

Dynamic Assessment Overview and Tools

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Dynamic Assessment Model for Academic and Language Contexts

Overview: Dynamic Assessment (DA) is a fluid evaluation process that changes with development and learning versus a static model that identifies knowledge previously learned.

Purpose: DA can assist in describing a student's ability to learn, retain, and transfer learned information or concepts. DA can reflect the gap between a student's actual development ability and their developmental potential, which is referred to as the "Zone of Proximal Development" (ZPD).

- The range of this "zone" can be determined during a mediated learning experience (or teaching phase). The number of prompts and level of support required for a student to learn new or unique information, during a teaching phase, and the student's ability to transfer that information within and between learning sessions, helps determine a student's ZPD.
- DA can assist clinicians/educational staff in determining when and how to intervene. For example, children who show limited change during the assessment may require extensive assistance to facilitate changes in language or academic behavior. In contrast, children who show notable changes during a DA experience, by needing reduced prompts or scaffolds, and who can maintain those changes, may not need specialized academic or language services.

Test – Teach – Retest Method (One Type of DA Approach):

Within this paradigm, the examiner first identifies deficient or emerging skills that may or may not be related to a lack of experiences with that skill. The examiner then provides an intervention or lesson designed to modify the child's level of functioning in the targeted area(s). By teaching the principles, scope, and sequence of a given concept, target, or task, the test situation changes from an *evaluative* interaction (typical of traditional test situations) to a *teaching* interaction where the examiner maximizes the child's target competence with and without supports. The child's performance on tasks within and between tasks, including during the post-test (retest phase), also serves as an indicator of the child's modifiability and retention following multiple teaching experiences.

- Clinicians/educational staff should also use qualitative and quantitative data to describe changes pertaining to a student's responses during the teaching phase. This may include the types and number of curing hierarchies required to learn, maintain, and transfer new learning, and any needed scaffolding supports required during the teaching activity.

A Rating Scales Checklist:

- This can help identify differences that relate to limited educational opportunity, exposure and prior knowledge, or the potential for a learning delay or disorder. The scales are also helpful to determine what it takes to effect change, such as the amount of effort/intensity, time, type of cue, and type of modification that may be needed for the student to complete the task. This scale can be developed using a Likert-type scale of rating scale for a variety of variables. The data can also be noted anecdotally.

Validity and Reliability: It should be noted that Dynamic Assessment is a non-standardized approach to identify how a student learns, retains, and transfers information. However, according to Pena's research, the *specificity rate* (e.g., the classification of a traditional learner) was 95.3% (good – Plante & Vance, 1994) and the *sensitivity rate* (the classification of low language ability) was 77.8% (fair – Plante & Vance, 1994). In addition, the reliability was noted at .82 and higher. Pena also noted that gains were not due to the “practice effect” but due to the MLE treatment. However, it should be noted that fidelity of instruction can impact the validity and reliability of results.

Atypical Response: When an appropriate teaching experience is provided, children who are different, but typical language learners, can demonstrate efficient response to intervention (i.e., ability to learn, retain, and transfer new information). On the other hand, students with language-learning disabilities may demonstrate little quantitative change, or need significant cuing, scaffolds, accommodations, and/or modifications to complete the task. Students with language-learning disabilities have a difficult time learning, retaining, and transferring new information in an efficient manner.

McMaster et al., (2002) suggested developing valid methods of identifying non-responders to learning. One alternative to the performance-level-only and growth-rate only methods is a “dual-discrepancy” approach. This is where a student should reflect a discrepant response from their peers, or themselves (ipsative assessment), in both performance level and growth rate to be considered unresponsive.

This document is made up of excerpts from the following sources

- Gutierrez-Clellen, V.F., & Pena, L (2001). Dynamic Assessment of Diverse Children: A tutorial. *Language, Speech, and Hearing Services in Schools*, 32, 212-224.
- Lewis, J (1991). Innovative Approaches in Assessment. In R. Samuda, S. Konk, J. Cummins, J. Pascual-Leone, & L. Lewis (Eds.), *Assessment Toronto, Ontario: C.J. Hogrefe and ISSP and Placement of Minority Students* (pp. 123-142).
- McMaster, K. L., Fuchs, D., & Compton, D. (2002). Responding to nonresponders: An experimental field trial of identification and intervention methods. *Exceptional Children*, 71, (4). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1177/001440290507100404>
- Pena, E. (2000). Measurement of modifiability in children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, 21 (2), 87-97.

Recommended Steps in a Dynamic Assessment

(Test – Teach – Retest Format)

I. Pretest

- Identify skill area deficits (this can be obtained from one or more of the following)
 - Observations
 - ESL test data
 - Second Language Acquisition checklist results
 - Teacher report
 - Work samples
 - Standardized or curriculum-based measures
 - Language sample

- Set up mechanism to establish baseline data
 - Develop an ipsative* and/or a criterion-based assessment tool.
 - *Ipsative-Based*: Compares a test-taker's results against his or her previous results (e.g., a growth model approach).
 - *Criterion-Based*: A criterion-referenced test measures against an external criterion.

II. Teach phase (MLE: Mediated Learning Experience)

- Ideally a minimum of 3 – 5 sessions (Note: Some research notes valid and reliable DA results over a 2-session engagement)
 - Can start after the pre-test.
 - Recommended minimum of 30-minute sessions.
 - Sessions should be at least 1-2 days apart and not more than 1 week.
 - Session should be individual or in small group (note: when in small group, comparison to other students may assist in data collection).

