### Background

This study is part of a research project developed in the frame of Bilingual and Multilingual Experts Committee of the Spanish Association of Logopedy, Phoniatrics and Audiology (AELEFA-P) in cooperation with several universities (see logos above). Research on bilingualism in Spain is still limited and not fully oriented to clinical purposes.

The Project started with the elaboration of a Survey of Speech & Language Therapists’ beliefs and practices with bilingual and multilingual population in Spain (Nieva, Conboy, Aguilar & Rodríguez, 2014) which preliminary results were presented in the IALP Congress (Dublin, 2016).

Thanks to that survey and its general view of the multilingual SLT situation in Spain (Nieva, Rosell & Rodríguez, in press), authors could get to know the real needs that SLT find in their daily practices

### Aims

- To understand the current situation regarding SLT intervention in bilingual/multilingual environments in Spain to allow comparison with other realities.
- To study the beliefs and practices of SLT working with challenging linguistically and culturally diverse environments.
- To deepen into the Spanish SLT beliefs regarding their practices with bimultilingual population as well as their professional competences, cultural competences and cultural confidence.

We follow the Cultural Competence Process approach by Campinha-Bacote (2002):

- **Why?**

  - To understand the current situation regarding SLT intervention in bilingual/multilingual environments in Spain to allow comparison with other realities.
- **What?**

  - To study the beliefs and practices of SLT working with challenging linguistically and culturally diverse environments.
- **Where?**

  - To deepen into the Spanish SLT beliefs regarding their practices with bimultilingual population as well as their professional competences, cultural competences and cultural confidence.
- **How?**

  - To understand the current situation regarding SLT intervention in bilingual/multilingual environments in Spain to allow comparison with other realities.
- **Where?**

  - To study the beliefs and practices of SLT working with challenging linguistically and culturally diverse environments.
- **How?**

  - To deepen into the Spanish SLT beliefs regarding their practices with bimultilingual population as well as their professional competences, cultural competences and cultural confidence.

Why?

Cultural motivation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural motivation</th>
<th>Cultural Knowledge</th>
<th>Cultural Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural sensitivity</td>
<td>Conceptual in theoretical structures</td>
<td>Self-construct, bias and stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interplay</td>
<td>Cultural experiences</td>
<td>Cultural education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural awareness</td>
<td>Cultural skills</td>
<td>Multicultural Intervention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural function</td>
<td>Cultural encounters</td>
<td>Cultural practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Ecological model**

  - People's perceptions and cultural practices shape each other through various cultural processes.
  - A person's perception of a situation is the result of the interaction of the cultural context and the person's cultural identity.
  - A person's cultural identity is shaped by the cultural context in which they are placed.
  - Cultural contexts are constantly changing, and cultural identities are always evolving.

- **Perspective-centred approach (SLT & Client)**

  - SLT's perspective: what they think about their work in multicultural environments.
  - Client's perspective: what they think about their work in multicultural environments.

- **Professional competences**

  - Knowledge and skills about multicultural environments.
  - Knowledge and skills about working with people from different cultures.
  - Knowledge and skills about working with people from different cultures.
  - Knowledge and skills about working with people from different cultures.

- **Training challenges**

  - What are the main challenges for SLT in multicultural environments?
  - What are the main challenges for SLT in multicultural environments?
  - What are the main challenges for SLT in multicultural environments?
  - What are the main challenges for SLT in multicultural environments?

- **Multicultural Intervention**

  - How do SLT intervene in multicultural environments?
  - How do SLT intervene in multicultural environments?
  - How do SLT intervene in multicultural environments?
  - How do SLT intervene in multicultural environments?

### Method

#### Survey

- **Survey on Speech & Language Intervention in Multilingual Environments** (original: Cuestionario sobre intervención en Logopedia multilingual)
- **Survey design based on previous studies** (D’Souza et al., 2012; Guiberson & Atkins, 2013; Hammer et al., 2004; Harris, 2003; Jeffry & Prong, 2008; Jordaen, 2008; Menn & Stansfield, 2009; Kritikos, 2009; Shaham, Watten & Lief, 2009; Williams & McLeod, 2011)
- **Creation of Specific Focus Group to discuss SLT needs working with multilingual population**

#### Participants

- **SLTs** No 374 voluntarily respondents Age: (mean of birth) 1993-1994 Gender: 63.5% female | 36.5% male Training: Do you think that your university has prepared you properly to work with people from bilingual/multilingual environments?
- **Reality** During your professional practice, how you encountered with people needing bilingual/multilingual language assessment or intervention?
- **Self-perception as bilingual:** 86.5% self-perception as bilingual | 13.5% self-perception as monolingual

#### Procedure

- **Survey online distributed by letter addressed to the National and Regional Professional Official Colleges of SLTs in Spain to ensure a balanced representation of the national reality.**
- **Gathering and analyzing data through Qualtrics tool.**

### Results

Our study shows that:

1. Most SLTs in Spain deal with bilingual clients or with clients with exposure to more than one language.
2. In general terms, we have found that Spanish SLTs differ on their self-assessment of their beliefs and what they are actually doing.
3. Even when SLTs respond that they speak more than one language, they do not consider themselves as bilinguals.
4. They perceive their initial training (in multilingual issues) as insufficient.
5. SLTs in Spain declare to use special resources when evaluating bilingual clients, also cultural adapted materials, given the lack of available bilingual standardized test with Spanish population scales.

### Discussion & Conclusions

The responses gathered reveal that there is a growing interest about cultural issues and, specifically, about culturally adapted materials (Nieva, 2012, 2013).

What previous studies have in common, despite their cultural differences, is the focus on SLTs linguistic experience, practices with bilingual populations and self-perception. Our results lead to some similarities with those in terms of discrepancy between beliefs and practices (Jones, 2010) perception about pre-service and in-service training needs and other needs and practices related to evaluation, use of tests and intervention review, (2013; Williams & McLeod, 2012). The results invite to consider a holistic and reflexive approach to be introduced in the initial educational programs (McAllister, 2014; Stokes, 2015).

The final purpose of this Project is to improve the knowledge and skills that professionals have necessarily to develop. The team will publish guidelines based on the needs following a process of reflexive practices session, base on questions and answers that clinician face in changing contexts (McAllister & Lewis, 2014) so as the cultural confidence (Stokes, 2015) they need to develop in their multilingual daily practice.

### Future lines

One further step as a result of the good practices analysed is to elaborate a Guide of Practice with Multilingual and Multicultural population in Spain such as the International Expert Panel on Multilingual Children's Speech (McLeod, Verdon & Brown, 2013) or organizations as ASHA (2012, 2015) or IALP have already published.

### References

- **American Speech Language Hearing Association.** (2015). Clinical competences and cultural diversity in the professions. Available at: http://www.asha.org/about/leadership

### Acknowledgment

Thank you all the Survey participants and the Focus Group SLT participants to help us to reflect and improve our multicultural and multilingual SLT practices in Spain.

### Contact:

silnieva@psi.ucm.es / Lidia.rodriguez@uclm.es

---

**Speech-Language Therapists’ (SLTs’) needs working with multilingual and multicultural population in Spain.**

Silvia Nieva, Lidia Rodríguez, Eva Aguilar-Medialiara, Barbara Conboy, Leire Azcoñobieta, María Martín