

# **1ST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**



**CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF SERVICE IN SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY**

## **BEING A PRACTITIONER AND BEYOND**

**NOVEMBER 26, 2022 | 1.00-4.00 PM | VIRTUAL**

**NOVEMBER 27, 2022 | 8.00AM-4.00PM**

**NEUROTRAUMA AUDITORIUM,  
NATIONAL HOSPITAL, COLOMBO**



CELEBRATING **TWO DECADES** OF SERVICE IN  
*THE FIELD OF SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY IN SRI LANKA*

## Program and Abstracts

|                                |  |   |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2022 |  | Virtual   |
| 27 <sup>th</sup> November 2022 |  | Neurotrauma Auditorium,<br>National Hospital, Sri Lanka |

# Contents

|  |   |    |
|--|---|----|
| Sri Lankan Association of Speech and Language Pathologists | - | 2  |
| Executive Committee  | - | 3  |
| Message from the President - SLASLP                        | - | 4  |
| <b>Scientific Program</b>                                  |   |    |
| Pre-conference   | - | 5  |
| Conference   | - | 7  |
| Invited speakers   | - | 9  |
| Abstracts of free paper session                            | - | 28 |
| Acknowledgement  | - | 33 |
| Sponsors   | - | 34 |

# **Sri Lankan Association of Speech and Language Pathologists**

“Sri Lankan Association of Speech and Language Pathologists is a registered professional body that incorporate herewith the provision of section 2 (a) of the companies Act No 7 of 2007 subject to the limitation that it engages in any sphere of Speech and Language Therapist and 2 (b) of the Act which confers all rights and privileges to carry on the aforesaid the objects.”

## **Mission Statement**

A gathering of Speech and Language Pathologists/ Therapists in Sri Lanka aiming to ensure scientific and evidence-based client-centered care and advocate (encourage) for the need of research-active and professional, local and international clinical partnerships.

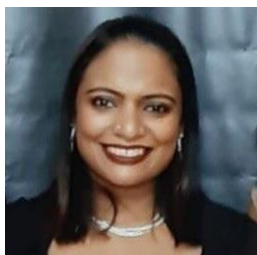
## **Vision**

- To ensure that all Speech and Language Therapy services involving its members adhere to the professional standards and code of practice set by the association.
- To support, promote and facilitate Speech and Language Pathologists/ Therapists and their practices for the benefit of clients seeking Speech and Language Therapy services in the country.
- To ensure all Speech and Language Pathologists/ Therapists, and their services are supported in fostering a culture of gathering and applying evidence-based practice, information sharing for the betterment of Speech and Language Therapy services in the country.

## **Objectives**

1. To act as a professional body governing the Speech and Language Therapy profession in Sri Lanka.
2. To maintain professional standards of Speech and Language Therapy services in Sri Lanka.
3. To maintain and develop a code of ethics for the Speech and Language Therapy profession.
4. Sri Lankan Association of Speech and Language Pathologists is responsible to promote and safeguard the professionals involved in the association while intervening as professional body to its member's queries related to Sri Lankan Speech and Language Therapy services defined in the code of ethics.
5. To act as a coordinator in promoting & conducting continuing professional development activities.
6. To raise awareness in Speech and Language Therapy within the community.
7. To protect the rights of the people with disabilities.
8. To support and promote all activities in developing Speech and Language Therapy services in Sri Lanka.

