

# The Puzzle: Identifying Young DLLs Who Need More Intensive Instruction

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# Dual Language Learners



- Are increasing in numbers
  - Fastest growing group
    - Nearly 30% of children in Head Start
- Provides a challenge to educators who are to
  - Support children's
    - language development
    - school readiness
  - Determine when children are in need of extra supports
  - Provide more intensive instruction

# The Challenge Presented to Linda & Me



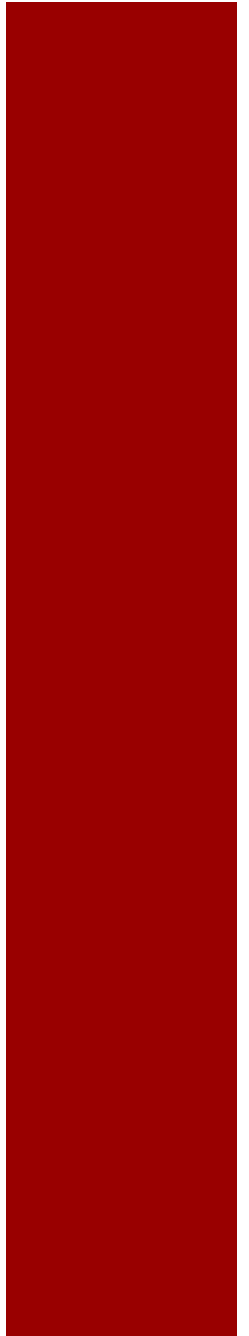
- How do we identify DLL children who may need more than Tier 1 early literacy and language instruction?
- What evidence-based approaches are currently available for supporting for children who are Dual Language Learners?



# Goals of this Presentation

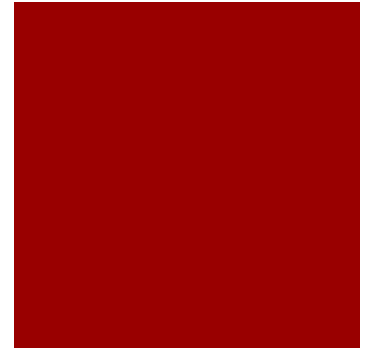
- To assist educators more accurately identify DLLs who are in need of Tier 2 or 3 interventions
  - Review key myths/facts about DLLs' development
  - Examine the complexities of identifying children in need of more intensive instruction
  - Discuss key pieces of information needed

# Myths and Facts



# True or False?

“English or Dual Language Learner” refers to a child who is not been exposed to English at home.



# False



- DLL includes
  - Sequential learners
  - Simultaneous learners
- Often, simultaneous learners are forgotten
  - Many times educators assume they are proficient in English

# True or False?

It's easy for children to learn a second language.

They learn language quickly.





