

Expressiveness on the radio: Speech-Language Pathology practices in question

Expressividade no rádio: a prática fonoaudiológica em questão

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: To analyze, based on speech-language pathologists reports, how oral expressiveness has been approached with radio professionals in Brazil. **Methods:** Six speech-language pathologists experienced in working with radio professionals answered semi-structured interviews that were transcribed and categorized according to general performance characteristics and to the expressiveness concept. Categories were illustrated with excerpts of the participants' interviews. **Results:** Speech-Language Pathology intervention happens similarly in schools for announcers and within radio stations. The prevention of vocal disorders has considerable space in these practices, and mostly occurs in the form of orientations regarding vocal health. The term oral expressiveness is relatively new, and, at times the meaning of the message is conveyed by the speaker's individual characteristics, by the content of the text message, or by the style of a particular station. Intervention aims include strategies approaching pause, voice quality, resonance, articulation, pitch, loudness, speed and breathing. The most used strategy is the reading of texts of different genres, including radio subjects. **Conclusion:** The term oral expressiveness is not generally used by the subjects interviewed, due to the fact that its concept is new to them. The term comprises the conveyance of emotions and intention by the speaker. The following aspects were considered to interfere on oral expressiveness: listeners' judgment; adequacy of the speech to the context; style of the radio station; and textual content of the message, evidencing the dynamics between subjective and social. More theoretical studies in Linguistics may subsidize less conceptually diverse practices when considering speech-language interventions.

Keywords: Voice; Voice training; Speech; Radio; Voice quality

INTRODUCTION

Amongst the different means of mass communication, the radio is the only one that makes use, exclusively, of the voice as a way to convey information. Thus, the visual context, gestures and visual expressions do not assist in the meaning of verbal messages, reverting more responsibility to the announcer, in the transmission of emotions and information⁽¹⁾.

However, nowadays, the radio is one vehicle among several

others used to obtain different kinds of news. In order for a broadcasting station to be successful in their business (good audience, and therefore, profits with advertising), there must be increasing investments in improving announcer's communication, so that they are able to manage the lack of visual imagery inherent to this means nature.

In order to have clear communication and to retain the listener's attention, it is necessary to speak with precise articulation, to have control over respiration and be knowledgeable and conscious about the use of one's own voice and its different resources. That which allows the listener to detect emotions from the voice of their interlocutor can be understood as vocal expression, manifested as a group of suprasegmental traces, employed by the speaker, independently of the verbal contingency of their speech⁽²⁾.

These traces, also known as prosodic traces, consist of the acoustic elements of fundamental frequency, duration and intensity. Their combination will form the patterns of intonation, stress, speed (denominated speech rate), pauses, prolongations of parts the utterance and rhythm of speech. The combination of these factors will determine the comprehension of the message and will carry the expression of the subject's emotions when speaking. These are the elements that serve as mediators between form and the content of speech. Knowledge of these

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components is of fundamental importance in the professional formation of the radio announcer, whose occupation demands the use of all their vocal resources to convey images to listeners, through the exclusive use of their voices^(1,3).

These prosodic properties have both linguistic and pragmatic functions. They are indicators of the type of phrase (negative, interrogative, exclamatory and affirmative), are associated to differences in meaning or to the grammatical category of words, contribute in the expression of the attitude and emotions assumed by the speakers, and mark the contrast between new and given information. The information which we talk about is called topic, while the new information, in which the communicative interest relies, is called focus.

When vocal resources used in broadcasting speech read by announcers and non-announcers were compared using the perceptive-auditory evaluation and acoustic analysis, it was verified that the professional broadcaster applies similar patterns of a radio broadcast, in their voice, in a spontaneous speech situation. The increase in the duration of speech, the more homogenous distribution of pauses, the lower frequency of speech, and higher number of halftones are characteristics that differentiate announcers from non-announcers and are aspects that provide greater melodic variation to speech⁽⁴⁾.

The first reference on the work of speech pathologists with radio speakers, in Brazil, is a register of the performance of these professionals in a specific radio broadcasting course held by the National Service of Commercial Training (SENAC) of the city of Campinas/SP. At this time, the vocal relationship of group members and different vocal techniques were discussed during training⁽³⁾.

The strategies used aimed towards the improvement of knowledge on: vocal hygiene; voice and speech physiology; relaxation and posture; breathing; resonance; articulation and rhythm; breath-speech coordination; intonation and specific techniques in the different contexts of the radio (variations of advertising information, news, narrations).

The aim of this study was to analyze how oral expressiveness has been approached with radio professionals in Brazil, using accounts of speech-language pathologists, about their practices with these subjects.

