

Therapy approaches for children with SSD: current practice of SLTs working in Portugal

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Background

Speech Sound Disorders (SSD) are the most common communication difficulties among preschool children¹. Recently, SLTs' role in managing SSD has garnered significant attention, leading to the development of various therapeutic approaches, from traditional articulation therapy to contemporary phonological and motor-based interventions. The choice of approach depends on the child's specific needs, disorder severity, and the therapist's expertise and should be guided by evidence-based practice (EBP).² It is crucial to understand which intervention approaches are currently most prevalent.

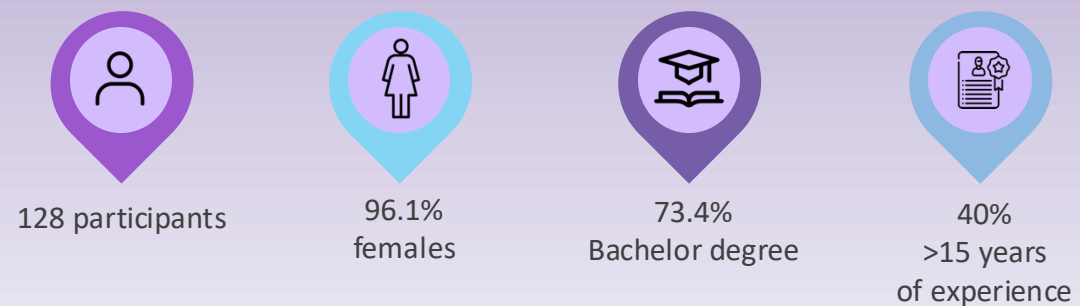
Aim of the study

This study aims to describe the most frequently used approaches by SLT in the treatment of children with SSD.

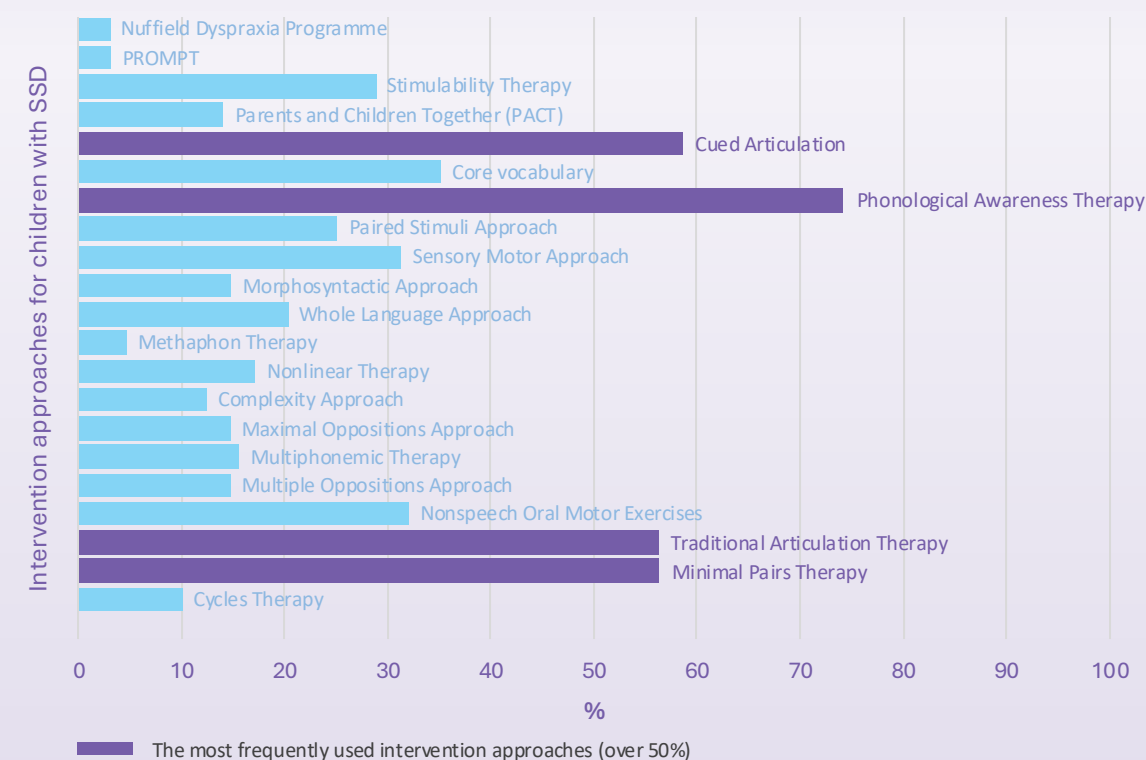
Method

A cross-sectional survey was conducted in Portugal. The questionnaire used was translated and culturally adapted from the study of Brumbaugh and Smit³. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics.

Results



The most frequently used intervention approaches for children with SSD by SLTs



Conclusions/ Take Home Messages

- ✓ The use of diverse intervention approaches by SLTs highlights their efforts to address the heterogeneous nature of SSD cases, which is essential for effective treatment.
- ✓ A relevant gap remains in SLTs' familiarity with phonological-based approaches that take into account the complexity of children's phonological systems. This is particularly important given that phonological-based SSD cases are more prevalent globally compared to motor or articulatory-based SSD cases.
- ✓ A greater emphasis on training and awareness of phonological-based approaches could enhance the effectiveness of SLT interventions, particularly given the high prevalence of phonological-based SSD cases.

References

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- ² Furlong, L. M., Morris, M. E., Serry, T. A., & Erickson, S. (2021). Treating Childhood Speech Sound Disorders: Current Approaches to Management by Australian Speech-Language Pathologists. *Language, speech, and hearing services in schools*, 52(2), 581-596.
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