Early Language Screening and the PLS-5 ECE Screener

Screening Communication Skills to Identify At-Risk Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers

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Disclosures

Dr. Scheller is an employee of Pearson (financial), publisher of the PLS-5 ECE Screener, which will be discussed in this presentation.

Agenda

1. Importance of Early Screening
   • Language's link to learning
2. Overview of the PLS-5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators
3. Why are there separate English and Spanish (Spanish-English) Editions?
4. Examples of Test Items and Scoring
5. Q & A

• NOTE: Sample items/tables will be viewed during this webinar. Please remember guidelines for test security of copyrighted materials.
Early Language Development

Many children enter school with weaknesses in early language

- Children in poverty—heard 250,000 words per year
- Children in homes of professionals—heard 4 million words per year
- Exposure to vocabulary directly linked to acquisition of vocabulary

Hart & Risley (2002)

Language and Test Scores by SES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures and scores</th>
<th>13 professional</th>
<th>23 Working-class</th>
<th>6 Welfare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recorded vocabulary size</td>
<td>Parent 2,176</td>
<td>Parent 1,498</td>
<td>Parent 974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child 1,116</td>
<td>Child 749</td>
<td>Child 525</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average utterances per hour</td>
<td>Parent 487</td>
<td>Parent 301</td>
<td>Parent 223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child 310</td>
<td>Child 176</td>
<td>Child 168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average different words per hour</td>
<td>Parent 382</td>
<td>Parent 297</td>
<td>Parent 216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Child 251</td>
<td>Child 167</td>
<td>Child 149</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Hart & Risley, 2002)

Language and Literacy

Early development of reading depends critically on whether the receptive phonological component of the aural system and the expressive phonological component of the oral system are developing in an age-appropriate manner.

(Berninger 2007)
Developing Language Competence

• What is the connection between oral and written language?
  a. Oral language provides the foundation for the development of reading and writing;
  b. the relationship between oral language and literacy development is reciprocal in nature, with interconnections originating in early childhood;
  
  ASHA, 2001

Developing Language Competence

• What is the connection between oral and written language?
  c. children with speech and language impairments are at increased risk for difficulties with early and conventional literacy development; and
  d. intervention for oral language can positively influence literacy development, and vice versa.
  
  ASHA, 2001

Importance of Early Screening

• Many children do not successfully acquire speech and language skills prior to school (King et al., 2005; McLeod & Harrison, 2009; McLeod & McKinnon, 2007).
  • Therefore: screening tests may be used as the first step in the assessment process.
  • Allows educators to “close the language gap”
PLS-5 Screening Test for Early Childhood Educators

What is it?
• Quickly screen language skills in either English or Spanish
• Identify children who may need to be referred to a speech-language pathologist for further speech and/or language assessment.

What is it?
• Screen children in a wide variety of settings and from a wide age range.
• PLS-5 ECE can be used to screen older children (i.e., 3:0–6:11).
• NOT a diagnostic assessment

Overview Information
• Qualification Level: B
• Completion Time: 5–10 minutes (not timed)
• Scoring Options: Manual Scoring...easy! 😊
Early Language Screening and the PLS-5 ECE Screener

Ages: Birth – 6:11

• Age-bands
  • Birth – 11 months
  • 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 years old
  • Each age band reflects unique aspect of language development.

Versions

1. English
   • For children who speak English as their primary language.
2. Spanish
   • For children speaking Spanish only
   or
   • Children speaking Spanish and English (with Spanish as their primary language).

What am I assessing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains Assessed by Age Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Domains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articulation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connected Speech</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social/Interpersonal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stuttering</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Scores & Interpretation

- Infants and Toddlers
  - Pass/fail scores:
    - emerging interaction
    - language and speech skills

- Children ages 3:0 – 6:11
  - Pass/fail scores:
    - articulation
    - language
    - social/interpersonal communication skills
    - stuttering
    - voice

Administration Basics

- For very young children (0:0 – 1:11), information can be gathered from a caregiver about a child’s target behaviors.
  - Use Caregiver Questions

How to involve caregivers: Should I?

