

Corporate speech therapy: review of dissertations and theses defended between 2002-2022

Fonoaudiologia empresarial: revisão de dissertações defendidas entre 2002-2022

Fonoaudiología corporativa: revisión de disertaciones y tesis defendidas entre 2002-2022

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Abstract

Introduction: this study aims to explore the Speech-Therapy's literature and its contribution to identify the most researched and few explored themes in dissertations and theses in the area. **Objective:** to analyze the Brazilian scientific production submitted between 2002 and 2022, considering production level, publication year, institution of defense, geographical location, research methodology, the first descriptor, research location, the thematic focus, total sample size and knowledge areas. **Method:** the review analysis was conducted using data obtained from the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations on May 5, 2023, using the terms: "Speech-Therapy" and "Company" to retrieve theses and dissertations from 2002 to 2022 according to the variables described above. Data were analyzed descriptively. **Results:** among the 30 entries retrieved, 24-80,0% were dissertations, most of which defended in 2007 (6-20,0%). The majority of the studies were from the Southeast region (20- 66.7%), represented by Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo: PUC-SP (10-33.3%) and the highlight was observational researches (22-73.3%) and the majority of the research was conducted at business companies (20-66,7%). In addition, "worker's health" was the most used descriptor (3-10,0%). The knowledge area (CNPQ) that produced the most studies was Health Sciences (25-83,3%) through the subarea of Speech-Language-Pathology (20-66,7%%), with Audiology being the most researched theme

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NDA: developed the data collection, analysis, and discussion of the results; drafted the manuscript; and approved the final version of the manuscript;

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(16-53,3%). **Conclusion:** Audiology was the area with the highest number of studies found 16,53,3%. Research conducted in the Voice field (7-23,3%) addresses topics related to vocal quality, communication and expressiveness, however, they do not address leadership. The findings suggest a need for future research. Further studies can build upon insights to advance knowledge and promote evidence-based practice in the field of business companies, considering that Speech-Therapy has as its object of study and activity human communication.

Keywords: Leadership; Communication; Voice; Speech.

Resumo

Introdução: o presente estudo visa mapear e avaliar a produção registrada sobre Fonoaudiologia Empresarial, a fim de identificar as temáticas mais pesquisadas, bem como as temáticas pouco exploradas em dissertações e teses na área. **Objetivo:** analisar a produção científica brasileira defendida entre 2002-2022, considerando nível de produção, ano, rede de ensino, instituição de ensino superior (localização geográfica), tipo de pesquisa, descritor registrado (primeiro), local, temática, total da amostra pesquisada e áreas de conhecimento. **Método:** revisão realizada na Biblioteca Digital Brasileira de Teses e Dissertações, em 05 de maio de 2023, considerando os termos “Fonoaudiologia” e “Empresa”, pesquisados no período 2002-2022, segundo as variáveis anteriormente descritas, analisados de forma descritiva. **Resultados:** dentre 30 fontes registradas, 24-80,0% são dissertações, sendo 2007 o ano mais produtivo (6-20,0%). A Região Sudeste liderou a pesquisa (20-66,7%), representada pela PUC-SP (10-33,3%) e o destaque foi de pesquisas do tipo observacional (22-73,3%), sendo Empresas os locais mais pesquisados (20-66,7%) e o descritor “saúde do trabalhador” o mais utilizado (03-10,0%). A área de conhecimento (CNPq) que mais pesquisou foi Ciências da Saúde (25-83,3%) por meio da subárea Fonoaudiologia (20-66,7%), sendo a Audiologia a temática mais pesquisada (16-53,3%). **Conclusão:** foram encontrados 16,53,3% registros na área de Audiologia e as pesquisas realizadas na área de Voz (7-23,3%) abordam os temas relacionados a qualidade vocal, comunicação e expressividade, no entanto, não abordam liderança. Tal dado sugere esforços em pesquisas científicas e atuação profissional, já que a Fonoaudiologia tem como objeto de estudo e atuação, a comunicação humana.

Palavras-chave: Liderança; Comunicação; Voz; Fala.

