Special Education Considerations for English Language Learners with Learning Disabilities

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Spring 2012 Member Meeting
Tampa, FL
What I’ll address...

• Distinguishing between language acquisition and LD
• The Common Core Standards and ELLs
• Collaborative Strategic Reading
• Decision-making by school-level teams
• An ecological framework for special education identification
• Special education for ELLs
• Planning....next steps
Distinguishing between Language Acquisition and Learning Disabilities
Specific Learning Disability 34 CFR 300.8(c)(10)

• A disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, that may manifest itself in the imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or to do mathematical calculations, including conditions such as perceptual disabilities, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia.
  – (ii) Specific learning disability does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor disabilities, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.
• A child has a specific learning disability, as defined in 34 CFR 300.8(c)(10), if:

• **The child does not achieve adequately** for the child’s age or to meet State-approved grade-level standards in one or more of the following areas, **when provided with learning experiences and instruction appropriate for the child’s age or State-approved grade–level standards**:
  – Oral expression.
  – Listening comprehension.
  – Written expression.
  – Basic reading skills.
  – Reading fluency skills.
  – Reading comprehension.
  – Mathematics calculation.
  – Mathematics problem solving.
34 C.F.R. § 300.534  Determination of eligibility.

(b) A child may not be determined to be eligible under this part if—

(1) The determinant factor for that eligibility determination is—

   (i) Lack of instruction in reading or math; or

   (ii) Limited English proficiency
Language Acquisition or Learning Disability?

The single biggest error made in placing ELLs into special education is:

*misinterpreting language acquisition as a learning or language disability*

We must help educators become better at making this distinction.
Language Acquisition or Learning Disability?

To a large extent, determining whether an English language learner has a learning disability is a process of elimination.

- Many factors must be considered and ruled out as possible reasons for a child’s struggles.
- There are multiple possible explanations for every behavior.

There are no tests that can definitely tell us whether the student has LD.
It’s important to...

Understand the second language acquisition process

- Oral language
- Written language
- Literacy (and what can be confusing)

Know possible characteristics associated with LD

Look at the quality of instruction and students’ opportunities to learn
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Misconception</th>
<th>Reality</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Semilingualism is a valid concept and non-non classifications are useful categories.</strong></td>
<td>Semilingualism and non-non categories are the results of tests that do not measure the full range and depth of language proficiencies among emerging bilingual students acquiring two languages.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Native language assessments present a clear picture of linguistic proficiency.</strong></td>
<td>Commonly used native language proficiency assessments provide a limited view of ELLs’ oral language proficiency.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Assessment and instructional frameworks developed for monolingual students are appropriate for ELLs.</strong></td>
<td>Literacy instruction and assessments in a second language differ in key ways from native language instruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. <strong>The majority of ELLs in the U.S. are sequential bilinguals.</strong></td>
<td>The majority of ELLs in the U.S. are simultaneous bilinguals. This is especially true among long-term ELLs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The more time students spend receiving English instruction, the faster they will learn it.</td>
<td>Students who receive some L1 instruction achieve at higher levels in English than students who do not.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. All ELLs learn English in the same way at about the same rate.</td>
<td>The length of time it takes students to acquire English varies a great deal; many different variables affect the language acquisition process.</td>
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<td>7. Errors are problematic and should be avoided.</td>
<td>“Errors” are a positive sign that the student is making progress and are a necessary aspect of second language acquisition.</td>
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<td>8. ELLs are not ready to engage in higher level thinking until they learn basic skills.</td>
<td>ELLs are as intelligent as fully proficient peers and should have frequent opportunities to engage in higher level thinking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Learning/acquiring more than one language at a time is confusing.</td>
<td>Children around the world learn/acquire multiple languages simultaneously.</td>
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Sequential Bilinguals and Simultaneous Bilinguals

ELLs with LD exhibit difficulties in their first language as well as in English.

