

Bianca and skill

[Health & Medicine](#), [Disability](#)



Although after three months of total immersion of a language, most people should show significant progress, Bianca's lack of progress does not necessarily mean she has a learning disability. There are a number of possible causes for her lack of progress and a learning disability is only one of them. In Bianca's specific case, her history should be considered. She was orphaned due to a tragic event and traumatized.

This life event at the age of five, the time when reading often begins, could significantly affect her rate of developing reading skills without factoring in the second language. An additional social factor that could affect Bianca's language and reading acquisition skills could be her recent adoption and move to a new country and environment. Anyone would have some difficulty adjusting to a new family, home, culture and language at the same time.

It would undoubtedly be more difficult for a traumatized eight-year-old to adapt to and thrive in a short amount of time. The adoptive parents have legitimate concerns about how extensive testing for a specific learning disability during her adjustment to her new life could cause additional trauma. If, however, Bianca does have a learning disability, it would be important to find this out and treat her accordingly. The teacher could do some basic observations in order to get an idea about possible learning disabilities.

It would be important to observe her development in other areas such as motor, social, and cognitive. If she is delayed in other developmental areas, the problem could easily be due to her trauma and adjustment. In spite of the school total immersion policy, a few age-level books should be acquired for her in her native language. By listening to her read in her native

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language a teacher could determine if she struggled in the language she understood as well as she did in English.

The teacher could recognize a struggling reader even if she is not familiar with the language. If Bianca reads well in her native language the problem is probably not a learning disability, and the best assistance in her development would be time and attention dedicated to her. If Bianca is discovered to have significant difficulty in her native language, it would warrant the need for additional testing to determine if the problems are due to a learning disability and if a way can be found to help her overcome it.

If she does have an actual learning disability, the earlier intervention can be found, the better her chances of effectively developing new language and reading skills. Bianca is a unique child, who should not be caught up in a standard school policy of total immersion. She might require some special attention due to her traumatic past and extensive changes. Some of this special attention could involve some translation and allowing her to do some of her work in her native language in order to help her catch up to her grade level.