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# Questions about oral expressiveness in the cinema

## Questões sobre expressividade oral no cinema

## Cuestiones de la expresividad oral en el cine

*Priscila Haydée de Souza\**  
*Eliana Maria Gradim Fabron\*\**  
*Izabel Viola\*\*\**  
*Mary Jane Spink\*\*\*\**  
*Léslie Piccolotto Ferreira\*\*\*\**

### **Abstract:**

**Introduction:** As well as being the object of study of Speech Language Hearing Sciences, oral expressiveness is the primary tool formovieactors, along with the expressiveness of the body.**Objective:** To understand questions about oral expressiveness inthe movies. **Method:** qualitative research, interviews were conducted with six actors, six directors and a sound editor, with experience in cinema based on the open questions. The answers were recorded and transcribed.Subsequently, the material was analyzed following assumptions of Discourse Analysis and Production of Sense in the adapted form of Thematic Framework, which summarizes the information, reflections and discussions on each topic. **Results:** there are questions about oral expressiveness and itsconstruction in moviesthat goes through several stages, including prior preparation of actors, resources and knowledge, interference ofdirectors and acting coaches, singing teachers and Speech Language Pathologistsassisting the professional communication as well as the audiovisual technologies and editing. There is great diversity in the training of professionals who work in the cinema, suggesting the need ofschools and training methods that are specific to acting in themovies. Technological, environmental, climatic, financial and aesthetic variables interfere in the work of the actor. **Conclusion:** It was possible to develop a line of reasoning and understanding the variables that may interfere in the process of building oral expressiveness of characters and list a few challenges and difficulties where Speech Language Hearing Sciences can help.

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*\*Speech Language Pathologist and Audiologist, Professorat Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho. \*\*\* Speech Language Pathologist and Audiologist, PhD in Applied Linguistics and Language Studies at Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, Brazil. \*\*\*\*Psychologist, Professorat Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, Brazil. Postgraduate Program of Studies in Social Psychology. \*\*\*\*\* Speech Language Pathologist and Audiologist, Professor at Faculdade de Ciências Humanas e da Saúde at Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, Brazil.*

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**Endereço para correspondência:** Priscila Haydée de Souza. Via Lorenzo il Magnifico, 109, Interno 03. Roma, RM, 00162, Itália.

**Mailing address:** [priscilahaydee@yahoo.com.br](mailto:priscilahaydee@yahoo.com.br)

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## Resumo

**Introdução:** A expressividade oral é objeto de estudo da Fonoaudiologia e é o principal instrumento de trabalho dos atores de cinema, juntamente à expressividade corporal. **Objetivo:** Compreender questões relacionadas à expressividade oral no cinema e conhecer possíveis dificuldades. **Método:** pesquisa qualitativa, realizada por meio de entrevistas com seis atores, seis diretores e uma editora de som, experientes em cinema, questionados de maneira semelhante, mediante questões abertas. As respostas deram origem a relatos livres que foram gravados e transcritos. Posteriormente, o material foi analisado seguindo pressupostos da Análise Discursiva e Produção de Sentido, na modalidade adaptada Quadro Temático, que sintetiza as informações, reflexões e discussões em cada tema. **Resultados:** foram levantados aspectos sobre a expressividade oral no cinema, em suas várias etapas, organizadas didaticamente como um processo de construção, desde a instrumentalização prévia dos atores, recursos e conhecimentos; interferências da direção, preparadores de elenco, professores de canto ou fonoaudiólogos na assessoria em comunicação profissional, bem como da tecnologia na captação audiovisual e posterior edição. A grande diversidade na formação dos profissionais que atuam no meio suscitou comentários sobre a demanda de escolas ou métodos específicos para a atuação no cinema. Segundo os entrevistados, variáveis físicas, emocionais, culturais, tecnológicas, ambientais, climáticas, financeiras e estéticas interferem no trabalho do ator. **Conclusão:** foi possível organizar uma linha de raciocínio e compreender variáveis que interferem na construção da expressividade oral de personagens cinematográficas e elencar alguns desafios e dificuldades, aos quais a Fonoaudiologia poderá auxiliar.

**Palavras-chave:** voz; fonoaudiologia; emoções manifestas; meios de comunicação; cinema como assunto.

## Resumen

**Introducción:** La expresividad oral es objeto de estudio de la fonoaudiología y es la principal herramienta de los actores de cine, junto con la expresividad del cuerpo. **Objetivo:** Conocer los aspectos de la expresividad oral en el cine. **Método:** Utilizando un diseño de investigación cualitativa, se realizaron entrevistas con seis actores, seis directores y un editor de sonido, con experiencia en el cine basado en preguntas abiertas. Las respuestas fueron grabadas y transcritas. Posteriormente, el material fue analizado por los supuestos de Análisis del Discurso y la Producción de Sentido en la forma adaptada Marco Temático, que resume la información, reflexiones y debates sobre cada tema. **Resultados:** Hay cuestiones acerca de la expresividad oral e de la su construcción en la película, pasando por diversos pasos, desde lo instrumental anterior de los actores, medios e conocimiento; la interferencia de la dirección y del cast preparadores, los profesores de canto y logopedas del asesoramiento en comunicación profesional. Existe una gran diversidad en la formación de actores que trabajan en las películas. Esto requiere escuelas y métodos de capacitación específicos para el cine. Las variables tecnológicas, ambientales, climáticas, financieras y estética afectan el trabajo del actor. **Conclusión:** Es posible organizar una línea de razonamiento y comprender las variables que afectan la expresividad oral y el su proceso de construcción en los personajes de la película y la lista de algunos de los desafíos y dificultades que la Fonoaudiología puede ayudarles.

