

Second language Learning, Acquisition and Dealing with Bilingual Clients and Their Families

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Facts About Bilingualism

- Bilingualism is not equal knowledge of two languages.
- Children may lose skills in their first language under certain conditions.
- Continued meaningful exposure and use of the home language help children develop skills in a second language
- Code switching, the alternating use of two languages, is not a reflection of inadequate vocabulary in both languages or word finding problems.

(Kayser 2002)

Fundamental Concepts About Bilingualism

- In no instance should anyone think that bilingualism causes a language and learning difficulty.
- A second language develops better when the linguistic foundation of the first language is strong. (Langdon 2008)
- Bilingualism is the norm by worldwide standards, whereas monolingualism is not the norm.

(Kayser 2002)

Simultaneous Bilinguals

- A child who has learned two languages before the age of three is considered a simultaneous bilingual.
- Typically developing simultaneous bilinguals do not have any difficulty with language comprehension.
- These children reach milestones in language development on par with monolinguals, such as age at which the first words and word combinations occur and the number of words learned.

(Kayser 2002)

Sequential Bilinguals

- Children learning a second language after the first language is established are sequential bilinguals.
- Preschool sequential bilinguals usually have had at least three years of monolingual language environment.
- Have developed the foundation for speaking in complete sentences and asking questions.
- May or may not have older English speaking siblings.

(Kayser 2002)

Sequential Bilinguals

- School-age sequential bilinguals enter the school after age 5, with no previous exposure to English.
- The advantage for these children is that they typically have a greater and more mature language and cognitive development in the native language on which to build the second language.
- These children are able to use familiar concepts/ideas in native language to understand English, an unfamiliar language.
- May or may not have had exposure to books and academic language at home.

(Kayser 2002)

Misconceptions About Second Language Acquisition

- Children learn second languages quickly and easily.
- Children acquire a second language once they can speak it.
- Children with special needs will be confused by bilingual instruction.
- The younger the child, the more skilled he or she is in acquiring a second language.

(Goldstein 2000)

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

- Four stages of second language acquisition proposed by Krashen and Terrel
 - Pre-production stage
 - Early speech production stage
 - Speech emergence stage
 - Intermediate fluency stage

(as cited in Goldstein 2000)

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

- Pre-production stage
 - Understands simple language
 - Undergoes a silent period
 - Uses yes/no and single word responses
- Early speech production stage
 - Produces few words
 - Produces short phrases
 - Uses formulaic speech, such as "my turn"
 - Recognizes a written version of basic vocabulary

Stages of Second Language Acquisition

- Speech emergence stage
 - Speaks in longer phrases
 - Uses complete sentences
 - Can read and write simple text
- Intermediate fluency stage
 - Engages in conversation
 - Produces narratives
 - Develops an increasing ability to use higher language levels in a specific academic area

BICS and CALP: Levels of Language Proficiency

- Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) refers to the language proficiency needed to function in common interactions.
 - Not related to academic achievement.
 - May be attained after two years of exposure to L2.
- Cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP) refers to language proficiency required to successfully function in an academic setting, such as analyzing and synthesizing information.
 - CALP in L1 and L2 overlap.
 - May be attained between five to seven years of exposure to L2.

BICS and CALP: Clinical Applications

- When analyzing the language profile of a student acquiring English as a second language it is helpful to consider the areas of BICS and CALP.
- A language disorder may manifest itself in a variety of areas for a bilingual student, as it would for a monolingual.
- With bilingual students, certain areas may be affected in one language, but not the other depending on the student's exposure to and use of each language, and depending on the structure of the language.

(Langdon 2008)

BICS and CALP: Clinical Applications

- Four different profiles are possible within each case, there may also be variations of severity.
 1. BICS L1 ok, CALP L1 not developed
 - BICS English not developed, CALP English not developed
 - (This student needs more time to acquire CALP in L1)
 2. BICS and CALP L1 not developed
 - BICS English not developed, CALP English not developed
 - (This student may have a language-learning disability)

(Langdon 2008)

BICS and CALP: Clinical Applications

- Four different profiles are possible within each case, there may also be variations of severity.
 3. BICS L1ok, CALP L1not developed
 - BICS English ok, CALP English not developed
 - (Examine teaching strategies and progress over time, too soon to tell)
 4. BICS L1and CALP L1ok
 - BICS English and CALP English not developed
 - (This student does not have a language-learning disability)

(Langdon 2008)

Language Loss

- Language loss is the weakening of an individual's L1 because of the focus on learning the L2. (Schiff-Myers 1992 as cited in Kayser 2002)
- Language loss can occur at any age, even in adulthood.
- Young children appear to be more susceptible than older children.
- Children that stop using the home language may never develop full proficiency in the L2.
- Parents should be encouraged to maintain the home language so that children will not lose their proficiency in the L1.

