

Working With Interpreters and Translators

A Guide for Speech-Language
Pathologists and Audiologists

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Contents

<i>List of Videos</i>	<i>ix</i>
<i>Foreword by Maxine B. Langdon Starr, PhD, LMFT</i>	<i>xi</i>
<i>Contributor</i>	<i>xiv</i>
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>xv</i>
Part I. A Guide for the Speech-Language Pathologist and Audiologist	1
Introduction to Part I	1
Description of Part I Chapters	3
References	4
Chapter 1. Bridging Linguistic Diversity	7
<i>Henriette W. Langdon</i>	
Chapter Goals	7
Historical Perspectives on Interpreting and Translating	10
Need for Trained Interpreters and Translators in the Field of Communicative Disorders	11
Language Statistics	13
Interpreting and Translating Methods	22
Specializations in the Field of Interpreting and Translating	23
Summary	25
Discussion Items and Activities	26
References	26
Chapter 2. Communication Issues in a Multilingual Society	29
<i>Henriette W. Langdon</i>	
Chapter Goals	29
The Interpreting and Translating Process in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology	31
What Is the Difference Between Language and Dialect?	32
Verbal Aspects of Communication	33
Nonverbal Aspects of Communication	40
Phenomena That Occur When Two Languages Are in Contact	43
Translation Skills	46
Verbally/Linguistically Based Applications to the Interpreting Process	47
Discussion Items and Activities	50
References	51

Chapter 3. Cultural Elements	55
<i>Terry Irvine Saenz</i>	
Chapter Goals	55
Defining Culture	55
Responding to the Client's/Family's Voices	63
The Interpreter/Translator as a Cultural Broker	73
Summary	75
Discussion Items and Activities	75
References	76
Chapter 4. Interpreting and Translating in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology	81
<i>Terry Irvine Saenz</i>	
Chapter Goals	81
Responsibilities of SLPs and Audiologists	82
Responsibilities of Interpreters and Translators	89
Discussion Items and Activities	105
References	106
Chapter 5. Three Important Steps: Briefing, Interaction, and Debriefing (BID Process)	109
<i>Henriette W. Langdon</i>	
Chapter Goals	109
Taking Three Steps Through the Process	109
Defining Best Practices in Collaborating With an I/T in Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology	127
Summary	129
Recommendations (With Teresa Wolf)	130
Discussion Items and Activities	132
References	132
Chapter 6. Assessing Bilingual/Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Children	135
<i>Henriette W. Langdon</i>	
Chapter Goals	135
Assessment Issues That Are Pertinent to SLPs, Audiologists, and I/Ts	136
Guidelines for Assessing a CLD Child With the Assistance of a Trained Interpreter	146
Assessment Guidelines Pertinent to SLPs and I/Ts	147
Assessment Guidelines Pertinent to Audiologists and I/Ts	155
Summary	158

Discussion Items and Activities	158
References	159
Chapter 7. Enhancing Professional Development Programs and the Future of Interpreters	163
<i>Teresa L. Wolf</i>	
Chapter Goals	163
Challenges for Interpreters	163
Designing a Professional Training Program	166
Minimum Qualifications for Program Participants	169
Creating the Professional Development Program	171
Outcomes and Evaluation	176
Summary	180
Discussion Items and Activities	181
References	181
Part II. A Guide for the Interpreter/Translator	185
Introduction to Part II	185
Chapter 8. The Interpreting and Translating Process	187
<i>Henriette W. Langdon</i>	
What You Should Know About Speech-Language Pathologists	188
What You Should Know About Audiologists	189
Interpreting and Translating Terminology	190
Expectations of Interpreters and Translators Who Collaborate With SLPs and Audiologists	191
Common Interpretation and Translation Errors	197
Code of Ethics	198
Activities to Practice Your Interpreting and Translating Skills	199
Self-Assessment Items	204
Chapter 9. The Interpreter/SLP or Audiologist Collaboration Process	207
<i>Henriette W. Langdon</i>	
The Interview or Conference Environment	208
Assessments	211
The BID Process in Audiological Assessments	212
The BID Process in Speech and Language Assessments	216
Activities to Practice Assessment Procedures	228
Self-Assessment Items	236
References	237

