

Instructional Guide for Chapter 7

***Preschool English Learners:
Principles and Practices to Promote Language, Literacy and Learning
A Resource Guide, Second Edition
CDE (2009)***

Chapter 7: English Learners with Disabilities or Other Special Needs

PRINCIPLE 8:

Coordination and collaboration among families, teachers, and specialists become crucial in supporting the language and literacy development of children with disabilities and other special needs.

Addressing Key Topics

Key Topic: A Language Disorder versus a Language Difference

Motivator and/or Connection to Experience

In pairs or as a whole group, ask students to respond to the following questions:

- In general, what experiences have they had with children with disabilities?
- Have any of those experiences been with children with disabilities who are also English learners?
- Describe the challenges and opportunities that were involved in these experiences.
- What knowledge and/or skills that you had at the time were helpful?
- Were there opportunities for professional and/or personal development that equipped you to meet challenges and see opportunities in these experiences?
- Were there specific strategies that you used? What actions did you take?
- What did you gain personally or professionally from these experiences?

<i>Knowledge and Skills identified for Chapter 7 that could be addressed with this activity depending on the themes that emerge and areas that faculty choose to emphasize</i>	
Knowledge	<i>1.1, 1.2, 1.4 – 1.8; 2.1 – 2.7; 3.1, 3.2; 4.1 – 4.5</i>
Skills	<i>1.1 – 1.5; 2.1 – 2.7; 3.1 – 3.5; 4.1 – 4.6</i>

Information Delivery

Use the following question, which is found on page 63, as a focus for addressing this key topic.

'How do I know if a child is experiencing difficulties in learning a language, such as a speech disorder, or is just going through the process of second-language acquisition?'



Slide 3-4

Begin by exploring the definitions of language disorder and language difference. Ask students to find these definitions on page 64, and, depending on the level of your students, ask them to underline or highlight them and/or read them aloud.

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Knowledge	<i>1.1, 1.2, 1.4 – 1.8; 2.1 – 2.7; 3.1, 3.2; 4.1 – 4.5</i>
Skills	<i>1.1 – 1.5; 2.1 – 2.7; 3.1 – 3.5; 4.1 – 4.6</i>

In-Class Activity

Suggest that a language difference might easily look like a delay in learning English. Review the stages of learning a second language on page 46 and consider where in these stages a child might be most likely to exhibit behaviors that might look like a delay or disability, but are characteristic of English learners. Use the behaviors listed on page 64 as examples of some of the things that might make a teacher think that a difference is a disability.



Slides 5-8

The table on the following page can be used to help this process. Students can work in pairs, teams of three or four, or as a whole group. Ask students to consider each behavior

and put a check in the box for each stage at which you might observe this behavior. When discussing results, suggest how easy it is to confuse difference and disability, and how important it is to know where every child is on the path to learning English.

<i>Knowledge and Skills identified for Chapter 7 that could be addressed with this activity depending on the themes that emerge and areas that faculty choose to emphasize</i>	
Knowledge	<i>1.1, 1.2, 1.4 – 1.8; 3.1, 3.2; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.2</i>
Skills	<i>1.1, 1.4, 1.5; 3.1 – 3.5; 4.1, 4.3 – 4.6; 5.3</i>

Stages	Uses home language	Observation and listening period	Telegraphic and formulaic speech	Fluid language use
Behaviors on page 64				
Speaks infrequently				
Speaks excessively				
Refuses to answer questions				
Confuses similar sounding words				
Is unable to tell or retell stories				
Has poor recall				
Uses poor pronunciation				
Uses poor syntax and grammar				
Does not volunteer information				

In-Class Activity

Organize the class into pairs or teams of three or four. If possible, have an even number of groups or pairs. The following is a guide for the faculty member. There is a student handout on the following page.

Group 1:

Using the vignette found on page 45, give half the groups the first half of the vignette: *Heart, an only child, came to preschool in August fluent in Thai and speaking no English. At first he spent a great deal of time playing alone, running around the room yelling, covering his ears, and shrugging his shoulders in frustration. As he played, I sat near him and used lots of gestures paired with words. "You can jump. I can jump." As we jumped, he sometimes repeated, "I jump."*

Give these students the following (written) directions:

You suspect this child has special needs and should be referred to special education.

- Identify the possible developmental, educational, and or behavioral issues that this child might present.
- In the meantime, while trying to decide if a referral is appropriate, list five things you would do to support this child's acquisition of language. You might refer students to the chart on pages 54 and 55.

