

4



Assessing Comprehension in the Language for Learning Stage

Developmental level: 5–10 years

Language level: Brown's stages V+; MLU 4.5 and up

Production milestones: Vocabulary is large (greater than 5,000 words). Basic syntax in simple sentences has been acquired; few grammatical errors are heard in speech. Some complex sentences (about 20% of utterances in speech samples from typically developing children [Paul 1981]) are used. Most morphological markers are used consistently, although a few errors (e.g., overgeneralization of past tense) may persist. Most phonological simplification processes have been eliminated; one or two may remain. Distortions of a few sounds may also be present. Speech is intelligible.

The third period of language development is the "language for learning," or L4L, stage of acquisition, so named because of the close connection between language skills and success in school during middle childhood. During this time, children do increasing amounts of their learning through the medium of language rather than through direct experience. In fact, much of the learning that goes on in middle childhood takes place through reading rather than through oral language (Dickinson, Wolf, & Stotsky, 1993). Not only new information but also new vocabulary and exposure to increasingly complex and "literate" styles of language are gained primarily through reading or through formal, decontextualized oral language (e.g., lectures) during this period (Westby, 1991). Because of these connections between language competence and the ability to acquire the information needed for academic success, the label for this stage emphasizes the interactions between language and learning. In addition, because of the great reliance on understanding so many new forms and discourse functions of language in order for learning to proceed, comprehension skills become particularly pivotal during this period.

TESTING OPTIONS IN THE L4L STAGE

When children reach the developmental level of 5 years or more, they are usually ready for the more structured standardized assessment procedures. These procedures offer the advantage of normative data that enable us to compare an individual child's performance with that of a large group of similar children on the same items presented in exactly the same manner. Clearly, where the use of such procedures is possible, confidence in the decision as to whether or not the child has a compre-

hension problem is improved. However, the child must meet the requirements specified by the test in order for the results to be interpreted correctly. Children with sensory or motor disorders may be unable to provide the types of responses demanded by standardized testing. Children with significant cognitive limitations are different in important ways from the norming population, who will be much younger than the child when they take the test. Lahey (1990) points out the difficulties of using formal tests normed for children of different chronological ages with older children who have decreased cognitive levels. And, as discussed previously, formal tests may not sample all of the structures and functions, particularly discourse functions, that we would like to assess. For these reasons, informal comprehension testing can be important during the L4L stage, even after a standardized test has been given to establish that a child's comprehension skills are different from those of other children. Of course, all of the procedures in this chapter must be administered with the same care for stimulus description and interpretation as the informal procedures in Chapters 2 and 3.

In addition to the fully nonstandardized procedures provided in this chapter, one instrument that straddles the border between formal and informal measures should be mentioned. The *Miller-Yoder (M-Y) Test of Language Comprehension* (Miller & Yoder, 1984) is a picture-pointing procedure that samples a variety of syntactic and morphological forms important for functioning in the late preschool and early school-age period. Each structure evaluated on the M-Y is tested in two pairs of stimulus sentences, with each pair containing one sentence representing the target structure and one sentence with the contrasting unmarked form (e.g., marbles/marble, is/is not). The child must respond correctly to both sentences to be credited for the pair and to both pairs to be credited for the structure. This procedure requires the child to demonstrate comprehension of the target structure as contrasted with the exact utterance without the contrasting form (e.g., The girl is running/The girl is not running). Furthermore, the opportunity for getting credit by guessing is reduced from 1 chance in 4 to 1 chance in 16. All items on the M-Y are designed with sentence length and vocabulary controlled so that the clinician can feel confident that the form being tested in each pair is the only variable that will affect the child's performance. Because each item tests a single grammatical form, item analysis can be used to identify specific comprehension problems and target them for intervention.

Normative data on the production of the forms tested on the M-Y are available and can be used to compare performance with that of peers. The real strength of the M-Y, though, is its capacity for adaptation as a criterion-referenced, rather than norm-referenced, procedure. Using it this way, decisions about comprehension-production gaps can be made by looking at the child's production in free speech and contrasting it with performance on same forms in the receptive mode on the M-Y. For example, suppose a child produces *in* and *on* correctly in free speech but does not use any other prepositions spontaneously. Comprehension of a range of locative prepositions could be assessed using the M-Y, and it could be determined whether receptive locative vocabulary is larger than that used in spontaneous speech. In addition, administration of the M-Y can be adapted to an individual child's disabilities. To do this, items

can be given in the standard manner, then adapted, one variable at a time, in order to look for changes in performance. For example, although the instructions on the M-Y caution the clinician not to stress the form being tested, when giving the M-Y to a child with a hearing impairment, the clinician may want to alter intonation on these forms to ensure that they are received by the child. Care must be exercised in using the normative data for interpretation under these circumstances. Responses can be interpreted from a criterion-referenced point of view, though, noting the range of forms the child understood and the testing conditions. Again, this information is helpful in looking at gaps between comprehension and production, identifying targets for intervention, and evaluating progress in a treatment program. If the goal is to determine initially whether or not a child has a significant comprehension problem, a more standardized administration procedure will be necessary.