## Executive Committee (2022/2023)



Ms. Thushani  
Jayasooriya

President



Ms. Asanka  
Wijerathne

Vice President



Ms. Nina Anupama  
Panterliyon

Joint Secretary



Ms. Kalhari  
Dissanayake

Joint Secretary



Ms. Navindra  
Rajapaksha

Treasurer



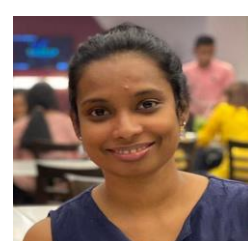
Dr. Nimeera C.  
Weeraratne

Council Member



Dr. Isuru  
Dharmarathna

Council Member



Ms. Lakshika  
Udugama

Council Member



Ms. Fathima Shimla  
Hamza

Council Member



Ms. Rangika  
Perera

Council Member



Ms. Yashodha  
Hettiarachchi

Council Member



Ms. Harshani  
Jayathissa

Council Member

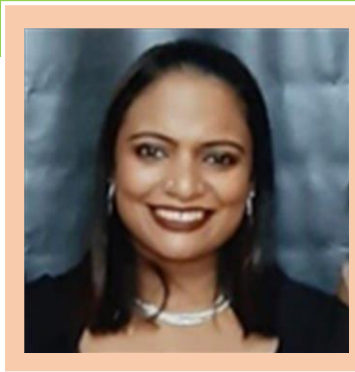


Ms. D.M.P.M.  
Dissanayake

Council Member



## Message from the President, Sri Lankan Association of Speech and Language Pathologists



Dear members, colleagues and valued sponsors,

Speech and language therapy as a profession is still a relatively young profession in its 22nd year. Hence, I am extremely delighted to congratulate my colleagues in organizing the very first international Sri Lankan conference for speech and language therapists/ pathologists.

It is also a delight to have well-wishers and sponsors supporting us in this joyous occasion.

Speech and language therapy is twenty-two years old as a profession and is trying to find its way around Sri Lanka. We still have much to build on both as a professional body and professionals, both new and the experienced therapists, working together while learning from each other. It has been reflected on the agenda of this occasion by commemorating the pioneer therapists who have been in this field for over twenty years and are still continuing, with much appreciation and gratitude. It is a very difficult path you walked on, to pave the way for the future generation of speech therapists to come for many years. The journey has been built with many small steps and each taken in the path for the betterment of ourselves and most importantly for our clients/ patients who have kept faith in us with their lives for communication and other needs.

We are very proud of our graduates, and we want to empower the graduates to face the future with more awareness and confidence as you are the future of speech and language therapy/ pathology in Sri Lanka even though times and future ahead look uncertain. The best is yet to be built together.

We have a few interesting projects lined up for the coming year as an association to develop our skills (webinars) and to develop as a professional body, working through the hurdles, jumping one at a time. Your cooperation, support and most importantly participation is the key to all of us succeeding on this path.

**Best regards to all.**

## “Being a Practitioner and Beyond”

### Virtual Pre-Conference Program

**26<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

| Time                     | Topic   | Invited speaker   |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| 1.00 p.m.                | Welcoming The Virtual Pre-conference  | <b>Thushani Jayasooriya (PgDip)(BSc)</b><br>President, SLASLP   |
| 1.00 p.m. -<br>1.40 p.m. | Hearing aid Troubleshooting   | <b>Randimali Rupasinghe</b><br>Clinical Audiologist<br>(BSc Hons. Audiology)                                      |
| 1.45 p.m. –<br>2.25 p.m. | Speech and Language Therapists’ Role in<br>the Management of Oro-Pharyngeal<br>Cancer   | <b>Susan Germain</b><br>Highly Specialist<br>Speech and Language Therapist<br>Head & Neck Oncology/ ENT<br>(MSc.) |
| 2.30 p.m.-<br>3.15 p.m.  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Free Paper Presentations</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Presentation 1:</u></b></p> <p>Clinical Reasoning for Equitable Practice: Exploration from Speech-Language Pathology in Sri Lanka</p> <p><b><u>Presentation 2:</u></b></p> <p>Working with and Learning from Children with Disabilities: Experiences of Speech and Hearing Sciences Undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya</p> <p><b><u>Presentation 3:</u></b></p> <p>Cultural Adaptation and Identifying Reliability of the Language Screening Test (Last) for Sinhala Speaking Individuals with Left Hemispheric Damage Following Acute Stroke</p> <p><b><u>Presentation 4:</u></b></p> |   |

|                                 |   |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
|                                 | <b>Developing a Reliable, Applicable and Validated Sentence Assessment for Children with Cleft Lip and/ or Palate- in Spoken Sinhala Language (SACLP-SIN)</b> |  |
| <b>3.20 p.m.-<br/>4.00 p.m.</b> | <b>Cerebro-Visual Impairment and AAC:<br/>Approaches to Success</b>   | <b>Jessica Mount Matney</b><br>Speech and Language Therapist<br>(MS C CC-SLP)<br><b>Melody Zagami Furze</b><br>Education Specialist<br>(PhD Special Education) |



