Emerging solutions to serving Dual Language Learners in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support

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Why focus on DLLs?

• DLLs require special attention to language development in both their home language and English.

• They will vary significantly in language proficiency.

• Different approaches may be warranted based on the language group in your community.
Overarching considerations

• Dual Language Learners are a heterogeneous population

• Assessment and intervention decisions need to be made based on the specific population of DLLs in your community

• Serving DLLs requires a process of decision-making taking into consideration bilingual development, language proficiency, cultural influences on development, and the specific resources available in your community
Main challenge
DLLs speak more than one language!

• This may seem obvious, but many programs rely on only English assessments to measure children’s language ability, pre-academic skills, cognitive abilities, and progress in programs.

• This approach can provide an inaccurate view of the child’s overall language and cognitive development and potentially lead to underestimating their ability
Overarching solutions to improve MTSS with DLLS

1. Gather information on home language exposure
2. Know what resources are available
3. Include home language and families in intervention
4. Adapt English instruction to match child’s English language proficiency
First step: Gathering family home language background information

• An important first step in any assessment process is to gather information from the family about the child’s home language environment.
• The intent is to understand how much exposure children have had to both their home language and English.
• This will help you to understand whether children are *simultaneous* or *sequential* bilinguals and approaches to intervention.
• This will also help you understand what level of ability to expect in each of the child’s languages.
## Current Language Use
We are interested in how much English, Spanish, or other home language your child hears and speaks. First, think about week days (Monday-Friday) and then think about weekends (Saturday-Sunday).

### 7. Monday-Friday What languages does your child HEAR?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morning Routine (awake to 9)</th>
<th>Early Afternoon (9 to 1)</th>
<th>Mid Afternoon (1 to 4)</th>
<th>Evening (4 to bedtime)</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>☐ Spanish</td>
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### 8. Saturday and Sunday What languages does your child HEAR?

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<tr>
<th>Morning Routine (awake to 9)</th>
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### 9. Monday-Friday What languages does your child SPEAK?

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### 10. Saturday and Sunday What languages does your child SPEAK?

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Differentiating approaches to MTSS with Spanish-speakers vs. other languages

• In the US Spanish speakers are about 80% of the DLL population
• This provides practitioners with options!
• However over 300 languages are spoken in the US and other language groups will demand different approaches
Universal screening instruments available in Spanish

- Early Literacy Skills Assessment (ELSA; DeBruin-Parecki, 2005)
- Get Ready To Read!-Spanish (GRTR; Lonigan, 2003)
- Individual Growth and Development Indicators (IGDIs- Español; Wackerle-Hollman, Durán & Rodriguez, 2016)
- I-station ISIP Early Reading-Spanish (Mathes, Torgesen & Herron, 2015)
- Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (Ford & Invernizzi, 2015)
Approaches to screening in other languages

- Parental report
- Language sampling in home language
- Clinical observations in natural contexts and in preschool settings
- Translate English instruments, but use results cautiously given linguistic and cultural differences and potential bias in assessment
In a recent review of early childhood curricula the only curriculum to demonstrate efficacy in a preschool aged population was the *DLM Express*. The DLM curriculum demonstrates medium to large effects for oral language, print knowledge, and phonological processing and small effects for cognition and math.

- Available in Spanish
Tier 1 quality for all DLLs

It is important to consider the level of language scaffolding strategies in place and the quality of interactions in English.

