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Research Report

Supporting language development in Lebanese preschools: SLT and pre-KT practice and perception of roles

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Abstract

Background: Speech and language therapists (SLTs) are increasingly engaging in school-based interventions targeting children with language difficulties. Collaborative work between teachers and SLTs has shown to be beneficial in fostering language development in all children. Both groups of professionals have different but complementary roles in offering language support, according to children's needs. Effective collaboration between SLTs and teachers requires both parties to understand their roles and practices in schools. However, little is known about language support practices in Lebanese preschools and the roles of SLTs in these contexts.
Aims: (1) To explore the perceptions and reported practices among preschool teachers (pre-KTs) to support language development; (2) to investigate the current practices of SLTs in preschools; and (3) to understand pre-KTs' and SLTs' perceptions of the SLTs' role in Lebanese preschools.
Method & Procedures: Using a quantitative method, the study reports the results of two questionnaires (one for pre-KTs and one for SLTs) that were developed based on a review of the academic literature and adapted to the contextual realities. Questionnaires were completed in hard or soft copy by pre-KTs and through an online survey by SLTs.
Outcomes & Results: The questionnaires were completed by 1259 out of 1442 pre-KTs from 175 Lebanese preschools, and by 200 out of 391 SLTs from across Lebanon. First, the findings show that both professional groups recognize they have a role in supporting language development. Second, differences in reported practices were identified regarding language strategies for children with communication needs. In particular, pre-KTs reported less use of specific language strategies targeting children with language difficulties, while SLTs reported that their practices in schools remain primarily focused on children with communication needs. Finally, the analysis of perceptions showed a lack of acknowledgement of the SLTs' role in the prevention of communication and language disorders among all children.
Conclusions & Implications: This study provides an overview of the perceptions and reported practices of language development support in Lebanese preschools. The majority of SLTs and pre-KTs acknowledge their role in supporting language development. However, the slight differences in perceptions of SLT roles in prevention interventions highlight the necessity for SLTs to promote their active involvement in services targeting all children. Future research will investigate how SLTs are beginning to reconceptualize their role in intervention for preschool children. This will help to better define SLTs' roles and responsibilities in educational settings and foster effective professional collaboration.

Keywords: language practices, perceptions, preschool teachers, prevention, speech and language therapists, Lebanon.

What this paper adds

What is already known on the subject

- Collaboration between teachers and SLTs has been shown to be beneficial in supporting language among all children. The way SLTs and pre-KTs view each other's roles could result in more effective professional

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collaboration. The SLT profession in Lebanon emerged about 20 years ago, yet SLTs are still struggling to define a framework for the scope of their practice in Lebanese preschools and to increase awareness of the relevance of their intervention in language.

What this paper adds to existing knowledge

- The results revealed that there are major agreements between pre-KTs and SLTs concerning the support of language development in preschools. However, the findings highlight slight differences in the perception of the SLTs' role in the prevention of communication, language and literacy disorders in educational settings. It seems that their role is more commonly acknowledged for children with identified language and communication needs. Moreover, despite the strong agreement between both professionals on the role of the SLT to target all children, SLTs' practices in preschools are still mostly limited to meeting only referred and diagnosed needs in children.

What are the potential or actual clinical implications of this work?

- This study's findings contribute to a better understanding of the perceptions regarding the roles and practices of both groups of professionals in language development. The differences in how the SLTs' roles are perceived could lead to a more difficult implementation of collaborative language practices in preschools. It is therefore necessary to ensure a better understanding of the roles played by professionals, who could receive the relevant training in undergraduate education programmes. There is also a pressing need to provide a clearer definition of SLTs' roles in educational settings by reconceptualizing them into a preventive approach in collaboration with teachers.

Introduction

Language development and support in early years can prevent or reduce language difficulties and thus improve learning outcomes (Duncan *et al*. 2007). Preschool teachers (pre-KTs) are on the front line to support the language development of children. Their teaching practices play a major role in children's language-learning paths by using language-promoting strategies in the classroom. However, their practices could be impacted by their perceptions and beliefs about language support practices, which make studying them of crucial importance. Findings show that pre-KTs' perceptions are considered important for the effective implementation of developmentally appropriate practices (Parker and Neuharth-Pritchett 2006).

Pre-KTs are not the only professionals who support language in a school setting. The expertise of speech and language therapists (SLTs) is actually well recognized beyond language and communication needs to include curriculum language-based interventions targeting all children (Archibald 2017). Findings from studies involving SLT–teacher collaboration for language support in preschools have shown positive outcomes in language development, especially in domains such as oral vocabulary, phoneme awareness, decoding, reading comprehension and spelling (e.g., Carson *et al*. 2013).

The significant change in education policies has led to the need to review the roles of SLTs in schools. The service delivery model employed by school-based SLTs has changed over the years and may vary from country to country depending on organizational and contextual differences, for example, multilingualism and a lack of regulations (e.g., Brandel and Loeb 2011, Wium and Louw 2015). These factors could have an impact on the role of SLTs in schools and, consequently, interprofessional collaboration. Currently, most of the available data stem from developed monolingual countries, but little is known about SLT-teacher collaboration in developing multilingual countries.

Effective collaboration between SLTs and teachers requires both parties to understand their individual roles and practices in schools (Wium and Louw 2013). The present paper explores the perceptions (i.e., what they think they have to do) and reported practices (i.e., what they think they do) concerning language support among pre-KTs and SLTs in Lebanese schools. It also aims to identify the perceptions of the SLTs' roles (what they think they have to do) in this process. This is particularly important in a country such as Lebanon where multilingualism and multiculturalism are the norm, and where language teaching approaches in pre-KT programmes as well as the SLTs' scope of practice in preschools are poorly defined.

The Lebanese multilingual school context

In Lebanon, the school starting age is 3 years, but is not compulsory before the age of 6 years. Lebanese schools are 41.8% private, 12.5% semi-private and subsidized by the government, and 43.4% public. Addi-

tionally, there are schools (2.2%) run by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) for Palestinian refugees. Provision of preschool programmes in the public sector remains lower than in the private one. Thus, 20% of Lebanese students are preschoolers, with 74.9% of them in private schools and 25.1% in public schools (CRED 2019).