Resumen

Introducción: este estudio tiene como objetivo mapear y evaluar la producción grabada sobre Fonoaudiología Empresarial, con el fin de identificar los temas más investigados, así como los temas poco explorados en disertaciones y tesis en el área. **Objetivo:** analizar la producción científica brasileña defendida entre 2002-2022, considerando nivel de producción, año, red educativa, institución de educación superior (ubicación geográfica), tipo de investigación, descriptor registrado (primero), ubicación, tema, muestra total investigada y áreas. del conocimiento. **Método:** revisión realizada en la Biblioteca Digital Brasileña de Tesis y Disertaciones, el 5 de mayo de 2023, considerando los términos “Fonoaudiología” y “Empresa”, investigados en el período 2002-2022, según las variables previamente descritas, analizadas en una manera descriptiva. **Resultados:** entre 30 fuentes registradas, 24-80,0% son disertaciones, siendo 2007 el año más productivo (6-20,0%). La Región Sudeste lideró la investigación (20-66,7%), representada por la PUC-SP (10-33,3%) y destaque para la investigación observacional (22-73,3%), siendo las Empresas las localidades más investigadas (20-66,7%) y el descriptor “salud del trabajador” el más utilizado (03-10,0%). El área del conocimiento (CNPq) más investigada fue Ciencias de la Salud (25-83,3%) a través de la subárea Fonoaudiología (20-66,7%), siendo la Audiología el tema más investigado (16-53,3%). **Conclusión:** Se encontraron 16,53,3% registros en el área de Audiología y las investigaciones realizadas en el área de Voz (7-23,3%) abordan temas relacionados con la calidad vocal, la comunicación y la expresividad, sin embargo, no abordan el liderazgo. Estos datos sugieren esfuerzos en la investigación científica y en el desempeño profesional, ya que la Fonoaudiología tiene como objeto de estudio y actividad la comunicación humana.

Palabras clave: Liderazgo; Comunicación; Voz; Habla.

Introduction

The first undergraduate courses in Speech-Language Pathology emerged in the 1960s, and the profession was regulated in 1981. With respect to Corporate Speech-Language Pathology, the profession initially stood out with the issue of Occupational Health, focusing on the prevention of disorders related to its field of activity, to identify and modify risks arising from tasks in work environments, aiming at the integrity of human communication¹.

In 1998, Directive of the MS/GM [*Minister's Office of the Ministry of Health*] No. 3120 approved the Normative Instruction for Worker Health Surveillance in the SUS [*Unified Health System*], defined as a continuous and systematic action, with the objective of detecting, understanding, researching, and analyzing factors that impact health related to work processes and environments, in technological, social, organizational, and epidemiological aspects, in order to implement interventions to mitigate and eliminate them.

The Worker's Health area operates in a multi-institutional and multidisciplinary field of action in the SUS [*Unified Health System*], and, according to Brito² (1997), besides the challenge of constructing its legitimacy, it also has the challenge of operating with a positive impact on workers' health through intersectorality and transdisciplinarity. Santana et al.³ (2009) believes that surveillance should be anticipatory, allowing the acquisition of relevant information for planning actions and, consequently, ensuring the quality of health care for the worker population. The large number of workers who lost their health due to unhealthy working conditions, including Noise-Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL), resulted in the creation of the Worker Health Reference Centers (CRSTs) in 1989. Speech-Language Pathology stood out in the corporate environment, consolidating mainly through preventive measures, since, as reported by Ferraz⁴ (1995), NIHL is rarely seen as a serious health problem, and workers are often unaware of the proposed interventions.

Speech-Language Pathology also gained prominence in the corporate environment in the 1990s through telemarketing. At that time, Algodal⁵ (1995) defended his master's thesis on the subject, highlighting the specialties of corporate speech-language pathology: language and hear-

ing assessment in the selection process, voice, language, and hearing guidance in training, and orientation and/or referral of the telemarketing operator for an evaluation of the oral sensory-motor system, due to signs and symptoms presented by the teleoperator. Over time, and with the maturation of the field, the role of the corporate speech-language pathologist expanded, also focusing on non-verbal and vocal resources.

In order to outline the objectives of the speech-language pathologist's role with telemarketing operators, Garcia⁶ (2000) sought to understand the meanings attributed to the voice by the voice professional and found that the voice is valued by them in the context of communication, seen as the materialization of language, and that the use of voice at work favors vocal expressiveness. However, they attribute little value to vocal health issues and only recognize this need following episodes of dysphonia. Thus, he concluded that it is essential for the speech-language pathologist to know the operator's work environment, health risks, and vocal profile, in order to work in the company in a differentiated way: relating body/mind health to voice health; promoting changes in the professional's attitude towards the voice; and working on the concept of voice within a broader correlation between voice, work, and personal relationships. Moreira-Ferreira⁷ reported that the performance of teleoperators is related to oral communication, and those who use quality and dynamic vocal adjustments in the composition of oral expressiveness, as well as linguistic-discursive choices, are more competent. Thus, it is concluded that the work of the speech-language pathologist in the corporate environment goes beyond identifying signs, symptoms, health issues, and vocal habits, expanding their role to encompass human communication, understanding all aspects of verbal and non-verbal communication.