Chapter 10. Evaluation and Outcome of the Process	239
<i>Henriette W. Langdon</i>	
Assessment of Your Oral and Written Proficiency in Two Languages	240
Evaluation of Collaborators' Skills	240
Conclusion	241
Reference	241
<i>Epilogue</i>	243
<i>Glossary</i>	245
<i>Index</i>	253



List of Videos

Henriette W. Langdon and Maxine B. Langdon Starr

Video Clip 1. Expectations of Interpreters and Translators Who Collaborate With Interpreters and Translators

A Quick Background of the Profession
Types of Interpreting
Types of Translation
Expectations

Video Clip 2. Interpretation in Action: Interviews and Conferences

Contents
Following the BID Process
Briefing (Demonstration)
Interaction for Interviews (Demonstration)
Interaction for Conferences (Demonstration)
Debriefing (Demonstration)

Video Clip 3. The Role of the Interpreter/Translator in Hearing Assessments

General Statement
A Typical Day in the Life of a Hearing Aid Dispenser
Assessment Conducted by a Hearing Aid Dispenser
Demonstration of Typical Hearing Aids
The Sound-Proof Booth¹

Video Clip 4. The BID Process in SLP Assessments: When There Are Normed Tests in the Language (e.g., Spanish)

Change of Roles
Obtaining and Analyzing a Language Sample
When There Are Normed Tests in the Language (Spanish)
What to Be Aware of When Using a Normed Test
Scenario With an 8-Year-Old
Responding to Selected Subtests of the CELF-4 (Spanish)
Debriefing the Assessment Process

¹This video addresses the dilemmas in working with a hearing aid dispenser instead of an audiologist. It was carried out to offer an additional perspective of situations where the assistance of an interpreter might be needed when a client's proficiency is limited in English.

Video Clip 5. The BID Process in SLP Assessments: When There Are Normed Tests in the Language

Background Information

What To Do When There Are No Tests

Scenario With a 6-Year-Old Vietnamese-Speaking Child

Briefing (Demonstration)

Short Interaction With the Parent (Demonstration)

Assessing the Child's Skills (Demonstration)

Debriefing (Demonstration)



Foreword

I am not a speech-language pathologist (SLP), an audiologist, an interpreter/translator (I/T), a psychologist, counselor, linguist, teacher, or a school/hospital administrator. So, why would I be interested in writing the foreword to a guide on collaborating with interpreters and translators with practitioners whose fields, speech-pathology and audiology, are tangentially related to mine? For all the titles and qualifications I may not seem to have, I nevertheless consider that I possess some background and experience to offer comments on this very important topic of collaborating with I/Ts.

We all are well aware that we live in a world that is increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse, a phenomenon that we are experiencing not only in the United States but throughout the entire globe. Despite a greater number of bilingual specialists available in different fields, there continues to be a vast discrepancy between supply and demand for services for clients whose English is limited and who have very diverse linguistic backgrounds. Even if you are considered a bilingual specialist, you may need to know how to collaborate effectively with an I/T when you are not proficient in your client's language, and an assessment is needed to evaluate his or her skills in an equitable, ethical, and legally appropriate manner.

I am a bilingual licensed marriage and family therapist (LMFT), and I have been working as a mental health specialist (MHS) for almost 3 years. My services are contracted to a large school district,

and I work with many bilingual primarily Spanish-speaking students. My job requires that I participate in individual education plan (IEP) meetings, collaborate with general education and subject-matter teachers, school administrators and staff, parents, and I/Ts to plan and evaluate students' progress. My major charge is to assist these students with their social and emotional goals so that they have a fair chance to succeed academically, vocationally, and personally.

As the only child of an ambitious and hardworking SLP who also happens to be my accomplished mother, I have been exposed to many of the roles taken in the profession. During most of my upbringing, she was eager to conduct every test on the planet known to SLPs in the languages of French, English, and Spanish to try out the test or collect some norms (yes, I'm trilingual). I can attest to being thrown into the client chair more times than most children are ever asked to do. More important, I enjoyed trying my best to impress my mother and her eager SLP graduate students with my intelligence and linguistic skills. Aside from this, however, I decided along the way of being used as a testing "guinea pig" that my mother had already saturated the SLP field, and so I chose the field of psychology instead. My choice to ultimately become a therapist was not that simple, as many therapists and helping professionals say the field chose them as much as they chose their vocation.

