



# Elevating Cultural and Linguistic Diversity within Collaborative Assessment Considerations for All Families

Serra Acar, Sheresa Blanchard, Katrina Cummings-Sangutei, Jennifer Hurley, and Megan Vinh



# VOICES



# DEC Recommended Practices

- DEC Recommended Practices
  - A3 - Practitioners use assessment materials and strategies that are appropriate for the child's age and level of development and accommodate the child's sensory, physical, communication, cultural, linguistic, social, and emotional characteristics.
  - A5 - Practitioners conduct assessments in the child's dominant language and in additional languages if the child is learning more than one language.
  - F1 - Practitioners build trusting and respectful partnerships with the family through interactions that are sensitive and responsive to cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity

# Topics

- Linguistic, Cultural, Functional and Metric Equivalents of Assessment Tools
- Bias in assessment and ways to combat
- Experiences and Perspectives of Immigrant Families Involved with Special Education Services: Cultural Values Lens
- Collaboration during IEP and IFSP Meetings in a Refugee Resettlement Community: Lessons from Cultural Liaisons

# LINGUISTIC, CULTURAL, FUNCTIONAL AND METRIC EQUIVALENTS OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS

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# DEC Recommended Practices

- Practitioners use assessment materials and strategies that are appropriate for the child's age and level of development and accommodate the child's sensory, physical, communication, cultural, linguistic, social, and emotional characteristics (A3).

# Background Information

- It is promising that the literature provides substantive information about psychometric properties of the screening tools that are translated into other languages (Bornman, Jevcik, Ronski, & Pae, 2010; Fallah, Islami, & Mosavian, 2011; Janson, & Squires, 2004; Saihong, 2010).

# Challenges

- Translation protocols merely focuses on ensuring linguistic equivalence (Musquash & Bova, 2007; Pena, 2007).
- Only a few of them provide evidence on cultural appropriateness, psychometric equivalence, and utility of the tool in the translated culture (Campos, Squires, & Ponte, 2010; Dionne, Squires, Leclerc, Peloquin, & McKinnon, 2006; Heo, Squires, & Yovanoff, 2008).

