



Cross Cultural Developmental Education Services

TEST EVALUATION CHECKLIST

(TEC)

Administration Manual & Screening Form



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Test Evaluation Checklist (TEC/

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Administration Manual & Screening Form



**CrossCultural Developmental
Education Services**

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WHAT IS THE TEC

The Test Evaluation Checklist (TEC) is a tool for evaluating standardized assessment instruments for use with culturally and linguistically diverse learners. It will assist with selecting appropriate instruments and procedures. TEC is based upon research cited in Educating Minority Handicapped Students (Hoover & Collier, 1988) and Separating Difference from Disabilities (Collier, 2011). The TEC should be used with any instrument or procedure proposed for use in the identification of diverse learners with learning and behavior problems.

WHY USE THE TEC

The team members involved in evaluating the needs of a particular diverse learner should review each individual instrument or procedure that they intend to use in this evaluation for appropriateness and potential modification. Adaptation to correct for content and language bias necessitates an evaluation of cultural and linguistic appropriateness in the most recent edition of the test and in the student's native language, if available. The TEC facilitates and documents your analysis for cultural and linguistic appropriateness.

HOW TO USE THE TEC

The team members involved in evaluating the needs of a particular diverse learner should review each individual instrument or procedure that they intend to use in this evaluation for appropriateness and potential modification. Each review of a standardized instrument or procedure is done in relation to a specific student profile. Assessment administration resource files on groups of students sharing cultural and linguistic characteristics should be kept available for instructional and multidisciplinary staffing teams. This analysis includes a visual and structural overview of the illustrations and items in a test to determine if they are within the student's experiential background. It includes a review of the validity and reliability data as well as the standardization data to determine the representativeness of the population sample.

GUIDELINES FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS

Section 1

Write the name of the test under examination at the top of the form. Write the cultural or ethnic background of the student on the line “culture(s).” Some students are multicultural. You should note all ethnicities or cultures that could be an influence for this student. Write the dialect, patois, language or languages this student speaks on the line “languages.” Write the acculturation level on the line indicated. If you have a score from an acculturation measurement tool, put it here and add a note about what level this represents. Add the rate of acculturation if you have that information (obtainable from the AQSIII¹). Under “experience,” note information from this student’s life experiences that you think may influence their ability to perform on this test. Note any other significant factors that you think could be a factor in this student’s performance on this particular test.

Student Background Information
Culture(s):
Language(s):
Acculturation Level:
Experience:
Other factors:

Section 2 Language

Document your analysis of the language of the test by considering the six questions under “Language.” You will need to review the test manual and descriptions of norming and standardization procedures to answer these questions. Your team should include resource personnel from the particular ethnic or cultural community of the student under consideration.

¹ AQSIII (Collier 2011) Acculturation Quick Screen, CrossCultural Developmental Education Services, Ferndale, WA. Available from www.crosscultured.com

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The TEC asks your team to rate the degree to which the instrument, without modifications, addresses areas of known test bias that can affect its validity and reliability for specific populations. This includes questions to consider related to the language of the student and the language of the test instrument and administration. Place a checkmark in the appropriate column under “Degree of Applicability” from [I agree completely] Yes (5) to [I don’t agree at all] No (1), in answer to the question. If answering “Yes” to any item, make notes in the “Comment” section regarding any modifications you will make to the instrument, your administration procedures, or other test activities that will address the question. Add notes concerning any special circumstances that will assist others using the instrument. If answering “No” to any item, make notes in the “Comment” section regarding your student’s abilities or scores from language tests that support your response. Information about the student’s language proficiency and language issues related to this test instrument will be useful during a compliance review or service plan evaluation as well as helpful for other evaluators wanting to use this instrument.

Language	Degree of Language Applicability				
	Yes				No
Issues to consider:	5	4	3	2	1
1. Is the English proficiency necessary for successfully completing the instrument beyond the present academic language of the student?					
2. Does this instrument employ English vocabulary that is colloquial, regional, or unfamiliar to the student?					
3. Does this instrument rely heavily on receptive and expressive English language ability?					
4. Is there a parallel form of the instrument available in this student’s native language or dialect?					
5. If so, are all of the items equivalent in difficulty and intent to the English version?					
6. Does the student have adequate experience with the academic language and academic tasks required?					
Column Totals					
Applicability of Unmodified Content to Student/Group:				Applicability Score	

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Total the scores in each column, i.e. all the 5's, all the 4's, etc. Then add these points together and put the total in the box labeled "Applicability Score."

Score Range	Degree of Language Applicability
6-10	Not appropriate for use with this student.
11-15	Will need extensive modification to be valid.
16-20	Must modify most items and procedures.
21-25	Appropriate with specific modifications.
26-30	Appropriate for use with this student without modification.

Remember that the TEC process provides you with documentation that supports your evaluation and placement decisions, particularly regarding potential compliance issues. Therefore, the more detail and explanation you provide, the more useful the TEC will be as a resource for you and other district personnel.

Section 3 Content

Document your analysis of the content of the test by considering the fourteen questions under "Content." You will need to review the test manual and descriptions of norming and standardization procedures to answer these questions. Your team should include resource personnel from the particular ethnic or cultural community as the student under consideration.

The TEC asks your team to rate the degree to which the instrument, without modifications, addresses areas of known test bias that can affect its validity and reliability for specific populations. This includes questions to consider related to the content of the test instrument. Place a checkmark in the appropriate column under "Degree of Applicability" from [I agree completely] Yes (5) to [I don't agree at all] No (1), in answer to the question. If answering "Yes" to any item, make notes in the "Comment" section regarding any modifications you will make to the instrument, your administration procedures, or other test activities that will address the question. Add notes concerning any special circumstances that will assist others using the instrument. If answering "No" to any item, make notes in the "Comment" section regarding your student's abilities or scores from language tests that support your response. Information about the student's language proficiency and language issues

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related to this test instrument will be useful during a compliance review or service plan evaluation as well as helpful for other evaluators wanting to use this instrument.

Content	Degree of Content Applicability				
	Yes	No			
Issues to consider:	5	4	3	2	1
1. Is the student's ethnic and cultural group part of the sample?					
2. Is the experience level necessary for success on this instrument directly related to the assessment objectives?					
3. Given the student's cultural and experiential background, do any illustrations on this instrument represent unfamiliar or misleading content?					
4. Is the student's socioeconomic group part of the sample?					
5. Is the student's language or dialect group part of the sample?					
6. Is the specific focus of concern included in the test?					
7. Are the questions in the test familiar to the student?					
8. Given the student's cultural and linguistic background, do any items on this instrument represent unfamiliar or misleading content?					
9. Does the student have experience with the items illustrated?					
10. Does this instrument rely heavily on receptive and expressive English language ability?					
11. Has the student's level and rate of acculturation been identified?					
12. Will the results of this instrument yield instructionally meaningful information?					
13. Does the research or manual for this instrument report any differences in performance related to sociocultural or linguistic background?					
14. Does the student have experience with the tasks and processes used?					
Column Totals					
Applicability of Unmodified Content to Student/Group:					Applicability Score

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Total the scores in each column, i.e. all the 5's, all the 4's, etc. Then add these points together and put the total in the box labeled "Applicability Score."

Score Range	Degree of Content Applicability
14-26	Not appropriate for use with this student.
27-37	Will need extensive modification to be valid.
38-48	Must modify most items and procedures.
49-59	Appropriate with specific modifications.
60-70	Appropriate for use with this student without modification.

Section 4 Format & Procedures

Document your analysis of the language of the test by considering the eight questions under "Format & Procedures". You will need to review the test manual and descriptions of norming and standardization procedures to answer these questions. Your team should include resource personnel from the particular ethnic or cultural community as the student under consideration.

The TEC asks your team to rate the degree to which the instrument, without modifications, addresses areas of known test bias that can affect its validity and reliability for specific populations. This includes questions to consider related to the format and procedures used during the administration of the test or screening. Place a checkmark in the appropriate column under "Degree of Applicability" from [I agree completely] Yes (5) to [I don't agree at all] No (1), in answer to the question. If answering "Yes" to any item, make notes in the "Comment" section regarding any modifications you will make to the instrument, your administration procedures, or other test activities that will address the question. Add notes concerning any special circumstances that will assist others using the instrument. If answering "No" to any item, make notes in the "Comment" section regarding your student's abilities or scores from language tests that support your response. Information about the student's language proficiency and language issues related to this test instrument

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will be useful during a compliance review or service plan evaluation as well as helpful for other evaluators wanting to use this instrument.

Format & Procedures	Degree of Format Applicability				
	Yes			No	
Issues to consider:	5	4	3	2	1
1. Is the testing environment and situation appropriate for this student's cultural background?					
2. Is the testing environment and situation appropriate for this student's linguistic background?					
3. Does the instrument demand an understanding of directions beyond the current capacity of the student?					
4. Does the instrument demand a level of reading and readiness preskills beyond the current capacity of the student?					
5. Does the instrument demand an understanding of questioning procedures beyond the current capacity of the student?					
6. Does the instrument demand an understanding of answer selection and marking procedures beyond the current capacity of the student?					
7. Does the instrument demand a level of writing and readiness preskills beyond the current capacity of the student?					
8. Does the student have experience with the format and procedures used?					
Column Totals					
Applicability of Unmodified Procedures to Student/Group:	Applicability Score				

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Total the scores in each column, i.e. all the 5's, all the 4's, etc. Then add these points together and put the total in the box labeled "Applicability Score."

Score Range	Degree of Format Applicability
8-13	Not appropriate for use with this student.
14-20	Will need extensive modification to be valid.
21-27	Must modify most items and procedures.
28-34	Appropriate with specific modifications.
35-40	Appropriate for use with this student without modification.

Section 5 Statistics

This section includes questions to consider related to the format and administration procedures of the test instrument. Place a checkmark in the appropriate column under "Degree of Applicability" from [I agree completely] Yes (5) to [I don't agree at all] No (1), in answer to the question. If answering "yes" to any item, make notes in the "comment" column regarding any modifications you will make to the instrument, your administration procedures, or other test activities that will address the specific question. Add notes concerning any special circumstances that will assist others using the instrument. If answering "no" to any item, make notes in the "comment" column regarding student's abilities or scores from other sources that support your response. Information about the standardization and characteristics of this student's population in regard to this test instrument will be useful during a compliance review or service plan evaluation as well as helpful for other evaluators wanting to use this instrument.

Statistics	Degree of Applicability				
	Yes	No			
Issues to consider:	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has this instrument been standardized on a large enough sample from this student's specific sociocultural group to warrant reliance on the norms or criterion levels?					
2. Has this instrument been validated for the specific purpose for which it is being considered for this student?					

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3. Are the validity and reliability measures within acceptable limits for this particular cultural population?					
4. Has this instrument been standardized on a large enough sample from this student's specific linguistic/dialectical group to warrant reliance on the norms or criterion levels?					
5. Are the validity and reliability measures within acceptable limits for this particular linguistic/dialectical population?					
Column Totals					
Applicability of Unmodified Procedures to Student/Group:				Applicability Score	

Total the scores in each column, i.e. all the 5's, all the 4's, etc. Then add these points together and put the total in the box labeled "Statistical Application Score."

Score Range	Degree of Statistical Applicability
5-10	Not appropriate for use with this student.
11-15	Will need extensive modification to be valid.
16-20	Must modify specific items and procedures.
21-25	Appropriate for use with this student without modification.

Section 6 Comments

This section provides an opportunity for the examiner to summarize concerns about the test instrument, testing procedures, and general remarks about specific assessment issues in relation to a specific student population or speech/language issue. Add explanations and possible solutions for specific student or testing issues as appropriate. A resource file of the comments can be developed. A resource file of the comments generated should be kept available for instructional support teams and multidisciplinary teams who may use specific standardized tests with particular groups of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. A copy of the TEC should be attached to the test after administration as documentation of sociocultural considerations. Record the date reviewed and the names of the evaluators. A file of all tests reviewed, notes on the procedures followed, and documentation of

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recommended modifications in content, language, or administration, should be kept available as a resource at the building and district level.

Section 7 Summary Notes on Particular Tests

The resource file of the various checklists generated should be kept available for instructional support teams and multidisciplinary teams that may use specific standardized tests with particular groups of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. A number of summary table forms are included in this manual to assist with these resource files.

1. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							

Enter the name of each test being used and evaluated on the first line of the summary form. Enter the four applicability scores in the appropriate spaces: Language, Content, Format, and Statistics. Add the interpretation of this score in the appropriate box. Additional information including the type of modifications to the instrument deemed necessary should be put in the "Comments on test" section of this table.

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TEST INSTRUMENT:						
Student Background Information		Comments				
Culture(s):						
Language(s):						
Acculturation Level:						
Experience:						
Other factors:						
Language		Degree of Applicability				
		Yes	No			
Issues to consider:		5	4	3	2	1
1. Is the English proficiency necessary for successfully completing the instrument beyond the present academic language of the student?						
2. Does this instrument employ English vocabulary that is colloquial, regional, or unfamiliar to the student?						
3. Does this instrument rely heavily on receptive and expressive English language ability?						
4. Is there a parallel form of the instrument available in this student's native language or dialect?						
5. If so, are all of the items equivalent in difficulty and intent to the English version?						
6. Does the student have experience with the academic language and academic tasks required?						
Column Totals						
Applicability of Unmodified Content to Student/Group:					Applicability Score	

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Content	Degree of Applicability				
	Yes	No			
Issues to consider:	5	4	3	2	1
1. Is the student's ethnic and cultural group part of the sample?					
2. Is the experience level necessary for success on this instrument directly related to the assessment objectives?					
3. Given the student's cultural and experiential background, do any illustrations on this instrument represent unfamiliar or misleading content?					
4. Is the student's socioeconomic group part of the sample?					
5. Is the student's language or dialect group part of the sample?					
6. Is the specific focus of concern included in the test?					
7. Are the questions in the test familiar to the student?					
8. Given the student's cultural and linguistic background, do any items on this instrument represent unfamiliar or misleading content?					
9. Does the student have experience with the items illustrated?					
10. Does this instrument rely heavily on receptive and expressive English language ability?					
11. Has the student's level and rate of acculturation been identified?					
12. Will the results of this instrument yield instructionally meaningful information?					
13. Does the research or manual for this instrument report any differences in performance related to sociocultural or linguistic background?					
14. Does the student have experience with the tasks and processes used?					
Column Totals					
Applicability of Unmodified Content to Student/Group:					Applicability Score

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Format & Procedures	Degree of Applicability				
	Yes	No			
Issues to consider:	5	4	3	2	1
1. Is the testing environment and situation appropriate for this student's cultural background?					
2. Is the testing environment and situation appropriate for this student's linguistic background?					
3. Does the instrument demand an understanding of directions beyond the current capacity of the student?					
4. Does the instrument demand a level of reading and readiness preskills beyond the current capacity of the student?					
5. Does the instrument demand an understanding of questioning procedures beyond the current capacity of the student?					
6. Does the instrument demand an understanding of answer selection and marking procedures beyond the current capacity of the student?					
7. Does the instrument demand a level of writing and readiness preskills beyond the current capacity of the student?					
8. Does the student have experience with the format and procedures used?					
Column Totals					
Applicability of Unmodified Procedures to Student/Group:				Applicability Score	

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Statistics	Degree of Applicability				
	Yes				No
Issues to consider:	5	4	3	2	1
1. Has this instrument been standardized on a large enough sample from this student's specific sociocultural group to warrant reliance on the norms or criterion levels?					
2. Has this instrument been validated for the specific purpose for which it is being considered for this student?					
3. Are the validity and reliability measures within acceptable limits for this particular cultural population?					
4. Has this instrument been standardized on a large enough sample from this student's specific linguistic/dialectical group to warrant reliance on the norms or criterion levels?					
5. Are the validity and reliability measures within acceptable limits for this particular linguistic/dialectical population?					
Column Totals					
Applicability of Unmodified Procedures to Student/Group:				Applicability Score	

COMMENTS:

Date Reviewed: _____ Evaluators: _____

Strategies for Gathering Information

Information discussed in this section includes several assessment techniques, with emphasis on specific adaptations needed to develop meaningful instructional information for diverse students. The discussion covers as part of assessment the collection of information from existing records, interviews, observations, testing, work sampling, and analytic teaching. Although mention is made of technical assessment procedures and theories, the emphasis remains on gathering instructionally meaningful information and the adaptation of assessment techniques to address the special sociocultural backgrounds of diverse students. The assessment of sociocultural factors that contribute to learning and behavior problems in different academic or socioemotional areas receives special attention. As discussed by de Valenzuela and Cervantes and citing the 1991 American Psychological Association Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, “if the normative population does not apply to the child, if the test items are culturally or linguistically inappropriate, or if the test must be modified during administration, then it is unethical to use standardized test scores to qualify that student to receive special education services.”²

This type of assessment provides information about the student's current status, the task, the setting, and the efficacy of instructional strategies used. Teacher-made criterion-referenced tests are a common example of informal assessment. While formal tests include a broad range of items from a general curriculum area and use few test items to measure each specific skill, informal assessment devices focus on one or more sub-skills within a curricular area in an attempt to provide a more comprehensive assessment.³

Review of Existing School Records

A review of existing school records can be very revealing, though with many culturally diverse students this information may be incomplete or inaccurate. Points to remember in looking at existing records are:

- What is the language(s) of the home?
- What is the student's language proficiency in the home language? In the English language, if different from home language?
- What is the student's cultural background?
- What are the child-rearing practices of the student's family culture?
- How many years has the student been in the United States? The Community? The School?
- What unusual trauma or stress has the student experienced in getting to the United States?
- How well has the student adjusted to the mainstream culture?
- How well has the student adjusted to the school culture?
- What are the student's previous experiences with schooling?
- How much time does the student spend in interacting with mainstream peers?
- How much time does the student spend in interacting with cultural and linguistic peers?
- What do the student's parents say about the student compared to his or her siblings?

