

# CLD Corner: Q&A for the CLD Experts

The CLD Corner is a regular column written by members of the TSHA Task Force on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity.

The CLD Corner was created in an effort to respond to questions on cultural and linguistic diversity. Questions are answered by members of the TSHA Task Force on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity. Members for the 2006-2007 year include **Lynette Austin, Gina Glover, Becky Gonzalez, Dolores Castor, Marie Belgodere, Gail Goodrich-Totten, Cynthia Garcia, Katsura Aoyama, Roxanna Ruiz-Felter** and **Michele Albornóz**. Submit your questions to [slaustin@cebridge.net](mailto:slaustin@cebridge.net). Look for responses from the CLD Task Force on the TSHA's website and in the *Communicologist*.

The CLD Task Force is now offering half- and full-day trainings for school districts, Education Service Centers, university programs, and other agencies on Assessment and Intervention with CLD Populations. For additional information, contact **Lynette Austin** at [slaustin@cebridge.net](mailto:slaustin@cebridge.net).

**QUESTION:** I've been told that it is important to use dynamic assessment when I'm trying to determine if a child demonstrates a language difference or a language disorder. What is dynamic assessment, and how do you use it in a speech-language evaluation?

**ANSWER:** A dynamic assessment is a test-teach-retest procedure that attempts to explore the examinee/learner's cognitive modifiability, or learning potential. It is a method that fits particularly well with the needs of evaluating culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) clients. The dynamic assessor's main goal is to gather information about the quantity and quality of the examinee's language learning potential, rather than to simply record data about the examinee's knowledge and ability at the moment of testing. The child's response to the process of dynamic assessment can assist in determining whether a CLD child truly has a language disorder or a language difference.

The theory of dynamic assessment is based on psychologist **Lev S. Vygotsky's** notion of the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD). The ZPD can be thought of as the area that lies between what children can do independently and what they can do with assistance. Of interest in the assessment are two questions: To what extent is the child able to change when given direct instruction? and How intense an instructional effort is required in order to achieve that change?

Dynamic assessment formats can run the gamut from casual and brief, to multiple sessions that are intensive and carefully planned. **Miller, Gillam, and Peña** (2001) provide an example of the test-teach-retest procedure of dynamic assessment by actively teaching the narrative style used in mainstream American society. The test, or first step, would be to elicit a narrative using a multi-picture sequence story, and then analyze it. The teach, or second step, would be to systematically and explicitly explain to the child what a good story would be like, and then practicing telling stories with the child. At this step taking notes on the child's reaction to the instruction, how many practice stories it took, etc., is important. The retest, or last step, would be to have the child tell a sequence story with no assistance and record that story.

Positive qualitative and quantitative changes in the child's ability to tell a story would indicate that language learning potential is good, and would be evidence that the child demonstrates a language difference. Other types of tasks that have been utilized in dynamic assessment formats include naming (**Peña & Quinn, 1997**), verbal problem solving, and phonological awareness tasks.

More information on dynamic assessment can be found on the ASHA website at [www.asha.org/about/leadership-projects/multicultural/issues/da/default.htm](http://www.asha.org/about/leadership-projects/multicultural/issues/da/default.htm).

## References

Miller, L., Gillam, R., & Peña, E. (2001) *Dynamic assessment and intervention: Improving children's narrative abilities*. Austin: Pro-Ed.

Peña, E., & Quinn, R. (1997). Task familiarity: Effects on the test performance of Puerto Rican and African American children. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools, 28*, 323-33.

## Task Force Favorite

**Gina Glover** recommends the website [www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/#](http://www.uiowa.edu/~acadtech/phonetics/#). It contains animated libraries of the phonetic sounds of English, German, and Spanish. It can be a useful tool in both therapy and assessment. She found out about it through her colleague, **Anna Garcia**, and thinks it's great!

## The TSHA announces another great member benefit: the CE Registry!

TSHA members are now able to track and receive their continuing education (CE) credit online!

Please bring your TSHA membership card to all CE activities so you can record your TSHA membership number on the sign-in roster. Your TSHA membership number is NOT the same as your licensure number. BOTH numbers are needed on all your CE sign-in rosters to ensure an accurate record of your CE activity.

To access your TSHA CE Registry information, visit [www.txsha.org](http://www.txsha.org).

Under the banner "Inside the TSHA Site" place your cursor over "Continuing Education." A drop-down menu will appear. In the drop-down menu, select "CE Registry."

To login, enter your user name (first initial + last name, i.e. Jane Doe = jdoe) and your password (your TSHA membership number). Your CE activity for 2007 will be displayed!