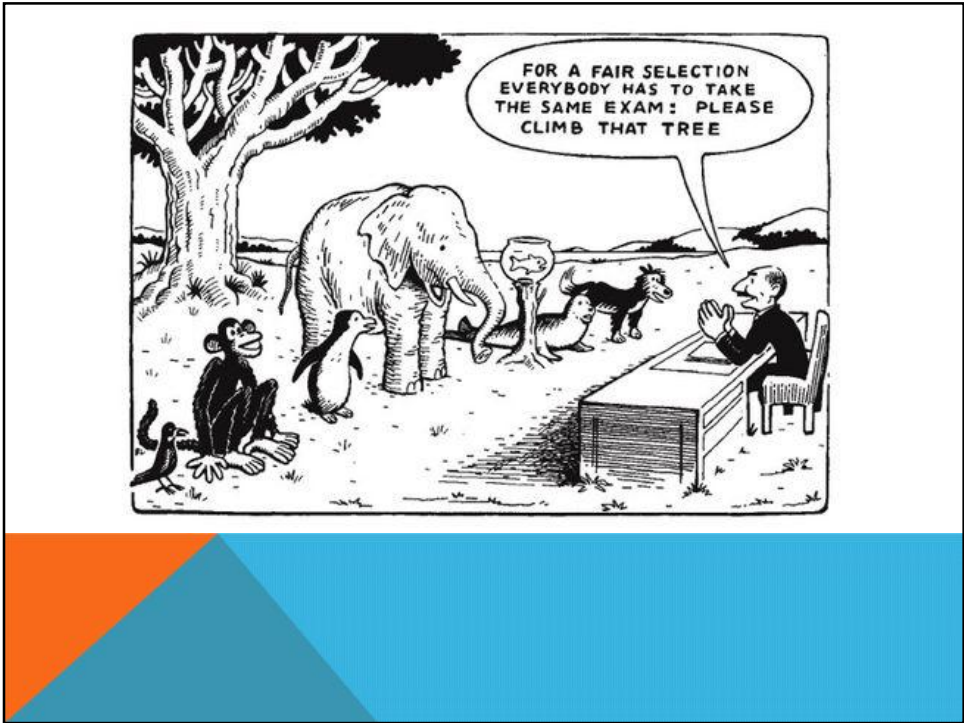


**ISSUES IN ASSESSMENT
OF ELL STUDENTS
WITH DISABILITIES**

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POSSIBLY NEW ACRONYMS



*Original Artist: spm-fuc on ighle obtainable from DoveCappender...
www.DaveCappender.com

- RTI – Response to Intervention
- CLD – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
- LD – Learning Disability (Disabled)
- MSN – Moderate Special Needs

MANTHALA GEORGE JR. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- K-5 SEI Program
- K-5 ISEI (with ESL pull-out)
- K-5 Dual Language Program
 - ❖ 60% L1/40% L2 in Kindergarten/1st grade
 - ❖ 50/50 split in grades 2-5
- Bilingual Specialists
 - ❖ School Adjustment Counselor
 - ❖ Speech Language Pathologist
 - ❖ Moderate Special Needs Teacher (MSN)
- Additional programs: Gen. Ed., Inclusion, Self-Contained SPED



ROLE OF SPANISH BILINGUAL MSN

- **Within the George School setting:**
 - ❖ Service provider for ELLSWD in bilingual (SEI/DL) programs
 - ❖ Member of Instructional Support Team (IST)
aka Teacher Assistance Team (TAT)
 - ❖ Interventionist at Tier 3 level
 - ❖ Diagnostician for IST screening and TEAM evaluations

- **Within Brockton Public Schools:**
 - ❖ Member of Bilingual Task Force (Bilingual and SPED)
 - ❖ Citywide Spanish Diagnostician for TEAM evaluations

ADDRESSING ISSUES IN ASSESSMENT OF ELLSWD

- **Our district-wide Bilingual Task Force has addressed many ELLSWD issues and made improvements to current practice, including but not limited to:**
 - Creation of a BICS/CALP checklist to assist teachers in assessing language development
 - Addendum to RTI and pre-referral documents to address specific questions related to ELL's
 - Establishment of a protocol for identifying SWD as ELL

- **This presentation presents an overview of the continued work of the BTF at the George School in identifying additional ELLSWD issues, specifically those surrounding assessment of L1 and L2, RTI, and identification of learning disabilities.**