²Baca & Cervantes, 2003

³McLoughlin & Lewis, 1986

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- What is the student's health and developmental history?
- What is the student's response to previous instruction?
- How well does the student perform in various instructional situations?
- What is the student's response to ESL/Bilingual instruction?
- How well does the student perform in various subject areas?
- What changes in the student's performance have occurred over time (e.g., different subjects, schools, and teachers)?
- What are the student's academic and behavioral patterns in and out of the school setting?
- What significant differences have been observed in the student's performance compared to his or her cultural and linguistic peers?
- How well does the student see and hear?

A complete review of various student school records--official course grades, scores, and anecdotal records--can provide useful information about the student, particularly in regard to instructional history. Unfortunately, these records are not always comprehensive, consistent, or even organized meaningfully. Education professionals reviewing student records must interpret grades and scores in relation to other information about the student that may not be available. Also, anecdotal records may vary in subjectivity depending on the experience, background, knowledge, and training of the person who wrote the report.

As with the other assessment techniques, it is important to have specific assessment questions in mind rather than approaching the task in a random, haphazard manner. Clear assessment questions about the student's learning and behavior problems that need to be addressed are a prerequisite to the examination of school records. When available records cannot answer these questions adequately, the teacher will have a better idea about additional information that needs to be obtained. Wiederholt, Hammill, and Brown suggest questions to ask about the information in school records. These may be summarized as follows: (a) is the information current? (b) Is it reliable? (c) Are there any discrepancies in the information? (d) Are there consistent patterns across the available information?⁴ Other related questions are: (a) how familiar was the person who completed the report with the student's culture and language? (b) Was the student's language proficiency assessed in both languages and how recent was the assessment?

A review of existing records is an appropriate initial action for concerned professionals when assessing diverse students and should be designed to answer a comprehensive set of questions. Information essential to planning further assessment and instruction of diverse students may be found in these records.

One of the most important factors to consider before proceeding with the assessment process is the student's cultural and linguistic background. This is fundamental to all other elements of the assessment process, and it is a prerequisite for ascertaining language proficiency and level of acculturation. For example, a teacher may think that Maria is Hispanic because of her name and physical appearance. However, an examination of the records may reveal that she comes from a Central American Indian tribe in a rural area of Nicaragua. This information should raise several potential assessment concerns, including the language she speaks, the most dominant language in

⁴ Wiederholt, Hammill, & Brown, 1983

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her home, whether she has been through physical or chemical warfare or has undergone unusual stress in her migration to the United States, her cultural background and the child-rearing practices in her culture, and the reaction of her cultural group to acculturation situations in Nicaragua. If the anecdotal record contains nothing about the student's background, it is critical to obtain this information immediately. Siblings, parents, or other community members may be interviewed to collect this information.

Other important information to obtain from existing records is information that allows educators to make tentative decisions about the student's level of acculturation. This information can be ascertained by examining (a) the student's length of time in the United States and in the current community, (b) the amount of interaction with cultural peers vis-à-vis mainstream peers, (c) ethnicity or national origin, and (d) language proficiency in both languages.

Unless the student is completely new to the school system, information related to language screening should be in existing records. Sometimes only information regarding the student's English language proficiency is available. In school districts with bilingual or ESL education programs, there is usually a screening procedure to determine if the student needs bilingual or ESL instruction. In many school districts, this instrument is the Language Assessment Scales (LAS).⁵ The LAS is available in English and Spanish; some districts have translated the instrument into other languages. Some districts are developing comparable instruments in specific target languages, e.g., the Russian Language Assessment Tool (RLAT).⁶ However, a particular diverse student may have been assessed with the LAS or another language screening instrument in English only. As discussed previously, it is crucial to instructional planning to identify the student's other language abilities. Therefore, the examiner needs to examine the existing records for evidence of the student's other sociolinguistic abilities. If this information does not exist, it must be determined through other assessment techniques, for example with the CLIC or through the interview process.

Interviews

Another technique for gathering information is the interview. There are various considerations when conducting cross-cultural interviews. As with any assessment technique, it is important to have a clear purpose before proceeding. The teacher and other professionals conducting the interview must understand clearly what information is to be ascertained, how it should be obtained, and why it is needed. In addition, the interviewer should record the information unobtrusively and should have a plan for dealing with any unusual reactions or answers. Teachers, parents, students, social workers, nurses, and paraprofessionals may be involved in the interview process. Indeed, varying the participants in the structured interview may result in more meaningful information related to the student's instructional needs. It is also important to vary the location and format of the interview, especially when any of the participants are not from the mainstream culture or have limited English proficiency.

Interviews can be very useful assessment techniques for examining the needs of culturally and linguistically different students. Their effectiveness, however, depends upon the skill of the person who conducts the interview. The interviewer must be familiar with the cultural and linguistic background of the student in order to determine whether a student's behaviors are culturally or

⁵ DeAvila & Duncan, 1991

⁶ Stern & Collier, 1999

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linguistically appropriate. If the interviewer is fluent in the student's and parents' native language, these interviews will be more informative and meaningful for subsequent instruction. However, this is not always possible, especially when working with those who speak neither English nor Spanish. Interpreters may facilitate the interview process. In addition, it is important that the interviewer is sensitive to the nuances of cross-cultural communication and interaction.

Some school districts employ special bilingual community liaison personnel to make home visits and to conduct interviews with non-English speaking parents. This approach can facilitate the collection of assessment information; however, it is important that the liaison is trained thoroughly in the techniques and rationale for obtaining information unobtrusively and in a manner that is culturally appropriate. If the interview is not conducted in an appropriate and comprehensive manner, the result may be information of little instructional value and the possible alienation of the family. The results of cross-cultural interviews (if they are conducted appropriately) can provide meaningful information such as:

- a) Parents' perceptions about the student's behavior, developmental history, and upbringing
- b) Family perception and treatment of the student in the home
- c) Parents' perception of the source of the student's learning and behavior problems ⁷

The basic elements for cross-cultural interviews or verbal exchanges include:

- Nonverbal reflection
- Verbal reflection
- Cultural comfort zone.

Nonverbal reflection refers to the interviewing technique of adjusting to the body language and gestures of the person who is being interviewed, though it should not be a mirror copy or obvious imitation. For example, if the person addressed is seated in a particular manner, the interviewer should assume a similar position. If the person interviewed uses many hand gestures, the interviewer should also use hand gestures. If the person addressed avoids eye contact as a sign of respect, the interviewer should try to decrease eye contact.

Verbal reflection refers to adapting one's tone of voice, intonation, latency, and rate of speech to that of the person who is addressed. For example, if the respondent speaks slowly and deliberately, the interviewer should avoid using rapid, excited speech. Tone, intonation, latency, and rate of speech convey different meanings in different cultures. Therefore, an interviewer should listen carefully to the patterns used by the respondent and should reflect them as much as possible.

Latency refers to the amount of time between the utterances of one person and those of another and can convey different meanings in different cultures. Spanish and English speakers tend to have rather short latency periods under certain circumstances (particularly during an argument or other excited exchange). American Indian cultures tend to equate latency with degree of respect and may have long pauses between one person's comment and another's response. In such a situation, an interviewer who asks a question and then asks another immediately after the response indicates little or no respect for the person's answer.

⁷ Hammill, 1987

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Cultural comfort zone refers to the awareness of one's own culture and sensitivity to the culture of the other person in the conversation. Awareness of one's cultural comfort zone includes not sitting or standing too close or too far away from the other person, not touching the person to whom one is speaking unless it is appropriate, responding to any signs of discomfort on the part of the respondent, and asking for clarification regarding the other person's discomfort or how to improve the situation. The interviewer should follow the question outline illustrated in Table 8, Cross-Cultural Interview, providing probes as necessary, and allowing the respondent plenty of time to respond. As shown in the sample interview, the interviewer is gathering information from Juan's parent about Juan's cultural and linguistic background, previous school experience, sociolinguistic development, and learning style. The interviewer is also gathering information that will assist in determining Juan's level of acculturation and degree of adjustment to American culture and society in addition to his response to the culture and environment of the school.

The information from this interview would be used to supplement the information gathered from a review of existing records in an attempt to estimate Juan's level of acculturation and to identify the cultural and sociolinguistic factors that must be addressed in greater detail during the assessment process. The information collected about Juan's experience and his response to the school environment and learning style can be used immediately by the classroom teacher in modifying Juan's instructional plan. An observation of his response to these modifications would then be appropriate, especially as related to earlier observations.

Table 8 Cross-Cultural Interview

For how long have you and your family lived in this community? Tell me about how you come to live in this community.

- A. Probe: Did you come here because of job/family/other?
- B. Probe: How did you decide to move from where you lived before?
- II. How has Juan adjusted to living in this community?
 - A. Probe: What problems has he had with the move from _____?
 - B. Probe: How does he feel about leaving your previous home?
 - C. Probe: What does he miss about his previous home/community?
 - D. Probe: What does he enjoy about this new community?
 - E. Probe: How does he compare to your other children in adjustment?
- III. Tell me about Juan's friends.
 - A. Probe: Does Juan play with children in this neighborhood?
 - B. Probe: What are they like compared to Juan?
 - C. Probe: What languages do they speak while playing?
 - D. Probe: With whom does Juan spend the most time? Tell me about them. How do they compare to your other children's playmates?
- IV. What languages do you speak at home?
 - A. Probe: What language do you use during dinner?
 - B. How do you decide what language to use?
- V. Tell me about Juan's previous school experiences.
 - A. Probe: Did Juan like being in school before?
 - B. Probe: How did he do? What were his favorite subjects?

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- C. Probe: Tell me about Juan's attendance.
- VI. Tell me what you think would help Juan be successful in school.
 - A. Probe: When Juan does something you like or don't like, what do you do?
 - B. Probe: When you want to teach Juan how to do something, what do you do?
- VII. Tell me about Juan's early childhood development.
 - Probe: How does he compare to your other children?

Observation

Another technique/strategy for gathering information for planning the interventions is observation. A clear understanding of concerns about the student's behavior or performance is a prerequisite to effective observation. As in the interview technique, it is helpful to have predetermined questions that are to be answered as a means of analyzing the results of the observation, although there are situations when this information may bias the observation. In some circumstances, it is better to observe the student's interactions and behaviors without reference to prior information regarding the teacher's concern. In any observation, however, what is seen as noteworthy is highly subjective; the background, training, and preparation of the observer become a significant factor in the accuracy and usefulness of the observation.

Observation can be an appropriate assessment technique for examining the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. It is highly dependent upon the skill of the examiner who must be familiar with the cultural and linguistic background of the student. When observing student behavior, the observer should know what is culturally or linguistically appropriate for that particular student.

There are also cultural pitfalls that must be avoided when making observations. A structured observation can provide instructionally meaningful information because it is the one assessment technique that permits evaluation within a natural environment. Just as the nature of the student's culture and the nature of school culture are a part of that natural environment, the observer must exercise caution when interpreting observational data. For example, a Navajo student may be observed looking at the floor every time the teacher speaks to him. If the observer knows that this behavior is culturally appropriate as a sign of respect and attention, the act of looking at the floor will not be misinterpreted as an indication of disrespect, defiance, low self-esteem or inattention. If an observer sees an Eskimo girl looking surprised (e.g., raising her eyebrows) when the teacher asks her a question, he might think she did not know the answer, or that she was not familiar with what had been asked. However, an observer familiar with the Eskimo culture knows that raising one's eyebrows is a way of giving a positive response (i.e., saying 'yes'). In many cases, it may be difficult to employ an observer from the same cultural and linguistic background as the student. However, the successful use of this technique requires that the observer is someone who is sensitive to and knowledgeable about the student's culture. In addition, a videotape of the student's behavior in the classroom or playground environment may serve as a basis for discussion by a multidisciplinary cross-cultural team who can address the student's behavior from a variety of perspectives.

The observation focuses on several particular concerns. It provides information about the diverse learner's response to the learning environment in the classroom as well as information about his experiential background, cultural and sociolinguistic development, and learning style. The key elements of the observation are (a) an adequate length of time; (b) an activity which provides

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comprehensive information about the student's performance; (c) a clear understanding of the content, strategies, and setting of the activity; and (d) a comprehensive description of the observed behavior. The information from the observation, together with information from existing records and previous interviews of the student's parents enable the observer to draw several conclusions about the student's cultural and background experience, sociolinguistic development, and cognitive learning style. For example, the observer might conclude that the student had basic interpersonal communication skills in English but limited use of cognitive academic language proficiency in English and in Hmong, and, that he responded well when given concrete examples and demonstrations. Table 9 provides an example of a cross-cultural observation. An additional element of the observation may be an examination of the student's work sample.

Table 9 Cross-Cultural Observation

Student: Ba Vang

Grade: 3rd

Teacher: Ms. Hartley

Observer: Ms. Homer

Date: 10/8

Time of day: Morning

Length of observation: 45 minutes

Environment - There were 20 students seated at separate desks placed in clusters around the room. There are several learning centers in the room and the students have decorated the room with materials and pictures appropriate to harvest celebrations.

Activity - Students were working independently at their desks while Ms. Hartley had a group of six students including Ba gathered around a table in the "science center" with a number of globes representing star positions and planets as well as an ephemeris of the current night sky. After positioning the globes, the students returned to their seats to work on a drawing and worksheet about the night sky while another small group came into the science area.

Content - Ms. Hartley asked the students to look at the ephemeris and then use the models of planets and moon to represent where these would be in relation to Earth that night. This was part of their regular 3rd grade science lesson on the Solar System.

Strategies - Ms. Hartley was very positive and supportive using praise and touch to reinforce the students' achievements with the lesson. She had also reviewed the names of the globes and their location on the ephemeris before having the students construct the model.

Setting - This small group was located in the room's science center away from the other students and partially screened from them. All of the students were standing around the table which held the globes.

Observed Behavior - Ba said, "Ms. Hartley, it is a lot of ball," Ba looked at the globes and touched them, but soon his attention seemed to wander and he started trying to get the attention of his cousin in the other section of the room. When Ms. Hartley called his name and asked him to move one of the globes into position, he looked at her and the globes, but did not touch the correct one. He smiled and shrugged. One of the other students asked Ms. Hartley if he could move the globe, as he knew which one and where to place it in relation to the Earth globe. Ms. Hartley asked the student to assist Ba in moving the globe. The student took one of Ba's hands and placed it on the

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correct globe, and then both moved the globe into place. When Ms. Hartley asked the student why he had not just told Ba where the globe went, he replied that Ba did not understand him very well. Ba did not speak during this lesson, although he did go over to his cousin after the activity and talk to him in Hmong before the cousin went over to participate in the science activity. When Ba was in his seat, he held his pencil and looked at his worksheet, then got up and looked over the partition at his cousin in the science center. When his cousin came out after the completion of the globe activity, he spoke to Ba and motioned him back to his seat. Ba returned to his seat and began to draw small circles on the paper and then colored the space around the circles black.

Summary - Ba has not been in this country very long and is evidently unfamiliar with globes and other representations of the objects in the sky. He uses English in social language, but did not respond to the teachers directions in English. He appeared to grasp the general idea of what needed to be done on the worksheet, but still could not associate his own drawing of a nighttime sky to that which was required. He appeared curious about the lesson and wanted to know more. He may never have seen symbols and models of sky objects before. His performance improved whenever someone gave him concrete or physical examples and guidance.

