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|             | Bears spend winters  
|             | In their dreams |
Dual-Language Learners:
An Emerging Topic of Research that All Educators Should Watch

Article Link: https://www.childcareexchange.com/article/dual-language-learners-an-emerging-topic-of-research-that-all-educators-should-watch/5024355/

Throughout my career, I have repeatedly witnessed how societal shifts and new research impact education. As the needs of the large-scale population change and new information becomes available to us, we—as educators—must adapt our teaching methods and approaches to ensure we fully prepare the next generation.

An important concept in today’s world is dual-language learning. Dual-language learners are children who are able to adopt two or more languages simultaneously, successfully learning a second language while still developing their first.

According to the Census Bureau, the number of American residents who speak a language other than English in their home reached an all-time high of 61.8 million in 2013. As that number continues to increase, so does the frequency of dual-language learning, emerging as a key focus area for research and presenting new challenges and opportunities for early education professionals.

How Research Reinforces the Importance of Dual-Language Learning

Helping children develop language and communication skills is one of the primary goals of early education because it provides the foundation for all other learning. As a result, the increase of bilingualism in households is raising questions about the capability of young children to learn multiple languages simultaneously and the overall effect on a child’s language development.

A report by the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences at the University of Washington states that infants are not only proficient at learning and developing two languages at the same time, but that infancy and early childhood are the most opportune times to cultivate bilingualism.

According to the research conducted by I-LABS, a child’s linguistic journey begins in the womb. It asserts that within a few hours of being born, babies are able to recognize their mother’s language and can differentiate it from unfamiliar, foreign sounds. Throughout their first six months, they are capable of distinguishing words across all languages, but by 12 months, their ability to distinguish native sounds progresses while their ability to discern foreign sounds declines.

Through an advanced, non invasive neuroimaging and brain recording study (conducted in 2016), researchers at I-LABS were able to study the brains of infants to identify differences in monolingual and bilingual development. By measuring brain responses to language sounds in 11-month-olds, scientists deduced that a baby’s brain reflects his language experience and is especially proficient at processing sounds that are present in his environment. As a result, infants who are exposed to multiple languages within their first year are more likely to become proficient in more than one language.

This research not only illustrates that bilingualism begins much earlier than expected, but also suggests that to develop native fluency, a child must be exposed to a language within the first year of life.
In addition to helping children achieve bilingual fluency, exposing them to multiple languages early in life bolsters their development and helps them learn skills that can contribute to long-term success. An information sheet for early education providers produced by the U.S. Department of Education explains the many benefits associated with dual-language learning:

Cognitive development: The brains of dual-language learners are agile and active. Because they are constantly switching between two language systems, dual-language learners must vigilantly manage their attention and exercise their brains, which enhances their mental capacity and strengthens their ability to switch between brain functions, according to the research conducted by I-LABS. As a result, it is often easier for them to develop strong executive function skills—such as critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, self-control, adaptability and working memory as well as cognitive flexibility, which helps with planning and other tasks. Because of their advanced development of these skills, dual-language learners often more easily grasp math concepts and solve word problems; exercise logic; demonstrate superior thinking skills; hold focus, remember things and make decisions; and comprehend the study of language. These skills are evident at a young age and continue to mature into adulthood.

Social-emotional development: While there is not yet much research on the effects of bilingualism on social-emotional development, there is evidence that dual-language learning positively impacts children’s relationships. Given the increasing diversity of our society, bilingualism allows children to nurture new friendships and strong relationships with peers using their secondary language, as described by the information sheet. Bilingualism also helps children cultivate strong bonds with their family, community and culture. These ties serve as a critical foundation for a child’s identity and character development.

Accelerated learning: As a result of dual-language learners reading and thinking in multiple languages, they have trained their brains to think abstractly and problem solve, which makes them more flexible learners. Research from the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America (http://www.pnas.org/content/106/16/6556) explains that bilingual children as young as seven months old demonstrate a stronger ability to focus and learn language patterns than monolingual children. Additionally, I-LABS research suggests children between the ages of two and three have an easier time learning alternative names of actions or objects for which they already know the name (e.g., firefly and lightning bug). At a young age, dual-language learners who learn to read in their native language can also use that existing knowledge of reading to help them more easily learn to read in a second language.

