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PSCL 230

Extra Credit Assignment

For this assignment, I selected an article titled “What clinicians need to know about bilingual development in children.” The reason I selected this article is because bilingualism has always fascinated me. My father is 100% German and grew up with two immigrant parents. He learned many of the words and phrases spoken in German, but he never became fluent. My brother and I were never taught any of these words. I’ve always wished that my father could have spoken o me more in German, or that my grandmother could have lived with us while I was growing up. I wished this because in many psychology classes I have heard how easy it is for a child to learn a second language compared to an adult. I selected this article in the hopes of learning more about how children are raised in a bilingual household.

This brief article summarizes a research article by Erika Hoff, which was published in the Seminars in Speech and Language. The article discusses two major issues that clinicians have when assessing bilingual children. One is the diagnosis of language impairment in these children. This is because when a child learns two languages at the same time, he or she will not progress in one language as much as a child who is only learning one language. This means that a clinician has to correct a bilingual child’s score on language impairment tests. There is a possibility over correcting the score, resulting in a failure to diagnosis impairment, or under correcting the score, resulting in the child being diagnosed with language impairment when he or she is actually unimpaired. The second issue that clinicians have to deal with is providing advice to bilingual parents about how to properly raise a child in a bilingual environment. I always thought that a bilingual environment would do nothing but help the child, so I was very interested to hear that it may affect children. Many bilingual parents believe that a child can very quickly learn English once they enter school, so the parents focus on the other language during the child’s early years. However, poor English skills can severely affect a child’s school performance. The article then goes on to explain the best environment to learn English in.

I did not find any problems with this article. I thought it presented a new idea that I had not considered in the past.