please refer back to Chapter 3. The data sets that contributed to these results were Bob's interview, two of Bob's professors (Ms. Doyle & Ms. Nun) interviews, Bob's two classmates (Lisa & Anne) interviews, Bob's speech therapist (Ms. Donna), and four observations related to the university such as classrooms and university clinic.

Impact of University Culture. As data were analyzed from an individual perspective, several patterns or themes emerged from the data that defined the contextual makeup and the overall ethos of the university. Similar to participant 1, 2, and 3, these patterns represented the views and practices of the people that operated within the university so that the customs, values, and rules within the setting could be reviewed. There were five major patterns that represented the cultural construct of the university setting for Bob: *unfamiliarity about stuttering, journey towards agency, relationship dynamics, departure from normalcy,* and *environmental obstacles.* Varying indices within these five major patterns surfaced from the data which acted as subthemes and served to further describe the

means by which the primary themes were shaped. A list of the major themes and subthemes can be found in Table 4.7 on the following page.

Table 4.7. Themes and Subthemes for University Culture.

Major Themes	Subthemes
Unfamiliarity about stuttering	Lack of support
	Misconceptions about stuttering
	Consequences from stuttering
Journey towards agency and management	Experimentation
Relationship dynamics	Comfort with familiar partners/contexts
	Change over time
	Partner challenges
Departure from normalcy	Requires accommodation
	Uncertainty from others
	Violates expectations
Environmental obstacles	Influence of classroom context
	Rigidity of tasks

Unfamiliarity about stuttering. Within all of the interviews and observations in university classrooms, Bob encountered numerous individuals who were unfamiliar with stuttering. These individuals mainly included professors and classmates. This unfamiliarity to stuttering from his peers and professors resulted in inadequate emotional and communicative support at times, all of which impacted Bob's quality of life and provoked classroom consequences for stuttering. This major theme was supported by three subordinate themes of: *lack of support*, either communicative or emotional, *misconceptions about stuttering, and consequences from stuttering*.

Lack of support. As with the previous three participants, there was an overall lack of communicative support for Bob at the university setting. Bob discussed classmates and professors did not know how to respond to him when he stuttered or when he spoke in class and often times interrupted him or talked over him. Bob assumed it was because of their ignorance towards his needs in communicative events and not because of malice. An

example below illustrates the lack of communicative supports he experienced in the college

classroom.

Example 4.89, Lisa (Bob's classmate) explains the lack of communicative supports she has seen in the classroom (II=Investigator, L=Lisa).

II: What are some things you have seen? Is there one in particular that you seen more than the other?
L: Cutting off Bob. It's like "what!" you are the teacher! It shocks me, but that's how it is. Depends on how you look at it. Bob gets very upset though.
II: Bob?
L: Yea, I was upset for him, cause he's trying to talk and he's like (professor) "uh huh" as if it didn't matter if he stutters. But that's how he treats everyone in the class.
II: So there's no difference?
L: Yea, but nobody else stutters. But I don't know if he would do the same thing, it just so happened he's the only one that does stutter. And I've seen him (Bob) turn red and he's like, "if he does it one more time I'm going to"….we actually had our conversation as the "girls" and was like he shouldn't be doing that. Me, Anne, and two other girls.

In this example, Lisa summarized situations in which Bob tried to speak in class but

because of the lack of support from their professor, Bob was cut off and suffered

embarrassment. Lisa further explained that cutting off students is a part of the professor's

interactional behavior but since Bob stuttered he needed additional support in the classroom.

Another example was discovered in in observation #1 in an instance in which Bob

answered a question in class. After a question was prompted by the professor, there was a

long pause from the class and then Bob answered. The example below are the field notes

from this classroom situation.

Example 4.90, Participation Observation #1 – Bob speaks in class but is cut off by the professor and a classmate.

While moving toward Bob (on the other side of classroom), the professor is nodding with agreement and gestures (points) to Bob to complete the conversational turn, assuming he has finished his response. The professor and student in background begin talking to move on to the next idea but Bob begins speaking again (He was blocking).

This is another example of the lack of support that occurred for Bob in the classroom. In this instance, Bob was not finished speaking and because there were no support strategies established prior to the interaction, an awkward interaction ensued between all social partners. Although the professor modified her turn of talk once Bob began speaking again, the lack of communicative support is evident in this interaction.

Misconceptions about stuttering. Based on interviews, artifacts, and observation data, and similar to the other participants, there were many misconceptions about stuttering that resulted in inadequate support for Bob in moments of stuttering. As noted in Chapter 3, Bob's overt stuttering was severe and often times people who were unfamiliar with stuttering, avoided eye contact or performed an action during speaking moments classified as a negative reaction. These actions are rooted in a misunderstanding of stuttering. During Observation #3 and what was an unusual class because of the extended class group time, many social encounters were documented with Bob and his classmates, which illustrate this subtheme.

> **Example 4.91, Participation Observation #3 – Bob engages a female student sitting behind him but her reactions do not acknowledge him as a speaker.**
>
> Bob then interacts with the female student directly behind him and the female student does not look up and acknowledge him only shrugs her shoulder (which is her response) and answers his question with a one-word response. She looked upset and seemed impatient with Bob, not interested in communicating with him. This student also was noted communicating with the female students earlier with a positive affect. After she answers Bob, he engages her once again and turns around to speak to her. She again, does not make eye contact and answers with a one word, short response of "ya" "uh huh" and "okay."

This example revealed the inadequate support given to Bob brought about by her misunderstanding of stuttering. If the female student understood Bob's needs in conversation,

she would have more of an effort to acknowledge him as a competent communicator by making eye contact.

Another example that supports this subtheme was uncovered in Ms. Donna's interview. Ms. Donna described a situation with Bob as a graduate clinician, in which the grandmother of Bob's client was concerned Bob's stuttering would transfer over to her grandson's speech pattern. This misconception of stuttering resulted in a few challenging encounters for Bob and his supervisor as they tried to convince the grandmother that stuttering is something people can't catch, like the flu.

Ramifications from stuttering. The final subtheme from the major theme *unfamiliarity about stuttering* is based on interviews and observations in which Bob experienced a consequence as a result of stuttering because of the lack of knowledge of the disorder. Bob noted some of these ramifications were negative reactions of laughing and mimicking but seemed to improve as he progressed through college. Other ramifications were noted in the observations as classmates did not treat Bob the same as other classmates by avoiding him physically, avoided eye contact, and ending interactions at points that typically lead to more discussion. Ms. Donna also contributed to this theme when she described a situation that occurred in clinic. As a part of Bob's graduate studies, he was assigned a teenager who stutters and the mother of the teenager did not want Bob to treat her son because he stuttered. An excerpt from Ms. Donna's transcript illustrated this subtheme.

Example 4.92, Ms. Donna explains the mother's negative reaction towards Bob because she did not want a graduate clinician who stuttered treating her son (DA=Ms. Donna).

DA: … We thought that having a client who stutters would be a good thing for him and it may be a very good thing for the client and I could tell you by just hear say initially the client and mother reacted negatively, but they hung in there and now he's growing immensely.

201

Because Bob stuttered, the mother of the client and the client reacted negatively toward Bob. When asked to elaborate on this instance, Ms. Donna stated that the mother refused to come to therapy because she did not see how someone who stuttered could help her son. Even though this instance was later resolved, there were initial ramifications for Bob. Bob noted in a lamination session that this hurt him initially and affected his confidence as a clinician.

Journey Towards Agency and management. The second major theme that emerged within this data set was Bob's movement towards independence and agency. Similar to John, Bob experienced hardships his first two years of college but had a much different experience once he stepped out of his comfort zone and began to take risks. His risks lead to emotional and physical gains which influenced his overall self-worth and identity during these times. According to the data, this journey towards agency was driven by strategies he utilized along the way. One subtheme that represents John's journey towards agency was *experimentation.*

Experimentation. As Bob took risks and experimented with learned strategies, he was able to discover helpful tools that ignited agentic behaviors which improved his ability to participate effectively. Bob's use of experimentation was revealed through his repeated attempts at disclosing stuttering by raising his hand and speaking the first few classes, applying cognitive restructuring principles throughout the day, and implementing covert strategies that prepared him for communicative events. All of these strategies were first attempted by Bob and then if he established them as meaningful and useful, he would implement them into his interactional behaviors. An example from Ms. Donna's transcript below illustrates the use of experimentation.

Example 4.93, Ms. Donna explains how Bob has taken charge in the therapy sessions and implementing the learned strategies into the classroom (II=Investigator, DA=Ms. Donna).

II: Is there anything else that has come up over the time that you've spent with him?
DA: Well we worked on a cognitive approach. So we worked on identifying the road blocks, what are the thoughts that are getting in your head and is interfering. We do a lot of comparisons of time when he has situations where he has trouble and no trouble and he's the one that tells me about them and based on what he says, I know what to observe further. Based on what we find he then develops coaching strategies. But basically the concept of flow has been a big breaking point for him which is the idea of being in the present moment and just focusing on what I have to do now.

This example further explains Bob's behaviors that contributed towards agency and management. Through the process of experimentation with his therapist, Bob utilized his learned tools in the classroom in order to improve his thoughts of self but also his ability to engage successfully. Bob noted he had many tools that he could utilize at any time, but each tool had a specific context in which it worked better. Bob was able to speak to his tools' effectiveness only through experimentation.

Relationship dynamics. The relationship dynamics that emerged in Bob's data were similar to that of any relationship one may encounter as they describe what the interactants were experiencing during that specific moment, the reactions that took place within a specific context, and also the specific needs of the individual who was engaged in the interaction. For example, Bob's classmate Lisa noted when Bob tried to speak in class, sometimes the professors would talk over him or cut him off if he took too long. Because of a professor's paradigms that he/she brought to the classroom interaction, Bob, in some ways, did not meet that standard and thus a breakdown occurred from the professor's perspective (stuttering) and also from Bob's perspective (talk over him). This breakdown typically had all social partners experiencing an affective response. That is, Bob was angry because he was not provided a

chance to speak and the professor was agitated because Bob took too long. There were emotions embedded within conversation because people of individuals' biases and deviant behaviors usually disrupted these biases. Three subthemes helped to bring light to these relationship dynamics: *comfort with familiar partners, change over time,* and *partner challenges.*

Comfort with familiar partners. Bob discussed throughout the data that he experienced an ease in speaking situations when he was speaking to someone he knew well or was comfortable with in general. He stated his fluency improved and his anxiety was decreased in these interactions. In one example, Bob described a classroom situation in his undergraduate degree that he was very comfortable speaking in class because the teacher's assistant who taught the class was a PWS. Bob knew the teacher well because of their time spent talking about stuttering, which brought comfort to Bob and improved his communicative abilities and willingness to participate. Ms. Donna also noted that Bob spoke more fluently with her because he was comfortable with her due to all the time they spent together.

Change over time. Similar to all of the other participants, people who communicated with Bob initially either expressed concern because he stuttered or discussed the challenges in communicating with Bob, but as they learned his speech pattern, got to know Bob, and asked questions about stuttering in order to clear up any misconceptions, their perception of Bob improved along with their ability to communicate with him. This was revealed in Ms. Donna's data as she discussed many parents who had concerns for Bob as their speech therapist but as they talked to Bob and learned more about stuttering, their belief in Bob's ability changed over time and their concerns were diminished. Other examples were

discovered in Bob's classmates' interviews as they too discussed the challenges in communicating with Bob but stated once they understood his atypical speech pattern, the barriers and difficulties that were present before were diminished. An example below from Lisa's transcript illustrates this subtheme.

