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Student Development & Cultural Assessment in an Educational Environment

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STUDENT DEVELOPMENT
& CULTURAL ASSESSMENT
IN AN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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I. AN INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMMING PROCESS

Legislative mandates require state (SEAs) and local education agencies (LEAs) to demonstrate progress toward meeting the goal of full services for all handicapped children. California AB 1250 specifically requires LEAs to seek out individuals with exceptional needs (IWENs) 0 through 21 years of age, and to provide for the identification and assessment in a nondiscriminatory manner, of their learning needs. LEAs also must develop procedures through which an appropriate individualized education program (IEP), based on nondiscriminatory assessment data, will be designed and effectively implemented for each student receiving special education; IEPs must be reviewed at least annually. Decisions related to a student's eligibility for special education, IEP, and placement must be made within specified time limits by a team of professionals, and with parent participation and informed consent.

Outlined in this section is an instructional programming process I designed, through experience, study, and teaching seminars through the years, to respond to the above requirements. As depicted in Figure 1, the process begins with screening to identify students with unmet learning needs and continues through annual review of IEPs for special education

PREFACE

> Yesterday's theories were based on the concept that the school was a sorting out and rejecting mechanism. If the individual failed, it was somehow his his fault for not having adjusted to the system (Pacheco, L. C., Education renewal: A bilingual-bicultural imperative. Educational Horizons, 1977, 55 (4), 168.)

The purpose of educational assessment should be to identify the unique learning needs of individual students and to provide a basis for implementing successful instructional intervention. All too often, however, assessment practices have served only to assign a diagnostic label to a child and to establish eligibility for a special education program which isolates the child from mainstream education at least temporarily and often permanently. In addition, it is well documented that traditional assessment practices insufficiently address the needs of culturally and/or linguistically "different" children, and that minority children are over-represented in classes for the mentally retarded.

Efforts to develop procedures and safeguards for overcoming such problems have culminated in the 1975 enactment of Public Law 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975. This legislation, along with related federal and state laws (Proposed Rules and Regulations for Section 504 of the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973; California Assembly Bill 1250; California Administrative Code, Title 5 Regulations), clearly requires schools to provide equal educational opportunity to all children, regardless of the nature or severity of their handicapping condition and their racial or cultural heritage. These laws also require that due process and procedural safeguards, including protection in testing and evaluation, are guaranteed to handicapped children and their parents. Complementing this legislation, the Office of Civil Rights (1970; 1975) has specified criteria for compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1974 and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1974 (Public Law 93-380), including a comprehensive set of federal guidelines for psychological and educational assessment practices in schools.

To meet the mandates of both federal and state law and regulations, an urgent need exists to examine current "best practices" in educational evaluation and programming, particularly as applied to culturally and/or linguistically different children, and to identify viable methods for assuring culturally appropriate, effective educational evaluation and individualized programming. Responding to this need, I have written this text.

It is hoped that the handbook will serve as a useful tool for teachers, administrators, school psychologists, and all others who share the goal of reducing the number of children who are inappropriately referred, assessed, and placed in special education programs solely because of cultural and/or linguistic differences. I recognize, however, that culturally appropriate assessed by itself will not guarantee instructional programming that accommodates and builds upon the cultural and linguistic differences of individual children needing special education. For this reason, the handbook addresses educational assessment from a cross-cultural perspective within the context of a total instructional programming process, beginning with screening of all students to identify individuals with exceptional needs and continuing through appropriate referral and development and implementation of an effective individualized educational program.

The handbook is necessarily limited in scope. Considerably more work must be done to fully develop and validate the "how to's" of culturally appropriate educational assessment. It is the modest hope of the editors, however, that this publication goes beyond problem definition and rhetoric to the provision of practical and useful information.

students. The process is based on the assumption that there exists within the LEA:

1) a commitment to comply with the state mandate to provide a free appropriate public education to individuals with exceptional needs;
2) a coordinated continuum of regular and special education services; and
3) operational Assessment Team(s) ---School Appraisal Team(s) (SAT) and Educational Assessment Service(s) (EAS) or Admissions and Discharge Committee(s) (A&D) where individual members have clearly defined and mutually agreed upon roles and areas of responsibility.

The 13 steps of the instructional programming process provide the context for the factors related to nondiscriminatory and/or culturally appropriate identification, assessment and programming discussed in this handbook.

A. STEPS IN THE PROCESS

1.0 SCREEN STUDENTS

Locate and screen all students in LEA for the purpose of identifying those students with unmet learning needs and determining appropriate service alternatives, within the educational mainstream where possible. I was a referral agency for Kennedy Regional Resourse Center, S.M.F.C. UCLANPI. These agencies assisted me in locating spe-

cial need students and then they were referred to me as below.

2.0 REFER POTENTIAL IWEN

Refer potential IWEN or IWEN requiring reassessment and/or review of IEP, to LEA Assessment Team (at my school).

3.0 ANALYZE REFERRAL

Gather and review relevant data and information on referred student via examination of existing records and/or direct observation. At my school we took daily pictures and anecdotal notes of IWENS.

4.0 REVIEW REFERRAL FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION ASSESSMENT

Determine if student should be assessed further by special testing team for possible special education placement. If assessment is not recommended, normal E.C.F. program is used.

5.0 RECOMMEND ASSESSMENT

For referent requiring assessment, make specific assessment recommendations. Assessments are gathered from my testing teachers at my school and local schools of the handicapped and others, private sources.

6.0 PLAN ASSESSMENT

Develop, with input from parents, a detailed assessment plan and time-line based on my established guidelines for assessment of IWENs. Specify who will participate on the assessment team, what types of assessment will be done, and what instruments and techniques will be used. Inform parents of proposed assessment and possible outcomes, and request consent for assessment. NPI, for instance, sent pages of detailed information to parents explaining the purpose, techniques, etc. regarding our research projects.

7.0 OBTAIN PARENT CONSENT

Always obtain written parental consent for assessment and release of information via a meeting, a home visit, or written notice.

8.0 ASSESS STUDENT

Conduct assessment, or reassessment if student is already receiving special education services based on specified plan.

9.0 HOLD MEETING WITH PARENTS

Conduct team meeting, with parents, to discuss assessment outcomes, make placement recommendations, and

design IEP for IWEN including long-range goals, annual objectives, evaluation procedures, etc.

10. PLACE STUDENT

Place student in selected program and/or arrange for needed services. Some special services were arranged outside my school - for example, physical therapy. This was computed at McBride School for handicapped children. This is not a mainstreamed school.

11.0 DEVELOP IEP IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Provide needed support to teacher and other professionals as they develop student's individual implementation plan: short-term objectives, instructional methods, etc.

12.0 IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR IEP

Provide needed follow-up assistance to IEP implementors as they instruct student and monitor student progress. Weekly studies of implementors in classroom situations were observed and noted. Meetings are held for discussion of cases.

13.0 REVIEW IEP

Review student's IEP at least every 6 months (annually

in Public School) to evaluate progress toward stated objectives, and to determine if:

a) student can benefit from an alternative placement, such as non-mainstreamed school. More support outside therapy.

b) IEP should be modified and continued;

c) reassessment is needed.

Report student progress and recommendations to parents. This may be done every month or so as I was working more closely with parents because my students were full day, 7-6.

B. Features of the Process

1. All of the required components, screening, formal referral, review of referral, parental participation and informed consent, assessment, identification, and review are included in the process. These components are sequenced in a manner which observes procedural safeguards and time limits.

2. Students may enter the process at various points. The process allows for searching out potential IWENS (preschool and school age) from within the general school population and from within the LEA community at large. Provision is made for referral of potential IWENs from both school and agnecy personnel,

as well as from parents and other community members. My school also accommodated those students already receiving special education services who were periodically referred for reassessment and/or individual program review.

3. The process incorporates the concept of "least restrictive environment."

   Potential service alternatives within the domain of regular education are outcomes of step 1.0. Successive steps in the process are decision points for student re-entry or intial placement into regular education, which in my school was already mainstreaming, as well as into separate special education classes during the day. Any given placement decision is reviewed at least once a month in light of current information about the student's learning needs and the capacity of the educational environment to meet them.

4. The process is cyclical.

   The process allows for periodic formal, and continuous informal, screening of all students in the LEA, and for channeling students identified in screening through as many subsequent steps of the process as needed. Initial placement of a student in special education classes occurs after completion of steps

1.0 or 2.0 through 10.0; thereafter, individual students may recycle through appropriate steps until such time as the Assessment Team determines that the student no longer needs special education services. Once a student re-enters or is placed for the first time in a regular program, that student participates routinely in further formal and informal screenings.

C. Implementing a Process for Instructional Programming

This section describes how the process may be implemented. Supporting legislation and legal requirements related to nondiscriminatory assessment are cited.

STEP 1.0: CONDUCT FORMAL AND INFORMAL SCREENING

"Screening: describes procedures used with an entire school, grade level, age group, or classroom, and is distinct from "assessment" which refers to procedures used selectively with individual students. Both formal and informal procedures used selectively with individual students. Both formal and informal procedures may be used to locate and screen students/children, ages 0-21 years, who potentially require special education services. Formal procedures include state-wide "child-find" programs, as well as local screening programs conducted by school districts and/or community agencies. Screening of the in-school population involves close cooperation of regular and special educators. Informal procedures include observation of students by classroom teachers and systematic review of pupil performance data. Screening may include:

1.1 Select or design formal screening procedures which have these characteristics:

a) take into account a sufficient range of variables which may affect educational/developmental progress (vision; hearing; health; communication skills; learning rate, etc.) so that "high risk" students may be identified;

b) equally consider all students within a classroom or age group as having unmet learning needs;

c) permit the collection of such basic data as: identifying and locating information on the student (name, school, parents, home address and phone); vision, hearing, health information; language information.

1.1c) "Before the testing and evaluation of a student may be approved, the school district must ensure that the student has been provided with a thorough medical examination covering as a minimum, visual, auditory, vocal and motor systems." (OCR Memorandum, 1970 3.)