Similarly to any lengthy test used in speech-language pathology, which typically comprises multiple parts with many

sections, the individual who is asked to take this test is also multifaceted. There are some characteristics of that individual that cannot be measured by a standardized test. Human beings have strengths and weaknesses that are unique to their own personal character and may not be measured by their responses to a given set of test items. Upon entering my field, I believed that my strengths were observation and language expression. Also, we need to consider that we only have a limited number of tests in a few languages for monolingual speakers and an even fewer number for bilingual speakers of Spanish-English or other frequently spoken languages like Chinese-English or French-Spanish. The fact is that, overall, the fields of speech and language pathology and audiology lack materials to equitably assess the numerous languages and combinations of two languages that may come across during our daily work. Therefore, other measures that may be attained through careful observation need to be considered. Many of the conclusions we might reach need to be carefully interpreted taking into account the background, growth and development, experiences, the culture, and the specific structures and uses of the languages of the client we are with, to say the least. My own early development illustrates some of these aspects.

Early on during my infancy, I frustrated my mother extensively because I was silent for over 2 years. I did not utter a complete or "true" word as a baby. She tells me almost every year around my birthday of how much I made her worry that I was going to be a mute child. However, in hindsight, I have given her an explanation saying that I was not mute but rather observing the world around me. I was acting like an absorbent sponge, immersing myself in all the sights, smells,

sounds, tastes, and touches available within my reach. I was listening and watching. I have always been somewhat intuitive, as I can guess what a person is thinking simply by observation. Naturally, these personality traits have assisted me a great deal as a mental health professional. I also imagine they are advantageous to SLPs and also especially to I/Ts.

There is a well-known saying that I grew up with and continue saying, which is, "There is no 'I' in 'TEAM.'" I have always been part of a professional team when I work in the schools, with other disciplines, or among my colleagues in supervision, trainings or collaborating on difficult cases. Even when I was growing up, I was competing on a sports team (figure skating drill team, cheerleading), performing concerts as part of the school orchestra, or providing the soundtrack for the school plays. I could not have accomplished these personal or professional feats alone, but yet I always had a distinct role to play. In IEP meetings, I am the prime commentator on the student's emotional or behavioral goals and presentation. In sporting events, I was the support and the base so that our flyer could hit a back-tuck basket toss. In the orchestra, I have played the roles of concert chair and also background percussionist. In both aspects, I had to do my part and play my role, so that the student, the team or the patient/client/consumer benefited but also so that I had felt that I had made an impact or a difference. Who is going to be the one to advocate for these children, clients, students, parents, or those without the ability to communicate? Of course, the SLPs, teachers, administrators, psychologists, mental health professionals, school and hospital personnel, and graduate students reading this book should already have the answer: US. Not only just YOU

can make a difference, but also working as a team, the effects become united and have a resounding effect on everyone as a whole.

I would imagine this book is not only for those who work with I/Ts in various settings but also so that the I/T can have a voice, an importance, a distinction, and an identity of his or her own. We who provide human services do not carry on this work for our own personal benefit (although, of course, being paid for what one loves to do is an added bonus). Everyone who is on a team has his or her own distinct role, even if it is just to sit back and observe (as I know from my own experience). We must begin to take the role of the I/T more seriously and definitively. Let us give I/Ts their own voice and recognition, just as the SLP helps give the gifts of language

and communication to those who could not otherwise facilitate those skills independently. Without the I/Ts' unique skills that allow us to bridge the needed communication with our clients and their families, we would be unable to serve many individuals who seek our services.

I hope this book will inspire those of us who make a difference every day in people's lives to also acknowledge and recognize the unique skills and strengths the I/T brings and to be better prepared and trained to work and interact with these professionals going forward.

With gratitude, admiration, and respect for all the work I/Ts, SLPs, audiologists, mental health professionals, administrators of all sorts, and staff do to better the lives of everyone around them.

—Maxine B. Langdon Starr,
PhD, LMFT



Contributor



Teresa L. Wolf, MS, CCC-SLP, is a clinical professor in speech-language pathology at the University of Memphis. She holds the Certificate of Clinical Competence from the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association. Her areas of clinical interest include voice, articulation, and working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations. She has presented nationwide on the topic of working with interpreters and has been a coauthor on several journal publications. She is currently the coprincipal investigator on a grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education, which focuses on training graduate students to work with interpreters in the field of speech-language pathology.



Acknowledgments

I have always enjoyed reading or composing this section because a book, a guide, or any created work cannot be completed without the help and support of others.