**Palabras clave:** Voz; fonoaudiología; emoción expresada; medios de comunicación; cine como asunto..

## Introduction

It is through visual and sound expressions using the body and voice<sup>1</sup>, in which the actors count and recount the stories for their audience.

With scientific and technological developments, a new form of art and performance began to consolidate: the cinema. “The arrival of a train”, considered the first movie ever, caused a major impact, even without the presence of the speech. Lasting only 50 seconds, single plan in diagonal perspective, its images show the arrival of a train in a station for the disembark and embark of passengers<sup>2</sup>. A new form of language was emerging and, at that moment, given the realism of the record and the impact of the first view, many people believed that the train would come out of the screen and tried to protect themselves.

Only by the middle of 20 and 30 of the twentieth century, the speech of the characters began to be introduced in the movies, especially in Hollywood. In the rest of the world, the speech was introduced gradually.

Since four decades ago, the Speech Language and Hearing Sciences – SLHS, has been studying the speech of actors and characters at the theater<sup>3</sup>, and recently sought to align the knowledge, especially about the cinematic language and the way in which the actors relate to it, focusing on the oral expressiveness built for the representation of characters<sup>4-7</sup>.

The term “oral expressiveness”<sup>8</sup> was suggested in order to understand the orality in its representations, in addition to the anatomophysiological, pathological and therapeutic knowledge of traditional SLHS, i.e., phonetic segments (consonants and vowels) and voice (the suprasegmentals in quality and dynamics), which allow the serving of the speaker’s emotions and attitudes<sup>8,9</sup>. In the SLHS literature different nomenclatures for the parameters involved in these segmentals and suprasegmentals, like phonoarticulation, vocal quality, intonation and modulation, *pitch*, *loudness*, resonance, speech speed, fluency, pauses and emphases<sup>10</sup>. Advancement in studies of this topic helps building a more efficient communication, especially in the work of coaching professionals who works with professional, spoken, sung communication and performance<sup>9-18</sup>.

The growth of cinema brought a new demand for the current SLHS and studies on professional

communication of movieactors began to emerge. Some studies analyzing the oral expressiveness of characters contributed to demonstrate how the work of the actor can stand out in relation to the cinematic construction or not, as well as relate harmoniously to the elements of the audiovisual language itself, creating meanings beyond acting<sup>4,5</sup>.

The speech of the character is no longer produced only in the dialogue of the scene, with the aid of a musical soundtrack and scenic noises, but the visual dynamics of the cameras and the proximity of the microphones brought to the actor other creative possibilities, innovating the relationship of orality in all expression of scenes, called *mise-en-scène*<sup>4,7</sup>.

Study that presents reports by Speech Language Pathologists – SLPs, also called speech language pathologists – SLPs – who were dedicated to coach these professionals<sup>5</sup> showed the need for flexibility in dealing with the production of a film. It is a group work, in which the director of the film signs for all and the actors are recognized in partnership by their characters, i.e., the actors also participate in the creative process, not being totally submissive to the artistic direction. SLPs advice or coaching comes in between, emerging to aggregate in building expressiveness, observing the limits of each actor, his well-being, the vocal representations of characters, the creational freedom and the demands of the direction team, with attention to linguistic issues, paralinguistics, body, continuity and also singing voice<sup>4-7,18</sup>.

The objective of this study was to understand issues related to oral expressiveness in movies and meet its possible difficulties.

## Method

This research, in a qualitative method, was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the institution, under the number 089/2010.

## Subjects

Six actors were selected (A1, A2, A3, A4, A5 and A6), aging from 25 to 46 years old; six directors (D1, D2, D3, D4, D5 and D6), from 31 to 55 years old; and a sound editor (S1), 26 years old; all with experience on movies, both by the completion of several films, for a differentiated education, and for its nominations and awards received. S1 is the only sound editor interviewed in this study and was selected for her undergraduate and master’s

degree in music, having been responsible for the edition of 22 national feature films, awarded for her work five times. She was suggested by a director, of international recognition, justifying the direct relationship of the sound editor to the cinematic sound issues, which would raise relevant information for this study.

**Material**

After the free and informed consent, interviews were conducted with each subject.

With the intention of collecting as much information as possible about the topic, the subjects were questioned with two open questions:

1. Based on your experience in cinema, tell me which issues you consider pertinent when you think about voice and speech in this vehicle, give examples if you consider it necessary (what do you think about voice and speech in the cinema?);

2. Do you think there are difficulties related to voice and speech in the movie? If yes, what are these difficulties?

The interviews were digitally recorded for later transcription and analysis. They were transcribed and sent to interviewees, which could change the contents freely, and, later, analyzed.

**Procedures**

The interviews were analyzed in three stages. At first, various readings of the transcribed material were made for a globalized knowledge of all the content.

Later, for the varied extension of reports, lasting from seven minutes to just over an hour, and the objective of this study, it was proposed an adaptation of the Discursive Analysis with Sense Production Method<sup>19</sup> and performed an analysis adaptation, through the Thematic Framework. Each interview was organized by paragraphs in a frame and by the course of the reports, the topics discussed in the stretch were noted in a side column, as shown table 1.