(Kayser 2002)

Language Loss

- The consequences of language loss include:
 - Loss of efficient and effective communication at home
 - Difficulty communicating with family regarding critical emotional issues
 - Communication primarily to manage discipline
 - Silence at home
 - Inability to mediate school and home
 - Loss of cultural identity
- Studies with immigrant children in the U.S. indicate that adolescents who speak both home and community languages are more likely to graduate high school than their immigrant peers who speak only English and also to develop close family and cultural connections associated with social and emotional health. (Kohnert 2010)
- Bicultural children tend to be more successful in school. (Restrepo 2007)

English Language Learners

- The process of learning two languages is not any more difficult than learning one, provided that the conditions required for the development of one language are also present when one is learning the second.
- Two conditions that lead to the successful acquisition of either one or two languages:
 - an intact cognitive system that is able to process the regularities of language(s)
 - a rich linguistic environment that stimulates and encourages communication and that provides sufficient exemplars of the regularities of language(s) to which a child is being exposed. (Iglesias and Rojas 2012)

English Language Learners

- Although children use their innate skills and go through similar stages of language development, there is clear evidence of significant variability in the rate and order in which particular structures are acquired and used.
- Greater variability in the developmental time line is bound to exist among children raised in bilingual environments because of the timing and influence of additional factors that alter the development trajectory of both languages. (Iglesias and Rojas 2012)

English Language Learners

- English language learners (ELLs) are in the process of learning English as a second language and lack sufficient mastery to successfully achieve in an English language classroom without additional support.
- ELLs account for 10% of the elementary school population in the United States, with approximately half of this population enrolled in kindergarten through Grade 3 (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2006).
- More than 60% of ELLs come from low-income homes, and half of the adults in these households do not have a high school education.
- 69% are enrolled in schools in which half of the student body is made up of ELLs.

(Iglesias and Rojas 2012)

Bilingual Language Development of English Language Learners: Influential Factors

- The first sociolinguistic environment most children encounter is the family unit.
- ELLs are raised in homes in which the home language is used to varying levels of proficiency in each language. Different parent-language use patterns may exist.
- The existence of a particular language in the home does not guarantee its use.
- De Houwer (2007) examined parental language use in families in which at least one parent spoke the majority language. Children used the minority language most when both parents spoke the minority language or when one parent only spoke the minority language.

(Iglesias and Rojas 2012)

Bilingual Language Development of English Language Learners: Influential Factors

- Siblings and peers also have an influence in shaping an ELLs' linguistic environment.
- Older siblings and peers provide children with greater opportunity to be exposed and use the language of their schools and communities.
- As children age, peer interaction becomes more significant as social networks shift from the home environment to a more diverse environment that involves individuals outside the family.

(Iglesias and Rojas 2012)

Bilingual Language Development of English Language Learners: Influential Factors

- The timing of the introduction of the second language (L2) also affects the course of language development.
- Most ELLs have a period in their life when only one language is present in their environment. If a second language is present, it is not readily available to a child or used consistently with the child.
- For the majority of children, their language skills up to that point have been adequate to meet the communicative needs of their immediate communities.
- L2 language learners are not at the same developmental stage as language learners beginning to learn their first language.

(Iglesias and Rojas 2012)

Bilingual Language Development of English Language Learners: Influential Factors

- The rate of L2 learning is bound to increase as the child uses his or her first language to bootstrap learning of the second.
- There will also be some asynchronous development in which the sequence of acquisition is altered as a function of the child having acquired particular structures in their first language.
- One would also expect the growth rate to vary across language domains, with lexicon probably showing one of the fastest rates of growth.
- ELLs from the same language background walk into classrooms for the first time with significantly varied language skills.

(Iglesias and Rojas 2012)

Bilingual Language Development of English Language Learners: Influential Factors

- The type and amount of exposure to English.
- Whom the child needs to communicate with regularly.
- Their attitudes toward the new language.
- Their aptitude to learn a second language.
- Their motivation to learn a the new language.
- The parents attitude toward maintenance of the home language.

(Kayser 2002)

Strategies for Supporting ELLs In General Education Classrooms

ELLs benefit from a variety of classroom and teaching modifications in order to succeed academically, including:

- When functional communication between the teacher and students and among fellow students is emphasized
- Having culturally-familiar materials available at school in their native languages.
- When instructors label certain key items and/or classroom routines with both the English word and the respective second language words.

(Garcia 1991)

Strategies for Supporting ELLs In General Education Classrooms

ELLs benefit from a variety of classroom and teaching modifications in order to succeed academically, including:

- When the instruction of basic skills and academic content is consistently organized around thematic units.
- When instruction requires students to interact with each other and use collaborative learning techniques.
- Latino ELLs benefit when they are permitted to write in their native language and then systematically transition to writing in English without pressure from the instructor to do so.