1. Caregiver’s participation is a critical aspect of test administration!
2. Give credit for passing specific test items if the caregiver can provide examples of the child’s behavior at home.
3. Information needed to score an item may be obtained by using the Caregiver Questions (CQ) listed in the administration directions.
4. Prep caregiver prior to participation.
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**Administration**

- Individual administration.
- Manual and Record Form.
- Place only the manipulatives that you need for the specific item in front of the child.
- Administer only age appropriate items.

**Manipulatives**

Ages 0:0–2:11 require the use of toys or objects that may be found within the child’s environment

- squeaky toy
- infant toys
- spoon
- 3 keys
- bottle with nipple and/or pacifier
- Cup
- Bowl
- Bubbles
- watch with a second hand or stopwatch
- 1 or 2 of the child’s personal, age-appropriate toys
- sealable bag
- age-appropriate crackers or snacks

**Test Sections**
Language Section

• The pass criterion for the Language section is different for each age.
  • For children ages 0:0–4:11
    • “Score of 4 or more items correct.”
  • For children ages 5:0–6:11
    • “Score of 5 or more items correct.”

Language Items

• Once the pass criterion for the Language section has been met, the remaining Language items do not need to be administered.
  • Screening the language of children ages 0:0–1:11:
    • You may score based on caregiver’s report, observation, or elicitation.

Language Items

• Caregiver Questions (CQ) are provided in the stimulus pages.
  • Score 1 if the caregiver provides an example that meets pass criteria.
  • Score 0 if the child does not demonstrate the targeted behavior.
  • Ages 2:0–6:11:
    • Most items include sub-items that require multiple responses from the child.
Feeding Section

- Atypical behaviors in the feeding and swallowing development of children ages 0:0–1:11 that may warrant further evaluation.
- Statements describe any atypical patterns observed during testing or reported by the caregiver.
- The pass criterion is "None of the behaviors are noted."

Articulation Section

- Ages 2:6–6:11
- Speech sounds in the initial, medial, and final positions
  - 5 target sounds for children ages 2:6–2:11
  - 8 target sounds for children ages 3:0–3:11
  - 10 target sounds for children ages 4:0–4:11, 5:0–5:11, and 6:0–6:11.
- Some words include two target sounds.

Connected Speech Section

- Ages 3:0–6:11.
- Check statement that best describes the child's conversational speech.
- The pass criterion for all ages is “You understand most of what the child says.”
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Social/Interpersonal Section (0:0 – 2:11)

- 0:0 – 2:11: The statements describe atypical behaviors.
- Check statements observed during testing or reported by the caregiver.
- The pass criterion for children ages 0:0–2:11 is “None of the behaviors are noted.”

Social/Interpersonal Section (3:0 – 6:11)

- 3:0 – 6:11: Statements describe typical behaviors.
- Check statements that best describe the child’s social/interpersonal skills.
- The pass criterion for children ages 3:0–6:11 is “4 or more statements checked.”

Stuttering and Voice Sections

- Administered to children ages 3:0–6:11.
- Typical and atypical characteristics of children’s speech
- Check statements that describe the child’s speech and voice.
- The pass criterion is “No atypical characteristics noted.”
Screening Summary

- Determine if any assessed domains require additional information to be obtained.
  - Check only one box for each section for which the child was screened.

Implications for Performance

- If you have checked any box in the Refer for Additional Testing column in the Screening Summary…
  - refer for additional testing.
  - SLP
  - Include observations, participation, and screening results

Be sure…

- If a child does not follow directions, attend to task, or respond to test items, they might not pass item.
  - Child may appear to need additional assessment even though the child’s skills may be typical.
  - In this case:
    - Gather additional information
    - Observe
    - Administer the screening test at a later time
Questions?

Pricing:
In effect through December, 31, 2016

1. Ages 0–3 English Kit (0158008642)
   • $81.50
2. Ages 3–6 English Kit (0158008677)
   • $81.50
3. Ages 0–3 Spanish Kit (0158008693)
   • $86.50
4. Ages 3–6 Spanish Kit (0158008774)
   • $86.50

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