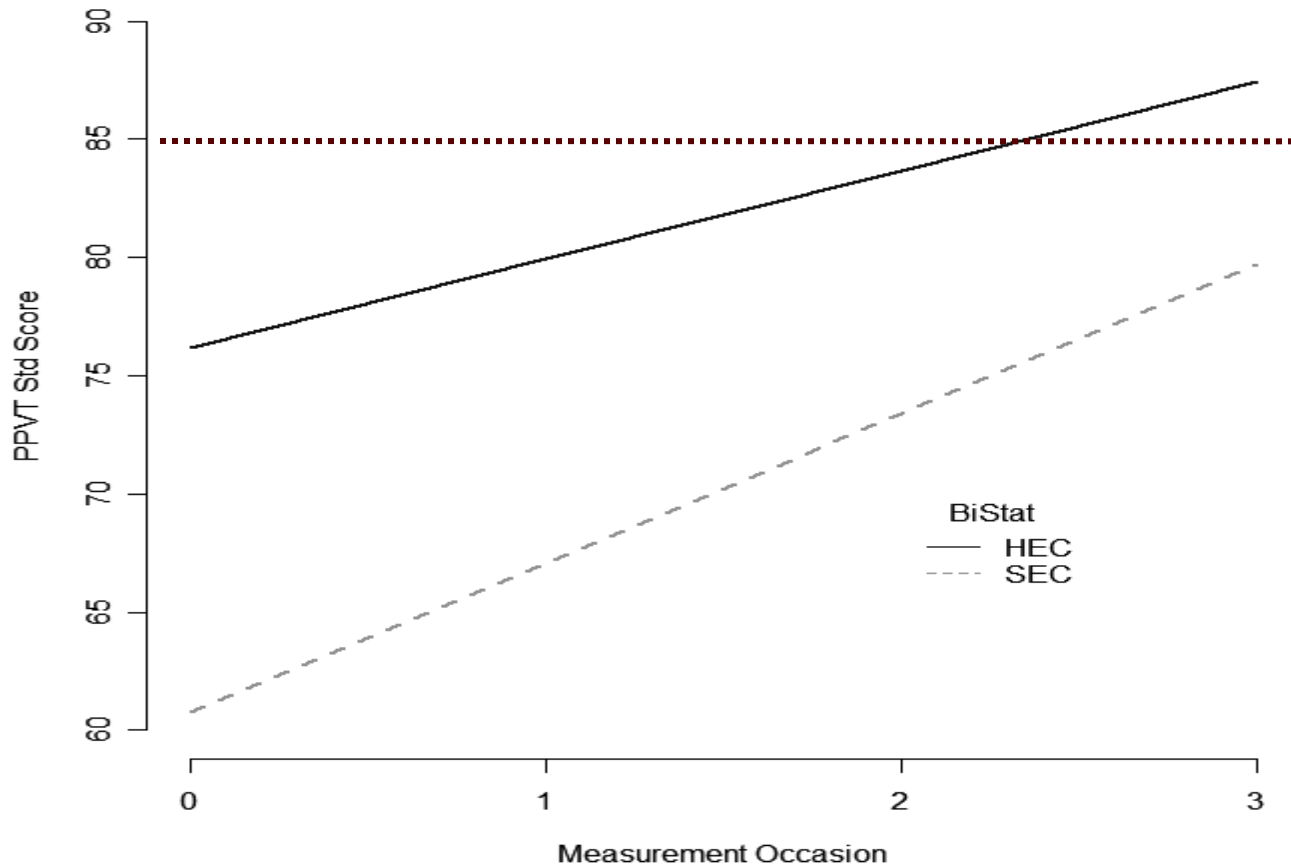
# False



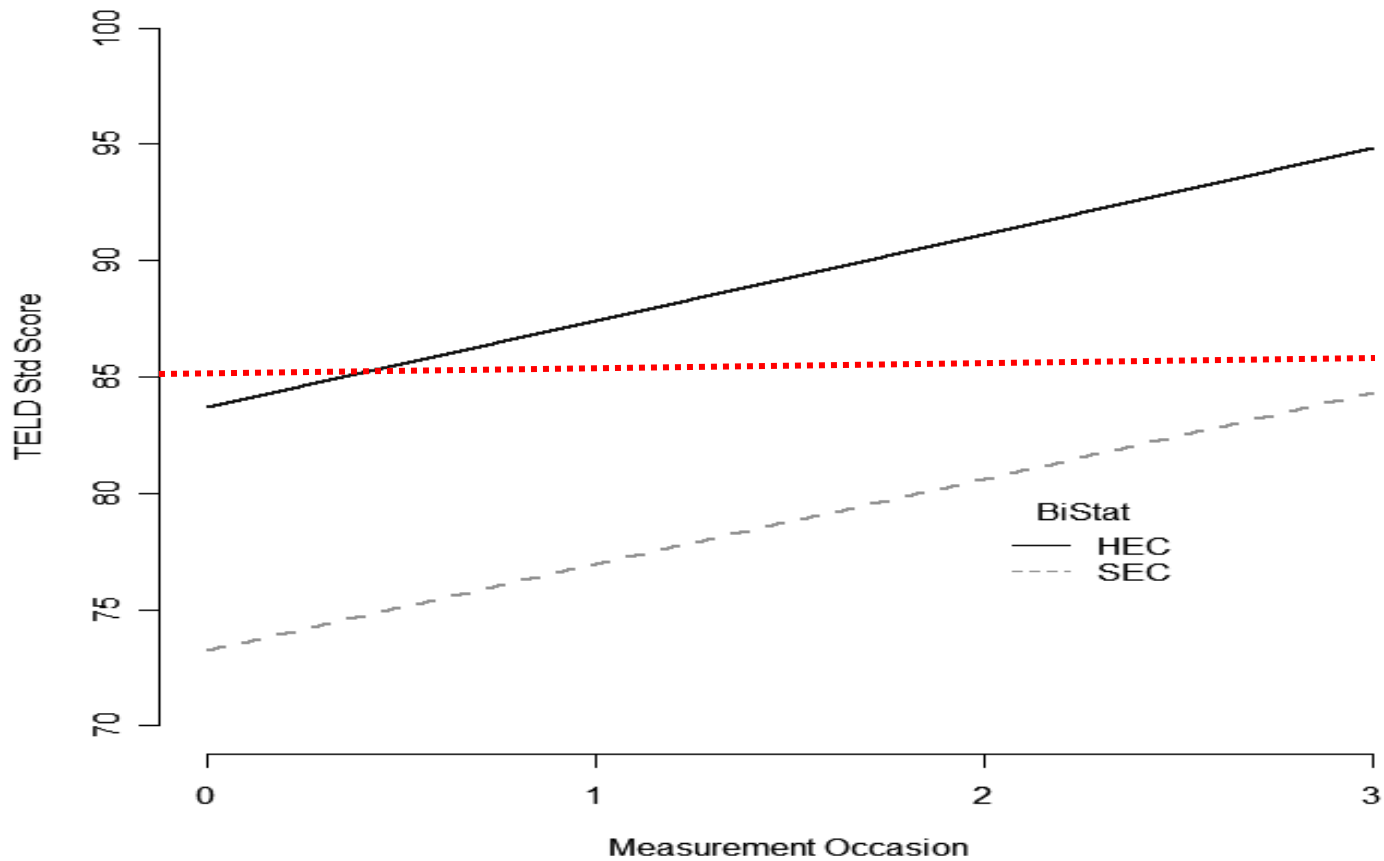
- Children need time to acquire English
- Research on school-age children shows that it takes
  - 2-3 years to catch up to monolinguals
    - Conversational language
  - 5-7 years to catch up
    - Academic language

# English Receptive Vocabulary

Hammer, Lawrence & Miccio (2008)



# English Receptive Language Development



# True or False?

- DLLs with learning difficulties can have an impairment in English only.
  - And not in their native language



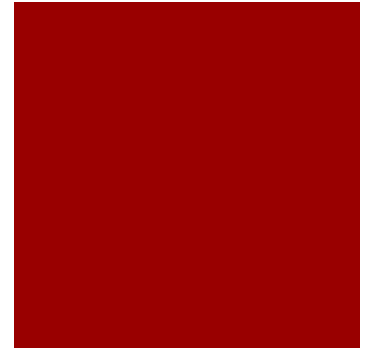
# False

- Children with language learning problems have difficulties in both languages.
- Children cannot have a
  - language impairment
  - learning disability in 1 language
- So, if a child has problems in English but not the home language, the child does not have a disability.
  - May need Tier 1 interventions tailored for DLLs to support their English development



# True or False?

- Parents' of DLLs should only speak to their children in English, particularly if their children have learning difficulties.



