

**THRESHOLD OF HEARING AND MAGNITUDE OF ACOUSTIC REFLEX  
IN  
CHILDREN**

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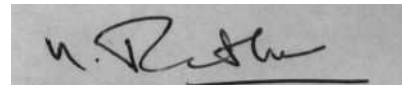
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FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE  
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C E R T I F I C A T E

This is to certify that the Dissertation  
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of Acoustic Reflex in Children" is the  
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## DECLARATION

This dissertation is the result of my own study undertaken under the guidance of Mr. M.N.Vyasamurthy, Lecturer in Audiology, All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore, and has not been submitted earlier at any University for any other diploma or Degree.

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## C O N T E N T S

<u>CHAPTER</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
I	INTRODUCTION	1.1 - 1.9
II	REVIEW OF LITERATURE	2.1 - 2.97
III	METHODOLOGY	3.1 - 3.8
IV	RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS	4.1 - 4.10
V	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	5.1 - 5.3
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	B.1 - B.45

## LIST OF FIGURES

<u>FIG.NO.</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Block diagram of instrumentation used in ERA.	2.4
2. Differential inputs	2.5
3. Inputs referred to ground	2.6
4. Brain Stem evoked response at three age levels (each tracing represents sum of 1000 to 2000 responses to 1msec. monaural click delivered 30 times per sec.	2.11
5. Sample FFR to 500Hz tone burst	2.16
6. Typical configuration of the middle response.	2.18
7. The averaged evoked response from adults and children.	2.24
8(a) AER in waking child	2.25
(b) AER during stage 2 sleep	2.25
9. Negative component of AER during sleep.	2.25
10. Electro cochleographic averaged response (recorde from electrode in the wall of external auditory canal)	2.36
11. Normal electrocochleogram from left ear of 3 year old.	2.38
12. Schematic drawing of the respiration audiometry equipment.	2.46
13. Single Respiration cycle a-c recorded during quiet breathing:(a-d)inhalation (d-c)-exhalation & (b-d)amplitude Respiration alterations: B-amplitude reduction c-jamming or an M.shaped pattern & D-Flattening of respiration cycle.	2.51



<u>FIG. NO.</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
14.	Wave form of a heart beat	2.54
15.	Block diagram of heart rate response audiometry equipment.	2.55
16.	Averaged Heart rate response of ten normal subjects: stimulus:pulsetrain (80 dBSL)	2.58
17.	Finger pulse volume response:Stimulus :pulse train (80dBSL)	2.63
18.	Hypothetical explanation for Noise Tone Difference (Jerger et al, 1974)	2.73
19.	Bivariate Plots: (Filled circles-normal ears Open circles-average Sensorineural loss 32dB)	2.83
20.	Bivariate plot with new classification (Silman & Gelfand, 1979)	2.84
21.	Effect of signal level on the noise tone reflex amplitude difference in normal hearing, flat sensorineural loss & shoping loss groups.	2.95
22.	Electro acoustic Impedance bridge-Z073	3.3

## LIST OF TABLES

<u>TABLE NO:</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Criteria for interpretation of Brainstem evoked responses.	2.14
2. Criteria for the prediction of Sensitivity of hearing.	2.75
3. Criteria for the prediction of slope of hearing loss.	2.75
4. Criteria for the categorization of audiograms (degree of hearing loss)	2.76
5. Criteria for the Categorization of audiograms (configuration of hearing loss)	2.76
6. 1977 SPAR criteria.	2.79
7. Values of two supra threshold indices for normal hearing, flat loss and sloping loss groups.	2.96
8. Expansions of symbols used in the formula for computing Noise tone difference (Reflex magnitude)	4.3
9. Mean values of $N_1, P_1, N_2$ and $P_2$ for right and left ears.	4.3
10. Mean values of $a_1, b_1, c_1$ & $N_1$ and $a_2, b_2, C_2$ and $N_2$ for right and left ears.	4.4
11. Noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) values for 26 right ears and 10 retested ears at 10dBSL and 20dBSL.	4.5
12. Noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) values for 29 left ears and 9 retested ears at 10dBSL and 20 dBSL.	4.6

**TABLE NO.****PAGE**

- |     |   |     |
|-----|---|-----|
| 13. | Mean(M), standard deviation(S.D) & product moment Co-efficient of correlation( ) values of noise tone difference for right and left ears at 10dBSL and 20 dBSL. | 4.7 |
| 14. | Mean values of $a_1, b_1, c_1$ & $N_1$ and $a_2, b_2, c_2$ & $N_2$ for right and left ears of 2 subjects with sensorineural.                                    | 4.8 |
| 15. | Noise tone difference(reflex magnitude) values of 2 sensorineural loss subjects for Right & left ears at 10dBSL and 20dBSL.                                     | 4.9 |

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

"Audiology has two major areas to control. Stimulus and response. The stimulus has come quickly under the control of instrumentation. Client response control however has eluded the examiner and his instrumentation." (Fulton and Lloyd, 1975).

Accurate assessment of hearing according to Lamb (1975) is often hindered by the inability or unwillingness of the subject to respond to sound in a prescribed manner. Fulton and Lloyd (1975) refer to such subjects as "the difficult to test" and report that the Audiology with the difficult to test has arrived at a new era after progressing through 'three phases'.

In phase - 1, an individual, not responding to standard puretone technique was diagnosed as hearing impaired and hence assessment was incomplete or inappropriate.

To overcome the shortcomings of Standard puretone audiometry, classical and instrumental conditioning procedures were developed in phase - 2.

In phase - 3 it was made clear by reliability and validity studies that reliable assessment is possible in many individuals when stringent control over variables is applied in the conditioning procedure.

The foremost concern of the new contemporary era is the development of improved methods for applying advanced electronic instrumentation and human engineering principles to audiologic procedures.

The first three phases correspond to the subjective tests and the new phase to the objective tests in audiometry. "The test is objective if the patients responses can be evoked without any form of voluntary response from the patient" (Coles, 1977).

"Modern audiologic assessment is based on puretone audiometry, which is a reliable procedure for assessing auditory sensitivity in humans" (Lloyd, 1975). Puretone data provide an ordered set of threshold responses indicating auditory sensitivity in low, middle and high frequencies and possible differential between sensitivity to air conducted and bone conducted sounds. Skillful interpretation of puretone thresholds can provide gross differential diagnosis of the site of auditory impairment and communication disorders.

Children constitute a major portion of the 'difficult to test' group. As Brewster and Morrison (1978) observe, when a child comes for audiological testing, "One is dealing with an extremely complex little human being who is doing much more than responding (or not responding) to

the clicks, bangs, warble tones, filtered speech, filtered music and narrow band noises we present to him." So each child is individualistic and selection of appropriate test procedure to suit his needs is absolutely essential.

In puretone audiometry, in order to elicit 'subjective' response from the child audiologists have designed special techniques. 'Conditioned Orientation Reflex Audiometry' (CORA) by Suzuki and Ogiba (1960), 'Peep Show technique' by Dix and Hollpike (1947), 'Food Audiometry' by Ewertson and Nielson (1970), 'Ear choice technique' by Curry and Kentzrock (1951) are some of the specially designed techniques for assessment of the difficult to test children. These procedures have been successful in assessment of hearing in many difficult to test children. But responses in the subjective tests, sometimes may be influenced by certain variables. Lloyd (1975) outlines these variables as follows - 1) Linguistic variables - vocabulary and other language limitations can influence the instructions, training and conditioning aspects of puretone audiometry. 2) Motivation, cooperation and attention variables differ from child to child depending on physical, psychological and emotional problems the child might have. The immaturity of children may impose limitations on accuracy of their judgements leading to supra threshold responses

## 1.4

rather than a valid index of auditory sensitivity. A negative attitude in the child might result in earphone rejection by him.

3) Response mode variables - Neurologic or physiologic disabilities such as cerebral palsy make the child unable to give motor responses like hand raising, block dropping or button pressing.

4) Stimulus variables - when puretones are used, low frequencies (250Hz and below) tend to be easily masked by environmental and body noises. The higher frequency tones (2000 Hz, and above) are occasionally confused by tinnitus. Narrow band masking noise might be confused with test signals, especially at low frequencies.

Thus, in some children, it might not be possible to elicit reliable responses by subjective audiometry. It is necessary that hearing loss must be identified as early as possible so that its effects on the child may be diminished. This is where objective audiometry comes in to picture. Objective tests may also be used to cross check the results obtained by subjective audiometry.

Through sophisticated instrumentation and more precise evaluation procedures, new objective tests are being developed to make direct physiological measures of body reactions to auditory stimuli. While objective techniques like Electro-

encephalic response audiometry (especially early and late response audiometry), Electro cochleography, Impedance audiometry have already become popular. New methods such as Respiration audiometry, Heart rate response audiometry, vaso-motor response audiometry are developing rapidly. Electro dermal or psychogalvanic reflex audiometry has been reported to be successful with some children. Visual response audiometry, although has a long way to go, is quite promising.

In the area of impedance audiometry, the acoustic reflex, because of its several characteristics, has been used by audiologists to estimate integrity of peripheral auditory system (Himelfarb et al, 1978). Acoustic reflex in humans results from a contraction of stapedius muscle in response to auditory stimulation. It is involuntary and not affected by the state of the subject, various drugs, or by other factors which usually influence behavioural or subjective auditory assessment. Acoustic reflex can be quantified by measuring the acoustic impedance of the ear by means of a quick, simple, non-invasive procedure.

In the early stages, presence or absence of Acoustic reflex threshold was used to infer presence of hearing loss (Popelka, 1981). The difference between acoustic reflex threshold for puretones and acoustic reflex threshold for broad band noise called "Noise tone difference" (NTD), was used by Niemeyer and Sesterhenn (1972, 1974) to predict



hearing sensitivity since then many predictive methods have been reported-

- i) Differential loudness summation test (Jerger, 1973)
- ii) Sensitivity prediction by the Acoustic Reflex-SPAR (Jerger et al, 1974)
- iii) 1977 SPAR (Hall, 1978)
- iv) Prediction of hearing for single frequencies (Sesterhem and Breuninger, 1977)

Few investigators (Baker and Lilly, 1976; Lilly, 1977; Rizzo and Greenberg, 1979) have given hearing prediction formulae based on regression equations.

Using the ratio of acoustic reflex thresholds for noise to tone called, 'Noise tone ratio', bivariate plot coordinate systems were developed for prediction of hearing (Popelka, Margolis and Wiley, 1976; Handler, and Margolie, 1977; Margolis and Fox, 1977; Silman and Gelfand, 1979).

Jerger et al (1978) attempted to predict hearing by

- 1) supra threshold amplitude ratio - ratio of the reflex amplitude of 1000 Hz tone and broad band noise stimuli.
- 2) Supra threshold noise tone difference - difference in reflex amplitude between 1000 Hz and broad band noise.

Three groups of adult subjects were used - normal hearing, flat sensorineural loss and sloping sensorineural loss.

The two supra threshold amplitude indices were not found to be as effective as noise tone difference in reflex threshold for hearing prediction.

**Need for the present study:-**

In children, who form a large segment of 'difficult to test' population, objective prediction of hearing is very useful.

Jerger et al (1978) reported that the predictive accuracy of 1977 SPAR was extremely good in children (2 to 12 years old). Predictive accuracy was 100% in normal hearing, 85% in severe hearing loss and 54% in moderate hearing loss children.

So far predictive efficiency of 'NTD' in reflex magnitude (amplitude) has not been investigated in children.

**Purpose of the present study:-**

It was sought to investigate NTD (reflex magnitude) in children and to explore any possibility of its use in the prediction of hearing sensitivity.

**Null hypothesis-**

"There exists no difference between the reflex magnitude for pure tones and the reflex magnitude for broad band noise".

The study was designed to find answers for the following questions:-

- a) Does the magnitude of reflex increase as intensity of the stimulus increases?
- b) Is there a difference in NTD (reflex magnitude) between right and left ears?
- c) Does NTD (reflex magnitude) differ with respect to sensation level (reference:ART) of the stimulus?
- d) Does NTD (reflex magnitude) of normal ears differ from that of sensorineural loss ears?

#### **Brief plan of the study**

Thirty three normal hearing children (age range of 5 to 10 years) and two (age 13 years) with sensorineural hearing loss were taken as subjects for the study.

Puretone thresholds were established at frequencies, 250Hz to 8000Hz using the 'up 5-down 10' method with principles of Hughson-Westlake ascending technique (Green, 1978).

Tympanometric and static compliance measurements were made to ensure absence of middle ear pathology. Acoustic reflex thresholds were established for the puretones (500Hz, 1000Hz and 2000Hz) and broad band noise. Reflex magnitude measurements were carried out at the reflex threshold level, at 10 dB sensation level (reference:ART) and 20dB sensation level (reference:ART).

Noise tone difference (reflex magnitude), For right and left ears at 10dB sensation level and 20dB sensation

level was computed. Data were statistically analyzed.

**Definitions of the terms used:**

**Pure tone:** Periodic sound wave of the sinusoidal type which has no partial or overtone (Scottwood, 1971).

**Broad band noise**(White noise): a sound in which energy is present over a wide range of frequencies with equal energy per cycle (Glorig,1968; Martin,1975).

**Puretone threshold:** is the least audible sound pressure level often defined as the level of a sound at which it can be heard by an individual 50% of the times.(Martin,1975)

**Acoustic reflex threshold:** Is the intensity in dB SPLS which is just capable of inducing a reflex contraction of stapedius muscle as induced by compliance change in the impedance of the tympanic membrane.(Jepsen,1966).

**Acoustic reflex magnitude:** in the present study is the number of units of deflection of balance meter needle, in response to sound stimulation.

## CHAPTER - II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"An objective hearing test is one which defines a patient's hearing ability without the patient's active participation or co-operation" (Northern & Downs, 1978).

Schimizu (1981) outlines ideal requirements of objective audiometry as follows:-

1. Patient's co-operation is not required.
2. Subjective judgement of the examiner is not needed.
3. Results of the test are highly reproducible.
4. Response threshold can be obtained at least within 20 dBSL.
5. Response is frequency specific so that audiogram can be predicted.
6. The technique used is non-surgical.
7. The procedure is not risky.
8. Instrumentation is simple enough for daily clinical use.

In practice, an objective test should satisfy at least some of these ideal conditions.

Objective tests that try to establish auditory sensitivity in children are:-

1. Electro encephalic Response Audiometry.
2. Electro Cochleography.
3. Electro-dermal or psycho galvanic response audiometry.

## 2.2

- 4+ Respiration Response Audiometry.
5. Heart rate response audiometry.
6. Vasomotor response audiometry.
7. Visual response audiometry.
8. The Acoustic Reflex battery.

A review of literature in these topics is as follows:-

### 1. ELECTRO ENCEPHALIC RESPONSE AUDIOMETRY:

Davis (1939) noted that the electrical activity of the brain as indicated by electro encephalographic recordings showed a change because of auditory stimulation. They were reported to be most prominent from vertex of the scalp and hence referred to as "V potentials".

Electro encephalogram or EEG was used to determine hearing sensitivity in pre-school and hard of hearing children by Derbyshire et al (1956) and Derbyshire and McDermott (1958). Thresholds obtained by them were within  $\pm 18$  dB of routine audiometric thresholds. Witharow and Goldstein (1958) reported EEG threshold to be + 10 dB of Standard Audiometric threshold on testing hard of hearing children.

In order to reveal relatively small V potential from the on going EEG potentials, Dawson (1954) developed a photographic superimposition technique.

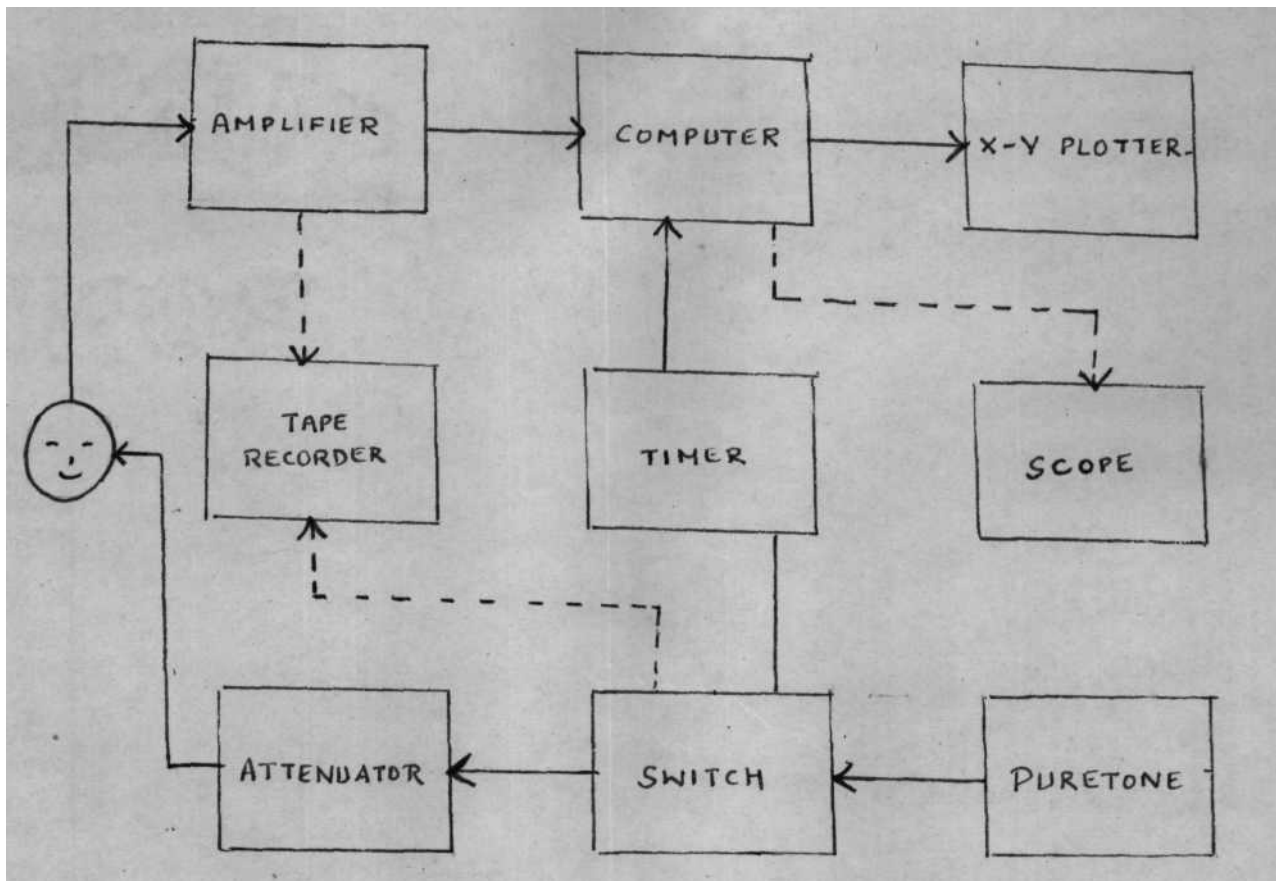
## 2.3

Clark(1958) and Clark etal(1961) developed a computer which averaged the consistent changes in the electric potentials related in time to the onset of the stimulus. Meanwhile, random noise in the background consisting theoretically of an equal number of positive and negative electrical potentials was averaged out to be of zero value so that only the wanted response activity summated in the computer.

Instrumentation for ERA, as specified by Price (1975) consists of a puretone oscillator; Audio signal generated is controlled by timer; switch and attenuator and delivered to the subject by ear phone. With the onset of the stimulus a pulse is sent by the timer to trigger the average response computer - The low voltage potentials from the scalp are picked up by electrodes attached, amplified by the amplifier system and made available to the computer. At the end of a predetermined number of sweeps, averaged data stored in the computer are traced on a graph by X - Y plotter with time on X - axis and voltage on Y - axis. In order to allow for greater flexibility of analysis, stimulus and response can be recorded during test session on a tape magnetic system. Accumulation of data can be monitored by means of visual display on oscilloscope. A camera attachment to photograph the response from the

oscilloscope helps in maintaining a permanent record of the averaged response. An Oscillograph recording EEG activity gives information concerning state of subject, effect of sedation, artifacts such as heart beats, etc. (see Fig.1).

Figure-1



**Block Diagram of instrumentation used in ERA**

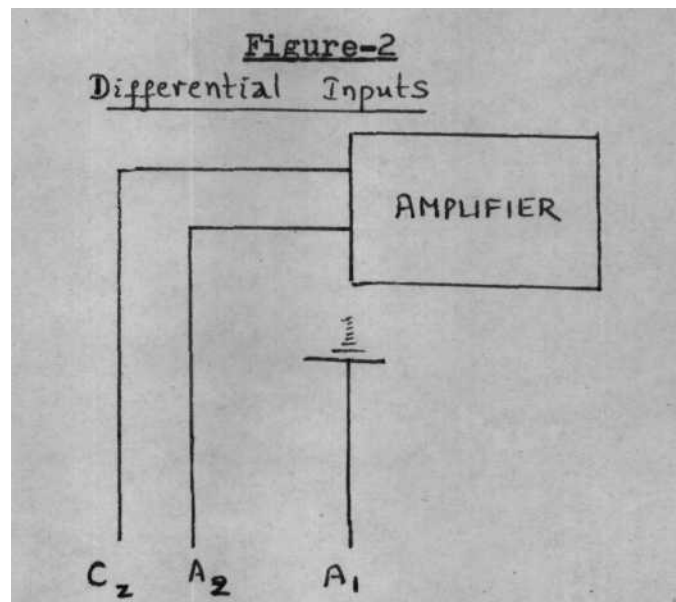
Surface of the scalp is cleaned chemically (eg.by acetone) in the areas where electrodes have to be attached.



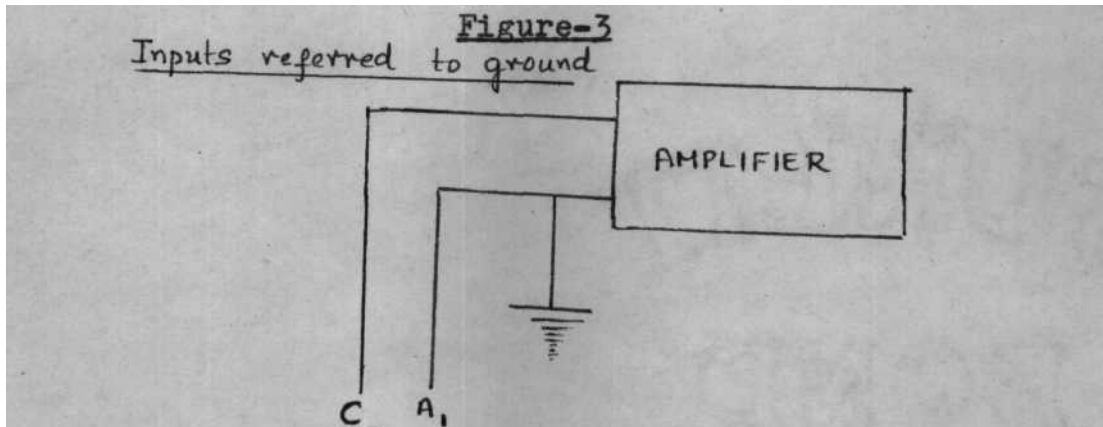
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An electrolyte is used between scalp and electrode to conduct potentials. Electrodes are securely attached to scalp by tape or glue to prevent artifacts from physical displacement

Price(1975) gives two types of electrode arrangement.  
(i) Differential inputs- where voltage differences between electrodes  $C_z$  and  $A_2$  are amplified while electrode  $A_1$  not attached to input of amplifier connects the subject to the ground. (See fig. 2)



(ii) Inputs referred to the ground in which potentials at electrode  $C_z$  are recorded as they relate to electrode  $A_1$  which is grounded. Potentials amplified are voltage differences between  $C_z$  and earth (See fig. 3).



