

Phonological Assessments and Treatments When Working with People who are Linguistically Minoritized

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Understanding the Intersections Between Language and Race

Key Definitions

Minority vs. Minoritized

Racialized

Linguistically Minoritized

Standardized English

The History of Language, Race, and Power in the U.S.

European colonization of the Americas in the 16th century

- Europeans deemed indigenous people's languages as "less sophisticated and subhuman."

Language prestige in postcolonial times

- The standardized English spoken by Whites from higher SES is considered most valuable or the norm.

Listeners vs. Speakers



Perceptions of what is considered correct and appropriate may vary depending on who the listener and speaker are

What is the role of the SLP?

The role of the SLP when assessing and treating the articulation and phonological skills of Individuals who have been linguistically minoritized is to determine whether they have a phonological disorder vs. dialectical difference and to support their communication for THEIR communities and identities.



Let's Review the Basics

- **Dialect**: mutually intelligible form of a language associate with a particular region, social class, or ethnic group (Goldstein & Iglesias, 2013)
 - **Dialect Density**: the extent to which a speaker uses dialect features
- **Register**: the way one speaks in a different context or with different interlocutors
 - **Codeswitching**: changing from one register to another

People's Use of Languages, Dialects, and Registers Are Dynamic

Southern
American English

Spanish-
influenced
English/Spanglish

Puerto Rican
dialect of
Spanish

Standardized
English



English-
influenced
Spanish

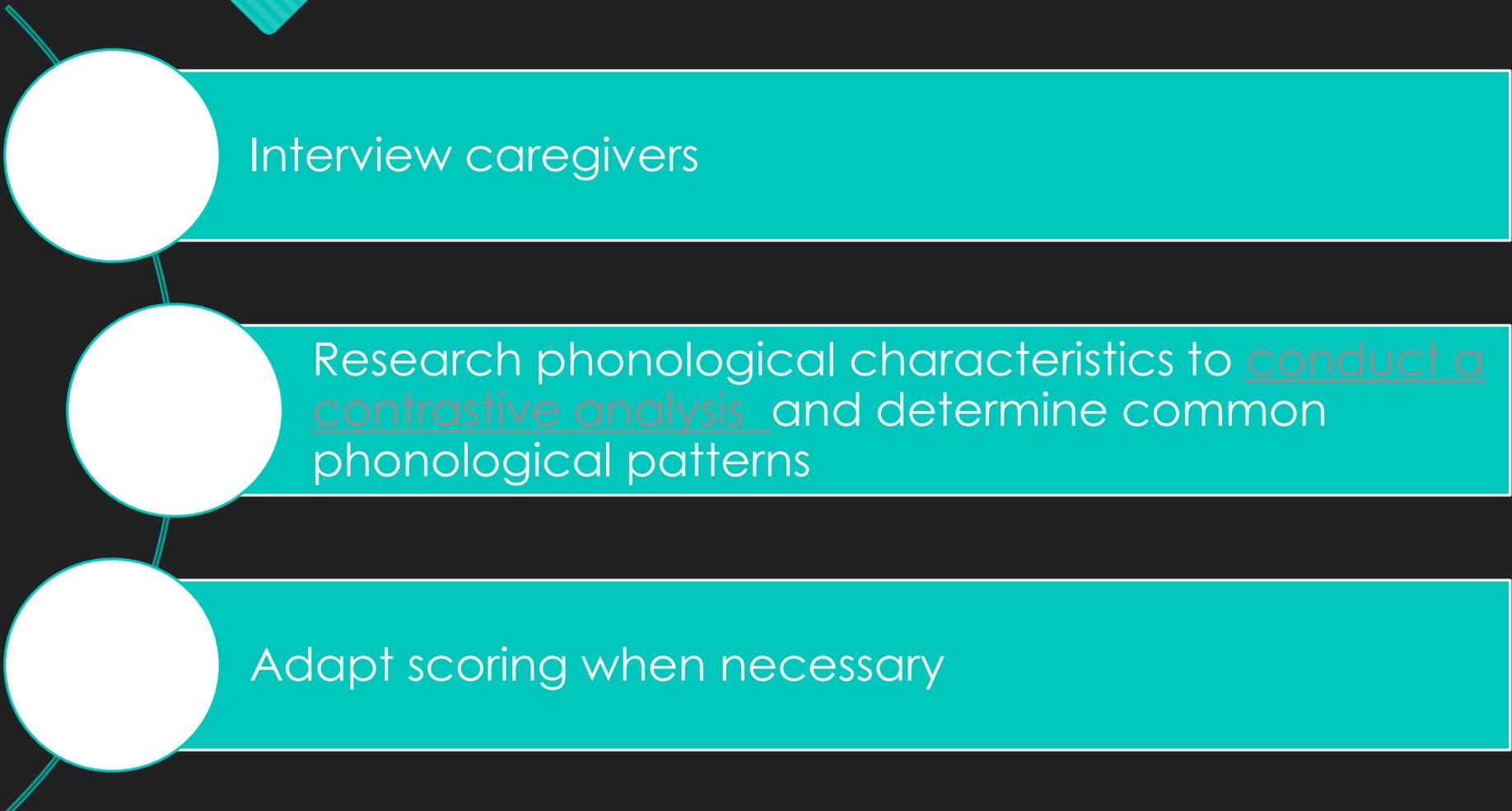
Everyone has a dialect and changes registers!!

