



# LANGUAGE VS DISABILITY

1 - 2 8 - 2 6

# AGENDA

Today:  
discerning  
language and  
disability.

**Objective: Participants will be able to separate language acquisition from disability by looking at students from a holistic standpoint.**

## **TODAY IS ...**

- ...the beginning of a journey or your learning.
- ...one piece of the puzzle.

## **AS THE MIGRANT EDUCATOR, I CAN ...**

- ...advocate for and help support the opportunity to learn.
- ...support my families with understanding and help gather more information

# IN OUR TIME TOGETHER...

Please keep an open, positive mindset



Let's keep students out of boxes



Holistic: We're looking at the child from a holistic, asset-based standpoint

WARM UP:  
TRUE OR  
FALSE?

- If I am bilingual, I am equally proficient in both languages
- More time spent immersed in English literacy instruction means they will learn to read faster
- Errors indicate disability
- All ELLs learn English at the same rate (5-7 years)
- ELLs need basic skills before they can engage in higher-level thinking
- Caregivers should speak and read English in their homes. Speaking and reading in the home language slows down the rate of learning.

# IN THE CHAT...

What are some of the learning moves students make that you think might indicate a disability?

# LET'S BRAINSTORM

WHAT DOES THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN LOOK  
LIKE?



**LEARNING  
DISABILITY &  
LANGUAGE  
ACQUISITION  
MIRRORS**



# MIRRORS

## Disability

Difficulty carrying out a series of directions because of poor short-term memory or lack of attention

Difficulty with phonological awareness even though the student knows the sounds

Slow to learn sound-symbol correspondence, knows the letter sounds one day, but not the next.

Difficulty remembering sight words; may know one day but not the next

## Language

Difficulty carrying out a series of directions because the directions are not well understood, and it may be harder to remember directions in a second language

Difficulty distinguishing auditorily between unfamiliar sounds not in one's first language, or that are in a different order than in the first language.

Confusion with sound-symbol correspondence when it is different than in one's first language and difficulty pronouncing sounds not in the first language.

Difficulty remembering sight words when word meanings are not understood or when irregular patterns are used.

# MIRRORS

## Disability

Difficulty retelling a story in sequence because of poor short-term memory or retrieval skills.

Confusion with figurative language, idioms, and words with multiple meaning. May be very literal.

Slow to process challenging language.

May have poor auditory memory and not be able to repeat a string of sounds or words accurately.

## Language

Difficulty retelling a story in English without the expressive skills to do so. Student might understand more than they can convey.

Confusion with figurative language, idioms, pronouns, conjunctions, and words with multiple meanings.

Slow to process challenging language because it is not well understood.

May seem to have poor auditory memory if sounds or words are unfamiliar or not well understood.

# MIRRORS

## Disability

May have difficulty concentrating.

May seem easily frustrated and/or discouraged.

## Language

Learning in a second language is mentally exhausting; therefore, ELLs may seem to have difficulty concentrating at times.

Learning in a second language can be frustrating.

# Input output In its simplest form

## English Speaking Student Example

2 English Speaking Volunteers

- Teacher says: “What is two times two?”
- The student takes in this language in English and thinks, ‘HMMM two times two is four.’
- Student says, “Two times two is four.”

## Bilingual Student Example

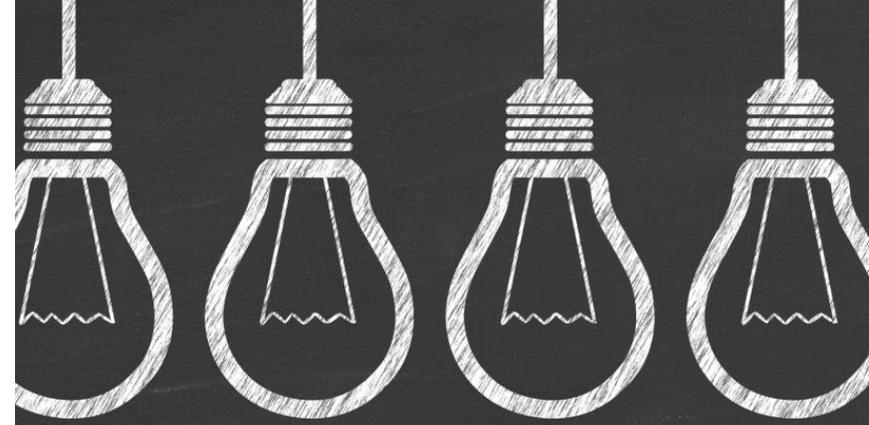
1 English Speaking Volunteer & 1 Volunteer Comfortable Reading Spanish

- Teacher says: “What is 2 times 2?”
- The student takes in this language in English and thinks, ‘What is 2 times 2 significa ¿Cuánto es dos por dos? HMMM dos por dos es cuatro? Dos significa two, cuatro significa four. Two times two is four.’
- Student says “Two times two is four.”

WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE WHY  
AND ANSWER THE  
OF THE N

COMMUNITY  
LEARN  
MEANS ...