**The 1<sup>st</sup> International Conference on  
Speech and Language Therapy**

**“Being a Practitioner and Beyond”**

**27<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

**Neurotrauma Auditorium, National Hospital, Sri Lanka**

| TIME           | SESSION  | RESOURCE PERSON/SPEAKER   |
|----------------|--|---|
| 7.30 am        | Registration   |   |
| 8.00 am        | Inauguration ceremony – lighting the oil lamp                  |   |
|                | Welcome Speech   | <b>Thushani Jayasooriya (PgDip)(BSc)</b><br>President, SLASLP   |
|                | SLASLP journey so far  | <b>Nina Panterliyon (MSc)</b><br>Jt. Secretary, SLASLP  |
| 8.15 am        | Keynote Speech: Pathway for publishing your research           | <b>Senior Professor, A R Wickremasinghe</b><br>Cadre Chair and Senior Head,<br>Department of Public Health,<br>Faculty of Medicine,<br>University of Kelaniya |
| 9.00 am        | Celebrating 20 years of service in Speech and Language Therapy |   |
| 9.15 am        | How to start writing your manuscript?                          | <b>Dr. Shyamani Hettiarchchi (PhD)</b><br>Senior Lecturer, University of Kelaniya   |
|                |  | <b>Dr. Isuru Dharmarathna (PhD)</b><br>Senior Lecturer, University of Kelaniya  |
| 10.00-10.30 am | Tea Break  |   |

|                 |  |  |
|-----------------|--|--|
| 10.30 am        | Technical session I: Dyslexia Intervention Strategies              | <b>Dr. Thilini Lokubalasuriya (PhD)</b><br>Senior Lecturer, University of Kelaniya   |
| 11.15 am        | Forum I: Pathways for foreign postgraduate training for SLPs/SLTs  | <b>Shimla Hamza (MPhil)</b><br>Speech-Language Therapist, South Colombo Teaching Hospital<br><br><b>Gayanthi Kodituwakku (MSc)</b><br>Lecturer (Prob), University of Kelaniya<br><br><b>Samadhi Gunathilake (MSc)</b><br>Visiting Lecturer, University of Kelaniya |
| 12.15- 01.15 pm | Lunch Break  |  |
| 01.30 pm        | Technical session II: Fussy Eating vs. Sensory Feeding Disorder    | <b>Dr. Isuru Dharmarathna (PhD)</b><br>Senior Lecturer, University of Kelaniya   |
| 02.15 pm        | Forum II: How to set up your own clinic in community setting?      | <b>Dr. Nimeera Weeraratne (PhD)</b><br>Speech-Language Pathologist, CEO, Co-founder, The Bridge International Institute<br><br><b>Buddhima Samaraweera (MSc)</b><br>Speech-Language Pathologist, Founder, Words Speech Therapy                                     |
| 02.45 pm        | Featured speech: Business administration in local clinical setting | <b>Yasith Arunashantha (MBA)</b><br><br>Assistant Manager and Clinical Audiologist, Vision Care (Pvt) Ltd  |
| 3.15 pm         | Award ceremony   |  |
| 03.30- 04.00 pm | AGM  |  |
| 4.00 pm         | Evening Tea  |  |

# **Invited Speakers**

# **Keynote Speaker**



**Senior Professor A.Rajitha Wickramasighe**  
***Cadre Chair and Senior Head, Department***  
***of Public Health,***  
***Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya***

Professor Rajitha Wickremasinghe is the Senior Professor of Public Health at the Department of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya. He was the former Dean of the Faculty when the Bachelor's degree program in Speech and Hearing Sciences was started in the Faculty in 2008. He is an epidemiologist and biostatistician by profession and has been involved in teaching and mentoring SLTs and audiologists in research. Prof. Wickremasinghe has published extensively in local and international peer-reviewed journals on varied topics. His research interests include genetics, malaria, public health, epidemiology, nutrition, non-communicable diseases, environmental health, health economics, entomology and health policy. He has mentored over 50 postgraduate trainees including clinicians, parasitologists, entomologists, physiologists, nutritionists, community physicians, public health specialists, medical administrators, SLTs and Audiologists.

## **Pre-conference**





**Randimali Rupasinghe (BSc Hons.)**

***Clinical Audiologist***

Randimali Rupasinghe works as a Senior Audiologist at Hearing Solutions, Vision Care Optical Services Pvt Ltd, Maharagama. She obtained her Honors degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences from University of Kelaniya specializing in Audiology with a First-class Honors becoming the best student in 2014.

