

*Serving
English Language
Learners
with Disabilities*

***A Resource Manual for
Illinois Educators***



Illinois State Board of Education

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2002

FOREWARD

It is a well known fact that the composition of American society is shifting and this change is currently being reflected in our school population. Schools are recognizing and responding to these changes. They continue to seek out exemplary educational opportunities that will enhance the successful performance of our limited English proficient population.

The primary purpose of this manual is to provide school districts with recommended guidelines to facilitate the identification and delivery of services for English language learners who may have disabilities. It makes available to teachers, administrators, special educators, and special service providers recommended concepts, practices, insights and experiences to address their students needs. Additionally, it is to assist in the development of an appropriate framework ensuring that their rights are protected by Title VI, Section 504, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Title 23 of the Illinois Administrative Code. These procedural safeguards are to be in place to appropriately determine when students truly have learning problems or are reflecting cultural and linguistic differences that may be misunderstood. The information provided will give you the impetus required to reevaluate current practices and to develop new ones that will take into consideration the complex and unique nature of language and biculturalism.

Language and cultural background are to be considered as part of the special education evaluation process. The language proficiency and degree of acculturation need to be considered when planning a student's individualized educational program (IEP). The students do have the right to receive nondiscriminatory and educational interventions to address their lack of English proficiency. Special educational interventions should be tailored to fit the student's needs including the necessity to develop proficiency in their second language, English.

As we seek to enhance the quality of services for English language learners in Illinois, this manual becomes a major resource. We invite you to use the "Serving English Language Learners with Disabilities" and anticipate that you will enjoy its benefits. It should help you assume a more active role and further strengthen the linguistic foundations that are prerequisites for successful school performance.

We hope it will be helpful.

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We acknowledge the work of the Joint Bilingual Special Education Subcommittee which is comprised of members from the Illinois Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities (ISACECD) and representatives from the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (IACBE) as well as, at-large education and community advocates.

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STATEMENT BY THE JOINT BILINGUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE ON ADVOCACY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES FOR CLD STUDENTS IN ILLINOIS

After many years of advocacy for appropriate special education services for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) children and youth with disabilities, it became apparent that only a structured policy mandate would ensure compliance among school districts in the state of Illinois. Thus, an ad hoc committee was formed by community advocates, public and private school educators, parents, and representatives from the constituencies of elected officials to formulate a legislative framework that would address the educational and special service needs of CLD children and youth with disabilities.

As a result of the efforts of committee members, Public Act 87-0995 was signed into law by Governor Edgar on September 1, 1992. This legislation was introduced by Senator Miguel del Valle in the Senate and by Representative Miguel Santiago in the House. This Act made Illinois the first state in the country with specific legislation addressing the needs of children and youth with disabilities whose home/native language is other than English.

An important mandate contained in the legislation was the involvement of the Advisory Council on the Education of Handicapped Children (now known as the Illinois Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities) and the Advisory Council on Bilingual Education in the formation of a Subcommittee to review special education issues regarding CLD children and youth with disabilities, including but not limited to teacher certification, financial resources, and bilingual education. Today, representatives from the Illinois Advisory Council on the Education of Children with Disabilities (ISACECD) and representatives from the Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (IACBE) as well as at-large education and community advocates comprise the Joint Bilingual Special Education Subcommittee.

The Committee addresses all issues related to students in special education who are culturally and linguistically diverse. During the nearly 10 years of the Committee's existence, members have acted on behalf of CLD students with disabilities and their families on many fronts. The Committee has prepared and presented statements at public hearings where the lives of CLD children with disabilities were affected. The Committee has advocated that child count data be maintained on the number of second language learners with disabilities and their level of language proficiency and that ISAC scholarship categories include bilingual special education teacher shortages as a priority. The Committee has also advocated for and facilitated dialogue among school district administrators and university faculty for the creation and development of opportunities for inservice and preservice training for teachers, speech and language pathologists, social workers, and school psychologists who can appropriately serve these students.

This resource book represents a continuing effort by the Joint Bilingual Special Education Subcommittee to advocate for and improve culturally and linguistically appropriate specialized educational services for every child with a disability whose home/native language is other than English. Members of the Committee encourage school administrators, classroom teachers, and support staff to use the resource book as a guide to developing and implementing a

comprehensive program of service delivery to CLD children, youth, and their families. Important components of such a program include:

- A formal, positive philosophy of service to CLD populations, including members with disabilities;
- A system of intervention for CLD students experiencing difficulties in the general education environment;
- A comprehensive plan of instruction based on "best practice" for CLD students with or at risk of learning problems;
- A system for monitoring whether the rights of CLD students and their families are protected in the special education evaluation and staffing process;
- Models for providing instruction for CLD students with disabilities in inclusive settings;
- A program of professional development for educators on issues related to language, culture and disability; and
- A plan for continuous evaluation of educational services to CLD students with disabilities and their families.

INTRODUCTION FROM THE EDITOR

The purpose of this resource manual is to provide Illinois educators with an overview of critical topics in the assessment and instruction of English language learners (ELLs) with disabilities. Ten years has passed since the publication of the Illinois State Board of Education's first resource guide, *Recommended Practices in the Identification, Assessment and Provision of Special Education for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students* (ISBE, 1992), and the field of bilingual/ESL special education has expanded considerably. We have more research and practical experience on which to base our identification and teaching practices. We are also fortunate to have a small but increasing number of education professionals with combined expertise in the fields of bilingual/ESL and special education. The task we face over the next ten year period is primarily one of professional development. University faculty and administrators are the key to this effort but they will first have to educate themselves, reaching beyond their personal and professional comfort zones to familiarize themselves with language, culture, and disability issues. At the preservice level, faculty need to (a) implement program changes so that ALL graduate and undergraduate education students exit programs with basic knowledge about how to serve ELLs with disabilities and (b) establish specialized training options in bilingual/ESL special education for students who will become teachers, administrators, psychologists, speech/language pathologists, counselors, and social workers. At the inservice level, administrators need to establish a strong network of communication between bilingual/ESL and special education staff and provide for professional development on issues including the relationship between academic performance and language proficiency and how instruction can be modified to develop literacy skills and content knowledge.

The authors of this resource guide have an extensive range of practical and academic experience in Illinois schools and have sought to provide the reader with a combination of background knowledge and guidelines for practice. Readers looking for a "quick fix" to making diagnostic and instructional decisions will be disappointed. There is no one test or magic bullet for distinguishing disability from language and cultural issues or for selecting the language of instruction. Such critical educational decisions are to be made on a case-by-case basis by informed professionals who examine all aspects of the instructional environment in relation to the student's needs and characteristics. Readers are encouraged to use this resource to become better-informed practitioners on legal and pre-referral issues (Chapters 1 & 2), assessment concerns (Chapters 3, 4, & 5), use of interpreters in the schools (Chapter 6), recent research on instruction (Chapter 7), adapting instruction and using technology (Chapter 8 & 9), serving young children and their families (Chapter 10), and developing the IEP (Chapter 11). Resources for more extensive information on these and other issues are located in the end-of-chapter reference lists and in Appendix A.

With the help of technology and ISBE staff, we hope this resource will become a "living document" that will be updated on a regular basis and remain available on the ISBE website (www.isbe.net/spec-ed/). Comments and questions may be addressed to the editor at: r-brusca@csu.edu.

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CHAPTER 1

Serving English Language Learners with Disabilities: Illinois Requirements

*Rita Brusca-Vega, Ed.D.
Professor of Special Education
Chicago State University*

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of Illinois rules and regulations concerning the assessment and instruction of English language learners (ELLs) with disabilities. The following questions are addressed:

What should educators know about...

- Screening procedures to identify students of non-English language backgrounds? (page 2)
- Assessing students of non-English language backgrounds? (page 3)
- Providing programs for students identified with limited English proficiency? (page 4)
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- Summary of Public Act 87-0995 (Bilingual Special Education) (1-A)
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Administrators at the state and local levels have two critical tasks when it comes to planning and implementing educational services for ELLs with disabilities. First, they have to integrate two sets of legal requirements, i.e., one set for serving students found to have limited proficiency in English and one set for serving students with special education needs. Second, they have to take this integrated body of requirements and put it into practice in the field. Illinois is one of the few states in the nation to have tackled this challenge directly, fashioning the requirement that IEPs be culturally and linguistically appropriate several years before the federal government addressed the same issue in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA '97; P.L. 105-17) and establishing credentials for educators with combined expertise in special education and bilingual/ESL education. (See Chapter Appendix 1-A and 1-B on Illinois Public Act 87-0995.) When Illinois requirements regarding students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities are considered together, we see that our state has a comprehensive system for serving ELLs with special education needs. The purpose of this chapter is to present these state requirements in an easy-to-follow format. Best practices for ELLs with disabilities are also presented throughout the chapter.

1. Screening Procedures to Identify Students from Non-English Language Backgrounds

In order to better serve students with limited proficiency in English, the state requires school districts to seek out and screen all incoming students to determine those who come from non-English language backgrounds.

Students of non-English background are defined as:

...students whose native language is other than English or students who come from homes where a language other than English is spoken in daily interaction, either by the students themselves or by their parents or legal guardians.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.10 Definitions)

Each school district is required to:

...administer a home language survey to each student entering the district's schools for the first time, for the purpose of identifying students of non-English background. The survey shall include at least the following questions: (1) whether a language other than English is spoken in the student's home and, if so, which language; and (2) whether the student speaks a language other than English and, if so, which language.

...use its best efforts in seeking out children believed to be of limited English proficiency who are resident within such district but are not enrolled in a private school within the district.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.15 Identification of Eligible Students)

The home language survey is to:

*...be administered in English and, if feasible, in the student's home language.
...provide a space for the signature of the student's parent or legal guardian.
...be placed into the student's temporary record as defined in 23 Ill. Adm. Code 375 (Student Records).*

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.15 Identification of Eligible Students)

Best Practice for ELLs with Disabilities: Section 228.15 does not directly address students with identified or suspected disabilities. However, information from the home language survey is required as part of the case study evaluation process if a student is referred for special education services (see 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.140). The requirement to conduct a home language survey when a student first enters the district should not be ignored even if (a) the student obviously appears to have special education

needs, such as the case of a Spanish-speaking child with Down Syndrome, and will be referred for a special education eligibility determination or (b) the student enters the district with an eligibility determination or IEP from a previous district.

2. Assessing English Language Proficiency in Students from Non-English Language Backgrounds

Once students from non-English language backgrounds have been identified, the school district is required to assess these students for proficiency in English. The purpose of the assessment is to determine whether they have limited proficiency in English and, therefore, are eligible for services under 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education:

The district shall administer an individual language proficiency assessment to each student identified through the home language survey as having a non-English background. This assessment shall take place within four weeks of the student's enrollment in the district, for the purpose of determining the student's eligibility for bilingual education services.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.15 Identification of Eligible Students)

Individual proficiency assessments and subsequent determination of limited English proficiency are to be conducted according to the following requirements:

A nationally normed test of English-language proficiency shall be administered to each student who is old enough to take such a test. Each such test shall include measures of oral language skills (listening and speaking). Each such test to be administered to a student in grade 2 or above shall also include measures of reading and writing proficiency. Each student who scores below the 50th percentile on such a test (or, where test results are not expressed as percentile scores, below the proficiency level comparable to the 50th percentile) shall be considered as having limited English proficiency and shall be eligible for bilingual education services.

In cases where no nationally normed English proficiency measure can be administered, and for all students of non-English language background who score at or above the 50th percentile or the equivalent on the nationally normed test used, the school district shall also consider other indicators such as the results of criterion-referenced or locally developed tests, teachers' evaluations of performance, samples of a student's work, and/or information received from family members and school personnel in identifying limited English proficiency and determining eligibility for bilingual education services.

Students who, based on a review of evidence such as that outlined...above, are judged to be unable to perform successfully in classes where instruction is given only in English or more than one year behind the average performance of students (of

comparable age/grade) in the district in any subject as identified in Section 228.30 (a) (1) (A) of this Part shall be considered as having limited English proficiency and shall be eligible for bilingual education services.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.15
Identification of Eligible Students)

Parents whose children have not been identified as having limited English proficiency may request that the school district conduct a language proficiency assessment:

The parent or guardian of any child resident in a school district who has not been identified as having limited English proficiency may request the district to determine whether such child should be considered for placement in a bilingual education program, and the school district shall make such determination upon request, using the process described in this Section. A determination contested by the parent or legal guardian may be appealed to the Superintendent of the Educational Service Region in which the district is located, pursuant to the provisions of Section 3-10 of the School Code (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1991, ch.122, par. 3-10).

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.15
Identification of Eligible Students)

Best Practice for ELLs with Disabilities: How the determination of limited English proficiency should be made when students have suspected or identified disabilities is not directly addressed in Section 228.15. However, according to Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.14, procedures and criteria stipulated in Section 228.15 should be followed prior to conducting a case study evaluation of a student of a non-English language background. Best practice indicates that districts consider multiple and alternative assessment measures, including criterion-referenced tests, work samples, behavioral observations, and teacher evaluations, when assessing these students for English proficiency. Districts may also choose to assess in native language as well as English at this stage of the process for a more comprehensive look at language abilities.

3. Providing Services to Students Identified with Limited English Proficiency

Students who are determined to have limited English proficiency based on the assessment criteria described above are eligible for bilingual/ESL education services. These services are delivered to students through one of two program options which may be offered on a full-time or part-time basis: Transitional Bilingual Education or Transitional Program of Instruction:

Transitional Bilingual Education Program

When an attendance center has an enrollment of 20 or more limited English proficient students of the same language classification, the school district must establish a transitional bilingual program for each language classification represented by such students (Section 14-C3 of the School Code). A further assessment of those students to

determine their needs for bilingual instruction and for placement in either a full-time or a part-time program shall be conducted.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.25 Program Options, Placement, and Assessment)

Full-Time Program Requirements

A full-time transitional bilingual education program shall include the following components (Section 14C-2 of the School Code; Ill Rev. Stat. 1991, ch. 122, par. 14C-2):

- *Instruction in subjects which are either required by law (see 23 Ill. Adm. Code 1) or by the student's school district, to be given in the student's home language and in English; core subjects such as math, science and social studies must be offered in the student's home language;*
- *Instruction in the language arts in the student's home language and in English as a second language; and*
- *Instruction in the history and culture of the country, territory, or geographic area which is the native land of the students or of their parents and in the history and culture of the United States.*

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.30 Establishment of Programs)

Part-time Program Requirements

Students, including kindergarten students in either full-day or half-day programs, are eligible for placement in a part-time program pursuant to the provisions of Section 228.25 (c) of this Part, or students previously placed in a full-time program may be placed in a part-time program under the following conditions:

- *an assessment of the student's English language skills has been performed in accordance with the provisions of Section 228.15(f) of this Part;*
- *the student's prior performance, if any, in coursework taught exclusively in English has been evaluated; and*
- *a review of these areas shows a performance that is less than one academic year behind the average of students of the same grade level in the district, in all but one or two subject areas, so that instruction in ESL and subject area instruction in the home language may still be necessary.*

A part-time program will consist of those instructional programs and materials, supportive services (e.g., counseling, special instructional resources, or tutorial assistance), learning settings, and other educational services which modify, supplement, and support the standard educational program of the public school and which, based upon an assessment of the student's educational needs in accordance with the standards set forth in subsection (a) (2) of this Section, will provide daily instruction in the home language and in English.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.30 Establishment of Programs)

Transitional Program of Instruction

When an attendance center has an enrollment of 19 or fewer students of limited English proficiency and from any non-English language, the school district shall conduct an individual student assessment to determine the student's need for native language instruction and may provide a transitional bilingual program in the non-English language(s) common to such students or shall provide a locally determined transitional program of instruction for those students. (Section 14C-3 of the School Code.)

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.25 Program Options, Placement, and Assessment)

A transitional program of instruction must include instruction or other assistance in the student's home language to the extent necessary, as determined by the district on the basis of the student assessment required in Section 228.15(f) of this Part, to enable the student to keep pace with his/her age or grade peers. A transitional program of instruction may include, but is not limited to, the following components: instruction in ESL, language arts in the student's home language, and instruction in the history and culture of the country, territory, or geographic area which is the native land of the students or of their parents and in the history and culture of the United States.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.30 Establishment of Programs)

Regardless of which program a student is placed in or whether services are full- or part-time, the school district is to consider a variety of factors in designing an appropriate instructional program for the student:

Districts shall consider the following factors when determining an individual student's full-time or part-time educational programs needs: language assessment in English and, if available, in the student's home language; academic history and achievement levels; age; cultural background; handicapping conditions, if any; and any other factors that would assist the district in designing an instructional program appropriate to the student's needs.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 228, Transitional Bilingual Education, Section 228.25 Program Options, Placement, and Assessment)

Best Practice for ELLs with Disabilities: According to Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.220, the language needs of the student with limited English proficiency are to be considered in the development of the IEP. The IEP team, after considering these needs, may or may not involve the student in the bilingual/ESL programs that the district offers. For example, the IEP of one student might indicate continued placement in the school's transitional bilingual classroom for 4th grade students with the addition of "push-in" resource assistance from

a special education teacher in English. The IEP of another student might include goals for the development of oral language skills in the student's home language and English in a school where non-English language instruction has not heretofore occurred. In this case, best practice indicates that the school district examine new service delivery models in order to meet the IEP stipulations.

4. Conducting Child Find Activities and Referring Students of Non-English Backgrounds for Special Education

Similar to the way in which school districts are required to identify students who are eligible for bilingual/ESL services, districts are required to seek out and identify students who may be eligible for special education services:

Each school district shall be responsible for actively seeking out and identifying all children from birth through age 21 within the district, including children not enrolled in the public schools, who may be eligible for special education and related services.

Procedures developed to fulfill this responsibility shall include:

- *An annual screening of children under the age of five for the purpose of identifying those who may need early intervention or special education and related services*
- *Ongoing review of each child's performance and progress by teachers and other professional personnel, in order to refer those children who exhibit problems which interfere with their educational progress and/or their adjustment to the educational setting, suggesting that they may be eligible for special education and related services.*
- *Ongoing coordination with early intervention programs to identify children from birth through two years of age who have or are suspected of having disabilities, in order to ensure provision of services...*

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.100 Identification of Eligible Children)

Referrals of children may be made to the school district by individuals not mentioned or necessarily involved in the process described in Section 226.100.

A referral may be made by any concerned person, including but not limited to school district personnel, the parent(s) of a child, an employee of a community service agency, another professional having knowledge of a child's problems, a child, or an employee of the State Board of Education.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.110 Referral [The reader should see this section for a complete description of referral procedures.]

Best Practice for ELLs with Disabilities: Section 226.100 does not directly address identification procedures for children of non-English language backgrounds. Best practice indicates that school districts implement strategies to reach out to parents of non-English language backgrounds about the annual screening process and have staff available at the annual screenings who can communicate with children and parents in their home language as needed.

5. Evaluating Students of Non-English Language Backgrounds for Special Education

The evaluation of students for special education services is an extensive process designed to gather and analyze accurate and comprehensive information about the student in a nondiscriminatory manner. This section deals only with procedures that relate directly to the assessment of students of non-English language backgrounds. For complete information on the evaluation process, the reader is referred to 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Sections 226.120 through 226.150:

Section 226.120 Identification of Needed Assessments,
Section 226.130 Evaluation Requirements,
Section 226.140 Mode(s) of Communication and Cultural Identification,
Section 226.150 Case Study to be Nondiscriminatory,
Section 226.160 Determination of Eligibility,
Section 226.170 Criteria for Determining the Existence of a Specific Learning Disability, and
Section 226.180 Independent Educational Evaluations.

A. Determining Language Proficiency

School districts are required to determine the English language proficiency of students from non-English language backgrounds prior to proceeding with a case study evaluation. Determination of English language proficiency is to be made in accordance with Part 228 Transition Bilingual Education, Section 228.15. Information obtained from the assessment is maintained for use in the case study evaluation process and, if the student is found to be eligible for services, in the IEP development process:

Before a child is given a case study evaluation, the local school district shall determine the primary language of the child's home, general cultural identification, and mode of communication.

Determination of the child's language use pattern and general cultural identification shall be made by determining the language(s) spoken in the child's home and the language used most comfortably and frequently by the child.

If the child has a non-English-speaking background, a determination shall be made of his or her proficiency in English. Such a determination will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of 23 Ill. Adm. Code 228 (Bilingual Education) which specifies the assessment procedures and eligibility criteria for bilingual education

programs (see 23 Ill. Adm. Code 228.15). (See pages 2-4 of this chapter for text from Section 228.15.)

The child's language use pattern, proficiency in English, mode of communication, and general cultural identification shall be noted in the child's temporary student record, and this information shall be used in the evaluation and in the development and implementation of the individualized education program.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.140 Mode(s) of Communication and Cultural Identification)

Best Practice for ELLS with Disabilities: Best practice indicates that the bilingual or ESL teacher who conducts the assessment of English language proficiency work in collaboration with a special educator in cases where disability is suspected or has been identified. The combined knowledge of experts from both fields serves to enhance the assessment process.

B. Conducting the Case Study Evaluation

Once a determination of language proficiency has been made, other aspects of the case study evaluation can be addressed, including the selection of relevant tests, materials, and other assessment strategies; language or languages to be used with the student; and qualified personnel to conduct the procedures:

Tests and other materials used to evaluate a child:

- *Shall be selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;*
- *Shall be provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication unless it is clearly unfeasible to do so;...*

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.130 Evaluation Requirements)

The language(s) used to evaluate a child shall be consistent with the child's primary language of the home or other mode of communication. (See Section 226.140 of this Part.) If the language use pattern involves two or more languages or modes of communication, the child shall be evaluated by qualified specialists or, when needed, qualified bilingual specialists using each of the languages or modes of communication used by the child... (See Chapter Appendix 1-B, Bilingual Special Education Approval, for information on becoming a "qualified bilingual specialist.")

If documented efforts to locate and secure the services of a qualified bilingual specialist are unsuccessful, the district shall use an individual who possesses the professional credentials required under Section 226.840 of this Part to complete specific components of the evaluation. This qualified specialist shall be assisted by a

certificated school district employee or other individual who has demonstrated competencies in the language of the child.

If documented efforts to locate and secure the services of a qualified bilingual specialist or a qualified specialist assisted by another individual as provided in subsection (b) of this Section are unsuccessful, the district shall conduct assessment procedures which do not depend upon language. Any special education resulting from such alternative procedures shall be reviewed annually until the child acquires a predominantly English language use pattern.

Tests given to a child whose primary language is other than English shall be relevant, to the maximum extent possible, to his or her culture.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.150 Case Study to be Nondiscriminatory)

If test administration or other assessment strategies used in the evaluation vary from standard conditions, such as deviating from the published test directions for administration, a description of the variation is to be included in the evaluation report:

If an assessment is conducted under nonstandard conditions, a description of the extent to which the assessment varied from standard conditions shall be included in the evaluation report. This information is needed so that the team of evaluators can assess the effects of these variances on the validity and reliability of the information reported and determine whether additional assessments are available. For example, the use of a translator when a qualified bilingual professional is not available may create nonstandard conditions.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.130 Evaluation Requirements)

Best Practice for ELLs with Disabilities: Best practice indicates that individuals completing various parts of the evaluation collaborate with each other and with bilingual or ESL educators or qualified bilingual specialists. This collaboration should take place prior to selecting and administering tests and other assessment strategies and prior to arranging for any necessary interpreter services. School districts should also consider developing a list of internal and external resources for interpreter services and conducting training sessions on interpreting for all involved in the assessment process.

C. Making the Eligibility Determination

Once the case study evaluation is complete, the IEP team meets to determine whether the student is or is not eligible for special education services. Several requirements that are part of the eligibility determination process have special relevance for students of non-English language backgrounds:

A child may not be determined eligible under this Part if the determinant factor for that determination is lack of instruction in reading or math or limited English proficiency and the child does not otherwise meet the district's eligibility criteria.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.160 Determination of Eligibility)

The IEP team may include a qualified bilingual specialist or bilingual teacher, if the presence of such a person is needed to assist the other participants in understanding the child's language and cultural factors as they relate to the child's instructional needs.

The IEP team shall include an individual who is qualified to interpret the instructional implications of the evaluation results, who may be one of the individuals enumerated in subsections (b) through (g) of this Section.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.210 IEP Team)

Best Practice for ELLs with Disabilities: Eligibility determinations are enhanced by involving professionals with formal training in the second language acquisition and acculturation process. Individuals such as school psychologists and bilingual teachers with temporary credentials may be fluent in two languages but may not be knowledgeable about issues including the determination of language proficiency or how stages of second language acquisition influence school performance and achievement. Districts should consider how to provide appropriate training to existing staff, recruit staff knowledgeable in these areas, and increase the number of staff in the district who hold the Bilingual Special Education Approval (see Chapter Appendix 1-B).

6. Developing the IEP for Students with Limited English Proficiency

If a student with limited proficiency in English is found to be eligible for special education services, the IEP is developed with the following considerations:

In the case of a child of limited English proficiency, the team shall consider the language-related needs of the child.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.220 Factors in the Development of the IEP)

A statement as to the language(s) or mode(s) of communication in which special education and related services will be provided, if other than or in addition to English.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.230 Content of the IEP)

The placement of limited English proficiency students with disabilities shall be in non-restrictive environments which provide for integration with non-disabled peers in bilingual classrooms.

(Illinois School Code, Article 14: Children with Disabilities, Section 14-8.02 Identification, Evaluation, and Placement of Children)

Best Practice for ELLs with Disabilities: Best practice indicates that easy access to information such as models for delivering bilingual and/or ESL services to students with disabilities is helpful to IEP team members when they consider how the language needs of the student should be addressed. Suggestions for school districts include allowing team members to visit exemplary programs for ELLs with disabilities or providing descriptions of possible service delivery options for discussion. (The reader is referred to Options for Service Delivery in Chapter Appendix 11-A.)

7. Communicating with Parents of Non-English Language Backgrounds in the Special Education Process

Procedural safeguards exist to address the needs of parents who are not able to communicate fully in English about their child's involvement in the special education process. These include the use of translation and interpreter services:

The notices to individual parents required in this Subpart F shall be:

- *Written in language understandable to the general public; and*
- *Provided in such a way as to accommodate the primary language or other mode of communication of the respective parent, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so.*

If the primary language or other mode of communication of the parent is not a written language, the local school district shall ensure that:

- *The notice is translated orally or by other means to the parent in his or her native language or other mode of communication;*
- *The parent understands the content of the notice; and*
- *There is written evidence in the child's record that the requirements of this subsection (b) have been met.*

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.500 Procedural Safeguards)

The district shall take whatever action is necessary to facilitate the parent's understanding of and participation in the proceedings at a meeting, including arranging for an interpreter for parents who are deaf or whose native language is other than English.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.530 Parents' Participation)

Best Practice for ELLs: The Illinois State Board of Education has produced a number of special education forms in high incidence languages. These may be downloaded from the ISBE website at www.isbe.net. Best practice indicates that school districts develop forms in non-English languages that are common in their student populations, employ teacher assistants and other educational personnel who speak these languages and provide them with interpreter training, and develop a list community resources for interpretation and translation services.

Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has attempted to present Illinois requirements for the assessment and instruction of ELLs with disabilities by first familiarizing the reader with requirements for students of non-English language backgrounds and then highlighting the special education rules that specifically address or are related to this population. Best practices were introduced to assist districts in avoiding common barriers to implementation. The reader is reminded that state requirements for special education adhere to the federal requirements put forth in IDEA '97. In addition, the reader is referred to the resource list at the end of the chapter and to the remaining chapters in this resource book for additional information on providing comprehensive services to ELLs with disabilities.

Background Readings

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR...

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Appendix 1-A Illinois Public Act 87-0995

Illinois Public Act 87-0995

Signed into law in September, 1992, Illinois Public Act 87-0995 is a unique, comprehensive piece of legislation that addresses bilingual/ESL special education issues at the state level. At the time, the Act was viewed by Illinois educators as the beginning of a national trend to deal with persistent problems in providing adequate service delivery to ELLs with disabilities by legislative means, a perception that has proven true over the years. Although Illinois continues in its efforts to provide exemplary services to these students, the Act provided a "jump start" in the state to forthcoming federal requirements. The Act remains a model at the national level for establishing credentials for educators and requiring an annual census of students from non-English language backgrounds who receive special education services. The major provisions of the Act are:

Student and Program Provisions

- A detailed annual census of children of non-English backgrounds, birth through 21 years, who receive special education services;
- Assessment and placement of students with LEP which reflects linguistic, cultural and special education needs;
- Eligibility for special education only with the recommendation of a state approved bilingual/ESL special educator (if one is available);
- Development of definition for "culturally and linguistically appropriate IEPs";
- IEPs which reflect cultural, linguistic, and special education needs; and
- Integration of students with disabilities and LEP with bilingual peers.

Personnel Provisions

- Creation of credentials for bilingual special educators (see Chapter Appendix 1-B);
- Data collection on shortage of bilingual special educators; and
- Scholarships to obtain bilingual special education credentials.

Standards and Monitoring Provisions

- Establishment of subcommittees on bilingual special education issues on state advisory councils;
- Establishment of standards for development, implementation, and monitoring of bilingual special education programs; and
- Incorporation of monitoring procedures to verify implementation of the standards.

Appendix 1-B Bilingual Special Education Approval

The Bilingual Special Education Approval is the vehicle for bilingual education professionals to become "qualified bilingual specialists." The application forms to obtain the Approval and to register for the language exam in the non-English language of instruction may be downloaded from the ISBE website at www.isbe.net. Individuals who are not bilingual may apply for the Approval by indicating ESL on the application form.

Professional staff otherwise qualified pursuant to this Section shall be considered "qualified bilingual specialists" if they meet the applicable requirements set forth in this subsection(f):

- 1) *A holder of a special certificate endorsed in the area of responsibility pursuant to 23 Ill. Adm. Code 25.40 or 25.43 shall successfully complete a language exam in the non-English language of instruction and shall have completed coursework covering:
 - A) *Psychological/educational assessment of students with disabilities who have limited English proficiency;*
 - B) *Theoretical foundations of bilingual education and English as a second language, including the study of first and second language acquisition; and*
 - C) *Methods and materials for teaching students of limited English proficiency or students with disabilities who have limited English proficiency.**

- 2) *A holder of an early childhood, elementary, or high school certificate who also holds special education approval in the area of responsibility (see Section 226.810 of this Part) shall successfully complete a language examination in the non-English language of instruction and shall have completed the coursework listed in subsections (f) (1) (A), (B), and (C) of this Section.*

- 3) *A holder of an early childhood, elementary, or high school certificate who also holds approval to teach bilingual education or English as a second language shall have completed coursework covering:
 - A) *Methods for teaching in the special education area of assignment;*
 - B) *Psychological/educational assessment of students with disabilities who have limited English proficiency, or psychological diagnosis for children with all types of disabilities; and*
 - C) *Characteristics of students, or characteristics of students with limited English proficiency specifically, in the special education area of assignment.**

- 4) *A holder of a transitional bilingual certificate issued pursuant to 23 Ill. Adm. Code 25.90 and endorsed for the language of assignment shall have completed two years of successful teaching experience and have completed coursework covering:
 - A) *Survey of children with all types of disabilities;**

- B) Assessment of the bilingual student, or psychological/educational assessment of the student with disabilities who has limited English proficiency;*
 - C) Theoretical foundations of bilingual education and English as a second language, including the study of first and second language acquisition;*
 - D) Methods for teaching in the special education area of assignment; and*
 - E) Characteristics of students, or characteristics of students with limited English proficiency specifically, in the special education area of assignment.*
- 5) *A holder of a school service personnel certificate endorsed for guidance, school social work, or school psychology shall successfully complete an examination in the non-English language and shall have completed coursework in the assessment of the bilingual student or psychological/educational assessment of the student with disabilities who has limited English proficiency.*

23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.800 Personnel.

CHAPTER 2

Disproportionate Representation of English Language Learners in Special Education

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The purpose of this chapter is to emphasize the problem of disproportionate representation of English language learners (ELLs) in special education and to suggest a model of best practice for intervention. Responses to the following questions are contained in the chapter:

- What is disproportionate representation? (*page 1*)
- How can disproportionate representation be avoided? (*page 2*)
- How can districts implement an intervention model for ELLs? (*page 5*)

Chapter Appendix Material

- Sample Intervention Program for ELLs (*2-A*)

What Is Disproportionate Representation?

Disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students, including ELLs, in special education refers to having significantly higher or lower percentages of these students in special education when compared to the average percentage of students in special education and/or to the percentage of Euro-American, monolingual-English speaking students in special education. Disproportionate representation may occur in one of three ways:

First, students may be **over-identified** as having disabilities, meaning that students are classified as meeting the criteria for one of the disability categories when in fact they do not have genuine disabilities. ELLs with poor school achievement are vulnerable to this type of misdiagnosis because educators mistakenly assume language, cultural, and experiential differences for disabilities. The potential negative consequences of this mistake for students include unjustified separation from their peers, low expectations for performance by teachers, and exposure to the effects of labeling.

Second, students may be **under-identified** as having disabilities, meaning that their disabilities are overlooked and not addressed in their educational programs. Under-identification is often due to the faulty perceptions of educators about ELLs, including that they are not motivated to do well in school or that they tend to be slow learners because of language and cultural differences. Under this circumstance, students with genuine disabilities may drop out or be simply passed along without mastering basic literacy skills. These

students also miss opportunities for legally mandated transition services to employment and independent living situations prior to graduation and for adult disability services later in life.

Third, students may be **mis-identified**, meaning that their disabilities are assigned to inappropriate disability categories. For example, ELLs with genuine learning disabilities may receive a diagnosis of mild mental retardation instead of learning disabilities due to factors such as bias of standardized tests or prejudicial attitudes of the IEP team. Here, students may suffer the consequences of inappropriate instruction, an unsuitable curriculum, and personal and family misunderstanding of the disability.

How Can Disproportionate Representation Be Avoided?

Disproportionate representation of ELLs can be avoided by (a) monitoring the number and percentage of students from non-English language backgrounds receiving special education services in the school and school district and (b) operating from a holistic perspective in which screenings and subsequent interventions for troubled academic and social behavior are routinely implemented.

<i>Table 2.1</i>			
Illinois Students by Race/Ethnic Group Receiving Special Education Services, 1999-00			
<u>Racial/Ethnic Groups</u>	<u># of Students in Illinois Public Schools</u>	<u># of Students Receiving SPED Services</u>	<u>% of Students Receiving SPED Services</u>
White	1,229,943	188,139	15.3%
Black	432,686	66,061	15.2%
Hispanic	295,896	29,816	10.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	65,963	3,171	4.8%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3,112	288	9.3%
All Students	2,027,600	287,475	14.2%*

Source: Illinois State Board of Education (see ISBE 1999-00, 1999-00a).

*The percentage of Illinois students receiving special education services decreases to 12.2% when non-public enrollment (n=323,869) is added to the number of Illinois students. Data on non-public school students by race/ethnicity were not available. Percentages arrived at by author.

Monitoring for Disproportionate Representation

Consistency Across Racial Groups. Problems of over-, under- and mis-identification of CLD students with regard to special education eligibility are currently of great concern in the field and are being addressed at the national level by the U.S. Department of Education and by professional organizations including the Council for Exceptional

<i>Table 2.2</i> Illinois Students who Received Specialized Services by Language Group, 1999-00		
<u>Language Groups¹</u>	<u># of Students Receiving Bilingual/ESL Services²</u>	<u># of Students Receiving Special Education Services</u>
Spanish	110,831	8044
Polish	6,550	341
Serbian	2,412	53
Arabic	2,312	216
Urdu	2,303	124
Korean	1,803	66
Gujarati	1,680	80
Cantonese	1,566	48
Russian	1,246	41
Vietnamese	1,210	57
Pilipino	905	56
Japanese	812	15
Assyrian	786	70
Albanian (Gheg)	702	None reported ³
Romanian	609	27
Mandarin	595	16
Bulgarian	523	None reported
Hindi	434	24
Ukrainian	385	None reported
German	377	5
Panjabi	359	None reported
Cambodian	340	17
Malayalam	338	None reported
Bosnian	335	None reported
Lithuanian	318	5

Source: Illinois State Board of Education (see ISBE, 1999-00c).

¹List of the 25 largest language groups receiving bilingual/ESL services.

²Enrolled in Transitional Bilingual Education or Transitional Programs of Instruction.

³None reported means either 0 or included in the category "Other" in the ISBE special education program data.

Illinois' figures are consistent with national data that students from non-English language groups are likely to be under-represented and under-served in special education.

Children (CEC 1997, 2001a; 2001b; Committee on Minority Representation in Special Education, 2002). At the state and local levels, administrators can help prevent disproportionate representation by being aware of state demographic information on special and monitoring similar statistics at the local level (see Table 2.1). In Illinois, we have approximately the same percentage of Euro-American and African-American students being served by special education programs. The percentage of Hispanic and Native American students in special education is about 1/3 lower while the percentage of Asian-American students in special education is about 2/3 lower. Illinois figures are consistent with national data from the U.S. Office of Civil Rights and congressional reports on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) showing that Hispanics and Asians are under-identified in special education programs (OCR, 1993; Committee on Minority Representation in Special Education, 2001).

Consistency Across Language Groups. One way to examine the representation of ELLs in special education is to compare the percent of students receiving special education and bilingual/ESL services to all students receiving bilingual/ESL services. In Illinois, this is a difficult process because we count students with disabilities by primary language, rather than by receipt of bilingual/ESL services and we do not specify in the total bilingual/ESL services count how many students also receive special education services. However, we can make some estimations based on the expectation that we should find roughly the same percentage of students with disabilities in the population of students with limited English proficiency that we find in the total student population, i.e., 14%. In 1999-00, Illinois schools served 143,855 students with limited English (ISBE, 1999-00b), so roughly 20,000 students should also have received special education services. However, state data indicate that only 9,650 (approximately 7%) of students who received bilingual/ESL services were identified as having disabilities (ISBE, 1999-00c), about half of the expected number. For the 1999-00 school year, Table 2.2 shows (a) the number of students who received bilingual/ESL services and (b) the number of students who received special education services by language group to illustrate this point. For example, there were 6,550 Polish students with limited English proficiency in Illinois public schools in 1999-00, but only 341 were identified as having special education needs, about 1/3 the number we would expect. In conclusion, although some districts may have an over-representation of certain racial or language groups in special education, ELLs with disabilities are under-represented and under-served by Illinois schools.

Working from a Holistic Perspective

Why do some schools with large numbers of CLD students have a solid record of academic achievement while others struggle? Why are certain teachers successful with so-called problem students while others give up on students or over-refer for special education evaluations? More successful teachers and schools take a holistic view of the learning process and look beyond the student to identify troublesome issues. They examine factors such as the appropriateness of the curriculum for the student, the social environment of the classroom, and how their own behavior, as a school or as individuals, may be contributing to the problem. While this approach does not seem extraordinary, it is in conflict with our traditional analysis of learning problems, a perspective which is based on the medical model. In this traditional approach, inquiry is focused on what is wrong with the student: Does the student have motivation to achieve? What processing difficulties is the student having? How

does the student's behavior interfere with his or her learning? Blame for the problem is then often assigned to the student and/or his or her family, effectively reducing the responsibility of the teacher and the school. In a more enlightened approach to the analysis of learning problems, inquiry is broad and examines the student as one of many aspects of the learning environment: Does the learning environment stimulate student achievement? What processing demands does the instruction place on the student? What is the behavior management system of the classroom and school? The holistic approach is proactive and we can use it to help us ascertain the best possible interaction between the learning environment and personal attributes of the student.

Using principles of ecobehavioral psychology, the state of being at-risk for academic underachievement or failure is a function of the "goodness of fit" between the student and the learning environment. The better the fit between the student and the learning environment, the higher the likelihood for achievement. The worse the fit, the lower the potential for success. Here is a striking example:

Argentina and Shmeran are two bright Assyrian cousins about to enter the school system with little formal education, no English skills, unaware of peer customs regarding dress and music, and parents who can offer limited support. The school that Argentina enters is unaccustomed to immigrant families in the community and has no Assyrian staff. The school provides twice-weekly English as a second language (ESL) preparation and no direct instruction related to the acculturation process. The classroom teacher is angry that she is expected to teach students without English skills and peers either ignore or tease the girl. At the end of the first year, Argentina is speaking little English, does not complete assignments, and behaves sullenly in class. The school that Shmeran enters enrolls her fulltime in an ESL program with social integration activities. As her conversational skills grow, she attends the general education classroom for longer periods of time and is paired with students who help to accustom her to the class routine. The school contracts with a community member who speaks Assyrian to translate during regularly scheduled parent-staff meetings. At the end of the year, Shmeran displays good beginning proficiency in English, has friends, and is eager for involvement in school activities. (Gonzalez, Brusca-Vega, & Yawkey, 1997, p. 6)

The concepts of holistic analysis and goodness-of-fit are critical to any successful intervention process. Members of the school community must be willing to look not only at themselves and other aspects of the instructional environment but to work to make changes after problem areas have been identified. This is not a process for the meek; it takes courage to self-evaluate and adapt and to become an advocate for students when their needs are in conflict with hard-to-change attitudinal or organizational aspects of the school or district.

Establishing a School-Wide Screening Process for Learning and Behavior Problems

In many schools, students are identified for intervention or for special education evaluation in a haphazard manner. An incident of school violence is reported in the news and then a list of potentially troubled students is put together for counseling services. Teachers are given vague criteria with which to refer students for special education, with the result that some teachers make many referrals and others make none. Sometimes, it is only after the

demand of a parent that a meeting is called to discuss a student's lack of progress. Such inattention to potential learning difficulties on a school-wide basis contributes to the disproportionate representation of CLD students in special education. A systematic approach to screening the student population for learning and behavioral problems is essential for healthy schools and successful students. While school- and district-wide standardized testing programs certainly point out which students need remediation, the resulting actions are often too little, too late. A multi-layered screening plan, that involves the regular collection of quantitative and qualitative information on the physical, emotional, social, and academic well-being of students, is the first step in any intervention process.

How Can Districts Implement an Intervention Model for CLD Students?

Educators should be aware that federal and state rules do not require that students suspected of having disabilities go through a pre-referral or intervention process prior to referral for a special education evaluation. However, school districts often utilize an intervention process as an opportunity for school staff to better analyze and resolve problems that interfere with the educational progress of students. Once students have been identified at-risk for school failure because of learning or behavior problems in the classroom, attempts to improve the situation in the context of the general education environment should be made and documented. In many schools, unfortunately, this process is primarily one of the classroom teacher establishing a paper trail, attending meetings and being persistent about follow-up from the special education administrator. An authentic intervention process requires the hands-on involvement of a team of educators, where teachers are not just handed a laundry list of ideas to implement but are supported individually with professional expertise throughout the assessment and intervention process. A hands-on approach includes time for teacher observation and given feedback, informal diagnostic sessions with students, time for discussion among teachers, and modeling of behavior management or instructional skills in the classroom. An exemplary model for intervention with ELLs has been developed by Garcia and Ortiz (1988). In this model, five major aspects of the learning environment are examined in relation to language diverse students:

- **teacher behavior, knowledge and attitudes**, including knowledge of second language acquisition process, expectations for language diverse students, and experience with diverse populations;
- **instruction**, including the use of strategies known to be effective for second language learners and knowledge of literacy development;
- **exposure to the curriculum**, including attention to pre-requisite skills and whether the curriculum was presented in a language the student could understand;
- **student characteristics**, including previous academic experiences and language dominance and proficiency; and
- **evaluation of instruction**, including the appropriateness of evaluative techniques for English language learners.

Although the Garcia and Ortiz model was designed primarily to prevent the over-representation of ELLs in special education, the model can assist us in making a variety of diagnostic decisions. Here in Illinois, where we tend to under-identify ELLs with disabilities,

teachers can use the model to help analyze the academic performance of all ELLs who are experiencing difficulties. In some cases, what teachers refer to as "bilingual problems," including poor memory for oral language, slow processing speed, immature speech patterns or inattention to the learning task, may be revealed as learning disabilities or speech/language disorders.

Among the first steps in the Garcia and Ortiz model is to ascertain whether the curriculum is known to be appropriate for ELLs. These students are often transitioned out of bilingual or ESL programs without adequate language skills and adequate support for the cognitive demands of the new learning environment. Modifications to curriculum or professional development to teachers about facilitating the development of English may be warranted. If the student has problems even when language and cultural needs are supported by the curriculum, a validation process is initiated in which the student's difficulties are verified by several means and sources. Then, if the problem is verified, an ecological analysis of the environment takes place with corresponding interventions. Small group instruction, after-school tutoring, behavioral contracts, and instruction in note-taking skills are some of the interventions that may be tried. Only after all options have been exhausted is the referral to special education made.

Putting an Intervention Program into Action

In order to put models of best practice into action, adaptations are often required to meet the unique characteristics and needs of the school. The program described in the following section, based on the model by Garcia and Ortiz, was designed by the author for a large and culturally diverse elementary school where a large and disproportionate number of students had been referred for special education evaluations.

The Problem: At this school, teachers were making many special education referrals based on generalized low achievement rather than strong indicators of disability. The case manager and evaluation team were overwhelmed. Teachers complained that their requests for assistance were not being taken seriously and that the process took an extraordinary amount of time. The case manager and others on the intervention team felt that some teachers were pushing for special education evaluations so as not to be responsible for student learning and that other teachers had unclear notions of what constituted a disability. At the same time, the author, who was working as a consultant in the school, observed several students with very clear processing difficulties and low achievement who had never been referred for evaluation. Overall, there were a variety of problems in the learning environment at the school but there was also an extremely high level of expertise and commitment of many teachers and administrators.

The Solution: In the opinion of the author, student achievement problems were more likely to be solved if those with relevant expertise and closer ties to the students and teachers involved would take charge of the process. The solution here was to utilize teacher assistance teams in which the members were selected by the referring teacher. Team members committed to conducting at least two classroom observations and a diagnostic session with the student. The teachers committed to fully implement the suggestions. And, if the team had reason to suspect a disability, administration committed to proceed with the referral. A more

complete explanation of the process with corresponding forms is offered as a sample to administrators in Chapter Appendix 2-A.

Conclusion

Disproportionate representation of ELLs in special education can be addressed by having comprehensive assessment and intervention systems in place. Of the three types of representation problems, over-, under-, and mis-identification, it is the under-representation of these students in special education that is a critical issue at the national and state levels. When students are not properly identified and served, they are at increased risk for dropping out of school and are not eligible for the transition services that will help them become productive citizens as adults. A variety of factors are implicated in this problem including lack of professionals who speak the native language of the students and misconceptions of staff about language and cultural issues. Educators are urged to behave as advocates for these students and implement plans to examine and remedy disproportionate representation at the local level.

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Appendix 2-B Sample Intervention Process

Sample Intervention Process: Guidelines for Referring Teachers

What Is the Intervention Program?

This program is an effort to make the intervention process more helpful and efficient for students and teachers. The purpose of the new procedures is for you (with the assistance of at least two of your peers) to attempt to solve the problem in the context of the general education environment prior to requesting an evaluation for special education services. You and your colleagues will be primarily responsible for deciding whether or not a student is in need of a case study evaluation. If conducted appropriately, this procedure should (a) increase and improve the quality of peer mentoring and collaboration, (b) result in improved academic and/or social behavior of the student, and (c) result in improved diagnosis of learning difficulties and disabilities for all students.

What Are the Steps in the Intervention Process?

1. After deciding that you have exhausted options/ideas for how to improve the student's behavioral or academic performance, select two colleagues to review the situation. These peers should be individuals whose opinions and expertise you respect and who will be honest and direct with you. Colleagues may include teachers at any grade level, special education teachers, counselors, psychologists and other support staff as well as administrators.
2. You and your colleagues have an initial group meeting where you explain the problem, providing details about the student, the class, curriculum and instruction, and your previous successes and failures with the student. The job of your colleagues at this point is to ask good questions and get you to clarify the issues as much as possible.
3. Your colleagues then schedule times to observe in your classroom during a period when the problem will be evident. Your colleagues need to observe at least twice for a minimum of 30 minutes and conduct an informal diagnostic session with the student. For accuracy, observations should be written in narrative or outline form as the observation takes place. Notes about the diagnostic session should be written immediately following the session.
4. Next, you and your colleagues have a group meeting to decide on future steps. Your colleagues should attend this meeting having filled out the "Analysis and Recommendations" form based on the information gathered in Steps 2 and 3. In most cases, you and your colleagues will agree that you should implement a series of specified interventions prior to referring the student for special education. In extreme cases, you and your colleagues may decide that the student needs to be referred immediately for an evaluation for a special education evaluation. If the student is referred, the team continues to support your efforts with the student at least until eligibility has been determined.

In the case of a decision for **general education intervention**, schedule a follow-up meeting with your colleagues to report on your progress with the student and determine what, if any, additional actions should be taken.

In the case of a decision for **special education referral**, complete the required forms, anecdotal records, and the analysis and recommendation forms of your colleagues.

Sample Intervention Program: Forms for Team Members

II. Student Variables (cont.)

A. Language Proficiency

1. Which is the student's dominant language? Which is preferred?
2. What is the student's level of proficiency in the primary language and English?
3. Are student behaviors characteristic of second language acquisition?
4. What type of language intervention has the student received?

B. Learning Style

1. Does the student's learning style require curricular/instructional accommodations? If so, were these characteristics accommodated?

C. Motivational Influences

1. Is the student's self-concept enhanced by school expectations? How do you know this?
2. Is the student's schooling perceived as relevant and necessary for success in the student's family and community? How do you know this?

D. Behavior

1. What behaviors does the student display that enhance or hinder academic progress?
2. What behaviors does the student display that enhance or hinder social relationships with peers? With adults?
3. Does the student seek guidance when necessary for academic or other issues?
4. What specific behavioral interventions has the teacher implemented? Have these interventions been successful? Why or why not?

III. Curriculum Variables

- A. Were the skills in question taught?
- B. Did the student receive adequate exposure to the curriculum?
- C. Was instruction sensitive to the student's level of performance?
- D. Was adequate mastery of skills/concepts ensured prior to moving on to new material?

IV. Instructional Variables

- A. How does the learning environment promote intrinsic motivation?
- B. Does the teacher use alternative approaches when there is evidence of a learning difficulty? Give examples.
- C. Does the teacher use strategies known to be effective for the population? Give examples.
- D. Does the teacher use approaches to literacy development which focus on meaningful communication? Give examples.
- E. Does the teacher use appropriate modifications for this student's learning problems? Give examples.

V. Evaluation Variables

- A. Does the teacher use evaluation techniques that maximize opportunities for the student to show what he or she has learned? Give examples.
- B. Does the teacher assess for formative as well as summative evaluation? Give examples.

Sample Intervention Program: Forms for Team Members

Analysis and Recommendation Form

Name of Student: _____

Name of Teacher: _____

Completed by: _____

1. After (a) meeting with the referring teacher, (b) conducting two classroom observations and a diagnostic session with the student, and (c) carefully considering the questions about teacher, student, instruction, curriculum, and evaluation variables, my understanding of the problem is as follows:

2. My three primary recommendations are:

3. I will help to implement these recommendations and help evaluate the outcome of these recommendations by:

4. If one recommendation is for a special education referral, state:

- (a) which disability you believe is present (e.g., learning disability, mild cognitive disability, behavior/emotional disturbance); and
- (b) why you think the student's characteristics match the federal definition of the disability.

CHAPTER 3

Assessing Oral and Written Language Proficiency in English Language Learners

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In this chapter, we will address issues of language assessment as they pertain to psychologists and teachers working with English Language Learners (ELLs) who may have possible special education needs. The chapter is organized around frequently asked questions that revolve around the following major topics:

- What constitutes bilingual language proficiency? (*page 1*)
- What should an assessment of language proficiency consist of? (*page 3*)
- How should information regarding language proficiency be obtained? (*page 3*)
- Why is it important to assess oral and written language in a special education setting? (*page 4*)
- How should information regarding language proficiency be used? (*page 8*)

Chapter Appendix Materials

- Forms for Language Assessment (*3-A, 3-B, 3-C, 3-D*)

What Constitutes Bilingual Language Proficiency?

Language proficiency has been defined as the ability to use language accurately and appropriately in its oral and written forms in a variety of settings (Cloud, Genesee & Hamayan, 2000). This definition incorporates the four aspects of language: listening, speaking, reading and writing. The first two aspects constitute oral language, and the last two written language. Although the four aspects of language are highly interrelated, they can develop independently of one another, especially when the language is not native to the learner. Thus, it is possible for a child to develop oral proficiency in English as a second language (ESL) outside of school without having had any exposure to written English. Similarly, it is possible to have learned English as a foreign language in the home country primarily through literacy, without having had much exposure to or practice with spoken English. While listening and reading represent receptive skills (the person receives information), speaking and writing represent expressive skills (the person gives information). Receptive skills typically develop ahead of expressive skills because receiving information is easier than giving it. So, most learners understand more than they can express.

Proficiency in all these aspects of language is rarely equal in both languages that a bilingual person uses. The person who is equally proficient in all aspects of both native and second languages—that is, the balanced bilingual—is the exception rather than the rule. Most bilinguals have more proficiency in some aspects of one language than the other, and it is not always the native language that is the more proficient one. For one thing, proficiency varies as a function of the context of communication. The extent to which language is contextualized makes a difference in how easy it is to process.

Table 3.1
The Range of Language Proficiency Components of Bilingual Students

				Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
L1	High Context	Formal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
		Informal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
	Low Context	Formal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
		Informal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
L2	High Context	Formal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
		Informal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
	Low Context	Formal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
		Informal	Abstract				
			Concrete				

Language that is highly contextualized (such as an illustrated story) is easier to use and is learned more quickly than language that occurs in a reduced, or low, context (such as a conversation over the phone). Proficiency also varies as a function of the purpose and content of communication. The language needed in informal social settings and particularly about concrete topics (such as describing the physical attributes of a person or object) may be easier to master than language that is needed in more formal settings, especially when the content is abstract and cognitively demanding (such as explaining the concept of democracy or justice).

All these variables that define bilingual language proficiency make the assessment process quite complex. It is important that psychologists and teachers keep this complexity in mind when making educational and programmatic decisions regarding ELLs with possible special education needs.

What Should an Assessment of Language Proficiency Consist of?

The most extensive assessment of language proficiency would provide information about all the different aspects of language, in a variety of contexts, for a variety of topics—both informal and formal, as well as concrete and abstract— and in both native and second languages. Table 4.1 illustrates the range of language proficiency components that would give the most complete picture of a student’s bilingual performance. However, not all assessments of language proficiency need to encompass the entire gamut of components illustrated above. We assess whatever we need information on and for specific purposes in order to make specific decisions. Unless the student has zero (or close to zero) proficiency in one of the two languages, it is recommended that proficiency in both languages be assessed. As the section below shows, the different aspects of the education of ELLs with possible special education needs must determine the information that we obtain regarding a student’s language proficiency. For example, in order to make the decision regarding the language(s) of instruction, we must obtain information in how well the student processes academic language required to succeed in school at grade level in all four skills.

How Should Information Regarding Language Proficiency Be Obtained?

Several approaches are possible to obtain information regarding language proficiency. Some of these approaches are standardized norm-referenced measures, and others are alternatives that are more informal, authentic, direct and descriptive. As was the case with the choice of what is assessed, it is important to choose the assessment approach that yields the information that is needed for a specific purpose. Among these alternative measures are language use surveys, anecdotal information collected by teachers, interviews, conferences, language samples (oral or written) and observation. Language proficiency information can be recorded by using checklists, rating scales, inventories or narrative form and can be kept in portfolios (Hamayan, 1995). Regardless of the approaches to be used, it is essential that assessment be planned carefully. The following questions can guide the planning process (Genesee & Hamayan, 1994):

- Who will use the results of assessment and for what purpose?
- What will I assess?
- When will I assess, and has this information already been gathered?
- How will I assess?
- How will I record the results of my assessment?

Why Is it Important to Assess Oral and Written Language in a Special Education Setting?

Language forms the heart of communication and through language we witness conceptual development and cognitive growth. The interaction between language and cognition is a complex phenomenon and for ELLs who, by definition face language obstacles, the two constructs are often intertwined and difficult to differentiate. One of the most effective ways of making this differentiation is through assessment of the students' oral and written language proficiency.

It is well established that the English language proficiency of ELLs is not on par with their native English-speaking peers. This fact, however, does not in and of itself constitute a predisposition to a language disability as defined by the special education community. There is a substantial body of research on second language acquisition that documents the developmental process of language learning for students across age spectrums, cultures and educational experiences. We, as educators, must bring this knowledge to the table when special education is being contemplated for ELLs. Therefore, we must ascertain the contribution of language to a student's total development, especially for linguistically and culturally diverse students who have been exposed to a language other than English, even if incidentally. In obtaining this information, it is critical that we assess the four major domains of language, listening, speaking, reading and writing, in the student's first (L1) language and second (L2) language, English. Only then can we determine the full extent language plays in a student's academic performance.

Equally important, assessment must be systematically employed for each of its specified purposes and contexts. In this section, three contexts within a special education setting, (pre)referral, instruction and accountability, are examined in terms of the stakeholders involved and the types of oral and written language proficiency measures that are appropriate. Later in this chapter, these same contexts are explored in regard to the potential uses of the assessment information. A planning form for assessing oral and written language proficiency in first and second languages within special education contexts (Table 4.2) is displayed for teachers to map the types of language proficiency assessments that are used in each context.

(Pre)referral

Teachers must be astutely aware of students' oral and written language proficiency at the pre-referral stage. That is, before a teacher embarks on the formal referral process, extensive language proficiency data need to be gathered. This information, collected in students' L1 and L2, assists teachers in making the preliminary decision as to whether students should be brought before a multi-disciplinary team for further evaluation. In addition, if the process does move forward, the language proficiency data are invaluable for psychologists who make the determination of the language in which the psychological testing is to be conducted. The choice of language for psychological testing is key to students' educational future; therefore, it is incumbent upon teachers to have accurate language proficiency evidence so ultimately, psychologists, in turn, can obtain reliable and valid information.

Table 3.2

Planning Form for Assessing Oral and Written Language Proficiency of ELLs in First (L1) and Second (L2) Languages Within Special Education Contexts

LANGUAGE OF ASSESSMENT	LISTENING/ SPEAKING		READING		WRITING	
	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2
(PRE)REFERRAL						
INSTRUCTION						
ACCOUNTABILITY						

Given the three major contexts for special education assessment, we must now determine who are the primary persons responsible for planning, collecting, analyzing and reporting the information (the stakeholders) and what types of language proficiency information are needed. Table 4.3 outlines broad categories of applicable tools for (pre)referral, instruction, and accountability.

Within the context of referral, there are three main purposes for language proficiency assessment of ELLs. First, information on students' oral and written language proficiency serves as criteria in the determination of students' eligibility for special education services. Second, language proficiency information helps define the necessary amount of L1 and L2 instructional support and therefore, is important for placing students in appropriate educational environments. Third, the information can be applied to creating the language-related goals and objectives of students' Individual Educational Plans (IEPs).

Several types of oral and written assessment tools are tied to (pre)referral. To gain an overall understanding of ELLs' language preference inside and outside of school and to inspect the students' interaction patterns with various language models and in varied settings, a language use survey is suggested (see Chapter Appendix 3-A for a sample survey). Although, for example, ELLs may interact only in English (L2) at school, it is important to ascertain their exposure and use of their first language. The sample survey is intended to be read to the student, however, it may be translated and adapted for parents as well.

Standardized language proficiency tests are another data source for (pre)referral. Information must be current on the ELLs' oral language proficiency and literacy (for those students in grade 3 or above). The state mandates that standardized, norm-referenced language proficiency testing be conducted on an annual basis for ELLs receiving services from Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) or Transitional Programs of Instruction (TPI) funds, therefore, these data should be readily available in English. For Spanish-speaking

students, there is a choice of several instruments in Spanish. Minimally, older ELLs, other than those who speak Spanish, should produce a writing sample in L1.

Table 3.3

Aligning Oral and Written Assessments of ELLs with Special Education Contexts and Stakeholders.

CONTEXT FOR ASSESSMENT	STAKEHOLDERS	ORAL ASSESSMENT	WRITTEN ASSESSMENT
(PRE)REFERRAL	Multi-disciplinary Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Language Use Survey ✓ Standardized language proficiency tool ✓ Standards-based measures ✓ Anecdotal information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Standardized language proficiency tool ✓ Standards-based measures
INSTRUCTION	Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Interviews/conferences ✓ Performance tasks ✓ Observation of students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Informal Reading Inventories ✓ Writing samples
ACCOUNTABILITY	Teachers, Administrators, and the State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Alternate assessment portfolio ✓ Standardized language proficiency tool ✓ Standards-based measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Alternate assessment portfolio ✓ IMAGE

In addition, information from standards-based measures that are part of a school district’s repertoire of either norm-referenced or criterion-referenced tests is helpful as a means of comparison between ELLs and their peers, ideally other ELLs with a similar profile. And lastly, anecdotal information on the students that has been logged by teachers on an ongoing basis lends valuable insight into the students’ overall performance. In conclusion, for (pre)referral, current information on students’ oral and written language proficiency in L1 and L2 that is based on multiple sources provides a well-rounded picture of ELLs’ total language development.

Instruction

Once students have been placed within a special education setting, it is important to assess ELLs' oral and written language proficiency in order to establish a student's baseline performance levels. In this way, appropriate and effective instructional services can be provided. The intensity and duration of L1 and/or L2 support should be clearly stipulated in every IEP to maximize the potential for academic success for each ELL with special needs. In addition, specific instructional accommodations for individual ELLs with identified disabilities, such as reading content area material to students or having students dictate their responses, need to be clearly delineated in their IEPs as a means of ensuring the same accommodations during state assessment.

Knowledge of ELLs' language proficiencies is important in being able to design a coordinated instructional plan. Provision of an integrated set of support services including special education, English as a Second Language (ESL), bilingual education, and Title I is necessary in order to facilitate continuity of instruction for students throughout the school day. To accomplish this goal, all teachers serving ELLs need to collaborate regularly with open and clear lines of communication.

Through instruction, teachers constantly monitor student's language development and through assessment, teachers are apprised of the students' movement along the language proficiency continuum as well as their acquisition of academic concepts. The primary purposes of instructional assessment are two-fold; to document student progress and to inform instruction. In a special education setting, teachers need to customize classroom measures to take into account the ELLs' language proficiency and specific disabilities.

As in (pre)referral, teachers' reliance on multiple measures is required for ongoing language proficiency assessment. Oral language data on the students can be readily obtained through teacher/student interviews or conferences that focus on objectives in the students' IEPs; this means of assessment also allows for periodic student feedback and student self-evaluation. Another way of assessing oral language is through observation of student interaction. If conducted systematically, observing students as part of instruction provides ample opportunities for teachers to log their students' use of language. For example, for documentation purposes, teachers might create an oral language checklist similar to the survey in Chapter Appendix 3-A. In the checklist, however, the left-hand column is devoted to specific language functions, that is, how students use language to communicate. Such functions might include that the students respond to commands, ask questions, converse with one another, hypothesize, discuss school-related topics and/or explain a process.

Within the context of instruction, performance tasks, when coupled with rubrics or scoring guides, can also serve as assessments. These tasks are hands-on activities where students manipulate, construct, or work with concrete objects or other forms of representation, such as graphs, charts and tables. They are often bound to subject area concepts and specified Illinois Learning Standards. To accompany performance tasks, many rubrics have been developed for ELLs that address language proficiency and academic achievement; two such resources are *The Language Proficiency Handbook: A Practitioner's Guide to Instructional*

Assessment (ISBE, 1999) and *Authentic Assessment for English Language Learners: Practical Approaches for Teachers* (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996).

In performance tasks students demonstrate academic language proficiency, as language is taught through content. All four areas of language may be incorporated into a task, which may be as lengthy as a thematic unit, so both oral and written language proficiency are assessed. In sum, teachers ought to collect various forms of assessment information within the context of instruction that chronicle ELLs' language development.

Accountability

Just as language proficiency assessment is a critical component of (pre)referral and instruction, so too does its importance extend to the context of accountability. In special education settings, accountability for student learning occurs at different levels. The first level is the classroom, where teachers design and deliver instruction. It is here where the students' IEPs become the binding contract and legal document; teachers must produce defensible data that justify the extent to which an individual student's objectives and goals have been met. As part of the teachers' commitment to student learning, with each annual review, ELLs' oral and written language proficiency information must be updated.

