

Awareness of DLD existence, characteristics and causes data from a public survey conducted in Portugal

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Team



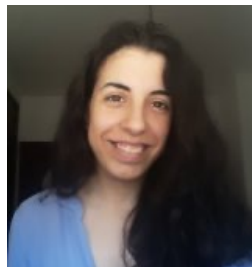
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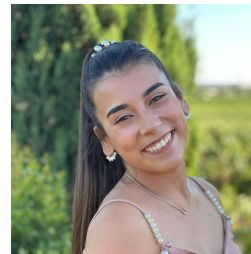
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Introduction

Terminology



- difficulty producing or understanding language
 - it impacts literacy, learning, friendships and emotional well-being
- (Bishop et al., 2012)



Introduction

Prevalence

6 to 15%

of all children when assessed by norm-referenced tests

(Law et al., 2000)

The values vary considerably in studies for Portugal, being much higher than the ones found for other populations.

80 to 111 children per 1000

have **Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)** in Portugal

Perturbação do Desenvolvimento da Linguagem (PDL)

[estimated based on the most recent fully published country population – Censos (2011)]



Introduction

Prevalence

Autism	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	Dyslexia	Speech Sound production
1 to 2 %	5% to 7%	5,4% Portugal	10 to 15% (3-6% for 4-6yo) preschool children
(Steinbrenner et al., 2020)	(Filipe, 2021)	(Vale et al., 2011)	(ASHA; McLeod & Harrison, 2009; McLeod & Baker, 2014; Rice et al., 2018)



Question

What is the level of awareness of DLD in Portugal,
comparing with other conditions such as Autism, Dyslexia,
ADD/ADHD and Speech Disorders, and other European countries?



Method

European Portuguese version of **Public Survey on Awareness of Language Impairment in children**



developed by Working Group 3, led by Seyhun Topbaş and Elin Thordardottir, under the COST Action ISI406 (*Enhancing children's oral language skills across Europe and beyond – a collaboration focusing on interventions for children with difficulties learning their first language*)

Thordardottir, Topbaş & WG3 of CA ISI406 (2021)

5 sections

- 1. demographic information (10)**
- 2. questions about the nature of language impairment in childhood - manifestations and causes (9)**
- 3. questions about intervention services (5)**
- 4. questions about the role of parents in identification and remediation (4)**
- 5. questions about awareness of autism, dyslexia, ADD/ADHD and speech disorders (3)**



Method

European Portuguese version (online)



Questionário sobre *Perturbação do Desenvolvimento da Linguagem*

1. adaptation to European Portuguese – translation, retroversion and conciling
(Ana Castro, Dina Caetano Alves, Marisa Lousada & Ana Catarina Baptista)
2. piloting for answering time and comprehension (2 respondents)
3. Google forms setting and piloting (Aline Camacho & 4 respondents)

Ethical approval

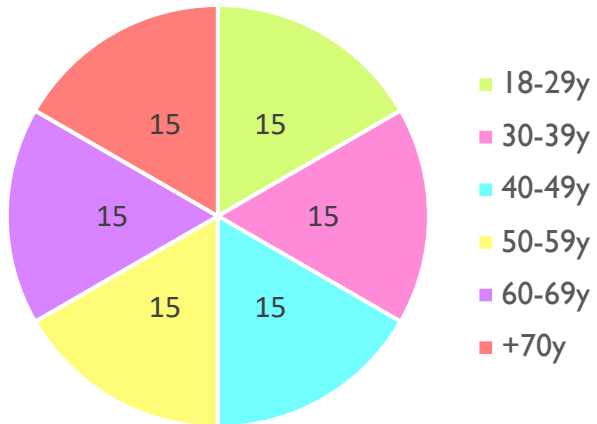
- Comissão Especializada de Ética em Investigação (CEEI) da Escola Superior de Saúde do Instituto Politécnico de Setúbal (ESS/IPS), **Portugal**
- Institutional Review Board of the Faculty of Medicine of McGill University, **Canada**



