

Book Review / Évaluation de ressource écrit

Dual Language Development and Disorders: A Handbook on Bilingualism and Second Language Learning

Fred Genesee, Johanne Paradis and Martha Crago
(2004)

Publisher: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.,
Baltimore, Maryland

Cost: \$35.00 (US)

Reviewer: Elizabeth Sovis, MSLP, S-LP(C)

Affiliation: Private practice, Edmonton, Alberta

Clinicians and educators who work with children learning two languages will enthusiastically welcome *Dual Language Development & Disorders*, the most recent volume published in the *Communication and Language Intervention Series*. Genesee, Paradis and Crago have provided an authoritative guide to the intricacies of dual language learning and, most especially, to the means for appropriate diagnosis and effective intervention planning in cases of specific language impairment (SLI).

The book is divided into three sections: I: Foundations, II: Understanding Bilingual and Second Language Acquisition and III: Diagnosis and Intervention. Each chapter contains a comprehensive reference list and most offer a concluding summary and analysis of clinical implications. A glossary, found in an addendum, makes this handbook an excellent reference instrument.

The three chapters found in Section I lay the theoretical and terminological foundations for the rest of the handbook. The first chapter defines essential terms and presents the authors' contention that functional bilingualism is a valuable asset and that "a number of children with SLI can and do become dual language learners" (p. 20). The authors provide profiles of eight dual language learners to help readers structure their understanding of the complex interplay of linguistic, socio-cultural, cognitive and educational issues. These children are also dichotomized as simultaneous bilinguals (who are exposed to two languages from birth) or second language learners (who learn a second language after 3 years of age), and then again as members of a majority ethno-linguistic community or a minority community. Chapters 2 and 3 address two areas that are intrinsically related to language: culture and cognition. The second chapter illustrates the need for understanding cultural diversity to make an accurate diagnosis and the need for culturally sensitive practices to provide effective intervention. There is an excellent discussion of the power differential that may exist between a professional interventionist from the majority culture and a client family from a minority culture, and a sensitive appraisal of consequences of the loss of family language and culture.

Chapter 3 investigates the two sides of the language-cognition relationship, asking first, whether children's cognitive capacity is burdened by learning two languages and second, whether dual language learning affects cognitive development.

Chapter 4 through 7, in section II, outline the two different routes for dual language learning and discuss the issue of bilingual code mixing among simultaneous bilinguals, and the schooling options for second language learners. An important issue developed in chapters 6 and 7 is the psycho-social and cognitive/educational benefits of maintaining and continuing to enrich the child's first language. Evidence indicates that it is inappropriate in most cases to advise parents that a child with SLI should learn only one language. In the final section, chapter 8, the authors return to the eight children first introduced in chapter 1, but now assume that these children are experiencing language learning difficulties. They discuss the assessment and intervention issues for each child, including the determination of language dominance, assessment procedures in each language and expected outcomes. Although the focus is on children with SLI, the authors claim that their recommendations would not be different for a child diagnosed with cognitive delay or other disability. Unfortunately, the authors report that since no unique markers have yet been found to distinguish typically developing dual language learners from those with impairment, diagnostic decisions will continue to be difficult.

Genesee, Paradis and Crago succeed admirably in attaining their stated goal: that is, the provision of an up-to-date description of typical and impaired dual language development that will assist professionals and parents in making appropriate assessments and in planning effective interventions. They contribute the richness of diverse specializations, notably psychology, linguistics and speech-language pathology, and of varied practical experiences. Their comprehensive research review explores the implications of the factual evidence, discusses limiting factors in studies cited and cautions readers about the tentative nature of some conclusions. Supported by the empirical evidence of recent research and augmented by "best guesses" grounded in clinical experience, the authors lay bare many myths including the cognitive burden of dual language acquisition and the supposed costs borne by the first language.

On this sound theoretical foundation, the authors then build their guidelines for schooling, family language use, assessment procedures, diagnostic decisions and intervention planning. Clinicians may find some of the repetition between sections tedious, but this same redundancy allows readers to consult one section at a time, a useful feature in a reference guide. Those that persevere in reading the entire handbook will be amply rewarded by this well-developed model of dual language

development supported by interesting insights, clever analogies and relevant examples.

In summary, this work makes a significant contribution to the area of communication sciences and disorders. Its primary audience will be speech-language pathologists, but the authors succeeded in producing a masterful handbook that will be accessible to other interested professionals and to concerned parents. It would be a valuable addition to the library of any clinician working with children exposed to more than one language and is highly recommended to all persons involved in the lives of dual language learners.



