

RSP Revista de Saúde Pública

Volume 48
Special Number
May 2014



IPLeiria International Health Congress

09 and 10, MAY 2014

CHALLENGES & INNOVATION
IN HEALTH

Abstracts

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UNIVERSITY OF AVEIRO'S ADVANCED VOICE FUNCTION ASSESSMENT DATABASES (AVFAD)

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Introduction: The number of patients with voice disorders has been increasing dramatically over the last decade. Acoustic voice analysis is an effective and non-invasive tool that can be used to confirm an initial diagnosis and provide an objective determination of the impairment.

Objective: With an increasing concern to improve the assessment of voice for as many European languages as possible, the first complete and representative Portuguese pathological voice database is currently being collected. This database will be of huge significance for voice clinicians' assessment and for testing and developing innovative, automated methods and devices for voice analysis.

Methods: Informed consent from all participants that allows the use of this data in further studies and by others research groups in the field of voice assessment is ensured, allowing future cooperative work. The database is distributed through the Advanced Communication and Swallowing Assessment (ACSA) acsa.web.ua.pt platform.

Results: This Portuguese pathological voice database will provide acoustic data from a group of 500 pathological and 500 controls voice subjects, all matched individually for gender and chronological age. Healthy controls are recruited from the University of Aveiro staff and students, and various institutions that participate in the project. Patients are currently being recruited at three hospitals in Porto and Matosinhos, and their medical diagnosis, socio-demographic and anthropometric information registered.

Conclusions: Databases collected by clinicians will enable the interpretation of automatically extracted descriptors of the speech signal and lead to the development of models for their interaction.

Descriptors: Voice Disorders; Databases; Acoustics; Assessment; Speech and Language Therapy.

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APHASIA ASSESSMENT BY THE PORTUGUESE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPISTS

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Introduction: Recently, there have been considerable worldwide changes in the way speech and language therapists (SLT) work with people with aphasia (PWA), and therefore the way its consequences are assessed.

Objective: The main goal of this study was to describe how Portuguese SLT currently access and characterise PWA.

Methods: A questionnaire was constructed to survey SLT opinions (N=59) about aphasia, its consequences, their actual professional practice, needs, wishes and levels of satisfaction related to different existing intervention approaches and assessment instruments.

Results: Results showed dissatisfaction towards the available aphasia assessment instruments for the Portuguese population: 54/59 mentioned that these were not sufficient while 58/59 mentioned the need for new ones. The majority of SLT characterised aphasia focusing on linguistic aspects (83%), recognising, nevertheless, its impact on communicational levels (26%). Their clinical practice was mostly characterised by the rehabilitation model and by focusing on the activity level. Regarding their needs in professional practice, SLT seemed to value the social model as the most relevant, and they considered that the PWA active participation should be the focus of intervention. Significant differences between their current practice versus their needs in a clinical setting arose only for the social model ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusions: This discrepancy suggests that the clinical practice and the management of health services should include more principles from the social model and the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF), e.g., active participation and facilitators. There is an urgent need to develop or to adapt new instruments to the Portuguese culture and reality in aphasia.

Descriptors: Aphasia; assessment; ICF; Speech and Language Therapy; models of health care services.

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