**Table 1** – illustrative excerpt from the thematic framework analysis.

Transcript	Theme
<p>D4: (...) There is a very intense concern, at least at the time of shooting, I see in the way we work, which is never to interfere with the quality of interpretation of the actor, right? There are actors that really interpret in a more European manner, i.e. between quotation marks, right, this way of interpreting in more European cinema, is even talking lower, right? In a, a lower modulation, huh? Unlike other methods of interpretation more loaded, more theatrical, more histrionic as you see in American cinema, in Russian cinema, for example, huh? I mean, the French, the ... The ... I don't know, the ... Belgian or Dutch, you see all the actors, the best actors, they have this way of talking almost whispering, sometimes, right? Many times ... This brings up, in fact, entails a certain technical care, that our biggest concern, especially of technician of production, right? Is he able to work it, the sound technician, of the good sound designer, be working without ever intervene, or annoying or interfering in the interpretation of the actor, right? (...)</p>	<p>Difficulties related to the sound capture and interpretation.</p>
<p>D4: there are actors that I say as soon as possible "I'm not going to worry about your job, I'll worry about mine", huh? It is understandable that, after all, he's the one who's giving that story, isn't it? And even to the director, so, it is very important to be always, in fact, backing up the actor, right? I think the good director, he actually works in function of the human element that he has in hand, after all, the good director, he considers the actor an accomplice, huh? It's just not a simple hire... No! A "I hired the guy and he's got to say the lines, I wrote or was ordered to direct", huh, no! He has to have this relationship, because it is the human material, and I'm talking about not only the human material, but this material is more important that any director has in hand! (...)</p>	<p>Film Team</p>

From that moment, the thematic categories were defined, which highlighted the issues covered by the interviewees. Each category gathered a lot of information that complemented each other or that showed differences between the reports of each subject, propitiating a discussion interweaved for SLHS scientific assumptions about voice and speech in the movies.

Finally, only the themes, excepting their considerations, were grouped and structured in accordance with the contextual relationship existing among them, as table 2 shows, allowing the reader a synthesized view of the general content addressed by the interviewees and the construction conception of oral expressiveness in the cinema as a process, which receives various interferences.

**Table 2** – summary of the thematic correlation on the construction process of the oral expressiveness in the cinema.

Process		
<b>Formation of the Oral Expressiveness in the Cinema</b>		
Preparation	Previous Instrumentalization - PI	Biological-psychological and social constitution
		Formal and/or informal education
	Creative Process- CP	Influences: script, direction, coaches
		Construction of the oral expressiveness of the film character.
Unpreparedness- UP	Inefficient and/or nonspecific education	
Repair	Dubbing	
	Edition	
<b>Support Technologies and Infrastructure</b>		
	Team	
	Equipment	
	Environments	
	Repair	Dubbing
		Edition
<b>Fragmentation of Oral Expression</b>		

**Results and discussion**

Below, the issues raised during the interviews will be presented and discussed, illustrated with the most representative speech snippets of each category, as the provision proposed in table 2.

**Construction process of Oral Expressiveness in Cinema**

**1 – Formation of the Oral Expressiveness in Cinema**

**1.1 - Previous Instrumentalization**

From the reports, it was possible to notice that each actor brings in his construction learning theories either formal or informal, specific or not, life experiences, in addition to his own working tool

– body and speech – expressing psychic, social and biological aspects. Then, in A and B, such aspects will be developed.

**A - Biological-psychological-social Constitution**

To be chosen by the casting director to play a role, the actors have already some representation in regard to the character. Compatibility for body, voice and personality – from the actor in regard to the character – was shown in the reports as an important factor of selection, to make the story believable, and aesthetics.

*“Now the question of voice ... It is ... I don't know, because the actors have their*



voices and if you call the actor you have already bought his voice.” (D3)

“There is no doubt that the choice of the actor, the issue of voice comes along. I think it goes through a process of selection too!” (D4)

“If you don’t work in a low voice register, you have a tendency to be used more for comedy, than for a light role...” (A5)

“The cinema has this tendency to stick the character to the actor; the casting in cinema is very close! No one will call you (interviewer) to make a 70-year-old woman in a movie ...” (A2)

According to the reports, it is possible to gain a better understanding of the role of the voice of the actor when building the character, and even find in them an inflexible, invariant conception of voice.

In another sense, the speech of one of the actors brought the possibility of a more dynamic voice, which for some of the respondents also proved possible.

“There’s endless possibilities of things to be doing with the voice and, for me, who opened this possibility was MM (SLP). And it was really to free the actor from his own voice to he could create other voices, give real voices for the characters, not just lending them yours... Sometimes, you might want to borrow yours, because it fits! But, sometimes it doesn’t.” (A6)

There are studies that show the organic relationship between oral and body expressiveness, as dynamic, flexible and adaptable,<sup>10,28,9</sup>. Thus, the way an actor expresses himself, seen by some respondents as something static, do not proceed; being possible to understand the voice and the speech as an expression in movement, adaptable to performing situations of the characters<sup>4,7,20</sup>.

The report of the director D4 also brought concerns about the coherence between the voice and body from the characters.

“Of course, compatibility, when you talk about it in the cinema, there is a concern from the beginning of the soundtrack! Compatibility of timbre with the physical type that is in front of the camera!” (D4)

The sound editor complemented by pointing out gaps between the story of the character and the actor.

“Sometimes, you have a character who has an amazing voice and he (director) casts an actor who speaks with a thin high pitched voice. And the actor has to be the main character, the guy’s a hero, it does not work, we would have to dub the entire movie then...” (S1)

These questions about characterization are discussed in other studies that shows the possibility of constructing the biological-psychological-social aspects harmoniously by the actor and his character, but requires specific training and direction to be flexible and achieve credibility, truthfulness and naturalness required to the speak of the character<sup>6,7</sup>.

Issues related to vocal well-being also emerged over the reports. The emotional state and diseases can affect the vocal performance and disrupt the work of the actors. Some reports, however, consider the vocal care less needed in the cinema.

