Speech-Language Assessment with English Language Learners

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Why is this important?

"By the 2030s, say demographers, English language learners (ELLs) will account for approximately 40% of the entire school-aged population in the United States. In some areas, that projection is already exceeded-in California, for instance, 60%-70% of schoolchildren speak a language other than English as their primary language." (ASHA)

FLASHBACK TO GRADUATE SCHOOL…

Definitions

English Language Learner	Individuals in the process of acquiring English as a second language while learning academic content.
Speech Language DIFFERENCE	Present if difficulty in communication (oral/written) and/or speech production is impacted by the process of learning a second language.
Speech Language DISORDER	Present if difficulty comprehending and using language (oral/written forms) and/or producing speech (sounds, fluency) in Language 1 (for monolingual students) and in Language 1 and Language 2 (in bilingual students) or when difficulty is not a product of a language difference.

Normal Processes of second-language acquisition

Interference/ Transfer	Error is made in a second language (L2) due to the direct influence of a primary language (L1) structure.
Silent Period	Focus on listening and comprehension; Very quiet or silent Few weeks-few months for older children; year+ for preschoolers
Code Switching	Alternate use of L1 and L2 within an utterance or phrase.
Language Loss/ Attrition	Loss of skills and fluency in L1 during the course of L2 acquisition if L1 is not reinforced or maintained. Can be cognitively and linguistically detrimental to children's learning and to their family lives (esp. if parents speak only L1).
Accent, Dialect, and Phonetic Patterns	Maintenance of a native accent (way people sound/pronunciation), dialect (rule-governed, systematic variation of language; accent, grammar, & semantics), and phonetic patterns within L2 is common

Language Acquisition Development		
Theoretical Stages	Characteristics	Behavior
1. Silence	• Understands little or no English. Student "quietly takes it all in." For some this stage may last a few minutes, others a few months	Does not speak or understand English
2. Nonverbal indications of understanding	• Uses no English except for a word or two • Student will not respond verbally but will respond physically to instructions or requests • Understands only slow simple speech; requires repetitions • Progresses to one word response in English or a response in own language	Understands simple sentences but only uses isolated words or expressions
3. Chunking	• Understands simplified speech with repetitions and rephrasing • Produces some common English words and phrases • Uses unanalyzed chunks of language that perform an important social function: "It's my turn," "What's your name?" "Can I play?" • Understands more than can produce	• Speaks English with difficulty • Converses in English with help • Understands at least parts of the lesson • Follow simple directions

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4. Interlanguage	• Understands adult speech but requires repetition and rephrasing • Speech may be hesitant because of rephrasing and groping for words • Uses some complex structures • Overgeneralizes rules of grammar • Has difficulty with choice of verb tense, verb tense consistency, and subject/verb agreement • Vocabulary is adequate to carry on basic conversation; some word usage difficulties • "Interim grammar" one part one language, one part another. "They in school and home's live." "My friend likes the books to read."	Understands, speaks, reads, and writes English with some degree of hesitancy

Stages		
5. Gaining control of English	- Understands most adult speech except some advanced structures - Speech may be nonnative evenness. An accent may be present. - Demonstrates a fairly high degree of proficiency - Controls most basic grammatical structures with occasional error in syntax. Some errors in a young learner may be seen as developmental. - Vocabulary is varied	Understands and speaks English well but needs assistance in reading and writing in English to achieve at level appropriate for his or her grade level
6. Fluent Speaker	- Understands everything expected of a native speaker of the same age - Speech is effortless and native-like; however an accent may be present - Expresses ideas creatively having mastered a broad range of syntactic features - Vocabulary is as accurate as native speaker of the same age - Use different varieties of language depending upon the situation (code switching)	Achieves at appropriate level

Bilingual Acquisition: Simultaneous or Sequential

▶ **Simultaneous**: L1 & L2 acquired simultaneously from birth

▶ **Sequential:** exposed to L1 from birth; L2 acquisition occurs later in child development

▶ Since L2 proficiency is partially a function of L1 competence, student may not fully develop either language ("limited bilingualism"). May appear as having a language learning disability.