First, I find it necessary to provide the readers a short history that precedes the birth of this second edition on collaborating with interpreters and translators in speech-language pathology and audiology. The conception of this new edition was not easy, and I realize my story mirrors that of many other authors. But, I needed to share with readers how seemingly unrelated events can ultimately converge to create a positive ending. Thinking Publications, under the leadership of its founder and editor Nancy McKinley, produced the two guides on speech-language pathologists and audiologists collaborating with interpreters and translators in 2002. As of 2010, the company that bought out Thinking Publications, after Nancy's passing in 2005, decided to no longer reprint the guides. It had been my intent to rewrite the guides, and I tried to negotiate a contract with another editing company, but it resulted in an unsuccessful endeavor. Toward the end of 2010, Carl, my husband, was diagnosed with lung cancer, and he passed in the spring of 2012. Due to this unfortunate event, my project to write a second edition was pushed to the side. Then one day, in the fall of 2013, I received a copy of an e-mail written by Dr. Linda Jarmulowicz, Associate Professor and Associate Dean in the School of Communicative Sciences and Disorders at the University of Memphis in Tennessee, addressed to one of the editors of the company that terminated the

printing of the guides asking for additional copies, and she was told they were out of print. Linda had used the two publications to train her students on working with interpreters and translators in speech-language pathology and audiology through a grant that she had written with this volume's guest author, Clinical Professor Teresa L. Wolf. This e-mail provided me with the necessary incentive to contact Plural Publishers. By then, I had had the pleasure to meet Valerie Johns, Senior Editor, at the Spring California Speech-Language-Hearing Association Convention, who had encouraged me to write a proposal. But, I had not taken any action until I received the magical e-mail. Therefore, my first thank you goes to Linda for giving me the incentive to embark on this project, and the second thank you is for Teresa, who graciously accepted my invitation to write Chapter 7 on training issues, adding on her firsthand experience and expertise in training graduate students to work effectively with interpreters and translators.

My third thank you goes to my coauthor, Dr. Terry Irvine Saenz, who agreed to navigate with me on this venture after my former writing partner, Dr. Lilly Cheng, decided she needed to put her effort into her multiple new projects. Terry, who had been my writing partner in the past, was once again an excellent collaborator. Terry wrote Chapters 3 and 4, which include entirely new material and the latest literature to support her information. Terry would like to acknowledge the input she received from Dr. HyeKyeung Seung for a draft of Chapter 3. In addition to writing

her two chapters, Terry offered invaluable support and patience by reading at least two drafts of the four chapters I rewrote, including Chapter 7, written by Teresa. Also, her help in reading the entire manuscript once it came to us in the typesetting edition was invaluable. Her attention to detail is immeasurable! Altogether, my writing partners proved to be the most punctual and reliable team I have ever had.

Terry, Teresa, and I wish to thank Valerie Johns, Executive Editor, and Kalie Koscielak, Project Editor, in facilitating the distribution and feedback from our reviewers and for coordinating the editing and final product, and Megan Carter and Alya Hameed for their assistance in the copyediting phase of the project. We also very grateful for the feedback from our reviewers, Dr. Elisabeth Wiig, Nancy Castilleja, and Kristin McNeil. Their comments assisted all of us in producing a clearer text. A few other anonymous reviewers took the time to read and comment on earlier drafts of the manuscript, and we greatly appreciate their feedback as well.

Direct input through e-mails and phone conversations from several audiologists and/or specialists in deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals was extremely helpful in securing that the material would be as accurate and up-to-date as possible in the area of working with interpreters and translators in audiology covered in Chapters 5 and 6. I want to extend my thanks to Dr. Sandy Bowen, Susan Clark, Dr. Mitzarie A. Carlo Colón, Evelyn Merritt, and Dr. Christine Yoshinaga-Itano who took time to answer multiple questions and offer their own insights on this issue. Special thanks to my colleague, Dr. June McCullough, who was willing to discuss some of the dilemmas of working with a language interpreter/translator in audiology and provided me with very

needed comments on some sections of Chapters 5 and 6. Dr. Lu-Feng Shi, professor of audiology at Long Island University, kindly suggested some feedback and further references. Last but not least, I wish to thank my old friend and colleague, Dr. Lilly Cheng, who agreed to give away some of her time to write the Epilogue.