METHODS

This study was approved by the Ethics and Research Committee of the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo (PUC-SP), under number 415/02 - 10/10/03.

Six speech-language pathologists ranging from two and 19 years of professional experience in the radio area in the Southeast region of Brazil participated in this study. The professionals worked in schools which trained radio announcers, or offered vocal assistance to this same professional category. All the participants signed a free-consent term, assenting with the accomplishment and publishing of this study and its results, according to Resolution 196/96.

The speech-language pathologists participating of this study answered a semi-structured, descriptive interview, with no previously determined time-limit, about their work with radio announcers. Each interview occurred on date, time and

place more convenient to each subject, and was scheduled in advance, according to their availability. The questions were merely evocative and meant to serve as a guide of the resultant speech, in order to comprehend what these professionals understand by vocal expressiveness and to characterize the emphasis attributed to it, in their general practice with radio broadcasters (subject identification; practices; given content; specific aspects approached; definition of vocal expressiveness; application of this concept and strategies).

The interviews were registered using a Sony recording cassette, model TCM-16. The participants signed the free-consent term, at the end of each interview, in order not to induce their answers. After transcriptions, an inspection of the accounts was performed, by means of successive sessions of reading and, later, the material was organized, according to characterization of the speech pathologists' performance with broadcasters, in their general aspects and in relation to expressiveness. Clippings of the speech of the participants, identified by letter F, numbered from one to six, illustrate the cited categories (F1, F2, etc.).

RESULTS

Out of the six speech-language therapists interviewed, two work only in training schools and four, in radios stations, being that one of them also worked in the training of radio announcers (Chart 1).

The specific practice occurs in two different ways: evaluation and consultancy. The evaluation is occurs either at the therapist's private practice, in a room at the radio station, at the training center, or *in loco*, in the recording studio. Consultancies happen in groups or individually, in the form of lectures or speech therapy sessions. Generally, it occurs at the radio station or private offices. At the offices, it can also take place in pairs. The client is referred to as a student or patient.

Three interviewed subjects (F4, F5 and F6) mentioned that they have an agreement with the radio station, which presumes a certain predetermined number of sessions, in a private office, to those announcers who need this type of care.

The search for assistance occurs in different ways and the hired speech-language therapist makes *in loco* evaluations or listens to the announcer on the radio (Chart 2). The radio station may also look for this kind of service when detecting inadequacies on their announcers' speeches, or the interested parties themselves, the announcers, seek attention with the intention of improving some aspect of their communication.

The competitiveness in the work environment, and self-consciousness of the announcers have been pointed out, by some of the interviewed subjects.

(...) they look for us because either the director of the show or even they had made a self evaluation and had arrived at the conclusion that something needed to be improved. They do not always know what. (F3).

They (the announcers) never find that their articulation agility is good enough for what they do. (F4).

There were moments where the speech/vocal consultancy seemed to be considered an important allied by the announcers,

Chart 1. Characterization of speech therapeutic practices

| Workplace | Work contract | Type of radio station | State of practice |
|--|---------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| F1 Radio station (consultancy) Private practice (care paid by the radio station) | Salaried | FM | São Paulo (countryside) |
| F2 Training School | Salaried | Trains both AM and FM announcers | São Paulo (capital city) |
| F3 Radio station (speech therapist's room and recording studio) | Salaried | AM FM | São Paulo (capital city) |
| F4 Radio station (consultancy) Private practice (care paid by the radio station) | Autonomous | AM FM | São Paulo (countryside) |
| F5 Training school Private practice (care paid by the radio station) | Salaried | Trains both AM and FM announcers | Minas Gerais (capital city) |
| F6 Radio station (consultancy) Private practice (care paid by the radio station) | Autonomous | AMFM | São Paulo (capital city) |

Chart 2. Distribution of speech-language pathologists' references about the demand of broadcasters

| Demand | References |
|---|------------|
| Speech therapist detects changes in assessment | 5 |
| Announcer's complaint | 4 |
| Radio show director asks for assessment/care | 2 |
| Speech therapist is hired by the station to give a lecture | 2 |
| Speech therapist detects disorder while listening to the radio programs | 1 |

Chart 3. Specific aims of speech therapy, according to the interviewed subjects

| Aim | References |
|----------------------|------------|
| Vocal hygiene/health | 4 |
| Oral expressiveness | 2 |
| Speech articulation | 2 |
| Rhythm/melody | 1 |
| Breathing | 1 |

who recognize and value this type of practice, beyond the usual prohibitions of "abusive" vocal habits.

Vocal well-being is pointed by the speech-language therapists as an important part of the practice with radio announcers, a pioneer area of practice for speech-language pathologists (Chart 3).

