

PHONOLOGY

(There are few clusters in Asian languages. Many processes are similar.)

Reported intelligibility

Observation of speech in session

- *interpreter can pick out certain sounds and create word lists*
- *can use 'First Bilingual Dictionary' series for Indian languages published by Schofield & Sims Ltd, Huddersfield*

INTERACTION/BEHAVIOUR

Appropriate?

NB consider cultural factors

Range of communicative intents

- comment
- initiate
- reject
- request
- greet

NB child initiation with adults may be less appropriate in many cultures

Interest in interaction, sharing interest

NB learners of English as an additional language may be expected to have a normal 'silent' period in nursery

Non-verbal

observation in the home setting is invaluable

PLAY

- Appropriate
- Varied/Rigid?
- Simple pretend
- Sequences of pretend play

what does the child like to play with?

what do they do with toys?

are they silent or talkative when they play?

do they play on their own or with others?

check if dolls/teddies are used?

LONDON SIG BILINGUALISM

A CHECKLIST FOR ASSESSING THE COMMUNICATION OF YOUNG BILINGUAL CHILDREN

Designed primarily for ages 2-4 years

Developed at the 19.6.97 study day in a workshop led by Jane Stokes & including additional comments from Nasreen Chaudhry of SIG Bilingualism

Our Method

We took a fairly standard assessment procedure for a young monolingual child and discussed how we would adapt it for a young bilingual child (ie where there is a home language other than English)

Key

ASSESSMENT AREAS ARE GIVEN IN BOLD CAPITALS

The standard assessment procedure is given in standard script

Particular considerations for bilingual children are given in italicised script.

LISTENING/ATTENTION

There may be cultural variations in expectations of a child to sit and attend. Could this be reflected in actual attention and listening abilities?

Length of time child concentrates (observed & reported eg by parents & by nursery staff)

- own choice
- adult directed

The child may have greater difficulty in listening to an unfamiliar language

Looks up when name called

important to check what name the child is usually addressed with

AUDITORY COMPREHENSION (of home language)

Language in context at home (reported)

eg "when everyone's going out & you say 'put your shoes on' / 'find your shoes', does your child understand?"

Understanding of range of nouns **not** in context (observed & reported)

Reported: eg fetches things from another room, knows body parts & clothes.

Observed: selection of objects to request; selection of pictures to request.

NB cultural appropriacy of objects; check the child's familiarity with the vocabulary

Understanding of range of verbs

Use of action pictures*, making doll/teddy perform actions, child's actions

NB (1) check child familiar with dolls/teddies

(1) some very strict religious beliefs may not permit use of pictures, dolls or teddies

* Control for gender: some languages feature compound verbs which inherently mark gender

Number of ICEs (Information Carrying Elements)

generally feel OK to use Derbyshire picture test but use caution with regard to developmental order (eg concepts)

Concepts

- big/little
- (in)/on/under - check if in/on distinction is marked
- wet/dry & dirty/clean - look at wider range: be cautious of drawing conclusions if absent
- colours - if not present, may not be significant: may only be known in English

Comprehension by function

Questions such as "which one do we drink from?" are frequently difficult to translate reliably. It may be better to say "what's this for?"

Look out for echolalia & jargon (see Expression)

EXPRESSION (in home language)

Is the child talking like others of their own age?

Length of utterance (reported & observed)

• how many words can the child put together? - single words? short phrases? full sentences?

NB beware: in some languages a short sentence may be equivalent to a longer one in English

• Ask for examples eg what would the child say if they want, perhaps, a biscuit. Write this down & analyse.

• Consider taping child's speech and analysing it together with a bilingual speaker.

Use of gesture

instead of or as a supplement to speech

Main method of communication

pull & point? vocalising? using words? Use specific questions such as in the Pragmatics Profile

Size of vocabulary

ask parents to list or to record for next time

Range of grammatical structures

- difficult to assess this directly: best done from a taped language sample analysed with interpreter
- can ask about word order
- ask if sentences used are like an adult form
- use pictures, books, Duplo figures
- does the child use the wrong word or have difficulty thinking of the right word?
- does the child use certain words a lot (eg the word for 'this')?

Refers to events outside here and now

Echolalia

NB Distinguish between this and imitation

Jargon

NB Distinguish between this and unintelligible speech

Does the child ask questions?

Does the child stutter/get stuck on words?

**PUBLISHED ASSESSMENTS FOR USE WITH MULTILINGUAL CLIENTS –
formal and informal**

- *Indicates that we have this assessment at UCE

Language

1. Derbyshire Language Scheme – available in both English and Punjabi – can use parallels to establish SLI vs EAL
2. BPVS 2nd edition – has bilingual norms for 3.0yrs – 8.6 yrs
3. Bengali Expressive Language Assessment (informal screen in Sylheti Bengali) (London Bilingualism SIG) – we have the assessment form
4. Rapid screening test for Vietnamese speaking children (London Bilingualism SIG)
5. Sandwell Bilingual Screening Assessment – Scales for Expressive Punjabi and English*

Speech

1. Turkish Phonology Screening Assessment (version 1) (London Bilingualism SIG)*
2. Phonology Screening Assessment for Punjabi Speaking Children*