Regional Dialects of English

- Eastern American English
- Southern American English
- Appalachian English
- Ozark English

Speakers of African American English (AAE)

Assessment Considerations for Individuals who Speak AAE



Interview caregivers

Research phonological characteristics to conduct a contrastive analysis and determine common phonological patterns

Adapt scoring when necessary

Contrastive Analysis

	Dialect 1 (Example: AAE)	Dialect 2 (Example: SAE)
Consonants		
Vowels		
Clusters		
Syllable Structures		

African American English (AAE)

(ShIPLEY & McAfee, 2004)

Characteristic	SAE	AAE
/l/ is lessened or omitted	/tu:l/	/tu/
/r/ is lessened or omitted	/dɔ:ɹ/	/dɔ:ɐ/
f/θ substitution in the medial & final positions	/tiθ/ /nʌθɪ ŋ/	/tif/ /nʌfɪn/
t/ð substitution in all word positions	/brʌð ə/	/brʌð ɹ/

African American English

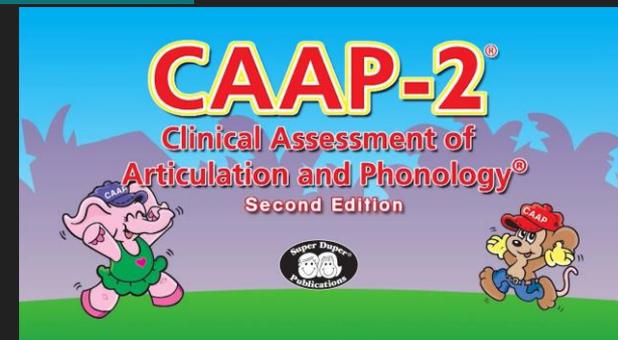
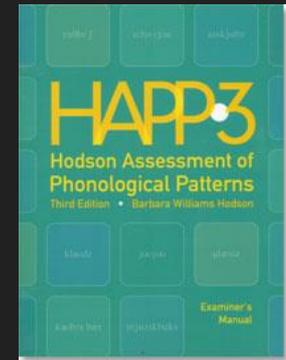
Characteristic	SAE	AAE
v/ð substitution in all word positions	/brið/	/briv/
consonant cluster reduction	/dɛsk/	/dɛs/
metathesis	/æsk/	/æks/
devoicing final consonants	/bɛd/	/bɛt/
ɪ/ɛ substitutions	/pɛn/	/pɪn/
b/v substitution	/sɛvin/	/sɛbɪn/
diphthong reduction	/ɔɪ/	/oɪ/

Adapting Scores when Conducting Articulation/Phonological Assessments with Speakers of AAE