Work Samples

Analysis of students' work samples is a very meaningful assessment technique for instructional purposes. Samples of student work or production may be collected for any subject or content area as well as student's speech, language, and fine or gross motor performance. Samples may be examined directly in a variety of instructional situations. The analysis of work samples may be informal (e.g., noting the presence or absence of various letters or shapes) or formal (e.g., more systematic analyses such as the Reading Miscue Inventory⁸, or Formal Reading Inventory⁹).

As with other assessment techniques, knowledge of the student's presenting problem and concomitant assessment questions are essential elements of this technique. Work samples can be highly structured or informal depending upon the teacher's needs and circumstances. However, familiarity with and sensitivity to the student's cultural and linguistic background are crucial. For example, if the teacher collects examples of the student's writing and notes that it shows peculiarities in shape and directionality, the teacher should determine the kind of orthography the student used in the native language. The student's use of orthographic characteristics from the native language may continue to pose problems when writing English.

However, it is instructionally meaningful for the teacher to know that this problem is due to a learned behavior and not to a possible perceptual problem. The correct instructional response, then, is to assist the student in transferring and transforming orthographic skills into a more appropriate format. Another example of cross-cultural differences in work samples might be seen in the syntax the student uses in language arts activities. For example, rather than write, "A chair is something that is used in a house," a German student might write, "A chair is something what is used in a house," because of differences between the two words in German. A Navajo student may write or say "Nell my name" rather than "Nell is my name," as this is the direct translation from Navajo. Also a Navajo may say "Man how called?" which is a direct transliteration of "What

⁸ Goodman & Burke, 1972

⁹ Wiederholt, 1985

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is that man's name?" in Navajo. In Czechoslovakia, people do not say "The boy is in the sun (shine)." Rather, the expression is, "The boy is on the sun." These and other linguistic differences between English and other languages may pose considerable problems for diverse students in written and spoken classroom work.

Different performance seen on students' work samples may also be due to different instructional experiences. For example, a teacher referred a student to a child study team because of consistent and recurring poor performance in spelling even though this student, who was Hispanic, spoke English as well as her peers. An examination of spelling work samples revealed substitutions such as "through" for "tough," but words such as "rough" and "tongue" were never substituted for "tough." A thorough analysis of work samples led to the conclusion, verified later by a call to her previous school, that she had been in a spelling program which emphasized the use of configuration (i.e., the shape of words) as a strategy. In addition, a search of her health history indicated that she needed glasses, but had not had a new prescription in years. This student could not see clearly enough to distinguish individual letters and was using the configuration strategy to approximate the correct spelling.

If the teacher is not familiar with the student's cultural and linguistic background, student work samples should be examined with the assistance of someone who is sensitive to the student's background. This is a situation where a teacher assistance or child intervention team may be helpful. The concerned teacher could share work samples with the team members and a group discussion may lead to a more comprehensive evaluation of the student's performance. Additional questions about the student's work may be raised and a plan developed for collecting further work samples. Teachers must be aware of linguistic and cultural substitutions or modifications and the possible lack of familiarity with the task or terminology required. These two areas, familiarity and transfer, may influence the student's work samples in any curriculum area.

Analytic Teaching

Analytic teaching, sometimes labeled diagnostic or prescriptive teaching, involves the observation of student behavior in the learning of particular tasks subdivided into their constituent components. The teacher determines the tasks and components based on assessment questions concerning student abilities. For example, if the teacher is unsure of the student's ability to tell time, she asks the student to perform a sequence of increasingly difficult tasks related to telling time. The teacher instructs the student to count to 12; count by fives; give the definition of a clock; name its parts; and other specific sequential tasks.

During analytic teaching, it is important for the teacher to note what the student can and cannot do in regard to the task. In addition, the teacher notes cultural and linguistic differences, and addresses these by varying the sequence or nature of the analytic tasks. Analytic teaching analyzes a student's behavior during ongoing instructional situations. The procedure, outlined in Table 10, Steps in Analytic Teaching, gathers instructionally meaningful information used to form hypotheses about the nature of the student's learning and behavior problems, in order to determine subsequent steps in assessment or instruction and to monitor student progress.

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Table 10 Steps in Analytic Teaching

1. Identify the current instructional condition or baseline performance.
2. Identify an activity that will assess the student's problem(s).
3. Identify the steps necessary to successfully complete the activity.
4. Construct a sequence and completion checklist based upon the steps.
5. Construct a self-analysis checklist based on this sequence for the student to complete.
6. Develop and implement an instructional activity that incorporates the assessment steps and sequence.
7. Observe the student during this activity, noting the results, and have the student complete his self-analysis.
8. Analyze the results obtained from the checklists.
9. Identify and select a new instructional strategy to evaluate.
10. Implement the new instructional strategy for a brief period.
11. Continue to regularly assess the student's performance.
12. Implement a second new instructional strategy if desired.
13. Continue to regularly assess the student's performance
14. Plot the student's performance data for the baseline and the intervention phases on a graph.
15. Compare performance across the interventions. (Steps 1-8 make-up the baseline phase and steps 9-13 are the intervention phases)
16. The teacher should change only one element at a time in intervention. This identifies the instructional factor that produced change in the student's performance.

The steps can be summarized as:

- (a) Selection and identification of the activity
- (b) Task analysis
- (c) Determination of the next stage of analysis based upon the results of the observed behavior.

The following description of a lesson in spelling is an example of how analytic teaching informally assesses a student's cognitive learning style. The first step in the analytic approach is to identify an activity in which the student's success or failure appears related to his approach to the learning task. Therefore the teacher selects spelling words and outlines the steps the student needs to follow. The teacher works with the student to develop a self-checklist. The steps suggested by the student to learn the new vocabulary may be: Repeat the words as the teacher says and spells them; say them four times; try to spell them correctly without looking; check the spelling and do more practice with those incorrectly spelled.

As the student follows these steps, the teacher observes the student's attempt to learn the new vocabulary and notes the results. The teacher might indicate to the student that the activities that depend on auditory cues may not produce the best results. The teacher instructs the student to try a new approach to learning the vocabulary, such as using different rehearsal strategies. Writing the words as she says them, pausing to picture what the word means, and then writing the word

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down as the teacher says it out loud, are rehearsal strategies that the student will then use. The teacher then observes how the student performs with a new list of words. The teacher encourages the student to continue to use a particular learning strategy if its use improves the student's performance. The teacher suggests other strategies such as analogy or kinesthetic cues if performance does not improve. The teacher continues to assess the student's performance in these activities and to modify teaching technique if necessary. Analytic teaching is instructionally meaningful and is useful in all aspects of the curriculum, especially as a prereferral intervention activity. Interventions derived from analytic teaching assessment focus on the teaching of enabling skills, that is, sub-skills necessary to perform more complex behaviors.

Curriculum-Based Assessment

Curriculum-Based Assessment measures school skills directly and can contribute to instructional intervention team assessment. The classroom curriculum determines its content. This type of procedure is obtrusive and requires that a test or a series of tasks be added to the instructional situation.¹⁰ CBAs are teacher-made tests designed to measure directly the students' skills at specified levels; they are criterion-referenced, and they are a powerful element of collaborative consultation among the regular classroom teacher and special educators at all stages of the assessment process. The assumption that a curricular area may be divided into discrete steps or facts and that learning itself consists of the mastery of discrete elements is the foundation of CBA. If a student fails to answer a CBA test item correctly, the assumption is that he needs remedial assistance with the unmastered skills and content of the CBA item. Idol, Nevin, and Paolucci-Whitcomb discuss CBA in great detail and provide many examples from different subject areas. They have identified several steps¹¹ illustrated in Table 11, Steps in Curriculum-Based Assessment.

Table 11 Steps in Curriculum-Based Assessment

1. Sample items should be selected from the curriculum.
2. Items should be arranged in order of difficulty.
3. Selected items should be administered as a test to the whole class.
4. The test should be repeated at least two times with different items from the same content.
5. Assessment should be conducted across several curricular levels.
6. Student performance as a class should be recorded.
7. Acceptable levels of student performance or mastery are determined which reflect the typical classroom
8. Performance should be determined. This can be accomplished by normative sampling.

¹⁰ McLoughlin & Lewis, 1986

¹¹ Idol, Nevin, & Paolucci-Whitcomb, 1986

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9. Curriculum-Based Assessment should be conducted with individual students or groups of students immediately prior to instruction on a topic.
10. Results should be studied to determine which students have already mastered the skills targeted for instruction, which students possess sufficient pre-skills to begin instruction, and which students lack mastery of pre-skills.
11. CBA should be re-administered after instruction on the topic. Results should be analyzed to determine which students have mastered the skills and are ready to begin a new topic, which students are making sufficient progress but require more practice, and which students are making insufficient progress and require teacher modification of some aspect of instruction.
12. Instruction should be modified to reflect student performance (i.e., do not repeat mastered areas and provide more assistance in the unmastered areas).
13. CBA should be re-administered periodically throughout the year to assess long-term retention. As illustrated in these steps, the classroom teacher may develop CBA in any subject area with which diverse students have particular difficulty (e.g., reading in English). The teacher selects sample vocabulary words and concepts from the reading materials used in the class and arranges them in order of difficulty, using the scope and sequence of the materials as a guide. The whole class takes a test using some of these words and concepts. The teacher repeats this procedure using different items from the reading materials at various levels, and records the class performance. Evaluating the average performance of the class and of reading groups within the class will determine acceptable levels of performance. The teacher may then administer the CBA to the diverse students about whom there is particular concern. Depending upon student performance on the CBA, the teacher will modify the instructional setting, strategies, or content.
14. Practitioners using CBA procedures must have a clear understanding of what constitutes curriculum. Curriculum is the comprehensive environment of instruction including content, instructional strategies, instructional setting, and student behaviors. Using only the content of instruction in CBA has limited value as a primary assessment technique for diverse students.

Using Interpreters and Translators

Implicit in selecting and using interpreters and translators is assuring that they receive appropriate training and preparation. The key is to provide training before student testing and to review after testing. Translating, especially in an evaluative capacity, can be a very difficult task, and usually requires training for the interpreter in all phases of assessment since the interpreter should be involved in the total assessment process including test modification. The translation of a test instrument or any other material may be checked for validity by having another bilingual person translate the non-English version text back into English. There will be slight variations, but the meaning should remain and the information collected should be meaningful.

In addition to a high level of competency in all four language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), the interpreter should have some understanding of student development, language variation (dialects, language domains, etc.), and cross-cultural variables. Interpreters need training

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in the administration of tests, including how to transmit information about role playing, how to cue a student during assessment, how to prompt for responses, and how to probe for pertinent information or responses. Training in confidentiality is also essential. The competence and expertise will vary among interpreters, but what is essential in this important position is a highly developed sense of professional responsibility.

There are several situations where instructional and assessment materials need to be translated into the native language of the student. There are two steps to consider when using interpreters or translators.

- a) Provide training
- b) Identify and implement strategies

Translation Step 1: Provide Training

All education personnel and persons working in situations where bilingual interpreting and translation is used need training and development. There are linguistic, cultural, and professional competencies which must be part of the recruitment and preparation of bilingual persons preparing to become interpreters or translators. The linguistic competencies for translators and interpreters include:

- The ability to understand and converse in L1 and L2 with a high degree of proficiency.
- The ability to understand and use reading and writing skills in L1 and L2 with a high degree of proficiency.
- The ability to say the same things in different ways.
- The ability to adjust to different levels of language usage (colloquial or more formal dialectal variations, social and academic language).
- The capacity to switch with familiarity between different types of interpretation and translation.
- The ability to retain information in memory.
- The knowledge of technical educational terminology.
- The knowledge of the culture of the language interpreted/translated.

Cultural competencies must also be an expected outcome of training and staff development for interpreters and translators. These cultural competencies include but are not limited to:

- 1) An understanding of cross-cultural interaction patterns
- 2) An ability to use cross-cultural communication strategies effectively
- 3) An understanding of subgroups within various cultures
- 4) An understanding of acceptable and expected behaviors within both C1 and C2 interactions.

There are also competencies associated with learning to perform as an education professional, including confidentiality, ethics, and expectations of the school system and other education

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professionals. Preparation, orientation, and training of translators and interpreters for special education assistance must include training in these competency expectations. These educational competencies include:

- 1) The ability to maintain professional conduct in all situations
- 2) The ability to maintain and to explain the need for confidentiality
- 3) The ability to remain impartial and neutral
- 4) The ability to be straightforward, to not accept an assignment beyond one's capabilities, and being able to ask for help or clarification when necessary
- 5) The capacity to display respect for the authority of the administrator or the diagnostician
- 6) The ability to work as a part of the team with the education staff.

Sometimes school districts with extensive needs for interpreting and translation have an extensive and comprehensive training program for interpreters and translators that also includes courses in child development, tests and measurements, and an orientation to educational theory. The interpreter or translator also needs to learn to work well with the school psychologist, diagnostician, special educator, and other education professionals he or she may be assisting. These comprehensive interpreter or translator training programs are usually integrated into career ladder and professional development programs which prepare bilingual and ESL certificated personnel.

There are also training needs related to preparing education professionals of all backgrounds to work with an interpreter or translator. This training is usually offered through in-service staff development programs and is sometimes part of a general district professional development plan.

The school professional working with an interpreter or translator needs the ability to plan and implement pre- and post-diagnostic conferences with the interpreter or translator. He or she will need to orient and train the interpreter or translator as to the particular purpose and procedures appropriate to formal testing, interview, observations, etc., which will be carried out. The school professional also needs preparation in group and individual interaction dynamics. He or she needs to be able to establish rapport with all participants in the cross-cultural and cross-lingual interaction. This usually involves some training in cross-cultural communication techniques and strategies. Knowledge of the methods and techniques of interpretation and translation is also useful.

School professionals about to work with an interpreter must be aware and sensitive to the kinds of information loss that is inherent in the interpretation procedure (e.g., omissions, additions, substitutions, etc.). They must have an understanding of the limitations of formal tests administered using an interpreter or translator. Given these limitations, the professional must become proficient in using observation of the student's response to testing, language, behavior and non-verbal communication.

Crosslingual Training

There are a number of special considerations for interpreters and translators. These include omissions, additions, common errors, substitutions, and transformations. Training of interpreters

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and translators must include how to avoid and self-correct for these problem areas when working crosslingually.

Omissions

Interpreter or translators may omit single words, phrases, or sentences. They may do this when they do not know the meaning of the words, phrases, or sentences or when the words cannot be translated. Omissions also may occur when the interpreter or translator cannot keep up with the pace of the speaker, cannot retain all the details and has forgotten what was said.

Additions

Interpreter or translators may add extra words, phrases, or entire sentences. They may do this when they wish to be more elaborate or when they editorialize. The interpreter or translator may add when they need to explain a difficult concept for which there is no equivalent in the other language.

Substitutions

Interpreter or translators may use words, phrases, or sentences other than the specified ones. They may do this when they make an error or they misunderstand the speaker. This sometimes happens when they cannot keep up with the pace of the speaker and must make up material based on the words that they have heard. The interpreter or translator may become confused about the words (e.g., homonyms) or fail to retrieve a specific word or phrase.

Transformations

Interpreter or translators may change the word order of the statement, sometimes distorting the meaning.

Errors

Some errors may occur due to unequal skill in L1 or L2. Some interpreter or translators may find it easier to interpret from L1 to L2 than from L2 to L1. Some errors may occur due to differences in style. Some interpreter or translators may change the meaning of the message through their personal style of intonation, facial expressions, and gestures.

Interpersonal Training

Training on effective interpersonal communication and sensitivity to the linguistic and cultural characteristics of the home are also important elements when preparing translators and interpreters. In planning parental involvement activities, it is important to plan around the needs of the entire family, rather than to limit the focus narrowly to the needs of the child with disabilities or the needs of the parents. In thinking about the following parent involvement activities, it is always best to assume a family systems perspective to obtain the most positive results. Education professionals should provide parents with resources by collecting brochures and booklets (in both L1 and L2) about: community resources, information concerning the various disabilities in lay-person's terms, and services for care, counseling, disability-related services, adult education and training programs, associations, and clubs. School personnel should work with community leaders concerning the community's needs and goals. They may jointly organize supportive services for

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families or jointly plan activities for families and make home visits. Personal contact with the whole family is very important for bridging the home/school gap.

