

Incorporating Dynamic Assessment into Evaluations

May 4, 2021

Andrea Bertone, MS, CCC-SLP Education Consultant

Lisa Kirby-Mangas, MS, CCC-SLP Madison Metropolitan School District

Marie Wirka, MS, CCC-SLP Madison Metropolitan School District



Housekeeping – Meeting Resources

- In the **Participant Folder** you will find the google slide deck as well as other relevant resources for the meeting.
- Once finalized, the recorded meeting and resources will be all be available to view on the [WI DPI Speech-Language Website](#)
- If you have any questions, feel free to put them in the [padlet](#)



Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge Indigenous Land the culture and heritage that thrive long before colonization.

We recognize this land has been stolen from the original stewards.

In Wisconsin, we recognize 11 federally-recognized nations and the Brothertown nation.

<https://wisconsinfirstnations.org/map/>
<https://native-land.ca/>

MAP KEY

- Treaty Lands (B00)
- Tribal Lands (present day)

*Brothertown is not state or federally recognized.

At DPI, Educational Equity Means...

EQUITY



That every student has access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education, across race, gender, ethnicity, language, ability, sexual orientation, family background, and/or family income.



Our Focus Must be on Equity

What actions are we taking to:

- Support underserved students and families
- Maintain and deepen relationships
- Collaborate in decision making based on individual student and family needs
- Increase capacity of families and general education teachers to maximize Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
- Practice self-care so that we can support others



Today's Learning Objectives

1. Participants will gain understanding in what dynamic assessment is and how it can fit into their current assessment practices.
2. Participants will gain familiarity with dynamic assessment case examples.
3. Participants will identify resources to explore this topic further.



IDEA Requirement

IDEA requires

.. the evaluation be sufficiently comprehensive to identify the child's special education and related service needs, whether or not commonly linked to the disability (impairment) category in which the child has been classified.

34 CFR 300.304 (c)(6)



Comprehensive Assessment Model

4 Part Model for Comprehensive Assessment

Academic Activities:

- Artifact analysis
- Curriculum-based assessment
- Observations in school (natural) settings
- Educational records

Speech-Language Probes:

- Case history
- Interviews
- Language/Narrative samples
- Stimulability
- Dynamic assessment
- Play-based assessment

Contextualized Tests:

- Norm-referenced measures of academic achievement
- Curriculum benchmarks

Decontextualized Tests:

- Norm-referenced speech-language tests (parsed skills: articulation, semantics, syntax, morphology, fluency, etc.)

Ireland, Marie. "The Real Requirements Behind Eligibility Decision Making in Schools." Lecture. ASHA Connect, Chicago, IL, July 19, 2019.

Limitations of Norm-Referenced Tests

*Decontextualized tests are just one-fourth of the model

Norm-referenced tests:

- Assumes all children have had the same experiences and opportunities prior to evaluation when this is clearly not the case.
- Additionally, the skills evaluated by these tests are often more associated with culture or socioeconomic status, such as vocabulary, rather than a true language impairment.

Kate Crowley, Leader's Project,
Columbia University
<https://www.leadersproject.org/2012/11/26/applying-dynamic-assessment/>



Considerations for Students Who Are English Learners

- Current guidance for evaluating English Learners is to evaluate the child in both languages *unless it is not feasible to do so*.
- Recommendation to use a translator to obtain case history to determine extent of knowledge and use of home language.
- Interview school staff (gen ed teacher; EL teacher) regarding language use across settings.
- Use dynamic assessment to determine student's modifiability.

Orellana et al. 2019;
Roseberry-McKibbin 2021



DA is Part of Assessment

- Implemented in the context of an evaluation
- Time-limited
- Active process for student and evaluator
- Determines student modifiability including:
 - present level of functioning
 - learning potential (emphasis on learning process)-ASHA
 - to support in goal development and determination of needs

<https://cd.wv.usde.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/4-emo-Dynamic-Assessment-for-K-12-07-07-01-01.pdf>



Potential to Reduce Bias

“By focusing on learning potential rather than a snapshot of skills, the child has the opportunity to learn and make changes, which reduces some of the biases inherent in typical static assessments of language ability.” p.1299

Orellana et al. 2019



Dynamic Assessment

- Systematic assessment of a student's ability to improve performance as a result of mediated learning;
- Provides evidence to distinguish impairments from differences (ESL/ELL, dialect, culture, at-risk populations) and lack of exposure;
- Yield data-based recommendations for use in classrooms and intervention

https://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/in_sch_language_impairments/guidelines-2019.pdf
p.21



Clinical Judgement

“Many evaluators initially feel uncomfortable with dynamic assessment because it does not produce a score like commercially available tests, even though commercially available tests may provide invalid and inaccurate scores. For this reason, it is necessary for all evaluators to develop clinical judgment.”

