Assessment Considerations for

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students

Assessing for a Disability: Language Difference or Disability?

To determine whether a student with limited proficiency in English has a disability, differentiating a disability from a cultural or language difference is crucial. In order to conclude that a student with limited English proficiency has a specific disability, the assessor must rule out the effects of different factors that may simulate language disabilities.

No matter how proficient a student is in his or her primary or home language, if cognitively challenging native language instruction has not been continued, a regression in primary or home language abilities is likely to have occurred. According to Rice and Ortiz (1994), students may exhibit a decrease in primary language proficiency through:

- inability to understand and express academic concepts due to the lack of academic instruction in the primary language,
- simplification of complex grammatical constructions,
- replacement of grammatical forms and word meanings in the primary language by those in English, and
- the convergence of separate forms or meanings in the primary language and English.

These language differences may result in a referral to Special Education because they do not fit the standard for either language even though they are not the result of a disability. The assessor also must keep in mind that the loss of primary or home language competency impacts the student's communicative development in English.

The student's competence in his or her primary or home language may be interfering with the correct use of English. Culturally and linguistically diverse students in the process of acquiring English often use word order common to their primary or home language (e.g., noun-adjective instead of adjective-noun). This is a natural occurrence in the process of second language acquisition and not a disability. Furthermore, students may "code-switch" using words and/or patterns modeled in their homes or communities. While often misinterpreted as evidence of poorly-developed language competence, the ability to code-switch is common among competent, fluent bilingual speakers and may not necessarily indicate the presence of a disability.

Experience shows that students learn a second language in much the same way as they learned their first language. Starting from a silent or receptive stage, if the student is provided with comprehensible input and opportunities to use the new language, s/he will advance to more complex stages of language use. Cummins (1984) suggests that it takes a student, on average, one to two years to acquire basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS)—the level of language needed for basic face-to-face conversation. This level of language use is not cognitively demanding and is highly context-embedded. On the other hand, cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), the level of language needed for complex, cognitive tasks, usually takes on average five to seven years or more to acquire. This level of language functioning is needed to be successful in an English classroom where language is context-reduced and cognitively more challenging. If a student appears to be "stuck" in an early language development stage, this may indicate a processing problem and further investigation is warranted.

In addition to understanding the second language learning process and the impact that first language competence and proficiency has on the second language, the assessor

must be aware of the type of alternative language program that the student is receiving. Questions should be considered such as:

- Has the effectiveness of the English instruction been documented?
- Was instruction delivered using the second-language teacher or was it received in the general education classroom?
- Is the program meeting the student's language development needs?

The answers to these questions will help the assessor determine if the language difficulty is due to inadequate language instruction or the presence of a disability.

Interpretation Considerations Regarding Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children

Interpreting the communicative behavior of culturally and linguistically diverse children during assessment is not substantially different from interpreting that of native English speakers. However, it does require consideration of both the structure of their language/dialect and the cultural values that affect communication. The professional literature contains much information in this area. Some of that information is highlighted below (Anderson, 1994; Battle, 2002; Fahey & Reid, 2000; Garcia, 2002; Goldstein, 2000; Goldstein and Iglesias, 1996; Haynes and Roseberry-McKibbin, 2001; Roseberry-McKibbin, 1994; Stockman, 1996; Watson and Kayser, 1994; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995).

Background Information Considerations

- child rearing practices that may affect communication development (e.g., amount of parent-child vs. peer-peer talk),
- cultural attitudes to impairment that may produce "learned helplessness" in child by our standards,
- genetic conditions that may affect communication development (e.g., prevalence of sickle cell anemia among African-Americans in relation to sensorineural hearing loss),
- influence of difficulty or inconsistency in accessing health care system for identification or intervention of medical conditions that impact communication development (e.g., related to cultural values, parents' lack of English proficiency, poverty),
- stage of native language development when English was introduced,
- disruptions in learning native language or English,
- quality of English speech-language models,
- stability of family composition, living circumstances related to opportunities to engage in normal communication building experiences, and
- attitudes of family and child to English language culture.

