



# LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY PART II: ASSESSMENT AND TREATMENT

Xigrid Soto, PhD, CCC-SLP  
xigridsoto@ku.edu

# Review from Previous Class

- Importance of considering **sociolinguistic factors** when working with individuals who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD)
- **Bilingualism**
  - Sequential bilinguals
  - Simultaneous bilinguals
- **Dialects**
  - Idiolect
  - Register
  - Accent

## Today's Learning Objectives:

To understand how to properly assess and treat individuals from CLD populations.

# Assessment for Individuals who are CLD

- **Primary goal:** To complete the *least biased assessment*
- The aim is to understand the person's culture and language, and how these factors may influence the diagnostic process.

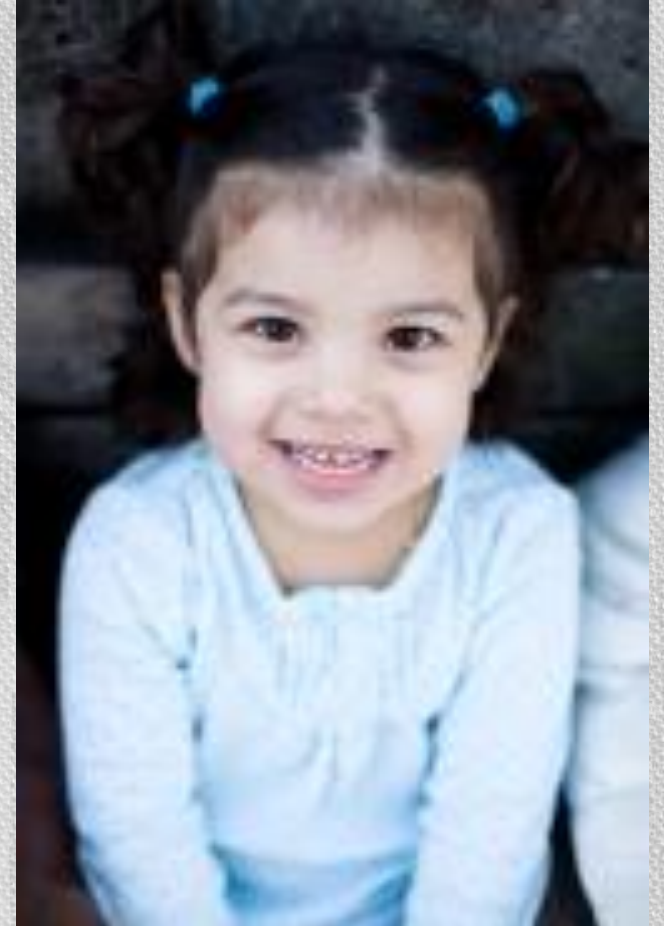
Language  
Difference

Language  
Disorder

# Revisiting Nina's Case

- 4 year old bilingual client whose family spoke primarily Spanish at home
- Child demonstrated limited language use when interacting with mom
- Her sentences and vocabulary were age-appropriate when speaking to her sister

*Think about some ways in which you could best determine whether Nina is demonstrating a language difference vs. a language disorder*



# Redefining Communication Disorders

- **A communication disorder is defined as communication that deviates from the norm.**
- ***However, it is important to remember that the norms from one group cannot be imposed on another group who is different.***

# Factors Associated with Assessment



# Clinical Factors

- Our culture and experiences impact the way we provide services to our clients.
- To respond well to the people we are servicing, we must demonstrate:

A positive attitude toward the family's culture and values

An understanding of typical/atypical language development for each group

An environment in which the client can code-switch

# The Skills of a Bilingual SLP

1. Describes typical bilingual speech and language development
1. Understands the dialect that the child speaks at home
1. Uses a least biased assessment to assess communication skills
1. Administers and interpret evaluation tools
1. Applies intervention strategies in the child's language
1. Recognizes cultural factors that influence assessment and treatment



# Assessment Factors

## 1. Assess speaker in multiple contexts

Functions and activities

- Interviews
- Language samples

Participation

- Portfolios with homework
- Writing samples

Naturalized observations

- Reading measures
- Curriculum measures

Decontextualized observations

- Standardized assessments

# Assessment Factors

2. Administer several standardized and formal measures
3. Assess language skills in ALL of the client's languages/dialects
4. Recognize that there will be variability in the client's communicative modes

# Assessment Tools

Modifications to standardized assessments may need to be made

Know the client's background knowledge



Identify possible test biases



Can administer test to native adult first to identify what to expect



Identify the interactions between the client's first and second language



Report all modifications that were made to the assessment

# Example of Test Biases

*Point to the food we eat for breakfast.*



*What is this?*



Does the sentence  
“We was going to  
the park” sound  
right?