- Pre-test items used during the teaching phase it's OK to use some of the items from the pretest.
 - The teach phase should include targeted concepts not listed in pre-test to reflect change or transfer.

- The focus of the teaching phase is to teach a targeted concept (e.g., labeling, verb tense, sound-symbol relationships, etc...) not to be content specific for the 3 sessions without seeing how the student responds to added difficulty and complexity and can integrate the targets into different learning contexts (e.g., not just teach 5 animal names over 3-5 sessions).

- Be able to scaffold a concept to assist the student at their learning level and within their “Zone of Proximal Development”.
 - Move from an expressive task to a receptive task.
 - Use visuals and/or manipulatives.
 - Develop and use a clear cuing hierarchy.
 - Break task down into discrete hierarchical parts.

- Lesson should include the main components of “mediation.”
 - Intentionality: *Statement of goal and purpose of interaction*)
 - Meaning: *Why concept is important and how it relates to student*)
 - Transcendence: *Develop metacognitive skills – asking “what if questions”*)
 - Panning/Competence: *Children think about what they have learned and how they will use that skill the next time they are asked to complete a similar task*)
 - Transfer: *Summarize a lesson and help children think about how they will generalize the skill they have been learning to other situations*)

- Dynamic assessment focuses on the cognitive functions and processes (e.g., attention, maintenance, impulse regulation, and strategy application).

- Following each teaching session, the clinician/educator rates the child on the Learning Strategies Checklist (LSC) and Modifiability Scale (MS)... *see pages 15-20*
 - On the LSC, the clinician notes the child’s responsivity and ability to apply learned strategies.
 - Note accommodations, modifications, and scaffold techniques used for students to be successful.
 - The Modifiability Scale is used to summarize the educator’s judgment of overall student change associated with the levels of needed support (i.e., examiner effort, student response, transfer).

- Dynamic assessment can be used to target a communication concept (i.e., content, form, and use), a reading concept (i.e., phonemic awareness, word attack skills, comprehension skills, etc.), math skills (i.e., calculation & reasoning), and writing skills (i.e., orthographic, organization, etc.).

III. Post-Test

- Recommended that no more than 2 days pass from the final teaching session to avoid learning loss.
- Use same tool and items from pre-test to determine student growth.

Remember: Transfer of knowledge from pre to post-test provides only one dimension of information. It is also important to triangulate your Dynamic Assessment information with other assessment data. The multidimensional utility of Dynamic Assessment is to identify how a student learns information, how they retain information, and how they transfer information (*See atypical learning profiles in Appendix A, B, and C*).

Concepts of the Dynamic Assessment Teaching Session (i.e., Mediated Learning Experience)

During the teaching session, the clinician/educator carefully supports the child's learning at a level that is somewhat above what they can do without support (i.e., ZPD). Examiners do this by pointing out:

- State the learning goal at the very beginning. Be specific – tell them what you are targeting during the lesson.
- Explaining why that goal is important.
- Helping children develop and follow a plan for learning.
- Helping children think about possible relationships between the learning goal and everyday situations and events.

During a teaching session, the examiners observe the strategies children use to meet the demands of the learning goal. Examiners ask four main questions:

- Are children able to form a more complete or more coherent answers with examiner support?
- Do children pay attention to and include more elements of the targeted concept when the examiner uses interactive teaching?
- How hard does the examiner have to work for children to make positive changes?
- Is learning quick and efficient or is it slow and labored?

The answers to these questions become the basis for determining whether initial low performance is likely due to a language-learning disorder, lack of experience, or a language difference.

5 Basic Components of the Teaching (i.e., Mediation) Phase

Intentionality

Strategies are used to explain the goal of the activity to the student. It is important for the student to understand the goal(s) of each teaching session. Understanding the goal helps the student maintain focus on the target task and ignore irrelevant stimuli. Another reason that establishing intentionality with the student is that this can also provide data regarding the student's ability to self-correct following any potential errors. Without knowing the specific learning objective, it will be difficult to measure a student's ability to self-correct or self-repair during the teaching phase. The examiner should also periodically remind the student of the goal or ask if the student remembers the goal. Another

Example: Today we are going to talk about different parts of a story. First, we are going to learn about the “characters” in the story. Another way to think about this is to think about and talk about “who” is in the story.

Meaning

Strategies are used to explain to the student why the task or goal is important. This helps the student attend to the important features of the task and understand task relevance.

Example: (When teaching sequencing and use of temporal prepositions within the context of a story):
When we tell or write a story, it's helpful to use words that describe the order of when things happened.

This helps the listener or the reader to understand and remember what and when things happened. We use words like first, next, then, last, before, and after.

Transcendence

Teaching strategies are used to help a student develop metacognitive and metalinguistic skills related to a task. The examiner may engage the student with concepts pertaining to who, what, when, where, and why related questions. In addition, the examiner should introduce “what if” questions to facilitate thinking about alternative strategies and answers. Students may also discuss with the examiner the relative benefits of alternative scenarios or strategies. This type of teaching encourages independent, critical thinking and learning.

Example: Let’s talk about who was in the beginning of the story. When we talk about “who” is in the story, we call that person or animal a *character in the story*. Where did the story take place? We call the place where the story took place *the setting*. Why did the main character in the story have to go to the doctor?

