

## Handout: *Common Screening and Assessment Errors*

Common Error	What to Do
1. Informal translation of an existing measure without careful examination of the norming population, reliability and validity of the translated version compared to the English version.	Don't just use an interpreter who reads the directions of the instrument. Remember that the screening or assessment measure may not be normed on the population being assessed. We must use multiple sources of data to truly understand where a child's home and classroom language skills are and how they progress.
2. Selection of a non-English version of an assessment based solely on the reliability and validity of the English version, and not those of the translated or adapted version.	Again, we can't just rely on an English version of a measure, even if it is highly valid and reliable for use with the population on which it is normed. We must gather multiple sources of data.
3. Collection of inadequate information from families and providers on the amount and timing of a child's prior language exposure and the child's current proficiency levels in both the home language, as well as in English.	Use the <i>Gathering and Using Language Information Families Share</i> booklet to learn about children's home language(s) and English exposure. This information is essential to help guide appropriate selection of specific measures and assessment approaches.
4. Use of family members during the administration of a standardized screening or assessment tool in ways that do not adhere to published procedures.	Hire an interpreter and train him or her in the standardized assessment procedures.
5. Use of a measure's published normative data that does not match a particular child or group of children's background characteristics.	Do NOT make educational decisions based on data normed on a population of children that is different than the one being assessed. Use multiple sources of data such as family report and teacher observations of the child's strengths and needs.
6. Misdiagnosis of a child's abilities as a language disorder or disability rather than a typical lag in performance due to typical developmental trajectories of young children who are dual language learners.	Gather data from multiple sources over time before making educational decisions or diagnoses. It is important to give a young DLL time to become accustomed to new environments and languages.
7. Making program funding decisions based on the overall progress of a group of children as measured against a single standard rather than relative growth for specific sub-groups of children.	Disaggregate data, meaning that programs should look at specific groups of children's progress when making decisions about the effectiveness of the program.
8. Analysis and reporting of classroom- or program-level assessment data without regard for disaggregated data presented for sub-groups of children.	Same as above-early childhood programs should look at the progress of specific groups of children to determine the strengths and areas for improvement for the program.

Adapted from Barrueco, S., Lopez, M., Ong, C., Lozano, P. (2012). *Assessing Spanish-English Bilingual Preschoolers: A Guide to Best Approaches and Measures*. Baltimore: Brookes Publishing, p. 15).