> **Example 4.94, Lisa explains her ability to understand Bob has improved because she is aware of his conversational pattern and his needs during interactions (II=Investigator, L=Lisa).**
>
> II: So Is there anything else you want to add?
> L: I think that it's good to have someone in our program that we consistently have to interact with on a daily basis that stutters because stuttering is something that scares SLPs and if you interact with them it's helpful. If I had a client, I couldn't tell you what I would do. I think it's good, because you have to learn to communicate with them and why not learn now, what's right and what's wrong. But why not learn now?
> II: So the more you interact with him, the easier?
> L: Yea.
> II: So the more you are exposed to it, the easier it is to be around?
> L: Yes, it becomes second nature. You do slow down your speech a little bit and if he doesn't get it, I'm just like a million miles and hour (her speech). I just talk to him and give him his turn. And then I will say, "oh yea, ok, ok, yea you are right." And then I will cut him off if I need to but I do give him his time.

In this excerpt, the investigator asked Lisa at the very end of the interview if she wanted to add anything else to complete her narrative and she responded by disclosing an example of how speaking to Bob had gotten easier because she understood his needs/wants during the interactions. Because she understood his desires, their ability to interact as a dyad improved.

Partner challenges. Even though some of Bob's communicative partners expressed that comprehension advanced with increased interactions, there were partner challenges that emerged in the data. All data sources contributed to this subtheme. Bob's classmates both noted when they spoke to Bob, they had a heightened sense of awareness about their own

speech and exerted more cognitive effort to make sure they gave him adequate time to speak and other support strategies. They also discussed they were more conscious about their body language as to not give him the impression that they were not listening to him.

Ms. Doyle and Ms. Nunn discussed, from the professor perspective, the challenges when Bob spoke in class. Because it was difficult to know when Bob completed his turn, they too noted an increase in cognitive effort to make sure Bob had enough time to speak, but also to make sure they did not interject if they thought he needed topic support, instead of communicative support. Typically, with a fluent speaker they reported that they could interrupt during a classroom discussion and not feel offensive. However, because Bob's conversational needs deviated from the norm, their communicative supports also had to deviate from their typical classroom behaviors. They both discussed having a heightened sense of awareness of behaviors to avoid when speaking to Bob. The example from Ms. Nunn's interview further explains this subtheme.

Example 4.95, Ms. Nunn explains her challenge when she calls on Bob during classroom discussions (II=Investigator, NU=Ms. Nunn).

II: …. You said you give him time to speak, make eye contact, and those are great! Every instructor should be doing that and they don't, but are there any other things that you do?
NU: I try not to jump in and help him out. And I might do that with another student who was having difficulties expressing their idea. I might say "so like.. this" and give them some prompts but with Bob, I don't I feel like I can do that because it might come off as not giving him the time to speak.

In this excerpt, Ms. Nunn spoke to her heightened awareness that existed when speaking to Bob in the classroom. Typically, Ms. Nunn might have interjected or used a support strategy in order to assist students in coming to a realization, but because Bob is a PWS, she chose not to use this same strategy.

Departure from normalcy. Similar to the other participants, stuttering did not fit into the mold of what typical speech sounds or looks like, which resulted in awkward conversational exchanges and periods of uncertainty from the listeners. During the data collection, Bob stuttered for extended periods of time with physical concomitants present (e.g. eye blinking, blank stare while blocking), which left the listeners in a state of limbo, not knowing how to proceed. Listeners were uncertain how to engage Bob when stuttering was present or assumed Bob had finished speaking when he had not, which left the listeners and Bob in awkward social encounters. The three subthemes of *requires accommodations, uncertainty from others*, and *violates expectations* help elaborate on this major theme below.

Requires accommodations. Throughout the interviews and observations, stuttering was discussed as something that needed to be augmented. During Ms. Donna's interview, she described stuttering as negative and fluency as positive and even attached adjectives to each of the variances in Bob's speech. For instance, she labeled stuttering as "out of control, struggling, and losing control" and fluency as "in control, regaining control, and flowing beautifully". Even though Ms. Donna noted fluency was not the goal when speaking, she attached semantic value to stuttering that one would interpret as "requiring accommodation". Other examples were found from Bob's interview when he described classmates who spoke for him and cut him off during classroom discussions. Similar to Ivey, these "speaking for behaviors" derive from listeners who are uncomfortable with stuttering, thus interject in order to terminate the deviant behavior.

Uncertainty from others. Similar to all other participants, because Bob's social partners were not familiar with stuttering, a period of limbo or stage of uncertainty was noted during moments of stuttering. Interviews and observations contributed to this subtheme.

207

Some of Bob's social partners did not know how to respond when stuttering occurred, which resulted in partner interjections, "speaking for behaviors", or covert responses that expressed uncertainty. For example, both of Bob's professors noted challenges in knowing when he was finished speaking in class and when to intercede if long stuttering moments persisted. An excerpt from Ms. Doyle's transcript articulates this subtheme.

> **Example 4.96, Below is Ms. Doyle's response when asked by the investigator how she felt when Bob stuttered one day in class (DO=Ms. Doyle).**
>
> DO: …. but at a certain point in that moment I started thinking, this has to be uncomfortable for him and it seems to be getting to the point to be uncomfortable for others. So at that point do I intercede, how long do you wait? Do I cut him off at some point? Didn't have to as it turned out but those thoughts are present. I hope he was done when I thought. So I guess just having those thoughts of, "ok I don't deal with individuals who stutter but it's not too much of a foreign concept."

Ms. Doyle provided an example of her uncertainty during moments of stuttering when she questioned her actions as noted above (e.g., do I cut him off, should I intercede, etc.). As the facilitator of the classroom, her concerns are seen from keeping the flow of the classroom intact as she later expresses stuttering disrupts that flow.

Ms. Nunn also contributed to this subtheme. Similar to Ms. Doyle, her uncertainty was seen from her role as a facilitator of the classroom and when Bob stuttered, she was unsure of how to proceed if it persisted. Her example below illustrates this subtheme.

> **Example 4.97, Ms. Nunn elaborates on her answer of why she feels awkward in the class when Bob speaks in the class (NU=Ms. Nunn).**
>
> II: … What is the awkward. Is there anything you want to add to the awkwardness?
> R: From my perspective, I guess it's kind of like, I don't always know what I should be doing in that moment. What should I do in this situation? I don't want to appear impatient because I want to give him a chance to get his ideas out there and I admire him for speaking up in class as most of the students do not.

Ms. Nunn earlier in the transcript expressed that she felt awkward when he stuttered at times and when prompted by the investigator to elaborate on what awkward meant to her, disclosed that her awkwardness derived from her not knowing what to do when Bob spoke and then stuttered in class. Ms. Nunn later elaborated on her awkwardness and stated it also came from her inability to facilitate his participation without making the classroom more awkward. She was concerned about the classmates' responses as well. Lisa also contributed to this subtheme by stating when Bob stuttered for extended time frames, she did not know when to interject. She observed professors cutting him off also because they thought he was finished talking. Both classmates and professors spoke to this subtheme.

Violates expectations. The final subtheme that supported the major theme *departure from normalcy* came from the idea that Bob's stuttering violated conversation and classroom expectations. Bob's classmates were accustomed to a typical interactional pattern between the professor and students, which involved a fast paced question and answer format. Bob was not able to keep up with the typical pattern and thus violated their expectations of what classroom banter should resemble. Lisa spoke to this theme when she described how professors avoided Bob at times to prevent classroom disruption.

Example 4.98, Lisa explains what she has observed as a classmate of Bob when he raises his hand and speaks in the classroom (L=Lisa).

L: When he raises his hand, I'm glad because I don't have to answer and I don't care if he stutters through it but sometimes if we are in a rush and the teacher is trying to teach, they will go to someone else and they will evade looking in his direction and that's just my perspective. It's not that they don't want him to speak… the teachers are just trying to move quickly and they don't know what will happen. Will he get stuck? Will he take forever? If I was an instructor and I was trying to move quickly I don't know if that's something I would I do because he's here to learn too.

Lisa explained the dilemma that teachers have when calling on Bob in the classroom. Because Bob's stuttering pattern violated their expectations of classroom banter, at times they avoided him to complete their lecture. Lisa later elaborated on this thought by stating that they have to get through all of their notes and slides or they are behind and Bob does not allow them to when he speaks.

Another example that exemplified how stuttering violated classroom expectations and norms was found during observation #1 in Ms. Doyle's class. During this observation, Bob raised his hand to answer a question posed by the instructor and once called on, had a long stuttering moment that violated the rules of interaction.

Example 4.99, Participation Observation #1 – Bob raises his hand to speak in class which results in a breakdown of communication between student and professor.

As Bob is sitting in the front, far right row, the professor asks a question. After a long pause waiting for the class to respond, Bob answers. Bob initially blocks, then begins the utterance continuing to stutter throughout. Bob's face turns red and many heads orient towards him while he answers. While moving toward Bob (on the other side of classroom), the professor is nodding with agreement and gestures (points) to Bob to complete the conversational turn, assuming he had finished his response. The professor and another student in the background begin talking in order to move on to the next idea but Bob begins speaking again (He was blocking). As more heads turn toward Bob now, the professor takes two steps back (looks confused) to give him the floor once more, takes a drink from her cup while he is talking and pauses after Bob finishes. She gazes towards him, puts down her cup, and nods at him to confirm he is finished. There is a long pause as the professor contemplates how to proceed. She starts by saying, "okay……good."

Ms. Doyle assumed Bob had completed his response because of the long pause, which normally tells the partner that the turn is completed. Ms. Doyle then proceeded but was met with Bob's continued stuttered response. Bob's long pause and abnormal speaking pattern during this observation violated Ms. Doyle's expectations and resulted in a breakdown of communication for a short time. Ms. Doyle recovered by giving the turn back

to Bob, but was put in an awkward social situation as the facilitator of the class. The class noticed the breakdown as well and turned towards Bob when he began speaking again for the second time. During Ms. Doyle's interview, she commented on this observation and stated that Bob's stuttering at times can disrupt the classroom flow.

More than one student and professor explained that when Bob chose to speak in class, it disrupted the flow and presented a discomfort in the classroom. Another example was from Ms. Nunn's interview explaining how she felt when she called on Bob to answer a question.

> **Example 4.100, When asked by the investigator why she always calls on Bob when he raises his hand, Ms. Nunn elaborates why stuttering violates the normal give and take between professor and student in the class (NU= Ms. Nunn).**
>
> NU: …. Well I wouldn't want to not call on him. If he's indicating that he has something to say…. but that's not different for any student. But I have to tell you, sometimes there is a break in the flow of the class because it takes him so long sometimes to get his answer out. And I do feel like as I look over at him sometimes and I think he knows the answer I'm looking for but he doesn't raise his hand. Now with other students, I don't think I treat him any differently, but I do find sometimes when I do call on him I feel awkward because I stand there and I'm waiting for him to finish exactly what he wants to say. And he will continue on. He does eventually get to what he wants to say but it's sort of like a break in the flow of the discussion.

This example illustrated the challenge that existed once again for Bob's professors when he spoke in class. Because of the extended pauses and stuttering moments that violated conversational rules, the normal classroom flow was disrupted and resulted in a communication breakdown, from the perspective of all parties involved.

Environmental obstacles. There was a consistent amount of data that revealed because Bob was a PWS within the university setting, he encountered numerous obstacles. Bob often discussed the challenge in engaging in the university because of the already embedded structure of the university, in and out of the classroom. These inherent structures,

211

designed for fluent speakers, presented challenges for PWS like Bob, to effectively navigate the university because of the increased speaking demands that existed. Bob discussed classroom challenges of introducing himself, giving oral presentations, and speaking in class to answer questions. He noted that the size of the classroom also played a role in some of the challenges because the smaller classrooms usually required more group work and partner interactions, which were difficult for Bob. Typically, Bob was more anxious in smaller classrooms because of his fear of speaking and sat in the front in order to avoid the negative reactions of his classmates. The two subthemes that contribute to this major theme are *rigidity of tasks* and *influence of classroom context*.