Gibbs and Gibbs(1950) find the 'differential inputs' arrangement more advantageous because "disturbances between earth and inputs are not amplified".

Placement of Electrodes may be bipolar or monopolar. In monopolar recording an electrode on an active area is referred to one on an inactive or indifferent area, where as in bipolar recording, both the electrodes are on active areas. A monopolar technique is most commonly used to record the auditory evoked potentials (Skinner, 1978). Magerison, St.John Loe and Binne (1967) find bipolar recording technique to be useful in comparing electrical activity of the scalp in one region with the activity of another region.

Subject should be comfortably seated or reclined in a quiet test room adjacent to control room. An assistant should stay with the child in the test room. A sound treated room with electrical shielding and provision for visual and auditory monitoring is an ideal testing environment.

## 2.7

The determination of threshold is a special problem in ERA. As signal intensity decreases the amplitude of response also decreases. As a result, near psychophysical threshold it is difficult to distinguish the evoked response from background activity.

A preliminary step is to present moderate to high intensity signals to evoke a clear averaged response using ascending or descending procedure.

There are two general techniques followed in ERA (Price, 1975):- 1) Predetermined schedule of stimulus frequencies and intensities with interpretation of each series postponed until all series are completed.

2) Threshold searching procedure where intensity and frequency of each series is determined on the basis of judgement of information from preceding one.

Skinner (1978) divides auditory electro encephalic response (AER) arbitrarily into four classes of responses on the basis of latency, different properties and presumably different anatomical origins. They are-

- a) The early or brain-stem response.
- b) The middle response.
- c) The late response.
- d) Very late response.

(a) The early or brainstem response

The brainstem component or early response which was reported by Jewett and his associates in 1970, is a moderately large (1 to 10 $\mu$ -VDH) polyphasic wave, occurring from 1 to 8 mac after the onset of an auditory stimulus (Hood, 1971; Jewett and Williston, 1971; Jewett et al, 1970).

The early response is composed of a series of very fast waves (100 to 2000Hz) with seven peaks originating from different regions of brain stem (Jewett and Williston 1971).

Starr and Hamilton (1976) using patients with confirmed brain stem lesions attributed various peaks of brainstem response to the following components; auditory nerve ( $J_i$ ), cochlear nuclei, trapezoid body and superior olivary nuclei ( $J_i$  and  $J_{iii}$ ) and lateral lemniscus and inferior colliculus ( $J_{IV}$  and  $J_v$ ). Largest amplitude occurs at peak v which also is the most stable of various peaks.

A click stimulus is used in evoking a brainstem response because it creates an abrupt pressure change within the peripheral hearing apparatus and auditory pathways producing synchronous neural firings. Which can be detected by surface electrodes. (Weber, Seitz and McCutcheon, 1981).

Tone pips or bursts with rise times slower than 2.5msec do not elicit the early response (Cobb, Skinner and Burns, 1977).

## 2.9

Suzuki and Horiuchi(1981) recommend rise times of 3,2,1.5 and 1 msec for puretone pipe of 0.5, 1,2 and 4 KHz respectively. A 5 msec rise time is best for frequency specificity and response recognizability(Stapells & Picton, 1981). BER is primarily on onset response (Hecox, Squires and Galambos, 1976) produced by the onset of the signal and unrelated to signal duration (Skinner,1978).

Jewett and Williston(1971) have found good brainstem responses with click sensation levels at 60 and 75 dB and rate of presentation 2 per sec. Hood(1971) recommends 3 per sec.

Brainstem response consists of seven waves when stimuli are applied at slow repetition rates (1 to 10/Sec) and at faster repetition rates (33.3/Sec) wave V is the most prominent (Mokotoff et al,1977). Rowe(1981) recommends a stimulus rate of 30 to 50/Sec for acuity testing. The early response (4 to 8 msec) may be obtained with very high stimulus repetition rates but optimally with 5 to 10 per second and requires 1000 or more stimulus samples(C}lattke,1975).

An analysis band pass of 1.6 to 2500Hz gives clearest early response (Jewett and Williston.,1971). Motokoff etal (1977) recommend a band pass of 100 to 3000Hz Laukli & Mair(1981)find a wide band pass of 2-5000Hz suitable.

## 2.10

Berlin(1978) and Rowe(1981) finds monaural stimulation to be more sensitive than binaural.

Mean behavioral click threshold obtained from a group of normal listeners can be used as the OdB reference intensity for Brainstem Response Audiometry(Weber,Seitz and McCutcheon,1981).

The abrupt signal risetimes required to elicit the brainstem response produce wide energy, dispersion across frequency (Skinner,1978). In order to overcome this, Picton etal(1979)proposed the use of 'notched noise' masking to limit the tone response to a specific region of cochlea. This yields more accurate threshold information.

Brainstem response may be measured using surface electrodes on the scalp(vertex) and on the earlobe or mastoid(Hood, 1975)

Terkildsen and Osterhammel (1981) found a pair of electrically linked electrodes one on each side of the neck to be useful as reference electrodes for active vertex electrode.

Stapells and Picton(1981) recommend that reference electrode should be lower down the mastoid to avoid distortion of early response by post auricular reflexes.

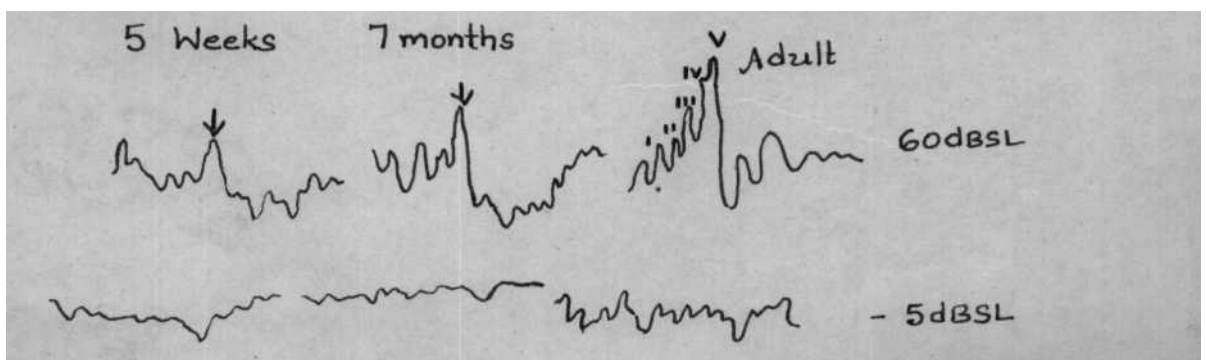
Brainstem response is not dependent upon subject arousal levels and therefore a mild sedative, natural sleep or even general anesthesia can be used to aid Brainstem response audiometry when necessary. (Fujikawa and Weber,1977). Early response can be recorded more reliably in relaxed or sleeping subjects as they are of very low voltage and may be observed easily by myogenic potentials (Skinner,1978).

Researches agree that fifth wave, the so called Jewett ( $J_v$ ) is the most useful one for audiometric purposes (Sohmer and Feinmesser, 1970; Hood,1975; Davis,1976; Galambos, 1976; Meunier and May, 1976).

The latency of  $J_v$  peak has been found to be inversely proportional to the intensity of the stimulus with mean normal adult latency of 4.6 to 5.1 msec. During infancy,  $J_v$  latency progressively shortens to attain adult value between 12 to 18 months. (Hecox and Galambos,1974; Salarny etal,1976. (See fig.4)

#### Figure-4

**Brainstem evoked responses at three age levels:** Each tracing represents sum of 1000 to 2000 responses to 1 msec monaural click delivered 30 times per sec.



This latency shift has been attributed to receding conductive hearing loss due to progressive resorption of middle ear mesenchyme with gestational age by Hecox and Galambos(1974) and Berlin(1978).

Rowe(1981) recommends absolute peak latencies to be taken in to consideration for measurement of hearing acuity.

Brainstem evoked response audiometry is gaining wide acceptance for evaluating hearing in children.

Jerger and Hayes(1976) recommended the procedure as a useful cross check in determining hearing levels of young difficult-to-test patients.

Motokoff et al (1977) tested children from 6 week old to 15 years and defined following criteria to identify hearing loss-

- i) No response to a 60 dBHL stimulus
- ii) a wave V latency, in response to 60 dB stimulus, that is prolonged for the age of the patient and
- (3) absence of response or an abnormally prolonged wave latency at one or more stimulus intensities below 60 dB.



Jerger and Mauldin(1978) by carrying out correlational analysis between BER threshold, BER latency and other audiometric indices in ears with different configuration and degree of sensorineural hearing loss, concluded that - "Average puretone threshold for 1,2 and 4KHz is most accurately predicted by multiplying BER threshold by 0.6". But standard error of estimate of predictions was relatively large (15-16 dB).

Jerger, Hayes and Jordan(1980) gave three categories of auditory sensitivity depending on results of BER audiometry on children as follows-

- i) Normal sensitivity/mild sensitivity loss
  - presence of Auditory Brainstem response(ABR) in either or both ears at 40 dBHL.
- ii) Moderate-Severe sensitivity loss
  - ABR in either ear to signals of 50 to 90 dBHL
- iii) Profound sensitivity loss
  - Absence of an ABR in both ears to signals at 90dBHL.

Stein, Ozdamar and Schnabel(1981)used BER audiometry with 82 developmentally delayed infants and children suspected of being deaf and blind. Their criteria for interpretation of responses is given in table 1.

Thresholds obtained by BER audiometry on 24 infants were lower than those obtained by recording heart rate change as a response measure (Galambos & Galambos, 1975).

## Criteria for interpretation of Brainstem evoked response

Table-1

Category	Interpretation	Criteria
A	Audiologically and Neurologically normal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Detectable wave V at an intensity level of 30 dBHL</li> <li>(2) Latency intensity curve for wave V within the range established for normals by age.</li> </ul>
B	Audiologically abnormal, neurologically normal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Detectable wave V at an intensity level of 30dBHL</li> <li>(2) Latency intensity curve that deviates either in a parallel or falling manner from the normal curve for age.</li> <li>(3) Presence of a 1-v wave interval within established normal range or latency of wave v at high intensity within the normal range for age.</li> </ul>
C	Neurologically abnormal, audiologically normal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Detectable wave v at an intensity level of 30 dBHL</li> <li>(2) Prolongation of 1-v, 1-111 or 111-v wave interval</li> <li>(3) Distortion of component waves.</li> </ul>
D	Audiologically abnormal and/or neurologically abnormal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) No Auditory brainstem response at maximum intensities.</li> <li>(2) Wave 1 but no component waves</li> <li>(3) Detectable wave V prolonged in latency, no detectable wave 1.</li> </ul>

Fujikawa and Weber(1977) found that increasing the rate of click presentation and thereby increasing the stress on the system helps in the earlier detection of brainstem disorders. This was shown as greater latency shifts in infants, geriatric adults and multisclerotic patient than young adults. They attribute this shift to loss of myelization and loss of cell count.

Davis(1976) summarizes clinical importance of Brainstem Response audiometry to include wave form consistency, easy recordability and optimal latency-slow enough to avoid confusion with cochlear microphonic yet fast enough to avoid being masked by the earliest muscle reflexes.

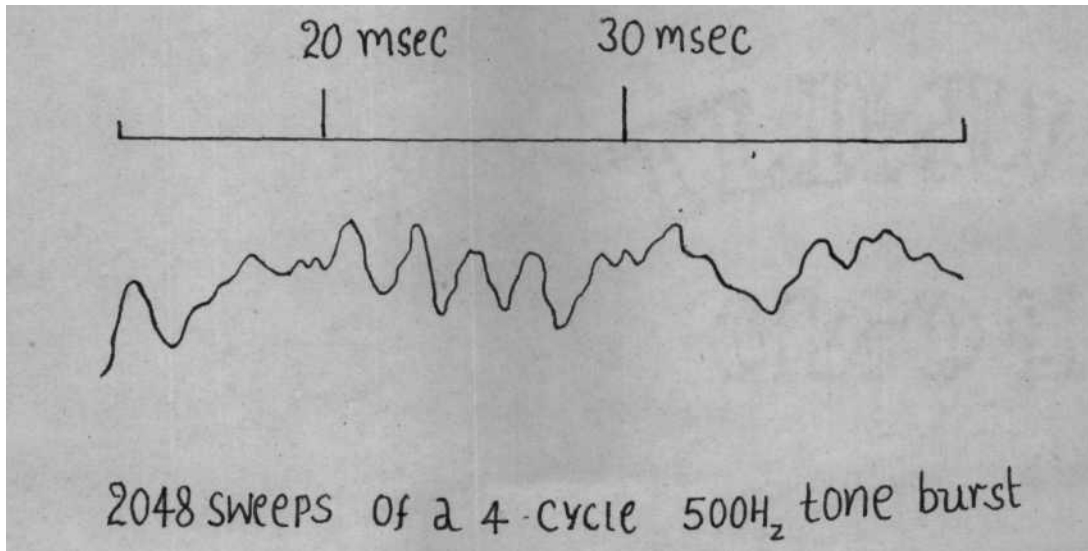
Berlin(1978) warns against exclusive use of BER audiometry with children because at high intensity levels, transcranial transmission may take place at the level of Jv making it unsure as to which ear has yielded response. He recommends BER audiometry to be included in test battery.

BER audiometry involves signals with short rise time and hence responses reflect predominantly the basal turn of the Cochlea(Davis, 1976).

Rose et al(1967) reported that synchronous firings of units of auditory nervous system to low frequency tones can be recorded.

Based on this principle, Worden and Marsh(1969) described 'Frequency following response'(FFR). It is a microphonic like response which follows the driving frequency of the stimulus.(See fig.5)

Figure-5



**Sample FFR to 500Hz tone burst**

For recording this response, Stillman, Moushegian and Rupert(1976) use a vertex target electrode, a reference, right earlobe electrode and a ground electrode placed on opposite ear lobe.

A high gain high frequency preamplifier is used with low frequency limit set in the preamplifier to allow low frequency synchronous discharges.

Response is clearly observed for tones 500Hz & below. Rise time of tone is 4 to 5 msec. If a stimulus of frequency 250Hz is presented to cochlea, a group of firings from

units of cochlea in synchrony with phase angle of 250Hz tone is elicited.

Davis and Hirsh(1979) reported a slow negative response at 10 msec post stimulus ( $SN_{10}$ ). It seems to terminate the brainstem sequence. Source is thought to be dendritic material.

It can be elicited by tone pips of 500, 1000 and 2000Hz at low intensity levels and clicks.

$SN_{10}$  can be recorded with active electrode on forehead, reference on right mastoid and ground on left mastoid.

Latency in newborn is longer than adults.  $SN_{10}$  provided more information than Jv in newborn subjects.  $SN_{10}$  can be useful as a threshold indicator for low frequencies.

**(b) The middle response:**

The middle response is comprised of a series of fast waves(5 to 100Hz) (Goldstein,1969). There is much controversy regarding the origin of middle response.

While Geisler, Frishkopf and Rosenblith(1958) believed that the component was of neural origin, Bickford, Jacobson and Cody(1964) indicated it to be myogenic because response amplitude changed systematically with variation in tonus of neck muscles. Geisler(1964) proposed that the middle response was neurologically generated with amplitude dependent on muscle tension.

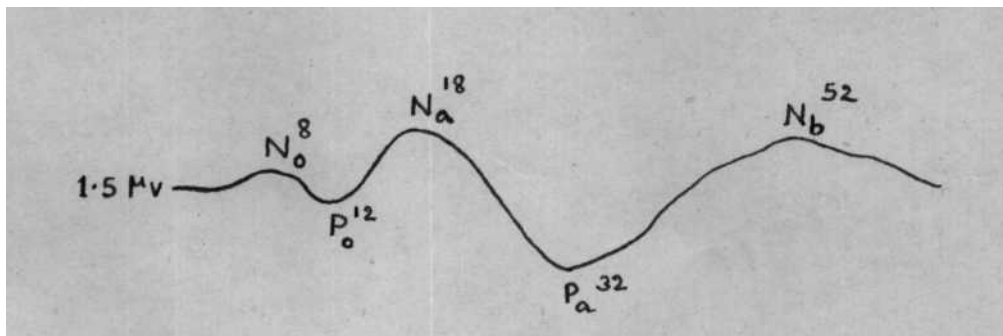
The middle Response when recorded from postauricular location is myogenic. (Kiang et al, 1963, Cody et al, 1964) Mast (1963,1965) reported that the middle response comprised of both neurogenic and myogenic components as the response recorded from vertex was consistent with muscle contraction.

Neurogenic origin of the response has been supported by several investigators, (Borsanyi and Blanchard, 1964; Lowell, 1965; Goldstein, 1965; Ruhm et al, 1967).

The middle response is presumed to be arising from primary cortical projection areas (Goldstein, 1969).

Lowell (1965), Ruhm et al (1967), Goldstein (1969) have described the wave form of the middle response as comprising of two positive peaks  $P_0$  and  $P_a$  at 12 and 32 msec latencies respectively and three negative peaks  $N_0$ ,  $N_a$  and  $N_b$  at latencies of 8, 18 and 52 respectively. (See fig.6)

**Figure-6**



Lowell et al (1960) reported that the amplitude of the middle response increases with the decrease in stimulus rate. Optimum stimulus repetition rate of 10 per sec is best for clinical measurement of the middle response (Mendel,1973).

Response amplitude increases in direct relation with stimulus intensity.

Skinner and Antinoro(1969b)found that stimuli with fast rise time (10 sec) were most effective in eliciting the middle response.

Lane and Kupperman(1969) and Skinner and Antinoro(1970) found middle response to be unaffected by signal duration.

Filtered clicks and tone pips have been used to elicit the middle response, but interpretation of frequency information is difficult with such stimuli(Hood,1975).

The response waveform characteristics of the middle response are stable and unaffected by natural sleep(Mendel and Goldstein, 1969) or Sleep because of sedation(Mendel,1973)

Karlovich and Goldstein(1969) suggest 500 or more stimulus samples to be taken for analysis of the middle response.

With the finding of close(within 5 or 10 dB usually) agreement between middle response thresholds and behavior

thresholds for the same stimuli, middle response threshold can be used as an indicator of auditory sensitivity (Geisler et al, 1958; Goldstein and Rodman,1967; Lowell et al,1960; Mast,1965)

Davis et al (1974) Skinner(1973) found middle responses to be inconsistent to allow any estimate of threshold.

Mc Randle, Smith & Goldstein(1974) could elicit middle response in newborns during sleep with clicks at 55dBHL. These authors find this response to be useful in threshold audiometry for neonates.

(c) The late response-

The late response comprises of 'slow waves'(2 to 10Hz) presumably arising from primary cortical projection and sensory association areas(Appleby,1964; Scott,1965).

The late response was described in 1964(Davis,1964; Davis et al, 1964; Dubyshire and Mccandless 1964; Mccandless and Best,1964; Walter,1964;)

This response is generally accepted as neurogenic in origin. It is a diffuse response that is easily recordable from nearly anywhere on the scalp, but has its largest amplitude when recorded from the vertex(Davis,1939).

While late responses can be evoked by auditory, visual and tactile signals, and recorded from many areas on the



## 2.21

cortex the wave forms differ among sensory modalities, auditory stimuli eliciting largest amplitude. (Walter,1964).

Late response in sleeping subjects probably gives rise to "K complex" a special pattern of EEG reported by Loomis et al (1938) and Davis et al (1939).

Wave form of the late response is polyphasic with vertex positive peaks at about P<sub>1</sub> 75 and P<sub>2</sub> 200 msec and vertex negative peaks at about N<sub>1</sub> 150 and N<sub>2</sub> 275 msec.

Increase in the late response amplitude with decreased rate of signal presentation has been reported by several investigators (Keidel and Spreng, 1965; Davis et al,1966; Nelson and Lassman,1968). Although one signal per 10 sec. yielded largest amplitude, it is too timeconsuming for clinical use. McCandless and Best(1966b)reported repetition rates of 1 click per 2 sec or slower to be satisfactory for eliciting late response. Irregular rather than constant interstimulus interval promotes a higher amplitude response (Barnet,1971).

Leibman and Graham(1967) and Rose and Ruhm(1966) indicated that 100 or more signals may be used without risk of inhibition. The least number of runs reported to be adequate are from 32 (Davis et al, 1966) to about 50(Cody and Bickford,1965; Leibman and Graham,1967; McCandless and Best, 1964; Price and Goldstein,1966).

Many studies have demonstrated that an increase in intensity produces an increase in peak amplitude and a decrease in latency. Skinner and Antinoro (1969b) and Antinoro et al, (1969) have shown that the relationship between signal intensity in dB and late response amplitude in microvolts is linear for low and middle frequencies.

Amplitudes for fairly loud click stimuli (50 to 70 dB SL) range from 10 to 20 volts and get quite small as behavioral threshold is approached (Davis, 1965).

A distinctive drop in the amplitude of late response when rise time of the stimulus reached 30 msec (Onishi and Davis, 1968) was observed. Thus, a rise time of 25 to 30 msec is optimal since it is gradual enough to produce a pure tone and sufficiently abrupt enough to evoke a clear late response.

Onishi & Davis (1968) reported that with optimal rise time of 25 to 30 msec no effect of signal duration on late response amplitude. Skinner and Jones (1968) also did not find any consistent change in response amplitude with change in signal duration.

Barnet recommends signal duration of 100 msec while Price and Goldstein (1966) used signal duration of 30 msec in their study.