I also wish to thank Dr. Katarzyna Węsierska, Professor from the University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland, for encouraging her doctoral student, Katarzyna Gawel, to undertake a dissertation topic on collaborating with interpreters and translators in Poland. Last but not least, my great appreciation also goes to Dr. Barbara Morrill who has offered me encouragement and support during the completion of this project, and Dr. Gloria Weddington for her continued support of my work.

The zeal to try my best and continue to learn has been instilled by two exceptional individuals who both have served as my mentors, and I want to thank them both for being excellent models: Dr. Paula Menyuk and Dr. Elisabeth Wiig, both Emerita Professors from Boston University, where I received my doctorate degree.

And, finally, the book could not have been completed without the help of Maxine Langdon Starr, who is directly related to me, as she is my daughter. Maxine reviewed the entire manuscript and wrote the Foreword. She also helped me design, produce, and edit the video clips that are part of this guide. We spent many hours together planning and editing each tape. We are most grateful to those who were brave and accepted to take on various roles in these tapes. Another person I wish to thank is Kevin Starr, Maxine's husband, who kindly let her go when I needed her to complete work on this project and offered his artistic talent by giving his input on the cover of the book.

Last, Spottie Dottie, a little white dog with brown and black spots on her ears and a few others spread around her body, played a very important role. During the course of writing this guide, she spent her

time lying next to me or on my lap. And, she also offered me some of the unconditional love and tenderness that I have needed following the loss of my husband Carl. Thank you Spottie Dottie!



Chapter 5

Three Important Steps: Briefing, Interaction, and Debriefing (BID Process)

Henriette W. Langdon

CHAPTER GOALS

- Review the briefing, interaction, and debriefing (BID) process for interviews, conferences, assessments, and interventions while outlining the role of the speech-language pathologist (SLP) and audiologist
- Describe the role of interpreters/translators (I/Ts) during the BID process while contrasting their roles in the fields of speech-language pathology and audiology
- Define best practices in collaborating with an I/T in speech-language pathology and audiology
- Trace a path for a future certification for I/Ts collaborating with SLPs, audiologists, and educational staff (written in collaboration with guest writer Teresa Wolf)

or audiologist, as well as his or her charge in preparing the I/T. A code of ethics was also proposed since the profession of an I/T working in the educational field has not been officially defined.

In this chapter, we describe the necessary steps that the SLP and audiologist as well as the I/T should follow to ensure that the process is successful. We also will outline similarities and contrasts between the role of I/T in each of the two professions, speech-language pathology and audiology, by listing some best practices for an equitable process drawn from other professions and propose some trends for the future to certify/train I/Ts to work with SLPs, audiologists, and other educational staff.

TAKING THREE STEPS THROUGH THE PROCESS

In Chapter 4 we reviewed the roles and responsibilities of each team member, SLP,

The success of the interpreting process for conferences and interviews with families and clients, assessments, or intervention

is enhanced when it includes three steps: briefing, interaction, and debriefing (BID). The three-step process should provide the SLP or audiologist a plan on collaborating with the I/T to ensure success on behalf of children and their families. However, despite some outlined practices taken from other fields like interpreting for courts or medical interpreting, no research on evidence-based practices exists to support any of them.

Briefing

During the *briefing* portion or the initial step of the meeting, the SLP or audiologist and the I/T, as a team, should take time to plan the content and process for a given interview, conference, or an assessment session. Several important decisions need to be made, which are listed below.

Interviews and Conferences

- *What is the purpose of the meeting?* Specifically, is this an interview to gather information about the child, is it to plan an assessment, or is it to report results of an assessment to draft goals and recommendations? If it is an interview, what is the information to be obtained? Table 5–1 includes questions to ask regarding various areas such as background information on motor and language developmental milestones, health, and school performance. If it is an assessment, what are the goals in conducting the assessment; what are the tests, activities, and materials to be used; and what is the function of the I/T? Chapter 6 includes more specific information on this

topic for audiological and speech-language assessments. Finally, if the meeting is to report results of an assessment, what are the highlights of the information to be shared; will the I/T be asked to interpret what is said by the SLP/audiologist, the parent, and participants; and/or will the I/T be asked to do a sight translation of the individual education plan (IEP) or individual family service plan (IFSP)? In the latter case, additional preparation time for the I/T will be necessary.