Ultimately, the responsibility for educating our students resides with the state, the second level of accountability. Accountability measures for all students in special education, including ELLs, are summative, based on cumulative performance, and anchored in Illinois Learning Standards. ELLs in grades 3-11 must be involved in state assessment and, depending on their disability, either participate in the *Illinois Measure of Annual Growth in English* (IMAGE), with or without accommodations as stipulated by their IEP, or produce an alternate assessment portfolio. Since 1996 IMAGE, a standardized reading and writing language proficiency test designed and normed on ELLs, has been administered to students participating in state approved TBE/TPI programs for three consecutive years or less.

The alternate assessment portfolio, with its alternate performance indicators, has been developed for special education students whose disabilities preclude them from participating either in the IMAGE or the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT). Initiated in 2000, it represents the blending of assessment and instructional practices, the rise in the legitimacy of performance assessment and use of criteria as descriptors of student performance (Gottlieb, 2000). In addition to accountability, the portfolio has a secondary purpose; to offer students the opportunity for self-reflection and evaluation (Gottlieb, 1995).

The thrust of state accountability lies in measuring student progress in reading and writing. For ELLs, the emphasis on literacy assessment at the state level has to be offset by oral language assessment at the classroom level in order to create a balanced and comprehensive picture of the students' language proficiency. In measuring oral and written language of ELLs, the use of both standardized and classroom tools is not only important, it is invaluable in determining what students know and are able to do.

How Should Information Regarding Language Proficiency Be Used?

We have defined bilingual language proficiency, discussed the importance of assessment of oral and written language and described appropriate language proficiency data sources and measures. We now turn to how language proficiency information can be effectively used in special education settings. Parallel to the discussion on the necessity for language proficiency assessment for ELLs, in this section, the uses of assessment data are described for (pre)referral, instruction, and accountability. A summary of how assessment information applies to special education contexts is presented in Table 3.4. Irrespective of the context, however, the overriding use of reliable and valid assessment information is to promote sound educational decision-making.

Table 3.4
The Uses of Assessment Information on Language Proficiency According to Special Education Contexts.

CONTEXT FOR ASSESSMENT	USES OF ASSESSMENT INFORMATION ON LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY
(PRE)REFERRAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Determine relative language proficiency ✓ Determine the relationship between oral and written language ✓ Compare individual student performance over time and with that of other ELLs
INSTRUCTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Diagnose strengths and weaknesses ✓ Detect trends or patterns of language use ✓ Plan and modify instruction ✓ Review IEP goals and objectives ✓ Share with students and parents
ACCOUNTABILITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Report to stakeholders ✓ Determine student gains from year to year ✓ Document movement toward IEP goals and learning standards

(Pre)referral

For pre-referral, teachers gather both standardized and classroom information on ELLs' oral and written language proficiency in the students' L1, to the extent feasible, and L2, English. Using comparable measures, teachers can compare student performance in L1 with L2 for a given language area (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to ascertain the student's preferred or stronger language. Table 3.5, Determining relative language proficiency across language areas based on specified data sources, is a matrix that teachers may complete to assist them in this process.

Teachers may approach this task in several ways. One suggestion is that the L1 and L2 columns be color-coded according to preferred/non-preferred language and, based on the information from language proficiency assessment, teachers fill in the appropriate cell for each language area with the data source(s) and date(s) noted in the last column. Another option is that teachers enter test scores directly in the listening, speaking, reading and writing cells for L1 and L2 while identifying the instrument(s) and date(s) in the right-hand column. In either case, teachers will have summaries of students' language proficiency information that can be used in deciding whether a special education referral is warranted.

Table 3.5

Determining Relative Language Proficiency Across Language Areas Based on Specified Data Sources

	FIRST LANGUAGE L1	ENGLISH L2	Data Source(s), Instrument(s) and Date(s)
LISTENING			
SPEAKING			
READING			
WRITING			

Within the context of referral, the information from Figure 4.5 can be reanalyzed to establish the relationship between students' oral (listening and speaking) and written (reading and writing) language proficiency or between students' receptive (listening and reading) and productive (speaking and writing) language proficiency. For ELLs, discrepancies among the language areas may be attributed to the developmental nature of the language acquisition process or the discontinuity of exposure to a particular language. Disabilities usually manifest themselves across languages for ELLs; therefore, the only means to capture all the pertinent language proficiency information is through bilingual assessment.

Once language proficiency information is made available on a linguistically and culturally diverse student to a multidisciplinary team during referral, current student performance can be compared with prior performance to mark individual gains over time. Additionally, the oral and written language proficiency of an individual ELL, when compared with other ELLs of similar backgrounds and profiles, yields information about the average expectations for the group. Language proficiency data of ELLs must be carefully analyzed

and evaluated in L1 and L2 during pre-referral and referral before assigning any language-related, special education label.

Instruction

Teachers who work with ELLs with disabilities are attuned to their individual strengths and weaknesses in L1 and L2. Assessment based on classroom activities and tasks provides the day-to-day diagnostic information teachers constantly use in introducing, reinforcing, and reviewing strategies and skills. In addition, the information on students' oral and written language directs teachers to reflect upon how effectively they teach the language objectives identified in each lesson and adjust their instruction to better meet the linguistic needs of their students.

Information from assessment is to be shared with students and parents (or family members) alike. Assessment is not a clandestine activity, it is a vital component of schooling, and reliable results that have been accrued over time produce a quite accurate portrayal of a student's performance. Students have a right to know what is expected of them (the criteria) and how they are expected to achieve those expectations (through exemplars or models). Equally important, students should receive specific feedback on what they do (again, based on set criteria) and shown ways to improve.

Parents or family members are to be part of the instructional assessment cycle as well. Every attempt should be made to have ongoing assessment information about their child in the language best understood by the parents. In addition, the state requires that the contents of the alternate assessment portfolio be validated by parents or guardians each data collection period.

Accountability

The state has an obligation to report assessment information to stakeholders and it does so for ELLs in special education in one of two ways. First, if the students participate in IMAGE, data are disaggregated for those with IEPs and, as with other ELLs, are reported at the state, school district, school, and student levels. The cover sheet with IMAGE results that is sent to parents is produced in English and Spanish; in addition, it has been translated into various other languages. As ELLs take IMAGE reading and writing for up to three consecutive years (the forms are vertically equated), it is easy to determine student gains from year to year. In fact, with IMAGE scores, we are able to predict a student's probability of success in meeting Illinois learning standards in the area of literacy that are represented in the ISAT.

Second, for those ELLs involved in the alternate assessment portfolio, state level participation data, rather than actual scores, are reported in its initial year of implementation, 2001. The original scoring rubric has undergone revision and during the 2001-2002 academic year, special education teachers and coordinators will receive training in its use. Then, information on students' oral and written language assessment will then be able to be tracked more reliably.

Lastly, teachers working with ELLs with disabilities are to remind themselves of each student's IEP goals and objectives when planning instruction and collecting language proficiency data. Representative samples of student work provide the evidence of each student's language-related accomplishments. For ELLs with severe disabilities, information on the students' oral and written language gathered within a specified time frame, such as in conjunction with that of the alternate assessment portfolio, can serve for both formative, or classroom, and summative, or state level, purposes.

We admit that language assessment of ELLs, in general, and those with disabilities, in particular, is a complex undertaking. Recognition of the linguistic and cultural diversity of our students and acknowledgement of the importance of assessing two languages is the first step. It is our sincere wish that in this era of accountability, appropriate and accurate assessment of oral and written language proficiency will produce information that will lead to improved education for all ELLs (Gottlieb, 2001; 1999).

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Chapter Appendix 3-A:

Sample Language Use Survey

Which language or languages do you use around home, your neighborhood, and school? Tell me if you use your first language, _____, English, or both languages with the people and places that I name. As the student responds, mark the appropriate box.

	FIRST LANGUAGE (L1),	SECOND LANGUAGE (L2), ENGLISH	BOTH LANGUAGES	NOT APPLICABLE
AROUND HOME				
1. with your parents or guardians				
2. with your grandparents				
3. with your brothers and sisters				
4. with relatives who live with you				
5. with your caregivers				
6. with your neighbors				
7. with your friends				
AROUND YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD				
8. at the store				
9. at the clinic				
10. at church				
11. in the park				
12. at a restaurant				
AROUND SCHOOL				
13. on the playground				
14. in the lunchroom				
15. in the halls				
16. during free time				
17. on the bus				
18. in the library				

Chapter Appendix 3-B:

The Range of Language Proficiency Components in Bilingual Students

To ascertain the range of language proficiency of bilingual students, consider the information generated from assessment for the different aspects of languages (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), in a variety of contexts (high and low) for informal and formal topics that are concrete and abstract in the students' first language (L1) and second language (L2).

				Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
L1	High Context	Formal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
		Informal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
	Low Context	Formal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
		Informal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
L2	High Context	Formal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
		Informal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
	Low Context	Formal	Abstract				
			Concrete				
		Informal	Abstract				
			Concrete				

Chapter Appendix 3-C:

Planning Form for Assessing Oral and Written Language Proficiency of ELLs in First (L1) and Second (L2) Languages Within Special Education Contexts

For each of the special education contexts, (pre)referral, instruction, and accountability, identify the measures used in English Language Learners' (ELLs) first language (L1) and second language (L2, English) for the language areas of listening/ speaking, reading, and writing. Compare the types of measures named across special education contexts, language areas, and languages to ensure a balanced and complete representation.

LANGUAGE OF ASSESSMENT	LISTENING/ SPEAKING		READING		WRITING	
	L1	L2	L1	L2	L1	L2
(PRE)REFERRAL						
INSTRUCTION						
ACCOUNTABILITY						

Chapter Appendix 3-D:

Determining Relative Language Proficiency Across Language Areas Based on Specified Data Sources

List each student’s assessment results derived from the various data sources and instruments for listening, speaking, reading, and writing in the designated boxes marked first language (L1) and English (L2). In order to ensure comparability in measurement, to the extent feasible, report the results using the same metric, scale, or summary form. Determine a student’s relative language proficiency by establishing the relationship between the student’s performance in L1 in relation to that in L2 on relatively similar tasks.

	FIRST LANGUAGE L1	ENGLISH L2	Data Source(s), Instrument(s) and Date(s)
LISTENING			
SPEAKING			
READING			
WRITING			

CHAPTER 4

Determining Eligibility of English Language Learners for Special Education Services

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This chapter provides an overview of Illinois requirements and suggested practices for conducting full and individual evaluations for special education services to students who are English language learners (ELLs). The chapter is directed to administrators, psychologists, and other school staff who are involved in eligibility determinations for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. The following issues are addressed:

- What information is needed prior to conducting a full and individual evaluation? (page 1)
- What are the requirements for conducting a full and individual bilingual evaluation? (page 2)
- What are the qualifications of the bilingual specialist? (page 5)
- What is the role of the bilingual specialist? (page 6)
- What are special considerations regarding cognitive and academic evaluation procedures and instruments? (page 7)
- What happens when bilingual evaluators are not available? (page 8)

Chapter Appendix Material

- Best Practice Example: Case Study Evaluation of Tobias (4-A)
- Sample Case: Referral of Flora To School Solving Problem Team (4-B)

What Information is Needed Prior to Conducting a Full and Individual Evaluation?

Before a CLD student is referred for consideration of special education or related services, best practice indicates that the local school assistance team provide for extensive interventions in the general education classroom. Exceptions to this practice include cases where the disability is obvious or severe such as deafness, blindness, or severe mental retardation. The job of the team is to discuss objectively the appropriateness and relevance of previous instructional interventions, including previous bilingual or ESL support services tailored to meet the student's language and cultural needs. After several interventions in the general education program have failed to help the student learn, a full and individual evaluation may be recommended. Prior to the initiation of the evaluation process, however, the team must gather the following information, which becomes part of the student's temporary records, in accordance with Illinois requirements:

Before a child is given a case study evaluation, the local school district shall determine the primary language of the child's home, general cultural identification, and mode of communication.

- a) *Determination of the child's language use pattern and general cultural identification shall be made by determining the language(s) spoken in the child's home and the language(s) used most comfortably and frequently by the child.*
- b) *If the child has a non-English-speaking background, a determination shall be made of his or her proficiency in English. Such a determination shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of 23 Illinois Administrative Code 228 (Bilingual Education), which specifies the assessment procedures and eligibility criteria for bilingual education programs (see IL. Adm. Code 228.15).*
- c) *Determination of the child's mode of communication shall be made by assessing the extent to which the child uses expressive language and the use he or she makes of other modes of communication (e.g., gestures, signing, unstructured sounds) as a substitute for expressive language.*
- d) *The child's language use pattern, proficiency in English, mode of communication and general cultural identification shall be noted in the child's temporary student record, and this information shall be used in the evaluation and in the development and implementation of the individualized education program.*

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.140 Mode(s) of Communication and Cultural Identification)

What Are the Requirements for Conducting Full and Individual Bilingual Evaluations?

Illinois Requirements for Non-Biased Assessment

Requirements to reduce bias in the evaluation of CLD students are presented here and discussed more fully in the sections that follow:

Each evaluation shall be conducted so as to ensure that it is linguistically, culturally, racially, and sexually nondiscriminatory.

- a) *The language(s) used to evaluate a child shall be consistent with the child's primary language of the home or other mode of communication. (See Section 226.140 of this Part.) If the language use pattern involves two or more languages or modes of communication, the child shall be evaluated by qualified specialists or, when needed, qualified bilingual specialists using each of the child's mode of communication. The provisions of subsections (b) and (c) of this Section shall apply when a qualified bilingual specialist is needed but unavailable.*
- b) *If documented efforts to locate and secure the services of a qualified bilingual specialist are unsuccessful, the district shall use an individual who possesses the professional credentials required under Section 226.840 of this Part to complete the specific components of the evaluation. A certificated school district employee or other individual who has demonstrated competencies in the language of the child shall assist this qualified specialist.*

- c) *If documented efforts to locate and secure the services of a qualified bilingual specialist or a qualified specialist assisted by another individual as provided in subsection (b) of this Section are unsuccessful, the district shall conduct assessment procedures which do not depend upon language. Any special education resulting from such alternative procedures shall be reviewed annually until the child acquires a predominantly English language use pattern.*
- d) *Tests given to a child whose primary language is other than English shall be relevant, to the maximum extent possible, to his or her culture.*
- e) *If the child's receptive and/or expressive communication skills are impaired due to hearing and/or language deficits, the district shall utilize test instruments and procedures that do not stress spoken language and one of the following:*
 - 1) *Visual communication techniques in addition to auditory techniques.*
 - 2) *An interpreter to assist the evaluative personnel with language and testing.*

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.150 Case Study to be Non-Discriminatory)

Initial Evaluations

A full and individual evaluation of all the domains that are relevant to the individual student's learning must be completed for the initial evaluation (23 Illinois Administrative Code, Part 226 Special Education, Section 226.120 Identification of Needed Assessments). In accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA '97; P.L. 105-17), the primary domains that must be considered are health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, communication status, and motor abilities. (See Table 4.1.) Best practice indicates that initial evaluations include a comprehensive assessment of the student's abilities and skills in the native and second language. When assessing language proficiency, using standardized proficiency tests as well as performance evaluation procedures, such as analysis of language samples taken in different contexts and observations of communicative interactions in multiple settings, are recommended. It is also recommended that the evaluation report describe the student's receptive, expressive and comprehension skills in English and the native language, including the student's use of both languages in academic contexts. Such assessment is imperative because comparisons between native language and second language performance in cognitive and academic tasks are crucial in the determination of initial eligibility for special education services of ELLs. A critical topic throughout all initial evaluations in the domain areas and subsequent reports is how linguistic and cultural factors are related to the academic and behavioral difficulties that a student may be exhibiting.

As stated in Section 226.150 (a) (23 Illinois Administrative Code) above, qualified bilingual specialists must always be the first choice among evaluators to complete the initial evaluations of students who come from homes where a language other than English language is spoken, although the Code makes some allowances for alternative, non-standard testing (see Section 226.150 [b] [c]). School districts are advised to make all possible efforts to

secure the services of bilingual staff, including school psychologists, social workers, nurses, special and general education teachers, to assess data about the domains relevant to the referral. Social and emotional status, including information about the student’s adaptive behavior, cultural background, and family history are best gathered by school professionals who can speak the native language of the parents and are familiar with their culture. Academic performance may be assessed by a bilingual school psychologist, a guidance counselor, or a teacher with the appropriate certificate for the student’s age. Information about the student’s general intelligence is best provided by the bilingual school psychologist. If there is evidence that the student has speech or language development problems, the use of a bilingual speech/language pathologist is critical to conducting the assessment of communication abilities.

Table 4.1
Components of a Full and Individual Evaluation for CLD Students

DOMAINS	BILINGUAL EVALUATORS (Best practice indicates the use of bilingual professionals for the evaluation.)
Health	Nurse
Vision	Nurse
Hearing	Nurse
Social Emotional Status, including Adaptive Behavior and Cultural Background	School Psychologist, Social Worker, or School Counselor
Assessment of Language Proficiency	Bilingual/ESL Teacher, Special Education Teacher, Speech/Language Pathologist, or School Psychologist
General Intelligence	School Psychologist
Academic Performance	School Psychologist, General Education Teacher, Special Education Teacher, or School Counselor
Communication Status	Speech/Language Pathologist
Motor Abilities	Nurse, School Psychologist, General Education Teacher, or Special Education Teacher
Learning Environment Assessment	General Education Teacher, Special Education Teacher, or School Psychologist

Re-evaluations

The determination of when students require a re-evaluation is made on a case-by-case basis by the local school assistance team:

A local school district shall reevaluate an eligible child whenever conditions warrant a reevaluation or the child's parent or teacher requests a reevaluation, but at least once every three years. Reevaluations are subject to the applicable requirements of Sections 226.110 through 226.180 of this Part.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Section 226, Special Education, Section 226.190 Reevaluation)

It is recommended that re-evaluations be completed by bilingual personnel in the following cases:

- The student has not acquired proficiency in English and is considered an ELL at levels 1, 2, 3, or S:

Level 1 Very low proficiency in English.

Level 2 A functional level of conversational skills have been acquired but reading and writing skills and conceptual language are poor.

Level 3 Oral language is near native speakers but reading and writing skills are below native speakers.

S Another language is spoken in the student's home and the severity of disability interferes with a language proficiency evaluation.

- The student is receiving bilingual or ESL services.
- The student is not currently classified as an ELL but has received bilingual/ESL services during the past three years.

What Are the Qualifications of the Bilingual Specialist?

. A qualified bilingual specialist is a teacher or pupil support services professional who meets the language and coursework requirements for the Bilingual Special Education Approval as specified in 23 Illinois Administrative Code, Part 226 Special Education, Section 226.800 Personnel. (See Chapter Appendix 1-B.) To meet the language requirement, an individual must successfully pass a language proficiency test provided by ISBE to determine bilingualism. To meet the coursework requirement, individuals who hold teaching certificates must complete three courses which include content about teaching and assessing ELLs who have disabilities. School service personnel (school psychologists, social workers, and guidance counselors) must complete one course on the assessment of ELLs. Administrators should be aware that bilingual teachers and bilingual pupil support services professionals are not considered qualified bilingual specialists unless they hold the Approval. However, these individuals may be useful in the evaluation and IEP process, providing information about the student's language and cultural characteristics, learning styles, academic achievement, and recommended instructional methods and materials. Monolingual special and general education teachers may apply for the Approval if they take the required courses and check the ESL option on the application form. All individuals who meet the requirements for the Approval are assumed to have knowledge about the non-biased assessment of language, cognitive, academic functioning, and social adaptive skills.

What Is the Role of the Bilingual Specialist?

An important function of the qualified bilingual specialist is to discuss the influence that the second language acquisition process has on a student's academic achievement and social adaptive functioning. One role of the bilingual specialist is to make recommendations to the team about the language(s) of instruction to be used for individual academic subjects

and about appropriate accommodations to promote learning and maximize academic and social participation in the general education curriculum with non-disabled bilingual peers. Another role of the bilingual specialist is to evaluate whether the instructional services that the student has received were appropriately tailored to the student's levels of language proficiency, socio-cultural characteristics, and cognitive styles (Lopez, 1995). It is recommended that an assessment of the learning environment be completed by the bilingual specialist to determine if the instructional methods and materials that teachers have used match the student's linguistic needs, cultural background, and social experiences. For example, it is appropriate for the bilingual specialist to check to see if methods used to present lessons incorporate a variety of multisensory instructional strategies and supports to make the content understandable for ELLs.

When assessing the socio-cultural experiences of CLD children, it is important for the bilingual specialist to make observations and interview the parents, student, and teachers to obtain information regarding variables including family composition, possible signs of stress related to cultural adaptation, the family's child rearing practices, the student's pattern of school attendance, and the family's history of transience (if any). The family's identified social or health problems and possible need for referral to community agencies is an area for discussion. In addition, information about the student's social interactions with peers and adults in school, the parents' level of communication with school personnel, and the parents' involvement in school may highlight possible social needs of the student and family. It is also important to explore the parents' interpretation of what constitutes a disability and their receptiveness to special education and related services. Table 4.2 shows the components of a comprehensive evaluation report.

Table 4.2
Recommended Content of Evaluation Reports for ELLs

Components of Report	Present	Not Present
LEVELS OF LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY IN L1 AND L2		
Language(s) of instruction used previously		
Language(s) of instruction recommended for current instruction		
Adaptation to the host country and new school system (acculturation)		
Family child rearing practices		
Pattern of school attendance and history of transience		
Level of social skills with students from other cultural, ethnic, and language groups		
Appropriateness of instructional methods and materials used in classroom		
Appropriateness of academic assessments used in the classroom		
Language(s) used during evaluation		
Comparison of academic achievement in L1 and L2 (if appropriate)		
Levels of performance on multiple cognitive tasks		
How evaluation was conducted, including evaluators, procedures, and tools		

What Are Special Considerations Regarding Cognitive and Academic Evaluation Procedures and Instruments?

As stated previously, Section 226.150 (23 Illinois Administrative Code) indicates that the members of the evaluation team are required to use comprehensive assessment procedures and tools that are relevant to a student's culture. Recommended practices in the assessment of the cognitive and academic functioning of bilingual children include the collection of qualitative data from different sources and the use of multiple procedures in the data collection process. Recommended practices also include the critical examination of characteristics of the standardization sample, especially when assessing CLD students with standardized cognitive tests. If the norming sample did not include students with the same demographic characteristics of the child, test results must be interpreted cautiously. Findings may indicate levels of achievement rather than the student's intelligence, potential, or learning aptitude (Sattler, 1988). Test items on standardized tests may tap information that CLD students may not be familiar with due to their language background and cultural experiences. Additionally, standardized testing procedures assume that CLD children have the skills necessary for test-taking (Lopez, 1995).

Results on standardized tests may be used on an informal basis in conjunction with data from numerous other sources, including developmental scales, performance-based assessment, criterion-referenced tests, and curriculum-based assessments to describe a student's level of performance (Hoy & Gregg, 1994). When appropriately used, curriculum-based measurement methodology is likely to minimize bias in the assessment process because it compares the performance of individual students to other children of the same age, linguistic background, and similar levels of exposure to a curriculum (Fradd, Larrinaga, & Wilen 1994). To avoid the weaknesses associated with interpreting the validity and reliability of standardized test results with CLD children, Ortiz (2001) suggests that an alternative classification system be used instead of a traditional numerical classification of standard scores or percentile ranks. He recommends describing the student's performance using descriptors that indicate the developmental stage, presence, or quality of the skills measured (e.g., highly proficient, proficient, and problematic).

A number of intelligence and educational tests have been developed in Spanish, the language spoken by most CLD students in the United States. However, a Spanish version of a test normed in Mexico may not be appropriate for students from Puerto Rico living in New York. Culture specific tests have limitations in terms of predicting how the student will perform in the mainstream culture represented in schools in the United States (Salvia & Ysseldyke, 2001). Substantial documentation exists showing that CLD students may lack exposure and experience with the materials, content, and type of tasks used in standardized psychometric tests (Gonzalez 1994; Gonzalez & Yawkey, 1993; Padilla 1992). These inhibitory factors and the extent of cultural and linguistic differences must be examined as possible explanations for the presence of learning difficulties before a disability is declared. This issue is addressed by Illinois requirements:

A child may not be determined eligible under this Part if the determinant factor for that determination is lack of instruction in reading or math or limited English proficiency and the child does not otherwise meet the district's eligibility criteria.
(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section: 226.160 Determination of Eligibility)

What Happens When Bilingual Evaluators Are Unavailable?

As stated previously, Section 226.150 (23 Illinois Administrative Code) indicates that when the search for a bilingual specialist has been exhausted, the district shall use the services of a qualified specialist assisted by a certificated employee or other individual who has demonstrated competencies in the language of the child. It is recommended that this practice be restricted to cases in which no bilingual specialist can be located because the student speaks a low incidence language. In these cases, it is advisable to have bilingual teachers working together with monolingual pupil personnel services staff to complete the required evaluation components. A bilingual teacher is not to be considered merely an interpreter but a member of the evaluation team who can provide valuable information about a student's educational performance and language development in the native and second language. However, having any native speaker interpret during test administration modifies standardized test conditions. Results from a test administered using an interpreter cannot be analyzed using the test's norms. An evaluation in which an English monolingual qualified specialist has used an interpreter to assess cognitive and academic functioning is not a standard evaluation situation. The results should not be considered conclusive and the report should indicate that the evaluation was performed using non-standard procedures:

If an assessment is conducted under non-standard conditions, a description of the extent to which the assessment varied from standard conditions shall be included in the evaluation report. This information is needed so that the team of evaluators can assess the effects of these variances on the validity and reliability of the information reported and determines whether additional assessments are needed. For example the use of a translator when a qualified bilingual professional is not available may create nonstandard conditions.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.130 Evaluation Requirements)

When cognitive assessments are completed using non-verbal tests, they are not free of bias since they are also affected by the student's familiarity with the content of test's items and his/her level of test taking skills. Although non-verbal and visual processing tasks tend to show smaller ethnic group differences than language loaded tasks, they assess a limited range of skills and their relevance to classroom academic tasks is questionable. Additionally, the administration of non-verbal tests requires the use of language to establish rapport, interact, and provide instructions to the student. Therefore, they also involve verbal interactions between the student and the evaluator.

Summary

In summary, the assessment of CLD students should go beyond traditional measures and include a variety of methods where students can demonstrate their competencies in ways that are compatible with their different learning and performance styles and experiential backgrounds. The following case study illustrates common variables intervening in the educational functioning of immigrant students from non-English language backgrounds and the assessment procedures commonly used with such students. Names that appear in the case study have been changed to ensure confidentiality. (See Chapter Appendix 4-A.)

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Chapter Appendix 4-A Sample Case Study Evaluation: Tobias Santana

Background Information

Tobias Santana was referred for an initial full and individual assessment. He came to Chicago three months ago from a rural town in Honduras. A review of Tobias' academic records brought by his mother from Honduras revealed that he received individual academic tutoring because he was learning at a slow pace. He started school at the age seven and repeated the first grade. The family emigrated from Honduras to Texas two years ago. In Texas, Tobias attended a bilingual general education program for one and a half year. He was referred by his bilingual teacher for a case study evaluation for his inability to show significant progress. However, at that time the family moved back to their hometown in Honduras.

Tobias is currently 11 years old. He was enrolled one month ago in a bilingual general education classroom at his local school in Chicago. Tobias' learning skills and social-emotional development appeared to be slow according to his mother and older sister. He presents a history of significant health and developmental problems. He has a history of convulsions and fevers. Medical records and information provided by Mrs. Santana indicated that Tobias was delayed in his speech and language and gross motor development.

Tobias' mother and his older sister reported that his social and independent skills are below the expectation for his chronological age. However, he is self-sufficient in daily living skills such as eating, grooming and dressing. He is able to prepare cold lunches for himself and assist his mother with some house chores such as cleaning, mopping, washing the dishes and setting up his bedroom. His mother and older brother described him as shy but as relating to others in positive ways. The family and the classroom teacher reported no aggressive or hostile behaviors.

Educational and Cognitive Evaluation

Woodcock Psycho-Educational Battery - Revised (Spanish)

Subtest	Grade Level
Letter and Word Identification	1.2
Reading Comprehension	1.0
Spelling	K.0
Math	1.2
Applied Problems	K.0

Brigrance Assessment of Basic Skills (Spanish)

Item	Response
Personal response data	Stated his full name, parents' names, names of siblings; Failed to state his age, birthday and address
Identifies colors	Recognized 8 out of 10 colors
Draws a person	Drawing comparable to that of student at 2 nd grade level
Visual motor skills	Approximately at 3 rd grade level, diamond form presented difficulty
Recites the alphabet	Did not respond
Reads uppercase letters	Recognized letters A and O
Reads lowercase letters	Recognized letter o
Counts by rote	Stated numbers 1-15

Writes numbers in sequence from memory	Wrote numbers 1-12; reversed number 9
Understands numbers	Matched fingers to number quantity
Word recognition	Failed to read any words on pre-primer list

Visual Motor Integration Test (Beery 4th Edition, Revised)

Age Equivalent: 6 years 2 months
 Standard Score: 53
 Percentile Rank: 01

Weshler Intelligence Scale for Children-III

Administered in Spanish, examiner translated verbal tests and instructions. (These results should be interpreted cautiously and at a descriptive level. They should be considered an estimation of his abilities due to the effect of translation on the validity of the test. Additionally, students from Tobias' cultural, social and linguistic background were not part of the sample used to develop norms for this test.)

Verbal Scale: Performed within the mild MR range
 Performance Scale: Performed within the mild MR range
 Full Scale: Performed within the mild MR range

Assessment of Language Proficiency

Measures of language proficiency included dialogue with the examiner, collection of language samples in the classroom, observations of interactions with peers, Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey: Spanish & English, analyses of written and reading samples in the classroom, and review of classroom portfolio:

English: Tobias is currently at the pre-production stage in the acquisition of English. He is beginning to understand simple commands and instructions in the classroom if repetitions are provided and non-verbal gestures are used for contextual support. He has developed a functional receptive vocabulary that allows him to follow instructions in the lunchroom, library and playground.

Spanish: Tobias' dominant language is Spanish. He is not literate in his primary language. He is a non-reader. His vocabulary and language production in Spanish is far behind that expected for his chronological age. His language production is characterized by short sentences and phrases. He also presents difficulties understanding compound sentences and abstract concepts.

Observation of Learning Environment

To assist Tobias in comprehending instruction, the bilingual teacher needs to use many supports and adaptations. She simplifies the language of instruction, explains the vocabulary before a lesson, and uses manipulatives and visuals. He learns better when he receives individual instruction in the native language and is engaged in activities that require active participation and immediate feedback. He needs constant repetition and reassurance. A bilingual parent volunteer works individually with Tobias to help the teacher in providing him with adaptations and supports during classroom instruction

and assessment. The bilingual teacher has to design and adapt lessons for Tobias in all the subject areas to match his instructional level.

Social Adaptive Behavior

Measures included an ethnographic interview with mother and older sister and the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale-Interview Edition.

Main weaknesses are in the communication domain due to his inability to read and write and delays in language development. Socialization skills are also below expected for chronological age and impacted by his difficulties with expressive language. Relative strengths are in the personal and domestic areas. In general, Tobias' adaptive behavior is estimated to be from three to four years behind his chronological age.

Interpretation of Findings

Tobias was attentive and cooperative during the days he was seen to complete this assessment. Rapport was easily established. Most of the assessment was done in Spanish, his dominant language. However, an assessment of current verbal and academic skills in English was also conducted. He expressed himself in Spanish mostly using single words and short phrases. He had difficulties pronouncing some sounds in Spanish. His English language skills are emerging. Results of the assessment of language proficiency indicated that Tobias's receptive and expressive skills are stronger in Spanish than in English. While performing on the cognitive and educational tasks, Tobias exhibited difficulties remembering questions. There was a need for frequent repetition of questions and tasks instructions. He also needed reassurance and examples about the expected performance on several of the non-verbal tasks of the WISC-III. However, he was engaged and put his best effort forward. Tobias' overall performance on the cognitive tasks administered, review of academic history, performance on academic tasks, and social adaptive behavior suggested a mild cognitive disability. Visual processing may be the channel of Tobias' relative strengths (but his skills in this area are still significantly below the average range). His gross and fine motor coordination skills appeared to be appropriate for his chronological age. Significant weaknesses are present in language processing and production. His strengths in adaptive behavior are in the daily living skills domain. Friendliness and good disposition in interpersonal skills are also positive assets in Tobias. Tobias' academic skills are at the first grade level. The history of transience of this family is a factor that has had negative impact in his academic and social development.

