

**THE CLINICAL VALUE OF THE AUDITORY STEADY STATE
RESPONSE FOR EARLY DIAGNOSIS AND AMPLIFICATION
FOR INFANTS (0 – 8 months) WITH HEARING LOSS**

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For Frederick, Nell and Mieke

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My help comes from the Lord

SUMMARY

TITLE : **THE CLINICAL VALUE OF THE AUDITORY STEADY STATE RESPONSE FOR EARLY DIAGNOSIS AND AMPLIFICATION FOR INFANTS (0 – 8 months) WITH HEARING LOSS**

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There has always been a need for objective tests that assess auditory function in infants, young children, and/or any patient whose development level precludes the use of behavioral audiometric techniques. Although the Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) is seen as the 'gold standard' in the field of objective audiometry, it presents with its own set of limitations. The Auditory Steady State Response (ASSR) has gained considerable attention and is seen as a promising addition to the AEP 'family' to address some of the limitations of the ABR. The ASSR promises to estimate all categories of hearing loss (mild to profound) in a frequency specific manner. It also indicates to the possibility to validate hearing aid fittings by determining functional gain of hearing aids by determining unaided and aided ASSR thresholds.

An exploratory research design was selected in order to compare unaided thresholds, obtained through the use of three different procedures – ABR, ASSR and behavioral thresholds. Aided thresholds were also obtained and compared with two procedures – the aided ASSR

(measured and predicted) and aided behavioral threshold. The results indicated that both the ABR (tone burst and click) and ASSR provided a reasonable estimation of the subsequently obtained behavioral audiograms. The ASSR, however, approximated the behavioral thresholds closer than the ABR and were furthermore able to quantify hearing thresholds accurately for subjects with severe and profound hearing losses. The result indicated further that the ASSR can be instrumental in the validation process of hearing aid fittings in infants. These results demonstrated however, that the ASSR measured thresholds underestimate the aided behavioral thresholds and the aided ASSR predicted thresholds overestimate the aided behavioral thresholds.

The research concluded that the ASSR is useful in estimating frequency-specific behavioral thresholds accurately in infants and validating hearing aid fittings. Until evidence is sufficient to recommend the ASSR as primary electrophysiological measure of hearing in infants, the ASSR should be used in conjunction with the ABR – following a test battery approach in the diagnostic process of hearing loss in infants. The ASSR further shows great promise in validating hearing aid fittings, but this specific application of the ASSR needs further research evidence on large groups to validate the procedure.

Key terms: Objective tests, estimate behavioral thresholds, auditory brainstem response, auditory steady state response, frequency specific, test battery, validation of hearing aids, ASSR measured thresholds, ASSR predicted thresholds, auditory evoked potentials.

OPSOMMING

TITEL	:	DIE KLINIESE WAARDE VAN DIE OUDITIEF STANDHOUDENDE RESPONS VIR VROEË IDENTIFIKASIE VAN GEHOORVERLIES EN VROEË PASSING VAN GEHOORAPPARATE IN DIE JONG BABA (0 – 8 maande)
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In die veld van Oudiologie is daar 'n voortdurende behoefte na objektiewe oudiometriese prosedures om ouditiewe sensitiwiteit in babas, jong kinders en/of enige pasiënte wie se ontwikkelingsvlak hul uitskakel van gedragsoudiometrie, te bepaal. Die Ouditiewe Breinstam Respons (OBR) word gesien as die "goue standaard" in die veld van objektiewe oudiometrie, alhoewel die tegniek sy eie beperkinge voorhou. Die Ouditiewe Standhoudende Respons (OSR), het aansienlike aandag begin geniet en word gesien as 'n belowende toevoeging tot die 'familie' van Ouditief Ontlokte Potensiale (OOP), wat gevolglik sekere van die OBR se tekortkominge kan aanspreek. Die OSR blyk 'n ouditief ontlokte respons te wees wat spesifiek geskik is om alle kategorieë van gehoorverlies frekwensie-spesifiek te voorspel. Daar is ook aanduidings dat die OSR geskik mag wees om passings van gehoorapparate by jong babs te bevestig, deur beide onversterkte en versterkte OSR drempels te bepaal.