“Normally the biggest problem with the voice that we see is if the actor get aflu, or some sort of disease that can make him more twang or that he has a little problem.” (D6)

According to the account of A3, muscle strains would affect her performance during the recordings of the film, messing up the expressiveness of the character. She mentioned having found in the vocal warm up exercises a large ally to these issues.

“And there is the technical aspect that is to take care of the voice, you warm up the voice. Not long time ago I learned some basic exercises to warm up the vocal cords. (...) And it’s not to have a voice that is beautiful, perfect, and this and that. It’s for you to keep the available voice. Often, when you are delivering a line, a word is choking or you fumble, you stutter in another word and it is the result of the emotion there, in the scene, of the moment, and it helps a lot to tell this story. Then, the vocal warm up is just for you to relax and let the truth of the moment come.” (A3)

Actor A2 revealed that he has never seen someone warming up their voice to a scene in the cinema and believes that, by using the microphone, it is not necessary.

“Nobody warms up to make scenes, no one tires the voice to do movies.” (A3)

Director D6 said that some filming takes all day, to make a good use of some scenario, for example.

*“If you take a typical day of filming, working, I know it’s ridiculous, but if you work ten or fourteen hours in a typical day of filming, a feature-length fiction, which is normal, an actor, in terms of talking, will have spoken for two hours the most. If you’re making a film, you’re going to use his voice in the filming for about two hours.” (D6)*

According to reports, there are also non-linear filming, i.e., scenes taken out of the chronological order and the need to maintain the linearity, the continuity, of the voice between the scenes, when rearranged.

*“Depending on the director or the storyboard, a same scene is filmed in various plans, it is fractionated. Then you have to get the continuity of the hand, the gestures that are there. Then, the actor has to be connected, as not only was the gesture, but how was the emotion, that voice, that voice within quotation marks, that emission.” (A4)*

In the literature, there are justifications about the realization of the vocal warm-up exercises<sup>7,21-23</sup>, as well as techniques for the adequacy of the voice projection to the diverse sound environments and to the audio capture<sup>6,18</sup>. The excessive recordings routine requires a greater vocal resistance, a fact that could be minimized with some vocal exercises to avoid vocal variations, especially in scenes that require greater attention to continuity. A sound capturing annulled by a bad vocal projection is likely to generate problems in the speech intelligibility of the character<sup>6,18</sup>.

About the issue above mentioned by D6, it would be interesting to add to the SLP’s proposal, coaching, guidelines and strategies for the prevention of disorders that can affect the actor’s vocal performance. For this, it could be realized, too, the actors’ vocal quality monitoring, along the film production, both by perceptive-auditory analysis, in which the SLP would use a standardized scale to register his perception about the actor’s voice, or the acoustic analysis<sup>12,24,25</sup>, through specific *software*<sup>4,6,18</sup>, in which the voice is recorded and analyzed.

### **B - Formal, informal and complement education**

College for performing arts, theatre schools, practice, empiricism, television, classes or assistance with singing teachers acting coaches and SLPs were mentioned as means of formation of the movie actor.

Many professionals considered positive the theatrical training, by giving greater scope to the creative process and transmitting more truth on oral expression.

Both directors and actors commented that the physical criterion interferes in hiring to act in movies. With this, it becomes common to people without specific training or experience, whether in theater, cinema or television, rendering difficult the process of construction of the characters in their dialogues, interactions, along the production. Apart from the lack of formal knowledge, there are also specific knowledge and expertise, focused on other vehicles, such as the theatre and television. The actors with extensive experience in television tend to represent in a too natural way, without daring to the characterization of the characters. This causes the distinct personalities representation to be reduced to just the actor. There are almost no character-construction process.

*“There are several strands, I mean, every source provides you a kind of actor and then you need to know including how far each one arrives. How to play with it, to know where each one arrives is fundamental ... We do things that are made of speech and if speech is not properly attached it becomes a problem ...” (D1)*

A5 pointed the theatrical formation as a negative factor, because its grandiloquent speech may seem artificial when he dialogues with an experienced actor in movies.

*“The stage actor is very articulate and very proud of his own voice, very charming. (...) When I get to work with this type of actor it is always very difficult, because I have a whole work dedicated to the language of cinema, I don’t like to talk naturally, because it does not exist, it is a premeditated and studied language for a vehicle.” (A5)*

The testimony of A3 brings up, based on his experience, the difficulty that the actors have to prepare to act in the film, due to the lack of formal specific education.

*“Nowadays there are more colleges and some regulated courses for actors in Brazil, but we don’t have a training with know-how, in fact. We end up learning a lot from the experience of the work. (...) Then, I think each one ends up discovering his own method, we don’t have a super*

*school with method of interpretation, so we don't have a school to use the voice, we're learning every one for ourselves. (...) So, I think that the greatest difficulty is this: we don't have schools with methods that help us, to help us right at the beginning. We end up learning and having experiences and getting screwed.” (A3)*

Such complaints related in the reports corroborate studies about the differences between the means of dramatic performance<sup>2</sup> and raises the demand for specific training for cinema, with knowledge focused on the creative process of oral and corporal expressiveness, providing greater harmony to dialogues, improvements in the quality of the sound capturing, on the credibility of the speeches<sup>7</sup> and also easing the dubbing<sup>18</sup>.

### 1.2 - The creative process

In addition to the previous instrumentalization, the influences of other variables, such as the direction, the script, the strategies and methods, as well as the support of consultants, have been mentioned by the interviewees. Within the creative process, too, it is the construction of the oral expressiveness, itself, that is, the planning and the producing of the voice and of the speeches of the characters, the moment in which the actor is finally recorded in the setting. In A and B, such aspects will be developed.