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- **What are the challenges that professionals face when assessing ELL students for language proficiency, academic achievement, and/or learning disabilities?**

- **How can we improve our assessment of ELL students in order to accurately assess language proficiency and academic achievement, provide meaningful interventions, and make appropriate diagnostic decisions?**

CURRENT ISSUES IN ASSESSMENT

- 1. Consistent and thorough assessment of language development in L1 and L2**

- 2. Consideration of language learning and development when providing interventions and assessing progress of CLD students**

- 3. Culturally and linguistically relevant assessment for CLD students in determining disabilities**

CURRENT ISSUES IN ASSESSMENT

1. *Consistent and thorough assessment of language development in L1 and L2*

Current Practice:

- ❖ BPS currently assesses native language proficiency upon entering school (Pre-LAS, IPT, WiDA APT)
- ❖ Yearly assessment of ELD (WiDA Model, formerly used MEPA/MELA-O)
- ❖ Yearly evaluation of ELD by Language Assessment Team
- ❖ Quarterly ELD Report Card
- ❖ Language Proficiency testing as requested by IST or TEAM (Bilingual Syntax Measure, IPT, TACL-3, BVAT)

WHAT ARE WE MISSING?

ASSESSMENT OF SPANISH

- Beyond K (or entry), we do not have a protocol to assess Spanish language skills
- Limited resources (rubrics, informal/formal assessments)

PROGRESS MONITORING

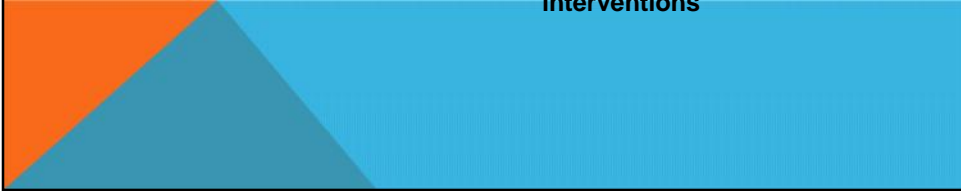
- We progress monitor academic skills... why not language skills?
- We discuss results in the Spring. How can we provide carryover to Fall?

ACTION PLAN	
ASSESSMENT OF SPANISH	PROGRESS MONITORING
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Set-up subcommittee of Bilingual Task Force to address language proficiency➤ WiDA SALSA and PODER – Spanish Standards and Assessment➤ Develop bilingual language assessments using Brigance – include BICS and CALP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Encourage teachers to consider ELD in:<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ instruction (language objectives)➤ classwork (what language skills are necessary to complete work?)➤ assessments (does the assessment match the ELD level of the student?)➤ Find and develop additional resources to monitor progress in ELD (ex. BICS/CALP Checklist)

CURRENT ISSUES IN ASSESSMENT
<p><i>2. Consideration of language learning and development when providing interventions and assessing progress of CLD students</i></p> <p>Current Practice at George School:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Interventions are based on academic needs❖ ELD data is reported as scores (MEPA level, ACCESS)❖ ELD/SLD goals are not often established as part of RTI❖ Academic interventions are not available to all students due to scheduling (ESL pull-out) or staffing (lack of trained interventionists)

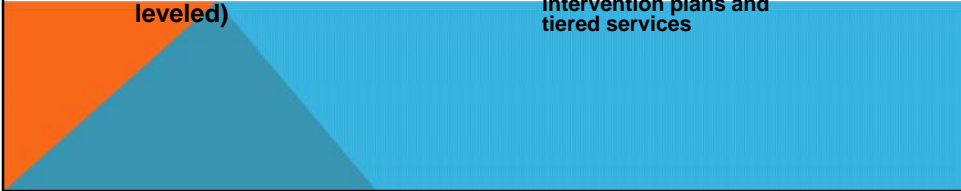
WHAT ARE WE MISSING?

CONSIDERATION OF LANGUAGE	INTERVENTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ We do not consider whether a student's academic skills match his/her ELD level. ➤ Many of our academic assessments are based on the expectation of proficient language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ We develop, address, and monitor academic goals but not language-specific goals. ➤ We do not utilize all ESL-trained staff in IST or RTI process and interventions



ACTION PLAN

CONSIDERATION OF LANGUAGE	INTERVENTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Collect specific language data (include "Can do" descriptors, expectations at student's language level) ➤ Consider and modify language when assessing academic skills (e.g. REACH assessments are leveled)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Conduct item analysis of assessments to identify specific language skills that need to be addressed ➤ Use RTI model to establish current baseline data and develop language-based goals ➤ Include classroom teachers, ESL teachers, bilingual staff in intervention plans and tiered services



WHAT ARE “CAN DO” DESCRIPTORS?