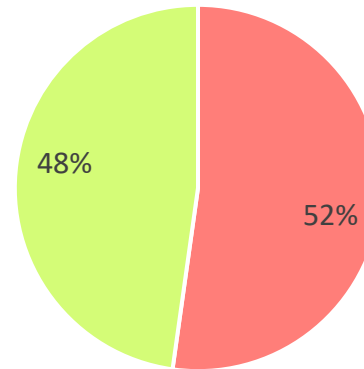
Method

Sample
90 respondents

Age

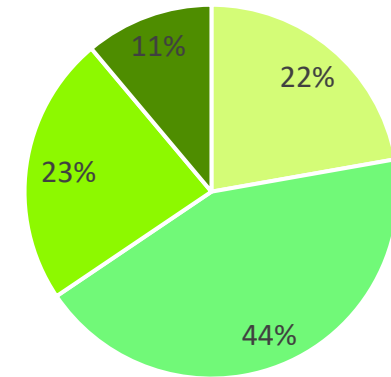


Gender



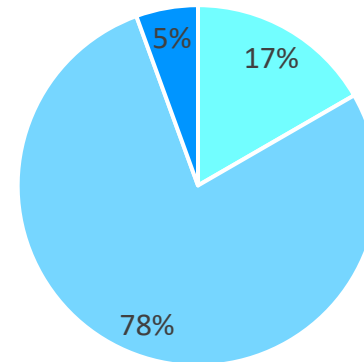
Feminine Masculine

Level of education



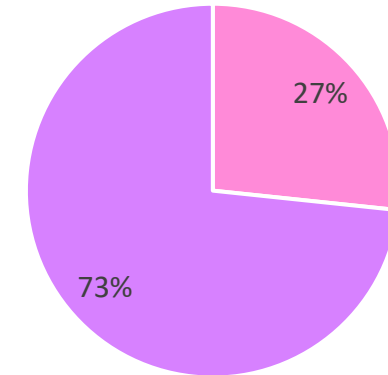
Prim. Ed. Sec. Ed Bachelor's Master's

Social-economic status