Tell me about  
your last family  
vacation.

# Alternative Forms of Assessment

- Important to tailor assessments to a person's culture and linguistic differences
- Effects of inadequate assessments:

Overdiagnosis

Underdiagnosis

# Types of Alternative Assessments

## Criterion-referenced

- Does not compare performance to other children
- The focus is on identifying the child's particular skills

## Dynamic Assessment

- Identifies how child's skills are modified after instruction
- Test-teach-retest

## Portfolio Assessment

- Collecting samples of the client's work over time

# Other Types of Alternate Assessments

## Ethnographic Assessments

- Observing the client in a variety of contexts while speaking with a variety of communication partners

## Probe Techniques

- Gathers data in a short time frame (i.e., weekly/biweekly) to gauge rate and amount of learning

# Things To Avoid to Prevent Misdiagnoses

- Only using norm-referenced tests
- Only using a language sample to qualify a person for services
- Using translations of tests
- Using English-only assessments if the client is bilingual
- Assuming that features of a second language are characteristic of a disorder
- Assuming that support personnel are trained in evaluations



# The Role of a Monolingual SLP

## Things You Can Do

English evaluations

Oral peripheral examination

Hearing screenings

Nonverbal assessments

## Getting Extra Support

Hire bilingual SLP consultant

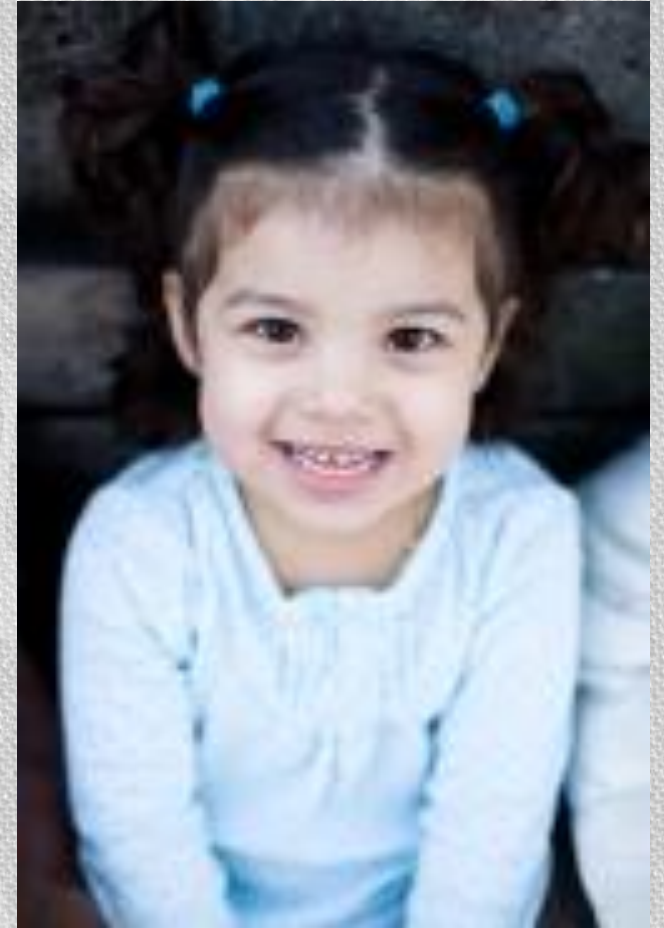
Establish network with other bilingual professionals

Train support bilingual personnel or members of the community\*

Hire itinerant bilingual SLP

# Evaluating Nina: Discussion Questions

1. What are some sociocultural factors to consider when completing the evaluation?
2. What can you do to reduce the possibility of a misdiagnosis?
3. What steps would you take if you were the monolingual SLP assigned to evaluate Nina?



# Intervention Techniques

- Important to consider the family's culture when rendering intervention (e.g., family-centered therapy)
- If working with children, it is important to get the parent's input when developing a treatment plan
- Make intervention meaningful through the use of naturalistic contexts
- ***Your role is NOT to impose your cultural values unto your clients but rather to help your clients become successful communicators in THEIR communities***

# Intervention Techniques

- Have a member of the community, sibling, parent, or paraprofessional model appropriate communication in their native language or dialect
- Two ways of conducting intervention for people who are bilingual:

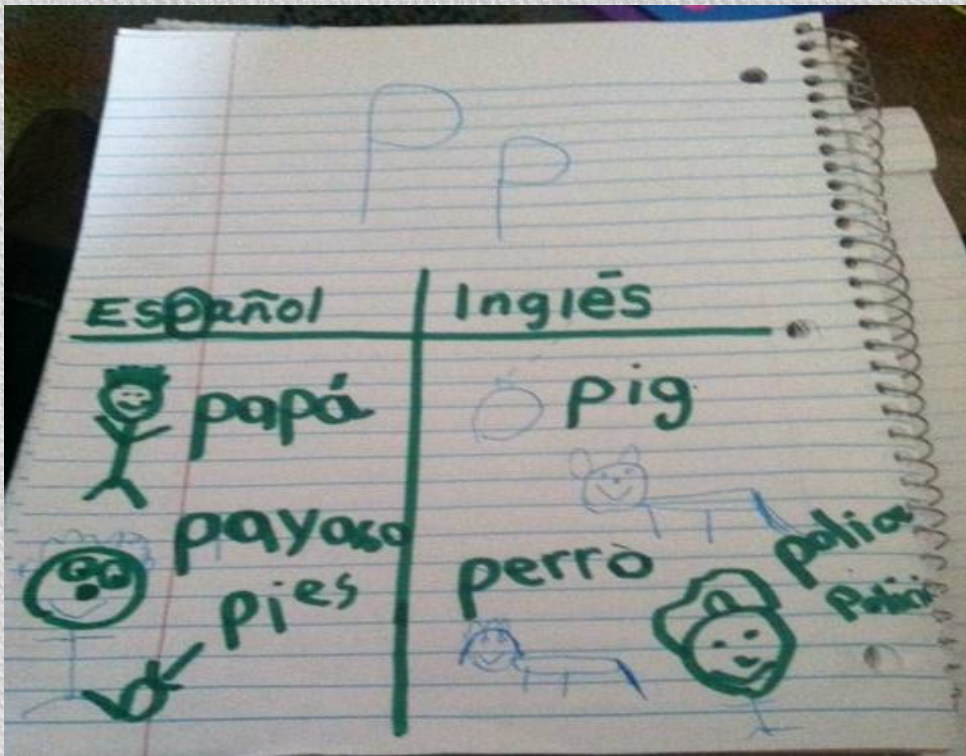
## **Bilingual Approach**

Targeting both languages at the same time

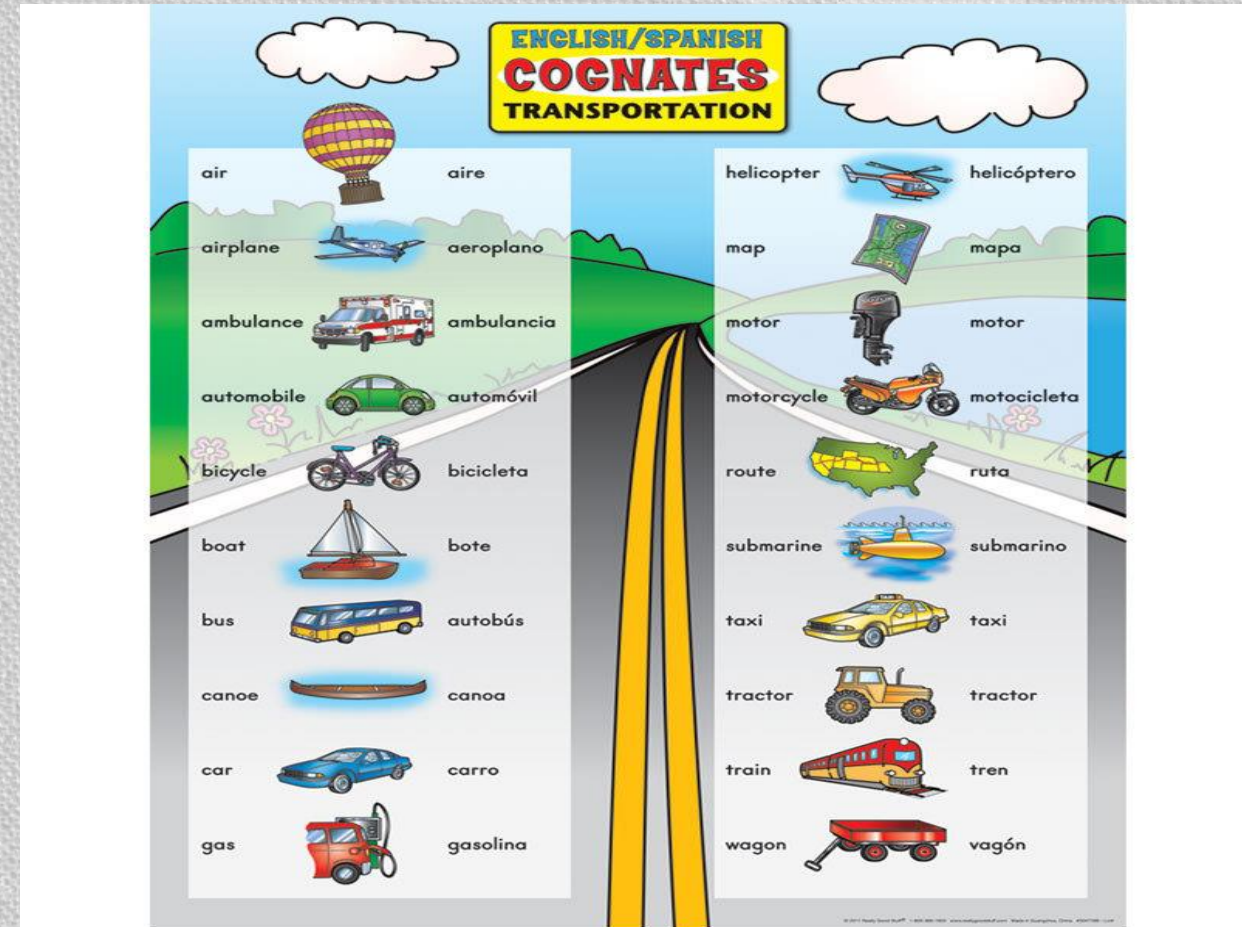
## **Cross-linguistic Approach**

Focusing on aspects that are different between the languages

