



Screening Bilingual Language Development for English-Spanish Speaking Preschoolers

Presented by

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1



Objectives

- DLLs: Definition and demographics
- Review why language is important for school success
- Understand how language development differs for English-Spanish bilingual speakers
- Understand best practices for screening the language development of bilingual preschoolers
- Explore tool options for screening English-Spanish bilingual preschoolers



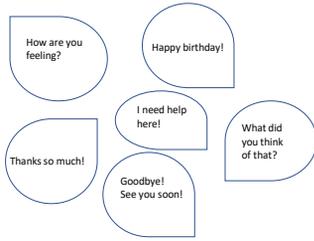
2



3

Language is a social instrument

- Connects people in many aspects of human life
- Allows us to share our ideas, thoughts, and feelings with others.



7



- *Language helps us form concepts, understand abstractions (e.g., sad, freedom, infinity), follow reasoning*
- *Language helps us engage in self-regulation and executive function*



8

8

Our secondary analyses of the NICHD Child Care data set suggests...

- **That language at school entry is the single best predictor of school outcomes** (reading, math, social skills, later language) in grades 1 and 3
- And of gains in outcomes scores from Grades 1 to 3; 3 to 5



9



The scientific data show both direct and indirect relationships between language and reading

- Consider phonological awareness, “c-a-t” or “base ball”
- Rhyming, e.g., day
- Asking for definitions – What does this mean?
- Hearing stories to build knowledge of narrative structure
- Exposure to academic language (e.g., decontextualized talk, complex syntax, academic vocabulary)

10



Detecting language issues early

- **Need language to understand text and learning**
- Early detection of language issues in general is important because intervention is more effective the earlier it begins
- It is better to assist improvement in oral language prior to embarking on the new challenges of literacy and other demands of the early school environment
- Oral language is essential for the demands of literacy beyond the level of sound-symbol correspondence

11



Challenge: Persistent language problems are hard to identify early

- **Challenge**
 - “Late Talkers”
 - Relying on language production
 - Examiner must make judgement of correct response
 - Reticent child
- **Solution**
 - Comprehension
 - Better predictor of language difficulties
 - Reduce burden of communication

12



Challenge: Identification of DLD in DLLs

- Developmental Language Disorders (DLD)
 - Language disorder not associated with a known medical etiology
- 3.3 percent of children ages 3-17 have a language disorder (7.7 percent in 5 to 6 year-olds)
- Individuals with DLD exposed to two bilingual contexts may not be correctly diagnosed
 - Overidentification
 - Underidentification
- **Exposure to a bilingual context is not a risk for DLD!!!!!!**

13



Why do DLLs especially need good language screeners?



We've all heard stories of DLL children sitting in classrooms, not identified as having language issues, until they are failing in school

- "Let's wait until they learn enough English before we assess them"
- "We do not have the time or the appropriate bilingual personnel to assess these children"

We needed a better way to screen for potential language difficulties in DLLs

14



Dual Language Learners: Assessment Challenges and Solutions

Some of the challenges are conceptual:

- Why is it hard to assess the knowledge of language when there is more than one language developing at once?

Some of the challenges are practical:

- How can we make it easier to assess DLLs when there may not be enough bilingual SLPs?

15

Conceptual Challenges

- There is a continuum of proficiencies
- How do we distinguish language risk status from incomplete learning
- Spanish and English have internal variability i.e. dialects

16

Language Learning Environment of DLL

home	gandules	nene	blue	white	ropa	wheel
casa		house	horse	Mamá	zapato	marshmallow
cupcakes	she		he	pizza	hotdog	gato
girl	muñeca		house	shed	baby	niña
perro						fireman

17

Knowledge Distributed Across Two Languages

home	gandules	nene	blue	white	ropa	wheel
casa		house	horse	Mamá	zapato	marshmallow
cupcakes	she		he	pizza	hotdog	gato
girl	muñeca		house	shed	baby	niña
perro						fireman