Low Medium High

Number of languages spoken



2 lang. 1 lang.



Results and discussion

Have you ever heard the terms **Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)**, **Autism**, **ADHD** and **Speech Sound Disorder**?

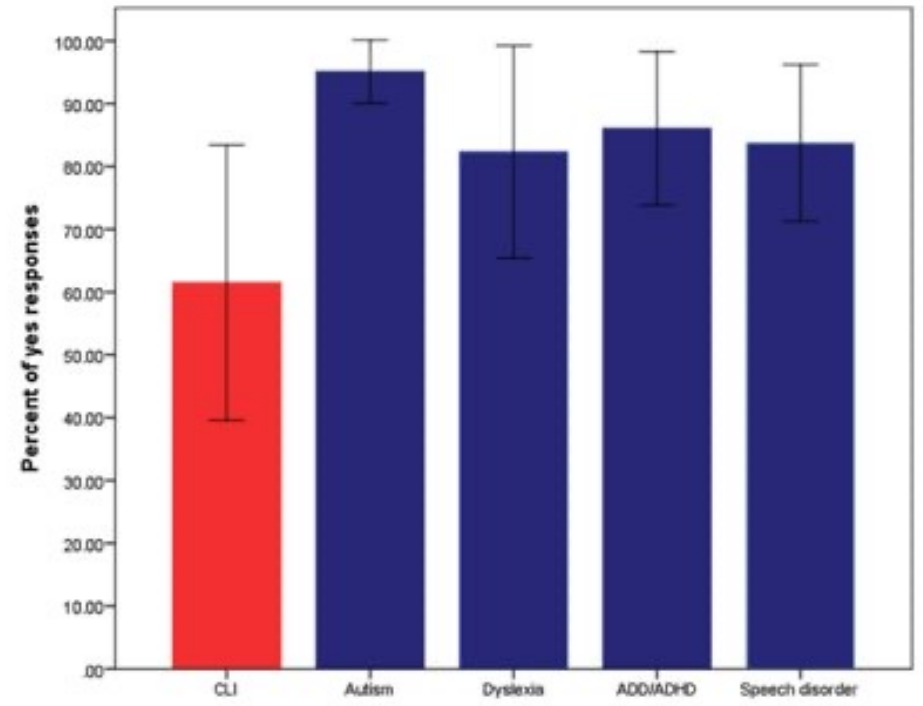
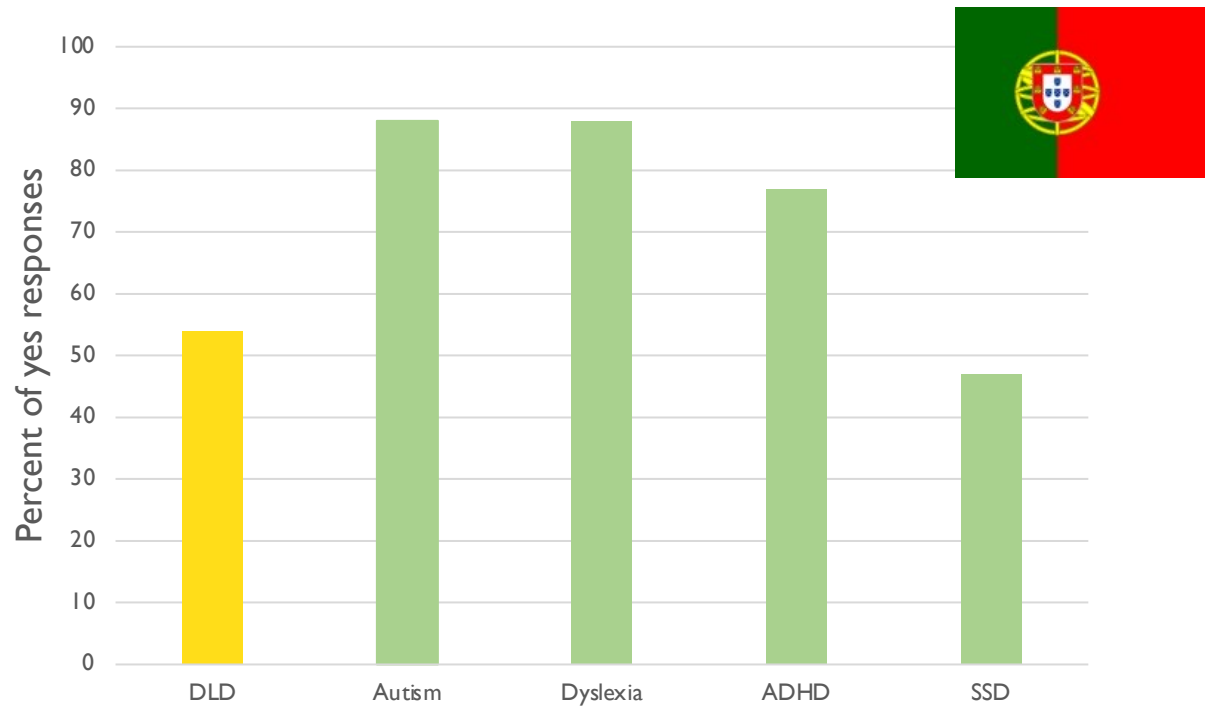