'n Ondersoekende navorsingsontwerp is gebruik om onversterkte drempels, soos bepaal deur drie verskillende prosedures – OBR, OSR en gedragsoudiometrie – te bepaal en te vergelyk. Versterkte drempels is ook bepaal en vergelyk deur middel van twee prosedures, naamlik die versterkte OSR (meting en voorspelling) en versterkte gedragsoudiometrie. Die resultate het getoon dat beide die OBR (toonbreuk en klik) en die OSR 'n redelike beraming van suiwertoon gedragsoudiometrie vertoon. Die OSR het egter die suiwertoondrempels meer akkuraat beraam en was daartoe instaat om die erge en uitermatige gehoorverliese te kwantifiseer. Die resultate het verder daarop gedui dat die OSR 'n rol kan speel in die bevestiging/validasie van gehoorapparaatpassings in babas. Die resultate het gedui daarop dat die OSR meting die versterkte gedragsoudiometrie drempels onderskat, terwyl die OSR voorspelde drempels die versterkte gedragsoudiometrie drempels oorskakel.

Die navorsing het bevind dat die OSR nuttig is om frekwensie-spesifieke suiwertoondrempels akkuraat vir babas te voorspel. Die OSR toon ook waarde in die validasie-proses wanneer gehoorapparate gepas word. Verdere navorsing is egter nodig alvorens die OSR as primêre elektrofisiologiese prosedure aanbeveel kan word om gehoor van babas te evalueer. Dit is duidelik dat die OSR deel van 'n toets-battery benadering moet wees om gehoorsensitiwiteit van babas te evalueer. Die OSR dui verder daarop dat dit 'n rol kan speel in die validasie-proses wanneer gehoorapparate gepas word, maar dat hierdie toepassing van die tegniek verdere navorsing benodig. Validasie daarvan op groot groepe is nodig.

Slutelwoorde: Objektiewe oudiometrie, beraming van suiwertoondrempels, ouditiewe breinstam respons, ouditiewe

standhoudende respons, frekwensie-spesifiek, toetsbattery, validasie van gehoorapparate, OSR meting, OSR voorspelling, ouditief ontlokte potensiale.

TABLE OF CONTENT

	PAGE
CHAPTER 1 -	
BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF STUDY	1
1.1 ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY.....	1
1.2 BACKGROUND	3
1.3 RATIONALE	7
1.4 PROBLEM STATEMENT	10
1.5 DEFINITION OF TERMS	13
1.6 DIVISION OF CHAPTERS	15
1.7 SUMMARY	17
CHAPTER 2 -	
CLINICAL APPLICATION OF AUDITORY EVOKED POTENTIAL IN INFANTS: COMPARING THE AUDITORY BRAINSTEM RESPONSE AND AUDITORY STEADY STATE RESPONSE	18
2.1 INTRODUCTION	18
2.2 EARLY INTERVENTION FOR INFANTS WITH HEARING LOSS	19
2.2.1 Early identification and diagnosis of hearing loss	20
2.2.2 Early amplification for infants with hearing loss	24
2.2.2.1 <i>Approaches to pediatric hearing aid fitting</i>	25

	PAGE
2.3	CRITICAL EVALUATION OF AEP'S IN PEDIATRIC AUDIOLOGY 33
2.3.1	Auditory Brainstem Response 34
2.3.1.1	<i>Detection of hearing loss</i> 35
2.3.1.2	<i>Diagnosis of hearing loss</i> 36
i.	ABR threshold evaluations using clicks 36
ii.	ABR threshold evaluation using brief tones 39
2.3.1.3	<i>The ABR in pediatric hearing aid fittings</i> 43
2.3.1.4	<i>Summary of the ABR application in Pediatric Audiology.....</i> 46
2.3.2	Perspectives on the Auditory Steady State Response 47
2.3.2.1	<i>Definition and development of Auditory Steady State Response</i> 47
i.	Single stimuli vs. multiple stimuli ASSR 51
2.3.2.2	<i>Threshold determination</i> 53
2.3.2.3	<i>Current clinical application of the ASSR in infants</i> 54
i.	Detection 55
ii.	Diagnosis 57
iii.	The ASSR in pediatric hearing aid fittings 60

	PAGE
2.3.2.4 <i>Critical evaluation of the ASSR</i>	61
2.3.2.5 <i>Summary of the ASSR application in Pediatric Audiology</i>	65
2.4 CONCLUSION	66
2.5 SUMMARY	67
CHAPTER 3 –	
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	68
3.1 INTRODUCTION	68
3.2 AIMS OF RESEARCH	69
3.2.1 Main aim	69
3.2.2 Sub aims	70
3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN	70
3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	73
3.4.1 Autonomy	73
3.4.2 Beneficence	75
3.4.3 Justice	77
3.5 SUBJECTS	77
3.5.1 Sampling	77
3.5.2 Selection criteria	78