Rigidity of tasks. The inherent structure within the classroom made it difficult for Bob to participate and engage effectively as a university student. Bob had to conform to the classroom assignments of speaking in front of the class, answering questions for participation points, and keeping up with fluent speakers during group work and interactive activities. Because of Bob's speaking challenges, he was often laughed at and excluded by classmates during these classroom tasks. Ms. Nunn discussed a situation in class where she broke the class into groups and had them do a two-day group project while in class. Afterwards, the group members rated each other for their performance on the project and Bob received the lowest marks, even though from her perspective he participated fully. Ms. Nunn attributed Bob's low marks to his inability to keep up in conversation with the group during the activity.

Another example was discovered as both of Bob's professors and his speech therapist showed some concern for Bob's ability to perform as an effective speech therapist because of the tasks involved in therapy, extensive talking and explaining. Ms. Doyle explained that she

did not know if Bob would be able to read a story to a child effectively and provide adequate feedback when needed because of the extended blocks that occurred and the lag time between a child's behavior and clinician feedback. The rigidity of these classroom tasks and the excessive speaking demands placed on Bob made it quite challenging for him to engage effectively without encountering some consequence for stuttering.

Influence of classroom context. Another obstacle the data revealed was the influence of the classroom context. In small and large classrooms, Bob sat in the front in order to avoid seeing the negative reactions by his classmates when he stuttered. Although Bob did not speak often in classes, he did note he felt more comfortable in the the larger classrooms because he was not concerned about speaking as much. The smaller classrooms usually required more speaking because of the group activities that were constructed. Bob further elaborated on the influence of classroom context in the example on the following page.

Example 4.101, Bob discusses how some of the non speech therapy classes were more challenging because of the demands to speak (II=Investigator, B=Bob).

II: …. What about the classes, like in the classroom? I just heard you talk about some things in high school that you went through in the classroom, how was the classroom like in college?
B: Not as bad. You had a lot bigger lecture halls so they're weren't chances to participate, so for me back then that was good. You just sat in your sit, and did the work. They had some discussion groups and maybe answer a question maybe here or there. I felt like the speech pathology ones were always a little easier too because I was more comfortable being that people were more familiar with stuttering. But the smaller classrooms that weren't speech therapy classes were tough because I think the professors expected you to talk more.

In this excerpt, Bob clearly painted a picture of how certain classes, depending on subject and size of the class, created obstacles for him while attending university. Bob preferred the speech therapy classes because he felt people were more open to stuttering, but

he had to overcome significant obstacles in the smaller non-speech therapy classes because of the excessive speaking demands required of him.

   Behavioral manifestations. As with each of the other participants, Bob implemented specific behavioral manifestations so that he could communicate in the university context. Bob was an individual who had extensive speech therapy dating back to his time in elementary school and at the time of data collection. This extensive speech therapy provided the basis for the behavioral manifestations. Bob used 1) strategies to cope with or avoid instances of stuttering, 2) strategies that functioned to induce fluency, and 3) strategies that increased support for speaking within a given context. Similar to the other participants, Bob utilized these different behaviors depending on the social partner and context of interaction. All of these behaviors discussed in this section serve to lay the foundation for identity construction as Bob's implementation of these devices are rooted in his interpretation of himself, which is a major aspect of identity construction. Participant observations and interviews were both important data sources used to ascertain these devices as both Bob and peers recognized these patterns of behavior and were able to express their functionality.

Table 4.8. Behavioral Manifestations for Bob.

Coping Strategies	Physical posturing
	Cognitive strategies (mindfulness, flow)
	Excludes self
	Increased emotional arousal
Fluency Inducing Strategies	Fluency shaping (e.g. easy onset & prolongations)
	Pseudo stuttering
Supportive Strategies	Therapist support
	Preparatory strategies (e.g. relaxing, talk to professors, mindfulness)

   Coping strategies. Bob implemented coping strategies in order to assist with communication throughout the various contexts within the university. The contexts observed

and discussed in the interviews were mainly within the university context such as classrooms and speech therapy clinics. As mentioned earlier, Bob was a graduate student pursuing a degree in speech therapy, so at the time of data collection, his narrative was oriented towards his current experiences although he did mention some of his past experiences. According to Bob, he did not have a job or a social life but spoke about his current role within the university as being a student only so his strategies derived from these past and current experiences at the university context. These strategies were context and social partner dependent and often times used in the different situations. The three subthemes that help illustrate Bob's use of coping strategies are *physical posturing, cognitive strategies, excludes self*, and *increased emotional arousal.*

Physical posturing. It was observed and discussed that Bob sat in the front of the class in order to avoid interactions and negative reactions. Bob discussed harmful past high school and college experiences in which classmates teased him because he stuttered. This prompted him to sit in the front of the classroom to avoid these disabling reactions. During each of the classroom observations, Bob sat in the front of the class so that if he stuttered he would not observe the laughs and negative reactions from his classmates. He stated his disabling past negative experiences were the driving force in this posturing strategy. Field notes from Observation #3 illustrate this theme.

Example 4.102, Participation Observation #3 – The class just begins and Bob is posturing himself to help him cope with negative reactions.

Bob is once again sitting in the front right of the class. He said in the interview, this is where he always sits and it helps him to be in front when he does answer questions so he does not see the reactions of others. I sit in the back of the classroom in order to to conceal myself.

215

In this part of the observation, Bob sat in his usual designation so that if he wants to speak, he does not see the faces of his classmates if he stutters. This example of physical posturing is a strategic classroom strategy Bob uses in all of his classes since the beginning of his college experience.

Cognitive strategies. Bob's data revealed he implemented cognitive strategies to help him cope with stuttering while in and out of the classroom. Although much of Bob's transcript was oriented towards fluency inducing strategies as a means for him to communicate in class, Bob's speech therapist discussed many of the cognitive tools targeted in order to help him cope more effectively in the classroom. Some of the strategies discussed by Ms. Donna (speech therapist) was oriented towards reducing Bob's anxiety during communicative events. For instance, positive psychology and mindfulness were topic areas discussed in her transcript and these skills are highly researched in the field of stuttering to reduce stress and anxiety. An excerpt from Ms. Donna's transcript highlights this subtheme.

Example 4.103, Ms. Donna discusses some of the cognitive tools Bob and her worked on during speech therapy while he attends university (DA=Ms. Donna)

DA: …. So we worked on identifying the road blocks, what are the thoughts that are getting in your head and is interfering. We do a lot of comparisons of time when he has situations where he has trouble and no trouble and he's the one that tells me about them and based on what he says, I know what to observe further. Based on what we find he then develops coaching strategies. But basically the concept of flow has been a big breaking point for him which is the idea of being in the present moment and just focusing on what I have to do now.

This example provided support of the use of cognitive strategies Bob and Ms. Donna targeted in speech therapy. Bob discussed many harmful speaking experiences that contributed to his increased anxiety which prompted this coping strategy. Bob further noted in a lamination session that he applied these cognitive strategies more so than traditional

fluency enhancing strategies (e.g. fluency shaping) because of the challenge in implementing fluency enhancing strategies in time pressure situations.

Excludes Self. Because of the negative impact that stuttering had on Bob's life during his freshman and sophomore years at college, one way he coped with stuttering was to avoid interactions and contexts that required speaking. In the beginning of Bob's college career, he noted that carried emotional baggage (bitterness from bullying) from high school that made it difficult for him to participate in the university because he felt extreme anxiety and stress in class and around people. As a result, he avoided joining social clubs, interacting in class, making friends, and engaging in the university. According to Bob, he isolated himself because he was not comfortable with himself at the time and had a low self-esteem. And this is no surprise due to the negative high school experiences discussed by Bob that influenced his self perceptions. For example, he described a situation in which 95% of his senior class made an apology to him for teasing him throughout high school because he stuttered. An excerpt from Bob's transcript provided an example of this subordinate theme.

Example 4.104, When prompted by the investigator to talk about his college experiences Bob initiates the interview with his challenges during his freshman and sophomore year (B=Bob).

B: …. The first year was pretty difficult trying to adjust. My class participation wasn't that great. I just didn't have the comfort level and probably wasn't as comfortable with myself as I needed to be. Grade wise, it wasn't my best, so both played a role. In terms of just the comfort level, wasn't good first time around, I just didn't participate much. I just came in to class and left. I wasn't as actively involved as I was towards the end of my college year and as I am now in graduate school. My engagement level was not where it had to be. In terms of my stuttering, I still schedule meetings, I still talked to teachers if I needed help and so I didn't avoid that in particular, so that wasn't as much of a factor (talking to teachers). In terms of friendships initially was difficult. I went from being around a large lecture hall and not knowing anyone and so I was always by people standing by themselves a lot. Didn't really socialize with people in my classes. In terms of being in the dorms, I was by myself. I talked to some people in my hall, here and there but

217

I guess I was always kind of holding myself back probably. I did not try to meet new people, or join new clubs, or go to different things. I really held myself back my freshman year there.

Because of his previous negative high school experiences related to stuttering, Bob did not start college with a positive mindset, which impacted how Bob chose to engage in the university. According to Bob, he assumed people in college would treat him similar to his classmates in high school and so to avoid facing these emotions, he excluded himself. Bob later explained that his college experience improved once he took risks, which included joining clubs and meeting new people but this change did not occur until his junior and senior year.

Emotional arousal. The last subtheme under coping strategies had to deal with Bob's increased emotional arousal during communicative events and also moments of stuttering. Bob discussed heightened anxiety and stress many times throughout his life but even more so in high school because of the bullying he experienced, which influenced his perception of self in college.

> **Example 4.105, Bob discusses the different levels of emotions he exhibits while he is in the classroom and how the classroom activity plays a role (II=Investigator, B=Bob).**
>
> II: …. You brought up small group. Is that something that's a little bit easier for you (to speak)?
> B: Yes. I feel like I gotten better for the large group presentation compared to when I was absolutely afraid before. I would try to avoid and I would be so frustrated I would almost get myself sick talking in front of a large group because I was so nervous. I feel like the large groups is what I've improved on, but the small groups are always more comfortable, less people, less stressful environment.

In this excerpt, the investigator and Bob are talked about some specific events in his life that made college challenging for him. Bob elaborated on the structure of the classroom and how small groups are easier for him to speak but in order for him to complete oral

assignments, he experienced extreme anxiety and stress almost to the point of sickness. He stated the anxiety when speaking is always present but it is more severe when he speaks in front of the class. In order for Bob to conform to the demands of the classroom, increased emotional arousal was present.

Ms. Donna contributed to this theme also by detailing specific strategies (mindfulness, positive psychology) that her and Bob targeted in order to decrease his stress and anxiety during communicative events. Bob's interview discussed his past experiences while Ms. Donna discussed Bob's experiences during the time of data collection.

Support strategies. The second theme that supports the major theme *behavioral manifestations* dealt with Bob's use of *supportive strategies* in communicative events while attending university. In order for Bob to maneuver the university context, Bob relied on *support from his therapist* to assist him with strategies, Bob's own version of *self-disclosure*, and the implementation of learned and self taught *preparatory strategies*. These support strategies functioned to provide Bob with speaking supports while attending university.

Therapist support. Bob had a unique experience while in graduate school because of the vast amount of support provided by his speech therapist, Ms. Donna. During Bob's interview, he discussed seeing a speech therapist in grade school almost but took a hiatus from therapy his first few years of college. Then he began therapy when he started graduate school. According to Ms. Donna, Ms. Doyle, and Bob, his therapy targeted classroom emotions (e.g. anxiety, stress, fear), ways to implement strategies in classroom interactions, and ways to improve his overall self-worth. Some of Bob's therapy consisted of speaking to different professors in order to reduce his anxiety around them and finding ways to move

219

beyond the anxiety that persisted in his life. Ms. Donna also placed herself in his classrooms in order to observe and find more effective ways for Bob to utilize his strategies.

