

LSSL certification - an option for professionals worldwide

Löfkvist, U.^{1,2}, Soman, U.^{1,3}, Melo, M.^{1,4}, Clark, F.^{1,5},
Abascal, C.^{1,6}, Hutsell-Guignard, G.^{1,7} and Rushbrooke, E.^{1,8}

1. AG Bell Academy, AG Bell Association; 2. Department of Special Needs Education, Univ. of Oslo, Oslo, Norway; 3. Carle Auditory Oral Sch., Urbana, IL, USA; 4. Infant Hearing Program, Toronto Publ. Health, Toronto, Canada; 5. Auditory Verbal UK, London, United Kingdom; 6. AG Bell Intl., Madrid, Spain; 7. AG Bell Association, Indianapolis, IN, USA; 8. Hear and Say Ctr., Brisbane, Australia

Introduction

34 million children worldwide have a hearing loss (HL) (1). Universal Newborn Hearing Screening has been introduced in many countries, leading to earlier identification of HL. Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) practice is an evidence-based option for families who choose spoken language as primary communication mode (2-3). There are 855 Listening and Spoken Language Specialists (LSSL) certified Auditory Verbal Therapists and Educators (June, 2019).



LSSL is an early family-centered intervention practice



LSSL is delivered by a professional who is a qualified Teacher of the Deaf, Speech and Language Pathologist or Audiologist who has undergone from 3 to 5 years of post-graduate training to become a listening and spoken language specialist (LSSL), accredited through the AG Bell Academy, the certifying body based in the USA.

The majority of all LSSL cert AV professionals are based in English-speaking countries. There is an urgent need to increase the numbers of professionals who have specialized knowledge about LSSL practice, within different socio-cultural and linguistic contexts, to meet the needs of children with HL and their families around the world, who choose to pursue a listening and spoken language outcome for their child.

Aim

To explore the current global perspectives on LSSL certification, and identify possible barriers and challenges for worldwide professionals to obtain the LSSL certification in AV practice.

Material and Methods

• **Participants:** LSSL cert., LSSL mentees, professionals who want to become certified, professionals who did not know about the certification, and professionals who know about LSSL practice but who do not want to become certified. So far mainly citizens from USA and Canada (around 75 %) have participated in the English survey besides from some individuals from Europe (UK, Scandinavia, Portugal) (n=289) and 83 participants in the Spanish version of the survey (N=373).

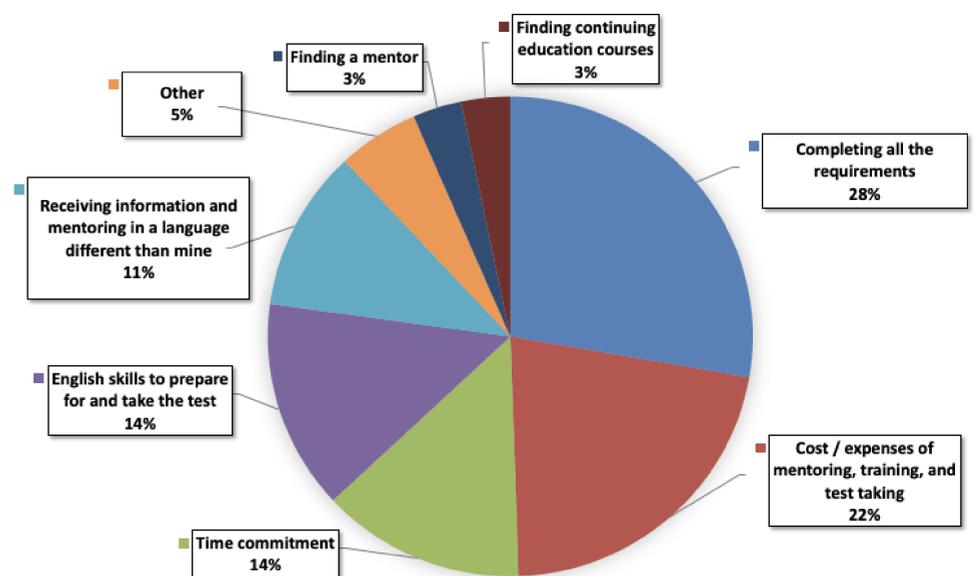
• **Material:** Online Survey developed by the Global Matters Committee, AG Bell Academy. The survey is open until the end of 2019 (English and Spanish).