Several authors have reported that the amplitude of late response decreases as test frequency goes above 1000 Hz

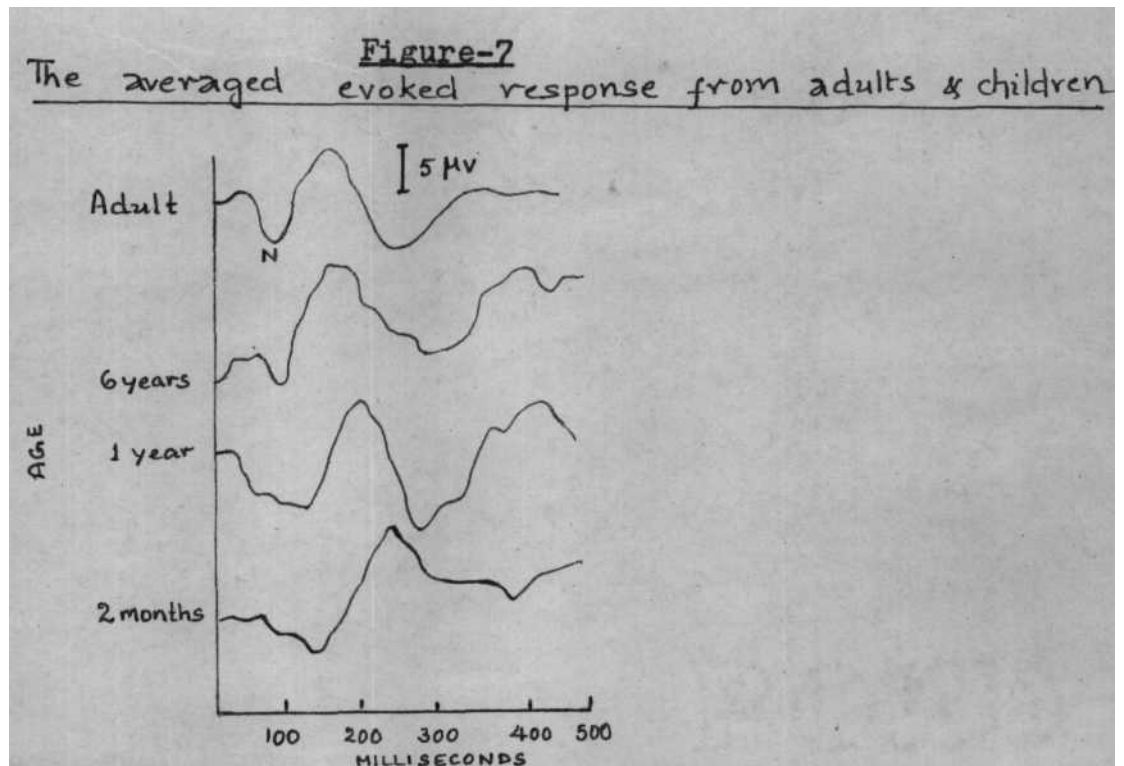
(Antinoro et al, 1969; Evans and Deatherage,1969; Henderson, 1972; Rothman and Davis,1970).

Henderson(1972)reported that the late response thresholds were within 10dB of behavioral thresholds at 250 and 500Hz while at 4000 and 6000Hz, late response thresholds were 20dB poorer than behavioral thresholds.

An analysis band pass of 3 to 15Hz is optimal for children and 1.5 to 30 Hz for testing adults (Hood,1975) Davis and Niemoeller(1968) suggest band pass of 3 to 35Hz for children inorder to fitter out low frequency movement artifacts and high frequency muscle potentials.

Electrode arrangement consists of an active electrode on vertex of skull on interaural plane, reference electrode on ipsilateral earlobe and ground electrode clipped to contralateral ear. Test stimulus may be presented through earphones, free field speaker or bone conduction vibrator (Mc candles, 1967).

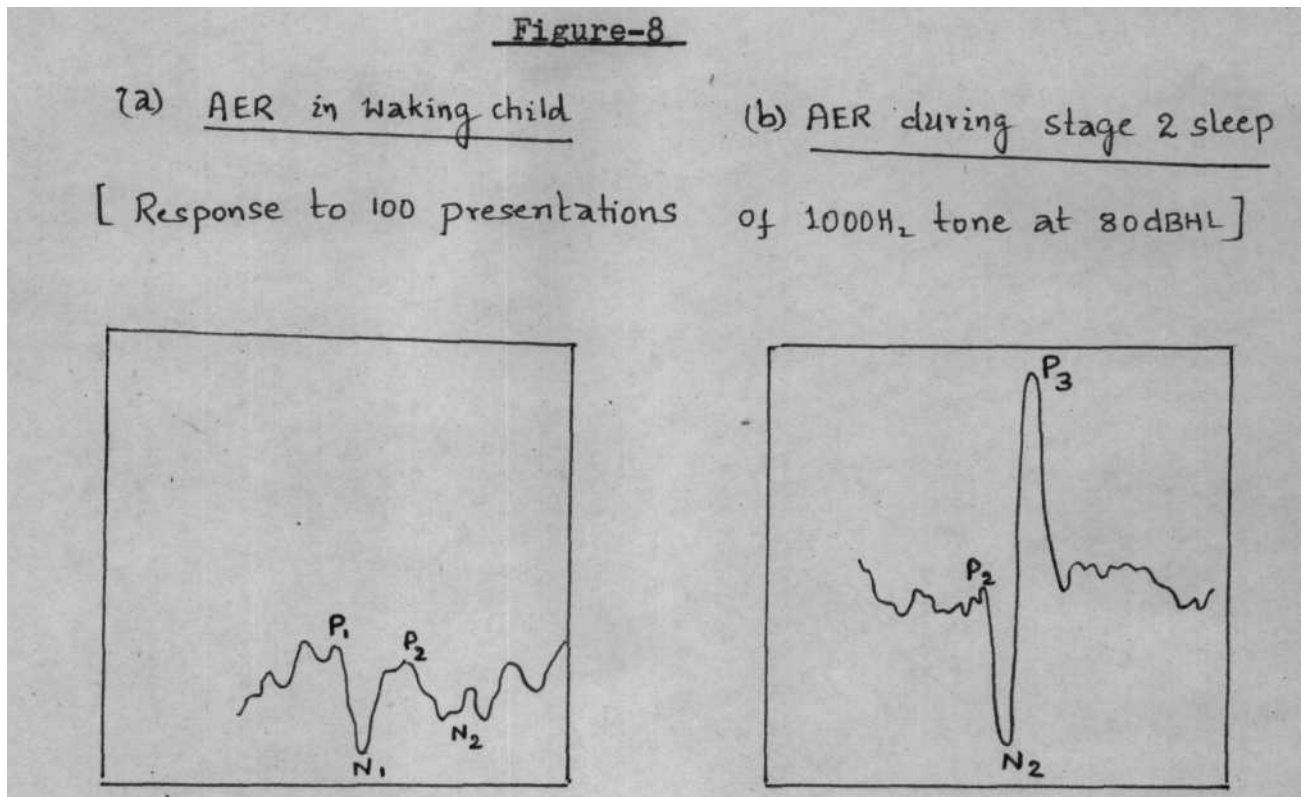
The late response is highly influenced by the age of the subject. Price and Goldstein(1966) found decrease in latency and amplitude of the late response with increase in age. (See figure7) By the age of 7 years the late response appears much like an adult's response(See fig. 7)  
(Davis et al, 1967)



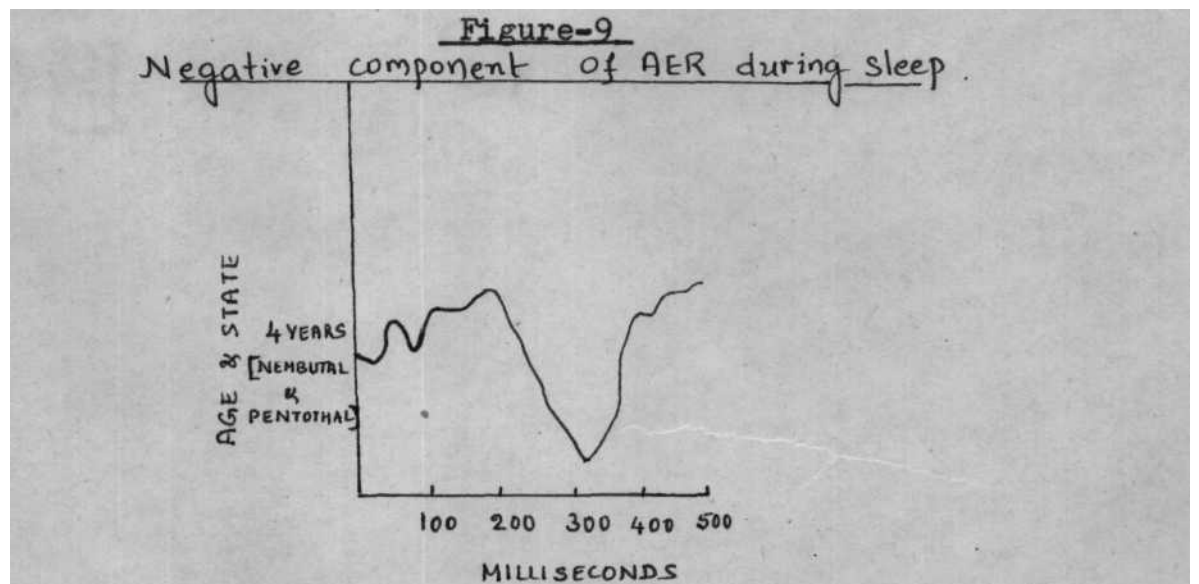
Mc candless and Best (1966a) and Davis and Zerlin (1966) concluded that the evoked response is highly variable at all ages, between subjects and test/retest reliability with the same subjects.

The wave form of the late response changes considerably and at times unpredictably during both natural and sedated sleep. Peak latencies tend to become longer (Skimmer and Antinoro, 1969a) as sleep gets deeper.

Rapin and Bergman (1969) found that in waking children, constant waves were  $N1_{100}$  and  $P2_{200}$  where as in sleeping children the constant peaks were  $P2, N2$  350/500 msec and sometimes  $P3_{500}$  & 800 msec. (see fig.8)



Williams, Tapas and Morloch (1962) reported that during certain stages of sleep, in the adult, a large negative peak occurs at about 300 msec which appears to be an exaggerated NL. This negative component in sleeping children is a good indicator of hearing. (Price & Goldstein, 1966) (See fig. 9)



Peak latencies tend to become longer (Skinner & Antinoro, 1969a) as sleep gets deeper.

Any medication which affects ongoing EEG activity is likely to affect evoked response. The late components of the response are observed when the patient is sedated with pentothol (Price & Goldstein, 1966; Rapin and Graziani, 1967). Rapin and Graziani (1967) reported good results with children sedated with chlorpromazine. Late negative component of response at about 300 msec ( $N_2$ ) is enhanced by pentobarbital sodium induced sleep.

Price (1975) recommends an analysis time of 750/1000 msec in sleeping infants in order to insure against loss of information.

Walter (1964) reported that habituation, a progressive attenuation of a cerebral response to monotonous presentation of regular stimuli, is a prominent feature of evoked response. Weber (1972) did not notice any evidence of habituation in twelve infants (14-18 week old).

In very young children for interpretation of late responses, norms are of very little value (McCandless, 1967; Lentz and McCandless, 1971; Price, 1969; Price & Goldstein, 1966). A typical response is the rule rather than exception in these populations of young children where it would be most useful.

Rose and Ruhm(1966) made a significant contribution to clinical practice with the evoked response by suggesting the use of a silent run during which time, the EEG activity is averaged but no acoustic stimulus is presented to the subject. Results from the silent run are then compared to results from a stimulus presentation run.

Price(1975) suggests combining silent run and stimulus presentation run by extending (by about 500 msec) the computer analysis time and triggering the sweep of computer 500msec. Prior to onset of each stimulus. Then cortical activity during prestimulus period can be compared with post stimulus period activity. When the stimuli are below threshold, pre and post stimulus averages are similar. When stimuli are above threshold responses are clearly evident in post stimulus portion.

Late response has been used for auditory threshold testing in children by many investigators.

Davis et al (1967) found the difference between late response thresholds and behavior threshold obtained with same stimuli, to be 0.1dB in deaf subjects. Mccandless(1967) found that evoked response thresholds tended to be poorer by 5-10dB than thresholds obtained by play audiometry in children between ages of 3 and 7 years. Rose and Rittmanic (1968), in their study of normally hearing mentally retarded children found the difference between voluntary threshold and

evoked response threshold to be 10 dB.

Suzuki and Origuchi(1969) found evoked response technique to be most sensitive in severe hearing impairments, the late response threshold differing by 0.43 dB from conditioned orientation reflex threshold.

Rapin, Graziani and Lyttle(1969) gave following criteria for interpretation of evoked response threshold- i)Threshold 40 dB or less-mild loss ii)45-70 dB threshold-moderate loss and iii) 75dB or more threshold-severe loss. They could establish normal hearing by evoked response threshold criteria in 11 children who had been diagnosed as hearing impaired by behavioral response audiometry.

Suzuki, Taguchi and Yoda(1979) found late response or slow vertex response more reliable for audiometry in children with sensorineural hearing loss, even when they are asleep.

Some investigators have directed their attention toward infants. Appleby(1964) reported that 85% of 40 neonates (2-10 days old) responded to 50 dB pips when evoked responses of vertex positive component were obtained.

Evoked responses in neonates ranged from 45dB to 60dB (Barnet and Godwin,1965; Suzuki et al, 1966; Toriyama et al, 1966)



Taguchi et al (1969) on testing 0 to 4 day old infants found better evoked response thresholds for lower frequencies and slightly better thresholds in somewhat older infants.

Evoked response thresholds for premature infants(59 dBHL) was higher than those for normal infants (43 dBHL) (Lentz and Mccandless, 1971).

Barnet(1971) reported that nearly half of the infants suspected of having a hearing loss did have a hearing loss when examined with evoked response audiometric techniques.

Lowell, Lowell and Goodhill(1975) found considerable agreement between test and retest results in a longitudinal study on evoked response audiometry in children.

Price(1969) cautions clinicians against false positive judgements where the patient is judged to have an auditory perceptual problem, to be a malingerer, or to have a Psychogenic hearing losses or false negative errors where true organic thresholds are exaggerated. False positives may be reduced by establishing strict criteria for responses and by obtaining frequent reference series. By repeating the analysis several times for interpretation, false negatives may be minimized.

**(d) Very late responses:**

The 'very late' responses have been described as the 'expectancy wave' which is the last peak in the late response (Davis,1973) and the 'contingent negative variation'

which is a long latency negative potential(DC shift) (Walter, 1964). Both types of responses can be related to specific conditioning stimuli to test certain cognitive or Psychological operations in children as well as in adults (Skinner, 1978). They do not come under objective hearing tests as they require active participation of the subject.

## 2. ELECTROCOCHLEOGRAPHY:

The term 'Electrocochleography' was coined by lempert et al (1947). Which involves recording and analysis of electrical potentials that originate within the cochlea or the auditory nerve.

There are three classes of electrical potentials, analysed in Ecoch G - 1) The cochlear Microphonic(CM) described by wever and Bray(1930) as originating from hair cells of organ of corti ii)the action potential (AP) from the auditory nerve noted initially by Derbyshire and Davis(1935) and iii) the summing potential(SP) identified by Davis (1950).

Cochlear Microphonic reflects the acoustic stimulus waveform over a considerable frequency and intensity range (Wever,1966). It is the earliest of three potentials, occurring nearly instantaneously after a stimulus reaches the cochlea. (Simmons and Glatcke,1975). It is extremely risky to use cochlear Microphonic as an index of auditory

thresholds or site of lesion though it has been suggested (Ruben,1967). Reason is that CM recorded from outside the cochlea indicates response from a small segment of cochlea (Misrahy et al, 1958; Simmons and Beatty,1962) corresponding to frequencies above 10KHz. For measuring CM response to lower frequencies, electrodes have to be placed within the cochlea which is not a possibility in clinical EcochG(Dallos, 1969,1973).

The SP component is a do shift in response to stimulation (Van Bekesy,1960), which is not in contention as an index of normal cochlear function in humans. (Simmons & Glatcke,1975).

The AP has been thought to originate in the internal auditory meatus where the fibres from the spiral ganglion twist together to form a compact bundle (Tear et al,1962; Dallow,1973). Derbyshire and Davis(1935) suggested that the AP recorded from the roundwindow and its surroundings originated from nerve fibres in bony spiral lamina. "The AP has proven to be the most sensitive indicator of the functional state of the peripheral auditory system yielding information about both the threshold and supra threshold characteristics of the cochlea and auditory nerve". (Glatcke,1978).

The individual nerve fibres produce unitary 'spike' discharges of constant amplitude and duration. Sum of these spike potentials is the compound Action potential(Berlin,1978).

Fromm et al (1935) were the first ones to pick up cochlear potentials from the human ear. They reported good recordings of cochlear microphonic from round window niche, otic capsule promontory, mastoid process and walls of external auditory canal on testing patients with large perforations of tympanic membrane.

Lempert et al (1947) reported EcochG results conducted at the time of surgery in 11 patients. They reported that potentials recorded from roundwindow yielded largest potentials with hypodermic needle inserted in the skin of external ear as inactive electrode, Lempert et al(1950) found that it was difficult to carry out EcochG through intact tympanic membrane and hence suggested that the procedure was clinically impractical.

Ruben(1967) reported that it was not possible to obtain specific information about amount of frequency characteristics of hearing loss by recording CM and AP.

The use of an averaging computer (Clark et al 1961) was extended to human cochlear recordings by Ronis(1966). As this procedure permitted recording of very small voltage responses, it was no longer necessary to place the electrode as close as possible to the organ of Corti.

Electrodes and recording sites used in EcochG fall in to three groups: i) transtympanic needle electrodes, making

contact with the promontory of cochlea ii) intrameatal surface electrodes and iii) Surface electrodes attached outside the ear canal (Glattke, 1978).

Portman, Lebert and Aran (1967) and Yoshie Ohashi and Suzuki (1967) developed Transtympanic membrane technique. Electrodes are hyperdermic needles, 3-6 inches in length, insulated except at the point and outer ends. Needle point after passing through posterior/inferior quadrant of tympanic membrane contacts the promontory. It is held in place by medical grade cement applied to tragus (Yoshie, 1973) or circum aural ring held in place by a headband (Portman and Aran, 1971). Reference electrode is attached to earlobe on the same side and a ground electrode placed on the forehead. General anesthesia is used in young and difficult to test children to permit electrode placement and subsequent recording (Eggermont and Odenthal, 1974a; Naunton and Zerlin, 1976a).

Intrameatal surface electrodes are placed within the external meatus near the tympanic membrane (Yoshi and Ohashi, 1969; Cullen et al, 1973; Coats, 1974) Local anesthesia is used to place the electrode in the skin of posterior wall of external Canal 5mm from the annulus of the tympanic membrane. Reference electrode is placed on the earlobe and ground on the forehead.

Surface electrodes outside of the ear include those which are clipped to the earlobe (Sohmer and Feinmesser, 1967) or fitted to a device which holds them in contact with the hard palate (Keidel, 1971).

Transtympanic technique is appropriate when conventional behavioral and other forms of objective technique have produced equivocal results. (Schmidt and Spoor, 1974; Montandon et al, 1975).

The AP can be elicited only if rise time of the stimulus is faster than 1 msec. (Goldstein and Kiang, 1958). So clicks or tone bursts are used in EcochG for the purpose of providing abruptness (Portmann and Aran, 1971; Yoshie, 1968, 1973; Eggermont, 1974; Naunton and Zerlin, 1976b).

The phase of each signal can be held constant or inverted 180° during the course of gathering responses. Then the CM portion of the observed responses will mimic the phase of click or tone pip and when signal is inverted 180° and presented, CM portion gets cancelled. (Peake and Kiang; Dallos, 1973). Meanwhile the summed Action potential is free of microphonic influence.

Measurement of the sound pressure level for clicks and tone pips cannot be accomplished with conventional sound level meters because the signals are too brief to be read accurately by meter. Teas, Eldredge and Davis (1962) have

suggested the method of determining peak equivalent SPL. The transducer is placed in the usual position for EcochG and the microphone is placed in a position corresponding to location of patient's pinna. Output of the monitoring microphone is observed on an oscilloscope while clicks or tone pips are generated by the transducer. The peak amplitude and principal frequency of transducer output are noted. Then a continuous sinusoid is given instead of tone pip or clicks and is matched to the amplitude and frequency noted previously. Sound pressure level is measured for this substitute signal and it is called peak equivalent SPL.

In clinical practice, it has become common to express signal levels in dB with reference to mean click or tone pip threshold for normal listeners.

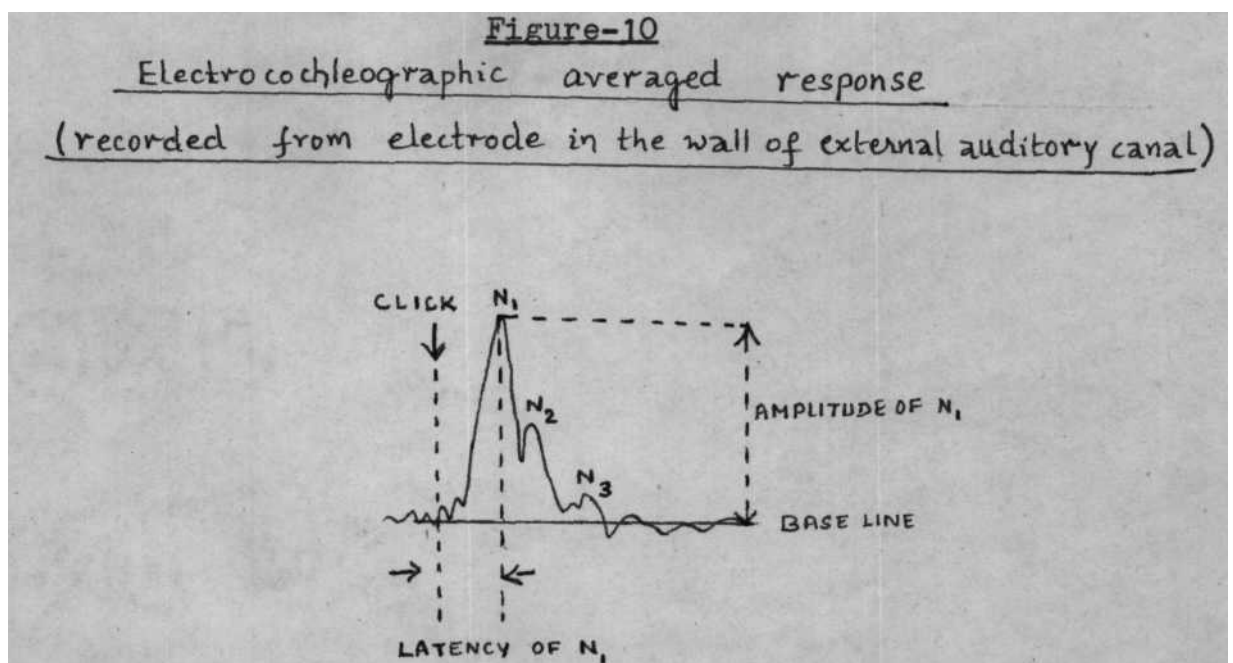
Rate of presentation of clicks or tone pips is 5 to 10 per sec. (Glatke,1978). Eggermont and Odenthal,(1974 a) found that there was 50% reduction in amplitude of the AP when stimulation rate was increased to about 30 per sec.

Promontory recording requires between 50 and 500 samples for analysis whereas intrameatal and surface recordings require more than 500 samples,(Glatke,1978).

Typical apparatus used for EcochG is described here. A small metal cup attached to the active electrode's outer

end is connected to the preamplifier lead. The differential input amplifier cancels the electrical noise, common to active and reference electrodes and enhances the AP. The filters are set from 0.9 Hz through 10KHz (Simmons and Glatcke,1975) with total gain in amplification 10,000 to 100,000 in order to provide levels adequate for computer processing. Computer must be able to sample the evoked activity from the recording amplifier and return to get next sample at a rate twice that of highest frequency passed by amplifier.

Yoshie et al(1967) describe a typical action potential response, as an initial wave  $N_1$  followed 1 sec later by a smaller negative wave  $N_2$  and followed occasionally later by a still smaller negative Wave  $N_3$  latency of  $N_1$  is defined as the time between arrival of click at the eardrum to the peak of  $N_1$ . The amplitude of the response is measured from the idealized baseline drawn through the tracing of spontaneous activity at the zero response level to the peak of the wave. (See Fig. 10).