CAN DO Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster 3-5

For the given level of English language proficiency and with visual, graphic, or interactive support through Level 4, English language learners can process or produce the language needed to:

	Level 1 Entering	Level 2 Beginning	Level 3 Developing	Level 4 Expanding	Level 5 Bridging
READING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Match icons or diagrams with words/concepts Identify cognates from first language, as applicable Make sound/symbol/word relations Match illustrated words/phrases in differing contexts (e.g., on the board, in a book) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify facts and explicit messages from illustrated text Find changes to root words in context Identify elements of story grammar (e.g., characters, setting) Follow visually supported written directions (e.g., "Draw a star in the sky.") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interpret information or data from charts and graphs Identify main ideas and some details Sequence events in stories or content-based processes Use context clues and illustrations to determine meaning of words/phrases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classify features of various genres of text (e.g., "and they lived happily ever after" – fairy tales) Match graphic organizers to different texts (e.g., compare/contrast with Venn diagram) Find details that support main ideas Differentiate between fact and opinion in narrative and expository text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize information from multiple related sources Answer analytical questions about grade-level text Identify, explain, and give examples of figures of speech Draw conclusions from explicit and implicit text at or near grade level

Level 6—Reaching

CURRENT ISSUES IN ASSESSMENT

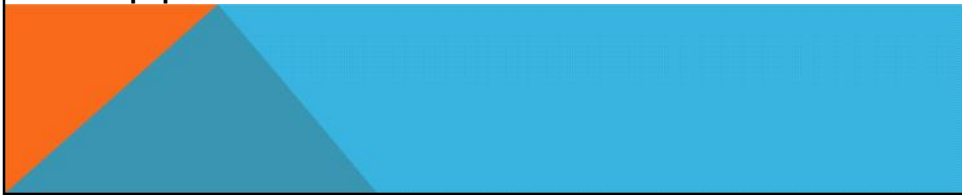
3. Culturally and linguistically relevant assessment for CLD students in determining learning disabilities

Current Practice:

- ❖ **Bilingual Special Educators and Specialists**
 - ❖ 1 Spanish Speech-Language Pathologist
 - ❖ 1 Spanish MSN, 2 CV Creole MSN's, 2 Haitian Creole MSN's
- ❖ **Woodcock-Muñoz Batería III used as Spanish Achievement test**
- ❖ **Monolingual School Psychologists are using Nonverbal measures of intelligence**
- ❖ **BVAT and KABC Nonverbal Index provide supplemental ability data**
- ❖ **Parental Rights, SPED documents are translated and sent home in language of families**


WHAT ARE WE MISSING?

FAIR & EQUITABLE ASSESSMENTS	REDUCING BIAS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Batería III last normed in 2007; BPS has moved from WJ-III to WIAT/KTEA (no longer corresponds) ➤ Ability and achievement tests are not normed on CLD population	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ We are not including enough descriptive, qualitative data ➤ Parents should be included at pre-referral level, not just at TEAM



ACTION PLAN

FAIR & EQUITABLE ASSESSMENTS	REDUCING BIAS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Look into alternative Spanish assessments ➤ Use Alternative Classification Scheme (Ortiz)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Improve pre-referral data collection - include observations by a variety of staff in different language settings ➤ Institute parent interview process at IST and pre-referral levels to gather cultural/linguistic/social/medical data



SPANISH-LANGUAGE ASSESSMENTS

- **Aprenda – comparable to Stanford 10, normed in U.S. and P.R.**
 - intended to be given mid-year to demonstrate progress
- **Logramos – comparable to ITBS, which we give in 3rd grade**
 - norm-referenced, used to assess student progress
- **Spanish Assessment of Basic Education**
 - multiple-choice, norms based on Hispanic students' performance on similar English assessment
- **SUPERA – comparable to Terra Nova**
 - group administered, intended to guide instruction, comparison to English TerraNova