### A - The influence of the script, of the direction and of the coaching

In the creative process, moment in which several factors contribute to the construction of the characters and their speeches, there is the important participation of various professionals.

#### A1 - Influences of direction

The directors have distinct formations, which will influence their way of driving the whole development of the film.

*“There are styles of direction. You take a more English direction, you have a greater respect for the artistic work of the actor ... (...) Now, there is the director who speaks ‘ I want you to get through the door and say ‘ good morning, Camila, how are you today? ‘ ‘ ((doing a deep voice and monotonous speech)). The guy will want exactly that! And the actor will have to do this!” (D6)*

Director D5 referred to use the script to start his direction, putting as much information as possible, about the character and about the scene, in order to ease the understanding of the actor in regard to what he had planned.

*“In the movies that I direct, I also participate in the script. I get very involved in the script. Script is something that the actor will take home and will read, will pay close attention, to do a good job. So, I put enough information there about the character, about the situation, about the things that are in the scene.” (D5)*

Actress A3 added, in regard to the role of direction, by interfering in the film with a comprehensive look at all the creative and technical aspects, the possibility of a positive participation of other professionals who assist in the preparation of oral and corporal expressiveness of the actor:

*“... the director look at the actor, look at the camera, he looks the light, the framing, he looks at millions of technical stuff. Some directors can do all this and direct the actor, but I think the more people with know-how, sensitive, creative, which may have an exchange with the actor will enrich his work, make it better.” (A3)*

The fundamental interference of the director in the creative process is present in the reports of the interviewees and corroborates other studies. Thus, the SLP, the acting coach and the actors must rely on his guidelines and adapt to them<sup>4,7</sup>.

#### A2 - Influences of script

On the creation of the script, there are directors who interfere in its writing and there are also those who bring almost nothing written down. Director D3 said she prefers that her actors improvise the dialogues, giving them few references. At first, she used to have a conversation by herself, record it and then transcribe it, so that the speeches would sound as real as possible. Still, she noticed difficulties at the moment in which the actors were reading the lines. She started, then, working with improvisation.

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Director D4 had great concern with the lines of his script and was convinced that it is possible for actors to interpret them with naturalness.

*“The process of preparation is important... Well, in my specific case... Specific because I write my own scripts. I don't follow a script written by others, maybe because my formation is essentially literary. (...) Before starting any work, having the actors around the table and hear them talking about the text that I wrote ... It's not for them to try to change my text. Because I wrote it, I spent months and months dedicated to it and it will not be the actor who will tell me whether the text is not good or not and that he won't be able to say it. I change the actor right away!” (D4)*

Director D6, who also worked as a scriptwriter, says his vision about the interactions.

*“So, obviously, as a scriptwriter, when you're writing, you're imagining the scene, you have to visualize the lines, you have to visualize the way that the actor will deliver that line (...). You think of intonation, you think of projection, you think of everything! (...) However, that's just the tip of the iceberg. Then, you will get the director's interpretation. (...) There, the director is talking to the actor and the actor creates a whole new way to talk about this line, to deliver this line... So there you have three distinct artistic interactions and the final product will be a dialogue among these three.” (D6)*

Thus, there are reports that showed great importance to the study of the script to know the characters and the director's interpretation, as there is who directs without scripts, creating situations at the time of the audiovisual capture.

In addition to the mentioned professionals, the sound team also interferes with the construction of oral expressiveness. Although the

director centralize the guidelines for the work, it is impossible to deny the collective nature of the cinematographic creation.

Other professionals, not less important, also interfere in the construction of the character, such as the makeup artists, costume designers, continuity supervisors, image and sound editors and producers<sup>7</sup>.

### **A3 - Influence of advising, coaching**

The consultancy for film actors can be performed by acting coaches, singing teachers and SLPs with expertise in this area.

These professionals work directly with the actor's oral expressiveness and can collaborate in different stages of production, on demand from the director or from the actor, who may seek assistance outside of the shootings.

#### **A3.1 - Acting coaches**

According to the report from the sound editor S1, the acting coaches assist the actors more in regards to the body issues.

*“What I hear from the actors at the time of the shooting is that they don't take care of the voice because the acting coach does not give the necessary attention, they prepare the physical, by preparing the body, stretching... (...) Whenever I had a chance to talk to the actors, they said they had never had any emphasis on any kind of preparation such as this, vocal preparation, even vocal artistic, not vocal 'vocal exercise', but vocal art.” (S1)*

Another report sees as positive the participation of the acting coach.

*“The directors seek aid because, really, directing is to administer many needs on the scene, the director has to have so many eyes, for a lot of things, for that a casting-director helps a lot.” (A3)*

#### **A3.2 - Singing teachers**

A5 believes that singing lessons can benefit the expressiveness of the actor, when constructing the line of his characters.

*“The good actor, he has a musical quality, knows rhythm, tone, dynamic ... So, for me, the study of the actor is the music.” (A5)*

### 3.3 - Speech Language Pathologists

Director D4 said that themovieactors rely on quality equipment for sound capturing and that the biggest concern during the scenes is in regardsto the modulation of voice, along the lines. For actors with a facial typology that best identify theircharacters, it was hired the consultancy of a SLPto work with the diction of these actors.

*"I'd rather hire a SLPto help the actress who has the ideal typology and I have no doubtyou can improve her diction. Often happens that, yes!" (D4)*

Actor A5 said he can't understand the presence ofSLPsin the preparation of the movie actor, because he believes that actors should speak well.