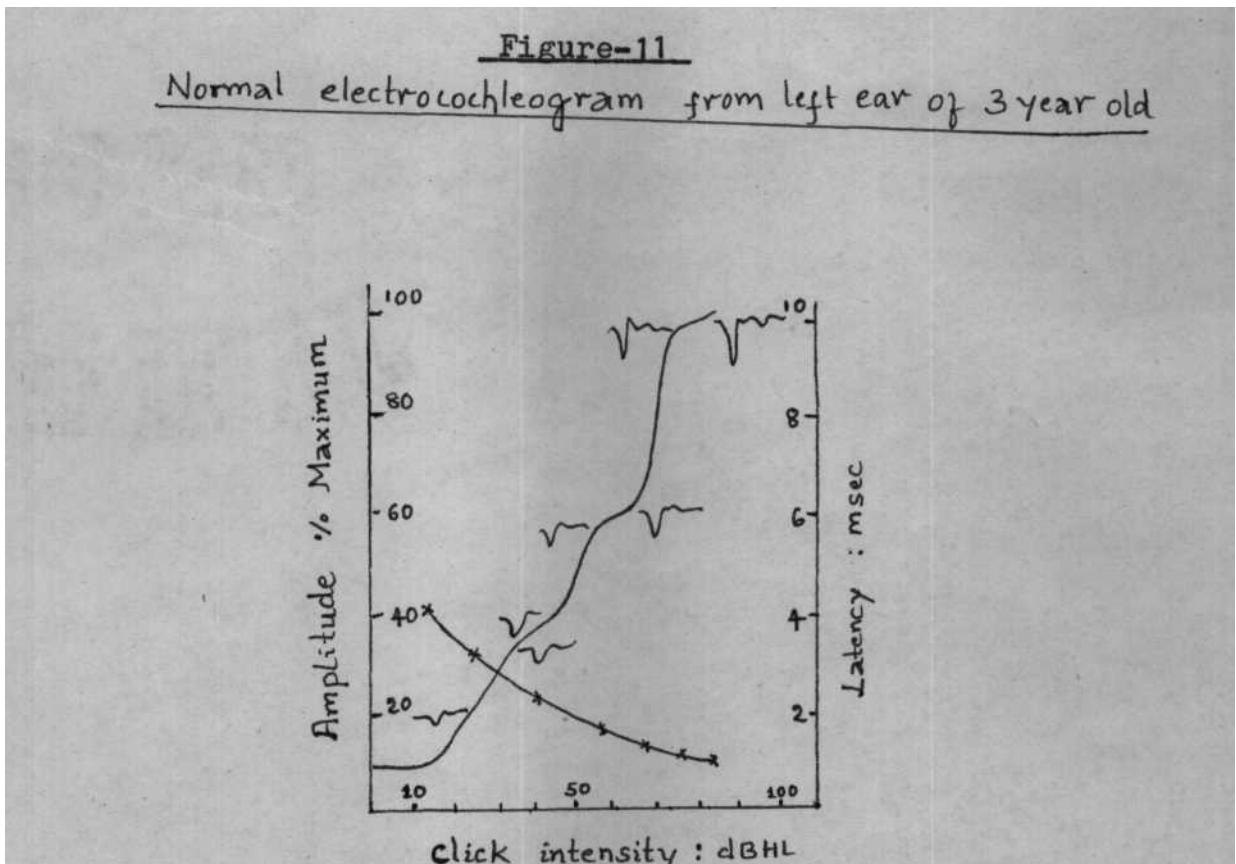


Aran(1971) is more interested in the dynamic range of variation rather than absolute amplitude of the  $N_1$  response. He measures peak-to-peak amplitude of the response and the latency of the first negative peak  $N_1$ . He reports that the waveform is diphasic (Negative wave positive wave) at low and medium intensities and monophasic (negative wave only) at high intensities.

The plot of  $N_1$  peak latency and relative amplitude against stimulus intensity is called cochleogram. (Simmons & Glatcke,1978).

Yoshie(1968) examined Input/output functions which plotted click intensity against amplitude of  $N_1$  wave in microvolts. He found that the curves rise rapidly in the beginning from threshold level to an initial hump and then rise again to a second hump which is the maximal level of output. Yoshie designated the low and high intensity portions of action potential response as L and H curves respectively. At 70 to 80dB peak equivalent SPL, the curve shows the inflection point.

Aran(1971) has an interesting technique of showing several types of results on same cochleogram including threshold of response to click, the pattern or input-output function of the click evoked response at supra threshold levels and amplitude and latency pattern of many curves. (See fig. 11)



Yoshie and Ohashi(1969) have EcochG patterns for

- i) Normal hearing subjects as  $N_1$  curve showing two distinct segments of input-output function(L and H curve) which might have been generated by different population of neurons stimulated by different class of sensory cells.
- ii) Conductive hearing loss as showing a latency shift for the  $N_1$  wave and amplitude change that was proportional to the degree of loss.
- iii) Sensorineural hearing loss demonstrating an overall reduction in the amplitude of  $N_1$  which may be related to reduced number of neurons capable of firing, disappearance of L-segment of input-output function indicating specific group of pathological hair cells and a prolonged  $N_1$  because of neural delay from asynchrony of neural impulses.

Tone pip signals result in Ap responses with amplitude and latency characteristics which are related to the frequency region and temporal features of the individual signal.

It was reported from Eggermont and Odenthal (1974b) and Naunton and Zerlin (1976a) that EcochG thresholds may be greater than 10 dB above perceptual thresholds for 500 and 1000Hz tone pips, but that they are likely to be within 10dB of perceptual thresholds for 2000, 4000 and 8000Hz.

Portman, Aran and Lagourgue (1973) reported 'recruiting cochleogram' associated with sensorineural hearing loss. Here the response grows in amplitude very rapidly without a plateau catching up to the amplitude of a normal subject at the same level of intensity, although it is considerably closer to the threshold of recruiting patient. The latency of response will be very short failing to show the progression seen in normal cochleograms. A diphasic response pattern is seen at all sound levels. Audiogram in such a case shows sloping or flat configuration. The change in slope of response curve which usually occurs around 60dB threshold reflects transition from outer hair cells and inner hair cells. Therefore recruiting Cochleogram shows damage to outer hair cells (Yoshie, 1971; and Portman et al, 1973)

Disassociated pattern of cochleogram in sensorineural hearing loss cases was reported by Aran et al (1971).

Audiogram shows normal hearing till 2000Hz, a notch of 60dB at 6000Hz and near normal threshold at 8000Hz. Ap response threshold is slightly elevated with the response function growing normally till 60dB. At 60dB, a 'new'  $N_1$  component appears which dominates the response at higher click intensities. In cochleogram, this change in wave form is reflected as abrupt disjuncture of amplitude and latency curves at 60dB. This hole in the cochleogram corresponds to loss of sensitivity between 2 and 8KHz. (Simmons & Glatcke,1975).

The 'larges' (broad) responses where there is flattening or broadening of  $N_1$  response is observed in patients with retrocochlear lesion (Portman & Aran,1972). An 'Abnormal' AP configuration with an initial positive component before  $N_1$  component may represent a combined cochlear disorder and a more general brain pathology.

Electrocochleography is a physiological test of cochlear function in individuals who cannot be tested by conventional audiometry and whose responses to other electrophysiological tests are equivocal. (Simmons & Glatcke,1975).

Aran(1971) reports results obtained from 29 children (as young as 1 month of age) on electrocochleography. He found no response to click stimulus of 100 dB SPL in 9 children, slight responses at 100dB in 3 children; in 7 of them clear responses to levels between 60 and 90dB; 6 children showing

clear responses between 0 and 30 dB and 4 showing 'abnormal' response with positive peak.

Sohmer and Feinmesser(1967,1973) report good results obtained with an active earlobe clip electrode and a reference scalp vertex disc electrode in infants and children with suspected hearing loss or uncertain diagnosis. In 22 cases, absence of EcochG response confirmed peripheral hearing loss, normal cochleogram in 13 cases indicated that behavioral hearing loss was not peripheral in origin, in 2 children EcochG provided hearing evidence confirmed later by behavioral techniques and in 22 infants, there was abnormal responses with high thresholds, small amplitudes or long latencies. Sedation seemed to have little effect on Action potential response.

Parving, Eberling and Salomon(1981) tested 149 children with age ranging from 2 to 123 months with EcochG. There was high correlation between EcochG thresholds and puretone thresholds in 53 children. When a comparison between Behavior observation Audiometry (BOA) and EcochG thresholds was made, it was found that BOA underestimates degree of hearingloss. EcochG gives valid estimates of hearing thresholds even in young children.

One of the advantages of EcochG is that each ear can be studied independently with masking obviously unnecessary (Berlin,1978). Northern and Downs(1978) hope that EcochG

may aid in evaluating an infant's potential for hearing aid fittings or educational placement by testing his auditory sensitivity.

But EcochG gives information only about basal turn of cochlea i.e., frequencies above 1500Hz. On lowfrequency stimulation, even though corresponding neural fibres innervating cochlea respond, their contribution cannot be detected because the large amplitude basal response obscures them. (Davis, 1973).

When high pass bands of noise that progressively extend to lower cut off frequencies are used, responses evolving from progressively more apical cochlear regions are obtained (Simmons and Glatcke, 1975).

### 3. ELECTRO DERMAL OR PSYCHO GALVANIC RESPONSE AUDIOMETRY

Psychogalvanic reflex(PGSR) or electrodermal response (EDR) was observed first by Fere(1888), named by Veraguth (1909)and was reportedly used to measure hearing sensitivity byAlbrecht(1918).

For the assessment of PGSR two basic methods were developed (Lindsley,1963)- i) The exosomatic approach of Fere which involves recording the degree of resistance offered by the skin in conducting an externally applied, low voltage current. Term Galvanic skin Reflex is employed to describe dermal responses detected by Fere method.

ii) Tarachnoff method of endosomatic approach where difference in electrical potentials generated by effector organs of skin are measured. This is called electrodermal response. Fere approach is more frequently used(Hogan,1975).

Bordley, Hardy and Richter(1948) utilizing modern audiometric equipment applied the technique of pairing pure tone stimuli with mild electric shock. After several presentations, tone alone was capable of eliciting the desired PGSR.

"The change in skin conductance which is the characteristic precursor of EDR can be elicited by virtually any suprathreshold auditory or nonauditory stimulus with or without conditioning".

The recording electrodes can be attached to inner surface of forearm or palm of the hand. Shock electrodes can be connected to one hand and response electrodes to other hand for ease of application. (Knox,1978).

Goldstein reported that latency of GSR is within a range from 1.8 to 2.9 secs. GSR tends to habituate on repeated sound stimulation(Berlin,1978). In conditioning EDR, 40% reinforcement Schedule (Chaiklin et al 1961) and presentation of shock 0.5 sec. after the onset of tone are carried out (Bitterman et al 1952).

Crowell et al. (1965) observed GSR activity in infants as early as 20 to 67 hours. There have been many studies reporting application of PGSR technique in retarded children (Irwin et al, 1957; Kodman et al, 1959; Moss et al, 1961; Waldon,1968). Spradlin, Locke and Fulton(1969) reviewed the state of the art of EDA with mentally retarded children and found it to be essentially ineffective.

Knox (1972) suggests that uninhibited nature of children almost precludes them from being candidates for EDA.

Conditioned EDR is difficult with children as it is not objective and requires active participation from the child. Unconditioned EDR is not a threshold level assessing device (Berlin,1978).

#### **4. RESPIRATION AUDIOMETRY**

Although breathing pattern alternations had been observed following sound presentations, it was only later that measurement of these alterations were used to quantify hearing sensitivity. The procedure has been termed "Respiration audiometry" (Bradford and Rousey,1972).

Mosso, in the late nineteenth century, investigated respiratory functioning of humans and animals by recording abdominal and thoracic movements with a pneumograph. In 1878, he recorded his sleeping brother's respiration and pulsepressure changes to the sound of light taps on a table top.



Stubbs(1934) was the first person to combine pneumograph records and controlled auditory stimuli for the assessment of hearing. She examined the effects of duration, intensity and frequency of puretones on respiration in newborn infants while they were asleep, in awake-inactive, silent active and crying active states. Puretones in the intensity range of 30 to 85 sensation levels were given through a speaker. Respiration was recorded by pneumograph. Respiration response were increase in rate and decrease in amplitude as stimulus duration increased from 1 to 15 sec. Smaller percentage of responses occurred with increase in intensity. Frequency of stimulus did not have much effect on responses nor did the physical states of infants.

From this study onwards various investigators have tried respiration audiometry with different kind of stimuli and instrumentation.

Rosenau(1962,1962b)recorded respiration movements using a kymograph connected to pneumograph, The former recorded the respiratory movements of thorax and abdomen picked up by the latter. He found noise stimulus to be more effective than puretones for eliciting respiratory changes.

Wagner(1963) used a modified Psychogalvanometer and constructed a different pneumobelt to improve respiration recordings. Lehnhardt(1963) introduced a cadmium sulfide photo pneumograph to record more accurately thoracic

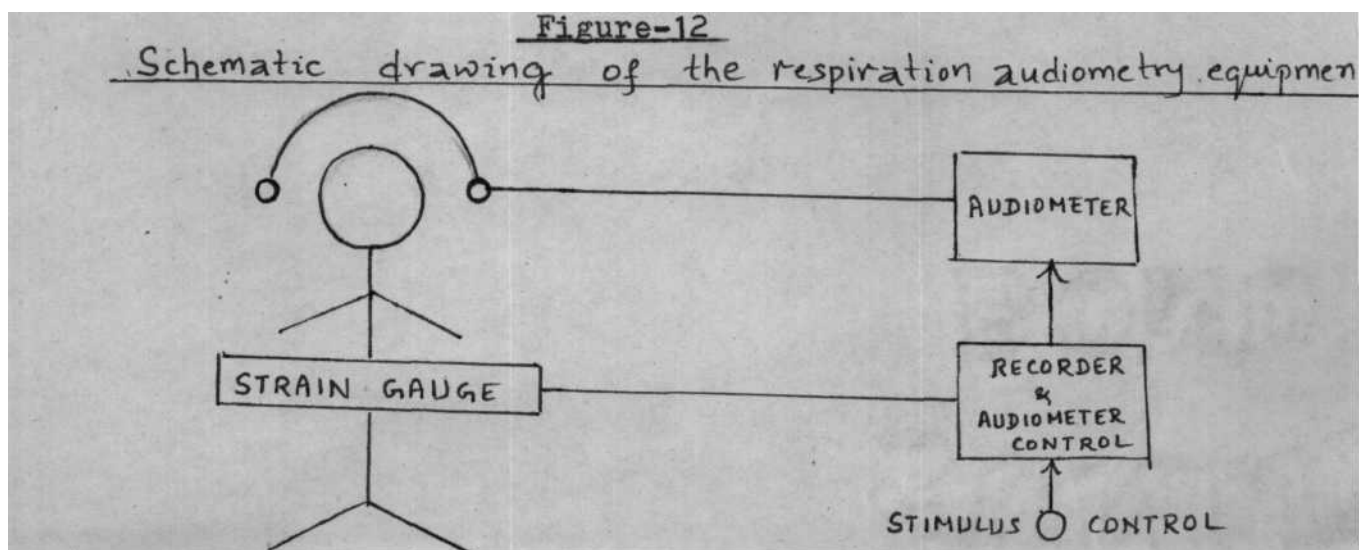
movements for air and bone conduction assessments.

Mahler and Wagner(1967) used impulse puretone stimuli where as Gerhardt et al(1967) used rhythmic white noise impulses synchronized with subject's respiration rate.

Suzuki et al(1964) used 500Hz tone and artificial sound (cow mooing) for a duration of 4 to 5 sec. in 10dB increments from 30 to 80dB. Low middle and high frequency modulated puretones were the stimuli in Heron and Jacob's study (1968, 1969).

Teel et al (1967) reported the use of a mercury in rubber strain gauge positioned around the chest of the subject to pick up respiration changes. Straingauge is attached to channel recorder through a wheat stone bridge change in balance of the bridge circuit caused by respiration movements are amplified and fed to recording pen.

Bradford (1975) describe the respiration audiometry equipment as consisting of a bellows actuated photoelectric cell strain gauge, stimulus timer and a two channel polygraph recorder with heat sensitive paper(See fig. 12)



The strain gauge is fitted snugly but not tightly around the chest of the person being tested. Movements of the chest during respiration lengthen or contract the bellows. The bellows, changes are recorded on the polygraph as upward deflections for inspiration and downward deflections for expiration. One channel of polygraph serves as the event marker to record the point and duration of 250 msec. stimulus tone and second channel records the respiration cycle traces. The paper speed of polygraph can be set to run at 5 and 10mm per sec. The amount of stylus deflection is adjusted by a balance control knob so that amplitude of respiration cycle recordings can vary between 25 and 60mm in width. Stimuli can be delivered from the audiometer through bone conduction vibrator or earphones.

Kankkunen and Liden(1977) used warble and puretones of frequencies 0.25,0.5,1.0,1.5,2.0,3.0 & 40KHz, presented through earphones or loudspeakers or Bone Conductor Vibrator. Frequency modulation was  $\pm 5\%$  10 times per sec. Recording apparatus described by them consisted of electrodes attached on either side of chest with tapes and feel with weak current. Breathing movements change air volume of lungs resulting in alteration of impedance. This can be picked up as voltage variations by electrodes and recorded by an ink recorder operating at a speed of 0.5cm/sec. An event marker to indicate tone stimulus is connected to one of channels of recorder.

Many investigators have used Respiration audiometry in children to assess hearing.

Roseneu(1962a)in his sleep-hearing test found that normal hearing children had a mean reaction threshold by respiration from 50 to 60dB at 125,400,1250 and 4000Hz. Difference between'mean reaction threshold' by respiration and audiometric threshold was from 40 to 55dB for those with induced deafness and 34 to 39dB for organically deaf group. Rosenau found that sleep had no effect on change of respiration. Lehnhardt(1963) reported threshold by respiration to be elevated by 30dB in deep sleep and by 30 to 40dB with sedation in children.

Rosey et al(1964) found low level stimuli evoking larger changes in respiration patterns. Suzuki et al (1964) in 45 normal neonates observed three respiration alterations:-  
i)changes rate or deepness of respiration ii)Decrease in regularity of respiratory movements lasting 20 to 30 seconds after auditory stimulation and iii)appearance of sudden deep inspiration increasing significantly at 70 and 80 dB intensity levels. They found average of respiration responses to be 628dB.

Teel et al (1966) used respiration audiometry in subjects between ages 7 and 21 years. They considered the thresholds obtained by respiration audiometry to be in agreement if they

were within 15dB of audiometric threshold 94% achieved this criteria.

Mahler and Wagner(1967) report that both the sleep and waking tests can be used with infants 6 months of age and older using respiration audiometry.

Gerhardt(1967) found increase in respiration rate with increase in rate of stimuli and change in respiration rate on termination of stimuli.

Heron and Jacops(1968,1969) report the most frequent respiration alteration in neonates to frequency modulated tone stimulation to be change of rate or depth of respiration or a 'gasp' reflex.

Kumpf and Landwehr(1970) used white noise, filtered white noise and warble tones as stimuli, presented through ear phones increasing in intensity at a rate of 1dB per sec. This was recorded on one channel of tape recorder while on the other channel, subject's breathing sound was recorded. These recorded sounds were played in to a level recorder to obtain synchronized write out called as 'pegeldiagram' by kumpf. On analysis, it was found that decrement in the amplitude of breathing sound occurred near auditory threshold consisting of pauses between inspiration and expiration. Increment in amplitude of breathing sound occurred when level of stimuli was above or equal to 30dB sensation level.

This technique is useful to measure air and bone conduction thresholds with children when awake and when under sedation. The procedure is not successful when subject is sleeping deeply.

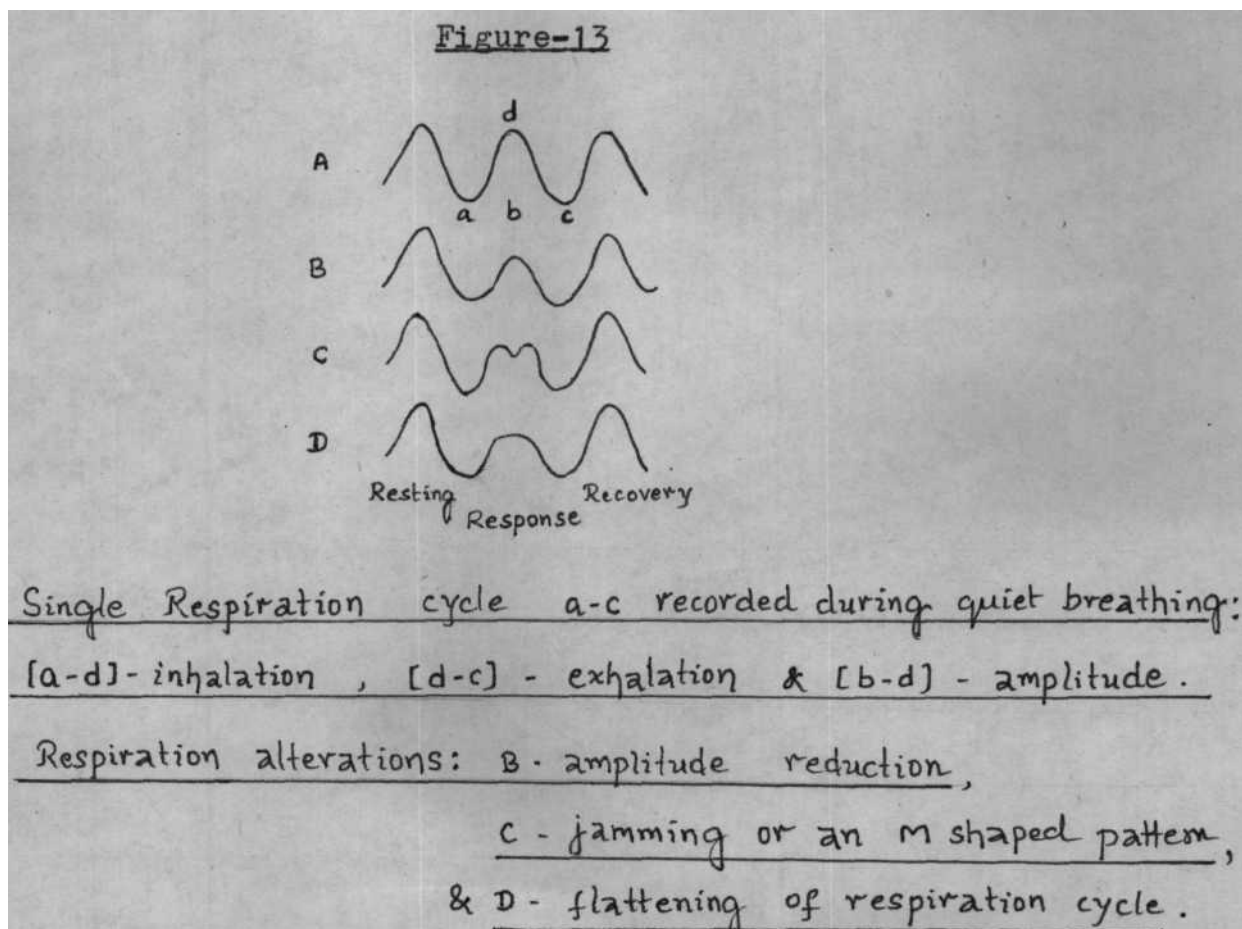
Hogan(1970) has given a measure 'the Respiration Response Index which provides a single numerical value sensitive to response activity in rate, amplitude and wave-form.