• When students are sequential bilinguals, it is not hard to determine whether difficulties are evident in both languages.
• When students are simultaneous bilinguals, it is much more challenging to determine if difficulties are the result of language acquisition or LD.
• We need a new way to think about the process of simultaneous language acquisition (Escamilla).
Figure 4. Percent of Adolescent LEP Students by Generation

Note. LEP = limited English proficient
Source: Migration Policy Institute, 2006
### (Some) Similarities b/w LD and Language Acquisition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Behaviors Associated w/ LD</strong></th>
<th><strong>Behaviors when Acquiring an L2</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty following directions</td>
<td>Difficulty following directions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty with phonological awareness</td>
<td>Difficulty distinguishing b/w sounds not in L1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slow to learn sound-symbol correspondence</td>
<td>Confusion w/ sound-symbol correspondence when different than in L1</td>
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<td>Difficulty pronouncing sounds not in L1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty remembering sight words</td>
<td>Difficulty remembering sight words when word meanings not understood</td>
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<tr>
<td>Difficulty retelling a story in sequence</td>
<td>May understand more than can convey in L2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Confused by figurative language</td>
<td>Confused by figurative language</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slow to process challenging language</td>
<td>Slow to process challenging language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May have poor auditory memory</td>
<td>May have poor auditory memory</td>
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<tr>
<td>May have difficulty concentrating</td>
<td>May have difficulty concentrating</td>
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<tr>
<td>May seem easily frustrated</td>
<td>May seem easily frustrated</td>
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</table>
## Academic Literacy Development: Native English-Speaking Struggling Readers and English Language Learners (Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Native English-Speaking Struggling Readers</th>
<th>English Language Learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Position on the Path to English Literacy or Biliteracy | • School history of intermittent failure  
• Unsuccessful in learning to read or in reading to learn  
• Usually labeled as a struggling reader, low achiever, or LD | • Some make steady progress  
• Some look much like native English speaking struggling readers  
• Some have had little or no opportunity for literacy development (i.e., lack of or inconsistent prior schooling)  
• May already be literate in 1<sup>st</sup> language |
<p>| Motivation                       | • Tend to have weak intrinsic motivation                                                                | • May have strong intrinsic and extrinsic motivation                                        |</p>
<table>
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<th>Native English-Speaking Struggling Readers</th>
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| Oral English Proficiency | - Proficient command of English  
- Wide vocabulary range  
- Usually know meaning of words sounded out by decoding  
- More likely to comprehend orally presented lesson previews, vocabulary definitions, task directions, & assignments | - May be at beginning levels of oral English proficiency  
- Decoding a word successfully may not be sufficient to access its meaning  
- Providing an oral preview or directions (only) not enough to help support understanding                                                                                                                                 |
| Background Knowledge (varies depending on time in U.S.) | - Likely to understand many U.S. cultural and historical references  
- Exposed to and may recall material covered in prior lessons  
- May be able to tap into prior knowledge to aid understanding of new text | - Background knowledge may not match topics of study  
- Need skilled teachers to make connections between content and background knowledge, and to build new knowledge |
<table>
<thead>
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<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Native English-Speaking Struggling Readers</th>
<th>English Language Learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary Terms with Multiple Meanings</td>
<td>• More likely to recognize multiple meanings of words</td>
<td>• May know one meaning of a word only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May apply knowledge of cognates to understand words</td>
<td>• May apply knowledge of cognates to understand words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td>• May not have had any specialized courses or teachers trained to support struggling readers</td>
<td>• May have specialized classes with a qualified ESL teacher to help develop English proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May be in lower tracks and remedial classes with rote level drills rather than meaningful, motivating activities</td>
<td>• May have teachers who do not understand linguistic and cultural needs or know how to support literacy development in English as a second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In upper grades, instruction no longer focuses on learning to read</td>
<td>• May be in lower tracks and remedial classes with rote level drills rather than meaningful, motivating activities</td>
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Opportunity to Learn

Opportunity to learn must be established.

Some ELLs are identified as having LD not because they have disabilities, but rather because they have not received an adequate opportunity to learn.