(...) giving vocal use guidelines, vocal hygiene. When I started off, I gave, general, basic guidelines, but the guidelines, I give at each meeting because all of them overuse their voices, all of them drink alcohol, all of them have the habit of using their voices a lot, because they are not just radio announcers but they also call numbers at bingos, they run auctions around the area from where they are and this makes them use their voice beyond their work schedules at the radio station. (F1).

I make use of a dynamic activity with some pictures and they have to identify what it is good, what is bad and what makes no difference for the voice. (...), Then, we have a

discussion, and, with that, they learn what it is good, what is bad (...). (F5).

This kind of prevention is gaining different approaches, aimed toward the promotion of health and the development of vocal conservation behaviors (F4), instead of focusing on the prohibitive vocal behaviors. A speech-therapeutic approach of considering vocal flexibility as an indicator of good health, is also noticed

My concern is also vocal health, of course, that they can acquire vocal resistance and use the voice in a resistant way (...), but what I believe is that the more they can use the voice in a flexible way, of course, and within ideal conditions of use, without great effort, tension, the more flexible, the healthier this voice is going to be, because they can have a better performance with all these variations. (F2).

Vocal complaints, problems, I find that they are related to conservation, behaviors of vocal conservation ... as in the case of people who smoke, right? Or they abuse their voices, but, generally, this is not at work. (F4).

The speech-language therapists that work in training centers for radio announcers do so working alongside professionals who teach "broadcasting techniques" and "interpretation". However, the role of these professionals, as well as the one of the speech-language therapists in these cases, was not well determined (F2, F5):

(...) later they begin to ask questions about broadcasting techniques and it is then that I give the tip, then, it is very individual. Then, I start to introduce prosody, speech articulation, intonation, emphasis, modulation. It escapes a little from the field of voice and moves more to linguistics, right? These parts of speech, more like speech. (F5).

In the previous account (F5), it is perceived that the subject marks a separation of the components of speech, conveying the idea that the concept of prosody does not imply *intonation*, emphasis and modulation. Differently, F2, quoted in the following account, began paying attention to expressiveness from the remarks made by the broadcasting teacher, and so, this relationship generated an interdisciplinary approach:

I started to work with this, I mean, to realize it when I had the chance to teach alongside the broadcasting techniques teacher and, mainly, the interpretation teacher. The interpretation teacher used to say: “hummm, this text is well read, but not evoking any emotion”, or “not giving any intention, it is not convincing... I am not attracted to this text”. Then, I started to think about how to translate, in speech therapeutic terms, or in voice terms, this interpretation that the teacher wanted and, from there, I saw that it is exactly that. They are prosodic traces. It is modulation; they are the emphases and the intonations that are used. (F2).

The survey of the materials used in the training shows that, even if radio texts are used by all the interviewed subjects, aspects related to phonation anatomy and physiology are also focused. The mainly used materials are: radio texts, handouts and different kinds of media with aspects of vocal anatomy and physiology, as well as examples of laryngeal examinations.

At the moment when the subjects were asked to define the term vocal expressiveness, hesitations, pauses and digressions are observed, indicating that this word is still not a part of standard speech therapeutic practices even though the concept exists under different names. F2 also refers directly to this issue:

*I did not know how to work with this and we find few references on it. We can even find descriptions, but few people actually say how to work with emphasis, prosody, with modulation, intonation. So, I work with this, I have been working with it, it is a little more recent. I am trying to find out how to work with it, also in a more efficient way. (F2).
Vocal Expressiveness? (long pause) Well, if you think of it literally, vocal expressiveness; I think it is what your voice expresses... it has to be that, doesn't it? Spontaneous. (F3).
Expressiveness? It would be a term that you... explain to me a bit better what you meant by vocal expressiveness (...) Hummm, vocal expression... ok, yes, I believe that it is that expressiveness, I do not know in which context that people are talking about this. (F4).*

Hummm, vocal expressiveness is to be able to express not only...let me see... to express a message in a different way... (F5).

The accounts of F3, F5 and F6, shown below, approach the concept of expressiveness beyond the verbal element, focusing on the individual's emotions and intentions. The words of F3 and F5 relate expressiveness to the concept of vocal psychodynamics:

(...) vocal expressiveness, I think it is what your voice expresses. Vocal Expressiveness: what does your voice express to you? I think that it would be related to psychodynamics, I don't know, it is the expression of that voice, what the voice is showing you ... it shows you... an anxious person, a needy person, an anxious person, a tense, nervous person. (F3).

Vocal expressiveness is to be able to express a message in a different way, to be able to express whatever you want,

using your voice, it is which emotion, it is what you want to say when you speak that way... you convey a certain message, but it is not exactly what you want to say, I think it is to be able to transmit your feelings. Not only the message, not only the content, but everything aside from it. The psychodynamics, right? (F5).