Summary and Recommendations

1. The IEP team should consider Tobias' eligibility for special education services for students with mild cognitive disabilities. Speech and language related services should be considered.
2. Tobias needs bilingual instruction. The native language should be used for reading instruction. Oral English language proficiency needs to be improved using ESL instruction.
3. The IEP should include goals to improve social adaptive skills in areas such as counting money, telling time, independent mobility in the school and walking back and forth to his house.
4. Adapt instruction for Tobias to include various types of input: (a) provide visual representations and demonstrations to support science and social study lessons, and (b) use videos and software to build vocabulary and concept development.

Chapter Appendix 4-B
Sample Case:
Referral of Flora to School Solving Problem Team

Background Information

Flora, age 9 years, 5 months, is a Mexican American female currently attending fourth grade at the Placido Domingo Elementary in Chicago Public Schools. Flora was referred to the School Problem Solving Team by her classroom teacher because of poor academic performance. The classroom teacher described Flora as inattentive, easily distracted, and presenting problems following directions, retaining information and completing tasks on time. Her referral indicated problems processing verbal information with specific references to Flora's difficulties in auditory processing, language production and concept formation. Overall, the classroom teacher felt that Flora was exhibiting characteristics indicative of students with learning disabilities.

Flora was born in Veracruz, Mexico. Her family moved from Veracruz, Mexico to Austin, Texas 13 years ago. She lives with her father, mother and two younger siblings. Spanish is the language spoken at home. Flora attended a public school in Austin, Texas, from kindergarten to second grade. She attended a bilingual program for her first and second grades, however, four months before the end of the second grade school year her family moved back to Mexico. She then attended a school for six months in Veracruz, Mexico where instruction was provided only in Spanish. After being in Mexico for eight months, the family moved back to the United States to reside in Chicago, Illinois. In the middle of last school year (January), Flora was enrolled in the third grade at the Placido Domingo Elementary School in Chicago.

Upon enrollment at Placido Domingo, a language proficiency assessment was conducted. Results indicated that she was an English language learner with an English proficiency level of 3, which means that she showed a high degree of oral fluency but performed below grade level in reading and writing. Flora's parents stated in writing that they did not want her to participate in bilingual education as she had in Texas. They wanted her to receive instruction only in English. School personnel convinced the parents to allow Flora to receive pullout ESL instruction to improve her English language proficiency. Since the middle of last school year, she has been attending regular education classes with instruction in English and a daily one-hour session of pullout ESL services with emphasis on oral language development in English. For the past four months, Flora has also been attending the After School Reading Program which is provided in English.

Flora's health records and information as reported by the parents indicate that Flora is in good health. She passed the vision and hearing tests. Her developmental milestones were age appropriate. She does not present a history of diseases and has never had surgery. Her social adaptive functioning is considered appropriate by her parents. She relates well with other children and adults. Her parents described her as obedient, calm, and introverted. She is completely independent in taking care of her grooming, dressing and organizing her bedroom. She has chores assigned at home, which she performs well and without assistance. She has learned how to cook simple recipes and assists her mother in caring for her younger siblings.

She likes to watch television and enjoys music. Her parents expressed their concern of not being able to help Flora with her homework since they do not speak, read or write in English. However, they make sure that Flora dedicates time everyday to do her homework.

Sources of Information

Two members of the School Problem Solving Team, the bilingual school psychologist and a bilingual teacher, collected the following information on Flora for review by the entire team:

- Review of school records.
- Interview with parents.
- Classroom observations by the bilingual school psychologist and the bilingual teacher
- Interview with student.
- English Administration of the Chicago Public Schools' Language Proficiency Test: (developed by MetriTech), Reading and Writing components. Results classified Flora as an English Language Learner with an English proficiency level of 3 (high degree of oral fluency in English but below grade level reading and writing skills in English).
- Spanish Administration of the Woodcock Munoz Achievement Test (scores in grade equivalents):
 - Letter Word Identification 3.2
 - Text comprehension: 3.1
 - Applied Problems 2.9
 - Calculations 3.5
 - Dictation 3.6
- Analyses of oral language and writing samples in English and Spanish collected in the classroom.
- Brigance Assessment of Basic Skills in Spanish- Criterion reference test:
 - Spanish Listening Comprehension 5th grade level
 - Spanish Reading Comprehension 4th grade level
- English-Curriculum based assessment probes using McMillan, McGraw Reading series: Able to pass end of the year second grade probes. Main difficulties in reading comprehension and word knowledge.
- English-Curriculum based assessment probes using McMillan, McGraw Mathematics series: Able to pass middle year probes of third grade series. Main difficulties in arithmetical reasoning.

Interpretation of Information by the School Problem Solving Team

The School Problem Solving Team, composed of Flora's classroom teacher, the school counselor, the assistant principal, the bilingual teacher, bilingual school psychologist and Flora's mother, reviewed the information gathered by the bilingual school psychologist and the bilingual teacher. They also reviewed samples of Flora's academic work in the classroom.

The School Problem Solving Team concluded that Flora is exhibiting academic difficulties typical of students learning English as their second language. Her academic profile shows

stronger language development and academic skills in the native language, which is expected in a student transitioning to a second language. While Flora has acquired sufficient command of oral language skills in English to allow her to communicate effectively in social interactions, she presents weaknesses in the formal level or literate language when instruction is provided only in English. Her academic skills in Spanish, her native language, are stronger than in English and have not developed further because instruction in the native language was discontinued.

Auditory discrimination and retention skills in Spanish appeared within age range. Processes of fine motor coordination and visual perceptual integration appeared within normal limits. Classroom observations made by the bilingual psychologists and the bilingual teacher suggest that Flora's distractibility and inability to complete her academic work on time are related to her lack of full comprehension of the language used in the classroom for instruction which is English.

Flora's language development and literacy in English have been impacted by her family's back and forth mobility from the United States to Mexico. She had not received sufficient time in bilingual instruction on a continuous basis to facilitate an appropriate transition into literacy in English.

Recommendations

- Flora should continue to receive ESL instruction for oral language development in English.
- A bilingual teacher will provide consultation to the regular classroom teacher about appropriate teaching strategies to assist in making instruction more comprehensible for Flora and for other students with problems understanding oral instruction.
- Teacher should use cooperative learning activities in the classroom to promote Flora's verbal interactions with fluent English speakers who will assist and support her as she completes her tasks. Cooperative learning activities will also provide opportunities for her to develop her interpersonal skills.
- The classroom teacher should use a variety of supports or accommodations to present lessons. Visual cues and prompts such as pictures, drawings, and videos should be used to introduce and reinforce vocabulary and concepts presented in the lessons.
- The classroom teacher or school assistant should preview the lessons for Flora, including providing her with definitions of new vocabulary words that will be used in the lessons.
- The classroom teacher or school assistant may also review lessons with Flora to support understanding of vocabulary and concepts, including providing pictures to relay meaning and developing a word bank to expand vocabulary comprehension.
- Allow Flora additional time to read material and complete work. Ask a peer to assist her when reading along.
- Paraphrase questions and instructions using simpler vocabulary and teach synonyms.
- Start lessons by eliciting prior knowledge of the subject.
- Use techniques such as identifying the five Ws (who, what, when, where and why).
- The bilingual or ESL teacher should provide suggestions to the After School reading instructor on how to individualize instruction for Flora.

CHAPTER 5

Speech and Language Evaluation for English Language Learners

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The purpose of this chapter is to provide a framework for evaluating communication disorders in English language learners (ELLs) for bilingual and monolingual English speech/language pathologists (SLPs), administrators, and other staff involved in the assessment process. The chapter addresses the following questions:

- What should SLPs know about language and culture before evaluating ELLs? (page 1)
- Who should be considered for a bilingual speech/language evaluation? (page 5)
- Who should conduct the bilingual speech/language evaluation? (page 7)
- What are important considerations in the speech/language evaluation of second language learners? (page 9)

What Should SLPs Know About Language and Culture Before Evaluating ELLs?

SLPs often complete their professional training with limited exposure to the issues of second language acquisition and cultural differences. Given the increasing number of second language learners entering the school system, all SLPs should expand their knowledge of language and cultural issues to improve service delivery to students. At a minimum, monolingual and bilingual SLPs should be familiar with the process of second language acquisition, dialect differences, codeswitching, the possible impact of culture on the assessment process, and the limitations of traditional standardized tests for this population. The following section contains only a brief overview of these topics. The reader is referred to the references and resources at the end of the chapter for more comprehensive information.

Second Language Acquisition

Over the past two decades, there has been an increase in research on second language learning resulting in the modification of traditional views (August & Hakuta, 1997). One of these new developments is Cummins' (1984) theory which identifies two general categories of second language acquisition, Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills (CALPS). BICS involves language that is cognitively undemanding and context embedded, such as using and understanding common phrases and following simple directions. These skills can take up to two years to develop. CALPS involve language that is cognitively demanding and context reduced, such as understanding complex academic vocabulary, following directions without visual cues, and creating fictional stories. These skills typically take five to seven years to develop. Cummins'

theory highlights the extent of time and the complexity involved in the process of second language acquisition, factors that research by others has supported (e.g., Krashen, 1985; Collier 1995).

Hamayan and Damico (1991) describe three types of processes that lead to proficiency in the second language acquisition process:

- Automatic habit formation. Learners pick up “chunks” of language through habitual use. These chunks are typically common phrases used in conversation such as, "I'm fine," "thank you," and "I don't know." The learner may not understand the specific meaning of the words when they are isolated from the phrase or context.
- Conscious rule learning. Learners develop explicit knowledge about the rules of the second language. The learner begins to understand when and when not to use certain words and phrases. This typically occurs as a result of formal instruction such as an ESL program.
- Natural acquisition of meaningful language. Language emerges through natural stages of development similar to a young child's first-language learning . The learner goes through a silent period before language production begins. The learner uses and understands short words and phrases before moving to more elaborate and complex language.

Development through these stages may be influenced by various environmental factors or personal factors (Hamayan & Damico, 1991). Environmental factors include the attitude of the family or of the community regarding the acquisition of a second language. Personal factors include the child's age of second language acquisition, personality, learning style, level of proficiency in the first language, type of school program, and access to speakers of the second language.

Dialect Differences

In 1983, the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), the national organization of SLPs, issued a position paper on social dialects, which stated that **no dialectal variety of English is a disorder or a pathological form of speech or language**. Students who use dialectal variations should not be considered to have a speech/language disability based solely on dialect differences. Dialects exist in virtually every language, including Native American, Asian, and Indian languages (Goldstein, 2000). Examples of Spanish-influenced English dialect differences are shown in Table 5-1. Prior to the assessment, the SLP should identify and learn about the child's dialect group and then consider dialect differences in the testing and evaluation process.

Codeswitching

Codeswitching is a pragmatic feature typical of most dialects. Codeswitching can occur in one language or between two languages. Terrell, Battle, and Grantham (1998) describe codeswitching as the speaker's ability to determine what linguistic style (formal/informal) is appropriate for the communication situation. Bilingual populations use codeswitching between two languages at the word, phrase, and sentence level. Codeswitching is a complex, rule-governed phenomenon and involves a complete break

between languages in phonology (Kayser, 1998a). Codeswitching is not a sign of a disability. It is typical for young children to display code mixing (insertion of single items from one language into the other) first and then later to develop more complex codeswitching patterns for different communication purposes (Kayser, 1998a). Since codeswitching is a rule-governed act, children with language disabilities may have difficulty codeswitching appropriately.

Table 5.1
Examples of Spanish-Influenced English

Form (phonology, morphology, syntax)	Content and Use (semantics and pragmatics)
Addition of "eh" before /s/ as in "eschool" instead of "school"	Codeswitching may be used as in "I'm going to parkier el carro" (parkier = <u>park</u> + <u>estacionar</u>).
Substitution of "ch" for "sh" as in "chirt" instead of "shirt"	Initial difficulty with English intonation and stress patterns may be apparent. For example, in Spanish, a question that requires a yes/no answer is produced with a rising intonation pattern whereas in English, this type of question is produced with a falling intonation pattern.
Substitution of "j" for "y" as in "jello" instead of "yellow"	
Substitution of /b/ for /v/ as in "bictory" for "victory"	During adult-child conversations, children are not considered equal communication partners.
Substitution of tense vowel for lax vowel as in "pen" instead of "pin"	Children may not engage in direct eye contact as a sign of respect.
Placement of adjective after the noun as in "the house white"	During testing situations, children may appear shy or uncooperative and may not initiate conversations with the examiners.
Lack of possessive "s" in Spanish: El perro de Juan/The dog of Juan	Close proximity is common during conversation.
Placement of negative "no" before the verb: No queiro nada/I don't want nothing	Informal conversation is expected before the "business" conversation begins.
Omission of subject pronouns when subject has been previously stated: Tu hermana es bonita/Your sister is pretty; Es muy bonita/Is very pretty	

Cultural Characteristics

Cultural characteristics of students and their families play an important role in the speech/language evaluation process. SLPs should familiarize themselves with the culture of the students they will be assessing prior to meeting with family members and prior to testing the child. SLPs should consider how culture impacts the perceptions and participation of those involved in the assessment process, including the child, family members, and

educational professionals. Examples of how cultural values, norms, and standards may influence the assessment process are shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

Examples of the Influence of Socio-cultural Differences on the Assessment Process

Areas of Difference Across Cultures	How Differences May Influence Assessment
<p>FAMILY STRUCTURES AND ROLES Primary caregiver, peer relationships, authority figures, male/female relationships, child-rearing practices.</p>	<p>Grandparents or extended family members may be the primary caretakers of the child. These individuals may be the family members who attend school meetings and strongly influence school-related decisions in the household.</p>
<p>VIEWS ON DISORDERS/DISABILITIES Cause, prognosis, stigma, role of professionals, access and availability of services.</p>	<p>Parents may believe there is a mystical reason for their child's disability, e.g., the disability is a blessing or a punishment.</p> <p>Parents may be offended by wording on special education paperwork.</p>
<p>TABOOS Discussion of topics, consequences for breaking rules.</p>	<p>Parents may not openly discuss background information with educational staff.</p>
<p>RITUALS AND TRADITIONS Religious background, beliefs about cause and effect, rituals associated with food, holidays, and ceremonies.</p>	<p>Parents may not be available to school personnel during religious holidays or extended vacations to the home country.</p> <p>Parents may resist putting their child on restrictive diets, food thickeners, or feeding tubes.</p> <p>School personnel may be expected to eat and converse during home visits before conducting business.</p>
<p>PERSONAL HYGIENE Dress, diet, grooming, self-help skills, access to medical and dental care.</p>	<p>Children may have suffered prolonged ear and throat conditions due to availability of medical care.</p> <p>Parents may feel their job is to nurture, not teach independence.</p>
<p>VERBAL BEHAVIORS Dialect, codeswitching, turn-taking, initiating conversations, topic shifting, rules of conversation, silence, degree of directness, intonation and stress, voice, pitch, loudness, phonology, morphology, syntax.</p>	<p>Children may not initiate conversations with adults because it is considered rude.</p> <p>Children may be reluctant to speak their native language in front of English-speaking peers and adults.</p>

<p>NONVERBAL BEHAVIORS Eye contact, proximity, back channeling, gestures, body movements, temporal concepts.</p>	<p>Children and adults may not make direct eye contact with educational staff because it is considered disrespectful and aggressive.</p>
<p>SOCIAL BEHAVIORS Etiquette, conflict resolution, work ethic, recreational activities, display of affection, attitude, humor, level of assimilation, desire to assimilate.</p>	<p>Children may insist that games continue until everyone has a chance to win. Children may react differently to peers and teachers based on gender.</p>
<p>EDUCATION Values/attitudes toward education, teaching and learning styles, school curriculum, types of education programs, attitudes toward special education programs.</p>	<p>Parents may be from countries that do not have special education programs. Children may be segregated in special schools or not attend school. Parents may feel that placing a child in a special program is synonymous with labeling the child as "crazy."</p>

Limitations of Standardized Tests

The majority of norm-referenced standardized instruments available for language testing are not appropriate for ELLs. These tests are typically not designed to consider second language learning issues and do not include ELLs in the standardization sample. Tests that have been translated are also inappropriate because they do not take into account the structure and content of the language being tested and because they have not been standardized on the non-English language group being evaluated. SLPs may choose to modify standardized tests in order to render them more useful (see Table 5.3), however, the results of the testing should be reported in qualitative, rather than quantitative, terms. Alternatives to standardized testing include the collection of speech/language samples, behavioral observations, diagnostic teaching sessions, and the use of checklists and rating scales.

Who Should Be Considered for a Bilingual Speech/Language Evaluation?

Best practice indicates that children who are suspected of having a speech/language disorder should have a bilingual speech/language evaluation if:

- (a) the home language is a language other than English;
- (b) the child understands/speaks a language other than English; or
- (c) the child is/was exposed to a language other than English.

These conditions include the different types of second language learners encountered in the schools (Kessler, 1984): (a) **recent immigrants** newly exposed to English; (b) **preschool successive bilinguals** (children exposed to native language for first three years of life and then enrolled in a preschool program with exposure to the second language; (c) **school-age**

successive bilinguals (children who learn the second language after beginning school at age five to six); and (d) **simultaneous bilinguals** (children who are exposed to and learn two languages before the age of three). In addition, children should be considered for a bilingual evaluation even if they are not currently receiving bilingual or ESL services or they appear to be proficient in English. True speech/language disorders will be apparent in the native language and the second language. An assessment that involves the use of native language is critical to the differential diagnosis process.

The SLP should be aware of the specific requirements that Illinois has in place for determining if a child has limited English proficiency and requires a bilingual assessment:

Before a child is given a case study evaluation, the local school district shall determine the primary language of the child's home, general cultural identification, and mode of communication.

Determination of the child's language use pattern and general cultural identification shall be made by determining the language(s) spoken in the child's home and the language used most comfortably and frequently by the child.

If the child has a non-English-speaking background, a determination shall be made of his or her proficiency in English. Such a determination will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of 23 Ill. Adm. Code 228 (Bilingual Education) which specifies the assessment procedures and eligibility criteria for bilingual education programs (see 23 Ill. Adm. Code 228.15).

The child's language use pattern, proficiency in English, mode of communication and general cultural identification shall be noted in the child's temporary student record, and this information shall be used in the evaluation and in the development and implementation of the individualized education program.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.140 Mode(s) of Communication and Cultural Identification)

The language(s) used to evaluate a child shall be consistent with the child's primary language of the home or other mode of communication. (see Section 226.140 of this Part.) If the language use pattern involves two or more languages or modes of communication, the child shall be evaluated by qualified specialists or, when needed, qualified bilingual specialists using each of the languages or modes of communication used by the child. (See Chapter Appendix 1-B on the qualified bilingual specialist.)

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.150 Case Study to be Nondiscriminatory)

Table 5.3
Suggestions for Modifying Test Materials/Procedures for ELLs

- Re-word the instructions.
- Develop additional demonstration items and examples of the test stimuli.
- Use picture stimuli that are culturally appropriate and relevant.
- Omit items that are consistently identified as incorrect by the child's cultural group.
- Record all responses.
- Provide additional time.
- Accept culturally appropriate responses.
- Have the child identify the actual item or action if he or she has limited experience with line drawings or testing procedures.
- Continue testing beyond the ceiling.
- Compare the child's responses to charts on dialect and/or second language acquisition.
- Give credit on articulation and expressive language samples for dialect variations or second language differences.
- Describe how test materials and procedures were altered and report the child's performance in qualitative terms in the written evaluation.

Source: Adapted from Kayser, 1998a

Who Should Conduct the Bilingual Speech/Language Evaluation?

Bilingual SLPs should be used to conduct the evaluations of ELLs whenever possible. As mentioned previously, Section 226.150 (23 Illinois Administrative Code) states that *"....If the language use pattern involves two or more languages or modes of communication, the child shall be evaluated by qualified specialists or, when needed, qualified bilingual specialists using each of the languages or modes of communication used by the child.."* Bilingual SLPs in Illinois can become qualified bilingual specialists by meeting the requirements for the Bilingual Special Education Approval (see Chapter Appendix 1-B for details). ASHA (1989) also has requirements for bilingual SLPs:

1. Ability to speak the primary language and to speak at least one other language with native or near-native fluency proficiency in lexicon (vocabulary), semantics (meaning), phonology (pronunciation), morphology/syntax (grammar) and pragmatics (use) during clinical management.
2. Ability to describe the process of normal speech and language acquisition for both bilingual and monolingual individuals and how those processes are manifested in oral and written communication.
3. Ability to administer and interpret formal and informal assessment procedures to distinguish between communication differences and communication disorders in oral and written language.

4. Ability to apply intervention strategies for treatment of communicative disorders in the client's language.
5. Ability to recognize cultural factors, which affect the delivery of speech and language pathology and audiology services to the client's language community.

SLPs who present themselves as bilingual should meet all of ASHA's qualifications and may risk violating ASHA's Code of Ethics if they do not. Administrators who take steps to ascertain the competency of the bilingual SLP in these areas help to assure the appropriate evaluation of students.

Given the diversity of languages in the schools and the dearth of bilingual school personnel, locating a bilingual SLP is not always possible. Illinois requirements allow for accommodations under these circumstances:

If documented efforts to locate and secure the services of a qualified bilingual specialist are unsuccessful, the district shall use an individual who possesses the professional credentials required under Section 226.840 of this part to complete specific components of the evaluation. This qualified specialist shall be assisted by a certificated school district employee or other individual who has demonstrated competencies in the language of the child.

If documented efforts to locate and secure the services of a qualified bilingual specialist or a qualified specialist assisted by another individual as provided in subsection (b) of this Section are unsuccessful, the district shall conduct assessment procedures which do not depend upon language. Any special education resulting from such alternative procedures shall be reviewed annually until the child acquires a predominantly English language use pattern.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.150 Case Study to be Nondiscriminatory)

If qualified bilingual specialists cannot be identified, the monolingual English SLP should first seek out certified bilingual teachers or bilingual speech assistants to provide support in the assessment process. If such individuals are also not available, a trained and experienced interpreter may provide the next best option. In the event that a trained interpreter cannot be located, another individual who possesses the necessary language skills may be used. Best practice indicates that all individuals who act as interpreters, including certified education professionals, be provided with interpreter training. In addition, the SLP who uses interpreters should be familiar with basic rules of interpretation, including standards for performance and ethical behavior in trained interpreters. (The reader is referred to Chapter 6 for comprehensive guidelines on the use of interpreters.)

The SLP should also be aware that if test administration or other assessment strategies used in the evaluation vary from standard conditions, such as using an interpreter, a description of the variation is to be included in the evaluation report:

If an assessment is conducted under nonstandard conditions, a description of the extent to which the assessment varied from standard conditions shall be included in the evaluation report. This information is needed so that the team of evaluators can assess the effects of these variances on the validity and reliability of the information reported and determine whether additional assessments are available. For example, the use of a translator when a qualified bilingual professional is not available may create nonstandard conditions.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.130 Evaluation Requirements)

What Are Important Considerations in the Speech/Language Evaluation of ELLs?

Purpose of a Bilingual Speech/Language Assessment

A bilingual speech/language evaluation assesses both the native language and the second language of the student. The goal of the bilingual speech/language assessment is to determine whether the child's communication profile indicates a speech and language disorder that cannot be attributed to a hearing loss or to cultural or language differences. A language disorder affects the child's underlying ability to learn a language and is present in both languages in bilingual children (Roseberry-McKibbin, 1995). Language differences, however, are variations in form (phonology, morphology, syntax), content (semantics) and use (pragmatics) which are present when a student is acquiring another language or uses a dialect of English (Goldstein, 2000). **An appropriate bilingual evaluation should distinguish a language disorder from a language difference.** Each component of the assessment process should be conducted with this goal in mind.

Pre-referrals of ELLs

A SLP's best line of defense against inappropriate referrals is the pre-referral process. Modifying the curriculum and adapting instruction can help identify the student's learning style, improve performance, and may eliminate the need for an evaluation. Some districts use problem-solving teams to identify children in the classrooms who are having difficulty accessing the curriculum. The problem-solving teams should include members who are knowledgeable about language and cultural differences so that recommendations specific to the needs of second language learners can be made. The SLP and the student's teachers, including bilingual or ESL teachers, can target problem areas and try interventions such as providing one-on-one assistance, using multiple modalities for learning, or teaching a learning strategy. The student's progress should be documented during this time. Most case study teams recommend that two or three interventions be attempted before a formal request for a full and individual evaluation for special education eligibility is made. Screenings can be also done to rule out complicating factors.

Damico (1991) suggests that the following questions be asked during the pre-referral

process to help distinguish between disabilities and typical second language learning issues:

- Does the student have similar difficulties in his native language as those observed in English?
- Can those difficulties that are present in English be attributed to the normal second language acquisition process?
- Can the difficulties be related to cultural differences?

Collecting Case History on Speech/Language Performance

The case history should be extensive and detailed. It should include the following information: language use (including who speaks in which language to the student and which language the child uses to speak to different families members and peers); educational history (what types of programs and the language of the program); medical history (complications at birth, colds, ear infections, etc.); general developmental status; and the parent’s perception of the problem. A critical part of the case history is information obtained by interviewing the child's teacher(s) to gain insight into the child’s language-related and other difficulties in the classroom.

Table 5.4

Characteristics of Students with Language-Related Disabilities and ELLs*

Characteristics Shared by Students with Learning Disabilities and ELLs**	Characteristics of Students with Speech/Language Disorders**
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Short attention span ▪ Distractible ▪ Daydreams ▪ Appears confused ▪ Speaks infrequently ▪ Uses gestures ▪ Speaks in single words and phrases ▪ Comments inappropriately ▪ Has poor recall ▪ Has poor comprehension ▪ Has poor vocabulary ▪ Has poor pronunciation ▪ Has poor syntax ▪ Confuses similar sounding words ▪ Has difficulty sequencing ideas and events <p>**For ELLs without disabilities, these characteristics will appear only when the second language is being used. All these characteristics are typical in the second language acquisition process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nonverbal aspects of language are culturally inappropriate ▪ Does not express basic needs appropriately ▪ Rarely initiates verbal interaction with peers ▪ Responds inappropriately when peers initiate interactions ▪ Gives inappropriate responses ▪ Peers give indications that they have difficulty communicating with the student ▪ Replaces speech with gestures ▪ Shows poor topic maintenance ▪ Perseverates on a topic ▪ Needs to have information repeated often, even when the speaker has modified the information <p>** For second language learners with speech/language disorders, these characteristics will appear in both languages.</p>

Source: Adapted from Ortiz & Maldonado, 1986 (as cited in Kayser, 1998b) and Roseberry-McKibben, 1995.

Making Observations

Because of validity and reliability issues regarding traditional standardized assessment procedures and CLD populations, observations and case history information become significant tools for the SLP. Several observations should be conducted in various academic and social settings. Second language acquisition can impact a child's behavior, attention, and responses in class. These behaviors may be similar to those in children with attention difficulties, learning disabilities, and speech/language disorders. (See Table 5.4.) The SLP has the difficult task of determining whether the behaviors observed are due to second language acquisition or related to a disability. Problems that appear regardless of the language being used may be considered reliable indicators of potential disorders.

Case Study Example: Making a Differential Diagnosis

Maria is an eight year old bilingual student in a transitional bilingual second grade class. The teacher has referred Maria for a bilingual speech/language assessment because she is concerned with Maria's grammatical proficiency in English. She comments, "Maria's English is very disorganized." A hearing and vision screening is done and these factors are ruled out. A case history interview reveals that Maria is an only child and primarily speaks Spanish at home. Maria parent's came to U.S. nine years ago and are in the process of acquiring English. Maria is a successive second language learner, as she began learning English when she was enrolled in a bilingual kindergarten. Her parents indicate that she is not having difficulty communicating in Spanish at home. The parents report Maria's health, medical, and developmental history as typical.

Maria is observed by the SLP in the classroom during a small group activity. The teacher uses English for this lesson. Maria is observed using multiple strategies to gather information (she asks questions, asks for clarification, and consults with other students in the group). Syntactic difficulties are noted in English. Maria is also observed during recess playing with friends. Maria uses appropriate pragmatic language skills to converse with them. It is noted that she uses Spanish appropriately to describe the rules of the game she has initiated. Syntactic difficulties are not noted in Spanish.

Maria is initially tested in Spanish and is found to present with average abilities in her native language. A week later, testing is done in English and below average abilities in the area of English expressive language are noted. The SLP notes that Maria has difficulty with comparatives and superlatives. The SLP does a mediated learning experience in this area and finds that with direct mediation, Maria is able to learn to use these forms with little examiner effort. Three weeks later, Maria continues to remember to use these forms. The SLP determines that the discrepancy in Maria's expressive language is due to second language acquisition and she does not present with a disorder.

Dynamic Assessment Procedures

Dynamic assessment, a procedure that compares the child's ability on tasks with and without adult mediation, also provides an alternative to inappropriate standardized tests for

ELLs. The examiner first tests to determine the child's initial performance on a task (such as a vocabulary test). Then the examiner plans a structured mediated learning experience for the task. For example, if the child regularly used verbs to label objects instead of nouns, the examiner will create a mediated learning task (noun vs. verb naming) to determine whether the child can learn and generalize the new skill with little examiner effort (modifiability). The mediated learning experience has to include the following components: intentionality, meaning, competence, transcendence, regulation and control of behavior, sharing, differentiation, and change. The examiner later retests the child. The reader is referred to Peña (1996) for detailed information on this procedure.

Distinguishing a Language Difference from a Language Disorder

Accuracy in determining whether language problems stem from a language difference or a language disorder depends heavily on the SLP's knowledge of second language learning issues, ability to consult and collaborate with informed sources, and skill in integrating the data collected. At a minimum, the following questions should be considered by the SLP and the IEP team prior to making a diagnosis:

- Are language difficulties due to health or medical issues?
- Are difficulties due to inappropriate educational placement? limited exposure to academic curriculum?
- Are language difficulties atypical for the student's cultural group? language group? dialect group?
- Are language difficulties typical for a second language learner?
- Are evaluation results due to the limitations of the SLP? of the assessment procedures?
- Are evaluation results consistent?

Conclusion

As the caseload of the SLP becomes increasingly diverse, so should our methods of evaluating and diagnosing children. This chapter serves as a framework for nonbiased assessment and is designed to be a springboard for clinicians working with CLD populations. The issues in this area are extensive and the cited resources should be utilized to gather more detailed information on procedures and normative data. The procedures described in the chapter may be used to complement district guidelines on the diagnostic process. Clinicians who are familiar with the factors that can impact their assessments (e.g., culture, language, and dialect) are better able to modify their procedures to ensure that children are not inappropriately identified. The ramifications of misdiagnosing a child with a communication disorder can be costly for all parties involved and nonbiased assessment procedures help to reduce this risk.

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Organizations and Websites

American Speech-Language-Hearing Association: www.asha.org

Illinois Speech-Language-Hearing Association: www.ishail.org

Bilingual Therapies, Inc.: www.bilingualtherapies.com

Center for Multicultural Resources: www.utexas.edu/coc/csd/multicultural/index.html

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CHAPTER 6

Interpreters in the School Setting

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The appropriate use of individuals as interpreters for educational purposes is a major concern in providing quality services to children from non-English speaking backgrounds and their families. This chapter presents the basic tenants of interpretation with suggestions for administrators and teachers:

- What is the difference between an interpreter and a translator? *(page 2)*
- Why is it inappropriate to use children as interpreters? *(page 3)*
- Why should trained interpreters always be used? *(page 4)*
- What skills/training should an interpreter have? *(page 6)*
- What guidelines apply when using an interpreter for assessment purposes? *(page 8)*
- What happens when an interpreter isn't available to assist in the assessment? *(page 9)*
- What can school districts do to increase their interpreter resource pool? *(page 9)*

The significance of having trained interpreters in school settings should not be underestimated. Professionally trained interpreters are commonplace in the international business sector, in the legal court systems, and for the deaf and hard of hearing. Yet, in educational settings, formally trained interpreters and translators working with limited English proficient students and their families are still uncommon. According to reports from the Illinois State Board of Education (1997, 1999):

- Over 100 languages are spoken by Illinois public school students.
- Nearly 140,000 students are served by programs designed to assist those with limited English proficiency.
- Approximately 80% of these 140,000 students are native Spanish speakers.
- More than 56,000 refugees were resettled in Illinois between 1983 and 1998, making it one of the top ten refugee resettlement states in the United States.
- Ninety-one Illinois school districts reported serving a total of 54,618 recent immigrants (i.e., children residing in this country three years or less).

