

Speech and Language Therapists' Advices for Multilingual Children with Developmental Language Disorders

Authors : Rudinë Fetahaj, Flaka Isufi, Kristina Hansson

Abstract : While evidence shows that in most European countries' multilingualism is rising, unfortunately, the focus of Speech and Language Therapy (SLT) is still monolingualism. Furthermore, there is sparse information on how the needs of multilingual children with language disorders such as Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) are being met and which factors affect the intervention approach of SLTs when treating DLD. This study aims to examine the relationship and correlation between the number of languages SLTs speak, years of experience, and length of education with the advice they give to parents of multilingual children with DLD regarding which language to be spoken. This is a cross-sectional study where a survey was completed online by 2608 SLTs across Europe and data has been used from a 2017 COST-action project. IBM-SPSS-28 was used where descriptive analysis, correlation and Kruskal-Wallis test were performed. SLTs mainly advise the parents of multilingual children with DLD to speak their native language at home. Besides years of experience, language status and the level of education showed to have no association with the type of advice SLTs give. Results showed a non-significant moderate positive correlation between SLTs years of experience and their advice regarding the native language, whereas language status and length of education showed no correlation with the advice SLTs give to parents.

Keywords : quantitative study, developmental language disorders, multilingualism, speech and language therapy, children, European context

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