Expressiveness is the way we place ourselves in the world, it is what we express to others by means of our communication. Something deeper than verbal, than the most formal intention of our speech, and the messages are very strong because they are much more primitive in the view of those who demonstrate it and thus almost unconscious from the point of view of the person who receives the information. So it is a very true form of communication. It is very difficult to manipulate, let's say, the impressions related to expressiveness. You can change the verbal, leave it in one way or another, using softer or harsher words, but the expression will always demonstrate how we are, how we feel and what our intention is. (F6).

The definition of F2, reproduced below, emphasizes the interaction between the intentions of the speaker and the interpretation of the text, which happens through the employment of vocal resources:

Vocal expressiveness is a term that is closely related to the interpretation of the text. With the way that the person is able to express by means of the voice the intention and interpretation and one meaning that they give to that text. I mean, the text has one meaning in itself and the person when they have the text in their hands also gives their own meaning to it and the way to express the meaning of this text and the intention of this text, is the expressiveness of the voice. And so what is expressiveness of the voice? They are the prosodic traces of our speech, all the melodic aspects of intonation, of modulation, the use of the emphasis resources. (F2).

In the definition of F4, the focus is on the message of the text itself, emphasizing the semantic and syntactic meanings which are explicit in the words of the text:

It would be the capacity that you would have to transmit the message in the true meaning that that message possesses (...). And so, to me, expression is this, it is being able to express a fact or a fact and a context, or a context alone, as in the case of the radio, by means of the voice. (F4).

The following concept by F1 is not clear as to how much she understands as expressiveness, but mentions the requirements that a voice must have to carry on a certain show, in other words, the speaker must have vocal expressiveness according to the style of the radio show:

Look, expressiveness is a term that we have been using lately. To me, in this clinical experience that I have had in this small town radio, to me this expressiveness would be to put together all the qualities that a voice can offer. The

announcer has to be expressive; he has to show expression in his voice. It has to have intonation; he has to have all the characteristics of his show. And so, expressiveness is to be able to give your voice all the prerequisites for your show. (F1).

Several relationships are established with concept vocal expressiveness by the interviewed speech pathologists. Some believe that it is the subject himself who attributes meaning to the text, demonstrating, in it, his emotions and feelings:

(...) he has to show emotion through his voice. He has to have intonation; he has to have all the characteristics of his show. (F1).

(...) it is very difficult to manipulate, let's say, the impressions related to expressiveness. You can change the verbal, leave it in one way or another, using softer or harsher words, but the expression will always demonstrate how we are, how we feel and what our intention is. (F6).

The importance of the speaker in interpreting the message, according to its content and its target public, as an actor, is presented in the following words:

(...) this (expressiveness) is very important for the announcers, they have to know that they are actors of the voice, right? They will interpret that text, they won't just deliver a message. They have to know what they want to do with that product, what message they want to convey. Is it for youngsters, for the elderly, is it a sad thing, is it a happy thing? (F5).

The expressiveness conveyed depending on the intention or the interpretation of the text can be exemplified in the words below:

The text has one meaning in itself, and the person when they have the text in their hands also gives their own meaning to it and the way of expressing the meaning of this text and the intention of this text, is the expressiveness of the voice. (F2).

It would be your capacity to transmit the message in the true sense that that message possesses... for example, on a specific piece of news we always ask announcers to highlight the main words of the text. This is a way to read news... Then, you highlight the most important elements. Normally, this is related to the words. If you give some news where you emphasize who, where he did that, what happened... these are those famous question phrases "who, where, why, how". Then, when you are giving the news, it is to those elements that you have to pay more attention and make stand out ... fluid voice, very nasal voice, they have an appeal more related to... the announcers themselves call this a "motel voice", more related to those shows like, "Company in the Dawn", or things of that type, right? (F4).

The association of expressiveness with the vocal resources was mentioned, as demonstrated below:

They are the prosodic traces of our speech, all the melodic aspects of intonation, modulation, the use of the emphasis resources. (F2).

(...) but we bring to attention that inflections can also suggest more that that specific chocolate can be delicious, or suggest less (...). (F4).

The concept of expressiveness understood as quality of the broadcasting, a speech that keeps attention, that transmits credibility and confidence, is indicated in the following words:

(...) Then, his vocal expressiveness is not right. (F3).

(...) it is necessary to have an expressive voice, but not exaggerated, not overdone. (F4).

(...) nowadays, it is not enough for the person to have a good voice on the radio. He has to be capable of guaranteeing attention; he has to be capable of demonstrating confidence, credibility. And people only trust those who seem natural and comfortable when expressing themselves. (F6).

