Authentic Assessment of English Learners

Lauren Leitao
3/29/14
Session Objectives

- Participants will review and reflect upon current EL assessment practices in their classrooms and schools.
- Participants will analyze and discuss different types of assessments and their impact on ELs.
- Participants will explore and experience authentic assessment practices that address the needs of ELs.
- Participants will identify 1-3 assessment practices that they will implement in their classrooms and schools this school year.
Activation & Assessment of Prior Knowledge

4 corners activity:

1: “Learning and teaching is messy stuff. It doesn’t fit into bubbles.”

2: “Every hour spent on [such] exam preparation is an hour not spent helping students become critical, creative, curious learners.”

3: “…when you raise the bar, people rise to the challenge.”

4: “Not everything that counts can be counted and not everything that can be counted counts.”
The Role of Qualitative Data

- **Quantitative vs. Qualitative Data:** Which type of data do we tend to collect more frequently from our EL students?

- **Turn and Talk:** What do we need to know about our EL students before we can appropriately and effectively instruct and assess them?
7 Integral Factors that Impact Achievement of ELs
from Marler, Hamayan, Sanchez-Lopez, & Damico, 2013

- Learning Environment
- Academic Achievement
- Oral Language & Literacy
- Personal & Family
- Physical and Psychological
- Previous Schooling
- Cross-Cultural
## Protocol for Gathering Data Along Seven Integral Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integral Factors</th>
<th>Examples of Data</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Environment Factors</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Achievement &amp; Instructional Factors</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oral Language &amp; Literacy Factors</strong></td>
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*Adapted from Hamayan, Marler, Sanchez-Lopez & Damico (2013)*
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<th>Previous Schooling Factors</th>
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<tr>
<th>Cross-Cultural Factors</th>
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<td>(*Note: cross-cultural considerations must be taken into account within all of the above integral factors)</td>
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Note: This data should be collected in students’ home languages and English, to the greatest extent possible.

Adapted from Hamayan, Marler, Sanchez-Lopez & Damico (2013)
Qualitative Data is Important!

- **Know your students!**
  - Interest inventories
  - Parent surveys
  - Parent/student intake interviews

- Our students are more than a set of data points.

- Qualitative data collection/documentation help us contextualize quantitative measures.
Assessment Brainstorm

- On the post-it notes provided, write down all of the assessments that you currently administer to EL students in your classroom or school.
- Please list only one assessment on each post-it.
- Spread the post-its out across your table/desk.
6 Purposes for Assessing ELs
O’Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996

1. Screening to determine which students are ELs and subsequent placement of ELs.

2. Placement in language support programs.

3. Reclassification as former ELs or exit from language support programs.


5. Program evaluation.

6. Accountability.
Assessment Sort #1: Mandated vs. Classroom-based

- Sort your post-its by mandated assessments (federal/state/district/school) and classroom assessments.
- What do you notice?
- What impact do these assessments have on ELs? On our instruction?
“Title III accountability requires ELs to make progress in learning English, to attain English language proficiency (ELP), and to learn academic content (NCLB, 2001).”
Assessment Sort #2: Formative vs. Summative

- Re-sort your assessments (post-its) into two groups:
  - FORMATIVE ASSESSMENTS: Assessment FOR learning
  - SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT: Assessment OF learning

- What do you notice? Did you have to change/move much from the previous sort?

- Which type of assessment do you find most valuable?

- Why is it important to utilize both types of assessment in the classroom?
Formative Assessment
Carol Ann Tomlinson

1. Help students understand the role of formative assessment.
2. Begin with clear KUDs (Know, Understand, and be able to Do).
3. Make room for student differences.
4. Provide instructive feedback.
5. Make feedback user-friendly.
6. Assess persistently.
7. Engage students with formative assessment.
8. Look for patterns.
9. Plan instruction and content requirements around student needs.
10. Repeat the process.
Assessment Sort #3: Content vs. Language

- Re-sort your assessments (post-its) into those that assess **content learning** vs. those that assess **language development**.
- Which aspect of your students’ learning do you assess more frequently?
- Do you have any assessments that assess **both** content learning and language development simultaneously?
- For ELs, we must assess **both**!
Assessment Sort #4: By Language Domain

• Re-sort your assessments (post-its) by language domain: Speaking, Listening, Reading, and Writing.
  • What do you notice?
  • Are certain language domains assessed more than others?
  • Are any of the language domains under-assessed, or not assessed at all?
Assessment Sort #5: Open Sort

- What are some other ways in which you might sort and classify the different assessments you administer to your EL students?