Long-term success: Strong executive function skills, social-emotional development and accelerated learning are all essential for children to thrive and contribute to the long-term academic and career success that results from dual-language learning. Given today’s global and connected society—and the fact that one-half to two-thirds of adults around the world are multilingual—businesses often hire prospects who can speak more than one language, according to the National Clearing House for Bilingual Education. Overall, multilingual people tend to have more advanced learning experiences, career options, travel opportunities and better salaries.
The Role of Educators in:
Dual-Language Learning

A separate study conducted by I-LABS at the University of Washington in 2016 (http://ilabs.uw.edu/Bilingual_Language_Learning_in_Children.pdf) found that approximately 25 percent of children in the U.S. hear a language other than English at home. As this number continues to increase, the responsibility of early educators to foster and support dual-language learning and diversity must keep pace.

Cultivating diversity in U.S. schools has been an ongoing and growing challenge for educators over the past decade. Education professionals should set the standard for respecting others by emphasizing good character as much as traditional academic lessons. At Primrose Schools, we model and teach lessons of respect, kindness and compassion as part of our Balanced Learning® approach to nurture character development in children, starting when they are infants.

Here are a few ways to support dual-language learning in early education and child care environments:

Establish respect in the classroom. Teachers are responsible for setting the tone of their classrooms and establishing an inclusive culture from the very beginning. This is vital to helping dual-language learners flourish! Educators should not show any personal bias or allow any bias from students. Everyone in the classroom must respect the home languages and cultures of bilingual students. If a teacher models acceptance and respect in the classroom, students will likely mimic this attitude and treatment toward others. Educators should also be mindful of children’s primary languages and cultures as they learn English, making sure to not disregard the child’s native tongue. Finally, it is important to be cognizant of the mental fatigue that can accompany dual-language learning, so teachers should be prepared to adjust their approach as needed.

Use classroom materials as visual aids. Using classroom materials is not only an effective tactic to engage students, but a great way to encourage diversity and help students relate to the content. Including classroom materials, such as books, toys, dolls and music that represent different ethnicities and cultures is an easy way to expose children to different cultures and foster an appreciation for them. Additionally, this tactic will help all children in the class to relate to the content while also establishing dual-language learning as the norm in the classroom.

Communicate through keywords. To overcome language barriers, teachers can collaborate with families to understand their culture and learn keywords and phrases in their native language to use when speaking to the child. This will help the child relate to the teacher while also enabling the teacher to better meet the child’s needs. Some helpful keywords might include “eat,” “more,” “drink,” “happy,” “sad,” “hungry” and “milk.” Sign language is also a helpful tool; Primrose Schools teaches sign language to young children who cannot yet talk so they can communicate. Teaching a few keywords in sign language can help young dual-language learners communicate and avoid frustration.
The Role of Educators in: Dual-Language Learning

Make it personal. Research tells us that students comprehend and retain information better when they are able to personally connect with the material. Involving children’s families and incorporating their culture into lessons is a great way to personalize information for dual-language learners. Encourage all students to bring in photos of their family and talk to them about how people may look different but have much more in common. To make the lesson language-specific, acknowledge that while we may use different words or say them differently, they mean the same thing. To make a lesson really memorable, invite parents into the classroom to teach the children some key words in their home language and draw connections between different cultures and languages to show similarities. This can promote respect between the teacher and parent—and also alleviate some of the pressure on the teacher.

Develop parent-provider partnerships. In order for children to thrive, they must feel supported by their families, caregivers and educators. To achieve this, teachers and families should work together to create learning and personal goals for the child. For bilingual students especially, this collaboration is important because research has shown that the benefits of dual-language learning are far greater for children when there is balance. During the early, formative years, it is essential that all of the people in a child’s life work to foster language skills and build a strong foundation for continued dual-language learning in elementary school and for success later in life.

As society continues to embrace and encourage diversity and the world grows more connected through technology, dual-language learning is becoming a prevalent area of focus and discussion in the early education field. As the long-term advantages of dual-language learning continue to come to the forefront, early learning educators should continue to monitor this trend and related research in the years to come.

Author: Dr. Gloria Julius serves as vice president of early childhood education for Primrose Schools and has more than 40 years of education experience. She has a genuine passion for leading teams of teachers, staff, parents and students to help create high-quality educational experiences.

References
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We have a great Facebook page that includes a comprehensive photo gallery of the library. We try very hard to keep the photo album updated and add in the new items when we get them, but if you don’t see something on there, please just call and ask! https://www.facebook.com/pg/EYCKamloopsCCRR/photos/?tab=album&album_id=1153406501388604

**BRAIN STORY CERTIFICATION** is a free, in-depth course for anyone who wants to learn more about the science of brain development.

