

## FOREWORD

When Kathryn Kohnert and José Centeno approached me about the possibility of editing an issue of *Seminars in Speech and Language* on multicultural issues in the treatment of adult speech and language disorders, I was embarrassed. It was such a no-brainer. Why hadn't I thought about it long before? Well, I hadn't, and so this issue is long overdue.

It seems to me that in our profession, we have concentrated our major resources on multicultural and multilinguistic concerns as they relate to children. This focus is neither unexpected nor wrong, but in our increasingly diverse society, it is inadequate. We all know that speech and language disorders are not the sole province of white middle-class American children.

An estimated 300 languages are spoken in the United States today, and with those languages come cultures, beliefs, mores, and adult

speakers who incur or who grow up sharing the full spectrum of communication disorders with majority white Americans. Race, too, plays a role. For African Americans, the incidence and prevalence rate of a major source of such disorders—stroke—is higher. Further, the American population is aging. Language, culture, race, increasing diversity, and increasing age all demand that individuals who work with disorders of human communication cast a very broad net indeed.

This issue is a great place to begin. It is not comprehensive; but it is a fine beginning. As Drs. Centeno and Kohnert suggest, it should serve both as a springboard for more study and research and as a way to introduce the importance of the topic to speech-language pathologists.

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