

Editorial/*Editorial*

The importance of scientific production for the political consolidation of professional practice

In general, researchers often choose their research themes based on criteria such as the scope of their research groups, the research lines of their graduate programs, funding public notices, etc. All these aspects are obviously legitimate, but as representatives of the supreme governing body of our professional practice, the Federal Council of Speech-Language Pathology (CFFa), we would like to invite the scientific community to reflect on other aspects that have direct interface and significant impact on the growth and strengthening of our profession.

The system which comprises the Speech-Language Pathology Councils can be understood as an extension of the State. Therefore, it should primarily ensure the public interest, especially in aspects related to the exercise of this occupation in the country. To this end, it must consider the interests of the community.

Observing their specificities and preserving their basic legislation, the Councils should foster the growth of the profession and adjust their legislation (especially the resolutions, recommendations and opinions) in order to keep up with the rapid changes and demands of the community, always ensuring the order and ethics in the professional practice, as well as the safety and security of society.

This mission leads us, as the regulatory authority of professional practice, to discuss the training in Speech-Language Pathology, as well as monitor the results achieved in the professional practice and the scientific research and advancement in the area. In this sense, we have witnessed, in recent years, a significant advancement in the scientific production of the Brazilian Speech-Language Pathology, which has been demonstrated by an increasing number of articles published in specialized journals of this and other related fields. In spite of this quantitative growth, we need to reflect on the quality of our publications.

To measure quality, several aspects that are beyond the scope of what we intend to address in this editorial can be considered, such as the level of evidence provided by the design of the studies or the impact factor of the publications, but one of them is of fundamental importance for political action: the ability to use scientific evidence to improve people's quality of life.

Over the past administrative term of the CFFa (2013-2016), we have undertaken efforts and actions with the legislative and executive powers to create or reformulate public policies, always with the interest to propose actions that promote the well-being of society, collaborating with the constitutional role of the democratic state. Our main initiatives are directed to promote health and education, but we also participate in themes such as the organization of work, social security, etc.

In conducting such actions, it is fundamental to count on the results and evidence of the scientific research in the area, because the whole political work, especially the proposition of public policies, should be guided and aligned with scientific advancement. It is the important role of taking science to those who most need it, to transform science into something concrete and available to improve people's lives.

While dealing with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, or the National Health Agency, for example, we felt difficulties to gather, organize and systematize scientific evidence that could be transformed into direct benefits for the population. Another noteworthy aspect is that, in this mission to provide science to the population, coherent positions are not always found. Research and opinions from groups with different convictions are commonly observed, but this is not a major issue if we can extract from each group, or opinion, the public interest that should guide an also public policy. To ensure the public interest, we must consider criteria for opportunity, convenience, fairness, justice, equity, etc.

Based on the foregoing, we herein propose our first question to the scientific community: What is the public interest of the research we have been conducting? Faced with the enormous social inequality and geographic dimension of Brazil, we can state that our studies are not always aligned with the social problems that affect our population. Likewise, and before the numerous deficiencies, research does not always address the most urgent or priority social problems.

According to Sebrae¹, a good public policy-making process generally tracks the following steps: conversion of statistics into information relevant to the problem; analysis of the preferences of the actors; and action based on acquired knowledge. Analyzing these steps, one can see the importance of scientific research and researchers for the systematization of knowledge to be converted into a public policy.

We can draw a few more questions to guide a reflection on the theme: What are the statistics and information available in the area of Speech-Language Therapy on issues that affect society? Are there enough studies on epidemiology, prevalence, and response to interventions? What are the political (ideological) views of the actors involved? Is it possible to establish a course of action to solve the problems based on the primacy of public interest?

We rely on the efforts of the entire professional class so that a reflection on these issues being present from the moment of choice of research themes to the final writing of the articles to be published in scientific journals, making it very clear in the scientific record of the Brazilian Speech-Language Therapy the social contribution of our research.

Also, we consider that the contribution and commitment of all reviewers, scientific editors, and heads of scientific organizations are essential to move forward and promote the growth of our profession on a solid scientific basis, with consistent and unquestionable social relevance.

Bianca Arruda Manchester de Queiroga

Maria Cecília de Moura

Solange Pazini

Jaime Zorzi

11th Executive Board Team (2013/2016) of the Federal Council of Speech-Language Pathology – CFFa - Brasília, Brazil.

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