Straight Talk on Stuttering: Information, Encouragement, and Counsel for Stutterers, Caregivers, and Speech-Language Clinicians (2nd edition)

Lloyd M. Hulit (2004)

Publisher: Charles C. Thomas, Springfield, Illinois
Cost: \$64.95 (US) hardcover, \$44.95 (US) paperback
Reviewer: Elizabeth Haynes, M.A., R.SLP, S-LP(C)
Affiliation: Institute for Stuttering Treatment and Research

The purpose of this book, as stated by the author, is to provide information about stuttering and practical advice about stuttering to people who stutter, their family members, speech-language pathology students and practicing clinicians. Dr. Hulit, who himself stutters and is Professor Emeritus of Speech Pathology and Audiology at Illinois State University, also confesses he wants to “convey the message that stuttering is not nearly so funny as it is depicted in cartoons and comedic movies, nor is it necessarily as tragic as some stutterers¹ allow it to be” (p. 8).

The book is organized into two parts. The first, *Understanding Stuttering*, contains chapters about his life as a person who stutters, definitions, causes, the development of stuttering, the history of treatments for adults, self help, and living with stuttering. The second part, *Treating People who Stutter: Adults and Children*, provides an introduction to the therapy of Charles van Riper followed by chapters on motivating the adult client, identification, desensitization, modification, and stabilization. As well, chapters focusing on treatment for the young beginning and advanced stutterer, measurement, and interviewing and counseling techniques are included in this section of the book.

Dr. Hulit states he wishes to provide a book that is easy to read and he has accomplished this. His writing style is direct, engaging and often humorous. He states he will define technical language used, and Dr. Hulit is

true to his word, defining terms within the text and the glossary at the back of the book.

He admits to being primarily influenced by Charles van Riper, Oliver Bloodstein and Wendell Johnson and their influence is seen throughout the book. Indeed, Dr. Hulit is an advocate of stuttering modification approach for adults and young advanced stutterers (older children who are reacting to their difficulties) and indirect approaches for young beginning stutterers.

Dr. Hulit’s chapters about stuttering modification techniques for young advanced stutterers and adults are clear and replete with examples of activities, suggestions for sequencing, identification of possible areas of difficulty for the client and methods to overcome these. His descriptions of strategies to assist with client identification of postponement, avoidance and core behaviors and his discussion of the conditioning of fear and avoidance provide excellent clinical information. For young beginning stutterers, he describes simply and succinctly how to establish a basal level of fluency followed by increasing tolerance for communicative stress (time pressure and interruptions). As well, his chapters on interviewing and counseling techniques provide practical suggestions for students and beginning clinicians.

Dr. Hulit is an advocate of “tough love” for adult clients, emphasizing the need for personal responsibility for change, courage and persistence. He also advocates the importance of intensive therapy for adults, and of stabilization or maintenance. In describing his self therapy, his relapse as a young man and his renewed commitment to the process of change, Hulit writes: “I practice every single day of my life – every single day – but you need to understand this about that practice. It is not a burden. It is a comfort. It is not something I loath to do. It is something I want to do” (p. 183): as simple and powerful a statement as I’ve read in some time.

My major difficulties with this book are Dr. Hulit’s assertions that the core behaviors of stuttering are learned and that stuttering is created by parental reaction to normal disfluency. Statements such as “stuttering is created by the person who stutters” (p. 49) are frequent. This may be partially true for adults who anticipate stuttering and tense in reaction to feared words or situations but it is difficult to see how a three-year-old who was fluent one day and stuttering the next “decides” to stutter. As well, Dr. Hulit does not address the implications garnered from brain scan and indirect studies such as those of W. Webster showing neurophysiological differences.

In discussing definitions and causation, Dr. Hulit discusses one theory – that of Wendell Johnson. This theory informs his chapter on treatment for children, where readers are advised to start with indirect methods and cautioned not to make the young beginning child aware of his difficulty, and his chapter on prevention, where he indicates “there are things we can do to prevent normal nonfluency from becoming stuttering” (p. 132).

As well, he is dismissive of behavioral programs, ignoring evidence based operant treatments such as the Lidcombe Program for Early Stuttering (Onslow et al.). Similarly, he dismisses the benefits of Delayed Auditory Feedback, indicating most clients would not want to wear an artificial device, even though, in my clinical experience, adults who stutter often express interest in portable wearable devices.

Overall, I would recommend portions of this book to clinicians, adults who stutter and their family members who are interested in learning more about the role of fear in the development of avoidance and struggle behaviors, stuttering modification therapy, the importance of motivation and personal responsibility for change, and the complexity of stuttering. I would not recommend that this book be used as a primary text in a fluency disorders class, however, because of the lack of presentation of more current theories and research and inclusion of other treatment methodologies.

Footnotes

¹ The term *people who stutter* may be preferred to the term *stutterer*. When the latter is used, it is because this term is used by the book's author.