Language Considerations

- stage of English acquisition,
- interference from native language that may cause English errors (e.g., Spanish "la casa grande" literally means "the house big"),
- *fossilization* or persistence of errors in English even when English proficiency is generally good,
- inconsistent errors that vary as the child experiments with English (inter-language),
- switching back and forth between native language/dialect and English (code-

switching) words or language forms to fill in gaps in English language knowledge or competence (child may have concept but not the word or indicates awareness of the need to "fill a slot" to keep the communication going),
- language loss in native language as English proficiency improves (may account for poor performance in native language),
- legitimacy of vocabulary and language forms of African-American English related to historical linguistic influences,
- absence of precise native language vocabulary equivalents for English words,
- influence of normal limitations in English vocabulary development on difficulties with multiple meaning words,
- influence of normal difficulties in English language expression on ability to demonstrate comprehension (e.g., respond to questions),
- absence in English of native language forms (e.g., Spanish "tu" and "usted (és)" vs. English "you"),
- restrictions or absence of certain uses of language due to cultural values (e.g., prediction in Native American cultures),
- influence of culture on nonverbal language (e.g., gesturing, eye contact),
- influence of culture on discourse rules (e.g. acceptability of more interruptions among Hispanics),
- influence of culture on proxemics (e.g., acceptability of greater proximity between listener and speaker among Hispanics, and
- influence of absence of written language forms in native language on English writing (e.g. capitalization, punctuation, paragraph structure in Chinese).

Phonology Considerations

- dialect variations within language groups (e.g., Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban dialects of Spanish),
- absence of sounds of native language in English or in the same position in English and vice-versa (e.g., deletion of final consonants in English related to only five consonants appearing in word final position in Spanish or deletion of final consonant clusters in English as a function of their absence in Japanese),
- effect on sound discrimination of meaningful sound differences in one language not being meaningful in another,
- influence of articulation features of native language sounds on production of English sounds,
- influence of dialectal variations on physical parameters of sounds (e.g., lengthening or nasalizing of vowel preceding a final consonant in African-American English when that consonant is deleted),
- historical linguistic influences on development of African-American phonology, and
- the child's possible embarrassment about how s/he sounds in English.

Fluency Considerations

- apparent universality of sound repetitions, sound prolongations and associated behaviors such as eyeblinks and facial, limb and other body movements in stuttering across cultures;
- influence of normal development of English language proficiency on occurrence of dysfluencies (e.g., revisions, hesitations, pauses);

- cultural behaviors that may be misinterpreted as avoidance behaviors (e.g., eye contact);
- cultural variations on fluency enhancers or disrupters;
- misinterpretation of mannerisms used to cover up limited English proficiency as secondary characteristics of dysfluency;
- the relationship of locus of stuttering to phonemic, semantic, syntactic and pragmatic features of the native language and English; and
- possible influence of foreign accent on accuracy of measurement of speech rate and judgments of speech naturalness.

Some Voice Considerations

- influence of vocal characteristics of native language on voice resonance in English (e.g., tone languages),
- cultural variations in acceptable voice quality (e.g., pitch, loudness),
- possible role of insecurity about speaking English on volume of voice in English, and
- possible role of stress from adapting to a new culture on vocal tension affecting voice quality.

IEP team members must understand the process of second language learning and the characteristics exhibited by ELL students at each stage of language development if they are to distinguish between language differences and other impairments. The stages of second language acquisition and charts in this packet of dialectal differences provide developmental and normative data on the speech and language characteristics of various culturally and linguistically diverse populations to assist the team in interpreting test results. The combination of data obtained from the case history and interview information regarding the student's primary or home language, the development of English language and ELL instruction, language sampling and informal assessment as well as standardized language proficiency measures should enable the IEP team to make accurate diagnostic judgments. Only after documenting problematic behaviors in the primary or home language and in English, and eliminating extrinsic variables as causes of these problems, should the possibility of the presence of a disability be considered (Rice and Ortiz, 1994).

