



Issues in
Culturally and
Linguistic
Diversity:
Part I

Fact vs. Myth

Most of the countries in the world are bilingual.

Fact

Fact vs. Myth

Teaching children two languages at the same time will confuse them.

Myth

Fact vs. Myth

It is better for bilingual clients to work only on their English skills so they can be successful in the U.S.

Myth

Fact vs. Myth

It is always best to assess a persons' language skills in both languages.

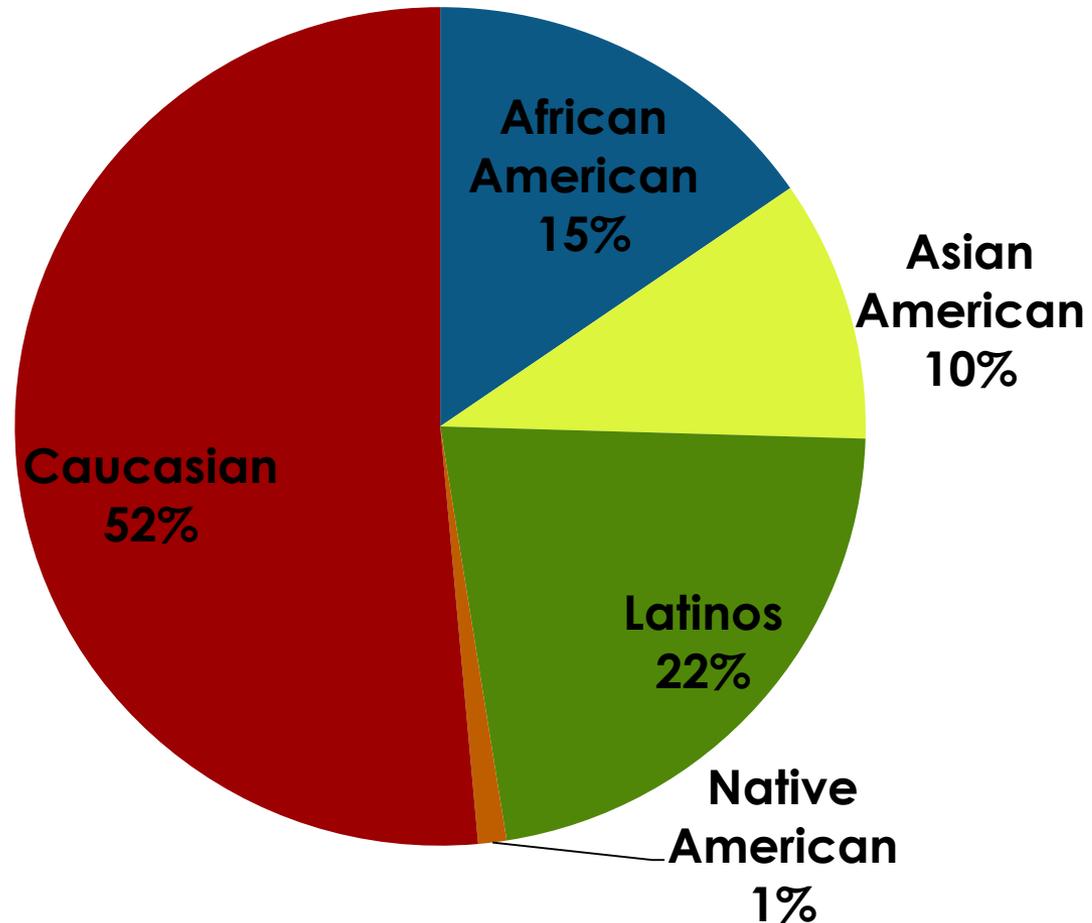
Fact

Fact vs. Myth

Everyone speaks a dialect.