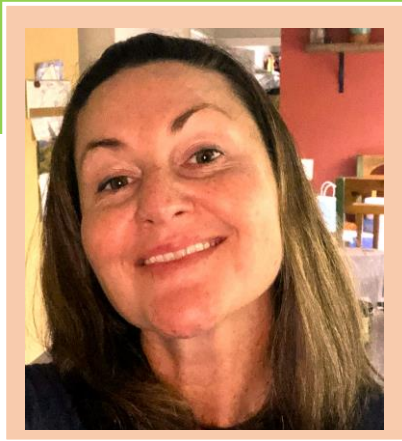
Since then, she has been working with both adults and children with hearing impairment in diagnosing and providing amplification. She has been trained with leading hearing aid manufacturers in the world and is currently working as a lecturer at Vision Care Academy in instructing and guiding new audiometricians and audiologists.



**Jessica Mount Matney (MS CCC-SLP)**

***Speech & Language Therapist***

Jessica Mount Matney, MS CCC-SLP is a Speech Language Pathologist and a Developmental Vision Specialist, currently working as the Instructional Lead, at the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired –Early Childhood Program in USA. Jessica began her practice in early intervention and has spent the last 16 years working with children with severe disabilities and vision impairments. Working with children at the earliest stages of communication development is a passion for Jessica. Jessica has worked locally and internationally focusing on intervention for children with significant, multiple impairments including visual impairments.



**Dr. Melody Zagami Furze (PhD)**

***Education Specialist***

Melody is an Education Specialist for the Professional Development and Training team at the Haring Center for Inclusive Education, Seattle WA. She received her doctoral degree in Special Education from the University of Northern Colorado in 2021. She earned her Master's in Special Education from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. She also consults as part of the brain-based visual impairment research and development team for the Anchor Center for Blind Children in Denver, Colorado.

Melody's work focuses on learning strategies and techniques for children with sensory impairments. Her expertise is program development for young learners with diverse neurological profiles, coaching, consultation, collaboration with early childhood teams, and early intervention and preschool support. She does consultation and research for children with cognitive and developmental impairment, visual processing disorders, and children with severe and complex needs. Most of the Melody's work intersects with clinical manifestations of atypical neurological development in early childhood populations and developing learning environments for inclusive practice.



**Susan Germain (MSc)**

***Highly Specialist Speech & Language  
Therapist***

***Head & Neck Oncology/ ENT***

Susan is a Speech and Language Therapist with 14 years of experience within acute, community and outpatient settings. She is a highly specialized Speech and Language Therapist in Head and Neck Cancer within the last 6 years specializing the care of head and neck cancer patients. She was graduated from Nottingham Trent University in 2003 with bachelors in Humanities: Linguistics and has completed her masters in Language Pathology at Newcastle University in 2007. Currently she is the SLT Clinical Lead for the head and neck cancer service at Birmingham Heartlands, Good Hope & Solihull Hospitals (HGS).

Her main responsibilities include being a core member of the Head and Neck MDT for HGS, running SLT TORS outpatient service at HGS, running a joint Altered Airways clinic alongside ENT CNSs, providing a dedicated inpatient & outpatient service for H&N cancer patients pre and post treatment.

Moreover, she is the lead for the surgical voice restoration service at HGS and part of the swallowing team at HGS involved in instrumental assessments of swallowing including videofluoroscopy and Fibreoptic Endoscopic Evaluation of Swallowing (FEES). Her main interests include supporting quality of life through cancer diagnosis, treatment and survivorship, surgical voice restoration and Trans oral robotic surgery.

# Conference



**Dr. Shyamani Hettiarchchi (PhD)**

***Speech & Language Therapist***

***Senior Lecturer, University of Kelaniya***

Dr. Shyamani Hettiarachchi is a Speech & Language Therapist and a Senior Lecturer (Grade I) in the Department of Disability Studies at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya. She graduated from the University of Kelaniya and completed her postgraduate studies in the UK, at University College London, University of Oxford and City University.

Her research interests include child speech sound disorders, dysphagia, and the intersectionality between poverty, disability and gender.