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES IN THE ACQUISITION OF A SECOND LANGUAGE

Developmental Stage	Characteristics
Silent/Receptive Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)	• hesitant, often confused and unsure • limited comprehension that is indicated nonverbally through gestures and actions • student begins to associate sound and meaning in the new language • student begins to develop listening skills
Early Production Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)	• yes/no responses • one word verbal responses advancing to groupings of two or three words • focus is on key words and contextual clues • improving comprehension skills • relates words to environment
Speech Emergence Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)	• transition from short phrases to simple sentences • errors of omission and in grammar • continuing mispronunciations
Intermediate Fluency Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS)	• transition to more complex sentences • students engage in conversation and produce connected vocabulary • errors more common as student uses language for more purposes • grammar not firmly acquired • extensive vocabulary development
Advanced Fluency Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) transitioning to Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)	• student can interact extensively with native speakers • student has higher levels of comprehension, though not advanced enough for cognitively-challenging academic tasks • few errors in grammar

(Adapted from Project Talk: A Title VI Academic Excellence Program, Aurora Public Schools, Colorado)

HOME LANGUAGE SURVEY

Student: _____ School: _____Teacher: _____ Grade: _____

	Other Language Specify	English	About Equal	Mixed Code	Neither
Which language does your child seem to understand?					
Which language did your child first learn to speak?					
In which language does your child speak to:					
Father					
Mother					
Siblings					
Grandmother					
Grandfather					
Caretaker					
Friends/Playmates					
Other					
Other					
Which language does your child speak when playing by him/herself?					
Which language does your child prefer when watching television?					
Which language does your child prefer when listening to the radio or stereo?					
Which language do each of the following people use wher speaking to your child?					
Father					
Mother					
Siblings					
Grandmother					
Grandfather					
Caretaker					
Friends/Playmates					
Other					
Other					

	Other Language Specify	English	About Equal	Mixed Code	Neither
Which language do each of the following people speak most often at home?					
Father					
Mother					
Siblings					
Grandmother					
Grandfather					
Caretaker					
Friends/Playmates					
Other					
Other					
In which language are most of the print materials (e.g., books, magazines, newspapers) you receive in your home?					
Does anyone read to your child at home? Yes____ No_____ If yes, in what language?					
Conclusions from Survey					
Based on the above information, which seems to be the dominant language of the home					
Which seems to be the dominant language of the child?					

Comments:

Interview Respondent _____

Interview conducted by _____ Date _____

Source: Ortiz., Alta A., Special Project in Bilingual Special Education, Department of Special Education. College of Education, the University of Texas at Austin. Austin, TX 78712

LINGUISTIC AND CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

Student's Name: _____Date of birth: _____Chronological age: _____

Language Spoken: _____

Questions	Yes	No	Don't Know
❑ Has the child been regularly exposed to L1 literacy-related materials?	___	___	___
❑ Is the child's vocabulary in the first language well developed?	___	___	___
❑ Was the child's L1 fluent and well-developed when s/he began learning English?	___	___	___
❑ Have the child's parents been encouraged to speak and/or read in L1 at home	___	___	___
❑ Has the child's L1 been maintained in school through bilingual education, L1 tutoring, and/or other L1 maintenance activities?	___	___	___
❑ Does the child show interest in L1 maintenance and interaction?	___	___	___
❑ Is the English classroom input comprehensible to the child?	___	___	___
❑ Does the child have frequent opportunities for negotiating meaning and practicing comprehensible output in English?	___	___	___
❑ Has the child been regularly exposed to enriching experiences such as going to museums, libraries, etc.?	___	___	___
❑ Has the child's school attendance been regular?	___	___	___
❑ Has the child had long-term exposure to standard English models?	___	___	___

The more "yes" answers that are checked, the more likely it is that the child has a good conceptual foundation for language and academic learning. The more "no" answers that are checked, the more likely it is that the child has underdeveloped conceptual and linguistic abilities due to limitations within the school and/or home environment, language loss, limited English practice opportunities, inadequate bilingual services, or a combination of these factors.

Assessment Form 1
NORMAL PROCESSES OF SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Student's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Chronological Age: _____ Assessment Date: _____

Language Background: _____

_____

MAJOR SECOND LANGUGE ACQUISITION PROCESSES

Please put a check mark beside the second language acquisition (SL) processes you and/or other professionals believe the student is manifesting at this time. Record any comments that are relevant in this situation.

_____**Interference**
Comments:

_____**Interlanguage**
Comments:

_____**Silent period**
Comments:

_____**Codeswitching**
Comments:

_____**Language loss**
Comments:

Source: Roseberry-McKibbin, C. Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs. Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates, 1995, p. 259. Reprinted with Permission.