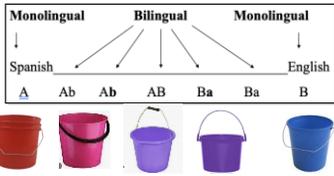



18

Distributed Knowledge – Beyond Vocabulary

19

Continuum of proficiencies in both languages



20

Capture child's overall language skills - *regardless* of language

- Assess in Spanish *and* English
- Score assessment to capture strengths and needs, regardless of language
- Best Score

21



	Spanish	English	Spanish/English
	casa	house	1
		giraffe	1
	manzana		1
	rana		1
		owl	1
TOTAL	3	3	5

22

Capture multiple domains of language and language learning

- Assess
 - Product
 - what the child knows-vocabulary and grammar
 - Process
 - ability to learn new language items

23

Assess Product

(what the child knows-vocabulary and grammar)

"Find the clairvoyant?"
"Encuentra el cartógrafo."



24

Assess Process (ability to learn language)

"Find the endolith."



25

Process (ability to learn language)

"Can you find another endolith?"



26

Process

• Encuentra el mixino.

Puedes encontrar otro? Enseñame el mixino



27



Sensitive to linguistic variations

- Both English and Spanish spoken in the US are variable,
- there are dialect variations to be considered that should not be characterized as mistakes because the child is reflecting the language they learned

28



AAE Example

- For speakers of African American English, the use of past tense or 3rd person marker is optional:
 - He finish(ed) his lunch
 - She always like(s) apples
- AAE has other grammatical properties – subtle aspects on verbs- that Mainstream English lacks:
 - He be working ten years at that factory
 - I fitna go home soon

29

What does a Spanish-speaking child call the pink thing coming out of the glass?

- PITILLO
- POPOTE
- PAJITA
- CALIMETE
- SORBETE



30



Practical Challenges

- Bilingual personnel often unavailable
- Training on administration and scoring often required
- Reports need to be informative for teachers and parents

31



How do we reduce the burden on test administrator?

Personnel may not be able to speak Spanish, nor be able to interpret accurately what a child says in Spanish

Better if the test "gave itself", with automatic narration and registration of the child's answers.

But then it has to be appealing to the child!

32



How to provide useful information to examiners, teachers, and parents?

- Rethinking language screening
 - Beyond Pass/Fail
 - Identify Strengths and Needs
 - Product
 - Vocabulary
 - Grammar
 - Process
 - Language(s)
- Need to have automatically generated, informative reports for teachers, parents (in English and Spanish), and other professionals

33



Take Home Messages

- Language screening is an **important first step** in identifying children at-risk for developing language disorders
- Screeners for bilingual children must **take into consideration both languages** and account for children's distributed knowledge across the languages
- Screeners **must assess product** (what the child has learned) **and process** (child's ability to learn new language items)
- Ideally, screeners **should not require specialized training**, should be **automatically scored**, and produce **output that is easily interpreted** by parents and teachers
- Language screener should provide practitioners and parents **information on TD children's strengths and needs**

34



Developing a Language Screener

- Our attempt to develop a screener for DLLs of English and Spanish:
 - How did we address these challenges?

35



- A new kind of screener
- 15 minutes per section
- Dynamic events can be presented by animation
- Automatic narration and scoring
- Automatic reporting functions
- Does not need a professional to test
- Children like it!

36



One Child Quils video

37



Assessment must be applicable to population assessed

- **Challenge**
 - What the empirical literature showed for this age range (3-6)
 - What we know about bilinguals' language and dialect
 - What kind of mistakes children might make - for the foil design

38



Matching the Sections

- **Solutions**
 - Structures assessed must be equivalent across languages
 - Nouns, Verbs, Prepositions, Wh-Questions
 - Unique features of one language [e.g., possessives in English ('s) and possessive in Spanish (de)] not assessed
 - Cognates avoided (cafeteria and caf  ter  a)

39

Avoiding Bias

- **Solutions**
- Items must not discriminate between/against children who speak different dialects of Spanish or English
 - Dialect neutral words in Spanish (e.g., silla/falda)
 - Past 'ed in English
 - Characters portrayed show various ages, races, genders, and disability status