In the next part of this chapter, several specific procedures for assessing comprehension in the L4L stage are presented. The main change in the procedures in this chapter, relative to earlier chapters, is an increased reliance on judgment tasks, which are easy to administer and developmentally appropriate for this level. A second difference is that in the L4L stage, many aspects of literal semantic/syntactic comprehension can be assessed using standardized methods. As a result, the procedures in this chapter do not usually assess literal comprehension of so broad a range of semantic and syntactic forms. Instead, nonstandardized assessment will generally be used to evaluate discourse-level skills and to focus on a few specific forms that need further study to follow up standardized testing, or that are especially important for classroom success.

JUDGMENT TASKS

Judgment tasks have been used by a variety of investigators (e.g., de Villiers & de Villiers, 1973; James & Miller, 1973; Paul, 1985) to examine children's linguistic competence. They have the advantage of allowing the clinician to look at comprehension of sentences that may be difficult to depict or represent with objects. But as Table 1.4 showed, children may not perform appropriately on judgment tasks until some time after they have passed the same item on a picture-pointing or object manipulation task. Judgment tasks should be interpreted with care, then, because they seem to involve some higher-level processes than do the earlier developing responses. Failure to pass a judgment task for a particular structure may not mean that the child does not comprehend that structure. For some forms of interest, though (e.g., those containing items not easily pictured, those that refer to concepts rather than objects), judgment tasks may be the only method of assessment available (see Procedure 4.4, for example).

Several variations on the judgment task have been used in studying language acquisition. De Villiers and de Villiers (1973) present a puppet who "has trouble talking" and ask children simply to say when it says "something silly." Another method used by James and Miller (1973) and Paul (1985) presents the child with two pictures—one of an "OK lady" and one of a bizarre-looking "silly lady." The children are shown the kinds of things each would say (the OK lady would say acceptable sentences such as "A boy eats an apple"; the silly lady would say unaccept-

able sentences such as "An apple eats a boy"). Test sentences are then read to the child, who is asked to point to the lady who would say each one to indicate a judgment about the acceptability of each sentence. Procedure 4.2 in this chapter is based on this method.

A second variation of the judgment task extends beyond asking the child to identify OK or silly sentences. This extension requires the child to convert the unacceptable sentences to acceptable ones. As Table 1.4 showed, the correction tasks add yet another level of difficulty to this comprehension method. Children can identify silly sentences appropriately before they can correct them accurately.

Judgment tasks can be used to assess children's knowledge of either semantic or syntactic acceptability. Semantic acceptability can be assessed at the level of individual semantic features by violating only one selection-restriction rule in each sentence ("The pretty girl smiled" versus "The furry girl smiled"; "The spider crawled across the room" versus "The spider skated across the room"), or at a more global level, such as that used in the *Verbal Absurdities* subtest of the *Detroit Tests of Learning Aptitude-III* (Hammill, 1992) (e.g., "My mom always makes us eat breakfast before we wake up"). Syntactic abilities can also be assessed with a judgment task. De Villiers and de Villiers (1973) asked children to judge the acceptability of sentences such as "tooth your brush" and "cake the eat." As Table 1.4 showed, semantic anomalies are identified by children earlier than these syntactic ones.

Finally, a semantic acceptability judgment task can be used to infer syntactic comprehension. For example, Paul (1985) used a procedure that required children to judge semantic acceptability in order to test their syntactic comprehension of active ("A boy rides a bike"), passive ("A bike is ridden by a boy"), and cleft-agent ("It's a boy who rides a bike") sentences. Examples of the three sentence types were presented in probable ("A boy rides a bike") and reversed ("A bike rides a boy") forms. Children were taught to identify silly and OK sentences by pointing to the silly or OK lady pictures. In order to decide which sentences were silly or OK, it was necessary for the children to use the syntactic form of the sentence to label agents and objects of action appropriately. This procedure allows the clinician to sample a variety of sentence forms using a relatively large number of examples for each one, while saving the time and expense of drawing a picture for each stimulus.

EXPECTATIONS FOR THE L4L STAGE

The procedures in this chapter include suggestions of some syntactic forms, semantic concepts, and discourse functions that are expected to emerge in the L4L developmental stage, are rarely sampled on standardized tests, and can add significantly to our understanding of the receptive abilities of children in the elementary school grades. In addition, Table 4.1 gives an extended list of semantic domains that can be considered for additional informal testing at this level. The procedures given here are meant to serve as examples of flexible tools for constructing assessment for specific children and to test narrowly defined sets of items that are likely to be important for success in school. In addition, these methods have been particularly helpful in probing the comprehension of new content introduced in intervention where the testing method should be different from the teaching method.