Fig. 1 – Yes responses to the question *Have you ever heard the terms Developmental Language Disorder (DLD), Autism, ADHD and Speech Sound Disorder?* (n=90)

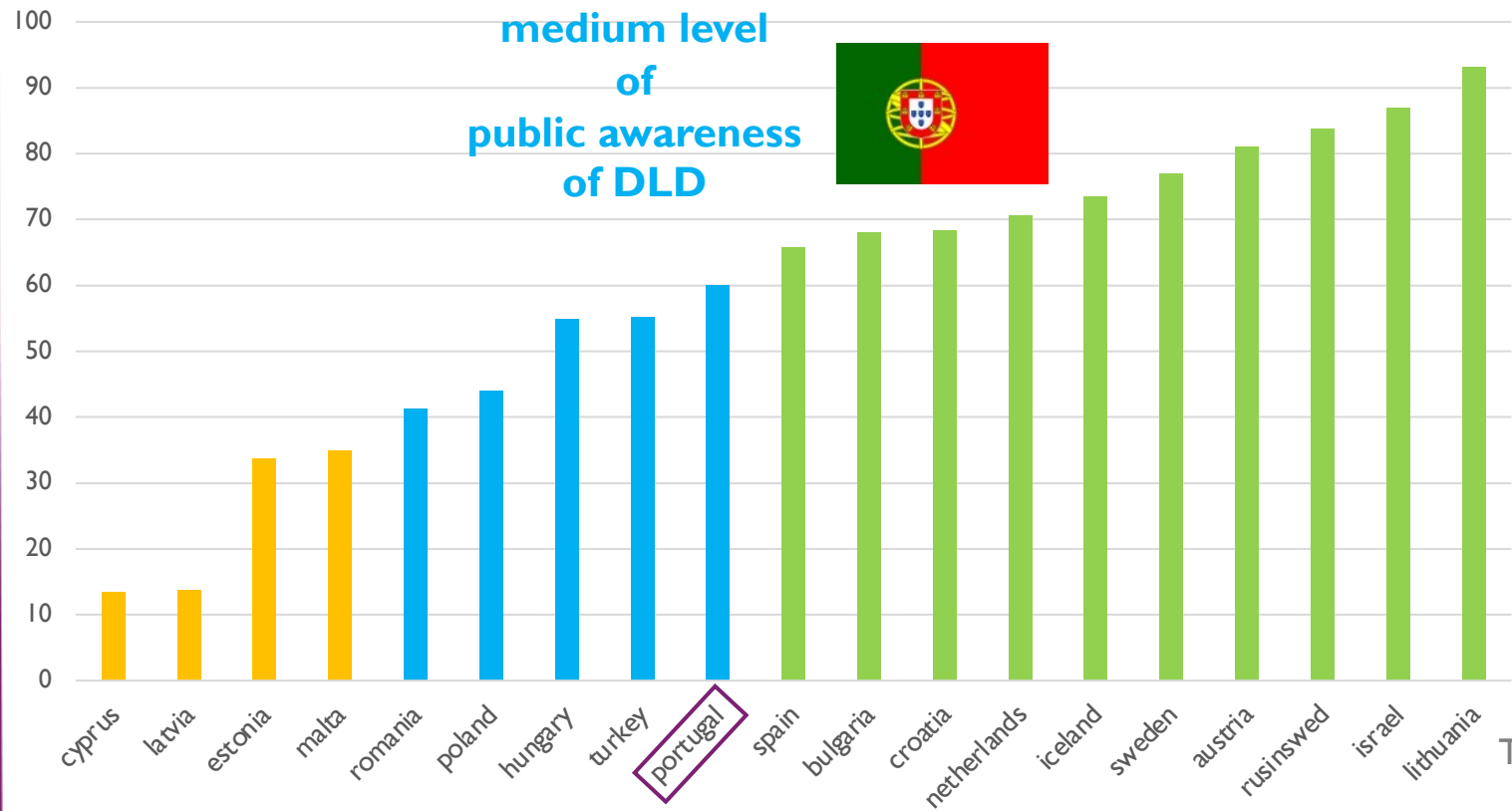
18 countries across Europe

Thordardottir, Topbaş & WG3 of CA ISI 406 (2021)



Results and discussion

Have you ever heard the terms **Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)**, **Autism**, **ADHD** and **Speech Sound Disorder**?



COMPARISON
responses across all countries
YES answers to having heard about
Child Language Impairment