Scoring adaptations of common articulation and phonological assessments



Diagnostic Evaluation of Language Variation



Differential diagnosis for speakers of AAE

Dialectical Difference	Speech Sound Disorder
<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Same phonetic inventory as a speaker of SAE-Substitution differences in line with AAE-Final consonant deletion might be common	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Stopping (e.g., /tat/ vs. /kat/)-Fricative errors in all positions-Affricate errors in all positions-Cluster errors

**Speakers who are
Bilingual**

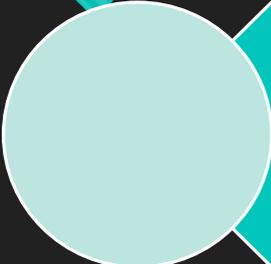
What if I don't speak the individuals' language?

Study the language to determine phonological differences

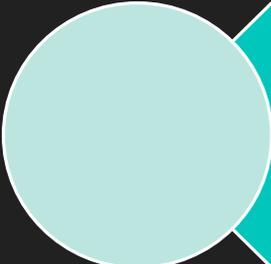
Consult with bilingual SLP and/or other colleague (teacher)

Train then interpreter and do not translate word for word

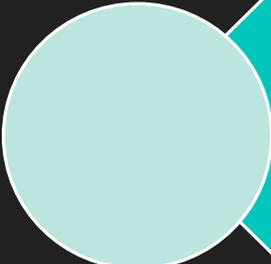
Assessment Considerations for Individuals who are Bilingual



