

**Clinical Assessment Workbook
for
Communication Sciences
and Disorders**

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Preface

This workbook follows a who, what, why, when, where, how format in order to provide a clear and familiar structure for learning. In keeping with that premise, the introduction is organized in a like fashion.

Who: The authors, who find the process of answering clinically relevant questions an exciting and challenging endeavor, bring their knowledge and experience as clinicians, clinical supervisors, and instructors in Communication Science and Disorders (CSD) into each chapter. The workbook is aimed at helping the advanced undergraduate and beginning graduate student better prepare for his/her role in the assessment process through interacting with the information provided in the text.

What: Assessment is about discovering answers to clinically relevant questions through a variety of structured and unstructured means. The earlier chapters provide a broad-based look at components that are common across assessments, while the latter chapters examine specifics—speech, language, hearing, and swallowing assessment procedures.

Why: The assessment process is multifaceted and can be daunting for the learner. This workbook provides information and activities to help prepare the student for his/her upcoming role in clinical assessment.

When: This workbook builds on the foundational knowledge gained through the normal process- and disorder-related classes found in the undergraduate CSD curriculum. It is designed to be used to prepare the student for his/her entry into assessment practices.

Where: The book is appropriate as part of a methods, clinical practicum, and/or assessment class. It can also be useful as an individual tool for review and application.

How: The workbook provides evidence- and experienced-based information, highlights important terms, presents activities to promote understanding with the answers provided to encourage immediate self-correction, and challenges the learner to consider thoughtful applications.

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We would like to dedicate this book to our families.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to Assessment

Who

Several people play an important role in completing an assessment. Both the client who is being evaluated and the clinician who is planning, executing, and reporting the results are central to any evaluation. Others are also involved as providers of information during the assessment or receivers of the information following the assessment (e.g., parents, teachers, doctors, and other team members).

What

Evaluations (initial or ongoing determination for eligibility) and assessments (initial and ongoing process of identification of skills) are aimed at finding the answer to one or more clinical questions (American Speech-Language-Hearing Association, n.d.; Kratcoski, 1998). Unique information is gathered depending on the question asked (Olswang & Bain, 1994; Westby, Stevens Dominguez, & Oetter, 1996). Some of the questions clinicians are asked to answer include

- Is there a need for testing?
- How does the individual's skills compare to a peer group?
- Is the client developing typically?
- Does the individual qualify for services?
- What is the present level of functioning?
- Are academics or social relationships being negatively impacted?
- What techniques will work best for remediating the errors?
- What level is the appropriate one to treat?
- What targets should be addressed?
- Is progress being made?
- Is the change a result of the remediation being provided?
- Should the client be dismissed from therapy?

With so many varied questions, which will need to be addressed at some point in your practice, it follows that there are many procedures that you will need to understand and know how to administer, interpret, and report.

Why

Communication is a vital part of people's lives. Your role as a clinician is to determine if a communication disorder exists, the extent/severity of that disorder, and recommendations for treatment or referral. There will be some procedures you will use that must be done in a very prescribed fashion. These approaches are termed static assessments and include norm referenced/standardized tests and developmental scales. Giving, scoring, and reporting on standardized tests requires precision and compliance to the administration procedures presented in the test's manual so you can compare your client to others of a similar age and gain a perspective of how he/she compares to the normative sample. There are other procedures, which determine a strategy that works for a client or determine what effect situations or partners have on the communication profile, that are better determined through a conversation, a planned/structured interaction between the client and the diagnostician, and/or observation of natural interactions. These types of assessments are termed dynamic assessment. Through static and dynamic assessments, you identify, describe, and recommend next steps.

When

When an assessment is given will depend on the questions you are trying to answer. Screenings, often a quick pass/fail procedure to identify whether a potential client needs a full assessment, are the earliest kind of evaluation. Diagnostic evaluations, usually involving norm referenced tests to determine the specific type, extent, and severity of the communication problem, are completed after a screening and prior to enrollment. Often, a block of time is set aside for this purpose. Baseline and dynamic assessments, which involve gathering information to make decisions on the specifics needed for treatment planning, may be a part of the diagnostic evaluation time block or may occur early in a scheduled treatment session. Ongoing assessment, the regular gathering of information on treatment progress, occurs throughout the remediation process. In the school setting, one-year Individualized Educational Plans (IEP) or three-year reevaluations are done at the prescribed time interval.

