

## **Editorial**

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Dear Readers,

This year of 2009 has begun in a very positive way for the Speech-Language and Hearing Sciences. In January, the "Congreso Internacional de Transtornos de La Comunicación" was held in Chile. This Congress was organized by Dr. Luís Martínez and Dr. Ricardo Rojas of the Universidad de Talca, Facultad de Ciencias de la Salud, Escuela de Fonoaudiología and by the Asociación Española de Logopedia, Foniatria y Audilogía. It was a great opportunity to have so many professionals of all over the world discussing about their fields of knowledge with such interesting themes. The reception of the guests was impeccable, loving and of a high executive competence.

Although our experience was great, it was a shame that so few Brazilians were there. Given the success of the Congress, discussions began in order to form, perhaps, a Latin-American Speech-Language and Hearing Society. We have to build something that will allow speech-language and hearing pathologist of South American and of other countries speakers of Portuguese and of Spanish to become united; union in a broad sense. An union that should begin by the basic curricular contents in graduation and post graduation - exchange of students and of clinical and research experiences, in short, giving movement to the science and knowledge generated by our people.

Also during this year, besides our traditional congresses - ABA and SBFa, we will also have the International Fluency Association Congress (IFA) in Rio de Janeiro and so many other important

events which I do not remember at the moment. My Laboratory and its partners will also be bringing three much honored professors. I think that we can finally say that we no longer are isolated from the proposals of the world; today, any great international researcher accepts to come to Brazil. Today, all of us from the Editorial Board of Pró-Fono are invited to take part in all of the great events and in all of the great discussions about editorial policies. If the Brazilian Speech-Language and Hearing Sciences is still not an international reference, I can say that we are close to this mark.

Once more our Journal Pró-Fono received editorial support. It is a lot of work, but this work is rewarding. The number of manuscripts submitted to the Journal increases every day. It is a great pleasure to present thirteen articles in our first number, being nine research articles, three reviews of the literature and one case study.

The purpose of the research presented by Coelho et al. (2009) was to relate the speech perception abilities to the vocal characteristics of children with cochlear implant. In order to do this, perceptive and acoustic analyses of the long vowel /a/ and of the counting of numbers of 25 pre lingual children, with ages between 5 to 10 years, with severe to profound hearing loss, users of cochlear implants were carried out. The results indicate that among the children with cochlear implants, the ones with better speech perception abilities present lower perceptive-auditory deviations of the quality of voice.

The study developed by Murphy & Schochat (2009) discusses auditory temporal processing and reading, and had as a purpose to analyze the potential correlations between reading acquisition, phonological awareness, and auditory temporal processing in Brazilian children with dyslexia. Sixty children with ages between nine and twelve years were evaluated - 33 with dyslexia and 33 in the control group. Although the dyslexic children demonstrated poorer results in all tests when compared to their controls, there was no definitive evidence that their poor performance on the auditory temporal processing tests was directly related to their phonological awareness skills, or even to their reading skills.

Wertzner & Silva (2009) presented a research about speech rate in phonological disorders, having as a purpose to compare the performance of children with and without phonological disorders in different speech rate tests. Participants of the study were 20 children diagnosed with phonological disorders and 20 with typical speech

development, aged 4 to 10 years and 11 months, of both genders. The results indicate lower values of speech rate for children with phonological disorder, due to possible language or motor deficits. The authors discuss that the results presented by the children with phonological disorder could have been influenced by the length of the sentence used in the test.

The purpose of the study presented by Cattoni & Fernandes (2009) was to describe the anthropometric orofacial measurements of children from Sao Paulo and to compare the obtained means to the North American norms. Participants of the study were 254 children, leukoderm, in mixed dentition period, with ages ranging from 7 to 11 years and 11 months, with no history of speech, language and hearing disorders or treatment. In order to obtain these measurements, an electronic digital sliding caliper was used. The results of the measurements obtained for the children from São Paulo referring to the height of the upper lip, the height of the lower lip and height of the lower face were below the values reported for North American children, indicating that the North American norms were not valid for the children participants of the present study.