Two observational coding methods for quantifying classroom quality for DLLs

- Language Interaction Snapshot (LISn; Sprachman, Caspe, & Atkinns-Burnett, 2009)
- Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation-DLL (ELLCO-DLL; Castro, 2005)
Tier 2 Curriculum available in Spanish

- *Read it Again Pre-K!* (RIA; Justice & McGinty, 2009) was adapted by Durán, Gorman, & Kohlmeier (2014)
- *Story Champs/Puentos de Cuentos* (Petersen & Spencer, 2016)
- *Developing Talkers/Hablemos Junto* (Zucker, Cabell, Solari, & Landry, 2010)
Tier 2 approaches for languages other than Spanish

- We need more research!!!
- We have little to no guidance about how to make evidence-based decisions in this area other than to attend both to the child’s level of proficiency in both English and home language.
- Systematically progress monitor skills that map onto the selected intervention
- Continually ask questions. Do we have clear objectives and outcome goals selected? Is what we are doing working?
Tier 3 in Spanish

• Vocabulary Oral Language and Academic Readiness intervention (VOLAR) (Gutiérrez-Clellan, Simon-Cerejido, & Restrepo, 2014).

• VOLAR focuses on teaching vocabulary and oral language through shared book reading using common trade books with Spanish and English support.
Tier 3 other languages

• Individualize instructional decision making based on child’s language proficiency in English and home language
• Decide on key target areas
• Evaluate what resources are available to support instruction in English and home language
• Involve families in the intervention, they can support home language development through targeted strategies and language scaffolding
Conclusion

Adapting MTSS for DLLs necessitates systematic attention to a child’s language proficiency in their home language and English.

- Innovation in current approaches is necessary and there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to serving DLLs.
- It is not considered best practice to only attend to English language development and English outcomes.
- We need more research in this area to answer pressing questions and to provide more evidence-based practice recommendations.
Resources


Websites

• Developing Talkers/Hablemos Juntos (https://www.childrenslearninginstitute.org/resources/developing-talkershablemos-juntos-curricula-and-training/)

• Get Ready to Read (http://www.getreadytoread.org/skill-building-activities)

• Head Start Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness (https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/cultural-linguistic)

• Read it Again-Pre K (https://earlychildhood.ehe.osu.edu/research/practice/read-it-again-prek/)
### Materials

Table 1. Multilingual language and early literacy materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Materials available</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big Books by George! (866) 581-2199 <a href="http://www.bbbg.org">www.bbbg.org</a></td>
<td>Big books in English/Spanish fiction and nonfiction Teacher resources and DVDs to use with books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capstone Press (800) 747-4992 <a href="http://www.capstonepress.com">www.capstonepress.com</a></td>
<td>English/Spanish children’s books: Math &amp; Science, Social Science, Animals, Health &amp; Technology Books, DVD’s CD’s, posters, and traditional games from multiple cultures. Picture dictionaries in multiple languages. Music CDs for toddlers to early elementary in English and Spanish focusing on speech and language goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Culture for Kids (513) 563-3100 <a href="http://www.cultureforkids.com">www.cultureforkids.com</a></td>
<td>Books, big books, board books, posters, maps, and audio story CDs in many languages English/Spanish educational games and books for preschool learning. English/Spanish language games and vocabulary builders</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kids’ Express Train, LCC (877) 876-3050 <a href="http://www.autismshop.com/music-speech-language/music-speech-language-kids-express-train/?sort_by=position">http://www.autismshop.com/music-speech-language/music-speech-language-kids-express-train/?sort_by=position</a></td>
<td>Board books for parents and infants in English/Spanish with embedded instructions on how to use the books with their children English/Spanish semi-scripted intervention lessons designed to increase the oral language development of bilingual children with speech and language impairment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language Lizard, LLC (888) 554-9273 <a href="http://www.languelizard.com">www.languelizard.com</a></td>
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<td>Learning Props, L.L.C. (877) 776-7750 <a href="http://www.learningprops.com">www.learningprops.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Super Duper® Publications (800) 277-8737 <a href="http://www.superduperinc.com">www.superduperinc.com</a></td>
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<td>Third Week Books (612) 990-6011 <a href="http://www.ThirdWeekBooks.com">www.ThirdWeekBooks.com</a></td>
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<td>Improving the Vocabulary and Oral Language Skills of Bilingual Latino Preschoolers (VOLAR) (866) 758-7251 <a href="http://www.pluralpublishing.com/publication_ivols.htm">www.pluralpublishing.com/publication_ivols.htm</a></td>
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