

SPA 328

Principles of Evaluation, Diagnosis,
and Report Writing in ComD

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Assessment Vs Diagnosis

Assessment

Assessment/ Evaluation

- Is the process of collecting valid and reliable information, integrating it, and interpreting it to make a judgment or a decision about something.
- **Or:** the process of arriving to a diagnosis



Diagnosis

A diagnosis

- Is an understanding of the problem.
- **Or:** the identification of the disorder by analysis of the symptoms presented and, in some cases, analysis of their underlying causes.



A meaningful assessment should:

1

Be **Thorough**

2

Use a **variety**
of assessment
modalities

3

Be **valid**

4

Be **reliable**

5

Be **tailored** to
the *individual*
client

Standard Assessment Procedures

1. Screening
2. Case History
3. Interview
4. Hearing Screening
5. Oral-Peripheral Examination
6. Speech and language sample
7. Diagnosis
8. Share findings

Screening

- A brief procedure
- (pass - fail/refer)
- Determine who should receive full assessment (detailed) and who should not
- Short in time

Case History

- To obtain info you need:
 - Case history form
 - Interview client, family, or both
- Helps to understand the client and their communication disorders
- Gathering info: about *family, health, occupation, cultural, and linguistic factors*

Case History Cont.

- **Information gathered:**
 - Start with the **identification info.** (name, D.O.B, address, phone..)
 - **Description** of the ComD
 - **Prior** Assessment and Treatment
 - **Family Constellation** and Communication
 - **Prenatal, Birth, and Developmental** History
 - **Medical** History
 - **Educational** History
 - **Occupational** History

Interview

- **Face-to-face** exchange with the client, family, or both
- Info. added to clarify and expand info. from standard case history form
- *Why is an interview important?*
 - to **obtain** data
 - to **provide** support
 - to **establish** rapport (*respect, trust,...*)
- Orientated, rational, slow pace, attentively listened to, distinguishes appropriate voice vs. non appropriate voice, confidential, takes into consideration cultural and linguistic variables ———> maintaining rapport and establishing trust
- Important to repeat (occasionally) what has been said

Hearing Screening

- Quick procedure (pass - refer)
- Determine normal hearing vs. needs thorough evaluation by an audiologist
- Make sure to have as little noise as possible
- 20 or 25 dB HL for 500, 1000, 2000, and 4000 Hz
- Younger children: 15 dB HL for 500, 1000, 2000, 4000, and 8000 Hz

Oral-Peripheral Examination

- Involves:

Examination of the **oral** and **facial** structures to evaluate their **structural** and **functional** integrity

- Note structural abnormalities (may need medical attention)
- Very important for speech production

Speech and Language sample

- Speech and language sample is the primary means of assessing the client's S-L production.
- *Audiotape vs. videotape*
- *Representative* sample (in naturalistic context)
- Could be during: *conversation, interactions*
- Could be *structured* or *unstructured*
- Info. about *articulation* skills, *language* skills, or *both*.

Speech and Language sample Cont.

- To obtain representative speech and language sample:
 - Tape record the entire sample in stereo (be sure the presence of the TR does not cause the client to be self-conscious)
 - Obtain 50-100 utterances (15- 30 mins.)
 - Observe carefully and take notice
 - Use a quiet room and avoid noisy stimulus materials
 - With adults use objects and pictures only when necessary (converse about relevant topics)
 - With children ask for favourite books and toys from home

Speech and Language sample Cont.

- Use age-appropriate conversational topics (movies, sport,...)
- Increase the child comfort level by having the child interact with family members first
- Do not bombard the child with questions (encourage initiation)
- With unintelligible utterances—> repeat what the client has said
- Ask open-ended questions more than yes-no questions
- Obtain a home language sample if parents are willing to tape-record
- Clinician can calculate MLU (especially for kids)
- Also, can note pragmatic skills (narrative, eye contact, turn-taking, topic maintenance and initiation)

Obtaining Related Assessment Data

- Helps for overall understanding of the client as a whole person.
- In **children** cases:
 - Hearing evaluation
 - Behavioral Evaluation
 - Medical evaluation and current medication (side effects too)
 - Educational psychological evaluation
 - Regular & special educational evaluation

Obtaining Related Assessment Data Cont.

- With **adult** cases in medical setting, info. related to:
 - Medical (diagnosis, prognosis, medication & side effects)
 - Current and future medical treatment plans
 - Brain imaging and radiologic data (e.g. neurological disorders)
 - Audiological findings related to CD
 - Physical rehabilitation plans