

PIERRE DE VILLIERS PIENAAR

MYRTLE L. ARON, PH.D. (WITWATERSRAND)

*Head, Department of Speech Pathology & Audiology
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg*

SUMMARY

The academic and professional background of the man who initiated and developed training programmes for speech therapists and audiologists in South Africa is presented. The manner in which he developed the profession, and pioneered work in phonetics and linguistics is described, including P. de Villiers Pienaar's role in educational, academic, clinical and cultural institutions in South Africa.

OPSOMMING

Die akademiese en professionele agtergrond van die man wat die opleidingsprogramme vir spraakterapeute en oudioloë in Suid-Afrika ingestel en ontwikkel het, word beskryf. Die wyse waarop hy die beroep ontwikkel het, sy pionierswerk op die gebied van die fonetiek en linguistiek, asook P. de Villiers Pienaar se rol in opvoedkundige, akademiese, kliniese en kulturele instansies in Suid-Afrika, word bespreek.

The study and practice of Speech Pathology and Audiology in the Republic of South Africa has developed significantly since its introduction over a third of a century ago. Pierre de Villiers Pienaar, with foresight and tenacity, was responsible for this development. At the time of his post-graduate studies in the late twenties at the University of Utrecht, Holland, and at the University of Hamburg, Germany, he recognized the possibilities of the rehabilitative application of facets emerging from the fields of phonetics and voice disorders. On his return to South Africa, he presented during the period 1936-1938 the motivation to institute a training course in Logopedics at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

His foresight in introducing this training programme and his awareness of the need to develop high academic and clinical standards demonstrate P. de V. Pienaar's remarkable ability to view the profession of speech and hearing therapy in a clear perspective. His timing and fundamental appreciation of the overview of the wider issues involved and his constant scrutiny of the profession, have led to what is today a respected scientifically based profession whose practitioners enjoy good status. There are now opportunities for the further development of academic, clinical and research facets in this area.

Pierre de Villiers Pienaar was born in 1904 near Potchefstroom in the Trans-

vaal and matriculated in the first class at the Boys' High School in Potchefstroom. In 1922 he attended the Johannesburg Teachers' Training College and the University of the Witwatersrand, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in Education and later an Honours degree in the first class. In 1926 he graduated with the degree Master of Arts, with distinction, at the University of the Witwatersrand. The latter two post-graduate degrees were in the area of phonetics and general linguistics, particularly Afrikaans phonetics, this subject-matter also being the topic for his doctoral degree (Ph.D.) earned at the University of Hamburg, Germany in 1929. The Department of Experimental Phonetics at the University of Hamburg, under the headship of Professor G. Panconcelli-Calzia, had a profound influence on de Villiers Pienaar. Not only did this Department provide the first course in Logopedics at a university in Germany, but it was attended also by Carl Meinhof and G. Kloeke who became foremost dialectologists and linguists, both adding considerably to the linguistic background of de Villiers Pienaar. During the years 1926-1927 and 1930-1932, he taught in primary and high schools in Johannesburg. He was appointed lecturer in 1933 in Phonetics in the Department of African Languages under Professor C.M. Doke at the University of the Witwatersrand and remained at this institution for twenty-three years pioneering the work in phonetics and speech pathology. Professor Doke was held in high esteem for his work and publication of basic texts dealing with African languages. He also held a modern outlook concerning phonetics and the teaching of this subject, and strongly supported P. de V. Pienaar's purpose in instituting a professional qualification for speech therapists. The first trained speech therapists completed their two-year diploma in Logopedics at the end of 1939 at the University of the Witwatersrand and received their clinical training at the Speech, Voice and Hearing Clinic at the same University. This Clinic was established in 1936 by P. de V. Pienaar with a view to training speech therapists. Pierre de Villiers Pienaar was appointed Senior Lecturer in Phonetics and Logopedics in 1938, and in 1944 to the Chair of the Department of Phonetics and Logopedics. The Speech, Voice and Hearing Clinic flourished steadily and with his appointment to the Chair he assumed the Directorship of this Clinic.