Ms. Donna discussed that she also had a role in who Bob's clinical supervisors would be in graduate school as to give Bob the best chance to succeed. She stated that there were supervisors who were more physically and emotionally demanding on their students and because of Bob's already heightened anxiety and fears of speaking, thought he would be best served by a more compassionate supervisor. Bob's therapist support played a major role in his ability to enter into and sustain interactions while attending university.

Preparatory strategies. The second subtheme in support strategies is Bob's use of preparatory strategies. According to Bob, Ms. Donna, and Ms. Doyle, Bob implemented specific strategies that assisted him in speaking in different university contexts. Some of these strategies were self-taught and others were learned through his tenure in speech therapy but nonetheless he found meaning in many of these tools that prepared him for up and coming communicative events. For instance, it was noted by Ms. Doyle that Bob spoke to her and role played possible interactions that may take place in the classroom. This was a part of Bob's therapy assigned by Ms. Donna and served as a means to prepare him for communication. Ms. Donna discussed that Bob not only spoke to Ms. Doyle but to each of his professors, again to assist with communication scenarios. An excerpt below from Ms. Donna's transcript explains this subtheme.

Example 4.106, Ms. Donna discusses the role playing strategy her and Bob are using with the different professors (DO=Ms. Donna).

DO: …. He can be very fluent and he's now going around and we have meetings with different professors about class work and speaking scenarios. His first one was with Dr. Zack, because he's the most comfortable with him. Dr. Zack at times was rough on him and he maintained his fluency during that time and blew Dr. Zack out of the water. But he was able to maintain and use

his strategies. Even when Dr. Zack asked, "Say I'm a parent and I come to you and say I don't think you can be an effective clinician with my child because you stutter." And he handled it.

This example of classroom preparatory strategies provided an example of communicative support and revealed the work that Bob must put in himself in order to engage as a university student. Another example of preparatory strategies was Bob's use of relaxing techniques (e.g. mindfulness & breathing) before he spoke and self taught covert practice. Bob described covert practice as role playing a classroom speaking situation in his mind while using a technique and then speaking after he prepared his mind for communication. Bob noted the use of covert practice was beneficial for him not only in the classroom but other speaking situations.

Self-disclosure. Unlike John who self-disclosed that he was a PWS to professors and classmates towards the end of his college journey, Bob discussed his own rendition of self-disclosure which reduced the fear of speaking in the classroom. Bob discovered in college that he functioned better in the classroom if he raised his hand the first few days of class and spoke. Bob knew he would stutter but this way everyone in the classroom, including his teacher, would know he stuttered. He utilized this strategy as a means to take risks in the classroom but also to support his communication. An excerpt from Bob's transcript supports this subtheme.

> **Example 4.107, Bob continues to elaborate on situations that he feels more stressed but expands upon how he manages his stress (II=Investigator, B=Bob).**
>
> II: …. Any other stress and anxiety situations as you look back on your undergraduate experience that sparked these responses?
> B: I think those are the most of them. I always have anxiety initially when it's a new class. I've learned if I raise my hands the first couple of days and speak in class, then my fear of speaking is reduced but it takes getting through those first couple of times. This way people in the class know that I stutter. When I

221

decide to participate, there's always some anxiousness but I'm like, "ok I'm probably going to stutter and people are going to react." But once I got through the first time or two, it gets a little bit easier.

In this example, Bob provided a detailed response to his version of self-disclosure. Bob stated speaking in general and managing stress were a challenge for him but disclosure was a strategy he learned to confront his fears. This example was not documented in the observations due to the limited amount of speaking opportunities for Bob and also because the observations were taken in mid-semester.

Fluency inducing strategies. Because of Bob's extensive time in speech therapy throughout his life, he had many fluency inducing strategies that he and Ms. Donna discussed as helpful for him. As discussed in each of the other participants, these strategies are designed to avoid stuttering by inducing fluency. These strategies will be discussed as a whole due to the large amount of strategies discussed in the data. Ms. Donna referred to these strategies as "tools in a toolbox" for Bob to use when he deemed worthy, which made these tools speaker and context relevant. Ms. Donna noted Bob had access to these tools at any time but his anxiety and fear of speaking is what hindered his ability to implement these in real time scenarios. The fluency shaping tools discussed were prolongations, easy onsets, slow-rate, and phrasal reading. The stuttering modification tools discussed were openly stuttering, cancelations, and pull-outs. All of these tools Bob had learned through his time spent in speech therapy.

It is important to note even though these strategies were discussed in the interviews, they were not observed by the investigator in all four of Bob's observations. In fact, during Bob's interview he eluded to the fact he had many fluency inducing tools as noted above but

they were very challenging to implement because of the speed of the classroom interactions.

An example of Bob's transcript illustrates this theme.

> **Example 4.108, Bob discusses the challenge in implementing fluency shaping and stuttering modification tools in the classroom. (II=Investigator, B=Bob).**
>
> II: …. Let's take some time and speak about some of your treatment as you did earlier. So what have you had in college?
> BR: Started out with fluency shaping. Did well with controlled environments with my parents when I was focused on it. The problem with shaping is you're not always focused or if you are stressed out it don't work. Well at least for me it didn't work and in the classroom people are speaking so fast. I kind of went to more modification (stuttering openly). Initially I was pretty resistant to it at first because I didn't like the idea of having to stutter openly at certain moments.

This example revealed the use of fluency inducing strategies, which were a part of his speaking behaviors, but also illustrated the challenge in implementing these tools in a fast paced classroom environment. Again, these strategies were not observed but only discussed by Bob and Ms. Donna.

Identity construction. Throughout college Bob experienced an ongoing construction of identity due to stuttering and the experiences he had linked to stuttering. Identity was constructed through the numerous interactions and lived experiences Bob encountered within the university. These interactions often lead to either positive or negative reactions from his social partners, all of which helped to construct his identity. During the time of Bob's data collection, he was attending graduate school to become a speech therapist, so his past experiences were documented in his interview but the majority of his current experiences were noted in each of the supporting interviews noted in Chapter 3. Similar to Ivey and John, Bob experienced a difficult first two years of college, which negatively impacted his view of himself at the time but through positive therapy experiences and taking risks in

communication, a more positive identity evolved. And according to Bob, his overall self-concept continued to improve even while attending graduate school. Themes emerged from the data sets and will be further explained in the following sections. The primary data source for this area was the interview with Bob, interviews with his two professors (Ms. Nunn) (Ms. Doyle), his therapist and supervisor (Ms. Donna), interviews with two classmates, and four observations that were collected. Artifacts, such as emails and therapy records were a valuable secondary source for understanding the views of others and how these ideas shaped the identity of Bob. Minor themes included 1) *Stigmatization* 2) *Negative reactions*, and 4) *Increased self-worth.*

Stigmatization. Similar to Ivey and due to the atypical speech pattern that Bob displayed at times, Bob experienced extreme social stigma during childhood, high school, and also within the university. It was evident that Bob's speaking pattern was unwanted by people in school, which resulted in social disapproval and shunning throughout his educational experiences. Bob was bullied, teased, and socially excluded during his time in the university and regarded as the social outcast by his classmates. Bob discussed many of his past educational experiences, which all played a role in constructing identity and shaped his intrinsic beliefs about himself. Due to the many areas Bob was stigmatized he struggled with low self-esteem issues and an ongoing anxiety about speaking because of the reactions he experienced when he stuttered. People who stutter do not initiate anxiety on their own because of their stuttering, rather form perceptions of themselves based on how they are treated by others in society. The next few examples will illustrate Bob's journey through stigmatization while attending school.

Example 4.109, Bob discusses his undergraduate and high school experiences with stuttering but paints a picture of stigma in the process. (B=Bob).

B: …. Let's jump back to high school If I may. I did deal with a lot of bullying in high school. I was probably bullied 5 or 6 times in each grade while growing up. And I got and became really bitter about it. And it probably lead me to being a little isolated. I figured well If I don't let myself out there (engage in college), I wouldn't have to worry about that (experience bullying). So that was one that definitely played a role in my stuttering.

After Bob spoke about bullying, the investigator returned to the topic and asked Bob to elaborate on these issues. The transcript below revealed his elaborations as Bob gave details about bullying.

Example 4.110, Bob discusses bullying in grade school, which all play a role in his stigmatization. (B=Bob, II=Investigator).

II: Give me an example of bullying.
BR: They would pick on me, they would call me names, they would laugh at me. An example would be when I had to do announcement over the loud speaker. When my turn came up…yea we did that at the end of the day and take turns and every couple of weeks you had to go up and do it. So when my turn came up, I was doing well and then at the sign off, I had a long block and I became the joke of the entire school.

During this example, Bob illustrated a clear example of the beginnings of stigmatization in grade school and also the rigidity of tasks that exist within educational institutions. Bob stated this happened in second grade and because of this incident people continued to mistreat him all through high school. Bob later spoke about an incident with a high school coach, which significantly affected Bob before entering university detailed below.

Example 4.111, Bob discusses bullying by a high school coach (B=Bob).

B: Then my freshman year in high school, a high school coach did too. The football coach didn't like me in the beginning. He coached gym and he just didn't like me for some reason. And for me a couple of instances where he'd call role and I would stutter and then he'd get really angry and say "Bob!

Bob!" and put more pressure on me. And one instances in front of the entire class he mimicked my stuttering as a joke. He frequently told people that I wasn't all there because I stuttered. I wasn't very bright or sharp. He even said "stupid" stereotypes and that was probably the worst. It wasn't another kid this time, it was a teacher. I couldn't get around very easily after that.

This example paved the way for Bob's high school experience as this took place in ninth grade, his first semester in high school. The teacher mocked and bullied Bob, which opened the door for students to do the same throughout high school. Bob stated that because of this incident he was associated with a pet name that continued to haunt him.

The stigma continued for Bob in college but not to the same degree as in grade school. In college, Bob discussed people laughed at him when he stuttered, treated him differently than other fluent speakers, and avoided him in classroom pairings. Bob did not have any professors tease him in college but some classmates did during his freshman and sophomore years, as what Bob noted were his most challenging years.

It was interesting that Bob discussed he had a difficult time joining groups in classroom pairings because this type of avoidance or shunning by classmates was observed in the observations. During observations #3 and #4 Bob was shunned several times by his classmates when the class was asked to join in partners. According to the field notes, Bob was shunned 3 times in these two observations. An example below reflects the disapproval of Bob in the classroom.

Example 4.112, Participation Observation #4 – The class is asked to pair up with a classmate and is given explicit instructions by the professor in who will be partners.

Bob is sitting in the front right row, as usual, and the professor asks the class to pair up with a partner by turning around to the person behind you and pointing to the class who will be partners. Bob turns around to make confirmation from classmate who should be his partner but she (classmate) keeps her head down, not acknowledging him and disrupts the group process

by joining another group of 2. Out of 32 students in the class, he is the only one who works alone during this activity.

The classmate neglected the instructions by the professor and violated the pairing protocol given to the class. This example of shunning and a characteristic of stigma, was noted in other observations as well and further illustrated the dissatisfaction of Bob by his classmates, which dated back to elementary school.

Negative affective reactions. Similar to stigma and also plays a role in identity construction, Bob experienced a vast amount of negative reactions while in school. These negative reactions contributed to Bob's belief about himself as an individual and communicator. Because identity is constructed over the course of a lifetime it is important to provide examples of Bob's past experiences that contributed to his current beliefs about himself and the world so this section will provide examples of past and current experience related to negative reactions in order to illustrate the impact on identity construction.