**Data from Center for Applied Linguistics, July 2007*

ALTERNATIVE CLASSIFICATION SCHEME

CLASSIFICATION	STANDARD SCORE/PERCENTILE RANK RANGE	
Highly Proficient	Standard Score = 110 or higher	Percentile Rank = 75 th ile or higher
Proficient	Standard Score = 90 to 109	Percentile Rank = 25 th ile to 74 th ile
Emergent	Standard Score = 80 to 89	Percentile Rank = 9 th ile to 24 th ile
Problematic	Standard Score = 79 or lower	Percentile Rank = 8 th ile or lower

NORM-REFERENCED TESTS AND

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CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRE-REFERRAL DATA

- **Focus on the key indicators of LD, as they relate to the definition:**
 - ❖ Persistence of a learning problem,
 - ❖ Over time
 - ❖ In the face of “normal” competent instruction*
 - ❖ Identify strengths and weaknesses
 - ❖ Compare to other students with similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds - Is the student’s progress in acquiring English significantly different from that of peers who started at about the same level of English proficiency and have had comparable instruction?

LD and the English Language Learner
Robin L. Schwartz, M.Sp.Ed.-LD
Lesley University, 2002.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PRE-REFERRAL DATA

- **Team Approach to collecting data – asking the right questions**
 - ❖ Have other adults working with the child noticed similar difficulties?
 - ❖ Does the problem exist across contexts (classroom, home, social)?
 - ❖ Are the problems evident in L1?
 - ❖ Are there other variables (cultural, social, economic, linguistic) that could explain the difficulties or contribute to them?
 - ❖ *Can problematic behaviors be caused or explained by bias during assessments?*

English Language Learners with Special Education Needs
Alfredo J. Artiles and Alba A. Ortiz (2002)
Published by the Center for Applied Linguistics

PARENT INTERVIEW

- **Detailed parent interviews should provide information about the cultural and linguistic environment of the home, including:**
 - ❖ An understanding of language use, development, and preference (of student and family members)
 - ❖ Level of proficiency in L1
 - ❖ Communication/literacy in the home
 - ❖ Developmental and medical history
 - ❖ Social and emotional functioning

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BICS/CALP AND “DIFFERENCE VS. DISORDER”

	HIGH L1 (CALP)	LOW L1 (BICS)
HIGH L2 (CALP)	<i>Type 1.</i> Equal Proficiency "true bilingual"	<i>Type 3.</i> Atypical 2nd Language Learner "acceptable bilingual"
LOW L2 (BICS)	<i>Type 2.</i> Typical 2nd Language Learner "high potential"	<i>Type 4.</i> At-risk 2nd Language Learner "difference vs. disorder"

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DISTINGUISHING LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES FROM LEARNING DISABILITIES

A TEAM must consider...

- If the student has been assessed in L1 and L2 to the fullest extent possible
- If the disorder is present in the student's native language and English
- If formal and informal assessments have been used to gather data
- If a student's language has been assessed in a variety of speaking contexts and by various professionals
- If error patterns in language usage have been established and analyzed
- If lack of academic progress is *primarily* the result of Limited English Proficiency
 - See "Considerations for Pre-referral Data" – How does the student compare to his/her peers from similar CLD backgrounds? Do his/her learning behaviors fit within the context of the definition of a "learning disability"?

KEY QUESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING A SCHOOL-BASED ACTION PLAN



QUESTIONS WE ASKED OURSELVES

- How are we evaluating language proficiency? How often? For what purpose?
- Are we basing instructional decisions on the language level of our students?
- How can we develop linguistically and culturally relevant interventions? Goals?
- How can we better include parents and families in the intervention process?
- How do we evaluate language, ability, and achievement in a way that is reliable, valid, and reduces bias?
- How do we show that Limited English Proficiency is or is not an exclusionary factor when discussing possible LD?

HOW CAN WE IMPROVE OUR ASSESSMENT?

- Accurately determine current language proficiency in L1 and L2
- If a student is not developing CALP in either or both languages, we must ask why and address specific language needs
- Rule out factors of:
 - ❖ Instruction (direct, targeted instruction and interventions)
 - ❖ Culture/environment (e.g. experience, norms/mores)
 - ❖ Language learning (e.g. code switching, language loss)
- Consider biases in assessment
- Gather descriptive data and dynamic assessment to support unbiased results
- Include parents/families in all aspects of the process

THOUGHTS? QUESTIONS?

“Everyone is a genius. But if you judge a fish on its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.”

Albert Einstein

