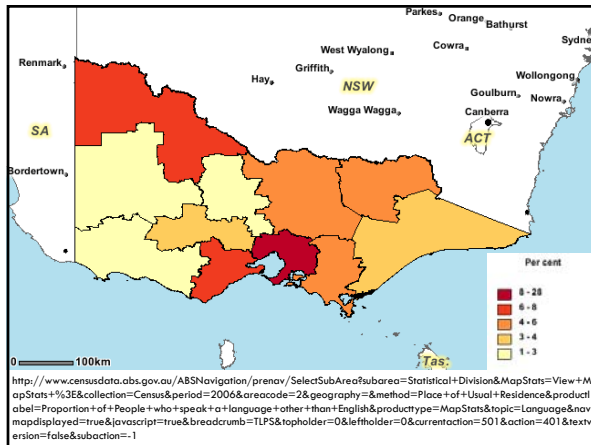## LET THE STUDENTS SPEAK

Identifying language disorder in children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

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http://www.censusdata.abs.gov.au/ABSNavigation/prenav/SelectSubArea?subarea=Statistical+Division&MapStats=View+M apStats+%3E&collection=Census&period=2006&areacode=2&geography=&method=Place+of+Usual+Residence&productl abel=Proportion+of+People+who+speak+a+language+other+than+English&producttype=MapStats&topic=Language&nav mapdisplayed=true&javascript=true&breadcrumb=TLPS&topholder=0&leftholder=0&currentaction=501&action=401&textv ersion=false&subaction=-1

Language and culture

"Language and culture cannot be separated. They are interrelated so intimately that one cannot speak of form, content, and use outside the context of culture." (Kayser, 1996, p. 385).

"… language use is essentially a cultural phenomenon, both reflecting and transmitting deeply held cultural values and beliefs." (van Kleeck, 1994, p 74)
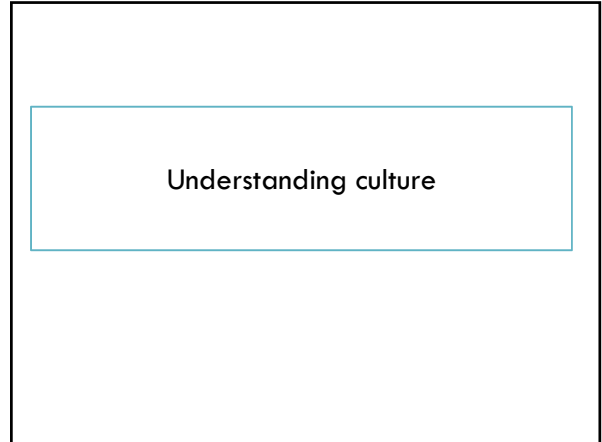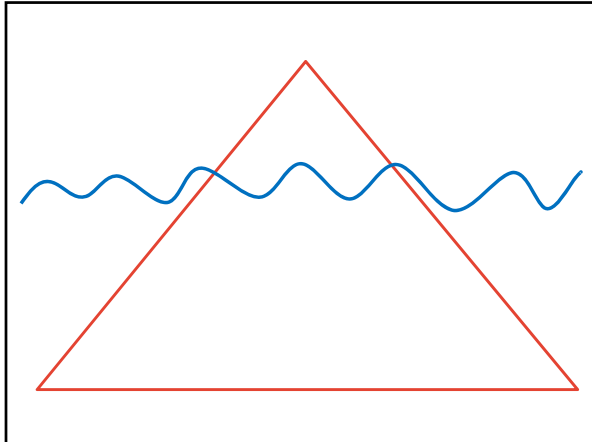
Understanding culture

Culture

"... the shared, accumulated, and integrated set of learned beliefs, habits, attitudes and behaviours of a group or people or community... at once the context in which language is developed and used and the primary vehicle by which it is transmitted."