Professor Pienaar left the University of the Witwatersrand in 1957 and joined the University of South Africa for two years as Professor of Afrikaans and Nederlands Linguistics. During this time he put forward proposals to create a professional degree course in Logopedics at the University of Pretoria. For eleven years (1959-1969) he was Professor and Head of the Department of Speech Science, Logopedics and Audiology at the University of Pretoria, and Director of the Speech, Voice and Hearing Clinic, attached to that Department. Professor Pienaar retired from this position at the end of 1969 but in order to benefit from his considerable experience, the University of Pretoria continued to retain his services and he was appointed a temporary lecturer for the period 1970-1972. P. de Villiers Pienaar is now a Professor Emeritus at the University of Pretoria and continues his avid interest in speech science, and in the area of diagnosis and rehabilitation of voice disorders.

During the first decade after P. de V. Pienaar had started the training facility for speech therapists, he continued to develop the programme methodically and with far reaching aims. He attracted lecturers from the Universities of

Iowa and Wichita, USA (the Senior Lecturer in Logopedics, A.B. Clemons and a Lecturer in Logopedics, H. Wise) and from Hamburg (Lecturer in Voice Science, G.B. Breckwoldt). Not only did the original two-year diploma in Logopedics become extended to a three-year diploma, but in 1948 Professor Pienaar was responsible for the introduction of the four-year professional degree course B.A. Logopedics (now called B.A. in Speech and Hearing Therapy at the University of the Witwatersrand). The study of the field of audiology was formally introduced as a two-year major in the four-year curriculum at both universities in 1962, but prior to this, Professor Pienaar was well aware of the close relationship between hearing impairment, with its concomitant speech and language problems, and the general field of speech therapy. Apart from introductory aspects concerning the ear and basic audiological procedures taught in the speech science course (Phonetics I), he introduced a specific course dealing with aural rehabilitation as early as 1946. The contents of the degree course demonstrate the eclectic view he holds generally about the study of communication disorders.

Taking cognizance of the needs of the areas to be covered to adequately train speech therapists, P. de V. Pienaar designed the curriculum offered for the four-year degree course as a non-elective one, except for a language in the first year of study, i.e. all subjects, with their practicums, are directly related to the aim of training speech therapists and audiologists. Although some courses might have undergone modification in recent years since he introduced them, intrinsically the content of the course today at both universities carries the stamp of his design. Students are introduced to the clinical situation from the first year of study (in structured observation sessions) and conduct therapy with a variety of cases under supervision from the second year of study. Clinical practicums are held in both university clinics as well as in hospitals, primary schools, cerebral palsy schools and in special institutions. For curriculum purposes the minimum number of clock hours required by students for diagnostic and therapeutic work in the areas of speech pathology and audiology is 750. Normally, the average student accrues nearly 1000 hours, a considerable amount for an undergraduate degree programme. The importance of supervised student clinical practicums has always been stressed by P. de V. Pienaar and the manner in which he originally conceived how a speech and hearing clinic should function in a university department has without doubt paid substantial dividends. In addition to providing student clinical material, the two university clinics function as major facilities serving the communities of Johannesburg and Pretoria and the country areas.

Professor Pienaar not only introduced and developed the training programme at the two universities, but has also been most active over the years in improving and maintaining the standards practised in the profession. He is the watchdog of what he has created and continues to pursue avenues and issues about any item which might have immediate or far reaching effect on the profession. He has always held meetings, called for discussions and has initiated correspondence with personnel here and overseas, all aimed to improve academic training, clinical standards, the creation of new posts and to report on what is being done in this country and overseas. On a Carnegie Fellowship in 1952, P. de V. Pienaar spent an extensive period on research in speech

archives, logopedics and audiology in centres in Europe, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. On his return he incorporated many new facets in the academic and clinical work in the field. During 1962, and again in 1965, he received grants from the Transoranje Institute and the S.A. National Council for the Deaf to attend international conferences dealing with Logopedics and Audiology. At the time of these conferences he re-established and made new contacts and visited training institutions. Professor Pienaar was appointed Honorary Life President of the S.A. Logopedic Society nearly twenty years ago, the national body representing speech therapists and audiologists which has recently changed its name to the S.A. Speech and Hearing Association. He exercises this role in a wide sense, drawing on outside organizations and professional persons in allied fields to take cognizance of the profession he has developed and nurtured.