Table 4.1. Possible semantic domains for testing and teaching

Domain	Examples
Major semantic categories	
Quantity	More, less, equal, half, while, great, grand, vast, abundance, small, little, trace, smidgen, increase, decrease, add, subtract
Number	Some, few, couple, (count 1–20), double, triple, century, hundred, thousand (Piagetian math books)
Order	First, second, and so forth; next
Time	Day, week, month, winter, summer, spring, fall, second, minute, hour, yesterday, tomorrow, year, now, later, present, past, future, young, old, new, early, late, morning, noon, nighttime, tonight, wait, when, while, again, after, before, anytime, ever, finally, finish, frequently, last, seldom, someday, until, usually
Change	Transform, fix, permanent, stable, substitute, reverse, return, same, difference, escape
Cause	Power, strength, weak, activate, frail, energy, force, drive, run, act on, operate
Form	Size, shape, equal, square, circle, rectangle, triangle, round, straight, cube, angle, sharp, smooth, rough, blunt
Location (space)	In, on, under, beside, behind, front, between, through, below, before, after, around, inside, over, vertical, rear, prone, level, left, right, near, horizontal, flush, edge, foreground, background, among, adjacent, adjoining, slope
Motion action verbs	
Location/change	Come, go, leave, walk, skip, trot, jump, run, hop, crawl, climb, drive
Action on object	Heat, mix, stir, shake, drop, kick, hit, push, chase, kiss, hug, spill, pour, touch, chop, cut, grab
Object transfer	Bring, take, give, get, buy, sell, trade, put, carry
Object consumption	Eat, drink, swallow, gulp, chew, bite
Object creation	Make, build, cook, draw, write, sew
Object destruction	Break, burn, kill, tear down, smash
Activity	Dance, fight, fish, count, dress, work, swim
Other actions	Sneeze, cough, laugh, cry, giggle, smile, whistle, breathe, wink, grin, look, stare
Performatives	Marry, divorce, adopt, join
Communication	Ask, tell, promise, say, report, call, question, speak, talk, discuss
Process verbs	
Changes of state	Happen, change, become, grow, dry, fall, die, appear, disappear
State verbs	
Perceiving	See, hear, smell, notice, read, feel, taste
Knowing (mental)	Remember, forget, fuss, think, know, learn, imagine, pretend, wonder, suspect, believe, bet, certain, decide, figure, except, guess, hope, maybe, might, perhaps, probably, remind, seems, suppose, surprise, thought, understand, wish
Feeling	Love, like, hate, need, want, feel, wish
Locative state	Stay, remain, wait, stand, sit, lean
Rest state	Rest, sleep, relax, lounge

The procedures given here are designed for assessing discourse comprehension and comprehension of classroom language during this stage. Discourse comprehension skills expected of the school-age child include the ability to judge the appropriateness of certain speech styles in context, the ability to recognize (from new) information in complex sentence forms, and a host of metalinguistic abilities that both contribute to, and are formed by, learning to read. Knowledge of vocabulary and sentence types used in teachers' language can also be assessed (Paul, 1995).

**PREPARATION
FOR ASSESSMENT**

In order to proceed with using the methods detailed in this chapter, you will need to do the following:

1. Review developmental production data (e.g., Haynes & Shulman, 1994; Miller, 1981; Owens, 1992) and the comprehension data presented in Chapter 2 of this book. These data provide content sequences for vocabulary and syntax for a variety of linguistic forms.
 2. Practice giving each procedure before you use it clinically.
 3. Set up your testing session so that more than one procedure can be used to test the same content where possible. This will allow you options when the child, for some unforeseen reason, is unable to perform your first choice task.
 4. Observe a child in the classroom, note features of the teacher's language that may be problematic, and test the child's understanding of these forms in criterion-referenced procedures. These features of curriculum-based assessment (Nelson, 1993) can be helpful in testing understanding of teachers' language.
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PROCEDURE
4.1