Fact

U.S. Population by 2050



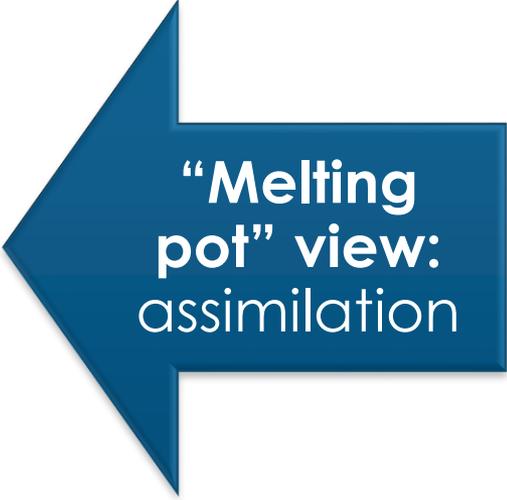
Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Most of what is known about the field of speech-language pathology comes from the norms of English-speaking, European Americans, middle-class individuals.

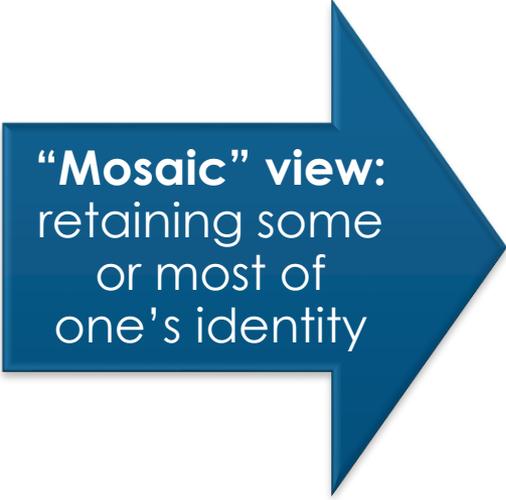
There are currently 11 million individuals considered to be English Language Learners (ELLs) in the U.S.

Redefining cultural diversity

- **Assimilation:** joining the mainstream culture while losing one's culture and language identity.



**“Melting
pot” view:**
assimilation



“Mosaic” view:
retaining some
or most of
one's identity

Common Challenges of SLPs Working with ELLs

1. Inability to speak the client's language
2. Lack of unbiased assessments
3. Lack of support personnel to support the client's language
4. Limited knowledge regarding the client's home language

The Relationship between Language and Culture

- Culture: The behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human thought that are shared by a community of people.
- Culture may affect the way that parents interact with their children or other adults.

Case Study: Nina



Nina enters the evaluation room with her mother, Mrs. Flores. The room was full of age-appropriate toys. Nina plays in the kitchen area. Mrs. Flores sat nearby and occasionally asked her to bring her something to drink in Spanish. Nina followed the commands after they were repeated twice. Nina's utterances were very limited in quantity and quality.

Discussion

- What is your impression of the interaction style between Nina and her mother?
- What would you do in this case if you were the clinician?

Case Study: Nina



Then a student clinician walked into the room and gave Nina a complex puzzle. Mrs. Flores asked Nina questions and started making general commands, such as “Put that one next to that thing.” Nina started talking a little bit more and seemed to understand the instructions.

Her language skills seemed to be below what one would expect for a four year old.

Discussion

- Do you think that Nina has a language delay? Why or why not?
- What else can you do to get more information about Nina's language skills?

Case Study: Nina



Finally, Nina's six year old sister, Ana, was asked to come to the evaluation room. Ana pretended to be a teacher and read a book to Nina. She asked Nina questions such as, "What is the girl's name?" and "What happened when she sat in Papa Bear's chair?"

