

## **Societal Linguistic Background**

Sonya Flores was born February 7, 1995, in Mexico. Her ethnic group is Hispanic, and her linguistic group is Spanish. Sonya is nine years old but only in second grade because she was held back a year in kindergarten to help her to become more fluent in English. Sonya has a dark complexion, brown eyes, and dark brown hair. She seems to be very intelligent, outgoing, and well-behaved. Sonya's social life is limited at school, but she plays on the community soccer team and is part of the youth group at her church.

Although there are a variety of Indian dialects used in Mexico, Spanish is the primary language that is spoken there. Both of Sonya's parents were also born in Mexico, and they decided to move to Florida when Sonya was two years old. The Flores family was having financial difficulties while in Mexico and moved to America to seek a better life. Sonya has two younger siblings that were born in Florida: a sister, age seven, and a brother, age five. The only language that is spoken at home is Spanish, because the father only speaks minimal English. The mother speaks enough English to function at a survival level, as in being able to buy items at the market, etc. The children are all in the ESOL program at school, and Sonya is the most fluent in English.

Sonya's father is a migrant worker and leaves Florida during the summer to work in Washington State. This causes some emotional trouble for the family, but her father feels that this is the best choice economically. Sonya's grades and behavior are known to decline when her father is away. Sonya's mother also works full time as a cashier. Since all the Flores' children are in school during the day, Sonya's mother works in a market near their home. When she works late, a neighbor watches the children until she comes home. With both parents working, the family can afford the necessities (food, water, electricity, air conditioning/heat).

The community the Flores' family resides in consists primarily of Hispanics. The community is of low SES, and many of the residents walk or take buses to work. It is a close community and the residents help each other with child care and other needs. The elementary, middle, and high schools are all within walking distance, and this is how many of the children get to and from school.

Resources pertaining to Mexico:

<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~rjsalvad/scmfaq/scmfaq/scmfaq.html>

<http://www.globalvolunteers.org/lmain/mexico/mexicoculture.htm>

### Linguistic Development

	Comprehension	Fluency	Vocabulary	Pronunciation	Grammar
<b>Date of Arrival</b>	none	none	none	none	none
<b>Kindergarten</b>	Doesn't understand simple conversation	Speech is halting & fragmented	Extreme vocab limitations	severe pronunciation problems	Speech virtually unintelligible
<b>Kindergarten 2<sup>nd</sup> year</b>	Comprehends some "social & school conversation"	Hesitant speech. usually remains silent	Very limited vocab, difficult to comprehend	Repeats herself frequently to be understood	Minimal of knowledge of convections

<b>First Grade</b>	Understands most of what is said with repetitions	Disrupted speech due to search for correct manner of expression	Somewhat limited vocab due to inadequate vocab	Pronunciation problems sometimes lead to misunderstanding	Frequent errors of grammar and word order
<b>Second Grade</b>	Understands nearly everything at normal speech, some repetition may be necessary	Speech is generally fluent, some search for correct manner of expression	Occasionally uses inappropriate terms and rephrases ideas	Intelligible, but definite accent and occasional inappropriate patterns	Occasional word order errors that do not obscure meaning

Sonya moved to America at the age of two and, therefore, she received no formal schooling in Mexico. Sonya spoke Spanish at her appropriate age level but did not receive any English language learning until she began kindergarten at age five. Sonya was placed in the ESOL program at her school, where she was only allowed to use English. Since Sonya had not previously been exposed to English and had not learned to read in her home language, it seemed harder for her to learn English so she spent two years in this program.

Although Sonya is fluent in Spanish, she does not read Spanish and reads English at a first grade level. Both parents read some Spanish, and her mother reads minimal English, while her father reads no English. Any books that are in the home belong to the children and were given to them by others outside the home.

### **ORAL INTERVIEW**

Amanda: Alright. For our first, um, assessment, we used a worksheet and we had our student write about her favorite animal and here she's going to tell us a little bit about it. Will you read to us what you wrote there?