Examining Individual Syntactic Structures in Object Manipulation Tasks

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL	4–8 years
LINGUISTIC LEVEL	Syntactic/morphological
LINGUISTIC STIMULI	Sentences from Bellugi-Klima (1968) (see score sheet on pp. 156–158)
RESPONSE TYPE	Object manipulation
MATERIALS	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Negative versus Affirmative Statements<ul style="list-style-type: none">Set A: • Two dolls, one with movable arms and one with arms that cannot moveSet B: • Two dolls, one seated and one standingSet C: • Two dolls, one with a hat and one without a hat2. Negative versus Affirmative Questions<ul style="list-style-type: none">Set A: • A pile of approximately six objects, some edible and some inedible (e.g., cookies, vegetables, cars, blocks, dolls)Set B: • Girl doll<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doll clothing• Approximately six nonclothing objects3. Singular versus Plural with Noun and Verb Inflection<ul style="list-style-type: none">Set A: • Two girl dollsSet B: • Two boy dolls4. Modification (adjectives)<ul style="list-style-type: none">Set A: • Two balls, one large and one small<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two boy dolls, one large and one smallSet B: • Two buttons, one round and one square<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two blocks, one round and one square5. Sentence versus Adverbial Negation<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Several blocks, some large and some small6. Negative Affixes<ul style="list-style-type: none">Set A: • Several blocksSet B: • Several blocks7. Reflexivation<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two boy dolls• A washcloth8. Reflexivation versus Reciprocal<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two boy dolls• Two washcloths

9. Comparatives
 - Set A: *more* versus *less*
 - One boy doll
 - One girl doll
 - Several marbles
 - Clay
 - Set B: *-er* endings
 - Sticks of various lengths and thicknesses
10. Reversible Passives
 - Toy cat
 - Toy dog
 - Boy doll
 - Girl doll
11. Nonreversible Passives
 - One girl doll
 - Toy cup
 - One apple
 - One boy doll
12. Conjunctions
 - Set A: *and* versus *or*
 - Blocks of various shapes (circle and square must be included)
 - Set B: *either* versus *neither*
 - Blocks of various shapes (circle and square must be included)
13. Self-Embedded Sentences
 - Set A:
 - Toy cat
 - Toy dog
 - Set B:
 - Girl doll
 - Boy doll
 - Toy telephone
 - Set C:
 - Toy cat
 - Toy dog
 - Set D:
 - Toy cat
 - Toy dog

PROCEDURE

1. Review the stimulus sentences on the score sheet on pages 156–158, and select the sets appropriate for the child to be tested. You may not want to test all 13 categories of sentences or all of the sets within the categories; instead, you may want to test only those categories the child needs to understand to succeed in the classroom. These could be identified by means of a curriculum-based assessment (Nelson, 1992). To conduct such an assessment, observe the child in the classroom, noting forms on the score sheet on pages 156–158 that are used by the teacher and observing whether the child appears to have difficulty responding to specific sentence types.
2. Gather the materials necessary for each set to be used in the test. Note that substitutions may be made according to availability of materials and the child's known vocabulary. For example, to test the sixth category, negative affixes, you may substitute bottles and corks or dresses with snaps for blocks. If you make such substitutions, be

sure to modify the stimulus sentences accordingly, as in:

"Show me: 'The bottles are corked.'"
 "Show me: 'The bottles are uncorked.'"

or

"Show me: 'The dresses are snapped.'"
 "Show me: 'The dresses are unsnapped.'"

3. If necessary, depending on the specific test set, arrange the materials. For example, Category 1, Set B requires one doll to be in a seated position and the other to be in a standing position. Where special material arrangements are necessary, they are noted on the score sheet on pages 156–158.

Before each stimulus item in a set, return the materials to their original positions.

4. For each set, present the child with the materials.
5. Read the stimulus sentences one at a time.
6. Record the child's responses on a score sheet like the one on pages 156–158.

PASSING RESPONSE

The child responds correctly to all items within a set. If the child makes errors on any item within a set, retest the item on which the error was made twice. If the child responds correctly on *both* retests, score the item as correct. Any set in which the child makes an error on one or more items that is not responded to correctly on both retests should be considered as a target for intervention.

DIAGNOSTIC NOTE

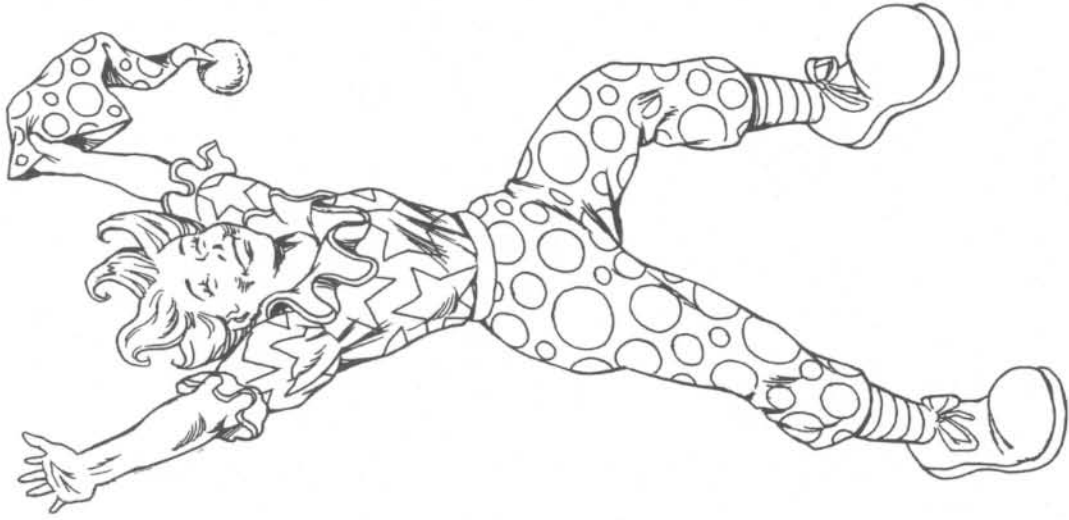
Bellugi-Klima's (1968) forms are acquired by typically developing children toward the end of the preschool period and in the early school years. They may be difficult for school-age children with language learning disabilities.

