

Language Sampling Trends of Professionals who Specialize in Serving Children who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing of Hearing

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Abstract

Language samples can be an invaluable tool for speech-language pathologists to assess the communicative outcomes of children who are Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing (DHH). This is particularly important as, in isolation, norm referenced assessments are not sensitive to identify error patterns in the use or omission of high frequency noun and verb morphology, errors that are common in children with hearing aids and cochlear implants. However, a recent study reports that professionals who specialize in working with children who are DHH do not frequently use language samples and most often use standardized assessments and checklists to evaluate and monitor progress of children.

Method

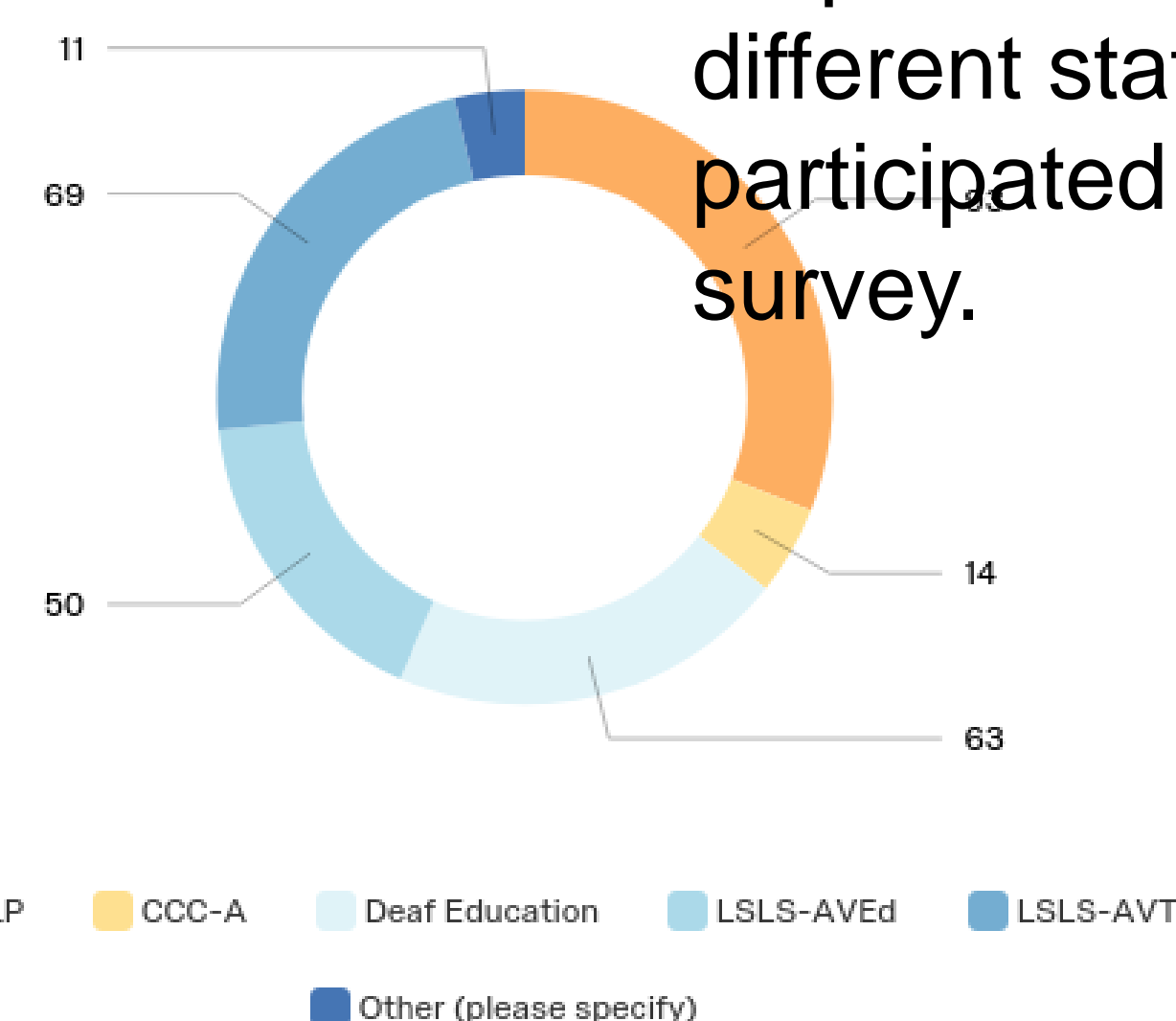
Electronic questionnaires were disseminated to audiologists, speech language pathologists and educators of the DHH.