# False



- Evidence does not suggest use of home language is harmful to children
  - Our study (Hammer, Lawrence, Rodriguez, Davison, & Miccio, 2009)
    - Use of Spanish promoted Spanish
    - Use of English or Spanish at home did not affect English development
- Benefits of Bilingualism
  - Cultural
  - Economic
  - Cognitive



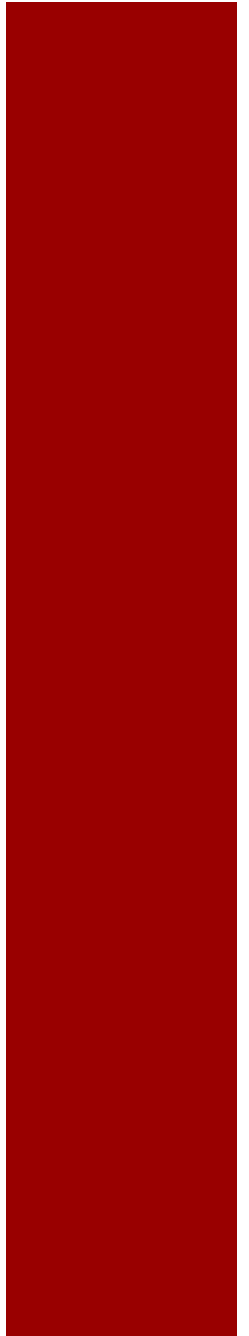
## Recommendation

**Do not** tell parents of DLLs to stop speaking their native language to their children

Instead, support parents' use of their home language



# Complexities of Identifying DLLs



# Complexities

- Heterogeneous group
  - Languages
    - Dialects within languages
  - Countries of origin/cultures
  - Socioeconomic status



# Complexities cont'd

- Differences in language experiences
  - Age of exposure to two languages
  - Amount of exposure to two languages
    - Differs over the child's life
    - Differs among
      - conversational partners
      - settings
      - conversational topics
  - Thus the idea of a dominant language is questioned



# Complexities Cont'd



- This heterogeneity
  - makes it difficult to establish bilingual norms
  - Because differences in children's experiences result in differences in abilities in the two languages.