PROCEDURE
4.2



Protocol for Judgment Task for Assessing Comprehension of Passive Sentences

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL	6–9 years
LINGUISTIC LEVEL	Syntactic
LINGUISTIC STIMULI	Passive sentences
RESPONSE TYPE	Contrived—judgment
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “OK lady” and “Silly lady” pictures (see p. 147)
PROCEDURE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tell the child, “I have two ladies here [show both pictures]. This lady [point to “OK lady” picture] is a regular, OK lady. She says OK things like:<ul style="list-style-type: none">‘A boy eats an apple.’‘A man drives a truck.’‘A girl rides a bike.’”2. Tell the child, “But this other lady [point to “silly lady” picture] is a silly lady. She says silly things like:<ul style="list-style-type: none">‘An apple eats a boy.’‘A truck drives the man.’‘A bike rides a girl.’‘An orange squeezes a girl.’”3. Give the child the following instructions: “I’ll say some things. You point to the lady you think would say each one.”4. Read each of the following practice items to the child. Give the child time to point to one of the pictures. (The correct answers are given in parentheses following each stimulus item.) If the child provides correct responses to all six practice items, move on to the stimulus sentences. If the child responds incorrectly to the practice items, review the instructions, pointing out what makes one or two examples “silly” or “OK.” Then administer the remaining practice items. If the child still has difficulty, you should consider this procedure, with its task–response method, too difficult and use alternate methods such as picture-pointing and object manipulation tasks.



"A woman eats an orange." (OK)
"A man jumps over a fence." (OK)
"A car bites a train." (Silly)
"A dog chases a cat." (OK)
"A banana opens a door." (Silly)
"A table kicks a boy." (Silly)

5. Proceed to the stimulus items on the score sheet on page 159.
6. Record the child's responses on a score sheet like the one on page 159.

PASSING RESPONSE

In a study of typically developing school children with mixed socioeconomic status, Paul (1985) found that all of the 8- to 12-year-old children tested on this task performed at better than 90% correct. Six- and 7-year-old children showed a more inconsistent pattern of responding to passive sentences. If a child with a developmental level above 8 years scores less than 90% on this task, passive sentences can be considered a target for intervention.

PROCEDURE
4.3

◇ Recognizing
Appropriate Speech Styles

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL 5–12 years

LINGUISTIC LEVEL Discourse

LINGUISTIC STIMULI Role-play conversations

RESPONSE TYPE Contrived—judgment

MATERIALS • Assorted puppets

- PROCEDURE
1. Tell the child that the puppets will play various characters in a movie and that the child is the director and must tell the puppets if they are playing their characters correctly.
 2. For each movie scenario, assign a role to each puppet, present the short bits of dialogue (like those given below in the examples) between the two puppets, and ask the child, “Did they do it OK? Which one was wrong? How should the puppet talk?”
 - Example movie 1: Roles: Teacher (Miss Jones), student (Johnny)
Teacher: Good morning, Johnny. Did you do your homework last night?
Johnny: Yes, Miss Jones, but my dog ate it when I left it on the kitchen table.
 - Example movie 2: Roles: Doctor, patient.
Patient: Doc, my throat’s really sore today.
Doctor: Your throat’s sore? Hey fella, mine is killing me.
 - Example movie 3: Roles: Mother, daughter
Mother: Jane, you really should clean up your room.
Jane: Well, honey, I’ll try to get to it for you by beddy-bye time.
 - Example movie 4: Roles: Two friends (Jack and Jim)
Jack: Let’s have a race around the block!
Jim: Well, you know, son, it really isn’t wise to use excessive speed on the sidewalk.

3. Record the child's responses on a score sheet like the one on page 160.

PASSING RESPONSE

The child should make all judgments correctly to "pass" this procedure. Children younger than 9 years may not be able to provide corrected responses and should be considered to pass without them. Children older than 9 years should be able to judge all scenarios correctly and provide an appropriate condition.

