

MMAC Projects Across the Globe

Mirjam Blumenthal (Netherlands) has developed a tool for screening bilingual children's phonological development. This tool is called Speakaboo and has resulted from a cooperative project to improve assessment by screening bilingual children's phonological development in a language the practitioner does not speak. Word lists to elicit words to screen children's phonological development were developed in 19 languages using the phonological system and lexical development in each of 19 different languages. When using this tool (with the help of a native speaker), children are presented with a game. During the game, images and spontaneous naming of pictures is elicited and recorded. All relevant consonants are screened, providing insight into a child's speech development. Recordings allow the practitioner to compare the child's production with that of an adult native language speaker. Findings from the initial investigation of this tool found that practitioners were able to successfully screen phonological development in children's native language. This allowed assessment from a multilingual perspective, facilitating intervention.

Bárbara Goulart (Brazil) is engaged in two projects to address the growth in the number of international immigrants and refugees in Brazil and the role of cultural differences in the Brazilian population in health outcomes. The goal of these projects is to address the unpreparedness of health services and practitioners to meet the demands of this increasingly diverse population, based on barriers faced daily in the access and use of health services. The goal of the first project is to ensure universal access to health care services for an increasingly diverse population through a government website that provides health care service information for health practitioners, immigrants, and refugees and to address the knowledge of practitioners in order to improve their understanding of cultural differences. This website is an essential factor for removing all barriers to health care access. The second project will study factors related to cultural differences and their impact on health outcomes. It can provide epidemiological causation data to make policies more effective and better directed to this population.

Deborah Hersh (Australia) is currently Course Coordinator in Speech Pathology at Edith Cowan University. Over the past ten years, she has been an investigator with a team, led by Professor Beth Armstrong, on five funded research projects (two through the NHMRC, and one each through the Lowitja Institute, the Stroke Foundation, and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies), exploring the experiences of, and services for, Aboriginal Australians with acquired communication disorders after stroke and brain injury. This work is ongoing and has currently resulted in twelve publications and multiple presentations nationally and internationally. Deborah led the development of training materials to enhance culturally secure practice in acute settings in the *Healing Right Way* project. In addition to this work with Aboriginal people after brain injury, Deborah contributes to several projects including assisting Aboriginal families in Perth to promote language development in their pre-school children who are at high risk of otitis media, and exploring the experiences of migrants to Australia who stutter.

Sandra Levey (United States) collaborates with an audiologist to address the held theory that certain ethnic groups and genders listened louder than others. This belief was found to lack evidence, given no significant differences across ethnic groups or genders. The World Health Organization estimates that at least 1.1 billion teenagers and young adults are at risk of hearing loss due to exposure to loud sounds over a sustained period of time, with campaigns to alert safe listening on a global scale by the WHO and other health organizations. Across all research investigations, approximately 400 participants' listening levels were examined, with participants given information on safe listening levels. This research effort was featured on the NBC Today Show in two broadcasts that addressed safe listening (<http://www.today.com/video/earbuds-pose-dangerous-risk-of-hearing-loss-516284483807>) and the dangers associated with children's toy. (<http://www.today.com/video/could-noisy-toys-damage-your-childs-hearing-589336643678>). Sandra has published articles and four textbooks that address children's language development that focus on bilingualism and ethical practice. She is chair of the Multilingual and Multicultural Affairs Committee and was onsite organizer of the International Composium on September 17 and 18 that took place in New York City in 2015 that addressed Multilingualism and Cultural Diversity. The following website can be accessed for presentations and publications: sandralevey.com.

