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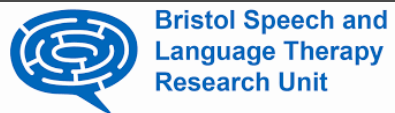
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Exploring the acceptability of speech and language screening for preschool children from parents' perspectives

Bristol Speech and Language Therapy Research Unit

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to…

- The parents and children who took part in the study

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Overview

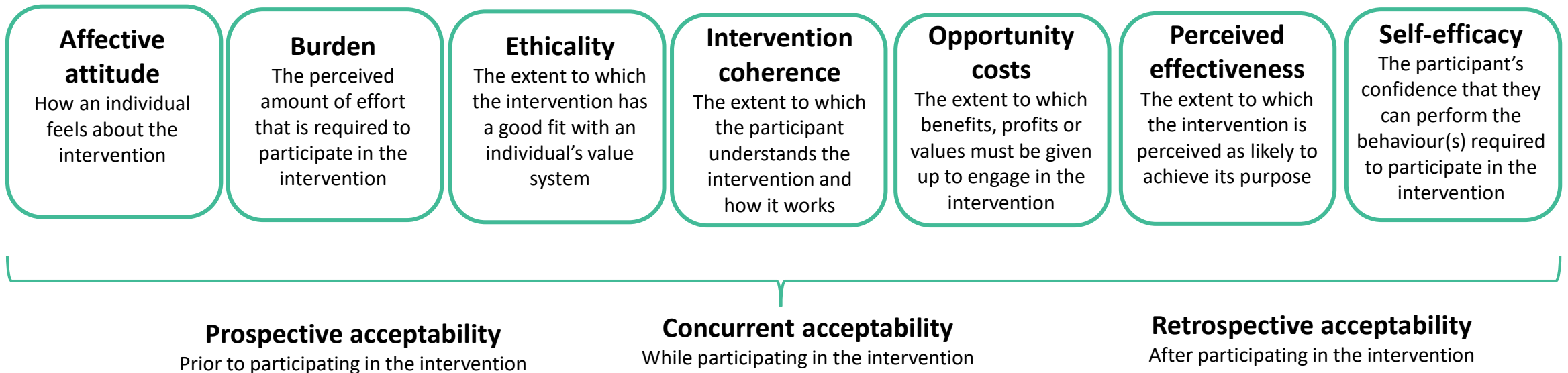- Screening of children's language promotes early identification of speech, language and communication needs (SLCN)

- Effective screening involves consultation with parents to ensure acceptability

- Frameworks for acceptability have not been applied to children's developmental screening

- This study will present parents' perceptions of speech and language screening in the context of acceptability

Acceptability

- 'Theoretical Framework of Acceptability' (TFA) developed by Sekhon, Cartwright and Francis (2017)

Affective attitude	**Burden**	**Ethicality**	**Intervention coherence**	**Opportunity costs**	**Perceived effectiveness**	**Self-efficacy**
How an individual feels about the intervention	The perceived amount of effort that is required to participate in the intervention	The extent to which the intervention has a good fit with an individual's value system	The extent to which the participant understands the intervention and how it works	The extent to which benefits, profits or values must be given up to engage in the intervention	The extent to which the intervention is perceived as likely to achieve its purpose	The participant's confidence that they can perform the behaviour(s) required to participate in the intervention

Prospective acceptability
Prior to participating in the intervention

Concurrent acceptability
While participating in the intervention

Retrospective acceptability
After participating in the intervention

How does the TFA apply to parents and children?

- Additional considerations – parent acting on behalf of child

- Authors report the framework is useful but additional elements are key for paediatrics –

➢Trust in practitioner(Deja et al., 2021; Toomey et al., 2021)

➢Communication and delivery of a message (Bhatti et al., 2021; Abel et al. 2020)

Acceptability of developmental screening

- Parents of children with SLCN report negative experiences (Marshall et al., 2017; Rannard, Lyons & Glenn, 2004)

- Acceptability depends on how screening is delivered (Kendall et al. 2019; Roche et al. 2005)

- Practical and ethical concerns of screening for speech and language

- **Aim of this study: to explore the acceptability of speech and language screening for pre-school aged children from parents' perspectives**

Method

- Study part of development of Early Language Identification Measure (Law et al. 2020) for use by health visitors at 2 – 2 ½ year review

- Quantitative survey of **433** parents' experiences of review

- Follow-up qualitative interviews with **40** parents

- TFA used to create questions for survey and interview

- Framework Analysis used to map responses to TFA (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994)

- Reflexive thematic analysis to check for themes not present in TFA (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Quantitative results support acceptability...