Where

Where the evaluation takes place is also dependent on the questions being addressed. A quiet testing room, the home, the school, the hospital room, a lab, or an informal meeting place may all be places where static and/or dynamic assessment information is gathered.

How

The way to assess will unfold in the chapters to come. It is a combination of using your knowledge, attending to the details, and caring about your client to make ethical decisions in planning, performing, and reporting assessment information.

Top 10 Terms

Baseline

Clinical questions

Developmental scales or tables

Dynamic assessment

Norm referenced/standardized test

Observation

Ongoing data collection

Screening

Static assessment

Structured interactions

Chapter Tips

- 1.** Remember, the question or questions to be answered are driving your assessment efforts. When planning an assessment, first know what you are trying to discover and then select the procedures you will use.
- 2.** When completing relevant paperwork (e.g., initial report, session notes or documentation, IEP forms, or progress reports), make sure it conveys information that answers the questions that are to be addressed.
- 3.** A combination of assessment tools is used to address the assessment questions. Always incorporate a look at actual communication interactions rather than merely relying on segmented test results.

Activity

- 1–1.** Some diagnostic procedures provide information for all the clinical questions you need to answer. Interviews and observations/conversational samples are two procedures used to address many questions. Other procedures are linked more clearly to a specific question. The following are seven questions a clinician may need to answer. Write the name of the procedure from the “Procedure

Bank” following the questions that is **most closely linked** to the question asked. A procedure will only be used once and some procedures will not be used at all.

1. _____ Is the client meeting developmental milestones?
2. _____ What techniques will work best for remediating the errors?
3. _____ How does the individual’s skills compare to a sample of same-aged peers?
4. _____ I did not get enough information from the standardized test—how does the client perform on specific tasks I have arranged?
5. _____ Is there a need for testing?
6. _____ Is progress being made?
7. _____ What accuracy percentage should I set as my objective target?

Procedure Bank—select from the following procedures to fill in the blanks

Screening

Norm references/standardized test

Developmental scales or tables

Dynamic assessment

Observation

Conversational sample

Ongoing data collection

Baseline

Structured interactions

Answers to Activity

1-1

1. Developmental scales or tables
2. Dynamic assessment
3. Norm references/standardized test
4. Structured interactions
5. Screening
6. Ongoing data collection
7. Baseline

Wrap-Up

1. The authors noted that interviews and observations/conversational samples are two procedures used across many questions. Select three of the questions from the activity section of this chapter and **describe how interviews and observations/conversational samples could contribute** important information to answer the question.

Question # ____

Interviews:

Observations/conversations:

Question # ____

Interviews:

Observations/conversations:

Question # ____

Interviews:

Observations/conversations:

2. Select three of the questions from the activity section of this chapter and identify **where** you think the best place would be to carry out the assessment to answer the question.

Question # ____

Question # ____

Question # ____

3. An excellent way to review information is to compare (identifying how things are the same) and contrast (identifying how things are different) terms or concepts. Complete Table 1–1 by identifying at least 2 important ways the specified terms are the same and different.

Table 1–1. Terms and Concepts. Complete the Table with Ways That the Concepts Are the Same and Different.

Item	Terms or Concepts	Important Ways They Are the Same	Important Ways They Are Different
A.	Screening test	1.	1.
	<i>versus</i> Diagnostic test	2.	2.
B.	Formal testing	1.	1.
	<i>versus</i> Informal testing	2.	2.
C.	Dynamic testing	1.	1.
	<i>versus</i> Static testing	2.	2.
D.	Structured interaction	1.	1.
	<i>versus</i> Observation	2.	2.

continues

Table 1.1 (continued)

Item	Terms or Concepts	Important Ways They Are the Same	Important Ways They Are Different
E.	Assessing in a natural environment <i>versus</i>	1.	1.
	Assessing in a clinical environment	2.	2.
F.	Initial assessment information <i>versus</i>	1.	1.
	Ongoing data collection	2.	2.
G.	Ongoing data collection <i>versus</i>	1.	1.
	Baseline data collection	2.	2.
H.	(Identify a set of terms YOU think should be included)		
	Term 1 <i>versus</i>	1.	1.
	Term 2	2.	2.
I.	(Identify a second set of terms YOU think should be included)		
	Term 1 <i>versus</i>	1.	1.
	Term 2	2.	2.

4. Name four things you hope to learn about assessment from this workbook?

I wish to learn _____

I hope to learn _____

I want to learn more about _____

An important aspect of assessment I need to know more about in order to be a good diagnostician is _____