Stuttering Severity Instrument for Children and Adults, Third Edition
(SSI-3)

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• PRO-ED, Inc., 8700 Shoal Creek Blvd., Austin, TX 78758-6897. Published, 1994.

Purpose:
• Individually-administered measure of stuttering severity in school-age children and adults.

Provides:
• An overall Total score is derived and comprised of subscales including Frequency, Duration, and Physical Concomitants (Distracting Sounds, Facial Grimaces, Head Movements, Movement of Extremities, Total).

Standardization Issues:
• Two of the three age groups comprising the norming sample are comprised of smaller-than-desired cell sizes. In addition, the demographic makeup of the standardization sample is insufficiently defined.

Reliability and Validity Issues:
• Intra/inter-examiner agreement reliability appears to be the only form of reliability estimation reported. The data provided yielded relatively high levels of agreement between experienced clinicians (82-93%), however, concerns regarding the method design for which this was determined were expressed. More detail and convincing evidence of construct validity may be needed and given the lack of more reliability data, convincing evidence of validity does not seem present.

Additional Points:
• Results obtained on the test need to be supplemented with information from parent interviews, speech samples in different settings, and other test data.
• Guidelines for analysis of speech sounds in other settings outside the test administration are vague, thus calling into question the assurance that the samples collected are similar-enough in nature to samples collected for the norm (comparison) group.
• Part of the analysis of oral fluency includes administration of reading passages and becomes protocol for children and adults at or above 3rd-grade reading level. There is little-to-no guideline for selecting the reading
passages. Poorly-matched reading passages and/or inherent reading fluency-issues can potentially confound the results.

- Scoring concerns inherent in the test’s design include no provision of information of how the stanine-intervals were derived (psychometrically), and questionable meaningful discriminating power of the Likert scale values that are summed to provide the “Physical Concomitants” score.
- The percentiles and severity ratings were derived from a small, marginally-constructed/defined comparison group.
- Given serious psychometric and other concerns regarding the test, it needs to be cautiously interpreted and supplemented with good, clinical insight, and used as one piece of a comprehensive stuttering evaluation.