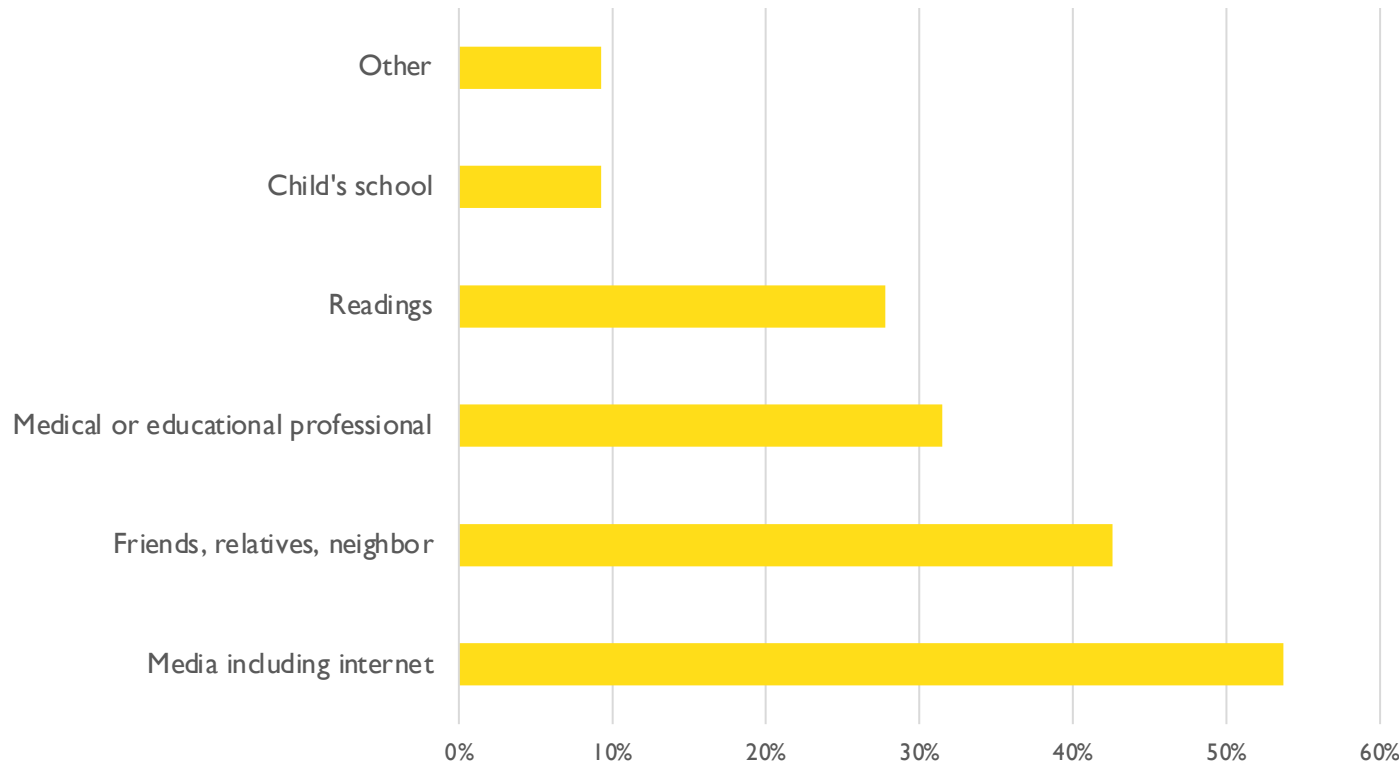
level of awareness
low
medium
high

Thordardottir, E., Topbaş, S., & WG3 of CA ISI 406 (2021)



Results and discussion

Where have you heard the term (childhood) language impairment?



respondents having answered YES to the previous question
Have you heard the term (childhood) language impairment?
(n=54)

Fig. 2 – Responses to the question *Where have you heard the term (childhood) language impairment?* (n=54)



Results and discussion

A child with childhood language impairment is likely to have problems with the following?