Other Types of Questions that can Facilitate Transcendence

- *What do you believe happened next, and why?*
- *What should have the main character done next, and why?*
- *Why do you think that is the answer? Explain*
- *How can you find out about ____?*
- *Why do you think that about ____?*
- *Explain another way that could have happened.*
- *What are the possible causes of ____?*
- *How would you formulate a solution to ____?*
- *How would you support your answer or conclusion?*
- *Why do you think the main character in the story was angry and got in trouble? What strategies could they have used to fix the problem.*

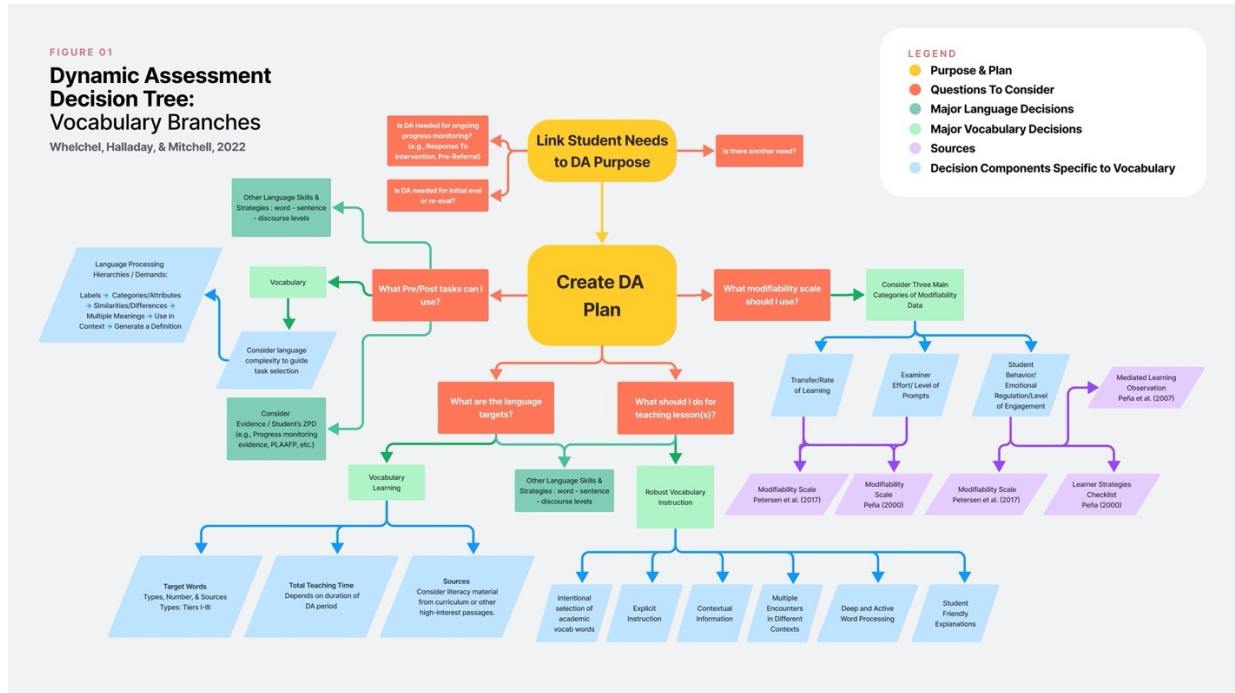
Planning: The student verbalizes or uses strategies to engage or complete a targeted task.

Example: I can use a timeline to help me remember “clue words” that tell the listener when things happen in a story, like before, next, and last.

Transfer: A summary of the session is discussed to help the student think about using their new skills in related settings or situations (i.e., story time, creative writing, answering teacher questions, etc...). Transfer can be assessed within and between sessions.

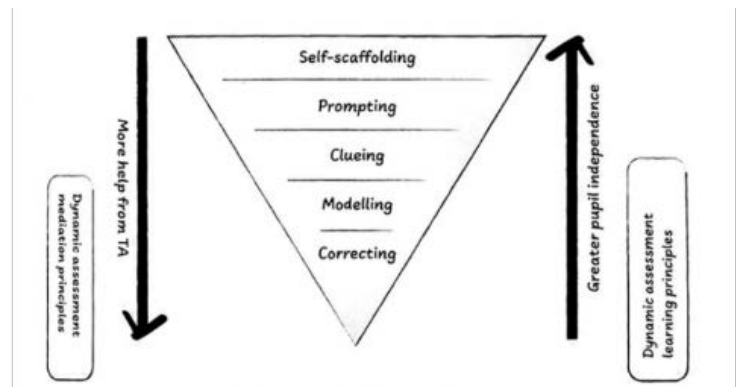
Example: Tell me what we worked on today and why it was important; Tell me the important parts of a story again; Tell me a word that we learned that describes when things happened in the story.

Dynamic Assessment Decision Tree (Using Vocabulary Instruction as an Exemplar)



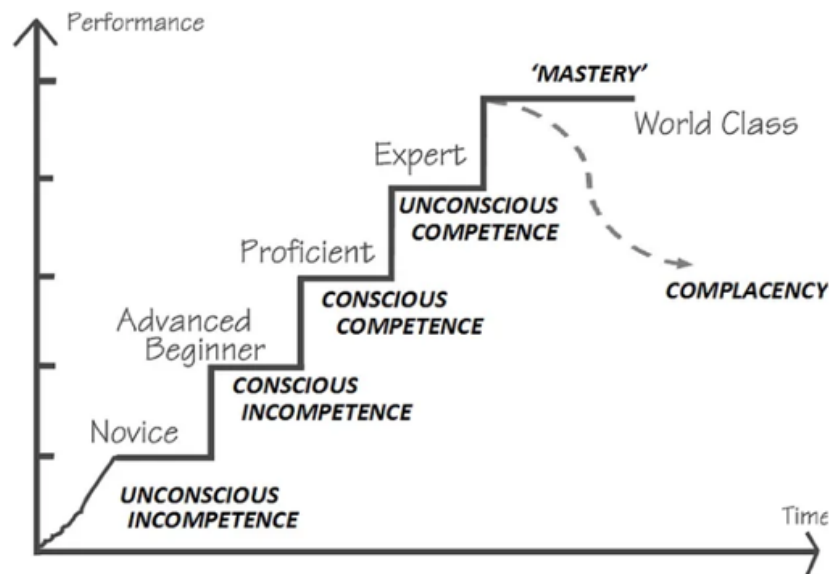
Mediated Learning (Teaching) Prompting & Cuing Hierarchies, and Scaffolding Strategies

