

Editorial

Claudia Regina Furquim de Andrade

Professora Titular

Departamento de Fisioterapia, Fonoaudiologia e Terapia Ocupacional

Faculdade de Medicina

Universidade de São Paulo

Dear Readers,

Our third editorial of 2009 will have as a central point the 6th World Congress on Fluency Disorders, which was held between the 5th and 8th of August at University Veiga de Almeida in Rio de Janeiro. This Congress is related to the International Fluency Association and is the main international event in the area.

The International Fluency Association is an international, interdisciplinary, and nonprofit association. Its main goal is the understanding and management of fluency disorders aiming at the quality of life of people who stutter.

The purpose of the 6th Congress was to approach clinicians, researchers and people who stutter in order to discuss theories, empirical, clinical and cultural data, especially related to stuttering.

The professors responsible for the organization of the event were Professor Monica Medeiros de Brito Pereira from University Veiga de Almeida, and Professor John Van Borsel from Gent University, Belgium. This is the first time that the Congress was held in Latin America and even in times of financial crises 27 countries were represented.

I have already taken part in other IFA events and can assure that this year's Congress, with Brazil as host; quality was maintained and in some aspects even subdued. I had the honor of opening the Congress as a key note speaker, presenting my theme of research which is familial stuttering. Regarding this theme, with a partnership between FMUSP, UNESP Marília and

UNESP Botucatu, I believe that in the next Congress Brazil will present pioneer data uniting speech-language and molecular data about stuttering.

In my opinion, the scientific highlights of the event were Professor's Luc De Nil (Canada) lecture about the multiple facets of stuttering according to neuroimaging findings, Professor's Nan Bernstein Ratner and Gerald Maguire's (both from the U.S.) debate about the position of stuttering in ICD 9/10, and the seminary coordinated by Professor Isabella Reiche (U.S.) about global perspectives on cluttering which involved professors of all around the world.

I would like to congratulate Professor Monica and Professor John, the Congress was a success! Thank you in the name of the Brazilian Speech-Language Science.

About our Journal's third number of 2009, we present nine original research articles, three reviews of the literature and one research letter.

Based on the fact that the identification of the mandibular movement range is an important procedure in the evaluation of the stomatognathic system, the purpose of the study presented by Machado et al. (2009) was to determine the average range of mandibular movements in Brazilian children aged 6 to 12 years and also to verify the difference between genders and age group. Besides presenting the measurements, the results indicate no statistical difference between genders and a gradual increase in the range of mandibular movements, with significant differences mainly between the ages of 6-8 years and 10.1-12 years.

Marangoni and Gil (2009) point that individuals with profound hearing loss may present vibrotactile responses when tested with supra-aural earphones due to the large skull area exposed to vibration in these transducers. For this reason these authors present a study that was designed to verify the influence of the type of transducer when assessing air conducted pure tone thresholds in 50 individuals with profound sensorineural hearing loss. According to the results, people with bilateral sensorineural profound hearing loss presented higher (worse) thresholds with insert earphones than with supra aural earphones for low frequencies (250Hz and 1000Hz), confirming the existence of vibrotactile responses with supra aural earphones.

The purpose of the study presented by Freitas et al. (2009) was to estimate the specificity and the false-positive rate of newborn hearing screening

(NHS) protocols using transient evoked otoacoustic emissions (TEOAE) and automated auditory brainstem response (AABR) in 200 newborns. After analyzing the results, the authors conclude that the false-positive rate and consequently specificity were better for the protocol using AABR, followed respectively by the protocol using TEOAE and using both TEOAE and AABR.

Investigation of the performance of primary school students in reading comprehension tasks according to the variables of grade and type of school was the purpose of the study presented by Carvalho et al. (2009). One hundred and sixty 160 students from the 3rd to the 6th grades were screened and later evaluated based on the retelling and question answering about a given story. The results indicate that students of the 5th and 6th grades of private schools presented a better performance on issues related to implicit information. All students achieved some level of reading comprehension.

Donicht et al. (2009) presented a research that compared the intelligibility of phonological disorder based on the analysis of three distinct groups of judges. The research consisted of two samples: one sample was composed by 30 individuals with phonological disorder (assessed individuals) and the other sample was composed by the judges (speech-language therapists, laypeople and mothers). The spontaneous speech of children (i.e. three narratives of logical sequences) was analyzed by the different judges according to instructions given for intelligibility identification. The results indicated greater concordance between the judges for the end assessment possibilities (good and insufficient). Concordance among all judges was substantial in the identification of good intelligibility. Judgment of regular intelligibility was the most difficult.

