
Developmental language disorder: Long list of research priorities

**denotes those in the top 10*

Identification

1. Language screening for children with behaviour that challenges
2. Rates of co-occurring DLD and low-mood or anxiety
3. Incidence of co-occurring DLD and attachment difficulties in looked after children

Assessment and diagnosis

4. Effective ways to assess the language skills of individuals within the youth justice sector and impact on identification of DLD
5. Parent experiences at various stages of the care pathway including diagnostic process
6. Reliability, validity and effectiveness of dynamic assessment compared to traditional assessment tools for identification of DLD (including in looked after children and bilingual populations)
7. Effective ways to support SLTs to use dynamic assessment with individuals with DLD in terms of developing competence and confidence
8. SLT and parent perspectives on benefits and drawbacks of using dynamic assessment to diagnose DLD
9. Assessment for DLD which can track progress: a) across time, b) across different environments
10. Confidence and competence of SLTs in assessing and diagnosing DLD and recommendations for development
11. Assessing education outcomes, social inclusion and mental health in relation to DLD presentation
12. Effective tools to assist accurate diagnosis of DLD in early years children with significant SLCN

Bilingualism

13. Exploring interventions for bilingual children with DLD

Lifelong impact

14. Outcomes for individuals with DLD across settings (e.g. language provision, mainstream school), in relation to curriculum access, language development and social skills*
15. Impact of SLT interventions for adolescents and adults with DLD, on wider functional outcomes (e.g. quality of life, access to the curriculum, social inclusion and mental health) *
16. Life trajectories of adults with DLD who did and did not access SLT services as a child from their own perspective
17. Impact of programmes aimed at developing self-awareness and self-esteem of adolescents with DLD (e.g. DLD and me)
18. Challenges experienced by individuals with DLD in the youth justice sector
19. Relationship between awareness and understanding of DLD (by self, parents or education staff) and impact on mental health
20. Most meaningful targets for individuals with DLD from the parent perspective
21. Impact of early parent support (e.g. training, networks) from the outset of diagnosis on the later outcomes of children with DLD from the parent/ carer perspective
22. Effective ways of teaching self-help strategies to children and young people with DLD*

Service provision: primary school age

23. Effective service delivery models in language resource provisions
24. Parental satisfaction of different SLT service delivery models for DLD (e.g. independent sector, NHS, education) and recommendations for improvement
25. Perspectives from children with DLD on barriers and facilitators to having support needs met
26. Effectiveness of a face-to-face versus indirect approach to intervention for individuals with DLD*
27. Impact of universal services on the speech, language and communication skills of individuals with DLD
28. Effectiveness of therapy provided by a DLD specialist compared to that of a generalist SLT

Service provision: Secondary school age and Service provision: adults

29. The current landscape of SLT services for adolescents and adults with DLD, in the context of the SEND code of practice (2014)

Intervention

30. Effectiveness of language interventions for adolescents and adults with DLD
31. Talking therapies for mental health difficulties by individuals with DLD
32. The SLT role in literacy development
33. Impact of SLT or specialist teachers input on literacy outcomes for children with DLD
34. Involvement of parents in planning and delivering intervention and impact of an individualised approach
35. Effective interventions targeting receptive language for individuals with DLD*
36. Impact of targeted vocabulary interventions on curriculum access for individuals with DLD*
37. Effective ways of teaching self-help strategies to children with DLD
38. Specific characteristics of evidence-based interventions for individuals with DLD which facilitate progress towards the goals of an individual with DLD*
39. Developing meta-linguistic skills in individuals with DLD
40. Impact of local context (e.g. socio-economic status) on initial intervention choice by SLT for children with DLD
41. Active ingredients of successful interventions for individuals with DLD
42. Clinical decision making processes of speech and language therapists when working with individuals with DLD

Working with others

43. Facilitating confidence and competency of teaching assistants to follow SLT programmes set by a therapist for children with DLD
44. Impact of collaborative working when supporting individuals with DLD, in terms of cost and time effectiveness
45. Effectiveness of outreach visits by language resource provision staff (SLT and teacher) to local mainstream schools on language outcomes of children with DLD
46. Impact of teacher training (on specific strategies/ language support) on academic attainment in adolescents with DLD in secondary schools *
47. Impact of including speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)/ developmental language disorder (DLD) in teacher training course curriculums on referral rates and level of support for children with DLD*
48. Effectiveness of training on DLD for professionals in the youth justice sector
49. Strategies to improve SLT's confidence and understanding of emotional, behavioural and mental health issues in children with DLD
50. Effective strategies to improve understanding of DLD amongst mental health professionals

51. Implementation of SLT recommendations in the classroom by teaching staff: confidence levels, capacity, capability and levels of success*
52. Factors of training packages for TAs, contributing to successful implementation of SLT programmes in the education setting
53. Multi-professional perspectives on the validity and use of auditory processing disorder as a distinct diagnosis

Raising awareness

54. Using components of successful awareness-raising campaigns for health disorders (e.g. autism) to inform a developmental language disorder strategy
55. Level of knowledge and awareness of DLD and the SLT role amongst relevant (e.g. health and education) professionals and effective ways of increasing this

Technology

56. Effectiveness of speech and language therapy intervention for children with DLD when delivered using technology: current practice and parent perspectives
57. Using technology to gather information (e.g. case history, feedback on therapy) from individuals with DLD and their families
58. SLT perspectives on using apps in therapy with individuals with DLD
59. Generalisation of skills learnt by children with DLD via SLT apps on activities of daily living, and impact on well-being
60. Effectiveness of hearing loops in the classroom setting for children with DLD