

# REPORT ON THE 27<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS OF THE UNION OF THE EUROPEAN PHONIATRICIANS

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The 27<sup>th</sup> Congress of the Union of the European Phoniatrians was held in Moscow on 2–5 October 2014. It was organized by the Russian Federal Clinic Research Center of Otorhinolaryngology with Congress President Dr Ekaterina Osipenko. More than 300 participants from 28 countries attended. There were two simultaneous sessions devoted not only to phoniatrians, but also, following the motto of the congress 'Phoniatrians: An Interdisciplinary Specialty', to otolaryngology, audiology, speech therapy, psychology, and linguistics.

At the opening ceremony, guests listened to a live musical performance which proved that phoniatrians also have a talent for music. The day progressed to a very interesting lecture by Prof T. Chernigovskoya (St Petersburg) on the origins of language, which recounted the latest research on this subject. Prof J. Sundberg (Sweden) delivered an equally interesting lecture outlining acoustic aspects of the human voice.

Prof R. Puxeddu and Prof E. Crosetti (Italy) spoke of new principles in the evaluation of benign and malignant lesions of the larynx. They stressed the importance of new techniques: narrow band imaging, contact endoscopy, fluorescence, and SPIES. A separate session was devoted to the management of vocal fold paralysis. Prof. M. Gugatschka (Austria) presented a novel method for the treatment of bilateral vocal cord paralysis. He showed promising results of surgical rehabilitation of 6 patients with the condition. The method uses an implantable device which works as a laryngeal pacemaker.

Some sessions of the congress were focused on the physiology and pathology of how a singer produces their voice. Other work covered neurological voice disorders as well as disorders of voice, speech, and hearing in children.

Among the participants were specialists from Poland. Prof B. Wiskirska-Woźnica (Poznań) discussed the results of EMG examination in patients with hyperfunctional dysphonia. Dr W. Wojnowski (Poznań) presented results of the successful treatment of exudative lesions in Reinke's space (edema, polyp, vocal nodules). The method is based on local injections of steroids directly into the vocal folds. Dr E. Włodarczyk and Dr B. Miaskiewicz from the Institute of Physiology and Pathology of Hearing talked about their experience with videostrobokymography, the results of surgical treatment of patients with sulcus glottis, and the long-term effects of injecting hyaluronan in cases of glottis insufficiency treated with laryngoplasty.

The congress also included practical workshops, one of them dealing with a holistic approach to silent reflux. Dr J. Schlomicher-Thier (Austria) shared his experience in the diagnosis and treatment of this common condition. Among other treatments, he described the Lax Vox method for voice rehabilitation which is an essential element of his therapy. A multidisciplinary approach to vocal disorders was the theme of an interactive workshop by E. Koutsoubaki (Greece).

This year's congress was an interesting one, allowing the exchange of valuable and professional experience. It was also an opportunity for participants to broaden both their theoretical and practical knowledge.