

Assessment of Young Dual Language Learners

December 9, 2016

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NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood
Development, Teaching and Learning

Greetings and Introductions



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Session Objectives

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

- Understand the terminology used in developmental screening, assessment, and dual language learners.
- Explore best practices when assessing dual language learners.
- Explore approaches and systems for assessing dual language learners.

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Frequently Asked Questions

“How can the children’s languages be utilized in assessments?”

“How can we understand the development of children within and across languages?”

“What are the best ways of doing so and what mistakes should we avoid?”

“Why?”



The WHY of Developmental Screening and Assessment for DLLs

Obtaining information to better respond to the child’s needs

What are some questions to be addressed through developmental screening and assessment?

Examples include:




- How is this child developing overall within and across multiple domains of development?
- Should we be specifically concerned about the child’s language development?
- How is the child developing in his English skills over time? How about in the home language? Both?

Key Concept


DLLs are developing in language as well as in all other domains!

CASE EXAMPLE

Let's Discuss Terminology...

- Dual Language Learners (DLL)
- English Language Learners (ELL)
- Limited English Proficient (LEP)
- Children who speak a Language Other Than English (LOTE)
- Bilingual




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Language Information About Dual Language Learners

- Important role of families and caretakers in developmental screening and assessment process
- Ask **all** families about linguistic background, including degree of exposure and engagement with **each** language*
- Some professionals assume that, because a child is exposed to English, learning or assessment will not be affected. That can be an incorrect assumption.


*Gathering and Using Information Families Share is retrieved from the ECLKC: <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hdr/search/?q=information%2Bgathering&rows=20>



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Contextual Questions (Barrueco, 2012)

- Age of the child
 - Infant vs. Toddler Vs. Preschooler
- Age of exposure
 - How many months or years ago did exposure begin?
- Intensity of exposure
 - At home
 - In the care setting(s)
 - Change over time: Immigration and other considerations
- Usage
 - Used in what type of interactions?
- Societal expectations



ECDTL Barrueco, B. (2012). Assessing Spanish-English Bilingual Preschoolers: A Guide to Best Approaches and Measures. 2012


 Video: Andreas, 3 Years Old



Andreas

Video courtesy of the former EHS NRC
EHS Family Child Care site


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 More Terminology: Developmental Screening and Assessment

Similarities


- Information-gathering process
- Focus = individual child
- Can occur birth through age 5 (and beyond)
- Observation/measurement of development
- Can cross multiple domains
- Data for decision making

Contributed by NCCDH

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 More Terminology: Developmental Screening and Ongoing Assessment

- Screening:
 - Brief procedure or instrument
 - To identify children who may need further assessment to verify developmental and/or health risks.
 - To identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills
- Ongoing Assessment:
 - Systematic procedure
 - Information from observation, interviews, portfolios, projects, tests, and other sources
 - Children's characteristics and development

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Developmental Screening and Assessment Contrasts

<p>Screening is single purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Should the child be referred for a formal evaluation? <input type="checkbox"/> Designed for single use. <input type="checkbox"/> Data are not meant to be aggregated over time. 	<p>Assessment is multipurpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Determine best program placement option. <input type="checkbox"/> Assess child progress. <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluate program effectiveness. <input type="checkbox"/> Plan for optimal teaching. <input type="checkbox"/> Designed to be repeated. <input type="checkbox"/> Data are intended to be aggregated over time.
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One More Point

Screening and assessment are different but they do not need to be completely separate.


Any information about a child's strengths, knowledge, skills, and abilities identified during screening can be used as ongoing assessment data.




Contributed by NCCSB

Best Practices in Screening

- Identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills.
- Use one or more research-based developmental standardized screening tools.
- Obtain additional information from family and staff.



Best Practices in Assessment




- Standardized and structured assessments
- Progress in multiple developmental outcomes
- Frequency to allow for individualization
- Regularly use observation-based or direct assessment information.

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Key Points in DLL Screening and Assessments

- Important for programs to have a formalized approach for implementing a screening and assessment system for all children.
- Noting red flags raised during the screening and assessment process.



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Best Practices in Screenings and Assessments with DLLs

- Qualified bilingual staff to examine
 - Language skills in home language and English
 - Domains in other than language skills in language or languages that best capture the child's development and skills in the specific domain
- When qualified bilingual staff not available
 - Use an interpreter along with a qualified staff person
- If neither qualified bilingual staff nor interpreter are available
 - Screenings and assessments may be conducted in English
 - Gather and use other information, such as structured observations over time and information gathered in a child's home language from the family

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Collaboration with an Interpreter

- Meet with interpreter beforehand.
- Discuss screening or assessment:
 - Purpose
 - Structure
- Discuss expectations of screening or assessment:
 - Administration
 - Documentation
 - Focus on child or parent




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Screening and Assessment Tools for DLLs

Key points to remember:

- Read the screening and assessment manuals and follow instructions.
- Some measures created to be administered:
 - ACROSS both languages
 - WITHIN each language




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The "NO-NOS" of Screening and Assessment with DLLs

Translate measures on your own.

Combine results from English and home language on your own.

Assess DLL children's language skills only in one language.



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The Characteristics of Measures for DLL children

- Characteristics of the best screening and assessment measures:
 - Attuned to developmental age.
 - Created with a large group of children.
 - Analyzed to minimize biases.
 - Reliability: Does the measure provide a clear picture?
 - Validity: Does the measure examine what matters?
 - Language: Beyond translation.
 - Cultural backgrounds and experiences.

ECCTL Barneo, S., López, M. L., Ong, C. A., & Lizano, P. (2012). *Assessing Spanish-English bilingual preschoolers: A guide to best measures and approaches*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.

The Characteristics of Measures for DLL children


- Some measures are well developed and some are not.
- If a measure is well developed in one language, that does not mean it is in the other language.
- Some measures are well developed across their English and Spanish version to support interpretation of results from both languages.
- Some are not.

Reliability				Validity								
Test-retest reliability	Internal consistency	Inter-rater agreement	Face and content	Internal construct	External construct	Criterion	Content equivalence of items and measure	Semantic equivalence of translations	Structural consistency across English and Spanish	Technical equivalence in reliability	Technical equivalence in validity	
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Let's Talk About Screening and Assessment Systems

WHAT SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT SYSTEM DO YOU USE?



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References and Resources

- ❑ Barrueco, S. (2012). *Assessing young bilingual children with special needs*. In S. M. Benner, *Assessment of young children with special needs: A context-based approach* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.
- ❑ Barrueco, S., López, M. L., Ong, C. A., & Lozano, P. (2012). *Assessing Spanish-English bilingual preschoolers: A guide to best measures and approaches*. Baltimore, MD: Brookes Publishing.
- ❑ National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. *Gathering and Using Language Information that Families Share*. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/search?q=Information%20gathering&rows=20>

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