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BESA Review

Thank you for asking for my review of the *Bilingual English Spanish Assessment* (BESA). I am a speech language pathologist, and also a researcher that focuses on bilingualism. I've followed the development of the BESA for a long time! I've waited anxiously for its release, because I recognize how important and timely it is to have a diagnostic tool specifically developed for bilingual people living in the United States. Most of the standardized language tests used to identify communication disorders are normed on monolingual speakers, so they are not as sensitive to the unique profiles and development of people that are bilingual. The BESA is a more reliable tool to diagnose individuals who are bilingual. This assessment was developed by researchers who are leading the way in the field of bilingualism, by identifying and treatment individuals with communication disorders from diverse backgrounds. Unlike most commercially available Spanish assessments, the BESA is not a direct English translation, but rather, a tool specifically designed for Spanish-English bilinguals.

The BESA uses evidenced-based approaches to diagnosing people who are bilingual. These include the use of conceptual scoring, home language questionnaires, and best language scores. I like that one can obtain a detailed description of an individuals' language input and output at home and at school. This helps create a better snapshot of a person's language use.

I like that the easel is very sturdy and allows for easy administration, and that the test is easy to score. The one downside of the BESA is that it can take a long time to administer; therefore, it is beneficial to break up the assessment into smaller sessions. I also believe that future iterations of the BESA will benefit from more updated pictures. Despite the test's administration time and current images, I highly recommend the BESA to any speech language pathologist who works with bilingual populations. The BESA is the one assessment that I trust to help me make better clinical decisions regarding my bilingual clients' presence of a communication disorder. I believe the BESA represents the growing demand for tools that more precisely identify communication disorders in diverse populations. I am exultant to know the BESA is currently available!

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