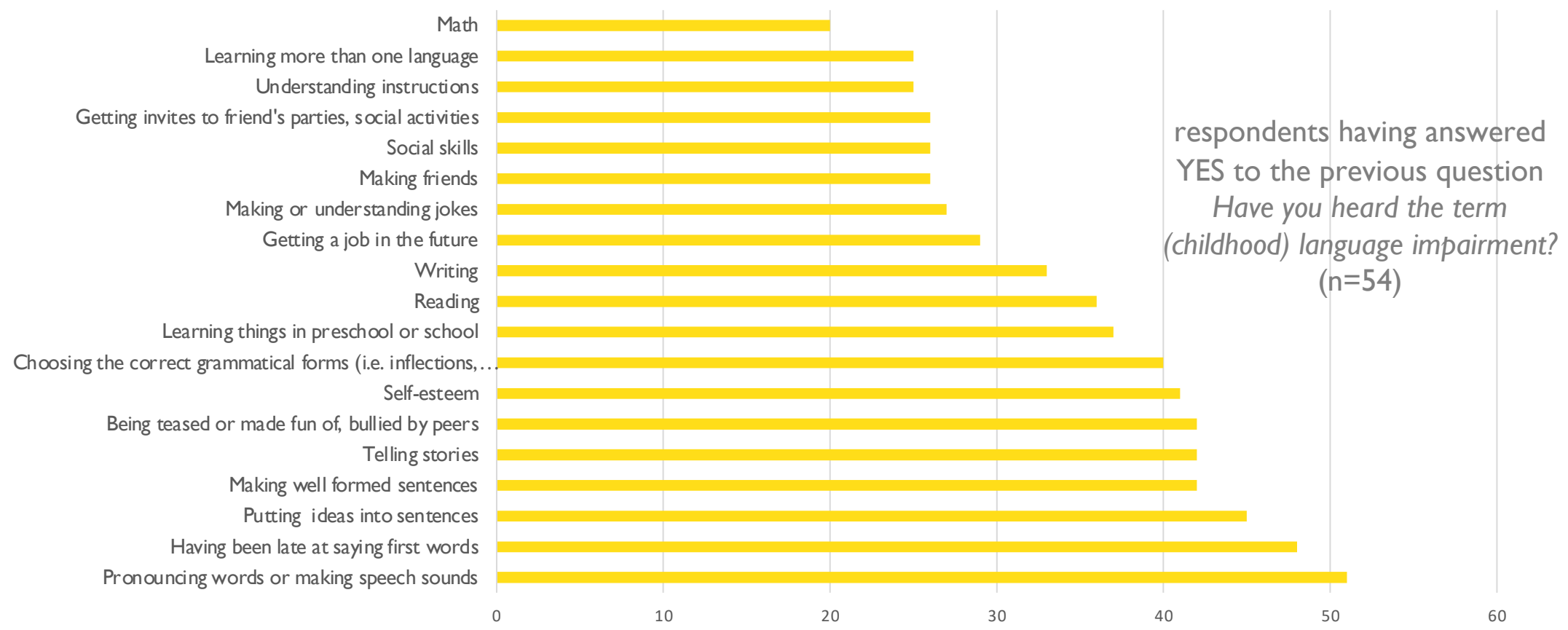
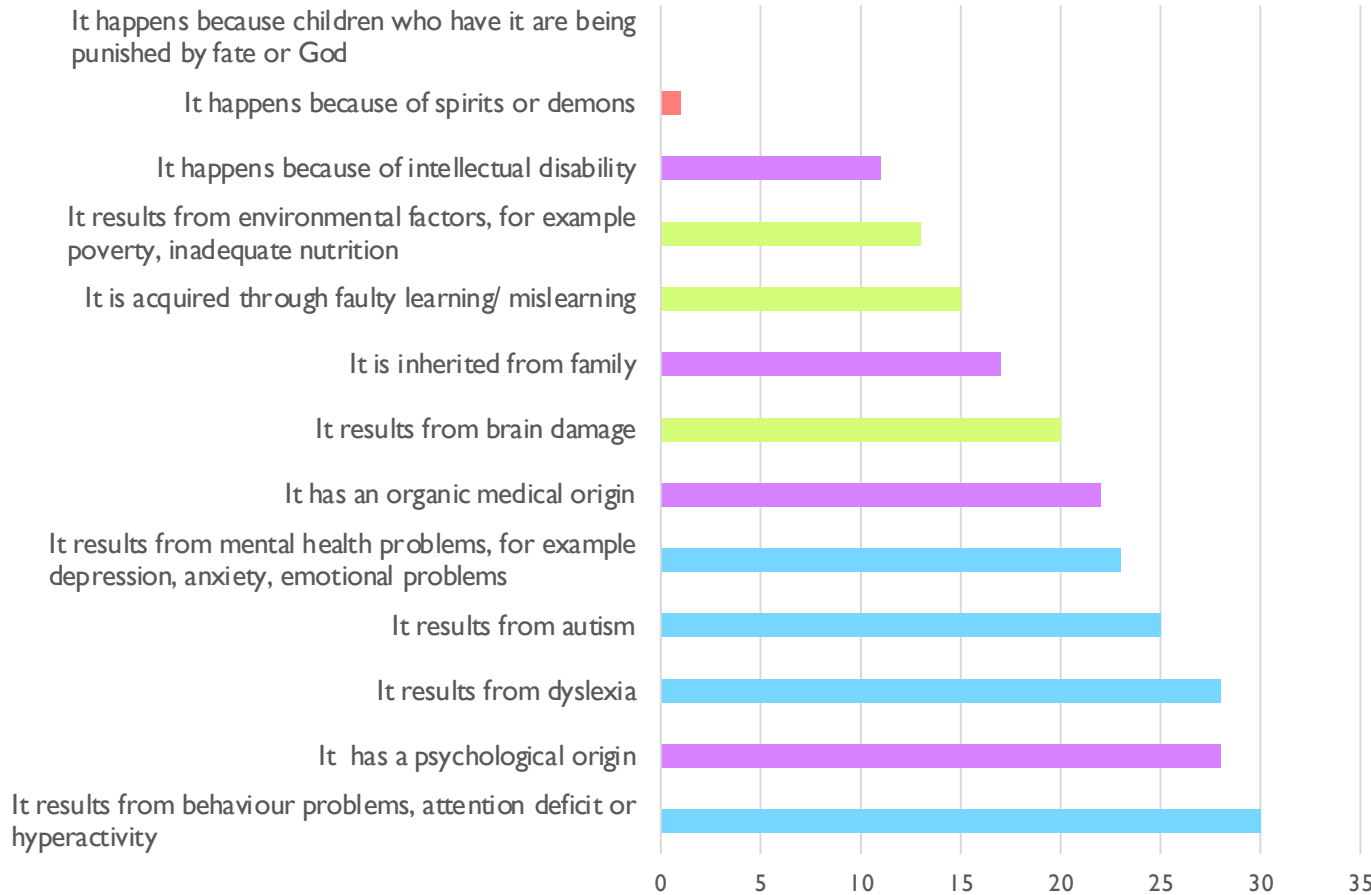