[Leaders Project 2012](#)



Mediated Learning Experience

- Providing support to the student within the Zone of Proximal development
- Prompting (e.g., repetition, feedback, highlighting important elements) is given to enhance learning.
- Evaluating modifiability
 - child responsivity
 - transfer of skills
 - examiner effort

[Leaders Project 2013](#)



Modifiability Video



- Child responsivity
- Transfer of skills
- Examiner effort

click here to watch video:
<https://youtu.be/7SHazrTcUbl>



ASHA Guidance on MLE

Student Responsivity	Transfer	Examiner Effort
How well does the student respond to the MLE? Does the student attend to the task and maintain attention? Does the student demonstrate efficient learning strategies? Does the student use skills such as looking, comparing, and verbalizing?	How well does the student apply the target skills from one item to another? From one task to the next? Does the student apply learned strategies soon after learning them?	How much support does the student need? What is the nature of the support required?

<https://www.asha.org/practice/multicultural/issues/components>



ASHA Guidance on MLE

Component	What	Why
Intentionality	Related intent to change child functioning to the child. Tell them the target and the reason for the MLE.	Teach, create awareness in the child
Meaning	Focus the child's attention on what is important. Help the child to attend to important features of the task and ignore unimportant features.	Help child to understand why task is important
Transcendence	Bridging of concepts & events beyond the immediate task; introduction of abstract ideas. Examples included questions like, "What would happen if it's?" and "Have you ever?"	Help child think hypothetically.
Competence	Help the child develop plan. Help them think through how they will use the targeted strategy. Discuss appropriate times to use particular skill.	Teach child to be self-regulated & active participant in own learning.

<https://www.asha.org/practice/multicultural/issues/components>



Applying KWL to Dynamic Assessment

KWL

K = What do we Know?

W = What do we Want to know?

L = What have we Learned?



Dynamic Assessment - Know

We Know how to do therapy . . . so we know how to do

- “trial therapy”
- “stimulability” probes
- graduated prompting

Completing and documenting this process as part of an evaluation is dynamic assessment.



Dynamic Assessment-Want to Know

What do we Want to know?

- How do we select targets of dynamic assessment?
- What does the teaching look like?
- How do we document learning potential, i.e., modifiability?
- How do we use the results?



Dynamic Assessment

1. TEST - complete formal/informal testing
 - A deficit/error/mistake becomes the target
2. TEACH - using a Mediated Learning Experience (MLE)
 - Approach the target and the learner with strategies based on scaffolding



MLE Components

Mediated Learning Experience (MLE) Components

- Intentionality - teaches the purpose of the activity
- Meaning - explains why we are working on something
- Transcendence - helps the student understand what happens when we don't have the skill
- Competence - assures us that the student has understood by providing the opportunity to practice and demonstrate the skill



Documenting Modifiability

During the MLE, observe

- Child's responsiveness to teaching
- Amount of examiner effort (graduated prompts)
- Ability to transfer learning to a new task

Remember, you are assessing *learning potential*, not previously acquired skills.



Dynamic Assessment

- Request or provide a repetition
- Offer 2 answer choices
- Provide a model
- Give the answer and get an imitated response

3. RETEST - measure language learning potential

- Look for modifiability - transfer of strategies
- Can child become independent on task?



An example ...

A student struggles to follow 2 steps directions:

- The SLP asked the student to take 3 photos of different toys and talk about each one. He indicated that he understood, took one photo and talked about playing with a friend rather than the toy.
Responsive? No - only followed part of the 1st direction.
- SLP told him he had not followed the directions. Repeated them and showed him an example. Still did not complete the task correctly. Was going to need more assistance to be successful.
Effort? A lot - had to explain multiple times in different ways, but the student did not focus or show ability to transfer skill - each time need to be retaught.