- 4 Stages of Learning Competence
- Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)
- Scaffolding Strategies
- Bloom’s Taxonomy



EFF: Education Endowment Foundation Model of Scaffolding
(adapted from Bosanquet et al., 2021)

4 Stages of Learning Competence (Burch, 1970)



The 4 stages are:

1. Unconscious incompetence

The individual does not understand or know how to do something and does not necessarily recognize the deficit. They may deny the usefulness of the skill. The individual must recognize their own incompetence, and the value of the new skill, before moving on to the next stage. The length of time an individual spends in this stage depends on the strength of the stimulus to learn.

2. Conscious incompetence

Though the individual does not understand or know how to do something, they recognize the deficit, as well as the value of a new skill in addressing the deficit. The making of mistakes can be integral to the learning process at this stage.

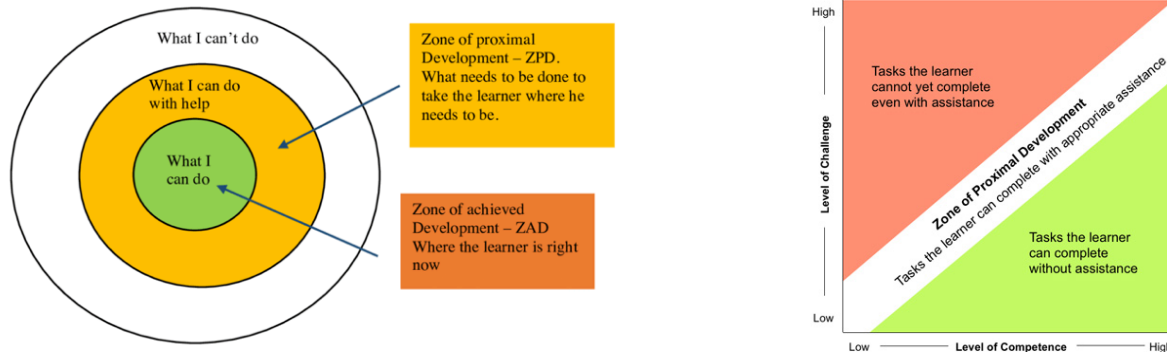
3. Conscious competence

The individual understands or knows how to do something. It may be broken down into steps, and there is heavy conscious involvement in executing the new skill. However, demonstrating the skill or knowledge requires concentration, and if it is broken, they lapse into incompetence.

4. Unconscious competence

The individual has had so much practice with a skill that it has become "second nature" and can be performed easily. As a result, the skill can be performed while executing another task. The individual may be able to teach it to others, depending upon how and when it was learned.

Vygotsky's Zone of Achieved and Proximal Development



The Zone of Proximal Development

The zone of proximal development (ZPD) is defined as the difference between a child's "actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving" and the child's "potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978). If learning is taking place in the ZPD, only a small amount of assistance will be required by the educator (or mediator). If too much assistance is given, the child may learn only to parrot the teacher, rather than mastering the concept independently.

ZPD Overview from Northwest Education Association: <https://www.nwea.org/blog/2023/the-zone-of-proximal-development-zpd-the-power-of-just-right>

Scaffolding Theory

The ZPD has become synonymous in the literature with the term scaffolding. However, it is important to note that Vygotsky never used this term in his writing, and it was introduced by Wood, Bruner, and Ross (1976). Scaffolding consists of the activities provided by the educator, or more competent peer, to support the student as he or she is led through the zone of proximal development. Support is tapered off (i.e., withdrawn) as it becomes unnecessary, much as a scaffold is removed from a building during construction. The student will then be able to complete the task again independently.

Wood et al. (1976, p. 90) define scaffolding as a process "that enables a child or novice to solve a task or achieve a goal that would be beyond his unassisted efforts." As they note, scaffolds require the adult's "controlling those elements of the task that are initially beyond the learner's capability, thus permitting him to concentrate upon and complete only those elements that are within his range of competence" (p. 90). It is important to note that the terms cooperative learning, scaffolding and guided learning all have the same meaning within the literature.

Instructional Scaffolding



Instructional Scaffolding refers to the support given to the learner who is attempting to learn something new in the zone of proximal development. That support might include tools, hands-on activities, or direct instruction. When the student first begins to learn the new concept, the teacher will offer a great deal of support. Over time, the support is gradually tapered off until the learner has fully mastered the new skill or activity. Just as a scaffold is removed from a building when construction is complete, the teacher's support is removed once the skill or concept has been learned.

Example Scaffolding Techniques for MLE (Teach Phase)

- Use of conversational recasting
- Use of focused stimulation
- Use of language expansion
- Provide a model or example of the concept, idea, or linguistic structure the student needs to learn.
- Shorten the directions given to the student.
- Require the student to restate the directions.
- Give the student extra time to organize their thoughts.
- Give the student cues to assist in word retrieval.
- Provide a more elaborate explanation of questions and instructions.
- Use expansions of the student's statements.
- Encourage elaboration by asking questions.
- Use simple terms when explaining concepts.
- Respond positively to the student's verbal attempts.
- Teach the student some strategies for asking for assistance and/or clarification.
- Give instructions and examples on using descriptive language.
- Use questions to help the student make connections between old and new information.
- Use semantic maps of stories and expository texts.
- Pair pictures and objects with directions or explanations of concepts.
- Simplify the questions posed to the student.

