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CHARACTERIZATION OF CHILDREN'S VOCAL PROFILE AGEING BETWEEN 0 TO 9 YEARS AND IDENTIFICATION OF THEIR NORMAL PATTERNS.

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Introduction: The development of voice accompanies an individual in different levels - physically, psychologically and socially. In children, vocal development is particularly intense because voice reflects all the variability of discoverable expressions children achieve during their development. There are some vocal international studies reported, but in Portugal, such studies are sparse especially when related to children.

Objective: The present project arises from the neediness of finding normative data for child's voice in the portuguese population, in order to build a voice profile expected for each age and thus assist speech language therapists identifying vocal deviations.

Methods: In order to characterize child's vocals, the Praat software will be used to record and perform acoustic analysis of voice parameters; this will allow extraction of fundamental measurement of frequencies, jitter and shimmer and maximum vocalization time. Simultaneously semi-structured interviews of parents, teachers and children themselves will also be conducted. The project's sample consists of twenty-two different groups arranged by age, with equal numbers of male and female. Each group will have at least thirty children and the sample's lowest limit is three hundred and thirty children.

Results: Apart from obtaining normative data, it is expected that, after analyzing data obtained from interviews and its related reference rates, will be possible to develop a structured assessment of children with dysphonia for each age group.

Conclusions: In this context, it becomes essential to alert children, family and educational professionals which kind of care is needed.

Descriptors: vocal health; child voice; child dysphonia.

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