



UW AUTISM CENTER  
CENTER ON HUMAN DEVELOPMENT & DISABILITY  
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

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## UW Autism Symposium August 14, 2019

Supporting Linguistically Diverse Children with ASD  
in the School Setting  
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## Workshop Objectives

- Define culturally and linguistically diverse and common language acquisition terms
- Identify common myths of linguistically diverse populations
- Describe a variety of classroom and treatment strategies to support linguistically diverse children with ASD



## WHAT DOES CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE MEAN?



## Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

- Race/Ethnic Backgrounds → main focus of today
- Religions
- Socioeconomic status
- Urban vs Rural
- Natural Individual and Family Differences
- LGBT community
- Internationally Adopted Children
- Dialects: African American Vernacular English (AVE)/African American English (AAE), Creole Dialects in Louisiana
- Dialects of different languages
- There are variety types of English spoken in other countries: Australia, UK, Canada, etc.



- Commonly Heard Names
  - English Language Learners (ELL)
  - Limited English proficient (LEP) students
  - Dual language learners (DLL)
  - Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD)



Let's look at the statistics.

## WHAT LANGUAGES HAVE YOU COME ACROSS IN SEATTLE?

## LANGUAGE ACQUISITION TERMS

- Language 1 (L1) – the primary language often the home language
- Language 2 (L2) – later learned language, often in English in these contexts, sometimes referred as the less dominant language

## Terminology

- Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) – context dependent, everyday language (think conversational), typically 2 years under ideal conditions to be proficient
- CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) – context reduced language of academics, typically requiring 5-7 years under ideal conditions to develop
- The proficiency of each language may differ as the student grows older

- Simultaneous
  - Learning 2+ language at the same time
  - Often seen in families speaking more than one language
- Sequential
  - Learning language one after the other
  - Often seen in those who immigrated later in life
- Dominant
  - One language (often home language) is more proficient in one language compared to another
- Balanced
  - Equal proficiency in both their first language and other known languages

- Inference/Transfer – when an error is made in L2 due to the direct influence of L1 structure (e.g. adjective use in Spanish vs English)
- Language Loss/Attrition or Subtractive Bilingualism – losing skills and fluency in their primary language if it is not maintained/reinforced
- Interlanguage – period in L2 development when the learner starts to use language productively until the student attains competence that is similar to that of native language



- Fossilization – when specific L2 “errors” remain firmly entrenched despite proficiency in the second language
- Dialect – rule-governed, systematic variation of a language
- Accent – the way people sound or pronunciation
- Code Switching – alternation between 2 languages with a single constituent, sentence, or discourse



## Silent Period

- Silent Period – may occur during the initial phrase of second language acquisition while an individual focuses on listening and comprehension of the new language.
- Often a 3-6 month period or more



## CAN CHILDREN WITH AUTISM LEARN ANOTHER LANGUAGE?



## Myths Solved

- Compared to monolingual children with ASD:
  - bilingual children with ASD did not experience additional delays
  - No differences in cognitive functioning, language skills, or symptoms of ASD
  - children with ASD did not have significant differences in understanding/speaking between two languages
- Language development is likely to happen at a comparable pace to monolingual children with ASD



## Benefits

- Compared to sequential learners, simultaneous learners tend to score higher on social interaction measures
- Valicenti-McDermott (2013) found:
  - better perspective taking,
  - greater use of gestures to signify wants and needs
  - Better pretend play skills
  - More cooing and vocalizing in toddlers
- Switching tasks may be easier, possibly due to code-switching
- Caretakers interacting in their native language are more likely to be responsive, use various communication functions, convey emotions, and expand on topics of interest; which may lead to better language modeling from the caretaker to the child
- May improve understanding of one's culture, improved self-esteem, a greater sense of community, and possibly more complex thinking skills



## DIFFERENCE OR DISORDER?





## Difference versus Disorder

- Careful consideration and evaluations are needed
- True communication disorders will be evident in **ALL** languages used by an individual
- Take in consideration language dominance may fluctuate across the lifespan based on use and input and language
- Consider BICS vs CALP



## STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT CLD STUDENTS



## Professional Training

- Work with translators to provide parent or caregiver trainings
- Convey acceptance and appreciation of multiple languages
- Drawing on bilingual paraprofessionals, aides, or community volunteers to deliver first-language services (Kohnert, Yim, Nett, Kan, & Duran, 2005)
- Team Teaching
- Refer to bilingual service providers
- Family Centered Approach



- Problems that may occur when translating may include (Goldstein, 2000)
  - language items often do not have a one-to-one translation;
  - languages vary in their order of acquisition or vocabulary, morphology, and syntactic structures;
  - Not all structures that are assessed on English tests exist in other languages;
  - standardized assessments that are not normed on bilingual populations are to only be used as informal probes with no accompanying scores.



## Communication Strategies

- Processing Time, Pausing Frequently
- Rate of Speech and Enunciation
- Use the students' name to direct and maintain attention
- Multimodal Instructional Approach
- Check for frequent comprehension
- Review previously learned material daily
- Focus on communication of meaning rather than correction of grammatical errors



## Language Strategies

- Provide clear, slower, repetitive, simplified input, along with more advanced forms
- Allow use of home language as a bridge to English (e.g. reciting a narrative in the primary language before English)
- Allow code-switching in student contributions to encourage spontaneous language
- Script Based Approach





### Recasting

- A technique to correct a learners' errors so that it is not obstructive to the communication

### Focused Stimulation

- Emphasizing often repeated grammatical errors
- Emphasizing Key Words



## Extension vs Expansion

### Extension

- Modeling the language using adult grammar and **ADD** new information

### Expansion

- Modeling the language using adult grammar but **DO NOT ADD** new information



## One-Up Rule

Child's language level	Model
Vocalizing, Preverbal	Pointing, Triadic gaze, Hand-for-help Sound effects, single words: "Pop, pop, pop!" "Big" "Help"
0-1 Words (e.g. "bu" for bubbles)	Single words: "Bubbles!" "Pop" "More"
1-2 words	Word combinations: "Blow bubbles!" "Pop Bubbles" "Big bubbles"
Word Combinations	Short Phrases: "Pop big bubble" "Blow bubbles up" "I blow bubbles"
Short Phrases	Descriptive sentences: "Blow lots of bubbles!" "I want more big bubbles" "Where's the blue bubbles?"



## Literacy and Reading

- Be aware narrative productions are different
- Graphic Organizers and Word Maps
- Phonological skills may be different, including letter-sound awareness
- Allow them to write in the primary language first, then have them translate
- Highlight key words
- Predictable and Active Books
- Culturally Relevant Books



## Social Skills Strategies

- Consider the family's cultural customs and social needs
- Peer- or sibling-Mediated
- Be aware Idioms or Figurative Language
- Encourage code switching
- Role Play
- Social Communication and Non-verbal Cues may be different in different cultures
- Theory of Mind



## Video Modeling

- Video Modeling—Based on Bandura's social learning theory
- Children learning skills and behaviors through observation, in this case videos
- Audio Recording may be similar
- (Ozerk and Ozerk, 2017)
- Found positive results using video modeling to teach a bilingual, 11 year old social skills through video modeling
- Transference of the targeted skills through the second language at school to the first language





## Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and Visuals

- Provide AAC and Visuals feedback in both languages whenever possible
- Culturally Appropriate Icons and Vocabulary
- Use Language Strategies with Modeling on their Device (Aided Language Stimulation)
- Families have different views of AAC/Visuals
- Parent Training



## Classroom Considerations

- Establish a daily routine
- Set up “partners” in order to team a student who is an ELL with another student
- Consider background of students in lesson planning
- Allow small group activities to allow ‘practice’
- Consistent format for worksheets
- Present information in short, sequential steps



## RESOURCES



## Questions??

Thank you for attending!

### Contact Information

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