References:

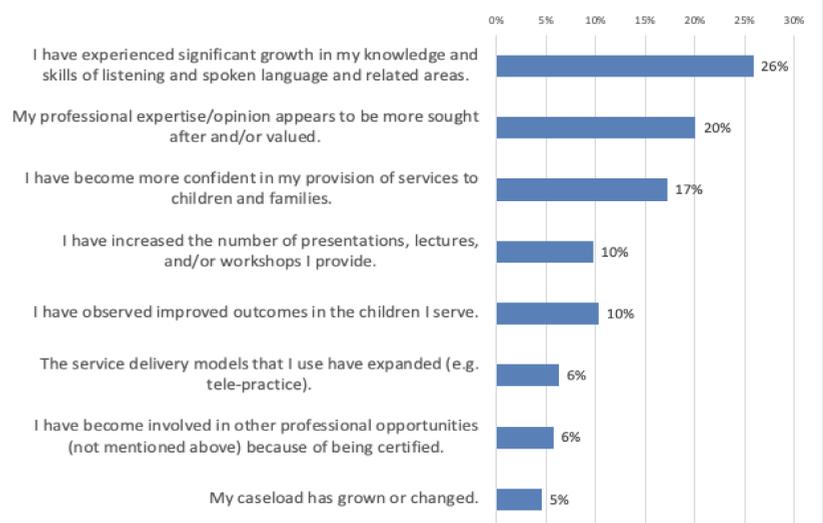
1. WHO (2019): <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/deafness-and-hearing-loss>;
2. Fulcher, A., Purcell, AA., Baker E., Munro, N. (2012). Listen up: children with early identified hearing loss achieve age-appropriate speech/language outcomes by 3 years-of-age. Int J Pediatr Otorhinolaryngol,76(12).1785-94.
3. Hitchins, ARC., & Hogan, SC. (2018). Outcomes of early intervention for deaf children with additional needs following an Auditory Verbal approach to communication. Int J Pediatr otorhinolaryngol, 115:125-132.

Preliminary results (LSSL cert.; English and Spanish cohort)

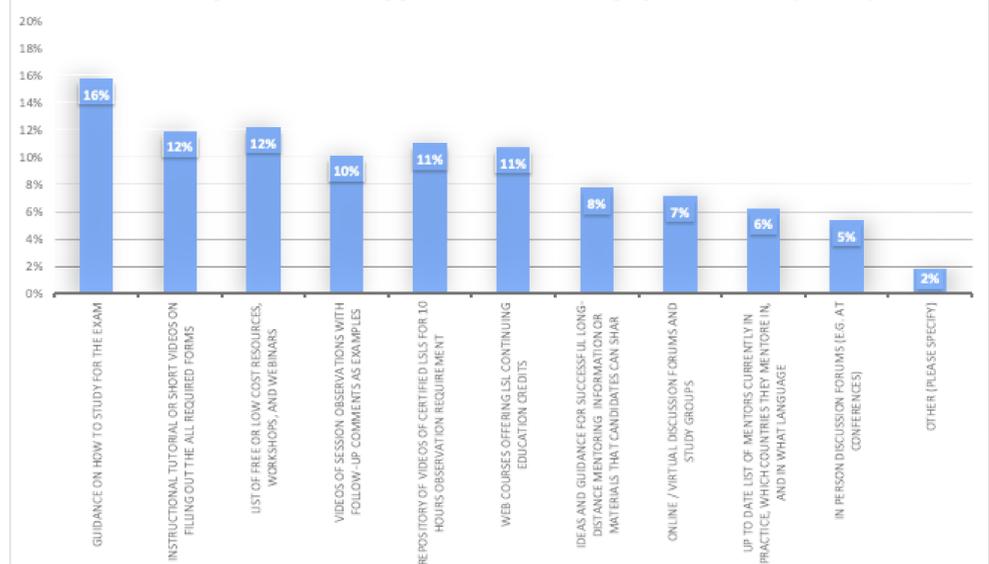
Top Three Challenges While Pursuing Certification (n=184)



Greatest Impact Having the LSSL Certification for My Practice (n=174)



Certification Preparation: Requested Resources and Information Needed on the AG Bell Academy Website to Support Those Pursuing Specialization (n=336)



Interested in participating in the survey?

Links to the Global Matters Survey:

English: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/global_matters

Spanish: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/asuntos_globales