

Introduction

School psychologists are well-positioned to support inclusion through assessment, consultation, and collaborative planning.¹ Yet current service delivery remains largely individualized, with assessment practices that may not consistently align with classroom contexts.¹⁻³ Psychoeducational assessment reports serve as a key mechanism for communicating student needs;⁴ however, educators often describe the recommendations within these reports as overly technical, generically phrased, and misaligned with classroom instruction.⁵

Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a framework that guides the proactive design of flexible instruction to reduce barriers and account for learner variability.^{6,7} Although widely referenced in education, its application to psychoeducational reporting remains underexplored.

Exploring alignment with UDL provides a framework for examining how psychoeducational assessment recommendations reflect inclusive design principles.

Research Questions:

- (1) To what extent do psychoeducational recommendations align with UDL principles of Multiple Means of Engagement, Representation, and Action and Expression?
- (2) How are recommendations distributed across levels of application (i.e., student-specific, group-based, or classroom-wide)?
- (3) What patterns emerge in the structure and framing of recommendations?

Methods

Design: Qualitative content analysis of psychoeducational recommendations using deductive and inductive coding.

Sample: Purposive sample of 20 de-identified psychoeducational assessment reports from the Mary J. Wright Child and Youth Development Clinic, completed between 2018 and 2025.

- **Age Range:** 5 to 12 years old ($M = 9.1$).
- **Diagnostic Categories Represented:** LD/SLD, ADHD, ID, ASD, GAD; one case without a formal diagnosis.

Analytic Procedure:

Unit of Analysis: Individual recommendations ($N = 754$).

- (1) Recommendations were deductively coded using UDL guidelines v3.0⁶ to examine alignment across principle checkpoints.
- (2) Recommendations were deductively coded for level of application.
- (3) An inductive content analysis was conducted to identify patterns in recommendation structure and framing.

Analyses were conducted in NVivo v15.0.

