

## Critical Appraisal Form

Date: 17-Nov-21

Members in Discussion: 4

Article: Peterson, S., Eisazadeh, N., Hopkins, D., Peltier, S. (2021) Dynamic Assessment and Small-Group Play-Based Context Supporting First Nation Children's Standard English Language Development. *Canadian Journal of Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology*, 45,1, 1-13.

Participants were 3 children from a Northern Ontario Indigenous Community; 2 in an Oji-Cree immersion Kindergarten class, and 1 in an English Kindergarten class. Children had no current or presumed diagnosis; school leadership requested that the children have increased language exposure to acquire additional Standard English grammatical markers. Participants had exposure to some Oji Cree, with English being the primary language used in the community and at school. Method: The Dynamic Assessment of Preschoolers' Proficiency in Learning English (DAPPLE) was modified based on input from local indigenous educators. A dynamic assessment approach, characterized by a test-teach-retest process was administered by an SLP. During weekly 30 min sessions, the children were exposed to Standard English language modeling by a local indigenous educator during play with toys.

Results: 3 video recorded sessions were analyzed for the types of educator input that elicited multi-word responses, use of sentence structure, use of plural nouns with 's,' gender pronouns, and wh-questions. All children were increasingly likely to provide multi word responses (with subject and predicate) when the educator did the following: Gave information (e.g. "It's called a pilot"), Directed their behavior (e.g. "Sit down"), or provided and sought affirmation (e.g. "Yes we can play with the frogs. Okay?"). All 3 children used plural noun forms in 100% of obligatory contexts; Results on use of gendered pronouns were inconsistent. This was potentially reflective of the less frequent use of gender terms in Indigenous language, in comparison to Standard English.

Strengths and Limitations of research article:

- Limited sample size of three
- Additional clarity with pre and post intervention measures, a longer period of data collection, and a more systematic protocol for training the FN SLP assistant are needed to provide more valid and reliable evidence

	Compelling	Suggestive	Equivocal/Uncertain
Validity			X
Clinical importance		X	

Clinical Implications/Discussion:

- Members discussed the value and importance of using modified assessment tools with First Nations Children, as well as limitations when seeking diagnoses and/or funding. They expressed desire for culturally appropriate assessment tools that could be used for diagnostic and/or funding purposes.
- Members discussed the language prompt of 'providing and seeking affirmation' as something they may use more in their practices.
- Members discussed the consultation of a local person from a first nations community who could provide cultural input regarding assessment and intervention. E.g. Insight on how gender distinction is used in the local community, and relevant vocabulary.
- Members expressed a desire for additional resources in order to best provide SLP services to children in First Nations communities, particularly in terms of language assessment.