*"Because, theoretically, anactor should know how to speak well, huh?" (A5)*

Another actor believes that the presence ofSLPsis due to a bad performanceof theseactors in the interpretation.

*"The bigger problem is that nowadays anyone thinks he can be an actor. So, theyhave no training to even understand what I'm talking about, even understanding what is the construction of a character (...). Then, of course, I think the SLPs, as well as the acting coaches are being called to getthe minimum of these people ..." (A2)*

Director D1 explained that he considers important that the actors make constant accompaniments, both with SLPs, andwith singing teachers, to broaden and improve their possibilities of action, as well as preventing problems during the process of sound capturing.

*"But, in general, their birthplace (of the actor) is the theater, theycome with a very strong voice preparation, of how to project, how to articulate, of how to break the speech articulation, because then he has roleswhich demand it. (...) With these guys, it is very pleasurable work because they can goanywhere ... When you get actors like that, and I tell you, they can do a lot, and are very close to the Comedy, I mean, you see DF (an actress), she has a huge range of possibilities there, but that's because she does all these things, she goes to theSLP, she works in her singing, her technique, so there is a constant exercise there." (D1)*

Another report talks about the importance of learning from the SLP and its benefits in the creative process.

*"For a year I had follow ups with a very nice SLP, who studies and teaches theatre to actors (...). She taught me that because I had a lot of trouble with it, because when I changed my voice, I thought it was forced. (...) How to make the voice feel true and appropriate to actor? And she's a person who knows how to teach it." (A6)*

The participation of other professionals in advising inmoviesseems to still not be clarified regarding the objectives of each contribution. One of the respondents, for example, said he cannot understand the role of the SLP in the cinema,he understands that they work with communication disorders, being the singing teacher, in his view, the most appropriate professional to deal with actors. This participant is unaware that the SLPswork in cinema because of the care with the voice; in the vocal construction of the characters, on perfecting or adapting it; in the vocal continuity; singing issues; in linguistic and paralinguistic issues; and in communications mediated by the body in harmony with the voice<sup>7,18</sup>.

This same participant reported having done singing lessons and mentionedhaving learned to observe more hisown voice, to know better hisworking tool, with its possibilities of treble, bass, projection. It is known that the singing lessons can improve breathing, the emission and the articulation, that the exercises can initially, in some degree, improve the speech patterns, but if there are complaints related to the spoken voice, the singing lessons can even harm it<sup>26,27</sup>.

It is important to differentiate the objectives of each activity. Actors-singers can benefit themselves from the lessons with singing teacher, however if the goal is to improve the speech, it would be interesting to find a SLP who works with professional communication consultants. There are studies that prove that a good singer is not necessarily a good speaker<sup>20,28</sup>.

### B - Construction of the oral expressiveness of the character

The reports of actress A6 shows that little has developed regarding methods for forming movie-actors, what she called ' schools of cinema '.

*“Making movies in Brazil is still something new. (...) so this fad to call coaching to train people to do the movie and such, because no one actually has the technique of cinema. There are good actors, but there’s no technique of cinema, because here there is no school of cinema. Because I’ve done these technical schools of cinema and it sucks! (...) A psychological thing in people’s minds so they think they are actors and these people are not ... It’s not that, the actor is an artist who creates, who knows how to communicate that role he was called to work on it! He understands that and he enters in it. That, to me, is a real job.” (A6)*

Among those interviewed, few reported using personal strategies or Stanislavski theatrical preparation, as: observing people in everyday situations and consecrated actors; studying the character in order to understand their contexts and imagining themselves as such; writing letters playing the character; avoiding the conscious construction, premeditated, in character, that is, improvising; imagining the voice of the character and, from it, incorporating the personality to be represented; and adapting the oral expressiveness to the cinematic context.

*“(...) you cannot change your voice, because otherwise you get very different and, as the camera is on you, you have to have an even greater credibility. So, I believe, that for the movie it is the same thing. You create the voice to your character, but it has another dynamic, this projection that voice, it is so much closed. So, you have to be more careful, especially in volume.” (A6)*

*“Learning is doing more with less ... I guess that’s it.” (A4)*

The proposals of Stanislavski, actor, theatre director and pedagogue, for the construction of the characters, are known and used by directors and actors, mainly in the theatre<sup>29</sup>. The method consists of active analysis about the characters, from the perspective of their physical actions, which are caused by internal content, thoughts and emotions. It has great prominence in the area since the 19th century until nowadays, with studies demonstrating its applicability<sup>29</sup>.

It is noteworthy that the presented content emerged from the issues related to voice and speech in the cinema, as well as its possible difficulties along the production of a film. Among the methods known by actors for the construction of the speech of a character, are the proposal of Stanislavski to theater and private strategies.

### C - Unpreparedness

When addressing the character construction and his expressiveness there were emerging oral comments about the unpreparedness of both actors the technique staff and even the direction.

Several reports pointed to the articulatory accuracy, intelligibility of speech or good diction as basic skill of the professionals who want to act in movies.

*“I see a problem on the part of the direction, the acting, regarding diction, with the accent.” (S1)*

Other reports point to the scarcity of studies directed to the issues of the character’s orality.

*“So, the problem we have is that lack of preparation. This lack of preparation of the director; this lack of preparation of the actor; this lack of preparation of almost all the elements of your team. Why? We don’t have school; people don’t care because they know this is a difficult job, huh? So, we’ve got a big problem within the film industry.” (D6)*

One of the needs mentioned by most professionals was the speech intelligibility and, in these cases, a way to improve them would be to add articulation exercises to the vocal warming<sup>9, 6, 18</sup>, allowing the actor greater control over their own lines.