Bradford (1975) gives three respiration cycle patterns to be considered when scoring the responses /- 1) resting cycles which are regular breathing cycles immediately proceeding a tone presentation. 2) response cycle is the single cycle in which the puretone stimulus is delivered and 3) recovery cycle which is immediately following the response cycle.

Rosey (1969) reports 3 response cycle alterations related to hearing thresholds. They are: a) a reduction of amplitude, b) jamming of two cycles together or an M shaped pattern and, c) flattening of positive peak, (see Fig. 13).

Of the resting and recovery cycles, the cycle with the lesser amplitude is used for comparing a response cycle reduction. If the amplitude of the recovery cycle is less than the amplitude of the response cycle, or if the recovery cycle is disturbed by some body movement, it is necessary

to reestablish the resting cycles and to introduce the tone again at same intensity level. For considering it as a response, cycle alteration must occur immediately following the presentation of the tone. Two and preferably three of the described alterations must occur at consecutive 5dB intensity levels before the cycle alteration at the lowest intensity level can be considered the threshold. (Braford, 1975).



Significant lengthening of respiration cycle occurs at or near auditory thresholds for puretone stimuli and respiration thresholds determined by lengthening criteria were within  $\pm 10$ dB of voluntary thresholds in 93% of subjects.

(Rousey et al, 1964; Poole et al, 1966, Rousey and Reitz, 1967; Teel et al, 1967 and Brooks and Gieschen, 1968).

Rousey (1969) found that more accurate estimation of thresholds can be obtained by automation from cycle lengthening measures than amplitude change measures. Respiration thresholds obtained during second stage of natural sleep produced thresholds similar to those found during the waking state..

Rousey and Bradford (1971) reported that respiration threshold obtained during sleep, indicating normal hearing is valid but if it indicates hearing deficit, rechecking should be done.

Bradford et al (1972) found respiration thresholds of preschool children to be mostly within  $\pm 10$  dB of voluntary threshold.

Bradford et al (1972) tested infants during first year of life - shortly after birth, at 4 months and at 12 months of age. Results indicated that pure tones alter the newborn and infant's respiration pattern in the same way as has been observed with older children and adults.

Kankkunen and Liden (1971) obtained respiration thresholds in 92% of high risk children. Follow up investigation showed that results were very reliable.



These findings indicate that 'Respiration Audiometry may be employed for determining a neonatal and infant hearing sensitivity (Bradford, 1975) and is neither expensive, time consuming nor noxious to patients.

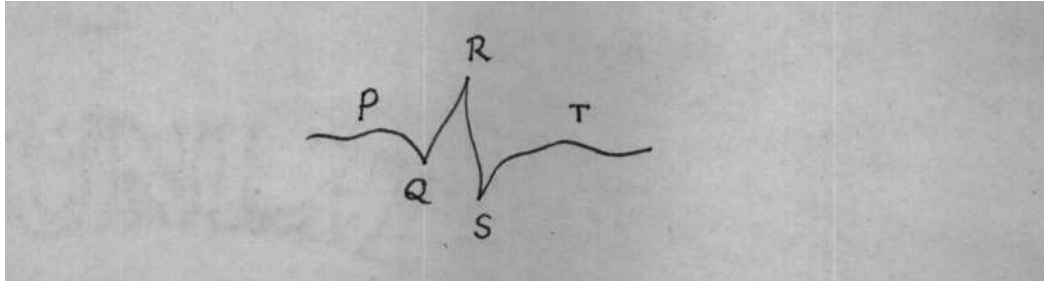
##### **5. HEART RATE RESPONSE AUDIOMETRY:**

According to Sokolov (1963, 1969) and Rouitenber (1968) a human being responds to stimuli in two ways- i) Defensive reflex which occurs in the presence of high intensity stimulation and limits the effects of stimulation, ii) orienting reflex which is elicited when subject attends to or receives environmental stimuli at low or moderate intensity levels and includes changes in heart rate (HR).

Zeaman and Wegner (1956) measured the HR response to a mild auditory stimulation in 4 normal adults and suggested the possibility of response as an index of objective test of hearing.

Smith and Borton (1980) outline the measurement procedure of HR response in audiometry.

During the cycle of its action, the heart generates electrical potentials which are conducted to skin through body fluids. Each heart beat produces characteristic wave form (see fig- 14) consisting of waves

Figure - 14Wave form of a heart beat

P, Q, R, S and T. P wave is associated with electrical activity of atria of heart; Q, R and S waves constituting 'QRS complex' are associated with ventricular excitation whereas T wave is used to indicate repolarization of ventricles. 'R' wave is used in heart rate response audiometry (Smith and Borton, 1980).

The raw cardiac activity transduced by recording electrode is amplified. Resulting signal is filtered to discourage the recording of muscle or other artifacts in the record.

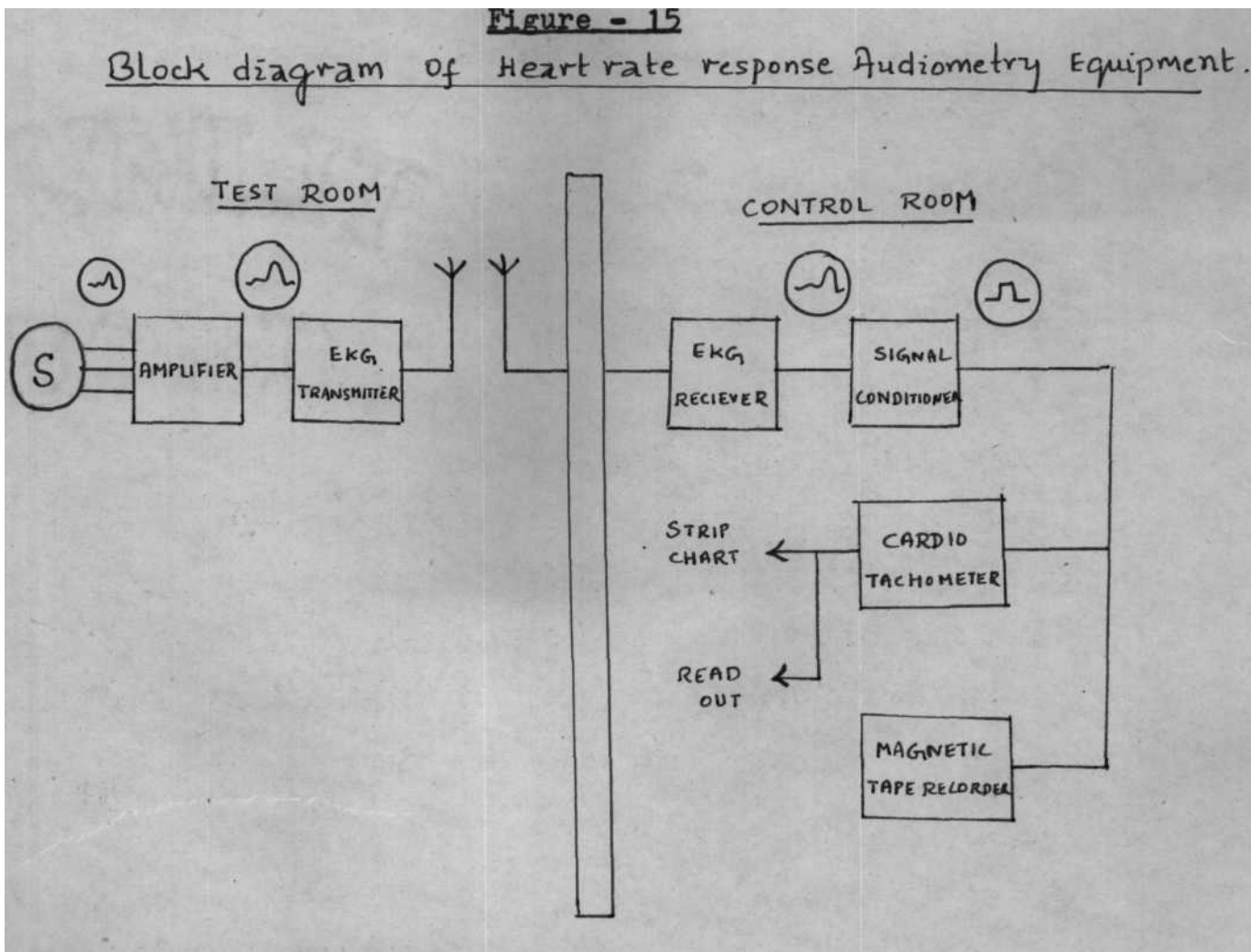
R wave is detected by a circuit called 'Schmitt trigger'. This electronic circuit is simply a voltage level detector which is adjusted so that it is triggered by a relatively large voltage change (R wave) but not by smaller voltages (other cardiac waves or noise).

## 2.56

This circuit provides a pulse which triggers a one-shot multi vibrator which gives rise to a uniform square pulse for each heart beat when the uniform square pulses representing the successive R waves are fed into a cardio tachometer, it converts the time interval between successive R waves into instantaneous rates by the formula:

$$HR = \frac{60}{\text{time interval}}$$

The result is displayed as digital readouts of instantaneous HR or recorded as strip chart deflections on a calibrated scale (see fig. 15).



Eisenberg (1976) refers to the time interval as 'tan or T'.

Silver or gold electrodes are used. Placement of electrodes can be on inner surface of wrists (Beadle and Crowell, 1962) or left lower leg and right fore arm (Suzuki, 1978). Eisenberg (1976) recommends 2 chest electrodes, one in third interspace just to the left of the sternum and the second (ground) adjacent to the left nipple; the third back electrode is attached at the midline over the vertebral column.

Recording sites and electrodes are cleaned with 70% isopropyl alcohol. They are coated with electrolytic gel or paste. About half an hour later cardiac electrodes are applied.

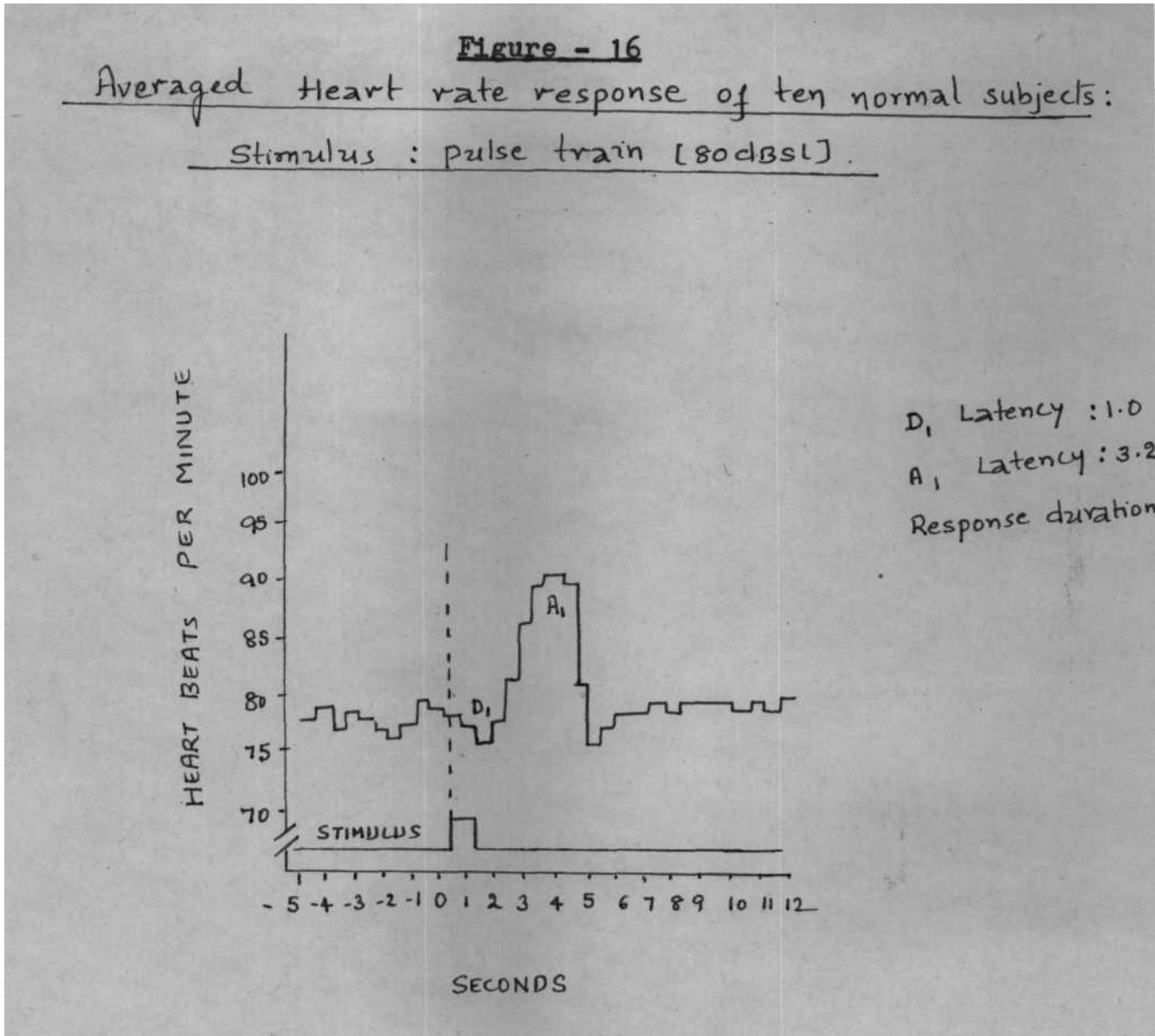
Some use puretones (Beadle and Crowell, 1962, Jasienska et al, 1967, Suzuki, 1978) where as others band limited noises centered around 500Hz and 3600Hz (Schulman and Wade, 1970) as stimuli in HR response audiometry. Schulman and Krier (1971) find band limited noise to be more effective because it contains more energy than a puretone at same sound pressure level. Turkewitz et al (1972) for the same reason found puretone to be more effective when combined with other tones than when used alone. Gerber, Mulac and Swain (1976) hence

used both 3150Hz puretone and 1/3 octave band noise in their study. Eisenberg (1976) uses synthetic vowel 'ah' as stimulus.

Beadle and Crowell(1962) used stimuli of 5 sec duration where as Suzuki (1978) used duration of 100msec. Black(1964) observed that response latency increased in time as duration of signal was increased. Turkewitz etal (1972) found that durations of 1,2,4 and 8 sec did not differentially influence heart rate responses.

Bartoshuk (1962) noted greater response decrement associated with short interstimulus interval (6 secs) than longer one (60 secs). Gerber et al(1976) did not use a fixed interstimulus interval where as it was 30 sec in Beadle and Crowell's study (1962) and 15 sec in Suzuki's investigation(1978).

Heart rate response is usually diphasic in nature starting with a brief interval of rate deceleration(peak  $D_1$ ) followed by a period of rapid acceleration (peak  $A_1$ ). Some exhibit a second deceleration phase to end the response (Hogan,1975), (see fig. 16).



Beadle and Crowell (1962) on analyzing the neonatal cardiac responses to auditory stimulation found that change in cardiac rate began almost immediately and covered a time period of approximately 10 seconds following the onset of stimulus.

Butterfield (1962) finds HR response audiometry not useful in children with mental age below 3 years.

Bartoshuk (1964) reported on the basis of results obtained from 39 neonates, that the absolute threshold for neonatal HR acceleration 1KHz tone was between 38 and 48 dBSPL.

Jasienska et al (1967) tested 35 newborns (1 to 10 days old) and observed that average change in the pulse frequency to be 11 beats per minute.

Steinschneider, Lipton and Richmond (1966) demonstrated a systematic shortening of latency with increasing levels of auditory stimulation.

Magnitude of heart rate change increases with increase in stimulus intensity (Bartoshuk, 1964; Graham and Clifton, 1966; Lipton et al, 1960). But it was found by Barnett and Goodwin (1967) and Davis et al (1955) that HR response is of all or none type with no significant correlation between response magnitude and signal level.

Graham et al (1968) observed that HR response showed an acceleration within first second, reaching peak by fourth second after which there was deceleration to approximately prestimulus level.

Berg and Graham (1970) report that low intensity stimuli resulted in a HR deceleration where as moderate

stimulus intensities produced a diphasic response and HR acceleration resulted for high intensity stimulation.

Schulman and Wade (1970) measured HR response in normal infants and found that most prominent response was deceleration, at 34 dB SPL, 6 secs after the stimulus onset. According to Griffiths (1975) criteria for positive HR response is deceleration of HR by 4 to 5 beats in 4 to 6 secs after the stimulus onset.

Eisenberg (1975) reported reliable HR responses to uninflected synthetic vowel of 60dB in newborns and adults. The predominant change in HR pattern was a prolonged deceleration independent of subject's level of arousal. The peak magnitude in infants was often found 6 or more seconds subsequent to stimulus onset.

Wilder (1950) reported that cardiac response follows "laws of initial values" where prestimulus HR rate influences post stimulus rate. Gerber et al (1976) in their study of 15 newborns (24 to 48 hours) controlled the influence of prestimulus heart rate upon post stimulus rate statistically by the use of analysis of covariance. Results indicated that magnitude of post stimulus rate change differed among subjects who were a significant source of variance. HR response was different in magnitude and latency for each subject. They recommend that heart rate patterns in infants must be observed in terms of



absolute change for each individual subject without considering the direction of change of HR response.

Suzuki (1978) reports that the most prominent and consistent response to be an abrupt and brief deceleration with peak latency of 1 to 1.5 sec by testing children under 12 months of age. This deceleration occurred in the interval between first and second beats after the stimulus onset. As stimulus intensity increased, deceleration increased in magnitude and second acceleration became prominent.

Advantage of HR response audiometry is that it does not involve noxious stimuli (Gerber et al 1976), yields less false positive response than slow vertex audiometry (Suzuki, 1978). The main drawback is "individual variability,"

#### **6. VASOMOTOR RESPONSE AUDIOMETRY:**

In response to auditory stimulation, changes in the blood flow and hence pulse volume occur. These vasomotor responses have been used for detecting response to auditory stimulation objectively. Changes in pulse volume may be detected by rheographic or plethysmographic methods, (Mojdehi et al, 1980).

Rheography utilizes differences in conductance of electricity in tissues and blood.

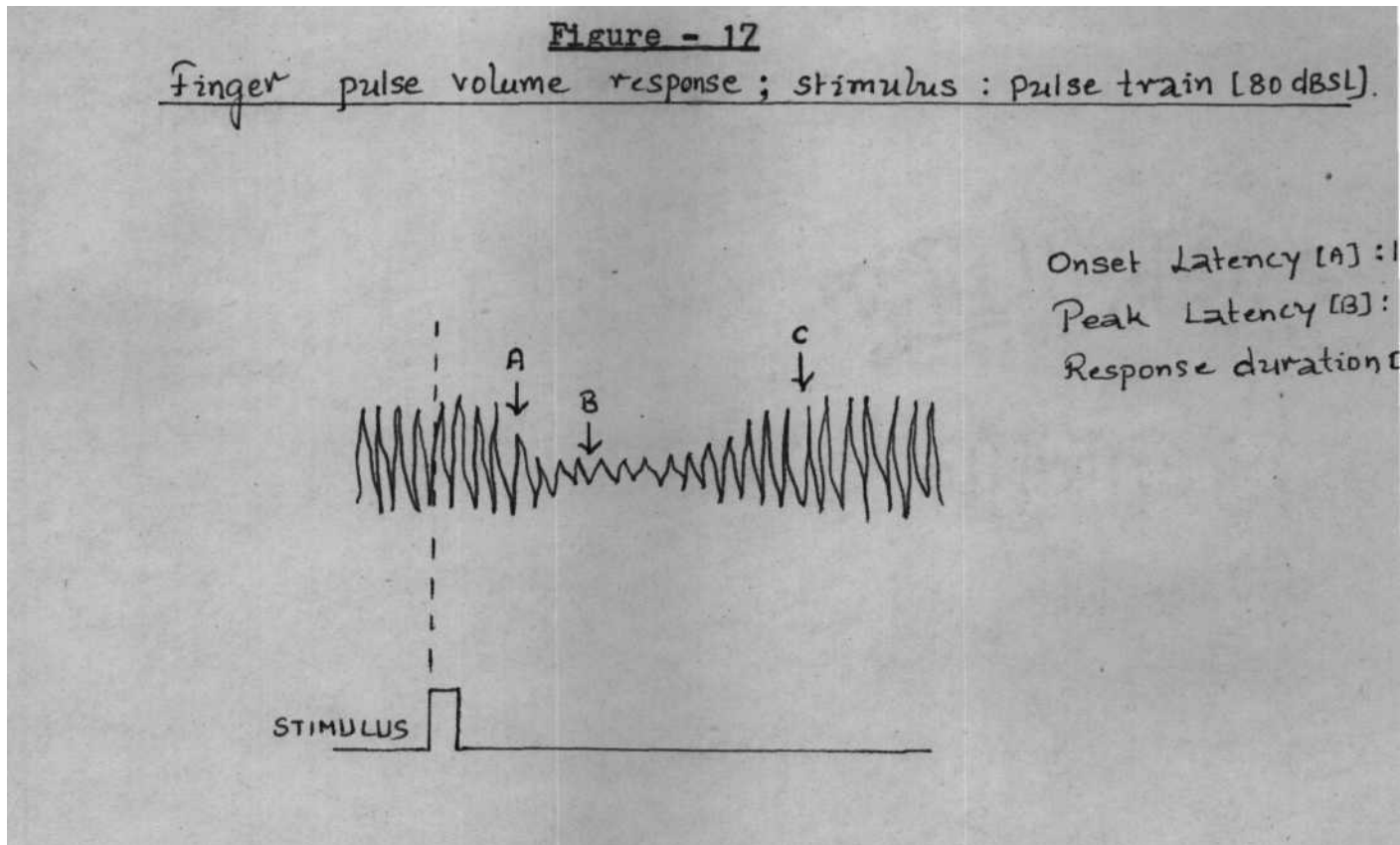
Vasilev, Diskalenho and Plepis (1975) used rheography in detection of response to puretones of 10 secs duration. Responses occurred at 20dBSL in most of subjects at 125Hz 3000Hz and in half of subjects at 6000Hz. They recommend rheography as an objective technique. The principle used in rheography is that blood is a better conductor of electricity than tissues and hence changes in pulse volume are shown by changes in relative conductance of electricity. So one electrode is attached to index finger and another to palmar surface. When there is vaso constriction in response to auditory stimulation, there will be decrease in blood volume thereby increasing the total impedance of electricity.

Cranley (1975) reports that although referred to as "impedance plethysmography", "rheography" is not a direct measure of volume or pressure.

Plethysmography makes use of volume changes of a body segment. Photo plethysmography uses a photo cell to detect changes in blood flow corresponding to volume changes.

Mojdehi et al (1980) outlined the procedure for Plethysmography as follows:- Subject is seated comfortably and a photocell covered by black cloth is placed on the lateral surface of the smallest digit and held in place by tapes. Room temperature is maintained at 78 to 82 F as response can be evoked from cold. An interstimulus interval

of more than 30 sec is used to allow full recovery of physiological system. Vasomotor response in the form of micro circulation is detected by photocell and is charted as pulse on graph called- 'phleborheograph or PRG (see fig. 17).