Lebanon is characterized by cultural and linguistic diversity, which is established early on within the educational curriculum. Lebanese is the spoken language of the majority of children and is widely used for everyday communication purposes. All children in Lebanese schools and all professionals who are working with them are at least bilingual. From the beginning of preschool, children study at least one foreign language (English or French), along with Modern Standard Arabic, which is more formal and not used in conversations or outside the classroom. Hence, children are exposed to an equal amount of weekly language periods in Arabic, English and/or French starting in preschool (6–7 h for each language). However, the extent to which the same amount of time for both languages (Arabic and the foreign language) is adopted and respected in private preschools has yet to be investigated. The school's chosen language of instruction (English or French) is often favoured to the detriment of Arabic, with the rationale that all children are Arabic-speaking and, therefore, they need to commit more time and effort to improving their second language for long-term academic achievements (Bacha and Bahous 2011).

Major disparities in teaching levels are reported among Lebanese schools. These disparities are related to either financial constraints and a lack of resources or shortcomings in the teachers' level of knowledge and standards of training (Esseili 2014). A total of 80% of Lebanese teachers are female (CRED 2019). The majority of them believe they are underpaid. On average, the starting salary of full-time elementary teachers, with a bachelor's degree in education, is US$700/month (2018–19). However, it is worth noting that this rate may vary among teachers depending on whether or not they hold a degree in education (Esseili 2014). Besides working conditions, pre-KTs in public and private schools may face other challenges. First, *the quality of their training*: Nearly 18.9% of them who teach in private schools and 14.18% who teach in public schools only have a high-school diploma (CRED 2017–18). This means that they have never attended a university or even received a teaching diploma. Consequently, there are teachers, especially those in preschools, who are unequipped and very probably do not have the skills to promote integrated and interactive teaching practices (Esseili 2014, Faour 2003). The second issue is related to *pre-KTs' attitudes and approaches to teaching*. It is recommended by the national curriculum that the main focus of teaching in preschools should be on basic communication and socialization skills, concept formation and the development of the premises of critical thinking abilities (CERD, KG Curriculum). According to Faour (2003), even if teachers have appropriate views and beliefs concerning their ability to teach as stipulated in the teaching requirements, there are reported discrepancies between their views and beliefs and their implementation of appropriate teaching practices. In fact, pre-KTs in Lebanon are often more focused on specific teaching techniques in fields such as mathematics and reading, relying mostly on traditional methods with few instances for enhanced language activities. Their instructional strategies are more often geared towards controlling the students' misbehaviour rather than promoting interactive learning through a whole language approach. In line with this finding, storytime, for example, known for its relevance in emergent literacy and for providing opportunities for using language-support strategies, is perceived by Lebanese teachers as less important than flash cards or worksheets (Faour 2003).

Last but not least, considering the above-mentioned multilingualism in education, Lebanese teachers are expected to deal with several challenges associated with the demanding context of multiple languages. One issue is that they may lack proficiency in the foreign language they are teaching. Shaaban (2013) reports difficulties among teachers in understanding and using a foreign language with the proficiency required to effectively interact with students. Furthermore, teachers have to deal with their students' various linguistic backgrounds. Most of them come from Lebanese-speaking families where they may or may not have been exposed to a foreign language to varying degrees and, therefore, will have varying levels of proficiency in the second language upon school entry. In this situation, teachers often code-switch between Lebanese and the foreign language, which raises several questions concerning the effectiveness of language immersion in the second language (Esseili 2014). In addition, teachers report several shortcomings in materials and resources for teaching languages: available national resources lack adequate activities and strategies, while international resources are foreign to the culture and, thus, do not encourage children to use the language to communicate (Shaaban 2013; Esseili 2014). Consequently, concerns have emerged regarding disparities in language teaching practices, as well as properly addressing the needs of students who are not fluent in either language. Moreover, teachers, who may be ill-equipped in Lebanon, lack knowledge concerning language support in a multilingual context, and developmental language disorders. In fact, pre-KT training in colleges and universities in Lebanon often includes language development in a more general course on child development, without providing more

in-depth knowledge on bilingual language development and language disorders. Therefore, teachers are often not prepared to cope with their students' varying language levels, or to address the students' special language needs (Esseili 2014, Bahous *et al.* 2011).

SLT in a Lebanese schools' context

The SLT profession first emerged in Lebanon in the late 1990s. University training programmes for SLTs focused on the need to train multilingual SLTs proficient in Arabic and French or English, or even both, depending on their main second language. SLTs have been active in Lebanon since the introduction of the profession in a multilingual context, but multilingualism has only recently become the subject of in-depth reflection. Consequently, multilingual practices have become a major topic in SLT university training programmes. The majority of Lebanese SLT practices currently adopt the 'medical model' approach (Llewellyn and Hogan 2000). Their main focus is concentrated on diagnosis and intervention, targeting more specific speech and language disorders within the framework of individualized services (Messarra and Hreich 2019). Over the years, and following the inclusion movement in education, more Lebanese SLTs have become employed within educational settings. This responds to the increased awareness among school administrators for the need of SLTs' specialized knowledge and skills to increase opportunities for students with communication and language disorders within their institutions. However, despite the official recognition of the profession in April 2019, school-based SLTs are working without really having any formal or best practice guidelines and statements relating to their role. Today, school-based SLTs are employed either by the school itself, by a health organization in the private sector or sometimes by the Ministry of Education in the public sector. In all cases, their collaborative role with school staff is often not well delineated and tends to be confused with language support instructors or even 'shadow teachers'. Occasionally, preventive activities are reported, such as workshops and training for teachers as well as information and awareness sessions for the parents (Kouba Hreich *et al.* 2020). SLT services targeting all children, grounded in interprofessional education principles in schools, have been slow to gain traction. In fact, the specific skills and guidelines required to elaborate effective collaborative work within educational settings are not yet well addressed in Lebanese SLT university programmes. These programmes do not directly provide SLT students with internationally practiced approaches and strategies in order to enhance collaboration with classroom teachers, nor do they provide guidance to SLT students on how to facilitate educationally relevant interventions in a classroom environment. In addition, the SLTs' roles and responsibilities in prevention in Lebanese preschools continue to be poorly defined.

Promoting language development in preschools

According to recent international estimations, around 7–14% of preschool children exhibit language difficulties (Law *et al.* 2017). The link between oral language skills and delayed school readiness has already been well established (Duncan *et al.* 2007) and is currently well acknowledged by educational staff (McKean *et al.* 2017). This is why preschool settings may very well provide a multitude of opportunities for responsive and interactive educators to actively support and promote language development (Burchinal *et al.* 2008). Pre-KTs often report the use of language promoting strategies, such as encouraging children to talk, using a varied vocabulary, expanding learners' utterances, using open-ended questions, etc. (Girolametto *et al.* 2006). However, in some instances, teachers may not be equipped with the proper knowledge and expertise in order for them to be able to develop such practices (Moats 2009), especially in multilingual contexts. Even if it is already widely known that multilingualism does not lead to language difficulties in general (Byers-Heinlein and Lew-Williams 2013), being a good teacher is not enough to address challenges in second language learning. Teachers should also understand bilingual processes for language and reading development, and acquire specific knowledge and skills in the second language to support and promote interaction (De Jong and Harper 2005). Hence, child-oriented language promoting strategies are described as being low and infrequent in the teaching process (Piasta *et al.* 2012), and their application may vary according to the teacher's perceptions and beliefs (Parker and Neuharth-Pritchett 2006). Questions arise concerning the links between teachers' perceptions of their role in the language development process, and how effective and sufficient their practices actually are, especially in the context of multilingual schools (Du Plessis 2012).

