

Abstract

Purpose: The present study included a review of current research literature regarding topics in speech-language pathology service delivery for bilingual Spanish-English children as well as an assessment of the amount and scope of pre-service training (education) that professional speech language pathologists (SLPs) received regarding bilingual/multicultural topics and an assessment of how highly various recommended practices were valued, compared with how frequently they were implemented by professional SLPs.

Method: A survey was distributed online to SLPs who are members of ISHA and ASHA SIG 01. 82 professionals completed the survey. Results for pre-service training were compared with results from Hammer et al.'s (2004) study. Results for recommended practices were compared within the present study.

Results: SLPs in the present study reported similar amounts of pre-service training to the participants in Hammer et al.'s study. A higher number of SLPs in the present study indicated receiving one to several courses. SLPs in the present study also reported that their coursework covered a scope of topics with greater frequency. Ratings for perceived value of recommended practices were consistently higher than ratings of actual implementation, especially for practices that would require proficiency in the Spanish language. A small sample of SLPs who listed themselves as bilingual service providers (N = 8) indicated a greater amount and scope of pre service training, as well as lower discrepancies between perceived value and implementation of recommended practices.

Conclusions: Pre-service training in bilingual/multicultural topics appears to be generally increasing, but amounts of training similar to Hammer et al.'s study were reported. Practices that require functional usage of Spanish are supported in the literature, but appear to provide a particular challenge for SLPs who are monolingual service providers. Continuing education and/or collaboration with bilingual paraprofessionals are possible solutions to overcoming this discrepancy.

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