

Figure 1 Bland-Altman graph for reliability analysis between the two applications of the Fear of Childbirth Motivators Questionnaire (QMMP), Universidade do Sul de Santa Catarina, Brazil, 2020 (n = 107).

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Wilhelm Heinrich Erb (1840-1921): recognizing his impact on Kraepelin's work after 100 years

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Being the 100th anniversary of his death, it is time to remember Wilhelm Heinrich Erb's influence on German neuropsychiatry. This outstanding German neurologist was born in 1840 in Winnweiler and died in 1921 in Heidelberg (Figure 1). He helped found modern neurology through his innovative contributions, several of which carry his name, including Erb-Duchenne palsy, Erb-Charcot paralysis, Erb-Westphal symptom, and myasthenia gravis ("Erb-Goldflam disease"). 1 He advocated the autonomy of neurology and its inclusion in large hospitals.2 He received his medical degree at Munich, and became an assistant in Nikolaus Friedreich's Department of Medicine in Heidelberg, where he was a lecturer in special pathology. However, in 1880, he began working at the University of Leipzig, where he set up an independent neurology unit. In 1883, he returned to Heidelberg,



Figure 1 Wilhelm Heinrich Erb (1840-1921). Collection Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg, CC BY-SA 4.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=64103800.

succeeding Friedreich as chair of internal medicine. He was one of the founders of *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Nervenheilkunde* (1891), later renamed *Zeitschrift für Neurologie*, now known as *Journal of Neurology*. He was also the first president of the Society of German Neurologists (Gesellschaft Deutscher Nervenärzte), serving from 1907 until his death.^{2,3} He had a decisive influence on another distinguished physician: Emil Kraepelin (1856-1926).

Soon after graduating in 1878, Kraepelin was looking for paid posts and other means of income. He worked at the Upper Bavarian Asylum in Munich with psychiatrist Bernhard von Gudden (1824-1886), and later, in 1882, with Paul Flechsig (1847-1929). Flechsig and Gudden were "brain-psychiatrists," while Kraepelin was far more interested in psychopathology and experimental pharmacology. He was also aware that they would not fully support his bid to become a *Privatdozent*. For him, such a post would allow him to perform his research while receiving tuition from his students. However, due to several arguments with Flechsig and his focus on research-oriented work, Kraepelin neglected his clinical work at the hospital and was dismissed without notice.⁴

Fourteen days after being dismissed, Kraepelin applied for a *Privatdozent* position at the Faculty of Medicine of

the University of Leipzig. For this special application, he had been encouraged by Wilhelm Erb to present his published research papers rather than the usual doctoral thesis. The Leipzig medical council asked Erb and Carl Ludwig (1816-1895) to review these articles. There is little doubt that this maneuver was allowed due to Erb's influence on the University Council, and the most recent study, "On the influence of acute diseases on the development of mental illnesses," proved to be the most important. Erb reviewed the papers and stated that they were "indeed essentially literary works," written in "a somewhat lengthy style and not free of tedious repetitions." Nevertheless, they met the academic standards of the time. On October 21, 1882, the oral examination (on Hebefrenia) was conducted by Erb. Kraepelin passed this final step and became a Privatdozent with Erb's support.4,5

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