### 1.3 - Repair

Repairs become necessary, because, throughout the shooting process, failures can occur that compromise the quality of the character’s oral expressiveness. In this study, the flaws were classified into Primary or Secondary Failures, according to the direct or indirect causal relationship with the actor.

**Type I or Primary Failures:** arising from problems in the actor’s oral expressiveness. In this case, the repair will be carried out during editing, with improvements in the acoustic signal. Or that

lines cut, or there is the need to perform the dubbing of that line.

**Type II or Secondary Failures:** the actor has built a good oral expression for the character during the shootings, but technical problems arose, like poorly positioned microphone, disconnected wires, environmental noises, bad sound monitoring of the input signal by the responsible for it. In this case, the repair, when the problem was not detected in time, will also be held during editing. The scene may be removed, the audible signal can be improved, or the actor may dub the line of that scene, where the problem occurred.

From the detection of faults and their causes, there are ways to prevent them or fix them.

The ways mentioned to repair a problem occurred during the capture phase were sound editing and dubbing, which will be described below, in A and B.

*“Comes the time for mixing, you don’t listen to anything that the actors are speaking, you hear the bird, the rustling of trees, but the actors you don’t listen, you don’t understand what they’re talking about.” (D4)*

#### A - Edition

The acoustic material, containing the character’s lines, is improved, equalized, in order to generate greater harmony between the dialogues. The edition depends on the quality of the acoustic material collected; however it is not always possible to take advantage of it. In this case, it resorts to the dubbing<sup>18</sup>.

*“The great technological challenge, the great technical challenge, for the good sound designer, is to balance the voices of the various actors, the actor who speaks lower, which has a lower tone, or the actor who already has a more acute or higher timbre; this is the great challenge that exists in the cinema! With all the technical advances, there is still this kind of concern and sometimes a bit of difficulty to be able to work with the various modulations of voices. I think this is a caution that we have to have, because it’s going to interfere directly in the quality of the work of the actor.” (D4)*

Technological advances, through the evolution of the equipment and of the software, allow more resources for the sound planning of the films. This favors the prevention and correction of the

problems, such as low-quality tone, unwanted noise and unintelligible speech. In addition to interference qualitatively on the uptake and the sound editing, the technology interferes with the way professionals work, what demand update, in order to follow these innovations<sup>30</sup>.

#### B - Dubbing

The actors need to repeat the speeches of his characters, in an attempt to play them as close as possible to the reality of that time they had performed. Not every actor has experience as a voice actor. Some of the interviewees reported fear of this time, because of the difficulty in performing the task.

*“I discovered recently that most of the films in the United States are dubbed. People don’t have the concern in the setting of the film to articulate and speak in the tone that should or would. I was very scared, because every movie I had to dub, I thought it was so hard! We dub inside of a cabin, fully sealed and alone, with a monitor in front that shows the scene that you’re dubbing. It’s still very uncomfortable for me. You have to reproduce what you were feeling at the time of the scene, it’s so different, it’s so cold.” (A1)*

S1 recounted her experience to follow the shooting of the dubbing of various actors and brought up the need for a more objective way of analyzing the speech in order to ease their reproduction.

*“I’ve witnessed episodes in which the actors depended on subjective resources, as some rituals to attain certain emotions and I think it would be interesting if there was a more objective way to reach them. (...) You have to have a somewhat more dynamic, a little more objective way to build it. And it’s that, the intonation that I’ll talk to transmit that emotion.” (S1)*

In relation to the dubbing, the difficulties mentioned by various subjects are explained by the demand of a sophisticated technique of sound synchronization with an interpretation construction in seconds. The actor must be able to incorporate details of context, of facial expressions and other aspects from the original version<sup>4</sup>.

Dubbing requires a specific training<sup>12</sup>, as well as acting in cinema, theater<sup>7,18</sup> or on television. This is another method in the work of the actor.



Therefore, the difficulties pointed out by the interviewees make sense.

## 2 - Supporting technologies and infrastructure

From the reports, it was evident the role of supporting technologies and infrastructure on the issues of oral expressiveness, because the work of the actor in cinema is mediated by audiovisual capture and, for that, there is the need for equipment, staffing, and procedures that enable the production of the film, with a good result in the end.

In the movies, to transmit greater reality to the narrative, the scenes are filmed in real locations, with various acoustic and visual environments. Thus, each scene must be well planned so that the capture is of good quality, while maintaining a natural performance.

### Team, equipment and environments

Engineers or designers, technicians and sound editors are professionals who work indirectly with the actor's oral expressiveness, because they affect the capture quality of the actor's speech, from the moment of its registration to the post-production, when audio files are edited.

*"And now there is what we call a sound designer. (...) And this is essential, because he isn't going to get there on time and position the equipment at random. (...) The great technological challenge, the great technical challenge, to the good sound designer, is to balance the voices of the various actors, the actor who speaks lower, which has a lower tone. (...) With all the technical advances, there is still this kind of concern and sometimes a bit of difficulty to be able to work with the various modulations of voices. I think we must be careful because it's going to interfere directly in the quality of the work of the actor, in the quality of actor's interpretation." (D4)*

The capture of sound can be performed while shooting the scenes or, subsequently, by means of dubbing. One of the microphones used, the boom, which is the microphone installed on top with the support of a rod and captures the sound of the actors and the environment, in 360 degrees; and the lapel, which is positioned somewhere hidden in the actor's clothes, and captures mostly the actor's voice<sup>18,30</sup>.