It was discussed earlier that Bob experienced bullying and teasing growing up but with these actions from listeners also brings reactions of laughing and mimicking. Bob discussed numerous times he was laughed at and called names for stuttering, and according to Bob was at least six times a grade. This greatly impacted his view of himself. In one example Bob discussed a situation in the last week of high school where all of the graduating senior class apologized to him because they treated him poorly throughout school. In fact, according to Bob, all but 7, which totaled 195 classmates, apologized for their negative treatment of him. Bob stated it was one of his most difficult days to experience knowing the whole grade negatively reacted to him at some time during high school. The examples of negative reactions given were laughing, smiling when stuttering, smirking, talking about him, bullying, teasing, avoiding him, and negative facial expressions.

227

In college, Bob also declared he experienced these same negative reactions but not to the degree as he did in high school. He said that because he was majoring in speech pathology courses, his classmates in his undergraduate studies were more understanding and curious about stuttering but did not negatively react usually. An excerpt from Bob's transcript illustrates the negative reactions he experienced while in college.

Example 4.113, Bob discusses some negative reactions he has experienced in college (II=Investigator, B=Bob).

II: …. You brought up that you had to look at their faces when you stutter, what were some more reactions that you experienced in college?
B: I guess maybe having some sort of faces of being unsure, some laughing, or looking away because they don't know how to act. And in your head, you put ideas in your head of what others are thinking. Were they looking away? Just start to look sometimes and it's a blank stare, so you put ideas in your head what others are thinking about you. That always made it difficult.

When asked by the investigator to provide examples of reactions, Bob summarized his college reactions as stated above. Bob also commented on the thoughts that were in his head during these negative reactions, which were the result of the stigmatization he endured during grade school.

Another example of negative reactions was discovered during Observation #3. Observation #3 was taken in one of Bob's classes but the class was not a typical day rather a class devoted to in class activities and group interactions. So, the observation revealed many interactions with Bob and the other classmates, which revealed negative reactions from his peers.

Example 4.114, Participation Observation #3 – Bob attempts to engage a female student for the sixth time.

As the in class activity continues, Bob engages the female student behind him again, this time asking her about the activity. While Bob is speaking, the student scratches her head, looks down at her paper, and answers in short and quick utterances of "yes" and "okay" which seems to be her conversation

pattern with Bob. She does not engage Bob the same way she engages the other students and she does not continue the conversation. She obviously wants to end the discussion as quick as possible. This conversation behavior from her has continued for the whole class thus far.

Even though Bob's college experience has improved during his graduate studies, he still continued to experience negative reactions in the form of disapproval by his classmates. Negative reactions do not always come in the form of laughing or teasing but can also be avoidance or shunning them in conversations as this example provided. During this observation, Bob finally gave up trying to speak to the female student and quit talking altogether even though class was not finished.

Increased self-worth. Bob discussed his hardest time at the university were during his first two years of his undergraduate degree. He related many of his horrific high school experiences as paving the way for his negative self-worth at that time and ultimately forced him into exclusion and isolation during his freshman and sophomore year. But Bob's narrative did not terminate though his sophomore year and in fact continued on as he took risks and had more positive experiences with classmates and teachers. Bob started seeing a speech therapist again his junior year of college which he said contributed to meaningful identity change in his life. He also joined political and religious clubs during his years of transition and contributed to his partaking in the college experience and meeting like minded people. He became more comfortable. Once these positive moments began, more positive experiences transpired in and out of the classroom. Bob said he started to feel more comfortable with his role as a college student, which ultimately affected his self-worth in a positive way. It took risks, cognitive restructuring, and positive therapy experiences to make the shift happen but he stated it did begin to happen during his junior and senior year and

carried over to his graduate school experiences. Some examples below articulate this transformation.

Example 4.115, Bob discusses the identity conversion that took place during his junior year of college (B=Bob).

B: …. I did not try to meet new people, or join new clubs, or go to different things. I really held myself back my freshman year there. I followed the biggest athletics and began to see changes my junior and senior year. I joined a couple of new clubs, got to meet some new people, became more active in class discussions. Stuff like that improved. I took a more active role in my college experience, I guess that's the way to say it. So I felt that really improved through my junior to senior progressively. Getting better each time around. Yea, so the outcome changed when I became more active in class, wore different clothes, and meeting new people. I felt I had to be the change that I had to make.

This example provided a further illustration of the transformation that occurred during his college experience. Bob took a more active role in his college education and practiced agency within his life, thus affected his identity construction in a positive way. This is not to say Bob did not have challenges during the later years but according to Bob, his challenges were met with effective ways to counter the negative experiences and manage the disabling emotions. Bob's increased participation and agentic behaviors as described above were noted during the classroom observations when during group discussions and partner activities, he engaged and participated as stated.

Summary. Similar to John, Bob experienced hardships his freshman and sophomore year of university, which no doubt was related to his negative high school experiences and lack of comfort with speaking. He experienced ramifications for stuttering in and outside of the university classroom and was marginalized by classmates because of his deviant speech behavior. At times when Bob chose to speak, classmates and teachers would react negatively because of their unfamiliarity with stuttering but also because Bob's severe stuttering pattern

disrupted the classroom flow and normal everyday pattern. Bob did not engage often in the college experience during this time and resulted in low self-worth and self-induced isolation. Beginning his junior year, Bob began to take risks and implement learned strategies of risk taking, relaxation, and disclosure, which assisted his ability to enter into and sustain interactions to the best of his ability. As positive experiences began to occur, Bob's confidence improved and his overall quality of life within the university. He joined university student clubs his junior year that allowed for meaningful friendships to transpire as well as his ability to engage in the university life as a college student.

Bob then moved to attend graduate school, which brought about new challenges because of the speaking demands required in his program. He continued to see a speech therapist at the university which helped him prepare for the speaking tasks he encountered daily. Even with the support of his therapist, Bob still experienced lack of emotional and communicative supports from his professors and classmates resulting in stigmatization and negative reactions. Often times his classmates seemed annoyed interacting with him and responded to him in one word responses in order to terminate the conversation. Bob was also seen by his classmates as the odd ball in the room and even worked independently while others were in groups. Overall, Bob's narrative was positive in nature and stated he enjoyed his graduate school experience.

CHAPTER FIVE: SHARED RESULTS

The findings from each individual participant and their separate interactional

environments were described in detail in Chapter Four. The purpose of this chapter is to

review the consistent patterns across the four participants in order to uncover commonalities

among all of the data sets. Broader comparisons such as these aim to establish a richer

understanding of the behavioral manifestations that occur for PWS within the university

context, the context and culture of the university for PWS, and identity construction for

PWS. Six primary themes emerged once all of the data from each participant was analyzed as

a whole. A discussion of these themes will be further discussed in detail in the subsequent

sections.

Theme One: Home-brew

One of the most prominent of the patterns across all participants was the individual

development of strategies that allowed PWS to enter into and sustain interactions within the

university setting. It is well documented that PWS use traditional behavioral strategies (e.g.,

prolongations, preparatory sets, etc.) to help them communicate in everyday contexts

(Langevin, Kully, Teshima, Hagler, & Prasad, 2010). In fact, most well-known stuttering

clinics around the world have a large focus on modifying the moments of stuttering which

enhance fluency (Langevin et al, 2010; Teshima, Langevin, Hagler, & Kully, 2010). The

interesting note about this discovery is even though behavioral strategies were discussed in

the interviews they did not capture the substance of this theme. In fact, none of the traditional

behavioral strategies were observed in the authentic interactions; they were only discussed in

the interviews as something they learned in therapy and strikingly, identified by the

participants as cognitively straining and ineffective in authentic interactions. In large part

because of the lack of support and understanding of the interactional needs, a *Home-brew* was developed. *Home-brew* is a broad examination of the devices PWS employed in order to participate within the university setting. These strategies were not a result of traditional speech therapies, but rather ideas, strategies, methods and even thought processes that were developed by the participants to be as successful as possible in everyday communication settings.

The title of this major theme was taken from Ivey's transcript as she described the communicative devices that she constructed throughout her life that made interaction possible for her. To quote Ivey once more as she described how she navigated conversation being a PWS, "…. so I was like it's on you, you have to do what you have to do. So that's when I started to word swap, and breathe and increase inflections in my tone. I never thought they were actual strategies, I thought it was just something I did to cope and something I did at the house. Like a homemade recipe, *home-brewed* recipe. So it forced me to come up with these strategies to make myself ok with my stuttering." Ivey explains this theme well during her interview because her definition of a *home-brewed* recipe captures the essence of what the four participants achieved in order to engage in the university setting.

Ivey utilized word swapping, increased intonation, covert practice, and gestures to assist her in her communicative needs while Nick relied heavily on his friends to engage during interactions. Nick at times had severe blocks so his friends would intercede for him so that he could participate in certain interactions. And when long extended blocks took place, Nick implemented some multi-modal strategies of writing and use of gestures and sometimes changed his accent. Some examples of Bob's devices were preparing his mind by utilizing mindfulness and positive psychology tools, all of which were a part of his daily repertoire of

233

conversation skills. John in the beginning of college avoided contexts and social interaction altogether but expanded his home-brew later in college, to include self-disclosure and openly stuttering. None of these methods were taught by speech therapists in clinical settings….they were all developed by the PWS to help them meet their communicative needs.

Although these are but a few examples from the participant's data, it reveals the development and use of *home-brew* strategies. One important aspect to note is that the data also showed the use of these devices were context and situation specific, meaning not every tool was utilized in every context. Through experiential learning and agentic behaviors, the participants discovered on their own, what worked best for them in different situations. Ivey did not use increased intonation with her professors or people of authority because she stated it was "over the top" but she did use it strategically while answering the phone and while at work. John noted he couldn't disclose that he stuttered in each situation but self-disclosure was reserved for certain speaking situations (e.g. presentation in class) with the right people in the audience. He did not utilize self-disclosure at a bar or ordering food at a restaurant because he said there was not enough time and it was too abrupt or too fast. Because of the time sensitive interactions between Nick and his professor, writing was used as a strategy, but Nick stated writing was reserved only as a last resort or when he was having a "bad stuttering day".

Through the process of experiential learning, a *home-brew* was developed for each participant and made it possible for them to engage in the classroom, contribute at work, make friends, and ultimately lead to individual empowerment and practice of vulnerability. This theme highlights the essential nature of viewing all devices that PWS utilize as treatment and learning from their individual experiences.

Theme Two: Departure from Normalcy

Another prominent pattern that emerged for all participants was that stuttering was not a speaking pattern that people are familiar with and comfortable listening to because it departs from the normal interactional style. Because of the uncharacteristic speech pattern that stuttering presents with (long pauses, fragmented utterances, air gasping, etc.), social partners perceived stuttering as a deviant method of interaction. In order to mitigate the awkwardness, interactors often took control of communication attempts by reprimanding the PWS or taking their turn of talk.

Many of the professors discussed how stuttering disrupted the classroom flow by obstructing the typical give and take between professor and student. They also noted that as the facilitator of the class, it was difficult to maintain the flow of the classroom. This was often because during moments of stuttering, they perceived other students as uncomfortable and feeling awkward. It was even observed by other classmates that professors avoided calling on PWS in the classroom in order to maintain classroom flow and maintain the normal classroom routine and schedule. If a PWS chose to speak in class, they were often met with an expression of displeasure if they stuttered for too long or were cut off in order to move onto the next topic.