Some ELLs are taught in “disabling contexts,” with too few opportunities to develop their language/literacy skills.
Students are seated in a circle on the alphabet rug. Teacher asks them to stand up, and says, “Let’s do the alphabet rap song.” Teacher begins to rap and makes motions with her hands to symbolize sound-letter correspondence. Sings A-Alley, B-Bubba, C-Catina, D-Deedee... Students are trying to mimic the teacher, however, they are falling behind. [Students are not understanding this--the teacher is going too fast.] Teacher says, “Let’s try it one more time.” More and more students are falling behind to the point where the majority are just looking around and bumping into each other. They look like bumper cars. These students cannot keep up with the song and hand motions. Teacher, “S is for Sammy Snake (making a slithering motion)... V is for Vinny Vampire (motioning with her hands to her mouth that she had vampire fangs)....W is Willie Weasel....” (Orosco, 2007)
What is the significance of this example?

We cannot distinguish between LD and language acquisition without making sure that ELLs are receiving adequate opportunities to learn.

We can not determine whether ELLs have LD without looking into their classrooms and comparing how they are doing with their peers.
Marta was tested, identified as having LD, and placed in my LD class before the beginning of 3rd grade. Her 2nd grade teacher had referred her for a special education evaluation because of a lack of academic progress. Based on the results of their battery of tests, the IEP team considered Marta to be low in both her home language (Spanish) and English. They believed that she had auditory processing deficits and showed a significant discrepancy between IQ and achievement.

Marta had been in a bilingual program and received instruction in Spanish in kindergarten, but then her family had moved to a school without a bilingual program and she had been instructed in English only in 1st and 2nd grades. Marta’s parents described her as intelligent and very helpful at home with her younger siblings. They were concerned that Marta was not doing better in school, and trusted the school’s judgment that Marta needed special education.
When Marta became my student in September, I assessed her in both Spanish and English on a variety of tasks, and made the decision (in collaboration with her family and others) to provide her with Spanish literacy instruction (as well as intensive oral English language development). I used the Language Experience Approach—she dictated stories to me in Spanish that she then learned to read. She “took off,” so to speak, and gained two grade levels in Spanish reading in just a few months. She expressed a strong interest in also reading in English, and so in February I began English literacy instruction. By June she was on grade level in English and above grade level in Spanish. We reassessed her eligibility for special education and found that she was ineligible. She was exited from the program.

- LD or language acquisition?
- What about the role of previous instruction?
- What can be done to keep students like Marta from being misidentified as having LD?
Common Core Standards
English/Language Arts/ Literacy

Implications for ELLs
1. A shift in the balance of fiction and non-fiction texts, with students reading more non-fiction

• For ELLs, this shift to more of a focus on information text is a positive step. More building of background knowledge, connections to prior learning, and sheltering techniques to make sure text is comprehensive needed.
2. Literacy as part of science and social studies/history, with a focus on how to access the content in informational texts in English/language arts

• For ELLs, this means making sure input is comprehensible and explicitly teaching comprehension strategies.
3. Appropriately and increasingly complex texts

• For ELLs, this focus should help promote higher level thinking with grade level material rather than “watering down” the curriculum or relegating ELLs to rote level skill and drill activities.
4. Emphasis on questions that are text dependent and involve higher level thinking

- For ELLs (and all students) this means becoming better at returning to the text to find answers and justify thinking, and better at generating and answering questions involving critical/higher level thinking.
5. Emphasis on writing to inform or argue using evidence

• For ELLs, this should mean additional opportunities to write and a greater focus on the content and meaning of their writing rather than “errors.”
6. Increased focus on academic vocabulary and discussions around text

• For ELLs (and all students) this emphasis brings a heightened focus on academic language and opportunities to use language in text-related discussions. Great for ELLs!
ELLs and Common Core Standards

- Back-mapping related to the standards
- For each standard and for each ELP level
- Define ELL challenges and strengths
- Describe methods and materials that will help ELLs meet the standard
- Develop methods to reliably and validly assess ELLs knowledge and skills (August).
Ensuring that Educational Systems Meet the Needs of ELLs

• Instruction that develops foundational skills in English that enable ELLs to participate fully in grade-level coursework (back-mapping)
• Well-designed opportunities for classroom discourse and interaction to enable ELLs to develop communicative strengths in language arts
• Speakers of English who know the language well enough to provide the ELLs with models and support
• Ongoing assessment and feedback to guide learning (August).
COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIC READING

Before Reading

PREVIEW
1. Read
   Read the title, subtitles, headings and keywords to learn about the passage.