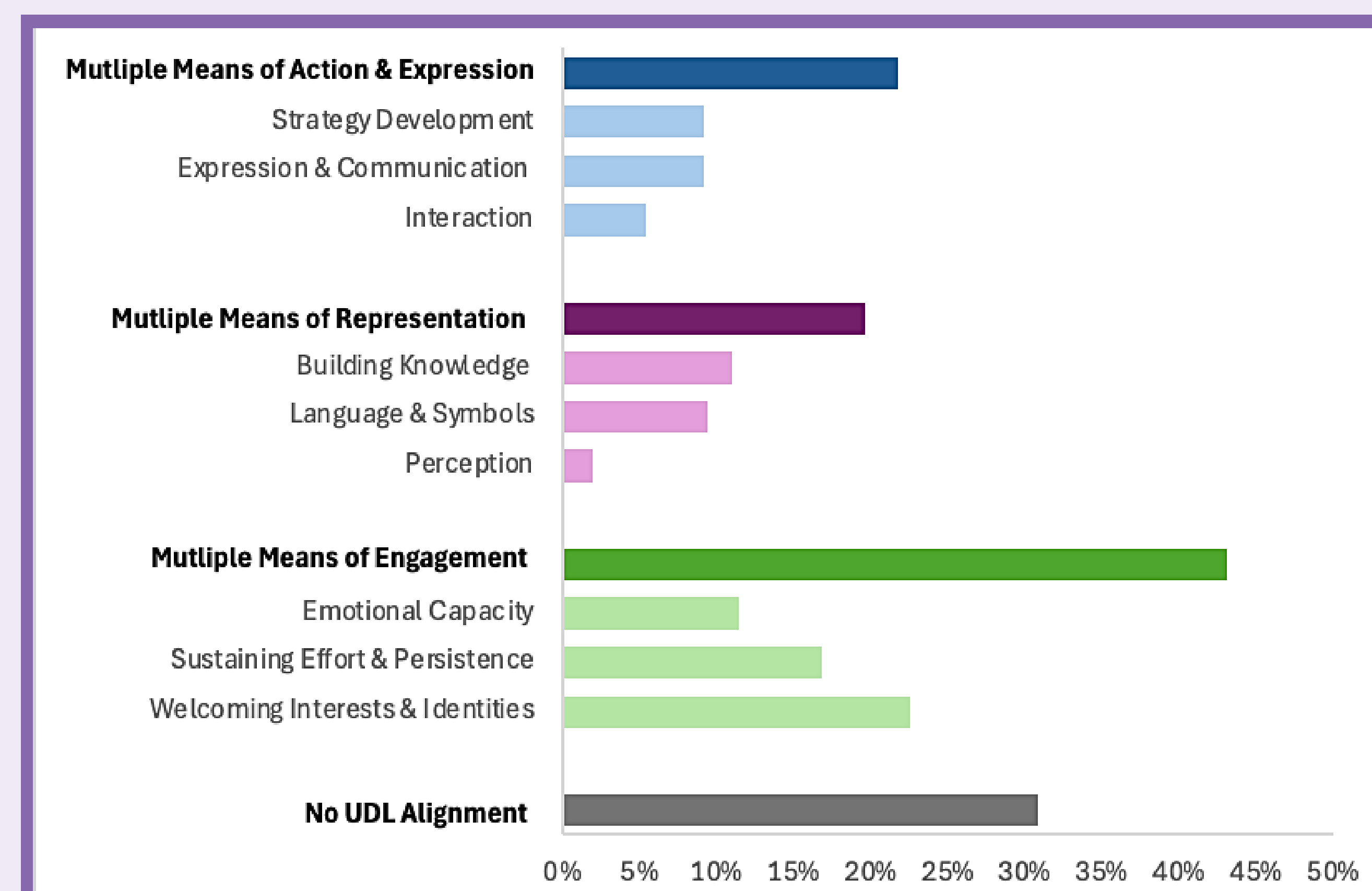
Reliability: Two coders independently coded an initial subset of recommendations ($n = 114$); inter-rater reliability was assessed using Cohen's κ , calculated in SPSS v30.0; discrepancies were resolved through consensus discussion.

Results

Question 1:

- Approximately 69% of recommendations demonstrated alignment with at least one UDL checkpoint, while 31% showed no explicit alignment.
- Alignment was most frequently observed within the Engagement principle, with less frequent alignment in Representation and Action & Expression.