Classmates discussed the challenges while speaking to PWS because of their own unfamiliarity and misconceptions about the stuttering speaking pattern. SB expressed agitation and frustration when speaking to Ivey because of the length of time she had to wait for her to finish speaking, which according to SB, interfered with her busy schedule. Some of John's and Bob's classmates were observed avoiding interactions with them in large part because it violated their conversational expectations. It was evident from all the data sources

that stuttering departed from the normal interactional style that social partners (professors, classmates, friends, etc.) were accustomed. In many cases, the interactional partner performed an action that attempted to minimize the deviant behavior (finishing sentences, etc.).

Theme Three: Fitting In

All four of the participants discussed the beginning of their college experience as challenging because of their inability to fit in to the university culture. At the core of this belief was the notion that fitting in meant passing as fluent. This is not surprising given their past experiences were marked with negative reactions and social exclusion prior to attending college. These participants were stigmatized for stuttering in some way for a large part of their lives and perceived as outsiders, thus yearning to fit in to the university culture as a fluent and normal student. This concept of fitting in was also associated with their individual uncomfortableness with stuttering. As they became more comfortable with stuttering their desire to fit in became less apparent in the data. The use of self-disclosure, openly stuttering, answering questions in class, and presenting in class illustrate this shift.

Because Ivey had a longing to fit in (not stutter) she utilized word swapping and increased intonation as a method of bypass stuttering. She even altered syntax and refrained from speaking in class. While in college, Ivey had been ridiculed by her professor for stuttering and teased by classmates, which also contributed to her yearning to pass as fluent. Bob experienced negative reactions while in college and avoided contexts and people his first two year of college as a way to appear normal and fit in to the college culture. John experienced significant hardships as well and went to great lengths to fit in by sitting in the front row in classes and trying fluency enhancing techniques so as to not stutter. The concept

236

of fitting in for these participants concentrated on their actions to engage but do so while appearing fluent.

Theme Four: Becoming Vulnerable

All of the participants in this study appeared to be making strides towards becoming more vulnerable while attending college. According to Brown (2012), vulnerability is uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure and for purposes of this study, this definition will be used. Generally speaking, the participants encountered numerous obstacles during the first two years of college, some of which were connected to the inherent structure of the university and the pre-determined rules of the classroom but all of which were rooted in their communicative challenges. Their individual hardships were manifest in a variety of ways including personal ramifications for stuttering, increased anxiety, social exclusion, depression, academic penalties, and negative reactions. Becoming more vulnerable is about the participant's journey in confronting their stuttering in order to confront the obstacles that stand in their way of their life goals while in college. This individual confrontation involved taking risks (e.g., speaking in class, self-disclosure, therapy) to become comfortable with stuttering. Becoming vulnerable was a difficult process as is evident with the hardships and obstacles the participants experienced as they took risks, found support (emotional and communicative), and developed strategies that improved their ability and confidence to interact. As they took more risks, they were more equipped to deal with their present challenges. As their self-worth improved so did their ability to lean into the discomfort that comes with stuttering.

Although each participant began the vulnerability process differently, all the participants experienced uncertainty, risks, and emotional exposure every day at college. If

stuttering is viewed as a deviant behavior, it is no wonder that negative feelings exist. Uncertainty was described by the PWS. They described it in this study as not knowing who may laugh at you or tease you, or if a professor may call on you during class. Risks involved the likelihood that a PWS would be exposed as deficient in some way if stuttering occurred. In fact, the data illustrated that misconceptions and ramifications in the classroom were often experienced by PWS due to the stigma of stuttering that existed. Finally, emotional exposure was evident with all participants discussing the experience of some type of negative emotion (e.g., fear, stress, depression, anxiety) when speaking

John was not able to hide his stuttering and because of the emotional issues associated with his stuttering (anxiety, depression, stress), he had to learn to become comfortable with stuttering. This individual confrontation involved taking risks (e.g., speaking in class, self-disclosure, therapy, confronting anxiety, confronting depression) by leaning into the discomfort that came with stuttering. As the participants leaned into the discomfort, they started the process of becoming vulnerable. Becoming vulnerable was an individual and ongoing difficult process that was evident with the hardships and obstacles described by the participants. They experienced this as they took risks, found support (emotional and communicative), and developed strategies that improved their ability and confidence to interact, they felt more equipped to deal with the university challenges. Bob also explicitly discussed this journey towards vulnerability in his interview. He noted the obstacles he had his first two years of college, which resulted in withdrawal from social interaction and loneliness. Over time, he began to take risks by becoming more active in social groups and classroom discussions. This allowed him to make new friends and gain a type of social support that he would not have had otherwise.

Theme Five: Stigmatization

It was evident throughout the data and illustrated in the individual themes that all of the participants experienced social stigma because they stuttered while in college. Similar to much of the research related to school experiences for PWS (Blood & Blood, 2004; Daniels, et al., 2012) and the stigmatization that occurs in these contexts (Boyle, 2013; Concoran & Stewart, 1998), all four of these participants were either socially excluded from classroom activities, teased, reprimanded for stuttering by professors and classmates, or oppressed in some way because they were a PWS. This fits the definition of social stigma that has been used in stuttering (Boyle, 2013) which is based on the earlier definition of "stigma" as identified by Goffman (1968).

Ivey discussed an instance her freshman year when she tried to read in class but stuttered significantly and was told by her professor she needed to talk better when reading. On the first day of class, Nick tried to say his name during introductions but blocked significantly and was told he was broken and not right by his professor. Comments such as these set the mood for the entire semester and contributed to social stigma in the classroom by both classmates and professors.

Other variables that point towards social stigma were social exclusion and group avoidance. Bob was often socially excluded in classroom activities and left out of partner pairings because students avoided working with him even though he was, according to his professors, one of the smartest students in the class. And to make matters worse for Bob, he received lower marks on group work when graded by his classmates. As told by some of the participants' classmates, professors showed displeasure when extended moments of stuttering occurred by interrupting them and revealing negative facial expressions. Although these are

but a few examples that contribute to this theme, it no doubt reveals the stigma that occurred for these participants.

This theme particularly supports past research that examined the perceptions of college students and professors of PWS who described them as less smart, anxious, and mentally impaired (Dorsey et al, 2000; Hughes, 2010). The parallels between the current findings and the findings from previous research is noteworthy, because one would assume professor's perspectives of deviant behaviors would evolve in a positive nature given that they set the tone of the classroom. This was not the case in this study. In fact, what was revealed in this study is that persons who operate in the university are uncomfortable when stuttering emerges and attribute negative stereotypes to these students all of which attributed to the construction of negative identity traits and negative emotions. It would seem social stigma is just another obstacle PWS must overcome as they engage in the university.

Theme Six: Prerequisites to Interaction

Relationship dynamics changed as a result of stuttering. Similar to findings by Beilby, Byrnes, Meagher, and Yaruss (2013), social partners of PWS perceived difficulties in communication that led to negative perceptions and reactions. For instance, partners often experienced feelings of frustration and impatience when PWS were more disfluent. A coworker of Ivey and friend of Nick explicitly stated that these emotions were a result of stuttering. Furthermore, both partners perceived that the PWS could and should make more of an effort to be fluent. That is, partners thought that PWS should put more time into remediating speech errors associated with stuttering.

Partners also discussed certain emotional states or needs that were a prerequisite to interaction. For instance, Kiki, John's girlfriend, stated that there was an increased cognitive

effort to refrain from finishing his sentences. This finishing of sentences was spoken about as if it was instinctive and something that she had to consistently remind herself about during interactions. This was evident as Kiki referred to finishing John's sentences as a "habit" that she needed to break.

Similarly, professors reported an increased awareness of possible consequences of calling on a PWS to answer a question in class. One of Bob's professors explained the thought process before making the decision to engage Bob in classroom discussions. As a prerequisite to interaction, she weighed the pros and cons of selecting him as a speaker and was aware of the supports that she needed to provide in order for him to be successful. One of Nick's professors also commented on the prerequisites to interaction that were required due to Nick's stuttering. Interview data revealed that Mr. Dupont felt that time was an important factor to consider before engaging Nick in an interaction. In fact, at least one social partner of all participants discussed patience or timing as a consideration that needed to be made prior to communication with a PWS.

Summary

The themes present commonalities and generalizations that are critical to understanding patterns of interaction for PWS, the ways in which the university setting impacts interaction, and the social consequences of PWS within the university setting. Taken together, these themes form a convincing account of the experiences of PWS while attending university. The patterns that are explained with these four participants are not representative for all PWS as different themes may emerge in different universities and with different PWS. However, the findings detailed in this chapter are vital with regard to the current body of work on the lived experiences for PWS in educational institutions because they provide

241

compelling accounts of the manifestations and consequences that occur in the university. The

next chapter will present responses to each of the specific research questions, as well as

clinical and theoretical implications of this project.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

The primary research question for this project was: *How do PWS navigate the overall college experience?* The sub-questions included: How do PWS interact with other characters (i.e. peers, professors, authoritative figures) in university settings? How does the university culture influence social encounters? How do PWS view their identity in communication with other characters at universities? How do PWS cope with the added pressures of being a university student and being a PWS within the university? What strategies do PWS employ to overcome communicative barriers in various contexts? How do the other social agents view PWS within the university?

The primary and sub-questions were established in order to explain the ways in which PWS engage in different types of social activities within the university and also how other members of the social activity perceive their role in communicating with PWS and how they maintain these communicative events. Second, this dissertation was interested in uncovering the various strategies PWS utilized as they attempted to enter into various interactions in the university. The sub-questions listed above will initially be addressed throughout this chapter as they were the guiding path to form the main research question, which will be discussed after the sub-questions in hopes to better explicate and illustrate the findings. Through this explication, a logical and defensible conclusion can be drawn about how stuttering affects the overall college experience.

Responding to the Research Questions

How do PWS interact with other characters (i.e., peers, professors, authoritative figures) in university settings? PWS interacted in various ways with people associated with their university experience. All data revealed an individualized, case by case method and

context specific implementation of strategies. How they chose to interact was largely based on level of vulnerability as noted in Chapter 5. For these participants, beginning college was a risky situation because of their past negative experiences associated with educational institutions and stuttering. Even Nick, who had a somewhat different experience in college due to the increased level of support and limited communicative challenges (e.g. avoided communication and was stigmatized in college) at the time of data collection (See Example 4.4), had many obstacles to overcome. The findings show that how these participants chose to interact within the university was determined by their level of vulnerability. The definition of vulnerability according to Brown (2012) is consistent with this observation. That is, as participants became more vulnerable, they had the opportunity to progress even more. In other words, as participants became more honest and entered situations as "a stutterer" (rather than hiding their stuttering identity), they were able to have a better college experience. This vulnerability dictated interactional choices. In fact, what the data revealed was the more vulnerable the participants were, the more they were comfortable with stuttering, thus their level of participation in the university culture increased.

John, for example, started college with severe anxiety and stress related to speaking. He left his room only to attend classes and avoided the cafeteria, speaking in class, and making new friends. This avoidance led to a period of intense sadness and attempted suicide. Family support was important in bringing him out of his grief and, eventually, he was able to participate in university culture. John spoke about this shift and described his new involvement in activities such as football games and going out to eat. Through these opportunities, he employed experimentation of strategies to overcome stuttering barriers (e.g., self-disclosure) which provided greater opportunities for social inclusion. Ultimately,

he felt more comfortable with tasks such as speaking in class, talking to professors, and finding a job, which fostered academic and vocational success.

How does the university culture influence social encounters? Context drives social action. The university culture had a great impact on social encounters for PWS. The environment of the university, especially the classroom environment, negatively influenced the communicative interactions of each PWS in this study. Field notes, narratives of PWS, interviews of social partners, and artifacts all demonstrated and detailed the lack of support that was inherent in university institutions.