2. Brainstorm
   Think about what you already know about the topic.

3. Predict
   Predict what you will learn.

During Reading

CLICK & CLUNK
1. Look for clunks
   Find words or ideas you don’t understand.

2. Use Fix-up strategies
   - Re-read the sentence with the clunk.
   - Re-read sentence before and after clunk.
   - Look for prefixes, suffixes and root words.
   - Look for cognates.

GET THE GIST
1. Figure out the main idea
   - Determine the most important who or what.
   - Find the most important information about the who or what.
   - Write a brief gist statement.

After Reading

WRAP UP
1. Question
   Write three types of questions that can be answered by reading the passage and thinking about what you already know.
   - Right There
   - Think and Search
   - Author and You

2. Review
   Identify the most important information.

CSR Colorado
Read. Lead. Succeed.
Results: GMRT by Pretest Reading Scores

- On average, all students made more than one typical year of growth across the first year of the study (except Typical students at the 75th percentile) on the GMRT pretest.
- Students who received CSR in social studies and science classrooms approximately 1X/week made greater gains than students who did not receive CSR, regardless of reading ability at pretest.

Figure 1. Gains from pre to post based on a standardized score (mean=100, SD=15) on the GMRT. A growth score of 0 indicates that a student received the same standardized score at the beginning and end of the school-year and therefore represents average (or one school-year’s) growth.
## 2011 CSAP means controlling for FRL, SpEd, ELL and GMRT pretest score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Typical</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>CSR</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>Δ χ² /Δ df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CSAP reading</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grade 6</td>
<td>606.78</td>
<td>8.80</td>
<td>613.92</td>
<td>15.87</td>
<td>2761.47/10</td>
<td>0.588</td>
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<tr>
<td>grade 7</td>
<td>618.25</td>
<td></td>
<td>623.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>grade 8</td>
<td>629.72</td>
<td></td>
<td>633.76</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CSAP writing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>grade 6</td>
<td>506.47</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>528.15</td>
<td>16.48</td>
<td>2502.73/10</td>
<td>0.988</td>
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<td>grade 7</td>
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<td>538.99</td>
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<tr>
<td>grade 8</td>
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<td>549.82</td>
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<td><strong>CSAP math</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>grade 6</td>
<td>532.82</td>
<td>10.50</td>
<td>531.96</td>
<td>18.35</td>
<td>2423.72/10</td>
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<td>grade 7</td>
<td>555.44</td>
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<td>554.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>grade 8</td>
<td>578.05</td>
<td></td>
<td>576.25</td>
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</table>
Students who received CSR approximately once a week in social studies and science classrooms made greater gains on the GMRT, a standardized assessment of reading comprehension, than students who received typical instruction (at a statistically significant level).

On average, results on the reading and writing high stakes assessment (CSAP) were greater for students in the CSR condition, although the results were not significant.

Implementation frequency varied greatly across teachers; on average, it was lower than expected.

Instructional fidelity to the CSR model was slightly lower than expected.
Coming up...

• A National Consortium Meeting to discuss:
  – How best to meet the needs of ELLs in large urban districts
  – How CSR can help
Decision-making by a School-level Team
Decision-making Team

- The make-up of the team should be diverse and include members with expertise in culturally responsive instruction, and, if appropriate, English language acquisition and bilingual education.
Decision Points when ELLs Struggle with Reading

How can we tell which ELLs should receive Tier 2 interventions or who to refer for a special education evaluation?