94%

Were very satisfied with the review (Affective Attitude)

99%

Were very or quite comfortable answering questions (Ethicality)

91%

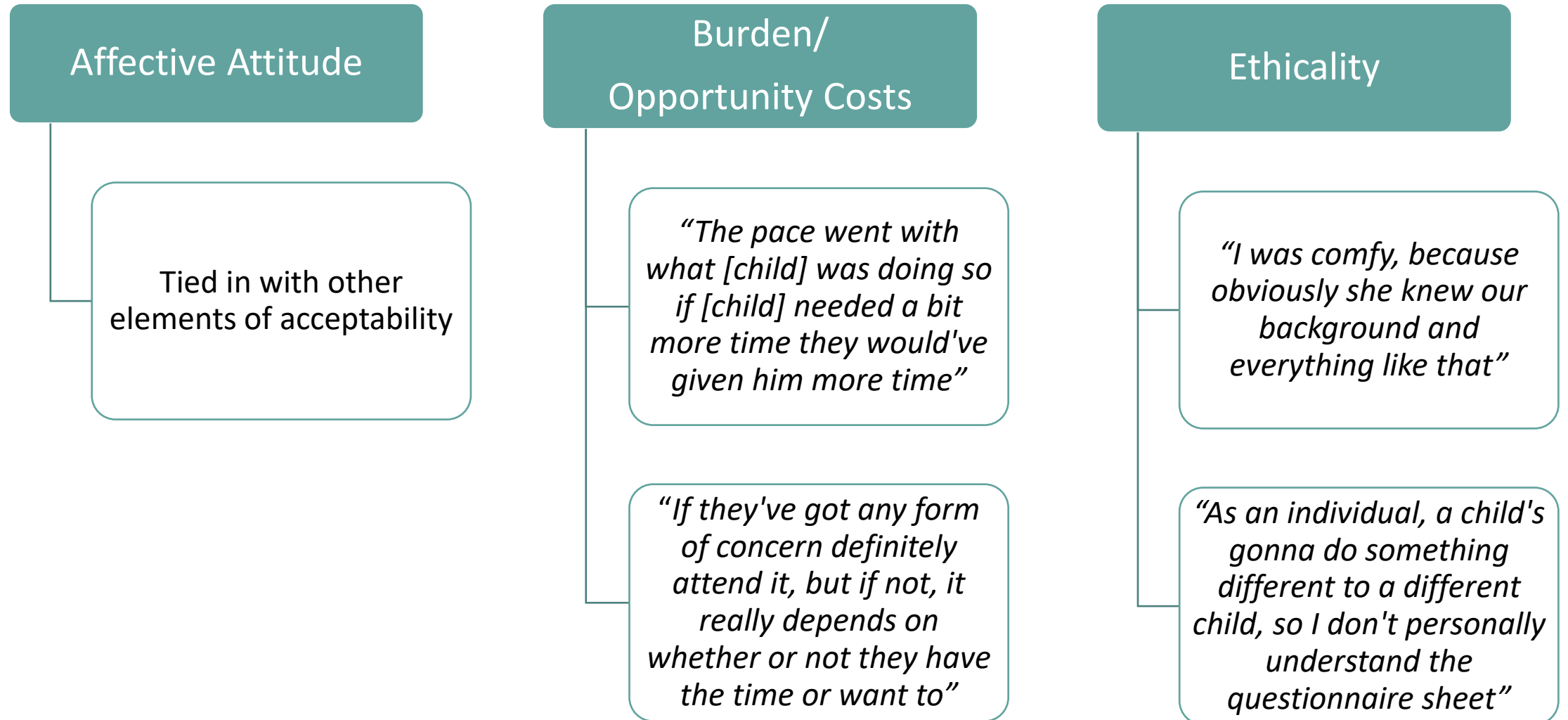Said information received was very or quite clear (Intervention Coherence)

99%

Were very or quite confident in ability to answer questions (Self-Efficacy)

Qualitative results were more complex…

- Dyer et al. (2016) – people tend to be more positive in surveys
- Carlton et al. (2021) - qualitative research methods needed to facilitate in-depth understanding of behaviours and parents' feelings

Qualitative results and the TFA

Affective Attitude

Tied in with other elements of acceptability

Burden/ Opportunity Costs

"The pace went with what [child] was doing so if [child] needed a bit more time they would've given him more time"

"If they've got any form of concern definitely attend it, but if not, it really depends on whether or not they have the time or want to"

Ethicality

"I was comfy, because obviously she knew our background and everything like that"

"As an individual, a child's gonna do something different to a different child, so I don't personally understand the questionnaire sheet"

Qualitative results and the TFA

Intervention Coherence

"When we first get the questionnaire…you think 'oh my goodness, she's not doing that, he's not doing that'"

"There was only a couple but she, she explained what it meant…And then I understood after that"

Perceived Effectiveness

"Because I do them anyway, there wasn't really anything, anything extra that I was told to do…she said just to continue what you're doing"

"It would've been absolutely brilliant if there was a sheet with ideas of things you could do to help in certain areas"