PROCEDURE
4.4



Criterion-Referenced Assessment of Center- Embedded Relative Clauses

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL	8–12 years
LINGUISTIC LEVEL	Syntactic
LINGUISTIC STIMULI	Sentences (like those given on the score sheet on p. 161) with center-embedded relative clauses, which are often difficult for children with language disorders
RESPONSE TYPE	Contrived—yes/no judgments
MATERIALS	None
PROCEDURE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Present stimulus sentences like those provided on the score sheet on page 161 and ask the child to answer each question.2. Record the child's responses on a score sheet like the one on page 161.
PASSING RESPONSE	The child interprets a majority of the sentences correctly.

PROCEDURE
4.5



Comprehension of Spatial, Temporal, and Connective Terms in Classroom Vocabulary

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL	6–12 years
LINGUISTIC LEVEL	Lexical
LINGUISTIC STIMULI	Sentences (like those below) containing words used in classroom language that seem, from a previously done curriculum-based assessment (Nelson, 1993), to give the child trouble
RESPONSE TYPE	Natural—behavioral compliance
MATERIALS	Set 1: Spatial Terms <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Piece of paper with a sticker in the middle• Pencil Set 2: Temporal Terms <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whistle, bell, or other noise maker Set 3: Connective Terms <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Whistle, bell, or other noise maker
PROCEDURE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Review the stimulus sentences for each set below and select the sets appropriate for the child to be tested.2. Gather the materials necessary for each set to be used in the test.3. For each set, give the child the materials gathered.4. Give the child the instructions in each example set, one at a time, or give instructions like those given in the example sets. Give three instructions for each italicized term, interspersing the items so the three similar instructions are <i>not</i> given consecutively. Note the child's responses to each on a score sheet like the one on page 162. (Note also that the three scores for each item are listed together on the score sheet for convenience. In administering the instructions, however, be sure to mix up the instructions to avoid giving the same type of item consecutively.) <p>Example set 1: Spatial Terms</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Make dots <i>above</i> the sticker.b. Make dots <i>below</i> the sticker.

- c. Make dots *around* the sticker.
- d. Make dots to the *right* of the sticker.
- e. Make dots *beside* the sticker.
- f. Make dots *on the left-hand side* of the sticker.

Example set 2: Temporal Terms

- a. Make a noise *after* I say "Go." (Pause before saying "Go.")
- b. Make a noise *before* I say "Go." (Pause before saying "Go.")
- c. Make a noise *while* I say "Go." (Say "Go.")
- d. Make a noise *as* I say "Go." (Say "Go.")
- e. Make a noise *when* I say "Go." (Say "Go.")

Example set 3: Connective Terms

- a. Make a noise *if* I say "Go." (Say "Go.")
- b. Make a noise *although* I say "Go." (Say "Go.")
- c. Make a noise *unless* I say "Go." (Say "Go.")
- d. Make a noise *until* I say "Go." (Pause before saying "Go.")

PASSING RESPONSE

The child performs correctly on three trials for each vocabulary item.

PROCEDURE
4.6



Criterion-Referenced Assessment of Classroom Direction Vocabulary

DEVELOPMENTAL LEVEL	6–12 years
LINGUISTIC LEVEL	Lexical/syntactic
LINGUISTIC STIMULI	Sentences (like those below) containing language from teachers' instructions that seem, from a previously done curriculum-based assessment (Nelson, 1993), to give the student trouble
RESPONSE TYPE	Natural—behavioral compliance
MATERIALS	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Piece of paper• Pencil
PROCEDURE	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Review the instructions below and select those appropriate for the child to be tested. It may be necessary to observe the child in the classroom and to note teacher directives with which the child seems to have trouble (i.e., perform a curriculum-based assessment). The examples given below should be supplemented with those the clinician identifies through such a curriculum-based assessment (Nelson, 1992).2. Tell the child: <p>Let's pretend you're a soldier. You're a good soldier. You always do what the sergeant says. Here's some paperwork the sergeant wants you to take care of. I'll be the sergeant and give some orders. You follow the sergeant's orders and write what the sergeant says to write on this paper. Listen carefully, now! Here we go!</p>3. Give the child instructions such as the following, one at a time. After each give the child time to complete the task.<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. OK, Private, draw a star in an <i>upper right-hand corner</i> of the paper.b. Now, Private, draw a tank on the <i>right-hand side</i> of the paper.c. Write today's <i>date</i>, Private.d. <i>Number</i> your paper from 1 to 10.e. All right, Private, draw a line down the <i>left side</i> of the paper.f. Now put a square in the <i>upper left-hand corner</i>.4. Record the child's responses on a score sheet like the one on page 163.