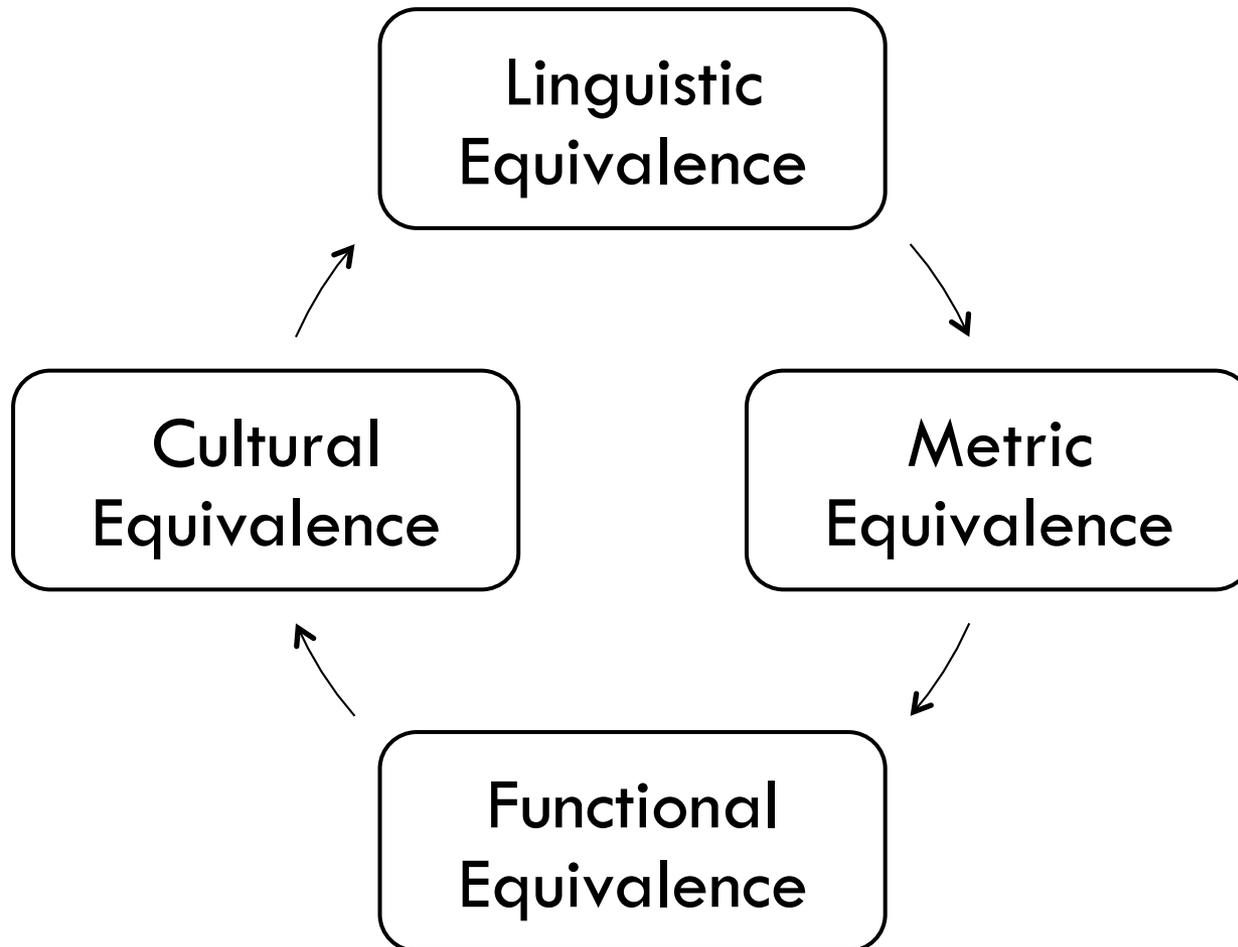
# Assessment Tools

- 14 tools reviewed
- Valid and reliable developmental screening tool
- Appropriate for use with children between birth and age five
- Available for parents, other caregivers or professionals
- Translated into other languages than English

# Results

Cultural adaptation/ accommodation	ASQ:3 <sup>rd</sup> , ASQ:SE, Battelle, Denver II, PEDS, SWYC
Utility	ASQ:3 <sup>rd</sup> , ASQ:SE
Translation protocol	ASQ:3 <sup>rd</sup> , ASQ:SE, PEDS-DM
Reliability and validity studies for children with special needs	ASQ:3 <sup>rd</sup> Ed., BDI-2 Screening Test, Brigance II, Denver II, DIAL-4, PEDS-DM, SWYC
Reliability and validity in the translated language	ASQ:3 <sup>rd</sup> , ASQ:SE, DIAL-4

# Key Points



*Note:* Figure adapted from Peña, 2007.

# Final Thoughts

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- There is a need to document the translation process
  - ▣ Items that are difficult to translate, require cultural adaptation, accommodation, procedures, and coding, etc.
- Disseminate the translated tool(s) to users and researchers



# Bias in assessment and ways to combat it

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Ph.D.

East Carolina University

we don't see things as they are  
we see them as we are

anais nin





**SELF REFLECTION**

A person is swimming in a pool, captured in a side view. Their right arm is extended forward, and water is splashing around their hand. The background shows a blurred landscape with hills and a bright sun or light source. The overall tone is motivational and serene.

Know yourself before you go around,  
analyzing and judging other people

- Anonymous

Language 𑌕𑌇𑌆𑌆𑌆𑌆 Linguaggio ЯЗЫК  
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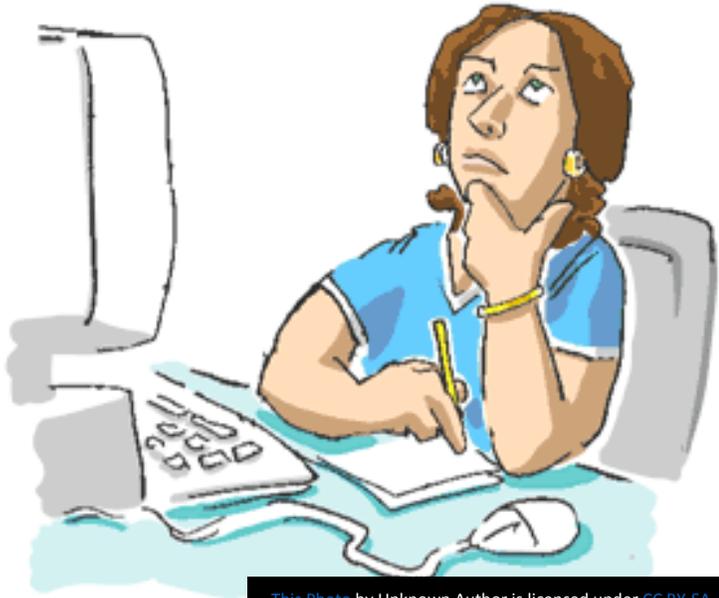
Is your  
assessment  
reliable and  
valid?