**Dr. Isuru Dharmarathna (PhD)**

***Speech & Language Therapist***

***Senior Lecturer, University of Kelaniya***

Dr. Isuru Dharmarathna is a senior lecturer at the Department of Disability Studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka and is an honorary speech-language therapist at Ayati, National Centre for Children with Disabilities, Ragama. She is a recipient of a Commonwealth scholarship to complete her MSc in Clinical Education, University of Edinburgh, UK. Dr. Dharmarathna is also a fellow of the Higher Education Academy, UK and is the inclusion representative and a committee member of the International Pediatric Feeding Disorders Alliance. Dr. Dharmarathna completed her PhD at The University of Auckland, New Zealand on dysphagia in 2020 and her research on obtaining objectivity in videofluoroscopic measures in children have been internationally recognized. Dr. Dharmarathna has published her research on instrumental swallowing assessments, developing low-cost swallowing assessment techniques, clinical education and employment for people with disabilities locally and internationally.



**Dr. Thilini Lokubalasuriya (PhD)**

***Speech & Language Therapist***

***Senior Lecturer, University of Kelaniya***

Dr. Thilini Lokubalasuriya is a speech and language therapist and a senior lecturer at the Department of Disability studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya. She also works as a speech and language therapist specialized in learning difficulties and is the head of the learning center at Ayati, National Centre for Children with Disabilities. She is the director of the Coordinating Center for Students with Disabilities at the University of Kelaniya. Dr. Lokubalsuriya received B.Sc. Honors in Speech and Hearing Sciences specializing in Speech and Language Therapy from the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka and received her Doctorate from University of Colombo, Sri Lanka in 2021. For her doctoral research, Dr. Lokubalasuriya has been awarded locally and internationally. Her current research interests include specific learning disorders and dyslexia, language and literacy and inclusive education.



**Shimla Hamza (MPhil),**  
***Speech & Language Therapist***  
***South Colombo Teaching Hospital, Sri Lanka***

Shimla Hamza is a Speech and Language Therapist currently working at a Government Hospital Setting in Sri Lanka. She has completed her Bachelor's degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences, from University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka in 2012 and her MPhil in Speech Pathology at the University of New Castle, Australia in 2021. She is a recipient of Australian Awards to pursue her MPhil.

Shimla works with pediatric and adult clients with communication and swallowing difficulties while also contributing her knowledge as a research supervisor and a clinical mentor for undergraduate students at University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.



**Gayanthi Kodituwakku (MSc)**  
***Speech & Language Therapist***  
***Lecturer (Prob),***

Gayanthi completed her undergraduate degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences, specialized in Speech and Language Therapy, from the University of Kelaniya in 2016. She is a Fulbright scholar and pursued her Masters in Communication Sciences and Disorders in 2021 from the University of Arkansas, USA.

She has 06 years of experience in clinical and research work in Speech and Language Therapy with a primary interest in acquired communication and swallowing difficulties in adults and maximizing communication using alternative augmentative communication (AAC). After graduating, she joined Teaching Hospital, Karapitiya as an in-house speech and language therapist. After pursuing her post-graduate qualifications, she joined as a lecturer at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya.



**Samadhi Gunathilake (MSc)**  
***Speech & Language Therapist***  
***Visiting Lecturer, University of Kelaniya***

Samadhi Priyanwada Gunathilake is a Speech and Language Pathologist. She completed her Bachelor of Science degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences at the University of Kelaniya in 2016 and completed her master's degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders at University of Arkansas USA. She is a Fulbright master's scholarship awardee and a winner of International P.E.O Peace scholarship in 2020.

Currently she is working as a Speech and Language Pathologist in the community setting and a visiting lecturer in the Faculty of Medicine University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka. She has mainly conducted her research in the field of hearing impairment and its management and voice and alaryngeal communication.



**Dr. Nimeera Chathuraga Weeraratne (PhD)**

***Speech & Language Therapist***

***CEO, Co-founder, The Bridge International Institute***

Dr. Nimeera Chathuranga Weeraratne (PhD) has led an impressive career as a Speech-Language Therapist, ABNLP certified NLP practitioner and Certified accelerated learning coach. He is a visiting academic at the University of Colombo, University of Peradeniya & OUSL and he is the 3rd President of SLASLP. In addition to his work in Sri Lanka, he is a consulting SLP in Maldives where he had been a strong asset in the field of special needs education and therapeutic intervention. In 2017, he received the international student award by ASHA and in 2019, he was awarded as one of the top 10 scientists in Sri Lanka at the 3MT competition conducted by SLAYS.

Dr. Weeraratne has also been featured in several well-known industry publications and his PhD research targeted on the development of culturally and linguistically appropriate reading comprehension assessment for post-stroke aphasia (RCAA-Sinhala). In addition, his research interest includes aging, aphasia assessment, and adult language disorders.

