



Measuring What Children Can Do in All Languages: Developmental Assessment for Children Who Are Dual Language Learners

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### Session Objectives

At the end of this presentation, you should be able to:

- Define bilingualism, and what it means for children.
- Identify language use that is typical of dual language learners.
- Evaluate the options for assessment of dual language learners.
- Demonstrate effective communication with families about assessment results.

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### Session Agenda

Here's what we're doing today:

1. What does it mean to be bilingual?
2. What dual language learners do
3. Assessment for dual language learners
4. The need to assess bilingually
5. Communicating results with families

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### What Does it Mean to be Bilingual?

Bilinguals use

- More than one language to *different degrees*
- These languages for a *variety of purposes*

A bilingual child is ...  
Someone who is *exposed* to two languages no matter what their level of proficiency is in either language.



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### What Do Young Bilingual Children Do?

- She's chuping her dedo.
- Am I gonna bath myself tonight?
- He's "ronking" (referring to dog)
- I'm gonna *ganar* you.
- Mom, look what Rufus "made" me.
- I'm so *sed*.

How do young children become bilingual?



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### What Do We Mean When We Say Assessment?

Assessment is the process of measuring children's learning and development for the purposes of:

- monitoring children's development,
- informing curriculum and decision-making,
- identifying whether children may benefit from additional support services, and
- communicating information to others about children's progress toward learning goals



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 **Developmental Screening**

- HSPPS 1302.33(a)(1)(2)
- "A program must use one or more research-based developmental standardized screening tools to complete the screening"
- Purpose: "to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills"

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 **Children who are Dual Language Learners**

HSPPS 1302.33(c)

(1) Screenings and assessments must be valid and reliable for the population and purpose for which they will be used. . . and being age, developmentally, culturally and linguistically appropriate. . .

(2) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English, a program must use qualified bilingual staff, contractor, or consultant to:

- (i) Assess language skills in English and in the child's home language, to assess both the child's progress in the home language and in English language acquisition;
- (ii) Conduct screenings and assessments for domains other than language skills in the language or languages that best capture the child's development and skills in the specific domain; and,
- (iii) Ensure those conducting the screening or assessment know and understand the child's language and culture and have sufficient skill level in the child's home language to accurately administer the screening or assessment and to record and understand the child's responses, interactions, and communications.

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 **Children who are Dual Language Learners**

HSPPS 1302.33(c)

- (3) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English and qualified bilingual staff, contractors, or consultants are not able to conduct screenings and assessments, a program must use an interpreter in conjunction with a qualified staff person to conduct screenings and assessments as described in paragraphs (2)(i) through (iii) of this section.
- (4) If a program serves a child who speaks a language other than English and can demonstrate that there is not a qualified bilingual staff person or interpreter, then screenings and assessments may be conducted in English. In such a case, a program must also gather and use other information, including structured observations over time and information gathered in a child's home language from the family, for use in evaluating the child's development and progress.

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 **Why Do We Need to Assess Children?**

- In one way or another, all early childhood assessments involve a process of gathering information about children in an attempt to better understand learning and development.
- Meaningful assessment involves thoughtful choices on the part of professionals among the many purposes, types, methods, and instruments available to assist us in getting to know more about young children.

Washington State  
A Guide to Assessment in Early Childhood



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 **Why Do We Need to Assess Children?**



Beyond observations of children and their families, it is important to also use screening & assessment tools to have an objective view of the child.

- Screening tools
- Assessment tools

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 **Typical Assessment in Early Childhood**

- Language development
  - Measured in one language
  - Or, one language at a time
- Other developmental domains
  - Social/emotional development
  - Cognitive development
  - Gross/fine motor skill development



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**Bilingual Development & Assessment**

What do we learn when we assess?

- Language development  
10 words (3 in English, 7 in Portuguese)
- Social emotional development  
"Sispann! Mwen pa renmen sa."

Do we really learn what we want to learn?

We must look at young bilingual children holistically!

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**Bilingual Assessment**

<p><b>Informal Bilingual Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asking and answering questions</li> <li>• Partnering children</li> <li>• Using bilingual materials</li> <li>• Involving family members</li> </ul> <p>Difference from monolingual assessment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We consider all languages!</li> </ul>	<p><b>Formal Bilingual Assessment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does it exist?</li> <li>• Main issues:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Assessing languages separately</li> <li>2. Norm samples are not bilingual</li> </ol> </li> <li>• One assessment for young children is <i>normed on a sample of bilingual children</i></li> <li>• Assess in each of the child's languages.</li> </ul>
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From Research to Practice



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**Families' Understanding of Bilingualism**



Our role in supporting families is to provide research-based information on bilingualism in the early years.

- What can they expect from their children?
- How do you (the professional) support the child's bilingualism?
- How can the family continue to support their children's bilingual development?

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**Communicating with Families**



Recommendations for how to communicate assessment scores and abilities to families raising bilingual children.

What do they need to know?

What can they do to help?

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**Resources**

- **Screening Dual Language Learners in Early Head Start and Head Start: A Guide for Program Leaders:** <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/screening-dual-language-learners-eng.pdf>
- **Promising and Effective Practices in Assessment of DLLs and EL's Educational Progress:** <https://www.nap.edu/read/24677/chapter/13>
- **Colorin Colorado** [www.colorincolorado.org](http://www.colorincolorado.org)
- **Assessing Young Dual Language Learners – What You Need to Know and Why:** <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/assessing-young-dlls-what-you-need-know-why-carol-scheffner-hammer.pdf>
- **Strategic Use of Consultants: An Interactive Guide for Head Start and Early Head Start Leaders:** <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/impacting-change-ncclr.pdf>
- **Dual Language Learners Toolkit:** <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language/article/dual-language-learners-toolkit>

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Wrap-Up

Answering Your Questions

Thank you for joining us, please [click here](#) to complete the evaluation for this webinar.

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Thank you!

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