As for language development and disorders, the SLT has an important role in the education system owing to their specialized knowledge and skills. Alongside other professionals, they enhance all students' language skills and identify children with language and communication needs (Bercow 2008). In the last decade, 'pull-out' and consultation models were predominant, with services delivered mostly outside of the classroom in either one-to-one or group interventions.

In developed countries, and in response to the limitations of the pull-out model of service delivery, which is considered costly and time-consuming, a conceptualization of a hierarchical multitiered model of SLT

intervention was developed (Ebbels *et al*. 2019). In this model, services become increasingly specialized, with SLTs acting at all tiers to maximize children's success. The SLTs' role in Tier 1 is described as *universal*, consisting of raising awareness, training others to use effective language strategies, incorporating language into curricula for high-quality instruction as well as identifying at-risk children and monitoring their progress. In Tier 2, the SLTs' intervention is *targeted*, aimed at collaboration with stakeholders to provide supplementary language-communication programmes for at-risk learners. *Specialized* assessments and interventions for children with language disorders will only occur in Tier 3 (Ebbels *et al*. 2019).

Among the implications of this model, there are three that are worth emphasizing. First, services for all children: Initially, all SLT services primarily target children with language difficulties to the detriment of more universal services. The multitiered model of intervention highlights the SLTs' specific roles among the general population of children. Second, the positive effects of classroom-based interventions provided by SLTs: Intervention studies have demonstrated that shared classroom instruction implemented collaboratively by SLTs and teachers leads to progress in all children's oral language skills in the areas of vocabulary, phonological awareness and literacy (e.g., Throneburg *et al*. 2000, Carson *et al*. 2013). Therefore, intervention is more likely to be effective in natural and authentic environments, such as the classroom (Cirrin *et al*. 2010). Hence, SLTs are currently encouraged to reconceptualize their practices in a more integrated and preventative approach among the general population (Law *et al*. 2013). Finally, this model requires strong collaboration, which involves professionals clarifying their role within a multidisciplinary team framework and sharing common goals (Du Plessis 2012, Glover *et al*. 2015). A successful implementation of this model necessitates an optimum organizational system and resources, thus allowing this collaboration to develop (Campbell *et al*. 2016). Even if both teachers and SLTs intend to collaborate, their collaboration may be impeded by different understandings of professional roles and expertise in language development. Thus, the lack of teachers' knowledge regarding the professional roles of SLTs in education may be a challenge in terms of developing effective and collaborative language-promoting strategies (Wilson *et al*. 2015).

Perceptions of the SLTs' roles in school-based interventions

Both pre-KTs and SLTs should be aware of the importance of their respective and distinctive roles in developing language and early literacy skills in preschoolers. On the one hand, studies have shown that the majority of pre-KTs believe the SLT's role is limited to the 'pull-out model', and consultative and collaborative practice. The SLT is involved in direct and indirect interventions to address learners' needs, collaborating with teachers in lesson planning, and conducting assessments of language and communication in children (Law *et al*. 2000). In their study about the knowledge and perceptions of prospective teachers and SLTs concerning their mutual roles in language support, Wilson *et al*. (2015) report that teachers widely agree that SLTs must provide services and should optimize learning among children who are identified with language disorders. However, their perceptions of the SLT's role in facilitating language in the general population remains uncertain (Shaughnessy and Sanger 2005, Wilson *et al*. 2015). Pre-KTs' perceptions of the SLT's role is mainly driven by their need for knowledge and support in the field of language interventions, especially for children struggling with language development. Furthermore, SLTs generally recognize that they play a major role in supporting educational staff. This involves conducting workshops and providing formal training to help increase pre-KTs' knowledge in the field of language development and their know-how on addressing children's language needs. SLTs also acknowledge their contribution in supporting teachers by using interactive strategies, but may sometimes feel less confident in designing, delivering and implementing language activities within the framework of a whole-class lesson (Campbell *et al*. 2016). Thus, both groups of professionals, SLTs and pre-KTs, are less inclined to conduct shared teaching with classroom-based language interventions (Wilson *et al*. 2015). The shift for SLTs to a more integrated model of intervention, within a classroom setting raises questions about its acceptability by the different stakeholders (Wilson *et al*. 2017).

Context and aims of the study

In the absence of an official SLT job description and a clearer definition of their duties and responsibilities in Lebanese schools, professionals are struggling to frame the scope of their practice. SLTs' collaborative role in prevention remains undefined and vague, and the nature of current language practices in Lebanese multilingual preschools should be more clearly established. Until now there has been little information about the perceptions that SLTs and pre-KTs have of their specific roles in language development, or about their perceptions of SLT roles in preschool settings. In an attempt to identify the premises of a positive interprofessional collaboration, this study aimed (1) to explore the Lebanese pre-KTs' perceptions about their role

in language development and their self-reported language support practices, (2) to investigate the Lebanese SLTs' reported practices in supporting language development in preschools and (3) to understand both professional groups' perceptions about the role of SLTs in the prevention of communication and language disorders in a preschool setting.

Method

To date, there has been no research on the perceptions and reported practices of pre-KTs and SLTs relating to language development in Lebanese preschools. Thus, this study adopted a quantitative method to assess the state-of-the-art of the current situation. It received ethical approval from the ethics boards of both Saint Joseph University of Beirut (USJ-2017-62) and the University of Liège in Belgium (1718-28).

Participants and procedures

A total of 175 preschools were randomly recruited from a list of 1296 Lebanese preschools. Care was taken to ensure that every part of Lebanon and public and private schools, with different religious denominations, were represented. This choice minimized the coverage error that occurs when not everyone in a population has an equal opportunity to participate in the survey. The list of public preschools was provided by the Ministry of Education, while contacts for private ones were obtained from the updated schools directory of the Service d'information et d'orientation (Information and Orientation Service) of Saint Joseph University of Beirut.