When organizing parent meetings/workshops, education personnel should always plan for childcare and "creature comforts." Through discussion with parents, school staff can plan an optimal day of the week, time and place for the meeting. They should have a specific purpose in mind related to parent needs/goals. Parent leadership and involvement in the planning and implementation of events is critical. Examples of parent/child services are:

- * A reading center
- * A parent activity center
- * An information clearinghouse
- * A phone help line

Parents can assist in the classroom, with tutoring, with special events (fairs, shows), with the donation of time, or talent (cooking, sewing, translating, making needed classroom items). School personnel should communicate with the home and hold informal parent "conferences" often. They could send home a "good work" folder of student work products or send photographs or monthly letters reporting on class activities. Some schools send home books, tapes, or home activities to complete. Some schools have parent education workshops where parents can learn about the school. Some of these may involve role-playing interactions with administrators, teachers, paraprofessionals and school clerical/secretarial staff to increase negotiation strategies available to parents. Others may include ESL for parents.

Translation Step 2: Identify and Implement Strategies

There are strategies that make the use of translation and interpretation as effective as possible. These differ slightly in how they are used in the two main situations where translation is most likely, i.e., assessment of ELL/LEP students and conferences with ELL/LEP parents.

Assessment

Before using any standardized norm-referenced instrument, the team needs to have worked with the interpreter or translator to complete the TEC or some other evaluation of the test's reliability and validity for the particular ELL/LEP student. The interpreter or translator may assist in identifying problem test items or elements of the procedures that may need to be modified. If the test has already been adapted for use with students of this culture or language background or has been translated into the target language (from English), the MDT members should familiarize and train the interpreter or translator to use it.

If the test has not previously been adapted/translated into the first language, the MDT will need to make sure it is done appropriately by using the specific interpreter or translator or another skilled bilingual translator. It is a good idea to have two different persons doing this task to double-check the accuracy of the translation. Be sure to have the English equivalent to follow during the testing session. Literal translations may be dangerous. For example, in one case, the interpreter or translator translated 'What's happening here?' as 'Que esta pasando?' The interpreter or translator was correct, but the question is not one a native speaker of Spanish would use to elicit a comment

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from a picture. As phrased in Spanish, the question meant 'What is going by?' The student correctly answered, 'Esta pasando un tren.' (A train is passing by). This response was judged as incorrect and taken as such by the assessing school professional.

The MDT or other professionals working with the interpreter or translator need to know the skill level of the interpreter or translator. Choose only the test(s) the interpreter or translator has been trained to give. Suggest the interpreter or translator gives the test(s) to two subjects at least prior to the testing date. The MDT needs to be sure that the parent has received notification indicating an interpreter or translator will be used.

Briefing

The school personnel and the interpreter or translator should meet prior to the testing to review the general purpose of the testing session, and discuss which tests will be administered. During this meeting, the group should discuss test validity and reliability. Care should be taken to avoid unnecessary rephrasing or radically changing test items. The Test Evaluation Checklist may be used to document the necessary changes planned. Interpreter or translators must also watch their use of gestures, voice patterns, and body language so as not to inadvertently provide cues. Information about the student to be tested should be discussed as well as results of the English or other previous testing, if any was done. The interpreter or translator must receive training in how and when to document behavior. Allow the interpreter or translator time to organize the test materials, re-read any test procedures, and ask for clarification, if needed, on any issue.

Interaction

During the actual testing situation, a professional staff member must be present during testing. The interpreter or translator should immediately ask questions as they arise. The professional staff member writes down observations of the student during assessment, and observes the interpreter or translator during the testing watching: body language of the interpreter or translator, use of too many words, use of too many instructions, overusing reinforcement (type and frequency), giving cues to or prompting the student, making sure the interpreter or translator takes notes.

Debriefing

Following the assessment, the professional and the interpreter or translator should meet and discuss the student's responses and errors. The interpreter or translator should give observations of the student, but not try to say what is wrong with the student. The interpreter or translator tells the professional what the student did and said as well as what the correct response was. The professional must be careful not to use professional jargon that the interpreter or translator may not understand. For tests that have already been appropriately normed/adapted to the target language/cultural group, the interpreter or translator assists in the scoring of the tests. The professional and interpreter or translator discusses any difficulties relative to the interpreter or translator process. It is important to remember that a translated/interpreted test loses its validity/reliability. The objective is to determine, as best as possible, the minimum general skills level of the student. However, it is more important to define areas of strength and weakness that are contributing to the learning process. At best, any test only samples behavior to some statistically satisfactory degree of adequacy. We assume that the sampling is adequate in amount and that the sampling is representative of the area. The students on which tests of learning aptitude are used have had exposure to comparable, but not identical acculturation.

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Measurement error will be present in any measurement. Only present test behavior is observed in the sampling process. Future behavior is inferred--any such inferences are presumably based upon observed behaviors. A sharp distinction is drawn between what is observed and what is inferred. The examiner herself/himself is a crucial variable. It is the examiner who decided what test to use, knows its appropriateness to the situation at hand, and is obligated to help the user of the information that is produced, in a psycho-educationally sound manner. A test just lies on the shelf; it is a person who decides whether it is relevant for the task.

Conferences and Meetings

Conferences and meetings follow the same steps: Briefing (meeting to plan the conference), Interaction (the actual conference), and Debriefing (the last meeting to discuss how the conference went). During the Briefing:

- 1) Review the format of the conference or how the meeting will actually be run.
- 2) Review the purpose for the conference.
- 3) Review the critical pieces of information that must be discussed.
- 4) Review the critical questions that need to be asked to obtain information from the parents or from others.

During the conference:

- 1) The professional and the interpreter or translator should make the conference place comfortable and non-threatening.
- 2) The conference should be kept to a small group whenever possible.
- 3) The professional, through the interpreter or translator, should introduce the parent(s) to everyone at the meeting. Each person involved should give his or her name and position and specific role in relation to the students.
- 4) The professional and interpreter or translator should arrange the seating so the parent is not isolated and can see both the interpreter or translator and the speaker.
- 5) The professional through the interpreter or translator should then state the purpose of the meeting and tell the parent about how long it will last.
- 6) The professionals should always use language that is appropriate for the parent(s). The interpreter or translator interprets all comments made by the professionals and parents.
- 7) The professional through the interpreter or translator, summarizes the conference and may also want to ask final questions, discuss follow-up and take time to reassure the parent(s).

While conducting a debriefing after the conference or meeting, the interpreter or translator and other professionals should:

- 1) Discuss the information collected.
- 2) Discuss any problems relative to the conference itself.
- 3) Discuss any problems relative to the interpreter or translator process.

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Overcoming Communication Barriers

Education professionals who are not bilingual should have someone available who is when they talk to parents. They need to make an attempt to learn words, phrases, and to say something positive about the child in the family's preferred language. Professionals should also be sure that printed materials for parents are available in their preferred language. Schools should provide a sign language interpreter for parents who are deaf or hearing-impaired. All personnel involved in education should learn as much as possible about the cultures that students represent through talking with parents and other staff, reading books, attending in-service sessions, and viewing films. Family structures, values, and child-rearing practices vary greatly. Professionals should use the cultural differences as strengths rather than working at cross-purposes. Instead of lumping all groups together, district personnel must recognize the many differences that exist within groups of Hispanics, Anglos, Blacks, and Pan-Asians. Each country, each region, and most importantly, each individual has unique ways of interpreting their cultural experience. Professionals should weed out the stereotypes and prejudices that have been acquired through their own cultural roots and try to approach people individually and openly. Educators can use cultural differences to bring schools and families together. They can utilize celebrations and the special traditions that go with them as ways of learning and working together. Educators should never feel that they have to apologize for their own culture or ethnicity. Everyone has something special to contribute.

Summary Notes on Particular Tests

1. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							
2. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							
3. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							

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4. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							
5. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							
6. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							

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7. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							
8. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							
9. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							

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10. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							
11. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							
12. Name of Test:							
Language		Content Score		Format Score		Statistics Score	
Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation	Score	Interpretation
Comments on test							

Testing, Data Collection, and Monitoring Issues

This is an excerpt from the Separating Difference & Disability Workbook¹²

Monitoring and Data Collection

The instruction and intervention process described previously includes documentation and monitoring to collect instructionally meaningful data. This data facilitates analysis for separating difference and disability issues. When indicators suggest that an EL is having difficulties attaining linguistic, academic and social expectations, which are unrelated to the student's level of English proficiency, the student might typically be referred to the school's intervention team for problem-solving and intervention strategies. One of the first tasks the team needs to do is to conduct a parent interview in order to obtain information about the student's native language development, language experience at home, and any prior literacy and school experience. Conducting a parent interview to understand more about the EL's medical, developmental, and language-learning history should not be seen as a delay in making a referral for special education evaluation; rather, it is an important first-step in developing the lens through which an EL's individual history, language-learning experiences, and current learning can be viewed. This information will help guide the team in uncovering any established medical or developmental conditions present from birth for the student that may indicate an immediate need for a special education evaluation. The information will also help the team determine the focus and the intensity of any needed intervention prior to a special education referral. For example, if the team discovers that a fourth-grade student has been exposed to English for less than six months and has never had prior schooling experience, the academic differences the team is noticing may not appear as unexpected compared to a student who has been exposed to English for less than six months but has had five years of schooling in his native language. A thorough parent interview conducted face-to-face and with an independent, educated native speaker of the parents' primary language will yield the most accurate description of the student's history and best inform the team's next steps.

In addition to a parent interview, the team needs to review both core classroom instruction and core ESL/Bilingual support services that the student has been receiving. Classroom observations and teacher interviews are helpful in determining the amount and appropriateness of classroom instruction given the student's level of

¹² Collier 2016

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English proficiency and academic background. A review of the data illustrating the student's progress in the classroom as well as with the English Language Development standards that have been taught is crucial prior to the development of intervention strategies or a special education evaluation.

When intervention strategies are developed for an EL, progress monitoring data should be collected across time and regularly reviewed by the Child Study Team to determine the student's response to these intervention strategies. This means that observable and measurable data is collected so that the team can determine if there is positive/adequate, questionable or insufficient response to the intervention strategies. Periodic reviews will be conducted to determine the success or failure of the strategies. These intervention strategies must be utilized to determine what further strategies may be necessary. These intervention strategies must also be utilized to ensure that a student is not referred for a formal special education evaluation when the lack of academic progress is primarily related to language-learning background or a need for more ESL/Bilingual support services. In the event that the various strategies are not successful after being delivered with sufficient intensity, fidelity, and a reasonable amount of time, the student may be referred for a special education evaluation. Students with identified medical or developmental conditions present from birth may also be referred for a special education evaluation at any time. When these documented medical or developmental conditions exist, a lack of response to intervention is not a prerequisite for a special education evaluation. Similarly, proficiency in English is not a prerequisite for a special education evaluation, no matter how long the student has attended English-speaking schools. The student will likely require an evaluation that uses an instrument designed to be administered in the student's native language.

Since individual districts establish procedures for referring students for special education evaluation, it is important that districts don't engage in practices and policies that avoid or make it almost impossible to evaluate ELs in a timely manner because of their EL status. Policies and practices related to this stance are hard to defend from a compliance standpoint. At no point should an evaluation of a student suspected of having a disability be denied an evaluation for the sake of gathering more information or delaying the process. As with any special education evaluation, once a student is suspected of having a disability, a referral and consent should be initiated.

What Is Progress Monitoring?

Progress monitoring is used to assess student progress or performance in those areas in which they were identified by universal screening as being at-risk for failure

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(e.g., reading, mathematics, social behavior). It is the method by which teachers or other school personnel determine if students are benefitting appropriately from the typical (e.g., grade level, locally determined, etc.) instructional program, identify students who are not making adequate progress, and help guide the construction of effective intervention programs for students who are not profiting from typical instruction (Fuchs & Stecker, 2003). Although progress monitoring is typically implemented to follow the performance of individual students who are at risk for learning difficulties, it can also follow an entire classroom of students (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006).

How Does Progress Monitoring Work in Response to Intervention?

As soon as a student is identified as at risk for achievement deficits by the universal screening measure, his or her progress should be monitored in relation to Tier 1 instruction (Fletcher, Lyon, Fuchs, & Barnes, 2007). Progress should be monitored frequently, at least monthly, but ideally weekly or biweekly (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006). A student's progress is measured by comparing his or her expected rate of learning (e.g., local or national norms) and actual rate of learning (Fuchs, Fuchs, & Zumeta, 2008). A teacher can use these measurements to gauge the effectiveness of teaching and to adjust instructional techniques to meet the needs of the individual student. A student who is not responding adequately to Tier 1 instruction would move on to Tier 2 and increasingly intensive levels of intervention and instruction. The current recommended time period for measuring response to Tier 1 instruction is 8–10 weeks (McMaster & Wagner, 2007; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2005; Vaughn, Linan-Thompson, & Hickman, 2003) and non-responsiveness is typically determined by a percentile cut on norm-referenced tests (e.g., < 20th percentile) or cut score on a curriculum based measurement (CBM).

According to the [National Center on Student Progress Monitoring](#), progress monitoring has the following benefits when it is implemented correctly: 1) students learn more quickly because they are receiving more appropriate instruction; 2) teachers make more informed instructional decisions; 3) documentation of student progress is available for accountability purposes; 4) communication improves between families and professionals about student progress; 5) teachers have higher expectations for their students; and, in many cases, 6) there is a decrease in special education referrals. Overall, progress monitoring is relevant for classroom teachers, special educators, and school psychologists alike because the interpretation of this assessment data is vital when making decisions about the adequacy of student progress and formulating effective instructional programs (Fuchs, Compton, Fuchs et al., 2008).

Elements of Effective Progress-Monitoring Measures

To be effective, progress monitoring measures must be available in alternate forms, comparable in difficulty and conceptualization, and representative of the performance desired at the end of the year (Fuchs, Compton, Fuchs et al., 2008). Measures that vary in difficulty and conceptualization over time could possibly produce inconsistent results that may be difficult to quantify and interpret. Likewise, using the same measure for each administration may produce a testing effect, wherein performance on a subsequent administration is influenced by student familiarity with the content.

By using measures that have alternate forms and are comparable in difficulty and conceptualization, a teacher can use slope (e.g., academic performance across time) to quantify rate of learning (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2008). Slope can also be used to measure a student's response to a specific instructional program, signaling a need for program adjustment when responsiveness is inadequate (Fuchs et al., 2008).

Effective progress-monitoring measures should also be short and easily administered by a classroom teacher, special education teacher, or school psychologist (Fuchs & Stecker, 2003). According to Fletcher et al. (2007), there is much research to support the use of short, fluency-based probes in deficit areas such as word reading fluency and accuracy, mathematics, and spelling. However, for areas such as reading comprehension and composition, there is less research support for specific kinds of probes because these domains demonstrate less rapid change and require methods for assessing progress over longer periods of time (Fletcher et al., 2007; McMaster & Wagner, 2007).

Common Progress-Monitoring Measures

Progress can be monitored by a variety of methods. From a norm-referenced standpoint, it is possible to use widely available assessments such as the Test of Word Reading Efficiency (TOWRE; Torgesen et al., 1999) or the Woodcock-Johnson Achievement Battery (Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001). With such tests, alternate forms are available to demonstrate student improvement over time, but usually there is at least three months between administrations (Fletcher et al., 2007). Tools such as AIMSWEB and DIBELS are also used, but we do not recommend them for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Curriculum based measurement (CBM), one approach to progress monitoring, has the most well supported measures in the research base. CBM is a scientifically validated form of student progress monitoring that incorporates standard methods

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for test development and administration and for data utilization. Each CBM test samples the year-long curriculum. CBM tests are brief and easy to administer. Each CBM test is different, but each form assesses the same types of skills at about the same level of difficulty. Teachers use CBM to monitor student progress throughout the school year by administering “probes” at regular and frequent intervals.

According to Fuchs and Fuchs (2006), “*More than 200 empirical studies published in peer-review journals (a) provide evidence of CBM's reliability and validity for assessing the development of competence in reading, spelling, and mathematics and (b) document CBM's capacity to help teachers improve student outcomes at the elementary grades (p. 1).*”

CBM is a form of classroom assessment that 1) describes academic competence in reading, spelling, and mathematics; 2) tracks academic development; and 3) improves student achievement (Fuchs & Stecker, 2003). It can be used to determine the effectiveness of the instruction for all students and to enhance educational programs for students who are struggling (McMaster & Wagner, 2007). Finally, findings of over 200 empirical studies indicate that CBM produces accurate, meaningful information about students' academic levels and growth, is sensitive to student improvement, and when teachers use CBM to inform their instructional decisions, students achieve better (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006).

