The ART of GIC proximal restorations in primary teeth

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Citation for published version (APA):

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Acknowledgements
Thank you!

My special thanks to Prof. Marcelo Bönecker. You were the one watering the little seed and showing me that I could fly higher. Your constant incentive and sincerity taught me to survive in the academic world and to remain authentic. More than you as professor, I would like to thank here my dear friend!

I still remember my first scientific contact with ART, in 2004, as a just graduated dentist, in the occasion of the 4th ART symposium in Bauru (Brazil). There I realized two important things: 1) ART was a real possibility to help many underprivileged children, 2) this is what I wanted to do and 3) if I wanted to go further, I needed to improve my English. After that symposium I had the opportunity to write a chapter about ART in the first book of my dear professor J.C. Imparato on the subject. After some years he invited me to be a co-editor of his second book about ART, together with my “scientific mother” Daniela Raggio. Daniela was at ACTA in 2004 and, together with Prof. Marcelo Bönecker, she introduced me to dr. W. Evert van Amerongen. After I finished my specialization course in Pediatric Dentistry I wanted to take a step further on my academic career and took the opportunity offered by Evert to be a local supervisor of ACTA Dutch students in an ART project in Brazil, which later became the subject of one of the papers of this thesis. I accepted this offer and willing to live abroad but, at the same time, afraid of it, I had the great opportunity to be at ACTA in 2007 for a one-month research internship. This month changed my life completely. I got to know dr. W. Evert van Amerongen better and I had the great opportunity to work together with dr. Cees Kleverlaan, my co-supervisor and my third and forth pair of hands in the lab! To force my “integration” I was biking three times a week from the old ACTA building to the VU. There I had the pleasure to work with dr. Hans de Soet, who was always extremely patient with my lack of knowledge in microbiology and with my “precarious English”. Alongside to all these experiences I was sharing an apartment with a dental student, Diana Draaijer. Diana went some months later, together with Nicoline van der Kaaij, to do an internship in Brazil. We taught each other many things, I probably owe my Dutch accent in English to them, and the nice part is that I was still their “chef” (boss). We learned that real ‘vriendschap’ and ‘amizade’ are exactly the same and forever! To complete this network in a lovely way and go against all odds, after this month at ACTA, I went back to Brazil in love with Luiz Felix, a Brazilian who was living in Amsterdam and with whom I am still in love! When I decided to move to Amsterdam, I left my clinical research in Brazil in the golden hands of Daniela Hesse, the “gold standard” for the clinical evaluations.

After doing a lot of ART treatments, research with ART and glass ionomers, I must say that I was not completely satisfied. Of course I learned a lot and I am sure the clinical studies indeed helped a lot of people but I wanted to make it better. When I was already a bit disillusioned with ART, I met my promoter, Prof. Cor van Loveren. In a very gentle way he challenged me to make my disappointing results look insightful. Research is made from disagreements and even though he didn’t always agree with me, he accepted and respected my point of view and my soulful way of being, in all circumstances. It was a pity to have met Cor only in the last year of my PhD but I am glad we will keep working together. To all these people that were an essential part of this journey, my sincere gratitude, respect and love. Thank you for making it possible!
Several students (today already dentists) helped my research with their exchanging programs in Brazil. They were my ‘little helpers’, even though I must look up to talk to them. Thank you to Eva, Melanie, Wladimir, Nico, Rene, Fygen, Malou, Nicole, Marieke, Kristel, Martijn, Machteld and Stephanie. A special thanks to Diana and Nicoline, my dear friends, as it could not be different: my paranympths. You helped me since day one until the end. Not forgetting an extra thanks to my official Dutch reviewer Nicoline.

In the department of Materials Sciences I had some big helpers. Thank you Arie Werner for bringing coffee and fun to my days in the lab. Your help was indispensable. Thank you Nie de Jager, for helping me with the FEA study. Your kindness and patience are immeasurable. Thank you Cees, again and again, for lending me your hands in the lab and your time when I was coming with my ideas, complaints and questions. Thank you Prof. Albert Feilzer, for your boost and comprehension in the last phase.

In the department of Pediatric Dentistry of the University of São Paulo I had also some long-distance collaboration, always intermediated by Prof. Marcelo and Daniela Raggio. The opportunity to work together with your students and to send my students to work with you is always very enriching. Special thanks to Tatiana Galindo, Camila Guglielmi, Tathiana Lenz and Tamara Tedesco.

