

# Exploring parental perspectives, expectations, and experiences with Lexipontix.

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## About Lexipontix

Lexipontix Programme (Furlas & Marousos, 2015, 2018, 2019) is a structured therapy programme for school-age children who stutter. The programme lasts for 13 weekly sessions (4 months) and it addresses the overall stuttering experience of the child and family and individualizes therapy according to overall needs, expectations and available resources. The unique stuttering experience of each child is mapped on the Lexipontix Formulation Chart, a working model for treatment planning and monitoring purposes (Furlas & Marousos, 2014, 2018; based on Yaruss & Quesal, 2004; WHO, 2001).

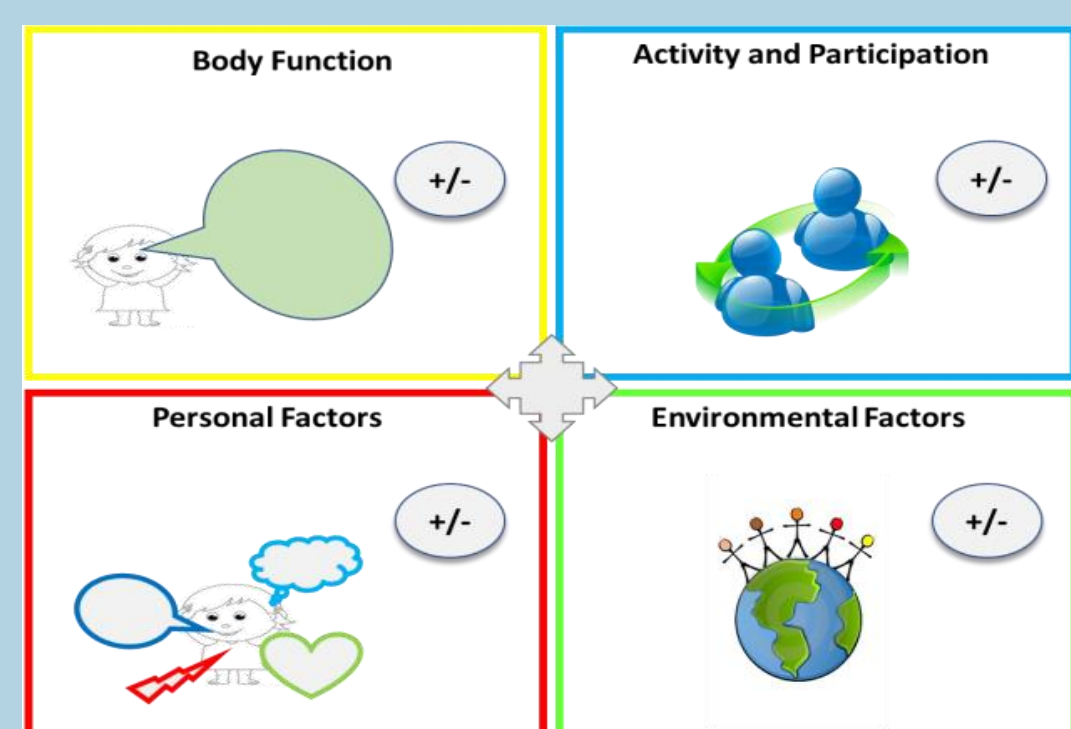


Figure 1. The Formulation Chart

Lexipontix introduces therapy as a theme-based role play game. The protagonists/main characters are the child in the role of a Superhero, who tries to defend his Factory of Mind, and a naughty mouse called Lexipontix. Lexipontix tries to intrude or invade the Factory of Mind and Sabotage the Factory Machines. The child is empowered with Allies (family, therapist and significant others) and Blue, Red and Yellow Tools (alliance tools, tools for thoughts and emotions and speech control tools, respectively). The child and his alliance is involved in Missions and Experiments in order to deal with the activity of Lexipontix. The child gradually experiences a rationalized and harmonious relationship with his stuttering and stuttering is not a worrying threat anymore.