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d) can be effectively administered on a periodic basis by available school personnel.	
1.2 Inservice school personnel (teacher, psychologists, resource teachers, etc.) regarding the purpose of the screening, the screening procedures, potential outcomes, and formal referral procedures. Additional inservice may be provided, as needed, for regular and special class teachers to increase their skills in collecting, recording, and analyzing student progress data.	1.2 "establish and implement uniform nondiscriminatory criteria for the referral of students for possible placement in special education programs." (OCR Memorandum, 1975, cited in Oakland, 1977 p. 32.)
1.3 Administer formal screening procedure(s) and identify target population (students with unmet learning needs), based on pre-established criteria.	
1.4 In consultation with classroom teachers and others involved with students, gather available informal screening information on target students.	
1.5 Make one of the following decisions with regard to each target student:	
a) place student's name on list of students whose progress is to be closely monitored;	
b) design and implement modifications to student's present program to accommodate student needs;	
c) provide consultation/indirect service at teacher's request;	
d) refer student to the Assessment Team (or me as director, and teachers)	
NOTE: 1) Decision options a), b), c) are within regular education. Individual LEA special education resources determine the extent to which special educators are available to assist in implementing options b) and c) and in providing needed followup. A consultant role for Resource Specialists should be considered as a service option which may result in successful maintenance of more students within the regular education program.	

PROCESS	LEGAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY ASSESSMENT
2) Decision options a), b), c) can be selected in a sequential progression with movement from one option to the next being based on teacher analysis of student progress data. Such an approach should produce adequate documentation of attempted educational interventions and observed outcomes which must be the reference point for a decision to make a formal referral of a school-aged child.	
STEP 2.0: MAKE REFERRAL TO ASSESSMENT TEAM AND NOTIFY PARENT	
Formal referrals of potential IWENs may be received from classroom teachers and other school personnel, from parents, professionals, and others in the community, and from students themselves. Information dissemination and awareness activities should be conducted with these groups so that all potential users of the referral system are familiar with completion of the referral form (2.1).	
2.1 Completion of referral form which provides a functional description of the student and supportive data/information.	
2.2 Routing of referral form to designated person(s), e.g., building principal, Assessment Team Administrator, etc.	
2.3 Notification of parents that their child has been referred (unless parent makes the referral.)	
2.4 Dating and logging in of referral to establish time frame for subsequent process steps.	
2.5 Assignment of case manager by the director (unless the structure of the Team is such that one member routinely functions as intake case manager.)	
2.6 Case manager (Teacher) sets up case folder and initiates a "Process Checklist" which will be used to ensure that due process and procedural safeguards are observed, and that process steps, including the Assessment Plan, are followed.	

PROCESS	LEGAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY ASSESSMENT
STEP 3.0 ANALYZE REFERRAL: COLLECT AND REVIEW INFORMATION ON STUDENT	
3.1 The case manager analyzes the referral for the purpose of: a) structuring the information received from the referring person; b) generating a framework for the collection of existing information on the student; c) pinpointing areas where more information is needed.	
3.2 Written parental consent must be obtained for the release of confidential information.	
3.3 Case manager collects and organizes existing information and baseline data on the student. Baseline data should be collected from persons involved with the student at home and at school. Data may be collected via personal interviews; phone contacts; home visits; direct observation.	3.3 "Before a student may be assigned to a special education class, the school district must gather, analyze and evaluate adaptive behavior data and socio-cultural background information ... relating to the non-school environment of the student..." (OCR 1970 Memorandum, 1.). Speaking here of Public Schools.
3.4 Case manager collects and organizes existing information and baseline data on the student. Baseline data should be collected from persons involved with the student at home and at school. Data may be collected via personal interviews; phone contacts; home visits; direct observation.	
3.5 Case manager reviews all information about the student and prepares a summary for presentation to the Assessment Team.	
STEP 4.0 DETERMINE IF STUDENT IS POTENTIALLY IN NEED OF SPECIAL EDUCATION	
4.1 Assessment Team meets to review and discuss summary information on referred student.	

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4.2 For initial referrals, Assessment Team (or sub-group) determines whether the case should be formally reviewed by the Assessment Team for possible special special education placement. If the answer is YES, continue with Step 5.0.	4.2 "Although non-English speaking pupils may be appropriately identified as individuals with exceptional needs ... this definition does not include persons whose educational needs are due primarily to unfamiliarity with the English language or to cultural differences". (AB 1250, Sec. 11, e.c. 56302 c , 4 .)
4.3 If the answer to 4.2 is NO, the Assessment Team returns the referral to its source, giving: 1) reasons for not serving; 2) steps taken in responding to referral; 3) suggestions for possible service alternatives (e.g. bilingual instruction, ECE, reading programs, etc.).	"For each child being reviewed for possible assignment to a special education class for the mentally retarded the School District must make adequate provision that there has been a careful review in light of the cultural and linguistic environment of the child of any recommendation for preassignment testing and evaluation..." "... report must include a summary of the observable school behavior academic performance, socio-cultural background information and adaptive behavior data"
STEP 5.0 MAKE ASSESSMENT RECOMMENDATIONS	
5.1 At the Assessment Team meeting, specific recommendations for conducting needed assessment (or reassessment) should be made. When a request is made for further assessment, do not duplicate assessment that has already been done.	
5.2 Notify parents of due process and appeal procedures, and invite parents to participate in the development of an Assessment Plan for their child.	
STEP 6.0 DEVELOP ASSESSMENT PLAN AND INVOLVE PARENTS	
6.1 The Assessment Team meets, with parents where possible, to develop an Assessment Plan which responds to requirements of California Assembly Bill 1250, and the California Administrative Code, Title 5 Regulations, and which includes:	
a) the proposed action and the reason for it:	
b) actual assessment instruments and techniques to be used;	6.1b) "...must be selected and administered so as not to be racially or culturally discriminatory"...administered in the child's native

PROCESS	LEGAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY ASSESSMENT
	language...validated for the specific purpose for which they are used..."not merely those designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient." (P.L. 94-142 Regulations, 121a.530;532). "...test materials and other assessment devices...are selected and administered in a manner which is nondiscriminatory in its impact on children of any race, color, national origin or sex". "Tests and other evaluation materials... validated for the purpose for which they are used..." (Proposed Regulations for Sec. 504-Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 84.35 b 1 .) (See also, AB 1250, Sec. 10 EC 5630. i).
c) Identification of responsible professionals who will conduct the assessment. Those professionals would either be on staff or in the community agencies and universities.	6.1c) "The psychological assessment... shall be conducted by a credentialed school psychologist who is adequately trained and prepared to evaluate cultural and ethnic factors" (AB 1250, Sec. 32, EC 56336, d .)
d) Specification of the date for completion of the assessment.	
6.2 Inform parents in writing of the intended assessment and request their consent.	6.2 "This written notice shall be in ordinary and concise language and in primary language of the pupil's home..." (AB1250, Sec. 8 EC 56036, a 1; See also P.L. 94-142 Regulations 121 a.500 a ; 121 a.505 b ; c)

PROCESS	LEGAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY ASSESSMENT
NOTE: Parent Involvement in the development of the Assessment Plan can provide valuable information about the student and it also ensures that parents are fully informed prior to giving consent for assessment. When parents attend the Assessment Plan meeting, their written consent for assessment may be obtained at that time (7.0).	
STEP 7.0: OBTAIN WRITTEN CONSENT FOR ASSESSMENT	
7.1 Give parents sufficient time to respond to request for consent for assessment. This followed smoothly at school because parents were seen every day.	
7.2 Assessment must <u>not</u> be initiated without parent consent.	
STEP 8.0: CONDUCT ASSESSMENT OR REASSESSMENT	
8.1 Based on the Assessment Plan developed in 6.0, the designated team members complete the assessment (reassessment) within <u>35 school days</u> following the date of parental consent to the Assessment Plan.	8.1 "Before a student may be given any individually administered intelligence test...<u>the student must be familiarized with all aspects of the testing situation and the test must be made compatible with the student's incentive-motivational style</u>..." (OCR Memorandum, 1970, 5.).
8.2 Upon completion of assessment, the results should be summarized in written form, and a prioritized list of the student's educational needs prepared.	
8.3 At the option of the Assessment Team, a meeting may be held to prepare for the meeting with parents (9.0).	
STEP 9.0: HOLD MEETING WITH PARENTS TO DISCUSS ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES, MAKE PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND DESIGN IEP TOTAL SERVICE PLAN FOR IWEN.	
9.1 Based on the assessment report and statement of the student's learning needs, the Assessment Team, together with parents, reviews and discusses the assessment outcomes, and appropriate educational goals/objectives.	
9.2 Placement alternatives are examined in terms of their capacity to meet the student's identified educational needs.	

PROCESS	LEGAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY ASSESSMENT
9.3 One of the following placement recommendations is made: a) continue in present placement; b) return to (or enter) fulltime regular education; c) initial placement in Resource Specialist Program and/or Designated Instruction and Services; d) initial placement in special class or center and needed Designated Instruction and Services. 9.4 Parent consent for special education placement is obtained. 9.5 Identify ancillary and/or support services (i.e., transportation, if possible; interpreter to be provided.) 9.6 For students entering or continuing in special education, an IEP is designed at this meeting (weekly, monthly and annual goals; objectives; evaluation procedures, etc.). The IEP is more fully developed, following placement of the student, in 11.0. 9.7 For students who do not require special education services, the Assessment Team prepares a statement of the disposition of the case, with the reasons for their decision, and forwards this to the referral source. A regular ECE Program can be recommended at this time. STEP 10.0: PLACEMENT OF STUDENT IN SPECIAL EDUCATION Arrangements are made to place student in recommended program and services, including: 10.1 preparation of student for transition; 10.2 transportation;	

PROCESS	LEGAL REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO NON-DISCRIMINATORY ASSESSMENT
STEP 13.0 REVIEW IEP ANNUALLY	
13.1 A review of the student's IEP must be conducted at least once a month. The purpose of the review is: a) review the student's progress in terms of the stated instructional objectives contained in the IEP; b) review the student's educational placement to determine if an alternative placement can better meet the student's needs at this time; c) recommend future placement and/or additional assessment or reassessment; d) design changes in the student's IEP Total Service Plan.	13.1 "If...it can be reasonably concluded that on the basis of either (1) the psychometric indicators interpreted with medical and socio-cultural background data or (2) the adaptive behavior data, that the assignment of the student to a special education class for the mentally retarded is inappropriate, the proposed assignment must be terminated"
13.2 Parents must be notified prior to the review meeting and invited to attend.	
13.3 Reviews must be conducted when a student transfers out of a program or into the school district.	

II. CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN INFORMAL ASSESSMENT

Because the educational system often reflects and reinforces only majority culture values, it is necessary to evaluate what the child can do and what he or she is expected to do against a backdrop of cultural and language differences. Learning problems which result solely from cultural and language differences are the province of regular education and, in keeping with the child's right to an education in the least restrictive environment, should be accommodated in that setting.