Group 2:

Using the vignette found on page 45, give the rest of students the first half of the vignette *and* add the rest:

By October he would pull me to the book area, take out a book and show me with gestures that he was drawing a dinosaur. In late January, he was building with blocks and said to me as I approached, "I made a house for you. I have a big house in Thailand. It is up in a tree (using gestures to make a tree). You come see me. OK?" (He put his hands together like an airplane).

Give these students the following (written) directions:

- Based on what they know about supporting second language learners, list ten things they think this teacher did between October and January. Again, you might refer students to the chart on pages 54 and 55.

After 10 or 15 minutes, bring all the groups together. Ask groups to share their responses. If possible, chart these responses.

Ask the students the following questions:

- What do you notice about the responses from different groups?
- Is there anything in the responses that you find especially interesting or new?
- What does this tell you about distinguishing language differences from disabilities?

<i>Knowledge and Skills identified for Chapter 7 that could be addressed with this activity depending on the themes that emerge and areas that faculty choose to emphasize</i>	
Knowledge	<i>1.1 – 1.8; 2.3, 2.5; 3.1, 3.2; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1 – 5.3</i>
Skills	<i>1.1 – 1.5; 2.2, 2.3; 3.1 – 3.5; 4.1 – 4.6; 5.1, 5.2</i>

Group 1

Heart, an only child, came to preschool in August fluent in Thai and speaking no English. At first he spent a great deal of time playing alone, running around the room yelling, covering his ears, and shrugging his shoulders in frustration. As he played, I sat near him and used lots of gestures paired with words. “You can jump. I can jump.” As we jumped, he sometimes repeated, “I jump.”

You suspect this child has special needs and should be referred to special education.

- Identify the possible developmental, educational, and or behavioral issues that this child might present.

- In the meantime, while trying to decide if a referral is appropriate, list five things you would do to support this child’s acquisition of language. You may refer to the chart on pages 54 and 55.

Group 2

Heart, an only child, came to preschool in August fluent in Thai and speaking no English. At first he spent a great deal of time playing alone, running around the room yelling, covering his ears, and shrugging his shoulders in frustration. As he played, I sat near him and used lots of gestures paired with words. “You can jump. I can jump.” As we jumped, he sometimes repeated, “I jump.”

By October he would pull me to the book area, take out a book and show me with gestures that he was drawing a dinosaur. In late January, he was building with blocks and said to me as I approached, “I made a house for you. I have a big house in Thailand. It is up in a tree (using gestures to make a tree). You come see me. OK?” (He put his hands together like an airplane).

- Based on what they know about supporting second language learners, list ten things you think this teacher did between October and January. You may refer to the chart on pages 54 and 55.

Key Topic: Special Education Programs and English Learners

Use the following question, which is found on page 63, as a focus for addressing this key topic.

‘Is it OK for me to use English and the child’s home language at school when the child has a disability?’

In-Class Activity

The chart on the following page can be offered as a ‘myth-buster quiz’. Ask students individually to respond to the following questions with a T or F for True or False.

All of the statements are false, except 8.

When students have finished this quiz, ask them:

- Have you heard any of these statements before?
- How could you respond now if you hear someone make any of these statements?

Note: These questions could also be used for a written out-of-class assignment, with rationale for their responses.



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<i>Knowledge and Skills identified for Chapter 7 that could be addressed with this activity depending on the themes that emerge and areas that faculty choose to emphasize</i>	
Knowledge	<i>1.1 – 1.8; 2.1 – 2.7; 3.1, 3.2; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1, 5.2</i>
Skills	<i>1.1 – 1.5; 2.1 - 2.7; 3.1 – 3.5; 4.1 – 4.6; 5.1 - 5.3</i>

	T or F
1. Children with disabilities are not capable of being bilingual.	
2. Bilingualism is a cause of delays or disabilities.	
3. Young children learning more than one language will have delayed language acquisition.	
4. A child with a disability will be confused by being exposed to more than one language	
5. It does not matter what language is used for assessment.	
6. Children who are bilingual and have a disability will be better off in a setting where they only hear English.	
7. Children with disabilities who are bilingual do better if they are in a setting with only other children with disabilities.	
8. Many of the principles and practices in this guide apply to children with disabilities who are learning English.	
9. It is not necessary to get information about the child's use of language from family members; it will probably not be accurate anyway.	

Key Topic: Coordinating Language and Communication Goals

Use the following question, which is found on page 63, as a focus for addressing this key topic.

‘How long should I wait before I make a referral to special education for a child who is learning English as a second language?’

In-Class Activity

Point out that there are two tools in the guide that could be used for gathering information when contemplating a decision regarding a referral to special education. These are the lists of functions of language on pages 23 and 24, and the cognitive and social strategies that children use on pages 52 and 53. These could be used to explore if a child is making progress in learning and using the second language, and if the child is using cognitive and social strategies that would be expected to emerge as the child learns the second language. It is especially important that teachers are able to recognize when a cultural or language difference might look like a disability.