BICS & CALP

▶ **Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS):** Context-embedded, everyday language that occurs between conversational partners, typically requiring *2 years* under ideal conditions to acquire proficiency.

▶ *Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP):* Context-reduced language of academics, typically requiring *5 to 7 years* under ideal conditions to develop a level commensurate with native speakers.

▶ **BICS-CALP gap:** Student may develop conversational English that appears fluent and adequate for everyday communication BUT still struggle with CALP (reading, writing, spelling etc. where there is little context so support language). **Can lead to false ID of language-learning disabilities.**

Speech-Language Assessment with ELLs: Language Difference or Language Disorder?

Bilingual Speech-Language Evaluation Referral

▶ Likely different for each school AND the process may be altered each year

   ▶ Bucktown:

      ▶ Contact Tara Bailey (Speech Language & Audiology Coordinator)

      ▶ tybailey@cps.edu

      ▶ See "How to Submit a Bilingual Speech-Language Referral 16-17" document on drive

▶ Reach out to school administration regarding the process or who you should contact

▶ Some schools need to "okay" your request because they may need to pay for it out of the schools budget

▶ Referral at the clinic?

Monolingual SLP's Role

▶ Be aware of IDEA and ASHA's code of ethics. Discrimination based on race, ethnicity and nationality is illegal and unethical when testing and providing services.

▶ The SLP needs to know cultural differences and expectations. They need to determine the language history, the need for interpreter/translator or a bilingual SLP, and the availability of assessment tools in the native language

COLLABORATE: Use your team!

- Family/Caregivers
- ELL teacher
- Gen Ed
- SPED teachers
- Paraprofessionals
- Other related service providers
- Interpreters

Interpreter

- If a bilingual SLP is not available (and let's be real.. they RARELY are) we need to look elsewhere
  - Bilingual SPED→ professional translator provided by district → parapro or teacher → bilingual volunteer from community → parent or family (if all else fails)
- BID method:
  - Brief (review history and testing plan)
  - Interaction (SLP & interpreter interact as team during interview and assessment)
  - Debrief (discuss results/observations)
- If no interpreter was used you must state your reasoning, such as: "No interpreter was necessary in the assessment of this student since comprehensive assessment in English revealed results to be within (or above) the average range"

Red Flags

▶ Standard 'red flags' do not necessarily generalize to CLD (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse) students

▶ Potential red flags for CLD students:

  ➢ Difficulty in learning language and sound production at a normal rate, even with special assistance in both languages

  ➢ Communication difficulties in the home

  ➢ Communication difficulties when interacting with peers from a similar background

  ➢ Family history of learning problems

  ➢ Significant birth/developmental history

  ➢ Slower development than siblings (per parental report)

1: Referral Source?

- Parents
  - May give greater insight into skills in L1 (e.g., comparison to siblings, language skills with family versus community members speaking L1, etc.)
- GenEd or SPED teacher
  - May over or under identify concerning students due to ELL status
- ELL teacher
  - May note similar concerns to teacher BUT have specialized knowledge of L2 acquisition and greater number of ELL students which whom to compare progress
- Pediatrician
  - Was this surprising for parents? Did they request that the pediatrician write request to school?

2: Gather Background Information

- Thorough case history (forms on SHARED)
  - Can be difficult to gather information from family at school – try to gather information at the domain (suggest/request a domain for initials with ELLs)
- Record Review
- Student & Family

2: Gather Background Information (continued)

- Country and region of origin
- Age of immigration
- Age and manner of acquisition of the language(s)
- Language(s) used at home and at school/work
- Language(s) used within the family
- Literacy level of parents
- Length of exposure to each language
- Language of choice with peers & family