Kohnert, (2008, p28)

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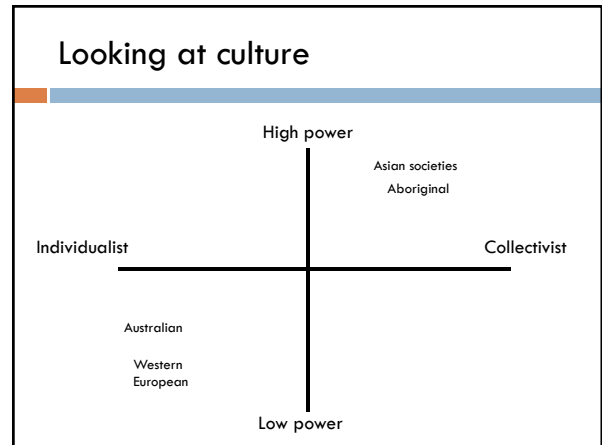We see the world through the filter of our own culture

We need to learn to recognise the ways in which our culture impacts on our views....

... so that we can see how much is cultural

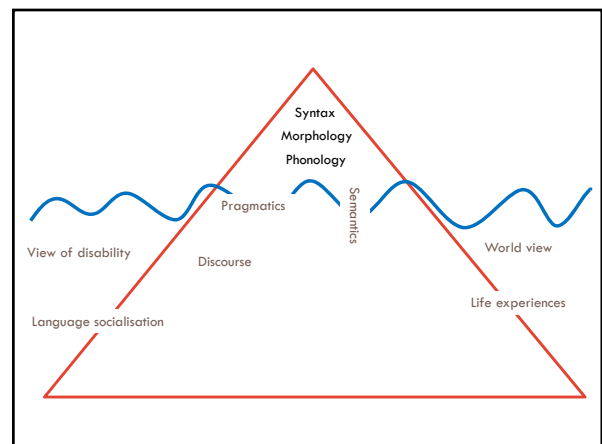Reflect for a minute or two on the behaviours you expect of children.

How much do you think these expectations are based in your cultural background?

"Cultural self-awareness is the first step in intercultural effectiveness. Only when we examine the values, beliefs, and patterns of behavior that are a part of our own cultural identity can we distinguish truth from tradition."
Hanson (1998 : 26)

Looking at culture

High power

Asian societies
Aboriginal

Individualist _____ Collectivist

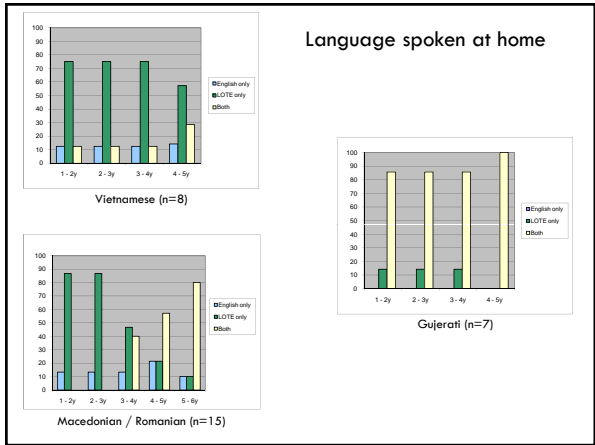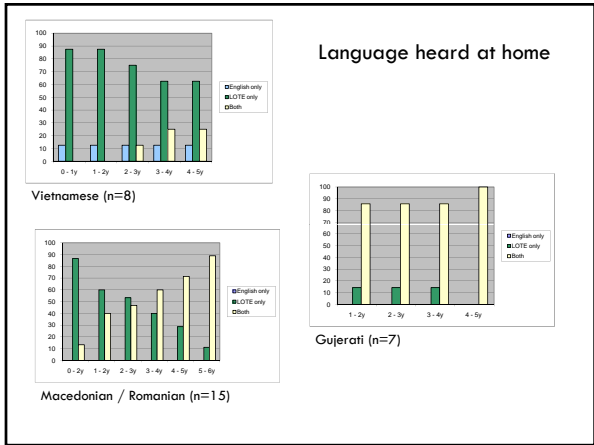Australian

