English Language Learners with Disabilities (ELLWD)

ALS Directors

March, 2011
Definitions

• **LEP**..Limited English Proficiency..A student who has limited skills in speaking, reading, and/or writing English, as measured by the State mandated LEP assessment.

• **L1**..first language/L**2**..second language

• **ELSN** (English Learners with special needs)

• **SLA** (Second language acquisition)
True Peers

- Similar language proficiencies (L1 & L2)
- Culture experience & background
- Experiential background
- Educational background
- Local norms rather than national norms
Students with interrupted formal schooling

• Subgroup/marginalized that others
• Require more time than their educational EL counterparts
• More negative perspective of SIFE
• Pg 27-28 of State Rules

• A student must not be determined to be a student with a disability if the determinate factor for that determination is…(3) Limited English proficiency….
• If a student has LEP issue, it is considered a "rule out" or exclusionary factors
• The issues with ELL students who might be suspected of having a learning disability in their “home” language is a combined responsibility of general and special education. The first responsibility lies with general education, special education can provide instruction consultation/support to general educators.
Issues surrounding Identification

- Educators ability to identify whether an ELL’s academic difficulties stem from learning a second language or from a disability or a combination of the two… is limited.
- Guidelines from state to state and district to district are varied
- Over-representation and under-representation
• Teachers often lack the training to distinguish between a language/cultural acquisition process and a learning/emotional disability
• Standardized assessments cannot pinpoint if a child is an EL and has special needs
• Standardized assessments are not broad enough to include multiple contexts and multiple situations

• The cultural and linguistic voices of parents, families and children do not always play a role in the assessment process
• ELLs under-represented in special education in K-1\textsuperscript{st}
• BY 3\textsuperscript{rd} grade it appears ELLs are over-represented (USDOE Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, 1998-99)
• ELLs with genuine special education needs appear to be identified for services later than their native English speaking peers (McCardie, et.al 2005)
Considerations when providing instruction/interventions and assessing
• Academic vs conversational language
• Culture
• Environment
• Economic
• “double the work”
• Family literacy level
• Attendance
• More visual/realla especially math
• Native language to support content instruction
• 3-way (written, spoken and visual)
• Emphasis on key vocabulary and concepts
• Chunking
• Culturally responsive literature, non-fiction and fiction
• Remember ELL students need to be prepared for the complex academic material and text and the world after graduation.

• Focusing or only requiring conversation proficiencies or skills does a disservice to our ELL population with or without disabilities.
• Acquiring a second language does not necessarily cause or exacerbate a language disorder, but it may complicate the process for identifying a student for language or special education services
• Not well developed research in the area of interventions for struggling ELLs

• Given research at this time, the findings support the assumption that what works in instructing struggling native speakers to read also works for ELLs.

• *What Works Clearing House*
• Repeated oral readings
• Using audiotapes
• Teach vocabulary before starting lessons
• Culturally appropriate stories
  – Virginia Hamilton
  – Langston Hughes
  – John Steptoe
  – Tomie dePaola

• Create opportunities to paraphrase a story/text in diverse students own words
• Even with language interventions EL’s English development will not resemble that of the fluent English speaker.
Parent Involvement

- Significant role in ELs academic achievement
- Case history
- Classes for ELs after school
Where might EL’s get “stuck”?

- As they move towards paragraph-level language discourse
  
  EL’s depend on small group formats to practice speaking in paragraphs
  
  Extend vocabulary instruction
• Culturally/linguistically diverse students benefit from systematic instruction in skills to observe, think about, manipulate and experience sounds in spoken language

• Playing versions of familiar songs substituting culturally associated animals i.e kangaroo, puma, platypus
Peer Tutoring

• peer-assisted learning strategies (PALS)
  – Vocabulary gains
  – Increases in post-reading tests
  – Social/academic gains for student tutors/tutee (Villareal, March, 2011)
Components of a successful tutoring program

• Planning
• Tutor training
• Analyzing curriculum
• Pairing student dyads effectively (culturally sensitive)
Identification and Assessment

• When EIs fall behind, educators must be able to distinguish between LD and SLA and issues related to poor or limited education opportunities.
  – Students with interrupted formal schooling
• Traditional assessment and norm-based evaluations practices are inappropriate.
• Instead look at preventive and diagnostic interventions through a school based multidisciplinary team
• Team Members?
  – Teachers
  – Family members
  – Expert in bilingual development

• Also continuously assess the quality of EL learning opportunities, support systems and disciplinary practices.
• Don’t forget that a “comprehensive evaluation” to determine if a student is a student with a disability IS REQUIRED.
Data

- **Multiple sources of information**
  - Language proficiency tests
  - Performance on diagnostic measures of language processing and reading skills
  - Performance on non-language based assessments (math)
  - Academic achievement measures
  - Parent reports of language & literacy abilities and practices
Data (cont.)