Instructional Hierarchy for Prompts & Cues

1	Expectant Pause	Give the child time to respond or the opportunity to initiate communication.
2	Indirect Nonverbal Prompt	Use your body language to indicate to the child that something is expected (e.g. expectant facial expression, questioning hand motion with a shrug, etc).
3	Indirect Verbal Prompt	Use an open-ended question that tells the child that something is expected but nothing too specific (e.g. "Now what?", "What should we do next?").
4	Request a Response	If there is still no response, you can try to direct the child more specifically (e.g. "Tell me what you want." "You need to ask me.").
5	Gestural Cue	You can point to the symbol or leave/tap your finger there for several seconds to get the child started with his message.
6	Partial Verbal Prompt	If there is still no response, give them part of the expected response (e.g. "You went to the...").
7	Direct Model	If still no response, model on the student's device (e.g. "The bear is sad."). Pause and wait for the child to imitate or respond.

(Senner, 2010; Yaack, 1999)

Prompting: Prompting leads to the correct answer. It is a strategy used to assist someone step-by-step through a task. Think of the prompting hierarchy...gestures, models, physical, visual, verbal. The prompting hierarchy is a structured, systematic method of assisting a person in learning new skills. There are two different types of hierarchies: Most-To-Least and Least to Most.

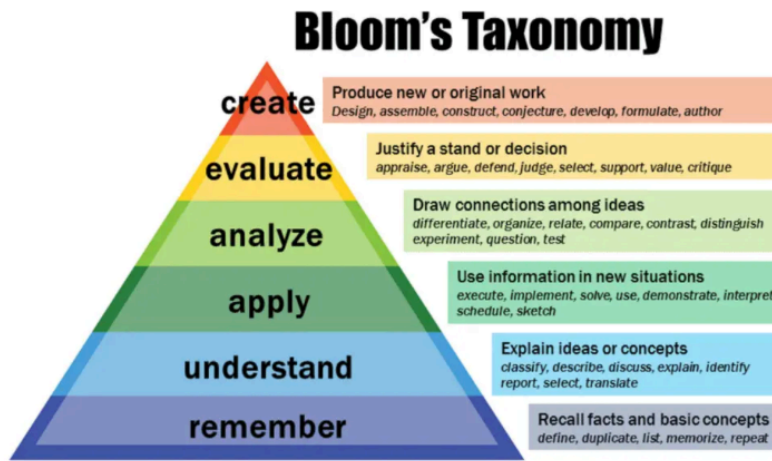
Cuing: Cuing is a *hint* or clue to serve as a signal or suggestion and does not lead to a direct answer. *You can remember that "cue" sounds like "clue!"*

Note: These terms are not interchangeable. A prompt is direct and leads to the correct answer. A cue is indirect and serves as a hint. Cues remain and prompts fade.

Bloom's Taxonomy (1956)

Bloom's Taxonomy (Revised; 2001): The cognitive domain is broken into six levels of learning constructs: Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, and Create.

Bloom's taxonomy helps the educator to think and analyze their teaching and student's learning. The framework is used to state clear objectives which can help the educators to identify a student's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and plan lessons accordingly. Moreover, it can provide a framework for cognitive behaviors which can be applied to understand the difficulty of tasks, conduct an assessment, and simplify or make activities more difficult. Bloom's Taxonomy helps the educator to better understand the objectives of teaching students and the target lesson. It guides the educator to change the complexity of the questions, which can help students to achieve higher learning levels along the taxonomy hierarchy.



Verbs to Use when Teaching within Each Domain of Bloom's Taxonomy

Remembering		Understanding		Applying		Analyzing		Evaluating		Creating	
To find or recall information		To construct meaning from written material or graphics.		To use information in new situations.		To draw connections among ideas.		To value information or ideas		To produce new or original work.	
Define	Name	Associate	Estimate	Calculate	Modify	Break Down	Experiment	Appraise	Measure	Compose	Formulate
Draw	Outline	Classify	Explain	Change	Organize	Categorize	Illustrate	Argue	Rank	Construct	Generate
Duplicate	Recall	Compare	Identify	Classify	Plot	Combine	Inspect	Assess	Rate	Create	Produce
Identify	Recognize	Comprehend	Indicate	Compile	Practice	Connect	Predict	Conclude	Recommen-	Criticize	Propose
Label	Select	Demonstrate	Interpret	Compute	Present	Contrast	Question	Convince	Score	Design	Revise
List	Show	Describe	Relate	Employ	Produce	Debate	Research	Evaluate	Select	Develop	Rewrite
Match	State	Differentiate	Restate	Execute	Show	Distinguish	Simplify	Grade	Support	Direct	
		Discuss	Select	Illustrate	Solve	Examine	Subdivide	Investigate	Test		
		Distinguish	Summarize	Implement	Use			Justify			
		Translate		Map	Write						
				Model							

Dynamic Assessment Scoring Sheet

Content Target:

Student Name:
Examiner's Name:

Teaching Session #:
Date:

Learning Strategy Checklist	Scoring Criteria (Circle One)	Cuing and Scaffolding Notes
Attention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student exhibits an orienting response and focus to task-relevant stimuli 	1 2 3 4 5	
Task Specific Performance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student performs features of the target task (e.g., answer questions, describing, sequencing, use comparative relationships, summarizing, etc.) 	1 2 3 4 5	
Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student verbalizes or uses systematic strategy to task 	1 2 3 4 5	
Self -Regulation / Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student waits for instructions, seeks help when needed, corrects self, or rewards self 	1 2 3 4 5	
Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student shows enthusiasm for task & persists in the face of frustration 	1 2 3 4 5	
Interaction with Adults <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeks help when needed & changes responses according to adult cues 	1 2 3 4 5	

Total Learning Strategy Score _____ (See Differentiation Criteria for Analysis)

Note: See Attached Scoring Criteria Description for Assistance

Modifiability Scale (Note: overall performance after each teaching session)

Examiner Effort	Extreme (1)	High – Moderate (2)	Moderate-Slight (3)	Slight-None (4)
Student Responsivity	None (1)	Slight (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)
Transfer	None (1)	Low (2)	Moderate (3)	High (4)

Total Modifiability Score _____ (See Differentiation Criteria for Analysis)

Note: See Attached Scoring Criteria Description for Assistance

Additional Comments: (Note changes within and between MLE, pre- and post-testing data, levels of cuing and/or types and amount of accommodations)

Differentiation Criteria

Learning Strategies Checklist:

- 6 Points **Profound** Learning Challenges
- 7-12 Points **Severe** Learning Challenges
- 13-18 Points **Moderate** Learning Challenges
- 19-24 Points **Mild** Learning Challenges
- 25-30 Points **Typical** Learning Characteristics (i.e., Efficiently Learns, Retains, & Transfers Information)

Modifiability Scale:

- 3 Points Observed Learning Patterns - Atypical & **Severe**
- 4-6 Points Observed Learning Patterns - Atypical & **Moderate**
- 7-9 Points Observed Learning Patterns - Atypical & **Mild**
- 10-12** Points Observed Learning Patterns - **Typical**

Note: *To maximize the validity of the Dynamic Assessment results, the teaching lessons need to be within the student's "zone of proximal development" (i.e., within their developmental range). If a targeted lesson is too easy or challenging, the results of the Dynamic Assessment can be compromised.*

Adapted from:

Gutierrez-Clellen, V., Brown, S., Conboy, B., and Robinson-Zanartu, C. (1998). Modifiability: A dynamic approach to assessing immediate language change. *Journal of Children's Communication Development*, 19 (2), 31-43.
Pena, E. (2000). Measurement of modifiability in children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, 21 (2), 87-97.

Dynamic Assessment Scoring Criteria

Learning Strategies Checklist

Attention: The student exhibits an orienting response and focus to task-relevant stimuli (i.e., ignoring irrelevant stimuli), throughout length of task. Student who is distractible may need greater repetition of instruction and may require more mediation (i.e., direct instruction) to learn.

Note: Developmental norms should be considered when interpreting and scoring behavior

5. Orienting response and on-task behavior without prompts.
4. Attentional prompts needed only at the beginning of mediation session.
3. Prompting / repetition needed between 10 – 30% of the time.
2. Prompting / repetition needed more than 40-70% of the time
1. High distractibility and minimal attention 75-100% of the time.

Task Specific Performance: This activity targets the specific teaching and student response of a targeted learning task. This may include basic receptive and expressive tasks. However, it can also include teaching more advanced language and academic tasks that require both metacognitive and metalinguistic skills related to a task. The examiner/teacher may engage the student with concepts pertaining to who, what, when, where, and why related questions. In addition, the examiner could also introduce “what if” questions to facilitate thinking about alternative strategies and answers. Students may also discuss with the examiner the relative benefits of alternative scenarios or strategies. This type of teaching encourages independent, hypothetical thinking and learning.

Level	Learner Awareness	Learner Independence	Performance Descriptors	Performance Accuracy
5. Expert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflects on the task performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spontaneously uses target behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs at a mature age/grade level • Always appropriate • Always consistent • Always precise • Always complete • Always spontaneous • Always independent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has 0-1 errors or minor deviations (which are age appropriate) • Clearly conveys meaning
4. Competent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is conscious of the task performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly uses target behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performs at an established level • Usually appropriate • Usually precise • Usually complete • Usually spontaneous • Usually independent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has 2-3 errors or several minor deviations (which are age appropriate) • Errors rarely interfere with meaning

3. Advanced Beginner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is an active learner • Actively participates in the targeted task 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes uses target behaviors, or uses target behaviors with support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses rules and patterns at an emerging level, not firmly established • Sometimes appropriate • Sometimes inconsistent • Sometimes imprecise • Sometimes incomplete • Sometimes needs prompts • Sometimes needs support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has 2-3 major errors, several minor deviations (which are not age appropriate) • Errors have some effect on meaning but main ideas are conveyed.
2. Beginner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is not self-directed • May require delayed models 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely uses target behaviors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses patterns and rules randomly, if at all • Usually inappropriate • Usually inconsistent • Usually imprecise • Usually incomplete • Usually needs prompts • Usually needs support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has 4-6 major errors and many minor deviations (which are not age appropriate) • Errors prevent the coherent transmission of meaning
1. Limited Language and/or Academic Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires repeated direct modeling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not use targeted behavior in an expressive manner. • Primary mode of communication may be at a receptive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rarely uses patterns and rules • Recurrently inappropriate • Recurrently inconsistent • Recurrently imprecise • Recurrently incomplete • Recurrently needs prompts • Recurrently needs support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has 7 or more major and minor errors (which are not age appropriate) • Errors prevent the transmission meaning or receptive understanding of content being targeted

Planning (Systematic Strategy): The student verbalizes or demonstrates the aspects of "planning, meaning, and transcendence (that is taught and/or reviewed at start of session): See "Basic Components of Teaching/Mediation on pages 6-7 of this document.