## 3 - Fragmentation of the oral expressiveness

One of the features of the cinema is the possibility to record the scenes out of the chronological order, which facilitates the use of scenarios, environments and physical aspects of the actors, who may need to change the look throughout the storyline. That possibility, however, can hamper the creative process and the construction of an organic and coherent oral expressiveness.

Just as it is necessary to pay attention to the physical placement of characters in the settings, in scenes recorded on several takes, it is also necessary to pay attention to the continuity of the voice and of the line.

*"It is also the great difficulty of the cinema; I think it's the fractionated part of the thing. It's all very split, sometimes ... Depending on the director or of the plan, a same scene is filmed in various plans, it is fractionated. Then you have to get the continuity of hand, gestures that are there. Then, the actor has to be connected, not only about the gesture, but how was the thrill, that voice, that voice within quotation marks, that emission, to take a unit and one truth! It's so hard and I think that the fun is in it." (A4)*

About fragmentation along the recordings, the capture of scenes out of chronological order requires greater care with the continuity of oral expressiveness, regarding vocal quality, *pitch*, *loudness* and the issues of vocal dynamics, like speed of speech, articulation, rhythm, modulation, among others. In that sense, the SLPscan assist the actors in maintaining the linearity, the continuity of vocals<sup>7</sup>.

The following table 3 illustrates the repetition of themes between the subjects interviewed in this study and draws attention to some important aspects, such as the question of unpreparedness and ratio of performance with the technologies and infrastructure.



**Table 3** – thematic recurrence among the interviewed subjects.

Categories	Process			
	Training of Oral Expression in Cinema			
Professionals	Preparation PI, CP and UP	Repair	Support technologies and infrastructure	Fragmentation
D1	PI, CP, UP		X	
D2	UP			
D3	PI, UC			
D4	PI, CP, UP	X	X	X
D5	CP		X	
D6	PI, PC, UP			
A1	PI	X	X	
A2	PI, CP, UP		X	
A3	PI, CP, UP			
A4	CP			X
A5	PI, CP, UP		X	
A6	PI, CP, UP			
S1	PI, CP, UP	X	X	X

**Caption:** D – Director; A – Actor; S – Sound editor; PI – Previous Instrumentalization; CP – Creative process; UP – Unpreparedness; IE – Infrastructure.

The topic preparation of the oral expressiveness in cinema has been approached by all participants, being the most discussed the creative process (11-86%) the previous instrumentalization (10-77%); and the unpreparedness to act in this way (9-69%). Another recurring theme among those reports was supporting technologies and infrastructure (7-54%). Repair and fragmentation of oral expressiveness in cinema were the least for applicants, present in the report of three subjects (23%). It is interesting to note that S1 and D4 approached all themes found in this study.

### Conclusions

Regarding content that would arise when requesting that each professional thought about voice and speech in the cinema, there were questions about the process of the oral expressiveness construction and main features that this should transmit to their audience: truth, credibility and intelligibility, harmoniously with the body expressiveness, with themise-en-scène, aligned to

the aesthetic assumptions of the cinematographic direction.

It was possible to understand that there is an oral expressiveness construction, going through stages of a process, in which may relate to the following variables: previous instrumentalization, which covers the biological-psychological and social actor’s constitution and the specific learnings about performance, as well as the complementary learning related indirectly to the acting; the creative process, which covers the influence of the script, the direction and the coaches; the technologies and infrastructure, along the catchment, audiovisual recording, editing, financial resources, environments and scenarios; and, lastly, fragmentation, because it affects the linearity of the actor’s work and requires greater attention to that consistency in the finalization of the movie.

Regarding difficulties related to voice and to the speech in the cinema, they are present, from the formation of the actor to the editing phase, as the absence of specific teaching with objective methods, specific training of the technical staff,

quality of equipment, assertive communication among team members and dubbing. In relation to the actors, it was mentioned difficulties related to the appropriateness of vocal quality, projection and loudness, of articulation, of characterization or of the characters construction, vocal resistance and dubbing. It's pointed out that such terms were not used exactly as listed, but are here translated into technical terms borrowed from areas like the acoustic physics, physiology and the phonetics, in order to clarify to readers interested in the area of professional voice.

Thus, some problems or difficulties regarding the construction of the oral expressiveness of the characters may be present in all these steps. In so far as they are known, could be prevented and improved the technical problems.

The presented study progressed, compared to previous ones, to raise questions related to oral expressiveness in cinema, including reflections on the acoustic environment, supporting technologies and infrastructure. Contributed, mainly, by aiding in the understanding of the construction process of the oral expressiveness in cinema, as well as the variables involved in it; raised the issue of specific training for acting in movies; allowed to understand the fundamental role of technicians and sound editors on the quality of the acoustic records of the characters lines and to reflect about the limits between the difficulties that can be resolved through the technology and those that can be avoided, prevented by the good preparation of actors in relation to voice and speech.

It is noteworthy that this study was of great scientific importance for its innovative character, whose qualitative methodology enabled to explore a broad field for the SLHS in the advising of professionals of the artistic voice, in particular the instrumentalization of the film actor.

In order to benefit the actors and the overall result of a cinematographic production, the SLHS can act to ease and improve, whether in dialogue between team members, whether on the issue of well-being, the fragmentation of the vocal recordings in order to maintain the continuity of the interpretation and, also, to enable the actors to a greater dominion over their oral and, also, body expressiveness.

As a suggestion, in this study, the completion of this investigation in practical situation, with educational proposals aimed to enlarge the

possibilities of the actors in the construction of oral expressiveness in cinema.

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