Dynamic Assessment Protocol Examples

- [Oregon Dynamic Assessment Protocol](#)
- [Bilingualistics Dynamic Assessment Protocol](#)
- [DA for School SLPs - Tutorial and Report Template](#)



Dynamic Assessment-Learned

What have we Learned?

- How quickly the student learns: did the student improve on the retest?
- How easily the student learns: how much effort did you put into teaching (i.e., the MLE), or how many cues/what type of support did you have to give for success?



Dynamic Assessment-Learned

What have we Learned?

- Whether or not the student can transfer the skill to a new task: did the student demonstrate learning and respond differently when given the opportunity?
- That my observations and subjective experience will inform my clinical judgment when considering how to use the results in terms of our eligibility criteria.



Dynamic Assessment Results

Consider these in the context of the entire evaluation (case history, observations, informal and formal assessments). We take that static information and add in the dynamic information that we gain during a clinician-student interaction to inform our clinical judgment which we then use to determine the results of the assessment.



It's the.... Amazing Dynamic Assessment Game

Example 1

- At an initial evaluation meeting, a teacher shared the concern that a student did not know any teachers' names except the PE teacher's name. The SLP created a list of teacher names with the IEP team.
- The SLP had a discussion with the student about what they did to learn the PE teacher's name. The student shared that their favorite time at school was in PE. They also discussed why it is important to use accurate names when talking with people, including all staff at school, not only the name of the PE teacher.
- After the child described their strategy, the SLP and child practiced this strategy with the list of the student's teachers with limited repetition, limited cueing, and limited effort from the SLP. Visuals were not necessary.
- During an observation a few days later, the SLP noted that the student had starting using other teachers' names, and transferred this skill by using teacher names in multiple locations in the school. When interviewing the student, the student reported consciously thinking about applying the strategy.

YES

The SLP conducted a brief MLE that included direct teaching, limited cueing, and collected data about the student's ability to change and apply learning.

Example 2

- A first grade student was being evaluated for concerns about the production of /s/, /l/, and /r/.
- Although the student produced these sounds incorrectly on formal assessments, they were stimuable for correct production within a few sessions of direct instruction when provided with verbal models and placement cues. During these teaching sessions the student was focused and self-monitored their own productions. The SLP and student discussed the importance of others understanding what we say to communicate.
- During a post-test, the student was able to produce some instances of the targeted sounds correctly at sentence level in the S/L room and in the classroom. In observation, it was noted that the student was working to self-correct error productions.



Yes

The SLP conducted an MLE that included direct teaching, limited cueing, and collected data about the student's ability to change and apply learning.

Example 3

- A collected and transcribed narrative language sample demonstrated a student's needs in the area of the use of story grammar elements.
- The SLP met with the student two times and directly taught/modeled the story grammar structural element of beginning, middle and end by using a wordless picture book. Verbal models, a high level of cueing, repetition, drawings and visuals in addition to many cues to focus on the task and maintain attention were provided. The student and SLP discussed the importance of retelling stories, and sharing these stories with others. With a high level of SLP effort, the student produced a beginning, middle and end when retelling the story by imitating the SLPs model but in shorter utterances only when provided with many supportive prompts.
- In another collected narrative sample about a different book, the student's narrative of the new story did not include a beginning, middle or end of the story.



YES

The SLP conducted an MLE that included direct teaching, modeling, cueing, and collected data about the student's ability to change and apply learning.

Example 4

- The IEP team noted concerns including that the student had difficulty following directions, retellings stories, learning new vocabulary and used short utterances with grammatical errors.
- The SLP administered and scored the CELF-5. Then the SLP administered the CELF-4 in Spanish.
- A language sample was collected.
- The SLP felt there was enough information to consider impairment and started writing their individual report.



NO

Completing only formal norm-referenced assessment tasks does not provide enough information to apply clinical judgement when considering difference versus disorder and eligibility criteria.