Respondents were recruited through:

- the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) special interest group (SIG) SIG 9: Hearing and Hearing Disorders in Childhood, the
- Alexander Graham Bell (AG Bell) Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Listening and Spoken Language Knowledge Center directory and
- OPTION schools, a non-profit organization of listening and spoken language programs and schools for children who are DHH.

Demographics

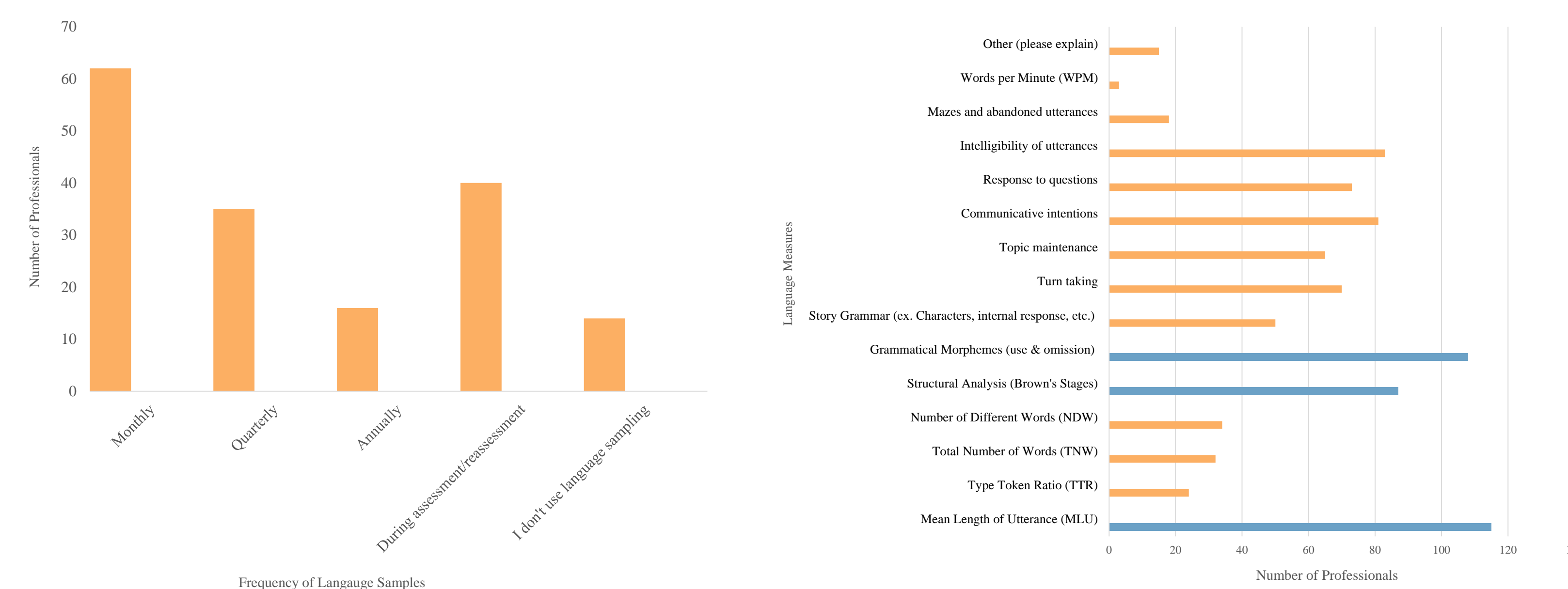
Licensing and Certification



A total of 168 respondents from 34 different states participated in the survey.