- Look at how many ELLs are struggling.
- If the majority of ELLs are making little progress, the teacher should focus on improving instruction.
- If most ELLs are doing well and only a few are struggling, the teacher should look more closely at what is going on with those individual students and consider that they may need additional support.
Letter Naming Fluency Risk Level Overview

George Batsche & David Tilly
Guiding Questions

• When a child shows signs of struggling, the first step should be to observe in her classroom.
  – Is instruction targeted to and appropriate for the student’s level of English proficiency and learning needs?
  – Is the teacher implementing appropriate research-based practices with fidelity?
    • If the teacher is modifying practices, for what reasons?
  – Does the classroom environment seem conducive to learning?
  – Are the student’s true peers succeeding?
• If most English language learners in the class are thriving, the next step should be to collect student data:

  – Has consideration been given to the child’s **cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and experiential** background?
  
  – Have authentic assessments been used in addition to progress monitoring?
  
  – What tasks **can** the student perform and in what contexts?
  
  – Does the student differ from true peers in rate and level of learning?
  
  – Have the child’s parents been asked for their input?
## Tier 1 Self-Reflection Questions

1. Am I sufficiently prepared to teach ELLs?
2. Am I knowledgeable about the second language acquisition process and how to differentiate learning disabilities and language acquisition?
3. Am I providing all of my students with research-based reading instruction that has been found to be effective with similar students, in similar contexts?
4. Do I provide a positive, supportive learning environment?
5. Do I consider students’ first and second languages and cultures in assessment and instructional planning and decision making?
6. Does my instruction take into account students’ cultural, linguistic, socioeconomic, and experiential backgrounds, including English and first language proficiency levels?
7. Do I conduct universal screening and ongoing progress monitoring as well as informal assessments to inform instruction?

ETC.
Tier 2 Questions

1. Do Tier 2 providers have sufficient expertise in teaching ELLs?
2. Does our system for progress monitoring include multiple kinds of measures—both quantitative and qualitative—that assess what students can do as well as their learning needs?
3. Are experts on students’ linguistic and cultural backgrounds involved in interpreting assessment data and planning instruction?
4. Is a plan in place for using assessment data to group and regroup students (in small same-ability groups and one-to-one tutoring), to plan targeted instruction, and to make adaptations?
5. Are criteria for entry into and exit from Tier 2 implemented and reassessed as needed, with the help of experts who are knowledgeable about the cultural and linguistic backgrounds and needs of the students involved?
6. Are interventions research-based, and have they been validated with similar students in similar contexts?

ETC.

Progress Monitoring for ELLs

- **Multiple** assessment methods are needed to provide a comprehensive view of learning.
- No single best test or assessment strategy.
- Different assessments tap into different skills and knowledge.
- Assessment strategies should reflect the multi-dimensional nature of language and literacy.
- The purpose of progress monitoring is to ensure that instruction is adjusted to meet the needs of individual students and classrooms of learners—use it to find what works!
A Common Scenario: Early Literacy Measures

Lesaux

**Letter Names & Letter Sounds**

**Phonological Awareness**

**Word Reading**

**Accuracy**

**Efficiency**

**• Oral Language**

**Vocabulary**

**Word Learning Strategies**

**Knowledge of word function or type**

**Metalinguistic Skills**

**• Text Characteristics**

**Organizational structure**

**Sentence structure**

**• Background Knowledge**

**• Interest**

**• Motivation**

**• Understanding of Purpose**
The Gap between Reading Words & Comprehending Text (Lesaux)
An Ecological Framework for Special Education Identification
Identifying Students with LD

• When students have participated in interventions and still do not seem to be progressing, the problem-solving team may conclude that a comprehensive evaluation is needed.

• This comprehensive evaluation should be based on an ecological framework.
• The team’s evaluation report should contain the following information for all criteria components:
  – a summary of the data used to determine that the student has a disability, e.g., “test scores, work products, self-reports, teacher comments, previous testing, observational data, ecological assessments; and other developmental data. In addition, the summary should describe any modifications made during the administration of standardized procedures including the use of interpreters (34 C.F.R. § 300.532(c)(2)); and
  – an indication of which data sources had the greatest relative importance for the eligibility decision.
Use a “hypothesis-driven” process

• Begin the referral and evaluation process by exploring the hypothesis that the causes of the individual’s learning difficulties are due to external factors.