Sonya: A kangaroo is funny. I will like to be a kangaroo because it carries a baby in its pouch.

Amanda: Great! And she drew a picture of it and it looks just beautiful! Okay, now we're going to have her read *Hop on Pop* by Dr. Seuss. Okay, just read as much as you can of it.

Sonya: Pup, Pup. Pup in Cup. Pup, cup. Cup in pup. Mouse, house, mouse on house. Mouse, house mouse, house on mouse. All tall, we all are tall. All small, we all are small. All ball, we all play ball. All wall, we all, we, up on a wall. All fall, fall up, fall up the wall. They play, we play all day. Night fight, we fight all night. He me, he is after me. Him, Jim. Jim is after him. See bee, see a bee, see be three now now we see three. Three trees, three fish in in a tree. Fish in a tree, how can that be? Red, red. They call me red. Bed, bed, I am in bed.

Amanda: Okay. (tape stops) Okay now we're going to have you read another book. It may be a little bit harder so just do the best that you can. It's called *A Dragon in a Wagon*. Go ahead.

Sonya: Maggie opened a world (pause) window?

Amanda: (prompting) Guess...good job.

Sonya: Guess what she sees? A dragon in a wagon. She says the dragon lets go up lets go for a ride. Good (pause)

Stephanie: (prompting) Idea...

Sonya: Good idea said Megan. She hops inside the the wagon does not go far so Megan and the dragon hop into a car. The car will not go so so they (pause) hop on a bus with horse and a fat hippopotamus. (laughs) The bus will not go so they jumped into a boat with a dog, three cats, and a billy goat. The boat will not row so they hop on a sled with a moose (pause)

Amanda: (prompting) who...

Sonya: who was by funny (pause) mice.

Stephanie: Good.

Sonya: on his head. The sled will not go so they...

Amanda: Good job.

## **PROBLEM SCENARIO**

### **Problem:**

Sonya's father is a migrant worker and leaves for the months of June thru October. Her grades and behavior are known to decline while her father is absent from the home in these months. Her behavior goes from being attentive and quiet to unruly and out of control during

these months as well.

### **Solutions of the Stakeholders:**

*The Parents of the LEP Child-* Sonya's mother does not inform her father of the behavior problems she encounters at home because she does not want Sonya to be harshly punished.

*The School Principal-* She has sent a translated letter home to Sonya's mother stating her concerns about Sonya's behavior while her father is absent from the home. The principal has suggested that Sonya visit the school counselor two days per week for 30 minute sessions.

*The School Counselor-* She is cognizant of the reasons for Sonya's misbehavior while her father is absent. Therefore, the counselor has suggested that the mother join a session while a translator is present in hopes of resolving the behavioral issues. She strongly recommends that the father is informed of Sonya's misbehavior because she feels that the father can be of assistance.

*The Classroom Teacher-* He spends more one on one time working with Sonya. However, he does not feel like giving her opportunities for extra credit is fair to the other students.

*The ESOL Teacher-* She is bilingual and is involved in the counseling sessions. She also sends home weekly reports to Sonya's mother translated in Spanish. She suggests that the classroom teacher give Sonya some opportunities for extra credit.

*Sonya's Perspective of Her Misbehavior:* Sonya is very defensive when confronted with her misbehavior and does not believe that she is doing anything wrong. She also is not receptive to counseling.

### **Reflective/Discussion Questions:**

- Is it financially necessary for Sonya's father to leave for such a long period of time?
- Do Sonya and her father have a close relationship?

- Does Sonya's father stay in contact with the family while he is away?
- Does Sonya act out at home?

**Bloom's Taxonomy Questions:**

*Knowledge:* When does Sonya misbehave?

*Comprehension:* What is the primary cause of Sonya's misbehavior?

*Application:* How is Sonya's situation different from other students in her class?

*Analysis:* Why does Sonya act out in class?

*Synthesis:* What are some solutions for Sonya's misbehavior issues?

*Evaluation:* What criteria should be used to assess Sonya's well-being?