# Examples of Activities Related to the Bilingual Approach

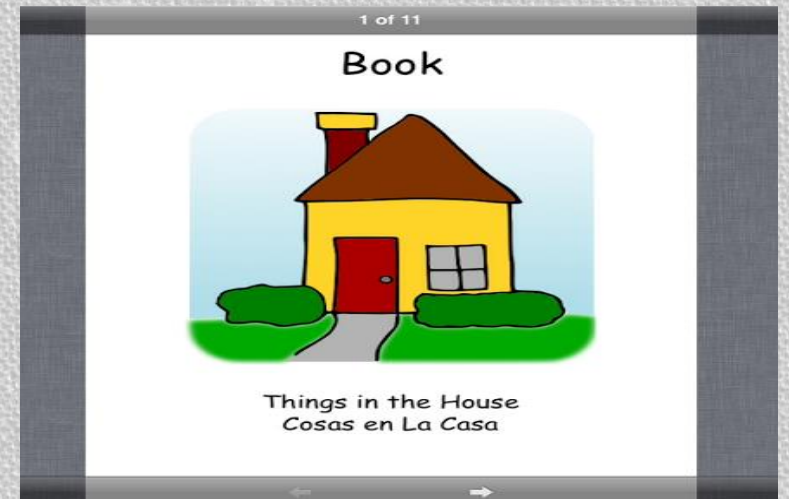
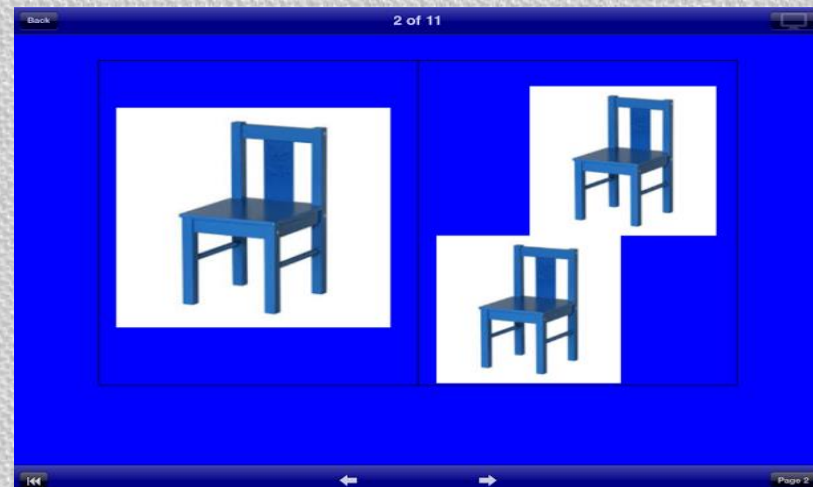
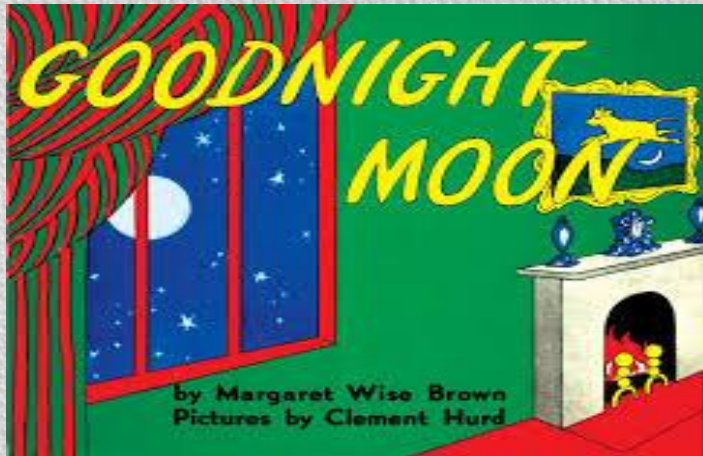