The research presented by Ciocchi & Andrade (2009) proposed a speech-language cooperation protocol for the fiberoptic laryngoscopy evaluation of larynx mobility in thyroid illnesses (PAN). The first version of the protocol was elaborated based on data found in the literature; the protocol was judged twice, using the triangulation method. A pilot version was presented and applied in 11 patients and was then judged again by doctors and speech-language pathologists. Based on the analysis of the judges and after the application of the pilot version, the final version of the PAN was proposed. The PAN resulted in the description of items that should be verified by the doctor and speech-language pathologist during the fiberoptic laryngoscopy evaluation of larynx mobility in thyroid illnesses. Results indicate that the PAN, in its final version, contributes for the systematization of the assessment procedures based on evidence and on the agreement of professionals.

A study regarding the relationship between age, speech rate and speech performance in children

was presented by Folha & Felício (2009). Participants of this study were 200 children divided in three different age groups: 6:0 to 8:0 years (Group I), 8:1 to 10:0 years (Group II), and 10:1 to 12:6 years (Group III). The results indicate that speech performance, measured by the Percentage of Consonants Correct (PCC), and speech rate increased according to age, resulting in significant differences between the three age groups. The increase of the PCC indexes and of speech rate was directly proportional.

The comparison of the speech rates of individuals presenting different stuttering severity levels was the purpose of the research presented by Arcuri et al. (2009). Six adult stutterers with the following severity levels: 2 with mild stuttering; 2 with moderate stuttering and 2 with severe stuttering were selected. The authors point that the group with mild/moderate stuttering presented higher and similar speech rates, differing statistically from the group with severe stuttering, therefore indicating that the higher the severity of stuttering, the lower the speech rate. This difference seems to be related to difficulties in motor programming, affecting mainly the rhythm and the timing of discourse.

The research presented by Moura et al. (2009) investigated the possible gain in performance in tasks involving phonemic awareness skills of children, following the development of a program to stimulate phonemic awareness. Participants of the study were 18 boys and 18 girls, all with typical language development, in their second grade of Elementary Education. The authors concluded that girls performed better in the majority of the phonemic awareness tasks, and that the program was effective in stimulating these tasks.

The study proposed by Gonçalves et al. (2009) had as a purpose to verify whether the exposure to occupational noise is an important risk factor for hearing disorders in adults with ages between 50 to 70 years, besides the auditory deterioration caused by age. The audiograms of 71 men with ages ranging between 50 to 70 years were studied, with the participants being divided in 2 groups (Group 1 with occupational exposure to noise and Group 2 without the exposure to noise). The results indicate that the auditory thresholds of individuals with ages between 50 and 70 years are worse for the group that is exposed to noise. Noise is a higher risk factor than age when considering neurosensorial hearing losses.

The review of the literature presented by Rodrigues & Béfi-Lopes (2009) describes and discusses findings of researches concerning the assessment of phonological working memory in

normally developing children undertaken since the 1980's. An analysis was made considering the applied tests and the results regarding the effects of extension and age and the relationship of these variables with phonological working memory for speakers of English and the Brazilian Portuguese language. The authors conclude that according to the consulted literature, studies indicate a relationship between the phonological and lexical knowledge and the phonological working memory in children with normal language development.

Chun (2009) presented a review of the literature concerning the expansion of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) in Brazil. The purpose of the review was verify the terms used in Brazil and to discuss their implications, taking as a reference the policies and recommendations of Isaac - International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication. The author concludes that it is important for a given version/term, besides being adopted by its own use, to maintain the original intended sense and to be in consonance with recommendations/policies of the field it belongs, such as those proposed by Isaac.

The appearance of the praxis disorder during the first years of development was the theme of the review of the literature presented by Souza et al. (2009). After the review, the authors point that the present literature about childhood speech apraxia has an inclination that may motivate a mixed therapeutic broaching, in which one contemplates not only aspects pertinent to language processing in a phonological representational level, but also aspects related to motor programming and pre-articulatory sequencing of speech itself.

Finally, the case report presented by Machado et al. (2009) had as a purpose to investigate possible connections between feeding and language disorders, adopting a bio-psychic perspective. Based on the description of the case, the authors point that there is a relationship between oral language and feeding problems, suggesting that speech-language therapists who work with language problems should investigate feeding habits, as well as those who work with the stomatognathic system should investigate the oral language of their patients.

It is an excellent beginning.

Regards, Claudia

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