	PAGE
3.5.2.1	<i>Client status and record</i> 78
3.5.2.2	<i>Hearing ability</i> 78
3.5.2.3	<i>Normal Middle Ear functioning</i> 78
3.5.2.4	<i>Age at time of identification</i> 79
3.5.2.5	<i>Neurological status</i> 79
3.5.3	Subject Selection Apparatus 80
3.5.3.1	<i>Hearing screening apparatus</i> 80
3.5.3.2	<i>Otoscopic examination</i> 81
3.5.3.3	<i>Middle ear assessment</i> 81
3.5.4	Subject selection procedures 81
3.6	DESCRIPTION OF SUBJECTS 82
3.7	MATERIAL AND APPARATUS 83
3.7.1	Hearing thresholds estimation apparatus 83
3.7.2	Functional gain estimation apparatus 88
3.7.3	Clinical audiometer 88
3.7.4	Test environment 89
3.7.5	Data collection sheet 89
3.8	PROCEDURE 89
3.8.1	Data collection procedure 89
3.8.1.1	<i>Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR)</i> 91

	PAGE
3.8.1.2	<i>Auditory Steady State Response (ASSR)</i> 91
3.8.1.3	<i>Aided ASSR thresholds</i> 92
3.8.1.4	<i>Unaided behavioral pure tone thresholds (BT)</i> 92
3.8.1.5	<i>Aided behavioral thresholds</i> 94
3.8.2	Procedures for data recording, processing and Analysis 94
3.8.2.1	<i>Recording of data</i> 94
3.8.2.2	<i>Procedures for processing and analysis of data</i> 95
3.8.3	Validity and reliability 98
3.9	Summary 99
CHAPTER 4 –	
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	101
4.1	INTRODUCTION 101
4.2	RESULTS FOR SUB-AIM 1: TO INVESTIGATE THE POTENTIAL CLINICAL VALUE OF THE ASSR IN EARLY DIAGNOSIS OF HEARING LOSS IN A GROUP OF INFANTS BY DETERMINING AND COMPARING UNAIDED ASSR, ABR AND BEHAVIORAL THRESHOLDS 104
4.2.1	Individual subject results for sub-aim 1 104
4.2.1.1	<i>Subject 1: Results for sub-aim 1</i> 104

	PAGE
4.2.1.2	<i>Subject 2: Results for sub-aim 1</i> 106
4.2.1.3	<i>Subject 3: Results for sub-aim 1</i> 109
4.1.2.4	<i>Subject 4: Results for sub-aim 1</i> 112
4.2.1.5	<i>Subject 5: Results for sub-aim 1</i> 115
4.2.1.6	<i>Subject 6: Results for sub-aim 1</i> 117
4.2.2	Collective results for all six subjects concerning Sub-aim 1 119
4.2.2.1	<i>Comparing the unaided ABR and unaided ASSR</i> 121
4.2.2.2	<i>Unaided ASSR vs. unaided behavioral thresholds</i> 126
4.2.2.3	<i>Unaided ABR vs. unaided behavioral thresholds</i> 131
4.3	RESULTS FOR SUB-AIM 2: TO INVESTIGATE THE CLINICAL VALUE OF THE ASSR FOR RELEVANT EARLY FITTING OF HEARING AIDS IN INFANTS BY DETERMINING AND COMPARING AIDED ASSR AND AIDED BEHAVIORAL THRESHOLDS 136
4.3.1	Individual subject results for sub-aim 2 137
4.3.1.1	<i>Subject 1: Results for sub-aim 2</i> 137
4.3.1.2	<i>Subject 2: Results for sub-aim 2</i> 139
4.3.1.3	<i>Subject 3: Results for sub-aim 2</i> 141
4.3.1.4	<i>Subject 4: Results for sub-aim 2</i> 143
4.3.1.5	<i>Subject 5: Results for sub-aim 2</i> 145
4.3.1.6	<i>Subject 6: Results for sub-aim 2</i> 147