Alphabetic Teaching



Cognates in English/Spanish

# Examples of Activities Related to the Bilingual Approach



# Examples Related to the Cross-Linguistic Approach

## Syntax



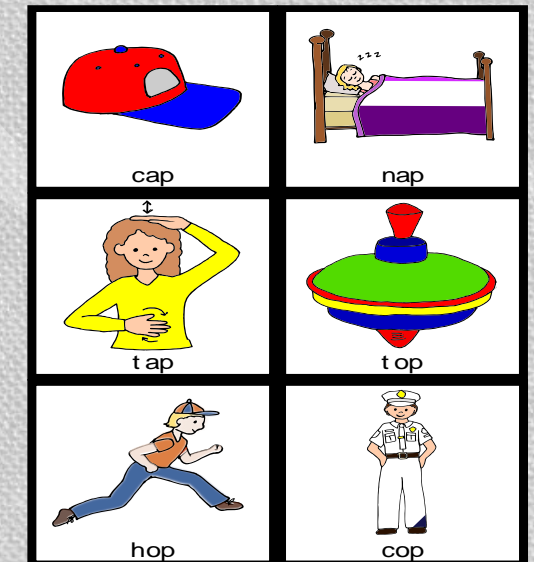
Wind-up toys can be used in English to work on SVO structure (“The rabbit walked”), or in Spanish to practice gender cues (“El conejo caminó”).

## Phonology



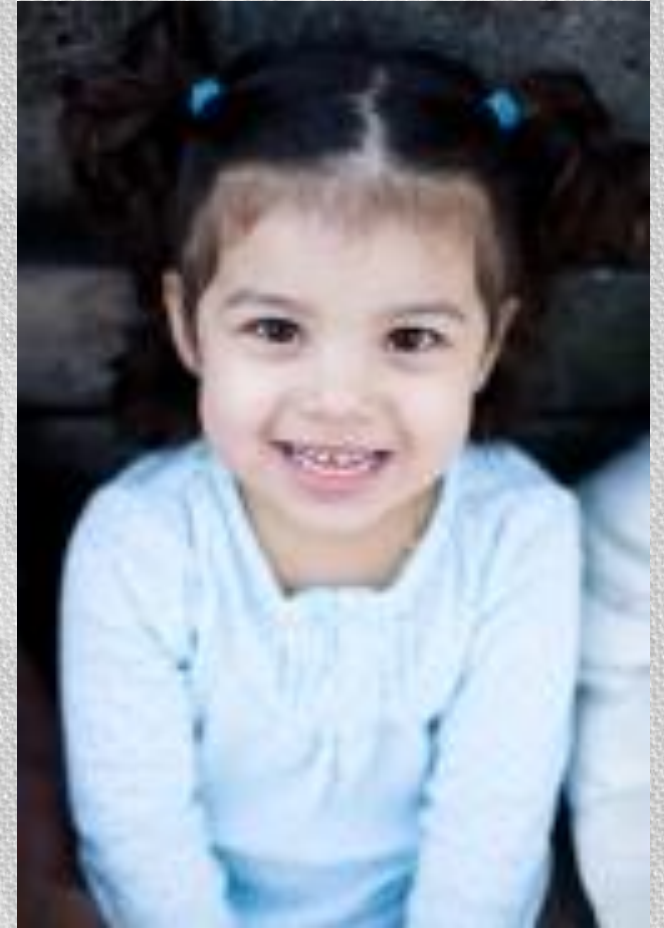
Multisyllabic words in Spanish

Final consonants in English



# Treating Nina: Discussion Questions

1. What would be the benefits of treating Nina in English and Spanish?
2. What can you do to treat Nina if you are a monolingual speech-language therapist?





# Review

- What are the limitations of standardized testing in people who are CLD?
- How can we complete a least biased assessment?
- What can a monolingual SLP do when he/she is assigned to work with a client who has a different cultural/linguistic background?