All pre-KTs in each recruited school were invited to complete the questionnaire. These were delivered in hard or soft copy to school secretariats, between December 2017 and March 2018, by the researchers or a contact person. They included a cover letter inviting teachers to participate voluntarily by completing the questionnaire individually in their preferred language, either French, Arabic or English. To minimize non-response error, there was at least one follow-up, by email or by phone, before the collection of the questionnaires, to encourage pre-KTs' to participate. A total of 1259 pre-KTs responded to the questionnaire. They were all women with ages varying from 20 to 64 years old (mean = 37.88; standard deviation (SD) = 10). The mean number of years of experience was 15.51 years (SD = 9.88), with a minimum of 0 years (beginners) and a maximum of 44 years.

In order to contact and recruit SLTs, we worked with the Association Libanaise des orthophonistes (ALO) (Lebanese SLTs' Association) and the local universities that teach degrees in SLT. A link to an online survey was emailed to those on the mailing lists of the SLTs' association (ALO) and the Institut supérieur d'orthophonie (Higher Institute of Speech and Language Therapy) of Saint Joseph University of Beirut. A promotional video was also prepared, inviting professionals to participate via the institute's Facebook page. According to the SLTs' professional association, there were 240 registered SLTs. To prevent coverage error, all SLTs with an email address, that is, 391 Lebanese SLTs, received a cover letter along with the link to the survey, between January and March 2018. A follow-up mailout was sent once a month, encouraging clinicians to complete the survey to minimize non-response error. The vast majority of SLT respondents were female (98%). Their ages varied from 22 to 53 years old (mean = 28.93, SD = 5.14), they all had a bilingual practice, and their years of experience ranged from 1 to 30 years (mean = 7.11, SD = 5).

All pre-KT and SLT participants were Lebanese nationals. Thus, we could assume that Lebanese Arabic was the home language of the majority. Regarding the language used in a school context, despite the fact that the majority were bilingual, teachers and SLT participants primarily used the school's chosen languages of instruction in their practice.

Data collection

Two questionnaires were developed for this study: one for pre-KTs and one for SLTs, based on academic literature reviews on the topic (Ebbels *et al.* 2019) and the contextual realities in Lebanon. The questions were first drafted then assessed by a questionnaire design expert as well as four researchers in both SLT and educational fields, to ensure that the survey items and questions adequately represented the content domains that our instruments were designed to explore. A combination of response formats was used to elicit comments from participants. Some of the questions had more than one possible response, while other items required a rating on Likert-type scales.

Both questionnaires led to the collection of general information on the respondent's profile and work environment (e.g., age, gender, level of education, years of experience, workplace, type of school (private or public), current teaching language, etc.).

Pre-KTs' questionnaire

The pre-KTs' questionnaire included questions that helped to investigate the perceptions of their role in language development. There were 11 items that had to be rated on a five-point Likert-type scale, from 1, totally disagree, to 5, totally agree. The same 11 items were then proposed in order to collect information regarding the use of these strategies in pre-KTs' current

practice (see Appendix A). The use of strategies was dichotomized by 'yes' or 'no'. Items on pre-KTs' perceptions of their role in language development and practices were based on the current literature on the available evidence of the SLTs' role in different tiers (Ebbels *et al.* 2019, for children with language disorders; and Fuschs and Vaughn 2012, for children with learning difficulties). Interventions in Tier 1 target the development of oral language skills for all children (universal). Tier 2 refers to delivering language interventions in small groups of children with vulnerabilities (targeted), while Tier 3 is more focused on individualized interventions based on a child's special needs (specialist). Items were matched to the type of intervention (universal, targeted and specialist) according to the type of population of children, for example, 'support language development of all children in my group' would be placed in the 'universal' category or Tier 1. The pre-KTs' questionnaire also examined their perceptions of the SLTs' role in preschools through four statements (table 5) that were also based on the current literature on the available evidence of the SLTs' role in different tiers (Ebbels *et al.* 2019). Participants were asked to rate these four statements on a five-point Likert-type scale, from 1, totally disagree, to 5, totally agree. In order to minimize measurement error, data entry and calculations were double-checked by the authors.

SLTs' questionnaire

The questionnaire for the SLTs also explored their preschool practices by estimating the percentage of time they allocated to each of their professional practices (e.g., assessment, direct intervention, etc.) (figure 1). Practices were also attributable to the description of the SLTs' roles in different tiers (Ebbels *et al.* 2019, Fuschs and Vaughn 2012). Moreover, similarly to the pre-KTs' questionnaire, the SLTs' questionnaire sought to examine their perceptions of their own role in preschools using the same four statements that were used in the pre-KTs' questionnaire (table 5). In addition, participants were asked to rate these four statements on a five-point Likert-type scale, from 1, totally disagree, to 5, totally agree. The measurement error was minimized by using an online survey that allowed automatic calculation and summation of responses.

Both pre-KTs' and SLTs' questionnaires were reviewed by six SLTs and six pre-KTs in order to ensure the items and the format were clear, and to have an estimate of the time it took each questionnaire to be completed. The piloting information was useful for the development of the final set of questions. In both questionnaires, we removed some items that were redundant and changed the wording of certain items to avoid confusion. For the pre-KTs' questionnaire, there were initially 13 items relating to their role in language development. These were reduced to 11 to avoid redundance, for example, 'ask a child who doesn't talk much to participate' was removed as there was already the item 'help children who speak less to participate more in discussions'. We also added more detailed notes to certain statements to improve clarity, for example, 'integrate strategies (e.g., open questions) into my teaching' was replaced with 'integrate strategies into my teaching (ask questions that allow open answers other than "yes" or "no")'.

Moreover, in the section relating to the SLTs' role in preschools, discussions with volunteers revealed that some items were not relevant and redundant. Thus, we reduced them from 10 to four items, making sure they corresponded to the available evidence on the SLTs' current role in universal, targeted and specialist interventions (Ebbels *et al.* 2019, Fuschs and Vaughn 2012).

In the SLTs' questionnaire, several items asked respondents to indicate the percentage of time they usually spent on activities and practices in preschools. The volunteers proposed adding items such as 'meetings, scheduling' and 'participating in interviews and entrance tests'.

The questionnaires were designed first in French, then translated into Arabic and English. The translations were processed by three trilingual research assistants to ensure they stayed true to the original.

In order to verify the reliability of the questions in the survey, Cronbach correlations were applied to items relating to pre-KTs' reported practices pertaining to language development and support. Internal consistency was found to be robust ($\alpha = 0.802$) for the 11 items assessed.