Language Sample Protocols

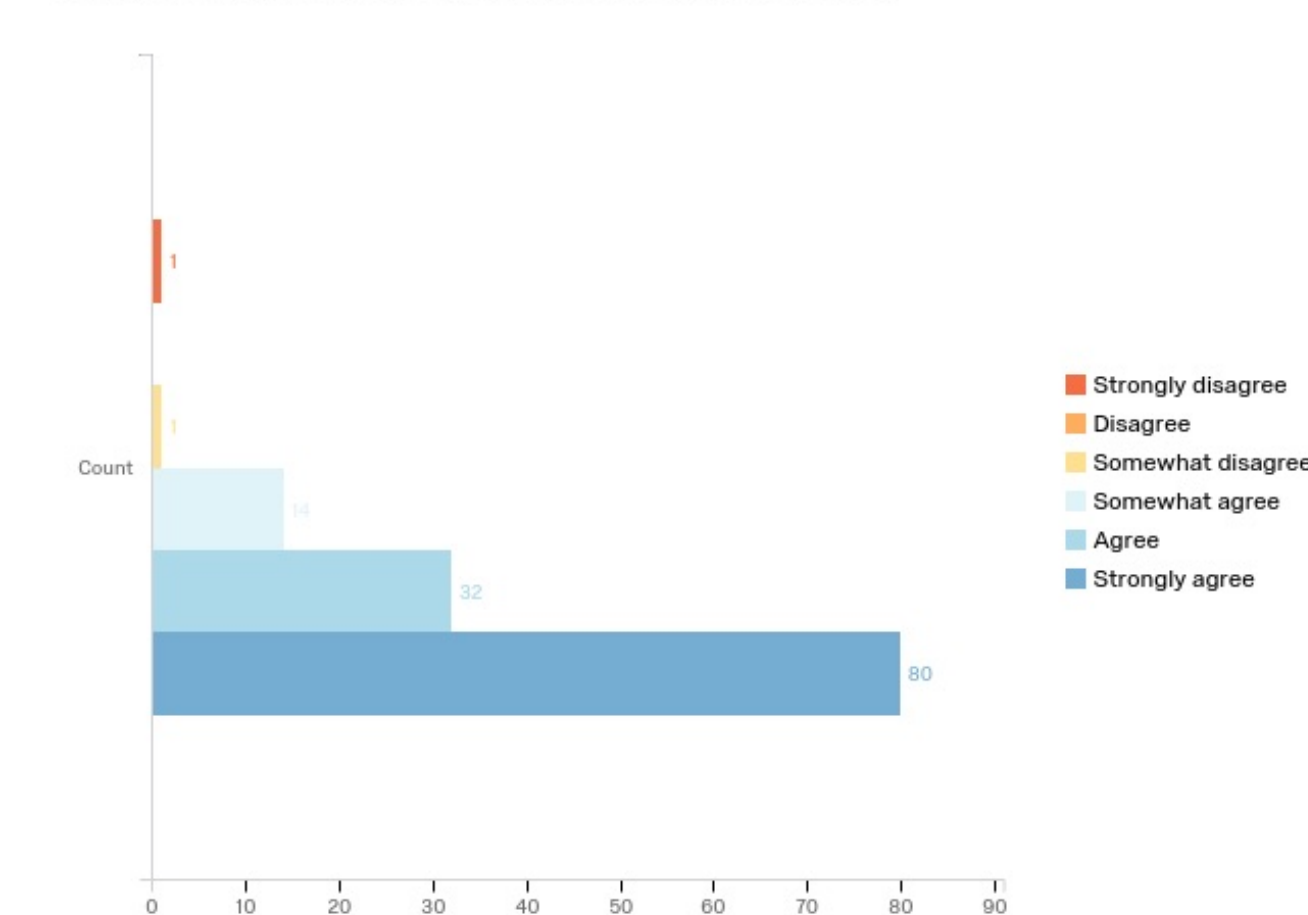
A majority of the respondents (n=153; 91.6%) reported that they use language samples as a part of their intervention when working with children who are DHH.



