INFLUENCE OF RESPIRATORY PAUSES DURING THE SPEECH IN THE ASSESSMENT OF VELOPHARYNGEAL FUNCTION: PILOT STUDY

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Objective: To verify the influence of respiratory pauses during the production of syllable and word in the analysis of velopharyngeal closure (VPC). Method: Pilot study with the assessment of 8 individuals with operated cleft palate, both sexes, aged between 15 to 33 years old. Rhinomanometry was performed by means of Pressure-Flow technique using the PERCI-SARS system, version 3.50 (Microtronics Corp), in order to estimate the velopharyngeal cross-sectional area during the production of the oral syllable "pa" and the word "rampa", following two different methods of evaluation, each one used in a craniofacial center. One method consists of respiratory pauses during the repeated production of the syllable and word (M1), and another method consists in the repeated production of the same stimuli, without respiratory pauses (M2), produced in a single expiration. VPC was classified according to the values of the velopharyngeal sectional area obtained in the production of the [p], as proposed by Warren (1997): adequate (0 to 0.049cm2); adequate-borderline (0.050 to 0.099cm2); borderline-inadequate (0.100 to 0.199cm2) and inadequate (≥0.200cm2). The descriptive analysis of the data was performed according to the VPC classification for syllable and word of each individual, comparing M1 x M2. Results: According to M1, VP variation was observed between the production of the syllable and the word in 50% of the analyzed cases (4/8). For M2, there was lower VPC variation among the stimuli studied (25%, 2/8). Conclusion: This result suggests that respiratory pauses during speech production could influence VPC, modifying speech aerodynamics in cleft palate patients.