



Speech and Language Eligibility Criteria
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Criteria for Language

Terminology:

- **Language:** Language is the comprehension and/or use of a spoken (i.e., listening and speaking), written (i.e., reading and writing) and/or other communication symbol system (e.g., American Sign Language). (ASHA, 1993).
- **Communication difference/dialect** is a variation of a symbol system used by a group of individuals that reflects and is determined by shared regional, social, or cultural/ethnic factors (ASHA, 1993).
- **Language involves** the parameters of content, form and use such as phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics. Language includes the disorders of receptive, expressive and pragmatic communication in the following modalities: oral, written, graphic, and manual.

Eligibility: Using the following guidelines the student presents with a language disorder which results in an adverse effect(s) on the student's educational performance.

- When using standardized tests to determine if a student has a language disorder(s), the student must perform less than or equal to 1.5 standard deviations below the mean on 2 different tests or subtests.
 - Any standardized test administered must:
 - a. have adequately determined norms
 - b. appropriate reliability and validity
 - c. be appropriate for the student being assessed.
 - *The SLP may use clinical judgment if the scores are not a full 1.5 standard deviations below the mean.*
- When using language guidelines to determine if a student has a language disorder(s), the language guidelines used should be based on credible research.
 - For example, when determining the mean length of utterance, refer to MLU guidelines such as the MLU predicted standard deviations based on the research of Miller and Chapman (1981).

Exclusionary Criteria:

- Social pragmatic disorders are not considered to be a determination of SLI eligibility as stand-alone.
- Language skills that are a result of a dialectical difference or learning English as a second language.
- Students with elective or selective mutism or school phobia must also have documentation of a delay in oral communication skills.
- Language performance that is consistent with developmental levels unless the student requires language services to benefit from their education program.
- Central Auditory Processing (CAP) unless the IEP team is able to document that the auditory processing results in an impairment of oral communication skills.

If the determinant factor for the student's suspected disability is any one of the following factors, the student is not eligible for services under IDEA:

- ***lack of instruction in reading,***

- *lack of instruction in math,*
- *limited English proficiency.*

Dismissal:

- No language disorder present, (e.g. language skills are within 1 standard deviation of the mean.)
- No adverse effect on educational performance even in the presence of a language disorder(s).
- Language performance that is consistent with developmental levels unless the student requires language services to benefit from their education program.
- The individual who uses an augmentative or alternative communication system has achieved optimal communication across environments and communication partners.
- The student is unwilling or unmotivated to participate in treatment, treatment attendance has been inconsistent or poor, and efforts to address these factors have not been successful.
- Parent/guardian requests exit from service despite SLP recommendations for continuation of services.
- When considering LRE, it is no longer appropriate for the student to be pulled to receive speech-language services, as their language needs are being met in the special/general education classrooms.

Criteria for Phonology

Terminology:

- **Phonology:** the study of the speech sound (i.e., phoneme) system of a language, including the rules for combining and using phonemes (asha.org, 2019).
- **Phonological processes:** pattern of sound errors that typically developing children use to simplify speech as they are learning to talk.
- **Phonological deviations:** when phonological processes persist beyond the age when most typically developing children have stopped using them or when the processes used are much different than what would be expected.

Eligibility: Using the following phonological guidelines, the student presents with phonological deviations in 40% or more occurrences of the assessment that are not age-appropriate AND result in an adverse effect(s) on the student's educational performance.

Phonological Guidelines

Mastery Age Student should NOT be using the phonological deviations of:

- 3 **Initial consonant deletion** (e.g. key → ey)
Final consonant deletion (e.g. bat → ba)
Backing (e.g. tie → kie, dog → gog)
Vowel deviations (except vocalic /r/ vowel deviations)
Voicing errors (e.g. pick → pig, gomb → comb)
Denasalization (e.g., doze → nose)
Stopping of stridents /s, z, f, v/ (e.g., dun → sun, pan → fan)
- 4 **Any of the above**
Syllable reduction (e.g. banana → nana)
/s/ + consonant reduction (e.g. spoon → poon)
Stopping of stridents “sh, ch, juh” (e.g., shop → dop)
Consonant cluster reduction (e.g., spoon → poon, plane → pane, green → geen)
Fronting (e.g., key → tea, go → doe)
- 6 **Any of the Above**
Gliding (e.g., wabbit → rabbit, yeyo → yellow)
- 8 **Any of the Above**
Vowelization (e.g., appo → apple, papuh → paper)

Eligibility Determination Key:

	Mild	Moderate	Severe	Profound
Intelligibility	Over 80% in connected speech	50-80% in connected speech	20-49% in connected speech	Unintelligible without gestural cues or knowledge of content
Errors	1 process outside of developmental guidelines	2 processes outside of developmental guidelines	3 processes outside of developmental guidelines	4 or more processes outside of developmental guidelines

Dismissal:

- Phonological skills fall within the above guidelines.
- No adverse effect(s) on educational performance even if phonological skills do not fall within the above guidelines.
- The student is unwilling or unmotivated to participate in treatment, treatment attendance has been inconsistent or poor, and efforts to address these factors have not been successful.
- Parent/guardian requests exit from service despite SLP recommendations for continuation of services.