Dr. Weeraratne is serving as the CEO & Co-founder at The Bridge, where he is conducting numerous programs to improve the personal excellence and quality of life of people of all ages.





**Buddhima Samaraweera (MSc)**  
***Speech & Language Therapist,***  
***Founder, Words Speech Therapy***

Buddhima completed her undergraduate degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences in 2007 and her Master's degree in 2009 at Bangalore University, India. She joined Ratmalana Audiology Center and provided services in both Speech-Language Therapy and Audiology fields from 2009 to 2011. She was the resident speech & language therapist at Durdans Hospital from 2011 to 2014.

Buddhima is the founder of Words Speech Therapy, which began in 2015 while she was working as a visiting SLT at Durdans Hospital and Hemas Hospital Thalawathugoda. She has been working closely with the Department of Disability Studies at the University of Kelaniya as an external lecturer, research supervisor and external examiner since 2010.

Her clinical interest is early intervention for children with autism and other developmental disabilities. Currently, she is pursuing her PhD in Speech-Language Therapy at the University of KwaZulu Natal South Africa. Her research interests are child language, clinical reasoning, professional transformation, decolonization, cultural diversity and social science in healthcare.

## **Featured Speaker**



**Yasith Arunashantha (MBA)**  
***Clinical Audiologist***  
***Manager, Vision Care (Pvt) Ltd***

Yasith completed his bachelor's degree in Speech and Hearing Sciences, specializing in Audiology from the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka in 2014. He obtained his MBA from University of Bedfordshire, UK.

He has 09 years of experience in the field of Audiology, and currently work as a manager in the regional sales as well as a clinical audiologist in Vision Care Hearing Solutions, Sri Lanka. Yasith has been instrumental in offering job opportunities and career development for newly graduating audiologists in Sri Lankan community setting. Further, Yasith is pioneering in upgrading Audiology profession in Sri Lanka by training healthcare professionals on management of hearing impairment and raising awareness about hearing impairment and Audiology among general public. He is a lecturer at Vision Care Academy in instructing and guiding new audiometricians.

## **Abstracts of Free Paper Session**

- 1. Clinical Reasoning for Equitable Practice: Exploration from Speech-Language Pathology in Sri Lanka**

Samaraweera B, P, Pillay M, Moodley L

- 2. Working with and Learning from Children with Disabilities: Experiences of Speech and Hearing Sciences Undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya**

Chandramali S, P, D, Athauda L

- 3. Cultural Adaptation and Identifying Reliability of the Language Screening Test (Last) for Sinhala Speaking Individuals with Left Hemispheric Damage Following Acute Stroke**

Dineshika K, P, Wijesekara J, Rathnayaka S, P

- 4. Developing a Reliable, Applicable and Validated Sentence Assessment for Children with Cleft Lip and/ or Palate- in Spoken Sinhala Language (SACLP-SIN)**

Jayathilake S, M, S, W, Gunasekera A, R, Wijesekera G, J, S

# 1. Clinical Reasoning for Equitable Practice: Exploration from Speech-Language Pathology in Sri Lanka

*Samaraweera B. P<sup>1</sup>, Pillay M<sup>1,2,3</sup>, and Moodley L<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Speech-Language Pathology, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa*

<sup>2</sup>*Speech-Language Therapy, Massey University, New Zealand,*

<sup>3</sup>*Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom*

**Introduction:** Clinical reasoning is a complex phenomenon in healthcare practice. The healthcare research in Global South reveals that their unique historical, cultural, socio-political and economic backgrounds influence clinical reasoning. (Findyartini, Hawthorne, McColl, & Chiavaroli, 2016; Pillay & Pillay, 2021; Lee et al., 2021). This research attempted to explore how speech-language pathologists in a nation with a history of colonization negotiate Western-Eurocentric knowledge in their native context to provide services to their communities.

**Method:** Participatory research methodology was utilized within the decolonized and indigenous qualitative research paradigm. Eight speech-language pathologists with a minimum of one year experience were recruited through purposive sampling via email invitations. We used a virtual platform to collect data collaboratively with oral history narratives and textual reflections using object collection. Reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2019) and visual-textual analysis (Brown, 2019) was performed.