If a child has a learning problem which results in referral to the assessment team, the team must plan the assessment based on a knowledge of the child's cultural and linguistic characteristics and implement the assessment in a manner which accommodates the cultural and linguistic differences that the child and parent may bring to the instructional programming process. Within this context, the ability of individual team members to acquire and appropriately interpret information in a cross-cultural context is critical to an accurate assessment and the development of appropriate instructional interventions.

Informal assessment is distinct from formal testing for intelligence, psychological, and perceptual/psycholinguistic

variables. Techniques of observation and interviewing can be used to investigate and define both student behaviors and environmental variables. Areas of student behavior which may be assessed informally include adaptive behavior, locus of control, learning style and rate, and language dominance, preference, and proficiency. Environmental variables which may be assessed informally include classroom verbal and non-verbal interactions, classroom management systems, and, through home visits, variables outside the classroom. The use of interviews and observation in each of these types of assessment is discussed below.

A. The Home Visit

The purpose of a home visit may be to inform parents of their rights to confidentialityand due process; but it also can be used to obtain information on a child's home environment, family background, and medical and developmental histories, and/or to elicit parental cooperation and participation in both assessment and programming. Ideally, home visits should be conducted as part of the assessment process for all children, but they are essential where minority children are involved. The child's parents and others in the home are valuable sources of language data, information on family and peer relationships and play habits, and data on the child's behavior

in the home and in other non-school settings.

The importance of the initial home visit, in particular, cannot be under-estimated. It sets the tone for all future interactions with a child's parents who either may block or contribute to both the assessment process and program implementation, and it provides an opportunity for gathering baseline data which would be hard to obtain in any other manner. At minimum, the parent interview I used during the initial home visit should address:

1) The family's cultural and linguistic background;
2) language dominance and language preference;
3) parental perceptions of the child's strengths and weaknesses;
4) parental expectations and goals for the child;
5) parental attitude toward the child's problem;
6) parental attitude toward education;
7) parental locus of control;
8) family composition and patterns of interaction; and
9) the child's daily routine, peer and sibling interactions, play habits, and at-home patterns.

Culturally relevant questions to consider in preparing for and conducting the home visit include: Should the parents be interviewed separately, to avoid dominance of one parent over the other, or together? Is a translator needed? How much time

should be allotted for the visit? How should the child's problem be described? What social conventions should be observed?

The interviewer's success in dealing with these and other considerations can be substantially increased if the interviewer understands how his or her own cultural values, attitudes, and behavior contrast with those of the culture in the home to be visited. For example, three major values commonly associated with mainstream American culture are efficiency, independence (freedom), and equality (democracy). Although these values are virtually unquestioned by those who share them, each represents a potential area of difficulty for a home interviewer who embraces these values and unconsciously acts on them in the context of the cross-cultural home visit.

1. Efficiency. Basically an economic value, efficiency denotes conservation of time, energy and material resources as a means for increasing profits or for maximizing the "cost-benefit ratio." In some cultures where efficiency is subordinate to other values, an interviewer who places a high value on efficiency may encounter the following difficulties in successfully conducting a home interview:

   a) Scheduling appointments. Tightly scheduled appointments may not allow adequate time for establishing

parental rapport. This is especially true in those cultures which view time as more relative than fixed, which stress informality, or which encourage the observance of elaborate interpersonal protocol. In some cultures, for example, the presence of a guest in the home is perceived as an honor requiring semi-ritualized customes like the exchange of intended greetings and tea drinking before settling down to business. The home visitor who "has no time" to observe these customs risks offending or even "bringing shame upon" the host. Alienation also may occur when a home visitor schedules appointments to suit his/her own convenience without regard to parent' work schedules. It should be possible to avoid interrupting the work schedule of a migrant worker by arranging a home visit for the "next rainy day."

b) Maintaining control of the interview. One of the greatest advantages of the home visit is that it occurs on the parents' home territory. This makes it more comfortable for the parent to offer honest, comprehensive information about the child. The interviewer who insists on utilizing a set interview protocol and who retains tight control of the discussion is not effectively using the home environment and is likely to alienate the parents, especially in homes hostile to the majority culture or the school system. It is wise, therefore, to allow the parent to establish both the pace and the content of the first few home visits - to conduct, in short, "client-centered interviews."

c) Stressing information-gathering rather than information sharing. In the interest of saving time, many interviewers make the mistake of firing rapid successions of questions at parents rather than providing careful explanations of the purpose of the home visit, the child's learning problems, diagnostic procedures, and/or programming recommendations. This approach can often produce misunderstandings and may even arouse the parent's suspicion or anger. The home visitor must be careful to balance the role of inquirer with that of messenger.

d) Being direct and to the point. Some home visitors normally may use a style which is direct and to the point. This style can be ineffective in homes where roundabout and seemingly ambiguous decision-making processes are

the rule, where there is indecision, ambivalence, or a tendency to digress, or where cultural differences mandate the home visitor's establishing a basis for mutual understanding before "getting to the point." To accommodate these differences, two visits might have to be made instead of one.

2. Independence. This value suggests freedom and personal responsibility and may create the greatest difficulties in the home visit. Some of these difficulties might include the following:

   a) Ignoring the perference for group as opposed to individual action. In many cultures, the extended family provides a social network whose approval and/or active cooperation is required before the parent will participate in assessment and programming activities. Rather than view this dynamic negatively, the home visitor should acknowledge and investigate the strengths and potential support of the extended family.

   b) Discounting deterministic beliefs. While these beliefs may be inconsistent with the prevailing views of the school system, it is incumbent upon the home interviewer to accommodate them in working with the parents and significant others in the child's home environment. Notions such as a child with a learning problem having been "touched by God" or a mentally retarded child having had "the light of his mind extinguished) may be formidable factors influencing the child's home environment, and as such, they must be acknowledged and handled with great sensitivity.

   c) Describing a child's problem in terms that make the child appear lazy, disinterested, or irresponsible. Emphasis on independence and personal responsibility often results in a tendency to ascribe a child's learning problems to the failure of the child. Not only is this frequency inaccuarate, but also may embarrass or offend the child's parents. Instead of asserting that "Susan is failing math," or "John is inattentive," it is better to shift the focus of responsibility from the child to the School, e.g., "We are not having much success in teaching Susan math," or "School doesn't seem to interest John." This may prevent parents from misperceiving and possibly

punishing a child for a learning problem. Also it may avoid embarrassing the parents if they believe that the family had been shamed by the child's failure. Conversely, it may better capture the interest of some parents who may assign little or no responsibility to young children, because in their culture, children may not be considered responsible for their actions until puberty. Finally, by shifting the focus of responsibility to the school rather than the child, the home visitor may mitigate the feeling among many minority parents that they are at odds with the school system, and help convince them that the school is interested in a cooperative venture in assisting rather than criticizing their child.

3. Equality. This value is associated with the principles of democracy and social and economic freedom without regard to race, national origin, class status, sex or age. As in the case of independence, valuing equality uncritically can pose numerous problems for the home visitor. Some of these are:

   a) Ignoring lines of authority and power. Some cultures have matriarchal or patriarchal family structures where final decisions are made by the father or mother but not both. In some cases, the advocacy of one or more of the family elders is required before the parents will cooperate with representatives of the school system. It is important, therefore, for the home visitor to discover the general decision making process within each cultural group with which the interviewer will be working as well as the idiosyncrasies of the decision making structure of each individual family. Understanding the former should assist in discovering the latter.

   b) Using first names. In some minority cultures, first names may be used regardless of age, sex, class, income, or relative authority. However, in cultures where first name usage sumbolizes subordinate status, or in those which preserve formality of address as a means for displaying respect, using first names may be an insult.

c) Expecting traditional democratic forms of exchange. Among some cultural groups, responding to a compliment with anything other than a denial is to display unwarwanted pride. Thus, persons from these cultures rarely respond positively to compliments. The home visitor must be careful not to interpret particular patterns of exchange as "rude" or "unfriendly."

d) Touching. An increasingly common trend among humanistically-oriented young professionals is that of touching as a means of establishing rapport. As in first name usage, however, touching a parent, child, or sibling may have adverse consequences. In some cultural contextx, for example, touching occurs only up or down the chain of authority, thus the home visitor's touch may be interpreted as a sign of implied dominance or simply a violation of appropriate social distance. Touching is only one aspect of non-verbal message systems which are different for each cultural group. The home interviewer needs to utilize the non-verbal behaviors appropriate to his or her role and status as a representative of the school as viewed from the standpoint of the home culture.

e) Assuming the role of authority figure. Just as many people justifiably expect certain forms of respect, so are they willing to demonstrate respect. In some cases, the child's parents may view the home visitor as an authority figure worthy of respect or even obedience, especially in cultures with rigid hierarchical structures. In these cases, the home visitor must be careful to represent him or herself as a neither subordinate nor superior to the child's parents.

In summary, the home visitor must cultivate a general awareness that in certain cultures, and even in some mainstream homes, interviewer behavior reflecting an emphasis on efficiency, independence, and equality may evoke some degree of cultural conflict detrimental to the objectives of the home visit. Home visitors, therefore, must learn to accommodate the value systems and learn to adapt their interviewing techniques to the cultural contexts in which they will be working.

The following do's and don'ts can help interviewers accommodate cultural differences during home visits:

DO

1. Describe a child's specific problem behaviors, rather than applying labels. A minority mother said to a school representative: "Before you came along my child was OK. Now he's retarded." Avoidance of labels and other jargon also will help prevent misunderstandings.

2. Adjust to the level of formality expected by the culture. Some cultural groups like formality, some do not. This applies to dress as well: while one cultural group may be pleased when the visitor appears in a business suit or tweed skirt (instead of jeans), formality of dress may set up a barrier with parents of other cultures.

3. Modulate your voice according to the volume and pitch used by the parents. In some cultures a parent may perceive a loud voice as overbearing; in others, a parent may interpret a lowered pitch as having an angry connotation.

4. Show interest in the digressions, stories, and sayings of the family and allow time for these interactions. They can provide a good source of diagnostic information as well

as helping to establish mutual rapport and informality needed in working with some cultural groups.

5. Be sensitive to the expense of the visit or proposed diagnostic or prescriptive procedure. Schedule home visits to avoid work loss for parents. Attempt, where possible, to obtain public funding for expensive services such as psychiatric work-ups, neurological exams, or physical therapy. I was fortunate to have free work-ups available to me at UCLA NPI, SM Family Service which I offered to parents.

6. Learn about the community support or extended family systems in cultural groups where these systems are important. Seek out ways to enlist the support of these systems for diagnostic and instructional purposes.

7. Accept hospitality if offered. Often eating or sipping tea or coffee with the child's parents is the best of all possible ice-breakers. Do refrain from alcolic drinks for obvious reasons.

