Short communication

Origin and Pawn scaling for adults who do and do not stutter: A preliminary comparison

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: In order to determine whether adults who stutter (AWS) would show changes in locus of causality during stuttering treatment and approximate those of adults who do not stutter (AWNS) this preliminary study compared the locus of causality as indicated by Origin and Pawn scaling procedures from two groups of young adults who do and do not stutter.

Method: A total of 20 age- and gender-matched undergraduate and graduate students who did ($n = 10$) and did not ($n = 10$) stutter participated. The AWS took part in a three week intensive stuttering treatment provided by the American Institute for Stuttering (AIS). Along with measures of treatment outcome, writing samples were analyzed for Origin and Pawn statements that indicated the participant's locus of causality.

Results: At the outset of treatment the AWS showed significantly greater Pawn scores than the control group of AWNS and similar occurrences of Origin statements. The AWS showed a statistically significant increase in pre- to post-treatment Origin scores and a statistically significant decrease in Pawn scores. Following treatment the AWS showed the Origin and Pawn score ratios similar to those of AWNS.

Conclusion: A pattern of increasing Origin and decreasing Pawn scores may indicate a pattern of increasing agency during successful stuttering treatment. Moreover the post-treatment Origin and Pawn score ratios of AWS, which were not significantly different from those of AWNS, may indicate a change trend toward normalization. Further research will determine whether such change patterns are predictive of long-term maintenance.

Educational Objectives: By reading this article the reader will be able to: (a) describe advantages of content analysis measure such as the Origin and Pawn Scales; (b) discuss the purposes and procedures of the Origin and Pawn Scales; (c) describe typical change pattern of Origin and Pawn scores of adults who stutter while receiving treatment; (d) discuss how successful treatment for stuttering can result in the normalization of one's locus of causality.

1. Introduction

In 2011 Lee, Manning, and Herder investigated the use of a scaling procedure designed to indicate the *locus of causality* of adults who stutter. This construct is based on the work of DeCharms (1968) who suggested that locus of causality is indicated by the extent to which one is capable of being the originator of actions or, conversely, is more likely to make choices in response to others or circumstances in their social environment. That is, the person is likely to make choices and take actions because he or she "wants to" or because he or she believes they "have to" given external social conditions.

DeCharms found that a person's locus of causality can be derived by content analysis of spoken or written narratives in the form of "Origin" and "Pawn" statements (Plimpton & DeCharms, 1976). Subsequent investigations by Viney and her associates (Viney, 1983; Viney & Caputi, 2005; Westbrook & Viney, 1980) resulted in a scaling procedure (Gottschalk & Gleser, 1969; Gottschalk, Gleser, Stone, & Kunkel, 1968) that provided a reliable and sensitive indicator of a participant's locus of causality for individuals undergoing counseling for drug addiction (Viney, Westbrook, & Preston, 1985) and treatment for anxiety and depression (Viney, Clarke, Bunn, & Benjamin, 1985).

Origin and Pawn scaling procedures using content analysis provide several advantages over questionnaire-type measures for determining psychological change. It is assumed that psychological state is well represented in the narratives of the speaker, and content analysis provides a system for analyzing freely spoken or written narratives (Gottschalk & Gleser, 1969; Westbrook & Viney, 1980). The number of statements expressing specific psychological states identified in the content analysis is used to indicate the psychological state of the participant. As participants can freely express themselves in the narratives and are not repeatedly exposed to the same, limited set of items, the content analysis measure is less reactive than questionnaire-type measures. In addition content analyses of narratives are more likely to provide an individualized and dynamic indicator of psychological change via narratives that are most meaningful to the participant (DiLollo, Manning, & Neimeyer, 2003).

Another advantage of the Origin and Pawn procedure is the nature of the locus of causality construct. For example, the Locus of Control is regarded as a unidimensional *trait* construct with a negative relationship between externality and internality (e.g., higher scores represent greater externality and lower scores represent greater internality). This unidimensional nature is also the case with the self-efficacy construct where one's response results in a greater or lesser degree of self-efficacy (Baer, Holt, & Lichtenstein, 1986; Schwarzer, Bäßler, Kwiatek, Schröder, & Zhang, 1997; Schyns & von Collani, 2002). Locus of causality, on the other hand, is regarded as a two-dimensional construct where scores associated with Origin or Pawns are not interconnected or necessarily inversely related. That is, people with greater Pawn perception do not necessarily have less Origin perception (Westbrook & Viney, 1980). In addition, as a two-dimensional, *state* construct the origin and pawn scaling procedure is seen as providing a more sensitive and nuanced description of an individual's current psychological state.

1.1. Determining agency

Underlying successful change for many human conditions including stuttering is a reconceptualization of the nature of the problem as well as one's ability to cope with the problem in more effective ways (DiLollo & Neimeyer, 2014; Plexico, Manning, & Levitt, 2009a, 2009b). Research thus far with the locus of causality construct suggests that Origin and Pawn scaling provides a way to determine an individual's ability to achieve an autonomous and agentic lifestyle (Lee, Manning, & Herder, 2011; Manning, Hodak, & Plexico, 2005; Shin & Lee, 2014). Agency has been described as ". . . the ability to live life and achieve a voice in a literal as well as a metaphorical sense; or you could think of it has having a lifestyle where the person can act for themselves and speak on their own behalf." (Monk, Winslade, Crocket, & Epston, 1997, p. 301). Likewise, Groat and Allen (2011) described agency as the ability to exercise autonomy and take responsibility. Westbrook and Viney (1980) reported that participants with greater Origin perception were more likely to show active coping strategies than those with greater Pawn perception. Plexico et al. (2009a, 2009b) noted that adults who stuttered and who were able to successfully manage their stuttering were able to make the transition from emotion-based, avoidance-orientated coping strategies which focused on protecting the self and others to approach-oriented, cognitive-based coping strategies that promoted the achievement of agency.

1.2. Purpose of the current study

Along with providing a replication of the Lee et al. (2011) investigation the purpose of the current study is to take an initial step in comparing rates of Origin and Pawn statements by adults experiencing treatment for stuttering with fluent speakers. The American Psychological Association (2002) suggests that those who receive treatment show characteristics comparable to a normally developing control group. That is, as a result of successful therapy adults who stutter (AWS) would show increases in Origin scores and decreases in Pawn scores that would approximate those of their fluent peers. Although Lee et al. (2011) found that Origin and Pawn scaling procedures can provide a reliable and valid indicator of participant change in agentic behavior during stuttering treatment these patterns of change have not been compared to a control group of adults who do not stutter (AWNS). A direct comparison of Origin and Pawn values between AWS and AWNS would help to clarify and further explore the possibilities of Origin and Pawn scaling for monitoring the development of agency during (and perhaps following) stuttering treatment. Along with systematically replicating the original study by Lee et al. (2011)