**Speech-Language Evaluation Summary**

**Name**: Emilia Mattaraz **Evaluation Date**: March 20, 2023

**Date of Birth:** June 8, 2020

**Age:** 2 years, 8 months

**Relevant Background Information**

Emilia, a 2-year, 8-month-old female was seen for an initial comprehensive speech-language evaluation at Innovative Pediatric Learning Center (I.P.L.C.) of Miami on March 20, 2023. Her mother, who served as a reliable informant, accompanied her to the evaluation. Speech-language evaluation was recommended by Emilia’s teachers.

As per information obtained from case history, Emilia was born at 40 weeks gestation via planned cesarean section. Birth history and medical history were reported unremarkable. Emilia’s mom reported Emilia is in good health at this time.

Developmental milestones were reported to be achieved within normal limits. Emilia currently attends Aguamarina preschool full time and is in a PK-2 classroom. Her predominant Language is Spanish, but she is also exposed to English.

**Instrumentation**

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

* Preschool Language Scales – Fifth Edition Spanish (PLS-5 Spanish)
* Speech-Language Sample
* Social Behavioral Observation
* Oral Peripheral Observation
* Speech Sound Assessment
* Connected Speech Sample

All measures were performed in Spanish as this appears to be Emilia’s primary language at the time. Results of all formal and informal assessments appear to be reliable.

**Outcome of Evaluation**

**Preschool Language Scales – Fifth Edition Spanish (PLS-5):** The Preschool Language Scales – Fifth Edition Spanish (PLS-5) was administered in order to assess receptive and expressive language skills. The PLS-5 is designed for children from birth through seven years, eleven months of age. It evaluates all aspects of an individual’s oral language and language comprehension through the use of pictures, manipulatives, and observation. The test is comprised of two subscales, auditory comprehension and expressive communication. These subscales are used to evaluate how much language a child understands and how well they communicate with others.

Standard scores are based on a scale with a mean of 100 and a standard deviation of +/- 15. The following interpretation of standard scores is applicable:

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| **Standard Score Range** | **Interpretation** |
| Above 115 | Above Average |
| 85-115 | Average/ Within Normal Limits |
| 78-84 | Marginal/Below Average/Mild |
| 71-77 | Low Range/Moderate |
| 70-50 | Very low range/Severe |
| 50 and below | Profound |

The following results were yielded:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Subtests | Standard Score | Confidence Interval | Percentile Rank | Age Equivalent | Severity |
| Auditory Comprehension | 85 | 79-93 | 16% | 2-3 | Grossly Within Normal Limits |
| Expressive Communication | 100 | 92-108 | 50% | 2-9 | Within Normal Limits |
| Total Language Score | 92 | 86-99 | 30% | 2-5 | Grossly Within Normal Limits |

**Auditory comprehension:** On the receptive portion of the PLS-5, Emilia obtained a standard score of 85, yielding an age equivalence of 2 years, 3 months. Standard score is within normal limits and age equivalent is 5 months below chronological age. This standard score and age equivalence are grossly within normal limits. It should be noted that Emilia’s receptive abilities might be higher than testing scores indicated due to her preference of activities and inattentiveness in testing when presented with non-preferred activities.

Emilia demonstrated strength in the following receptive language tasks:

* Looking at objects or people the caregiver or another person looks at and point to without naming them
* Identifying familiar objects from a group of objects without gestural cues (inconsistent secondary to decreased attention to task)
* Following commands with gestural cues (inconsistent secondary to decreased attention to task)
* Understanding inhibitory words (other than no)
* Identifying photographs of familiar objects (inconsistent secondary to decreased attention to task)
* Identifying basic body parts
* Identifying things you wear
* Recognizing actions in picture
* Understanding use of objects
* Understanding part/whole relationships

However, Emilia demonstrated difficulty with the following receptive language tasks:

* Consistently looking at objects or people the caregiver or another person looks at and points to without naming them
* Identifying familiar objects from a group of objects without gestural cues
* Consistently following commands with gestural cues
* Consistently identifying photographs of familiar objects
* Engaging in pretend play
* Understanding the verbs *comer, tomar/beber,* and *dormir* in context (secondary to decreased attention to task. When given direction, “Don Osito tiene sed. Dale algo de beber”, Emilia picked up the cup, but did not execute the action. Instead she saw another item of interest and then play with that.)
* Understanding pronouns
* Following commands without gestural cues

**Expressive communication:** On the expressive portion of the PLS-5, Emilia obtained a standard score of 100, yielding an age equivalence of 2 years, 9 months. Standard score is within normal limits and age equivalent is 1 month above chronological age. This standard score and age equivalence are within normal limits. It should be noted that intelligibility was not taken into account when scoring items on the PLS-5.

Emilia demonstrated strength with the following expressive language tasks:

* Participating in a play routine with another person for at least 1 minute while using appropriate eye contact
* Extending toy or pointing to an object to show others
* Using at least 5 words (Unintelligible)
* Initiating a turn taking game or social routine
* Using words for a variety of pragmatic functions (unintelligible)
* Naming objects in photographs (unintelligible)
* Using different word combinations
* Combining three or four words in spontaneous speech (unintelligible)
* Using the gerundio form of verbs
* Using plurals

However, Emilia demonstrated difficulty with the following expressive language tasks:

* Using words more often than gestures to communication – It was observed that Emilia used gestures about as often as words
* Telling how an object is used
* Answering questions logically

**Total language:** Emilia’s total language scores revealed a standard score of 92, yielding an age equivalence of 2 years, 5 months. This standard score and age equivalent are within normal limits.

**Speech-Language Sample:** A speech-language sample was gathered in order to evaluate spontaneous speech and obtain more information about Emilia’s language skills in a less structured environment. A language sample can help identify the types of language behaviors in a child’s repertoire and provides an enhanced overview of language development. The speech-language sample was collected informally through play and observed for semantic, syntactic, morphological, and pragmatic language abilities using the Preschool Language Scale (PLS-5) Language Sample Checklist. The following was observed:

Emilia’s language structure consisted predominantly of 1-2 word utterances paired with gestures. Longer utterances were observed occasionally. However, they were unintelligible. Emilia was observed to be aware communication breakdowns occurring when she tried to use longer utterances. Therefore, it was observed that she preferred to use 1-word utterances and gestures in order to be better understood by unfamiliar listeners. Emilia’s language content consisted of naming various objects, using words to describe objects, and using words denoting possession. Social language use consisted of initiating (e.g., “xxxxx ami me toca, a mi”), requesting (e.g., “Yo quiero mas duro”), asking questions (e.g. “Ques esto” ), and getting attention (e.g.,“Mira”). She also used words for greetings and answering clinician’s questions.

Emilia was observed to communicate primarily via gestures and unintelligible utterances (e.g.,“Yo quiero este” pointed and tried moving clinician’s body so that she could see the toy Emilia wanted). Speech intelligibility in connected speech was judged to be poor. Furthermore, Emilia’s connected speech contained frequent use of unintelligible utterances and was judged to be disorganized, off topic, at times, and out of sequence.

**Social Behavioral Observation:** Observation was used to assess behavioral components in various structured and unstructured activities throughout the course of the evaluation. The following social behavioral observations were noted:

The evaluation was completed at I.P.L.C. Miami. Initially parent entered treatment room with Emilia while rapport was established and case history was reviewed. Emilia was able to separate from parent to complete assessment measure. She did occasionally ask for mom, but was easily redirected when told that mom was on the phone with dad outside.

Throughout the course of the evaluation, Emilia was able to sit independently on the floor with clinician. Emilia demonstrated inconsistent, but appropriate, eye contact, joint attention, and response to name. Emilia demonstrated difficulty attending to adult-directed task, requiring extra time, repetition, and redirection to task, especially during administration of formal assessment measure. While administering the auditory comprehension portion of the PLS-5, Emilia’s performance was noted to be very inconsistent, suggesting that incorrect responses were a result of decreased attention. Therefore, it should be noted Emilia’s language abilities might be higher than testing scores indicated due to her preference of activities, inattentiveness, and impulsivity in testing.