What are some  
factors that  
could influence  
this answer?



**SOLUTION**

The word "SOLUTION" is rendered in large, bold, blue 3D block letters. Small, grey, stylized human figures are positioned around the letters to suggest teamwork and effort. One figure is pushing the letter 'S' from behind, another is pushing the letter 'O' from the side, a third is standing with arms raised holding up the letter 'U', a fourth is holding up the letter 'O', and a fifth is pushing the letter 'N' from behind. The letters and figures are set on a white reflective surface, creating clear reflections below them.



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# Thoughts and Reflections

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A man is but the  
product of his  
thoughts. What he  
thinks, he becomes.

Gandhi

# APPLYING A CULTURAL VALUES LENS TO UNDERSTAND IMMIGRANT FAMILIES' EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES AND POTENTIAL APPROACHES TO ASSESSMENT

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**F1. Practitioners build trusting and respectful partnerships with the family through interactions that are sensitive and responsive to cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity.**

**Katrina Cummings, Ph.D.**

**Simpson College**

# US Demographic Trends

- US population is ~321 million
- 43.3 million or 13.5% are foreign-born
- 27% of children have one foreign-born parent ( Zong & Batalova, 2017)
- In 2013, the US had over 4 times more immigrants than any other country (UN, 2013)
- Between 2014 and 2060, those born outside of the United States is expected to increase by 85% (growing to one fifth of the population) compared to an increase of 22% for native born individuals (Colby & Ortman, 2015).

# Purpose of the Study

- What are the experiences of immigrant and refugee families of children with disabilities related to education and other specialized services?
- How does sociocultural context (both the heritage and new country contexts) of immigrant and refugee families of children with disabilities impact their perspectives on education and other specialized services?
- What are potential cultural values orientations of the families? How might families relate to assessment given these orientations?

# Participants

- **Selection Criteria**

- Parent is from an immigrant community
- Parent is 18 years or older in age
- Parent has a child with special needs

- **Study Participants**

Country of Origin	Time in US	Parent's Age	Languages	Child's Age	Disability
Burmese1	5 years	25-34	Karen	21 months	congenital heart disease, S/L delay
Burmese2	4 years	35-44	Karen	9	Polio, global delays
Vietnam1 (Montagnard)	10 years	35-44	Mnong	9	speech
Vietnam2 (Montagnard)	9 years	25-34	Mnong	6	Down syndrome
Mexico1	10 years	35-44	Spanish	4	Speech/ Language
Mexico2	8 years		Spanish	6	Medical, Autism
Peru1	17 years	45+	Spanish/English	16	Autism
Peru2	16 years	35-44	Spanish/English	4	Autism, PDD

# Procedures

- ❖ Individual interviews for 1-2 hours
- ❖ Semi-structured questions
- ❖ Trained interpreters assisted with the interviews as needed
- ❖ Data were coded by case and across all interviews to identify common themes

# Family/Home Context (Group Membership)

- Native language spoken in homes of all participants
- Refugee families from camps have perspectives different from immigrants directly arriving from heritage country

*“No one speaks English at home. So, we reinforce the native language.”*

**--Montagnard mother**

*“...when we were in the camp um, I’ve seen, there is triplet babies. They [service providers] come and have them like, they give help. They come to take care of them. But I think, if a child like, if a disabled child like my child in the camp like this, I don’t think that they would get, he would get like a lot of help, like here.*

**--Burmese mother**

# School/Services (Authority, Ways of Knowing)

- Parent's uncertainty about child's diagnosis, whether child had IEP, and how to navigate the US system of services
- Parent-professional partnership: Most parents described active participation in their child's development at home and more passive participation at school or medical settings where professionals were regarded as experts
- Parents desire more and better communication from school professionals

*“And then I always hear that my child is in the hospital like every week, every other week, like that. Um, so I don't feel happy. Then I move over here. I have to stay with him closely because I know he need like 24 hour a day, like that. And then, I'm not surprised when they use the double diaper at school because it's very, a lot of work, for a person like this. Then, at the school, the teachers um, continue to um, continue to ask to go to school but I'm not feeling good about that. And I tell them, you say my child is getting better but at home, he cannot do anything. ”*