- scaffolded (instruction and assessment)
- culturally and linguistically responsive
- great language instruction
- optimal conditions



# CONSIDER ...

- Social-emotional needs
- Economic status
- School timeline
- Missed schooling
- Time and experience
- Family history
- Language distance

# LACK OF OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN

IS NOT AN EXCUSE FOR SPECIAL ED

## Language Acquisition Grid

<b>Pre-Production</b>	<b>Early Production</b>	<b>Speech Emergent</b>	<b>Intermediate Fluency</b>	<b>Advanced Intermediate</b>	<b>Advanced Fluency</b>
<b>0-6 months in US Schools</b>	<b>6 mo-1 year in US Schools</b>	<b>1-2 years in US Schools</b>	<b>2-3 years in US Schools</b>	<b>3-5 years in US Schools</b>	<b>5-7 years in US Schools</b>
<p>Able to observe, locate, label, match, show, classify, sort</p> <p>Adjusting to U.S. culture</p> <p>Associate sound to meaning</p> <p>Comprehend key words only</p> <p>Depend on context</p> <p>Develop listening strategies</p> <p>Gaining familiarity with sounds, rhythms and patterns of English;</p> <p>Follow modeled oral directions</p> <p>May not produce speech</p> <p>Minimal comprehension of general meaning;</p> <p>Point to real objects related to content</p> <p>Mimic gestures or movements</p> <p>Gesture responses</p> <p>Responses range from no verbal response, one to two words, single words, phrases</p> <p>Speech errors observed</p>	<p>Able to name, recall, draw, record, point out, underline, categorize, list</p> <p>Carry out two to three step commands</p> <p>Beginning sound symbol understanding</p> <p>Depends heavily on context</p> <p>Grammar errors</p> <p>Increased comprehension of general and some specific meaning</p> <p>Mispronunciation</p> <p>can sequence a series of statements using real objects or pictures</p> <p>Produces words in isolation</p> <p>Respond using phrases and simple sentences</p> <p>Responds with one/two-word answer or short phrases</p> <p>Can locate objects described orally.</p> <p>Match oral reading to illustrations</p> <p>Use routine expressions independently</p> <p>Uses simple words, gestures, and drawings</p> <p>Verbalizes key words</p>	<p>Able to share, retell, follow, associate, organize, compare, restate, role play</p> <p>Functions on social level</p> <p>Good comprehension of general meaning and increased comprehension of specific meaning</p> <p>Hears smaller elements of speech</p> <p>Makes frequent errors of grammar and word order which occasionally obscure meaning</p> <p>Follow modeled multistep directions</p> <p>Reads and writes basic sight words</p> <p>Respond in more complex sentences with more detail using newly acquired vocabulary to experiment and form messages</p> <p>Can match objects with functions and descriptions</p> <p>Classify objects according to descriptions</p> <p>Short phrases</p>	<p>Able to tell, describe, restate, contrast, question, map, dramatize, demonstrate, give instructions</p> <p>Good comprehension of general meaning and increased comprehension of specific meaning</p> <p>Initiates conversation and questions</p> <p>Makes some pronunciation and basic grammatical errors but is understood</p> <p>Produces whole sentences</p> <p>Reads and writes simple words/sentences</p> <p>Respond in more complex sentences with more detail using newly acquired vocabulary to experiment and form messages</p> <p>Simple sentences</p> <p>Responds orally and in written form</p> <p>Shows good comprehension</p> <p>Uses limited vocabulary</p> <p>Uses short sentences to inform and explain</p>	<p>Able to imagine, create, appraise, contrast, predict, express, report, estimate, evaluate, explain, model</p> <p>Can communicate thoughts</p> <p>Consistent comprehension of general meaning and good understanding of implied meaning</p> <p>Sustain conversation and respond with detail</p> <p>Engage in and produce connected narrative</p> <p>Functions somewhat on an academic level</p> <p>Makes complex grammatical errors</p> <p>Participate using more extensive vocabulary</p> <p>Produces text independently for academic &amp; social purposes</p> <p>Reads and writes descriptive sentences.</p> <p>Shows good comprehension</p> <p>Use standard grammar with few random errors</p> <p>Uses descriptive sentences and initiates conversations</p> <p>Uses expanded vocabulary</p>	<p>Able to relate, infer, hypothesize, outline, revise, suppose, verify, rewrite, justify, critique, summarize, illustrate, judge</p> <p>Comprehend general and implied meaning, including idiomatic and figurative language.</p> <p>Demonstrates comprehension in decontextualized literacy situations</p> <p>Demonstrates decontextualized comprehension</p> <p>Initiate and negotiate using appropriate discourse, varied grammatical structures and vocabulary</p> <p>Functions on academic level with peers</p> <p>Maintains two-way conversation</p> <p>Nativelike proficiency with social conversations.</p> <p>Uses enriched vocabulary</p> <p>Use conventions for formal and informal language.</p>



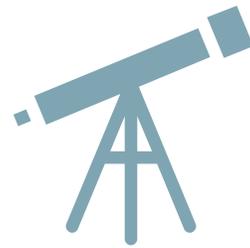
# LANGUAGE DISTANCE

Features	Arabic	English
Writing System	right-to-left, 28 letters	left-to-right, 26 letters
Vowels	a, i, u    durational	a, e, i, o, u short/long
Consonants	no c, f, p, q, v, x additional consonant sounds (gh, kh) no consonant clusters	Consonant clusters voiced and voiceless consonants (th)
Grammar	subject - verb - object no modal verbs no indefinite articles questions marked with question word	subject - verb - object modal verbs (may/might) indefinite articles (a) questions- word order inversion or addition of “do”

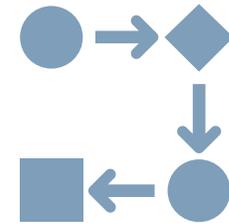
# WRAP UP



What have you learned or never considered?



What questions do you still have?  
Where do you need more clarity?



Is there anything you can start doing now?