These data suggest that it is more common than not for schools to encounter children and families of limited English proficiency. For this reason, it would not be surprising for many schools in Illinois to require the services of an interpreter several times in any given month.

What Is the Difference Between an Interpreter and a Translator?

Before comprehending the role of the interpreter, it is important to understand the difference between interpreting and translating. An interpreter orally converts one language to another between two or more individuals who do not speak each other's language. A translator converts one language to another in writing, i.e., his or her concentration is on written material. Although the intent is the same, the skills and knowledge required of a translator are more extensive. It is as different as speaking English and writing or teaching English. Because an individual speaks English, one should not assume that the individual has the ability to formally write it or much less to teach it. On the same note, because an individual speaks more than one language or is "presumably" bilingual, one should not assume that the individual is automatically qualified to be an interpreter or a translator.

Neither translation nor interpretation should imply word-for-word equivalence. The reality is that word-for-word translation can often lead to an incorrect message. The art of translating or interpreting correctly involves the accurate conversion of a message from the point of view of both its content, its style (register, dialect, specialization), and cultural concepts. With this in mind, it must be noted that interpreters and translators must have the appropriate training and educational background to perform such sophisticated and complex tasks. An interpreter must receive training in interpreting techniques as well as background material specific to the field for which the interpreting is needed in order to perform as a qualified interpreter. A translator on the other hand, requires much more sophisticated skills for the written transfer of a message from one language to another.

Written translation requires deep knowledge of grammatical context; clear familiarity with idiomatic expression, syntax, technical, and colloquial terms; as well as cultural concepts in both cultures and languages. This is why individuals who learned their parents' or grandparents' native language at home without any formal training are usually unsuccessful in providing a quality translated product. Unfortunately, because translated materials do not go through clearinghouses or editing by experts, the outcome is often poorly translated or sometimes outright offensive material. Terms such as advanced directives, senior citizens, case managers, or truant officers are terms used in this country that may not have direct translations in other languages. In addition, some of these terms refer to concepts that do not exist in other cultures or languages. In essence, without someone who has specific expertise in translation, many important translated legal or medical documents and policy, procedural, or consent forms can easily lose the intent they are supposed to have for parents.

Why Is it Inappropriate to Use Children as Interpreters?

The purpose of this section is not only to identify the repercussions of using children as interpreters, but also to provide educators with options in order to avoid these situations. It is essential to first look at what is a widespread practice in many of the schools when an interpreter is required. It is not uncommon for parents to use their children to interpret for them. Often parents, as well as school personnel, assume that after a year or two in the school system children can manage their way around in English and use them to interpret without realizing the harmful effects this can have on the children. Beyond the issues of English

language proficiency, children, whether they are five or 15, are limited in either language by nature of their age and experience. In addition, it places on the child the responsibility of being a faithful transmitter of a conversation that should be solely between two adults.

Little attention has been paid to the extent to which parents use their children to interpret as a result of school personnel inadvertently encouraging this practice by modeling the use of children as interpreters. The message sent to parents by these actions is that it is permissible to use their children as interpreters in and away from school. This may lead to a domino effect in which parents keep their children out of school to fulfill their own responsibilities when there may be no one to provide the service in their native language. Children may even begin to believe that attending school is secondary to acting as a parental interpreter. Depending on familial needs, interpreter duties may result in increased absenteeism and contribute to poor academic performance or school failure.

Social workers estimate that three out of four immigrant children learn English after two years in the U.S. but that many parents never learn the language at all. As a result, children as young as seven are increasingly being pushed into managing interpreter responsibilities. Social workers and teachers say these children are called upon to handle issues including family financial concerns; medical, mental health, and social service intake screenings; settling housing disputes with landlords and neighbors; fielding telephone calls from companies; and accompanying their parents to the police department to pay tickets (Philadelphia Inquirer, July 15, 1997). As children become increasingly involved in the financial, legal, medical, and social concerns of the family (which can be of a highly sensitive nature such as terminal illness, domestic violence, rape, war crimes, or sexually transmitted diseases), the traditional parent-child relationship changes, often leading to role conflicts among family members (Szapocznik, Kurtines, & Hann, 1979). Even worse, is the role reversal that can occur, where the adult becomes the child relying on the child, and the child becomes the adult assuming the responsibility of ensuring that the parent's needs are being met. Consequently, parents feel inferior and lose the authority to discipline their children whereas children are placed in the position of carrying a load of adult responsibility on their small shoulders.

Many of us would not use our children to relay important health, financial or legal information to service providers on our behalf, yet this burden is placed on children when trying to obtain information from non-English speakers without thought to how this contributes to the child's life event stressors. A number of studies have found a significant relationship between life event stressors, school adjustment and achievement in children of immigrant families (Alva & Padilla, 1995). These children showed manifestations of maladjustment that included frustration and sadness, fatigue, lack of concentration, aggression, loneliness, acting out, persistent and predictable stomach problems, high absenteeism, and general anxiety. In cross-cultural studies, fourth, fifth, and sixth graders reported a markedly higher incidence of school related stressors as compared to majority group students. Specifically, the students reported significantly higher occurrences of stress for academic retention, poor grades, and being pulled out of class. These findings suggest that school adjustment can be a difficult process, particularly for elementary school children and adolescents. Caught between the conflicting demands and expectations of both school

and family, struggling to form an identity that successfully integrates the old and new features of a new homeland can be stressful to migrant, immigrant, and refugee children. Most parents are aware of the pressures placed on their children but feel they have no other recourse.

For all of these reasons, using children as interpreters should never be an option. School districts have the responsibility to discourage this practice and should move forward as though no interpreter were available and seek other options. Parents should also be dissuaded from using their children as interpreters, explaining to them why it is inappropriate and what the repercussions are to the child. Rather, parents should be encouraged to exercise their rights under the law and request that institutions provide qualified interpreters for them when seeking a service. School districts need to educate local community service providers as to the adverse effects of this practice on children and advocate the use of trained interpreters. These efforts would begin to contribute to a child's well being, and give the responsibility of providing qualified interpreters where it belongs -- to the service providers.

Why Must Trained Interpreters Always Be Used?

There are many dangers in the practice of using untrained interpreters just as there are dangers in using untrained personnel for positions such as childcare workers or medical assistants. Untrained interpreters are individuals who are used to interpret, yet have not benefited from any formal technique training. There is a widespread misconception that being bilingual automatically qualifies a person to be an interpreter. However, being bilingual is not the same as being a trained interpreter. Interpreting requires learned techniques and much practice to refine interpretation skills. Too often, bilingual teachers or school personnel are called upon to provide interpreting services which they may not be equipped to carry out. The accuracy of any conversation being converted from one language to another relies heavily on the interpreter's proficiency level in the languages. For example, some bilingual staff may not have the specialized vocabulary needed to effectively communicate with other adults or, in some instances, may be able to read and write only in English, not in the second language. In addition, bilingual teachers should not be expected to meet the needs of all linguistically and culturally diverse children and families in the program, especially those whose language they do not speak. Bilingual providers should not be asked to translate forms, particularly at a moment's notice, nor should they be required to stop their work in order to serve as interpreters. Bilingual teachers should not serve in roles, such as advising or counseling, in which they may lack professional training. These assignments may seem simple but often can be burdensome and must be viewed as added duties placed upon the bilingual teacher.

It is also important for monolingual English speakers to keep in mind that they are at a clear disadvantage when using someone who is "presumably" bilingual. Unless an individual has been tested for proficiency in the two languages, a monolingual individual will not be able to determine if the knowledge level of the "bilingual" individual is adequate enough to maintain the accuracy of the conversation. Therefore, it is imperative that before a person is asked to interpret or considered for interpreter training, that his or her language skills be assessed to determine the proficiency level in the target and source language.

The goal of a trained and qualified interpreter is to facilitate a two-way conversation between two individuals who do not speak each other's language and to maintain an accurate conversation between those two parties, keeping himself or herself out of the conversation. Frequently, untrained interpreters tend to edit information. Key words or concepts may be omitted, added, changed in meaning, modified or polished. When faced with an embarrassing or unfamiliar term, there is a tendency to "wing it" and not relay the message accurately. In addition, certain words or concepts, which exist in one language and culture, may not exist in the other. Lack of translatable words or concepts are frequently obstacles that untrained interpreters are unable to successfully overcome. When faced with this, it may be too embarrassing to admit their lack of knowledge by asking questions or acknowledging personal limitations. Instead, they simply supply what they believe is a correct or close interpretation. This practice is labeled linguistic distortion. The result of this may impact a diagnosis, decision, treatment plan, or other event because the information received was inaccurate. At times, information (which may be crucial) that is believed to be unimportant is not relayed or simply forgotten. Adding information, words or sentences to a message in the relay process may be done by the untrained interpreter because of feelings that it is the right thing to do for the conversation. Too often the liberty is taken to ask further questions, provide explanations or even answer the client's questions unbeknownst to the professional. Polishing the language is also a prevalent practice, especially performed by those of a higher educational background. These practices not only jeopardize accuracy but can also seriously affect the intended outcome of the conversation with the client.

It is not up to the interpreter to determine which information is important enough to be shared or which isn't. A trained interpreter shares all the information, regardless of relevancy, and allows the professional to decide what information is valid to the conversation. The control is where it should be, between the two speakers. A trained interpreter will repeat everything that is being said, whether the register is too high or too low or whether the vocabulary used is offensive or inappropriate. The goal of a trained interpreter is to maintain the fidelity of the message. The interpreter allows for the two individuals who need to communicate with each other to speak directly to one another as they would if they spoke the same language. In this manner the true sense of who the speakers are is projected to each other, rather than projecting false images that untrained interpreters feel compelled to portray at times. Therefore, the effective way to develop a true relationship between the speakers is by the former method.

Untrained interpreters, particularly family members, often give unwarranted opinions, provide judgment to the situation, hold biases or exercise power to relay or to withhold information without others finding out that this is occurring. Staff sometimes cannot tell if the family member being used is a perpetrator in an event or has an unhealthy vested interest in the situation. Parents who rely on in-laws that have lived in this country longer than they have may find themselves in tough positions when needing to depend on them for communicating with English speakers. For example, a mother who would like to admit that her husband is violent to family members may be fearful of divulging this if the person interpreting is the husband's sister. It is best to remove the responsibility from the shoulders of non-English speakers by stating that it is the institution's responsibility to provide a trained interpreter and that a family member may not be used. This is especially relevant in highly

confidential situations such as domestic violence, rape, sexual abuse, or health conditions such as AIDS and STDs. The overriding danger in the use of family members as interpreters is that ethics are violated, leading to dilemmas even more serious than those jeopardizing accuracy. "The breach of student and parent confidentiality, likelihood of the manipulation of information to save the family from difficult news, and the role reversal which occurs when utilizing students and friends of the family as interpreters precludes this as an appropriate practice" (Lynch & Hanson, 1996).

Under the theme of ethics there is a long list of issues including client confidentiality, especially in social and psychological assessments, and the client's right to know. The issue of confidentiality is crucial. Without proper training on this subject, individuals used as interpreters might easily run and share information discussed during an encounter with other individuals. This breach of confidentiality can potentially inflict harm on the self-esteem or reputation of the student or parent. This is particularly true in smaller language communities. The issue of the client's right to know everything that is said in front of him/her is also important. Ethically it is the interpreter's responsibility to repeat everything that is being said in the presence of the speakers. The rule of thumb is that the environment should mirror that of a conversation with an English speaker. What wouldn't be said in front of an English speaker shouldn't be said in front of the non-English speaker as well. After all, the client may understand a little more English than what others are led to believe.

Unfortunately, the path of least resistance is all too often taken in the selection and use of an interpreter. It is not acceptable for an untrained bilingual teacher, school secretary, or family member of the student or parent to be spontaneously called upon to serve as an interpreter in a given situation. Not only is this not their role, there are legal implications tied to this practice as well. The haphazard selection of interpreters has the potential to greatly limit the effectiveness of the interpretation process and ultimately the quality of service provision. A trained interpreter is always the best option for effective outcomes.

What Skills/Training Should an Interpreter Have?

The primary goal of an interpreter is to support the establishment of a relationship between the two speakers by providing accurate communication. A successful interpreter creates the illusion of a two-way conversation with three individuals speaking. Although it is a triadic relationship, only two individuals are conversing with each other. Despite the fact that the two individuals do not speak each other's language, the intent of the qualified interpreter is to create an environment where they truly are speaking to and understanding each other. How this is accomplished relies heavily on using the appropriate interpreting techniques.

The first step that an interpreter takes is to execute what is called a pre-encounter session. In the pre-encounter session, the interpreter explains his/her role both to the professional and the client. The interpreter informs the speakers that they will be speaking in the "first" person, i.e., "I/you", something untrained interpreters are unfamiliar with. The third person "he/she", "ask her/him" is completely eliminated. The focus is on the speaker and not on the interpreter. The interpreter also asks the speakers to look directly at each other

when speaking as the conversation is between the two of them and not with the interpreter. The speakers are also informed that anything they say will be repeated. If they do not wish for something to be heard by the other, they should refrain from saying it. In addition, the speakers are forewarned that if the interpreter does not understand something, he/she will ask for a pause for clarification purposes. Since accuracy is a primary goal of the interpreter, there should be no holding back on asking for clarification. After this brief introduction, the conversation between the professional and client begins. Overall, interpreting techniques include such things as first person usage, positioning (standing in the appropriate spot to facilitate maintaining the conversation between the two speakers), keeping the eye contact between the speakers, the use of a notebook, maintaining fidelity of the message, interpreting body language, good memory and listening skills, and ensuring that the control of the conversation is always with the speakers. The interpreter who becomes the center of the conversation is not upholding the true goal of a qualified interpreter.

Considerable concentration is dedicated to ethics in the interpreter techniques curriculum. As mentioned previously, client confidentiality is essential. "The role of the interpreter requires an ability to stay emotionally uninvolved with the discussions and an ability to maintain confidentiality and neutrality" (Langdon, 1992). The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 and the NASP Principles for Professional Ethics (1997) require that confidentiality of student and parent information be maintained. Individuals serving as interpreters must have an understanding of these requirements and must be informed of the extent and limitations of confidentiality. In small language communities it is not uncommon for many members of this community to know each other and or their families. Therefore, it becomes crucial for those acting as interpreters to understand well why confidentiality is so important and the kind of damage that can be done when private information is divulged to others.

Equally as important is for an interpreter to understand what their own value system is and how to successfully fit in as a neutral, non-judgmental party in the encounter. Understanding why opinions should not be given even when asked, why is it important to maintain a professional demeanor, and what kind of ethical situations may arise are all part of the training on ethics. Without this, an interpreter is not receiving all the appropriate tools needed to successfully fulfill the role. A national interpreter code of ethics is also provided to interpreters during training. Recently, professional standards have also become part of the interpreter technique training (Cross Cultural Health Care Program, 2000). In these standards there exists a list of skills and core competencies for interpreters to follow. Although they were developed specifically for medical interpreters the same would apply for interpreters in any field.

It is also important for interpreters to learn both the technical and colloquial vocabulary specific to that field, be it special education, bilingual education, assessments, etc. Contrary to what many believe however, terminology is the last component of interpreter technique training. In addition to the technical and colloquial vocabulary specific to that field, interpreters also serve as cultural brokers. It is key that they be familiar with American culture as well as the nuances and beliefs of the representative culture and that they point out cultural incongruencies to the professional which may be misunderstood or not appropriate.

This helps to eliminate potential misunderstandings or poor judgments in the event of a culture clash. Sometimes relationships can even be severed due to cultural misunderstandings making it more difficult to work with students and their families.

What Additional Guidelines Apply When Using an Interpreter for Assessment Purposes?

According to Illinois law, school districts are required to exhaust all means of obtaining appropriately trained professional personnel who are bilingual before seeking the assistance of interpreters:

If documented efforts to locate and secure the services of a qualified bilingual specialist are unsuccessful, the district shall use an individual who possesses the professional credentials required under Section 226.840 of this part to complete the specific components of the evaluation. This qualified specialist shall be assisted by a certified school district employee or other individual who has demonstrated competencies in the language of the child.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.150 Case Study to be Nondiscriminatory)

School psychologists and other individuals involved in the assessment process can offer support to the selected interpreter to make the interpretation process better. Lopez (1995), in a review of the literature (based on Figueroa, 1990; Fradd & Wilen, 1990; Hallberg, 1996; Langdon, 1985; Lopez, 1992; Omark & Watson, 1981) makes the following suggestions:

- Allow time for a pre-encounter session so that the interpreter can be informed about test procedures and details related to the student's background (e.g., place of birth) and review of material.
- Arrange for the interpreter to receive training in the terminology, procedures and rationale of the evaluation process and assessment instruments.
- Throughout the interpretation process (a) speak in short, simple sentences; (b) avoid idioms, metaphors, or colloquialisms; (c) use specific terms and avoid jargon; and (d) allow the interpreter time to interpret all messages.
- Conduct frequent checks during the interpreting encounter to insure student or parent understanding and supervise interpreter activities.
- With respect to the actual testing sessions, inform the interpreter to avoid verbal and nonverbal prompting, to state questions exactly, and to observe and record the student's verbal and nonverbal behaviors with precision and objectivity.

The more knowledge the interpreter has about the assessment process, the more able he or she is to monitor the appropriateness of the interpreted encounter and maintain standardization as necessary. Careful selection and use of trained interpreters is imperative in situations as critical as testing and assessment. The professional behavior of the trained interpreter is an especially useful asset to the evaluation team since the relationship which develops between the interpreter and the student or parent can be helpful in maintaining parent participation throughout the evaluation process. When possible, an interpreter who

will be able to work with the student or parents on an ongoing basis should be selected (Rhodes, 1996).

What Happens When an Interpreter Isn't Available to Assist in the Assessment Process?

Illinois law addresses how school administrators should proceed when it is clearly not feasible to conduct procedures in the student's native language or through the use of an interpreter, such as in the case of a low incidence language or a lack of available interpreters in a rural community:

If documented efforts to locate and secure the services of a qualified bilingual specialist or a qualified specialist assisted by another individual as provided in subsection (b) of this Section are unsuccessful, the district shall conduct assessment procedures which do not depend upon language. Any special education resulting from such alternative procedures shall be reviewed annually until the child acquires a predominantly English language use pattern.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 266, Special Education, Section 226.150 Case Study to be Nondiscriminatory)

If an assessment is conducted under nonstandard conditions, a description of the extent to which the assessment varied from standard conditions shall be included in the evaluation report. This information is needed so that the team of evaluators can assess the effects of these variances on the validity and reliability of the information reported and determine whether additional assessments are available. For example, the use of a translator when a qualified bilingual professional is not available may create nonstandard conditions.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.130 Evaluation Requirements)

What Can School Districts Do to Increase Their Interpreter Resource Pool?

There are several options available to school districts that need to expand their pool of interpreters. Smaller school districts can collaborate with their local community police, federal and county court systems, medical institutions, volunteer and service providers, religious, social, and ethnic organizations, and other educational organizations such as foreign language schools, colleges, and universities. Individuals who are fluent in a foreign language can be identified, tested for appropriate language proficiency levels and trained as interpreters so that a local community-wide interpreter/translator resource pool can be created. Once created, school districts can share or combine their resource lists to expand and increase their interpreter/translator pool. Trained staff interpreters can be hired if there is a daily need to have an interpreter available in a given language. In addition, there are refugee and immigrant social service agencies, small private businesses which provide trained interpreters, and an array of language lines that provide over-the-phone interpreting for clients. Questions to ask when contracting out for interpreters include what type of training have they received,

whether they have been trained in interpreting techniques, in which profession have they practiced their services, and to what extent have they assisted with testing and assessment.

In conclusion, schools need to place a high significance of utilizing trained interpreters and setting aside the necessary resources in order to work more effectively with our increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse populations.

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CHAPTER 7

Instructional Strategies for English Language Learners with Disabilities

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This chapter provides an overview of research-based instructional principles relevant to English language learners (ELLs) with disabilities. The following issues are addressed:

- Which language should be used for instruction? *(page 2)*
- What are best practices in Sheltered Instruction? *(page 3)*
- How can teachers develop literacy rich classroom environments? *(page 5)*
- What are some special instructional considerations in teaching math? *(page 7)*
- How can cooperative learning techniques be used effectively? *(page 8)*

Our schools' children represent and reflect the diversity of cultures, languages and customs of an enormous array of peoples. For many of us, as teachers, parents, and teacher educators, developing ways to teach all children in effective and meaningful ways is both a pedagogical challenge and a professional obligation. In particular, we seek ways to combine the knowledge that so many have developed from the fields of both bilingual education and special education. Critical to planning instruction for any child is to have a good understanding of his/her learning from the standpoint of achievement as well as his/her unique learning needs. One needs to have completed informal assessments that provide the teacher with an understanding of what the child knows, understands, and is able to apply to other contexts, the child's problem solving approaches and learning styles, and factors that are interfering with learning. The underlying necessary assumption is that one also needs to have a good sense of the student's language use, home environment, values and customs, as well as an understanding of the student's previous school and program experiences.

Gersten and Jimenez (1994) outlined eight constructs that they suggest are integral to the design of effective teaching strategies for ELLs. These include providing the students with higher order thinking opportunities and high expectations, active involvement in their own learning, successful experiences, and respect for cultural diversity. They also suggest the use of scaffolding and mediation through the use of visual organizers and background information and by modeling the use appropriate strategies. Finally, they advocate the use of collaborative and cooperative learning and sheltered content area English instruction. In this chapter, these principles are described and elaborated more fully in the context of general and specific recommendations for the design and implementation of effective instructional strategies for ELLs with disabilities.

Which Language Should Be Used for Instruction?

Perhaps the most frequent question that emerges in discussions regarding teaching ELLs with disabilities is that of which language to use. Indeed, while the benefits of providing instruction in the child's first language have been sufficiently documented in general education settings (cf. Ben-Zeev, 1977; Berhardt, 1991; Krashen & Biber, 1988; Lambert, 1977; Tucker, Hamayan, & Genesee, 1976; Moll & Diaz, 1987), it is much less clear regarding children with literacy based disabilities. Although *conversational* English is usually acquired after one to two years, we know that acquisition of *academic* English at a level necessary for formal grade level instruction and testing requires five to seven years (Collier, 1989; 1991). Thus, teaching the more complex academic content to students in their native language appears to be pedagogically logical; children are better able to discuss, develop, and understand when they are not expected to translate to and from English (Gersten & Woodward, 1994; Lopez-Reyna, 1996). However, a common perception in the field is that teaching ELLs with disabilities in native language further burdens their cognitive processing abilities, and thus, is discouraged. Jimenez, Garcia, and Pearson (1995) noted that proficient readers were able to transfer knowledge from their native language to English after having had sufficient exposure to English and having acquired academic skills and knowledge in their native language. In so doing, these bilingual readers employed specific strategies to help them transfer what they knew from their native language to English (Gersten, 1998). However, Jimenez, et al (1995) cautioned that for less proficient readers, it was a much more difficult process.

For students with disabilities, teachers need to assess the strength of the student's native language skills and decide to what extent the knowledge base and skill use can be further developed in the native language. If the student has no English language knowledge, it does not make sense to immerse him/her in English and expect him/her to also learn new knowledge. As suggested by Chamot and O'Malley (1996), ELLs need explicit strategy instruction to transfer what they know in their native language to English. When children have disabilities, these strategies are critical to their instructional program. Although many of the decisions of educators today hinge on the availability of collaborative efforts and material resources, ideally, students should be permitted to use their native language to problem solve in academic tasks such as reading comprehension, composition, and mathematics and provided with a learning environment that supports their transition to English language instruction. Teaching a student in his/her native language provides more than a familiar language system through which to communicate. It potentially provides the student with a learning environment that is accepting of his/her culture, incorporates his/her life experiences and interests, and values the use of more than one language in our society.

While the choice of language of instruction is complicated, the decision should be based on a set of factors including the primary language of the child, his/her parents, primary caregiver, and community (Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin, 2001). The length of time that the child has been exposed to the English language and his/her prior experience with various bilingual and ESL programs within school(s) are also important factors to consider. A case for the use of native language in education was well summarized in a UNESCO report in 1953 (as cited in Brice & Roseberry-McKibbin, 2001):

It is axiomatic that the best medium for teaching a child is his mother tongue. Psychologically, it is the system of meaningful signs that in his mind works automatically for expression and understanding. Sociologically, it is a means of identification among the members of the community to which he belongs. Educationally, he learns more quickly through it than through an unfamiliar linguistic medium.

Optimizing the learning opportunities of children in bilingual/ESL special education programs is best accomplished in settings that reflect the sociocultural - constructivist perspective (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000; Lopez-Reyna, 1996; Moll, 1990; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). Instructional practices need to be designed to support ELLs in both learning a new language and acquiring academic content (Arreaga-Mayer, 1998). A key concept in teaching ELLs, particularly those who are also experiencing difficulties due to learning disabilities, is to provide them with *comprehensible input*. Comprehensible input is understandable and meaningful language directed to ELLs. It is composed of language that the learner already knows plus a range of new language that can be comprehended by the content of the known language and by efforts on the part of the speaker to provide “clues” to assist comprehension (Krashen, 1985). In the following section, the use of sheltered instruction is described and recommended as a means of providing the ELL with special learning needs with comprehensible input and other necessary supports and instruction.

What Are Best Practices in Sheltered Instruction?

In a recent book, Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2000) presented the use of Sheltered Instruction (SI) in the content areas through detailed descriptions of indicators that guide teachers through planning, instruction, and review/assessment of ELLs. Throughout their book, they provide examples for teachers to develop their own skills. In a sheltered English classroom, the teacher embeds second language learning principles within the classroom learning environment to increase the “comprehensibility” of the content, adjusts the language demands of the lesson by modifying speech rate and tone, uses context clues and models extensively, and relates instruction to the students’ experiences. SI classrooms often include ELLs who speak various (home) languages other than English. Echevarria, et al (2000) caution, however, that SI is more than simply a set of additional techniques and advocate that SI be a part of a school wide effort to improve learning for all students. They describe a Sheltered Instruction Model noting that:

Accomplished SI teachers modulate the level of English used with and among students and make the content comprehensible through techniques such as the use of visual aids, modeling, demonstrations, graphic organizers, vocabulary previews, predictions, adapted texts, cooperative learning, peer tutoring, multi-cultural content, and native language support. They strive to create a non-threatening environment where students feel comfortable taking risks with language. They also make specific connections between the content being taught and students’ experiences and prior knowledge and focus on expanding the students’ vocabulary base. In effective SI lessons, there is a high level of student engagement and interaction with the teacher, with each other, and with text that

leads to elaborated discourse and higher-order thinking. Students also are explicitly taught functional language skills such as how to negotiate meaning, ask for clarification, confirm information, argue, persuade, and disagree. Through instructional conversations and meaningful activities, students practice and apply their new language and content knowledge. (p.11)

Echevarria, et al (2000) provide teaching guidelines for lesson preparation, instruction, and assessment. The following is a summary of the guidelines in the three categories:

1. The *Lesson Preparation* category includes:
 - (a) clearly defined content objectives,
 - (b) clearly defined language objectives,
 - (c) content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students,
 - (d) high use of supplementary materials to make the lesson clear and meaningful,
 - (e) adaptation of content to students' levels, and
 - (f) meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts with language practice opportunities for reading, writing, listening, and/or speaking.

2. The *Instruction* category includes descriptions of:
 - (a) Ways to link to the students' background experiences and past learning to new concepts as well as emphasizing key vocabulary. With respect to the latter, they offer several instructional strategies including vocabulary self-selection, the use of personal dictionaries, word walls, and concept definition maps.
 - (b) Making verbal communication comprehensible to all students. This includes enunciating, speaking more slowly, repeating when needed, and avoiding jargon while using gestures, body language, visuals, and demonstrations.
 - (c) The explicit teaching of strategies for learning and retaining knowledge and skills, including ample opportunities for students to use them. Specifically, reference is made to metacognitive, cognitive, and social/affective strategies (Omalley & Chamot, 1990). Echevarria et al also describe the use of scaffolding techniques by teachers to support the students learning, practicing, and in developing independent learning skills.
 - (d) Promoting and creating opportunities for interaction and discussion between teacher and students and among students. This includes providing opportunities for students to clarify concepts in L1 and grouping student to support one another in language and content objectives.
 - (e) Providing hands-on materials for students to practice using new content knowledge as well as activities for students to apply content and language knowledge. The teacher also uses activities to integrate reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills by practicing and applying what they are learning.
 - (f) Lessons clearly reflect the content and language objectives during teaching. This indicator also looks for appropriate pacing of the lesson, as per the

students' needs and seeks levels of student engagement to be 90% to 100% of the period.

3. In the *Review and Assessment* category, emphasis is placed on the types of review and assessment that occur concurrently and spontaneously throughout the lessons. This category looks for the extent to which key concepts and vocabulary are reviewed through the use of constructive feedback through clarification, and making instructional decisions based on student responses. It also includes the gathering of information (via observation, eavesdropping, and spot checking, for example) throughout instruction that will evaluate the extent to which students have accomplished the learning objectives.

It is evident from the above descriptions of SI, that the principles are applicable to the needs of students with learning and behavioral disorders as well. They require thoughtful consideration of individual children's learning needs for active involvement in their own learning, provision of an array of modes for learning and participating, attention to language development needs, specific strategies instruction, opportunities for expanding learned knowledge and skills into other settings, as well as ongoing formative assessment.

How Can Teachers Develop Literacy Rich Classroom Environments?

Holistic approaches to literacy instruction, or whole language, are compatible with the Sheltered Instruction teaching strategies described in the previous section and have been shown to have positive effects on learning for ELLs (Edelsky, 1989; Freeman & Freeman, 1992). In a recent article, Daniels, Zemelman, and Bizar (1999) described whole language as "a philosophy of teaching and learning, an approach to curriculum, and a family of distinctive but closely related activities" (p.32). They continued with a summary of strategies often employed by teachers who promote whole language. These included: reading aloud daily, structuring independent reading and writing, embedding literacy activities in broad interdisciplinary themes, stressing higher-order thinking, teaching decoding of unknown words, organizing students into collaborative groups, teaching writing process, encouraging students to set goals and engage in self-assessment, and employing the teacher as model of adult literacy.

In traditional special education practices, one of the basic principles about learning to read and write has been lost. This principle is that the best way to learn to read and write is by reading and writing. This means that our students need to be surrounded by print, provided with multiple opportunities throughout their school day to use written text – for gaining information, for enjoyment, for development of spelling and writing skills, for communicating, and so forth. Teachers of children with IEPs, often pressured by concerns for meeting objectives of explicit reading, writing and math skills, are susceptible to losing sight of the bigger literacy development picture and concentrate their teaching efforts on the teaching of isolated skills. While teaching of explicit skills and strategies is a very important part of the curriculum, it does not need to occur in the absence of a holistic instructional program.

There are countless examples available in the research literature and in books on how teachers provide direct instruction of explicit skills and strategies within a whole language setting (cf., McIntyre & Pressley, 1996; Stires, 1992). Dudley-Marling (1996) points out that this type of explicit instruction differs from the more “traditional” skills instruction in terms of how, when and why reading skills are taught as well as the meaning attached to the learning of skills. He describes creating a classroom environment that invited students to read and modeled reading. He did this by encouraging students to read various types of texts such as song lyrics, comic books, and newspaper articles; by posting directions, announcements, and samples of students’ work; and by displaying a chart story that he wrote each day. Dudley-Marling (1996) demonstrated to his students the enjoyment and power of reading everyday by reading aloud to them, a practice which he notes has been found to affect reading vocabulary, reading comprehension, reading interests, as well as students’ oral language development. Reading aloud can be from chapter books to short poems, dependent on the window of time that the schedule permits day by day; in his classroom, the author read three to four times each day.

There are a variety of specific strategies for developing students reading. Literature circles or literature-sharing groups, where students of various reading skills and with varying interests share a range of genres of books, have been found to be effective with second language learners. In these groups, students may be assigned particular roles, such as one to keep track of new vocabulary, one to facilitate the reading and discussion and one to keep track of participants' opinions. Another strategy is the use of assisted reading or Neurological Impress Method (Heckelman, 1966). Using this technique, the teacher sits slightly behind the student and reads along with her/him for not more than 10 to 15 minutes (Purcell-Gates, 1996). During this reading, the teacher needs to maintain a reasonable, fluent pace of reading while the student matches the teacher’s fluency. The teacher runs a finger smoothly along the print as it is being read and the teacher does not use this reading as a basis for working on other aspects such as comprehension or word knowledge. Students also need to be taught to use a range of cueing systems (graphophonics, syntax, and semantics) and strategies such as predicting, rereading, and skipping unknown words to improve their reading fluency and comprehension.

