Preventing Misdiagnosis of Phonological Disorders in Bilingual Children: Evidence-Based Assessment Strategies

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Biography:

Leah Fabiano-Smith, PhD, CCC-SLP is an assistant professor in the Department of Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences at the University of Arizona. She received her Ph.D. from Temple University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Center for Research in Language at the University of California San Diego, specializing in theoretical phonology. As an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist, Dr. Fabiano-Smith has worked in the early intervention, preschool, public school, and nursing home settings with bilingual clients in the United States and Mexico. Her research interests include phonological development and disorders in bilingual Spanish-English speaking children and her clinical interests include developing evidence-based assessment and treatment methods for culturally and linguistically diverse populations. She is the director of the Bilingual Certificate Program at the University of Arizona.

Description: This 3-hour workshop will provide a theoretical framework for the assessment of phonological skills in bilingual children from a variety of language backgrounds and extend that theory into the clinical assessment process. Least-biased methods of bilingual phonological assessment will be introduced in lecture format and the application of these approaches will be demonstrated to the audience using real-life scenarios. We will take a case-based approach to demonstrating how quantitative and qualitative analyses of phonological skills during assessment, within and across languages, lead to more accurate diagnosis in the preschool to school-aged population. Common pitfalls that result in misdiagnosis will be addressed and the roles of monolingual and bilingual service providers will be discussed at length. This interactive presentation will provide a clear set of tools and measures that clinicians can directly apply to clinical practice with bilingual populations.