40

Challenge: Assessments must examine ability to learn new language items as well as the product of learning (vocabulary and grammar)

- **Challenge**
 - Product of language must be examined
Vocabulary and grammar in prekindergarten are unique predictors of language variability in third grade
 - Process (ability to learn new words and structures)
Some children may be adept at learning but have limited exposure to high quality language interactions.
Others may be surrounded by rich language but have a limited capacity to generalize.
- **Solution**
 - Assess Product and Process

41

Product-Syntax-Prepositional Phrases



Figure 6.7a. Prepositional Phrases (English). "The dog sat behind a chair." (English)



Figure 6.7b. Prepositional Phrases (Spanish). "El mono se sentó detrás de una silla." (Spanish)

42

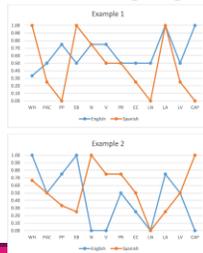


- Syntactic Bootstrapping video

43

Knowledge is distributed across languages

- Challenge
 - Knowledge is distributed across two languages – and not just in vocabulary.
- Solution
 - **Best score** in each language assessed



44

Reduce burden on administrator Minimize training/expertise/language fluency of test administrator



- Self contained assessment
 - Stimuli presented (Spanish or English)
 - Child touches screen
 - Response recorded
 - Automatic reports

Adult just sits with child and has only to offer support to continue.

45



Assessments must be psychometrically sound

• Challenge

• Screening instruments must meet certain psychometric standards to be useful to practitioners

- Construct Validity
- Concurrent/convergent validity
- Internal reliability
- Test-retest reliability

• Convergent validity

- PPVT Correlation .727
- PLS-5 Best Score Correlation .693
- BESOS Correlation .368

46

QUILS: ES Norming

- Norm based on 362 children ages 3;1-5;11
- Geographical distribution
 - Massachusetts
 - Pennsylvania
 - Delaware
 - Florida
 - Nebraska
- SES
 - 80% low SES

47

QUILS: ES Interpretation

- Purpose: Screen children who need further assessment
- Refer for further assessment
 - Overall score below 20%
 - Vocabulary and Syntax below 20%
 - Process Score below 20%
- Sensitivity and Specificity – Indicators
 - Work in progress on QUILS:ES
 - Determining sensitivity and specificity
 - QUILS Sensitivity 80, Specificity >80

48



Reports

49

QUILSES Student Detailed Report

Student Information
 Student Name: Juanita Figueroa
 Student ID: 100117

Overall Performance

Grade	Score	Percentile Rank
1st Grade	100	100
2nd Grade	100	100
3rd Grade	100	100
4th Grade	100	100
5th Grade	100	100
6th Grade	100	100
7th Grade	100	100
8th Grade	100	100
9th Grade	100	100
10th Grade	100	100
11th Grade	100	100
12th Grade	100	100

Summary and Recommendation

Based on the Overall Best Score, the student is recommended for National Assessment at this time. Based on the student's individual test domain results, the student is not recommended for National Assessment in English Language Learning or any individual area.

50

QUILSES Reporte Para Los Padres

Información sobre el Examen

Resumen de Juanita Figueroa

Resumen de Juanita Figueroa en Porcentil

Grado	Puntaje	Porcentaje
1er Grado	100	100
2do Grado	100	100
3er Grado	100	100
4to Grado	100	100
5to Grado	100	100
6to Grado	100	100
7to Grado	100	100
8to Grado	100	100
9to Grado	100	100
10to Grado	100	100
11to Grado	100	100
12to Grado	100	100

QUILSES Parent Report

Student Information

Juanita Figueroa's Results

Juanita Figueroa's Percentile Results

Grade	Score	Percentile
1st Grade	100	100
2nd Grade	100	100
3rd Grade	100	100
4th Grade	100	100
5th Grade	100	100
6th Grade	100	100
7th Grade	100	100
8th Grade	100	100
9th Grade	100	100
10th Grade	100	100
11th Grade	100	100
12th Grade	100	100