Lemmietta McNeilly (United States) has worked collaboratively with leaders of international organizations to advance the professional development of Speech-language pathologists prepared to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse individuals. In May 2018, she participated in the ASAE European CEO Symposium Global Foresight Summit in Amsterdam, Netherlands. She presented two international sessions at the 10th European Congress of Speech and Language Therapy May 2018 in Cascais, Portugal. *The Barriers and Facilitators in Interprofessional Education: Barriers and Facilitators based on European and North American Evidence*. Constantinidou, F., McNeilly, L., Zerafa, C., Bonello, M., Ojaste, A., Emmeneger, K., and Garrido, J. and *Patient Safety Guidance for Speech-Language Pathologists Working with Children* McNeilly, L. and Robinson, T. In July 2018, she worked with the Philippine Association of Speech Pathology (PASP) to plan and execute an international conference *PASP Transcend* held in Manila Philippines and presented a session *on Service Delivery in Limited Resource Contexts*. She participated in the Global Rehabilitation Alliance meetings May 2018 and May 2019 in Geneva, Switzerland; the WHO Rehabilitation Road Map 2030 activities meetings at the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD and in Geneva 2018 and 2019. She worked with colleagues in Brazil to plan a conference in Foz do Iguacu in April 2019. She presented on *the WHO Rehabilitation Roadmap 2030 and ICF Framework to Write Functional Goals*. Select international articles published in the past 4 years: McNeilly, L. Requisite Knowledge for Teaching Graduate Students to Utilize the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health Framework in Perspectives and McNeilly, L. (2016). McNeilly, L. The Multifaceted Role of Speech-Language Pathologists in the USA. *Annales Universitatis Mariae Curie-Sklodowska. Lublin-Polonia Vol.1 Section N.* (2016). McNeilly, L. Requisite Knowledge for Teaching Graduate Students to Utilize the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health Framework. *Perspectives, SIG 17, Vol.3 p.78-85, 2018.* McNeilly, L. Using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health Framework to Achieve Interprofessional Functional Outcomes for Young Children: A Speech-Language Pathology Perspective. *Pediatric Speech and Language: Perspectives on Interprofessional Practice, Pediatric Clinics of North America.* Philadelphia: Elsevier Inc. (2018) 65:1,125-134. McNeilly, L and Robinson, TL. Communication Disorders: An Overview for Ear, Nose and Throat Surgeons in *Annals of Otolaryngology and Rhinology*, July 2018. McNeilly, L.G. Strategies Utilized by Speech-Language Pathologists to Effectively Address the Communication Needs of Migrant School-Age Children, *Folia Phoniatica et Logopaedica* May 2019; 71:127-134.

Natalia Meir (Israel) is involved in diverse projects investigating typical and atypical language development among bilingual children. Her research deals with evaluating the underlying mechanisms of atypical language development and exploring the interfaces of Language, Cognition (e.g., verbal memory) and Theory of Mind. Natalia focuses on Russian-Hebrew bilingualism and investigates bi-directional cross-linguistic influence in bilingual children, i.e., the effect of the Heritage Language onto the Societal Language and vice versa. She is a member of the Bilingualism Matters network which aims to communicate evidence-based knowledge about bilingualism through dialogue between researchers and the community. Natalia's research showed that Non-Word Repetition and Sentence Repetition tasks are reliable measures for the assessment of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD, previously referred as SLI) in monolingual and bilingual children speaking Russian and Hebrew. A recent study on monolingual and bilingual children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) showed that Sentence Repetition tasks are also valuable in diagnosing comorbid language disorders in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). She advocates for the importance of testing bilingual children in both languages and for the use of empirically derived bilingual norms to ensure adequate language assessment of bilingual children.

Sharon Moonsamy (South Africa) has developed a project that addresses the emergent literacy and language skills of children from marginalized populations in South Africa. This program was presented to Early Childhood Development (ECD) teachers of kindergarten children, 4-5 years of age. The strategies included oral reading, one-on-one reading, and paired-reading. Children had no previous access to SLP services. ECD teachers reported a difference in the children's knowledge of print awareness, confirming that these approaches to teachers' instruction are central. This finding supports the contribution of the support model to children from marginalized communities who are developing language and literacy skills for school-readiness and academic success. The success of the collaboration between the SLP and the ECD teacher should be viewed as a solution to providing early access to SLP services in developing countries.

Munyane Mophosho (South Africa) has been involved in various AAC related projects especially to the ones that speak to issues of social justice and quality of life for the people with communication disabilities. One of the principles of AAC intervention is that everyone can communicate. Most of the people in developing countries have no access to alternative and augmentative communication. Approximately 80% of all people with disabilities are in developing countries. Munyane has conducted community presentations for teachers and/or families on simple low-tech "make at home/school" type AAC resources and, most importantly, how to teach your children to use them. AAC specialists need to see beyond just the physical and learn to engage with clients from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in a holistic manner during consultations. Understanding their clients cultural and linguistic backgrounds will be to their advantage. The project is ongoing and Munyane hopes to get a book published on using AAC in an African context.

Hadar Oz (Israel) has been involved in various projects to bridge the gap between research and the clinical reality of bilingual children in Israel. Among her efforts, she organizes lectures and workshops for SLP's, pediatricians, kindergarten teachers, and others to develop a better understanding of bilingualism and the diagnosis and treatment of a Developmental Language Disorder (DLD). Bar-Ilan University has had the honor of opening the 20th branch of Bilingualism Matters, an organization created to provide valid, updated information to parents, researchers, educators, caregivers, and policy makers dealing with bilingual children and teenagers. Hadar is the dissemination coordinator of the center, advising parents and SLP's on DLD. One of her latest projects is creating a clinical tool, the Bilingual Parents' Questionnaire (BiPaQ), that will assist clinicians in distinguishing DLD from typical development of bilingual children.

