OCALI

Inspiring Change for People with Disabilities
Administering the Functional Listening Evaluation

A "How-To" Module for Audiologists, Speech and Language Pathologists, and Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing
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An Audiologist at Montgomery County ESC-Regional Center. Her primary role includes providing hearing and auditory processing evaluations and working with educational teams to determine appropriate supports for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. She is a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist certified by AGBell and a fluent signer. Dr. Skidmore has a special focus area on language development in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population from birth to age five.
Module Objectives

Participants will:

• Explain why a Functional Listening Evaluation is conducted.
• Identify the steps to conduct a functional listening evaluation.
• Given a set of completed FLE data, identify the student’s best listening environment and name an accommodation that can be beneficial to the student based on the results.
• Name two additional resources you can use to prepare for or administer a functional listening evaluation.
What is the Functional Listening Evaluation?

• A tool designed to assess the impact of noise, distance, and visual access in the student's natural listening environment.
Purpose of the Functional Listening Evaluation

• attempt to quantify the impact of noise and distance and visual access on an individual learner
• compare accessibility to spoken language with and without assistive listening technology
• can support the need for additional accommodations
FLE Administration

Who can administer the FLE?
• Educational Audiologists
• Speech and Language Pathologists
• Teachers of the Deaf/Hard of Hearing

The administrator should have experience with the evaluation and an understanding of how deafness can impact performance in the classroom.
FLE Data and the IEP Team

• can help determine auditory access to the mainstream classroom teacher
• provides information for considering specific accommodations for access
Limitations of the Functional Listening Evaluation

• Measures access to spoken language, not comprehension of the language
• Varied acoustic environments in the school/varied educational environments
• Varied readability of the instructor/educator
• Personal preference (Learner and Parent)
Materials Needed

• Sound Level Meter

• Recording of cafeteria noise
  • Can be simulated using an app
  • Must be able to play continuously at a set level for 10 minutes
  • Needs to be on a different device than the sound level meter

• Listening hoop
  • Allows sound to pass through undistorted, but blocks visual access to speechreading
Materials Continued

• Measuring tape
  • Needs to measure a 3 and 12 foot distance

• Stimulus materials
  • Age of the student
  • Can the student repeat back a 5-10 word sentence accurately? Or should the stimulus of single words or two word phrases be used?
  • Does the student have adequate articulation to accurately repeat the sentence? Or should a picture pointing task be used instead?
Close Condition

- Examiner and sound source are each placed three feet away from the student, forming a triangle with the sound source, student, and examiner.
Far Condition

- Sound source remains 3 feet from the student and the examiner is 12-15 feet from the student.
Test Conditions

Abbreviations used in the FLE:

• A means the stimulus is presented Auditory ONLY
• AV means the stimulus is presented AUDITORY PLUS LIPREADING(visural)
• C means at the 3 foot distance, or close
• F means at the 12 foot distance, or far
• N means with background noise
• Q means in quiet
## Test Conditions Table

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Case Study 1

Reflection Questions:
• What is the student’s best listening condition?
• Is a remote microphone system recommended/needed?

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Case Study 1 Recommendations

Possible Recommendations:

- If there are no concerns about this student's classroom performance and the child does not express any difficulty, no RM/HAT may be needed.
- If there are academic concerns and/or the child complains or exhibits symptoms of fatigue, a trial of RM/HAT can be conducted to see if there is a change in performance in the classroom setting.

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Case Study 2

Reflection Questions:

• Why might three of the auditory plus visual conditions not be tested?
  • What additional information would that have given you?

• What can you conclude from the results you have?

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Case Study 2 Recommendations

Possible Recommendations:

- A remote microphone system may be helpful to this student as they show difficulty in noisy environments when lip reading is not available to them.

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Case Study 3

Reflection questions:

• What does the difference between with and without visuals tell you about the student’s access to spoken language?

• What is your interpretation of how well this child can access a general hearing classroom without a remote microphone? With a remote microphone?

• What additional supports or services might this child require in addition to a remote microphone?

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Case Study 3 Recommendations

Possible Recommendations:

• The IEP team needs to consider how to decrease the barriers to this child's access. This may take some trial and error. Some possibilities are:
  • Visual language supports
  • Pre-teaching and re-teaching of content
  • Use of small group instruction
  • Use of captioning
  • Small group work moved to a quiet environment
  • Professional development for the educators

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Thank You
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