Author’s response to reviews

Title: The Relationship of Bottle Feeding and Other Sucking Behaviors with Speech disorder in Patagonian Preschoolers

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Author’s response to reviews: see over
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Natalie Pafitis MSc
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RE: Manuscript ID: 1077100494283290

Dear Ms. Pafitis:

Thank you for your prompt review of our manuscript entitled "The Relationship of Bottle Feeding and Other Sucking Behaviors with Speech disorder in Patagonian Preschoolers."

We appreciate the constructive comments and suggestions provided by the expert reviewers.

We are enclosing a revised version of our manuscript. Below we outline the modifications we have made in response to the reviewers’ comments. We have highlighted the text added (amended) in yellow.

Reviewer 1

Major Compulsory Revisions

Item #1
We thank the reviewer for making this point. The methods section has been amended to address the concern. We now present more data on the validity and clinical value of the TEPROSIF test.

Item #2
We thank the reviewer for this comment. Our intention was to give background information on how our study differs from previously conducted studies. We now have elected to delete the text associated with physical examination from the methods section to avoid confusion.

Item #3
The main findings are now properly and consistently mentioned in the results and discussion sections. There was a typo in our OR and 95% CI for pacifier for 3 or more years. We apologize for this oversight.
Item #4
We agree with the reviewer’s point of view that association does not signify a causal relationship. However we have made guarded statements regarding possible association throughout the manuscript.

We agree with the reviewer that it is possible to detect chance associations. However, the calculation regarding how many chance associations one should expect to find is over-inflated. If there were no associations among variables with a pre-specified alpha of 0.05 (i.e., the probability of falsely rejecting the null hypothesis of no association), one should expect to find one in 20 (i.e., 1/alpha) chance associations, not "one or two" in 10 comparisons as the reviewer indicated. Further, if there were truly no associations among variables, the observed p-values should be uniformly -- or evenly -- distributed between zero and one. Clearly that is not the case here.

Regarding his comment about providing an explanation of why this finding would be meaningful, the association remains significant both before and after adjustment for potential confounding variables.

Item #5
The methods section is now amended to describe the statistical tests used including the type of logistic regression procedures employed. We have also made additional clarifications for tables 1-3 in the statistical analysis section.

Item #6
We have amended table 4 to describe the variables used to adjust in the model.

Item #7
We appreciate the reviewer’s point of view. In our study we particularly interested in looking at our \textit{a priori} hypotheses of associations between exposure (bottle feeding and other sucking behaviors) and outcomes (speech disorders). Hence we reported odds ratios of these associations. The sociodemographic information was presented to give general background information of the study setting to the readers. This is done in similar manner with other epidemiological reports published in BMC Journal Series

Item #8
The first paragraph of the discussion section is now amended as requested.

Item #9
We thank the reviewer for this point. We now discuss recall bias as a potential limitation in our study.

\textbf{Minor essential revisions}

Item #10
We have made the editorial changes throughout the manuscript.

Item #11
The question regarding ‘Security Blanket’ has a cultural context in our study setting. It is often common for children in Chile to suck the blanket while going to sleep. We now have added this detail to the methods section to provide reasoning for including this question.
**Discretionary revisions**

**Item #12**  
The paragraph in the introduction section is now amended as requested.

**Item #13**  
We have shortened the text in the introduction in response to reviewer’s comments.

**Reviewer 2**

**A. Major Compulsory Revisions**

**Item #1**  
We thank the reviewer for this comment. The methods section is amended to precisely describe the procedures involved in the study.

**Item #2**  
We now start the discussion section by providing summary of main findings.

**B. Minor Essential Revisions**

We thank the reviewer for these comments. All suggested editorial changes are made throughout the manuscript as requested.

**C. Discretionary Revisions**

**Item #1**  
We appreciate the reviewer’s point of view. However, the introduction section is formatted in similar manner like manuscripts published in BMC Journal Series

**Item #2**  
We’ll make the questionnaire available to readers upon request.

**Item #3**  
The text is amended to mention the adjustment variables (gender and age)

Again, thank you for giving us the opportunity to improve and re-submit our manuscript.

Sincerely,

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