PASSING RESPONSE

The child follows directions correctly. Any direction on which the child makes an error can be given again. If the child responds incorrectly the second time, consider the item as an intervention target. If the child responds to the second trial correctly, give the item again after an interval. If the child responds correctly on this trial, consider the item passed. If not, consider this a target for intervention.

FOR USE WITH
PROCEDURE:
4.1



SCORE SHEET

Grammatical Forms for Testing by Object Manipulation

Instructions: For each set administered to the child, indicate the child's response in the right column opposite the stimulus item. If you substitute materials, and therefore stimulus sentences, mark changes in the left column to reflect these substitutions.

Child's name: _____

Child's chronological age (years.months): _____

Date: _____



Forms	Child's response
<p>1. Negative versus Affirmative Statements with Auxiliaries</p> <p>Set A:</p> <p>"Show me: 'The doll can't put his arms down.'"</p> <p>"Show me: 'The doll can put his arms down.'"</p> <p>Set B:</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Arrange dolls so one is sitting and one is not.</p> <p>"Show me: 'The doll is sitting.'"</p> <p>"Show me: 'The doll is not sitting.'"</p> <p>Set C:</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Arrange dolls so one is wearing a hat and one is not.</p> <p>"Show me: 'The doll doesn't have a hat.'"</p> <p>"Show me: 'The doll has a hat.'"</p> <p>2. Negative versus Affirmative Questions</p> <p>Set A:</p> <p>"What can't you eat?"</p> <p>"What can you eat?"</p> <p>Set B:</p> <p>"What does she wear?"</p> <p>"What doesn't she wear?"</p>	

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Forms	Child's response
<p>3. Singular versus Plural with Noun and Verb Inflection</p> <p>Set A: <i>Note:</i> Begin with both dolls lying down. Demonstrate walking for the child. "Show me: 'The girl walks.'" "Show me: 'The girls walk.'"</p> <p>Set B: "Show me: 'The boy jumps.'" "Show me: 'The boys jump.'"</p> <p>4. Modification</p> <p>Set A: "Give the little boy a big ball." "Give the big boy a little ball."</p> <p>Set B: "Put the round button on the square block." "Put the square button on the round block."</p> <p>5. Sentence versus Adverbial Negation</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Place some large blocks on top of small blocks, some small blocks on top of large blocks, and some blocks separate from the others (perhaps five of each type of arrangement). "Show me: 'No little blocks are on big blocks.'" "Show me: 'No, the little blocks are on the big blocks.'"</p> <p>6. Negative Affixes</p> <p>Set A: <i>Note:</i> Arrange the blocks so some are piled on top of one another and some are lying separate from the others. "Show me: 'The blocks are piled.'" "Show me: 'The blocks are unpiled.'"</p> <p>Set B: "Show me: 'The blocks are not unpiled.'"</p> <p>7. Reflexivation</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Demonstrate washing for the child. Introduce the dolls as John and Bill. "Show me: 'John washed him.'" "Show me: 'John washed himself.'"</p>	

Forms	Child's response
<p>8. Reflexivation versus Reciprocal <i>Note:</i> Demonstrate washing for the child. "Show me: 'They washed themselves.'" "Show me: 'They washed each other.'"</p> <p>9. Comparatives Set A: <i>more</i> versus <i>less</i> "Show me: 'The boy has more marbles than the girl.'" "Show me: 'The boy has less clay than the girl.'" Set B: <i>-er</i> endings <i>Note:</i> Hold up one stick for each item in the set. "Give me a stick that is shorter and thicker than this one." "Give me a stick that is longer and thicker than this one."</p> <p>10. Reversible Passives "The cat is chased by the dog." "The boy is washed by the girl." "The girl is pushed by the boy."</p> <p>11. Nonreversible Passives "The milk is drunk by the girl." "The apple is eaten by the boy."</p> <p>12. Conjunctions Set A: <i>and</i> versus <i>or</i> "Give me a circle or a square." "Give me a circle and a square." Set B: <i>either</i> versus <i>neither</i> "Give me a piece that is neither a circle nor a square." "Give me a piece that is either a circle or a square."</p> <p>13. Self-Embedded Sentences Set A: "The cat that the dog chased jumped." Set B: "The girl that the boy phoned stood up." Set C: "The cat that the dog chased jumped." "The cat that chased the dog jumped." Set D: "Before he jumped he fell down." "He jumped before he fell down."</p>	
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4.2



SCORE SHEET

Assessing Comprehension of Passive Sentences with Judgment Tasks

Instructions: For each stimulus sentence, indicate the child's response in the far-right column.

