

# Painting a Picture of Developmental Language Disorder in Language Minority Bilingual Children

Bonifacci, P., Atti, E., Casamenti, M., Piani, B., Porrelli, M., & Mari, R. (2020). Which measures better discriminate language minority bilingual children with and without developmental language disorder? A study testing a combined protocol of first and second language assessment. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research*, 63(6), 1898-1915.

**Language minority bilingual children (LMBC)** use a language at home that varies from the language they encounter in other environments, such as school.

While LMBC are not always at increased risk for **developmental language disorders (DLDs)**, they are more likely to be misdiagnosed than their non-LMBC peers.

The article offers helpful advice to educators seeking to differentiate between LMBC students with and without DLD.

## Tips for Assessment

### Consider Both Languages

Evaluating bilingual children in both their primary and secondary languages offers a more complete picture of language development and may be key to spotting DLD.

### Use Multiple Tests

Using multiple tests that measure different aspects of language may be better than any single test at distinguishing bilingual children with DLD from typically developing peers.

### Include Parents

Asking parents to report on their child's skills in their home language may improve identification of DLD beyond assessing the student directly.

## Key Comparisons

Bilingual children with DLD may struggle more than non-DLD peers with...

### Narratives

Communicating information in a story format

### Nonword Repetition

Repeating back nonsense words they have just heard

### Morphology

The knowledge of word parts that have meaning, such as affixes, root, and base words

### Vocabulary

Knowing what words mean and how to say and use them correctly