Fig. 3 – Responses to the question *A child with childhood language impairment is likely to have problems with the following?* (n=54)



Results and discussion

Why do you think childhood language impairment happens?



CAUSES

Other disorders	49%
Genetic, organic, emotional factor and others	36%
Environmental and acquired factors	30%
Gods, demons, spirits, or faith	1%

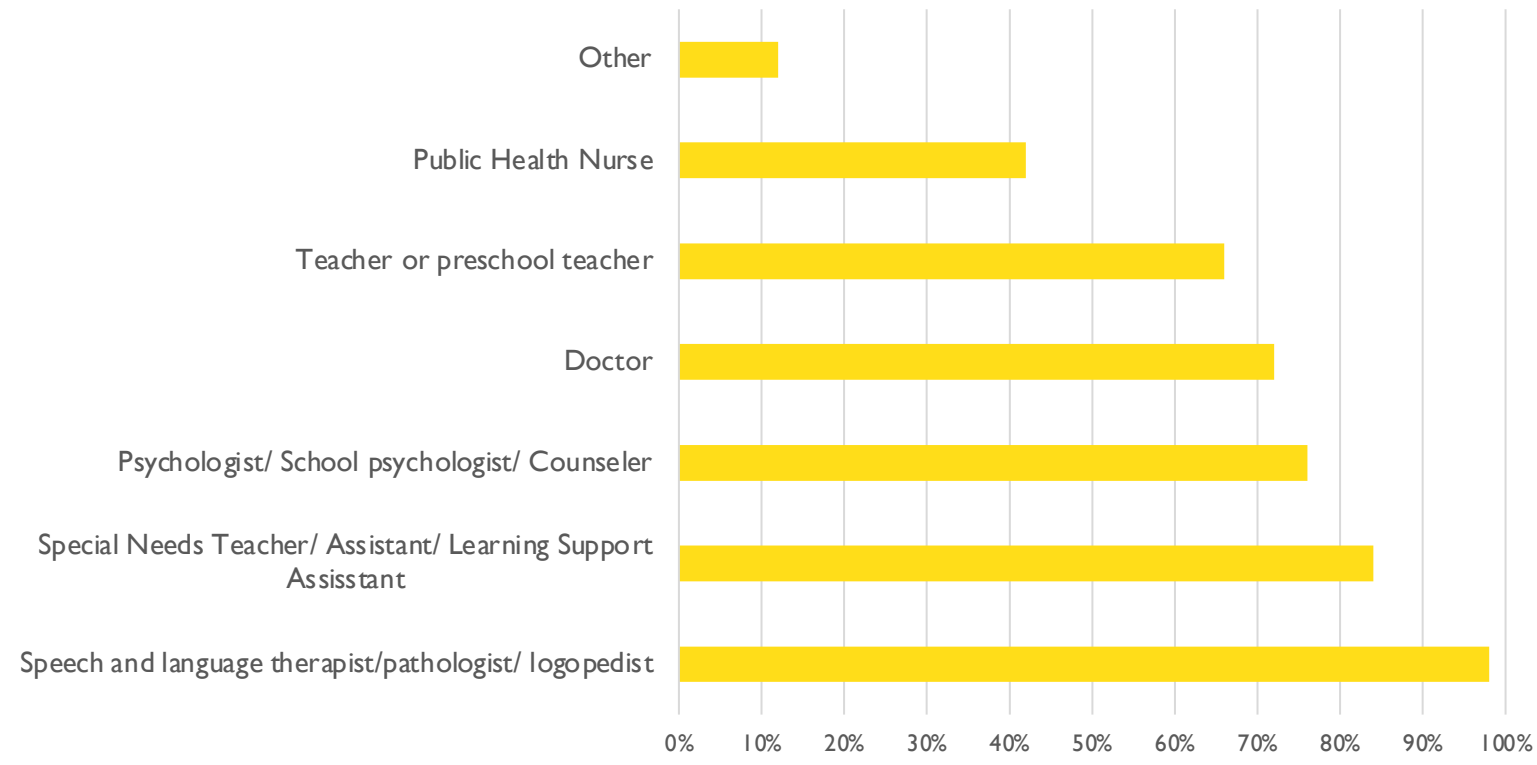
respondents having answered YES to the previous question
Have you heard the term (childhood) language impairment?
(n=54)

Fig. 4 – Responses to the question *Why do you think childhood language impairment happens?* (n=54)



Results and discussion

Who identifies children with childhood language impairment?



respondents having answered YES to the previous question
Do you think language therapy/intervention for children is helpful?
(n=50)

Fig.5 - Responses to the question *Who identifies children with childhood language impairment?* (n=50)



Results and discussion

- **DLD is less aware** than other disorders that are less prevalent (ADHD, Dyslexia and Autism).
- *Perturbação dos Sons da Fala* (the EP translation for the disorder SSD) is amongst the major disorders treated by SLP in the child population, in Portugal and around the World (Mullen, & Schooling, 2010; Bacelar, 2013; Oliveira, Lousada, & Jesus, 2015; Ramos, 2017) but SSD may not be known by the general population as a specific diagnostic term.
- **DLD causes are seen more as a symptom** associated to other disorders (ADHD, Dyslexia or Autism) than related to an independent disorder on its own.
- **Professionals with primary educational or medical relations with children seem not be the ones who more identify children with CLI.**



Conclusions

The study points to a need for **raising public awareness of DLD**, which will lead to significant progress in the delivery of services to the youngest population.