**Results:** Verbal, visual and textual data were analyzed, and four themes were generated. The themes were labelled using metaphorical statements that were drawn from the data. The four themes are; 1). “Like plants need water to sustain life – education is fundamental to practice” 2). “Don’t borrow someone else’s spectacles to view the world”, 3) “Listen to unspoken words – Look for the unseen picture”, 4). “Practice is like a puppet with many strings attached”. The themes were discussed regarding how the Western knowledge system and indigenous identity are contested during clinical reasoning. The results demonstrated that while scientific knowledge contributes to clinical reasoning partially, multiple contextual factors play a significant role in guiding clinical reasoning.

**Conclusions:** Practicing science in its original form within the native context is challenging. We argue that colonial roots and scientific imperialism impact the delivery of appropriate services to our communities. Practitioners need to critically interrogate their true identities and the effect of dominant epistemology. This may unpack culturally relevant epistemologies that can guide the clinical reasoning for equitable practice.

## 2. Working with and Learning from Children with Disabilities: Experiences of Speech and Hearing Sciences Undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya.

**Chandramali D<sup>1</sup>, Athauda L<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Disability Studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.*

**Introduction:** Speech and language therapists play major role in early intervention for the children with disabilities. Working on children with disabilities is a mandatory component of undergraduate training. The aim of this study is to describe the experiences of working with and learning from children with disabilities among speech and hearing sciences (SHS) undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya.

**Methodology:** In this qualitative study, semi structured interviews were conducted among purposively selected SHS students at the University of Kelaniya. The experiences of the participants in regarding working with children with disabilities, its effect on personal life, career and academic life. Interviews were transcribed, analyzed and translated using narrative thematic analysis methods. Inductive coding was conducted manually by the research student and the supervisor.

**Objective:** To describe the experiences of working with and learning from children with disabilities among Speech and Hearing Sciences (SHS) undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya.

**Results:** Fifteen undergraduates (all females) participated in the study. Following four themes emerged from the collected data and all of them have both positive and negative sides. 'positive and negative behavior of children and parents', 'positive and negative impression of society on children with disabilities', 'positive and negative emotions of the students' and 'positive and negative impact on self and future career'. While some experiences motivate the students, some demotivate. Some such behaviors of parents and societal expectations make an impact on how students feel about themselves. Experiences gained during clinical encounters, shape the students' career and appear to make an impact on their personal lives.

**Conclusion:** The results of the study showed that positive and negative experiences influence undergraduates' personal lives and future career. The importance of increasing speech therapy services in Sri Lanka was highlighted. Awareness about children with disability should be increased giving service providers the due recognition.

**Keywords:** Speech and hearing sciences, children with disabilities, experiences, narrative qualitative study, speech therapy



### 3. Cultural Adaptation and Identify Reliability of The Language Screening Test (Last) for Individuals with Sinhala Speaking Left Hemispheric Damage Following Acute Stroke

**Dineshika K.P<sup>1</sup>, Wijesekara J<sup>2</sup>, Rathnayaka, S.P<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Speech Therapy Department, National Hospital of Sri Lanka*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka*

<sup>3</sup>*University of New South Wales, Australia*

<sup>3</sup>*University of New South Wales, Australia*

**Introduction:** Language Screening Test (LAST) was originally designed in French. And it has been translated and validated to many languages in the world. There are very few Sinhala language screening test available to screen aphasia. Therefore, this study aimed to translate, culturally adapt LAST into Sinhala language, and identify its' reliability.

**Methods:** Objectives of the study are (1) Translate and culturally adapt the LAST into Sinhala language. (2) Identify the reliability of the adapted LAST (LAST-S), and (3) Compare the LAST-S performances between normal participants and aphasic participants. The study involves three phases. First phase is the linguistic translations and adaptation of the LAST into Sinhala Language. Second phase is administration of the adaptation of the screening tool to a normative sample (healthy volunteers). Third phase is administration of the adapted screening tool to the stroke patients. To confirm the diagnosis all patients were assessed using a detail language assessment tool (SLAA) within seven days which could also enhance the criterion validity of the tool.

A total of 45 post stroke (left hemispheric damaged) Sinhala speaking individuals, within the first month of diagnosis, between 20 to 80 years of age (experimental group) and 45 healthy volunteers of same age group included in this mixed study, conducted in Speech and Language therapy clinic at government hospital in Sri Lanka.

