**Initial Evaluation Summary**

**Name**: Liam Burton **Evaluation Date**: January 21, 2022

**Date of Birth:** April 11, 2011

**Age:** 10 years, 9 months

**Relevant Background Information**

Liam, a 10-year, 9-month-old male was seen on January 21, 2022 at Innovative Pediatric Learning Center of Miami for an initial evaluation of overall language skills and how they relate to reading. He was accompanied to the evaluation by his father, Luis Burton, who served as a reliable informant. Parent reported concern regarding Liam’s academics and overall reading skills.

As per information collected via case history, Liam was born naturally following a full-term pregnancy. Birth history is significant for jaundice. This was resolved. Early medical and developmental history was reported unremarkable. Liam was diagnosed with a speech-language disorder and apraxia and received speech-language intervention at the age of 5. Parent reported seeing “major improvements” following speech-language intervention. Parent concern rearose in 2020 when parent observed that Liam was continuing to fall behind in school and reading. In November 2021 it was established that Liam had an Autism Spectrum Disorder by Dr. Vasconcellos.

Liam has been in a home school curriculum since the first grade. Liam currently attends school virtually and is enrolled in the 4th grade. The primary language spoken at home is English. At this time, parent reported his primary goal is to help Liam catch up academically.

**Instrumentation**

Formal and informal measures performed during the evaluation included the following:

* Review of Psychoeducational Evaluation
* Parent Interview
* Portions of Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – 5th Edition (CELF-5) administered
* Pragmatics Profile
* Speech-Language Sample
* Oral Peripheral Observation
* Articulation/Phonology

All measures were performed in English, as this is the language Liam primarily understands and uses at this time. Results of all formal and informal assessments appear to be reliable.

**Outcome of Evaluation**

**Review of Psychoeducational Evaluation:** Liam received a psychoeducational evaluation in November 2021. An extensive report was provided and reviewed. Information obtained from this report revealed that Liam’s intellectual profile was inconsistent. His global intellectual skills fell within the very high range. His visual intelligence was found to be very well developed, as well as, his expressive vocabulary. His working memory skills were found to be a weakness.

A mild weakness in daily living skills and communication was found.

Further testing was done to better understand Liam’s comprehensive academic abilities. Reading skills were found to be within the very low range. Additionally, phonics, reading comprehension, reading fluency, word decoding, and spelling were all found to be in the very low range.

Assessment of phonological processing abilities revealed that phonological weakness likely impacted ability to read and auditorily process information.

Psychoeducation assessment revealed that Liam does not demonstrate elevation in his levels of inattention, hyperactivity, or social emotional difficulties.

Overall, psychoeducation evaluation revealed that Liam is a “capable child with advanced visual reasoning abilities. He has a willingness to learn; however, struggles due to significant phonological processing weaknesses, motor coordination weakness and variable memory abilities.”

Given the information provided in the psychoeducation evaluation report, no further formal assessment of reading was deemed necessary at this time. Therefore, informal measures were used in order to gain more information regarding overall language skills and how they relate to reading.

**Parent Interview:** Prior to beginning the assessment, additional information was collected via parent interview. Mr. Burton reported that Liam currently attends school virtually and is in the 4th grade. Mr. Burton helps Liam with his schooling. He reported Liam struggles with reading and all tasks that involve reading. At this time, Mr. Burton reported that he is currently touring schools for Liam to attend school in person next school year. Liam was evaluated by a psychologist and then by a neurologist. He was diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. At this time, Mr. Burton’s primary concern was Liam’s reading and how it is affecting his overall academics. In addition, he also expressed concern regarding Liam’s social skills.

**The Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals- 5th Edition (CELF-5)** a standardized assessment of receptive and expressive language skills was administered in order to assess overall language skills. The CELF-5 is designed for students ages 5-21 years to assess a language and communication skills in a variety of contexts.

Portions of the CELF-5 were administered in order to gather more information regarding Liam’s oral language and how it affects written language, as well as, to determine if difficulties with spoken language extended to overall reading.

Test scaled scores provide performance information about the language content that each test targets. Test scaled scores are based on a scale with a mean of 10 and a standard deviation of 3. Subtest scaled scores that are between 7 and 13 are considered to be within normal limits. The following scores were obtained:

**Recalling Sentences** -The Recalling Sentences subtest assesses student’s ability to recall and reproduce sentences of varying length and syntactic complexity. Liam obtained a scaled score of 6 and age equivalence of 7 years, 2 months. This scaled score and age equivalent yielded a moderate to severe delay. Liam demonstrated difficulty recalling the meaning, structure and intent of spoken sentences.

**Understanding Spoken Paragraphs** -The Understanding Spoken Paragraphs subtest assesses the ability to sustain attention, create meaning from oral narratives, and apply critical thinking strategies. Questions are probed to assess memory for facts and details, ability to identify main idea, and make inferences. Liam obtained a standard score of 7. This scaled score yielded a mild to moderate delay. It should be noted that some responses that were counted as correct, were not grammatically correct.

**Word Definitions** ­- The Word Definitions subtest assesses the ability to analyze words for meaning, class, and describe meaning that are unique to the reference or instance.Liam demonstrated relative strength in this area.