8. Always make an appointment. Simply dropping in may give parents the impression that you are checking up on them.

9. Use the language of the family if at all possible. Siblings or other family members may make good interpreters, but outsiders may intimidate.

10. After exchanging greetings, clearly state the purpose of your visit, put the parents at ease, and find a topic of conversation which both expresses your interest in the family and allows the parents an opportunity to contribute. For example, a migrant worker might find it easy to discuss weather and the crops. Remember, however, that a parent may not be flattered by your interest in his or her cultural background.

11. De-mystify the school. Show actual school materials to parents whenever possible.

12. Elicit and deal with parents' concerns about the school. For example, a father who maintains close control over his children may believe his daughter needs a chaperone at school dances, or that the child should not leave the neighborhood school for a field trip. A careful explanation of the school's policies and safeguards in these and similar instances may help change parent attitudes.

13. Follow up on the visit. Communicate and become more

familiar with the family.

14. Above all, be patient. Given the many potential barriers to cross-cultural communication, patience is of utmost importance in the home visit. The interviewer who, through impatience, manages to alienate the child's family may never have a second chance to establish mutual trust.

DON'T

1. Don't assume that academic education is univerally valued. This type of education may threaten traditional values and family structure in some cultural groups. On the other hand, other cultural groups view school as an extension of education in the home.

2. Don't be misled by a family's housing or employment in estimating its level of education. Highly educated, newly arrived refugees, for example, may hold comparatively low paying jobs and may be living in low-income housing. This was very true with the large numbers of Vietnam refugees I worked with.

3. Don't assume that all minorities want to be assimilated. While some cultural groups pride themselves on full

assimilation, many others prefer to preserve their cultural identities.

4. Conversely, don't assume that all minorities want to retain their cultural identities. In the event they don't, emphasis on cultural differences may alienate the child's parents.

5. Don't assume that constructive criticism of the child necessarily will be well received. In some cultures, any criticism may shame the family.

6. Don't assume that the family understands that no cost is involved in special school services. Many interviewers have found that initial resistance expressed by a family was erased when this issue was clarified.

7. Don't assume that it is best to interview both parents together. One or the other may be the official family spokesperson in a given culture, or family lines of authority may dictate that one may not speak freely in the other's presence.

8. Don't renege on your word. In many cultures a promise has the force of a contract. Make your word your bond. Follow through on your commitment.

9. Don't push for answers if a family shows reluctance to give them. Skepticism or family pride may prevent discussion of problems with strangers.

10. Don't assume parents are apathetic if they are not assertive. They may be overwhelmed by the interview. They may overcommit themselves simply to avoid hurting an interviewer's feelings - and then not follow through.

B. Adaptive Behavior

The assessment of adaptive behavior is by definition culturally appropriate in that it evaluates the child's behavior only with reference to the role expectations within various social systems such as the nuclear family, the extended family, the peer group, and the community. Among roles which might be investigated within these systems are those of son or daughter, brother or sister, baseball team member, gang member, etc. The assessment team is limited here only in its ability to isolate and project the child's different roles.

Implicit in this approach to assessment is recognition that children participate in a complex network of social systems which require various role-related behaviors, and that expectations for these behavior vary according to

various characteristics of the social system and the age and sex of the child. Thus, in assessing adaptive behavior, what is "normal" or "abnormal" is defined only in relation to the expectations of a given social system for a given role. For example, the child who is passive and withdrawn in the school setting may need precisely these traits to survive in a rigidly authoritarian family structure. In the family context, these traits become highly adaptive. Similarly, a child who frequently cuts school may find this a highly adaptive means of obtaining peer approval.

By viewing the child's behavior from these multiple perspectives, the assessment team is better able to understand both the child's motivation and the ultimate impact that modifying seemingly maladaptive behavior will have: the child who, in the classroom, is unable to read a simple sentence may be able to find his or her way around three wuare miles of the inner city; the child who appears to have no understanding of physical science may be able to repair his or her brother's car; the child who is "distractable" and "irresponsible" may be able to care for four younger siblings while their mother works at night. Noting these and similar inconsistencies between classroom and out-of-classroom behaviors will help

prevent inaccurate diagnoses which may result in inappropriate placement. Moreover, it will provide the assessment team with additional insight into possible situational causes and potential interventions for the child's classroom behaviors.

If a child demonstrates normal, resourceful, intelligent behavior in coping with environmental demands beyond the classroom, it is doubtful that restrictive special education placement is needed, regardless of the maladaptive classroom behaviors demonstrated. By capitalizing on the child's out-of-classroom adaptive behaviors, or coping skills, the assessment team usually can engineer an effective transition of adaptive behavior patterns to the regular education program. This often precludes the need for special education programming.

If, on the other hand, the child is experiencing difficulty across social systems, more intensive assessment and/or special education programming may be required. In these instances, adaptive behavior measures often can provide a basis for grouping children who display maladaptive behaviors amenable to modification by comparable instructional interventions. These interventions should stress improvement in those aspects of the student's development

for this purpose are identified in Figure 2.

In use of these scales, normal and abnormal behaviors are not attributed solely to the child but rather are considered in relation to norms for a particular culture and the roles the child plays within that culture. Therefore, the scales usually are culturally appropriate. However, because many adaptive behavior scales have been standardized on institutionalized populations, they often represent only a restricted range of behaviors. Thus, as with any instrument, the assessment team must check these scales for bias.

One limitation of many adaptive behavior scales is that individual items often imply value judgments. For example, one item on the AAMD Adaptive Behavior Scale calls for the evaluator to check whether or not the child "wears clashing color combinations - if not prompted." What are clashing colors? Certainly this can be culturally defined. For example, colorful ethnic-styled clothing may be considered by some to include clashing color combinations. Similarly, value judgments are implied on items such as "knows about welfare facilities in the community." It is altogether possible that the child's family may never have had occasion to use such facilities. While items like this are

measured in the assessment of adaptive behavior - e.g., in self-help skills, communication skills, socialization, occupational skills, social responsibility, and the like. These and other adaptive skills are basic to the complex interactions between the individual and his or her environment.

Valuable assessment data may be gathered by interviewing persons from the child's home, neighborhood, or community who can provide insight into the child's adaptive and maladaptive behaviors in these environments. Minimally, the child's parents or principal caretaker should be interviewed to obtain as much information as possible regarding the various roles the child plays in relation to parents, relatives, siblings, peers, and community members. To gather this information, the assessment team member who conducts the interview(s) must be familiar with the child's sociocultural group and should be conversant in the language spoken in the home.

Specific observation techniques permit a comparison of the child's adaptive behavior with that of other children of the same age to determine whether the child can function effectively within his or her sociocultural setting. Some of the scales which have been designed specifically

A SELECTIVE LISTING OF ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR SCALES

SCALE	POPULATION	BEHAVIOR DOMAINS
Vineland Social Maturity Scale American Guidance Publishers' Bldg. Circle Pines, Minn. 55014	Non-handicapped, mentally retarded and other handicapped populations (blind, deaf, physically handicapped, health impaired, and emotionally disturbed)	1) Self-help 2) Self-direction 3) Locomotion 4) Occupation 5) Communication
AAMD Adaptive Behavior Scale American Association of Mental Deficiency 5201 Connecticut Ave. Washington, D.C. 20015 AAMD Adaptive Behavior Scale School Version Address as above	Mentally retarded, emotionally maladjusted and developmentally disabled individuals TMR, EMR, EH (special class and learning disabled) and regular grade placed individuals	Part I Ten Behavioral Domains 1) Independent functioning 2) Physical development 3) Economic activity 4) Language development 5) Numbers and Time 6) Domestic activity (School Version) 7) Vocational ability 8) Self-direction 9) Responsibility 10) Socialization Part II Maladaptive Behavior 1) Violent & destructive behavior 2) Antisocial behavior 3) Rebellious behavior 4) Untrustworthy behavior 5) Withdrawal 6) Stereotyped behavior; odd mannerisms 7) Inappropriate interpersonal manners 8) Unacceptable vocal habits 9) Unacceptable or eccentric habits

Figure 2: Adaptive Behavior Scales

A SELECTIVE LISTING OF ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR SCALES

SCALE	POPULATION	BEHAVIOR DOMAINS
AAMD Adaptive Behavior Scale (continued)		10) Self abusive behavior (School Version) 11) Hyperactive tendencies 12) Sexually aberrant behavior (School Version) 13) Psychological disturbance 14) Use of medication
Camelot Behavioral Checklist Camelot Behavior Systems P.O. Box 607 Parsons, Kansas 67357	Mentally retarded of all ages	Self-help Physical Development Home Duties Vocational Behaviors Economic Behaviors Independent Travel Nummerical Skills Communication Skills Social Behaviors Responsibilities
SOMPA The Psychological Corp. 757 Third Avenue New York, N.Y. 10017		Adaptive Behavior Inventory for Children (ABIC) Family Community Peers School (Non-academic) Earner/Consumer School (Non-academic) ABIC Average Score Health History Inventory Natal Inventory Traumatic Events Disease/Illness Vision

Figure 2 - continued

A SELECTIVE LISTING OF ADAPTIVE BEHAVIOR SCALES

SCALE	POPULATION	BEHAVIOR DOMAINS
Cain-Levine Social Competency Scale Consulting Psychologists Press 577 College Avenue Palo Alto, CA 94036	TMR	Self-help Initiative Social skills Communication

Figure 2 - continued

clearly intended to measure adaptive behavior in the low socioeconomic status child, they may be inappropriate for a child from an upper income home. Thus, the individual items on adaptive behavior measures should be assessed for their appropriateness to a given child and modified as necessary.

While there are positive correlations between levels of adaptive behavior, intelligence, and psychological adjustment, there also is considerable variability in individuals on these three types of measures. Nowhere is this more evident than in minority group children, who often show a discrepancy between adaptive behavior and measured intelligence. Thus, measures of adaptive behavior are in no way predictive of either intelligence or psychological adjustment.

Similarly, measures of adaptive behavior do not readily discriminate between social incompetence due to intellectual deficiencies and that resulting from emotional disorder. Thus, no implications can be drawn in either of these areas from the child's level of adaptive behavior.

c. Language Preference and Language Dominance

Language dominance refers to the language which a bilingual child tends to use both at home and in the classroom. Language preference refers to the language which parents prefer the child uses in the classroom. This may or may not be the same as the preference for the language to be used at home. It is important to determine language dominance accurately as early as possible in assessment.