If the determinant factor for the student's suspected disability is any one of the following factors, the student is not eligible for services under IDEA:

- ***lack of instruction in reading,***
- ***lack of instruction in math,***
- ***limited English.***

Criteria for Articulation

Terminology:

- **Articulation:** requires exact placement, sequencing, timing, direction, and force of the articulators (Shipley, 1992, p.130).
- **Articulation disorder:** Incorrect production of speech sounds due to faulty placement, sequencing, timing, direction, and force of the articulators.

Eligibility: Using the following phoneme (sound) development guidelines, the student presents with articulation errors (e.g. additions, omissions, substitutions, distortions) that are not age-appropriate AND result in an adverse effect(s) on the student's educational performance.

Phoneme (Sound) Development Guidelines

<u>Age</u>	<u>Student should accurately produce:</u>
3	/p, b, m, h, n, w, t, d/
4	/k, g/
5	/f, v/, "y", "ng"
6	/l/
7	/s, z/, "sh", "ch", "j", "th", zh" ("zh" as in "measure")
8	/r/

These guidelines refer to the phonemes (sounds) in all positions in words and in blends, where applicable.

Dismissal:

1. Articulation skills fall within the above guidelines.
2. No adverse effect(s) on educational performance even if articulation skills do not fall within the above guidelines.

If the determinant factor for the student's suspected disability is any one of the following factors, the student is not eligible for services under IDEA:

- ***lack of instruction in reading,***
- ***lack of instruction in math,***
- ***limited English proficiency.***

Criteria for Voice

Terminology:

"Any deviation in pitch, intensity, quality, or other basic vocal attribute which consistently interferes with communication, draws unfavorable attention, adversely affects the speaker or the listener, or is inappropriate to the age or gender" (Nicolosi, 1989, p. 284).

Eligibility: The student exhibits chronic/persistent impairment(s) in connected speech in at least one of the following areas WHICH results in an adverse effect(s) on educational performance.

- Pitch
- Volume/Intensity
- Resonance (Nasality/Denasality)
- Phonation

Best Practices: It is recommended that no student should be enrolled for voice therapy without prior clearance by a medical doctor. Additionally, the presence of a medical condition, e.g. vocal nodules and/or a physician's prescription for voice therapy does not automatically qualify the student for Henry-Stark's speech-language services.

Dismissal:

1. No adverse effect on educational performance even in the presence of an atypical voice.

If the determinant factor for the student's suspected disability is any one of the following factors, the student is not eligible for services under IDEA:

- ***lack of instruction in reading,***
- ***lack of instruction in math,***
- ***limited English proficiency.***

Criteria for Fluency

Terminology:

"Fluency is the aspect of speech production that refers to the continuity, smoothness, rate, and/or effort with which phonologic, lexical, morphologic, and/or syntactic language units are spoken" (ASHA, 1999, p. 30). "A fluency disorder is a 'speech disorder' characterized by deviations in continuity, smoothness, rhythm, and/or effort with which phonologic, lexical, morphologic, and/or syntactic language units are spoken" (ASHA, 1999, p. 30).

- Disfluency refers to breaks in the continuity of producing phonologic, lexical, morphologic, and/or syntactic language units in oral speech" (ASHA, 1999, p. 30).

Eligibility: The student exhibits more than 5% **atypical** disfluencies during connected speech which may or may not be accompanied by decidedly greater than average duration, effort, tension, or struggle (ASHA, 1999) for 6 months or longer in duration AND result in an adverse effect(s) on the student's educational performance.

Atypical disfluencies may include the following: multiple part/whole repetitions, word/phrase repetitions, revisions, sound prolongations, or blocks.

A student is not eligible for special education and related services in the area of speech and language (fluency) impairment when:

1. Disfluencies are part of normal speech development
2. Disfluencies do not interfere with the student's ability to benefit from education.
3. Rate is the only affected area.

