



Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust


When should an EAL child be referred to Speech and Language Therapy and what happens next ?

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**Learning outcomes**

1. You will understand when to refer an EAL child to Speech and Language Therapy
2. How Speech and Language Therapists assess EAL children with suspected Speech, Language and Communication needs.



Bilingualism does **not** cause communication disorders, there is **no** reason why bilingual children should have a different rate of speech and language problems from a monolingual population

*Crutchley, 1999; Crutchley et al, 1997a, 1997b;  
Duncan & Gibbs, 1989; Winter 2001*



Children who are learning English as a additional language.....True or False ?

1. All have speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) T/F?
2. Who are slow to learn English should be referred to SLT straight away T/F?
3. Can't have SLCN T/F?
4. Are more likely to have SLCN than children who aren't EAL T/F?



### Important points

- Some children who are learning more than one language will have SLCN
- This is not because they are learning more than one language but because developing speech, language and communication is difficult for them whatever the language
- These children would have difficulties whether they were learning 2 languages or one
- It is important to identify these children's needs but often tricky!



### Stages of learning for the EAL Child

1. Chatters in home language
2. Silent period
3. Single words/Routine phrases
4. Making own phrases and sentences (BICS and CALP)



### Red flags for referral to Speech and Language Therapy



- Ongoing Silent period
- In first language > Slower progress than expected, difficulty with a particular area of SLCN eg understanding of language, expressive language, vocabulary development, social communication, pronunciation
- Other areas > Attention/listening, play, behaviour, literacy, attainment
- Parents or bilingual support staff > Raising concerns



### Silent period

- It is not unusual for children to experience a silent period when starting nursery or school, particularly where the language acquisition is sequential
- This silent period, in which the child does not often communicate at all, appears to be a time for assimilation
- Following this time, children often begin to try out the "new" language that they have heard around them
- The silent period can last for up to one year

Source:  
Leeds Speech & Language Therapy Service Standards & Guidelines  
for Working with clients with Additional Languages



Factors that are not causes for concern:

- Code switching ie mixing 2 languages in one utterance
- Higher use of “empty” words – these will phase out as English vocabulary increases
- Transference of linguistic rules eg word order from home language to English

Source: Nita Madhani SLT (Redbridge)



Learning outcome 2

How Speech and Language Therapists should assess EAL children with suspected Speech, Language and Communication needs.




Any of the conditions presenting to Speech and Language Therapists may occur in the context of bilingualism

Source: Bernd Klein “Bilingual upbringing of children in the Home”



“The main aim of assessing children referred with possible speech and language difficulties, from bilingual communities is to draw as full a language profile of the (emerging) bilingual child as possible”.


Royal College of Speech and Language Therapists



## Assessment

The purpose of assessment is to decide:

1. Whether the child's first language is intact and therefore is only having difficulty acquiring English as an additional language  
**EAL issues: managed by Education**
2. Whether the child is having difficulty acquiring speech and language  
**Speech and language delay/disorder: managed by Speech and Language Therapy Service**



## Case history

**Full case history to be taken as for all clients plus:**


**Socio linguistic profile of language use including:**

- how many languages/dialects and length of time for each has child been exposed to including English?
- how many languages/dialects child speaks /understand?
- what languages/dialects are used in/outside the home and the pattern/dynamics of usage?

**For those clients new to the UK need to:**

- establish length of time in this country
- previous schooling if any
- length of time in nursery/school

For completion at time of referral by referral agent at school or children's centre

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### Speech and Language Therapy Service Pre-assessment information for bilingual children

**Basic family details:**

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_ Age now: \_\_\_\_\_

Name child is called at home: \_\_\_\_\_

Name child is to be called at school: \_\_\_\_\_

Does the child live with both parents as a family unit? Yes/ No  
If no to above, who are the carers? \_\_\_\_\_

Names and ages of siblings: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival date in UK (if not British born): \_\_\_\_\_

Names of previous schools/LEAs: \_\_\_\_\_

Length of time at previous school abroad: \_\_\_\_\_

Dates of any extended absences from schooling: \_\_\_\_\_

**Language/communication (parent's view):**

Are parents concerned about the child's communication skills? Yes/No  
More details: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's strongest spoken language/dialect: \_\_\_\_\_

Languages spoken at home by the child to:  
Mother: \_\_\_\_\_ Father: \_\_\_\_\_  
Aunt: \_\_\_\_\_ Uncle: \_\_\_\_\_ Grandparents: \_\_\_\_\_

Languages spoken by family members to the child: \_\_\_\_\_

Can the child read/write in languages other than English? \_\_\_\_\_

**Community links:**

Does the child attend any other school/less in the community? Yes/No  
More details e.g. language use/taught there: \_\_\_\_\_

**Communicating with parents:**

Please indicate which level parents can communicate in English:  
No English \_\_\_\_\_ Basic English \_\_\_\_\_ Advanced English \_\_\_\_\_


Is an interpreter needed to communicate with parents? Yes/No

Please specify language/dialect: \_\_\_\_\_

Which of the following could parents access in English:  
Text via mobile \_\_\_\_\_ Letter \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone call \_\_\_\_\_

Which is the most useful/written language for parents: \_\_\_\_\_

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New research suggests typically developing 2.6 year old children who are bilingual in English and in an additional language and who hear English 60% of the time or more, perform equivalently to their typically developing monolingual peers

*Cattani et al School of Psychology, University of Plymouth IJCD Vol 49, No 6, 649-671 Nov-Dec 2014*



### Assessment

To assess the child's language skills we need to draw up a profile of language ability and use in each language

- How do we draw up a language profile?
- Once we have a language profile how will we know if particular features are or are not a problem?