- **Think-Pair-Share:** After going through the various sorts, can you identify assessments that need to be:
  - Added?
  - Eliminated?
  - Modified?
  - Reduced?
  - Enhanced?
**Instruction-Embedded Formative Assessments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>The teacher . . .</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Four Corners</td>
<td>• Listens for what students know or what misconceptions they may have about the concept/topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stand-up/Sit-down</td>
<td>• Observes what language students have to discuss the concept/topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Brainstorm/Quick-write</td>
<td>• Takes notes to help plan for instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Think-pair-share</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Word/picture sorts</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Concept attainment</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Knowledge rating/anticipation guide</td>
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</table>
Concept Attainment
What concept is being defined by these examples and non-examples?

<table>
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<td>Students are assessed in English and in L1, when possible.</td>
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What is the impact of these two statements? Which is more true of your classroom or school?
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<td>All assessments are given in the form of multiple choice tests and quizzes at the end of the unit.</td>
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Which statement best reflects your current practice? Which is better for ELs?
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<td><strong>All students take the same assessments. Assessments are not differentiated for language proficiency.</strong></td>
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What is the impact of these two statements on instruction and assessment of EL students? Why does it matter?
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**Which approach to assessment works better for ELs?**  
**For all students?**
Students are assessed in English and in L1, when possible.
Assessment is ongoing and is integrated into classroom instruction.
Assessments are differentiated to meet the needs of ELs. Students may have choice in how they are assessed.
Students set goals and engage regularly in self-assessment to reflect upon their progress.
Classroom assessments measure both content knowledge and language development.

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The SIOP Model: Assessment

- Comprehensive review of key vocabulary
- Comprehensive review of key concepts
- Regular Feedback provided to students on their output
- Assessment of student comprehension of all lesson objectives throughout the lesson (a SIOP lesson should include both content AND language objectives)
Linguistically Responsive Assessment Practices

1. Integration of content and language
2. Student ownership & choice
3. Instructional practices
4. Accommodations & Advocacy
1. Integration of Content & Language

- “[F]or English learners to have access to core content, they need academic language and literacy skills.” (Echevería, Vogt, & Short, 2013)

- SIOP Model
  - Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol – “a valid, reliable, and effective model of sheltered instruction.”
  - 8 Components: Lesson Preparation, Building Background, Comprehensible Input, Strategies, Interaction, Practice & Application, Lesson Delivery, Review & Assessment
  - “[SIOP] draws from and complements methods advocated for both second language and mainstream classrooms.”
# Can Do Descriptors: Grade Level Cluster 1-2

For the given level of English language proficiency and with visual, graphic, or interactive support through Level 4, English language learners can process or produce the language needed to:

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Level 2 Beginning</th>
<th>Level 3 Developing</th>
<th>Level 4 Expanding</th>
<th>Level 5 Bridging</th>
<th>Level 6 Reaching</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LISTENING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Follow modeled, one-step oral directions (e.g., “Find a pencil.”)</td>
<td>• Match oral reading of stories to illustrations</td>
<td>• Follow modeled multi-step oral directions</td>
<td>• Compare/contrast objects according to physical attributes (e.g., size, shape, color) based on oral information</td>
<td>• Use context clues to gain meaning from grade-level text read orally</td>
<td>Write in grade-level Listening expectations below:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify pictures of everyday objects as stated orally (e.g., in books)</td>
<td>• Carry out two- to three-step oral commands (e.g., “Take out your science book. Now turn to page 25.”)</td>
<td>• Sequence pictures of stories read aloud (e.g., beginning, middle, and end)</td>
<td>• Find details in illustrated, narrative, or expository text read aloud</td>
<td>• Apply ideas from oral discussions to new situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Point to real-life objects reflective of content-related vocabulary or oral statements</td>
<td>• Sequence a series of oral statements using real objects or pictures</td>
<td>• Match people with jobs or objects with functions based on oral descriptions</td>
<td>• Interpret information from oral reading of narrative or expository text</td>
<td>• Identify ideas/concepts expressed with grade-level content-specific language</td>
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</tr>
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<td>• Mimic gestures or movement associated with statements (e.g., “This is my left hand.”)</td>
<td>• Locate objects described orally</td>
<td>• Classify objects according to descriptive oral statements</td>
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| NAMES            |                   |                   |                   |                  |                  |

The Can Do Descriptors work in conjunction with the WIDA Performance Definitions of the English language proficiency standards. The Performance Definitions use three criteria (1. linguistic complexity; 2. vocabulary usage; and 3. language control) to describe the increasing quality and quantity of students’ language processing and use across the levels of language proficiency.
**A Blank Template for Drafting Strands of MPiS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ELD STANDARD:</th>
<th>EXAMPLE TOPIC:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**CONNECTION:**

**EXAMPLE CONTEXT FOR LANGUAGE USE:**

**COGNITIVE FUNCTION:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DOMAIN:</th>
<th>Level 1 Entering</th>
<th>Level 2 Emerging</th>
<th>Level 3 Developing</th>
<th>Level 4 Expanding</th>
<th>Level 5 Bridging</th>
<th>Level 6 - Reaching</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**TOPIC-RELATED LANGUAGE:**
Integration of Content & Language: Example Activity

• “Mingle to the Music”

• Each participant will receive an assessment strategy.