- Describe communicative contexts of typical day & home activities
- Contact with native speakers of L1 (primary language)
- Progress in receiving English as a second language (ESL) services or adult English language learning classes
- Language of academic instruction
- Academic performance in each language
- Age of immigration
- Simultaneous or sequential bilingual acquisition

3: Gather Current Information

▶ Current concerns

▶ Try to determine dominant language

  ➢ Parent & student report; ELL & teacher report

  ➢ Language proficiency screening (e.g., student oral language observation matrix) (form on SHARED)

▶ Classroom Observation (form on SHARED)

▶ Questionnaires/Interviews for student, teachers, parents, and others who interact with child on a regular basis (e.g., ELL teacher, para)

▶ Academic Information (e.g., grades, DIBELS, NWEA, classroom, supports/accommodations, ELL services, student portfolio to assess progress/learning)

4: Standardized Assessment

▶ Linguistic and cultural biases:
  ➢ standardization samples do not take education levels, bilingual abilities, background experiences, dialect differences, etc. into account
▶ Recommend not reporting standard scores if the standardized assessment was not normed for that language/population.
▶ Use the information as qualitative data to support the rest of your findings.
▶ You can get great information from administering a test in a non-standardized way…

4: Standardized Assessment
Modifications

- Access to a standardized assessment in L1 and have interpreter administer portions and help score/provide informal information

- Reword or expand instructions

- Provide instructions in both L1 & L2

- Record all comments, responses, prompts/cues used

- Add practice items, examples, demonstration

- Provide additional time for response

- Repeat test stimuli

- Have client explain their answer

- Accept culturally appropriate responses

- Accept responses in either L1 or L2

- Test beyond the ceiling

- Re-administer portions

4: Standardized Assessments: Disclaimer

▶ Must be aware of and DOCUMENT limitations and modifications of testing instrument (example reports on SHARED)

▶ Example disclaimer:

   ▶ *"The following test/s _____were normed on typical English speaking children. Testing materials are not available in standardized form for* child"s unique bilingual/bicultural background. In accordance with IDEA 2004 (The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) [20 U.S.C..1414(3)], official use of standard scores for this child would be inaccurate and misleading so the results reported are presented in descriptive form. Raw scores are provided here only for comparison with future performance."

6: Criterion Referenced Assessment

▶ Can be quick and simple to administer

▶ Focuses on student's interaction with specific content material to obtain a description of the specific knowledge and skills each student can demonstrate

▶ Checklists (on the SHARED), rubrics, rating scales, grades, % correct, etc.

5: Alternative Assessments
Dynamic Assessment

- Used to assess students ability to learn when provided with instruction.

- Test, Teach, Retest model

- Resource on drive for additional information: "Dynamic Assessment with ELL_Q&A"

- https://blog.asha.org/2014/05/01/dynamic-assessment-how-does-it-work-in-the-real-world-of-preschool-evaluations/

5: Alternative Assessments
Dynamic Assessment Examples

► Noword Repetition Tasks (hear, retain, repeat nonsense syllables)

► Fast Word Mapping (learn new words)

   ► Example activity: "Planning for a Picnic" – 1) put in familiar objects (apple) and introduce new vocab with abstract objects ("This is a TOWDAY. What is this? A TOWDAY! Put the TOWDAY in. 2) Repeat for about 5 items 3) test ("Give me the TOWDAY")

► Difficulty with these tasks may indicate disordered ability to learn new words from the environment

5: Alternative Assessment
Conversation Sample

▶ Engage in conversation with peer about a preferred and familiar topic

▶ Observe peer in conversation with peer or adult

▶ Think about…

  ▶ Code-switching

  ▶ Attempt to repair communication breakdowns

  ▶ Language used most frequently

  ▶ Adequate vocabulary to make ideas understood

  ▶ Communicative intents observed

5: Alternative Assessment
Story Retelling

▶ Wordless picture books, sequencing pictures

▶ Examines student's narrative skills and ability to organize information

▶ Best practice suggests that the student be asked to retell stories in L1 and L2