Fuchs and Stecker (2003) warn that most classroom assessment is based on mastery of a series of short-term instructional objectives or "mastery measurement." To implement this type of assessment the teacher determines the educational sequence for the school year and designs criterion-referenced tests to match each step in that educational sequence. According to Fuchs and Stecker, problems with mastery measurement include: 1) the hierarchy of skills is logical, not empirical; 2) assessment does not reflect maintenance or generalization; 3) measurement methods are designed by teachers, with unknown reliability and validity; and 4) the measurement framework is highly associated with a set of instructional methods. CBM combats these problems by making no assumptions about instructional hierarchy for measurement, so it fits with any instructional approach and by incorporating automatic tests of retention and generalization. According to Fuchs and Fuchs (2006), CBM and mastery measurement have another significant difference:

CBM also differs from mastery measurement because it is standardized; that is, the progress monitoring procedures for creating tests, for administering and scoring those tests, and for summarizing and interpreting the resulting database are

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prescribed. By relying on standardized methods and by sampling the annual curriculum on every test, CBM produces a broad range of scores across individuals of the same age. The rank ordering of students on CBM corresponds with rank orderings on other important criteria of student competence. For example, students who score high (or low) on CBM are the same students who score high (or low) on the annual state tests. For these reasons, CBM demonstrates strong reliability and validity. At the same time, because each CBM test assesses the many skills embedded in the annual curriculum, CBM yields descriptions of students' strengths and weaknesses on each of the many skills contained in the curriculum. These skills profiles also demonstrate reliability and validity (p. 2).

The tasks measured by CBM include 1) pre-reading (phoneme segmentation fluency; letter sound fluency); 2) reading (word identification fluency; passage reading fluency; maze fluency); 3) mathematics (computation; concepts and applications); 4) spelling; and 5) written expression (correct word sequences).

Example of CBM in reading:

- Student is given passage in grade-level material that reflects the end-of-year goal and reads aloud for 1 minute.
- Teacher follows along on his or her own copy and marks any miscues the student makes. Teacher places a bracket after the last word read at the end of 1 minute.
- The teacher tallies the total number of words read correctly in 1 minute.

The words read correctly are those pronounced correctly, in accordance with the context of the sentence (and the student's dialect). The teacher notes miscues, mispronunciations or word substitutions, omissions, hesitations (over 3 seconds), reversals (words not read in the correct order). Figure 16 illustrates an example of CBM in reading.

CBM should be conducted about twice a week for formative progress monitoring for students with disabilities and at least once a week for students who are at risk for learning problems. For students who are average or high achieving, doing a CBM should occur weekly, twice monthly or monthly depending upon the subject matter and target issues. When using the CBM for benchmarking or summative monitoring, once a quarter is appropriate for all students.

Progress monitoring involves ongoing data collection on skills that are important to student success to estimate student rates of improvement and to identify students who are not demonstrating adequate progress in order to alter instructional variables to better meet the needs of individual students. Thus, teachers may use progress monitoring to design more effective, individualized instructional programs for struggling learners.

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Larry was very excited! His father	6
had just brought home a new puppy. Larry's	14
brother and sister were going to be very	22
surprised, too.	24
The little puppy was black and brown	31
with a few white patches. Her ears were long	40
and floppy. Her tummy nearly touched the	47
ground. Dad said this dog was a beagle.	55
Larry thought their new dog was cute.	62
He couldn't decide what he wanted to name	71

Figure 17 Example of CBM Reading Fluency

Progress Monitoring differs from traditional assessments in a variety of ways. First, tests are typically rather lengthy and are administered on an infrequent basis while monitoring progress is conducted frequently and provides an easy and quick method for gathering student performance data on important, grade level skills

content. Teachers do not receive immediate feedback from traditional summative tests, and feedback may not inform instructional planning. While analysis of student progress (performance across time) allows the teacher to modify instructional programs when needed and/or adjust student goals upward. Monitoring allows comparison of data to individual student or to students in the teacher's classroom, in the child's school, or in the school district while traditional tests are based on national scores and averages.

Examples of Progress Monitoring

This is not an all-inclusive list, but covers some of the ways in which individual teachers can conduct progress monitoring within their classrooms.

Questioning and Other Learning Probes

The term "learning probe" refers to a variety of ways that teachers can ask for brief student responses to lesson content so as to determine their understanding of what is being taught. Questions to the class, quizzes, and other means of calling upon students to demonstrate their understanding are methods used by teachers to find out if their instruction is "working" or if it needs to be adjusted in some way. Does the use of learning probes have a beneficial effect on student achievement? The research indicates that this approach can indeed produce achievement benefits. Particularly effective techniques include: Keeping questions at an appropriate level of difficulty; that is, at a level where most students can experience a high degree of success in answering Paying close attention to who is answering questions during classroom discussion and calling upon non volunteers Asking students to comment or elaborate

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on one another's answers Using information on students levels of understanding to increase the pace of instruction whenever appropriate. (There is a strong positive relationship between content covered and student achievement. Monitoring can alert teachers to situations where they can profitably pick up the instructional pace and thus cover more material.)

Monitoring Seatwork

Research comparing the behavior of effective teachers (i.e., those whose students achieve highly or higher than would be expected given background variable) with that of less effective teachers has clearly revealed the importance of monitoring the class during seatwork periods. Such monitoring involves teachers moving around the classroom, being aware of how well or poorly students are progressing with their assignments, and working with students one-to-one as needed. The most effective teachers: Have systematic procedures for supervising and encouraging students while they work. Initiate more interactions with students during seatwork periods, rather than waiting for students to ask for help Have more substantive interactions with students during seatwork monitoring, stay task oriented, and work through problems with students Give extra time and attention to students they believe need extra help Stress careful and consistent checking of assignments and require that these be turned in

Monitoring Homework

The assignment of homework, like many educational practices, can be beneficial, neutral, or detrimental depending upon the nature and context of the homework tasks. The use of homework assignments bears a significant and positive relationship to achievement when the homework is carefully monitored, as well as serving the function of increasing students' learning time. Homework confers the most beneficial results when assignments are: Closely tied to the subject matter currently being studied in the classroom Given frequently as a means of extending student practice time with new material Appropriate to the ability and maturity levels of students Clearly understood by students and parents Monitored by parents; i.e., when parents are aware of what needs to be done and encourage homework completion Quickly checked and returned to students Graded and commented on The research also indicates that homework which meets these criteria is positively related to student attitudes. Students may say they don't like homework, but research shows that those who are assigned regular homework have more positive attitudes toward school, toward the particular subject areas in which homework is assigned, and toward homework itself, than students who have little or no homework. The research also indicates that homework which meets these criteria is positively related

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to student attitudes. Students may say they don't like homework, but research shows that those who are assigned regular homework have more positive attitudes toward school, toward the particular subject areas in which homework is assigned, and toward homework itself, than students who have little or no homework.

Monitoring As a Part of Classroom Reviews

Research has established a link between integrating monitoring methods into periodic classroom reviews and the later achievement of students involved in the review sessions. Daily, weekly, and monthly reviews can all enhance the learning of new material and, if they incorporate questioning and other learning probes, can call attention to areas where re-teaching is needed. The effectiveness of using review sessions to monitor student learning is clearly revealed in the research on the effects of teacher training: teachers trained in methods for conducting periodic classroom reviews which include the use of learning probes had students whose achievement was higher than it was before the teachers had been trained and higher than the achievement of students of untrained teachers. In addition, including monitoring activities in periodic reviews is a built-in feature of such programs as Direct Instruction and the Exemplary Center for Reading instruction (ECRI) system, as well as being a function carried out by the effective teachers in several comparative observational studies.

Classroom Testing

Those who study assessment and evaluation techniques are quick to point out that the role of standardized testing has received considerably more research attention than have classroom testing and other classroom-level assessment methods. The existing research does indicate, however, that well-designed classroom testing programs bear a positive relationship to later student achievement. Beneficial effects are noted when tests are: Administered regularly and frequently An integral part of the instructional approach (i.e., well-aligned with the material being taught) Collected, scored, recorded and returned to students promptly so that they can correct errors of understanding before these become ingrained When attitudes toward testing are studied, students who are tested frequently and given feedback are found to have positive attitudes toward tests. They are generally found to regard tests as facilitating learning and studying, and as providing effective feedback--an outcome which has surprised some researchers, who had anticipated finding more negative student attitudes toward testing.

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Reviewing Student Performance Data

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to describe the various systems teachers can use for recording and interpreting student performance data, it is worthwhile to note the importance of having and using such a system. Research comparing effective and ineffective teachers cites the existence and use of a systematic procedure for keeping and interpreting data on student performance as a notable difference between these groups.

Monitoring Methods Used In Combination

Research findings on the discrete effects of various classroom monitoring methods comprise only part of the story of applying classroom monitoring techniques. Research also indicates that using these methods in combination is superior to using only one or two of them. One researcher identifies five of the six monitoring methods above in his list of effective teaching behaviors. Another cites all of them as important components of a student accountability system. And in the comparative research on effective and ineffective teachers, the effective teachers were found to have implemented all or most of these monitoring functions in their classrooms.

Common Elements across Monitoring Methods

Looking at the range of research on monitoring student learning, several attributes of effective monitoring are cited repeatedly across the different investigations:

Setting High Standards

When students' work is monitored in relation to high standards, student effort and achievement increase. Researchers caution, however, that standards must not be set so high that students perceive them as unattainable; if they do, effort and achievement decrease. The definition of "high standards" differs across studies, but generally, researchers indicate that students should be able to experience a high degree of success (on assignments, during classroom questioning, etc.) while continually being challenged with new and more complex material.

Holding Students Accountable For Their Work

Establishing expectations and guidelines for students' seatwork, homework, and other functions and following through with rewards/sanctions facilitates learning and enhances achievement.

Frequency and Regularity

Whether the topic is teacher monitoring of seatwork, administration of tests, checking homework, or conducting reviews, researchers cite frequency and regularity in carrying out monitoring activities as a major reason they are effective.

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Clarity

Clarity about expectations, formats, and other aspects of direction-giving bears a positive relationship to the achievement of the students doing the homework, participating in the classroom questioning session, etc.

Collecting, Scoring, and Recording Results of Classwork, Homework, Tests, and So On

These activities are positively related to achievement, because they produce useful information to teachers and students and because they communicate to students that teachers are serious about effort and completion of assignments.

Feedback

Providing feedback to students lets them know how they are doing and helps them to correct errors of understanding and fill in gaps in knowledge. Some researchers focus on the ways in which feedback is provided, pointing out that students who are having learning difficulties require support, encouragement, and attention to their success if the feedback is to foster achievement of learning goals.

Formative Assessments

As mentioned in the previous chapter, another way of monitoring instruction is through the use of formative assessment. Formative assessments are ongoing assessments, observations, summaries, and reviews that inform teacher instruction and provide students feedback on a daily basis (Fisher & Frey, 2007). While assessments are always crucial to the teaching and learning process, nowhere are they more important than in a differentiated classroom, where students of all levels of readiness sit side by side. Without the regular use of formative assessment, or checks for understanding, how are we to know what each student needs to be successful in our classroom? How else can we ensure we are addressing students' needs instead of simply teaching them what we think they need?

Traditionally, we have used assessments to measure how much our students have learned up to a particular point in time (Stiggins, 2007). This is what Rick Stiggins calls “assessment of learning” and what we use to see whether our students are meeting standards set by the state, the district, or the classroom teacher. These summative assessments are conducted after a unit or certain time period to determine how much learning has taken place. Although Stiggins notes that assessments of learning are important if we are to ascribe grades to students and provide accountability, he urges teachers to focus more on assessment for learning. These types of assessment—formative assessments—support learning during the learning process.

Since formative assessments are considered part of the learning, they need not be graded as summative assessments (end-of-unit exams or quarterlies, for example)

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are. Rather, they serve as practice for students, just like a meaningful homework assignment (Chappuis & Chappuis, 2007/2008). They check for understanding along the way and guide teacher decision making about future instruction; they also provide feedback to students so they can improve their performance. Stiggins suggests “the student’s role is to strive to understand what success looks like and to use each assessment to try to understand how to do better the next time.” Formative assessments help us differentiate instruction and thus improve student achievement. As Carol Ann Tomlinson (2007) says “ Informative assessment isn’t an end in itself, but the beginning of better instruction.”

When I work with teachers during staff development, they often tell me they don’t have time to assess students along the way. They fear sacrificing coverage and insist they must move on quickly. Yet in the rush to cover more, students are actually learning less. Without time to reflect on and interact meaningfully with new information, students are unlikely to retain much of what is “covered” in their classrooms.

Formative assessments, however, do not have to take an inordinate amount of time. While a few types (such as extended responses or essays) take considerably more time than others, many are quick and easy to use on a daily basis. On balance, the time they take from a lesson is well worth the information you gather and the retention students gain.

The National Forum on Assessment in 1995 suggested that assessment systems include opportunities for both individual and group work. Listening in on student partners or small-group conversations allows you to quickly identify problems or misconceptions, which you can address immediately. If you choose a group assessment activity, you will frequently want to follow it up with an individual one to more effectively pinpoint what each student needs. Often, the opportunity to work with others before working on their own leads students toward mastery. The group assessment process is part of the learning; don’t feel you must grade it. The individual assessment that follows can remain ungraded, as well, although it will be most useful if you provide some feedback to the learner, perhaps in the form of a brief comment or, at the very least, a check, check-plus or check-minus, with a brief verbal explanation about what each symbol indicates (You have mastered the skill, You need more practice, etc.).

By varying the type of assessment you use over the course of the week, you can get a more accurate picture of what students know and understand, obtaining a “multiple-measure assessment ‘window’ into student understanding” (Ainsworth & Viegut, 2006). Using at least one formative assessment daily enables you to evaluate and assess the quality of the learning that is taking place in your classroom

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and answer these driving questions: How is this student evolving as a learner? What can I do to assist this learner on his path to mastery?

Types of Formative Assessment Strategies

There are various ways to do formative assessment. Here are a variety of quick ways for you to check for understanding and gather “evidence” of learning in your classroom. You will find four different types of formative assessments.

- **Summaries and Reflections**
Students stop and reflect, make sense of what they have heard or read, derive personal meaning from their learning experiences, and/or increase their metacognitive skills. These require that students use content-specific language.
- **Lists, Charts, and Graphic Organizers**
Students will organize information, make connections, and note relationships through the use of various graphic organizers.
- **Visual Representations of Information**
Students will use both words and pictures to make connections and increase memory, facilitating retrieval of information later on. This “dual coding” helps teachers address classroom diversity, preferences in learning style, and different ways of “knowing.”
- **Collaborative Activities**
Students have the opportunity to move and/or communicate with others as they develop and demonstrate their understanding of concepts.

Keeping Track of the Data

When you use formative assessments, you must keep track of the data that you collect. The easiest way to observe and assess student growth is to walk around your room with a clipboard and sticky notes. As you notice acquisition of a new skill or confusion and struggle with a skill, record the student’s name and jot down a brief comment. Consider keeping a folder for each child in which you insert any notes that you make on a daily basis. This process will help you focus on the needs of individual students when you confer with each child or develop lessons for your whole class.

Another way to keep track of the data is to use a class list such as the ones included in the Form section at the end of this chapter. On these sheets, you can note specific skills and record how each student is doing. You can use a system of check-minus, check, and check-plus or the numbers 4, 3, 2, 1 to indicate student proficiency with the skill.

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What are we monitoring?

Within an average instructional intervention team period of eight weeks, several specific learning behaviors may be addressed. The instructional intervention or RTI process usually takes at least six weeks, and may last as long as the intervention team observes, and documents, positive responses to each successive or concurrent intervention. The instructional intervention team designs an Instructional Intervention Plan which specifies the responsibilities of each member to address:

- any academic areas impacted by language difficulties
- learning and behavior problems arising from culture shock
- improvement of verbal skill in one or both languages
- improvement of writing skill in one or both languages
- any medical, behavioral, or emotional needs; adaptive behavior skills
- any cognitive learning strategies that would enhance students' ability to engage in learning
- Community services needed and outside agencies to access (food, clothing, employment, protective services, counseling).

The plan should specify who will be responsible for implementing each of the interventions and in what order they will proceed, based upon their prioritization of the student's needs. In designing goals, one must make sure that all of them are specific, measurable, and achievable. A summary review date should be set for the plan (six to eight weeks away is suggested) and weekly meetings should be used to monitor the instructional intervention team process.