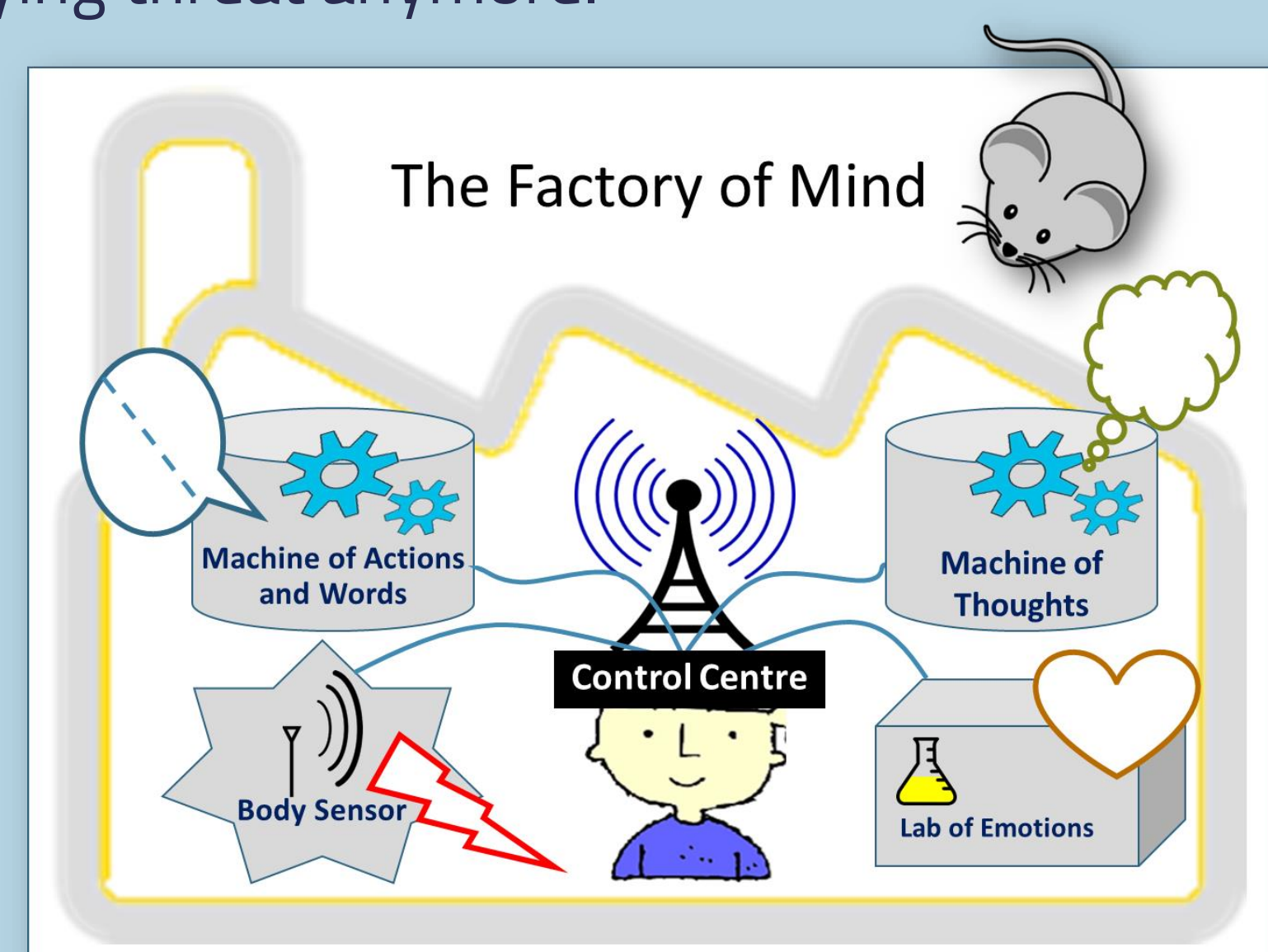


Figure 2. The Factory of Mind

## Purpose

In Lexipontix, parents are actively engaged in therapy. They support their child, and they explore their own thoughts and feelings about their child's stuttering and their hopes and expectations of therapy outcomes. Given parents' valuable contribution to the therapeutic process, it is important to explore their perspectives. Thus, the purpose of the present study was to explore parents' perspectives, expectations, and experiences with Lexipontix.