• When the music plays, “mingle” around the room.

• When the music stops, describe your strategy to the person next to you.
  • Possible sentence frame: *My strategy is_______. It could be used for ______________.*
2. Student Ownership & Choice

- Students are more engaged when they know what they’re learning and why.

- Students are more likely to take risks if they know they have the support to be successful and if the classroom environment allows them to learn from their mistakes.

- “Effective learning requires feedback.” (Hill & Flynn, 2006)
  - Feedback should be:
    - Corrective in nature.
    - Timely.
    - Criterion-referenced
    - Can be given through self-evaluation. (Hill & Flynn, 2006)
Strategies that Promote Student Ownership

- Project-based learning with a *menu of project options*
- Individual goal setting
- Portfolios
  - [http://lfonetwork.uoregon.edu/linguafolio-jr/](http://lfonetwork.uoregon.edu/linguafolio-jr/)
- Self-assessment (rubrics and checklists)
  - [http://rubistar.4teachers.org/](http://rubistar.4teachers.org/)
‘Can do’ Checklist Video Clip

http://www.learnnc.org/lp/media/video/Linguafolia/24%20Checklists.flv
Reflective Teaching Clip

http://www.learnnc.org/lp/media/video/Linguafolia/10%20RefTeachiing.flv
3. Instructional Practices

- “Language use is language learning.”
- Cooperative learning
- Teaching & learning activities that promote interaction between students
- Student-centered vs. teacher-centered instruction
- Variety of lesson formats: whole group, small group, individual conferencing, independent work
Instructional Practices that Promote Language Use

- Four corners
- Mix-Freeze-Group
- Send the Sage
- Jig saw
- Quick-write
- Picture of the day
- Sentence frames
- Paired reading
- Inside/outside circle
- Small group work with assigned roles
- Learning games ("pictionary", charades, 20 questions, etc.)
“Send the Sage”

- Form groups of 5.
- Read the assessment strategy provided.
- Identify the “sage”, or expert, for the group.
- As a group, prepare your “sage” to:
  - Describe the strategy.
  - Share grade levels/content areas to which it best applies.
  - Give an example of how the strategy might be used.
- “Sages” rotate to the other groups to share their strategy.
Additional Informal Assessment Strategies
Diane Staehr Fenner, 2014

- Thumbs up – thumbs down
- Exit cards
- Think-pair-share
- Listening in on students’ group work
- One-on-one interview
- Warm-up activity
- Logs or journals
- Writing samples
- Checklists
- Cloze tests or quizzes
- Brainstorming exercises
- Story or information retelling
Application of Assessment Practices

- **Mix-Freeze-Group** Activity

- Form trios that represent the three different colored paper slips.

- As a trio, discuss what type of assessment activity you might create to assess the content and language provided that is appropriate for the assigned proficiency level.
“While ELs are the most rapidly growing segment of the U.S. PreK-12 population, they do not always possess a strong voice in their own education due to many factors that may work against them such as their developing English language skills, their parents’ unfamiliarity with the U.S. school system, and their families’ level of understanding of community resources that are available.”
Testing Accommodations
Diane Staehr Fenner, 2014

- Direct linguistic accommodations:
  - Adjustments to the text/reduction of linguistic load.
  - Can be delivered in English or in L1.
  - Examples: simplified text, bilingual glossaries, translated test questions.

- Indirect linguistic support:
  - Test environment & test schedule
  - Examples: extended time, separate testing location

- For accommodations to be effective, students should be familiar with them and they should be utilized regularly during daily instruction and assessment.
Advocacy
Diane Staehr Fenner, 2014

- EL teachers must be active members of RtI, problem solving, and Special Education teams to make sure testing data is interpreted appropriately.

- Review Gifted, Honors, and Advanced Placement programs to make sure ELs are not being systematically excluded.

- Form an EL Committee to review your school or district’s assessment plan and make sure it is meeting the needs of EL students.

- Use local norms in assessment.
Resources/Recommended Reading

- Hill, J. and Flynn, K. *Classroom Instruction that works with English Language Learners.* ASCD, 2006.
Web Resources

- www.wida.us
- http://lfonetwork.uoregon.edu/linguafolio-jr/
- http://rubistar.4teachers.org/
3-2-1 Exit Slip

On your index card, write:

- 3 teaching strategies/activities that you’d like to try.
- 2 assessment practices that you plan to incorporate into your classroom.
- 1 question that you have about ELs and assessment.
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