

BOOK REVIEW

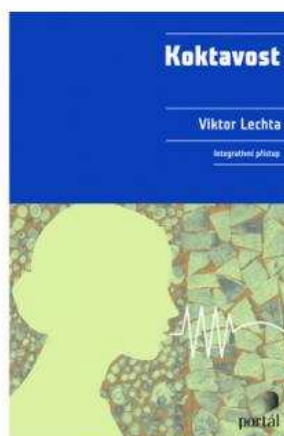
Viktor Lechta, *Koktavost: integratívni prístup* (Stuttering. The Integrated Approach). Published by Portál, Praha 2010. ISBN: 978-80-7367-643-8, pp. 336, second edition, extended and improved

Stuttering is one of the most traumatic forms of speech disorders. It often results in drastic consequences in a human life, irrelevant of one's age. It may limit participation in social life or result in a bad mental and physical condition. It may lower the level of our general quality of life or some of its aspects.

Knowledge about stuttering, available options in diagnosis, therapy and prevention all constitute a problem not only for novice speech therapists, but also for experienced specialists, since each case of stuttering is individual in nature and therapy procedures have to be adjusted to the needs and abilities of the patient, which in turn requires thorough and multi-interdisciplinary knowledge from the therapist.

At present, the knowledge about stuttering is rather extensive. Yet, obviously the problem has not been fully analyzed. Research and speech therapy reports, case studies, reports on the efficiency of diagnostic and therapy methods, data available on the internet are usually available in a dispersed form or published randomly. Hence book publications are of particular value since they present the problem of stuttering in a comprehensive and exhaustive way and are directed to specialists. The monograph ***Koktavost: integratívni prístup*** (Stuttering. The Integrated Approach) by the Slovak author, Professor Viktor Lechta, one of the most eminent representatives of European speech therapy, is certainly one of such publications.

The monograph *Koktavost: integratívni prístup* (Stuttering. The Integrated Approach) was published for the second time in 2010. The first issue was published in 2004 and very soon afterwards disappeared from bookshops, which indicates its enormous popularity as well as contents value being highly appreciated by its readers.



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The second edition of the monograph is significantly improved and extended. Apart from classical issues, the author has included the latest research reports from all over the world including Slovakia, his home country, other European countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary or Poland, as well as up-to-date reports from the USA.

The structure of the monograph is solid, logical and clear. The main body of the book is preceded by a brief summary in English. The prefaces to the first and the second edition, both written by Eva Škodová, are followed by the Introduction to the first edition and Introductory Comments to the second edition, and are all significantly improved and extended. The main body of the monograph comprises nine chapters in which the problem of stuttering is presented in a comprehensive way.

Particular chapters include:

- general information about stuttering understood as a communication disorder, basic terminology, most frequently used definitions as well as a historical account of the development of knowledge about stuttering (chapter one),

- discussion on speech fluency and disfluency including a vast amount of information concerning the assessment of fluency at four levels: linguistic, psychological, medical and logopaedic, as well as the characteristics of particular types of disfluency (chapter two),

- exhaustive information on etiopathogenesis of stuttering including most frequently reported causes of stuttering (among others hereditariness, social environment, psychological factors, organic changes, other forms of disorders of communicative ability as well as descriptions of several model approaches), risk factors, developmental disfluency and origins of stuttering (chapter three),

- an interesting presentation of the symptoms of stuttering in which three main symptoms are distinguished: psychological stress, excessive effort and disfluency (chapter four),

- a detailed presentation of diagnostic procedures: the principle of the integrated diagnosis, interpretation of detailed anamnesis data, options in diagnosing psychological stress, excessive effort and disfluency, quantitative and qualitative analysis, *balbutogram* i.e. a scale integrating quantitative and qualitative results, differential diagnosis (chapter five),

- an exhaustive characteristics of the goals, methods, therapy principles and the latest trends as well selected therapy methods and programs (among others: modification of speech patterns, delusion and psychotherapy approach, behavioral techniques, aural feedback technique, lowering the speed of speech delivery, Biofeedback, techniques based on Reading, MIDVAS, Monterrey program, Holl program, PROLAM GM, interactions, Lidcombe program, the Antwerp approach, KIDS, the Kassel therapy program for adults (KST), PowerrTM GAME, S.R. Gottwald program of prevention and early intervention, speech fluency awareness program, comprehensive therapy for stuttering schoolchildren, Fluency Plus Program,

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integral therapy based on the clinical model of stuttering, including methods of therapy in psychological stress, excessive effort and disfluency, *phono-grapho-rhythmic* technique), as well as detailed information on prognosis, criteria of therapy efficiency (goals, timing, symptoms, coping with therapy), pseudo-efficiency in therapy, recurrence, preventions (chapter six), organized information on particular levels of intensity of stuttering (beginnings of stuttering – chapter seven, permanent stuttering – chapter eight, chronic stuttering – chapter nine), in each case on the basis of the following Framework: the characteristics of a particular form of stuttering, integrated diagnosis, integrated therapy in psychological stress, excessive effort and disfluency.

The main body of the book is followed by a Summary, an extensive list of references as well as a glossary of relevant terminology facilitating allocation of necessary information.

It has to be stressed that all diagnoses and therapy methods in stuttering presented in the monograph have been tested clinically in the Bratislava Centre for Disfluency.

The monograph *Koktavost: integrativní přístup* (Stuttering. The Integrated Approach) (is directed to those readers who are interested in the problem of stuttering: scientists, speech therapists, physicians, psychologists and specialists in special education. It may also constitute an invaluable source of information for students taking a course in Speech Therapy.

Let me congratulate the author for the idea of the monograph and the publishers for their efforts. One can only envy Czech readers having direct access to an invaluable compendium of information about stuttering. Let us, readers from other countries, hope that the monograph will soon be published in other languages.

by Ewa M. Skorek