Data analysis

The data analysis of the SLTs' and the pre-KTs' responses were conducted separately. In both surveys, the participants left some of the items unanswered, which resulted in a variability in the response rate per question. Background information was analysed descriptively, and questions with 'check all that apply' were calculated in percentages. For the Likert-type items, we arbitrarily applied overall means to provide information about the strength of the participant's opinions (Maxwell and Satake 2006): means ranging from 1 to 2.50 indicated disagreement, while those ranging from 2.51 to 3.50 were interpreted as neutral. We considered the answers to be in agreement with the items as of a mean of 3.51 on the Likert scale. All data distributions were tested for normality. In line with research questions, variables were compared statistically using the Mann–Whitney *U*-test, as appropriate, given

Table 1. Questionnaires' response rate

	Number of questionnaires sent out	Number of questionnaires received	Response rate (%)
Pre-KTs	1442	1259	87.30%
SLTs	391	200	51.15%

Table 2. Characteristics of pre-KTs

Category		*N*	%
Gender	Female	1246	100%
	Male	0	0%
Degree in 'education studies'	Yes	1017	80.8%
	No	211	16.8%
Highest degree earned	BA	390	31.0%
	MA	59	4.7%
	Vocational	585	46.5%
Current teaching language	French	627	51.8%
	English	321	26.5%
	Arabic	532	43.9%
	Others	7	0.6%
Position	Homeroom teacher	961	76.3%
	Teacher's assistant	149	11.8%

the non-normal distribution of the variables. Responses to all items were tabulated in Excel sheets. Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS 25.

Results

Response rate

A total of 1259 pre-KT questionnaires were received back from 97/117 of the private preschools (90.65%) and 56/58 (96.5%) of the public schools (see table 1 for details).

For SLTs, 200 surveys (51.15%) were received. According to Fricker and Schonlau (2002), response rates vary from 8% to 44% for online surveys within social science research. Consequently, the response rate obtained could be considered as higher than expected in similar research design.

Table 1 provides details about the response rate for both groups of professionals.

Pre-KT questionnaires were 40.6% ($n = 511$) completed in Arabic, 45.4% ($n = 571$) in French and 14.1% ($n = 177$) in English. The majority of SLT questionnaires were completed in French (195/200).

Participants' characteristics

Table 2 presents a summary of general information on pre-KTs. The total number of participants may vary across questions owing to the unanswered items.

Findings indicate that 80.9% ($n = 1018$) of pre-KTs were from private settings, while 19.1% ($n = 241$) were from public schools. Most reported receiving 'vocational and professional training in education'. In Lebanon, vocational degrees in education involve 1–2 years of post-secondary training with hands-on practice in the field. The majority of the participants were homeroom teachers or primary care teachers in the classroom. Taking into consideration the multilingual Lebanese context, the findings indicate that some pre-KTs teach in more than one language, while a minority teach in languages other than Arabic, French or English (e.g., Armenian or German). On the positive side, 52.4% of pre-KTs ($n = 660$) reported that their school employs an SLT. At the same time, 56.75% of pre-KTs ($n = 723$) reported that they collaborate with SLTs, inside or outside the school, while 38.68% ($n = 487$) said that they do not.

Table 3 summarizes the SLTs' general information. The majority have a master's degree in SLT and work in a private clinical setting. Most are at least bilingual and reported that they often use Lebanese Arabic and at least one other language in their practice. The SLT sample included 42 school-based SLTs; 36 of them work in preschools. The majority of SLTs in preschools (27/36) indicated that they also have a private clinical practice.

Roles and reported language support practices of pre-KTs in preschools in Lebanon

Findings for the Likert-scale items regarding pre-KTs' perceptions of their role and use of strategies to support language development are reported in table 4. Results

Table 3. Characteristics of SLTs

Category		*N*	%
Gender	Female	196	98%
	Male	4	2%
Highest degree	BA	116	58%
	MA	80	40%
	PhD	1	0.5%
Current language use in practice	French	186	93%
	English	128	64%
	Lebanese	191	95%
	others	3	1.5%
Current practice	Private	158	79%
	School	42	21%
	Mixed (private plus school)	27	13.5%

Table 4. Pre-KTs' responses to Likert-type items on their role in supporting language development and the percentage of use of language support strategies in their current practice

		Perceptions		Reported practices
		Mean	SD	% Yes
Universal (Tier 1)	Support language development of all children in my group	4.84	0.482	99.4%
	Integrate strategies into my teaching (ask questions that allow open answers other than 'yes' or 'no')	4.71	0.693	96.6%
	Have a specific routine and clear instructions for children	4.46	0.965	93.6%
	Use language activities to develop early literacy	4.76	0.617	97.1%
Targeted (Tier 2)	Help children who speak less to participate more in discussions	4.74	0.590	98.9%
	Integrate new activities to develop language in a group of at-risk children	4.56	0.802	91.0%
Specialized (Tier 3)	Support a child who is struggling with language comprehension	4.70	0.650	98.2%
	Help more specifically a child who has language difficulties	4.29	1.025	87.1%
	Communicate with children with little or no language	4.20	1.285	85.1%
	Identify children who have language difficulties in my group	4.59	0.848	94.6%
	Apply specific recommendations suggested by an SLT to a child with language problems	4.48	0.941	83.8%

Note: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

suggest that pre-KTs agreed with all the statements relating to their role in using strategies pertaining to language support and development in preschool, with a mean > 3.51. However, they did not make a clear distinction between strategies relating to children with or without language difficulties. The data reveal some uncertainty regarding support for children with identified language disorders: respondents reported less frequent use of strategies to address the needs of children with language-based learning difficulties, such as 'Help more specifically a child who has language difficulties' (12.2% non-use), 'Communicate with children with little or no language' (15% non-use) and 'Apply specific recommendations suggested by an SLT to a child with language problems' (16.2% non-use).