Interview caregivers and gather data on home language use



Research phonological characteristics to conduct a contrastive analysis

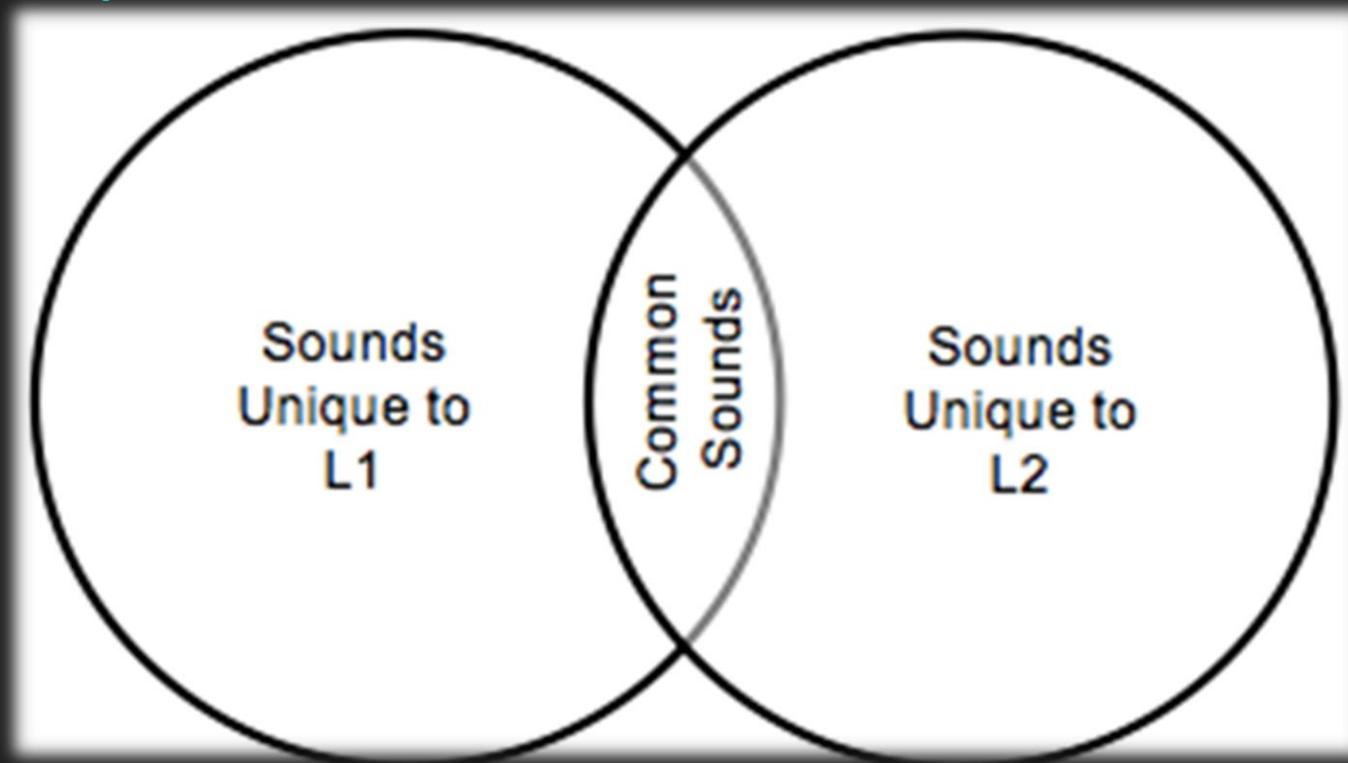


Select appropriate assessment tools, adapt scoring when necessary, and determine phonological transfer

(1) Determine the Home Language Use

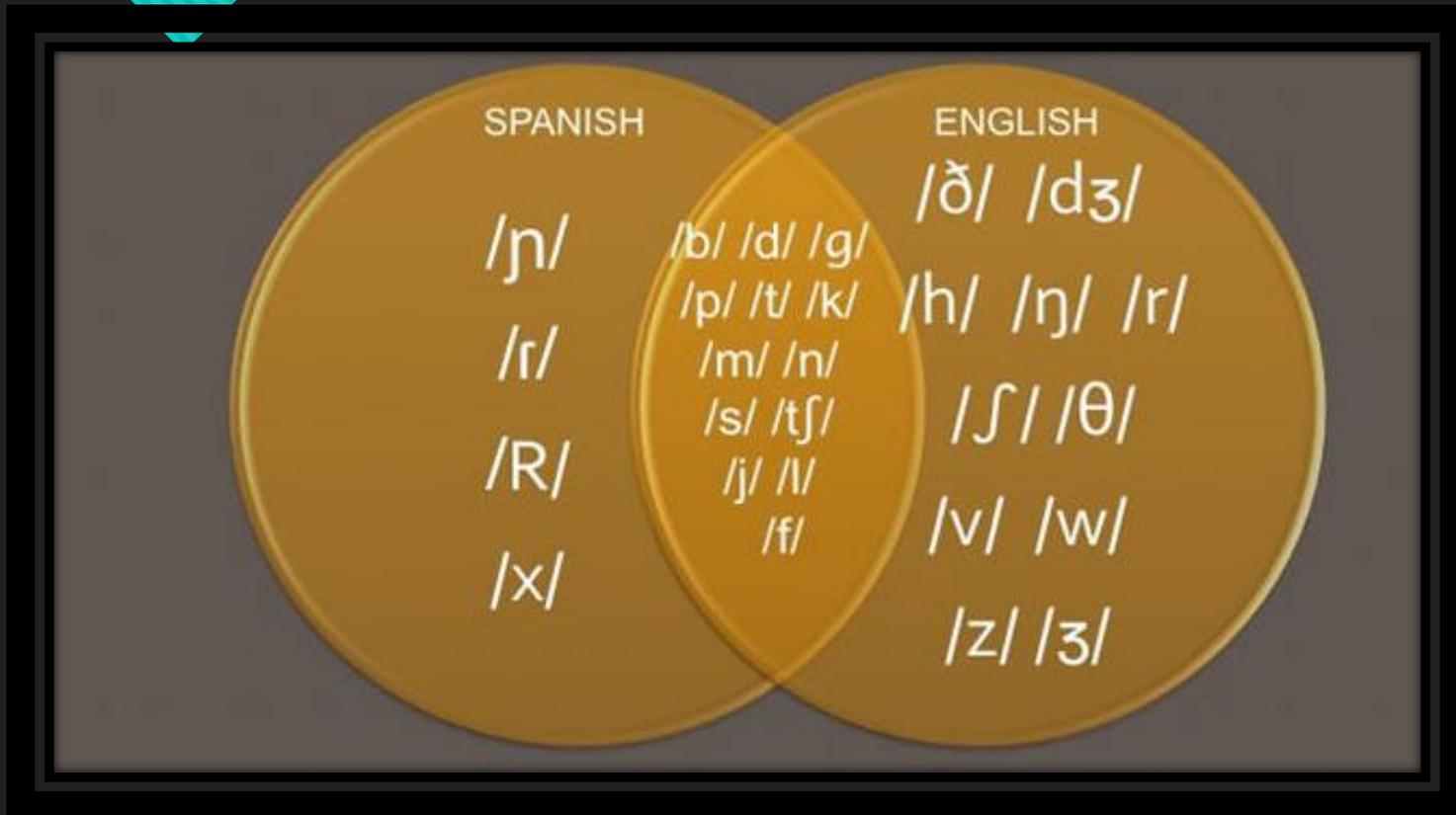
- Surveys of individuals' input vs. output and their communication partners input vs. output
 - Language Exposure Evaluation Report (LEER)
 - Bilingual Input Output Survey (BIOS) from the Bilingual Spanish-English Assessment (BESA)

