



Best Practices in Administration Addressing Unique Needs during Assessments Battelle Developmental Inventory – 2nd Edition NU

Dual-language Learners

Assessing a child whose first language is not English raises a concern when administration requires oral instructions, because the child may not comprehend what he or she is being asked to do. In such circumstances, test results may not accurately reflect the behaviors that the test intended to measure nor the actual abilities and skills of the child. Parents, family members, and caregivers may be limited in their understanding of English and in their ability to fully describe the child's abilities and behaviors.

- Differences in language and culture often occur at the same time and suggestions in the section related to cultural diversity also apply to dual-language learners. The examiner should be familiar with aspects of a child's culture that might influence responses (ex. a culture might discourage children from extended conversation with adults).
- The BDI-2NU was standardized using English presentation. Normative data is valid only when items are presented in English (except for interview items which may be administered in the parents' language if needed). Structured items should be administered in English but missed items can be administered again in the child's language. This type of administration gives information about which milestones the child was able to achieve given both opportunities. The goal is to gather information that accurately describes the child's developmental levels.
- The examiner should decide the appropriate accommodations for each child, note, and report the extent to which the assessment accurately reflects the child's current levels of functioning. Information provided in Unit 4 of this module will describe specific test items in which a child's performance might likely be impacted by language and/or cultural differences.
- Assessments related to Child Outcomes Measurement System – The BDI-2NU Data Manager as well as the BDI-2NU Mobile Data Solutions (MDS) software only provide scoring needed for Child Outcomes Measurement System when English is selected as the administration language.

Developmental Needs

Stages and levels of Development

The developmental stage at which a child is functioning will influence his/her behavior in a test situation and the characteristics of young children should be considered during assessments. The examiner should have knowledge of and understanding of how the young child's behavior influences assessment performance and outcome.

- Characteristics which might impact the assessment include the following:
 - activity levels and distractibility, shorter attention spans
 - wariness of strangers and inconsistent performance in unfamiliar environments
 - difficulty regulating his/her emotional, social, behavioral responses
 - physical discomfort (hunger, fatigue)
 - activity preferences
 - prior experiences with a variety of items as well as prior medical and health history

- Some suggestions for addressing the developmental needs of young children are listed below:
 - Have a variety of toys and activities available to gain the child’s interest. These items can also be used between assessment task items to re-engage or maintain the child’s interest while different assessment items are presented. If a child is reluctant to enter an assessment situation, preferred toys might be helpful in gaining his/her interest.
 - Ask the child to help put away some of the materials or suggest a task he/she can perform to “be a helper”.
 - Allow for motor and/or sensory breaks as needed. Young children usually need to move around and many children seek sensory input.
 - Be aware of the child’s energy level and physical comfort. Depending on the time of day or the family’s schedule, a child might become hungry, sleepy, or tired during the assessment. Collaborate with the parents and attempt to accommodate their needs as much as possible. It might be necessary to offer a snack during the assessment if the child is hungry.
 - If a child is reluctant to enter an assessment room, involve the parent in calming and reassuring the child. Bring some preferred toys out to show the child that he/she will be playing in the other room. Reassure the child that the parent will stay. Note: Refer to the previously provided information regarding conversations with parents about their role during assessments.
 - Use age-appropriate language such as “toys” and “games” instead of “test”. Encourage the child throughout the assessment. Set the tone of the assessment as one of playful fun.

Children with disabilities

General accommodation strategies for children with disabilities are discussed in the BDI-2NU Examiner’s Manual. However, evaluators must use clinical judgment when deciding which strategies are appropriate for each individual child.

- Evaluators must know the child’s skills and abilities, as well as ways to optimize the child’s performance. Examiners should give careful consideration when determining which accommodations are appropriate when administering specific items.
 - Know the child’s limitations and difficulties related to an identified disability, as well as the best means for the child to communicate or demonstrate knowledge.
 - The examiner should have knowledge of the construct of the test item – what skill is being assessed by the specific item. The accommodation being considered should not compromise the purpose of the specific assessment item.
- Allowable accommodations are specific to the child and to the assessment item. Explanations and descriptions of accommodations are in the BDI-2NU Examiner’s Manual. It is important that examiners refer to the specific area impacted by a disability and implement allowable accommodations as needed based on the characteristics of the specific child. Some examples of accommodations are listed below:
 - Time: Allow sufficient time for the child to initiate, work on, and complete a task. Discussion with parents as well as previous observations will provide information about how a child might approach a task. However, if the child does not understand or is unable to respond after several tries, terminate the attempt in order to avoid frustration. A few items on the BDI-2NU are timed and consideration of extending time limits would be determined by the child’s specific needs.

- Motor: Many items require that a child indicate an answer by performing a motor action such as placing objects from boards or cups, pointing, picking up objects to sort). Consideration should be given to proper positioning and/or adaptive seating. The examiner should be alert to attempts of the child to respond with head or eye movements or sounds if he/she is unable to point to an answer. The examiner is allowed to help a child initiate movement, ask that the child "look at" to show an answer, and allowed to show the choices and ask "is it this one?"
- Vision: Attention should be given to the best type of lighting, placement of materials, and the child's possible visual fatigue. Allow the child to handle materials for an extended length of time and to bring materials close to his/her eyes. Keep the environment free of clutter. Establishing rapport with a child with vision impairment often takes more time than with a child who is sighted. A child with vision impairment might also react in a stressful manner to entering a new place and new situation. It is important to engage in conversation or play with a simple toy to give the child a chance to become comfortable in the setting. Tell the child what you are doing and let him/her know which items are presented (unless the instructions indicate that materials can't be named for a specific item).
- Hearing: The examiner should be constantly alert to possible hearing impairments which have not yet been identified. Many young children who do not have a diagnosis of "hearing impairment" might experience temporary hearing difficulties due to ear infections. All concerns about hearing should be discussed with the parents. If the child has an identified hearing loss the examiner should become familiar with the characteristics specific to the type of hearing loss. Several aspects of hearing impairment are imperative for consideration during assessment. If the child should be wearing any type of amplification or hearing aids, be sure that they are in working order and turned on. Attract the child's visual attention before beginning a task. Be diligent in presenting practice trials that are provided with some items. (Do not provide practice if it is not designated in the BDI-2NU Examiner's Manual). It may be appropriate to begin some language items at a younger age level if the child appears to have delays in that area.
- Speech –Nonverbal responses such as nodding or shaking the head, pointing, using gestures are allowed as long as the purpose of the item is not compromised.
- Emotional/Behavioral – Use demonstration or practice trials when they are allowed for the item. Reinforce and praise for attempts and not for correctness. Collaborate with the parent to determine reinforcing and preferred activities for the child so that they can be interspersed with assessment items. Break the assessment session into small timeframes if necessary.
- Multiple disabilities, other disabilities – If information gained during interviews, observations, or from the BDI-2NU Screening test indicate that a child has needs for accommodations associated with more than one area of disability then those accommodations should be provided.

Reference: Newborg, J. (2016). *Battelle Developmental Inventory, 2nd Edition Normative Update, Examiner's Manual*. Riverside Insights Publishing.

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