Prologue

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In 1996–1997, IALP members Butler and Cheng prepared a special issue on child language, which became *Folia Phoniatria et Logopaedica* 1998;50, providing an initial view of child language research and treatment in a number of developed countries. Since that time there has been increasing interest, exemplified by the papers presented at the 75th IALP Anniversary's Goteborg Composium and the subsequent *Folia Phoniatria et Logopaedica* issue (52;1–3/200), edited by Dr. Ewa Söderpalm of Sweden. In that volume Sr. Marie DeMontfort Supple [1] of Ireland addresses dyslexia in an article that takes 'A New Look at Old Links' of dyslexia as an oral and written language disorder, Dr. Ruth Lesser [2] of England addresses 'Managing Aphasia: Then and Now' followed by Dr. Li-Rong Lilly Cheng [3], who comments on the 'Children of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow: Global Implications for Child Language'. In retrospect, it was this summation of the children of tomorrow, i.e. the virtual generation that has led to the creation of a second special issue on child language.

Several other authors contributed to the Composium, including Mogford-Bevan's [4] contribution on 'Developmental Language Impairments with Complex Origins' and Jensen's [5] remarks on the status of 'Aug-

mentative and Alternative Communication in Logopedics' throughout Europe and North America. M. Nasser Kotby [6] of Egypt provided a closing commentary on the 'The IALP and the World: Global Perspectives', addressing IALP's role in meeting the needs of individuals who have communication difficulties throughout the world.

Butler and Cheng responded to the invitation to prepare a second special issue, and as Guest Editors reviewed the limited information from non-Western cultures on the development of training programs in human communication and its disorders. In some respects, this is somewhat similar to the perplexities found in the study by *World Psychology* (1997;3) in an issue which explored how psychology is conceptualized, practiced and taught round the world. As Harre [7, p.104] notes in his discussion of cultural priorities, 'What is important for one culture may not be of central interest for another. The normative structure of a culture may have a profound effect on the repertoire of emotion displays competent members of a society are ready to perform.' The study of child language shares many similarities with the study of verbalized emotions. We asked members of IALP from around the world to contribute a relatively brief commentary of their individual perspec-

tive on their country's current and perceived future within a global context.

As the reader will discover, the authors took us at our word. Several address their country-specific difficulties as might be anticipated. Khaleefa [8] raises some of the same issues in his discussion of the difficulties Western psychology has faced in its translation to non-Western countries and cultures. Khaleefa [8, p. 29], a professor at the University of Bahrain, points out that there are inherent limitations in the introduction of Western sciences, and points out that there are 'five assumptions related to cultural dualism: traditionalism-modernism, ruralization-urbanization, collectivism-individualism, continuity-discontinuity, and macro-micro emphasis' as he urges Western scientists to better understand the complex processes which shape non-Western cultures. Readers of *Child Language II, Emerging Issues from around the World: Commentaries in a Global Context*, will find both implicit and explicit references to concerns expressed by Khaleefa.

Finally, there are researchers who would disagree with the concept of the Western world as conceptualized as Euro-American in terms of individualism-collectivism. A study reporting on data collected from school teacher samples in 46 nations and student samples in 42 nations and looking at school teachers

and school children on a shared value profile is reported by Schwartz and Ros [9]. They interpreted this study as one in which West European nations were distinguished from American profiles. The Western European data revealed that their cultural profile 'gives priority to Autonomy at the expense of Conservatism, Egalitarianism at the expense of Hierarchy, and Harmony and the expense of Mastery ... This cultural profile differs substantially from the profile found in samples from the United States. The latter give greater priority to Mastery, Hierarchy, and conservatism values, and less to Egalitarianism, Intellectual Autonomy and Harmony values' [9, p. 91]. These authors report that while the United States and Western Europe are seen as prototypical entities, with little differentiation in values, this is a misperception. They conclude that the differences between the two are as large as the differences between West and East Asia.

The issue editors urge our readers to read the essays that follow with an open mind and a good heart as our authors lay before you not only factual information, but their hopes and dreams for their professional lives. Their perceptions are, of course, part and parcel of their cultural and scientific backgrounds. As issue editors, we will return with an epilogue and our comments.

References

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- 9 Schwartz SH, Ros M: Values in the West: A theoretical and empirical challenge to the individualism-collectivism cultural dimension. *World Psychol* 1995;1-2:91-122.