Expressiveness, as trademark of a style of the speaker, the program or the station, can be perceived in the following accounts:

(...) mainly those announcers that host country music shows, they have more characteristic voices. Because it is a region of inner-state São Paulo, these speakers have a heavy accent which characterizes their speech ... it's their trademark. Back in the radio station where I work, we have speakers that already have their established trademarks and wherever they go, everybody recognizes this trademark. (F1).

(...) depending on the type of station there also has to be an adjustment of these resources, which is different from commercial announcements. Does it have a classic style, a more popular style, which is more dynamic. (F2).

(...) an FM announcer. He has a happy, dynamic vocal expressiveness, which is really pleasant to listen to... and we even use this parameter to know if that person is or is not within the standard of that radio station (...) this happens many times, when an announcer from another radio station is just hired and the director tells us something like this: "Hey, put a standard (of this specific station) on him, he doesn't have (this radio's) standard. (F3).

and to work with expressiveness would be to make the speaker perceive the form, the melody of his speech, the way how he is expressing something, considering that, in the great majority of time, he has that to do it according to the pre-established standards of the station. (F4).

In the accounts of the interviewed subjects, it may be observed that, in some categories, the number of references is greater than the total number of people interviewed (Chart 4). This fact demonstrates the use of synonyms or similar concepts to name one same resource. Two examples can be presented: in F2's first account, it may be perceived that the term intonation is strictly related to the punctuation and the

Chart 4. Vocal resources present in speech therapy practices

| Aim | References |
|--|------------|
| Breath-speech coordination | 10 |
| Speech rate/pause/speech duration variations | 8 |
| Intonation (intonation + modulation + melodic curve + pitch variation) | 9 |
| Speech articulation and minimization of regionalisms | 7 |
| Emphasis/prosody | 7 |
| Vocal warm-ups | 5 |
| Vocal health | 5 |
| Voice quality | 3 |
| Projection/resonance | 2 |
| Rhythm | 2 |
| Vocal resistance | 2 |
| Loudness variations | 1 |

syntax of the text, in addition to the term being differentiated into modulation and loudness. The terms intensity and volume also appear, separately:

Then, we starts with the reading of a text, punctuation, fluency of reading, intonation, depending on the type of text that one has, of the punctuation that it has, breathing, articulation, intensity, volume, loudness, vocal projection, modulation, intonation, speed... (F2).

The second example refers to what F3 mentions, that she does not differentiate the concepts of intonation and vocal quality:

We also work with intonation, because, sometimes, they read a page, something very exciting and they read it using a really serious voice, very low. Then, you have to do all that work: “, Hey, the news is exciting, it is a summer thing, sunny, so , let’s do this with your voice, with a high-pitched vocal quality, a more exciting vocal quality, right? Rather than with lower, more discouraged vocal quality. (F3).

Reading texts of different sorts is the predominant strategy in the practice with announcers and is done with the various purposes (Chart 5).

Some accounts deal with “vocal expressiveness” as a whole, believing that the employed strategies are universal, involving all vocal parameters, at the same time:

(...) Then, I start talking about breathing, but not only about breathing. I already point out how the voice is, the punctuation, the end of the phrase, the volume, the speed, the articulation (...) all the times that they think about speaking a little slower; they automatically remove the volume and use more serious tones, so then, I talk about the dependence and independence in the use of these resources. (F2).

You can vary the duration, the intensity and the loudness of speech (...). You vary the melodic curve. Then, there is variation of pitch, there is a variation of the rhythm of speech and the prolongation of it, of the most important key elements of the words of the text. (F4).

(...) So, he has to know these (vocal) resources to accomplish his job in the best possible way. (F6).

Chart 5. Strategies used in speech therapy

| Aim | Strategies | References |
|----------------------------|--|------------|
| Vocal expressiveness | To identify the vocal resources used and the intentions conveyed to the listener, when reading a text | 6 |
| | To identify the employed vocal resources and relate them to the sensations caused by the speech of others. | 6 |
| | To read a text aloud, and a colleague reads the same text, with another "interpretation" | 2 |
| Intonation | To read an advertising text, phrases or single words, interrogating, exclaiming and affirming. | 2 |
| | To read a text with previously marked pauses | 2 |
| | To read a text with previously marked melodic curves | 2 |
| | To read dialog texts | 1 |
| Emphasis | To read a text with previously marked emphases | 2 |
| | To read a sentence changing the placement of the emphases | 2 |
| Speech articulation | To read tongue-twisters | 1 |
| | Speaking with vertical mouth opening | 1 |
| | To utter vowels "a l u" in sequence | 1 |
| | To utter vowels "l e é a O ô u" in sequence | 1 |
| | Myofunctional exercises | 1 |
| Rhythm | Speaking quickly and then slowly | 1 |
| Pitch/loudness | To read a poem with pitch and/or loudness variations in each stanza | 2 |
| Feedback | To record a radio announcement in a studio | 3 |
| Vocal warm-up | Performance of mucosa vibration exercises | 2 |
| Breath-speech coordination | To read or speak phrases, progressively increasing length | 2 |
| Breathing | To read a text without punctuation, in a single inspiration, increasing phonation time progressively. | 1 |
| | To utter a progressive number of dual "sz sz sz sz" in a single inspiration | 1 |
| | Speaking a growing number of monosyllabic words, di-, tri- or polysyllabic, in a single inspiration | 1 |
| Resonance | To perform humming (resonance technique) | 1 |