## Methodology

**Participants:** Parents (19 mothers, 17 fathers) of 19 children who completed the Lexipontix Programme at the Stuttering Research and Therapy Centre.

**Survey:** Parents filled-out an 8-item, visual analog (0 to 10 scale) questionnaire that assessed the following constructs:

- Level of fulfillment of parents' expectations from the programme
- Perceived level of motivation of their child
- Parents' perceptions of the programme's overall quality
- Quality of therapy materials and assignments
- Demands of the programme in terms of family time and resources
- Pace of the programme.

Each construct was assessed with a single question except for the "quality of therapy materials and assignments," which was assessed with three questions, the average of which was calculated and used in analyses. Also, parents provided a written answer to the probe "Please write about your experience with Lexipontix." Their answers were analyzed with thematic analysis (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

## Results

The median rating of the aforementioned constructs ranged from 8.5 to 9.5 for mothers and 8.5 to 10 for fathers. A series of Wilcoxon signed-rank test did not detect statistically significant differences in rankings between fathers and mothers ( $p < .05$ ).

Parents' written replies to the probe "Please write about your experience with Lexipontix." were analyzed with the QDA miner software. Five main/organizing themes were identified: "Experience with the Programme," "Cognitive Restructuring," "Speech Restructuring," "Affective Change," and "Change of the Environment." The basic themes under each of the organizing themes (e.g., "confidence" under "affective change") and their absolute (n) and relative (%f) frequency are presented in Figure 3.

Table 1 presents differences the frequency of occurrence of each basic theme separately for fathers and mothers.