If a child is a limited-speaker of English, all further assessments will have to take this into consideration. In many instances, the case manager may determine whether or not the child is a limited-speaker of English by checking available records or current language data on the student in question.

In some school districts, a home-language questionnaire is used to identify students whose dominant language is other than standard English. If the questionnaire indicates that a child's primary language is other than standard English, the school district may follow-up with more definitive language dominance testing. Although these language dominance tests may yield detailed information, they should be viewed as screening rather than assessment procedures.

Assessment of language dominance is a major objective of home visits. If more thorough assessment is required after informal data gathering through interviews and observation during home visits, the assessment team member first consults with whomever has conducted the home-language survey (if there has been one) and with the school's bilingual coordinator (if there is one). Other sources of consultation may include the speech and language specialist and the child's previous teachers. Additional data may be acquired through teacher and child interview. An appropriate language dominance data collection instrument then may be selected by the case manager for use during the next home visit.

D. Language Developmet and Language Proficiency

After language dominance and language preference information has been obtained, assessment in the areas of language development and proficiency can proceed. Both language development and proficiency data are gathered on all languages used by the child in speaking, reading, and/or writing. The language development assessment consists of determining the child's level of linguistic competence or skill in using the structural aspects of language, including phonology, syntax, and semantics. The language proficiency assessment consists of investigating the child's linguistic performance or level of skill in speaking and comprehending language.

Language development and proficiency data are collected for three reasons: first, they provide information on the child's language skills which may be directly translated into instructional interventions; second, they provide information on the child's general conceptual abilities, and third, they provide information on the child's level of conceptual and linguistic development which may be used in the selection of additional assessment techniques.

One informal approach to assessing language development, for example, involves the use of naturalistic procedures for collecting and analyzing samples of the child's "free," or spontaneous, speech. This methodology is called "free speech analysis."

In contrast to formal testing, a major advantage of free speech analysis is that it can be used to sample the child's linguistic competence in a variety of situations and interactions (e.g., child-peer, child-adult, child-teacher, etc.). This is particularly important in assessing language development in culturally different children, who often are most communicative with peers in informal situations.

A second advantage of free speech analysis is that it allows for an analysis of the child's language errors in terms of normal developmental variances and in terms of

phonological differences between the child's dialects and/or languages. In this manner, it avoids the hazard of scoring for one "standard" answer, as is often the case in formal testing.

Several methodologies have been developed for conducting free speech analysis. Cazden (1972) provides an excellent review of these measures and their strengths and limitations.

E. Verbal and Non-Verbal Interactions

Verbal and non-verbal interactions which should be assessed include teacher expectancy and reinforcement patterns in the classroom.

1. Teacher Expectancy

Many factors interact to determine a teacher's perceptions of and expectations for a particular child. Some of these include the child's sex, ethnic background, socioeconomic status, physical appearance, previous achievement, intelligence test results, reports of the child's previous teachers, and the present teacher's knowledge of the child's siblings.

If a teacher treats a child according to these expectancies, rather than using the child's current performance as the basis on which to make judgments, draw conclusions and interact with the child, the child may respond

to the teacher by exhibiting behaviors which reinforce teacher expectations. Thus, a child whom the teacher perceives and treats as a fast learner often will experience an increase in his or her learning rate. Conversely, a child whom the teacher perceives and treats as a slow learner often will begin to experience a decrease in his or her learning rate.

This teacher expectancy cycle is depicted below.

1. The teacher forms expectations for student performance.

2. The teacher begins to treat the child in accordance with these expectations.

3. The child responds to the teacher by exhibiting behaviors which reinforce teacher expectations.

Figure 3. Teacher Expectancy Cycle.

Unfortunately, a negative expectancy cycle often is observed operating in teacher interaction with minority students. Stereotypical expectations on the part of

the teacher (e.g., Native Americans are non-competitive; Asians are quiet and withdrawn, etc.) often cause him or her to respond to minority children with behaviors consistent with these stereotypes. This ultimately shapes the child into conforming to teacher expectations which, although inaccurate, will perpetuate behaviors which are maladaptive.

2. Teacher Reinforcement

Teacher reinforcement may be both verbal and non-verbal. The following questions should be asked to assess teacher reinforcement patterns:

(1) To what extent does the teacher interact positively with the student, by:

a) accepting and using the student's ideas?

b) giving positive feedback to the student's responses?

c) giving the student opportunities to participate in classroom interactions and respond to questions?

d) allowing for response variations (e.g., writing, drawing, demonstrating)?

(2) To what extent does the teacher interact negatively with the student, by:

a) criticizing?

b) correcting behavior?

c) reminding of rules or directions?

d) receiving the student's efforts impatiently?

e) ignoring the student?

(3) To what extent does the teacher's positive and negative verbal feedback to the student differ from that to other students in the classroom?

(4) To what extent is the teacher's use of verbal reinforcement consistent with his or her instructional objectives for the student?

Verbal reinforcement should be appropriate to the individual student's abilities and behavior. No student should be slighted because of cultural, physical or emotional differences.

The non-verbal behavior which accompanies verbal interaction also is important. A teacher can encourage a student's response not only with words, but also by allowing time to respond, prompting with encouraging facial expressions and gestures, and using an expectant tone of voice. On the other hand, subtle non-verbal cues often counteract positive verbal reinforcement. For example, a teacher may intend to praise and encourage a student, but give an entirely different impression by simultaneously frowning.

Because there are many cultural differences in the use of non-verbal communication, it is particularly important

to observe non-verbal reinforcement by the teacher where minority children are concerned. As simple a behavior as eye contact may be critically important. Anglo-caucasians tend to look away from another person when they are speaking, and at him when they are listening. Blacks tend to do just the opposite: look at their companions when they are speaking and look away when they are listening. Communication barriers may result from these subtle differences in non-verbal communication. Flanders' Interaction Analysis System is one technique for collecting and analyzing verbal and non-verbal interaction.

F. Locus of Control

Locus of control (LOC) refers to the way in which a person attributes casuality to the events in his or her life. The LOC continuum ranges from "internal dominant," whereby an individual typically attributes success or failure to personal effort and ability, to "external dominant," whereby success or failure typically is attributed to chance, or to the intervention of powerful "others" or to other external circumstances. Most individuals fall somewhere between these two extremes; however, children from lower socio-economic levels generally tend toward the external dominant pole.

Thus, for example, a lower-class child may see his or her parents' hard work and struggle do not pay off in terms of economic and social advantage. From these observations, the child begins to conclude that effort and ability do not generally result in attainment. This despairing stance is compounded as a child encounters school failure. In order to preserve his or her self concept, the child may attribute that failure of the teacher or bad luck. Once this attribute is firmly entrenched, the child may find it difficult to take personal credit for either failure or success and may stop trying altogether. This, of course, establishes a cycle which perpetuates low achievement and school conflict.

A number of school-related behaviors that characterize external LOC may be recognized as common reasons for referral to special education. In contrast to the internal LOC child, the external LOC child often displays the following behaviors:

1. starts work more slowly;
2. demonstrates low self-reliance by asking more questions and directions;
3. demonstrates a lower level of aspiration by choosing non-challenging goals;
4. failure to persist when meeting difficulty;
5. remains uninvolved; takes few risks in order to avoid failure;

6. responds poorly to reinforcement by not accepting personal responsibility for success or failure;
7. does poorly on tests by expecting to fail and by spending less time on difficult items;
8. resists competency-based instruction that requires applying learned skills in order to master a task;
9. fails to profit from past mistakes because failure is quickly forgotten;.

While LOC may be related to school achievement, it is not related to intelligence. This means that the regular school program can be modified to intervene with the external LOC child without assuming that he or she is in need of special class placement.

Appropriate interventions for the external LOC child might include creating success experience for the child, rewarding persistent, independent, and/or assertive behaviors, failing to reward dependent behaviors, etc.

G. Assessing Basic Skills

There are three major areas of investigation in assessing the child's basic skills: 1) motor skills, 2) reading skills, and 3) math skills. Statements of the child's present levels of performance generated from assessment in these three areas are directly translated into instructional objectives and interventions. Since cultural differences

may have greatest impact on learning to read, implications for assessment of reading skills are discussed here.

Speaking a nonstandard variation of the language, in itself, should have no impact on a child's learning to read: learning to read basically consists of the same process across languages--matching graphic forms to spoken forms. Thus, in assessing a culturally different child's reading abilities, as well as in delivery of instruction, a child's dialect variation of his or her standard language should be ignored. The one variable which does significantly affect the culturally different child's learning to read is the teacher. The teacher's skill in switching styles, in accepting the child's language, in understanding cultural conflicts, and in motivating the child is critical. These teacher-related factors, rather than dialect differences, are responsible for the success rate of the culturally different child in learning to read.

In contrast, there are language-based problems for the child who is learning to read a language other than his or her dominant language. Many of these problems stem from the necessity to use a written symbol system for which the child has no oral referent. At this point in the assessment, the child's reading skills may be compared to his or her oral proficiency skills in both languages so

that reading problems can be most accurately diagnosed. In planning a secondary-language reading program, effort should focus not only on remediating the child's skill deficiencies in his or her secondary language, but also in building reading skills in the primary language.

H. Cognitive Style

Cognitive style is the way in which an individual perceives, interprets, and responds to his environment--the characteristic manner and form of an individual's problem-solving approach, regardless of acquired skill level. One way of describing cognitive style is in reference to a field-dependent/field-independent continuum.

Field-dependent individuals tend to use "spectator" approaches to learning; by contrast, field-independent individuals may tend to prefer to use "participant" approaches. Research suggests that students from different cultural groups may have preferred ways of approaching a learning or problem solving task. Not all students benefit equally from a particular instructional technique. Some students prefer to solve problems cooperatively; some independently. Some students are guided by intrinsic motivation; others need extrinsic rewards.

The cognitive style of the teacher may affect the way he or she teaches. By observing and identifying teacher

cognitive style and related teaching approaches, it should be possible to facilitate a closer match between students and teachers of similar cognitive styles. An accommodative, multicultural classroom must incorporate elements from both field-dependent and field-independent orientations. A multiplicity of instructional strategies will help each student to find the most appropriate strategy for his or her learning style.

I. Classroom Management Systems

All children enter and continue through school with unique individual learning characteristics--i.e., learning rates, learning styles, need for structure or freedom, retention levels, reward systems, need for active participation, etc. Children whose culture and language differ from the mainstream, however, display the same wide range of learning characteristics as those in the majority group.