"Law of initial value" (Wilder, 1950) is considered by recording 10 sec period of stable pulse amplitude. Criteria for response occurrence is 1) a change of 20% in digital pulse volume amplitude on comparison with pre-stimulus amplitude; 2) the first change in pulse amplitude occurring within 1.6 to 10 seconds of stimulus onset (Levander et al, 1974).

Siemaszko-zak (1976) gives another method of recording digital pulse volume called 'water plethysmography'. Here the index finger is fitted in to an aluminium capsule, it is filled with water and closed tightly. The capsule is connected through stiff plastic tube to electro manometer.

A dip in the plethysmographic curve below the base line or merely fall in amplitude of waves following acoustic stimuli evidenced a decrease in volume of finger tip blood flow ie. vasomotor response. Dip lasting at least during 2 beats of pulse and not smaller than 20% of amplitude of proceeding pulse volume was accepted as least change.

Daly (1965) obtained vaso constrictor responses in 10 sleeping subjects to thermal noise stimulation. In 80% of subjects there was response at 5 dB stimulus level.

Jansen (1969) found that among awake subjects, a white noise stimulus of 18 seconds duration evoked the response beginning at an intensity of 70 dBSPL. Response was in relation with band width and intensity of the signal.

Siemaszko-zak (1976) recorded vasomotor reactions to sounds of 1024, 2048, and 4096Hz frequency at levels of 0, 10, 20, 60, and 80dB in normal hearing persons (6 - 35 years). Latency of response was found to be 2 to 5 secs not depending on intensity or frequency of stimulus.

Responses were noticed in both during waking and sleep

state and % of responses increased with increase in stimulus intensity.

Mojdehi et al (1980) could record vasomotor responses in 11 out of 12 normal hearing adult subjects at 35 to 70 dB SPL.

So vasomotor response audiometry seems to be an objective technique which still has to be tried on children.

## **7. VISUAL RESPONSE AUDIOMETRY:**

Pupil dilation as a response to auditory stimulation has been used to test hearing. Baker (1938) conditioned pupillary responses to sub threshold auditory stimulation and Unger (1939) used pupillary dilation as an indicator of hearing.

Clynes (1962) was the first person to analyze the dynamic properties of pupillary response to sound using averaging computer; objective analysis yielded following results- (a) pupillary responses could be elicited to puretone stimulation at 40dB above threshold. (b) amplitude of the response increased little with increasing signal intensity. (c) the response consists of an initial dilation reaching a peak at about 1.5 seconds after stimulus onset and a subsequent prolonged constriction phase lasting for 20 seconds. (d) a differential sensitivity to abrupt changes

in either signal amplitude or frequency and (e) no fatigue or adaptation in response.

Suzuki and Kamiyo (1961) evaluated pupil reaction in normal subjects (3 to 53 years). Two - third of subjects yielded positive response at stimulation level of 20 dB or less and remaining subjects at 30 to 80 dB.

Suzuki et al (1964) observed pupillary responses in sleeping children by lifting eyelids, for auditory stimulation. The threshold disparity was 50 to 80 dB in normal hearing and conductive loss children, where as in sensori neural loss children it was 30 dB.

This area of utilizing visual responses to auditory stimulation for testing hearing sensitivity is still developing.

#### **8. THE ACOUSTIC REFLEX BATTERY:**

The Acoustic Stapedial Reflex is defined as "a reflex contraction of stapedius muscle induced by sound stimulation," (Sheehy and Hughes, 1974). The reflex is consensual so that stimulation of one ear produces contraction of muscles in both the ears.

Metz (1946) demonstrated that this contraction of the muscle produces an increase in the impedance of tympanic membrane. This impedance change is monitored to measure the stapedial reflex.

The reflex testing can be done -

- i) ipsilaterally where impedance change is monitored in the same ear as the stimulating ear or
- ii) contralaterally in which the impedance change is monitored in the ear opposite to stimulating ear.

Acoustic Reflex Threshold (ART) is the intensity in dB hearing level at which the reflex response can first be detected (Djupesland, 1980).

The contralateral acoustic reflex can be expected to occur at 70 to 95 dB sensation level (SL) in normal ears (Jepsen, 1951, Deutsch, 1972, Peterson and Liden, 1972) and about 3 to 12 dB lower SL for ipsilateral (Moller, 1962, Fria et al, 1975).

In contralateral reflex testing, if the middle ear function is being evaluated, then the test ear is the ear in which monitoring probe is fixed (probe ear). If ART or other dynamic characteristics of the reflex are being studied, then the ear being stimulated is the test ear and the ear in which impedance change is monitored the probe ear (Feldman, 1978).

After setting the balance meter of impedance instrument to maximum sensitivity and nulling it to zero, reflex stimulus (tone or noise) is introduced. Intensity of the stimulus is varied until the lowest dBHL at which there is

deflection of balance meter, synchronous with onset and offset of the tone. This is ART (Jerger, 1970).

In clinical setting, the acoustic reflex battery can be used to help in the detection of -

1. Middle ear pathology,
2. Sensory pathology,
3. Neural pathology,
4. Central pathology,
5. Hearing threshold level,
6. Nonorganic hearing loss.

The present topic of concern is detection or prediction of hearing threshold level by acoustic reflex.

Early attempts at making predictive statements concerning auditory sensitivity from ART measurements revolved around two concepts -

- 1) If Acoustic Reflex is present, it was assumed that at least some auditory function is present.
- 2) If ART was less than measured auditory threshold, it was assumed that subject had better auditory sensitivity than that behaviour thresholds indicated (Popelka, 1981).

The relation between puretone auditory sensitivity and ART had been suggested as a method of predicting the degree of SN loss in neonates, young and difficult to test by many investigators (Dedmon and Robinette, 1973; Jerger, 1970;



Robertson, Peterson and Lamb, 1968; Terkildsen, 1960; Wedenberg, 1963). But auditory sensitivity predictions based on ART for puretones appeared tenuous since puretone and Acoustic reflex thresholds may occur at same intensity levels in both normal hearing and sensori neural loss ears (Dedmon and Robinette, 1973; Beedle and Harford, 1973).

Then, the Noise Tone Difference (NTD) in Acoustic Reflex Thresholds formed the basis for hearing prediction from ART. It was reported by many investigators (Moller, 1962; Dallos, 1964; Fisch and Shulthess, 1963; Lilly, 1964; Djupesland, Flottorp and Winther, 1967; Deutsch, 1972; Peterson and Liden, 1972) that ART for Broad band Noise (BBN) are 15 to 25 dB lower than that for puretones.

In 1972, Niemeyer and Sesterhenn investigated the relation between ARTs for puretones and white noise and hearing thresholds in normal and sensori neural loss subjects. The difference level ( $dl_2$ ) between mean ART for tones (500 to 4000 Hz) and ART for white noise was correlated with the difference level ( $dl_1$ ) between the mean ART for tones (500 to 4000 Hz) and mean hearing threshold for tones (500 to 4000 Hz). It was found to be linear function where  $dl_1 = 2.5 dl_2$ . On the basis of this relation, Niemeyer and Sesterhenn proposed the formula:

$$\text{Mean Hearing Threshold} = \text{ART tones} - 2.5 dl_2.$$

But they found that although in flat sensori neural loss calculated hearing threshold was within 4 dB of measured threshold, in sloping hearing loss, the prediction was not that accurate.

So Niemeier and Sesterhenn (1974) modified their formula to include ART for low pass (100 - 1600Hz) noise (LPN) and High pass (1800 - 13500Hz) noise (HPN) to be used for low (250 - 1000Hz) and High (2000 - 8000Hz) frequencies in prediction. In normal ears,  $d_{l_2}$  for LPN~5 dB and for HPN~20dB. (3 : 4 ratio). In falling audiograms,  $d_{l_2}$ - for HPN  $d_{l_2}$  for LPN. This relation was unchanged in children. Predictions as reported by them were within  $\pm 10$ dB of actual hearing in 73% of cases and  $\pm 15$  dB in 90% of cases.

Miller and Davis and Gibson (1976) attempted prediction of puretone threshold on 100 ears using Niemeier and Sesterhenn (1974) formula. There was high error rate of false positives. They suggested a higher multiplication factor in the formula for better prediction. Coles (1974) has suggested a factor of 2.7 instead of 2.5\*

Margolis and Fox (1977) reported high false positive rate and poor distinction between mild - moderate and severe hearing loss when Niemeier and Sesterhenn (1974) formula was used.

Keith (1977) on using this formula found poorer prediction accuracy than reported by Niemeyer and Sesterhenn. He found no error for 35% of predictions, 56% of predictions to be within  $\pm 15$ dB 67% within  $\pm 10$ dB and 82% within  $\pm 15$ dB.

Ragunathan (1977) established multiplication factor 'k' for each of frequencies 500, 1000, 2000 and 4000Hz for the Indian population, k factor for the above frequencies was 2.8, 3.6, 3.8 and 3.8 respectively. With this hearing threshold could be computed for each of these frequencies, individually using Niemeyer and Sesterhenn (1972) formula.

Sesterhenn and Breuninger (1976) proposed a method for determining hearing threshold from ART in patients in whom threshold was frequency dependent. Basis was that acoustic reflex for low frequency signal can be elicited 20 to 30 dB lower than threshold level by means of preactivation with high frequency tone. Procedure involves determining ART for 8KHz tone, the preactivating stimulus. Then the intensity of the continuous 8kHz tone is adjusted to be at threshold barely eliciting reflex and an interrupted lower frequency (0.125 - 4kHz) tone is introduced simultaneously. Level of this interrupted tone is reduced from threshold level downwards until any reflex activity disappears. The difference between normal and reduced ART is  $dl_2$  and difference between hearing threshold and normal ART is  $dl_1$   $dl_1 = dl_2$ . Because of

different values for  $dl_2$  at different frequencies in normal hearing subjects K factor has different values (0.5 (0.5 KHz), 3 (1KHz), 3.5 (2KHz) and 4 (4KHz)). Hearing loss for each frequency can be determined. Prediction using this method was best in normal hearing profound subjects and least in moderate loss cases.

Jerger (1973) suggested a formula for the prediction of

It is called "Differential loudness summation test" or unweighted formula.

Here NTD=  $\frac{500\text{Hz ART} + 1000\text{Hz ART} + 200\text{ Hz ART}}{3}$

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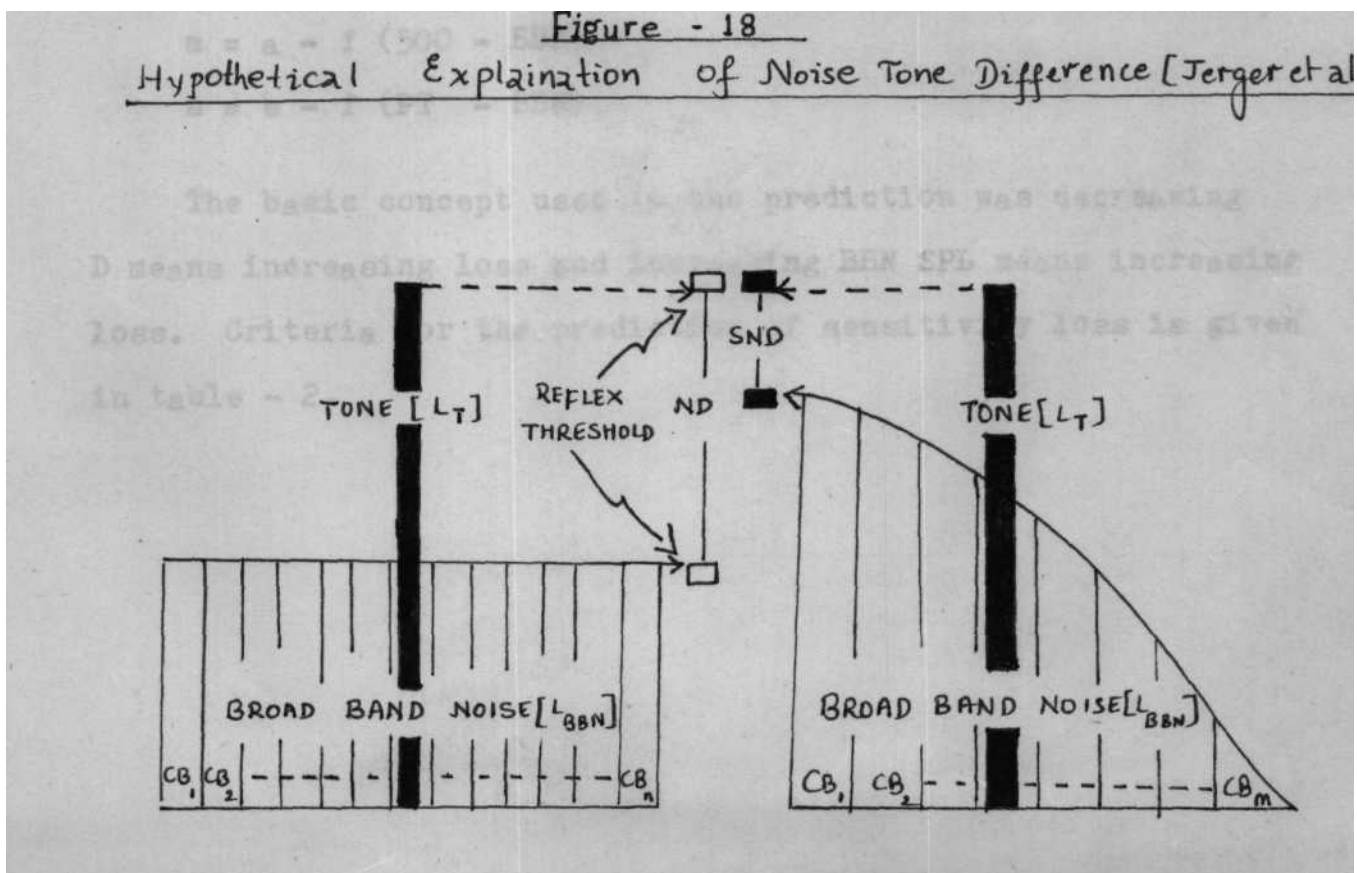
- BBN ART (SPL) + 2000Hz ART.

In 1971, Flottorp, Djupesland and Winther demonstrated critical band phenomenon operating on ART. They observed that ART in dB remained essentially the same up to a specific band width value (critical band width) beyond which ART decreased approximately 3 to 6 dB per octave. These findings were used by Jerger, Burney, Maudlin and Crump (1974) to explain NTD in normal hearing and sensorineural loss ears and to develop another formula for hearing prediction. This is referred to as 'SPAR' the 'Sensitivity prediction by the Acoustic Reflex'.

Jerger et al (1974) hypothesize that in normal ears, ART is reached when a stimulus exceeds a critical loudness (L).

Here the loudness is referred to that neural activity which is in one to one correspondence with human listener's loudness experience.  $L_T$  and  $L_{BBN}$  are the loudness experienced when puretone and Broad band noise are the stimuli respectively.  $L_{BBN}$  is taken as the sum of loudness contributed by critical bands  $C_{Bn}$ . Because the puretone is confined to a single critical band and noise derives loudness from  $n$  critical bands noise takes less intensity to produce reflex than the tone and hence NTD is observed in normal ears.

In sensori neural hearing loss ears, there is widening of critical band width (Scharf and Hellman, 1966; Deboer and Bourmester, 1974; Martin, 1974). As a result of this, the number of critical bands available for loudness summation is reduced. Then, sloping loss in these cases, reduces the relative loudness contributions from critical bands in high frequency region (see fig. 18).



**Table-2**

**Showing criteria for prediction of sensitivity of hearing**

D	BBN SPL	Prediction
20 or larger	Anywhere	normal
15 - 19	80dB or less	normal
15 - 19	81dB or more	mild-moderate
10 - 14	anywhere	mild-moderate
less than 10	80dB or less	mild-moderate
less than 10	90dB or more	Severe
	Reflex not observed	Profound

For prediction of slope of hearing loss, difference in ARTs for lowpass filtered (below 2600Hz) noise-LPFN and High pass filtered(above2600Hz) noise-HPFN was used. Criteria for prediction was as given in Table-3.

**Table - 3**

**Showing criteria for prediction of slope of hearing loss**

Difference (LPFN - HPFN)	Prediction
0 or positive	Flat configuration
-1 to -5 inclusive	Gradual slope
> - 5	Steep slope

Predictions were made for 1156 patients in the age range 3 to 91 years. To evaluate predictive accuracy of the method, audiograms (according to the degree and configuration of hearing loss) were categorized as given in table - 4 and table - 5 respectively.

Table - 4

Showing criteria for categorization of audiograms (degree of Hearing loss)

Category	Criteria
Normal	PTA less than 20 DBKL
Mild - Moderate	PTA 20 to 49 dBHL inclusive
Severe	PTA 50 to 84 dBHL inclusive
Profound	PTA 85 dBHL or more

Table - 5

Showing criteria for categorization of audiograms (configuration of hearing loss)

Difference in threshold between 1000 & 4000Hz	Configuration
Less than 5 dB	Flat
From 6 to 40dB	gradual
greater than 40dB	Steep

Prediction accuracy was found to be best for either normal hearing or profound loss and least successful for mild to moderate or severe loss categories. Prediction was perfect in 60% of cases. Errors were moderate (prediction and average result diverging by one category) in 36% of cases and serious (divergence by 2 or more categories) in 4% of cases.

In order to facilitate for uniform clinical SPAR predictions among various testers and impedance audiometers, Jerger et al recommended a 'physiological calibration rather than physical calibration.' It is carried out by subtracting the average reflex threshold for 10 normal hearing subjects (10 to 30 years) for BBN from average reflex threshold for 3 puretones 500, 1000 and 2000Hz. Result is normal NTD for that impedance apparatus. This is subtracted from the original norm reported by Jerger et al (25 dB) to get a correction factor for that instrument. This is added to D obtained for a particular patient and result is interpreted according to the table -2.

On using Jerger's weighted formula, Stelmachowicz et al (1974) found 72% of normal predictions, 10% of mild to moderate and 33% of severe hearing loss predictions to be correct.



Jerger (1975) and Keith (1977) find unweighted formula to be more accurate for hearing prediction than the weighted formula. The weighted formula is characterized by high rate of false positives (Johnsen et al 1976; Margolis and Fox, 1977) with prediction accuracy decreasing directly with decrease in hearing sensitivity (Schwartz and Sanders, 1976; Vanwagoner and Goodwine, 1977; Hall 1978).

In both weighted and unweighted formulae, false negative is uncommon (Keith, 1977).

Slope of hearing loss was predicted according to configuration categories of Jerger et al. Predictions were correct in 52% of flat loss, 30% of gradual loss and 100% of steep loss ears (Keith, 1977). Vanwagoner and Goodwine (1977) found error rates for prediction of slope of hearing loss to be much higher than that for prediction of magnitude of loss.

Jerger, Hayes and Anthony (1978b) gave a revised set of SPAR criteria called the 1977 SPAR as it was found by previous studies that NTD was not precisely sensitive to degree of loss (in moderate to severe range). Here absolute ART for 1000Hz puretone was taken into consideration (see Table - 6). They suggest that this criteria eliminates false negative results in children.

**Table - 6**  
**1977 SPAR criteria**

NTD	1000Hz ART	BBN ART	Prediction
20	95dBHL	Anywhere	Normal
< 20	>95dBHL	95dBSPL	Mild-moderate
< 20	>95dBHL	>95dBSPL	Severe

1974 SPAR method has predictive accuracy rate of 60-75% and SPAR 1977 virtually eliminates serious under estimation of hearing loss(Hall, 1978).

In 1977, Keith considered ART for BBN stimulus for separating normal hearing and hearing impaired ears. ART of 85dBSPL or less for BBN stimulus signified normal hearing where as ART greater than 85dBSPL indicated hearing loss. When this criteria was used on a group of 52 normals and 92 hearing impaired persons, Keith observed a false positive rate of 13% and a miss rate of 3%.

In 1976, Baker and Lilly introduced statistical regression for predicting hearing level using ART data on adult hearing impaired population of 125 subjects. Here noise and tone signals are weighted differentially according to their contribution to hearing threshold level(HTL) prediction. The equation predicts HTL for 4 frequencies (500, 1000, 2000 & 4000Hz).

$$\begin{aligned} \text{dBHTL} = & 1.11 \text{ ART BBN(SPL)} - 0.81 \text{ ART 500Hz(HL)} \\ & + 0.85 \text{ ART 1000Hz(HL)} - 0.43 \text{ ART 2000Hz(HL)} \\ & + 0.25 \text{ ART 4000Hz (HL)} + 64.7 \end{aligned}$$

With this formula, in cases where ART is absent for one or more frequencies, HTL cannot be predicted. So Lilly(1977) introduced another equation which permitted HTL prediction from ART for BBN or combinations of BBN and 500Hz or 500 & 1000Hz or 500, 1000 and 2000Hz.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{dBHTL} = & 1.07 \text{ ART BBN(SPL)} - 0.82 \text{ ART 500Hz(HL)} \\ & + 1.11 \text{ ART 1000Hz (HL)} - 0.45 \text{ ART 2000Hz (HL)} \\ & + 0.06 \text{ ART 4000Hz (HL)} - 67 \end{aligned}$$

Baker and Lilly (1976) reported that the median error of prediction to be 0 dB where as Hall (1978) found to be 3dB.

Other set of regression equations developed by Rizzo and Greenberg (1979) use ART for a single puretone signal 500Hz and a high pass Noise band. These equations also predict HTL for 4 frequencies or 3 frequencies depending on the equation used.

$$\begin{aligned} \text{dBHTL (4frequency)} = & (0.26 \text{ ART HPN(SPL)} - 0.078 \text{ ART 500Hz (HC)} \\ & - 7.515)^2 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{dBHTL (3 frequency)} = & (0.197 \text{ ART HPN(SPL)} - 0.080 \text{ ART 500Hz (HC)} \\ & - 7.986)^2 \end{aligned}$$

These regression equations have an advantage that they predict threshold in dB. But they are also characterized by false positive errors and with increased hearing loss, they

underestimate hearing loss (Hall, 1978, Hall and Bleakney 1981b). The regression equations pose 2 fundamental problems.

- 1) They are developed on the assumption that there is linear relationship between hearing threshold levels for noise and tone signals. On the contrary, effect of sensorineural loss on acoustic reflexes is not linear and varies as a function of degree of loss and the signal (Jerger et al, 1978a; Hall and Weaver, 1979). On the average BBN ART increase 3 to 5 dB for every 70 dB loss and puretone ART decrease slightly with increasing loss of up to 45 or 55 dBHTL.
- 2) Regression equations developed by a population homogenous in degree of loss and age will not hold good for a population that is heterogenous in these respects.

Because of clinical need for a method that would permit prediction of hearing sensitivity in different frequency regions, 'Bivariate plot coordinate system' was developed by Popelka, Margolis and Wiley in 1976.