A Mann–Whitney comparison of the respondents' perceptions and reported practices did not show significant differences whether or not they had a degree in education ($p > 0.05$), or if there was an SLT in the preschool. The only differences noted were for perceptions relating to the item 'Identify children who have language difficulties in my group' ($U = 171{,}625.5$, $p = 0.03$), and practices relating to the same item ($U = 178$, $p = 0.005$), for perceptions relating to the

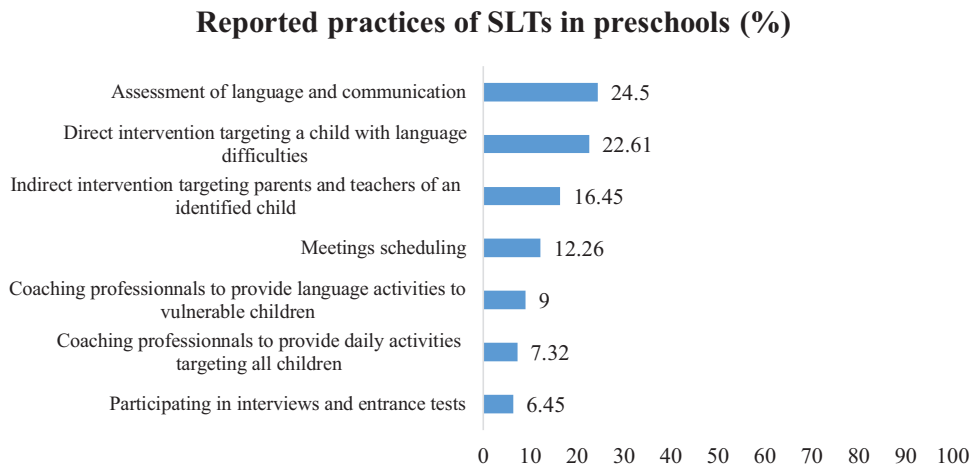

Figure 1. Percentages of SLTs' reported practices in preschools ($n = 36$). [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

item 'Support language development of all children in my group' ($U = 189{,}259.5$, $p = 0.022$).

Exploring current SLT practices in preschools

Only the questionnaires of the SLTs who reported on practices in preschools were taken into account. This corresponded to 36 out of 200 respondents. For the majority, practices in school settings appeared to be complementary to other workplaces, such as private clinics. The mean number of clinicians per setting is 2.07 with some of them working in four different places. For 44.4% ($n = 16$), they work less than one-quarter of a full-time, 'a few hours per week', while 13.36% ($n = 13$) have a part-time job. Figure 1 describes the average percentage of time allocated to the different activities in their job profile. The total amount of time spent in different positions must be 100% for each SLT. They currently spend more than half of their time in direct and indirect therapy (63.56%), for example, assessment (24.5%) and direct intervention (22.61%), and indirect intervention targeting parents and teachers of identified children (16.45%). Most assessment and direct intervention activities usually occur outside the classroom (pull-out). Interventions targeting all children fall in the lower range: Coaching professionals to provide daily activities to develop language and communication in all children (7.32%). Thus, the SLTs' intervention in Lebanese schools is more focused on children with language difficulties, and mainly relies on the 'pull-out' model for service delivery.

SLT and pre-KT perceptions of the SLTs' role in prevention in preschools

Both SLTs and pre-KTs were asked to express their opinions regarding the SLTs' roles in the prevention of communication and language disorders in preschools. Statements about the SLTs' role were allocated to each level of the multitiered model. Table 5 indicates that both professional groups, SLTs and pre-KTs, provided answers showing overall agreement on all items at all levels, varying from a mean of 3.73–4.65 for SLTs and 4.39–4.49 for pre-KTs on the Likert scale. Interestingly, SLTs and pre-KTs agreed on the SLTs' role in school regarding targeted intervention (Tier 2), while the rate of agreement was higher for SLTs than pre-KTs regarding universal intervention (Tier 1) and lower for specialized intervention (Tier 3A–B). Furthermore, the SLTs' role in prevention in preschool seemed less differentiated between tiers for pre-KTs, while SLTs better expressed their agreement on interventions targeting all children, rather than conducting interventions only with children having identified language needs.

There were no differences in pre-KTs' perceptions whether they reported having an SLT in school or not (Tier 1: $p = 0.840$, Tier 2: $p = 0.521$, Tier 3A: $p = 0.365$, Tier 3B: $p = 0.137$), or whether or not they collaborated with an SLT (Tier 1: $p = 0.372$, Tier 2: $p = 0.984$, Tier 3A: $p = 0.412$, Tier 3B: $p = 0.823$).

Discussion

This study explores the perceptions and reported practices that support language acquisition for pre-KTs and preschool-based SLTs in Lebanon. It also provides an overview about the perceptions both groups of professionals have of SLTs' roles in preschools. Two questionnaires were filled out by 1259 pre-KTs and 200 SLTs, out of which only 36 reported that they were practising in preschools. The return rate for pre-KTs was 87.30% and it was 51.15% for SLTs, indicating that the results are broadly representative. Our results indicate that the majority of the participants understand that

Table 5. Differences between SLTs' and pre-KTs' response means on a Likert-type scale concerning items relating to SLTs' roles in prevention in preschools

	SLTs		Pre-KTs		
	N	Mean (SD)	*N*	Mean (SD)	
Role of SLTs in prevention in preschools	200	4.65 (0.81)	1161	4.39 (0.98)	$U = 58{,}360$, $p < 0.000$, $d = 0.28$
Coaching early childhood professionals to have effective daily speech and communication practices, and high-quality interactions with all children (Tier 1)	200	4.59 (0.81)	1162	4.49 (0.86)	$U = 65{,}060.5$, $p = 0.105$, $d = 0.11$
Coaching early childhood professionals to provide individual intervention designed by the SLT for a child with an identified language disorder (Tier 3A)	200	3.73 (1.34)	1169	4.33 (1.07)	$U = 50{,}441.5$, $p < 0.000$, $d = –0.49$
Delivering individual indirect interventions to a child with an identified language disorder (Tier 3B)	200	3.97 (1.41)	1164	4.44 (1.02)	$U = 57{,}584.5$, $p < 0.000$, $d = –0.38$

Note: 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

they play a role in supporting language development in preschoolers and that they address language in their practice. However, there is still uncertainty concerning the provision of support and services, which needs to be addressed to ensure the needs of children with language difficulties are met. The study also shows that the SLTs' role in general population, in collaboration with the classroom teacher, is not well acknowledged. These findings are in agreement with other findings in the literature relating to developed countries (Wilson *et al.* 2015, Marshall *et al.* 2002).

Lebanese pre-KTs acknowledge their role in supporting language development

The first question in our research aimed at exploring the perception teachers have of their role in language development, and their self-reported language practices in their daily contact with children. The results showed pre-KTs agreed strongly about their role in supporting language development, without differentiating between children with or without language difficulties. However, their self-reported language practices seemed to vary slightly depending on children's needs. Teachers are aware of their role in developing language skills in all children, but they use less specific language strategies for children with difficulties. While our study does not indicate the reasons, other studies (e.g., Marshall *et al.* 2002, Mjaes Azar 2019) highlight the lack of knowledge and resources teachers require to identify and work with children with language needs. Most educational training programmes in Lebanon do not provide in-depth knowledge regarding multilingual language development and language disorders. Consequently, pre-KTs might be less confident when it comes to using specialized strategies with children with communication needs, which could lead to inconsistency and a reluctance to adopt them. Thus, they may believe that specialized practices are beyond their competence and fall under the role of SLTs, as indicated by some free comments that were found in the pre-KTs' questionnaires ('it's the SLTs' role'). The lack of knowledge and resources is a major issue hindering language support for children, and may influence classroom practices (Wilson *et al.* 2015, Sadler 2005).