To protect these individual differences, classroom management systems can be designed to recognize and understand cultural differences and accommodate the uniqueness of each learner. While it is important for the minority child to master competencies of the majority culture, this mastery should not be at the expense of the strengths and values inherent in his or her own cultural background. Thus, the more a classroom environment accommodates indivi-

dual differences, the better it will facilitate the learning processes of children in general and minority children in particular.

Classroom accommodation for a given child may be assessed through analysis of four variables and how they relate to one another: 1) the child's style of learning; 2) the rate of instruction; 3) the content of instruction; and 4) the physical characteristics of the classroom. Their importance is discussed briefly on the following pages.

1. Learning Style

   Learning style is an aspect of cognitive style. It is the characteristic manner and form of an individual's problem-solving approach, regardless of acquired skills. Certain learning styles are predominant in different sociocultural groups. However, no individual will totally exhibit the characteristics of any one style. A learner's unique style derives from, but transcends the styles attributed to any cultural group.

   Most individuals have developed a repertoire of styles. Bicultural children, i.e., children who can operate effectively in two sociocultural systems, tend to be bicognitive, reflecting the predominant learning styles of both cultures. Bicognitive ability appears to give

an advantage to such children through greater flexibility of experience and expression.

Although no stylistic mode is inherently better than another, in a school program where accuracy, speed and task-oriented behaviors are rewarded, the independent, analytical, reflective child may be at an advantage. However, such school programs also may inhibit further bicognitive development.

Increased emphasis on only one cognitive style in a given classroom has detrimental effects on users of other cognitive styles. Therefore, the truly accommodative, multicultural classroom must provide learning opportunities for students with a range of learning styles. A critical aspect of this is the influence of the teacher's own style.

2. Instructional Content

Instructional content is presented to the child in the classroom primarily through the use of textbooks and other print curriculum materials. A student may be experiencing confusion, alienation, and boredom in class because concepts are not being presented through meaningful, relevant curricular materials. It is unlikely, for example, that a young child from the

barrio will be able to participate in learning colors from a text that depicts "crimson sails on yachts." To be meaningful, the content must provide a bridge to and from the child's real-life experiences.

Evaluating the extent to which curriculum materials accommodate cultural differences is important. A checklist developed at the Institute for Cultural Pluralism at San Diego State University is presented in this project. It was developed specifically as a guideline for evaluating materials for Spanish-English bilingual programs. However, the general categories--relevancy, authenticity, racist stereotypes, sexist stereotypes, language, and history--are appropriate for structuring a review of commercial materials available in any classroom. The checklist may be used to determine revision or replacement of materials. Fortunately, multicultural curricular materials are increasingly available.

3. Rate of Instruction

Some cultures conceive of time as spontaneous, fluid, and natural, rather than something which can be structured, contained, and controlled. A child influenced by such an orientation is susceptible to conflict in a school setting that does not make allowances for

differences in perception of time. Compounding the problem may be the child's own personal pattern of time management--wait-till-the-last-minute, work-steady-as-you-go, work-a-while-visit-awhile, etc. Together, these factors may produce unacceptable learning rates for culturally different children.

Analysis of the rate at which learning content is presented to the child and the amount of time he or she is given to master it will determine first, whether the classroom accommodates the child's rate of learning, and second, whether the child's learning rate is exceptional to the point that it must be further investigated. If the classroom does not appear to be accommodating the child's learning rate, modifications in teaching strategies may be indicated--ways in which the teacher might alter the child's assignments and time frames to better accommodate his or her individual learning rate. At the same time, behavior management techniques may be needed to encourage the child to establish a learning rate which will be more adaptive to the classroom environment.

4. Physical Characteristics of the Classroom

The setting in which teacher/student interactions occur also must be assessed. The conventional classroom

arrangement with desks in rows and the teacher at the front of the class encourages individual effort and competition. A more flexible room arrangement with interest centers and large and small group activity areas, in addition to individual study areas, is more conducive to personal, cooperative interactions. It is important to remember that "open classrooms" do not automatically equate with accommodative classrooms. Flexible room arrangements may be deceptive, giving an illusion of individualization whereas, in fact, students may be receiving less teacher attention and direction, spending less time on task, and experiencing confusion over classroom rules and teacher expectations.

III. CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS IN FORMAL TESTING

The importance of multiple assessment measures is recognized by the procedural safeguard in PL 94-142 which restricts any single assessment procedure from constituting the sole criterion for determining an appropriate educational program for a child. As discussed earlier, informal evaluation techniques should be considered in addition to formal tests, e.g., behavioral observation, interviews, informal analysis, etc.

Assessment instruments and techniques must be selected only with the context of specific assessment goals and with knowledge of an individual child and his or her larger environment. Selection of any test instrument must therefore be preceded by a clearly stated purpose that is agreed on in advance by those who are to use the results. It is a clear awareness of this purpose which should guide an assessment team's planning efforts. Otherwise many abuses in the form or haphazard test selection are possible, i.e., using instruments simply because they are part of a standard battery, because they are familiar, or because they are the only ones readily available.

It is disrespectful of a child's needs and rights, as well as an abuse of the instrument, to use a test for an inappropriate purpose. For example, it may be both fair and useful to administer a test in English to a linguistically "different"

child when the purpose is simply to appraise readiness to profit from instruction in English; yet the same activity is clearly inappropriate if the test score is to be used as an estimate of overall intellectual capability.

The assumptions underlying any assessment procedure must be seriously questioned to make sure they are valid in terms of the purpose for which the child is being tested. Since tests are inventories of behavior, how well they evaluate what a child has learned depends on how well they sample that child's experience. It cannot be assumed that all children will have equal opportunities or motivation to learn the answers or skills necessary to succeed on a test. Such an assumption of universal experiences and value systems is particularly hazardous for minority children.

A different purpose is served by each type of evaluative procedure, and no single approach adequately will provide a sufficient range of data for appropriate instructional programming. Tests are never able to sample the full range of complex and variagated behavior that make up "real life" criteria. For example, school grades are likely to reflect motivation, teacher and parental expectations, peer influence, classroom behavior, curricular demands, and study habits, as well as intelligence and achievement. Even if a test could accurately measure scholastic aptitude, its validity for predicting

school grades would be limited because of the influence of the many other factors.

Many norm-referenced instruments, as currently designed, are inappropriate for use with children from minority cultures. A significant response to this problem has been the increased use of criterion-referenced measures. This approach avoids the negative implications of comparing children from diverse sociocultural backgrounds against inappropriate reference groups and focuses instead on measuring an individual's independent achievement.

It should be noted that criterion-referenced evaluation is not, by definition, free from cultural inappropriateness. The criteria by which children are being measured may be culturally or linguistically biased toward mainstream Anglo-caucasian culture. Lacking intercultural awareness and culture-specific knowledge, the curriculum specialist, program planner, or teacher may inadvertently establish criteria that place minority children at a disadvantage.

Any criterion-referenced test must be subjected to the same critical review for content, linguistic, and statistical appropriateness, as would any norm-referenced instrument. Below is a brief discussion of some general questions to consider, and some suggestions for procedures to follow when selecting tests for use with a culturally and/or linguistically

"different" child. Additional information related to testing in specific behavioral areas follows.

A. Selecting Tests

1. Is the content culturally appropriate?

The informational content of tests may be heavily loaded with questions requiring advanced verbal English skills and knowledge of the history, values, customs, and institutions of the majority culture. A child from the inner city should not be expected to demonstrate problem-solving ability by answering "What's the thing to do when you're lost in the wilderness?"

Other examples from a commonly used I.Q. test: "Why is is better to pay bills by check than by cash?", and "Why is it generally better to give money to an organized charity than to a street begger?" A child whose family lives on the fringes of poverty may have little idea of the values associated with checking accounts or donating to organized charities. The "right" answer to test items often reflects the particular value orientations most commonly held by the middle class of the majority culture.

A minority child might respond with, "My mother told me to hit 'em back if anybody hits me," to the test

question, "What is the thing to do if a fellow (girl) much smaller than yourself starts to fight with you?" That answer reflects a summation of learning experiences drawn from the child's cultural environment. The response represents a proven way of dealing with one's known environment. It would be less than intelligent for the child to give responses which are different. Such test items lack objectivity when scoring criteria and the "right" answers do not take value differences into account.

Suggestions for Evaluating Test Content

a. Select culture specific tests which reflect distinct experiential backgrounds. Tests such as the BITCH-100 and the Enchilada Test were developed to reflect experiences from the black and Chicano cultures respectively. However, there are problems with culture-specific tests. One difficulty is that there are so many different cultural groups that is would be an overwhelming task to design a specific test for each. A second problem is that culture-specific tests cannot be used to predict performance in the public schools, inasmuch as the schools reflect the core culture.

b. Check for the inclusion of minority groups in the initial trial of test items. If, at the original point of item selection, consideration has been given to the types of information valued in different cultures and to the frequency of vocabulary usage, there is some guarantee that the test items will fairly reflect different acculturation patterns. Merely renorming a test (determining performance levels of a new population on an old test) does not necessarily make the original test more appropriate, however.

c. Use professional judgment to determine the degree to which informational content may penalize a particular child. For example, the content on the matching subtest of the Metropolitan Reading Test may be inappropriate for the average Puerto Rican child in this country. Items which clearly reflect ambiguous or unfamiliar content and values should then be modified or eliminated. If the total test results are still used, they should be interpreted with appropriate caution.

d. Look to item-analyses which may reveal items that differentially favor one group over another.

e. Follow-up during and after assessment to determine if the child can accurately respond to the intent of the questions. This is important since it is not always possible to determine in advance which items are inappropriate for a particular child. Answer formats which allow the examiner to question and record the child's reasoning processes provide excellent opportunities for culture-fair test item analysis.

2. Is the Language Appropriate?

Where the purpose of assessment is to measure other than language ability, a demand for receptive and expressive language skills may put individuals with language differences at a disadvantage. A child may be penalized from the outset by test directions that require a level of reading or oral comprehension beyond the child's grasp. This is particularly true where strict time limits are imposed on test completion. Similarly, an answer format that requires written or oral responses in standard English may put the child with language differences at a distinct disadvantage. An examiner with an incomplete knowledge of a child's language competencies will be unable to elicit maximum performance.

Even when test directions or test items are translated, they cannot be assumed equal in difficulty to those in the original language. For example, an item on the Tests of General Ability (TOGA) shows a picture of a woman washing clothes and is followed, in the English edition, by the words "wash," "wake," "walk," and "call," and in the Spanish edition by the words "lavor," "despertor," "andar," and "llamar." In the English edition, a child is required to distinguish between three words beginning with the same letter, all having the same number of letters in the words, while the same is not true for the Spanish translation.