However, the resources are also trained independently. Sometimes, they are related to the type of text, as F2 points out, or, sometimes, highlighting an emotion or an attitude, depending on the specific emphasis given to a word in the sentence, as in the words of F5:

Then, in the first part (of the lesson) we saw, for example, we did a general warm up with everybody, and from there, I took a text for them to play with. In a specific lesson, I asked them to play with different tones of voice, low, medium and high-pitched. In the second part of the lesson, I will take three different types of commercials: an advertisement where he would have to use more high-pitched tones of voice that are of the more popular style, and another one that can be medium-pitched; then, some news where he can use a medium pitched tone of voice... I want them to be very versatile... Versatility, naturalness, spontaneity, dynamism... because I find that this is an important characteristic of the announcers' profiles. (F2).

(...) you know that typical phrase, I don't remember it by heart. I went downtown, it was raining... and you have to place emphasis, each time, in a different word. I work a lot with that because it is one of the things that they find more difficult: where to put the emphasis. I work a lot with them when they are in studio... when they have a message and then I ask them to express this same message in a happy, and then sad way, I want them to show it through articulation, through the changes that they will make... (F5).

DISCUSSION

Even though Speech Language Pathology practices with professional radio announcers are nowadays present in environments it had never been before, such as radio stations, it is observed that many times, the principles and methods of this practice still carry a therapeutic approach, characteristic of the beginnings of practice in this field (Charts 1 and 2). This practice still occurs with a clinical mindset, where the starting point is a disorder detected by the professional or by the announcer himself. The demand is treated in groups or individually, at the radio station, in private offices or at the training centers.

Vocal well-being still seems to be the aim of most actions (Chart 3), considering that this professional category is at a "high risk" of developing a vocal disorder. However, a change in focus towards a different concept of health can be observed, when the subjects consider the importance of vocal "conservation" and "flexibility", while comfortably using their vocal resources. Thus, these terms stand out due to the fact that they are not easily found in the literature and, clearly, because they represent an opposition to an interpretation of vocal health as being merely a list of "vocal prohibitions", and represent, compatible actions that promote health instead of posing a merely preventive character⁽⁵⁾.

Among the aims of the specific practices (Chart 4), the subjects emphasize the expressive aspects, speech articulation, melody/rhythm and breathing. Even though breathing is the foundation for any oral emission, its inclusion among the focused aspects is understood, because it is one of the issues

considered problematic by the announcers⁽³⁾.

The term expressiveness is often complemented, in many different ways, either by the subjects, or by the literature. The following terms occur: vocal expression, vocal expressiveness, speech expressiveness and communication expressiveness (concerning both body and oral expressiveness) This diversity is based on the emphasis given to different aspects of communication and the way of interpreting the relationship between voice quality and dynamics⁽⁶⁾.

In the accounts, there are several aspects associated to the concept of expressiveness. At one time the meaning of the message is given by the speaker himself, his emotions and intentions (with or without conscious control), at another by the content of the textual message, or even by the style of the station or by the announcer's characteristic style.

The association of the term expressiveness with transmission of emotions seems to be related to the vocal psychodynamics⁽⁷⁾, linked to the attribution of positive characteristics such as, confidence, dynamism, credibility and naturalness to the speech⁽⁸⁾. It should be remembered that not only emotions and positive attitudes are transmitted by the voice, but also sadness, insecurity, apathy, hypocrisy and artificiality. Sounding natural reflects a particular moment of expression, and at another moment this expression can be awkward, nervous and so forth. Every speech is expressive and makes use of different resources to materialize^(9,10).

When approaching the way the listener is affected by the speaker, the interviewed subjects mentioned speeches that are able to hold attention transmit credibility, confidence, and are interpreted by listeners in a more pleasant way than others; the interaction between the interpretation of the text and the intention of the speaker may or may not coincide. Even though the text has a semantic meaning explicit in its syntactic and semantic construction and even if syntax leads to a specific prosodic construction, it may be modified, if that is the speaker's intention. Irony, for instance, is a typical example of this type of modification.