	PAGE
4.3.2	Collective results from all six subjects concerning sub-aim 2..... 149
4.4	DISCUSSION..... 159
4.4.1	Sub-aim 1: To investigate the potential clinical value of the ASSR in early diagnosis of hearing loss in a group of infants by determining and comparing unaided ASSR, ABR and behavioral thresholds..... 160
4.4.1.1	<i>ABR vs. ASSR..... 160</i>
4.4.1.2	<i>ASSR vs. behavioral measures..... 161</i>
4.4.1.3	<i>ABR vs. behavioral measures..... 164</i>
4.4.2	Sub-aim 2: To investigate the potential clinical value of the ASSR for relevant early fitting of hearing aids in infants by determining and comparing aided ASSR and aided behavioral thresholds..... 165
4.4.2.1	<i>Unaided ASSR vs. aided ASSR responses..... 166</i>
4.4.2.2	<i>Aided ASSR responses vs. aided behavioral responses... 167</i>
4.5	CONCLUSION..... 171
4.6	SUMMARY..... 172

	PAGE
CHAPTER 5 –	
CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS	173
5.1 INTRODUCTION	173
5.2 CONCLUSIONS	174
5.2.1 Sub-aim 1: To investigate the potential clinical value of the ASSR in early diagnosis of hearing loss in a group of infants by determining and comparing unaided ASSR, ABR and behavioral thresholds	175
5.2.2 Sub-aim 2: To investigate the potential clinical value of the ASSR for relevant early fitting of hearing aids in infants by determining and comparing aided ASSR and aided behavioral thresholds	176
5.3 THEORETICAL AND CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS	177
5.4 CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE CURRENT STUDY	180
5.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	182
5.6 CONCLUSION	184
REFERENCES	186
APPENDIX A	209
APPENDIX B	210
APPENDIX C	212

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
2.1	Stages of hearing aid fitting process 27
2.2	Advantages and limitations of the ABR 46
2.3	Advantages and limitations of the ASSR 65
3.1	Description of subjects 83
3.2	Protocol for click ABR 85
3.3	Protocol for tone burst ABR 86
3.4	Protocol for the ASSR 87
4.1	Background information and test results for subject 1 105
4.2	Background information and test results for subject 2 107
4.3	Background information and test results for subject 3 110
4.4	Background information and test results for subject 4 113
4.5	Background information and test results for subject 5 115
4.6	Background information and test results for subject 6 117
4.7	Summary of unaided thresholds for the six subjects as determined by the ABR, ASSR and behavioral assessment 120
4.8	Average on all frequencies tested on three procedures 121
4.9	Statistical analysis of ABR and ASSR results 124
4.10	Statistical analysis of ASSR and behavioral measures 129
4.11	Statistical analysis of ABR and behavioral measures 134
4.12	Unaided ASSR, aided ASSR and aided behavioral thresholds measurements for subject 1 138

	PAGE
4.13	Unaided ASSR, aided ASSR and aided behavioral thresholds measurements for subject 2 140
4.14	Unaided ASSR, aided ASSR and aided behavioral thresholds measurements for subject 3 142
4.15	Unaided ASSR, aided ASSR and aided behavioral thresholds measurements for subject 4 144
4.16	Unaided ASSR, aided ASSR and aided behavioral thresholds measurements for subject 5 146
4.17	Unaided ASSR, aided ASSR and aided behavioral thresholds measurements for subject 6 148
4.18	Summary of aided thresholds for the six subjects as determined by ASSR and behavioral assessments respectively 151
4.19	Aided ASSR measured responses vs. aided behavioral responses 155
4.20	Aided ASSR predicted responses vs. aided behavioral responses 157

LIST OF FIGURES

		PAGE
FIGURE		
2.1	Principles underlying the ASSR	48
2.2	A single tone and a modulated tone	49
2.3	Recording the ASSR	51
2.4	Multiple ASSR	52
2.5	Polar Plot to Phase Coherence	54
3.1	A schematic representation of the data collection procedures	90
4.1	Main-aim and sub-aims of study	102
4.2	Schematic representation of the ABR, ASSR predictions and BT results for subject 1	106
4.3	Schematic representation of the ABR, ASSR predictions and BT results for subject 2	108
4.4	Schematic representation of the ABR, ASSR predictions and BT results for subject 3	110
4.5	Schematic representation of the ABR, ASSR predictions and BT results for subject 4	113
4.6	Schematic representation of the ABR, ASSR predictions and BT results for subject 5	116
4.7	Schematic representation of the ABR, ASSR predictions and BT results for subject 6	118
4.8	Representation of comparative frequency thresholds between the ABR and ASSR	122
4.9	Relationship between 500 Hz tone burst ABR and ASSR prediction bases on the measurement for seven ears	125