Western European

Low power

Comparing cultures

Anglo American
- Child centred family
- Child talk is valued
- Active social lives
- Early development of independence
- Participate in decision making
- Achievement, individuality

Asian
- Parent centred family
- Close physical contact rather than verbal interaction
- Infants seen as dependent
- Parent defines law, child obeys
- Group orientation, 'face'
- Humility, modesty

Syntax
Morphology
Phonology
Pragmatics
Semantics
View of disability
Discourse
World view
Language socialisation
Life experiences
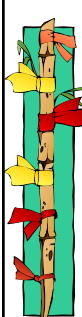
Second language learning

Factors affecting second language learning

- sequential or simultaneous development

- language learning history
  - age of exposure
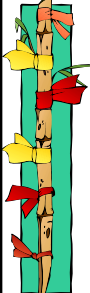 - languages spoken in the home – how much, by whom

Language heard at home

Vietnamese (n=8)

Macedonian / Romanian (n=15)

Gujerati (n=7)

Language spoken at home

Vietnamese (n=8)

Macedonian / Romanian (n=15)

Gujerati (n=7)

- family attitudes to L1, English

- life experiences

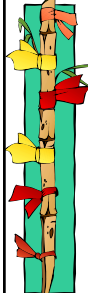- characteristics of languages

A quick comparison – Vietnamese and English

- Word level
  - Both languages have nouns, verbs, adjectives
  - Vietnamese has classifiers
  - Vietnamese pronouns are based on kinship terms

- Syntax
  - share SVO structure

- Characteristics of Vietnamese
  - adjectives follow the noun
  - question words are added to the place which would be filled by the answer (eg Miss-she go store, Miss-she go where)

- negatives add 'no' before the verb – "I no eat", or 'no correct' if the copula is used "It no correct be cat"

- tense is marked optionally by words which precede the verb

- plurality is not marked on the noun

- possession is optionally marked by 'of' (car (of) friend),

Typical processes in second language learning

- silent period

- interference / cross linguistic effects

- code mixing

- code switching

- use of routines / formulae

- avoidance

- fossilisation

- language shift / language loss

- It takes time!
  - Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) – 2 years

  - Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) – 7 years

In the classroom

1. home-language use
2. nonverbal period
3. telegraphic and formulaic use
4. productive language use

Tabors, (1997) in Genesee, Paradis & Crago, (2004)

Think about the questions you will need to ask about language in children from bilingual backgrounds.

Why the questions need to be asked – a true story.

Identifying language difficulties

Think about how a child from a CALD background presents in a classroom. Why might a teacher think the child has a language disorder?

The simple question

Language deficit or language difference?

The conundrum

- We need to be sure we don't mistake typical patterns of second language development for language learning disorder

- But we also need to be sure that we don't miss the signs of language learning disorder

The simple answer

"A child with language impairment should demonstrate limited performance in both languages, not only in English"

Gutierrez-Clellan & Simon-Cerejeido (2009, p239)

So the gold standard is….

…. assess both languages.

… but of course it's not that simple…..

☐ standardised English language tests disadvantage children from CALD backgrounds

☐ lack of normative information on LOTE

☐ lack of standardised tests in LOTE

☐ lack of bilingual speech pathologists

Languages spoken

Speech pathologists(28)	Children (65)
French	Vietnamese
Italian	Arabic
German	Cantonese
Spanish	Mandarin
Mandarin	Indigenous languages
Auslan	Tagalog
	Greek
	Other Chinese languages

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Dynamic Assessment

"…dynamic assessment is designed to measure children's latent capacities for change instead of their ability to perform a skill at a given point in time."

