



“Communication Differences Among Asian-American Speakers.”

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Bilingualism and multiculturalism are challenges in the classroom. The line between a “language difference” and a “language disorder” is often very thin. The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA) holds to a Code of Ethics that a Speech-Language Specialist/Pathologist must be able to distinguish a language disorder from a language difference.

A language difference results from a regional, cultural or ethnic dialect of language. A difference has its own set of rules and usually has distinguishing characteristics.

The classroom teacher may notice the following:

- CHINESE:**
- final consonant deletion “bow” for “boat”
 - vowel confusion
 - omission of plural markers, tense markers
- KOREAN:**
- final consonant deletion of /s/, /sh/, /ch/, /th/, /j/
 - substitution errors: b/v, p/v, s/sh, s/z and j/th
 - /r/ and /l/ may be used interchangeably (ex. “light/right” sound the same)
 - monotonous pitch
 - difficulty with he/she and gender
- JAPANESE:**
- substitution errors: r/l, s/th, z/th, j/th, b/v, h/f
 - addition of vowels to ends of words (ex. “booka” for book)
 - noun/verb reversal (“The boy to store walk.”)
 - absence of plurals

These differences do not make a student eligible for speech and language services. It is the belief of ASHA that these articulation and language errors will decrease as the student learns standard English in the classroom. Those who seek accent reduction are often referred to a private speech therapy clinic.

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