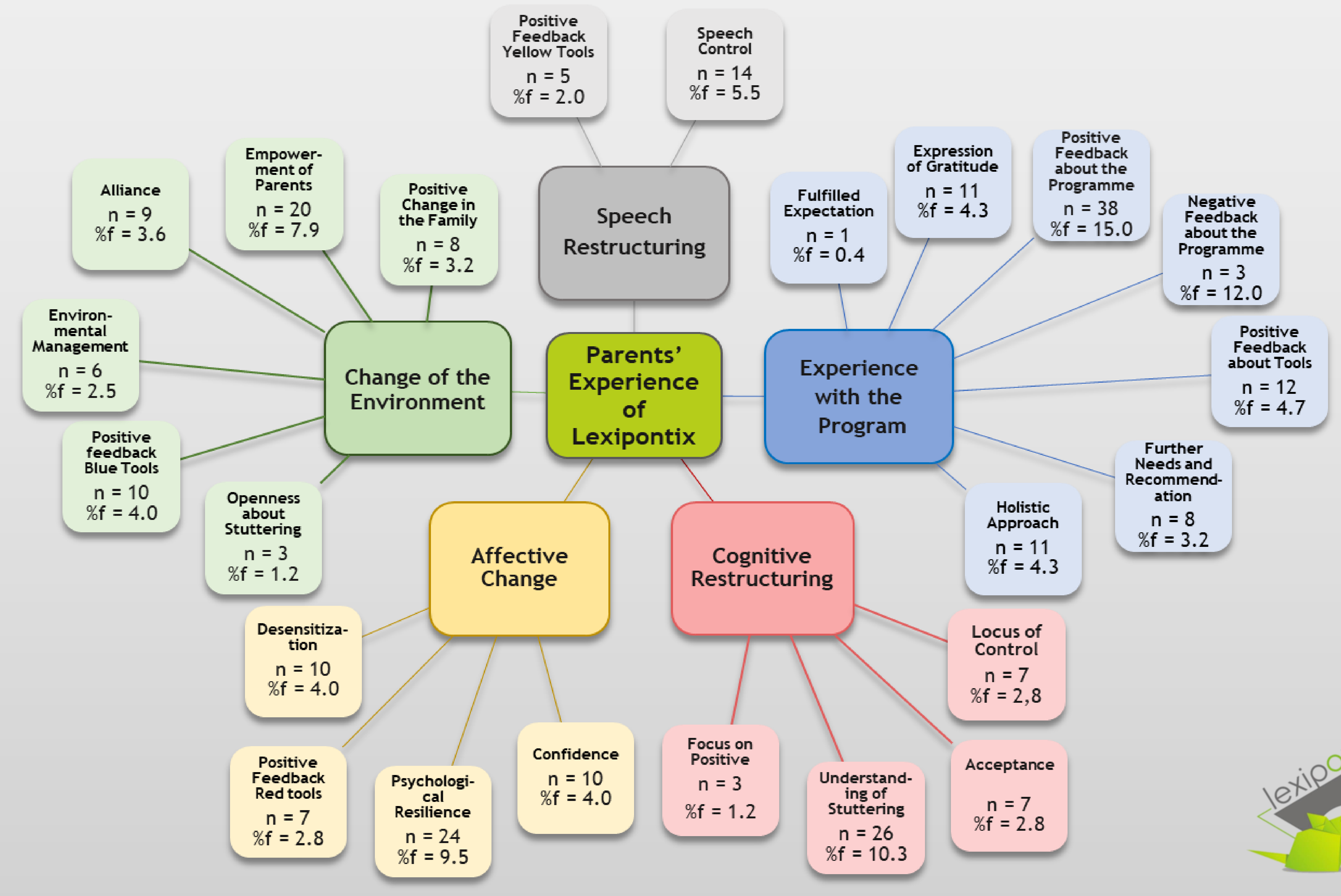


Figure 3: Thematic Network for Parents' Experience of Lexipontix.

Table 1: Frequency of occurrence of basic themes on fathers' and mothers' answers

Change of the Environment			Affective Change			Cognitive Restructuring			Experience with the Programme		
Basic Theme	n fathers	n mothers	Basic Theme	n fathers	n mothers	Basic Theme	n fathers	n mothers	Basic Theme	n fathers	n mothers
Positive Change in the Family	3	5	Desensitization	2	8	Focus on Positive	2	1	Fulfilled Expectation	1	0
Empowerment of Parents	9	11	Positive Feedback regarding Red Tools	4	3	Understanding of Stuttering	11	14	Expression of Gratitude	7	4
Alliance	6	3	Psychological Resilience	11	13	Acceptance	0	7	Positive Feedback about the programme	18	20
Environmental Management	3	3	Confidence	3	7	Locus of Control	4	3	Negative Feedback about the programme	2	1
Positive Feedback regarding Blue Tools	5	5	<b>Speech Restructuring</b>						Positive Feedback about Tools	8	4
Openness about Stuttering	1	2	Basic Theme			n fathers			n mothers		
			Positive Feedback regarding Yellow Tools	3	2						
			Speech Control	9	5						
						Further Needs & Recommendations	5	3			
						Holistic Approach	8	3			

## Correspondence / References upon request

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## Conclusion

Results demonstrate that parents' expectations for Lexipontix were largely fulfilled. Parents rated different aspects of the programme highly and they reported positive changes at various domains including cognitive, affective, motoric and environment. Although not statistically explored, the seemingly difference between fathers' and mothers' frequency of some basic themes (e.g., acceptance) may indicate that Lexipontix programme differentially addresses individual needs. It may also suggest that fathers and mothers differ on which therapy outcomes consider most important. Reported positive changes are related to all four fields of Lexipontix Formulation Chart namely Body Function, Personal Factors, Activity and Participation and Environmental Factors. This provides evidence on the effectiveness of the Lexipontix programme in addressing the overall stuttering experience of the child and his family.