Linguistic considerations are most important in tests that demand discrimination in phonology, semantics, and syntax. Spanish speakers of the Southwest often make no distinction in their pronunciation of the words "pen" and "pin", a test item found in the Wepman Test of Auditory Discrimination. Missing this item alone will lower a test score by four months.

One response to the problem of linguistic bias has been the development of so-called culture-fair non-verbal tests such as the Leiter, Cattell, and Raven tests. However, these tests have failed to yield similar means and standard deviations for persons from different sociocultural groups. They also lack suitable

predicative validity. One test cannot be universally applicable and fair to persons from all cultures and still assess important psychological characteristics and predict socially useful criteria. Also, non-verbal tests designed to reduce cultural bias may be inappropriate because they focus on only one mode of selecting and organizing information--which may be culture-bound.

Suggestions Related to Test Language

a. Where available, select tests that have been developed originally from appropriate language basis, not merely translated from standard English.

b. Use a language style during testing which maximizes the child's opportunity to understand what is required and to be able to respond freely and comfortably. This requires that the child's language proficiency has been previously determined. It is important to note that simply because a child predominantly speaks a language, he or she may not necessarily be literate in that language. A profile of listening, speaking, reading and writing proficiency should be established so a match can be made between the skills demanded by a test and the language or dialects in which a student may have acquired that skill.

3. Is the Format Appropriate?

Characteristics of the test format which may penalize students from different sociocultural groups include answer marking procedures as difficult to figure out as the test itself, test directions which require reading or oral comprehension beyond the students'

grasp of standard English, ambiguous illustrations, confusing lay-out designs, and restrictive time limits which emphasize completion, etc. If the purpose of testing is to predict a student's success in typical classroom situations, however, it may be important to find out how well he or she copes with the standard presentation format, time limits, and directions for tasks.

Suggestions for Accommodating Test Format

a. Teach the child test-taking techniques such as following directions, working persistently and speedily, marking answers, examining alternative responses.

b. Provide alternative response modes for children who do not have adequate command of spoken or written English. These could include taped responses from young children, signing for deaf children, body language, mixed language styles, etc.

c. Remember that any significant modification of the standardized testing procedure to control for time, directions, illustrations, or answer format make the scores earned on a modified test impossible to interpret within the original normative framework. If one departs from standard procedures for the sake of eliciting improved performance, it is important to have a clear rationale for doing so, to record the modifications used, and to be aware of their impact on standard interpretation of test results.

4. Are the Statistics Appropriate?

It is possible for the same test to measure different attributes or processes in minority groups than it

measures in majority culture middle class samples---or for the same processes to be captured with a different degree of fidelity. Tests may have good predictive validity for limited purposes, i.e., academic performance in public school with a monocultural curriculum. A child whose primary language is Spanish will score lower on academic readiness tests than a child whose primary language is English. Those low scores may accurately predict that the Spanish-speaking child will have difficulty coping with instruction in school---but they do not necessarily inform educators as to the child's capacity to deal with appropriate learning experiences.

A determination must be made as to whether the child to be assessed matches the acculturation patterns reflected in the standardization sample. Data reported in the test manual, i.e., sex, age, socioeconomic status, ethnic background, level of education, geographic region, psychological characteristics, etc., should be consulted to make this determination.

> We must avoid the notion that all minority or lower socioeconomic children are, by definition, significantly different from those in the standardization sample. This position is prejudicial and unwarranted. However, we must be sensitive to the fact that important differences exist with respect to child-rearing practices, expectations and aspirations, language experiences,

> and that these and other factors may result in acculturation patterns which are not directly comparable to those which are more typical in the United States. The decision as to whether a child's acculturation patterns are similar to those generally reflected in the test's standardization sample can be made individually and only with a thorough knowledge of the child's background (Oakland and Metuzek, 1976).

If the child in question does not match the standardization sample, normative comparisons should be avoided. The presence of minorities in the standardization sample may be unimportant if their number is small. If majority-culture children determine the normal distribution, cultural groups which differ systematically from the majority may be defined statistically as abnormal, even though this violates a basic statistical principle: when two groups differ significantly they are, by definition, from different populations. In such an instance, they cannot be treated legitimately as single population for purposes of norming a test.

Criteria may be used in statistical regression models that reflect no substantial minority culture contribution to the variance. In college admission practices, for example, Chicanos, because of their previous exclusion from, or nonparticipation in many colleges, have not been included in any significant number in the distribution of grades. Restriction in the distribution of scores tends to lower reliability. Minority-

group children tend to have a smaller spread of scores in reliability samples, thus yielding lower reliability coefficients.

Testing of the culturally different child is especially susceptible to the introduction of psychometrically random factors determining reliability. These include the relationship between assessor and child, the child's lack of test sophistication, and effects of previous negative testing experience. Also, test-retest reliability is lowered by the inclusion of items that rely on subjective judgment in scoring. In light of the numerous difficulties which exist in judging the statistical adequacy of test results, it often becomes necessary to supplement statistics with personal judgment in order to estimate a test's appropriateness.

Suggestions for Evaluating Test Statistics

a. Determine whether the child's acculturation patterns are similar to those reflected in the test's standardization sample.

b. Investigate the availability of loca/pluralistic norms for all cultural groups to which the instrument will be applied. See discussion on Intelligence Testing.

5. Is the Testing Situation Appropriate?

Test results may be adversely affected when there is a mismatch between the expectations of the examiner (or

test designer) and the personality factors and learned skills of the test taker. Some students may view the testing situation as cold, aversive, and irrelevant; some may view it as a time to interact socially rather than to achieve competitively. Minority group children may be virtually noncommunicative out of anxiety, fear, or a need to show respect for authority during testing.

The ethnic culture of the examiner may affect test performance. At the upper grades, "match to culture" may have a beneficial effect on test performance. A determination must be made on a child-by-child basis as to whether there is any evidence that would strongly suggest the matching of student and examiner by sex and/or ethnic background. Regardless of ethniciity, an examiner must be sensitive to the linguistic and sociocultural difference among children in order to elicit maximum performance and to validly interpret responses.

Suggestions for Evaluating Testing Situation

a. Determine whether the locale in which testing takes place is familiar and congenial to the student.

b. Determine the extent to which the examiner's style is warm, responsive, motivating, and respectful while firm. The style of the examiner probably is more related to test performance than either gender or years of professional experience.

c. Investigate the effect of the examiner's ethnic culture on the testing situation.

d. Determine the motivational tenor of the testing situation. Situations which generate a moderate level of motivational arousal generally produce the most favorable results with minority group children. The extremes of a low-expectation, game-like atmosphere or a high expectation, critical atmosphere should be avoided, as they may result in disinterest or anxiety.

B. Testing in Specific Behavioral Areas

1. Intelligence Testing

Intelligence testing must account for cultural and linguistic factors which may have a considerable impact on test validity. Critics of traditional IQ testing have pointed out that standardized tests (WISC-R; WAIS; Stanford-Binet) may be biased and unfair to persons from cultural minorities and low socioeconomic levels because most standardized intelligence tests primarily reflect white, middle class values and attitudes, and do not adequately sample the experiences and the linguistic, cognitive, and other cultural styles, attitudes, and values of minority groups. In addition, tests may be conducted incompetently by persons who do not understand the culture and language of minority group children and thus are unable to produce assessments which truly reflect the child's underlying competence.

Alternatives to the use of existing tests in their original form include the following:

a. Translation of existing intelligence tests into different languages and dialects. Translations of standard tests enable the linguistically different child to perform better than to standard English versions, but they nevertheless are not truly culture-fair. This is because they still test for concepts and use developmental norms which are culture-bound.

b. Nonlanguage tests. In nonlanguage tests, a measure of the child's intelligence is derived from his/her performance in a series of nonverbal tasks. An example of such a test is a Piagetian diagnostic procedure called Program Assessment/ Pupil Interaction (PAPI). The Leiter International Performance Scale is a commonly used nonlanguage test. It is necessary to recognize, however, that what these tests measure is necessarily different from what conventional tests measure, since it is psychologically impossible to eliminate the verbal content of any behavior without altering the intellectual processes involved.

c. Culture-specific Tests. The development of individual intelligence tests specific to each major cultural group in the United States would provide an ideal solution to the problem of culturally inappropriate intelligence testing. However,

the enormous costs and complexities involved in determining the constituent parts of intelligence in a multiplicity of cultures make this approach both prohibitive and impractical.

d. Providing local/pluralistic norms. The System of Multicultural Pluralistic Assessment (SOMPA) (Mercer et al., 1977) is one assessment system wherein pluralistic norms have been developed for distinct sociocultural groups within various ethnic groups. With SOMPA, the intelligence of each child is evaluated (using the WISC-R) only in relation to others who have come from similar sociocultural backgrounds and who have had approximately the same opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills to perform on an intelligence test designed for the majority culture. In addition, SOMPA is a system vs. a single test instrument, focusing not only on cognitive behaviors, but also on perceptual-motor development, health conditions, and adaptive behavior. Parent interview information is combined with data from direct assessment of the student to provide a comprehensive and balanced basis for planning instructional intervention.

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2. Perceptual and Psycholinguistic Testing

Should an assessment team decide to conduct a formal assessment of perceptual and/or psycholinguistic abilities, it should follow the suggestions given for evaluating tests for cultural appropriateness (pp.). An example of shortcomings in instruments which measure children's psycholinguistic abilities may be found in the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities (ITPA). In a study by Grill and Bartel (1977), the Grammatic Closure subtest of the ITPA was examined to determine the extent to which it was appropriate for speakers of nonstandard English. The results of this study showed that eleven of the thirty-three items on the Grammatic Closure subtest were "high risk" items in which appropriate responses could be made in standard English, but not nonstandard English. These items were found to account for between 52% and 100% of all errors by black children, in whose nonstandard dialect words like "hisself" and "theyself" were acceptable.

While the results of Grill and Bartel's research cannot be generalized to other subtests of the ITPA, to other standardized test, or to other minority population's performance on these tests, many psychometricians view language as a general problem in standardized psycholinguistic tests. Thus, studies such as that conducted by Grill and Bartel reinforce the need for

the assessment team to evaluate selected assessment techniques in advance for appropriateness and to interpret the data gathered with care.

3. Testing for Psychological Adjustment

As in all other areas, the assessment team will want to acquire only the information related to the child's psychological adjustment which can be used in developing the child's educational program. One area that may have direct relevance to instruction is that of achievement motivation. The concept of achievement motivation reflects the need for achievement as opposed to affiliation.