- Teacher ratings
- May do better with sight words vs nonsense word decoding
- Observation, classroom/academic
Assessment

Recommendations

• Complete a comprehensive assessment to examine skills in both languages (L1 & L2)

• Consider sociolinguistic variables (e.g. age, differentiated instruction, opportunities for intervention) by examining the interaction among them and the bilingual child’s language skills; and

• Consider providing intervention(s) in both languages in order to support the child’s development of the two languages simultaneously.
• Language/academic demands in the primary grades differ significantly from those in the secondary school.

• Providing classroom test instructions in the native language may enable some students to maximize their opportunity to demonstrate their skill/knowledge base. Do not translate norm-referenced tests into English.
• Tests that are translated should not be scored
• Scores from a standardized test that is given in a non-standardized manner should not be reported
• BUT IF YOU decide to use a standardized assessment for a starting point, be very cautious on reporting/using the information. Special education assessment must be done in students’ primary language.
• A test-reteach-test may be the best approach to rule out lack of exposure with certain skills
Assessments

- Bilingual Verbal Abilities Test (BVAT)
- Early Screening Inventory-Revised (ESI-R)
  - Development focus
  - Less culturally biased
• Bilingual Early Language Assessment (BELA)
  – www.cpsd.us/BELA
• Minneapolis Preschool Screening Instrument-R
  – www.health.state.mn.us
  – Spanish, Somali, Hmong
• Ages and Stages Parent Questionnaire
  – www.agesandstages.com
• Child Development Inventory (CDI)
• Batelle Developmental Inventory-2
• Learning Accomplishment Profile-Diagnostic (LAP-D)
• Expressive One Word Vocabulary Test
• Curriculum-Based-Measures of Reading (CBM-R) in English are as valid for Spanish speaking ELs as for English only students.

• CBM-R are sensitive to the reading progress of bilingual students.
Estimator Website in Spanish

• CELF
• PLS
• Test of Auditory Processing
• WISC-IV
• Current best practices recommends a case study approach, not the use of a severe discrepancy.
  
  • BUT

• if the team decides a cognitive is needed…non-verbal is the best practice

• C-Toni or UNIT

• Achievement assessments/examiners manual
• www.rti4success.org
• National Center on Response to Intervention
• Teaching Tolerance
• Classroom Instruction That Works with English Language Learners (Hill & Flynn, ASCD)

• How to Teach Students Who Don’t Look Like You. (Davis, Corwin Press)

• Assessing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students; a practical guide (Rhodes, Ochoa, & Ortiz, Guilford)
Flow Chart for ELL

Tier 1
General education classroom
Universal screening (L1 & L2)
Culturally and linguistically appropriate instruction, curriculum and assessment
ELL student’s progress compared to “true peers”
- Review of student’s ecology (i.e. educational history, language proficiency in L1 & L2, family education and literacy, acculturation level, SES, etc)
  - Interventions are developmentally, culturally, linguistically and experientially appropriate for targeted students and may be the classroom curriculum but a “double dose” or extension of classroom curriculum.
  - Interventions provided by classroom teacher, instructional assistant or other specialist within the general education classroom in a small group.
Tier 2

- Small group instruction
- Interventions are linguistically, culturally and experientially appropriate
- Interventions address specific problem areas and progress closely monitored
Tier 3

• Small group of 1:3 in alternative setting
• Curriculum and instruction addresses the specific deficits
  • Standardized assessments may be appropriate or considered
• Parents due process rights must be adhered to IF a comprehensive evaluation is warranted.
“…more attention be paid to what happens before children are referred to special education …… Because to resolve the problem through alternative assessments and other interventions after referral were ineffective”. (National Research Center, 2002)
by Janet Gibbs
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