# Individual Differences

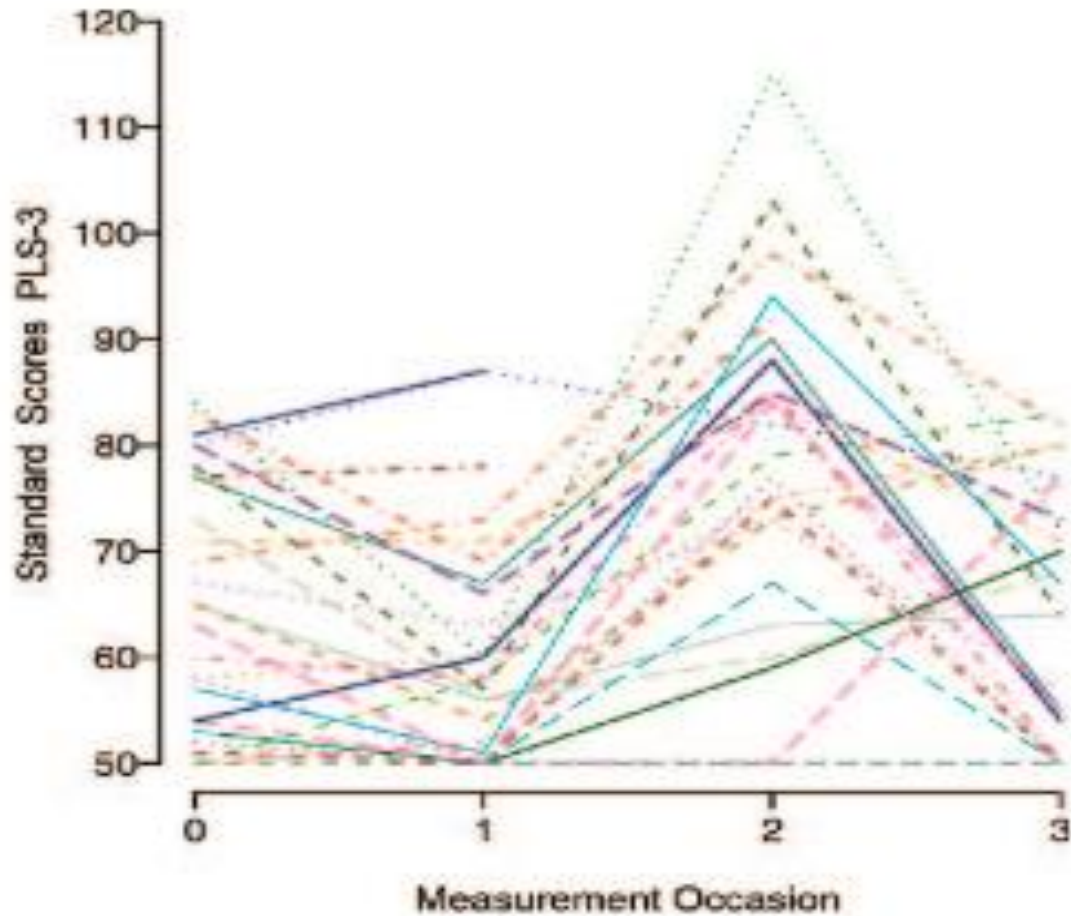
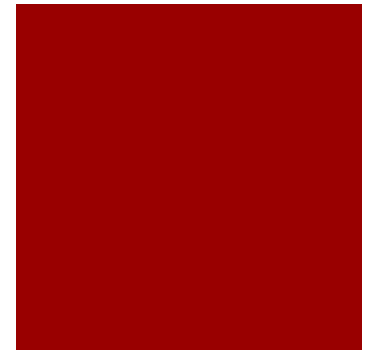
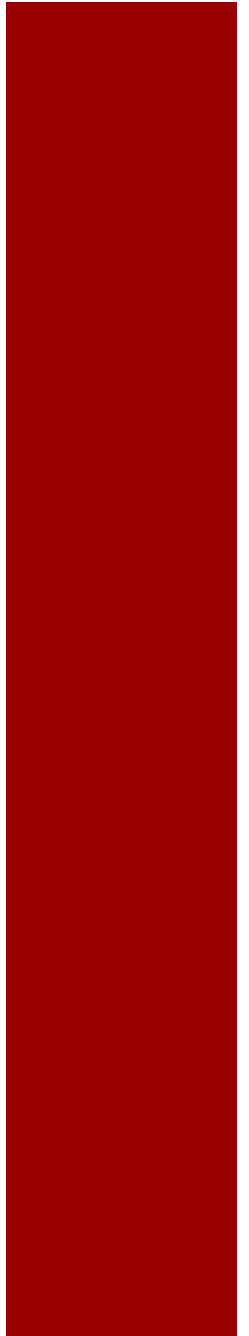


Figure 2. Individual trajectories of the *PLS-3*.

Determining  
which children  
need more  
intensive  
instruction





# Language Experiences

Critical to Determining DLLs' Status

# Language Experiences



- Learn from parents about their child's language experiences
- Age of exposure
  - Where was your child born?
  - How long have you used in the US?
  - What languages did the family speak to the child from birth?
  - At what age was the child talked to consistently in English?
    - At home?
    - In day care?
    - At school?
  - Is the child exposed to other languages?
    - Indigenous languages



# Language Usage & Exposure



- Languages key individuals talk to the child & Languages child uses when talking to key people
  - Mother
  - Father
  - Siblings (older)
  - Grandparents
  - Teachers (day care/preschool)
  
- What languages do \_\_\_\_ speak to the child?
- What languages does the child speak to \_\_\_\_\_?
- Response options provided
  - All Spanish
  - More Spanish than English
  - Equal Spanish and English
  - More English than Spanish
  - All English

# Language Environments



- Learn about children's various language environments
  - Time spent in family's country of origin
  - Time spent living with other family members
  - Day Care/Family care experiences
  - Preschool
    - Academic year vs. summer
      - Change in language learning environment
- Literacy experiences
  - Story telling
  - Book reading
  - Emergent literacy
    - Teaching of letters, colors, etc.
  - Determine languages used when conducting the activities