Conclusions

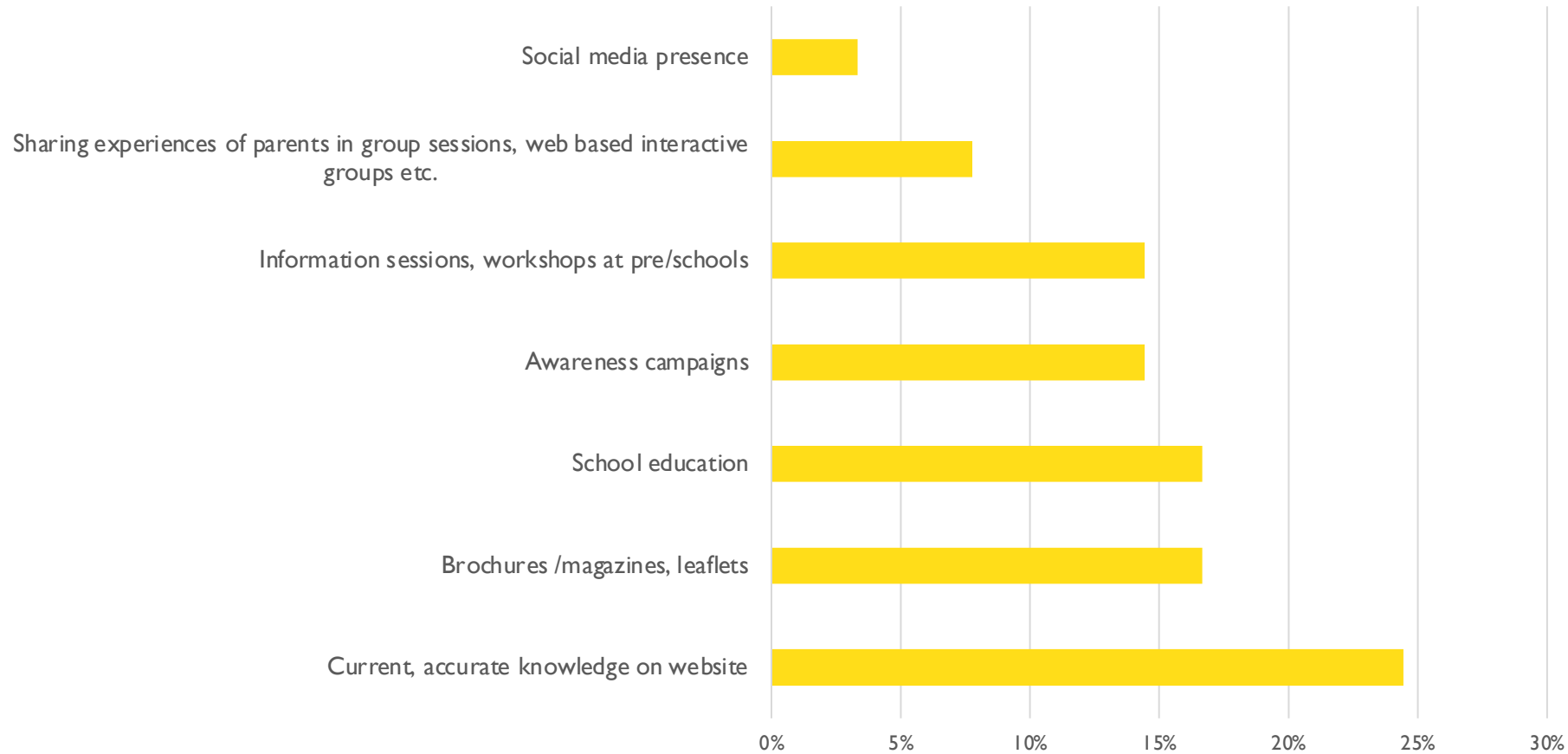


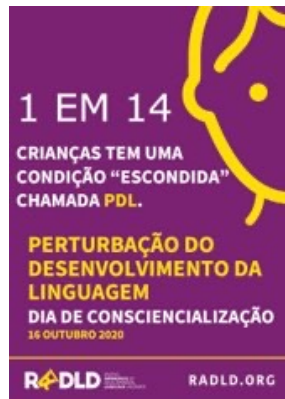
Fig.6 - Responses to the question *What would be good ways of sharing information about childhood language impairments?*



Conclusions

Portugal is a country with a **medium level of awareness of DLD** with not very specific knowledge about **practitioners, causes and treatments**.

Awareness campaigns, diffusion of information through schools and education settings, and Internet websites are identified as the preferable means to raise the knowledge about DLD.



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History of developmental language disorder in Portugal
Definition
The earliest reference to developmental speech and language disorder in the Portuguese literature is the manual written by Bernardino de Lencastre (de Lencastre, 1909), which describes the pathological features of the language disorder in a language disorder called "Disfunção da Língua" (D.L.). Lencastre (1909) defines D.L. as a disorder in language acquisition and development, which is associated with a mental deficit or a specific language disorder, usually secondary to an anatomical disturbance, congenital and acquired. In the last few years, the term "disorder" has been replaced by "Specific Language Impairment" (SLI) (D.V. de Matos (2012), Almeida V. M. (2014), Almeida V. M. (2015), Almeida V. M. (2016), Almeida V. M. (2017), Almeida V. M. (2018), Almeida V. M. (2019), Almeida V. M. (2020)).
Lencastre (1909) writing defines "Disfunção da Língua" as a disorder that is not due to an anatomical disturbance, congenital and acquired, but to a disorder in language acquisition and development, which is associated with a mental deficit or a specific language disorder, usually secondary to an anatomical disturbance, congenital and acquired. In the last few years, the term "disorder" has been replaced by "Specific Language Impairment" (SLI) (D.V. de Matos (2012), Almeida V. M. (2014), Almeida V. M. (2015), Almeida V. M. (2016), Almeida V. M. (2017), Almeida V. M. (2018), Almeida V. M. (2019), Almeida V. M. (2020)).
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Castro, Alves & Departamento de Linguagem na Criança da Sociedade Portuguesa de Terapia da Fala. (2019)



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