The team can use a planning and documentation process such as RTI or RTII to record and monitor the intervention goals and interventions being implemented. These problem solving models are useful, as they contain lists of appropriate interventions and a means of recording the language of instruction. Examples of appropriate interventions for language and acculturation are given below.

a) Language Acquisition

Appropriate language acquisition interventions include content instruction in the first language, bilingual assistance in content areas, ESL, two-way bilingual instruction, and bilingual language and content area instruction. Sheltered English techniques, as well as sheltered instruction in both languages, are also an option. Sheltered English instruction differs from ELL in that English is not taught as a foreign language, with a focus on learning the language; rather, the focus is on content knowledge and skills. In the sheltered classroom, teachers use simplified language, physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects. Additional language and communicative areas that can be addressed in interventions are code switching, stages in second language acquisition, and development of social

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and academic language (BICS and CALP). Instruction and interventions must also involve *comprehensible input*, an explanation of language learning proposed by Krashen (1981) that language acquisition occurs when instruction is provided at a level that is comprehensible to the learner. This can be achieved by modeling, demonstration, physical and visual examples, guided practice, and other strategic instructional practices.

b) Acculturation Needs

CLD students' needs for acculturation interventions is indicated by their performance on acculturation measures such as the AQS, or based upon expert observation. Appropriate interventions that address acculturation needs and acculturative stress are those which address culture shock, resistance to change, distractibility, response fatigue, and limited experience in academic settings, confusion in locus of control, stress reactions, and other psychological side-effects of the acculturation process. Appropriate interventions for addressing learning and behavior difficulties are:

- Cognitive Learning Assistance: Addressing cognitive learning differences between teaching style and the CLD student's cognitive learning style, and other cognitive academic needs such as academic language acquisition, metacognitive strategies, and cognitive learning strategies.
- Behavioral Assistance: Addressing distractibility, disorientation, confusion in locus of control, withdrawal, acting out, and other behaviors that may be manifestations of culture shock or side effects of the acculturation process.
- Ethno-ecological Assistance: Addressing the adaptation needs of students within the family, school, and community through peer tutoring, cross-cultural communication strategies for both the CLD student and classmates, and increasing family and community involvement in the school program.

The instructional intervention team advises the referring teacher or staff member about appropriate interventions and provides resources and guided practice in the implementation. Members of the team may go into the classroom and work directly with the student, may team teach with the referring teacher, may pull the student out to implement a specific strategy, or may otherwise become directly and collaboratively involved in implementing the recommended intervention for the culturally and linguistically diverse learner with learning and behavior problems. The team's active involvement also facilitates its monitoring of the student's response to the recommended interventions.

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Table 8 Example Intervention Strategies for Learning and Behavior Difficulties for CLD

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic Support Services • Accelerated Reading strategies • Acculturation Support • Adapted Instructional Materials • Affective Strategies • Behavioral Contract • Bilingual Materials • Cognitive Learning Strategies • Consulted Resource People 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperative Learning • Counseling Services • Mentoring • Metacognitive Assistance • Parent Conferences • Parent/Teacher Team • Peer Tutors • Planned Positive Reinforcement • Guided Reading strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of Stimuli • Sheltered English Instruction • Suggestions for/from Parents • Support Groups • Varied Content/Strategies • Varied Instructional Setting • Varied Outcomes • Guided Writing strategies • Bilingual reading recovery
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Interventions should not be chosen at random, but rather be selected and implemented to target specific, identified learning and behavior problems of concern to the teacher. The educator should study the scores and data from the screening forms and refer to the guidelines for interpreting these results. Each screening form has an administration manual that contains information about the tools, suggestions for intervention, and concern focus areas. For each area of concern, interventions are identified and noted for the instructional setting, instructional strategies, content, and for student behaviors. For example, having a CLD student work in a small group (setting) assigned to work cooperatively on an inquiry activity (strategies) for a science project (content) will have a great impact on student behavior. This is particularly true if all members of the group speak the same language, such as Russian or Spanish, versus multiple languages. The setting, strategies, content, or behavior cannot be changed without addressing its interaction with the other three.

One way to organize the implementation of a student's particular intervention plan is to use the PEARL strategy framework (Collier, 2015). This basic strategy for all diverse instruction is outlined in Table 9, Planning Sheet for PEARL. The acronym PEARL stands for the essential elements to be included in interventions and instruction for limited English speaking students that facilitate their effective acquisition of both language and content. These elements are:

1. **PREVIEW** everything using comprehensible input strategies. Use prediction, preparation, preview, and general overview of what is to come in the lesson or activity.
2. **EMBED** all instruction in context rich activities, including concrete, explicit structure or models, and making sure that concrete context is used.
3. **ATTACH** to what has already been learned at home and in previous schooling. Always connect learning to prior lessons and knowledge. Make intentional and overt connections between the new content or activity and things that are

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familiar to the learner, making meaningful attachments through analogies and illustrations between the known and the unknown.

4. **RATCHET** learning. Extend and build on what is learned like cogs in a gear mechanism. Enrich and expand upon learning, using skills in L1 to strengthen L2 learning and skills in L2 to strengthen L1.
5. **LOOK BACK** at what was learned and how learning occurred. Review content as well as the strategies used to learn. Have students reflect on what they have learned and how they will use this information, as well as discuss why the lesson was taught the way it was and what strategies facilitated their learning.

Table 9 Planning Sheet for PEARL

Students Name	Teacher
Date of intervention	Lesson
P	Plan
PREVIEW	Observation
E	Plan :
EMBED	Observation
A	Plan :
ATTACH	Observation
R	Plan :
RATCHET	Observation
L	Plan :
LOOK BACK	Observation

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The instructional intervention team monitors and evaluates the implementation of each intervention for its effectiveness with a particular CLD student. The student's response to each intervention within the particular context and language in which it is carried out is recorded and the observed patterns are noted. For example, changing the composition of the peer team in which an EL student is working, e.g., including two bilingual students proficient in the student's native language, may result in more consistent success in completing assignments. This would be done in a variety of subject areas, and its success or failure in producing differences in the student's behavior would be noted. It could indicate that the EL student needs additional assistance with language acquisition and academic language in English, that the student feels more comfortable working with these peers, or it could mean something else entirely. The positive results achieved by the intervention are noted on the RTI/RTII or other instructional intervention team documentation form.

During the Instructional Intervention Period, it is especially important to document the contexts and content areas or approaches in which the CLD student is successful. These will be helpful in determining further interventions, in guiding the classroom teachers in successful modifications and adaptations, and in building up an accurate learning and behavior profile of the student. This information will also be useful to the evaluation team should the instructional intervention team decide to refer the CLD student.

The decision to advance to another need area on the instructional intervention team's priority list may occur after two weeks, or possibly less. During the instructional intervention team process, and within the average six to ten week instructional intervention team period, whenever the CLD student needs further assistance in additional learning or behavior areas, the team should return to Step 3 in the instructional intervention team process: Identify. At this step, one intervenes for level, areas, and rate of language development and acquisition, and selects the next need on the priority list.

After at least six to eight weeks, and no longer than twelve, the instructional intervention team should reach a decision about exiting the student from the instructional intervention team process. There are two likely decisions at this point:

a) **The instructional intervention succeeds and the student exits intensive monitoring.** The student may continue to receive appropriate first language development and second language acquisition assistance.

b) **The intervention team decides to refer the student to the Evaluation Team.** The instructional intervention team determines that the student's learning and behavior needs are *not* due to cultural or linguistic differences; or that the student has some other learning and/or behavior need, in addition to learning and

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behavior needs related to second language acquisition, acculturation, and sociocultural adaptation. At this point, a formal referral to special education is justified and the student is exited from the intervention process.

The essence of the prevention and intervention step is to determine the degree to which the student's sociocultural background is having an impact on his or her learning and/or behavior problem in the school and to determine if something other than the normal side effects of acculturation and second language acquisition are a factor.

Differentiating Instruction in Response to Monitoring

Thomas R. Guskey suggests that for monitoring to become an integral part of the instructional process, teachers need to change their approach in three important ways. They must “1) use assessments as sources of information for both students and teachers, 2) follow assessments with high-quality corrective instruction, and 3) give students second chances to demonstrate success” (2007).

Once you have assessed your learners, you must take action. You will be able to help your students achieve success by differentiating your instruction based on the information you have gathered. Ask yourself, “Who needs my attention now? Which students need a different approach? Which students are not learning anything new, because I haven't challenged them?” “Tiering” your activities for two or three levels of learners is usually what is called for after a review of assessment data. We must be prepared to provide both corrective activities and enrichment activities for those who need them. An important caveat to keep in mind, however, is that the follow-up, corrective instruction designed to help students must present concepts in new ways and engage students in different learning experiences that are more appropriate for them (Guskey, 2007/2008). Your challenge will be to find a new and different pathway to understanding. The best corrective activities involve a change in format, organization, or method of presentation (Guskey, 2007/2008).

After using any of the monitoring or formative assessments contained in this chapter, you can choose from among the suggestions to scaffold your struggling learners or challenge your advanced learners. The suggestions for struggling learners will help students during their “second-chance” learning on the road toward mastery. The suggestions for advanced learners will challenge those students who are frequently forgotten in mixed-ability classrooms. With these easy adjustments to your lesson plans, you will be able to respond to the diverse readiness needs of students in your heterogeneous classroom.

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Designing Tiered Activities

Following are examples of ways to add layers of intervention within the multi-tiered problem solving process when you are doing this within an integrated classroom with students of a wide range of abilities:

Scaffolding for Struggling Learners

- Offer teacher direction (re-teaching with a different method).
- Allow the student to work with a reading partner, study buddy, or learning partner. (Buddy-up an English language learner (EL) with another student.) This will provide peer support for collaborative learning.
- Allow students to use class notes, textbooks, and/or other classroom resources to complete the task.
- Provide a model or exemplar (of a similar problem solved or a sample of the type of writing expected).
- Furnish step-by-step directions; break down the task.
- Provide hints or tips.
- Color-code different elements; highlight for focusing; provide “masks and markers” for focused attention on specific text.
- Provide sentence strips, sticky labels with terms, or manipulatives (plastic coins, Judy clocks, Unifix cubes, fraction tiles, number lines, algebraic tiles, calculators, etc.).
- Provide a partially completed graphic organizer or outline.
- Provide out-of-sequence steps for students to reorganize.
- Provide a cloze (fill-in-the-blank) paragraph (with or without a word box) for students whose language is extremely limited or for those who struggle with grapho-motor skills.
- Give a framed paragraph or essay (with sentence starters to help organize the writing).
- Provide guided questions.
- Supply a word bank and definitions.
- Support with visuals, diagrams, or pictures.
- Provide words on labels for students to simply pull off and place appropriately.
- Allow additional time.

Challenging Advanced Learners

- Design activities that are more complex, abstract, independent, and/or multistep.
- Pose a challenge question or task that requires them to think beyond the concrete and obvious response (from the newly learned material) to more abstract ideas and new use of the information.
- Require more complex expression of ideas: different types of sentences,

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synonyms, more than one adjective or action (verb) to describe what's happening.

- Require that metaphors and similes, idiomatic expressions, or specific literary elements be included in their writing.
- Ask students to make text-to-text and text-to-world connections (more abstract than text-to-self connections).
- Require students to note relationships and point out connections among ideas: compare and contrast; cause and effect; problem and solution; sequence, steps, or change over time; advantages and disadvantages; benefits; etc.
- Ask students to tell the story from a different point of view.
- Ask students to place themselves into the story or time period and write from the first-person point of view.
- Ask students to consider "What if?" scenarios.
- Provide multistep math problems.
- Include distracters.
- Do not provide a visual prompt.
- Ask students to suggest tips or hints that would help others who struggle to make sense of the information
- Provide a problem or model that does not work; have students problem-solve.
- Have students create their own pattern, graph, experiment, word problem, scenario, story, poem, etc.
- Have students use the information in a completely new way (Design an awareness campaign about ... ; Create a flier to inform ...; Write/give a speech to convince ...; Write an article to educate ...; Write an ad to warn others about ...; Design a program to solve the problem of)

In differentiated classrooms everywhere, a resounding mantra is "Fair is not equal; fair is getting what you need." Assessments enable us to determine what students need. But for our assessments to be accurate, we need multiple measures of student understanding. We need evidence gathered over time in different ways to evaluate how effective the teaching and learning process has been. Tomlinson and McTighe (2006) suggest that when we gather a "photo album" rather than a "snapshot" of our students, we can differentiate instruction based on a more accurate evaluation of our students' learning needs.

Cohort Peer Comparisons

Another critical element of using progress monitoring for instruction and intervention in our model, is the use of cohort peer comparisons rather than comparing EL students with native English speaking students. A cohort is a group of people who share a common characteristic or experience within a defined period

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(e.g., are born in the same month, learn the same language, and are exposed to a similar instructional procedure). Thus a group of people who were born on a day or in a particular period, say 1948, form a birth cohort. The comparison group may be the general population from which the cohort is drawn, or it may be another cohort of persons thought to have had little or no exposure to the instructional intervention under investigation, but otherwise similar. Alternatively, subgroups within the cohort may be compared with each other.

A cohort peer analysis is critical in determining if the student's performance is atypical particularly with our culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The ideal peer group for a particular EL student are other ELs from the same language background who have received the same EL instruction, have spent the same time in the program, and came into the school at the same grade level.

We recommend education professionals scour district longitudinal data and find as large a peer group as possible, including:

- Achievement benchmarks
- Culture/linguistic group
- Degree of parent input
- Entry grade
- Gender
- Parent involvement
- Language proficiency levels
- Level/rate of acculturation
- Mobility
- Time in EL program
- Other possible comparison areas.

Performing Your Own Cohort Analysis

Typically, the data required to conduct cohort analysis lives inside of a database of some kind and needs to be exported into spreadsheet software. If you're studying student achievement or behavior, you want to end up with a table of data that includes one record per student. Each record contains the student's ID, the date and age at or grade at enrollment, the areas of assessment (achievement test, language proficiency, level of acculturation, etc.), and the student's "cohort date" (this is typically the date of the student's enrollment and entry grade level). Ideally, however, you would want to include additional attributes such as the student's referral source, their baseline level of acculturation, entry language proficiency in both home language and English, geographic and demographic information, and more. The more information about the student you have, the more ways you'll be able to segment your cohorts. However, each of these additional attributes may require additional database joins.

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Step 1: Pull the Raw Data

This can come from your own classroom records, school cumulative records, or state student performance and demographic spreadsheets. Most states have a procedure for teachers to access the state student database using identification codes.

Step 2: Create Cohort Identifiers

Identify what and how you wish to compare your students. As mentioned above this should include date and age at enrollment, assessment scores, entry language proficiency, entry level of acculturation, gender, etc.

Step 3: Calculate Significant Stages

These would represent appropriate and measurable benchmarks for your particular population and situation, for example grade levels, acquisition benchmarks, levels of acculturation, etc.

Step 4: Create a Pivot Table and Graph

Pivot tables allow you to calculate an aggregation such as a sum or average across multiple dimensions of your data. Graphing your data for a cohort peer group will allow you to compare your individual student of concern to his or her cohort peer group and see if the performance is atypical for the peer group.

Data Perspectives

Even more helpful is to normalize this data by the size of the cohort. In order to do this, each data point for a cohort must be divided by the number of members in that cohort. That way, you can view the average value per cohort member side-by-side without a bias from the size of the cohort. To do this, you'll have to create a second pivot table to calculate cohort size and then divide one by the other.

Using Data from Monitoring to Make a Decision to Refer

The principle benefit of regular progress monitoring or formative assessment is to assess whether the EL student is making reasonable progress. It allows the team to study a student's individual growth rate or learning trajectory. With access to instruction that is matched to an EL student's level of English language proficiency in reading, writing, or math, an EL student's growth rate should approximate that of English speaking peers- typically 6 months to 18 months growth for one academic year of instruction (Farnia & Geva, 2011). If instruction and academic content are being provided far above the level of the student's English language proficiency in reading, writing, or math, it is inappropriate to expect the same rate of progress for EL students as for monolingual, native English speakers. In these cases, typically

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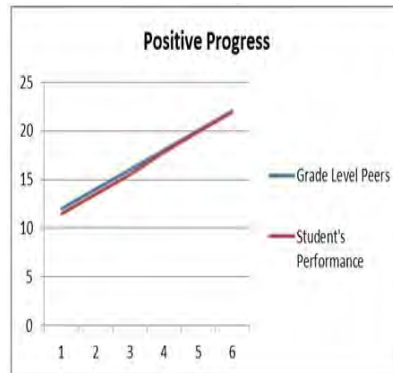
developing EL students may make less than 6 months to 18 months of growth for one academic year of instruction.