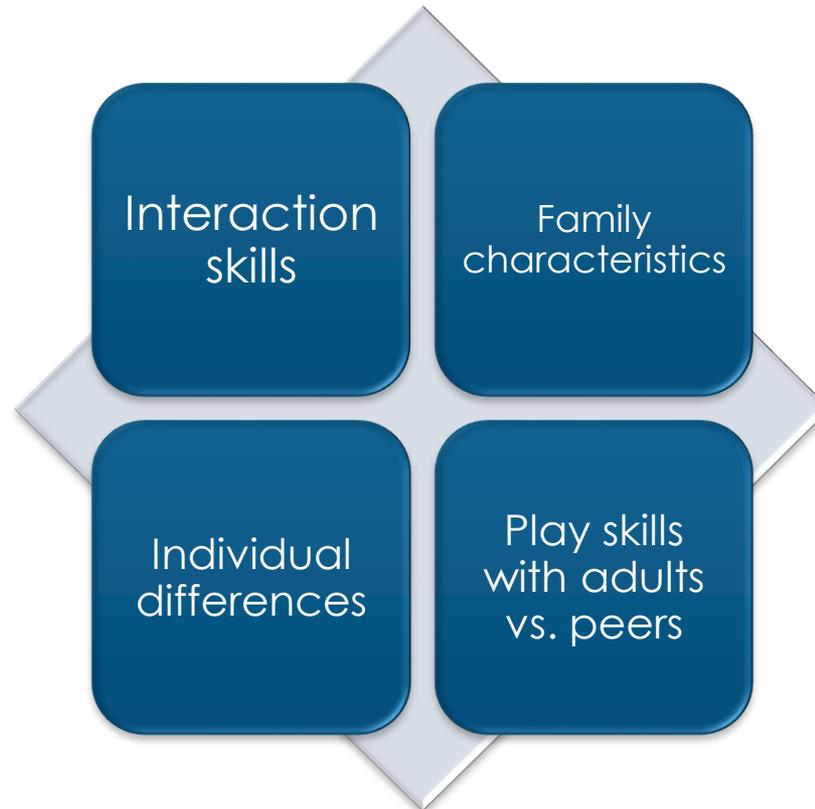
Nina answered all the questions, used a variety of complex sentences, and had age-appropriate vocabulary.

Discussion

- Why do you think that Nina's communication style was different when she spoke with her mom versus her sister?
- What would you conclude about Nina's language skills?

Sociolinguistic Factors

- A client's culture and language can influence a variety of areas:



Bilingualism

- Hard to define
- Bilingualism should be viewed as a continuum with changing levels of input, output, use, and proficiency over time.
- Language skills will vary based on context, as well as other social and geographical factors.



Monolingual

Bilingual

Two types of bilinguals

Simultaneous
bilinguals

Sequential
bilinguals

Two main types of bilingual proficiency

Basic
Interpersonal
Communication

- Proficiency in social contexts

Cognitive
academic
language
proficiency

- Proficiency to understand cognitively demanding, academic texts

Dialects

- Variety of dialects are spoken in the U. S.
 - Standard or General American English
 - African American English
 - Caribbean English
 - Appalachian English
- **Dialect:** a rule-governed variety of a language that is characterized by differences in its speakers' social, ethnic, and geographical differences.

Idiolect

a person's individual way of speaking

Register

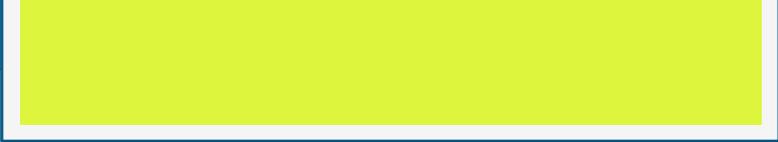
the way a person speaks based in the context they are in

Accent

the way a person pronounces sounds

Important thing to remember about dialects...

- No dialect is superior to another dialect
 - However, in the U.S., General American English is considered to be the prestige dialect and is preferred in educational setting.
 - Some dialects are more widely accepted than others.



And because TED is always a
good teacher...

Jamila Lyinscott: Three ways to
speak English

Food for thought:

- What are some important things to keep in mind when working with individuals who are culturally and linguistically diverse?
- **Next time:**
 - **Think about...**
 - What do you think is the best way to assess and treat people who are culturally and linguistically diverse?