(2) Conduct a Contrastive Language Analysis

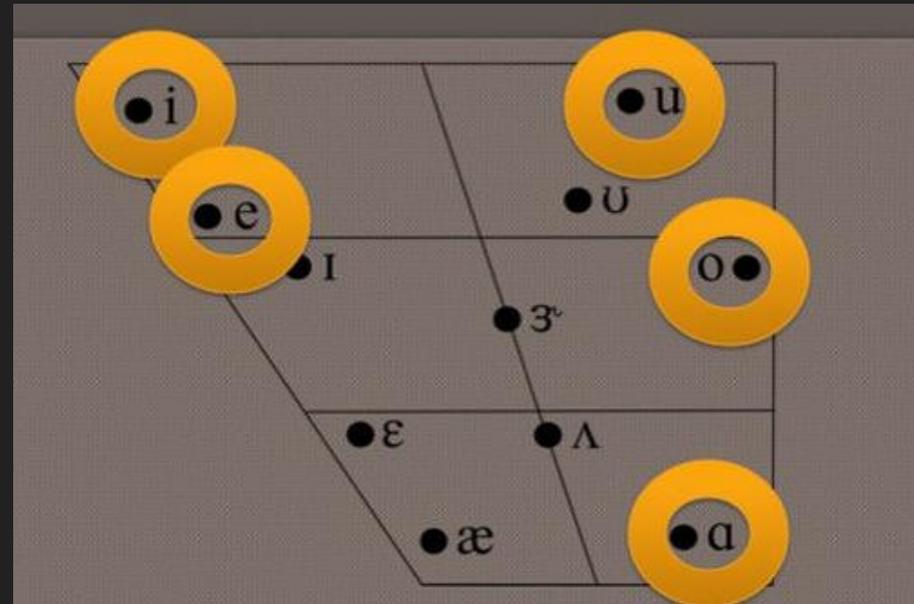
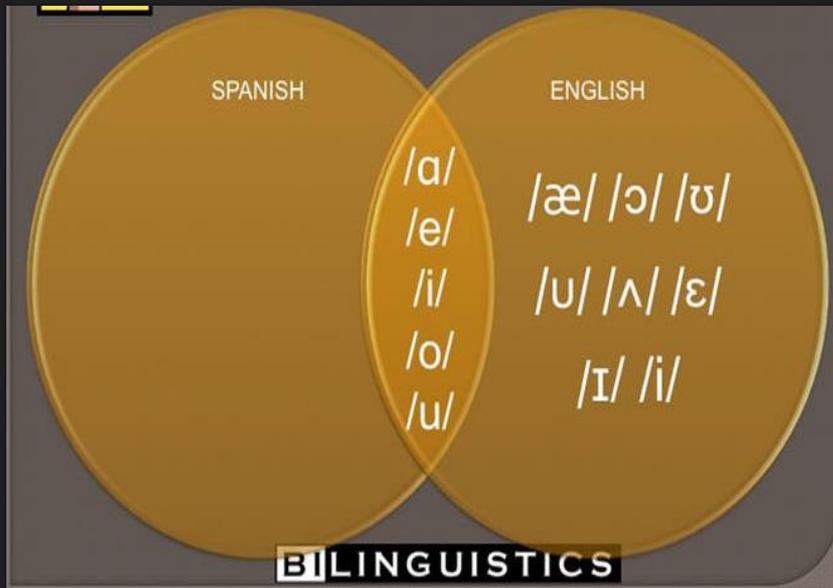