Pena, Resendiz & Gillam (2007, p332)

- Theoretical underpinnings
  - Vygotsky
  - Zone of Proximal Development

- Principles
  "… children who show significant changes during the assessment, and who can maintain those changes, may not need language services. Their initial poor performance might suggest unfamiliarity with the test situation or culturally based language differences."
  Gutierrez-Clellan & Peña (2001, p213)

- Process
  - Test – teach – retest
  Consider:
  - How the child learns
  - How much effort is needed to induce change
  - How much the child learns

- *Evidence*
  Peña et al, 2006.
  - 3 groups – TD, LI, Con.
  - Mixed ethnicity, but balanced
  - Pretest - narrative retell
  - 2 x 30 minute MLE sessions
  - Post test
    - All children showed higher post-test scores
    - LI children showed the least gain
    - TD children showed highest modifiability scores
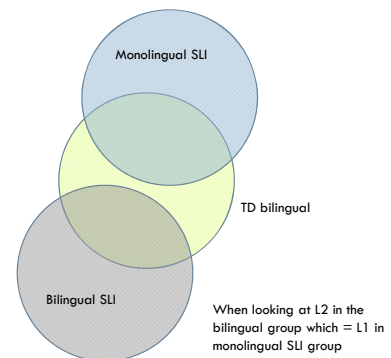 - Best classification: narrative measures and modifiability scores

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Ukrainetz, Harpel, Walsh & Coyle, 2000
- 23 Arapahoe / Shoshone children
- 8 weaker language, 15 stronger
- 2 MLE sessions
- Stronger language group - significantly higher modifiability score
- Stronger language group – significantly higher post-test scores on expressive test of categorisation

Compare like with like

"… it may be more informative to compare language measures of an ESL child who is suspected to have SLI with the English of his or her ESL peers rather than to the English of monolingual peers, either with or without SLI"

Paradis, (2005, p185)

Monolingual SLI

TD bilingual

Bilingual SLI

When looking at L2 in the bilingual group which = L1 in monolingual SLI group

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What parents can tell us

http://www.lssi.org/service/CounselingAndParentSupportServices.aspx

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What parents can tell us

Paradis, Emmerzael & Duncan (2010).

- ALDeQ
- Four sections - early milestones, current first language abilities, behaviour patterns and activity preferences
- 139TD ELL, 29 LI ELL
- Significant differences between TD and LI
- Specificity 96%, sensitivity 66%
- Early milestones was best discriminator

Making a difference

Key questions

□ What advice should we give to parents?

□ Which language should we use in intervention?

□ How can we work with bilingual children?

What advice should we give to parents?

□ Use only English

□ Use your first language

□ Use both

Some evidence on advice to parents

□ Paradis et al. (2003)
  8 bilingual French-English children
  21 English monolingual children
  10 French monolingual children
  Spontaneous language measures at 7y

  Bilingual children did not fare worse than their monolingual peers

"… a suspicion or diagnosis of language delay in a child raised bilingually should not call for a recommendation of elimination of either language… learning two languages does not cause additional delays in language acquisition."

Elin Thordardottir, Weismer & Smith, (1997, p225)

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"... advice to parents in bilingual families to stop speaking one of the languages to their children can be harmful to children and is also unethical. The fact that parents are never advised to give up speaking the majority language also shows an ideological bias that is not professional."

De Houwer (2009, p316)

Which language should we use intervention?

- Use English

- Use L1

- Use both

Recommendations: which language to use in intervention

- Treat the dominant language

- Make a decision for each individual
  - What is the student's level of proficiency in the primary language and in English?
  - What resources are available for conducting treatment in the primary language?
  - What language is used in the home?
  - Do the parents wish for the student's primary language to be maintained?
  - Does the student wish to use and maintain the primary language?
  - What attitudes do school professionals have about usage of the primary language at school?

  Roseberry-McKibbin 2002

- Ask a different question

  How can we best support both languages needed by bilingual children with PLI?

  Kohnert, 2008

Summing up

- Looking at language in children from CALD backgrounds is complex.
- Development of English language skills will be supported by a strong foundation in the first language.
- Effective practice with clients from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will take considerably more time and resources than with clients whose culture and language the speech pathologist shares.

  Speech Pathology Australia (2009, p4)

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