In 1966 de Villiers Pienaar instigated and convened an important round-table discussion on standards. This discussion was attended by representatives of several universities in South Africa, the S.A. Speech and Hearing Association and the Supplementary Health Services Committee of the S.A. Medical and Dental Council, a statutory body maintaining the register for speech therapists and audiologists. The outcome of this round-table meeting resulted in far reaching implications. It led to a greater awareness of the profession and the role it plays in the rehabilitative service of any community in this country. It also led to modified and improved considerations taken up by the S.A. Speech and Hearing Association. Recently, this Association introduced additional requirements for applicants seeking membership who have been trained in South Africa or overseas, and in certain cases applicants now will have to undergo an examination before being admitted as full members.

While demonstrating his awareness of the constant need to expand the field and improve on standards, P. de V. Pienaar has also, since his earliest years in the profession, expended much effort on the establishment of posts for speech and hearing therapists in this country. He first persuaded the Transvaal Education Department to employ speech therapists which they did from 1941. After this, also at his instigation, hospitals began creating more posts for therapists. Scrutinizing the country as a whole he has always assessed specific developments taking place which might lead to rehabilitative or diagnostic services and therefore the employment of speech therapists and audiologists. He has always remained vigilant in his contacts with education departments throughout the country, medical and dental training departments, national health organizations and the defence departments. His contact with some of these institutions has also embraced the need to establish a base for research to be conducted in the fields of normal and abnormal communication. Today there are over 130 full-time posts in S.A. Many therapists also conduct full-time or part-time private practices. Since the formal course in Logopedics was introduced by P. de V. Pienaar in the late thirties, over 380 speech and hearing therapists have graduated in this country. The number graduating in the profession will increase further when the University of Cape Town qualifies its first therapists after introducing a four-year professional degree course due to start in the very near future. This year the University of Natal-Westville intro-

duced a four-year professional degree in the field which will train Indian therapists.

The interests and activities of Professor Pienaar have been wider than his main purpose in furthering the profession of speech pathology and audiology. His academic work and teaching has revolved around phonetics and general linguistics and he has established speech science and language laboratories. He is also known as a pioneer in the study of experimental phonetics, particularly in relation to the phonemics of Afrikaans, at both the Universities of Pretoria and the Witwatersrand. He has interested himself over many years with the phonetics of Bushman dialects, diachronic linguistics in connection with the phonological structure of Afrikaans, and the linguistic aspects of speech disorganization. Concerning lexicological work he has collaborated with Professors M.S.B. Kritzinger and F.J. Labuschagne on the Verklarende Afrikaanse Woordeboek of which the 6th enlarged edition has just appeared.⁹ The research he has conducted in the field of Afrikaans Phonetics earned him the „Erepenning” Award of the Suid-Afrikaanse Akademie vir Wetenskap en Kuns in 1963. Still today in his retirement Professor Pienaar is engaged in this work as well as establishing archives in linguistics and speech science in South Africa. He has been appointed Head of the Speech Archives sponsored by the Department of National Education and the Human Sciences Research Council. Among his students who majored in Phonetics, three have become heads of university departments of Phonetics or African Languages in South Africa (L.W. Lanham, D.T. Cole and E.O.J. Westphal).

The membership or alliance Pierre de V. Pienaar holds with various bodies is extensive and reflects his wide interest within the area of normal and disordered human communication. His membership on committees or appointments to bodies include: the Language Advisory Committee of the S.A. Broadcasting Corporation, from 1957-1968; the Advisory Committee for language laboratories of the Government Department of Education, Arts and Science; the Film Board of the Republic of South Africa since its inception; the representative of the Department of National Education on the Board of the Transoranje Institute for Special Education; the Editorial Board of *Folia Phoniatrica*, the journal published by the International Logopedic and Phoni-atric Society; the Committee for controlling Speech Examinations and moderator for the University of South Africa since its inception up until 1971; the Commission appointed by the Department of Health to investigate the use and abuse of hearing aids in South Africa. In addition to being a member of learned societies both national and international, he has also served for many years on clinical and technical committees of the S.A. National Council for the Deaf, the Transoranje School for Partially Hearing Children, the National Committee for Noise Control and the S.A. Speech and Hearing Association. P. de V. Pienaar was an elected member of the „Maatschappij der Nederlandsche Letterkunde te Leiden.” Over many years he has given considerable advice and direction to professional and academic institutions in this country who turn to his experienced and objective counsel.