51

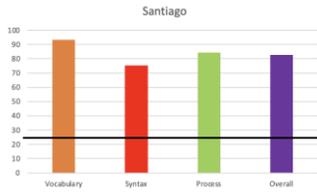


Results guiding practice

52

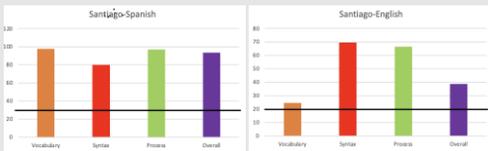


Case 1: Santiago



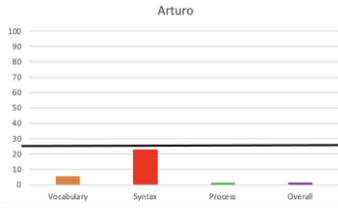
53

Case 1: Santiago



54

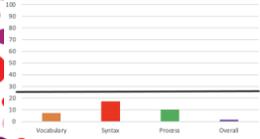
Case 2: Arturo



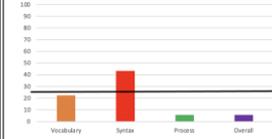
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Case 2: Arturo

Arturo-English



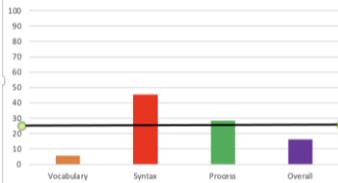
Arturo-Spanish



56

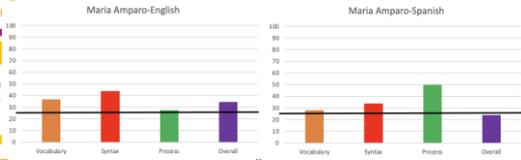
Case 3: Maria Amparo

Maria Amparo



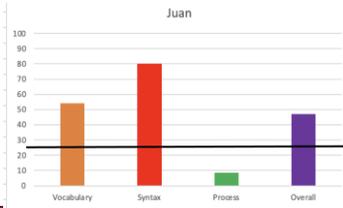
57

Case 3: Maria Amparo



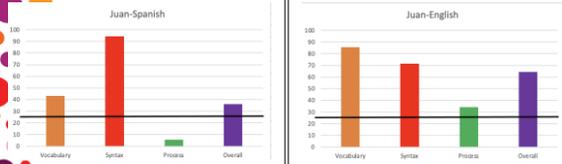
58

Case 4: Juan



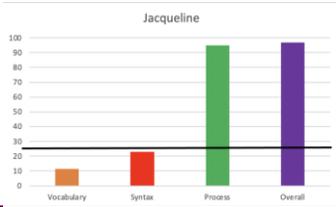
59

Case 4: Juan



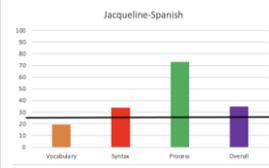
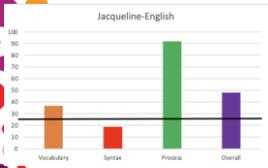
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Case 5: Jacqueline B



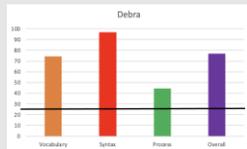
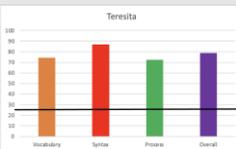
61

Case 5: Jacqueline



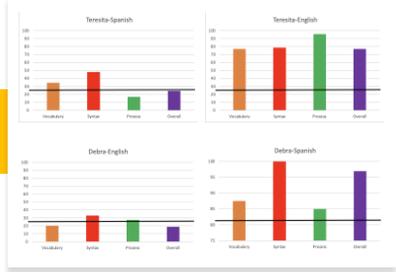
62

Case 6 and 7: Teresita and Debra



63

Case 6 and 7:
Debra and
Teresita



64



65



66

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