This method is based upon two important relationships

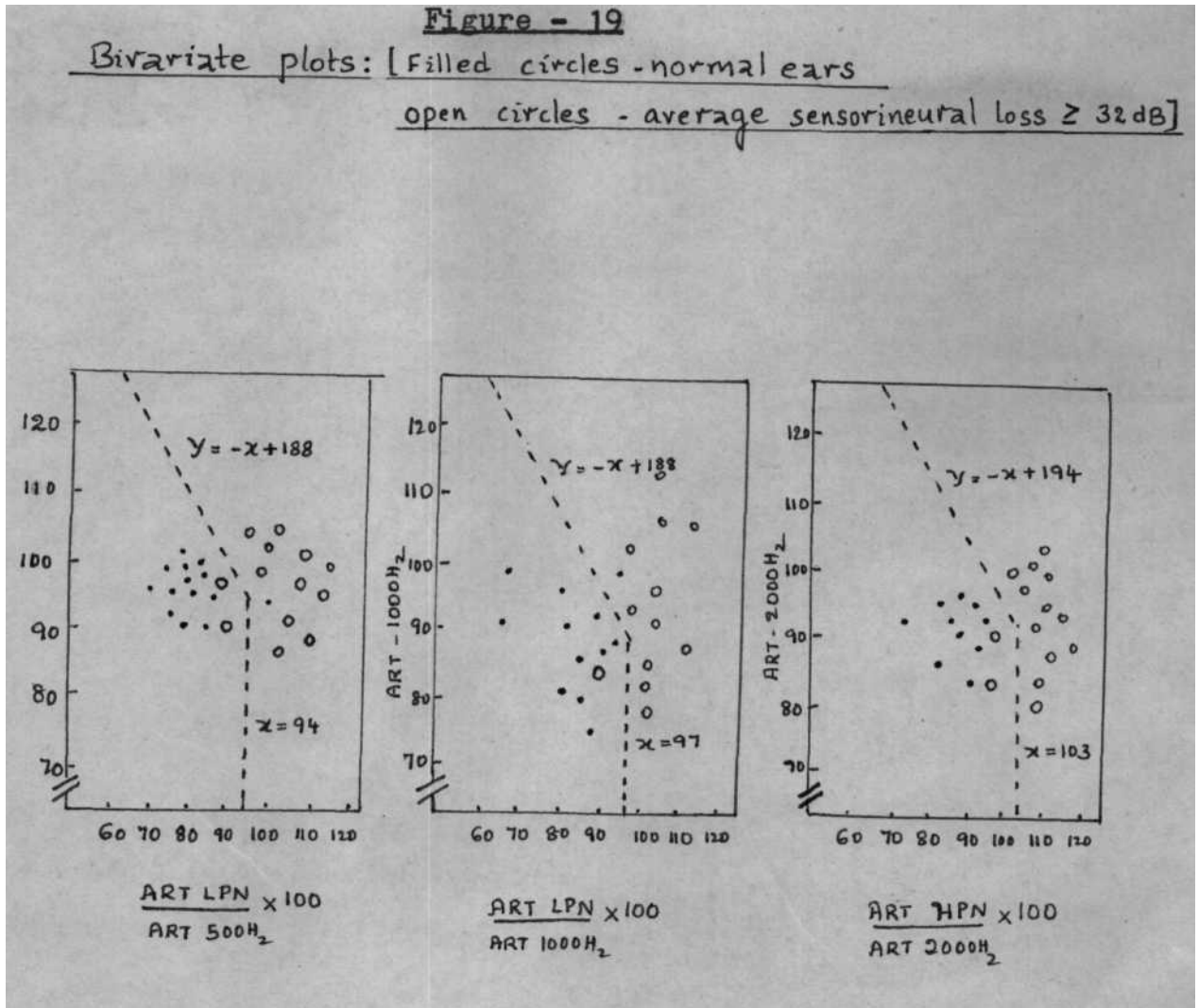
- (i) As hearing loss increases reflex threshold for tonal stimuli remain constant for mild losses, then begin to increase for more severe losses.
- (ii) Difference between reflex threshold for tonal and noise stimuli is large for normal subjects and patients with severe losses and small for cases with mild to moderate losses.

Therefore two measures - ART for puretone stimulus on Y axis and  $\frac{\text{ART WBN}}{\text{ART tone}} \times 100$  on X axis were used. These two measures tend to increase with magnitude of sensorineural loss and hence when they were plotted, a scatter plot was obtained, in which normal hearing and hearing impaired subjects - segregated in to separate regions. Normal region was defined by 2 line segments in such a way that false positive and miss rate type of errors were kept at a reasonable level. The scatter plot showed normal hearing clustered towards lower left portion and sensorineural loss cases towards upper right portion.

Handler and Margolis (1977) found that ARTs for elderly group and young adults were same for 500Hz, 1000Hz and 2000Hz and LPN but higher for 4000Hz, HPN and WBN in elderly group. So they introduced LPN instead of WBN in order to increase the predictive accuracy in elderly subjects. They report that use of LPN yielded 0% false positive rate where as WBN gives 38% false positive results.

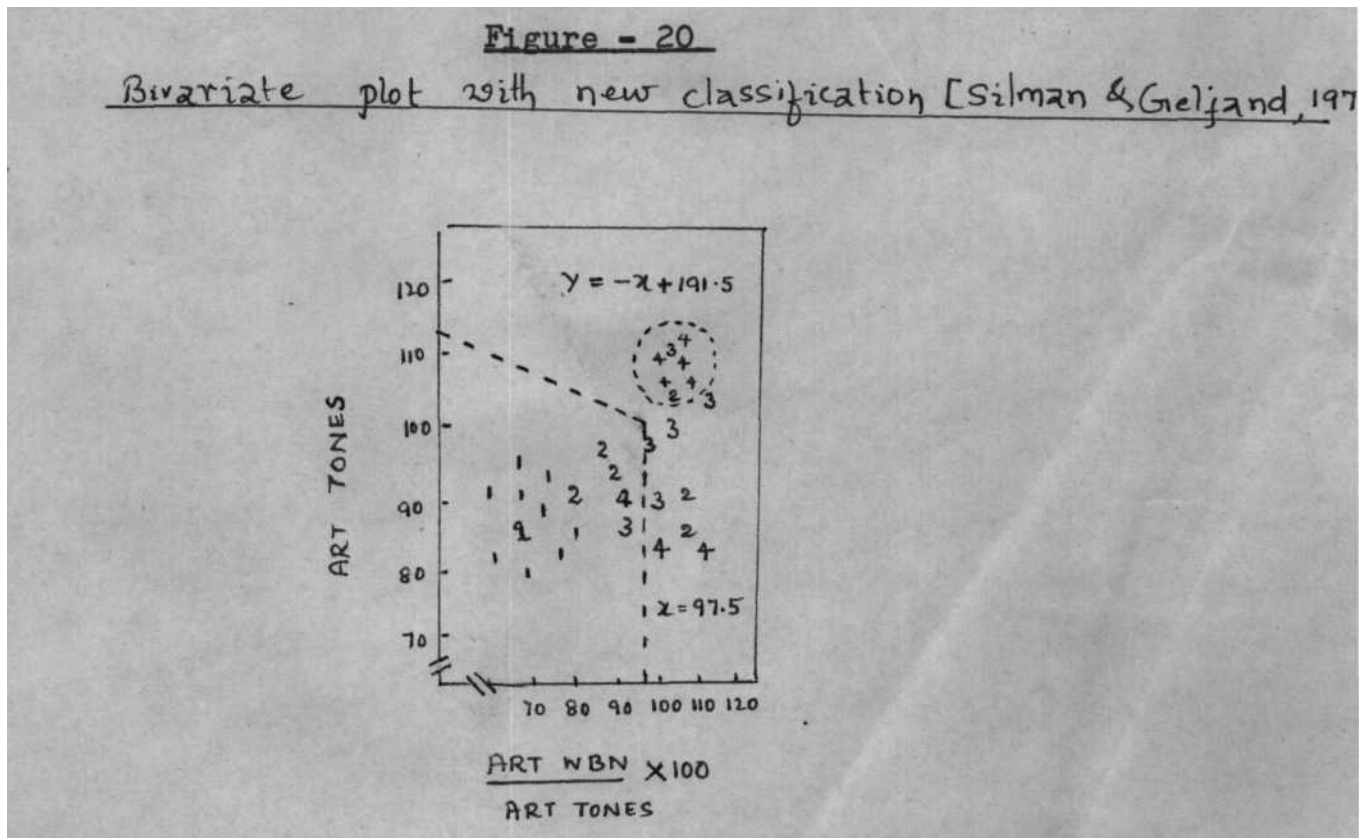
Margolis and Fox (1977) gave a bivariate plot system in which on the abscissa, LPN ART was used for 500Hz and 1000Hz ART and HPN ART for 2000Hz ART. In each plot normal region was defined by line segments -  $x=k_1$  and  $y= -x+k_2$ . Values of  $k_1$  and  $k_2$  for each frequency plot were chosen to include as many as normal ears and yet to exclude as many as hearing

impaired ears possible (see fig - 19).



A bivariate plot for 4000Hz was not reported because ART data for 4000Hz signal was variable and did not contribute to the predictive accuracy of the technique. Criteria for predicting an individual to have normal hearing or sensorineural loss was that he should fall in the appropriate region for 2 of 3 frequencies. By this procedure, false positives were minimized and subjects with average puretone loss greater than 32 dB were correctly identified as impaired with high accuracy (93% ) .

Silman and Gelfand (1979) report that the criteria on used by earlier investigators in bivariate plot analysis, for hearing loss was an average loss of 32 dBHL for speech frequencies without regard to audiometric contour or to threshold at higher frequencies. so the method cannot be applied to cases with sloping and high frequency losses. So Silman and Gelfand suggested a new procedure. They classify the subjects in to 4 categories (1) normal hearing, (2) ears with PTA 30 dB but with high frequency sensorineural loss ( 40 dBHL) begining at 4kHz or above. (3) ears with loss of 33 - 40 dB for 2 poorest of 500, 1000 and 2000Hz or a loss of 35 - 55dB for one of these frequencies. (4) Ears with average loss of 45 dB for 2 poorest of these frequencies or loss of 60 dB for one; These categories fall on different regions of graph as shown in figure 20.



If average ART is not elevated, then results should be plotted on the bivariate graph. If plotted results fall in to category 1 area then one may predict normal hearing or hearing loss above 500-2000Hz. If results fall in to category 4, significant loss is predicted. If bivariate plot is located elsewhere, the patient has atleast high frequency hearing loss.

In a series of experiments reported by Margolis and associates (1981) simplified bivariate plotting (where WBN was used instead of filtered noise band) was found to be as effective in predicting hearing loss in difficult to test children as adults.

False positive rate is minimized in bivariate plot method compared to SPAR. This may be because i) bivariate plot region for normal hearing has an upper average hearing threshold limit of 32 dB while in SPAR it is 20 dBHL. ii)of difference in noise signals: SPAR uses BBN where as bivariate system uses LPN and HPN (Hall, 1980).

Johnsen and Colleages (1976) suggested that isolated high frequency sensorineural loss elevates ART for WBN even in patients with relatively normal hearing in 500 - 2000Hz region. According to SPAR criteria for hearing loss, these Pases would have normal hearing but elevated BBN ART give rise to lower D predicting a hearing loss. This results in



false positive prediction. In bivariate plot method, ART for 2000Hz and HPN would be affected by high frequency loss but not ART for 500Hz, 1000Hz and LPN and since criteria for normal hearing is normal categorization in 2 of 3 bivariate plots, normal prediction is got not false positive.

Hall and Bleakney(1981b) found false positive errors to be more common than false negative in bivariate plot analysis.

Since all of the predictive methods rely on relations between reflex thresholds and hearing loss, any variable that differentially influences these relationships is a potential source of error (Margolis et al; 1981). So factors influencing hearing prediction should be considered.

Static compliance changes as a function of age in adults (Jerger et al, 1972, Hall, 1979) and children(Hall & Weaver,1979) and children (Hall & weaver,1979),Even ART is reported to be influenced by chronological age.

Reflex thresholds for tone signals improve slightly with increasing age from infancy through adulthood (Margolis and Popelka,1975,Robertson Peterson & Lamb, 1968; Abahazi and Greenberg,1977)

Himelfarb et al (1978) observed reflexes in most of their neonatal subjects (8 to 96 hours) by monitoring

acoustic conductance output on a stripchart recorder. Weatherby and Bennett(1980) could observe reflexes at lower levels in neonates (10 to 169 hours) using high frequency probetones. Absence of reflex with 220Hz probetone in these subjects was probably because of low impedance eardrum acting as a shunt element at low frequencies and obscuring impedance change caused by the reflex.

It appears then that there is no lower age limit restricting the use of predictive procedures provided that appropriate consideration is given to frequency of probe signal (Margolis et al 1981).

Handler and Margolis(1977) found that ARTs for 4000Hz, HPN and BBN was higher in elderly group than young adults.

Jerger et al(1978) reported that with the exception of 4000Hz, all puretones show same decline of about 7dB with increase in age. But reflex thresholds for BBN activators are not affected with increase in age.

Jerger et al(1978 a) hypothesize that there is elevation in ART for puretones because intense reflex activating signals result in the production of increased distortion products in elderly individuals even though there is no concomittant hearing loss. But BBN ART is not affected because the distortion products due to BBN add very little to energy already existing with in the band of noise.

Silman(1979a)found that young adult and elderly normal hearing subjects had similar ARTs for tonal stimuli where as elderly group had higher reflex thresholds for wide band noise.

Jerger (1979) attributed Silman's findings (which were contradicting the distortion hypothesis) to presence of mild high frequency loss in the elderly group of Silman's study. This might have resulted in Silman's younger group having subjects with better threshold than elderly group even though they were normal according to selection.

Silman (1979b)in reply to Jerger, reported that post hoc inspection of his data reveals no differences in BBN ARTs between subjects with puretone thresholds above and below 20dBHL at 8000Hz.

Gelfand and Piper (1981) duplicated Silman's study with 20dBHL threshold criteria extending for 8000Hz for both young and old subjects with younger group's threshold matched as closely as possible to elderly subjects. Results supported Silman's findings.

Net result of differential effect of age on reflex thresholds for tone and noise is a reduction in NTD. Hence accuracy of hearing prediction methods based on NTD such as SPAR tends to diminish as a function of age (Hall 1978; Jerger etal, 1978).

Predictive accuracy of SPAR 1977 as reported by Jerger et al (1978) was extremely good in children (2 to 12 years) with predictions of severe loss being correct in 85% of children and for moderate loss in 54% of children, predictive accuracy was poorer in elderly group (60 to 90 years) than young adult group (20 to 40 years).

Prediction accuracy for Baker - Lilly formula decreased systematically with age with hearing loss held constant, (Hall, 1978) and this has been reported with other regression equations also (Hall and Bleakney, 1981a).

With increase in age predictive accuracy decreased for 1974 SPAR but increased for 1977 SPAR (Hall and Bleakney, 1981b). So 1977 SPAR is preferable in older populations.

Bivariate plotting procedures can be effective with elderly subjects provided a LPN is used (Handler and Margolis, 1977).

Light, Ferrell and Sandberg (1977) found that sedation with diazepam and meperidine does not have a significant effect on SPAR testing and hence these sedatives can be used in cases of difficult to test.

Schwartz and Sanders (1976) hypothesized that if successful prediction of loss depends on an abnormal widening of critical band in sensorineural loss ears, there should be a direct relationship between degree of loss and abnormal/width of

critical band for ART. They found no consistent differences in abnormal widening of critical band in subjects with mild to moderate loss or severe loss. Abnormal widening of critical band did separate those with normal hearing from those with sensorineural loss. Except bivariate plot system other predictive methods attempt to differentiate degree of hearing loss on the basis of NTD, a critical band phenomenon. Therefore findings of Schwartz and Sanders may explain inaccuracies in prediction by these methods in mild - moderate loss categories.

Accurate differentiation of those with normal hearing Vs those with sensorineural loss is primarily dependent on NTD a relative value. Above 45 dB ie. mild - moderate - severe region, accurate predictions must rely on absolute level of noise and / or tone ART. 1977 SPAR employs both NTD criteria and absolute threshold for both noise and 1000 Hz signal (Hall, 1980).

Hall and Weaver (1979) reported that reflex threshold for noise signals increase relatively systematically with the loss while reflex threshold for tone signals improve slightly through mild - moderate loss region (26 to 45dBHL). Based on this data criteria for absolute threshold for noise and 2000Hz rather than 1000Hz seem to be more directly related to degree of loss (Hall, 1980).

Keith (1977) reports that with Niemeyer and Sesterhenn method also greatest portion of prediction error occurs with mild - moderate loss.

Margolis and Fox (1977) report that in bivariate plot procedure probability of a subject falling outside of normal region increases with the severity of loss.

Hall (1978) reports that Baker and Lilly regression equation most accurately predicted hearing in subjects with mild to moderate loss.

Hall and Weaver (1979) reported that relatively compliant ears elevated puretone ART from 3 to 5 dB and BBN ART by 10dB, and slight negative middle ear pressure (-50 to -100mm water) elevated puretone and noise ART by 2 to 5 dB. Hall (1978) reports that subtle middle ear abnormalities increase serious prediction errors in SPAR 1974 and SPAR 1977 versions and Baker and Lilly (1976) formula is not affected probably because it does not depend on absolute levels of Acoustic reflex.

Hall and Bleakney (1981a) found that 1977 SPAR is more affected by minor middle ear disorders than 1974 SPAR. This is because in patients with minor middle ear disorders, there is elevation of puretone ART. So they pass NTD criteria but fail in normal criteria for 1000Hz ART in 1977 SPAR, receiving a prediction of mild loss;. In 1974 SPAR, these subjects receive normal prediction NTD based Niemeyer and Sesterhenn method

will be seriously affected by minor middle ear abnormalities where as bivariate plot would be unaffected.

Prediction methods based in part on absolute reflex threshold level may tend to produce false positive results in central auditory disorder (Margolis and Fox, 1977). This is because of elevated acoustic reflex threshold for puretones. Hall (1980) hypothesises that reflex threshold for complex auditory signals such as noise will be more sensitive to central auditory disorder than simpler puretones. This may elevate noise reflex thresholds comparatively more than puretone reflex thresholds resulting in reduced noise tone difference. The net result is false positive prediction. This elevation of acoustic reflex threshold in central auditory disorder has obvious clinical importance for hearing prediction.

It has been reported by many investigators that the magnitude of acoustic reflex increases within limits as the intensity of the stimulus increases (Metz, 1951; Moller, 1958; 1962; Dallos, 1964; Hung and Dallos, 1972; Peterson and Liden, 1972; Beedle and Harford, 1973; Kaplan et al, 1977).

Moller (1962) demonstrated that the largest reflex magnitude was elicited by binaural stimulation followed in order by ipsilateral and then contralateral signal presentation. He reported acoustic reflex growth functions at selected stimulus frequencies from 200 to 4000Hz. As the stimulus frequency increased, slope of the growth function decreased.

Ravishankar Shukla(1980) found increase in reflex amplitude with increase in sensation levels to be not linear on both ipsilateral and contralateral stimulation.

The intensity range over which the acoustic reflex demonstrates growth(between threshold and saturation) is called 'Dynamic range of acoustic reflex'. With puretone stimuli, the range varies from 15 to 17dB(Djupesland et al, 1967) and for broadband noise stimulus, range is 30dB (Dallow,1964).

As probe tone frequency is increased, the magnitude of reflex measured in terms of impedance( $\Omega$ ) decreased (Dallow,1964).

Jerger,Mauldin & Lewis(1977)found that reflex magnitude or amplitude increases with increase in intensity. Growth of reflex is rapid for longer duration stimulus(500 msec) and gradual for shorter duration (10 msec)stimulus. Duration at which maximum summation is reached is same (100 msec) for both 1000Hz and BBN signal. They also found that at lower intensity levels, slope of BBN function is more gradual than slope for tone duration, whereas at high intensity levels, the slopes are parallel.

Wilson & McBride(1978) measured magnitude as change in acoustic admittance in mmho. BBN & 1000Hz stimuli produced largest reflex magnitudes while smallest were observed for

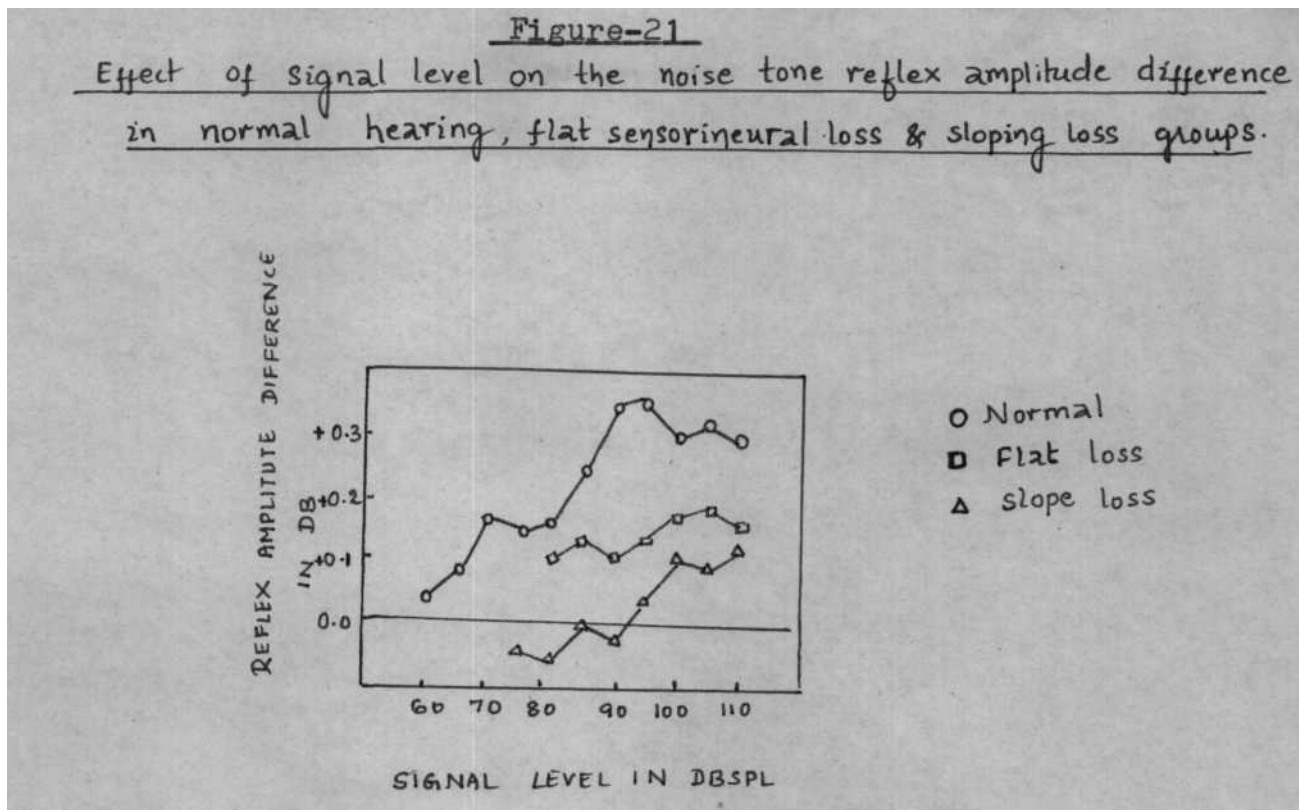


250 & 4000Hz puretones. Dynamic ranges for puretones were frequency dependent. For puretones, the rate of growth of reflex increased in the beginning and decreased later whereas for BBN, growth is gradual throughout the intensity range.