Accent softening was mentioned by one of the subjects, which aims, in this kind of practice, to weaken its related prosodic characteristics, which has a direct relationship with the way that the speaker affects the listener, due to social and cultural issues of each region⁽¹¹⁾.

Expressiveness cannot be taken as synonym of either the speaker's style, the program's style, or the radio station's. Style is a part of expressiveness and is defined by the recurrent marks used in oral animation, in the combinations and variation of grammatical and prosodic resources, which are determined by the station and/or by the announcer himself^(10,12).

Among the aims of the specific practice with radio announcers (Chart 3), expressiveness is second in rank. It is approached with the objective of giving the professional the possibility of conscious control over the use of his vocal resources, in order to be able to function with greater freedom, something that relates with the mentioned concepts of vocal plasticity and flexibility. The characteristics that differed in professional announcers and non-announcers were the more homogeneous distribution of pauses and the greater number of halftones in their voices⁽⁴⁾. However, expression is not restricted to the use of a variety

of resources, in the same way that there is no appropriate or inappropriate use of this or that resource^(9,10,12).

The variable and flexible use of vocal resources will be suitable for a certain type of expression, while in others the prosody will be different. The correlations between sound and meaning are given by the established symbolism between them. In this kind of (mis)alignment the processes of symbolic compatibility and incompatibility should be observed^(9,10,12). In a commercial radio announcement, which aims to persuade towards a certain type of product, speech will be faster and more richly modulated than one used for presenting news.

The strategy of reading is still the most used by the speech pathologists. Words, phrases, verses, tongue-twisters and texts are selected. The texts are from different genres such as poetry, chronicle, short stories, theatrical texts and specific radio texts such as news, advertising and commercials.

There is a need to discuss the conceptualization of the vocal resources mentioned by the interviewed subjects as important issues approached in their practices (Chart 4), not only because at times the same resource was named in different ways by the same person, but also because vocal health, warm up and resistance were at times incorrectly classified by the subjects as expressive resources.

All the interviewed speech pathologists said they perform breathing and breath-speech coordination exercises (Charts 4 and 5), and include, among the strategies for these purposes, pause marking in different texts to be read (Chart 5). Two observations are important: the first relates to breathing type and mode, and to speech-breath coordination itself, that cannot be overlooked when approaching oral expressiveness, given how well disorders in this coordination are able to convey different organic and emotional states. In this case, the best possible performance of breath-speech coordination is desired in order to obtain a good level of variability and articulation agility. Furthermore, it is necessary to understand this type of coordination in association with the meaning of the texts that are being read. The second observation regards the use of pauses. The interviewed subjects considered the respiratory pause, either associated or not to the punctuation of the text (of grammatical nature), but did not consider other types of pauses, such as expressive pauses, planning pauses and a pause denoting a shift of turns in speech^(10,13).

The term variation of duration refers to the length of pauses and segments (also known as stretching), which generates different speeds of speech.

The terms related to intonation were: modulation, melodic curve and pitch variation (Chart 4) Although all of them refer to pitch variation, each of the subjects established relationships with the specificities of their own practice, and the terms can be described in tones or melodic curves^(9,10).

The isolated approach of pitch (Chart 5), in the form of variation and modulation scale, gliding or staccato, performed with verbal and non-verbal sounds (vowels and consonants) in sequence, operates with a vocal fold flexibility that is similar to that required in attaining melodic curves in speech⁽¹⁴⁾. It is necessary to remember that, physiologically, it is very difficult to associate loudness and pitch, varying one, while the other remains stable (Chart 5). Therefore, the SLP professional

should be careful when applying this strategy, always observing the loudness level that can be attained, without substantial changes in pitch.

The strategies developed to work with speech articulation, described by the speech pathologists (Chart 5), include techniques that promote speech articulation widening, and agility in articulation. These include myofunctional exercises, reading or speaking with a wider vertical opening of the mouth, utterance of different vowels in sequence and reading tongue-twisters. These factors intervene in the duration of spoken segments, and, consequently, in speech rate, that is, the faster the rate, the shorter the segments and/or pauses must be, and likewise with stretching.

The interviewed speech-language pathologists referred using general strategies in their approach of emphasis, as if this were an isolated resource (Chart 5). One must note that emphasis and prosody are not synonyms, and emphasis is not a vocal resource. The term emphasis refers to the perceptive prominence on a determined word of a given phrase (and it can be one word alone). The technique of changing the place of the emphasis, that occurs when the phrase is composed of various words, results in a sensible change in the meaning of the sentence – a strategy that is widely used in speech -therapeutic practice. Oral emphasis can be given by one or more vocal resources placed on one word, such as: intonation, stress, articulation, speed and stretching of vowels, pause; and is associated with its interpretative context⁽¹⁰⁾.