**-- Burmese father**

# Heritage Cultural Context and Experiences (Ways of Knowing)

- Prior to moving to the United States, most parents reported that they lived in rural areas and were not exposed to people with disabilities
- Few formal and informal supports

*I didn't know what autism was, because for us, if a child doesn't speak at a young age, it's because, they say "He's going to talk. He is a late talker. But he will talk." So, there is not, how can I say it? There is not much knowledge about this, there.*

**--Mexican mother**

# Parents' Experiences/Perspectives (Ways of Knowing, Group Membership, Intermediaries)

- Sense of isolation in US for some participants
- Parents shift to seeking understanding about the disability(ies) of their child once diagnosed
- Advice –more teacher training on language and cultural practices; make sure interpreters are present at IEP meetings; let immigrant parents know that disability is NOT a punishment

*“It’s not many people that know about autism and they don’t provide therapy for kids with autism. They don’t. So you have to do it on your own. And that’s what I did with my son. Even though he’s not talking, at least he could see what we are doing and I spent hours, six hours a day playing with him, going outside, going for walks, going to the park, even though I was pregnant. I just play, play, play with him.”*

**--Peruvian mother**

# Cultural Values Orientations and Assessment

Orientation	Assessment Considerations
Group membership	<p>How does a family's <i>group membership</i> orientations align with conceptions and practices of <i>partnering, multidisciplinary teaming and assessment, etc.?</i></p> <p>How does a family's <i>group membership</i> orientations impact the power balance regarding <i>partnering, multidisciplinary teaming and assessment, etc.?</i></p>
Authority	<p>How does a family's <i>authority</i> orientations align with conceptions and practices of confidentiality, informed consent, partnering, etc.?</p>
Ways of knowing	<p>How does a family's <i>ways of knowing</i> orientations affect who is invited/present during the assessment process and who is an acceptable spokesperson?</p> <p>How does a family's <i>ways of knowing</i> orientations affect boundaries around the range and framing of <i>disability</i>?</p>
Individualism-Interdependence	<p>How does a family's <i>individualism-interdependence</i> orientations align with conceptions and practices of <i>individualized and family planning, inclusion and LRE, capacity-building, etc.?</i></p>
Intermediaries	<p>How does a family's <i>intermediaries</i> orientations align with conceptions and practices of <i>decision-making, dispute resolution, due process, service coordination, etc.?</i></p> <p>How does a family's <i>intermediaries</i> orientations affect who is invited/present during the assessment process and who is an acceptable spokesperson?</p>

# Collaboration during IEP and IFSP Meetings in a Refugee Resettlement Community: Lessons from Cultural Liaisons

Jennifer J. Hurley

Special thanks to the students who worked on this project:

David W. Clark, Katherine A. Fonseca-Foster, Sabina K. Pyne, Emily  
S. Casey, and Rachel A. Warren



The University of Vermont

# Collaboration during IEP and IFSP Meetings in a Refugee Resettlement Community: Lessons from Cultural Liaisons

- What was the purpose of this study?
- Who are Cultural Liaisons?

# Refugee Data and Trends

- Our world is currently experiencing the highest number of displaced people in recorded history and over half of the forcibly displaced people are children (United Nations High Commission for Refugees, 2017).
- Armed conflicts and fighting have contributed to the high numbers of children seeking refugee resettlement in the United States (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2017).
- Refugees are fleeing human horrors simply to save their lives (Strekalova & Hoot, 2008).
- If other countries do not provide refugees the ability to resettle, many will experience otherwise preventable deaths or ongoing extreme hardship (United Nations High Commission or Refugees, 2017).

# Setting and Participants

- 9 Cultural Liaisons
- All identified as refugees
- 2 School Districts in a Small New England community

# Data Collection and Data Analysis

- Data were collected and analyzed by 3 undergraduate, 2 graduate students and 1 faculty member in an ECSP program.
- Semi-structured interviews were conducted using an interview guide, audio-taped and transcribed verbatim.
- Data were analyzed using the constant-comparative method to identify recurring themes and discover common patterns while preserving individual contextual information (Denzin, 1978; Ely, Vinz, Downing & Anzul, 1999).
- A second level member check was conducted with two of the participants by providing a list of the themes and quotes to increase the reliability of the results (Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach & Richardson, 2005).

# Teachers Need to Educate Themselves about the History and Culture of the Refugee Families they Serve

- Learn about the roles of families and teachers in the educational system that the family comes from.
- Learn about how disability is perceived in a family's culture.