The following items from Ferguson, Katakowski, Koceski, and Whitmore (2015) are intended to guide thinking that is necessary when determining adequate progress in academic skill acquisition (not language proficiency). The focus is on the student's learning trajectory (learning rate) and performance gap.

Positive response to instruction & intervention

As a result of instruction and intervention supports, the student has an acceptable level of achievement, evidenced by being at, near or above age or State-approved grade level standards. The student is making one or more years of progress per grade level as the student learns both the English language and academic skills in English. There is little to no gap between monolingual English peers and the student. The student is demonstrating learning at a rate that is equal to or greater than grade level peers. The student is responding positively to the current system of supports through general education

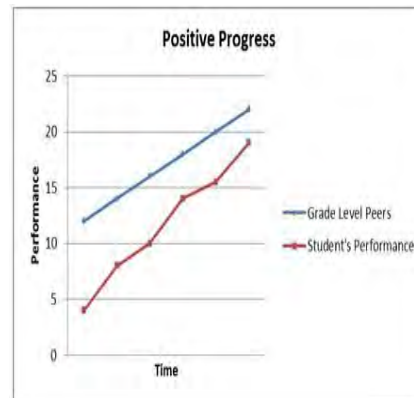
Decision Point: *This evidence does not suggest making a referral for a special education evaluation.*



Positive response to instruction & intervention

A performance gap exist (may not be on grade level), but there is acceleration in slope of learning or progress across grade levels in English reading, writing, or math skills early on, and/ or as the student becomes more proficient in English. The performance gaps shrink slightly across time. The student responds to and benefits from current general education instruction.

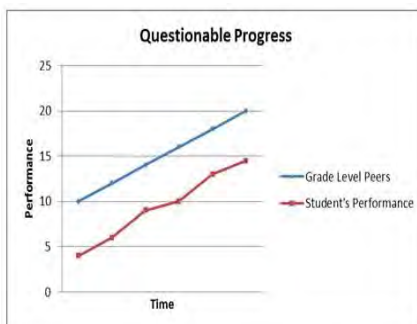
Decision Point: *This evidence does not suggest making a referral for a special education evaluation.*



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Questionable response to instruction & intervention

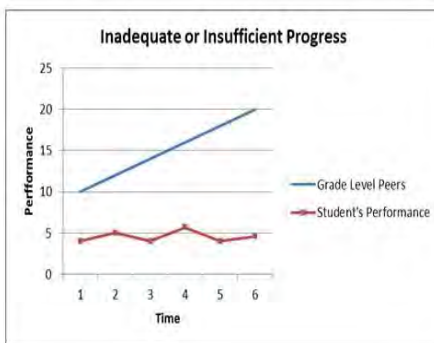
Minimal ($\frac{1}{2}$ or more years) of progress per grade level as a student learns both the English language and academic skills in English. This means that the student's learning slope may be parallel to their peers, but there is a performance gap that is stable or increasing slightly. This student may not be proficient compared to State-approved grade-level standards, but the student's learning rate is about equal to peers. The student is responding positively to the current system of supports through general education



Decision Point: *This evidence does not suggest making a referral for a special education evaluation. It does require further problem-solving to determine if there are strategies to increase the rate of progress to close the achievement gap.*

Insufficient response to instruction & intervention

Less than a $\frac{1}{2}$ year of growth per grade level in English reading, writing or math skills despite instruction matched to the student's level of English proficiency. This student's learning slope is not parallel to peers and the performance gap is getting *significantly* larger each year. It appears that the student benefits little from current general education instruction. The student's lack of progress is seen rare and uncommon compared to the diversity of learners in the classroom.



Decision Point: *This evidence suggests that further consideration is warranted to understand the possible barriers to learning. A referral for a special education evaluation may be warranted.*

In conclusion, one of the challenges teams face prior to determining whether an evaluation of an EL is warranted is to decide whether the student is making reasonable or adequate progress in both learning English and learning core academic content. Evaluating the progress of ELs is accomplished by determining individual progress, not progress against grade-level standards or national norms. Current research illustrates that often times a proficiency gap exists between the performance

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of typically developing (non- disabled) ELs and typically developing monolingual language learners on tasks of comprehension and vocabulary, even though the growth trajectories of these ELs matches those of monolinguals. Therefore, it is essential to establish a baseline of linguistic proficiency (speaking and listening) and academic performance (reading, writing, and math) in both L1 and L2 and track these performances across time. Merely identifying a performance gap between ELs and English-speaking peers does not necessarily indicate a true disability for an EL (Farnia & Geva, 2011). The current research base indicates that while some performance gaps are typical for ELs (especially in the areas of comprehension and vocabulary), the learning trajectories of ELs without disabilities mirrors the trajectories of monolingual English speakers (Farnia & Geva, 2011; Geva, 2014). Identifying a performance gap that increases across time and/or a growth trajectory that is significantly flatter than that of monolingual peers may be evidence of a true disability however. It is important to collect data across time to establish these learning/ growth trajectories.

Progress monitoring, and documentation of performance and comparison data are critical elements of the problem solving process as well as assisting in improving all services for culturally and linguistically diverse learners. It is also a legal requirement under current IDEA that you are able to document the extent to which language acquisition and transition issues are contributing to the EL student's presenting concern.

Referral to Special Education

Berkeley, Bender, Paester, and Sanders (2009) state that in all three-tier models, special education placement is considered a separate process that occurs after instruction and remediation interventions have been exhausted. However, they note inconsistencies regarding when the special education referral process can be initiated.

Although most programs consider special education after students have progressed through Tier 3, some conduct special education referrals after Tier 2 and others allow special education referrals to be made at any point in the instruction and intervention process.

Referral is a crucial element of the assessment process, as misinterpretation of referral data may have considerably adverse effects on students, especially those from different cultural backgrounds (Stefanakis, 1998). A referral indicates the need for more complete and comprehensive assessment, based in part on the fact that insufficient progress has been made as a result of pre-referral interventions. In their study, however, Ysseldyke and Algozzine (1982) found that the decision to place a

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student in special education was primarily based on the teachers' reasons for referral, even when the results of academic and behavioral assessment measures did not support those comments. The element of referral in the problem solving process is thus an extremely important area of concern. A teacher's referral of a student for assistance or formal evaluation indicates the need for more complete and comprehensive problem solving, based in part on the fact that insufficient progress was made as a result of instructional interventions. The initial task of the team who receives the formal referral is to determine whether a comprehensive evaluation is warranted, based on the information gathered during instruction and intervention..

At this point, cultural and linguistic factors should already have been considered and found to not be significant contributing factors to the student's problem(s). To facilitate this decision, a checklist is often helpful.

Example Referral Checklist for CLD Students

- Document that student received sufficient prior instruction.
- Document that acculturation and language issues were addressed during the instruction and intervention process in adequate and sufficient manner.
- Document that acculturation and language issues can be excluded as significant factors in the student's problems.
- Document that instruction and intervention was appropriate and sufficient to determine the student's capacity to achieve when provided with specific interventions.
- Document that instruction and intervention was appropriate and sufficient to resolve the students presenting problems.
- Document that the student's response to instruction, strategies and interventions was inappropriate, inadequate, unresolvable, or otherwise troubling.
- List unanswered questions.

At the time of deciding that something other than learning opportunities, access to prior instruction and intervention, etc. is causing the presenting problem, the team should ensure that all pertinent information gathered during instruction, screening and intervention activities is compiled and available prior to moving to recommend formal evaluation for special services. The team deciding that the student may have a learning problem beyond that common to other ESL students, will facilitate the process by succinctly and objectively outlining in their documentation form the suspected problem and the information obtained during the

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intervention stage. This includes ensuring that sociocultural factors have been considered and, though part of the CLD student's learning and behavior profile, have been found to not be significantly contributing factors to the student's problems. In essence, one purpose of intervention activities is to gather sufficient information to ascertain the role of sociocultural factors in the exhibited learning and behavior problems.

If the referral portion of the assessment process is completed appropriately and a formal referral to staffing is made, the following items will be evident:

1. Sociocultural information that has been compiled suggests whether acculturation, culture, and language factors are primary contributors to the student's learning or behavior problem or that other factors contribute significantly to the suspected learning and behavior problem;
2. Specific attempts to remedy the problems through the use of appropriate instruction and interventions were completed and insufficient progress was made;
3. All information, instruction, interventions, and screening data were monitored regularly and over specific problem solving periods of time.
4. All data compiled from the progress monitoring during problem solving RTI/RTII sessions was documented accurately and organized prior to a full evaluation;
5. Data compiled during problem solving RTI/RTII sessions was used to guide assessment procedures used in the evaluation;
6. The decision is made that the CLD student's learning and behavior problems are more complex than can be assessed through RTI/RTII; and
7. A formal comprehensive evaluation is necessary to determine more complete and appropriate forms of remediation.

Table 10 Special Education Eligibility Considerations for EL Students

Student Characteristics	Special Education Recommendation
• Difficulties only in English (L2) that are typical of students learning English as a second language or expected given the primary language of the student.	Not eligible as a student with a disability

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in both English (L2) and the student’s primary language (L1), with no history of L1 concerns prior to beginning English schooling. • “Language Loss” in the primary language (L1) that results from the process of learning English and a lack of sustained academic literacy support in L1. 	<p>Not eligible as a student with a disability</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties in both English (L2) and the student’s primary language (L1). • Difficulties in the primary language (L1) are explained by a true language disability present from early on and either atypical of students learning English as a second language or atypical of students with the same primary language-learning background as the EL. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Eligible as a student with a Speech and Language Impairment;</p> <p>Possibly eligible as a student with a Specific Learning Disability depending on the impact of the language impairment on reading and writing acquisition</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even with access to English reading, writing and/or math instruction matched to the student’s level of English proficiency, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A pattern of strengths and weaknesses in achievement exists that is significantly discrepant from grade-level standards, follows known patterns of specific learning disabilities, and is atypical of students learning English as a second language. ○ Academic difficulties that are severely discrepant from grade-level standards and learning trajectories, and demonstrate insufficient progress when given high-quality, tightly-aligned instruction. • Academic difficulties cannot be attributed to specific differences associated with a culture or its language. • Academic performance patterns are atypical of students with the same primary language-learning background and schooling exposure as the EL. 	<p>Eligible as a student with a Specific Learning Disability</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented medical condition or developmental delay (i.e., hearing loss, visual impairment, Down’s Syndrome, etc.) that has been present from birth, interferes with access to and/or progress in the general curriculum, and requires specially-designed instruction for the student to access and/or progress in the general curriculum. • Documented generalized cognitive delays across social, academic and adaptive functioning that have been present from birth and are atypical of students learning English as a second language. 	<p>Eligible as a student with a disability</p>

Referral to a Formal Individualized Evaluation

The next stage of the assessment process, evaluation and staffing, begins upon completion of the instructional intervention stage if, at that time, it is decided that formal comprehensive evaluation is warranted. This transition is only possible when a culturally and linguistically diverse student has an unresolved learning or behavior problem that needs more than the instruction and intervention provided within the regular program. A district must address the following elements to conclude that referral is warranted:

1. A specific point in the intervention process has been identified for making a final decision to refer or not refer for an evaluation and staffing.
2. An identified and trained team is responsible for making the decision to refer to evaluation based on documented and monitored interventions of sufficient duration.
3. Documentation is adequate and appropriate to terminate intervention and move to a formal referral.
4. Documentation is used to certify that the learning or behavior problem is not due to the student's cultural or linguistic difference or to his/her level of acculturation.
5. Documentation exists to identify the student's language and acculturation needs in addition to an unresolved learning or behavior problem.
6. There is a process for documenting the results of the intervention period and how these were used to justify the formal referral to evaluation and staffing.

After a formal referral, a comprehensive evaluation is scheduled and relevant specialists are involved in testing and assessing the student. Their task is to reach a data-based decision regarding the best placement for this student and to determine if the student meets the eligibility requirements for special education services. If they determine that the student is eligible, they will recommend a targeted services plan or an individualized educational plan (IEP), including a monitoring plan.

A basic premise of this book is that assessment is the process of gathering meaningful, instructional information about student needs. However, the question of what is "meaningful" creates some controversy during the interpretation of data. Educators want information related to the classroom-learning environment, to students' learning and behavior problems within that environment, and to particular circumstances in which students can perform learning tasks successfully. Knowing when, how, and in what way a student can do something helps in planning for success, effective teaching, and optimal learning. Educators are also concerned with the collection of information related to students' socioeconomic background, home environment, and other out-of-school experiences. Two key elements to consider during staffing for CLD students are (a) the skills of the multidisciplinary team and (b) the appropriateness and the comprehensiveness of the interpretation of evaluation findings.

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Including qualified bilingual culturally and linguistically knowledgeable personnel on the evaluation team is one way to address this. Providing consistent and regular training about the diverse populations in the school enrollment area is another. The team conducting the formal evaluation is constrained by federal regulations that do not apply during the instructional intervention process per se. These include signed approval forms, required presence of parents, and specific timelines for completion of the assessment process. As a result of these concerns, the team usually involves members whose primary function is to determine an appropriate special education placement in the least restrictive environment. Such teams must address the special needs of culturally and linguistically different students who also have disabilities; therefore, they should be composed of educators who can respond to these special needs. The team is only as effective as the skills and competencies of its members, and individuals involved in the assessment of diverse students should possess several competencies to ensure the attainment of the most meaningful and accurate information. Baca and Cervantes (2003) discuss the type of skills needed by team members involved in the assessment of diverse students. In addition to the usual range of abilities in assessment and instruction, one or more members of the team must also possess the following skills:

1. Knowledge of the appropriate use of instruments and procedures to assess language proficiency and first and second language abilities.
2. Knowledge of the principles to select a measure designed for use with students from the target populations, including but not limited to consideration of reliability, validity, norms, and standards for administration, interpretation of outcomes, and sources of cultural bias.
3. Knowledge of limitations of language assessment that result from examiner role, testing situation, content selection, questioning, dialect varieties of the target language, use of interpretation, and social-emotional factors.
4. Ability to apply the information from testing, observations, and parent and teacher interviews to identify (a) baseline levels of skills and comprehension, (b) conditions under which skill acquisition can occur most efficiently, (c) the sequence of instructional activities needed, and (d) a plan for evaluation of both process and performance objectives.
5. Knowledge and application of appropriate collaboration skills related to working with educational staff and parents in planning and implementing individual educational plans (IEPs) for diverse pupils demonstrating exceptionality.
6. Ability to devise or adapt existing instruments for assessing diverse pupils, which may include developing (a) new normative data

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- appropriate to the population and (b) informal instruments appropriate to the population.
7. Knowledge of factors that influence second language acquisition, including use, motivation, attitude, personality, cognition, and the first language.
 8. Knowledge of the cognitive and language development of a normally developing EL student.
 9. Knowledge of cultural factors, including semantic and pragmatic systems, as they relate to sociolinguistic environment (i.e., parent-student, school-student interaction).
 10. Knowledge of the dynamics of the interpretation procedure, including but not limited to the establishment of rapport with participants, kinds of information loss inherent in the interpretation procedure (such as omissions, additions and substitutions), the use of appropriate nonverbal communication, methods, and techniques of interpretation and translation, the importance of obtaining accurate translations, the need to procure translations that do not reflect personal evaluations of the person whose remarks are being interpreted, and efforts to minimize the interpreter's elaborated responses or questions.
 11. Ability to plan and execute pre- and post-assessment conferences including in cross-cultural bilingual settings.

An additional competency related to item 10, above, is the ability of the ET to decide whether the services of an interpreter are necessary. An interpreter can translate the test or other assessment techniques, prepare the student and parents for the assessment process, interpret student responses, and facilitate communication with the parents during the staffing meeting. An interpreter may be necessary when a bilingual professional is not available, when it is inappropriate to have a peer or sibling translate, when the student is not literate in his or her dominant language, or when no tests are available in the student's dominant language. It is important to remember that the ability to speak a language well and the ability to translate are two distinct skills and are not necessarily found in all bilingual persons.

Among the skills needed by professionals who utilize the services of interpreters is the ability to plan and execute pre- and post-diagnostic conferences with the interpreter. In these conferences, the school professional trains and orients the interpreter to the purposes and procedures appropriate to formal testing, interviews, observations, and other assessment activities. Perhaps one of the most important skills the school professional needs is the ability to work with the

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interpreter, which entails ensuring trust between the person conducting the assessment and the interpreter, knowing how to record the behavior of the interpreter in testing situations, and being able to effectively convey information to the interpreter so an accurate translation can be facilitated. Professionals may need preparation to work effectively with interpreters and the training of interpreters themselves is an ongoing process that takes into account the current activities of the school assessment personnel.