[Resources from ASHA](#)

Spanish vs. English Phonology



Spanish vs. English Vowel Inventory



(Bilinguistics, 2004)

Spanish vs. English Syllable Structures

English

- Many clusters
- Many words end in final consonants
- More words are monosyllabic

Spanish

- Many open syllables (CV)
- Very few words end with consonants (only allow /l, n, d, s, r/)
- Many words are multisyllabic

Spanish-Influenced English

Spanish Phonemes	English Phonemes	Example
/a/	/ɔ/	“paw” may sound like “pa”
/e/	/ɛ/	“get” may sound like “gate”
/i/	/ɪ/	“ship” may sound like “sheep”
/o/	/ʌ/	“bun” may sound like “bone”
/u/	/ʊ/	“put” may sound like “poot”

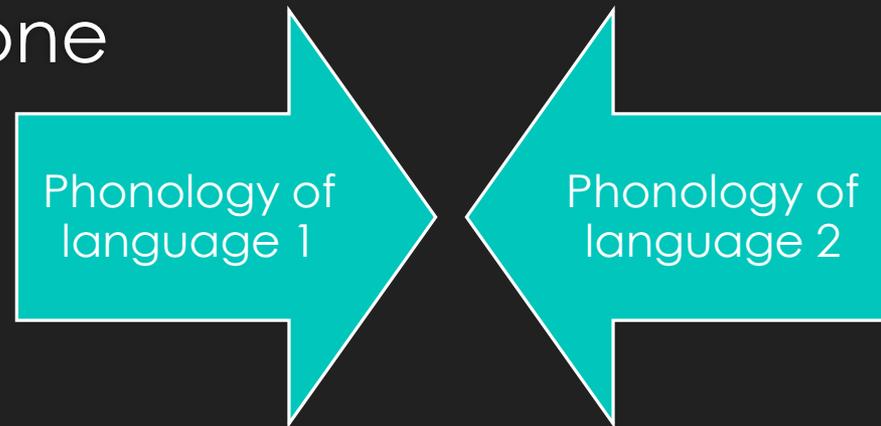
Articulatory Differences in Speakers of Spanish-Influenced English

Articulatory Characteristics	Sample Patterns
Final consonants may be devoiced	Dose/doze
b/v substitutions	Berry/very
tʃ/ʃ substitution	Chews/shoe
t/θ substitution	Tink/think
Epenthesis (adding vowel before initial /s/ clusters)	Espanish/Spanish
No /dʒ/ in Spanish, so speaker may substitute with /j/	Yoke/joke
Unaspirated stops	Little release in final consonants may sound like an omission

(Shipley & McAfee, 2004)

(3) Assess in All Languages AND Identify Influence of One Language on Other

- Assess phonological skills in BOTH languages when appropriate **AND**
- Determine influence of one language on other