Dismissal:

1. No adverse effect on educational performance even if disfluencies are present.

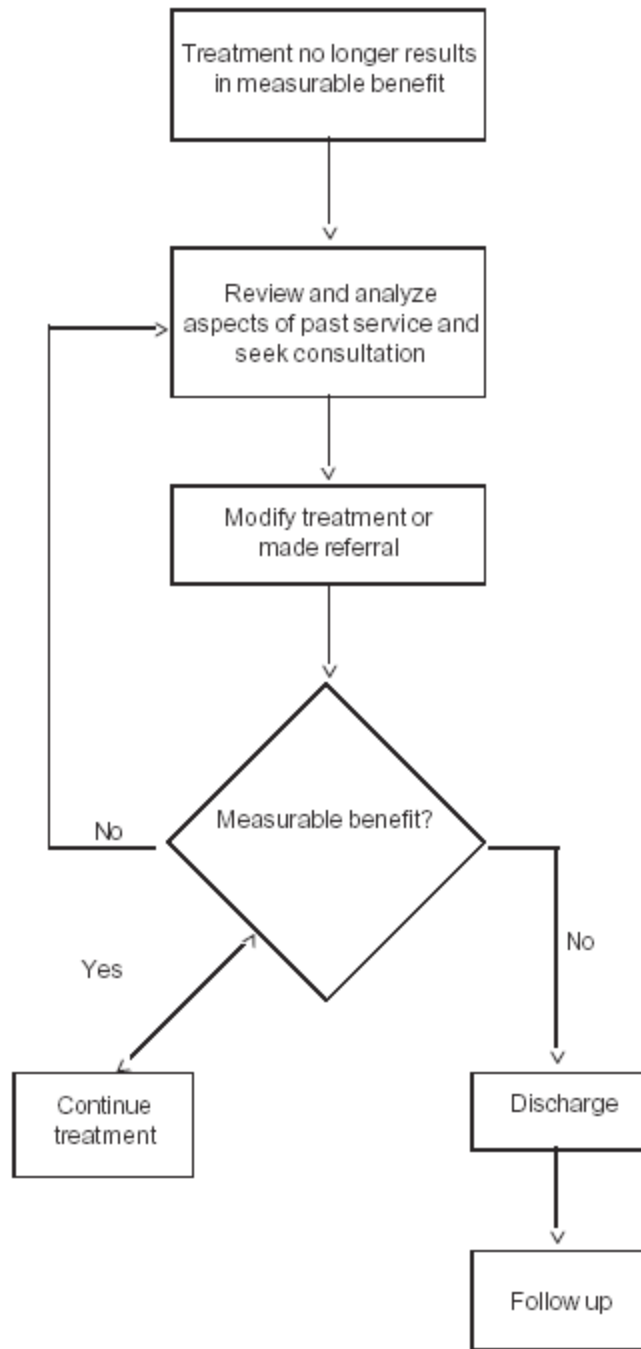
If the determinant factor for the student's suspected disability is any one of the following factors, the student is not eligible for services under IDEA:

- ***lack of instruction in reading,***
- ***lack of instruction in math,***
- ***limited English proficiency.***

General Dismissal Criteria

A student should be dismissed from language and/or speech intervention when one or more of the following occur:

- The child has met all the objectives in the language and/or speech areas and no additional errors warrant intervention.
- The parent requests exit from service.
- Intervention no longer results in measurable benefits, despite documented use of a variety of appropriate approaches and/or strategies.
- The child is unwilling or unmotivated to participate in treatment, treatment attendance has been inconsistent or poor, and efforts to address these factors have not been successful.
- Extenuating circumstances such as medical, dental, social, etc., warrant discontinuation of services temporarily or permanently.
- The disorder no longer has an adverse effect on the child's educational performance.
- The child no longer needs special education or related services to participate in the general curriculum (ASHA, 2000, p. 31).



Taken from the dismissal criteria at www.asha.org

General Considerations When Determining Eligibility

"Eligibility decisions for students in school settings must be made within the framework of the federal legislation and regulations governing the provision of services for students with disabilities. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Amendments of 1997 (P.L. 105-17) provide parameters for which services should be provided in educational settings. The final Part B regulations stipulate that the goal of providing services under IDEA is to help students progress in the general educational curriculum. If the student has difficulties that do not 'adversely impact the child's educational performance', the student does not qualify for services under IDEA. The Department of Education has further stated that a child's educational performance must be determined on an individual basis and should include non-academic as well as academic areas" (Department of Education, 1990)" (ASHA, 2000, p. 7). An example of a nonacademic area is the social curriculum: recess, lunch, physical education class, school transportation (e.g. bus rides), and field trips. Several factors need to be considered before making any eligibility determinations for students in the educational environments; these factors include: the qualifications for eligibility for services under IDEA, the required evaluation procedures to determine eligibility, the evaluation data needed to make the eligibility determination, and the procedures for determining eligibility" (ASHA, 2000, p. 7).

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