Throughout the course of unstructured play, Emilia engaged in play with clinician while playing with ball and hammer toy. Emilia was observed to independently initiate social interactions with clinician and try to get clinician attention. Throughout the course of the unstructured portion of the evaluation, Emilia engaged the clinician multiple times. She set up all of the balls and then handed to the clinician the hammer. However, Emilia was observed to go from toy to toy and demonstrated difficulty maintaining appropriate play with a toy. Much of her interactions with toys were taking the toys out, observing them separately and then seeking more toys. Emilia required prompting to engage in play and turn-taking.

**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. Cursory observation revealed:

Structure – The face was observed to be symmetrical in shape. The mandible and maxilla were in proper alignment, height, shape, and size. Dental occlusion, the palatal arch and oral/dental structures were observed to be unremarkable based on chronological age. At this time, Emilia’s oral structure was observed to be adequate for speech production.

Function – The body, trunk and facial tone were observed to be normal. All reflexes were inhibited (no observable reflexes when eating or performing verbal tasks). Phonation and breath support were adequate (1-3 seconds of sustained phonation), single voiced, nasal and un-voiced phonemes could be produced (/a/, /m/, and /h/). Jaw movements were significant for an occasional open mouth posture. Jaw stability is important for speech as it allows the tongue and lips to move independently to produce speech in a quick and efficient manner. In the area of Labial-Facial Control, Flaccid cheeks were noted due to underuse of the musculature. Furthermore, lip movements show decreased access/control to contact (medial one third of labial surface) as evident by difficulty with individual lip movement. Labial facial muscle movements were significant for decreased retraction and protrusion. In the area of Lingual Control (tongue) in connected speech, decreased tongue tip and body access/control was noted as evident by reduced precision of the tongue when articulating lingual sounds. Overall, facial muscles were observed to have decreased combined alternate movements and coordinated functioning

**Speech Sound Assessment:** 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. The Goldman-Fristoe Test of Articulation | Third Edition, Spanish- GFTA-3 was administered to assess articulation skills. The GFTA-3 Spanish is used to measure speech sound abilities in the area of articulation in Spanish speaking children, adolescents, and young adults, from ages two to twenty-one years, 11 months. The GFTA-3 Spanish uses vocabulary and picture stimuli familiar to individuals of various ages and from diverse regional and cultural backgrounds. Because the vocabulary of Spanish speakers can vary depending on the individual's country of origin and regional linguistic variation, words were carefully selected to minimize lexical variations. In addition to administering the GFTA-3, spontaneous speech was elicited both in words and connected speech. Data was collected and analyzed using the Age of Customary Consonant Production chart as recommended by The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA). The acquisition of speech sounds is a developmental process and children often demonstrate “typical” errors and phonological patterns during this acquisition period. Developmentally appropriate error patterns were taken into consideration during assessment of speech sounds in order to differentiate typical errors from those that are not.

Based on Emilia’s chronological age at the time of the assessment, the following relevant phonological processes, substitutions, distortions and omissions were noted:

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| Error | Example |
| Substitution of /k/ for /h/ | /pakaro/ for /pajaro/  /kugo/ for /jugo/  /roko/ for /rojo/  /kirafa/ for /jirafa/ |
| Substitution of /p/ for /f/ | /poto/ for /foto/  /cape/ for /café/  /peliz/ for /feliz/ |
| Distortion of /t,d,n/ characterized by decreased access/control of tongue tip with occasional tongue protrusion | Tongue protrusion of /n/ for /nariz/ distotions of /d/ for /dientes/ |
| Inconsistent substitution, distortion, and deletion of various phonemes as characterized by decreased control/access of the lips, cheeks, and tongue. | /mano/ for /bano/  /korguga/ for /tortuga/  /koche/ for /noche/ |
| Various inconsistent errors of sounds were noted in sequenced movements in spontaneous speech as a result of difficulty moving oral motor musculature appropriately during connected speech, difficulty with combined alternative movements of the facial muscles, and poor integration of jaw, lips, and cheek movements to support development of lingual control. | /kanzana/ for /manzana/  /pato/ for /zapato/ |

