Reviewer’s report

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

Version: 4 Date: 29 July 2009

Reviewer: Peter Flipsen Jr

Reviewer’s report:

A. Major Compulsory Revisions

NOTE THAT PAGE NUMBERS WERE NOT GIVEN. THIS REVIEWER ASSUMES THE TITLE PAGE = PAGE 1.

p. 7, 1st full paragraph – the method of evoking the sample requires clarification. Were real objects used or pictures of objects? If pictures were used, were they photographs or drawings? Were they in color? The way the process is described, it sounds like you:

a. showed them the pictures
b. asked them to name them spontaneously
c. asked them to give a different name for them

I suspect this was not the case. Did the examiner perhaps name the pictures for the child and then ask them to imitate the production and then ask them later to spontaneously name them?

Ibid – although the reference is given for the test, the cutoff scores for the different categories used should be specified.

One has to ask about data for reliability testing. Were any recordings made so that reliability of scoring could be established by having another SLP score from the recordings? Or perhaps a second SLP could have scored some of the tests concurrently during testing?

p. 11 – discussion should begin with a brief summary of the significant findings.

B. Minor Essential Revisions

p. 4, 3rd last line of complete paragraph – change “stimulatin” to “stimulating”

p. 4, 3rd line of last paragraph – should read “… 5 and 6 year OLD children …”

p.4, 2nd last line – did the final point made here apply to males only or to both sexes?

p. 4, last line – beneficial to whom or to what?

p. 5, 1st line of middle complete paragraph – insert “a” after “reported”
p. 5, 6th line of middle complete paragraph – should “sucking habits” here be changed to “pacifier use”?

p. 5, last line – the term “phonological speech disorder” should be changed to “speech disorder”. The term “phonological” implies speech but there is nothing in the analysis that was done that would allow one to infer that the errors the children were producing were phonological (rather than phonetic). Just because one can describe the errors using phonological process labels does not mean that the errors are based in the language system (which the term phonological implies).

p. 5, 1st sentence of last paragraph – should this sentence be introduced with something like “From the above it is apparent that …”?

p. 6, 1st line – change “my” to “may”

p. 7, 1st line of 1st full paragraph – change “valuation” to “evaluation”

p. 7, paragraph about Physical Exam – “tonsils” are mentioned twice? What is meant by “normal or depth”?

p. 8 – should indicate what critical p value was used for the testing.

p. 9, 3rd line of 1st paragraph – should state how age was defined. Assume it was “age at last birthday” (a typical and reasonable approach).

p. 9, 1st paragraph – should indicate the lowest values in the sample for gestation and weight.

p. 9, 1st line of 2nd paragraph – change “prevent” to “present”

p. 9, just before last paragraph – should present some summary data on the processes that were observed (i.e., how frequently each occurred in each age group). A table might be helpful.

p. 9, 1st two lines of last paragraph – change “speech level of simplified phonological processes” to “level of phonological processes”

p. 10, 1st sentence of 2nd paragraph – were the regressions done on two categories (it says “below normal versus normal). If so, were above normal scores discarded or were they grouped into the “normal” category.

p. 12, 6th line of full paragraph – change “data was” to “data were”

p. 12, 4th line from the bottom – change “the development of speech phonological” to “the suppression of phonological”. These “processes” are thought to be “systematic simplifications” which are “suppressed” over time in normal children as their speech capacity improves.

p. 19 – Table 3 title – change “score calculated” to “categorizations”
C. Discretionary Revisions

It might be useful to use subheadings in the Introduction section of the paper just as they were done in the Methods.

p. 6, last paragraph – it would be extremely helpful to the reader if the questionnaire were included as an Appendix. I had access to it but (if published) all readers could benefit from it.

p. 10, 2nd sentence of 2nd paragraph – should remind the reader that the adjustment was for “age and sex”.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.