Jerger et al (1978) computed reflex amplitude as equivalent change in SPL in dB of probe signal (250Hz) in a 2cc cavity, subjects were normal hearing adults (age range: 20 to 52 years). Results were as follows- i) ipsilateral reflex amplitude was slightly larger than the contralateral reflex amplitude for both 1000Hz & BBN stimuli, ii) the reflex amplitude for BBN stimulus was consistently larger than the reflex amplitude for 1000Hz tone. iii) Reflex amplitude growth was a monotonic function of signal level. iv) In presumably normal hearing subjects, probably because of minor middle ear disorders, reflex amplitude functions were deviant.

On studying 51 ears of 31 sensorineural loss patients, Jerger et al (1978) came to following conclusions regarding the reflex amplitude functions: a) sensorineural loss patients with flat configuration showed linear functions in reflex amplitude for both tone and noise stimuli. b) Sensorineural sloping loss cases showed gradual amplitude functions. c) There was little relation between degree of loss and amplitude functions. d) As the degree of slope of sensorineural loss increased, reflex amplitude decreased.

The amplitude difference between BBN and 1KHz reflexes as a function of signal level was calculated for 3 groups, i) normal hearing, ii) Flat sensorineural loss and iii) Sloping loss. Results indicated that in normal group, the amplitude difference increases rapidly with signal level to 90dB SPL, then plateaus at about 0.30dB; in the flat loss group, the difference increases slightly and never exceeds 0.19dB and in sloping loss group the difference is even smaller, never exceeding 0.13dB (See fig. 21)



These large amplitude difference effects among three

groups encouraged the authors to explore the possibility that some index of suprathreshold reflex amplitude might prove to be a predictor of hearing.

Two indices were computed - (1) Suprathreshold amplitude ratio:- Ratio of amplitude of 1KHz tone and BBN functions at the signal SPL showing largest amplitude for BBN functions. (2) Supra threshold noise tone differences: Average of differences of 1KHz and BBN functions at 100%, 75% and 25% points along 1KHz amplitude function where 100% is defined as the maximum amplitude function.

Results showed that amplitude ratio as expected, decreased with hearing loss. But effect was small. Supra-threshold noise tone difference decreased as expected with hearing loss and effect seemed substantial. Mean values for amplitude indices for three groups are given below:

(Table 7)

Table-7 showing values of 2 suprathreshold indices for normal hearing, flat loss and sloping loss groups.

Group	Supra threshold amplitude ratio	Supra threshold Noise tone difference
Normal	1.60	4.24
Flat S/N	1.38	2.84
Sloping S/N	1.40	2.22

Jerger et al (1978) concluded that "neither supra threshold amplitude ratio nor supra threshold noise tone difference works as well as the noise-tone threshold separation in differentiating normal from sensorineural hearing loss".

The present study was an attempt to investigate, noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) in children, to explore any possibility of its use in the prediction of hearing sensitivity.

## C H A P T E R - III

### METHODOLOGY

The experiment comprised of the following steps:-

1. Obtaining puretone thresholds of frequencies 250Hz to 8000Hz in normal hearing children through behavioural audiometry.
2. Establishing Acoustic Reflex thresholds in both the ears for puretones 500Hz, 1000Hz and 2000Hz and broad band noise.
3. Determining the acoustic reflex magnitude for each of the above stimuli at Acoustic reflex threshold level, 10 dB above acoustic reflex threshold and then 20 dB above Acoustic Reflex Threshold.
4. Collecting similar data from children with sensorineural hearing loss.

#### **Subjects:-**

Normal hearing subjects in the study were thirty three (17 males and 16 females) in the age range of 5 to 10 years. None of them had ear aches or ear discharge previously or at the time of testing. All of them had normal hearing according to Godman's (1965) classification of hearing impairment (reference: ANSI, 1969). All the

## 3.2

subjects had A type tympanogram static compliance within normal range of 0.30 to 1.60cd(Jerger,1970) and middle ear pressure within normal limits of  $\pm 50$  mm H<sub>2</sub>O(Porter,1972). Some ears with elevated or absence of Acoustic Reflex Threshold had to be discarded as it was not possible to measure reflex magnitude at and above Acoustic Reflex Threshold in these ears.

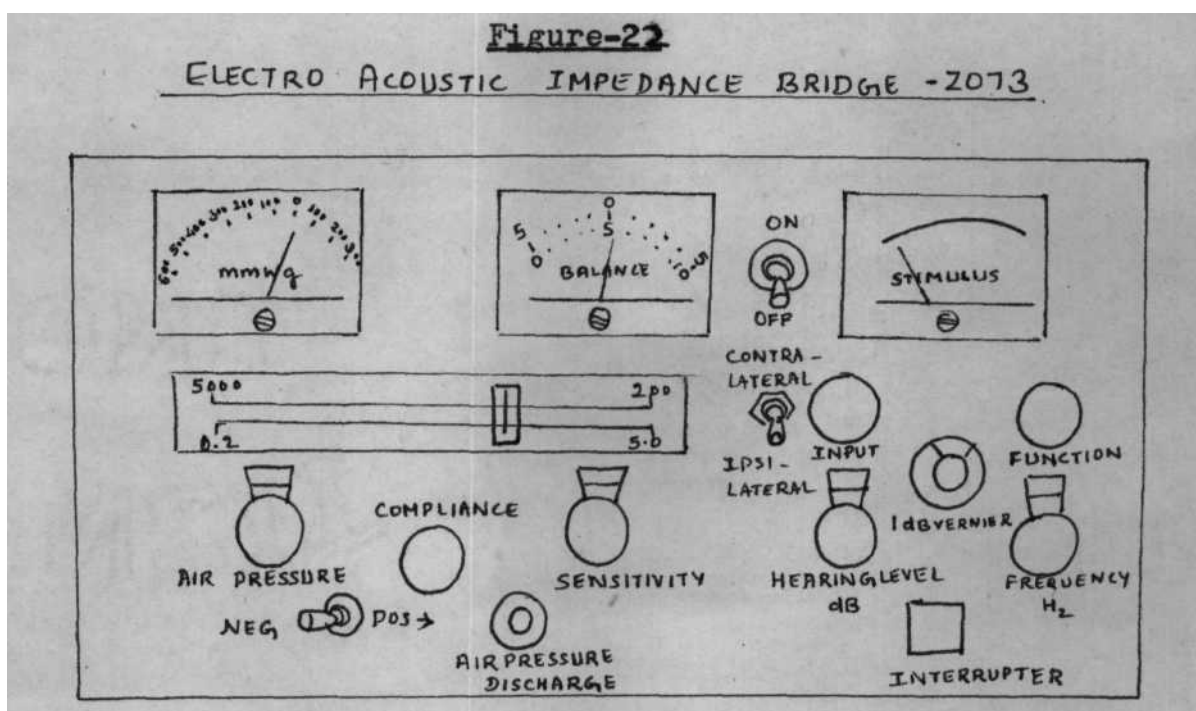
In the sensorineural loss children (of age range 5 to 10 years) whom the experimenter tested, Acoustic Reflex Thresholds(ARTs) were either absent or elevated. So they could not be included in the study.

Two subjects having sensorineural loss (age 13 years) in whom it was possible to carry out reflex magnitude measurements were considered for the study.

### **The instrumentation and environment:-**

For establishing, puretone thresholds, a clinical audiometer (MA - 30) with TDH - 39 earphones and MX - 41/AR cushions was used.

Impedance(Tympanometry, static compliance and acoustic reflex) measurements were carried out using an electro acoustic impedance bridge (Madsen ZO 73) with Type E head set and Telex 1470 earphone housed in MX - 41/AR ear cushion (see fig. 22), the probe tone frequency being 220 Hz.



All the testings were done in sound treated rooms of All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore.

#### Calibration of instruments:-

Audiometer MA - 30 was calibrated to ANSI (1969) standards using the instruments, artificial ear assembly (Bruel and Kjaer Type 4152), condenser microphone (Bruel and Kjaer Type 4144), Precision sound level meter (Bruel and Kjaer Type 2209) with 1/3 octave filter set (Bruel and Kjaer Type 1616) and adapter (Bruel and Kjaer Type 0962).

Calibration procedure with this involved the following steps:-

- 1) Artificial ear with the microphone was connected to the sound level meter .

### 3.4

- 2) Earphone from the audiometer was placed on the artificial ear and the weight over it was adjusted to 550 grams.
- 3) Sound level meter was set to 'external filter' position.
- 4) 250Hz puretone was delivered at 90 dBHL from the audiometer. The octave filter set was set at 250Hz and attenuator of sound level meter at 100 dB SPL.
- 5) Earphone was readjusted till maximum reading on sound level meter was obtained. This output level was compared with the expected output at 250Hz (ANSI-69) to get correction factor.
- 6) Procedure was repeated with other frequency signals (500 to 8000Hz) and a correction chart was prepared.

Linearity of the audiometer attenuator was checked directly from the audiometer by measuring electrical output in voltage and converting it to dB. Linearity was satisfactory, (ANSI Standard; output within  $\pm 1.5$  dB of dial reading).

Calibration of puretones of the impedance bridge was checked using the procedure as described above.

Broad band noise from the impedance bridge was calibrated as follows:-

- i. The same equipment as mentioned above were used,
- ii. Sound level meter was set at 'linear' position and attenuator at 90 dB SPL.



### 3.5

iii. Broad band noise was presented from the impedance bridge through the earphone at 90dBHL.

iv. If the output was not within  $\pm 1$ dB of 90 dB, then corresponding potentiometer was adjusted to bring the output within the required limits.

Linearity of attenuator of impedance bridge was checked and was found to be satisfactory.

The acoustic impedance section of the bridge was calibrated by inserting the probe into built in 2 cc cavity of the bridge turning the compliance control to get zero on balance meter and checking whether the compliance scale balanced at 2.0 cc . If not, corresponding potentiometer was adjusted till proper reading was obtained.

To check for air pressure leakage, the probe was inserted to built in 2cc cavity, air pressure control was adjusted to +200mm on pressure meter. The pressure meter needle was observed for any leakage.

In the present study, lower red scale of balance meter from zero to ten with zero at left hand side was considered. As a result, maximum possible deflection of needle could be read on the meter. If the deflection was beyond 'ten' on the meter, measurement was carried out at sensitivity '2'.

### 3.6

Everytime, before inserting the probe for testing the subject, the pressure meter was set to zero to ensure that full airpressure range was available.

#### **Test procedure**

Puretone thresholds for frequencies 250 to 8000Hz were established using "up 5 down 10" method with principles of Hughson-Westlake ascending technique (Green,1978). Each subject was instructed verbally as follows.

"Now you are going to hear a series of sounds, first in the right ear and then in the left through this telephone like instrument (earphones of the audiometer were shown). When you hear the sound, whether it is soft or loud, raise your finger. Keep the finger raised as long as you hear the sound and put it down when you stop hearing. Remember to raise your finger every time you hear the sound".

The instructions and type of response varied depending on child's age and interest. The earphones were placed on subject's ears and puretone thresholds were obtained.

Before starting the impedance testing the subject was given following instructions.

"In this test also, you are going to hear sounds. Unlike the previous test, you need not indicate that you are hearing the sound. Just relax completely. Sit quietly without much movements."

### 3.7

Sometimes, these instructions were varied depending on the child's co-operation. Further testing involved the following steps:-

(1) Earphone was adjusted over one ear and with the appropriate ear tip, probe was inserted in to contralateral ear. Absolute air tight seal was ensured for each subject.

(2) Tympanogram, static compliance and middle ear pressure were obtained using the standard procedure, at sensitivity '1'.

(3) Acoustic Reflex Thresholds for 500Hz, 1000Hz, 2000Hz and broad band noise: Pressure meter was set to middle ear pressure. Sensitivity knob was turned to '3' position. Balance meter needle was adjusted to be at zero of lower scale. Reflex eliciting stimuli were delivered to test ear through the Telex 1470 earphone stimulus duration was constantly maintained at 1.5 seconds. The intensity of the stimulus was increased in 5dB steps. The level at which there was balance meter needle deflection by 1.5 units was considered as Acoustic Reflex Thresholds.

(4) For each stimulus, acoustic reflex magnitude interns of balance meter needle deflection was noted at the following levels.

(a) At Acoustic Reflex Threshold level

(b) 10dB above Acoustic Reflex Threshold (10 dB SL)

(c) 20dB above Acoustic Reflex Threshold (20 dB SL)

3.8

The impedance bridge settings for reflex magnitude measurements were same as mentioned for Acoustic Reflex Threshold determination.

The data for each subject was recorded as follows:-

TEST EAR:

PROBE EAR :

INTENSITY LEVEL OF THE STIMULUS	ACOUSTIC REFLEX MAGNITUDE AT			STIMULI
	500 Hz	1000 Hz	2000 Hz	BBN
Acoustic Reflex Threshold				
10 dB SL				
20 dB SL				

(5) Five minutes later, acoustic reflex magnitude measurements were repeated to check for reliability.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this study, noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) was investigated in the normal hearing and sensorineural loss ears.

Of the thirty three normal hearing subjects (66 ears), 55 ears (20 right + 29 left) were included in the study. 11 ears had to be discarded because of elevation or absence of acoustic reflex threshold. Two subjects with sensorineural loss (4 ears) were taken.

Data was collected on reflex magnitude values for puretones (500Hz, 1000Hz and 2000Hz) and broadband noise stimuli at reflex threshold level, 10 dBSL and 20dBSL. In order to check for reliability, retesting was done on nineteen ears.

#### Computation of noise tone difference (reflex magnitude):

According to Jerger (1973) unweighted formula,

$$\text{Noise tone difference (Acoustic reflex threshold)} = \frac{500\text{HzART} + 1000\text{Hz ART} + 2000\text{HzART}}{3} - \text{BBN ART} + \text{Correction factor.}$$

It was reported by Peterson and Liden (1972) that the maximum reflex magnitude was attained at 20dBSL (Ref:ART) and further increase in signal intensity level did not bring about further increase in reflex magnitude.

So, in the present study, for computing noise tone

## 4.2

difference (reflex magnitude), amount of increase in reflex magnitude from reflex threshold level to 10dBSL and 20dBSL were taken into consideration.

Formula used for computation of noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) is as follows.

i) AT 10dBSL

$$\text{NTD (reflex magnitude)} = N - P$$

$$\text{where } P_1 = \frac{a_1 + b_1 + c_1}{3}$$

$$a_1 = Y_a - X_a$$

$$b_1 = Y_b - X_b$$

$$c_1 = Y_c - X_c$$

$$\& N_1 = Y_N - X_N$$

ii) AT 20dBSL

$$\text{NTD (reflex magnitude)} = N_2 - P_2$$

$$\text{where } P_2 = \frac{a_2 + b_2 + c_2}{3}$$

$$a_2 = Z_a - X_a$$

$$b_2 = Z_b - X_b$$

$$c_2 = Z_c - X_c$$

$$\& N_2 = Z_N - X_N$$

4.3

Expansions of symbols used in the formula is given in the following Table(8)

INTENSITY LEVEL OF THE STIMULUS	ACOUSTIC REFLEX MAGNITUDE AT STIMULI			
	500Hz	1000Hz	2000Hz	BBN
Acoustic reflex threshold	$X_a$	$X_b$	$X_c$	$X_N$
10 dBSL	$Y_a$	$Y_b$	$Y_c$	$Y_N$
20 dBSL	$Z_a$	$Z_b$	$Z_c$	$Z_N$

Data was analyzed using parametric statistics. Mean values of  $N_1$ ,  $P_1$ ,  $N_2$  and  $P_2$  were computed for right and left ears (See Table-9).

Table-9 Showing Mean values of  $N_1$ ,  $P_1$ ,  $N_2$  and  $P_2$  for right and left ears.

EAR	MEAN VALUES			
	$N_1$	$P_1$	$N_2$	$P_2$
RIGHT	2.48	1.97	4.07	3.67
LEFT	2.34	2.03	3.75	3.63

From the above table, it is clear that a difference exists between average reflex magnitude for puretones (500Hz, 1000Hz & 2000Hz) and reflex magnitude for broad band noise. Significance of difference between Mean values of  $N_1$  and  $P_1$

#### 4.4

and  $N_2$  and  $P_2$  were calculated. The difference was not found to be significant. So null hypothesis was accepted.

Mean values of  $a_1, b_1, c_1$  &  $N_1$  and  $a_2, b_2, c_2$  and  $N_2$  were determined for right and left ears (See Table 10).

Table-10 showing Mean values of  $a_1, b_1, c_1$  &  $N_1$  and  $a_2, b_2, c_2$  &  $N_2$

for right and left ears

EAR	MEAN VALUES							
	$a_1$	$b_1$	$c_1$	$N_1$	$a_2$	$b_2$	$c_2$	$N_2$
RIGHT	2.42	1.92	1.53	2.48	4.15	3.92	2.80	4.07
LEFT	2.43	2.25	1.44	2.34	4.41	3.87	2.62	3.75

Comparison of values  $a_1$  &  $a_2, b_1$  &  $b_2, c_1$  &  $c_2$  and  $N_1$  &  $N_2$  indicate that there is increase in reflex magnitude as sensation level(ref:ART) increases. This finding is in agreement with previous studies(Metz,1951; Moller,1958 Dollos,1964; Hung & Dallos,1972; Peterson & Liden,1972; Beedle & Harford, 1973; Kaplan et al, 1977; Jerger et al, 1977; Wilson & McBride, 1978; Jerger et al,1978).

Noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) values were computed using the formula at 10dBSL and 20dBSL for 26 right ears, 29 left ears and 19 retested ears.(See Tables 11 & 12).



## 4.5

Table-11 showing noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) values for 26 right ears and 10 retested ears at 10dBSL and 20 dBSL.

Sl. No.	RIGHT EAR			
	10 dBSL		20 dBSL	
	FIRST TESTING	RETESTING	FIRST TESTING	RETESTING
1	0.5	0	0.17	0.17
2	-0.5	-0.33	-0.5	-0.5
3	0.17	-0.16	1	0.5
4	0.34	0.17	-1	-1.16
5	0.17		0.5	
6	2.67		3	
7	0.67		1.5	
8	0.67		0.67	
9	- 0.66		-0.66	
10	0	0	0	0.17
11	- 1		0.67	
12	0.84		1.34	
13	1.67		1.34	
14	0		-0.5	
15	1.84	1.47	2	1.5
16	0.67		1.34	
17	0.34		-1	
18	-0.66		-2.16	
19	-0.33		0.17	
20	-0.66		0	
21	0.67	0.67	0	-0.6
22	0.34	0	0.34	0.17
23	1.5		1.67	
24	0.17	0.34	-0.5	-0.1
25	0.84		-0.16	
26	2.5	0.84	2.84	1.17

## 4.6

Table-12 showing Noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) values for 29 left ears and 9 retested ears at 10dBSL & 20dBSL

SL. NO.	LEFT EAR			
	10dBSL		20dBSL	
	FIRST TESTING	RETESTING	FIRST TESTING	RETESTING
1	- 0.5	- 0.16	0	- 0.33
2	0.17		0	
3	0.5		0	
4	0.17	1.84	0.5	- 0.16
5	0.34	0	0.2	0.5
6	0.17	- 0.66	0.5	0.4
7	- 0.33		- 0.83	
8	0.5		0.84	
9	0.67		1.5	
10	0.67		- 1	
11	0.17		- 0.66	
12	- 0.66	- 0.33	- 0.83	0.17
13	1.17		1	
14	0.47		0.84	
15	- 0.33		1	
16	- 0.5		- 0.5	
17	2.17	1.84	2.5	2.47
18	0.37		0.67	
19	0.17		- 1.16	
20	- 0.16		- 2	
21	1.34		0.17	
22	0.67		0	
23	1.5	1.84	0.34	0.5
24	- 0.33	0.17	0	0.67
25	- 0.33		0.16	
26	0.67	1	0.5	0.84
27	0.84		1.67	
28	1.17		0	
29	- 1.16		- 1.5	

#### 4.7

The statistical Mean(M) of noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) values, was determined for each ear at each level. To find individual variability within the group, the standard deviation(S.D) values were computed for right and left ears at 10dBSL and 20dBSL. The product moment co-efficient of correlation(f) was calculated to check for test-retest reliability (see Table 13).

Table-15 showing Mean(M), Standard deviation(S.D) and product moment Co-efficient of correlation( ) values of noise tone difference for right and left ears at 10dBSL and 20dBSL

STATISTICAL MEASURES OF NOISE TONE DIFFERENCE (REFLEX MAGNITUDE)	RIGHT EAR		LEFT EAR	
	10dBSL	20dBSL	10dBSL	20dBSL
1. M	0.49	0.46	0.33	0.12
2. S.D.	0.75	0.17	0.70	0.94
3. r	0.84	0.91	0.72	0.81

From the above table, it can be observed that mean noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) is larger for right ear than left ear. So ear difference should be taken in to consideration while using the normative data on noisetone difference (reflex magnitude).

Noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) in both ears was greater at 10dBSL than 20dBSL. Hence there was

decrease in noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) with increase in sensation level.

Standard deviation values indicate that for both right and left ears, variability within the group was more at 20dBSL than at 10dBSL.

Co-efficient of correlation values were significant at all conditions indicating good test-retest reliability.

Both the sensorineural loss subjects (used in this study) had moderate degree of hearing impairment. When the mean values of  $a_1$ ,  $b_1$ ,  $c_1$ , and  $N_1$  were compared with  $a_2$ ,  $b_2$ ,  $c_2$  and  $N_2$  respectively, an increase in reflex magnitude with increase in sensation level was observed. (See Table 14).

Table-14 showing mean values of  $a_1$ ,  $b_1$ ,  $c_1$ , and  $N_1$  and  $a_2$ ,  $b_2$ ,  $c_2$  and  $N_2$  for right and left ears of 2 subjects with sensorineural loss.

EAR	MEAN VALUES							
	$a_1$	$b_1$	$c_1$	$N_1$	$a_2$	$b_2$	$c_2$	$N_2$
RIGHT	2.25	2.0	1.5	1.5	3.25	3.5	2.5	2.5
LEFT	4.5	2.5	3.5	3.25	6.25	5.5	5.5	5

Noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) values were computed using the same formula for 4 sensorineural loss ears(See Table 15). All the values were negative.

Table-15 showing Noise tone difference (reflex magnitude) values of 2 sensorineural loss subjects for right and left ears at 10dBSL and 20dBSL.

SUBJECTS (SENSORI NEURAL LOSS)	RIGHT	EAR	LEFT	EAR
	10dBSL	20dBSL	10dBSL	20dBSL
1	-0.5	- 0.33	- 0.33	- 0.66
2	- 0.33	- 0.66	- 0.16	- 0.83

#### DISCUSSIONS:

In the present study, reflex magnitude for broad band noise stimulus was larger than the reflex magnitude for puretones in most of the normal hearing ears(40 out of 55 ears at 10dBSL and 38 out of 55 ears at 20dBSL). This kind of magnitude difference has been reported on adult, population by Jerger et al.,(1978). The loudness advantage enjoyed by the normal hearing ears for broad band noise might be the reason for it.

In the present study, noisetone difference (reflex magnitude) was computed by subtracting puretone reflex magnitude from noise reflex magnitude. Hence, for these [40&38 55]normal hearing ears, the noise tone difference (reflex

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