Wiebke Scharff Rethfeldt (Germany) is professor of Speech and Language Therapy with the special areas Cultural Linguistic Diversity and Developmental Language Disorder in Multilingual Children. Hence, she has been engaged in diverse scientific and developmental projects. Among others, she developed a tool for pre-assessing multilingual children's case history and linguistic developmental profile. The tools are called Bilingual Patient's Profile and Culturally Diverse Case History and Preassessment Information – Children. Both German instruments have been evaluated to improve the clinical reasoning process on making decisions with regard to assessment, intervention and consultation with multilingual children and their caregivers. Adapted versions are available in diverse languages, such as Arabic, Bulgarian, English, French, Mandarin Chinese, Russian, and Turkish. Current projects consider the investigation of language environmental analysis measures for bilingual toddlers and the use of online Journal Clubs to increase clinician's evidence-based practice skills and facilitate uptake in clinical practice. Wiebke is internationally representing the German association of speech-language therapists and is the German key contact on behalf of the international professional discussion on adaption of the DLD terminology. Wiebke was the onsite organizer of the 5th International Composium on Communication Disorders in Multilingual and Multicultural Populations, held August 24th and 25th, 2017 in Bremen, Germany. The IALP MMAC theme was multilingual issues associated with communication disorders in underserved populations, including refugees and migrants. The objective of this composium was to create a forum for presenting evidence that benefits researchers, educators, and speech-language therapists who provide services to migrant populations and refugees with communication disorders. The composium was hosted by the Hochschule Bremen, City University of Applied Sciences in Bremen, Germany. Conference papers and posters were presented by participants from all continents across the globe.

Eva-Kristina Salameh (Sweden) has developed an alternative assessment tool for grammatical development in second language learning that avoids the over- or under-diagnosis of language impairment in second language learners, *Grammatical assessment of Swedish as a second language*. This tool is based on a grammatical theory, Processability Theory which is not language specific and thus allows for comparisons with other languages. There are five grammatical levels, and the prerequisites for the following step is created at each level. Each level is designed to determine the ability to process grammatical factors required at this specific level. The five levels begin with identification and acquisition of words in a target language and end with the acquisition of grammar based on word order rules. The tool has been investigated in scientific studies and has also been tried out in clinical work for many years. The use of this tool found that bilingual children, with typical language development, were successful at level 4 (predominantly word order patterns) and in most cases at level 5 (subclauses) after 2 years of exposure to Swedish, which was not the case with children with a language disorder. These grammatical levels present a model that can also be used when working with the second language in both adults and children, since it presents the order of acquisition of different grammatical structures.

Sini Smolander (Finland) is the Head SLT at the Helsinki University hospital as well as conducting research in the Helsinki longitudinal SLI study (HelSLI) coordinated from the Department of Phoniatrics, University of Helsinki, Helsinki University hospital. HelSLI (<https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-018-0222-7>) investigates Developmental Language Disorder (DLD, also called specific language impairment, SLI) at multiple levels of analysis and consists of five subprojects (genetic, EEG, cognitive, psychosocial, and bilingual). Sini concentrates on HelSLI-bilingual, which investigates how bilingual children with DLD differ from their peers at the etiological (genetic and environmental), neural, cognitive, and behavioral levels of analysis and what are the risk and protective factors, and how DLD children could be diagnosed more reliably. In clinical assessment work, Sini has collaborated with interpreters to develop the assessment of multilingual children. In this collaboration, a guide has been developed for interpreters giving services for units assessing multilingual/multicultural children with DLD. This guide contains a list of words/terms that are used by different professionals in units corresponding to the Department of Phoniatrics and can be translated into different languages to prepare for the task in hand.

Mohamed Taiebine (Morocco) is engaged in two projects of adaptation and validation of clinical tools for screening PPA (Progressive Primary Aphasia) and acute aphasia following stroke in Arabic. It's a part of an international project conducted by the team of neurology-neuropsychology in Rabat lead by Prof. El Alaoui Faris. The goal of the first project is to address the neurolinguistic and psycholinguistic features of acquired neurogenic language disorders in the Moroccan elderly population in the context of neurodegenerative and cerebrovascular diseases. The goal of the second project is to create a website for healthcare and caregivers of patients with AD in the Alzheimer Center in Rabat. This website will provide advocacy and health care information for health practitioners and caregivers in order to raise the awareness in the population as well as to improve their understanding of such neurological condition and to promote the home-based support programme.

Pao chuan (Jean) Torng (Taiwan) has published her research in the area of emergent literacy and language development for pre-school and school-age children. More specifically, children from the remote mountain area, Nantou County, Taiwan who speak Mandarin Chinese, Taiwanese, or the aboriginal Languages. She developed several table games for children to improve their word recognition. Mandarin Character (the written word) is a complex written system that children need to spend a lot of time in remembering the form, the sound, and the meaning of each Mandarin Character. These therapeutic table games utilized the visual perception skills that motivated children to read and repeat searching for the target words. Results showed that children were able to improve their word recognition skills with the use of these table games.