

# The CLD Corner

by TSHA Task Force on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

The Cultural and Linguistic Diversity (CLD) Corner was created in an effort to respond to questions on cultural and linguistic diversity. Questions are answered by members of the Texas Speech-Language-Hearing Association (TSHA) Task Force on Cultural and Linguistic Diversity. Members for the 2008-2009 year include **Ellen Stubbe Kester (co-chair), Lynette Austin, Gina Glover (co-chair), Katsura Aoyama, Nelcy L. Cardenas, Catherine Carrasco-Lynch, Benigno Valles, Julia Pena, and Jacqueline Lopez**. Submit your questions to [ginamlglover@yahoo.com](mailto:ginamlglover@yahoo.com). Look for responses from the CLD Task Force on 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 information, contact Gina Glover at [ginamlglover@yahoo.com](mailto:ginamlglover@yahoo.com).

In our last CLD Corner, we introduced the topic of Response to Intervention (RtI) and cultural and linguistically diverse populations. We posed several questions that the Task Force would be addressing at the TSHA 2009 Convention. This edition of the Corner summarizes the roundtable discussion.

Approximately nine speech-language pathologists (SLPs) representing four school districts as well as university programs participated in the roundtable discussion. One of the first points of discussion focused on how the RtI process works in the respective districts and how it differs for CLD students compared to monolingual English speaking students. The majority of the participants shared that there is no difference and the topic is not being addressed. However, at least one participant's district has begun dual language instruction and as a result is attempting to address interventions specific to the curriculum used in the dual language program.

The participants also discussed at length that some districts are over-referring or under-referring students from CLD backgrounds. One participant stated her observation that some students are placed on RtI tiers because they are English as Second Language (ESL) learners, or they are not placed on RtI tiers because they are ESL. Some students who should be receiving interventions may not be because teachers attribute their difficulties to ESL. The discussion then shifted to whether or not teachers, reading coaches, and other general education staff have a sufficient knowledge

base regarding cultural and linguistic diversity issues. Perhaps we, as SLPs, need to educate our teachers and staff on topics such as first and second language acquisition, normal ESL processes, and cultural factors.

The remainder of the discussion focused on specifics of RtI and how it should be implemented as well as how the data should be gathered and analyzed to facilitate decision-making. Some participants expressed concerns that the process sometimes takes too long, especially when the teachers and staff feel the difficulties are due to the student's limited English proficiency. Participants also discussed the specific types of RtI interventions being used and discussed at length the idea of SLPs intervening prior to referrals by implementing short-term articulation interventions. Among the concerns were the process for identifying articulation errors without a speech evaluation and that some students identified with errors were really exhibiting first language influenced phonemic differences. Everyone agreed that students who exhibited articulation differences should not be placed in a pre-referral articulation intervention program.

The roundtable discussion was lively and very interesting. It may have sparked more questions than it answered. This topic will continue to be a focus for the CLD Task Force as we continue our research. In order to be the best resource we can for you, we need your feedback. What are your experiences, frustrations, questions, concerns, and success stories regarding the RtI process and your bilingual students? To share your thoughts with the task force, please email one of the co-chairs, Gina Glover at [gina.glover@fwisd.org](mailto:gina.glover@fwisd.org) or Ellen Kester at [Ellen.kester@bilinguistics.com](mailto:Ellen.kester@bilinguistics.com).

For further information on RtI and CLD populations, check out the following:

<http://www.nccrest.org/index.html>

[http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com\\_frontpage&Itemid=1](http://www.rti4success.org/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1)

[http://www.ets.org/Media/Conferences\\_and\\_Events/pdf/ELLSymposium/Baca\\_Leonard.pdf](http://www.ets.org/Media/Conferences_and_Events/pdf/ELLSymposium/Baca_Leonard.pdf)

Task Force Favorites:

The favorite this time is *Essential Spanish for the Speech-Language Pathologist* by Penny Chesner-Morris. This book is available through Super Duper Publications or directly from <http://www.essentialspanish.com/products.htm>. It contains Spanish vocabulary, phrases, and therapeutic directions. It was designed specifically for English speaking SLPs and includes pronunciation keys.