



DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES: A VISUAL DATA TOOL FOR THE CRITICAL EDUCATOR

Created by:
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Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center

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About the Centers

Great Lakes Equity Center (Center) is an educational research and service center located in Indiana University's School of Education at IUPUI. The Center engages in equity-focused technical assistance and related research with educational and community agencies focused on systemic improvements to serve all learners with particular focus on educational access, participation and outcomes for those who have been historically marginalized. Midwest and Plains Equity Assistance Center is a project of the Center and provides technical assistance related to educational equity based on student race, national origin, sex, and religion at no cost to public educational agencies throughout its 13-state region in the Midwest and Plains.



Introduction

Dual Language Learners with Disabilities: A Visual Data Tool for the Critical Educator is an equity tool for teachers that need quick access to research on the intersection of language and disability. This multi-functional tool can be used as a quick visual resource, or as a more in-depth tool by digging into the data sources embedded in the infographics coupled with critical reflective questions. This versatile tool supports critical educators in learning and growing through an alternative and accessible format.

While this tool is designed to be broadly accessible to educators wanting to use research to shape their practice, as the title implies, we designed it with critical educators in mind. Namely, educators that closely examine how their own practice is connected to historical injustices and how they can engage in the arduous work of unraveling the knots of injustice through praxis. We therefore purposefully use dual language learners (DLLs) as an asset-based alternative term to English language learners (ELLs), to highlight the linguistic strength of students in the process of becoming bilingual (or multilingual).

This tool is organized into the following three sections:

- 1) introduction (p. 1)
- 2) three printable infographics (pp. 3-5), and
- 3) the infographics at a glance with reflective questions for thinking about praxis (pp. 6-8)



About This Tool

The infographics can be printed and hung in the classroom for reference, used electronically with the embedded hyperlinks, or used in small learning communities. We encourage critical dialogue within a community of practice committed to advancing equity for DLLs with disabilities, for while being a DLL or a student with a disability can have grave equity outcomes, being at the center of this intersection compounds the impact of inequities. Our hope is to provide quick, accessible data (and data-driven practices) for critical educators committed to improving educational systems for DLLs with and without disabilities.

DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS WITH DISABILITIES: WHO ARE THEY?

A Visual Data Tool for the Critical Educator

A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Dual language learners with disabilities are students who are eligible for both bilingual or English as a Second Language services and special education services. These students are diverse and can have disabilities that span across the continuum.



RESOURCES

English Language Learners in Public Schools

NCES Fast Facts

RESOURCES

US Department of Education

Find data for your district/school here



DATA CHALLENGES

There is limited data on DLLs with disabilities, and determining nationwide numbers is difficult. For example, data on disability classifications may be disaggregated by race/ethnicity but not by English language learner status.

WHAT DATA CAN WE REPORT?

There are some discrepancies within the research on the numbers of DLLs with disabilities in the US. This shows we need more accountability in this area. According to some reports, there may be as many as 1.2 million DLLs with disabilities.



RESOURCES

Institute on Community Integration, University of Minnesota

WIDA Wisconsin Center for Education Research

RESOURCES

Migration Policy Institute

Pew Research Center Fact Tank

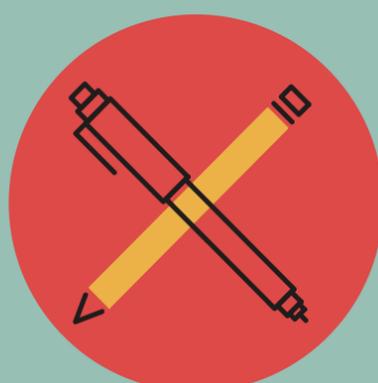


WHAT LANGUAGES DO DLLS SPEAK?

While the majority of DLLs speak Spanish, there are over 400 languages spoken by DLLs in the US. Some other languages include Chinese, Arabic, Hmong, French, Vietnamese, and many others.

WHAT SERVICES DO DLLS RECEIVE?

DLL students with disabilities receive both language and special education services. DLLs with disabilities most commonly receive special education supports for learning disabilities followed by speech or language impairments.



RESOURCES

NCES Children and Youth with Disabilities

Descriptive study of services for DLLs with disabilities

FIND MORE EQUITY RESOURCES @ [HTTPS://GREATLAKESEQUITY.ORG/RESOURCES](https://greatlakesequity.org/resources)

DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNER OR LEARNING DISABILITY? A SLIPPERY SLOPE

A Visual Data Tool for the Critical Educator

DLL, LD, OR BOTH?

DLLs and students with LD

If you teach students with learning disabilities (LD) or dual language learners (DLLs) you probably teach DLLs with LDs too, but also note that difficulties DLLs experience can appear similar to difficulties indicating a possible LD.



RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

A promising but limited alternative

Although RTI has become one of the most common approaches to identifying students with LDs, this approach is limited by the classroom teachers knowledge and ability to provide language supports for DLLs.



DISPROPORTIONALITY

A persistent problem

Determining if a DLL is struggling because they are still learning English or because they have a LD is a slippery slope to navigate. Both mis-identifying a DLL with a LD and waiting too long to assess a DLL with a LD are equity issues. How can we use caution to prevent over- and under-identification?