# Current Status of Language Abilities

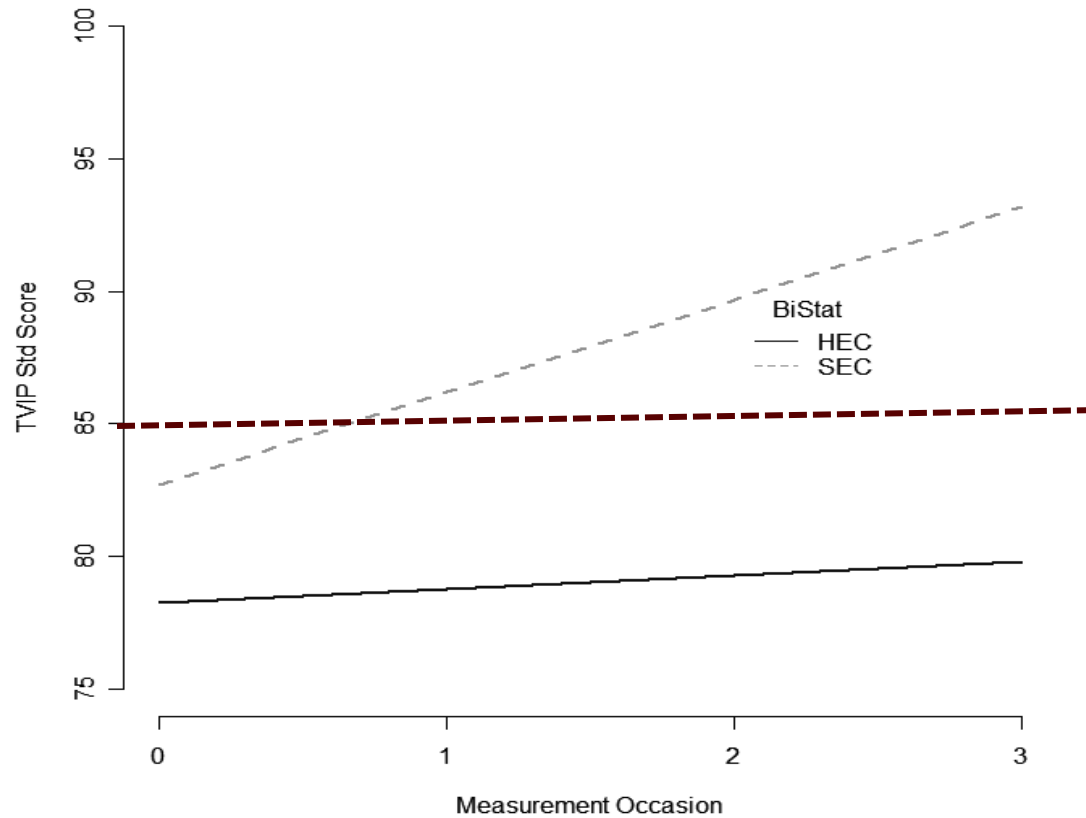


# Determine Status of DLLs' Language & Literacy

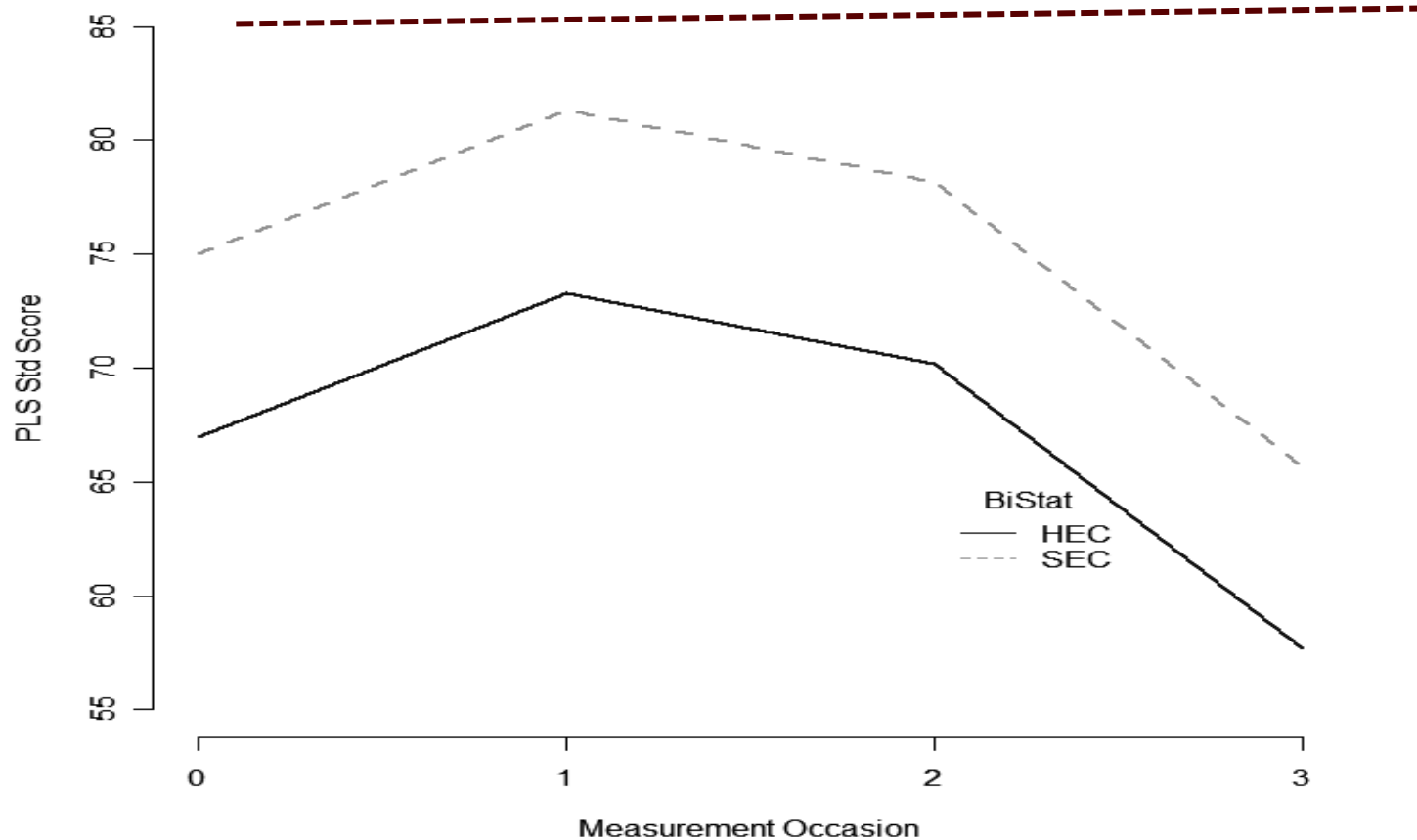
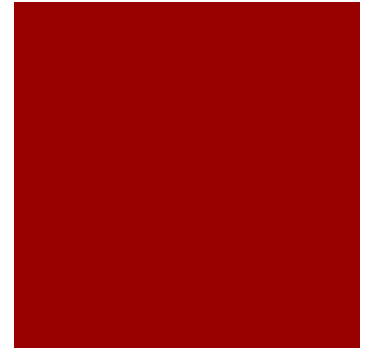


- Assess in both languages
  - Even if child knows little English
- Reasons
  - Baseline information
    - Use to track how child progresses
    - Monitor over time
    - Remember that children may not have “academic” knowledge in their first languages
      - Parents often teach school concepts in English
  - Data will help determine if the child has a language learning difficulty
    - Standardized tests may be one source of info

# Spanish Receptive Vocabulary



# Spanish Receptive Language



# Cautions about Standardized Tests



- Tests of English normed on monolingual English speakers
  - Even when there is a Spanish version
  - Monolinguals should not be compared to bilinguals
  