- *What are some helpful strategies to ensure the success of the process?*
 - The approach should be consistent with the family's cultural values and beliefs and needs to be implemented within the context of the family and community. Here the I/T may be very helpful but needs to remain objective.
 - The SLP or audiologist and the I/T should have an ongoing dialogue. It may be difficult because the I/T may be different for each case.
 - The SLP or audiologist should keep grammatical constructions simple and clear and avoid idiomatic words or professional jargon.
 - The SLP or audiologist should *define* specific professionally related terminology such as auditory comprehension, sensorineural loss, speech-language impairment, or autism by providing concrete examples that have application to the child's home and learning environments. This is not the role of the I/T **but of the SLP or audiologist.**

Table 5–1. Interview About a Child With a Family Member

Language used by the Interpreter:			
Name of the Interpreter:			
Date of the Interview:			
Name:		DOB:	
Age:		Grade:	
Number and age of siblings:			
Mother’s occupation:		Father’s occupation:	
Mother’s highest level of formal education:		Father’s highest level of formal education:	
Language Use and Preferences:			
Language(s):		Country of origin:	
Has the child resided in countries where other languages were spoken?			YES NO
If yes, where?	When?	How long?	
<i>Please describe the child’s experiences with other languages:</i>			
<i>How long has the family resided in the United States?</i>	Father:	Mother:	Child:
<i>Language(s) of interaction between child and:</i>	Father:	Mother:	Siblings:
	Other family members:		
<i>Is there a language the child seems to favor?</i>			
<i>Who converses most often with the child at home?</i>			
<i>What is the main language used by the adults at home?</i>			
<i>Does the child respond in the language used by the adults?</i>			YES NO
<i>If not, what language does the child use?</i>			
<i>Language preference in listening to the radio, CDs, or TV? (Please circle)</i>			
Home Language	English	No Preference	
<i>Language preferred for reading and writing by the child, if applicable?</i>			
Home Language	English	No Preference	

continues

Table 5-1. *continued*

Education:		
<i>Did the child attend school in the country of origin or other countries? (Please circle)</i>		
YES	NO	If yes, how many years?
<i>How long has the child attended school in the United States?</i>		
<i>Has the child attended any other U.S. schools before his or her present school? (Please circle)</i>		
YES	NO	If yes, where and for how long?
<i>Type of educational program: (Please circle)</i>		
Only English (which grades)?		ESL (which grades)?
Bilingual (which grades)?		Saturday school (which grades)?
<i>Did the child attend preschool/Head Start? (Please circle)</i>		YES NO
<i>Has the child's education been continuous or interrupted?</i>		
If interrupted, please describe reason(s):		
<i>Any problems at school with: (Please circle all that apply)</i>		
Listening to the teacher	YES	NO
Remembering what is taught	YES	NO
Following directions	YES	NO
Finishing homework	YES	NO
Participating in activities	YES	NO
Learning to read	YES	NO
Understanding what he or she reads	YES	NO
Learning math	YES	NO
Writing problems	YES	NO
Behavior	YES	NO
Making friends	YES	NO
Expressing ideas clearly	YES	NO
Others understanding the child	YES	NO
Acquiring English compared to other children	YES	NO
<i>If you marked YES for any of the items, please describe:</i>		

Table 5–1. *continued*

Health and Developmental Information:				
<i>Any problems with:</i> (Please circle all that apply)				
Pregnancy		YES	NO	
Birth process		YES	NO	
Hearing		YES	NO	
Vision		YES	NO	
Allergies		YES	NO	
Health		YES	NO	
Hospitalizations		YES	NO	
Birth weight:	Born at: (Please circle)	Home	Clinic	Hospital
<i>If you marked YES for any of the items, please describe:</i>				
Family’s Perception of the Child’s Language Performance at Home:				
<i>Have you noticed any difficulties the child has with?</i> (Please circle)				
Home Language	Understanding	Speaking	Reading	Writing
English	Understanding	Speaking	Reading	Writing
<i>Describe how the child’s speech and language development in the home language compares to that of the siblings or children in the community.</i> (Please circle)				
Same	Different	Please describe if there are problems:		
<i>Any problems at home with:</i> (Please circle all that apply)				
Following directions		YES	NO	
Understanding what others say		YES	NO	
Others understanding what the child says		YES	NO	
Attention		YES	NO	
Behavior		YES	NO	
Making friends		YES	NO	
Playing with others for a while		YES	NO	
Learning new concepts		YES	NO	
<i>If you marked YES for any of the items, please describe:</i>				

continues