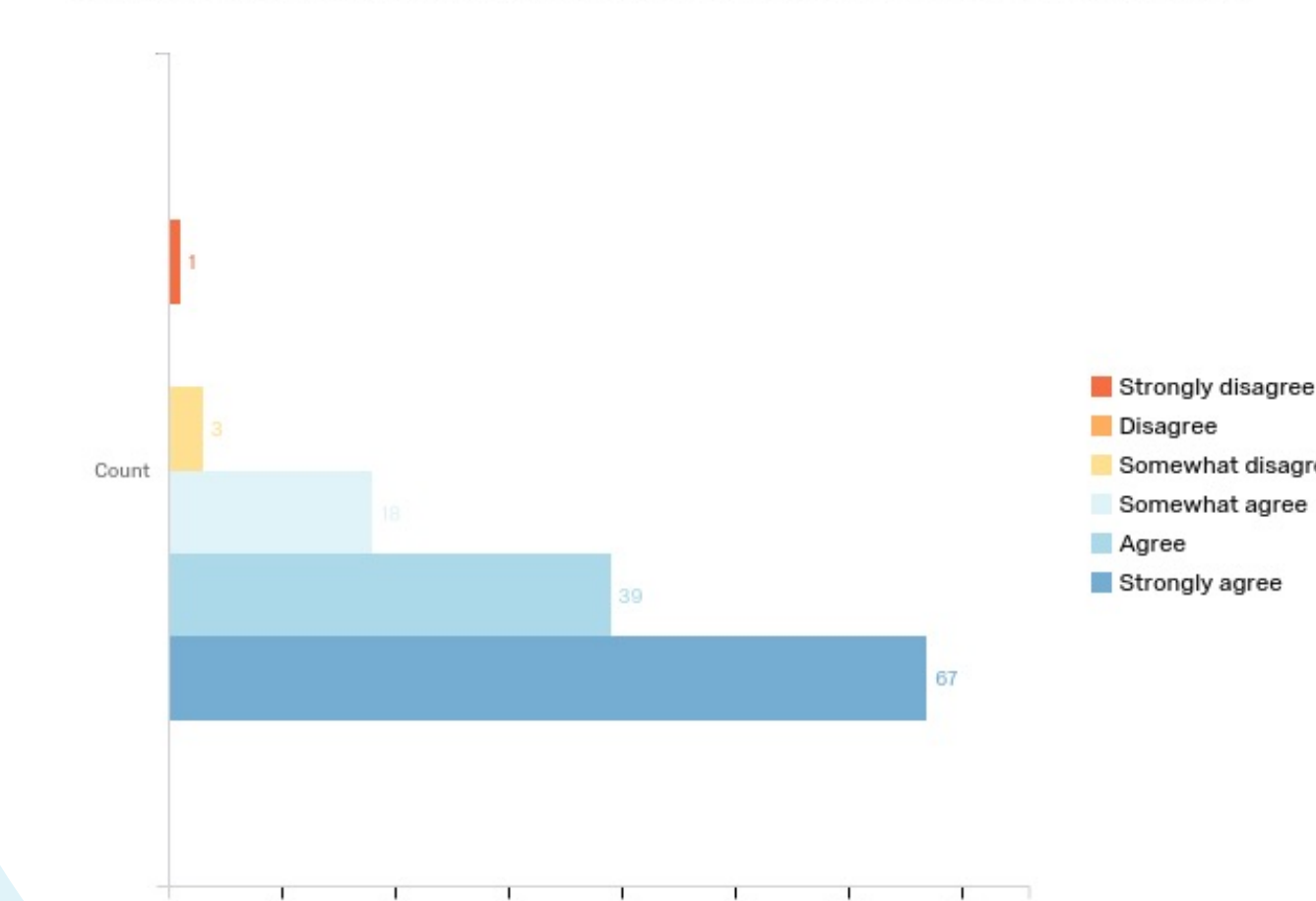
Attitudes Regarding Language Sample Use

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that they found language samples **useful with the populations they serve** (n=130; 94.9%) and that they **could offer information that norm-referenced assessments could not provide** (n=133; 97.1%), despite them being most popularly used for evaluation of children who are DHH.

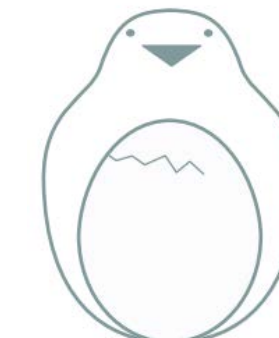
Language samples are useful with the populations I serve.