The CLD student is assessed, as are all referred students, in all areas related to the suspected disability, including, when appropriate, health, vision, hearing, social and emotional status, general intelligence, academic performance, vocational skills, communicative status, and motor abilities. The ET process for EL students differs in that this assessment must occur in both the first and second language of the student and address his or her acculturation level. Thus, the composition of the ET for particular EL students may vary. All tests are evaluated prior to administration for cultural and linguistic bias. The results of the evaluation are provided to the parents, or persons in parental relationships, in their most proficient language. There are five steps to addressing the focus of concern within the ET process, and the ET will follow these steps to arrive at the decision whether or not to place the CLD student in special education classes. The information gathered and evaluated will provide the basis of the IEP, addressed in Step 6.

When the team documents its decision to refer, the information recorded should remove all doubt that sociocultural or linguistic factors are the primary contributors to the student's learning or behavior difficulties. Federal regulations are very clear that a student should not be found as a student with a disability if the determinant factor is limited English Proficiency (§ 300.306). This means that a team must rule out that the primary cause of the student's inadequate achievement is not a student's limited English proficiency. Furthermore, Federal regulations require that during any assessment of an EL, the evaluation team must consider the child's cultural and language differences. Assessment tools must be non-discriminatory with respect to race and culture (see § 300.304 in sidebar). If the ET is attempting to determine the EL's proficiency in the primary language, assessments must be administered in the EL's primary language, or in a form that best estimates the child's abilities.

The forms and procedures described previously ensure that the team receives all the cross-cultural and linguistic information the team needs to proceed with appropriate formal evaluation. The team reviews the instructional intervention team

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files and the documentation summarized from the instructional intervention process. If there are unresolved culture, language, or acculturation questions, the evaluation team enlists the assistance of the instructional intervention team to obtain further information. After the referral is accepted, the parents' permission to evaluate the student must be obtained in writing. This consent form and other due process forms must be provided in the parents' most proficient language.

Prior to initiating the evaluation, the team must determine in which language(s) the student needs to be assessed, and to what extent assessment procedures will need to be modified to get reliable results. Also, any other remaining questions about the student that are of concern need to be identified. Upon reviewing the instructional intervention team information, the evaluation team will identify specific questions about the CLD student's learning and behavior problems that remain to be addressed, including the following specific concerns of how the assessment process, intervention, and instruction will be affected by (a) the student's native language development, (b) the student's level of second language acquisition in English, and (c) the acculturation profile of the student. To determine when and where to use the EL student's first and second language, the group reviews the student's acculturation and language transition scores. For example, a score of 25 or below on the AQS (Collier 2009) indicates that the student is still experiencing culture shock and that standardized test procedures must be modified. An AQS below 19 indicates that, in addition, testing should occur in the student's native language to the extent possible. The student's academic language in English (recorded on the CLIC (collier 2007) or other language screening instrument) will show the evaluation team whether or not they can acquire meaningful results from standardized tests in English. If the student has both social and academic language in English, then minimal bilingual assistance will be needed. The student's academic language in their native language (recorded on the CLIC or other language screening instrument) will show the evaluation team whether or not they can get meaningful results from standardized tests in the native language. When a bilingual evaluation is conducted, it must be reported and stated both on the IEP and in the individual assessment and eligibility report. A statement should be added to the bottom of the report to indicate that the evaluation was conducted bilingually.

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Testing

To ensure eligibility and access to special programs, when appropriate, it is imperative that students be tested thoroughly. A combination of formal and informal assessment procedures should be used to determine the student's level of functioning and possible disability. Each school district must establish procedures to assure that testing and evaluation materials and procedures utilized for the purposes of evaluation and placement of disabled students are selected and administered so as not to be racially, linguistically, or culturally discriminatory. Such materials or procedures shall be provided and administered in the student's native language or mode of communication, as well as English, unless it is clearly not feasible. No single procedure shall be the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for a student. The assessment of CLD students should take into consideration the following issues:

- Tests and evaluation materials must be provided and administered in the student's native language and in English.
- Tests should be culturally nonbiased.
- Tests and other assessment procedures include those tailored to assess specific areas of education need and not merely those that are designed to provide a general intelligence quotient (IQ).
- A structured observation of the student in his or her primary educational setting and a home language observation should be conducted.
- Student's behavior throughout the testing situation should be recorded and analyzed.
- Persons who possess knowledge and skills related to both cultural and linguistic dimensions of diversity should administer all tests.

One way to adapt tests for culturally and linguistically diverse students is to evaluate the instruments for content and language bias. Bias occurs for many reasons: experiential background, socioeconomic status, family history, cultural and

§ 300.304 *Evaluation procedures*
(c) *Other evaluation procedures.*
Each public agency must ensure that—
(1) Assessments and other evaluation materials used to assess a child under this part—
(i) Are selected and administered so as not to be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis;
(ii) provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication and in the form most likely to yield accurate information on what the child knows and can do academically, developmentally, and functionally, unless it is clearly not feasible to so provide or administer;
(iii) used for the purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;
(iv) Are administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel; and
(v) Are administered in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments.

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sociolinguistic background, gender, and other variables. Most general aptitude and ability tests rely on a student's previous experience and exposure to mainstream cultural concepts, and therefore are of little educational use in assessing students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The tasks included in the most frequently used standardized tests require a relatively high level of academic language in English. Therefore, the EL student might be judged as having an ability deficit while, in reality, test performance merely exhibits differences in experiential backg

round and limited English proficiency.

The first and perhaps simplest step in adaptation is to conduct a visual and structural overview of the illustrations in a test to determine if they are within the student's experiential background. It is also important to identify the standardization data, to determine the representation of the normed population sample. This should be followed by an evaluation of the response modes that the testing instrument requires. If the assessment concern is whether or not the EL student knows the multiplication facts or can recognize colors, the test must actually measure this ability and not the student's English proficiency in this area. The Test Evaluation Checklist (Collier 2004a) and other such tools may be used to address all of these test evaluation concerns.

The two most controversial issues in the assessment of CLD students are standardization and norming. According to Hammill (1987), standardization is applicable to all assessment techniques and knowledge of reliability. Tests that are highly standardized are considered formal assessments, while tests lacking standardization are considered informal assessments. Test validity is important when interpreting data collected from any assessment technique (e.g., analytic teaching, interviews, and observations, testing). Hammill (1987) also notes that, while norms are often associated with standardized devices, their presence is by no means an essential element of standardization; in many cases norms are superfluous. With precise and consistent administrative procedures, testing and other assessment techniques adapted for use with culturally and linguistically diverse students can yield reliable, valid results and can be interpreted consistently without being norm-referenced.

For example, in many test constructions, items become increasingly more difficult and the scoring and interpretation of such tests are a progression of item difficulty that was normed with a population that may not have included students of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Tests that use geometric patterns and no written language illustrate this inappropriateness. The patterns often become

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increasingly more complicated and asymmetrical, and when a student misses several consecutive items the examiner assumes a ceiling level has been reached and testing is discontinued. However, studies show that Crow students do better on the later portions of the test than on the beginning, "easier" portions. Chesarek (1981) suggests that often performance is related to the cultural use of asymmetry, a concept that test designers and administrators need to bear in mind when assessing culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Since it often takes ELL students five or more years to catch up academically in English, standardized achievement tests frequently underestimate an ELL student's academic progress and potential (O'Malley & Valdez-Pierce, 1996). Although aware of the cultural and linguistic bias inherent in tests, most professionals see test scores as true measures of students' achievement and performance and often accept test scores as the sole basis for determining the instructional needs of students.

An additional component to testing CLD students is that the person who administers the test must be "functionally familiar" with the student's communication style and communicative repertoire. Functional familiarity goes beyond sensitivity to the standard literate use of the native language. It requires that the test administrator sense how students can be helped to maximize their communication knowledge as they respond to test questions (Duran, 1994). This does not solely relate to ELL and LEP students, but also to students from minority cultures. Students' reactions and impressions are influenced by their home culture, which could lead students from other geographic locations or non-majority ethnic groups to respond in what could be considered an inappropriate way. The major underlying problem with formal assessment of CLD students for special education purposes is the lack of adequate connection between assessment outcomes and the subsequent instruction that is provided as a result of special education classification (Heller, Holtzman, & Messick, 1982).

EL Methodological Issues with Standardized Tests

Some ET teams are tempted to use standardized, norm-referenced tests when attempting to answer the questions above. Assessment of culturally and linguistic diverse students using standardized tests is fraught with validity and reliability issues for three major reasons: 1) lack of representation in the norm sample, 2) cultural loading in any given test, and 3) linguistic demands required by the test.

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Lack of Representation in the Norm Group during Test Construction. Norming samples used in standardized tests developed in the United States do not typically represent the background, cultural values, language, and experiences of ELs and therefore, are rarely applicable to the majority of culturally and linguistically-diverse students being assessed. If norms from these assessments are used as a comparison for performance, the results are likely invalid and lead to over-identification of culturally and linguistically-diverse students.

As a strategy, examiners are tempted to employ or utilize an interpreter to administer the assessment to overcome issues of bias or linguistic demands of the test. Direct translation of standardized, norm-referenced tests does not circumvent the fundamental norming issues and is psychometrically defenseless. Norm-referenced tests must always be administered in the standardized way when standardized scores are going to be reported and therefore cannot be translated. Informal assessments administered in the EL's primary language should be used to gauge proficiency in the primary language.

Cultural Loading. While tests try to eliminate cultural bias, all tests are influenced by culture. This means that all tests have some degree of cultural bias. For example, basing a test on what a 10 year-old English-speaking student in US schools is expected to have learned (either formally or informally) is only valid when the student has had 10 years of exposure to the US culture. In contrast, an EL student who is the same age and has not had the same cultural experiences cannot be expected to demonstrate the same cultural knowledge. The EL's score will undoubtedly be lower and may lead to erroneous assumptions about what a student does or does not know. Therefore, when a student's background experiences are different than the normative sample on which the test was based, the use of the test is inappropriate.

Linguistic Demands. Nonverbal assessments are often sought as a way to circumvent the linguistic demands of typical standardized tests. Nonverbal assessments tend to tout no cultural or language bias. This is an illusion when evaluating EL students. Nonverbal tests do not eliminate the issue of lack of norm sample representation and cultural bias previous discussed. Most importantly, closer examination of these tests reveals that while the expressive language demands decrease with the use of nonverbal assessments, the receptive language requirements remain the same. Thinking is mediated by language and nonverbal tests that use physical gestures, facial nuances and subtle body movements to convey directions are using forms of communication that still are culturally bound. Examiners need to be aware of the limits of using a nonverbal assessment approach for measuring a student's skills.

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Collecting information about what the student knows and can learn using non-discriminatory assessment practices is the goal. In this light, educators should be comfortable in using assessment tools and techniques that provide information about a student's learning. Traditional norm-referenced assessments standardized on monolingual language learners are static in nature and compare what an EL can currently express in English to what monolingual English peers can express; these norms cannot be applied to ELs. Big Idea #8 addresses more dynamic assessment techniques.

It is important to remember that every test administered in English to a non-native English speaker becomes, in large part, a language test and therefore it may not in fact measure what it is intended to measure. Attention should be given to the assessment of the student's range of communicative competence in English across naturalistic settings, in addition to obtaining information about a student's problem solving competencies in specific skill areas via an array of assessment instruments and devices. The following guidelines should be followed in the collection of the assessment data, as determined by the nature of the referral. All data should look at what ways the student is and is not successful at various tasks.

Observational Data

Observational data are needed in order to provide systematic and objective information regarding the student's behavior in formal and informal contexts by someone other than the referring person. Information should include the following: peer dynamics within the cultural group; amount of group participation when using the native language and when using English; classroom structure and organization; characteristics of the teaching/learning environment; and student-teacher interactions.

Intellectual Assessment Data

Assessment of cognitive functioning should be conducted by a bilingual certified psychologist who is sensitive to the cultural background of the student and aware of indications of culturally appropriate behavior that may be demonstrated throughout the testing situation. Standardized intelligence tests must be valid. This means that if the normative population does not apply to the student, if the test items are culturally or linguistically inappropriate, or if the test must be modified during administration, then it is unethical to use standardized test scores to qualify that student to receive special education services.

Scores obtained from tests translated but not standardized on the student's cultural group or translated by the examiner during the assessment process may not

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be used as representative of the student's present performance. The information collected and reported should be of a descriptive nature. Reports should state the language in which the tests were administered and whether a translator was used during the assessment.

Adaptive Behavior Data

Adaptive behavior should be assessed within the linguistic and cultural framework of the student. When recording adaptive behavior of language minority pupils, one must include their learning styles, approaches to learning, communication strategies, and psychomotor abilities, as well as aspirations. Much of the adaptive behavior information will be obtained from observing the student in different situations and in different settings. It may also be acquired from interviewing parents, siblings, peers, and significant others through a systematic, objective framework.

Social/Emotional Behavior Data

Social/emotional behavior data should be collected through informal and formal means and should be objectively reported in terms of appropriate behavior within the linguistic and cultural framework of the family and community. Consideration should also be given to the student's level of acculturation and use of behavioral roles and rules associated with language and culture.

Sociocultural Information

When collecting data on students from culturally diverse backgrounds, all aspects of the student's environment should be considered. Interviews and informal measures may be used to collect sociocultural information. This information should be documented by the bilingual social worker in relation to home and family responsibilities, cultural practices and behavior patterns, traditional vs. non-traditional values, the role of education, and religious beliefs.

Academic/Educational Test Data

As explained previously, standardized tests are valid only for those populations included in the standardization population of the test. If a test used to assess a CLD student is not valid for the student, informal assessment tools may be the best alternative. When informal assessment techniques are used, clinicians should describe the tasks presented, how they were presented, the student's responses and the basis for the conclusions drawn from the behaviors described. As per the Intellectual Assessment, mentioned previously, scores obtained from tests translated, but not standardized, on the student's cultural group or translated by the

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examiner during the assessment processes may not be used as representative of the student's present performance. The information collected and reported should be of a descriptive nature. Reports should state the language(s) in which the tests were administered and whether a translator was used during the assessment. Again, if the normative population does not apply to the student, if the test items are culturally or linguistically inappropriate, or if the test must be modified during administration, then it is unethical to use standardized test scores to qualify that student to receive special education services.

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About the Author

Dr. Catherine Collier has over 45 years' experience in equity, cross-cultural, bilingual, and special education beginning with Civil Rights voter registration in 1964. She completed her Ph.D. with research into the referral of Latino/Hispanic students to special education programs. For eight years, she was a classroom bilingual/ESL teacher, special education resource room teacher, and diagnostician for the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Arizona and Alaska. She established and directed the Chinle Valley School, *Dine Bitsiis Baa Aha Yaa*, bilingual services for Navajo students with severe and multiple disabilities for the Navajo Nation. She was the director of a teacher-training program, *Ikayurikiit Unatet* for the University of Alaska for seven years, preparing Yup'ik Eskimo paraprofessionals for certification as bilingual preschool, elementary, and special educators. She was an itinerant (diagnostician/special education) for Child Find in remote villages in Alaska. For eight years, Dr. Collier worked with the BUENO Center for Multicultural Education, Research, and Evaluation at the University of Colorado, Boulder, where she created and directed the Bilingual Special Education Curriculum/Training project (BISECT), a nationally recognized effort. She was the Director of Resource and Program Development for the American Indian Science and Engineering Society and is a Sequoyah Fellow.



Dr. Collier is the author of several books and articles on cross-cultural and multilingual special education. She is active in social justice activities for culturally and linguistically diverse learners and families. She started the first bilingual special education programs for the Navajo Nation and the White Mountain Apache. She works extensively with school districts on professional and program development for at-risk diverse learners. Dr. Collier provides technical assistance to university, local, and state departments of education regarding programs serving at-risk cognitively, culturally and linguistically diverse learners. She works with national organizations to provide professional development in the intersection of cross-cultural, multilingual, diversity, special needs issues in education.

She is the director of the national professional development project Curriculum Integration for Responsive, Crosscultural, Language Education (CIRCLE) at Western Washington University. She is the principal developer of the screening and software program "Acculturation Quick Screen" and many instruction, assessment and intervention materials for diverse learners. Her most recent publications are a chapter on acculturation in the [Multicultural Handbook for School Psychologists](#), and two books, [Response to Intervention for Diverse Learners](#) and [Seven Steps for Separating Difference and Disability](#).