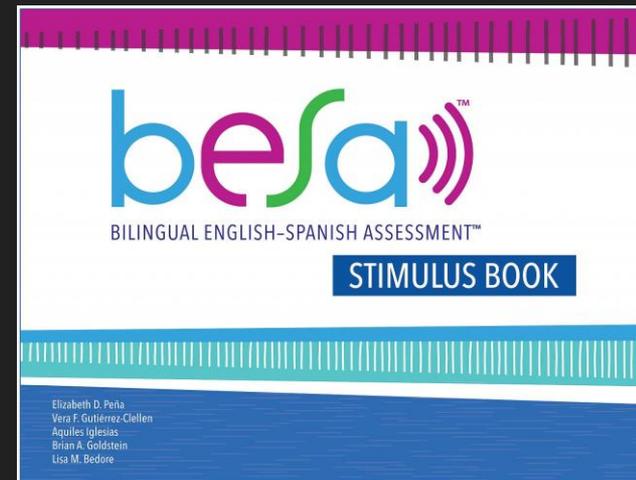


Common Phonological Transfer in Bilingual Children

Type of Transfer	Definition	Example
Under differentiation of Phonemes	Two sounds in the L1 are not contrastive, so speaker applies same rule to L2, where sounds are contrastive	Spanish: /b/ and /v/ are allophones Speaker treats /b/ and /v/ as being the same sound in English
Over differentiation of phonemes	Applying phonemic distinctions from the L1/L2 when they are not required in the other language.	English: /b/ and /v/ are contrastive, so speaker treats /b/ and /v/ as different in Spanish.
Reinterpretation of Distinctions	When distinction is important in L1, but redundant in L2	Finnish: duration of vowel is important, so in English the speaker will treat words as /sit/ and /sɪt/ as differing in length. May say [si:t].
Phone substitution	When two phonemes are shared in both languages but pronounced slightly different	[T ^h] [T [̚]] -Influence of syllable duration -Tone

(4) Choose an Appropriate Assessment Tool

- Formal and informal assessments of production at word, sentence, and conversation.
- It is not valid to use an assessment tool for bilingual speakers that has been developed for English speakers (e.g. GFTA-3), but you can use the test descriptively when appropriate
 - Not focus on standardized scores



Using an Alternative Assessment Approach

(Yavas & Goldstein, 1998)



Dynamic Assessment

- Test, teach, retest
- Zone of proximal development

Contextual sampling

- In which contexts (initial, medial, final) is the client most stimuable

(5) Conduct a Differential Diagnosis

Type of Pattern	Children Developing Normally	Children With Phonological Disorders	Example
Common phonological patterns	some	many	cluster reduction
Uncommon phonological patterns	rare	likely	backing
Age-appropriate developmental patterns	yes (low percentage-of-occurrence)	yes (moderate to high percentage-of-occurrence)	unstressed syllable deletion
Same phonological patterns in both languages	yes (low percentage-of-occurrence)	yes (moderate to high percentage-of-occurrence)	cluster reduction
Suppress patterns over time	quickly	slowly	final consonant deletion
Patterns in L1 but not L2 (and vice versa)	some	some	final consonant devoicing
Interference patterns	yes	yes	/j/ → [tʃ] in L2 (Spanish = L1; English = L2)

Providing Speech Sounds Intervention to Individuals who are Linguistically Minoritized

What is the overall goal?

Affirm the
dialectical
differences



Focus on
the
“disorder”

Interventions with Bilinguals

Treat phonological patterns that are the same in L1 and L2

Treat phonological patterns exhibited in L1 and L2 with unequal frequency

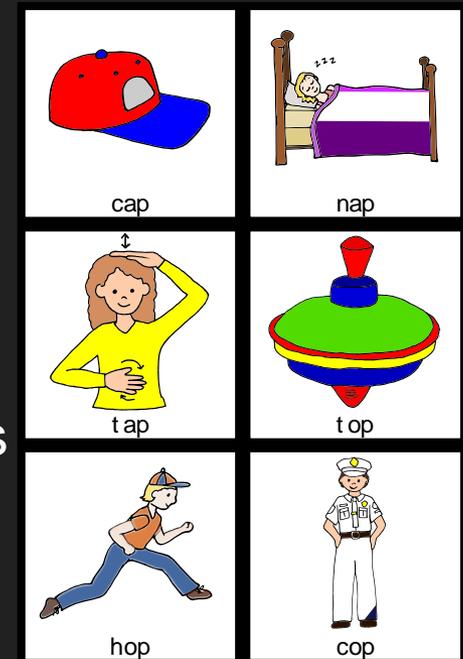
Treat phonological patterns that are specific to one language

Example Phonological Interventions



Multisyllabic words in Spanish

Apply findings from contrastive language analysis and work with native speaker to identify differences. Have native speaker work on the skills relevant to the home language.



Final consonants in English

Other considerations when conducting interventions with bilinguals

- Encourage the parents to provide a rich linguistic environment, regardless of which language they choose to use
- Support that children continue to speak their home language(s)



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