Self-Efficacy

"I was not very worried why they are not referring, because they are giving me the tools…and yeah I will work on it"

"It's just like someone has been assigned a task and they just want to say OK yes I've seen the kid and I've done my job, that's it"

Qualitative results – additional elements

Individualisation

- *"She didn't pressure me or it was all about her job, like she had to do it, sort of thing, she made it about us"*
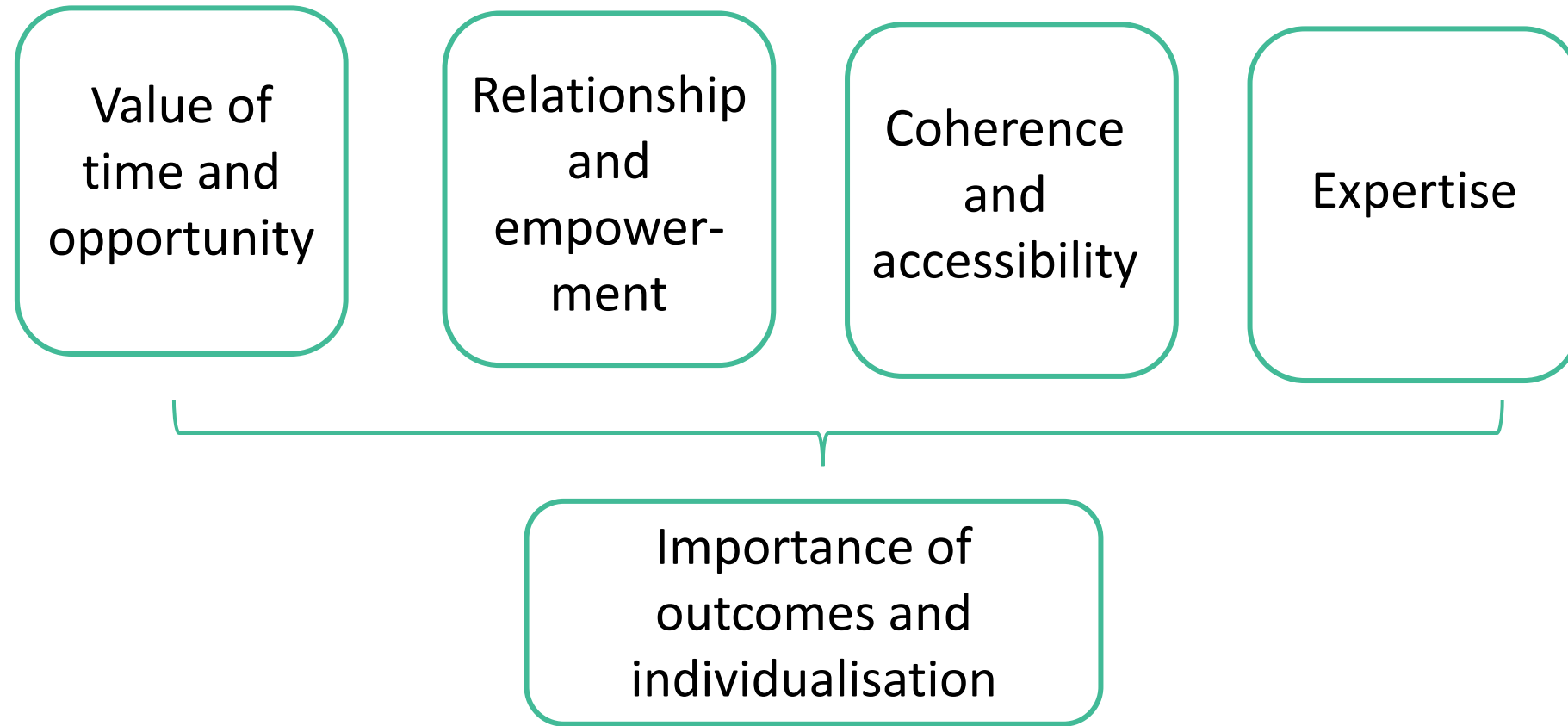
Relationship with practitioner

- *"She went through everything that I was worried about, all my concerns with the speech and everything like that and she was really good"*

Outcomes are key

"I think oh God what if he gets to 3 and then he's still behind and then what happens then. She didn't really go into anything further what happens at 3, she just said 'oh just give us a call if you are concerned."

"Feedback on development and language would be nice as well as any activities that are beneficial"

An acceptability framework for families?

Discussion

- Like previous studies, trust in practitioner and a positive relationship is key (Deja et al. 2021, El-Yousfi et al. 2020)

- Tailoring of an intervention is important for parents and children (Abel et al 2020)

- Positive outcome for child is key (Pennington et al. 2020)

- **Conclusion** – TFA useful as a framework, but additional elements apply in context of developmental screening

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