5. Verbalizes or demonstrates "planning, meaning, and structures of transcendence" with minimal difficulty or prompting.
4. Verbalizes or demonstrates "planning, meaning, and structures of transcendence" between 50-80% of the time, with cuing.
3. Verbalizes or demonstrates "planning, meaning, and structures of transcendence" between 25-50% of the time, with cuing.
2. Verbalizes or demonstrates "planning, meaning, and structures of transcendence to task < 25% of the time with, cuing.
1. Cannot Verbalize or demonstrate "planning, meaning, and transcendence" at the beginning of session.

Self-Regulation: The student demonstrates self-awareness and self-regulation skills. For example, the student waits for instructions, asks for assistance when task becomes difficult, responds to instruction with minimal prompts, is aware of correctness of own responses, and may use self-rewarding behavior.

5. Consistent use of self-corrections and self-rewards for accurate response after initial feedback. Waits for instruction throughout session.
4. Use of self-correction and self-reward between 50-90% of the time. Waits for instruction throughout the session.
3. Minimal use of self-correction or self-reward. Occasional impulsive response.
2. Impulsivity and fidgety 50% of the time with repeated impulsive responses
1. Impulsivity and fidgety throughout the session with random impulsive responses.

Motivation: The student shows enthusiasm for the task and persists in the face of frustration.

5. High enthusiasm about task as noted by verbalization, body language, and/or facial expressions.
4. Willingness to try most tasks throughout the session, despite difficulty.
3. Occasional attempts to end the teaching activity.
2. Frequent attempts to end the teaching activity.
1. Refusal to participate in the teaching activity.

Interaction with Adults: The student seeks help when the task becomes difficult. The student changes responses according to adult cues and feedback

5. Consistent use of verbal / nonverbal requests for help when task becomes difficult. Response consistently changes based upon adult input.
4. Use of requests for help most of the time. Occasional repetition of old errors in spite of adult input (between 10-20% of the time).
3. Inconsistent change in responses despite adult feedback (between 20-50% of the time).
2. Frequent repetition of old errors despite adult feedback (between 50-80% of the time).
1. Minimal change in response even after adult feedback (between 80-100% of the time).

Modifiability Scale

Examiner Effort: Using the data from the learning strategies checklist, identify the amount and intensity or effort required to induce change during the teaching session.

4. Slight: None (0-25% of the time)
3. Moderate: Slight (25-50% of the time)
2. High: Moderate (50-75% of the time)
1. Extreme: (> 75% of the time)

Student's Response to Teaching: Using the data from the learning strategies checklist, rate the student's overall responsiveness to the examiner's teaching during the lesson.

4. High: (0-1 errors with no or minimal repeated supports)
3. Moderate: (2-3 errors with several minor deviations with periodic needed scaffolding)
2. Slight: (4 -6 major errors with several minor deviations with repeated scaffolding and delayed modeling)
1. None: (7 or more major errors, with several minor errors, that require repeated scaffolding and direct modeling)

Ability to Transfer: Using the data from the learning strategies checklist, rate how the student applies the learned strategies to a new task, within and between sessions.

4. High (0-1 errors with no or minimal repeated supports)
3. Moderate (2-3 errors with several minor deviations with periodic needed scaffolding)
2. Low (4 -6 major errors with several minor deviations with repeated scaffolding and delayed modeling)
1. None (7 or more major errors, with several minor errors, that require repeated scaffolding and direct modeling)

Adapted from:

Gutierrez-Ciellen, V., Brown, S., Conboy, B., and Robinson-Zanartu, C. (1998). Modifiability: A dynamic approach to assessing immediate language change. *Journal of Children's Communication Development*, 19 (2), 31-43.

Pena, E. (2000). Measurement of modifiability in children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. *Communication Disorders Quarterly*, 21 (2), 87-97.

Wiig, E. H., Larson, V., and Olson, J. (2004). *S-Maps: Rubrics for curriculum-based assessments and interventions for grades k-12*. Wisconsin: Thinking Publications.

Appendix A

Questions to Help Determine How a Student Processes or Learns New Information

Use a Frame of Reference in Assessing Students

- Does the student attempt to paraphrase information when having difficulty understanding information? Yes / No
- Does the student use rehearsal of the information as a method of remembering information? Yes / No
- Is the student frequently unaware of errors in understanding (processing) information? Yes / No
- Does the student frequently ask questions when unsure? Yes / No
- Does the student try to understand information when he/she is having difficulty processing it, or does he/she give up? Yes / No
- Does the student ask for help when struggling? Yes / No
- Is the student confused by long, complex, and/or embedded information? Yes / No
- Does the student require frequent repetitions in order to understand the material? Yes / No
- Does the student have difficulty following multi-stage instructions? Yes / No
- Does the student need additional cues (visual, manipulative, auditory, etc.) to understand the information? Yes / No
- Does the student show irritability towards others when having difficulty? Yes / No
- Does the student show frustration when learning new information? Yes / No

Appendix B

Possible Indicators of a Language-Learning Disability

Culturally and linguistically diverse student with language-learning disabilities demonstrate problems in both their primary language and English. These problems may be observed in the following areas:

- Difficulty in learning language at a normal rate, even with special assistance in both languages.
- Deficits in vocabulary.
- Short mean length of utterance.
- Communication difficulties at home.
- Communication difficulties when interacting with peers from a similar background.
- Auditory processing problems (e.g., poor memory, poor comprehension).
- Lack of organization, structure, and sequence in spoken and written language; difficulty conveying thoughts.
- Slow academic achievement despite adequate academic English proficiency.
- Family history of special education/learning difficulties.
- Slower development of siblings (as per parent report).
- Reliance on gestures rather than speech to communicate.
- Inordinate slowness in responding to questions.
- General disorganization and confusion.
- Difficulty paying attention.
- Need for frequent repetition and prompts during instruction.
- Need for a program of instruction that is more structured than that used with most other students.
- Need for a program of instruction that is more structured than that used with most other students.
- Difficulties impacting grammar and sentence structure.
- Difficulties in the use of precise vocabulary and overuse of words such as *stuff*, *things*, *you know*, etc...
- Inappropriate social use of language (e.g., interrupts frequently, digresses from topic, is insensitive to the needs or communication goals of conversational partners, cannot stay on the topic of discussion, cannot take turns in conversation)
- Poor sequencing skills. Communication is disorganized, incoherent, and leaves listener confused.
- Overall communication skills that are substantially poorer than those of peers.

* Excerpt taken from Rosberry-McKibbin, C (2002). *Multicultural Students with Special Language Needs* (2nd Ed.). Oceanside, CA: Academic Communication Associates.

Appendix C

The Warning Signs of Learning Disabilities

*Susan Bergert, December 2000
ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education
(References included with original publication)*

(Below are excerpts from Ms. Bergert's Article)

I. Warning Signs in Preschool Children: Although growth patterns vary among individuals, uneven development or significant delays in development can suggest characteristics of a specific learning disability. It is important to keep in mind that the behaviors listed below must persist over time to be considered warning signs. Any child may occasionally exhibit one or two of these behaviors during the course of normal development.

Language

- Slow development in speaking words or sentences
- Pronunciation problems
- Difficulty learning new words
- Difficulty following simple directions
- Difficulty understanding questions
- Difficulty expressing wants and desires
- Difficulty rhyming words
- Lack of interest in story telling

Motor Skills

- Clumsiness
- Poor balance
- Difficulty manipulating small objects
- Awkwardness with running, jumping, or climbing
- Trouble learning to tie shoes, button shirts, or perform other self-help activities
- Avoidance of drawing or tracing

Cognition

- Trouble memorizing the alphabet or days of the week
- Poor memory for what should be routine (everyday) procedures
- Difficulty with cause and effect, sequencing, and counting
- Difficulty with basic concepts such as size, shape, color

Attention

- High distractibility
- Impulsive behavior
- Unusual restlessness (hyperactivity)
- Difficulty staying on task
- Difficulty changing activities
- Constant repetition of an idea, inability to move on to a new idea (perseveration)

Social Behavior

- Trouble interacting with others, playing alone
- Prone to sudden and extreme mood changes
- Easily frustrated
- Hard to manage, has temper tantrums

II. Warning Signs in Elementary School Children: It is during the elementary school years that learning problems frequently become apparent as disabilities interfere with increasingly demanding and complex learning tasks. Difficulties in learning academic subjects and emotional and/or social skills may become a problem. Warning signs for this age group may include any of those listed above for the preschool children in addition to the following.

Language / Mathematics

- Slow learning of the correspondence of sound to letter
- Consistent errors in reading or spelling
- Difficulty remembering basic sight words
- Inability to retell a story in sequence
- Trouble learning to tell time or count money
- Confusion of math signs (+, -, x, / , =)
- Transposition of number sequences
- Trouble memorizing math facts
- Trouble with place value
- Difficulty remembering the steps of mathematic operations such as long division

Motor Skills

- Poor coordination, or awkwardness
- Difficulty copying from the chalkboard
- Difficulty aligning columns (math)
- Poor handwriting

Attention / Organization

- Difficulty concentrating or focusing on a task
- Difficulty finishing work on time
- Inability to follow multiple directions
- Unusual sloppiness, carelessness
- Poor concept of direction (left, right)
- Rejection of new concepts, or changes in routine

Social Behavior

- Difficulty understanding facial expressions or gestures
- Difficulty understanding social situations
- Tendency to misinterpret behavior of peers and/or adults
- Apparent lack of “common sense”

III. Warning Signs in Secondary School Children: Some learning disabilities go undetected until secondary school. Physical changes occurring during adolescence and the increased demands of middle and senior high school may bring the disabilities to light. Previously satisfactory performance declines. Inappropriate social skills may lead to changes in peer relationships and discipline problems. Increased frustration and poor self-concepts can lead to depression and/or angry outbursts. Warning signs of learning disabilities in secondary students include the following, which again, should occur as a pattern of behaviors, to a significant degree, and over time.

Language / Mathematics / Social Studies

- Avoidance of reading and writing
- Tendency to misread information
- Difficulty summarizing
- Poor reading comprehension
- Difficulty understanding subject area textbooks
- Trouble with open-ended questions
- Continued poor spelling
- Poor grasp of abstract concepts
- Poor skills in writing essays
- Difficulty learning a foreign language
- Poor ability to apply math skills

Attention / Organization

- Difficulty staying organized
- Trouble with test formats such as multiple choice
- Slow work pace in class and in testing situations
- Poor note taking skills
- Poor ability to proofread or double check work

Social Behavior

- Difficulty accepting criticism
- Difficulty seeking or giving feedback
- Problems negotiating or advancing for oneself
- Difficulty resisting peer pressure
- Difficulty understanding another person's perspectives