Child's name: _____

Child's chronological age (years.months): _____

Date: _____



Stimulus sentences	Correct response	Child's response
"A train is started by a man."	OK	
"A toy paints a boy."	S	
"A table moves a man."	S	
"A wagon wrecks a man."	S	
"A woman is peeled by an orange."	S	
"A toy picks a woman."	S	
"A girl is washed by a floor."	S	
"A tree plants a boy."	S	
"An orange is peeled by a woman."	OK	
"A man is started by a train."	S	
"A floor is washed by a girl."	OK	
"A boy carries an ice cream."	OK	
"A wagon is fixed by a boy."	OK	
"A girl is pulled by a wagon."	S	
"A boy is fixed by a wagon."	S	
"A boy moves a table."	OK	
"A man is lifted by a table."	S	
"A wheel is turned by a man."	OK	
"A wagon is pulled by a girl."	OK	
"A boy plants a tree."	OK	
"A house cleans a girl."	S	
"An ice cream carries a boy."	S	
"A woman picks a toy."	OK	
"A table is lifted by a man."	OK	
"A man is turned by a wheel."	S	
"A girl cleans a house."	OK	
"A man paints a toy."	OK	
"A man wrecks a wagon."	OK	

Scoring key: S = Silly lady
OK = OK lady

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4.3



SCORE SHEET

Appropriate Speech Styles

Instructions: For each movie scenario, record the child's judgment of the dialogue as OK or NOT OK in the third column. If the child indicates that the dialogue is NOT OK, write in the far-right column what he or she says to correct the dialogue.

Child's name: _____

Child's chronological age (years.months): _____

Date: _____



Movie scenario	Correct judgment	Child's judgment	Child's correction of NOT OK dialogue
1	OK		
2	NOT OK		
3	NOT OK		
4	NOT OK		

FOR USE WITH
PROCEDURE:
4.4



SCORE SHEET

Criterion-Referenced Assessment of Center-Embedded Relative Clauses

Instructions: For each stimulus sentence and subsequent question, record the child's response (yes or no) in the far-right column.

Child's name: _____

Child's chronological age (years.months): _____

Date: _____



Stimulus sentence	Question	Correct answer	Child's answer
The boy who chased the cow was wearing a hat.	Was the cow wearing a hat?	No	
The girl who rode the pony was named Sally.	Was the pony named Sally?	No	
The crook who ran from the police officer was carrying a bag.	Was the crook carrying a bag?	Yes	
The woman who lost her dog was wearing a sweater.	Was the dog wearing a sweater?	No	
The cat that chased the dog was brown.	Was the dog brown?	No	
The cow that bit the goat was called Sadie.	Was the cow called Sadie?	Yes	

FOR USE WITH
PROCEDURE:
4.5



SCORE SHEET

Comprehension of Spatial, Temporal, and Connective Terms

Instructions: For each trial, indicate the child's response to the stimulus items. For items you create, fill in the second column with the stimulus item, highlighting in some way (e.g., underlining) the specific spatial, temporal, or connective term you are specifically testing.

Child's name: _____

Child's chronological age (years.months): _____

Date: _____



Set of terms	Stimulus item	Child's response/trial		
		1	2	3
1. Spatial	a. Make dots <i>above</i> the sticker.			
	b. Make dots <i>below</i> the sticker.			
	c. Make dots <i>around</i> the sticker.			
	d. Make dots to the <i>right</i> of the sticker.			
	e. Make dots <i>beside</i> the sticker.			
	f. Make dots <i>on the left-hand side</i> of the sticker.			
	g.			
	h.			
	i.			
2. Temporal	a. Make a noise <i>after</i> I say "Go."			
	b. Make a noise <i>before</i> I say "Go."			
	c. Make a noise <i>while</i> I say "Go."			
	d. Make a noise <i>as</i> I say "Go."			
	e. Make a noise <i>when</i> I say "Go."			
	f.			
	g.			
	h.			
3. Connective	a. Make a noise <i>if</i> I say "Go."			
	b. Make a noise <i>although</i> I say "Go."			
	c. Make a noise <i>unless</i> I say "Go."			
	d. Make a noise <i>until</i> I say "Go."			
	e.			
	f.			
	g.			

Scoring key: + = Child follows directions correctly
 - = Child follows directions incorrectly
 NR = Child gives no response

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SCORE SHEET

Criterion-Referenced Assessment of Classroom Direction Vocabulary

Instructions: For each stimulus item, indicate the child's response in the right column. For items you create, fill in the left column with the stimulus item for which you are testing (e.g., the specific directive word or phrase).

Child's name: _____

Child's chronological age (years.months): _____

Date: _____



Classroom vocabulary item	Child's response
a. Upper right-hand corner	
b. Right-hand side	
c. Date	
d. Number	
e. Left side	
f. Upper left-hand corner	
g.	
h.	
i.	
j.	
k.	
l.	

Scoring key: + = Child answers correctly
 - = Child answers incorrectly
 NR = Child gives no response