Assessment Form 2
EFFECTIVE SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION VARIABLES

Student's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Chronological Age: _____ Assessment Date: _____

Language Background: _____

_____

Please put a check mark beside any variables you and/or other professionals believe are influencing the child's acquisition of English:

_____Motivation

- ❑ Acculturation (student and family's ability to adapt to the dominant culture)
- ❑ Enclosure with American culture (shared activities with Americans)
- ❑ Attitudes of child's ethnic group and dominant group toward one another
- ❑ Family plans to stay in/leave this country (circle one)
- ❑ Possibility that learning English is a threat to the student's identity
- ❑ Student's efforts to learn English are successful/unsuccessful (circle one)
- ❑ Student appears enthusiastic/unenthusiastic about learning (circle one)

Comments:
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____Personality

- ❑ Self-esteem
- ❑ Extroverted/introverted (circle predominant pattern)
- ❑ Assertive/non-assertive (circle predominant pattern)

Comments:
_____
_____
_____
_____

_____**Socioeconomic status** (similar to other children in school?)

Comments:
_____
_____
_____
_____

Source: Roseberry-McKibbin, C. Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs. Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates, 1995, p. 262. Reprinted with Permission.

Assessment Form 3
SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING STYLES AND STRATEGIES

Student's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Chronological Age: _____ Assessment Date: _____

Language Background: _____

_____

Please comment on any second language learning styles and strategies that may characterize or be utilized by this student.

Avoidance (of situation, persons, topics, etc.)

Use of routines and formulas (e.g., "how are you?" or "have a good day!")

Practice opportunities (quantity and quality; who does the student interact with in English? In what settings? School? Neighborhood?)

Modeling (Who are the student's primary speech and language models? What languages do these models speak? If they speak English, what is the quality of their English? How much time does the student spend with them?)

Source:Roseberry-McKibbin, C. Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs. Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates, 1995, p. 261. Reprinted with Permission.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LANGUAGE MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX

AAL FEATURE/CHARACTERISTIC	MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ENGLISH	SAMPLE AAL UTTERANCE
Omission of noun possessive	That's the woman's car. It's John's pencil.	That ***the woman*** car. It ***John*** pencil.
Omission of noun plural	He has 2 boxes of apples. She gives me 5 cents.	He got 2 ***box*** of ***apple***. She ***give*** me 5 ***cent***.
Omission of third person singular present tense marker	She walks to school. The man works in his yard.	She ***walk*** to school. The man ***work*** in his yard.
Omission of "to be" forms such as "is, are"	She is a nice lady. They are going to a movie.	***She*** a nice lady. ***They going*** to a movie.
Present tense "is" may be used regardless of person/number	They are having fun. You are a smart man.	***They is*** having fun. ***You is*** a smart man!
Utterances with "to be" may not show person number agreement with past and present forms	You are playing ball. They are having a picnic.	You ***is*** playing ball. They ***is*** having a picnic.
Present tense forms of auxiliary "have" omitted	I have been here for 2 hours. He has done it again.	I ***been*** here for 2 hours. He ***done*** it again.
Past tense endings may be omitted	He lived in California. She cracked the nut.	He ***live*** in California. She ***crack*** the nut.
Past "was" may be used regardless of number and person	They were shopping. You were helping me.	They ***was*** shopping. You ***was*** helping me.

Source: Roseberry-McKibbin, C. Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs. Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates, 1995, pp. 50-51. Reprinted with Permission.

