

CORRELATION BETWEEN PERCEPTUAL AND NASOMETRIC SPEECH ASSESSMENT IN SUBJECTS WITH CLEFT LIP AND PALATE

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OBJECTIVE: To investigate the correlation between speech nasality and nasalance using high and low intraoral pressure stimuli in individuals with repaired cleft lip and palate.

MATERIAL AND METHODS: Thirty cleft palate individuals of both genders, aged from 6 to 48 years were analyzed. Patients were submitted to perceptual and nasometric assessment of nasality. Hypernasality was classified prior to nasometric evaluation, according to a 4-point scale, where 1=absent, 2=mild, 3=moderate and 4=severe. Nasalance scores were determined by using a nasometer model 6200-3 (KayElemetricsCorp). Speech samples for both methods consisted of two sets of five sentences: one set with a predominance of high pressure consonants (HP stimuli) and another composed exclusively with low pressure consonants (LP stimuli). The comparison between the mean values of nasalance of the two sets of sentences was performed by the Student t test and the correlation between the degree of nasality and nasalance scores was verified by the Spearman correlation test, with a significance level of 0.05. **RESULTS:** Mean nasalance scores were $36 \pm 15\%$ and $35 \pm 14\%$, respectively, for HP and LP stimuli, with no difference between them ($p=0.306$). A positive correlation between perceptual and nasometric assessment was found for both speech stimuli used ($p=0.000$). **CONCLUSION:** The results indicated that regardless the type of consonant used in the speech stimuli (high or low pressure), there is a positive correlation between the perceptual and nasometric evaluation of nasality.

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