In addition to working in occupational health prevention activities, the speech-language pathologist can be inserted as a consulting and advisory professional, in service implementation, recruitment, selection, and training in verbal and written communication. Oliveira and Algodal⁸ (2002) reported that, because of working in companies, the professional must have knowledge of administration, marketing, human resources, productivity, and the operational dynamics of the areas in which they work, in order to contribute accurately. They also

emphasize that it is not just about working with the voice, and that concepts need to be revisited and reevaluated. Kyrillos et al.⁹ reported that, by operating simultaneously, speech, body, and voice form a unique language. They emphasize that voice, speech, gestures, and facial expressions are parts that create the final effect of communication, allowing numerous possibilities to demonstrate intentions and feelings. This supports the conclusion that the field of speech-language pathology is broader than indicated at the beginning of the 1990s.

According to Ferreira and Bernardi¹⁰ (1997), the Brazilian Federal Council of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology submitted a letter (May 15, 1997 - No. 088/97) stating that laryngeal changes, resulting in dysphonia, fell under occupational diseases. With the consent of the president of the Brazilian Federal Council of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology, members of the Voice Laboratory at the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo submitted the issue for further discussion. Then, for the first time, this topic – dysphonia resulting from professional practice – was discussed in a Voice Seminar¹¹. According to the historical-political movement review¹², discussions on work-related voice disorders began in 1997 and were published by the Ministry of Health in 2018, after 21 years of discussions. The definition of WRVD [*Work-Related Voice Disorder*] was established as “any form of vocal deviation directly related to the use of the voice during a professional activity that slows down, compromises or prevents the worker’s activities and/or communication, whether in the presence of an organic change in the larynx or not.” Therefore, the document aims to assist not only so-called voice professionals but also those who, although not using their voice as a work instrument, might be exposed to environments with chemicals or smoke, potentially leading to a voice disorder.

Research conducted by IBGE/Pnad [*Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics/National Household Sample Survey*]¹³ indicates that there was a progressive increase in the number of professionals using their voice as a work tool from 2002 to 2015, rising from 39,971,000 to 53,780,000, a growth of 34.5%. There is a trend of increasing vocal complaints resulting from the combination of environmental and organizational work conditions, prolonged voice use, and individual factors,

which can lead to performance incapacity and even absences, generating high social and financial costs. Although the recognized and published document focuses on vocal signs and symptoms due to environmental and organizational work conditions, prolonged voice use, and individual factors, it is important to highlight the issue of expressiveness/communication as intrinsic components in the effectiveness and results achieved by voice professionals. Despite speech-language pathology practice in professional spoken voice in Brazil focusing on expressiveness to enhance professional communication for about 20 years, the topic of expressiveness has been a subject of study in Speech-Language Pathology¹⁴ for more than 40 years.

Given the above, this study aims to map and evaluate the production of dissertations and theses on Corporate Speech-Language Pathology to identify the most researched topics as well as those that are underexplored in the field. The information collected in this study can contribute to new research and provide elements for researchers to explore various topics

Purpose

To analyze the Brazilian scientific production on Corporate Speech-Language Pathology defended between 2002-2022, considering the level of production, year, educational network, higher education institution (geographical location), type of research, registered descriptor (first), location, theme, total sample researched, and area of knowledge.

Method

This bibliometric study was carried out on the platform of the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD)¹⁵ and, as a public material, it was exempt from submission to the Research Ethics Committee.

The mapping allowed analysis regarding the level of production, year, educational network, higher education institution (geographical location), type of research, registered descriptor (first), location, theme, total sample researched, and area of knowledge, to identify productions on Corporate Speech-Language Pathology.

Access to this platform (BDTD) occurred on May 5, 2023, when 133 institutions, 595,578

dissertations, and 221,423 theses were registered. The term “Speech-Language Pathology” was used in the search window for “all possible fields” such as author, title, and abstract. An additional search was conducted with the term “Corporate” in the search window for “all fields”, resulting in a final spreadsheet, to be used in this research, with 30 productions. The platform consolidates productions from the year 2002 and, therefore, no date filter was applied, allowing the analysis of all studies on the subject in the last 20 years.