(Garcia 1991)

Preparing For The Referral Of An ELL

- Reasons for referring a bilingual student generally includes concerns about the student's apparent language delay in English, the home language or both along with slow academic progress.
- Knowledge of the characteristics of the home language are necessary in determining if a student presents with a speech-language difference or a speech-language disorder.

Referral Of English Language Learner

- Behaviors demonstrated by ELL and children with disabilities may include:
 - Speaks infrequently
 - Refuses to answer questions
 - Confuses similar sounding words
 - Unable to tell or retell stories
 - Poor recall
 - Poor Pronunciation
 - Poor syntax/grammar
 - Does not volunteer information

Specific Language Impairment In Bilingual Children

- Bilingualism does not cause a language delay in children.
- The limited-capacity hypothesis, which is the belief that the human language faculty is set to acquire one language and acquiring two languages thus exceeds its capacity.
- If the limited capacity hypothesis were true, then bilingual children around the world would show pronounced delays and difficulty in their language learning, but this does not happen.
- There is little evidence that dual language learning puts children with language delay/impairment at a disadvantage; therefore, this research also argues against the limited capacity hypothesis.

(Paradis, Genesee, and Crago 2011)

Primary Language Impairment In Bilingual Children

- The underlying impairment manifests in both languages.
- Children with primary language impairment learn both languages at a much slower pace than their typically developing peers.
- We can anticipate varying degrees in relative L1 and L2 abilities for dual-language learners with PLI.
- The relative level of proficiency in each of the languages will vary with opportunities and experiences.
- There is also evidence to show that young minority L1 learners with impaired language systems are even more vulnerable than unaffected bilingual peers to loss or early plateaus in the home language if it is not supported.

(Kohnert 2010)

Families as Allies: The Role of Culture

Look inward first:

- Identify and analyze your personal preferences, beliefs, and values.
- Explore, define, question, challenge, why you think and behave within certain cultural parameters.
- Compare your experiences to those of your colleagues and the families and children you serve.
- Become sensitive to the role culture has as you provide services to that family/child.
- Create an environment of mutual trust and respect.

Families as Allies: The Role of Culture

As you begin to look outward:

- Be careful to not to over generalize information
- Remember that each family/child is on a shifting continuum in regards to culture and language.
- Consider that there are differences between members of a cultural group
- Remember that there are differences among members of the same family

Families as Allies: Introducing Parents to Special Education

- The concepts of early education, occupational therapy, speech therapy, and/or a learning disability may be unfamiliar to many families.
- Lack of knowledge may lead to a sense of confusion and detachment which in turn may lead to detachment and poor compliance.
- Remember that each family/child is on a shifting continuum in regards to culture and language.
- Cultural mismatches between professionals and the families/children they serve can be further compounded by language barriers.

(Louw & Avenant 2002)

Families as Allies: Cultural Considerations During an IEP Meeting

- Crucial opportunity to educate parents/extended family members.
- Be flexible with the use of time.
 - Have extra chairs handy.
 - Summarize your role before presenting your findings.
 - Avoid jargon, give examples, offer genuine praise when merited.
 - Encourage parent input (ask if they notice similar behaviors at home, then listen closely)
 - Avoid yes/no questions.

Summary

Today we covered several topics, including:

- Bilingualism and the stages of second language acquisition.
- Commonalities among English Language Learners.
- Reviewed the role of culture between professionals and the families/children they serve.

Selected References

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- Goldstein, B. (2012). *Bilingual language development and disorders in Spanish-English speakers, Second Edition*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes Publishing, Co.
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- Stubbe Kester, E. (2014). *Difference or disorder? Understanding speech and language patterns in culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Austin: Bilingualistics, Inc.

Suggested Websites

- Practice Portal Bilingual Service Delivery
<http://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Bilingual-Service-Delivery/>
- ELLs (English Language Learners)
<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/easl.htm>
<http://www.asha.org/public/speech/development/BilingualChildren/>
- Phonemic Inventories Across Languages
<http://www.asha.org/practice/multicultural/Phono/>
- Speech Sound Disorders-Articulation and Phonology
<http://www.asha.org/PRPSpecificTopic.aspx?folderid=8589935321§ion=Assessment>
- Collaborating With Interpreters <http://www.asha.org/Practice-Portal/Professional-Issues/Collaborating-With-Interpreters/>
- Provision of Instruction in English as a Second Language by SLPs in Schools
<http://www.asha.org/policy/TR1998-00145.htm>

Suggested Websites

- NPR
- English Language Learners: How is your state doing?
<http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/02/23/512451228/5-million-english-language-learners-a-vast-pool-of-talent-at-risk>
 - Great Books to Inspire ELLs
http://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2016/12/17/493948875/great-books-to-inspire-english-language-learners?utm_source=facebook.com&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=npr&utm_term=nprnews&utm_content=2045