As a means to assisting students in developing their comprehension, the Self-Monitoring Approach to Reading (SMART) (Vaughan & Estes, 1986) can be adapted. The student is taught to keep track of ongoing comprehension by marking in the margin with a check or question mark indicating understanding or confusion as he/she goes along. After completing a passage, the teacher models, and coaches (and gradually removes these scaffolding procedures) to teach the student to reread, identify unknown vocabulary, and to generate ways of solving his/her problems such as by asking for help or consulting a dictionary (Purcell-Gates, 1996).

With regard to teaching writing, students learn best when they are engaged in meaningful writing activities that provide the motivation and purpose needed for them to persevere as they learn about spelling, mechanics, form, and other conventions of

writing. Use of the writing process (Calkins, 1986; Carroll, Wildon, & Au, 1996; Graves, 1983) with explicit instruction on processes and strategies underlying effective writing (Graham & Harris, 1996) can be very effective with ELLs and students with disabilities. Composing involves generating ideas related to the topic, organizing them and then writing a draft while using the conventions of spelling, spacing, capitalization and so forth. Students with writing disabilities are not as adept with all of the processes and often write in a manner that does not involve any ongoing monitoring of the aspects of writing that will lead to a coherent and mechanically correct composition. Writing abilities develop best when students are provided opportunities to write about topics that are important to them and extended time for such writing.

It is in this context of writing process instruction that students can be made aware and taught about spelling patterns and rules, pluralization rules, meanings of word suffixes and prefixes, contractions, etc. More importantly, however, are teaching composition strategies such as those described by Graham and Harris (1996). They outline the use of a mnemonic that includes: Who is/are the main character(s)? When and Where does the story take place? What do/does the main character(s) do? What happens to them? How does the story end? How do they feel? (W-W-W-What=2 How=2). There are many other strategies that can be integrated with writing process instruction such as modeling by the teacher and peers, and cooperative group structures as described in a later section.

Purcell-Gates (1996) summarizes the “whole-to-part-to-whole” approach to teaching reading and writing by stating that one cannot lose sight of the fact that while it is useful to “work” on pieces of the system in isolation at times, when these pieces are put back into the whole system, those pieces will never look, or operate, the same as they did in the isolated work. She concludes that the more pieces that can be worked on in process, the more assured the teacher can be that the whole process will improve. Helping students develop their meta-cognitive skills cannot be over emphasized. It is this awareness and control over one’s own thinking and learning that serves to become a better learner. Whole language teachers often engage in modeling by thinking aloud as they solve a problem, as they decide what to include in a story they are writing, as they explain how they came about an answer, and so forth.

What Are Some Considerations in Teaching Mathematics?

It is reasonable to believe that the language best understood by the student should be the language of instruction, particularly when new meanings are being developed. Being that mathematics is the content area most likely to be taught in English, there are some important language and cultural considerations to keep in mind. For example, students in some countries are taught to subtract by finding the number that when added to the number being subtracted, would equal the number being subtracted from. (e.g., $14 - 6 = ?$ would be solved by finding the number that when added to 6, equals 14). Thus, the relationship between addition and subtraction used in the transition to subtraction is more salient. When the concept is learned,

more advanced subtraction is introduced and students are taught to regroup. One also needs to pay particular attention to the unique ways language is used in mathematics. For example, while even native English speakers may experience some confusion with terms that have non-mathematical homonyms such as 'sum' and 'whole,' their familiarity with the words makes it less likely that they will experience difficulties in distinguishing and appropriately using differential meanings (Licon-Khistry, 1995).

Comprehension of mathematics talk is further complicated when teachers unwittingly interchange various verbal expressions for the same symbolic statement (e.g., $14 - 6 = 8$ may be stated as "fourteen take away six is eight," or "six from fourteen leaves eight" (Pimm, 1987). Another example is the use of "un cuarto" which can be translated from Spanish as a "room" or as "fourth," or "three-fourths" used interchangeably with 'three-quarters.' The latter may be with understood as coins (Licon-Khistry, 1995). Close attention needs to be given to aiding students in making the connections between terms used in both languages as well as understanding the relationships between procedures that have been learned and those being presented or re-introduced in the current classroom.

How Can Cooperative Learning Techniques Be Used Effectively?

Cooperative learning structures are frequently promoted for ELLs in general and for ELLs in special education classrooms (e.g., Calderon, 1992; Calderon, Hertz-Lazoriowitz, & Tinajero, 1991; Fradd & Bermudez, 1991; Lopez-Reyna, 1997). Cooperative learning is especially beneficial for these students because of their language learning needs. As noted earlier, research suggests that conceptual knowledge developed through the students' native language does, with appropriate transitional support, transfer into English (Cummins, 1984, 1989, 2000; Diaz, Moll, & Mehan, 1986). Cooperative learning structures provide a context in which students are able to use their native language for teaching one another and for learning new concepts (Klingner & Vaghn, 1996; Lopez-Reyna, 1997). Similarly, cooperative learning groups have been observed providing a supportive language environment in which ELLs are encouraged by peers, who are more proficient in English language (Cohen, 1986), to participate in activities to learn content knowledge, improve social skills, and develop language skills.

While there is limited research in the use of cooperative learning with special education populations, the benefits are for the most part, positive. In a review by Stevens and Slavin (1991), they concluded that essentially two components discriminated between academically effective programs and those with inconclusive results: individual accountability and group rewards. That is, under the conditions of the two components, students receive an incentive to work together and to provide elaborate explanations to their group peers to optimize the group learning. In a study conducted by O'Connor and Jenkins (1996), they observed that students with disabilities received more help from their cooperative group peers than did their average-achieving classmates. They noted however, that there was a range in the quality of assistance and the extent to which the contributions of students with disabilities were taken into account. Most of the teachers in the study noted that the presence of peers who were willing and suitable partners for students with disabilities was a critical

aspect of successful group work. One of the principle findings with regard to the types of interactions that are positively related to achievement is the giving and receiving of explanations whereas simply giving the answers is not related to achievement. When children are taught and encouraged to work collaboratively and are closely monitored (O'Connor & Jenkins, 1996), they are able to support one another during cognitively demanding instructional tasks and thus, they gain access to alternative or supplemental modes of comprehension beyond what the teacher is able to provide (Au, 1984; King, 1992; Wittrock, 1990). This is particularly true for such literacy development in which discussion among students in pairs or small groups seems to facilitate the learning process (Stevens, 1994).

Cooperative learning involves much more than simply placing the students in small groups and asking them to work together. Students need to be made responsible for their own learning as well as that of their peers. It is important to organize children into heterogeneous groups. Depending on the goals of the lesson, students may be grouped according to their varying levels of content knowledge, English language fluency, social status characteristics or ability, and willingness to work with others. It is also recommended that the groups be changed several times during the school year to maintain heterogeneity. Another critical feature of cooperative learning structures is for the teacher to model high expectations, mutual trust, and respect. It is important for the teacher to identify cognitive skill areas in which the student is knowledgeable and/or skilled, provide opportunities for teaching others, and point out to the rest of the class the value of the skill/knowledge. Another means of promoting inclusion of students with varying levels of expertise is to prepare them prior to the lesson in such a way that significant participation is guaranteed (pre-teaching, not simply providing rote answers). This serves both to improve the students' involvement and expectations for him/herself and to reinforce perceptions for high expectations on the part of classmates. During the past few decades, many cooperative learning methods have been developed by individuals such as Kagan (1990), Johnson & Johnson (1991), Johnson, Johnson, & Holubec (1990, 1993), Slavin (1986), and Sharan & Hertz-Lazarowitz (1980). These include methods such as "think-pair-share," "three-step interview," "learning together," "teams-games-tournaments" and "jigsaw."

Conclusion

In closing, it is important to note the reciprocal relationship between assessment and instruction. The mention of the word assessment among teachers usually conjures up images of group standardized tests, those tests given by related services personnel, or tests that they use at the end of a unit of study. While these are all means of assessment, the type that is of most direct and relevant use is authentic assessment. All teachers are constantly involved in assessing their students. Based on a variety of sources of information, teachers make decisions regarding what and how to teach, often on a moment by moment basis. The strategies used include observation, miscue and error analysis, and the use of anecdotal records. Students may be taught to maintain learning logs, to complete questionnaires or interviews regarding their perceptions of their own learning, attitudes, and dispositions, and/or to think aloud (cf. Lopez-Reyna & Bay, 1997; Pike & Salend; 1995).

This chapter provides an overview of several principles and instructional practices that are recommended for English Language Learners who have mild disabilities. It is advisable to seek out the original sources that have been summarized and use them to guide you in your practice.

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Norma A. Lopez-Reyna, a daughter of Mexican immigrants, grew up in the central valley of California. She received her B.A. in Sociology, an M.A. in Counseling Psychology and School Psychology, and a Ph.D. in Special Education, all from the University of California at Santa Barbara. Currently, she is Associate Professor in Special Education at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her areas of interest are the uses of authentic assessment to inform instruction for CLD children with learning and behavior disabilities, teacher preparation for this population, and issues of research design and data interpretation as they pertain to informing policy regarding the education of CLD children. The youngest of Lopez-Reyna's three children is a daughter with learning disabilities and a severe language disorder. It is her children who help her stay focused on issues of direct relevancy to classroom instruction.

CHAPTER 8

Accommodations and Modifications for English Language Learners

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The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of accommodations and modifications that can be implemented in the various educational settings where English language learners (ELLs) with disabilities may be placed. The chapter addresses:

- What does it mean to make accommodations and modifications for ELLs with disabilities? *(page 1)*
- What do teachers need to consider before selecting accommodations and modifications for ELLs with disabilities? *(page 2)*
- What variables must be addressed for successful inclusion of ELLs with disabilities in general education classrooms? *(page 3)*
- What are some specific strategies that general and special educators can use with ELLs with disabilities in inclusive classrooms? *(page 4)*

What Does it Mean to Make Accommodations and Modifications for ELLs with Disabilities?

When students with disabilities participate in inclusive settings, the goal is for them to have access to the general education curriculum and the opportunity to learn the content being taught to all students in that setting. This goal is facilitated by making accommodations for the special learning needs of the students, modifying the curriculum, and adapting instruction as needed. For ELLs with disabilities, language and culture concerns should be considered together with special learning needs in order for students to develop their full potential and benefit from instruction in the general education curriculum. Strategies for successful inclusion should be developed in accordance with the IEP and be specific to the classroom setting in which the student is placed with consideration of the content or skills being taught. The environment should support the student's learning through a wide range of strategies (Cole, 1995). Unfortunately, there is often resistance to changing instructional and behavioral expectations and approaches in order to accommodate a small number of students. Some school staff are of the opinion that in striving for fairness, each student should be treated and evaluated equally. However, being fair does not mean treating everyone the same; being fair means giving each individual what is needed to optimize learning.

Many of the strategies offered to teachers in this chapter apply across classroom settings and categories of disability while other strategies apply to specific types of classrooms or disabilities. Many of the strategies also apply to ELLs with and without

disabilities. Teachers should familiarize themselves with a wide range of strategies and adapt them to suit their teaching style as well as the learning style and needs of the student. Teachers should not feel isolated in the selection and implementation of these strategies. Administrators can provide support by identifying and facilitating access to professional development materials, community resources, and the expertise of IEP team members, other school staff members, and parents. References at the end of this chapter provide additional resources.

What Do Teachers Need to Consider Before Selecting Accommodations and Modifications for ELLs with Disabilities?

In order to choose, develop, and implement appropriate modifications and accommodations, educational personnel need to understand and consider an array of factors (see Table 8.1). The modifications and accommodations chosen must match not only the students' characteristics but also those of the staff, classroom, and curriculum. A holistic approach must be utilized, integrating student characteristics and needs, staff availability and skills, curriculum, educational setting, and available resources. For example, although an accommodation may have been implemented successfully with a student in a small group or individual setting, it may not be appropriate in a more typical classroom. It must be emphasized that the classroom teacher should not be working alone; the staff, student, and parents need to work as a team to develop a plan, solve problems as they arise, and support each other in any way necessary to make inclusion a success.

What Variables Must Be Addressed for Successful Inclusion of ELLs with Disabilities in General Education Classrooms?

Teaming and Coordination of Services: In order for strategies to be successful within any classroom setting, collaboration, communication and sharing of responsibilities between staff members are vital (Schmidt & Harriman, 1998). Classroom teachers should not feel that they are working in isolation and should encourage and be open to involvement by other school staff members. The teacher must view fellow staff members as supports and resources, not as judgmental and interfering with the educational program. Additionally, all staff members need to be available and involved. It is more likely that a student's needs will be met and progress made when a collaborative approach to intervention is implemented.

Comfort and Confidence with Students and Program: There are times when members of the school staff are uncomfortable and anxious when an ELL with disabilities is placed in their classroom. This may be due to misunderstanding about the student's culture, language and/or disability or due to concern about the amount of extra work involved and the need to achieve what is perceived as impossible. To overcome this obstacle, it is important for the staff member to become familiar with and accept the culture, language and disability of the student and to get to know him/her positively as an individual. Staff members need to be reassured that although significant gains in student progress are desired, what is most expected of them is to make a sincere, solid effort in implementing the student's IEP, including modifications and accommodations.

Consistency Of Instruction: For optimum learning in ELLs, instruction needs to be provided in a consistent, uninterrupted, and comprehensive manner over time (Cummins, 1984). Those who are teaching the student need to use the same strategies and present the same concepts at the same time in the academic year. This means that the team needs to determine the language(s) of instruction and when the language(s) will be used. For example, if the sound of "s" is being taught in the reading class, the speech therapist should include this sound in therapy sessions.

Table 8.1

Factors to Consider Prior to Selecting Accommodations and Modifications

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Student</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral, reading and written language proficiency in L1 and L2 • Learning style • Type and severity of the disability; how the disability affects the student’s functioning within the classroom • Specific goals, modifications and accommodations as specified on the IEP • Educational and experiential background 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>School Staff</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support of the program by the school system as a whole • Clarification of which staff will be working directly with the student and which will serve on the support team • Qualifications and skills of the staff • Training and experience in working with ELLs with disabilities • Ability of the staff to work as a team • Flexibility of staff 	
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Family</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of family involvement with child and school • Participation in planning of and support for the educational program • Long term expectations for the child’s future • Language proficiencies • Style of communication with staff and child 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Instruction</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language(s) of instruction, including oral and written presentation of material • Characteristics of the content and curriculum • Nature of instructional materials • Types of instructional approaches and activities 	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>School and Classroom Environments</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type and amount of space available • Seating arrangements • Sound and lighting conditions • Availability of instructional materials • Classroom schedule

Determining Language(s) of Instruction: ELLs often have difficulty acquiring information that is presented exclusively in English and responding appropriately in an English-only setting. Those with very limited English skills are more likely to experience success if instruction is offered in the native language. However, in many instances, students learn best with instruction in both languages. This is because their existing knowledge is based on a combination of their native language and English. Often, formal language proficiency testing does not give the necessary information to determine the language in which the student comprehends instruction. One informal assessment strategy is to have a bilingual individual (aide or other staff member) fluent in English and the student’s home language available during instructional times to provide assistance in both languages. During this trial period

(perhaps two to four weeks), anecdotal records or performance charts may be used to record the student's responses. The records should then be reviewed to determine which language or combination of languages is most helpful for clarification or instruction.

Native Language Support: There are several different strategies that can be implemented to provide support to students in their native language. In a bilingual classroom, the teacher and peers can work with the student in the native language as well as in English. In an English-based classroom, pre-teaching of skills in the native language can be completed in order to ensure that the student understands new concepts and vocabulary prior to formal instruction by the teacher. This native language support can be provided by another student in the class who speaks the language or by a teacher aide or adult volunteer who can also provide this clarification. This support supplements, but does not replace, instruction provided by the teacher.

Encouragement of the Use of Native Language: One of the primary goals for most students with disabilities is to improve communication skills. Permitting and accepting the language the student is able to use to express him/herself leads to increased self-concept and communication ability (Cole, 1995). By accepting responses in either language, the teacher elicits language and creates the opportunity for a language lesson.

Home/School Partnerships: Support and involvement of parents/guardians is critical to student success. To foster partnerships, staff should first develop a least a basic understanding of the family's culture and views of education and disabilities (Bruns & Corso, 2001). Only after cultural understanding is developed and effective communication is established with the parents (possibly with the assistance of an interpreter), can a successful partnership be achieved. Staff need to be aware and responsive to goals of the parents for their child and respect the parents' knowledge of their child's preferences, learning styles, and interests. Parents/guardians need to have a good understanding of the program and services the student is receiving and what expectations are for behavior and work completion. They need to become involved in activities in the school or classroom to increase their understanding of the school culture. This can be accomplished by encouraging parents or other family members to assist in the classroom.

What Are Some Specific Strategies That General and Special Educators Can Use with ELLs?

Reality-Based or Experiential Models: This approach to teaching is very effective because it takes place in a real-life settings or situations rather than in artificial circumstances where the student does not see the relevance of what is to be learned (Cole, 1995). In the upper grades, for example, if students learning to write in English are required to compose a letter to obtain information or a product and then mail it to the appropriate company, they will see the purpose and results of their written language skills. In the lower grades or with students who need to improve their oral skills, teaching language related to manners and food during times when meals and snacks are served is likely to be more effective than using drills during a language arts period.

Explicit Teaching: Many students with disabilities have difficulty acquiring new information incidentally and should be explicitly taught the skills and strategies to retain those skills (Leung, 1993). The average learner acquires new knowledge through incidental learning and everyday experiences. However, when a student has a disability that impacts learning, the teacher may need to spend extra time directly explaining the concept with concrete examples. The direct instruction model, with its highly structured and consistent presentation of skills, fulfills this need within the experiential context described above.

Scaffolding: This is a technique in which the student is provided with support that is gradually reduced as the student nears independent functioning (Roseberry-McGibbon, 1995). In verbal scaffolding, the teacher accepts the student's ideas without correcting their form and then clarifies and elaborates as needed (Echevarria & Graves, 1998). For example during a literature discussion, a student may comment that one character in a story is the opposite of another character. The teacher may scaffold that idea by saying that authors often highlight the qualities of characters by providing "foils" or opposite images for the reader to notice.

Focus on Content over Form: This is an approach in which the focus of the instructional goal is on the development of higher level cognitive skills and acquisition of knowledge rather than on the mechanics of the work produced. For example, if a student writes a thoughtful answer to a social studies question but the spelling and grammar are poor, the teacher responds to the quality of the content.

Understandable Input: Teachers and other staff should make sure that the student fully comprehends what is being said. Students may be confused when teachers speak rapidly and/or use too much verbiage. For example, students may comprehend an initial question but then become confused when additional questions are asked or additional information is given without time to process a response to the first query. Teachers may need to speak at a slower than typical pace, use short sentences and phrases, and refrain from overloading the student with information. Teachers should also consider that ELLs can appear to be very fluent in English when engaged in everyday conversation but still lack the higher level, abstract language used during instruction and so are unable to understand what is being taught (Cummins, 1984).

Multimodal Approach: Instruction should be provided through all learning channels – visual, auditory and tactile. Emphasis should be placed on the frequent use of visual and gestural cues. The teacher should speak while using visual materials and gestures or exaggerated facial expressions. Visuals may include writing on the chalkboard, using pictures or diagrams, presenting objects, using computer graphics, or visual organizers. Further learning occurs when the student is involved in hands-on activities or when teaching others. Drama and music are also very effective techniques that incorporate multi-modal learning.

Monitor the Student for Fatigue: Learning a second language can be an exhausting process. Having a learning disorder and trying to learn in a large class setting can be overwhelming. When these two factors are combined, it is easy to imagine how fatigued a student with a disability who also is in the process of learning English becomes when placed in a large class

setting. These students may need frequent breaks or changes in activities throughout the school day and they are likely not at their best for learning in the late afternoon. Therefore, the more cognitively demanding instructional time should be in the morning, while the more active and less challenging activities should be scheduled for the end of the day.

Case Study Example:

Modifying the Science Curriculum for Ursula, a High School English Language Learner

Ursula is a 15-year-old high school student who was recently identified as having a learning disability. She is a Level 2 ESL student, which means that she is able to converse in English but still needs much of the academic language simplified or translated for her into Polish, her native language. As part of Ursula's IEP, she attends an inclusive basic level Science class. To help her succeed in this class, Ms. Jones, the LD teacher, and Mr. Smith, the Science teacher, collaborated at the beginning of the semester to develop strategies they plan to implement inside and outside of the classroom during the school year. Ursula was also asked to give her input about what she felt she was capable of doing in the inclusion classes. These modifications and expectations (see list below) were then reviewed with Ursula and her mother with the assistance of a Polish-speaking interpreter. In this way, Ursula was able to meet Mr. Smith before beginning his class, understand how the teachers would be helping her to learn, and encouraged to take “ownership” for her success.

1. At the start of each chapter, Mr. Smith will give Ursula a list of the new vocabulary, terms, and concepts to be taught. Ursula will then to meet with another Polish-speaking student who will explain the terms and general concepts to Ursula in Polish.
2. Ursula will keep her Polish/English dictionary with her to assist her in understanding unfamiliar words she encountered in the written materials.
3. Since Mr. Smith uses much cooperative grouping in his class, Ursula will team with two other students who will help explain the labs and include her when completing assignments.
4. Ursula's grades will be based on group projects, homework, and tests. Tests will be graded on understanding of material without regard to correct spelling or grammar of answers. Ursula will be able to take the tests orally with Ms. Jones if necessary.
5. Each week, Mr. Smith will complete a simple checklist to report Ursula's progress. In this way, if Ursula is having difficulty, Ms. Jones, Ursula and her mother will know immediately and action can be taken. All parties understand that the strategies and modifications put into place are not “etched in stone” and they can be changed according to Ursula's needs.
6. Ursula will be responsible for asking for help as needed.

Monitor and Attempt To Reduce Frustration: Many learners with disabilities have experienced repeated failure within the classroom (Roseberry-McKibbin, 1995). Therefore, their tolerance for frustration may be much less than the average learner, and they may respond in several ways: crying, yelling out, staring off or putting their heads down. To

reduce the frustration, extra practice with simpler tasks may be needed before expecting the student to complete more difficult tasks. Before students reach their frustration limit, it is important for the teacher to intervene with such strategies as providing breaks, allowing them to leave the area or room or having them work on another task.

Provide “Wait Time” And “Think Time”: Like many other students with disabilities, ELLs may have relatively slow processing speed. In addition, they often need to use both languages in order to understand the teacher and respond. Giving these students extra response time, therefore, is critical. Allowing the student sufficient time to think through the questions posed and to formulate thoughts to develop an answer is essential. The teacher should refrain from repeating the question or talking while the student is working through the problem or question. The teacher should also consider introducing the questions ahead of time in the form of advance organizers for the lesson.

Respond To Communication Attempts: Although many ELLs with disabilities have difficulty expressing themselves, it is important that the teacher and other students listen and respond carefully to the communication attempts (Roseberry-McKibbin, 1995). While students may take more time or have difficulty responding to questions or participating in classroom discussions, communication can improve only if sufficient opportunities are given for verbally interaction. If the student rarely responds or if an answer consists of a single word, the teacher should communicate acceptance. In other instances, the teacher may want to give the student the answer and then ask the student to repeat it.

Appropriate Questioning: The reason a teacher asks students questions is to assess their level of understanding of the concepts presented. In order to accommodate students’ various levels of abilities, including language abilities, the teacher may need to modify the questioning. ELLs in the initial stages of language acquisition may need to have close-ended or yes/no questions or be given a choice of answers. Others may need to respond to questions verbally rather than in writing. Rhetorical, ambiguous, run-on questions or those which clash with the student’s cultural style should be avoided (Roseberry-McKibbin, 1995).

Check Frequently For Comprehension: It is important that the teacher ensures that the student has understood a lesson before going on. However, a question such as “Do you understand?” is not enough. Often students do not want to admit that they do not know something and so will answer “yes” to such a question. More appropriate strategies to check for comprehension include having the student demonstrate the knowledge by performing the skill or explaining the concept (Roseberry-McKibbin, 1995). For example, if there has been a change of schedule for the day, the student may be required to make the changes on the previous schedule after the teacher has explained the new routine.

Peer Tutoring: This technique can be implemented with each student taking turns as tutor or learner (Fulk & King, 2001). When one student tutors another, not only do both students increase and reinforce knowledge, but self-esteem and social skills are improved as well. If the students are of the same language background, this strategy will be even more effective. Student pairs should be allowed to use either language or a mix of the two languages. Using selected materials and lessons of appropriate difficulty, the tutor asks questions and gives

corrective feedback when necessary. The roles are switched regularly. For example, two students can form a pair to read and edit one another's narrative stories or they might ask each other to explain an event or concept in social studies and then discuss it. Peer tutoring and other forms of collaborative learning activities provide ELLs with opportunities to interact with peers and develop their language skills.

Case Study Example:
Accommodating Marco's Learning Needs in the 4th Grade Bilingual Class

Marco recently came to the United States from Honduras and does not understand any English. Although he had only reached the 2nd grade in his native country, he was placed in the 4th grade due to his age. Subsequent to a child review, Marco was found to have mental retardation and the IEP team devised a plan which specified appropriate goals and benchmarks, language of instruction, and who was to provide the services. The plan calls for Marco to be included in the bilingual classroom for Science, Social Studies and "specials." In this way, he will be able to understand the language of instruction and communicate with the other students in native language. Most of the direct instruction will be done by either the bilingual teacher or the bilingual aide with support from the special education teacher. A functional academic program will be developed for Marco and functional literacy instruction is to continue in Spanish for the current school year until Marco's oral English skills improve. In the meantime, the special education staff has committed to learn basic vocabulary and directional words in Spanish. Efforts will be made to maintain a cohesive team where the intent is to support each other and to be flexible in providing the services. The team will meet and monitoring his progress during half-hour meetings every other week during the school year. The team agreed to begin Marco's instruction with the following modifications:

1. The special education teacher and teacher aide will be responsible for modifying materials for use in Spanish and for selecting appropriate computer programs.
2. Communication pictures with words written in both English and Spanish will be used to assist Marco in communicating with staff and for staff to communicate with Marco.
3. The lessons and vocabulary presented will be within the same theme as that being taught in his other classes; the same concepts and vocabulary will be taught across subject areas.
4. Each month one student will be chosen to be Marco's pal. This student will assist Marco with class activities but will not do them for him.
5. The special education teacher will team-teach with the bilingual teacher for Science and Social Studies classes. They will use many multi-modal, hands-on and concrete activities, which will be beneficial not only for Marco but also for all students in the class.
6. All of the adults who work with Marco, including his parents, will watch for signs of frustration or fatigue. They will also have the same expectations and consequences for Marco's behavior.

Preview-View-Review Technique: The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that the student understands what is to be learned and can relate the material to authentic situations (Roseberry-McKibbin, 1995). "Previewing" involves getting an overview of the content or skill to be learned and relating it to what is already known. "Viewing" involves going through the material with assistance to facilitate comprehension. "Reviewing" requires the student to go over what has been taught, summarizing, answering questions, and utilizing, or discussing the material. Overall, the teacher should take time to establish prerequisite knowledge, build the vocabulary essential for continued learning, and help the student solidify connections between prior knowledge and new knowledge.

Preventative Approach to Behavior and Discipline: A teacher can prevent many discipline problems by implementing specific expectations for behavior and by arranging the classroom and daily program so that positive behaviors are encouraged and supported (Schmidt & Harriman, 1998). Behavior problems may arise if a student does not understand the language and/or behavioral expectations; is unable to complete the work; is looked down on or humiliated in front of peers; becomes too fatigued or is overwhelmed by the setting and classroom expectations. It is critical that the student and parent/guardian fully understands classroom rules and consequences. The teacher also needs to watch for signs of acting out or problem behaviors which can be diminished by modifying work expectations or class activities.

Conclusion

The modifications and accommodations which are chosen for implementation with ELLs with disabilities are more likely to be successful with a collaborative and optimistic approach by all those involved: school staff, parents and the students. The strategies listed above should be considered as a stepping off point for a school team to modify and develop a program which is directed to the specific needs of the student and compatible with the classroom setting, resources, and curriculum. When a school team decides to implement a specific strategy, it should be modified as needed, agreed on by those who will be involved, and utilized consistently for a specified period of time before it's success can be assessed and modifications made if necessary.

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Additional Resources

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Organization and Websites

Connected Mathematics Project: www.meth.msu.edu/cmp/spneedsweb2.htm

Council for Exceptional Children: www.cec.sped.org

Institute on Community Integration, University Affiliated Program on Developmental Disabilities, College of Education and Human Development, University of Minnesota: <http://ici.umn.edu>

Institute on Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services: www.clas.uiuc.edu
LD Online: www.ldonline.org

National Clearinghouse on Bilingual Education – Special Education Resources:
www.ncbe.gwu.edu/library/specialed.index.htm

Special Education Resources on the Internet (SERI): www.seriweb.com

University of Northern Iowa – Inclusion Resources: www.uni.edu/coe/inclusion

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CHAPTER 9

Technology for English Language Learners with Disabilities

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The purpose of this chapter is to clarify issues related to the procurement and use of technology for English language learners (ELLs) with disabilities for teachers and parents. The chapter provides answers to the following concerns:

- What are Illinois requirements for the use of technology in special education? *(page 1)*
- What should be considered when establishing a technology program? *(page 2)*
- What technologies are appropriate for students with severe disabilities? *(page 4)*
- What technologies are available for augmented communication? *(page 7)*
- How can word processing, multimedia, and the Internet be used as teaching tools? *(page 8)*

Chapter Appendix

- Websites and resources on technology *(9-A)*

What Are Illinois Requirements for the Use of Technology in Special Education?

Assistive technology for students with disabilities is addressed in 23 Illinois Administrative Code based on the 1997 Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of (IDEA '97; P.L. 105-17). Both documents define what constitutes an assistive technology device and require the IEP team to consider the child's need for such assistance. Illinois requirements state:

Assistive Technology Device: Any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code, Part 226 Special Education, Section 226.75 Definitions)

In developing a child's IEP, ... the team shall consider whether the child requires assistive technology and services.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code, Part 226 Special Education, Section 226.220 Factors in the Development of the IEP)

The purpose of assistive technologies in special education programs is to support the educational needs of children. These technologies can be generic or specific in nature and are

typically identified as (a) low level: those technologies that require little training for the user to operate, or (b) high level: those technologies that are more sophisticated and require user training. Table 9.1 shows six important components that the IEP team should be familiar with when making decisions about assistive devices and services to children. For ELLs, best practice indicates that assistive technologies must be compatible with of the language needs of the child as indicated on the IEP.

Table 9.1
Components of the Assistive Technology Process

Components	Definitions
Evaluation	Functional evaluation of the individual in a customary environment for assistive technology
Purchase	Leasing/provision for the acquisition of assistive technology devices by individuals with disabilities
Selection	Designing, fitting, customizing, adapting, applying, maintaining, repairing, and replacing assistive technology
Coordination	Therapeutic or intervention services provided with other assistive technology devices associated with existing educational and rehabilitation plans and programs
Training/Technical Assistance for Persons with Disabilities	Provided to the individual or members of the family (in native language, when necessary)
Training/Technical Assistance for Professionals	Provided to individuals responsible for educational and rehabilitative services, employers, or those substantially involved in the major life functions of individuals with disabilities

What Should Be Considered When Establishing a Technology Program?

Technology plays a pivotal role in curricular and instructional delivery. How effectively these technologies are used in the classroom determines the amount of success they will incur with the children who use them. When computers first became available in schools, students found them to be highly motivating (Lewis, 1993) while many teachers were still learning how to operate the equipment.

Software

Much of the software available for educational purposes is interactive, providing students with virtual reality and opportunities for learning that is exciting, rewarding, and motivating. The Internet has made it possible for students to learn in real time that includes the use of graphics and sound (Birnbaum, 1999). Individual instruction is also available to the students once the teacher makes the necessary adjustments and modifications. A great deal of software is written in different languages and can be found in educational catalogs that sell software. In some cases, these programs can be used interchangeably between two or more languages, which makes them a valuable tool for teaching children learning English. The level of difficulty also varies so teachers can meet the individual needs of students.