AAL Feature/Characteristic	Mainstream American English	Sample AAL Utterance
Multiple negatives (each additional negative form adds emphasis to the negative meaning)	We don't have any more. I don't want any cake.	We ***don't have no*** more I ***don't never want no*** cake I ***don't never*** like broccoli.
"None" may be substituted for "any"	She doesn't want any.	She don't want ***none***. She ***give*** me 5 ***cent***.
Perfective construction; "been" may be used to indicate that an action took place in the distant past.	I had the mumps when I was 5. The man works in his yard.	I ***been had*** the mumps when I was 5. I ***been known*** her.
"Done" may be combined with a past tense form to indicate that an action was started and completed	He fixed the stove. She tried to paint it.	He ***done fixed*** the stove. She ***done tried*** to paint it.
The form "be" may be used to indicate actions and events over time	Today she is working. We are singing.	Today ***she be*** working. ***We be*** singing.
Distributive "be" may be used to indicate actions and events over time	He is often cheerful. She's kind sometimes.	***He be*** cheerful. ***She be*** kind.
A pronoun may be used to restate the subject	My brother surprised me. My dog has fleas.	My brother, ***he*** surprise me. My dog, ***he*** got fleas.
"Them" may be substituted for "those"	Those cars are antiques. Where'd you get those books?	***Them*** cars, they be antique. Where you get ***them*** books?
Future tense "is, are" may be replaced by "gonna"	She is going to help us. They are going to be there.	She ***gonna*** help us. They ***gonna*** be there.
"At" is used at the end of "where" questions	Where is the house? Where is the store?	Where is the house ***at***? Where is the store ***at***?
Additional auxiliaries are often used	I might have done it.	I ***might could have*** done it.
"Does" replaced by "do"	She does funny things. It does make sense.	***She do*** funny things. ***It do*** make sense.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LANGUAGE, ARTICULATION, AND PHONOLOGY

AAL FEATURE/CHARACTERISTIC	MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ENGLISH	SAMPLE AAL UTTERANCE
/l/phoneme lessened or omitted	tool always	too' a'ways
/r/phoneme lessened or omitted	doors mother protect	doah mudah p'otek
/f/ voiceless "th" substitution at end or middle of word	teeth both nothing	teef bof mufin'
/t/ voiceless "th" substitution in beginning of a word	think thin	tink tin
/d/ voiced "th" substitution at the beginning, middle of words	this brother	dis broder
/v/ voiced "th" substitution at the end of words	breathe smooth	breave smoov
consonant cluster reduction	desk rest left wasp	des' res' lef' was'
differing syllable stress patterns	guitar police July	***gui*** tar ***po*** lice ***Ju*** ly

Source: Roseberry-McKibbin, C. Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs. Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates, 1995, pp. 53-54. Reprinted with Permission.

AAL Feature/Characteristic	Mainstream American English	Sample AAL Utterance
Verbs ending in /k/ are changed	liked walked	li-tid wah-tid
Metathesis occurs	ask	axed
Devoicing of final voiced consonants	bed rug cab	bet ruk cap
Final consonants may be deleted	bad good	ba' goo'
I/E substitution	pen ten	pin tin
b/v substitution	valentine vest	balentine bes'
dipthong reduction	find oil pound	fahnd ol pond
n/ng substitution	walking thing	walkin' thin'

Note: *Characteristics may vary depending on variables such as geographic region.*

According to Berrey (American Speech 1940) dialectal variations differed only slightly in the various regions of southern Appalachia more than 30 years ago. We have no reason to believe that this same pattern does not pertain today. The four main divisions: (a) the Blue Ridge of Virginia and West Virginia, (b) the Great Smokies of Tennessee and North Carolina, (c) the Cumberlands-Alleghenies of Kentucky and Tennessee, and (d) the Ozarks of Arkansas and Southern Missouri--the great mountainous belts surrounding the great valley of southern Appalachia--demonstrated relatively few differences in language patterns. Otherwise, the dialectal speech patterns of Appalachia are fairly homogenous, except for some significant lexical differences. (See also a series of articles by Gratis Williams in the magazine Mountain Life and Work. 1960-62).

CHARACTERISTICS OF MOUNTAIN DIALECTS

MOUNTAIN DIALECT/CHARACTERISTIC	MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ENGLISH	SAMPLE MOUNTAIN DIALECT UTTERANCE
Pronunciation		
Common Omission Patterns		
Frequent Omission of initial unstressed syllable	across account according appears	'crost 'count cordin' 'pears
Omissions of one of two stop sounds that are in proximity to each other – for example, the (k) and (t) combination	directly	direckly
Omission of (d) and (t) in particular in order to avoid using the stop	children let's	chillern less
Omission of medial (r)	burst curse horse first	bust cuss hoss fust
Occasionally two syllables containing the (r) disappear: tolable	tolerable considerable	tolable consid'able
Omission of final sounds, particularly stops and usually a dental – for example, final (t) is lost after (ep), and also tends to disappear after (f), after (s), etc., final (d) usually dropped after (n) and (l), final (p) often lost after (s).	slept crept loft Baptist must old hand ground clasp wasp	slep' kep' lof' Baptis' mus' ole han' groun' clas' was'