Thank you to my manuscript commission Prof. dr. Rob Burgersdijk, Prof. dr. Joost Roeters, Prof. dr. Paul Wesselin and dr. Daniela Raggio. Special thanks to Joost, who read my manuscript very carefully and unfortunately, cannot be present at my defence. I would like to thank Paul for accepting to be a part of my manuscript commission and, moreover, for all your kindness and respect towards me in the last years. I really appreciate all your care and professionalism and I regret not having worked with you for longer. You will always have my admiration and respect.

In the last three and a half years that I am at ACTA I met several people, lots of them had an influence in the construction of this thesis, even if not related to my PhD, but by making my days at work nicer and “gezelliger”. Special thanks to my sweet friends Ghazal Khashayar, for making my cold days at ACTA a bit warmer and always cheering me up, even from the other side of the Atlantic (I miss you so much!); and Ana Milheiro, for using the incongruity of the Portuguese language to make me feel good, laugh and teach me to always look at the bright side!

Thank you to all my colleagues from the pedo-section: Arash, Ahmed, Carolien, Caterina, Ellen, Els, Elvira, Feline, Florence, Guus, Hans, Ilona, Irmke, Jaap, Jacolien, Jacqueline, Janneke, Jasper, Karin de Jong, Karin van Nes, Kelly, Lieke, Marleen, Marlies, Mariette, Marjolein, Machteld, Natalia, Nahar, Paul, Pyret, Roos, Rory, Sara, Sweta, Sandra, Selma, Susanne, Sunaina, Tineke and Thalita. Thank you for listening, for trusting and for all the knowledge exchanged. Each of you helped and taught me in a different way.

I also met people outside ACTA and they all tried very hardly to show me during these years that life is more than working and studying. For the “happy days” I thank to Ana Paula Faloni, Andre, Agnes, Carol, Daniel, Dennis, Dani Salim, Eszter, Fezinha, Gisa, Giorgi, Guigo, Hermine, Ines, Jeff, Jeyne, Juliana, Laura, Matheus, Patricia, Pedro, Radi, Ricardo, Simone and Thais. Thank you for taking care of me and understanding my absence at several moments.

Since my specialization course I have a friend who always supported me, trusted me and is the responsible for the nice cover and design of my thesis. Thank you Flavio
Valverde, for helping me again in your best way! I would never expect that someone I met in a waterfall in Bahia (Brazil) would become such a good friend!

I thank the invaluable support of my dear dentist-scientists friends Marcio Cardoso and Fernanda Sardenberg. You are both an example of dedication and integrity. I thank also my dear friends Paula Manso and Beatriz LaFraia, not scientists neither dentists but my references to eternal friends. Thank you for having been always (instantly) there for me!

Thank you to my family, not only the "bloody" ones, but also my heart family: friends that accept me without changes and that I love no matter what! To Dani Raggio, thanks for adopting me, for your constant guidance, trust and all the time you put into helping me. Real friends share feelings even behind the cold keyboard keys. To my "soul sister" Dani Hesse, thanks for your magical way of hugging me through the msn and helping with all the evaluations.

To my dear Evert, my father in the Netherlands, thank you for all the opportunities, nice moments, hugs and even for the disagreements that made me feel loved, respected and cared. You are the family I chose to have and the match could not be better. We know each other so well that sometimes words are unnecessary. My gratitude and admiration is extended to your wife, Andree, whose warmth always makes me feel comfortable and loved.

For all the good vibes and lesson that life can be difficult but we are much toughner, I thank my aunt and godmother Tata. Thank you Sandra Felix, for welcoming me in your family, treating me as your daughter and trusting on me. Thanks to my brother André Calil Bonifácio, without whom I would never have left Brazil. I still remember, in 2007, during my one month at ACTA that you wrote me an email asking if I was ever coming back after that month, as you could feel from my emails how happy I was here. Later you encouraged me to return and to go after my dreams. Thank you for being trustworthy and taking care of my most precious models of life: our parents. Mama and Papito: you are my basis of hard work and principled way of living, never letting the smile leave our faces. I cherish you both! No words can say how grateful I am to you, to your constant support and love! You are my truest friends! You taught me that neither words nor presents, but daily actions, are able to express feelings. Anyway, just to register it here: I love you!

Most of all I would like to thank my better half, Luiz Felix. No one else understands and shares my "crazy" side like you do. Instead of complaining you cheer when I have to study, then you can also delve deep into your own papers. Happy students forever and ever! You are my favourite geek, my benchmark of discipline and determination. The one I dreamed to have by my side. I hope I can be of the same help with your PhD as you were with mine.

Muito obrigada!

Clarissa