### Drawing up a Language Profile

*WHAT CAN WE REALISTICALLY ASSESS IN HOME LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH?*

**Listening and attention:** type and time

**Play:** symbolic play, imaginative play, social play

**Comprehension:** ICW's, vocabulary, concepts


**Expression:** length of utterance, vocabulary, word order

**Speech:** errors, intelligibility

**Social skills:** ability to use language to communicate effectively, non-verbal skills

**Fluency, Voice, Feeding**



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**LEEDS SLT ASSESSMENT FOR BILINGUAL CHILDREN – 2013**


AGE 4 - 5 years Foundation Stage 2

	Informal Assessment	Baseline level
<b>ATTENTION</b>	Observation	By 5 yrs can perform an activity while listening to the adult giving directions. <i>Ref: Jones (2002)</i>
<b>PLAY</b>	Observation	By 5 yrs can choose their own friends. Use talk to take on different roles in imaginative play. <i>Ref: The Communicator That University Speaking 2011</i>
<b>VERBAL COMPREHENSION VOCABULARY</b>	Test in each language using Vocab screen (sheet 1) <i>(Appendix viii &amp; viii)</i>	Understands 80% of words in Vocab screen across all languages (40/50). <i>Appendix viii &amp; viii</i> <i>Ref: Burdett &amp; Chapman SLT2</i>  By 5 yrs can understand more complex language i.e. 'only', 'long', 'behind' etc. <i>Ref: The Communicator That University Speaking 2011</i>
<b>SENTENCES</b>	Test in each language using appropriate materials (Can Use Rapid Screening Test – DLS) <i>Appendix viii</i>	Understands sentences containing key words in strongest language. <i>Ref: Johnson (2001)</i>
<b>EXPRESSION VOCABULARY</b>	Test in each language using Vocab screen (sheet 1) <i>(Appendix viii &amp; viii)</i>	By 5 yrs vocabulary is expanding. Children will be asking about meaning of new words. <i>Ref: The Communicator That University Speaking 2011</i>  Names 80% of words on Vocab screen across all languages (40/50). <i>Appendix viii &amp; viii</i> <i>Ref: Burdett &amp; Chapman SLT2</i>
<b>SENTENCES</b>	Test obtain language sample in each language	By 5 yrs are using sentences that are well formed. Cooks switched sentences may be used. Possible word order errors may occur. <i>Ref: Per and Cox 2002</i>
<b>SPEECH</b>	• Test speech production – words in isolation and connected speech • Test g.p.motor skills	By 5 yrs can hear most speech sounds. <i>Ref: The Communicator That University Speaking 2011</i>  Spontaneous speech in strongest language should be intelligible to unfamiliar adults. <i>Ref: Price (2002)</i>
<b>PRAGMATICS</b>	Observe pragmatic skills – be aware of cultural and bilingual issues	By 5 yrs are able to interact and negotiate with people and have longer conversations. Can ask relevant questions/comments. <i>Ref: Communicator That University Speaking 2011</i>

The baselines indicated above for vocabulary understanding and naming have been determined from experience of working with bilingual children in the **Burtoncliffe** and **Chapelallerton** areas of Leeds over a period of 5 years.

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Speech and Language Therapy Bilingual Pilot Project  
Chapelallerton and Burtoncliffe Locality – Sept 2010 ©

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**Vocabulary Screening Test for bilingual children** Sheet 1

(A screen of 50 words taken from 250 word programme)

Name of child (M/F): \_\_\_\_\_ D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_ Year Group: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assessed by: \_\_\_\_\_ Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

For reception class Year 1 children test on the 50 sheet 1 words only (exclude category words in *italics*). Year 2 and older, continue the test using sheet 2. These are sample words taken from more detailed word lists. Understanding (comprehension) – tester asks 'show me this' – if the child points to the picture named by the tester he understands the meaning of the word. Naming (expression) – tester asks 'what is this?' – if the child can name the picture then he can use the word expressively i.e. can say the word. The child gets one point for each correct answer.

Target word	Date:	Date:	Date:	Date:
	Language tested:	Language tested:	Language tested:	Language tested:
	English	English	Understanding	Naming
<b>Food and drink:</b>				
egg				
banana				
chicken				
orange juice				
tea				
<b>Clothes:</b>				
gloves				
jumpers				
trousers				
<b>Living things:</b>				
dog				
lion				
flower				
leaf				
baby				
teacher				
<b>Transport:</b>				
bike				
plane				
<b>Furniture:</b>				
chair				
table				
sink				
<b>Body parts:</b>				
hair				
ears				
tummy/belly				

**HOW DO WE KNOW IF A THERE IS A PROBLEM?**

Need to compare the language profile with that of children of similar age and linguistic background looking at both English and home language. Are there any difficulties at all with the home language? Is the child's profile significantly different to that expected?



Unfortunately when looking at comparisons there is no book of language profiles for different populations. It would be a very big book!



***Is the level of ability lower than expected in best language given age of child? ie a language delay***

***Is the level of ability significantly different to that expected in best language given age of child? ie a language disorder?***



**Resources :**

[www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/cslt](http://www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk/cslt)  
Toolkit – bilingualism



Any questions?