The only strategy described as an approach to rhythm (Chart 5), by one of the interviewed professionals, was the change in speech rate, throughout a phrase, from faster to slower. This technique is described in the literature with intention to work with speech rate, and so it is a misconception to consider both terms as synonyms. In the literature, the described strategies concerning rhythm include saying a poem with altered metrics, and also marking the rhythm of speech while reading or speaking, using a metronome, hand clap or foot tap. These techniques are based on regular rhythmic intervals which are not found in speech, and so the duration is changeable due to lexical, stylistic and expressive issues and interacts with the speed and duration of the segments^(15,16).

It is important to discuss the issue of the vocal quality alongside resonance and articulation, since it has been understood by Speech-Language Pathology within a concept that makes a distinction between speech and voice, and describes the motions of the phonatory organs at the glottic level, separately from the ones at the supraglottis. It would be an important change in theoretical positioning to focus on voice quality as a product of anatomical characteristics of the phonatory organs, and derived from laryngeal and supralaryngeal muscular adjustments, instead of subdividing vocal quality into laryngeal, resonant and articulation factors^(10,11).

The terms projection and resonance were considered synonymous by the interviewed subjects (Chart 4), which represents another misconception. Resonance refers to the amplification of sound in the nasal and oral cavities, while projection relates to the propagation of sound in space, requiring differentiated body adjustments, in order to increase loudness without corporal effort. The only mentioned technique to work

with resonance was humming (Chart 5), even though there are a great variety of strategies described by literature.

Varying loudness in stanzas while reading a poem was the only strategy with this purpose mentioned by the interviewed subjects (Chart 5).

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the accounts of speech-language therapists, who act with radio professionals in Brazil, evidences that the verbal concept of expressiveness is “new” for them, even though it is described in specific speech-language pathology and linguistic literature.

This concept not only appeared related to the speaker’s manifestations, in the expression of emotions and intentions, but

also to the judgment of the listener and to its social adequacy, displaying the dynamic relation between what is subjective and social. Although interrelated, at some moment of speech, one of these factors may preponderate on others. Not only is expressiveness conveyed by the subject and his subjectivity, but the actual meaning of the textual message and the style of the radio station were also mentioned as interfering factors.

The variety in nomenclature of vocal resources reveals the need for conceptual deepening in the field of linguistics, since a theoretical model of reference could serve as a guide to practical approaches, in the field of the prosody, in speech-language pathology.

The most widely used strategy most used by speech-language therapists in the intervention, is the reading of different texts, including, mainly, radio texts.

RESUMO

Objetivo: Analisar, pelo relato de fonoaudiólogas, como tem sido a prática da expressividade oral com profissionais do rádio, no Brasil. **Métodos:** Participaram do estudo seis fonoaudiólogas, com experiência profissional na área, por meio de entrevista semi-estruturada, transcrita e categorizada segundo características gerais de atuação e conceito de expressividade. As categorias foram ilustradas com recortes das falas das participantes. **Resultados:** A atuação fonoaudiológica acontece de forma similar em escolas de locução e em emissoras de rádio. A prevenção de lesões tem espaço considerável nas práticas e acontece em forma de orientações sobre bem-estar vocal. O termo expressividade oral é relativamente novo, sendo que, ora a atribuição de sentido à mensagem é dada pelo sujeito e sua subjetividade, ora pelo teor da mensagem textual e, ainda, pelo estilo da emissora. A intervenção abarca o uso de pausas, qualidade de voz, ressonância, articulação, *pitch*, *loudness*, taxa de elocução e respiração. A estratégia mais usada é a leitura de textos, de diferentes gêneros, inclusive radiofônicos. **Conclusão:** O termo expressividade oral não é usualmente utilizado pelas fonoaudiólogas, pois o conceito é tido como novo pelas entrevistadas. Remete à transmissão de emoções e intenções, na mensagem, pelo falante. Foram considerados interferentes: o julgamento do ouvinte; a adequação da fala ao contexto; o estilo da emissora e o teor textual da mensagem, expondo a dinâmica relação entre o subjetivo e o social. Um aprofundamento teórico, no campo da Linguística, pode subsidiar uma atuação fonoaudiológica com menos divergências conceituais no que se refere ao trabalho com os recursos vocais na fala.

Descritores: Voz; Treinamento da voz; Fala; Rádio; Qualidade da voz

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