Lack of support was evident through the rigidity of classroom culture and a one-size-fits-all mentality. PWS were expected to perform like a fluent speaker, even for verbal tasks such as class presentations or reading written papers aloud. This was especially evident in the data for Ivey, Nick, and John. One example of this is a story Ivey told about a professor requiring her to read the title of her paper exactly as it was written, which removed her ability to word swap in order to overcome stuttering episodes. There were a few professors that did provide some level of support for PWS (e.g., verbal presentations out of class, only calling on PWS when hand was raised), but these experiences were limited. These supports were primarily discussed by professors but were rarely mentioned by PWS. This reveals a disconnect between PWS and their professor and the interactional needs within the classroom.

Due to the lack of support, PWS experienced a variety of negative consequences. At times these ramifications were social in nature, including being laughed at during class or being stigmatized in some other way. Other times, consequences were academic. For example, John, Bob, and Ivey all discussed the impact of stuttering on academic

performance. This resulted in poorer grades. These poorer grades, especially for group projects, had the potential to further hinder relationships with classmates. This connection was made explicitly stated by Bob.

How do PWS view their identity in communication with other characters at the university? How do the other social agents view PWS within the university? The two sub-questions listed above will be answered together since identity is something that is negotiated through a constant interchange of social action (Goffman, 1967). That is, identify construction involves how a person views himself or herself, but is also shaped by listener perspectives. PWS viewed themselves as having a subordinate role when compared to others. This was evident by the negative affective reactions noted throughout the participants' narratives. Some of these reactions included feelings of helplessness, frustration, intense sadness, and anxiety. PWS commonly reported these affective responses during their interviews, but social partners also noted them as well. For instance, Lisa, Bob's classmate, recognized that Bob was frustrated when professors cut him off in class. She stated that Bob would turn red and "get very upset" during these classroom interactions.

These negative reactions were at least in part due to the behaviors of other people that interacted with PWS. For instance, the data showed that social partners of PWS tended to use "speaking for" behaviors and interruptions during interactions. At times, the data also showed that social partners went as far as to avoid PWS. This was observed with Bob and John and discussed in interviews with all participants. Social partners also felt that they didn't always have the resources to communicate effectively with PWS, which led to negative perceptions of the PWS. Ivey's friend, Sally, spoke about the frustration she felt when trying to communicate with Ivey on a "bad day". Sally was overwhelmed with the time

246

and effort it would take to interact with Ivey, which led to negative behaviors such as interruptions. Similarly, Nick's friend Bennett reported that patience was a prerequisite for speaking with Nick. Bennett was judicious about the duration of a conversation due to the patience required for the interaction.

As PWS continued on their journeys there were some positive experiences that began to occur. Through experimentation and practiced agency, there were increasing amounts of success in interactions. This success led to increased confidence and self-worth and initiated a slight perspective shift for PWS. That is, the PWS in this study began to see themselves as more competent communicators in the latter part of their college years. This can also be explained by a journey towards vulnerability and risk-taking that occurred through experiential learning. However, these gains seemed minimal when compared to the vastly negative experiences that were detailed in participant narratives and observed by the researcher during participant observations.

How do PWS cope with the added pressures of being a university student and being a PWS within the university? PWS were similar to other college students with disability in that stuttering was an additional burden during an already challenging time (Borland & James, 1999). PWS often discussed common pressures that they felt as a university student in conjunction with the added pressure, or inconvenience as Nick stated, of stuttering. Ivey spoke about this best when she stated:

> "And now I have to have this beautiful hair, either this big nice afro or nice long weave or its my natural big afro even when I don't have either. And now I have to be nice and feminine and look beautiful to the black people standard with a small waist and big butt. And when I realized that I don't have that, I am also reminded that I stutter. So It's a conundrum of a mess, a conundrum of bullshit."

Essentially, Ivey felt the pressure of being female, being African American, and being a PWS. Stuttering was only one of the many pressures that she had to deal with on a day-to-day basis during a crucial identity-shaping time (i.e., the college experience). This made managing stuttering increasingly important as participants made their way through college. Daniels and Gabel (2004) have discussed identity construction in PWS and the impact of stuttering on identity construction is quite clear. The strength of this current study is that it reinforces the theories espoused by manuscripts such as these, but it also offers current data to show how identity continues to be constructed at this time of life for PWS.

For these participants, coping strategies were largely avoidance behaviors initially. However, as PWS began to establish their identity in new contexts and with new social partners, strategies began to shift toward those that were more supportive or fluency-inducing. This change was primarily brought about through experimentation and a reliance on experiential learning as these participants discovered the positive and negative effects that strategies had on social interaction.

What strategies do PWS employ to overcome communicative barriers in various contexts? When considering the framework of the university setting, PWS used various strategies to communicate with others. As mentioned earlier, home brew strategies were defined as individual strategies used by the PWS to participate in the university, including those behaviors employed to avoid certain interactions. These were noted both inside and outside of classroom settings. Home brew strategies were employed in a systematic fashion in order to survive communicative tasks. These tasks varied from participant to participant and were highly dependent upon both the interaction and the individual identity that each PWS was attempting to portray. For example, John began to disclose his stuttering in college

248

contexts. Nick avoided some interactions by changing syntax which effectively caused him to lie. When in a speaking situation with his friend Bennett, he was asked if he had any brothers or sisters. Nick said "no", even though he has brothers and sisters. Bennett said in his interview that he knew why Nick did this and it was to avoid any more conversation about siblings and to even name his siblings. According to Bennett, this was Nick's "home brew" recipe for overcoming a communicative barrier.

The data revealed that strategies served three major purposes: 1) to induce fluency, 2) to act as a support, or 3) to cope with stuttering. While strategies were highly individualized, there were many commonalities across the data sets. For example, multiple participants spoke about support strategies such as using various modes of communication (e.g., gestures, electronic mail) and a reliance on familiar partners. Ivey, John, and Nick all reported that they were strategic about who they interacted with in challenging communicative contexts. In those situations, all three participants made sure that a familiar partner was there to provide support for communication. One example of this from the data was during a New Year's Eve party that Nick attended with his core group of friends and Bennett's family, who had known Nick for many years. In his interview, Bennett described this reliance on others as his mother stepped in and introduced Nick to a group of unfamiliar partners. He went on to state that Nick thanked the mother for interceding in that challenging context.

Coping strategies were also pervasive in the data. Physical posturing, avoiding certain speaking contexts, and changes to semantics and syntax were noted in all participants. Physical posturing was noted in the classroom during participant observations and spoken about during interviews by PWS and his/her social partners. Examples of this included sitting at specific places within the classroom, body turns, and using props to conceal overt

characteristics of stuttering. Ivey and John were both noted to make changes to word choices at work and in the classroom. These behaviors were triangulated with data from interviews. Bennett, Nick's friend, reported that Nick would outright lie to avoid a stuttering moment. For example, Bennett recalled a time when Nick told a communication partner that he had no siblings, yet in reality, he had a sister. Bennett felt that this behavior was consistent across experiences with Nick and that it was a direct result of his stuttering.

How do PWS navigate the overall college experience? Based upon the responses provided for the secondary questions, the primary research question can now be answered. The results of this study centered around how four PWA navigate their way through college. The ethnographic methodologies employed allowed for a unique look inside the world of these PWS. There have indeed been retrospective views of how PWS react to their life's challenges, but none of these studies looked at the stuttering experience as it has been unfolding at the current time. Studies such as Klompas and Ross (2004) and Daniels et al (2012) are but a few of the studies that have looked retrospectively at the lives of PWS. Klompas and Ross (2004) had at least seen some impact on life experiences as PWS reflected on their life. Daniels et al. (2012) concentrated on one particular part of life, the kindergarten through high school years, but stopped at that point. The current study brings in a new and fresher perspective on one part of life of PWS that has received very little attention in academic studies.

Overall, stuttering negatively impacted the college experience for PWS. This was primarily evident in classroom culture, which was rigidly structured and designed for fluent speakers. Speaking tasks such as oral presentations, group projects, and in-class required participation were activities in which PWS felt most uncomfortable and stigmatized. This

was discussed by PWS as feelings of increased anxiety and helplessness. Many individuals in the university who interacted with PWS were unfamiliar with stuttering and because of this, they were unsure of how to react when stuttering occurred. Many social partners discussed the idea that stuttering violated their expectations for interactions (e.g., amount of interjections, pause time during blocks). Because stuttering presented with an atypical speech pattern, social partners did not know how to support communication and often became frustrated or impatient, especially when stuttering episodes were more severe.

As a result of these interactional dilemmas, PWS experimented with and employed several strategies to overcome communication barriers inside and outside of the classroom. Some of these strategies worked to induce fluency during stuttered talk, but more often, behaviors were used to supplement speech and support the communicative exchange or to cope with feelings associated with stuttering. Therefore, traditional behavioral techniques that were learned in speech therapy were used infrequently in authentic contexts. Instead, PWS chose self-discovered strategies that were battle-tested in their own arena of life.

Unfortunately, many of the experiences associated with stuttering led to negative perceptions about PWS. This was evidenced through the negative self-talk that occurred during the interviews of PWS, but also was noted in observations and partner interviews. While there was a slight trend toward experiences that led to positive identity construction as PWS made their way through the college years, it was apparent that negative perceptions were long-lasting and continued to plague PWS several years later. Whenever support from partners was available, (e.g., professors, classmates, friends) it did play a crucial role in positive identity construction.

Clinical Implications

There are four main clinical implications derived from this project. These implications should be considered in light of the social and interactive needs of PWS in universities, although many implications can be extended to PWS in other contexts of interaction.

Implication one – Leave the lab coats at home. One of the most salient implications that emerged from the data stems from the fact that traditional behavioral approaches are not utilized in authentic interactions and are actually perceived as cumbersome and ineffective. This is not to say that the traditional therapeutic approaches were not discussed. However, they were only discussed due to participants' time spent in speech therapy. This is quite concerning given the monetary and time burdens of speech therapy. In all sixteen of the observations noted in this study, there was not one instance of traditional speech therapy tools being used as a means to engage in conversation. Instead, the PWS relied on their self-discovered strategies as the preferred method of navigating a communicative context. Many of these were the home brewed strategies discussed throughout this document. These strategies were what the participants discussed as reliable and effective. Even though this sample size is limited, clinicians should rethink what strategies PWS employ in authentic interactions and build upon these already battle-tested, meaningful, self-constructed skills.

In order to rethink therapy, a re-conceptualization must take place; one that is entrenched in ecological validity and not methods of control. Making change is irrelevant if change stops at the door of the laboratory. One must step back and respect the experiences that PWS have had and the tools that have carried them through their journey. Then, working towards the refinement of these tools can then be emphasized in therapy. Viewing therapy

from the traditional fashion inhibits therapists and researchers from recognizing individuals' perspectives and interpretations. Thus, the mechanisms that PWS employ to overcome obstacles are never realized; rather, they are discarded as ineffective. Negative interactions where the professional ignores the client's experiences as valid, are not seen as being a part of effective stuttering therapy and can actually inhibit the therapeutic alliance for PWS (Plexico et al, 2010). Exploring what is more meaningful for the client may be a good starting point in therapies.

A review of stuttering therapy in adults (Blomgren 2010) shows that no single therapy seems to work best for PWS, but that adults must often test what works for them in each current setting. In fact, research has shown the ability of an individual who stutters to communicate effectively in a variety of every day speaking situations is not necessarily determined by the amount of stuttering they experience (Beilby, Byrnes & Yaruss, 2012; Blumgart, Tran, Yaruss & Craig, 2012; Koedoot, Versteegh, Yaruss, 2011; Mulcahy, Hennessey, Beilby, & Byrnes, 2008). This is certainly the case that was discovered by the four participants in the current study. Each person found certain patterns or behaviors or intentional acts that seemed to work best for them, all while trying to navigate a setting involving persons who should have been knowledgeable and understanding of their condition. A text published several years ago reviewed "stories by people who stutter" (St. Louis, 2001). In this compilation of stories, many PWS talk about their road to where they are today. Many of those PWS that viewed themselves as being successful also talked about finding their own path. Many of these same PWS also talked about reaching a certain age when they had greater self-understanding of themselves and could take a more active role in

253

forming their identity. It was almost always in their twenties when this change occurred. These findings are also supported in this dissertation.