The purpose of the study presented by Coutinho et al. (2009) was to determine the immediate effect of modified auditory feedback: amplification, delay and masking in the voice and speech of 26 individuals with Parkinson's disease, according to gender. Results indicate an improvement in vocal quality, increase in loudness and overall strain level in the masking situation. On the other hand, there was a decrease in vocal quality, decrease in loudness and overall strain level, decrease in speech rate and in articulation in the amplification and delay situations. In the acoustic analysis, an increase in the fundamental frequency and vocal intensity was observed in the masking situation and an increase of the maximum phonation time was observed in the delay situation. The authors conclude that the masking situation presents better

immediate effect in the voice and speech of individuals with Parkinson's disease.

Verification of the effectiveness of a communication strategies training program for caregivers of patients with moderate Alzheimer's disease (AD) was the purpose of the study presented by Roque et al. (2009). For this purpose, the use and effectiveness of communication strategies used by caregivers, prior to and after training was verified. After the application of the program the results indicated a significant statistical increase in the use of the proposed strategies and also report of other changes related to communication. The authors conclude that the training program was effective in changing the communicative behavior of caregivers.

Goulart and Ferreira (2009) presented the validation data of a new speech disorders screening test (TERDAF), developed by Brazilian researchers. For this purpose, 2,027 children, of both genders, enrolled in the first grade of elementary public schools in Canoas (Brazil) were selected by a probabilistic cluster sampling and assessed. The authors conclude that TERDAF can become an important ally in the early diagnosis of speech disorders as well as in the prevention of co morbidities associated to speech disorders

Levy and Rosemberg (2009) assessed the auditory abilities of children with non-progressive chronic encephalopathy (NPCE) and characterized the benefit of hearing aids for these children. Neurologic, otorhinolaryngologic and auditory assessments were performed in 46 children with NPCE. The results indicate that over half of participants presented hearing loss. No correlation was observed between etiology and complaints of hearing loss. The results also indicated that all children who presented hearing loss benefited from the use of hearing aids.

The purpose of the systematic literature review presented by Lemos et al. (2009) was to verify the existence of scientific evidence confirming the effectiveness of personal FM systems in the treatment of central auditory processing disorders (APD). The search resulted in 1,589 references out of which only 19 met the inclusion criteria. All of the analyzed articles were classified as having low level of evidence (expert opinion or case studies), and obtained low scores in the CONSORT scale (0 or 1). The authors argue that since such device is frequently recommended for the treatment of APD, it becomes essential to carry out studies with high scientific evidence that could safely guide clinical decision making on this subject.

The review presented by Spinardi et al. (2009) had as a focus distance learning (DL), arguing that it is becoming a higher education modality with a meaningful impact, offering students flexibility, mobility and choices. Based on this review, the authors point that DL is of great importance since it can reach a greater number of professionals and students in a more effective way, when compared to other learning modalities, without losing quality. The authors discuss the need Brazil has in developing direct actions to DL in the fields of Speech-Language Pathology and Hearing, due to the irregular distribution of professionals, fact that aggravates the differences in quality and availability of services offered throughout the country.

Based on the fact that echolalia is one of the most common symptoms among the language characteristics in Autism, the review presented by Saad and Goldfeld (2009) had as a purpose to provide a detailed information about the role of echolalia in the language development process of autistic individuals, followed by a discussion about the use of this language feature in the speech-language clinical practice. The authors point that the reviewed studies show classifications and analysis criterions of echolalia in a discursive context. A few studies are against the use of echolalia, pointing that it has no communicative function, and therefore should be discouraged. On the other hand, other studies indicate that echolalia has a communicative value and can be used as a communicative in speech-language intervention.

The research letter presented by Mangilli et al. (2009) had as a purpose to characterize motor control and morphology of the masseter muscle in normal individuals, verifying the compatibility between surface electromyography and ultrasonography. Participants of this study were five adult individuals, with no alterations of the stomatognathic system. The adopted assessment procedures for all participants were surface electromyography and ultrasonography. Based on the results the authors conclude that there is no correlation between the tested methods, suggesting that both methods are complementary and not mutually excludent.

Regards, Claudia

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