The following information was collected from the spreadsheet generated by the platform itself (Export CSV): abstract; level of production; year of publication; educational network, higher educa-

tion institution (HEI); type of research; registered descriptor (first); location of the research; theme addressed; total sample researched and area of knowledge. For the elaboration of the final spreadsheet, state and geographical region were identified from the HEI, and other variables were analyzed from the reading of the abstracts. In certain productions, it was not possible to identify all the information in the abstract and, therefore, it was necessary to read parts of the research.

The data were analyzed descriptively, recording the numerical and percentage occurrence.

Results

Table 1. Numerical and percentage distribution of dissertations and theses defended between 2002-2022, year of defense, educational network, educational institution, region, research type, first descriptor, location, areas and subareas of knowledge, and analyzed themes (n=30).

Analysis	n	%
Year of Defense (n=30)		
2003	1	3.3%
2004	1	3.3%
2007	6	20.0%
2008	1	3.3%
2010	1	3.3%
2011	2	6.7%
2013	4	13.3%
2014	1	3.3%
2015	1	3.3%
2016	2	6.7%
2017	3	10.0%
2018	2	6.7%
2019	1	3.3%
2020	1	3.3%
2021	1	3.3%
2022	2	6.7%
Level (n=30)		
Dissertation	24	80.0%
Thesis	6	20.0%
Educational Network (n=30)		
Public	16	53.3%
Private	14	46.7%
Educational Institution (n=30)		
PUC-SP	10	33.3%
UTP	4	13.3%
UFMG	3	10.0%
UFSM	3	10.0%
UFRRJ	2	6.7%
UFAL	1	3.3%
UFF	1	3.3%
UFPE	1	3.3%
UFRN	1	3.3%
UFSCAR	1	3.3%
UFTM	1	3.3%
UNICAMP	1	3.3%
USP	1	3.3%



Analysis	n	%
Region (n=30)		
Southeast	20	66.7%
South	7	23.3%
Northeast	3	10.0%
Research type (n=30)		
Observational	22	73.3%
Interventional	8	26.7%
Place (n=30)		
Corporate	20	66.7%
School	3	10.0%
Hospital	2	6.7%
Public service	2	6.7%
Database	1	3.3%
Clinic	1	3.3%
University	1	3.3%
Areas and subareas of knowledge (n=30)		
Health Sciences	25	83.3%
Speech-Language Pathology	20	66.7%
Nursing	3	10.0%
Medical clinic	2	6.7%
Engineering	2	6.7%
Production Engineering	2	6.7%
Applied Social Sciences	1	3.3%
Administration	1	3.3%
Linguistics, Literature and Arts	1	3.3%
Language and literature	1	3.3%
Agricultural Sciences	1	3.3%
Agricultural Engineering	1	3.3%
Themes (n=30)		
Audiology	16	53.3%
Voice / Expressiveness / Communication	7	23.3%
Ergonomics	3	10.0%
Language	3	10.0%
Technology development	1	3.3%
First descriptor (n=30)		
Worker's health	3	10.0%
Communication	2	6.7%
Hearing	1	3.3%
Audiology	1	3.3%
Audiological evaluation	1	3.3%
Call center	1	3.3%
Professional competence	1	3.3%
Journalistic communication	1	3.3%
Acoustic comfort	1	3.3%
Organizational culture	1	3.3%
Occupational diseases	1	3.3%
Special education	1	3.3%
Oral expressiveness	1	3.3%
People management	1	3.3%
Medicine	1	3.3%
Miner	1	3.3%
Work organization	1	3.3%
Hearing loss	1	3.3%
Noise-induced hearing loss	1	3.3%
Occupational hearing loss	1	3.3%
Hearing loss caused by noise	1	3.3%
People with Disabilities	1	3.3%
Evoked auditory potentials	1	3.3%
Hearing preservation program	1	3.3%
Phoneme-grapheme relationships	1	3.3%
Patient safety	1	3.3%
Voice	1	3.3%

Source: Research Data (2023)



Discussion

As described in the introduction of this article, Corporate Speech-Language Pathology follows an important trajectory, beginning with concerns about Worker's Health, highlighting the theme of auditory health and, subsequently, vocal health. In addition to the mentioned themes, there is a potential and vast field of opportunities for action, given its broad object of study: human communication. Therefore, this study aims to map the themes addressed by Speech-Language Pathology in companies, as there is much to explore regarding voice and communication in professional situations.