Despite their major engagement in practices to support language development, caution is warranted when interpreting pre-KTs' results since they depend solely on self-reported data. The language stimulation provided by pre-KTs may be impacted by the quality of interaction between the adult and the child, and by the level of language used (Burchinal *et al.* 2008). Two major issues may be responsible for restricting our participants' readiness to adopt interactive approaches in teaching. First, there is a persistent belief in Lebanon about teachers' role, which is to provide knowledge and to ensure that students are learning it correctly. Consequently, Lebanese pre-KTs may tend to adopt a directive approach in their teaching, with strategies more focused on controlling students' misbehaviour rather than promoting interactive language strategies and facilitating communication attempts during classroom time (e.g.,

during storytime; Faour 2003, Ghosn 2004). Hence, this decreases opportunities to engage children in language interaction based on their own experience in a naturalistic language exchange. Second, teachers are frequently teaching a second language, thereby restricting the opportunity or readiness to adopt interactive approaches. Many of the pre-KTs may face challenges in addressing the variety of students' language levels and needs, and cultural backgrounds. This is also exacerbated by the lack of appropriate resources, poor working conditions and support services (Shaaban 2013, Bahous *et al.* 2011).

Lebanese school-based SLT: A practice focused on children with identified language needs

The second research question is aimed at exploring SLTs' practices in preschools. Our respondents reported that they mainly provide services (assessment and intervention, indirect intervention) to identified children, usually outside the classroom. Their participation in entrance tests and interviews is also aimed at identifying children with language difficulties. Thus, a very small amount of time is dedicated to language activities targeting all children, in collaboration with teachers (7.32%).

Even if the results could be limited by group size, reflection on this situation raises two major points: first, the profession of SLT in Lebanon is still young and designed according to the medical model of intervention (Messarra and Hreich 2019). Thus, SLTs may lack experience in a preventative approach to language and communication, and preparation for curriculum-based language interventions, also reported in other international studies (Wilson *et al.* 2017). Second, schools that implement inclusive education tend to employ SLTs to deliver services for children with language disorders in order to help them adapt to learning, as advocated by the school system and educational curriculum (Mjaes Azar 2019). However, research in developed countries (Archibald 2017) and health and education policies in Lebanon are currently calling for a reconsideration of practices within an integrative approach, focusing on engaging SLTs in effective and collaborative services among the general population (WHO—Aims Report 2010). Hence, SLTs are invited to reconceptualize their intervention by adopting a hierarchical model of SLT involvement (Ebbels *et al.* 2019). However, the traditional pull-out service delivery model in Lebanon is still advocated in numerous schools and should be questioned in consideration of the international evidence-based practice recommendations.

Perceptions of SLTs' role in preschools

Available international data from developed monolingual countries advocate a new conceptualization of the SLTs' role according to Ebbels *et al.* (2019), in the multitiered intervention model, to better serve all children's needs through increasingly specialized services. Our third question sought to understand pre-KTs' and SLTs' perceptions of SLTs' roles in Lebanese preschools according to the multitiered model of intervention. Our findings showed that both pre-KTs and SLTs agreed on universal practices for SLTs. However, they suggested that teachers tend to acknowledge SLTs' role more in statements related to Tier 3, while the SLTs recognize their role more in Tier 1. These findings were also reported in other studies (Shaughnessy and Sanger 2005, Wilson *et al.* 2015). These differences in perceptions may be related to constraints in many areas. First, at an organizational level, where the lack of effective time that both professional groups can spend on collaborative work may influence perceptions. Many of the SLTs are employed for a few hours or part-time in preschools. They are still spending a significant amount of time on direct service delivery, which may decrease the number of opportunities for inter-professional communication and shared practices (Glover *et al.* 2015). Second, the 'medical' model of service provision and the consultation role assigned to SLTs in Lebanese schools may also reduce the understanding of mutual roles and the interdependency in supporting children's language. It could lead to creating unequal power in decision-making, regarding the children, and thereby fostering tensions between the two professions, with a lack of SLT support for teachers, as stated in international research findings (Lindsay and Dockrell 2002).

Furthermore, the lack of professional preparation of SLTs in the domain of universal intervention approaches could make them reluctant to implement such practices in schools. This is certainly favoured by the 'medical design' of their initial training (Messarra and Hreich 2019).

Last but not least, the lack of policies, and the legal issues, as well as the scope of practice for SLTs in general, and in schools in particular, have a negative impact on understanding the roles and responsibilities of SLTs in preschools and may also lead to differences in perceptions of the SLTs' role in universal interventions (White and Spencer 2018).

Hence, the clarification surrounding distinct professional roles would not only help set collaborative practices that would go beyond sharing information or counselling but also would help to reconceptualize the SLTs' role by putting more emphasis on all learners to

address inequities. This implies a change in the philosophy of the practice toward a more integrated approach to SLT (Law *et al*. 2013).

Limitations

Caution should be taken when interpreting the results of this study. First, given the limited number of school-based SLTs, our findings cannot be assumed to be representative of all SLTs in Lebanese schools. Only 36 (18%) out of the 200 SLTs reported that they were working in preschools. Among them, the majority are employed for only a few hours per week or on a part-time basis. This low number of SLTs in preschools should be treated with caution owing to the recent increase of the inclusion movement in education in Lebanon (Mjaes Azar 2019) and, consequently, in view of the presumed increase of the number of school-based SLTs. It could be related to the type of employment of SLTs in schools, which may influence their perceptions of their engagement in schools, their professional identity and qualifications (Kouba Hreich *et al*. 2020). Additionally, school-based SLTs may be more involved with elementary schools rather than preschools given the nature of the needs of the students in oral and written language. Preschools may therefore remain underserved. Moreover, the figures concerning the number of positions for SLTs may underestimate their 'nomadic life' (Pring *et al*. 2012), since many of them may work in several schools in Lebanon.

Second, caution should also be taken when interpreting the teachers' results. Given the logistical constraints, teachers were contacted through the school secretariats, and the questionnaires were not always given in person to each one. Some of the questionnaires may not have been filled in individually, hence the responses may not be representative of each individual's opinion.