# Teachers Should Prepare the Family and Cultural Liaison for the IEP or IFSP Meeting

- Make sure the family understands the purpose of the meeting before the meeting.
- All forms and rights should be translated in advance and given before the meeting to the family and the cultural liaison.
- Meet with the cultural liaison before the meeting to review documents and provide clarifications.

# Suggestions for Conducting the IEP or IFSP Meeting

- Provide food and drinks.
- Avoid acronyms and idioms.
- Make eye contact with the family, not the cultural liaison when you are talking.
- Listen to the family when it is their turn to talk and do not interrupt.

# Need for Increased Demonstration of Compassion and Respect

- “I’m bring back respect... if you don’t know the language people treat you as if you not a human being.”
- “First of all is check their (teacher’s) heart. Take a course on having a heart. That will be the first. Take a course on having a heart and then things might be okay because what I have found is this wall. People don’t even know they’re doing it. They belong to a certain social class where they have a certain job and they don’t even know they’re acting like this. How do you change that?”
- “They (teachers) started with the parents just the way they (teachers) approached the parents showed high respect. From my own culture parents expecting high respect and they will be even better with you... if you approach them with low respect and high expectations for you as a teacher then they shut down, they don’t want to talk to you.”

# Final Thoughts from the Cultural Liaisons

- “There is a way so that we can all work together. I’m thinking teachers absolutely should take trainings to work with refugee families.”
- “It would be good for teachers to know their culture. The teacher must be sensitive not to hurt somebody.”



# **Bringing it All Together-How does Bias Impact Our Assessment and Instructional Planning**

Megan Vinh, Ph.D.

# What is Implicit Bias?

- Activated involuntarily (i.e., individual not aware of biases)
- Pervasive and robust
- Does not necessarily align with our declared beliefs
- Malleable, but can be unlearned and replaced with new mental associations

(Beattie, et al., 2013; Blair, 2002; Blair, Ma, & Lenton, 2001; Clark & Zygmunt, 2014; Dasgupta, 2013; Dasgupta & Greenwald, 2001; Devine, 1989; Graham & Lowery, 2004; Greenwald & Krieger, 2006; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998; Kang, 2009; Kang & Lane, 2010; Kang, et al., 2012; Kang & Lane, 2010; Nosek, Smyth, et al., 2007; Rachlinski, Johnson, Wistrich, & Guthrie, 2009; Ross, Lebrecht, Tanaka, & Tarr, 2013; Rudman, 2004)

# Implicit Bias in Education

- Implicit bias exacerbates inequalities and creates a “vicious cycle” of racially disproportionate practices
- Research on school-age children has identified concerning trends that show how implicit bias effects **teachers’ instructional practices, interactions with students, school discipline, and special education eligibility and placement decisions.**





## **What is Culture:**

- The way we live
- Values, mores, customs
- Behavioral expectations
- Belief Systems
- Communication styles
- Traditions that are shared and passed between generations

# What is Culture Continued

- Culture impacts the way children:
  - Learn
  - Cope
  - Solve problems
  - Communicate
- Viewing the child through this cultural context provides an understanding of the child and the factors that influence behaviors



Slide adapted from Vinh, Allen, and Smith, 2016

Gay, Geneva 2010. Culturally Responsive Teaching

# Elements: Of Culture At School



**We must be aware of our own cultural framework and context** █



# Who defines behavior?

“Behavior is defined by the person most annoyed by it” –Rosemarie Allen

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=669&v=f8nkcRMZKV4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=669&v=f8nkcRMZKV4)

# So, what can we do about it?

- Engage in professional development activities that support us in identifying and changing our biases.
- Using the DEC Recommended Practices (e.g., assessment; family practices)
- Using culturally responsive practices
- What else?

# Questions for Reflection

- What teacher preparation activities or practices are the most beneficial for supporting service providers in developing the skills and knowledge necessary for effectively working with families and children who are recently resettled refugees?
- How can we ensure that service providers have the opportunity to learn about the cultures of the families they serve while guarding against stereotypes and generalizations?
- How “real” or prominent do you think the concept of bias in assessment is and have you seen examples of this?
- How do you combat bias in assessment in your own work?

# PLEASE JOIN US!!!

- DEC VOICES Interest Meeting
- This meeting is to check in about VOICES current initiatives, activities being planned, and how members might become more involved.
  - This evening, October 5
  - TIME: 7:45 PM
  - LOCATION: C120