An excellent example of the culturally appropriate nature of the TAT, adapted for the assessment of achievement motivation, can be found in a recent study by Ramirez and Price-Williams (1976). These researchers used seven TAT cards depicting the following: 1) student and teacher, 2) student and mother, 3) student and father, 4) two students of the same ethnic group, 5) two students, one of darker complexion than the other, 6) student, parents, and principal, and 7) student studying alone. They asked test subjects to answer three questions for each card: 1) what is happening? 2) What happened before? and 3) How will the story end? Results were scored blind, i.e., without

knowledge of the sex or ethnic group membership of the subjects. It was concluded from this study that:

> In the past it has been all too readily concluded that Mexican Americans and Blacks have little motivation to achieve, and it has been assumed that somehow their cultures interfere with the development of this motivation. The results of the current study, however, show that the aforementioned conclusions are unjustified. That is, members of certain cultural groups may have appeared to exhibit little achievement motivation because the particular methodology used did not tap achievement motivation as interpreted by that cultural group and/or because the achievement motivation expressed was not recognized as such due to the narrow definition of achievement used.

Through such assessment, the team may be able to better understand both the child's reinforcers and the ways in which they may be capitalized upon in instructional programming. For example, the classroom environment and instructional methods used with the child may be adapted to meet affiliation needs and to encourage achievement motivation.

In addition to the TAT, there are a large number of psychological assessment techniques ranging from self-report inventories like the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) to projective techniques like the Rorschach. All techniques utilized in this area of assessment should be carefully scrutinized for cultural appropriateness and relevance for

educational programming. When these techniques are to be used, the clinician's familiarity with the minority child's culture, language, and social class should be a prime consideration in the selection of the individual to do the testing.

IV. PRACTITIONER CHECKLISTS

CHECKLIST OF ADMINISTRATIVE CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENSURING CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

1. Have affirmative action procedures been followed in selection of assessment team members? Is individual commitment to culturally appropriate procedures in educational programming a consideration in staff selection? ___ yes ___ no.

2. Has the assessment team participated in inservice training experiences designed to develop and/or increase their competencies in working with culturally and/or linguistically different children and their families? ___ yes ___ no.

3. Are additional resource persons known and available to the assessment team for augmenting the skills and expertise of team members as needed? ___ yes ___ no.

4. Have due process and appeal procedures been designed in such a way as to facilitate informal education decision-making by professionals, parents, child advocates. ___ yes ___ no.

5. Are formal and informal screening procedures applied in a manner which is fair and equitable for <u>all</u> students? ___ yes ___ no.

6. Is there a sequence of alternatives available, prior to formal referral, for students identified via screening? ___ yes ___ no.

7. Does the data and information gathering pahse following formal referral attend to sociocultural factors in the student's life, both in school and at home? Are home visits routinely included in this phase? ___ yes ___ no.

8. Is there a systematic procedure for determining the primary language of the student, and of the student's home? ___ yes ___ no.

9. Are all notices and other forms of communication with parents in their primary language? Are interpreters identified and available? ___ yes ___ no.

10. Are special efforts made to ensure and increase parental understanding and involvement in each step of the identification/assessment/educational programming process--i.e., additional home visits, interpreters, parent-to-parent support systems, etc? ___ yes ___ no.

11. In the development of assessment plans is there appropriate emphasis placed on the collection of data via informal procedures (i.e., observation, interviewing, etc.)? ___ yes ___ no.

12. Are documented systematic procedures routinely used to evaluate and periodically review the assessment instruments/techniques, and processes currently in use, in terms of their cultural appropriateness? ___ yes ___ no.

13. Are there documented guidelines for the selection, modification, and use of assessment instruments and techniques? ___ yes ___ no.

14. Has consideration been given to specifying more frequent IEP review intervals for the purpose of determining the appropriateness of student's placement? ___ yes ___ no.

CHECKLIST FOR REFERRAL ANALYSIS

1. Is the referral legitimate?

   a. Does the referring agent have a history of over-referral of children from certain cultural groups? ___ yes ___ no.

   b. Could irrelevant personal characteristics (e.g., sex or attractivevess) of the child have influenced the decision to refer him? ___ yes ___ no.

   c. Could the referring agent have misinterpreted this child's actions or expression due to his lack of understanding of cultural differences between himself and the child? ___ yes ___ no.

2. Can the assessment team provide the referring agent with interim recommendations that may eliminate the need for a comprehensive evaluation?

   a. Is it possible that the curriculum being used assumes that this child has developed readiness skills at home that in reality he hasn't had the opportunity to develop? ___ yes ___ no.

   b. If so, can the team assist the teacher in planning a program to give this child the opportunity to develop readiness skills? ___ yes ___ no.

   c. Can the team provide information on the child's cultural background for the referring agent so that there are fewer misunderstandings between the referring agent and this child, and perhaps other children of similar cultural background? ___ yes ___ no.

3. Have the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) been informed, in their primary language, of the referral? ___ yes ___ no.

4. What special conditions about this child do I need to consider?

   a. Do I know the child's primary home language? ___ yes ___ no.

   b. Do I know about the child's home environmental factors? ___ yes ___ no. (e.g., - familiar relationships/ placement - social and cultural customs).

c. Do I understand this child's culture and language so that I can assess performance which accurately indicates the child's underlying competencies? ___ yes ___ no.

5. What special conditions about myself do I need to consider?

   a. How do I feel about this child?

   b. Are my values different from this child's? ___ yes ___ no.

   c. Can I evaluate this child fairly and without prejudice? ___ yes ___ no.

   d. If not, would I refer him to another assessor if one is available? ___ yes ___ no.

6. a. Have I examined closely all the available existing information and sought additional information concerning this child? ___ yes ___ no.

   b. Have I observed this child in as many environments as possible (individual, large group, small group, play, home)? ___ yes ___ no.

   c. Am I making illegitimate assumptions about this child? ___ yes ___ no (e.g., do I assume he speaks and reads Spanish simply because he was born in Baja, CA?)

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING TESTS FOR CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS

1. Is the content culturally appropriate? ___ yes ___ no.

   a. Are the skills necessary for success on this instrument directly related to the assessment objectives? ___ yes ___ no.

   b. Considering what you know about this student, do any items or illustrations on this instrument represent unfamiliar or misleading content? ___ yes ___ no.

   c. Considering what you know about this student, do any items on this instrument reflect unfamiliar or conflicting values? ___ yes ___ no.

   d. Does the test manual or research literature report any differences in performance which are related to sex or sociocultural background? ___ yes ___ no.

   e. Will the information being obtained from this instrument easily assist in defining instructional interventions for this student? ___ yes ___ no.

2. Is the language appropriate? ___ yes ___ no.

   a. Does this instrument employ vocabulary that is colloquial, regional and/or archaic? ___ yes ___ no.

   b. In assessing abilities other than language, does this instrument rely heavily on receptive and expressive English language ability? ___ yes ___ no.

   c. Is there a parallel form of the instrument available in this student's native language or dialect? ___ yes ___ no.

   d. If there is a parellel form, are the items equivalent in difficulty and intent to the English version? ___ yes ___ no.

3. Is the format appropriate? ___ yes ___ no.

   a. What does the technique/instrument demand in terms of prerequisite skills?

      - appropriate reading level of questions/directions? ___ yes ___ no.

- ability to work rapidly? ___ yes ___ no.

- understanding of answer selection and marking procedures? ___ yes ___ no.

- other?

b. Does this child possess these prerequisites? ___ yes ___ no.

4. Are the statistics appropriate? ___ yes ___ no.

a. Has this instrument been standardized on a large enough sample from this student's sociocultural group to warrant reliance on the norms or criterion levels? ___ yes ___ no.

b. Has this instrument been validated for the specific purpose for which it is being considered? ___ yes ___ no.

c. Are validity and reliability measures within acceptable limits? ___ yes ___ no.

5. Is the testing situation appropriate? ___ yes ___ no.

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR CULTURAL APPROPRIATENESS

A. Relevancy:

Does the book (poster, movie, slide, etc.) actually reflect the language and the experience of the minority student? ___ yes ___ no.

Does it depict people of the child's minority group as worthwhile individuals? ___ yes ___ no.

B. Authenticity:

Is the book (poster, movie, slide, etc.) authentic from the perspective of the minority student? ___ yes ___ no.

Is the book written by amember of the minority group being portrayed? ___ yes ___ no.

Does the book deal with or compare minority cultures within and outside the U.S.A.? ___ yes ___ no.

Does it identify with majority culture values and standards? If so, are the majority culture values considered the only acceptable norm? ___ yes ___ no.

Does comparison of cultures in any way imply the superiority of one culture to another? ___ yes ___ no.

C. Racist Stereotypes:

Are illustrations of faces, figures, and settings stereotypical? ___ yes ___ no.

Do the clothes, appearance, manners of speech and behavior described in text and illustrations tend to reinforce derogatory stereotypes of the child's minority group? ___ yes ___ no.

Who in the stories are the leaders? Who are followers? Who are characters with ideas and initiative?

Is the impression given that the welfare of one group (or individual) depends on the generosity or goodwill of another group (or individual)? ___ yes ___ no.

D. Sexist Stereotypes:

Are the females in the book just part of the background and do they play minor roles in a male-centered story? ___ yes ___ no.

If females are central figures, are they case in roles other than the usual stereotype of teacher, mother, and nurse? ___ yes ___ no.

Are the actions of women less sophisticated, less interesting, less challenging than those of men? Do they show initiate and imagination or are they docile and passive and need help in order to resolve the problems posed? Is the solution to problems based on a sixth sense or "women's intuition? ___ yes ___ no.

Are the values of beauty, sweetness, domesticity, motherhood, and marriage the predominant virtues depicted for females in the stories? ___ yes ___ no.

E. Language:

Is the language used familiar to the student? If not, are there glossaries? ___ yes ___ no.

Can the language of the text be used as a cross-culture experience to facilitate communication and cooperation between groups in the U.S.A.? ___ yes ___ no.

Does the book depict dialects and cultures of different groups inaccurately? Are these confused with one another? ___ yes ___ no.

Are words not used in common set aside in glossaries? ___ yes ___ no.

Is minority group language or dialect used in a derogatory or demeaning way? Is it used in a comparative or illustrative way to show diversity of dialects and cultural variations? ___ yes ___ no.

F. History:

Does the teacher or evaluator feel he or she has sufficient knowledge of the history of the group involved to make an accurage judgement as to the validity of the historical content? ___ yes ___ no.

Are the settings, actions, places, dates, etc., accurage? ___ yes ___ no.

If the book identifies "heroes" or famous men and women, are they equally distributed among various minorities? ___ yes ___ no.

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