Chapter 5

Language Based Learning Disabilities in School-Age Children
Language-Based Disabilities

- Language-based learning disabilities
- Traumatic brain injury induced
- Attention deficit disorder
- ABNQ children

Learning Disabilities- One of a heterogeneous group of disorders characterized by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or mathematical abilities

1. Language-based learning disabilities-reading or spelling, usually extensions of speech and language disorders in preschool
2. Traumatic brain injury and other neurological induced-etiology
   - motor vehicle accidents
   - falls
   - physical abuse
diffuse cerebral damage that leads to swelling, and increased intracranial pressure
general symptoms of brain injury
   - lack of inhibition
   - lack of initiative
   - distractibility
   - perseveration
   - low frustration levels
3. Attention deficit disorder-inability to maintain focused, selected attention due to neurological factors
4. ABNQ children- “almost but not quite” specific language impairment, “not performing up to their potential”
Curriculum Demands

- Preschool
- K- Grade 2
- Grades 3 & 4
- Grades 5 & 6
- Grades 7 - 9
- High School

Preschool - incidental learning (learning that takes place as result of normal, routine interaction with environment)

K- Grade 2 - basic skills necessary for reading and writing, phoneme/grapheme correspondence and basic mathematical operations

Grades 3 & 4 - major leap from decoding to reading (move from learning to read to reading to learn, word problems

Grades 5 & 6 - fully automatic decoding so attention directed toward comprehension

Grades 7 - 9 - read popular magazines, expansion of content areas, social studies, history, science

High School - foreign languages, abstract reasoning, analysis, judgement
Identification of Risk

- ABNQ kids
- ADD or ADHD
- Soft signs

1. ABNQ kids
2. ADD or ADHD
3. Soft signs- possible indicators that could be warning signs for possible language-based learning disability
   - left handedness
   - Visual-motor deficits
   - letter and number reversals
   - phonological deficits
   - history of ear infections - otitis media with or without effusion
   - higher rate of allergies in family
   - headaches
   - developmentally delayed speech
Functional Illiteracy

- 85% of teens in juvenile court
- 79% of welfare recipients
- 85% of school drop-outs
- 72% of the unemployed
Learning Disabilities

- PL 94-142 definition
  - often interpreted to refer to a homogeneous group rather than a heterogeneous group
  - fails to recognize a learning disability beyond age 21
  - does not allow for multiple disabilities

- NJCLD (1991) definition

1% to 15%
several factors affect outcome
  type
  pervasiveness of the disabilities
  chronicity
  interactions with the academic, social, and environmental demands
Categories of L.D.

1. language disorder syndrome (language-learning disabilities)
   most common
   problems with:
   - language comprehension, expression and use
   - word finding difficulties
   - sometimes auditory processing and speech discrimination problems
   40% to 60% of learning disability cases

2. articulatory and graphomotor dyscoordination syndrome
   problems with:
   - articulation
   - writing
   - drawing
   may include apraxia of speech
   sometimes called “clumsy child syndrome” or “developmental apraxia”
   10% to 40% of learning disability cases

3. visuospatial perceptual deficit syndrome
   least common
   problems with:
   - visual discrimination
   - visual memory
   - spatial orientation
   5% to 15% of learning disability cases
Categories of L.D. (cont.)

4. attention deficit disorder with or without hyperactivity (ADD/ADHD)
   as many as 20% of school age children
   most significant features:
   inattention
   inability to stay focused on a task for an extended period of time
   difficulties in dividing attention
   hyperactivity and impulsivity (ADHD)
   treated through educational management, counseling, and medication therapy

5. nonverbal learning disabilities syndromes (NLD)
   family of related syndromes associated with nondonominant hemisphere involvement
   share characteristic deficiencies across disorders
   arithmetic skills and reasoning
   visuospatial
   organizational
   social perception and skills
   abbreviated dialogue
   impoverished inner language
   disorganized spoken and written discourse
Clinical Findings

- Phonologic
  - grapheme/phoneme association
  - Segmentation tasks - breaking down sentences into words and phonemes

- Semantic
  - Organizing word meanings (multiple meanings)
  - Anything beyond concrete (metaphors, antonyms, synonyms)
  - Confrontational naming
    - Circumlocution
    - Substitution naming
    - Lack of specificity

- Syntactic
  - Lower MLU (constant slow rate of development instead of rapid bursts)
  - Poorer sentence comprehension

- Pragmatic
  - Passive in groups
  - Ask fewer questions
  - Difficulty maintaining topic
  - Survival language
  - Easily led for peer acceptance
Spelling & Reading

- Stages (Table 5-4, page 132)
- Trouble areas (Table 5-5, page 133)
Dyslexia

- Runs in families
- More common in boys than girls
- DSM-IV definition (Table 5-6, page 134)
- SLP role

Dyslexia- Rare type of reading retardation with some type of central nervous system