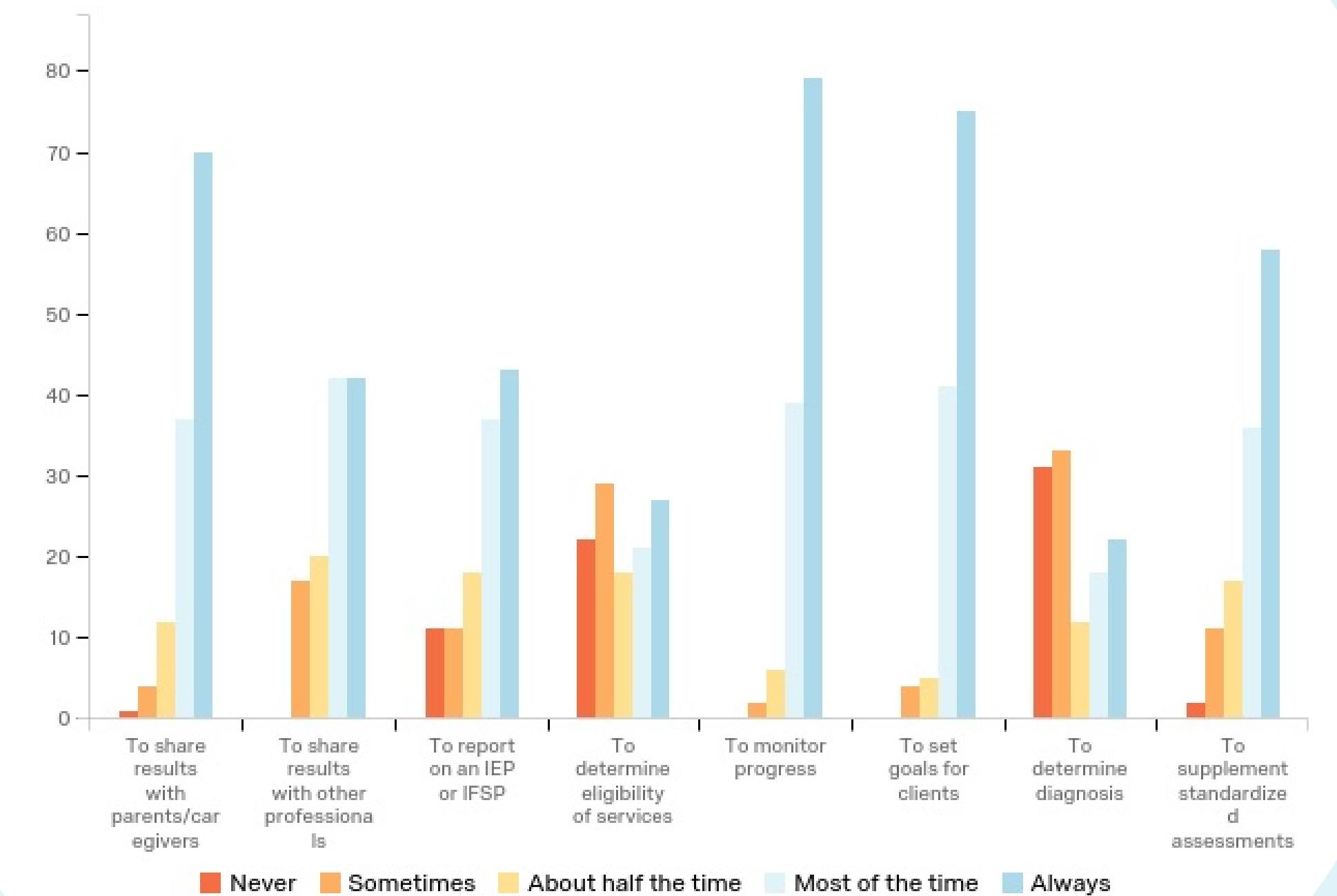
Language samples offer information that norm-referenced tests cannot provide.



The HATCH Lab



Language Sample Use by Professionals



Summary

Information from this group of professionals was sought specifically with the intent of analyzing procedures and trends of these providers to determine if there were patterns of practice that could be shared with a broader group of professionals also serving this low-incidence population.

Due to the sensitivity of language samples there is a tendency for specialists working with children who are DHH to use language samples often, especially when in conjunction with other assessment tools such as checklists. Professionals from this sample most frequently analyzed language samples by hand, using self-designed procedures or comparing information obtained from the language sample in comparison to a checklist.

The current study reflects that the majority of respondents believe that language samples offer a unique look into a child's language that norm-referenced assessments are not sensitive enough to detect. Additionally, it shows that professionals with experience serving this population are more likely to use language samples.