Implication two – Advocacy training for PWS. Because of the large corpus of data from all participants that points to others' unfamiliarity and misconceptions of stuttering, advocacy should be an important goal for clinicians and PWS. Advocacy might be most powerful when driven by PWS. This could be achieved through activities such as taking advantage of laws and accommodations that are available to college students. Also, PWS may need to practice self-disclosure or get involved in the self-help movement. Because this dissertation reveals that PWS require classroom accommodations, disability laws would seem advantageous for this population.

Unfortunately, none of the participants in this study sought out disability rights through mandated accommodations. It was not the goal of this dissertation to understand stuttering as a disability. However, it is interesting that even though each of the participants experienced challenges that directly impacted academic performance, none of them took advantage of university services that could have established support through classroom accommodations. Perhaps this is the case because PWS are not aware of their rights as a "disabled" college student (Meredith, Packman, & Marks, 2012).

Self-help organizations have become increasingly popular for PWS. The largest self-help group for stuttering in the world, the National Stuttering Association (NSA), now has a complete track at their annual conference for "twenty-somethings" that relates to many of the very issues that have been raised in this dissertation. As the program began for these "twenty-somethings", the NSA sponsored a focus group to explore the needs of this specific population (Tetnowski, Nicolai, Rosenbaum & Douglas, 2009). Many topics emerged related

to marriage, job search, and having children, but many of the issues brought up in this dissertation were discussed openly. Topics such as "bullying" by other twenty year olds, what to do in a classroom setting, how to make new friends, what to do when a person moves away from home, dating, and many other issues were discussed. Unfortunately, no answers were provided, but the key outcome was that the life of a PWS does not end and is still being shaped after they leave their local high school. The results of this dissertation help to document these needs.

Implication three – A lack of support/understanding. It was evident throughout the data that there was a significant lack of support for PWS in the university setting. Because of the misconceptions and unfamiliarity with stuttering, social partners were oblivious to the emotional and social impact that stuttering had on an individual, therefore, they were reluctant and ignorant to the type of support needed. During the interviews, one reoccurring theme was that people did not know enough about stuttering in order to provide the proper interactional support that would facilitate communication for PWS. Communication breakdowns were illustrated through a lack of comfort noted from interactors and a feeling of awkwardness when stuttering persisted. In fact, most social partners wanted to learn more about stuttering and how to better communicate with PWS, but rarely followed through with their intentions.

All participants had at least one negative experience with a professor that reflected a lack of support. Ivey was told to be better prepared when speaking. Nick was asked if he was broken. John asked for support from his teacher and the dean but was ignored. Similarly, communication breakdowns due to a lack of support and understanding were noted by friends and classmates of PWS. Because stuttering departs from the normal speaking pattern

and conversational rules that are inherently established, social partners require a basic understanding of what the PWS needs from them in the interactions and in the moment of stuttering in order to decrease the negative reactions, awkwardness, and feelings of discomfort that occur.

Implication four – Partner training. This implication is the logical follow up to the lack of understanding and support that was discussed in implication 3. Information from this data set points to the need for partner training for PWS. The concept of partner training in the area of stuttering has not been discussed in the literature and no articles have explored these possibilities. The concept of communication partner training or "conversational coaching" has implications that can be carried into the stuttering population.

Communication partners are people who might interact with a client, including, but not limited to, family members, friends, professors, co-workers, and classmates. Communication partner training is considered a form of environmental intervention because it involves the use of communication supports and strategies external to the client. These supports are designed specifically to change the communication environment for the client (Simmons-Mackie, Armstrong, Holland, & Cheney, 2010). Communication skills training typically involves training the partner to use strategies or resources to support and facilitate the communication of the PWS (Kagan, Black, Duchan, Simmons-Mackie, & Square, 2001). This could be adapted to meet the needs of PWS as they learn to become more effective communicators.

The data in this study indicates that the more exposure partners had with stuttering, the more comfortable they were when stuttering emerged. This led to partners feeling more equipped to provide adequate support. Nick's experience in college at the time of data

256

collection was different from the other three participants. One could argue it was because of his apathetic personality or his nature of efficiency that guided every action taken throughout the day. But besides the traits he exhibited, it could be said his experience was vastly different because of the ongoing communication partners that existed in his life. Examples of his partners' training were discussed in Bennett's and Nick's interview and confirmed during the observations. Nick's partner training was not developed by a licensed SLP or a life coach, rather it was organically constructed out of the compassion by his "core group of friends". Sometime while Nick was in college, his friends asked him what they could do to better accommodate him in communicative events, which ignited an open discussion between Nick and his friends that addressed both Nick and his friend's conversational needs. Nick discussed how he hated when they patted him on the back when he stuttered, when they looked away, played on their phones, or finished his sentences for him. Nick even stated that there were going to be times that he needed them for conversational support but he would initiate it, not them. His friends noted that at times they had to cut him off or speak for him because time constraints. But if they did so, they would let him know when it happened. Because of ongoing conversations (and training) such as these, his friends could use resources and strategies to help him participate in conversations, which minimized the negative impact of stuttering and improved Nick's quality of life while attending university.

The same could be said about Bob's classmates (Lisa and Ann) who stated because they had Bob in many classes and had many interactions with him. They were more familiar with his stuttering pattern and thus able to provide him with adequate communicative support. They discussed that they knew to give him extra time, knew when he was stuttering,

and worked hard on providing patience when needed. These were viewed as positive encounters by Bob.

John's professor, Mr. Piper is another example that illustrates the effectiveness of partner training. Mr. Piper and John had many interactions throughout the course of their time spent in two classes together and because John had self-disclosed to him, explained the communicative supports he required in the classroom, the two could construct fluid classroom interactions, unlike other participants who had interactional challenges with social partners. According to John, these conversational and environmental supports provided by Mr. Piper, improved John's quality of life and decreased his anxiety in the classroom.

Research Needs and Future Directions

While there is a limited amount of knowledge in the area of stuttering within the university setting, it is the hope of this investigator that this dissertation calls attention to the needs of the PWS in this setting. While this study has been useful in illustrating the complex relationship between stuttering and the university setting, many questions are left unanswered. Two major avenues for future research include the impact of stuttering on partners and the effectiveness of self-discovered communication behaviors that were described in this dissertation as "home-brew" strategies. These are fruitful for future study.

Social partners expressed serious concerns and frustrations when trying to communication with PWS. There was uncertainty in how to deal with stuttering behaviors as they unfolded in natural conversation. This was especially true when there were extended pause times or periods when the PWS were stuck on a particular word. Communication partner training has been shown to be effective in other discipline-specific areas such as aphasia (e.g., Beeke, Beckley, Johnson, Heilemann, Edwards, Maxim, & Best, 2015),

dysarthria (e.g., Forsgren, Antonsson, & Saldert, 2013), and traumatic brain injury (e.g., Togher, McDonald, Tate, Rietdijk, & Power, 2016). Therefore, it is conceivable that education and training could be beneficial for PWS and his/her communication partner. This idea is echoed by Beilby and colleagues (2013) based upon the results of their study which revealed that spouses who were more informed about stuttering were better able to provide communicative support for PWS. Unfortunately, this area has not been thoroughly investigated in college-age PWS. Additionally, there is no empirical evidence for the success of partner training in stuttering. Both of these could be investigated in future research.

The other major void in the stuttering literature pertains to the adoption of self-discovered strategies by PWS. Stuttering therapy remains largely dominated by traditional behavioral approaches which have questionable ecological validity (Lincoln, Onslow & Reed, 1997). These stuttering modification techniques have also been labeled by PWS as burdensome, unnatural, and cognitively taxing (e.g., DeNardo, 2017; Manning, 2010; Murphy, Yaruss, & Quesal, 2007a; Murphy, Yaruss, & Quesal, 2007b; Murphy, Quesal, & Gulker, 2007; Shapiro, 2011). Findings from this investigation support the claims that techniques taught in behavioral stuttering therapy are unnatural, difficult to use, cognately taxing and uncomfortable for listeners. Although it was not a primary concern of this study, it appears as if self-discovered strategies were effective (and used more often) in accomplishing social action. It would be interesting to examine these self-discovered strategies to see if they served their intended purpose and how partners oriented towards them as they were employed. In order to reach those conclusions, different data collection and analysis strategies should be utilized such as video-taped interactions and qualitative discourse

259

analysis or conversation analysis. These are natural extensions of this study that should be examined in future studies.

Limitations

Although this study brought about numerous findings about the experience of stuttering in college settings, there are some limitations to these findings. The traditional limitation of studies employing qualitative methodologies is that these findings cannot be generalized. This is indeed the case with these findings, but the consistencies discovered in Chapter 5 shed some light on potential commonalities among many people who stutter. This could be of value in future studies.

Another limitation could be related to the sampling methods selected. During many of the observations, the presence of the researcher could have influenced the behaviors of the PWS or the other participants. Although the researcher observed form a distance, the PWS knew of the researcher's presence and there was no way that this could have been avoided.

Another potential limitation could have been the number of clients studied, which was only four, but the depth of this study and the richness of the data more than makes up for this potential weakness.

In spite of these potential weaknesses, the strength of this dissertation lies within the same parameters. A snapshot of PWS at this given time opens the door to the current aspect of the lives of PWS that are currently in college settings. The data is authentic as a result capturing the true essence, i.e., an insider's view of their own experiences. Few studies have done this in the world of stuttering.

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APPENDICES

Appendices are contained on a compact disc that is attached to this dissertation's back cover.

Azios, Michael. Bachelor of Science, Old Dominion University, August 2006;
      Master of Science, Stephen F. Austin State University, Spring 2012; Doctor of
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Title of Dissertation: The College Experience of Stuttering: An Ethnographic Study
Dissertation Director: Dr. John Tetnowski
Pages in Dissertation: 290; Words in Abstract: 226

ABSTRACT

This dissertation focused on the impact of stuttering within the university setting.

Data were gathered and examined using a qualitative research methodology. This research

design used several data collection procedures including participant observation,

ethnographic interviews, and artifact analysis. These procedures captured the use of

communicative strategies and barriers as they unfolded in authentic interactions within the

university. They also served to illustrate how other social partners perceived PWS (persons

who stutter) in the classroom and other relevant university contexts.

The results of these data were examined using categorization of the context and

culture of each environment, conversational strategies employed during social interactions,

and the coping and supportive devices used during authentic interactions. The views,

reactions, and affective reactions of PWS were also explored and discussed. Patterns

emerged from the data that uncovered the types of strategies that PWS employed to

overcome communicative barriers within the university setting. This study provides further

evidence in support of strategies that consider the context within the university when

examining PWS and the value in exploring the real-time behaviors that are implemented by

PWS as they negotiate social action within these contexts. This study has important

implications regarding the value of qualitative research paradigms in investigating social

access and inclusion in PWS in the university setting and exploring the usefulness of partner

and advocacy training in universities and other educational institutions.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Michael Azios earned a PhD in Applied Language and Speech Sciences at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in the summer of 2017. Mr. Azios holds a master's degree in Speech-Language Pathology from Stephen F. Austin State University and has been awarded a certificate of clinical competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. He has over fifteen years of clinical experience working with persons who stutter of all ages. Mr. Azios is a native of Texas and he has spent most of his career working with people who stutter, their families, and bringing stuttering awareness to the different communities he has been involved with.