CHARACTERISTICS OF MOUNTAIN DIALECTS

MOUNTAIN DIALECT/CHARACTERISTIC	MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ENGLISH	SAMPLE MOUNTAIN DIALECT UTTERANCE
The Addition of Sounds: Some Patterns Only		
Voiceless consonant following a nasal causes the addition of a (p) or (t); if the consonant is voiced, the (b) or (d) are added.	comfort warmth family chimney	compfort warmpth fambly chimbly
Similarly when (l) is followed by a consonant, a stop (d) or (t) may be added before the next consonant.	miles else	milds elts
Intrusive (r) after the schwa	magazine banana	magerzine bananer
Some Vowel Substitutions The sound (I) tends to become (e): ben (been), breng (bring).	been bring	ben breng
The sound (e) may be modified to (I): kittle, chist, git, yit.	kettle chest get yet	kittle chist git yit
Occasionally (ei) becomes (i), (I), (e), and (ou)	drain grate came naked	dreen grit kem necked
The sound (o) may become (er)	window hollow banjo	winder holler banjer
The sound (e) may be substituted for (ŭ)	brush grudge such just	bresh gredge sich jist

CHARACTERISTICS OF MOUNTAIN DIALECTS

MOUNTAIN DIALECT/CHARACTERISTIC	MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ENGLISH	SAMPLE MOUNTAIN DIALECT UTTERANCE
Sound Consonant Substitutions		
Sometimes (d) becomes (dz) and conversely the final (t) becomes (d).	tedious salad twenty	tejous salat twendy
Sometimes (k) replaces (t).	vomit	vomick
The (t) becomes (ch) before (iu), (ju) and (u).	tune Tuesday	chune cheusday
Grammar – Nouns		
Noun compounds are used where the initial noun is used attributively.	church widow Bible	church-house widder-man Bible-book
Pluralization	posts nests beasts	postes nestes beastes
Collective sense-singular and plural alike	seven years ago six feet high	seven year back six-foot high
Appending –er to compounds	deaf and dumb new-born	deef-an'-dumber new-born'der

CHARACTERISTICS OF MOUNTAIN DIALECTS

MOUNTAIN DIALECT/CHARACTERISTIC	MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ENGLISH	SAMPLE MOUNTAIN DIALECT UTTERANCE
Pronouns		
Emphatic demonstratives	this he's here that that is this that	this here hese hyar that thar that 'ar this'n that'n
Disjunctive possessives (based on mine)	theirs hers his yours ours	theirn hern hisn yourn ourn
Reflexives	himself themselves	hisself theirselves theyselves
Hit used as a variant of it at beginning of a clause or medially only when particular emphasis is desired	It is over there.	Hit is over there.
Them is commonly employed for those and they.	Those boys went into town. They took the car.	Them boys went into town. Them took the car.
Verbs		
Strong preterites abound	shook drove fought froze rode broke sent wrapped	shuch driv fit friz rid saunt wrop
More often a weak preterite is used to replace a strong one	knew drew drank caught blew saw	knowed drawed drunked bruk ketched blowed seed
Addition of –ed to past form of many verbs	born cost drown	borned costed drowned

CHARACTERISTICS OF MOUNTAIN DIALECTS

MOUNTAIN DIALECT/CHARACTERISTIC	MAINSTREAM AMERICAN ENGLISH	SAMPLE MOUNTAIN DIALECT UTTERANCE
Adjectives and Adverbs		
Comparatives and superlatives are formed suffixing –er or –est.	most grown up best fighter the only best dancing	growed-upper fightin'er onliest dancin'est
Double comparative and superlatives are common.	worse better best	worser more betterer most best
Prepositions		
'A' is used with verbal nouns.	going giving	a-going' a-givin'
On for of is contracted.	off of out of	off'n out'n
Conversion: Parts of Speech Interchanged		
Adjectives serve as verbs.	Now don't go agonizing him any.	Now don't go a contraryin' him none.
Nouns are converted to verbs.	He's always blaming me. It won't please her much.	He's allus a-faultin' me. Hit won't pleasure her much.
Verbs are converted to nouns.	I brought in an armload of wood.	I fotched a carryin' armful o' wood.
Adverbs are used as nouns.	A person should have a preference about what he says.	A body should have a rather about what all he says.
Adjectives are used as nouns.	We sure got a good crop of onions this year.	We shore got a lavish o' onions this year.
Pleonasm: Redundancy of Southern Mountain Speech	the small man during nap	a small little-bitty feller durin' the while nap o' sleep

LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES COMMONLY OBSERVED AMONG SPANISH SPEAKERS

LANGUAGE CHARACTERISTICS	SAMPLE ENGLISH UTTERANCES
Adjective comes after noun.	The house green.
The *'s* is often omitted in plurals and possessives.	The girl book is… Juan hat is read.
Past tense –ed is often omitted.	We walk yesterday.
Double negatives are required.	I don't have no more.
Superiority is demonstrated by using *mas*.	This cake is more big.
The adverb often follows the verb.	He drives very fast his motorcycle.

Source: Roseberry-McKibbin, C. Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs. Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates, 1995, p. 67. Reprinted with Permission

ARTICULATION DIFFERENCES COMMONLY OBSERVED AMONG SPANISH SPEAKERS

ARTICULATION CHARACTERISTICS	SAMPLE ENGLISH UTTERANCES
The /t, d, n/ sounds may be dentalized (tip of tongue is placed against the back of the upper central incisors).	dose/doze
Final consonants are often devoiced.	
b/v substitution	berry/very
deaspirated stops (sounds like speaker is omitting the sound because it is said with little air release)	
ch/sh substitution	Chirley/Shirley
/d/ voiced th, or / z/voiced th (voiced "th" does not exist in Spanish)	dis/this, zat/that
/t/voiceless th (voiceless "th" does not exist in Spanish)	tink/think
schwa sound inserted before word initial consonant clusters	eskate/skate espend/spend
words can end in 10 different sounds: a, e, I, o, u, l, t, n, s, d	
may omit sounds at the ends of words	
when words start with /h/, the /h/ is silent	'old/hold, 'it/hit
/r/ is tapped or trilled (tap /r/ might sound like the tap in the English word "butter")	
there is no /j/ (e.g., judge) sound in Spanish; speakers may substitute "y"	Yulie/Julie yoke/joke
frontal /s/--Spanish /s/ is produced more frontally than English /s/	
the ñ is pronounced like a "y" (e.g., "baño is pronounced "bahnyo").	Some speakers may sound like they have frontal lisps
Spanish has 5 vowels: a, e, I, o, u (ah, E, ee, o, u) and few diphthongs. Thus, Spanish speakers may produce the following vowel substitutions:	
ee/I substitution	peeg/pig, leetle/little
E/ae, ah/ae substitutions	pet/pat. Stahn/Stan

Source: Roseberry-McKibbin, C. Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs. Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates, 1995, p. 68. Reprinted with Permission.

ARTICULATION DIFFERENCES COMMONLY OBSERVED AMONG SPANISH SPEAKERS

LANGUAGE CHARACTERISTICS	SAMPLE ENGLISH UTTERANCES
Omission of plurals	Here are 2 piece of toast. I got 5 finger on each hand.
Omission of copula	He going home now. They eating.
Omission of possessive	I have Phuong pencil. Mom food is cold.
Omission of past tense morpheme	We cook dinner yesterday. Last night she walk home.
Past tense double marking	He didn't went by himself.
Double negative	They don't have no books.
Subject-verb-object relationship differences/omissions	I messed up it. He like.
Singular present tense omission or addition	You goes inside. He go to the store.
Misordering of interrogatives	You are going now?
Misuse or omission of prepositions	She is in home. He goes to school 8:00.
Misuse of pronouns	She husband is coming. She said her wife is here.
Omission and/or overgeneralization of articles	Boy is sick. He went the home.
Incorrect use of comparatives	This book is gooder than that book.
Omission of conjunctions	You __I going to the beach.
Omission, lack of inflection on auxiliary "do"	She__not take it. He do not have enough.
Omission, lack of inflection on forms of "have"	She have no money. We__been the sore.
Omission of articles	I see little cat.

Source: Roseberry-McKibbin, C. Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs. Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates, 1995, p. 81. Reprinted with Permission.