	PAGE
4.10 Relationship between the click ABR and 2000 and 4000 Hz ASSR predictions based on the measurement of seven ears	125
4.11 Mean unaided ASSR thresholds and unaided behavioral thresholds obtained at each frequency for all the ears tested (n = 12)	127
4.12 Representation of comparative frequency thresholds between the ASSR predicted thresholds and behavioral thresholds	128
4.13 Relationship between thresholds determined with ASSR and behavioral responses for a specific number of ears.....	130
4.14 Representation of comparative frequency thresholds between the ABR and behavioral thresholds	132
4.15 Relationship between tone burst ABR and 500 Hz behavioral threshold assessment based on the measurement for seven ears	134
4.16 Relationship between click ABR and 2000 Hz and 4000 Hz behavioral threshold assessment based on the measurement for seven ears respectively	135
4.17 Aided results from subject 1 including behavioral thresholds and ASSR thresholds – measured and predicted	138
4.18 Aided results from subject 2 including behavioral thresholds and ASSR thresholds – measured and predicted	140

	PAGE
4.19	Aided results from subject 3 including behavioral thresholds and ASSR thresholds – measured and predicted 142
4.20	Aided results from subject 4 including behavioral thresholds and ASSR thresholds – measured and predicted 144
4.21	Aided results from subject 5 including behavioral thresholds and ASSR thresholds – measured and predicted 146
4.22	Aided results from subject 6 including behavioral thresholds and ASSR thresholds – measured and predicted 148
4.23	Comparison of average aided results for all measured ears based on aided behavioral assessment, measured and ASSR predicted values 152
4.24	Representation of comparative frequencies on aided ASSR measured thresholds and aided behavioral thresholds 154
4.25	Representation of comparative frequencies on aided ASSR predicted thresholds and aided behavioral thresholds 154
4.26	Relationship between aided behavioral thresholds and aided ASSR measured responses based on the measurements for six subjects 156
4.27	Relationship between aided behavioral thresholds and aided ASSR predicted responses based on the measurements for six subjects 158

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AABR	-	Automated Auditory Brainstem Response
ABG	-	Air Bone Gap
ABR(s)	-	Auditory Brainstem Response(s)
AC	-	Air Conduction
AEP(s)	-	Auditory Evoked Potential(s)
AER	-	Auditory Evoked Response
AM	-	Amplitude Modulation
ASSR(s)	-	Auditory Steady State Response (s)
BC	-	Bone conduction
BT	-	Behavioral Threshold
CF(s)	-	Carrier Frequency (s)
CNS	-	Central Nervous System
dB	-	Decibel
eCochG	-	Electrocochleography
EEG	-	Electro-Encephalo-Gram
EOAE	-	Evoked Oto-acoustic Emissions
FFR	-	Frequency Following Response
FFT	-	Fast Fourier Transform
FM	-	Frequency Modulation
HL	-	Hearing Level
Hz	-	Hertz
IAFM	-	Independent Amplitude and Frequency Modulation
JCIH	-	Joint Committee on Infant Hearing
Kg	-	kilogram
kHz	-	Kilo Hertz
kOhms	-	Kilo Ohm

L	-	Left
L-I	-	Latency Intensity
LLR	-	Late Latency Response
MASTER	-	Multiple auditory steady-state response
MF(s)	-	Modulation Frequency (s)
mg	-	milligram
MLR	-	Middle Latency Response
ms	-	Millisecond
n	-	Number
nHL	-	Normal Hearing Level
NICU	-	Neonatal Intensive Care Unit
NR	-	No Response
OAE(s)	-	Oto-Acoustic Emission (s)
PC	-	Phase Coherence
R	-	Right
s	-	Second
sec	-	Second
SD	-	Standard Deviation
SLR	-	Short Latency Responses
SN₁₀	-	Slow-negative Potential
SNHL	-	Sensory Neural Hearing Loss
SPL	-	Sound Pressure Level
SSP	-	Steady State Potential
SSEP		Steady State Evoked Potential
TB	-	Tone Burst
UNHS	-	Universal Newborn Hearing Screening
USA	-	United States of America
WRS	-	Word Recognition Scores