A Tool for Teaching ALL Students

Technology is also a powerful tool for teachers. Lewis (1993) states that technology becomes a sort of teaching assistant because lessons can be developed that involve multimodal levels of presentation. Thus, the teacher is the one who selects and manages the computer-based instruction the student will use. The goal of technology is to enhance learning while providing students with alternative ways to learn new skills and concepts. Lewis and Doorlag (1991) list ten principles that are important for establishing an effective technology program in a classroom for children with special needs as well as those who are ELLs. (See Table 9.2.) These principles focus on technology being driven by the curriculum rather than the other way around. Teachers can also use technology for the purpose of evaluating student performance. Many software programs will record student progress and provide the teacher with detailed feedback as to the errors the student made. By reducing the paperwork for the teacher, the program provides valuable and diagnostic information concerning the student's ability levels.

Table 9.2

10 Principles for Establishing Effective Technology Programs

Principles for Establishing Technology Programs for ALL Students

1. The curriculum should drive the type of technology that is going to be used.
2. While technology can be motivating and fun, make sure it is used as a teaching tool.
3. Technology can be used to reinforce previously taught skills by providing students with immediate feedback.
4. Match the technology to the goals of instruction and the levels of the students.
5. Select technologies that allow modification so that individual needs of students can be met.
6. Use assessment data provided by technology programs to monitor student progress.
7. Use technology as a tool for teaching new concepts.
8. The experiences provided by certain technologies in the classroom can broaden the learning experiences of students.
9. Teach students how to use technology to support learning and use it to increase the level of independence for the student.
10. Be certain the teacher knows how to use the technology to its fullest capacity.

The research literature contains a number of examples of how technology can benefit students who are acquiring English as a second language. In one study, Heath (1996) describes a class project conducted for a fifth grade class of ELLs in which students were required to produce their own videos as part of lessons they developed about their countries of origin. The process increased language and social skills while developing and teaching social studies. Newer technologies make it much easier for children to record video and audio; however, teachers can assist in this process if the students have limited cognitive abilities. In another study, Mielke and Flores (1994) found that educational technology was a significant source for meaningful active, sensory, and relevant information instruction for ELLs in the

elementary grades, especially for those students who also received special education services. These children experienced a lower degree of social segregation because technology was made available to them. Technology, including the use of attractive graphics, helped to bridge the instructional gap so that these children had the same educational opportunities as their non-disabled peers.

Khine (1994) describes initiatives in educational technology that benefit the teaching-education, is included. For children with cognitive disabilities, video technology is an excellent curricular modification. The use of media enhances language opportunities for children to interact while providing the teacher with opportunities to use a variety of different technologies. Teachers who work in bilingual education can make use of various types of media for educating children. Different types of media, especially those that involve video and audio, become useful tools for teaching cognitively delayed youngsters. Many of the units created using these technologies can be saved and utilized continuously over time. A number of software programs that contain graphics are inexpensive to purchase, which makes a wide array of graphics available. These can be used to create lessons that are motivating and challenging for the students. Computer software, compact disc, CD-ROM, and videodisc technologies provide and store large quantities of subject matter and allow teachers to individualize instruction, which, in turn, permits children to learn at their own speed. This is especially important for children who are learning English as well as for those receiving special education instruction.

Using Technology to Create Teaching Materials

There is a wide range of technologies available for the teacher to use in order to create learning materials for ELLs with disabilities (Birnbaum, 1999). Programs that enlarge the size of text or limit the amount of material presented to a student at a given time assist the teacher in the preparation of lessons that will meet the individual needs of the students. Reading materials can be scanned and then basic word processing programs can be used to provide comprehensible input for the student. Sentence structure and vocabulary can be easily modified while preserving the content of instruction. With the powerful cut and paste features of these programs, teachers can easily move material between files and, in only a few simple mouse clicks, the teacher can create entirely new documents for students with different levels of skill.

What Technologies Are Appropriate for Students with Severe Disabilities?

Many children with severe disabilities are prepared to become independent contributors to society and the community. While many of these students attend school, their programs focus more upon life skills and functional academics. The use of technology in meeting these goals is important because technology can provide these students with ways to achieve more independence.

Switches are one of the most important technologies that support the needs of students with severe disabilities (RIATT, 1998). Table 9.3 provides an overview of switches and how they can be used to assist in this process. Since students with limited range of motion or cognitive function have difficulty operating commonly used devices such as the computer or

television, the use of switches makes it easier for these individuals to access these devices. By simply being able to close a switch, or make electrical contact, the student becomes able to operate any device. In some cases, toys and equipment that is battery-operated can be converted to switch usage by using a battery adapter. A battery adapter is placed between the battery and the toy so that the child can use the item with little difficulty. The device will operate simply by activating the switch and will rely less on the traditional means of activation.

Table 9.3
Types of Switches

TYPE OF SWITCH	DESCRIPTION
Air Cushion Switch	Soft pillow-like plastic which pushes air through a tube. Activated by head.
Button Switch	Size of a doorbell. Activated by pressing button with a finger.
Grip Switch	Air-forced plastic cylinder Activated by palm grasp, press, or pincer grip.
Joystick	Stick or handle that resembles a gear shift or a car. Activated by pushing.
Leaf Switch	Small flexible post mounted on a base. Activates by bending the post.
Lever Switch	Small box that looks like a plate. Activated by weight.
Pillow Switch	Cushioned and covered by fabric. Activated by squeeze, press, or grasp.
Photo Cell Switch	Works with a sensor. Activated by blocking light.
Plate Switch	Large flat surface that varies by size. Activated by touch.
Dual Plate Switch	Two metal plates that must be touched simultaneously. Activated by touch.
Puzzle Switch	Contains puzzle pieces. Activated when all puzzle pieces are in place.
Roller Switch	Wooden or plastic roller. Activated by sliding hand across roller.
Sip and Puff Switch	Straw-like control. Activated by blowing and puffing air.
Tongue Switch	Spring rod with rubber end. Activated by the tongue.
Voice-Activated Switch	Reacts to sound or voice. Activated by sound.
Wobble Switch	Flexible stick. Activated by bumping, touching, or pushing.

The purpose of switches is to make it easier for the individual to operate any type of device. Therefore, it is important that the switch meet the cognitive and motor abilities of the student. No switch should be difficult to locate nor should it be complicated to operate. The location of the switch is also essential so that the individual can reach it and complete more than one task simultaneously. What is most important to remember about switches is that many are easy to make. While commercial ones are available, schools do not need to spend a great deal of money. Many can be made with a soldering iron and metal contacts. The materials that are needed to make the actual switch are relatively inexpensive and can be made to last a long time.

In addition to switches, other adaptations of technology can be made in order to accommodate the needs of children with severe disabilities. Adaptive keyboards, programs with voice-synthesis, and touch screens are only some of those available. These devices, however, must be purchased and can cost a great deal. Therefore, it is important for school personnel to be sure that the device is the best one for the student and that it will be used. Nothing is worse than spending money for a technology device that sits on the shelf.

Adaptive keyboards can be simply those that have ergonomic layouts or moisture guards. Sticky keys, found in many basic keyboard packages, allow keys to repeat if held for a specific amount of time. This helps the child who has limited motor control and requires only a light touch for the keystroke to be repeated. Keyguards, on the other hand, prevent the keys from repeating if the student needs to keep his or her hands on the keyboard for any length of time (Lewis, 1993).

Voice-synthesis software programs can be included with the operation of the computer so the student who has limited range of motion can access computer programs simply by speaking. The only drawback of these programs is that they must be trained to understand and recognize the student's voice. Any extraneous noise that may be found in a classroom situation may cause the voice synthesis program to not operate if the noises were not included in the initial setup session.

Touch screens also make it easier for students with severe disabilities to operate computers. Through the use of simple touch, the computer functions as it would with a keyboard. Many of these devices can be activated by hand or head controls so that the student with limited ability to access a keyboard can do so through other means.

Touch windows are also commonly used for children with severe disabilities. Touch windows can be fastened to the monitor. The student will touch the response on the screen which moves the student to the next point. Touch windows can also be placed in the student's lap which makes it easier for the student to access the required command. While these devices are somewhat sensitive, they can help the student who has limited cognitive function or mobility.

Cause and effect software programs provide opportunities for children to learn about cause and effect relationships. Some of the programs require that the student make a response in order for something to occur. The purpose of this type of program is to provide the child

with some level of control over his or her environment. Often the software program will produce colors, play music, or provide the student with animated graphics when the correct response is made. In order to accomplish this, the student must engage in making the software work by either pressing one or more buttons or switches.

What Technologies Are Available for Augmented Communication?

There are a great many technologies that provide opportunities for children with disabilities to communicate. Communication boards can be made using cardboard or can be created with computers using voice synthesis. While these are considered assistive technologies, it is important to remember that many require little planning or training. Head pointers that are driven by laser light can also be used for augmentative communication. Children who have limited mobility can use head pointers to activate communication boards and help them in the communication process. These devices require that the student only look at the picture/symbol in sequence so that an idea can be transmitted to the receiver. Children will need good head movement and some ability in vocabulary in order for these devices to work effectively.

There are also software programs available that provide picture/symbol systems so the child only has to simply point or activate a symbol in order to communicate. Many of these programs will do the speaking for the child but require some knowledge of vocabulary and sound/symbol relationships. The teacher needs to determine how these communication boards will be used and how many symbols the child will need in order to communicate effectively. While many of these devices can be quite expensive, it is important that the decision be made after careful review of the options available. In some instances, a more expensive device may not be the most appropriate for the student and some less expensive programs may better meet the needs of the child. Professionals working with families of students who are bilingual must ensure that directions for using the devices are available in the native language so that the device can be used without delay. Additionally, it is important for non-English speaking parents to make sure that telephone support for using assistive technologies is available in their native language.

What Are the Types of Assistive Technologies?

RIATT (1998) describes three different levels of assistive technologies, low, elementary, and high:

Low technologies are those that require little training on the part of the student to use and are not operated by battery or electrical power. Low level technologies are usually created by the teacher and can be made with a sundry of items available from around the house or classroom. An example of a low level assistive technology is a communication board made out of cardboard that requires the student to point or touch. These can include a wide range of words or phrases that can be made on the computer and placed over words on the communication board that are not in use.

Elementary technologies require a little training for the child in order for him or her to use the product and may require a battery or plug in order for the device to operate. Switches fall into this category as would most toys that are operated with a battery adapter. These technologies may require some soldering but can easily be made by an individual who is familiar with basic electronics.

High level technologies are those technologies that require a great deal of training in order for the student to operate the product. Most of these technologies are computer driven and are complex in their design. Additionally, high level technologies can be expensive and may be too complicated for the student to use. Therefore, it is important that a high level technology is needed before it is purchased.

RIATT (1998) also states that a high technology should never be used for a low technology issue. The purpose of the assistive technology is to benefit the child and in some instances, high level technologies may be inappropriate for some children. Individuals with mild or moderate disabilities probably would benefit from a low or elementary level technology while students with more severe disabilities would benefit more from a high technology solution.

How Can Word Processing, Multimedia, and the Internet Be Used as Learning Tools?

Word Processing and Desktop Publishing

Word processing programs come in many different forms and provide a variety of support for children with disabilities. Many of these programs come with voice synthesized software so that children with limited visual abilities can still enter text with voice command. As mentioned earlier, one of the problems with voice synthesis is that it requires voice-training so that the program can recognize the pitch and tone of the user. The voice synthesis programs can be adapted for any language as long as the word processing program can be translated. Most word processing programs can be converted into multi languages and use of the voice synthesized component can be easily adapted.

Word processing programs also provide the student with spell and grammar check as well as many opportunities to edit and change text. Word processors also allow the student to enter and save text while being able to cut, paste, and move large numbers of text within one file or the other. The ease of these programs makes writing easier and lessens the amount of frustration a student might encounter. Since students with fine motor problems may have trouble with handwriting, word processors make the task much easier.

Important considerations for selecting word processing programs include the level of difficulty of the program itself. For example, the program should be easy to use and should not require that the student learn a great deal of terminology nor require a great deal of movement to perform an action. Programs should have the ability to increase the size of text and font while requiring little skill to operate. The type of help function the word processing program has is also important. Students should be able to access help with little difficulty and the instructions included in this section should be succinct and clear. Since many students may have a reading disability or some language impairment, help sections that include

graphics and text would be beneficial. Also, the word processing program should be easy to boot and should not require that the student remember a great number of steps in order for it to operate.

Word prediction software is also important for students with disabilities. These programs can predict the next word a student may type. For example, the student can type the first couple letters of a word and a list of possible choices will be displayed. From this list, the student can select the word that best approximates the desired response. While this may make selection of the word easier, it should not be used for simply avoiding teaching new words and their meanings. The main reason for using this type of software is to reduce the amount of work the student has to do to accomplish a task while making the process of communication easier.

Desktop publishing is another great technology to teach children how to write. Through the creation of class newsletters or the development of anthologies that include student work, desktop publishing offers the teacher a wide array of choices. One major advantage of desktop publishing is that it creates opportunities for collaborative and cooperative learning. The teacher can change roles the students take in compiling newsletters or collections and each student can be given a different job that requires different responsibilities. Many students enjoy participating in the creation of class documents that include their own work. Desktop publishing software provides the teacher with opportunities for teaching decision-making skills. Setting up columns and deciding the type of layout that will be used promotes prediction skills while enforcing appropriate choice decision-making options. Using headlines or titles, for example, requires some choice.

Using Multimedia

Multimedia promotes multimodal learning. It is the combination of more than one type of media that interacts through one computer. Text, graphics, sound and video are some of the types of media that make up multimedia. Videodisc, video camera, CD-ROM and devices that play audio files are commonly found in many schools today. Many programs that support audio and video on a computer make excellent multimedia. For example, students can look at a graphic of an object that makes a sound and actually hear the sound the graphic makes. Train horns, or the roar of airplane engines can be heard at the same time the graphic is displayed. Almost any sound can be recorded into a file and can be matched with its appropriate graphic. Some of the sound may be prerecorded and be part of the program while other sounds can be recorded and saved by the teacher.

Scanners make it possible for the teacher to bring any image onto the computer screen. This includes text as well as graphics and pictures. There are scanners that can actually read text and provide voice output where the text is literally read to the student. One of these programs, Kurzweil, is used for children with visual disabilities. Through the use of special scanner, the teacher can scan any printed text which can be displayed on the screen in an enlarged font or read to the student. Many of these programs allow the integration of both sound and visual display. For students with visual or reading disabilities, these technologies bridge the gap between the child being able to read and actually being able to participate.

Hypertext and hypermedia area make access to information easier. Students are not required to learn in a linear fashion because the user is the one who determines the information that is going to be accessed and displayed. Many hypertext and hypermedia programs include graphics that support the text and many include sound animation, color, and video. Sometimes, hypermedia and hypertext might display a large image and allows the child to select one area of the image for further investigation.

One of the biggest advances in educational technology is the invention of the interactive disc. Interactive discs store information in the same way floppy discs do, however, interactive discs hold far more information and are more reliable. This allows the teacher to store large files that the student can use throughout the school year and requires little training for the student to use. Videodiscs are available as pre-packaged content area programs so the teacher can select the parts that will best benefit the student. It is not difficult for the teacher to create individually tailored programs for students and requires little training in the use of the technology.

The Internet as a Tool for Teaching

The Internet is probably one of the most underused teaching tools available. The amount of information available on the Internet is mind boggling and the opportunities for teaching using certain web sites are phenomenal. Imagine the power of the Internet as a tool for teaching across the curriculum while providing children with interactive audio and video, and virtual reality based in real time. Although the Internet continues to grow in popularity, it still has a great potential for changing the way children learn in school.

Table 9.4 shows how one Internet site (<http://www.weather.com>) can be used to teach concepts in language arts, written language, mathematics, science, and social studies. This particular site also includes real time weather maps and provides opportunities for learning in virtual reality. Students are able to view weather maps and actually become involved in understanding all concepts of weather. Additionally, this particular site promotes learning by providing teachers with seasonal information such as foliage and severe storm data. The site also contains a section for teachers to share ideas about how to teach and a section on sample lesson plans.

Table 9.4

Using the Internet to Teach Across the Curriculum

Language Arts	Mathematics	Science	Social Studies
Making Predictions	How much warmer?	What makes it rain/snow?	What part of the country is the bad weather found?
Chronological order	Percent of change	What causes severe weather?	How many states in a region?
Comprehension	Estimate rain/snow fall	Which way does weather move?	Name state capitols
Details	How fast does a storm move?	Why is it colder/warmer in one region?	What states are surrounded by water?

The Internet also provides access to free electronic mail (e-mail) programs. Teachers can establish e-mail addresses for students and many of the sites that are educator friendly ensure that inappropriate content is not made available to students. Many teachers from around the world are looking for other teachers who would like to establish electronic pen pal relationships between students or for teachers who would like to exchange ideas. The Internet has made the world much smaller and the opportunities for teaching differences in customs is more effective if the students are able to actually participate with another student from a different land.

Summary

In summary, equal access to technology is a critical issue for advocates of ALL students with special learning needs. There is no doubt that technology has become a major force in today's educational environment. It is essential, therefore, that teachers who work with children with disabilities are aware of the different types of technologies available and the responsibility they have for ensuring that all children are provided equal opportunities to learn. The purpose of these technologies is to provide the student with opportunities for maximum independent functioning and the teacher is the one who is responsible for ensuring that this is the focus of any educational or technological plan. For ELLs, teachers and other advocates have the added responsibility of considering how services and devices are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

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Chapter Appendix 9-A

Useful Websites and Resources for Using Technology to Teach Children with Disabilities

Assistive Technology Resources

Able Data	http://www.abledata.com
Assistive Technology online	http://www.asel.udel.edu
ATIA Innovation Cooperation	http://www.atia.org
Center for Applied Special Education	http://www.cast.org
Closing the Gap	http://www.closingthegap.com
Illinois Assistive Technology Project	http://www.iltech.org

Government Agencies

National Library Services for The Blind and Physically Disabled	http://www.lcweb.loc.gov/nls/nls/html
Office of Special Education And Rehabilitative Services	http://www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP
Special Education Resources On the Internet	http://www.hood.edu/seri/serihome.htm
United States Department of Education National Library for Special Education	http://thegateway.org
United States House of Representative e-mail Addresses	http://www.house.gov

English as a Second Language

Internet TESL Journal	http://www.aitech.ac.jp/niteslj
School of TESOL, University Of Seattle	http://www.seattleu.edu/soe/stesl

ESL Electronic Magazine	http://www.usd.edu/engl/ESL.html
Hyperlinks for Teaching and Studying ESL	http://ug.edu.au/~uejchris
Key Resources	http://www.lzg.com/topic/Teaching_English_As_A_Second_Language
Resources for Student Teaching Of ESL	http://english.uiuc.edu
Research in TESOL	http://boards.universalclass.com
ESL Worldwide	http://www.eslworldwide.com
Learning Systems	http://www.cowan.edu.au
National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education	http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu
US Office of Bilingual Education	http://www.ed.gov/offices/OBEMLA
Model Strategies for Bilingual In Bilingual Education	http://www.ed.gov/pubs/modStrat
National Association for Bilingual Education	http://nabe.org
California Association for Bilingual Education	http://www.bilingualeducation.org
Policy for Bilingual Education	http://www.ecsu.ctstateu.edu/depts/edu/textbooks/bilingual.html
History of Bilingual Education	http://www.rethinkingschools.org/Archives/12_03/langhst.htm
Bibliographic References	http://www.cal.org
Issues in US Language Policy	http://ourworld.compuserve.com
<u>Legal Issues</u>	
Parent Network on Disabilities	http://www.npnd.org

Special Education Advocate

<http://www.wrightslaw.com>

CHAPTER 10

Providing Preschool Services to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students with Disabilities

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This chapter addresses issues of early identification and service delivery to preschool culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) children with suspected or identified disabilities and their families:

- What are problems and solutions related to "child find" in CLD populations? (*page 2*)
- What are best practices for screening CLD children? (*page 3*)
- What are best practices in the assessment of CLD children? (*page 5*)
- What are best practices in transitioning from birth-to-three to preschool programs? (*page 7*)
- What are the components of appropriate programs for CLD children? (*page 8*)

American schools are increasingly being pressured at the elementary and secondary levels to meet ever more stringent standards while including all children in the general education program. This pressure as well as recent research on the development of the young brain has encouraged many educators to focus more and more on the early childhood level (Carolina Abecedarian Project, 1999). There is ample evidence to suggest that long term effects of preschool for children are positive. Children with preschool experiences have higher graduation rates, better paying jobs, and are less likely to be on welfare or have criminal arrests (Schwienhart & Weikart, 1980). The early intervention research such as that on Reading Recovery also suggests early intervention can have positive effects on the acquisition of academic skills. The increase in working mothers whose children are in daycare/preschool settings adds an additional incentive to identify and provide quality elements of an early childhood experience. At the federal level, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA '97; P.L. 105-17) mandates the important role of the public school system in the identification and assessment of young children who may be eligible for special education and in the provision of educational and other related services. At the state level, specific requirements for serving these children, including transitions from early intervention to preschool programs and child find activities, are found in 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, including Section 226.250 Child Ages Three Through Five and Section 226.260 Child Reaching Age Three.

What Are Problems and Solutions Related to "Child Find" in CLD Populations?

A major challenge for school districts is to inform families with young children who are linguistically and culturally diverse of screening opportunities for developmental problems. Conflicts in values, language differences, and logistical issues may hamper child find efforts, however, school districts can overcome these issues with social awareness and improved communication.

Values/Conceptual Conflicts

Some families do not believe their children should be in school or receive any kind of services when they are very young. They may think of school in a more traditional sense where children sit down and do worksheets. They may see this as inappropriate for their young children. Or they think that preschool is just playing and that they can do that at home without having their children ride a bus or deal with separation issues. Sometimes families and schools have a different concept of disability. The school may think a child's language development is delayed but a parent may believe the child communicates adequately and therefore does not need "special education" services that may have a negative connotation in some communities. Schools should take care to develop local parent educators, advocates, and parent networks to be their spokespeople. Teachers and administrators at the elementary schools also should be informed of services. They often have relationships already established with families and can encourage them to seek services for younger siblings. The elementary school can also be an effective route for disseminating screening information by posting flyers in the buildings and including announcements in the school newsletters. As the word gets out in the community that there are quality services for children, more families seek those services on their own.

Limited First Language Resources

Families cannot always read or understand the informational flyers sent by school districts if they are in English. Districts should make every effort to provide informational flyers that are simple and clear in the major languages represented in the school district populations. Some school districts have information/personnel available in their high incidence languages (e.g., Spanish) but not in lower incidence languages. Other school districts have very limited resources in any language. Districts should seek out competent bilingual individuals in the community if possible to help translate key documents to support the child find effort. Schools may send out a survey to the parents to identify bilingual individuals who would be willing to help families occasionally. Community agencies, churches, and businesses also could be a source of support. Once people have been identified, the protections and procedures described in the IDEA should be followed. Every effort should be made to make contact with families in their first language. Even when parents appear to be somewhat proficient in English when "educationese" is the language used to communicate, miscommunication often occurs. Early childhood programs are often the parents' first contact with the school system. The success of this contact may impact the interaction with the school system for many years to come. Clear communication should be a high priority goal.

Difficulties with Logistics

For some families it may be difficult to get time off of work to attend appointments related to the identification of children. Often a child with special needs requires multiple meetings. School districts should offer to provide letters to employers if this problem arises. For some families, transportation may be a barrier to getting to appointments. Scheduling meetings and assessments in locations close to public transportation or in their neighborhoods may alleviate this barrier. Scheduling appointments outside of the normal school day may reduce the stress on families i.e. evening and Saturday screenings. Families with children with many special needs may also need support from school nurses, social workers, parent facilitators, or others to access the maze of services.

What Are Best Practices for Screening CLD Children?

School districts are required by the IDEA to conduct an annual screening of children in their attendance area under the age of five for the purposes of identifying those who may need early intervention or special education and related services. Typically, screenings are conducted on large numbers of children in a relatively short period of time. Prior to conducting these screenings, school district administrators should consider the following questions: What decisions need to be made? How will the information be collected? Who will be responsible for obtaining it? What type of information is needed? When and where will the information be obtained?

Preparation for Screening

For CLD populations, it is best to have qualified bilingual/bicultural professionals who have been trained to conduct the screening. If a credentialed person is not available, a non-certificated individual with appropriate training, such as a teacher assistant, could be used. A person who is bilingual and happens to work in the school system, such as a custodian or a secretary, is not likely to have the skills or training necessary to be utilized in this capacity. In situations where qualified bilingual persons are not available, monolingual professionals who have training in ESL and non-biased assessment may be utilized with an interpreter to conduct screenings. However, it would be important to consider the limitations of this approach when evaluating the results of the screening. Information from the family is a key component for every screening but it is even more important when a bilingual professional is not available.

A family centered screening/evaluation is preferable to a more traditional approach (Meisels & Provence, 1996). Because young children do not always cooperate with strangers in a screening or assessment setting, the parent/family information is critical to accurate evaluation. The following strategies and practices will optimize the validity of the findings:

- Let parents know what to expect and how to meaningfully participate.
- Ask parents about their priorities. (It is important to clarify what areas are of most concern to maximize the assessment time. Many parents of young children will identify speech as a priority.)
- Wear name tags and introduce personnel to the family.

- Provide a family friendly setting i.e. comfortable chairs for different size people, a place for parents to sit, toys for children while they wait and for other siblings.
- Encourage parents to report child's abilities.
- Discuss results in terms that are comprehensible, in the native language whenever at all possible, and clearly explain what the next steps are to be taken.
- Be aware of screener's own cultural values, biases and experiences and use care in interpreting results with respect to their own cultural orientation. (This is particularly important when addressing child rearing practices and their developmental appropriateness. Sometimes children may not be competent on a particular task because they have not had the appropriate experience. This does not constitute a delay necessarily.)
- Utilize multiple sources of information.
- Use culturally sensitive instruments, procedures, and processes to improve the validity and reliability of the outcomes.
- Determine language proficiency as a result of screening.
- Use developmentally appropriate screening procedures that are administered in the child's native language and in English whenever possible.
- Interpret results from English measures within the framework of second language learning.

Screening Instruments/Procedures

The most common ways of gathering screening information are through observations, tests, interviews and questionnaires. Information is typically collected in the areas of large and fine motor, language, social development, adaptive abilities, and cognitive levels. Observation often yields the richest sample of information with young children. Activities can be designed which require the use of skills in each of the areas. Observational data can be collected and then compared to developmental checklists. However, this type of observation is often more time consuming than using a test instrument, a major limitation if large numbers of children are to be screened. (See the section on play-based assessment for more information on observational assessment.)

When choosing a screening instrument, district staff should look for the best match between the instrument and their identified needs. Some instruments yield information about cognitive, language, social, adaptive and motor abilities, such as the Batelle Developmental Inventory (Newborg, Stock, & Wnek, 1984). Others are available in Spanish and English, such as the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning-III (DIAL-III) (Mardel-Czudnowski & Goldenberg, 1998) and include a social-emotional checklist for parents. Others are curriculum based and/or criterion referenced, such as the Brigance Diagnostic Inventory of Early Development (Brigance, 1991) or the Early Screening Inventory-Revised (Meisels, Marsden, & Wiske, & Henderson, 1997). Some include language minority individuals in the sample while others do not. Others measure only adaptive skills and are available in Spanish and English, such as the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales-Revised (Sparrow, Balla, & Cicchetti, 1984). District staff must consider carefully what they need from the instruments and find the best match for their purposes, always realizing no single

measure will tell the whole story. (This is especially true if you are working with a 3 year-old who needs a nap!)

For efficiency purposes, it is recommended that all early childhood programs in a district use the same procedures for determining eligibility across programs. If the special education department uses one set of procedures, for example, and children are found not eligible for services under IDEA, they should be able to be referred to a state pre-kindergarten program without having to undergo another assessment. This requires coordination among pre-k, special education and bilingual/ESL programs. An ongoing analysis of data is necessary to make sure the criteria used to differentiate populations is in fact valid. Referral rates for case studies following screenings, eligibility rates after case study evaluations, student performance data, and teacher observations of children who enter programs can be collected to evaluate the effectiveness of the system.

What Are Best Practices in the Assessment of CLD Children?

While the purpose of screening is to assess a large number of children quickly to detect potential areas of difficulty, the purpose of a special education evaluation is to look at an individual child in depth, over time, and from multiple perspectives. This is done in order to determine eligibility for special education services and to inform the development and the ongoing adaptations of the IEP. The evaluation team identifies which domains must be assessed and which instruments/procedures are necessary to determine the child's eligibility for special education services. The domains include health, social emotional development, cognitive development, speech and language skills, educational skills, and motor skills. In most cases, screening procedures occur at one time and then children with potential disabilities are referred on to a different team for further assessment. In some districts, however, screenings and assessments are conducted during the same sessions.

In either case, the concept of a case study is not familiar to many CLD parents. For many families, a comprehensive evaluation at the early childhood level is the first time they have ever heard of the process. It is important that school personnel understand that the process can be overwhelming and even though something has been explained once before, it may not be fully comprehended. Informing parents that their child has delays may set into action an emotional grieving process. The way that is handled varies from culture to culture. Early childhood staff must be observant and open to working with families in culturally responsive ways. Some families may want to seek out non-traditional methods for dealing with the delays. Others may leave the country to seek treatments. Others may combine traditional and non-traditional approaches. The team should maintain good communication with the family so that they are aware of any interventions from all sources.

Transdisciplinary Play-Based Assessment

Transdisciplinary play-based assessment is a strategy for obtaining an estimate of the functional skills of preschoolers who are suspected of having a handicapping condition or developmental delay (Linder, 1993). It is an alternative to using standardized tests and consistent with the requirements of PL 99-457. Preschoolers often show behaviors that limit the usefulness of standardized assessment procedures. This is especially true when CLD

children go into a setting where their language is not the majority language. During a play-based assessment, the evaluation team sets up an interesting play environment with activities and materials aimed toward the diagnostic assessment of children's functional skills. A natural, comfortable environment includes:

- Activities that are largely child centered.
- Multiple opportunities for expression of developmental skills.
- Flexibility and adaptability in task presentation.
- Opportunities for peer interaction.
- Flexible parent involvement.
- Depending on the model, groups of two, three or four children.
- A team that consists of a parent, a psychologist, a speech therapist, a social worker, a nurse and a play facilitator.

The team then interacts with the children in play. Team members keep notes about each child's performance. The assessors must be keen observers and excellent teachers as they must alter tasks spontaneously during the session to collect quality data. The most effective teams evolve into transdisciplinary teams where the speech therapist may notice something about cognitive development and the psychologist may notice something about language development. Ideally one report is written that describes what was observed. Parents seem to appreciate the process because it is very comprehensible and they are able to observe their child at the same time as the team. Teams have found play-based assessment to be an excellent alternative to traditional testing, especially with CLD populations. Because language minority parents often naturally talk to their child in the native language, observers can note the child's performance when using English as well as the home language. This is valuable diagnostic information for determining eligibility. The team must be sensitive to cultural variants in play schemes and equip the playroom with culturally appropriate toys.

Traditional Assessment

Another approach to assessment is a psychometric approach. "Developmental expectations based on standardized measurements and norms should compare any child or group of children only to normative information that is age-matched, gender, culture and socio-economically appropriate." (NAEYC, 1992). Assessors must be cautious about identifying a disability in light of the cultural and linguistic biases that exist. Multiple sources of information across time and settings are the best way to assure a valid assessment. Typically, each bilingual professional spends time individually testing the child. This multidisciplinary approach provides a variety of perspectives that are synthesized at the IEP conference. When a bilingual psychologist is not available, monolingual psychologists sometimes use a nonverbal test, such as the Leiter International Performance Scale-Revised (Roid & Miller, 1997), with second language learners to reduce the bias inherent in verbal tests. Bilingual speech therapists often administer a language proficiency test as part of their battery or they use comparable instruments in two languages to assess language skills as well as relative language proficiency. If testing in native language is not available, all data must be interpreted within a framework of second language learning. This is true for the educational assessment as well. Formal instruments that assess adaptive behavior are available in Spanish and English, but if interviews are conducted with parents from other

language backgrounds, results must be interpreted within a culturally sensitive framework. Either traditional or play-based assessment can be effective methods for assessing young children as long as bilingual and bicultural variables are considered.

What Are Best Practices in Transitioning from Birth-to-Three Services to Preschool Programs?