• Conduct the assessment with the notion that there is nothing wrong with the individual and that systemic, ecological, or environmental factors are the primary reason for the observed learning problems.

• Maintain this hypothesis until data suggest otherwise and when all plausible external factors are ruled out (Watkins, 2003, Minnesota Department of Education).
Required Observation

- The group described in 34 CFR 300.306(a)(1), in determining whether a child has a specific learning disability, must:
  - Use information from an observation in routine classroom instruction and monitoring of the child’s performance that was done before the child was referred for an evaluation; or
  - Have at least one member of the group described in 34 CFR 300.306(a)(1) conduct an observation of the child’s academic performance in the regular classroom after the child has been referred for an evaluation and parental consent, consistent with 34 CFR 300.300(a), is obtained.
• English language acquisition (ELA) specialists assess ELLs:
  – language proficiency
  – academic skills in L1
• Special education teachers, psychologists, and/or speech language therapists conduct additional formal and informal assessments.
• Team members observe the child in different contexts to better understand the instructional environment and under what conditions the student seems to thrive or struggle and to make sure the child has received an adequate opportunity to learn.
• The focus should be to develop a profile that includes information about the student’s strengths as well as areas of need.
• The team develops an intervention plan and sets learning, and, if appropriate, behavioral goals.
• If the team determines that the student has a disability, then they develop an individualized educational plan.
James was at ESOL Level 1.

Teacher: “My real concern is that when I give a direction (in English) he gives me a blank look, like he doesn’t understand. He’s lost.” She also noted that he had difficulty paying attention.

Assistant principal: “A lot of children in ESOL have these difficulties.”

Teacher: “But I think it’s more than that. It’s more a matter of higher level thinking.”

This was accepted by the team and they proceeded to refer the student for an evaluation. They did not discuss his native language skills, and whether he exhibited these same problems in Haitian Creole.
Teacher: “The last sense is the sense of touch. That means you feel. Feel the floor with your elbows. Can you feel it?” [OC: The students don’t understand what to do. There are no visual cues.] Teacher (yelling), “Some of you are being extremely rude.” Then she asks more calmly, “So did you feel the floor with your elbows, but do you normally feel with your elbow?” A few students respond, “No.” Teacher yells again, “You just finished telling me you were listening, Ezekiel. Were you lying to me? I’m only going to call on the people who are listening.”...Teacher: “If I wanted to eat cake, what sense would I use?”...“My point is that you use your sense of taste to decide if you like it.” Teacher (yelling): “Pay attention to me, not his shoes! His shoes aren’t going to give you a grade. I will.” “If one more person touches shoes, I’m going to throw it in the garbage. It’s important to make sure your shoes are tied, but not while I’m teaching.”
Family Involvement

• Parents should be notified early when a child seems to be struggling and asked for input as valued partners.

• Schools should describe the referral process (RTI?), provide parents with written intervention plans that they clearly explain, obtain parents’ consent, and provide parents with regular updates about their child’s progress.

• As with previous versions of IDEA, families must be involved when a school is considering whether to conduct a comprehension evaluation of a child to determine whether he may have a disability.

• Just as before, families can request a formal evaluation for a disability at any time.
Special Education for ELLs with LD
Special Education for ELLs with LD

• Interventions at this level are:
  – tailored to the individual needs of the student
  – even more intensive
  – of longer duration

• Students with disabilities must also be instructed in the least restrictive environment and provided with access to the general education curriculum:
  – accommodations
  – adaptations
  – modifications

• ELLs also continue to need support with English language development.
Essential Components of Special Education for ELLs with LD

- Culturally and linguistically responsive teachers
- Culturally and linguistically responsive and relevant instruction
- A supportive learning environment
- Research-based interventions (found to be effective with ELLs) that match the language of instruction in the general education classroom
- Sheltered English and other support so that ELLs with LD can access and be successful with the general education curriculum.
- English language development
Interventions for ELLs

- Vaughn, Linan-Thompson and colleagues provided intensive, small group interventions in either Spanish or English to first-grade ELLs considered to be at risk for reading difficulties. The language of instruction of the supplemental interventions matched the language of classroom reading instruction. The intervention programs were specifically designed for ELL students who struggled with reading (Vaughn, Cirino et al., 2006; Vaughn, Mathes, Linan-Thompson, & Francis, 2005; Vaughn, Mathes et al., 2006).