- Tests of Spanish may be normed on
  - Monolingual Spanish speakers (living in other countries)
    - TVIP
    - Woodcock Language Survey, Tests of Achievement
  - Children who are predominantly Spanish speakers
    - PLS-IV
    - CELF-P2
  - Move to conceptual scoring
    - Expressive One Word Picture Vocabulary – Bilingual version
    - New PLS ??
    - Bilingual English Spanish Assessment (in development)
  
- Paucity of tests of literacy, phonological awareness
  
- Therefore,
  - May administer items for baseline info
  - But often can't use norms

# Gather info from parents



- Parents are good reporters of their children's abilities
- Ask parents about their child's development of L1
  - How does their child's abilities differ from older siblings/other child?
  - Is their child having difficulty learning L1?
  - What concerns do they have?
- Ask specific questions about what child can/cannot do in their L1
  - Does your child say 3-4 word sentences?
    - Can you give me examples?
  - Have they tried teaching letter names in Spanish?
    - How has their child responded?





# On-Going Assessment

Critical for Determining who is in need  
of T2 and T3 interventions

# Assess overtime



- After determining baseline status
  - Follow up with progress monitoring instruments
  - Ask –
    - Is the child making progress?
    - At the same rate as other children?
  - If the child is not making progress, ask
    - Does the child have appropriate Tier 1 supports?
      - Using L1 to support L2
      - Multiple modalities
      - Verbal routines
      - Multiple exposures in different contexts
      - Small group instruction

# Dynamic Assessment



- Based on Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development
- Goal – “to establish the amount of change that can be induced during interactions with the examiner during the assessment process” (Gutierrez-Clellen & Pena, 2001).
  - Children who show limited change
    - May need extensive assistance
    - Good candidate for Tier 2 or 3 interventions
  - Children who show significant changes & maintain those changes
    - May not need more intensive instruction

# Test-teach-retest

- Test child's ability in a particular area
  - Using a set of test probes
- Then, teach the child
  - Length of mediation varies
    - 2-4 sessions, 15-30 minutes in length
  - Document child's performance
- Retest the child using test probes
  - Measure of change
    - Qualitative analysis of children's responses
  - Modifiability ratings
- Dynamic assessment
  - Shown to differentiate children with and without learning difficulties



# Modifiability



- Important to choose appropriate measures of modifiability (Gutierrez-Clellen & Pena, 2001)
  - Examples
    - child's ability to attend, self-regulate or use adult as a reference
    - child's responsiveness to remediation
    - child's ability to transfer skill to novel task
    - intensity of effort used by adult to cause change

# Rate child on likert-type scale



- 1 = high distractibility & minimal attention
- 2 = prompting/repetition needed more than 50% of the time
- 3 = prompting/repetition needed less than 50% of the time
- 4 = attentional prompts needed only at the beginning of the mediation session
- 5 = orienting response and on-task behavior without prompts

# Case Example



- Two bilingual children
  - Performing below means on English vocabulary
  - Engaged in 2, 30 minute mediation sessions
  - Vicky
    - Somewhat motivated
    - Required much teacher effort
    - Intermittently used planning strategies that were taught
    - Limited ability to transfer learning across tasks
    - Modest changes in abilities observed
  - Luis
    - Highly responsive
    - Minimal teacher effort
    - Transferred abilities
    - Demonstrated learning

# Modifiability

	Vicky	Luis
Responsivity	2	5
Examiner effort	1	4
Use of strategies	2	4
Transfer	2	3
Total	7	16



# Putting the Pieces Together

- Combine multiple pieces of Information
- Piece 1 - Knowledge of DLLs' development
- Piece 2 – Child's Language experiences
  - Length & amount of exposure to English
  - Consistency of exposure/usage
- Piece 3 – Baseline Status
  - Current abilities in LI and English
  - Parental input and concerns
- Piece 4 – On-going assessment
  - Rate of development/Progress
  - Modifiability



Thank You!  
¡Gracias!

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