In addition, the following errors were found to be developmentally appropriate at this time, but should be monitored based on chronological age and sound development:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Error | Example |
| Substitution of /t/ for /s/ | /meta/ for /mesa/  /tol/ for /sol/  /felit/ for /feliz/  /tilla/ for /silla/  /atul/ for /azul/ |
| Various inconsistent errors of sounds were noted in sequenced movements in spontaneous speech as a result of difficulty moving oral motor musculature appropriately during connected speech, difficulty with combined alternative movements of the facial muscles, and poor integration of jaw, lips, and cheek movements to support development of lingual control. | /tete/ for /leche/  /kabes/ for /llaves/  /kickle/ for /chickle/  /katon/ for /raton/  /kopa/ for /sopa/  /gugon/ for /leon/  /feyis/ for /feliz/ |

These phonological processes, substitutions, distortions and omissions affected Emilia’s overall intelligibility at the single word level and conversational level, making it difficult for an unfamiliar listener to understand Emilia’s utterances more than 70% of the time. By the age of 3, Emilia’s intelligibility at the conversational level should be 75% for an unfamiliar listener. Therefore, articulation skills were judged to be severely delayed for Emilia’s chronological age.

**Connected Speech Sample:** A connected speech sample was obtained in order to evaluate spontaneous speech and obtain more information about Emilia’s articulation and overall intelligibility in a less structured environment. A speech sample was collected informally through play and observation. The following was observed:

Emilia engaged in conversation with the clinician throughout the course of the assessment. Intelligibility in connected speech was judged to be poor. It was difficult to understand most of the time without relying on context clues and/or gestures. Better production of 1-2 syllable words/utterances with simple movements was noted. Length and complexity of movements required to articulate the word and/or utterance contributed to unintelligibility. Emilia’s speech in spontaneous conversation was judged to be decodable by using context of the setting and gestures. Overall, intelligibility results from the connected speech sample were consistent with results obtained from the articulation portion of the assessment.

**Impressions**

Based on the results of formal and informal assessment as well as parent interview and clinical observation, Emilia, a 2-year, 8-month-old female presents with a moderate to severe speech delay.

It is important to note that all components of attention have a role in language acquisition. A language learner must focus on relevant linguistic input, discounting irrelevant input. He or she must sustain this focus in order to take in complete input for processing. When the source of language input shifts, the language learner must also shift his or her attention to avoid missing relevant input. Finally, he or she must attend to processing the information in order to make it available for future use.

Additionally, the younger a child is assessed, the less predictive test results are of later performance. Therefore, longer-term impressions about Emilia’s development potential based on these test results cannot be made at this time. The results of this assessment should be interpreted in terms of relative strengths and weakness so that they may be addressed through early intervention. Future assessments may yield different results. These results may be higher or lower due to a variety of intervening factors.

Based on the results from this evaluation, family support, and adherence to recommendations that follow, prognosis for Emilia to improve overall communication skills is favorable.

**Recommendations**

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

1. Individual speech-language therapy 2-3 times a week for 30 minutes to improve overall receptive, expressive language, and pragmatic language skills.
2. Continue to monitor receptive language and add goals to intervention plan as deemed necessary by speech-language pathologist.
3. Goals should be reviewed and updated monthly and a re-evaluation is recommended in 6 months to evaluate progress.
4. Implement at home activities focusing on goals targeted in therapy.
5. Continued school attendance

It has been a pleasure meeting and working with Emilia and her 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,

Text

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

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