Example 5

- An IEP team has a concern that a student had a limited vocabulary that affected listener understanding of the student's short utterances. The student labeled all fruits and vegetables using the label "banana."
- The SLP used a set of 10 fruits and vegetables that the family identified as common at home, and pretested the student on these labels using photographs.
- Next, the SLP taught the student that there are "special names" for things and over two sessions taught the "special names" of the 10 pretested fruits and vegetables. The student maintained a high level of attention yet required multiple verbal models and prompts, shortened length of SLP utterances, many repetitions and the use of concrete objects instead of photographs to label some of the items correctly.
- Then the SLP retested the set of 10 fruit and vegetable labels. The student labeled 3 of the 10 correctly. When the SLP joined the student during lunch at school, the student labeled all food items as "banana".

Yes

The SLP conducted an MLE that included direct teaching, modeling, cueing, and collected data about the student's ability to change and apply learning.

What Kinds of Tasks Can Be Used as DA?



Dynamic Assessment Brainstorming Document

Target Skill	Pretest	Mediated Learning Experience	Posttest	Source, if applicable

Practice Discussing Dynamic Assessment

20 min Breakout Rooms

Share information

- verbally
- in the chat
- [padlet](#)



1. Consider the examples from previous game. How responsive was the student to Dynamic Assessment?
2. Watch a video example. What are your thoughts from watching the video?
3. Review one of the Dynamic Assessment protocols.
4. What questions do you have?
5. Be ready to share!



Resources

- [ASHA: Dynamic Assessment](#)
- [ASHA: Dynamic Assessment: A Basic Framework](#)
- [Dynamic Assessment: Developing Your Own Plan](#)
- [Dynamic Assessment: Additional ASHA Resources](#)
- [Bilingualistics](#)
- [Leader's Project](#)
- [The Informed SLP: Remember What Dynamic Assessment Is](#)



Reflections and To Dos

Think of one action item you plan to start, enhance, or stop as a result of what you learned from this training?



What kind of support do you need to be able to implement the change as a result of what you learned in today's training?



References

- Gutierrez-Ciellen, Vera F., and Elizabeth Penna. 2001. "Dynamic Assessment of Diverse Children: A Tutorial. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools* 32(4): 212-224. [https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461\(2001\)019](https://doi.org/10.1044/0161-1461(2001)019)
- Leaders Project. 2012. "Understanding Assessment: Applying Dynamic Assessment." Accessed April 19, 2021. <https://www.leadersproject.org/2012/11/26/applying-dynamic-assessment/>.
- Leaders Project. 2013. "Understanding Assessment: Focus on Methodology in Recent Dynamic Assessment Articles." Accessed April 19, 2021. <https://www.leadersproject.org/2013/03/06/focus-on-methodology-in-recent-dynamic-assessment-articles/>
- Orellana, Carla I., Rebekah Wada, and Ronald B. Gillam. 2019. "The Use of Dynamic Assessment for the Diagnosis of Language Disorders in Bilingual Children: A Meta-Analysis." *American Journal of Speech Language Pathology* 28(3): 1298-1317. https://doi.org/10.1044/2019_AJSLP-18-0202
- Pena, Elizabeth D., Ronald B. Gillam, Melynn Malek, Roxanna Ruiz-Felter, Maria Resendiz, Christine Fiestas, and Tracy Sabel. 2006. "Dynamic Assessment of School-Age Children's Narrative Ability: An Experimental Investigation of Classification Accuracy." *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research* 49(5): 1037-1057. [https://doi.org/10.1044/1092-4388\(2006\)074](https://doi.org/10.1044/1092-4388(2006)074)



References

- Pena, Elizabeth D., Ronald B. Gillam, and Lisa M. Bedore. 2014. "Dynamic Assessment of Narrative Ability in English Accurately Identifies Language Impairment in English Language Learners." *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 57(6), 2208-2220. [doi:10.1044/2014_JSLHR-L13-0151](https://doi.org/10.1044/2014_JSLHR-L13-0151)
- Roseberry-McKibbin, Celeste. 2021. "Utilizing Comprehensive Pre-Assessment Procedures for Differentiating Language Difference from Language Impairment in English Learners." *Communication Disorders Quarterly* 42(2): 93-99.
- Virginia Department of Education. 2018. "Speech-Language Pathology Services in Schools: Guidelines for Best Practice." https://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/disabilities/speech_language_impairment/slo-guidelines-2018.pdf
- Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. 2003. "Speech and Language Impairments Assessment and Decision Making Technical Assistance Guide." <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/speed/pdf/slguide.pdf>