Of the 30 records found, the average number of research papers in Corporate Speech-Language Pathology is two per year, with 2007 being the year with the highest number of research papers (6-20.0%). The fact that a predominantly higher number of Master's defenses (24-80.0%) than Doctoral defenses was found is in line with the result of a bibliometric research study on Brazilian Graduate research, in which Araújo and Alvarenga¹⁶ (2011) identified that 76% of defenses in Brazil are at the master's level, with 72% related to Academic Master's and 4% to Professional Master's.

As described in the table, the public network (16-53.3%) slightly surpassed the private network. Although the public network led, the Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo was the university that produced the most (10-33.3%) over the twenty years analyzed, confirming that its Graduate Program has always reinforced the importance of scientific research, led studies on professional voice, as well as opened discussions until the publication of the WRVD by the Ministry of Health. Since the mentioned institution is ahead in the research ranking and is located in the city of São Paulo, the Southeast Region of Brazil has the highest rate of productions on the addressed theme (20-66.7%); moreover, the first Speech-Language Pathology courses emerged in this Region. Of the research conducted by the mentioned university, five were in Audiology and the other five focused on voice, communication, and expressiveness. There were no records of productions in the Central-West and North Regions of the country, with the latter still lacking Graduate Programs, as shown by the 2017-2020 quadrennial evaluation panel on the website of the Coordination of Improvement of Higher Education Personnel¹⁷. Data found indicate

that of 4,512 Graduate Programs in Brazil, only 279-6.2% are in the North Region.

The type of observational research proves predominant in the analyzed sample (22-73.3%), which is ideal for examining associations that are commonly assumptions or hypotheses, while intervention research requires a longer period than that offered for master's dissertations. The most researched location was the business environment (20-66.7%), justifying the search conducted on the platform.

The leading area of knowledge (CNPq [*National Council for Scientific and Technological Development*]) in the productions was Health Sciences (25-83.3%) through the subarea of Speech Therapy (20-67.7%), an expected indicator since this was the search term used. Although the first research descriptor was Speech-Language Pathology, it should be noted that there were records through other areas of knowledge. The most researched theme was Audiology (16-53.3%) and the most used first descriptor was Worker's Health (3-10%), an indicator justified by the history of Corporate Speech-Language Pathology, which gained prominence in the mentioned theme through Noise-Induced Hearing Loss – NIHL¹⁸, which preceded the publication of Work-Related Voice Disorder – WRVD¹³ (2018).

A focus on Noise-Induced Hearing Loss may be observed among the 16 publications on the topic of Audiology found in this research. This finding aligns with the history of Corporate Speech-Language Pathology mentioned in the introduction of this article. However, it is known that hearing loss can originate from other occupational elements, such as exposure to ototoxic substances, as mentioned by various publications¹⁹. On the other hand, the findings on this topic address the issue of hearing prevention and conservation, which is widely discussed in the field^{3,4,20}.

Regarding the theme of voice, communication, and expressiveness, 7-23.3% of the research found also justifies the trajectory of Corporate Speech-Language Pathology: five studies address Speech-Language Pathology in telemarketing^{06,21,22,23,24}, one discusses Speech-Language Pathology in television journalism²⁵, and one deals with the work of communication consulting by Speech-Language Pathologists as coaches²⁶. The research found highlights the focus on vocal and verbal aspects of professionals, topics discussed in the litera-

ture^{1,5,10,12,13,14,27}, but does not address non-verbal aspects, which are intrinsic to communication and require further discussion²⁸.

Although there is a limitation in this research –since not all productions from all Brazilian Graduate Programs are registered on the BDTD platform²⁹ – it is noted that the theme of leadership in companies was not addressed, despite the growing demand for transversal competencies in professional profiles³⁰, which, combined with technical knowledge, facilitate integration and contribute to better performance. Thus, it is evident that Corporate Speech-Language Pathology has a crucial topic to be explored: leadership, through voice, communication (verbal and non-verbal), and expressiveness, which, although being one of its study objects, has not yet been incorporated into the themes of its scientific research, as observed in this literature review.

Conclusion

The number of research studies has decreased over time, with a predominance in the Health Sciences area, through the subfield of Speech-Language Pathology and the theme related to Audiology (16-53.3%). The records around Voice (7-23.3%) address topics related to vocal quality, communication, and expressiveness, but do not address the theme of leadership. These data suggest efforts in scientific research and professional practice, as Speech-Language Pathology has human communication as its study and practice object.

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