STUDENTS' RIGHTS

According to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

If a DLL is suspected to have a disability, the law states they must be evaluated in a timely manner. Waiting will not benefit the student, yet culturally appropriate policies and procedures will.

Further, students have the right to receive both DLL *and* special education services at the same time.



IDENTIFICATION CONSIDERATIONS

Centering Language & Culture

If needed, arrange for a trained interpreter in order to meaningfully involve parents throughout the evaluation process, and provide documents in the parents' native language. A professional with expertise in language acquisition should be include throughout the process.

Additional Resources

- English Learner Tool Kit: Chapter 6 Tools & Resources for Addressing English Learners with Disabilities
- English Learners with Disabilities Meeting Summary
- Teaching Bilingual Learners with Disabilities in an Integrated Co-Teaching Dual Language Program

TEACHING DLLS WITH DISABILITIES



A VISUAL DATA TOOL FOR THE CRITICAL EDUCATOR

IMPLEMENT CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY

when planning curriculum and classroom activities, ensure students' socio-cultural identities are represented

RESOURCES

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy & UDL

¡Colorín Colorado! on CRP

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies Podcast



RESOURCES

CAST on UDL

¡Colorín Colorado! on Differentiation

Critical and Inclusive Practices in Literacy

DIFFERENTIATE INSTRUCTION

incorporate Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles, which allows students more access, deeper engagement, and more ways to express their learning

BUILD ON DLLS' CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC RESOURCES

all students bring cultural assets and knowledges to school. Community cultural wealth is an assets-based tool that can leverage the cultural resources DLLs bring as learning tools

RESOURCES

Writing Testimonios

Community Cultural Wealth

Counter Story Telling Curriculum



RESOURCES

WIDA Brief

Framework for RTI with DLLs

Educating K-12 DLLs with Disabilities



UNDERSTAND SUPPORTS

use resources such as the parents, the student, other teachers, the IEP, classwork, etc. to determine unique educational supports to incorporate in your classroom

EQUITABLE, RESPONSIVE EDUCATION FOR ALL

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Reflective Questions for Praxis: Infographic One

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Looking at this infographic, consider the following questions:

- ◇ DLLs are a diverse set of students. What information does the infographic tell us and not tell us about DLL diversity?
- ◇ How does this connect to your own educational context?
- ◇ Finding demographic data specific to DLLs with disabilities is difficult. What does this say about policies and practices?
- ◇ What are the implications for your educational context?
- ◇ Use the Office of Civil Rights data link to look up your school or district. Schools and districts sometimes treat DLL and special education categories as mutually exclusive and have either-or policies (though against the law).
- ◇ Does that data reflect what you expected to find? Why or why not?



Reflective Questions for Praxis: Infographic Two

Dual Language Learners or Disability: A Slippery Slope

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Looking at this infographic, consider the following questions:

- ◇ What policies do your school and/or district have in place for evaluating DLLs for LDs?
- ◇ Is there alignment between the policies and actual practices?
- ◇ Why is identifying whether a DLL might have LD a slippery slope?
- ◇ What are the ramifications of the decision-making during this process?
- ◇ In what ways does your school's RTI process (not) account for DLLs?
- ◇ Do DLLs end up in the most intensive tiers?
- ◇ How can your school's RTI be improved for DLLs?
- ◇ How are language and learning differences accounted for in your school's evaluation process?
- ◇ Who is (not) involved in the process?
- ◇ What is missing or working well?

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Reflective Questions for Praxis: infographic Three

Teaching Dual Language Learners with Disabilities

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Looking at this infographic, consider the following questions:

- ◇ Why do you think culture is salient throughout this infographic?
- ◇ What does culturally responsive/sustaining pedagogies mean to you? How are they discussed at your school?
- ◇ Listen to the podcast at the Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies: Teaching and Learning for Justice link. In what ways does Professor Paris reinforce and/or challenge your understandings?
- ◇ In what ways do teachers at your school discuss the cultural and linguistic wealth as resources?
- ◇ Is language framed as a resource or a barrier? In what ways?
- ◇ In what ways are families framed as problems or as resources?
- ◇ In what way can DLLs with disabilities access to information presented in class? In what ways can they demonstrate their understanding?
- ◇ Which students benefit the most/least?



About the Authors

Dr. Taucia González is an Assistant Professor of Special Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research addresses issues of equity and inclusion for emergent bilingual students with and without learning disabilities. Her current study, funded by the University of Wisconsin's Grand Challenges initiative, examines the work Hmong and Latinx parents and youth do to create more equitable and inclusive schools. The second strand of her research focuses on preparing teachers to work at the intersection of language and ability differences. Taucia currently serves as an advisory board member for the Wisconsin Education Research Advisory Council.

Kate Roberts is a PhD candidate in the department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education and a master's candidate in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her research interests include special education policy creation and implementation and the effects policy has on students, families, and teachers. A former special education classroom teacher in New York City, Kate remains committed to making education more accessible to all.

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