Lessons included best practices in ESL instruction:
- Explicit instruction in oral language and listening comprehension
- Explicit instruction in reading comprehension strategies
- A read aloud routine with explicit vocabulary instruction and scaffolded story retelling
- Word study and phonics strategies
- Word reading and reading connected texts
- Repeated reading for speed, accuracy, fluency, and prosody
Sheltered English

• Teach English *through* the content areas.
• Students learn grade appropriate, cognitively demanding core content.
• Sheltered English is characterized by an abundance of supplementary materials, clear and meaningful lessons, and concrete examples.
• Various instructional practices are used to help make content comprehensible for English language learners (ELLs).

• Special education teachers unfamiliar with sheltering can partner with ESOL teachers and/or TESOL endorsed content teachers.
(Sample) Accommodations for ELLs
(Echevarría & Vogt)

Assignments
- Provide extra time to complete tasks
- Clarify complex directions, providing picture support, if needed
- Provide visual supports
- Tape-record reading assignment for homework or review
- Divide assignments into shorter segments
- Reduce complexity of homework assignments
- Provide structured outline in L1 when needed
- Give frequent shorter quizzes; avoid long tests
- Allow use of L1 for expressing knowledge

Lesson Presentation
- Display and orally review content and language objectives
- Pair students to check work (with L peer if needed)
- Write key points and directions on board in clear, neat writing
- Provide peer tutoring (with L1 peer for clarification)
- Use wide variety of visuals and supplemental materials
- Provide peer note-taker (L1, if needed)
- Make sure directions are understood (model and check frequently for understanding)
- Break longer presentations into shorter segments

Klingner (2012)
Culturally and Linguistically Responsive?

**Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Teachers**
- Build strong relationships with students and their families
- Hold high expectations
- Connect learning with students’ experiences and interests, making learning relevant to their lives
- Value and build on different “ways of knowing”

**Cultural Responsive Instruction**
- Emphasizes cultural relevance and builds on students’ prior knowledge, interests, motivation, and home language;
- Is multifaceted, with frequent opportunities to practice reading with a variety of rich materials in meaningful contexts;
- Children’s literature provides “windows and mirrors”
- Includes explicit instruction

**Linguistically Responsive Instruction**
- Appropriate for students’ language proficiency levels
- Includes language objectives and language supports
- Develops linguistic competence through functional, purposeful classroom dialogue and frequent opportunities to learn and use academic language
Planning...
Next Steps
What can we do NOW in our districts?

• Develop a shared vision for assessing and instructing ELLs with LD in your district.
  – What do we want to accomplish?
  – What are our goals?
  – How will we know when we have met our goals?

• What resources are already in place that can help us?
  – Personnel?
  – Financial?
  – Resources?
  – Structures?

• What are we already doing we can build on?
What is our plan?

• What are we going to change? Add? Not do?
• What do we prioritize?
• Who is responsible for what?
• What additional professional development do we need? Resources?
• What are our challenges? How can we address our challenges?
In conclusion...

- Appropriate support for ELLS requires a comprehensive, systemic approach that includes:
  - strong leadership,
  - a well-established infrastructure,
  - coordinating curriculum and assessment considerations,
  - addressing teachers’ and others’ professional development needs re: ELLs,
  - attending to school climate issues,
  - collaboration among special educators, general educators, and families,
  - and enhancing leaders’ capacities to orchestrate and respond to multiple (often contradictory) reforms (Adelman & Taylor; Burdette, 2007).
Questions?
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