**Results:** Both internal ( $\alpha = 0.996$ ) and interrater reliability ( $\kappa = 0.759$ ) tests revealed good reliability of the LAST-S. However, the test-retest reliability showed reduced internal consistency ( $\alpha = 0.735$  and  $\kappa = 0.121$ ) for this tool (The original test conduct within seven days of the onset and re-test conducted after 10 days of original assessment).

**Conclusion:** The tool was administered to aphasic population and non-aphasic population to identify the reliability of the Sinhala version of LAST. The study mainly used three parameters to measure the reliability; internal, interrater and test-retest reliability. The study indicated a high internal and inter-rater reliability. The reduced test re-test reliability score can be due to the improvements made in their language skills within the 10 days of administration.

#### 4. Developing a Reliable, Applicable and Validated Sentence Assessment for Children with Cleft Lip and/ or Palate- Spoken Sinhala Language (SACLP-SIN)

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**Introduction:** Children with Cleft Lip and palate (CLP) are more prone to develop cleft type characteristics (CTCs) if, they were not treated after palate repair. Therefore, speech should assess with a standardized assessment in their native language. Aim was to analyze the nature of speech consonant production with a validated Sentence Assessment for Children with CLP- Spoken Sinhala Language (SACLP-SIN)

**Method:** SACLP-SIN consists with sentences to assess 25 consonants including 4 prenasalized voiced stops peculiar to Sinhala in word initial, middle and final position for children above 5 yrs old. Considered the international guidelines of CLP assessment, linguistic rules, cultural aspects, age appropriateness, and easy perception of CTCs, nasality, voice, intelligibility, non-cleft speech errors, SLT intervention in SACLP-SIN development. It has conducted at Lady Ridgeway Hospital (LRH) in Sri Lanka. SACLP-SIN developed according to; Development of the assessment; assessment of face and content validity; assessment of reliability, validity and acceptability. Found Kappa value for inter-rater and intra-rater reliability.

**Results:** SACLP-SIN scored cronbach  $\alpha$  value: /m/-0.928, /p/-0.773, /b/-0.794, /f/-0.791, /v/-0.834, /t/-0.932, /d/-0.891, /s/-0.954, /n/-0.97, /l/-0.972, /r/-0.826, /ʈ/-0.832, /ɖ/-0.839, /c/-0.695, /ɟ/-0.786, /j/-0.726, /ʃ/-0.604, /k/-0.923, /g/-0.923, /h/-0.945, /ɸ/-0.636, /d̃/-0.722, /d̃/-0.695, /ɣ/-0.824, and /ŋ/-0.684. SACLP-SIN has fulfilled all the requirements to perceive CTCs. Inter-rater reliability kappa values; Intelligibility-1, voice-0.69, hypernasality-0.819, hyponasality-0.702, Nasal fricative-0.787, Anterior oral CTCs-0.875, Posterior oral CTCs-0.935, Non-oral CTCs=1, Passive CTCs-0.805, Non-cleft speech errors-1, and SLT intervention-1. Intra-rater reliability-kappa values; Intelligibility-0.935, voice-0.69, hypernasality-0.728, hyponasality-0.613, perception of nasal fricative-0.713, Anterior oral CTCs-0.747, Posterior oral CTCs-0.805, speech intervention=0.833, Passive CTCs-0.940, non-cleft speech errors-0.8110, and speech intervention-0.745.

**Conclusion:** SACLP-SIN is a reliable, applicable, and validated assessment which is applicable to assess both children with CLP and without CLP for spoken Sinhala language in Sri Lankan context.

# Acknowledgement

We are grateful to Prof. A. R Wickremasinghe - Cadre Chair and Senior Head, Department of Public health, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, who graced the first international conference on Speech and Language Therapy in Sri Lanka as the Keynote Speaker. We cannot thank enough to our senior clinicians for being present at the conference and to their guidance throughout the journey and for the immense contribution to the field.

In addition, we would like to acknowledge all the invited speakers for sharing their expertise with us during this conference. We are pleased to have a free paper session with such high-quality research adding to local literature and we are grateful for the authors for choosing our conference as a platform to share their wonderful work.

Further, our student volunteer group was part of the driving force of this conference, who contributed with their time despite their hectic study schedules. We are grateful to our sponsors, who have supported us financially and materialistically during these crisis times in the country.

Finally, we are grateful to all our council members, members and attendees of the conference for making this historic conference a success.

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