Developing a word list to assess articulation errors in Sinhala speaking children with Cleft Lip and Palate age 2.5 to 3.0 years

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Background:
Cleft Lip and Palate (CLP) is a congenital abnormality and 0.79 per 1000 birth prevalence was observed in the Sri Lankan context. CLP affects the individual's articulation and resonance; early intervention could prevent most of the articulation errors and identification can be done using language assessment. However, in the Sri Lankan context we have no standardized assessments to identify this condition, and developing a tool to identify the CLP articulation errors is a need in the field of Speech and Language Therapy in Sri Lanka.

Objectives:
1. To identify test materials and vocabulary for the age range 2.5yrs to 3.0yrs using structured observation design.
2. Develop a word list to assess cleft type errors based on the norms to identify in objective 01 and evaluate the suitability of the identified words among typically developing children age 2.5 to 3.0 years

Methodology:
18 typically developing children age 2.5 years to 3.0 years were selected via purposive sampling for objective one and, initially play-based structured observation was used to select the words for the tool and a pre-test was conducted. After modification the tool was administered for the 30 typically developing children age 2.5 years to 3.0 years for objective 02.

Results:
95 words were identified as high frequency words from objective one and out of those, 24 high frequency words were selected for the tool. Except sound /s/ in word medial position all other sounds were produced in more than 75% cases, accurately. No male female production difference was observed.

Conclusion:
Except /s/ in medial position all other sounds could be used to assess children at the age range of 2.5-3.0 years.

Recommendation:
The tool should be administered among the affected population and validate the results to standardize the tool.