Slides 10-11

It is important to also point out that:

- these tools are not screening tools; they are information that might be helpful in organizing informal observations
- disabilities other than language delays or disabilities would require different kinds of observations and record keeping

One way to think about this is to work through the following table. A few suggestions are offered on the faculty copy, but note that these are only examples, and are intended to be a guide, not a rule.

This table suggests that, first, teachers need to be able to clearly identify and keep notes about the concern. Then, the teacher might think of individual differences that might be influencing the appearance of that concern. After that, the teacher might try to find out if there are influences from the child’s home culture that might account for the appearance of that particular behavior. When all individual differences and cultural influences have been ruled out, it will be more likely that a referral would be appropriate.

Ask students if they have any other ideas:

- Ask how they would find out what might be influencing a child’s behavior.
- What could they do about it if it reflects a cultural practice at home that is different than what is expected at school?
- What could they do if these behaviors cannot be accounted for by either stage of language learning, individual differences, or cultural influences on behavior?
- Who would they go to?

<i>Knowledge and Skills identified for Chapter 7 that could be addressed with this activity depending on the themes that emerge and areas that faculty choose to emphasize</i>	
Knowledge	<i>1.1 – 1.8; 2.1 – 2.7; 3.1, 3.2; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1, 5.2</i>
Skills	<i>1.1 – 1.5; 2.1 – 2.7; 3.1 – 3.5; 4.1 – 4.6; 5.1 – 5.3</i>

For Faculty Use

<i>Identify concern</i>	<i>What individual differences might be influencing that behavior: knowledge base, stage in language learning, temperament</i>	<i>What cultural differences (practices) might be influencing that behavior</i>
Speaks infrequently	Is a 'watcher' Not much language at home	Speaking up is not valued
Speaks excessively	High energy Verbal family	Dialogue is energetic
Refuses to answer questions	Low self-esteem, not confident	It is not polite to ask and answer questions
Confuses similar sounding words	Consider auditory challenges	Children's experience with their home language might affect how they perceive similar sounds in other languages
Is unable to tell or retell stories	Prefers action Not much exposure to stories	Only certain people tell stories
Has poor recall	Consider auditory challenges	What is important to remember might not be what is expected in the classroom
Uses poor pronunciation	Articulation is slightly delayed for age, but improving	Is not used to speaking
Uses poor syntax and grammar	Not much exposure to language, or exposure to poor syntax and grammar	Experiences different kinds of dialogue and language use at home
Does not volunteer information	Quiet temperament	It is not polite to speak unless spoken to

For Student Use

<i>Identify concern</i>	<i>What individual differences might be influencing that behavior: knowledge base, stage in language learning, temperament</i>	<i>What cultural differences (practices) might be influencing that behavior</i>
Speaks infrequently		
Speaks excessively		
Refuses to answer questions		
Confuses similar sounding words		
Is unable to tell or retell stories		
Has poor recall		
Uses poor pronunciation		
Uses poor syntax and grammar		
Does not volunteer information		

In-Class Activity

Assemble a panel consisting of a preschool special educator, a preschool teacher who has worked with children with disabilities who are English learners, and administrator, since and administrator is a policy maker, a family member, and any other specialist who might be available and able to contribute an alternate perspective (such as a school psychologist or speech pathologist). The family members might be related to a child with a disability learning a second language and/or a child with a language disorder learning two languages.

In preparation, during a class time, ask students to develop a set of questions to ask of the panel members.

- Suggest that they might want to ask some questions relating to how children get referred and how families are involved in that.
- Depending on the level of experience of students, it might help to hold a ‘mock panel’ before an actual panel is held.
- Remind them that the first question should be to ask the family to describe the child and the child’s strengths. (‘Tell us about your child and what you really like about him/her?’)
- Also be sure that specialists describe what they do and how they provide services to children with disabilities.

If it is difficult to assemble a panel, given the logistical difficulties of some classes, consider assigning this as an interview assignment. Different students could interview different ‘panel’ members and the responses could be collected and discussed in class. Be sure that, if interviews are done, participants sign releases so that their responses can be discussed.

<i>Knowledge and Skills identified for Chapter 7 that could be addressed with this activity depending on the themes that emerge and areas that faculty choose to emphasize</i>	
Knowledge	<i>1.1 – 1.8; 2.1 – 2.7; 3.1, 3.2; 4.1 – 4.5; 5.1, 5.2</i>
Skills	<i>1.1 – 1.5; 2.1 - 2.7; 3.1 – 3.5; 4.1 – 4.6; 5.1 - 5.3</i>