Third, the questionnaire's design may be a limitation, as it is not very common in the Lebanese cultural context to encourage professionals to complete questionnaires scrutinizing their employment practices. Research in the field is still in its early stages. Professionals, and especially pre-KTs who do not have a university degree, are not familiar with such methods and may fill them in inaccurately. Moreover, the questionnaire included self-reported measures, relating to perceptions about the SLTs' roles in preschools. Hence, considering the social desirability issues, it is difficult to determine whether all the answers represent an accurate description of reality. More specific questions using real examples, qualitative measures as open-ended questions and interviews may also help overcome some of the tool's limitations. In addition, as a future direction, observational methods could be more relevant to ensure that results better illustrate real interactions and practices that occur in the classroom.

Conclusions

This study provides the first overview of the perceptions and reported practices of SLTs and pre-KTs to support language development in preschools in Lebanon. Findings indicate that pre-KTs and SLTs are in agreement overall regarding their shared roles in language development. This highlights their mutual understanding of the importance of language skills for academic achievement. Despite the fact that pre-KTs acknowledge the SLTs' role with regard to children with language and communication disorders rather than the general population, both groups of professionals agree on the role of SLTs in providing teachers with effective practices and high-quality interactions with all children at a universal level. Future recommendations would suggest the relevance for pre-KTs and SLTs to understand each other's expertise. Training could be given at undergraduate level through interprofessional programmes (Wilson *et al*. 2015, Pfeiffer *et al*. 2019). Additionally, a critical review of the role of school-based SLTs would be a valuable insight for the purpose of inter-professional collaboration by shifting the emphasis from individual support targeting identified children to more general support targeting all learners and enabling teachers to develop skills in supporting language development.

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Appendix A

Pre-KTs' questionnaire

Cover letter:

This survey is designed for a project that aims to develop collaboration between SLTs and preschool teachers. In order to better expand practices targeting the development of language and communication in preschools, we need your enlightened opinion on these questions so that this project can be adapted to Lebanese realities and meet your daily concerns as teachers.

Please keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers. Feel free to answer based on your own experience.

Thank you for your participation!

The answers to this survey will be treated anonymously and confidentially. The study was submitted to the ethics boards of Saint Joseph University and the University of Liège.

- In the following statements, to what extent do you consider that the actions below are part of your role as a teacher. Please check the corresponding number between 1 and 5 on the scale below:

1 = *Totally disagree* and **5** = *Totally agree*

The teacher's role consists of	*Totally disagree*				*Totally agree*
-Helping all the children in my group develop their language.	1	2	3	4	5
-Supporting a child who has comprehension difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5
-Helping more specifically a child who has language difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5
-Helping children who speak less to participate more in discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
-Implementing new activities to stimulate language for a group of at-risk children.	1	2	3	4	5
-Communicating with children with little or no language.	1	2	3	4	5

The teacher's role consists of	*Totally disagree*				*Totally agree*
-Implementing strategies in my teaching (e.g., asking questions that allow answers other than 'yes' or 'no').	1	2	3	4	5
-Resorting to a specific routine and to clear instructions for children.	1	2	3	4	5
-Identifying children with language difficulties in my group.	1	2	3	4	5
-Applying specific recommendations suggested by the SLT to a child with language difficulties.	1	2	3	4	5
-Doing language activities to develop early literacy.	1	2	3	4	5

- In the table below, please indicate whether the actions listed are part of the actions you perform in your current practice:

	Yes	No
Helping all the children in my group in developing their language.		
Supporting a child who has comprehension difficulties.		
Helping more specifically a child who has language difficulties.		
Helping children who speak less to participate more in discussions.		
Implementing new activities to stimulate language for a group of at-risk children.		
Communicating with children with little or no language.		
Implementing strategies in my teaching (e.g., asking questions that allow answers other than 'yes' or 'no').		
Resorting to a specific routine and to clear instructions for children.		
Identifying children with language difficulties in my group.		
Applying specific recommendations suggested by the SLT to a child with language difficulties.		
Doing language activities to develop early literacy.		

- Is there a multidisciplinary team in your preschool?

☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, who are the team members?

- In the following statements, to what extent do you consider that the actions below are a part of the role of the SLT. Please check the corresponding number between 1 and 5 on the scale below:

1 = *Totally disagree* and **5** = *Totally agree*

The role of the speech and language therapist includes:	*Totally disagree*				*Totally agree*
Supporting teachers to have **effective daily** speech and communication **practices,** and high quality interactions **with all children**.	1	2	3	4	5
Supporting teachers to **provide language activities for at**-risk children.	1	2	3	4	5
Supporting teachers to **provide an individualized intervention** designed by the Speech and Language Therapist for **a child** with an **identified language disorder**.	1	2	3	4	5
Delivering **individualized direct interventions** to a child with an **identified language disorder**.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

SLTs' questionnaire

Cover letter:

This survey is designed for a project that aims to develop collaboration between SLTs and nursery educators or preschool teachers. Your opinion is very important to help us better understand Lebanese SLTs' perceptions of young children's communication and language development, in order to better specify our profession's legal framework.

Please keep in mind that there are no right or wrong answers. Feel free to answer based on your own experience.

Thank you for your participation!

The answers to this survey will be treated anonymously and confidentially. The study was submitted to the ethics boards of Saint Joseph University and the University of Liège .

- In the following statements, please say whether you consider that the actions below are a part of your role as a speech and language therapist. Please check the corresponding number between 1 and 5 on the scale below:

1 = *Totally disagree* and **5** = *Totally agree*

N.B.: by early childhood professional, we mean preschool teacher.

The role of the speech and language therapist includes:	*Totally disagree*				*Totally agree*
Supporting early childhood professionals to have **effective daily** speech and communication **practices,** and high quality interactions **with all children**.	1	2	3	4	5
Supporting early childhood professionals to **provide language activities for** at-risk children.	1	2	3	4	5
Supporting early childhood professionals to **provide an individualized intervention** designed by the speech and language therapist for **a child** with an **identified language disorder**.	1	2	3	4	5
Delivering **individualized direct interventions** to a child with an **identified language disorder**.	1	2	3	4	5

- How much time do you spend in the preschool?

☐ Occasionally
☐ Few hours per week
☐ Part time
☐ Full time

- Currently, what is the amount of time allocated to the professional activities listed below (the total must reach 100%):

List of professional activities	Percentage of work %
Assessment of communication and language difficulties	
Direct and individual intervention with identified children	
Indirect Intervention (parents, educators or teachers of identified children)	
Supporting professionals to provide language activities to at-risk children	
Supporting professionals to have daily activities to develop language skills and to have high quality interactions with all children	
Meetings, scheduling	
Participation in interviews or entrance tests	
Other, please specify …….	