

Developmental Language Disorder: strategies for better communication in school settings

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Background

Developmental Language Disorder (**DLD**) is one of the most prevalent neurodevelopmental disorders although the lack of public awareness about it (Castro et al., 2021; Thordardottir et al., 2021). DLD affects the way people use spoken language and it has a major long-term impact in social and emotional well-being as it influences scholar and work success and integration (RADLD, 2021).

→ **1 in 14 children demonstrate symptoms of DLD - in average, 2 children with DLD in each classroom.**

Many countries have long been undertaken inclusive policies and these children are integrated into mainstream schools.

Portugal have multidisciplinary teams in schools organised to draw actions to support learning and inclusion of children diagnosed with DLD (Castro et al., 2019).

Aim

→ a collaborative work done by speech and language therapists and kindergarten and primary school teachers in identifying and drawing measures for better communication to and from children affected by DLD in inclusive school contexts, through raising awareness for DLD

Methods

Participants

9 kindergarten teachers and 4 primary school teachers (n= 13)

Measures and instruments

→ Survey *Questionário de Consciencialização Pública sobre a Perturbação do Desenvolvimento da Linguagem* [adaptated for European Portuguese by Ana Castro & Dina Caetano Alves from *Public Survey on Awareness of Language Impairment in Children* (Thordardottir & Topbaş, 2021; Alves et al., 2022) – *COST Action IS1406*]

→ Survey for identification of useful resources and materials available at RADLD (Raising Awareness of Developmental Language Disorder) databases

Procedures

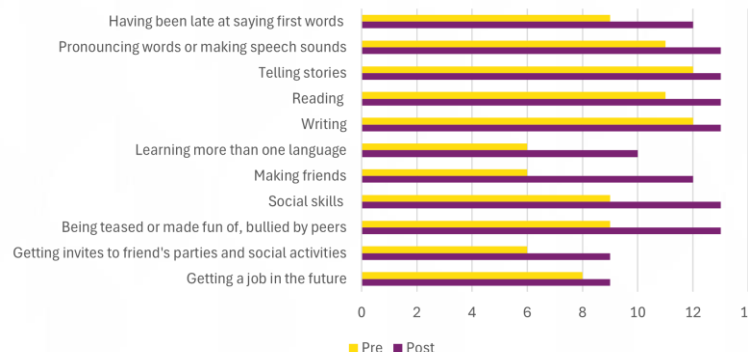
- 27 hours **training** (synchron sessions – 8 hours - and tutorials – 4 hours – plus autonomous tasks) for awareness, knowledge and identification of strategies and materials to promote a better knowledge and practices with children with DLD
- **Pre and post-training assessment** on awareness and knowledge on DLD
- **Assessment** of useful resources and materials for knowledge on DLD based on RADLD.org databases (2 moments)

Results and Discussion

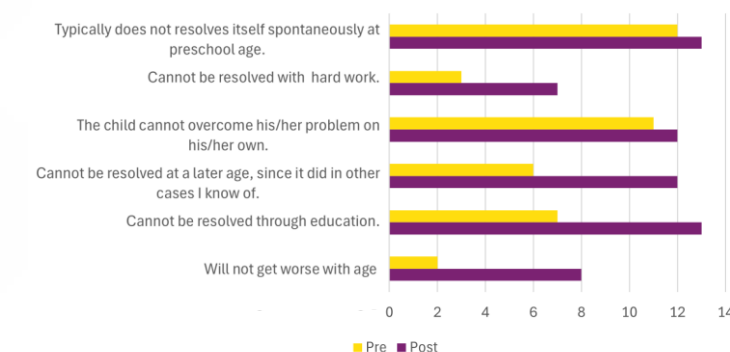
→ **Pre and Post assessment of knowledge (after training)** shows a better understanding on the nature and the impact of DLD across lifespan, in particular, more awareness on the emotional and social dimensions of wellbeing, as well on the need of specialized intervention.

→ **Assessment of resources and materials** reveals the need for clear and trustable information as well as real life testimonies.

A child with DLD is likely to have problems with:



Developmental Language Disorder...



Good ways of sharing information about DLD

- Website with current and accurate information
- Awareness campaigns
- Information sessions or workshops at (pre)schools
- Presence in the social media

Resources and materials to share for better knowledge on DLD

→ **RADLD.org website** and **RADLD YouTube channel**: alert signs and strategies to communicate with people with DLD, information on the nature and intervention on DLD and testimonies

Take home message

DLD is a not very well-known disorder and, in consequence, not all children get enough support, struggling during school years and afterwards. Collaborative interventions must be pursued and widespread, to provide a better communication and quality of life for people with DLD.