In some cases, children who enter preschool programs have been identified with disabilities during the ages of zero to three years and are already receiving services. The Illinois Department of Human Services administers these birth-to-three programs, with services provided by many agencies across the state. When these children are about to turn three, the local school district participates in transition planning conferences arranged by the service coordinator or lead agency. These conferences are held in order to develop a transition plan that enables public school personnel to review the existing Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) and to develop an IEP no later than the child's third birthday.

School personnel should work to develop a positive relationship with the early intervention providers with whom they come in contact most frequently. A transition consultant or designated contact that links the providers with the school district will make transition services more seamless. The transition from a medical model, which is typical for early intervention programs, to an educational model, which is typical for a school district, sometimes causes misunderstandings among early intervention professionals, school districts, and parents. It is critical that this shift be discussed as transition plans are being developed.

For culturally and linguistically diverse populations it is critical for school districts to collect data regarding the language used for assessments and for interventions. It is also important to understand the philosophical stance of the early interventionists and the school district. When there is a mismatch, families often feel services are not of the same quality. For example, if a Spanish-speaking child receives speech therapy for one year in English from a community provider but is then placed in a predominantly Spanish early childhood program, parents may feel English skills are not progressing as rapidly as they were previously. The child may in fact be working on higher level skills in his first language but the mixed programming can confuse parents and children.

School districts should become familiar with the instruments and procedures most commonly used in the birth-to-three programs so that the information can be more easily transferred into the system with minimal need to redo testing or collect information that was previously gathered. It is painful for a parent to relive a difficult birth many times so that the nurse, the social worker and the psychologist from both agencies all get the story. Districts should strive to make the transition as seamless as possible to allay parents' fears. Sending a child with disabilities to school the first time takes trust and faith in the schools. The more that the two systems cooperate and coordinate, the more likely that trust will be developed.

What are the Components of Developmentally Appropriate Programs?

Quality programs for CLD young children serve the whole child within the context of the family and the community. They use developmentally appropriate practices that respect the individual differences, choices and development of children. The goal of quality multicultural education is not to teach children about different cultures, but familiarize children with the idea that there may be many points of view, languages, and ways to live. The National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC, 1996) recommendations for programs and practice state that programs should (a) recognize that children can and will acquire the use of English even when their home language is used and respected; (b) support and preserve home language usage; and (c) develop and provide alternative and creative strategies for young children's learning.

Ideally, when a community has a group of children who share the same language, their teacher should also be bilingual in the language of the group. Learning a primary language is what all children are doing at the preschool level. When children come to school speaking a language other than English and begin to learn only in English, their first language development may proceed more slowly or they may suffer from language loss. They spend a great deal of time learning English while the English-speaking children are learning higher level concepts. This may put children more at risk than if they were being educated using their home language.

NAEYC's Guidelines for Developmentally Appropriate Practices (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1992; NAEYC, 1992) highlighted in the following section, are related to curriculum, adult-child interaction, relation between home and program and evaluation. Early childhood teachers, related service personnel, and administrators should carefully consider their practices in each area listed below to ensure that an optimum learning environment is provided for ALL students.

Recommendations for Curriculum

- *Developmentally appropriate curriculum provides for all areas of child's development: physical, emotional, social and cognitive through an integrated approach.*

Children who come to school with limited English skills will not be able to develop English language for social, cognitive or emotional purposes the same way English speakers will. Adaptations based on ESL pedagogy should be employed to create comprehensible input in low anxiety, high-context learning environments (Krashen, 1983). Children should be provided with many models and multiple practice opportunities as well as visual supports to enhance comprehension. If children are instructed in their first language as well as English, some differences might need to be highlighted, e.g., how you interact with adults varies from culture to culture.

- *Appropriate curriculum planning is based on teachers' observations and recordings of each child's special interests and developmental progress.*

Teachers using only English can observe children interacting in their native languages and make some assumptions about their capabilities. If English is the only language that can be used to collect data in school, then information from parents at home could

help a teacher have a better understanding about a child's development. Children's performance based solely on demonstrations in English must be considered through a filter of second language learning and not be mistaken for an overall indicator of functioning.

- *Learning activities and materials should be concrete, real and relevant to the lives of young children.*

Materials and experiences in classrooms should be representative of the backgrounds of all the children. Parents and community members can be very helpful as consultants in this area. For example, dress-up clothes can have some ethnic garments, the kitchen should have foods representative of different groups in the class, music should also be multicultural in origin, cooking experiences can reflect a variety of backgrounds.

- *Adults provide opportunities for children to choose from among a variety of activities, materials and equipment. Adults facilitate children's engagement with materials and activities and extend the child's learning by asking questions or making suggestions that stimulate children's thinking.*

When teachers are working only in English they will use ESL strategies to accomplish this goal. They will be aware of the stages of language development and tailor their interventions to meet the child's level of development. If adults are bilingual, then a language use plan will optimize children's continued language growth. That is, adults have a plan for how and when each language is used for what purpose.

Recommendations for Adult-Child Interaction

- *Adults respond quickly and directly to children's needs, desires and messages and adapt their responses to children's differing styles and abilities.*

This is easily accomplished when teachers are using the child's first language but frustration often develops when a child's needs cannot be understood in the second language. Children should be encouraged to use visual systems, their routines, peers and physical prompts as well as words to get their needs met. Teachers in turn can learn some words in the child's language to increase a child's self esteem and pride in his/her language and improve communication.

- *Teachers are alert to signs of undue stress in children's behavior and aware of appropriate stress reducing activities and techniques.*

When children spend a whole school day in their second language they may experience fatigue faster than their English-speaking peers. If they are also dealing with a disability that impacts their learning, they may turn off or tune out more often than others in class. A teacher should monitor this situation carefully to keep the stress level low. Activities such as bringing a favorite toy, water play, music, and

quiet time may give the child the opportunity to calm down and be ready for learning again.

Recommendations for Relations Between the Home and the Program

- *Teachers are responsible for establishing and maintaining frequent contact with families.*

When families and the teacher do not share the same language, community resources need to be found to help facilitate communication. Often families have someone they know who can translate for them. Schools should identify their own community resources. Sometimes school personnel mistake English language ability with accent. They should be careful to separate the two. Some very proficient adults have a heavy accent. Some not very proficient adults do not. Communication is the goal and any way, orally or in writing, that enables good communication should be used.

Program Models

- Classroom Composition. Students with special needs are often served in self-contained classes with students with disabilities, often grouped by severity of need. With the revamping of the IDEA in 1997, the inclusion movement was fully supported. Early childhood classes should be available across a full continuum of services from self-contained to inclusion. Some districts are combining children in state pre-kindergarten programs with students with special needs in the same classroom. Other districts include typically developing children in the mix as well. If classes are mixed, there should be no more than five students with disabilities per session.
- Language Use. Classrooms can be taught using English only, English as a Second Language (ESL), bilingual instruction or a dual language approach. The least effective approach is English only (sometimes called the "submersion" approach) in which the teacher uses English and makes few, if any, modifications for the needs of the second language learner. Often parents of children in these classes are encouraged to speak English at home even if their language models are poor. As a result, children lose a rich language environment as well as their emotional connection to the language. Some classes that have many different language backgrounds represented use an ESL approach. In ESL, trained teachers provide a consistent and low anxiety environment, language input that is comprehensible to the child, respect for the first language and culture, and incorporation of the first language and culture into the curriculum. Bilingual classes include both first and second language development opportunities in a planned approach. The goal is to support cognitive development in the first language while developing second language competency. Most programs for second language learners in Illinois are "transitional" bilingual programs, i.e., students gradually decrease the amount of first language they use in class and transition into an all English class. The dual language approach is one in which two groups of students who are dominant in different languages learn both languages in a planned instructional program. For example, a class of 16 students might have 8 Spanish speakers and 8 English speakers. Part of each day is spent interacting in English and part is spent interacting in Spanish. The goal of dual language

programs is to develop competent bilingual individuals. Programs of this type typically continue throughout elementary school and sometimes even beyond. Longitudinal studies show this model as producing higher academic achievement in students than any of the other models (Collier, 1989).

- Continuity. Early childhood program staff should be aware of the elementary programs into which children transition. Children do best when the types of programs are compatible. For example, if the early childhood program provides ESL services but the students transition into a bilingual kindergarten, they may show good conversational skills in English but lack concepts that will help them be good readers. Likewise, if the early childhood class is conducted in native language but the kindergarten class is English only, the transition may be more difficult for the child. Ideally, the two systems should coordinate and design instruction and curriculum that will maximize the children's success and not put additional stress on them. For example, the English only preschool class might hire a bilingual assistant to help build concepts in native language or the native language class could incorporate a systematic ESL curriculum to ease the transition. The closer the match between early childhood services and kindergarten the more successful the children will be.

Conclusion

Personnel dealing with young children with special needs who are culturally and linguistically diverse must constantly evaluate the existing systems in terms of their efficacy for this particular population. A problem solving approach is most beneficial because most systems are not currently designed to address this population (Bowman, Donovan, & Burns, 2000). Professionals from various disciplines must team together to bring their expertise to the problem solving process. In this way systems can adapt and change to meet the needs of the children and families that they must serve in high quality programs.

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CHAPTER 11

Developing IEPs for English Language Learners

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The purpose of this chapter is to present several sample IEPs, based on the best practices described in the resource book, for students of different ages, cultural and linguistic backgrounds, English language proficiency levels, and type of disability.

- What are the Illinois requirements for putting together an IEP team for English language learners (ELLs)?
- What are the legal requirements for developing IEPs for ELLs?
- Sample IEPs for ELLs

Chapter Appendix Material

- Options for Service Delivery to ELLs

What Are the Illinois Requirements for Putting Together the IEP Team?

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act Amendments of 1997 (IDEA '97; P.L. 105-17) regulations and 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226. Special Education, Section 226.210 IEP Team, the IEP team for each student is to be composed of:

- (a) the student's parents;
- (b) at least one general education teacher if the student is or may be participating in the general education environment;
- (c) at least one special education teacher;
- (d) a representative of the local education agency who is knowledgeable about special and general education and availability of resources;
- (e) an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results (if not already included);
- (f) other knowledgeable individuals at the discretion of the parent or school; and
- (g) whenever possible, the student.

In Illinois, there is a requirement for an additional team member **if the student has limited English proficiency**. This requirement was put into place in 1992 with the passage of Illinois Public Act 87-0995 (see Chapter Appendix 1-A):

The IEP team may include a qualified bilingual specialist or bilingual teacher, if the presence of such a person is needed to assist the other participants in understanding the child's language and cultural factors as they relate to the child's instructional needs.

(See Chapter Appendix 1-A for certification requirements of qualified bilingual specialists.)

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.210 IEP Team)

The IEP team is the key to developing culturally and linguistically appropriate IEPs. Much rests on the ability of the case manager to bring knowledgeable and creative professionals to the table. A team that works best for ELLs includes members who are knowledgeable about native language instruction and the learning of English as a second language; who can cross educational boundaries to discuss how special, bilingual, ESL and general education can be integrated in the best possible way for students; and who respect and consider the wishes of the parents and the students in the design of the program.

What Are the Legal Requirements for Developing IEPs for ELLs?

There are specific federal and state requirements that must be considered when the team develops IEPs for students with limited proficiency in English. IDEA '97 and 23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.220 Factors in the Development of the IEP require that:

- the language needs of students with limited proficiency in English be addressed on the IEP.

In Illinois, additional requirements apply:

- A section on the IEP labeled "Linguistic and Cultural Accommodations" to document:
 - (a) any accommodations needed to meet the student's cultural and linguistic needs; and
 - (b) whether special education and related services will be provided in a language or mode of communication other than or in addition to English.

(23 Illinois Administrative Code Part 226, Special Education, Section 226.230 Content of the IEP; Illinois State Board of Education Technical Assistance Document for Developing IEP Forms)

Sample IEPs for ELLs

Since the nature of the IEP is to be unique to the needs of the student, it is difficult to predict exactly which characteristics of the student and circumstances warrant specific goals or services. Examples can help us conceptualize what culturally and linguistically appropriate IEPs mean in practice. For a student who is a recent immigrant to the U.S., the IEP may contain a goal related to the acculturation process, i.e., learning about the U.S. and its customs. For a student from South America with strong Indian roots who is just beginning to develop literacy skills, culturally appropriate reading materials may be indicated on the IEP. For students who have difficulty with social interaction, the IEP may call for social integration activities with the student's cultural peer group. For students who are just beginning to learn English, a goal for developing basic interpersonal communication skills in English through the collaborative effort

of the ESL and special education teacher may be appropriate. For students with dual language skills, goals to improve reading and writing in both languages may be written, with services to be delivered by the English-speaking special education teacher in the bilingual classroom. Finally, for older students who have oral skills in English and the native language, but extremely limited literacy in either language, the IEP may call for developing functional reading in English only.

Three case studies are presented in this chapter with suggestions for how the IEP might be conceptualized and written for students with various abilities, backgrounds, and language proficiency. The cases deal primarily with four aspects of the IEP: linguistic and cultural considerations, annual goals, accommodations and modifications, and least restrictive environment. Each case begins with background information on the student, including current levels of achievement. This information is followed by a list of critical questions the team should discuss and answer before attempting to develop the written IEP. In practice, the case manager or another team member who is familiar with all aspects of the case should develop these questions, facilitate a discussion, and help the group come to closure on the issues. This step is especially important in cases where students are from cultural and linguistically diverse backgrounds because there is likely to be a lack of common understanding among team members about first and second language acquisition, the student's native culture, and the acculturation process. Following this discussion, the section on language and cultural considerations should be completed by the team as these considerations will guide the development of annual goals, decisions about service delivery models, and the list of accommodations and modifications. (The minimum requirements that districts must include in the IEP form are discussed fully in the Illinois State Board of Education's "Technical Assistance Document for Developing IEP Forms" and related documents available through ISBE's website at www.isbe.net). Options for service delivery appear in Chapter Appendix 11-A.

Sample A: Maria

Student: Maria B.
Age: 8 years, 3 months
Grade: 2nd

Recently identified as having a learning disability. This is her first IEP.

Reason for Initial Referral: Maria was referred by her second grade bilingual teacher who reported that Maria was performing well below the typical expectations for children her age in the areas of oral and written language and Spanish. Maria was also having a difficult time learning English as a second language compared to her peers.

Family Background: Maria arrived in the U.S. from rural Mexico around her sixth birthday. She was accompanied by her mother, father, grandfather, and younger brother. The family came to the U.S. seeking steady employment. Maria's father has conversational English skills and is taking English classes through his job. Maria's mother and grandfather speak Spanish only. The family lives in a small apartment close to the school and is saving money for a down payment on a house. Both children are described by the adults as polite and well-behaved.

Present Levels of Performance:

- Physical/Medical: Hearing and vision screenings normal. Pediatrician's report indicated no medical issues.
- Social/Emotional: Gets along well with peers and adults; tries hard to complete school work; usually asks for help when frustrated.
- Cognitive: Psychological testing revealed average cognitive ability with weaknesses in auditory processing and long-term retrieval of information.
- Oral Language Dominance and Proficiency: Woodcock-Munoz (English & Spanish versions) and analysis of oral language samples in both languages indicated Spanish as the dominant language. Maria was classified on the Woodcock-Munoz as having negligible-to-very-limited English and very limited Spanish. The bilingual speech/language pathologist noted limited Spanish vocabulary, problems with word retrieval, and sentence structure characteristic of younger children.
- Academic: Reading and writing abilities in Spanish at pre-K levels. Math is at grade level.

Issues for the IEP Team to Consider:

- Should Maria continue to learn to read and write in Spanish?
- What methodologies should be implemented to improve literacy skills in Spanish?
- How should the acquisition of English be handled in her program?
- What is the most inclusive way for Maria to receive services?
- What accommodations or modifications should general education teachers use with Maria?
- How can Maria's parents be included in her academic development?

Linguistic and Cultural Considerations:

Following a comprehensive review and discussion by the IEP team, members decided that Maria's instructional program will continue to develop her literacy skills in Spanish as she learns English. Maria will also continue to receive instruction in the context of her current general education bilingual classroom . A bilingual speech/language pathologist will provide direct and consultative service to promote Maria's oral language in Spanish and English. Maria's service delivery team will include the bilingual general education teacher, the monolingual English special education teacher, the bilingual teacher assistant, and the bilingual speech/language pathologist.

Suggested Goals:

1. Maria will improve her oral language abilities, including vocabulary and sentence structure, in Spanish.
Personnel responsible: Bilingual speech/language pathologist, general education bilingual teacher, special education teacher.
2. Maria will increase her Spanish reading and writing abilities to a first grade level.
Personnel responsible: General education bilingual teacher, special education teacher.
3. Maria will develop beginning Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) in English.
Personnel responsible: General education bilingual teacher, special education teacher.

4. Maria will earn passing grades in general education areas, including science and social studies, with appropriate accommodations and modifications to the curriculum.

Personnel responsible: General education bilingual teacher, special education teacher.

Least Restrictive Environment/Service Delivery Pattern:

Maria will receive services in her general education bilingual class with the exception of weekly pull-out services from the bilingual speech/language pathologist. The bilingual speech/language pathologist will also consult with the bilingual general education teacher and special education teacher to promote oral language development. The special education teacher will provide consultative services to the bilingual general education teacher on strategies for promoting literacy skills. A bilingual teacher aide, directed and supported by the special education teacher, will provide direct service to Maria during language arts activities.

Accommodations/Modifications:

General Education Classroom Instruction

- Maria will have written material from general education classes presented to her orally (by a peer tutor, teacher assistant, teacher, parent, or by tape) as needed in the language(s) the materials are presented in to her class.
- Maria will be able to provide oral responses instead of or in addition to written responses for class assignments involving written work.
- Maria will receive native language support as needed in general education classes by the bilingual teacher or bilingual teacher assistant (i.e., beyond what would otherwise occur in her bilingual classroom or for her bilingual peers).
- Maria's parents will receive a schedule of the week's academic activities with accompanying written materials in Spanish in order to reinforce learning at home.

General Education Classroom-based Assessment

- Maria will (a) have written assessments presented to her orally (by a bilingual teacher or teacher assistant) in the language(s) the materials are presented in to her class and (b) be able to provide oral responses instead of or in addition to written responses.

State and District-Wide Assessment

- Maria shall participate in state and district-wide assessments with the following accommodations:

Written assessments will be presented to her orally (by a bilingual teacher or teacher assistant) in the language(s) the assessments are presented in to her class.

Oral responses (transcribed by the teacher) instead of or in addition to self-written responses will be accepted.

Personnel Responsible: The special education teacher will be responsible for making sure that plans for accommodations and modifications are carried out successfully. The special education

teacher will work collaboratively with the bilingual teacher assistant and bilingual general education teacher to accomplish these activities.

Sample 2: Tad

Student: Tad L.
Age: 15 years, 4 months
Grade: High School

Recently identified as having mild mental retardation. This is his first IEP. The parents have requested placement in a special school.

Reason for Initial Referral: Tad was brought to his neighborhood high school by his older sister who asked about procedures for registering a student with special needs. Tad's sister explained that he and his parents had recently arrived from Poland, joining her and the rest of the family in the U.S. Tad had attended a special school in Poland that focused on self-care skills and vocational training.

Family Background: Since moving to the U.S., Tad and his parents have lived with his older sister, her husband and two nephews in a modest two-flat. A large group of extended family members live in the area. Tad's mother and father work in a restaurant owned by their son-in-law. Tad has been spending time helping at the restaurant and watching his two nephews at home.

Present Levels of Functioning:

- Physical/Medical: Hearing and vision screenings normal. Physician's report indicated no medical issues.
- Social/Emotional: Described as calm and friendly; prefers to interact with adults rather than peers; takes pride in being given responsibilities around the house.
- Cognitive: Psychological testing revealed general intellectual functioning significantly below average, placing him in the range of mild impairment.
- Adaptive Behavior: Functioning consistent with intellectual ability; has good self-care skills and housekeeping skills including ability to make simple meals; has limited independent experience in community settings.
- Vocational: Held part-time job in Poland as a dishwasher, working with his mother. Currently works at family restaurant doing general maintenance tasks.
- Oral Language Dominance and Proficiency: Tad is Polish dominant with receptive and expressive skills consistent with his intellectual ability. He is beginning to learn English vocabulary related to his job at the restaurant. Tad is exposed exclusively to Polish at home and to Polish and English at his job site.
- Academic: Qualitative assessment by the Polish bilingual teacher revealed reading, writing, and math abilities at the 2nd to 3rd grade level.

Issues for the IEP Team to Consider:

- How should the acquisition of English be handled in Tad's program?

- What is the most inclusive way for Tad to receive services considering the request of the parents?
- How should content area course requirements be handled in Tad's program?
- What accommodations or modifications will be necessary for district-wide assessments and vocational experiences?
- What transition plans or services should be included on the IEP?

Linguistic and Cultural Considerations:

Following a comprehensive review and discussion by the IEP team, members decided that learning conversational English and developing job skills are important priorities for Tad. Tad's parents agreed to placement in a general education setting, rather than a special school, when they realized that the services available in Poland only at special schools were available in general education high schools here. Tad will receive ESL instruction in the beginning general education ESL classroom (where the ESL teacher speaks Polish) and in the special education resource room. Tad will begin the year taking all content area classes in the special education room and will move to content-based ESL classes as his English develops. Since the school has a large number of Polish students, Tad will receive native language support from peer tutors in all his classes under the direction of the special education teacher.

Suggested Goals:

1. Tad will develop beginning Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) in English.
Personnel Responsible: ESL teacher, special education teacher.
2. Tad will develop beginning reading and writing skills in English.
Personnel Responsible: ESL teacher, special education teacher.
3. Tad will successfully complete required credits for sophomore year high school.
Personnel Responsible: ESL teacher, special education teacher.
4. Tad will successfully participate in vocational training classes.
Personnel Responsible: Special education teacher.

Least Restrictive Environment/Service Delivery Pattern

For the first half of the school year, Tad will spend approximately two periods of the day taking ESL classes for newcomers where he will have contact with the ESL teacher who speaks Polish. The remainder of Tad's day will be spent with other special needs students in enrolled in the vocational training program and other content area courses taught by the special education teacher. The special education and ESL teacher will collaborate to incorporate special education and ESL techniques throughout Tad's program. The IEP team will reconvene before the start of the second half of the school year to review Tad's progress and adjust his program as needed.

Accommodations/Modifications

General Education Classroom Instruction

- Curriculum goals will be modified for Tad according to his level of cognitive development.
- Written materials will be modified for Tad by providing pictures and other visual aids.

- Tad will be assigned peer tutors who speak Polish. The peer tutors will receive training from the special education and ESL teachers about how to provide support.

General Education Classroom-Based Assessment

- Classroom assessment will be based on Tad's modified curriculum goals using a "mastery learning" approach. A checklist of knowledge and skills will be developed for each curriculum area.

School and District-Wide Assessment

- Tad will not participate in these assessments during this first year in the program due to a combination of his limited English, his developmental level, and lack of experience with test-taking conditions.

Personnel Responsible: The special education teacher will collaborate with the ESL teacher to modify curriculum goals. The special education teacher will take primary responsibility for modifying materials and training the peer tutors.

Sample C: Mei

Student: Mei C.
Age: 10 yrs. 4 mos.
Grade: 5th

First identified as having behavior problems and learning disabilities in the 2nd grade. This is her fourth year receiving special education services.

Reason for Initial Referral: Mei was referred by her older sister at the beginning of 2nd grade due to acting out behaviors at home and reports by her first grade teacher that she was not performing well in Chinese or English. Her older sister, who was studying to be a teacher, reported that she had a difficult time convincing her parents that Mei should be evaluated for special education services but she persevered because she felt her parents were overwhelmed by Mei's behavior.

Family and Academic Background: Mei was born in the U.S. to Chinese immigrant parents who arrived about five years before her birth. Mei is the youngest of four children. Her two sisters and one brother are college graduates, all married and living outside of the family home. The parents own a store in the Chinese neighborhood where they live. Mei grew up in a predominantly Chinese language environment, learning more English when she began to attend school. She has been enrolled in bilingual education classes since the first grade and has received special education services in self-contained and resource settings from both monolingual and bilingual special education teachers over the years. She also attends Chinese school on Saturdays.

Present Levels of Performance:

- Physical/Medical: Hearing and vision screenings normal. Pediatrician's report indicated no medical issues.

- Social/Emotional: Is easily frustrated and tends to be argumentative with peers and adults during those times, but has improved significantly over the past two years. Mei's older sister, who is the primary contact with the school, reports that her parents find it difficult to control Mei at home and tend to be passive with her.
- Cognitive: Most recent psychological testing revealed average cognitive ability with significant problems in organization and memory.
- Oral Language Dominance and Proficiency: Reports from the bilingual teacher indicates low average oral language proficiency in both Chinese and English.
- Academic: Reading and writing skills in English are approximately two years below grade level. Mei displays inconsistent literacy skills in Chinese but performs overall at a primary level. Math skills are two-to-three years below grade level.

Issues for the IEP Team to Consider:

- Should Mei exit the bilingual program?
- Does Mei continue to need ESL services?
- What is the most inclusive way for Mei to receive services?
- How can Mei be helped to control her behavior at home and at school?
- What accommodations or modifications should general education teachers use with Mei?

Linguistic and Cultural Considerations:

Following a comprehensive review and discussion by the IEP team, members made the following decisions. First, the team decided to exit Mei from the bilingual program and place her in the general education 6th grade classroom for the upcoming year. Although the team does not think that English language acquisition continues to be an issue for Mei, any necessary native language support will be provided by the bilingual special education teacher who happens to serve the middle and upper grades. Second, the team decided to schedule Mei for weekly sessions with the bilingual school counselor who will work with Mei on anger management. At the request of Mei's older sister, Mei's parents will not be involved in any counseling sessions but the sister will report on home conditions to the school counselor. If limited progress on behavior is noted, the school counselor will refer Mei and her sister to an outside agency in the community for service.

Suggested Goals:

1. Mei will improve her reading vocabulary, sight word recognition, and silent reading comprehension in English.
Personnel responsible: General education teacher, special education teacher.
2. Mei will improve her spelling and narrative writing abilities in English.
Personnel responsible: General education teacher, special education teacher.
3. Mei will improve her ability to solve number and word problems in math.
Personnel responsible: General education teacher, special education teacher.
4. Mei will earn passing grades in general education areas, including science and social studies, with appropriate accommodations and modifications to the curriculum.
Personnel responsible: General education teacher, special education teacher.

5. Mei will exhibit improved self-control skills.

Personnel responsible: General education teacher, special education teacher, bilingual school counselor.

Least Restrictive Environment/Service Delivery Pattern:

Mei will receive services in her general education class with the exception of one period of resource services for intensive reading instruction. The special education teacher will provide direct and consultative services in the general education classroom.

Accommodations/Modifications:

General Education Classroom Instruction

- Mei will be provided with graphic organizers and modified written materials as needed for all content area subjects.
- Mei and her teachers will develop an individual behavioral contract with a self-monitoring component that will be reviewed weekly.
- Mei's academic performance, when appropriate, will be evaluated with a focus on her conceptual development rather than on written form.

General Education Classroom-based Assessment

- Mei will participate in all classroom-based assessments but will receive assistance from the teacher if she requests it. The special education teacher will review all assessments for the purpose of modifying them as necessary for Mei.

State and District-Wide Assessment

- Mei shall participate in state and district-wide assessments with the following accommodations:

Written assessments will be given with oral support.

Oral responses (transcribed by the teacher) instead of or in addition to self-written responses will be accepted

Personnel Responsible: The special education teacher will be responsible for making sure that plans for accommodations and modifications are carried out successfully. The special education teacher will work collaboratively with the general education teacher to accomplish these activities.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR...

Rita Brusca-Vega, Ed.D., is Professor of Special Education at Chicago State University in Chicago where she teaches courses on cultural and linguistic diversity and disability issues. In response to the growing language diversity in Illinois, she established one of Illinois' first personnel preparation programs in bilingual/ESL special education with support from the U.S. Department of Education. A former classroom teacher of students with special needs, she is on the Board of Directors of the Illinois Division of Diverse Exceptional Learners, Council of Exceptional Children (IDDEL-CEC), and is the co-author of the text, *Assessment and Instruction of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students with or At-Risk of Learning Problems*, Allyn & Bacon.

Options for Special Education Service Delivery to ELLs

Since the language and placement needs of ELLs with disabilities vary widely, it is important for the IEP team to consider a range of options in which students can receive appropriate language and special education supports. In the list that follows, options are initially categorized based on whether the student requires native language or ESL support. If native language support is indicated, the team considers options for delivering services based on whether the student will receive services in fully inclusive or partially inclusive settings. Under each of these categories, there are then options for students who need all or most instruction in native language or who need some instruction in native language. If ESL-only support is indicated, the team considers options based on whether services will be delivered in fully inclusive or partially inclusive settings.

While best practice indicates that fully certified bilingual/bicultural special education teachers should be the first choice as service providers, other teachers as well as appropriately supervised paraprofessionals may be capable of providing high quality instruction. A good example is the monolingual English special education teacher who holds the Bilingual Special Education Approval. This teacher, because of specialized training, may be very effective in providing ESL services to students with disabilities in consultation/collaboration with bilingual/ESL teachers and in supervising the instruction that bilingual paraprofessionals provide. IEP team members are encouraged to think "outside the box" when putting service delivery plans in place and focus on providing seamless services that allow for access to the general education curriculum.

A. Options for Service Delivery to ELLs who Require Native Language Support

1. Fully inclusive services:

For students who require all or most instruction in native language

- Student participates in general education bilingual classroom with consultative or direct support from a bilingual special education teacher.
- Student participates in general education bilingual classroom with direct support from a bilingual paraprofessional under the supervision of a bilingual or monolingual English special education teacher. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the classroom teacher and may also provide direct service to the student.
- Student participates in ESL program with direct support from a bilingual paraprofessional under the supervision of a bilingual or monolingual English special education teacher. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the ESL and other classroom teachers and may also provide direct service to the student.

For students who require some instruction in native language

- Student participates in general education bilingual classroom with consultative or direct support from a bilingual or a monolingual English special education teacher.

- Student participates in general education bilingual classroom with direct support from a bilingual or monolingual English paraprofessional under supervision of a bilingual or monolingual English special education teacher. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the classroom teacher and may also provide direct service to the student.
- Student participates in general education monolingual English classroom or ESL program with direct support from a bilingual special education teacher or from a bilingual teacher who consults with a special education teacher.
- Student participates in general education monolingual English classroom or ESL program with direct support from a bilingual paraprofessional under collaborative supervision of a special education and bilingual or ESL teacher. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the classroom teacher and may also provide direct service to the student.

2. Partially inclusive services

For students who require all or most instruction in native language

- Student participates in general education bilingual classroom with pull-out services from a bilingual special education teacher. The bilingual special education teacher provides consultative service to the classroom teacher and may also provide direct service to the student.
- Student attends general education bilingual classroom with pull-out services from a bilingual paraprofessional under supervision of bilingual or monolingual English special education teacher. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the classroom teacher and may also provide direct service to the student.
- Student participates in ESL program with pull-out services and direct classroom support from a bilingual paraprofessional under the supervision of a bilingual or monolingual English special education teacher. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the ESL and other classroom teachers and may also provide direct service to the student.

For students who require some instruction in native language

- Student participates in general education bilingual classroom with pull-out services from a bilingual or a monolingual English special education teacher.
- Student participates in general education bilingual classroom with pull-out services from a bilingual or monolingual English paraprofessional under supervision of a bilingual or monolingual English special education teacher. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the classroom teacher and may also provide direct service to the student.

- Student participates in general education monolingual English classroom or ESL program with pull-out services from a bilingual special education teacher or from a bilingual teacher who consults with a special education teacher.
- Student participates in general education monolingual English classroom or ESL program with pull-out services from a bilingual paraprofessional under collaborative supervision of a special education and bilingual or ESL teacher. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the classroom teacher and may also provide direct service to the student.

B. Options for Service Delivery to ELLs who Require ESL Support

1. Fully inclusive services:

- Student participates in ESL program with consultative or direct support from a special education teacher.
- Student participates in general education monolingual English classroom with direct support from an ESL teacher or paraprofessional. The special education teacher provides consultative service to the ESL and classroom teacher. The special education and ESL teachers jointly supervise the paraprofessional.

2. Partially inclusive services

- Student participates in ESL program with pull-out services from a special education teacher.
- Student participates in general education monolingual English classroom with pull-out services by a special education teacher. The ESL teacher provides consultative service to the special education and classroom teachers.