The interests of Pierre de V. Pienaar also extend to wider cultural areas. He has published a novel¹⁰ and collections of short stories^{11,12,13}, is Editor and

a contributor to the „Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner” (three volumes)¹⁵ and was a founder member of Die Handhawersband, an Afrikaans cultural association, and became the first editor of *Die Handhawer*. He has a keen interest in music and is well known for his deep knowledge about opera and singers, being particularly concerned with the art of singing.

Speech therapists in this country have for many years associated P. de V. Pienaar with his work in voice and its disorders. His diagnostic acumen and therapeutic skill with voice disordered cases have earned the respect of several ENT specialists who are increasingly referring cases of this nature to him and to other speech therapists. In his retirement he is continuing to work in this area, again pursuing developmental work which has been comparatively neglected compared to other disorders of communication.

The dedication of this issue of the Journal to Pierre de Villiers Pienaar reflects, in small measure, the large tribute which speech therapists and audiologists in this country have for the man who has initiated their profession and developed it with such purpose and tenacity. He pioneered the field and its academic training. P. de V. Pienaar's steadfast application concerning the expansion and improvement of clinical, academic and research facilities will always be remembered with admiration and respect. He will always be known, not only as a phonetician and a linguist, but the father of speech therapy and audiology in South Africa. We all wish him good health in his retirement and look forward to the fruits of the work he is now undertaking.

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS OF PIERRE DE VILLIERS PIENAAR

1. With T.H. le Roux (1927): *Afrikaanse Fonetiek*. J.C. Juta, Johannesburg.
2. (1930): *Die Fonoposotie in die Fonotopie van Afrikaanse afsluitings en vernouingsklanke binne die spraakmolekuul*. Swets en Zeitlinger, Amsterdam.
3. (1939): *Praat u Beskaaf*. Voortrekkerpers, Johannesburg.
4. (1947): *Die Afrikaanse Spreektaal*. Van Schaik, Pretoria.
5. (1945, 4th edition 1963): *Uitspraakwoordeboek van Afrikaans*. Van Schaik, Pretoria.
6. With A.G. Hooper (1948): *An Afrikaans-English Phonetic Reader*. Rand University Press, Johannesburg.
7. (1951): Chapter entitled "Speech Disorganization". in *Social Medicine*, Ed., E.H. Cluver. Central News Agency, Ltd., Johannesburg.
8. (1966): Chapter entitled "Speech Pathology in South Africa". In *Speech Pathology*, Eds., Rieber, R.W. and Brubaker, R.S. North Holland Publishing Company, Amsterdam.
9. With Kritzinger, M.S.B. and Labuschagne, F.J. (1973): *Afrikaanse Verklarende Woordeboek*. Van Schaik, Pretoria.

Literary works

10. (1928): *Skakels van die Ketting*. de Bussy, Holland.
11. (1934): *Ruth* e.a. Kortverhale. Nasionale Pers, Johannesburg.

12. (1936): *Magte* e.a. Kortverhale. Nasionale Pers, Johannesburg.
13. (1940): *Die Oorlogskind* e.a. Kortverhale. Nasionale Pers, Johannesburg.

Cultural works

14. (1951): *Opera en Sanger*. Afrikaanse Pers, Johannesburg.
15. Editor with Van den Heever, C.M. (1945-1947-1950): *Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner*. Three volumes. Nasionale Pers, Johannesburg.
16. (1968): As Editor, abridged and revised edition of *Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner*, Nasionale Pers, Johannesburg.

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