▶ Analyze content and form: "Assessment of Fictional Narratives" on SHARED is very helpful

▶ Tip: Record this for further analysis of articulation skills

5: Alternative Assessment
Cloze Tests

▶ Examines the student's background knowledge and knowledge of vocabulary and grammatical structures

▶ Best practice suggests that the student completes tasks in L1 and L2

▶ Recommendations:

  ▶ Choose a passage/story that contains 250-350 words

  ▶ Delete every 5th, 6th, or 7th word until at least 50 words have been omitted

  ▶ Do not remove the first word in a sentence or a proper noun

▶ Following procedure may be used when administering:

  ▶ Present several examples of what is expected by reading sentences with a word deleted (e.g., "The _____ is barking loudly") Ask student to supply the word.

▶ Read entire passage without any words deleted

▶ Ask student general questions about story to make sure student comprehends

▶ Read story again but leave out deleted words. If student does not provide missing word, go back to the beginning of the sentence and read forward to the next missing word. Continue.

▶ Think about…

▶ Grammar

▶ Vocabulary

▶ Word alter meaning of author's passage?

▶ Make sense?

Articulation

- Contrastive Analysis
  - Resources on SHARED for English and Spanish (contrastive analysis of phonemes, phonological patterns, etc.)
- Similar sounds across 2 languages may not be used in the same way (e.g., only used in WF versus all word positions)
- Errors on sounds not present in L1 would not be considered a disorder. SLP can provide guided practice and instruction to ELL for facilitation of sound production.

Analysis of Results

- Takes time, collaboration, and research
- Check out resources on SHARED

Eligibility

▶ "A language disorder is a disability that affects the child's ability to learn in any language. Exposure to two languages is not the cause of the disability" (Roseberry-McKibbin, 2002)

▶ "A language disorder is present when speaking behavior is defective to such an extent that it interferes with one's ability to convey messages clearly and effectively during interactions with community members who speak the same language and dialect" (Mattes & Omark, 1991)

Eligibility:
Questions to help guide your decision

▶ In addition to the general education teacher, have others (e.g., the ESL teacher, remedial program personnel, and parents) noted similar difficulties?

▶ Does the problem exist across contexts (e.g., in general education and ESL classes, at school, and at home)?

▶ Are the problems evident in the student's first language?

▶ Is the student's progress in acquiring English significantly different from that of peers who started at about the same level of English language proficiency and have had comparable instruction?

▶ Is there evidence that difficulties (e.g., lack of eye contact) can be explained by cross-cultural differences?

▶ Are there other variables (e.g., inconsistent school attendance) that could explain the difficulties?

▶ Is there evidence of extreme test anxiety (as can occur when the child being tested has been in the country for only a short time)?

▶ Can problematic behaviors be explained by procedural mistakes in the assessment process?

▶ Does data show that the student did not respond well to general education interventions?

▶ Are the assessment results consistent with the concerns of the student's teachers and parents?

Benefits of Bilingualism

▶ "Many research studies cite the cognitive-linguistic benefits of being a fluent bilingual speaker. Experts have found that children who are fluent bilinguals actually outperform monolingual speakers on tests of metalinguistic skill."

▶ Research shows that students will only become as proficient in L2 as they are in L1. Therefore, parents should be encouraged to promote use of dominant language in the home. This includes reading and writing. (Crowley, 2004)

Helpful Websites

- ASHA
  - Bilingual Service Delivery Info
    - https://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589935225&section=Key_Issues
  - Working with interpreters:
    - https://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Collaborating-With-Interpreters/
- Bilinguistics
  - Lots of helpful information for monolingual and bilingual SLP assessment and intervention
  - https://bilinguistics.com/

ELL folder on SHARED: Check it out and add to it ☺

Follow Up PART 2?!

- **Actually finish going through this lengthy PowerPoint :/**

- **Go further into resources for analysis of results**

- **Share different materials, resources, articles, etc. we have found helpful!**

- **Case studies**