**CELF-5 Reading Comprehension Subtest:** The reading comprehension subtest of the CELF-5 was administered in order to gain more information regarding Liam’s reading and provide insight as to whether or not difficulties with oral language comprehension extend to decoding and making sense of written language input. Liam was asked to read two paragraphs that are written at expected grade level for his age. Comprehension of the paragraphs was then evaluated with questions that probe for factual and inferential information and conclusions. The comprehension items were presented orally by the clinician. The following was observed:

When presented with the paragraphs, Liam immediately asked if he would have to read both by himself. Liam demonstrated difficulty reading the paragraph and appeared to be frustrated.

Liam was able to appropriately make some inferences. However, difficulty with decoding while reading the paragraph resulted in difficulty with labeling the main idea, sequencing, and recalling details from the paragraph.

Results from the reading comprehension subtest revealed that difficulty with decoding affects overall reading comprehension.

**Pragmatics Profile -** The Pragmatics Profile from the CELF– 5, a criterion-referenced checklist, was completed to gain additional information regarding overall pragmatic language development and any pragmatic difficulties that may influence social and academic communication. Information from this checklist can be used to determine how language is being used to communicate. This can help gain more insight on ability to meet school curriculum objectives for following teacher instructions, and managing classroom behaviors and interactions. The following observations were made:

Liam was able to make and respond to greetings. Additionally, he was able to begin a conversation and enjoyed talking with the clinicians. Liam demonstrated a sense of humor and was able to tell and understand jokes. Eye contact was inconsistent. Liam demonstrated difficulty with turn taking in a social interaction and preferred to control the conversation. Additionally, he preferred to speak about topics of interest to him and demonstrated difficulty with maintaining appropriate topics. While in conversation, Liam spoke very slowly and used repetitive and redundant information at times.

Results from analysis of the pragmatic profile revealed Liam’s overall pragmatic language skills may be influencing social and academic.

**Speech-Language Sample-** A speech-language sample was observed in order to evaluate spontaneous speech and obtain more information about Liam’s language skills in less structured tasks. The language sample was collected informally through conversation and observed for semantic, syntactic, and morphological abilities. The following was observed:

Liam enjoyed talking about spiders, insects, Roblox and comic books. Liam’s language structure consisted of utterances that were age appropriate in length, expanded utterances, and complex sentences. However, Liam’s language structure was observed to have inconsistent use of age-appropriate grammar.

Liam’s connected speech was considered to be disorganized, off topic, at times, and out of sequence. Additionally, speech intelligibility in unstructured and structured conversation was found to be good. Liam demonstrated some misarticulations (e.g. /f/ for /th/, difficulty with /r/), but they did not affect overall intelligibility severely.

Overall, while Liam was observed to have advanced language skills as evident by results obtained from the psychoeducational evaluation, information obtained from the speech-language sample revealed that Liam demonstrated difficulty using those skills in unstructured situations.

**Oral Peripheral Observation -** Informal assessment of the oral speech mechanism was performed through observation to assess the adequacy of the structures and functions of the oral-motor mechanism. No gross structural asymmetries or abnormalities were noted. At this time, oral structure and function of the oral peripheral speech mechanism was observed to be adequate for speech production.

**Articulation/Phonology -** The ability to produce speech sounds was assessed throughout the course of the evaluation in order to measure articulation of sounds and determine types of misarticulation. Spontaneous speech was elicited both in words and connected speech. Substitution of /w/ for /r/ was noted, as well as, /f/ for /th/. These errors did not affect overall intelligibility. Liam’s intelligibility was judged to be good in both structured conversation and spontaneous conversation.

**Impressions**

Based on the results of formal and informal assessment, as well as parent interview and clinical observation, Liam, a 10-year, 9-month-old male presents with a severe reading developmental delay, as well as, a moderate pragmatic language delay, and a mild articulation delay.

**Recommendations**

Based on the information obtained through the assessment tools and parent, the following recommendations are made:

1. Individual reading intervention 3 times a week for 60 minutes.
2. Initial reading intervention objectives should focus in the following areas:

* Improving working memory.
* Improving phonological awareness.
* Using compensatory strategies to aid with reading comprehension.
* Improving sight word reading using Lindamood Bell.

1. Goals should be reviewed and updated monthly and a re-evaluation is recommended in 6 months to evaluate progress.
2. Increase Liam’s exposure to pragmatic situations and continue to monitor pragmatic language skills. Add pragmatic goals, as needed.
3. Place Liam in group activities in order to increase exposure to social skills.
4. Continue to monitor articulation and language skills.
5. Assess articulation and language formally and begin intervention as needed once reading has improved.
6. Implement at home activities focusing on goals targeted in therapy.

It has been a pleasure meeting and working with Liam and his family. If you have any questions and/or concerns feel free to contact me directly via telephone at (786) 622-2353 or via email at [info@iplcmiami.com](mailto:info@iplcmiami.com).

Sincerely,

Alissa M. Darley, M.S., CCC-SLP, ASDCS

Speech-Language Pathologist