

## **Is stuttering a case of anxiety disorders?**

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Current diagnostic and classification criteria for anxiety disorders, as represented in the DSM-IV, are descriptive in nature and based on the presentation of their symptomatology. However, clinical practice reveals that effective treatment of any mental health problem should rely on knowledge about the etiology and the mechanism of pathogenesis of this problem and not on its phenomenology. According to several theoretical models, dysfunctional beliefs may play the central role in the pathogenesis of anxiety disorders and their replacement with adaptive ones should be the main aim of therapeutic intervention. Within the framework of the description of mental disorders according to their etiology, it is proposed that stuttering, currently classified as communication disorder, shares many important common features with anxiety disorders as distorted cognitions about one's self-efficacy to speak with fluency may be the main cause of the problem. The aim of this paper is to present a new theoretical perspective, in which the similarities between stuttering and anxiety disorders are highlighted, the role of dysfunctional beliefs in the development and maintenance of stuttering is clarified and implications for the effective clinical management of stuttering are proposed.

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