Figure 1. Alignment of Recommendations to the UDL v3.0⁶ Guidelines



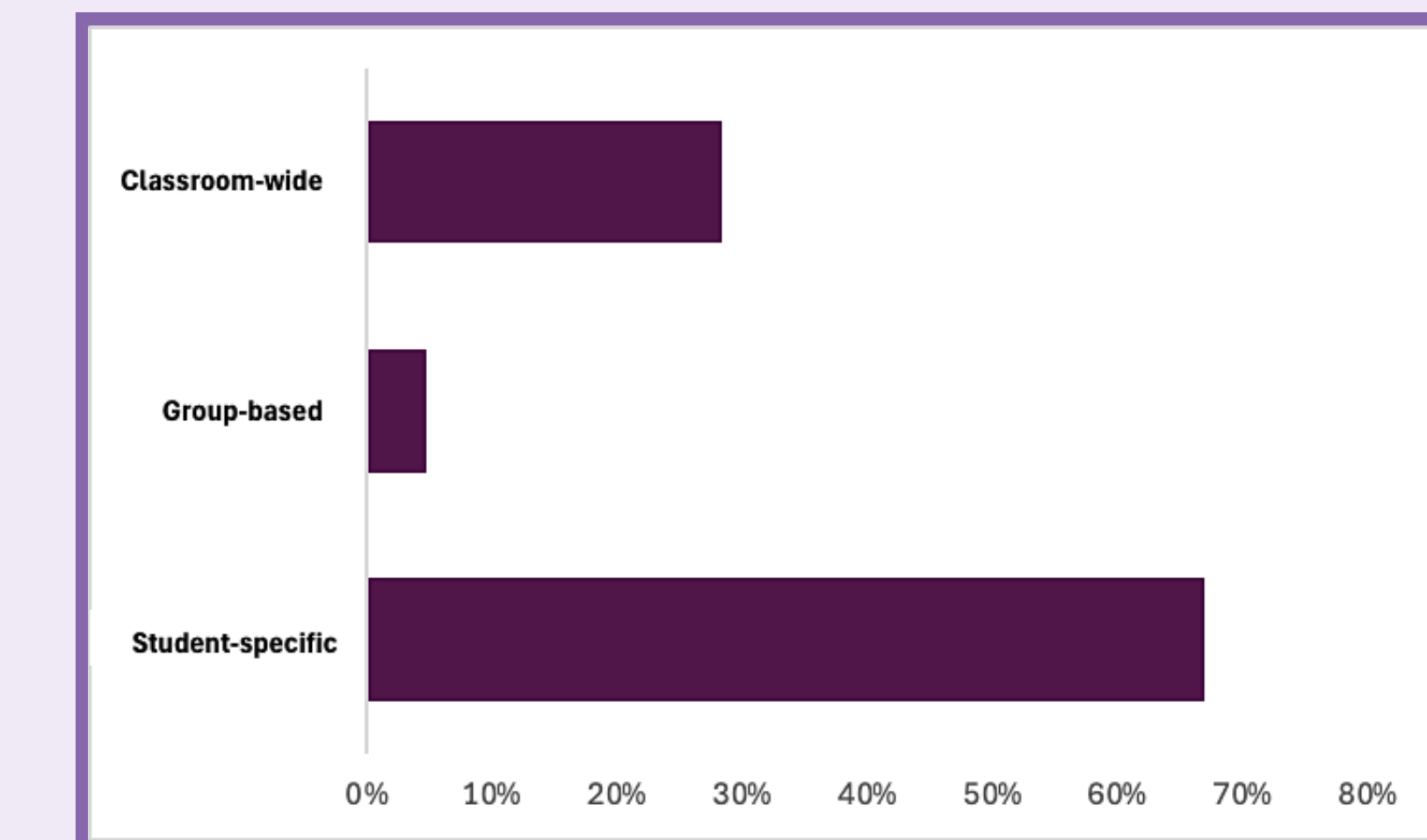
Note. Darker bars represent UDL principles; lighter bars represent guidelines within each principle. Individual recommendations may be reflected in more than one guideline. Scan the QR code for examples.

Reliability: $\kappa = .67$, $p < .001$, indicating substantial agreement.

Question 2:

- Recommendations were most frequently categorized as student-specific, with fewer identified as classroom-wide, and minimal representation of group-based strategies.

Figure 2. Level of Application of Recommendations



Reliability: $\kappa = .72$, $p < .001$, indicating substantial agreement.

Question 3:

- Recommendations were frequently justified by reference to individual learner characteristics.
- Responsibility for implementation was primarily adult-directed.
- Recommendations were predominantly directive in tone.
- Moderate levels of implementation detail were most common.
- Framing frequently emphasized immediate and ongoing supports.
- Students were most commonly positioned in terms of identified needs.

Discussion

Key Findings: (1) The majority of recommendations aligned with a UDL checkpoint, most frequently within Multiple Means of Engagement; (2) recommendations were primarily student-specific; (3) framing emphasized adult-directed implementation, needs-based positioning, and immediate supports.

Implications: Findings suggest that while inclusive principles were evident, recommendations were primarily individualized in orientation, which may influence their application within broader classroom-level inclusive practice.

Limitations: (1) Sample drawn from a single university-based psychology clinic; (2) findings reflect written recommendations rather than classroom enactment; (3) UDL alignment required some interpretive judgment in the application of the framework.

Future Directions: Explore models for integrating UDL into psychoeducational recommendation practices.

References and
Supporting
Materials