The Alberta Family Wellness Initiative (AFWI) has developed an online course to make Brain Story science available to professionals and the public. Brain Story Certification is designed for those seeking a deeper understanding of brain development and its consequences for lifelong health. The course is also designed for professionals seeking certification in a wide range of fields.

- Videos of more than 30 leading experts in neurobiology and mental health
- Certification in Brain Story science
- 19 modules self-paced

*Brain Story Certification is open to anyone at no cost to the learner.*

*For More Information go to:*

https://www.albertafamilywellness.org/training
**Affordable Child Care** for All Plan Making affordable, high-quality early learning and child care (ELCC) available to all families will grow the economy, promote gender equality, increase women’s labour force participation and enhance children’s well-being. The federal government must play a leadership role to ensure that all children in Canada, regardless of where they live, their ability, family circumstances or culture have access to affordable high-quality child care. Canada needs a plan—a road map—to affordable child care for all. https://timeforchildcare.ca/the-affordable-child-care-for-all-plan/ Taken from Northshore CCRR

**Child Care Operating Funding** Providers can now apply for CCOF, CCFRI and the ECE-WE all in one form that pre-populates some information to save time. Providers can now submit Enrolment Reports beginning the 15th of the month prior, which ensures payments are received before the first of the month following, for base CCOF, CCFRI and the Affordable Child Care Benefit. Visit the CCOF website for more information, including updated FAQs for other funding initiatives like CCFRI and the ECE-WE. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/.../running.../child-care-operating-funding

**B.C. Expands bursary program to attract early childhood educators** British Columbia is expanding the number of bursaries offered to early childhood educators as it further commits to the goal of creating a universal, province wide child-care system. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/amp/canada/british-columbia/article-bc-expands-bursary-program-to-attract-earlychildhood-educators/?

**ECE Education Support Fund** The program supports two bursaries: 1) The Early Childhood Education (ECE) Student Bursary Program; 2) The new ECE Workforce Development Bursary Fund Program

**THE FALL 2019 BURSARY SESSION IS NOW OPEN! VISIT BURSARY.ECEBC.CA TO BEGIN YOUR APPLICATION PROCESS.**

The ECE Education Support Fund is open to all BC ECE students enrolled in the below programs:

- ECE Basic certificate
- ECE Post - Basic certificates (Infant & Toddler and/or Special Needs)
- ECE Diploma
- ECE Bachelor

**Early Years Professional Development Portal:** Sponsored by the BC Provincial Office for the Early Years in collaboration with BC campus. A great website for the training opportunities in British Columbia https://earlyyearsbc.ca/
A Haunted House
Tune of Old McDonald

Old Ghost had a Haunted House,
Halloweeny-O. (Tune old McDonald had a farm)
Linda Brown

And in this house he had some chains,
Halloweeny-O
With a clang-clang here
And a clang-clang there,
Here a clang, there a clang,
Everywhere a clang-clang.
Old Ghost had a Haunted House,
Halloweeny-O
Old Ghost had a Haunted House,
Halloweeny-O.

And in this house the stairs would creak,
Halloweeny-O
With a creak-creak here
And a creak-creak there,
(Repeat clang sounds)
Old Ghost had a Haunted House,
Halloweeny-O
Old Ghost had a Haunted House,
Halloweeny-O.

And in this house a witch would cackle,
Halloweeny-O
With a Heh-Heh! Here, etc.
(Repeat creak and clang sounds)
Old Ghost had a Haunted House,
Halloweeny-O

Mr. Turkey Takes a Walk

Mr. Turkey took a walk one day in the very best of weather.
(walk fingers)
He met Mr. Duck along the way,
(walk fingers of the other hand)
and they both talked together.
“Gobble, gobble, gobble.”
(first hand opens and closes)
“Quack, quack, quack.”
(second hand opens and closes)
“Goodbye.”
(first hand opens and closes)
“Goodbye.”
(second hand opens and closes)
And they both walked back. (walk both hands behind back)
Craft Ideas

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Paper Bag Cave

- brown paper bag
- cotton balls
- glue
- scissors
- popsicle stick
- bear picture (I used clipart from Microsoft Word)

**Directions:**
Cut off the bottom 4 inches of the brown bag.
Cut an entrance to the cave, large enough for the bear puppet to fit through
Have your Tot place glue on the popsicle stick and attach their bear to make a puppet.
Spread glue evenly over the top of the brown bag, and glue cotton balls to the top to act as snow.

- Sing this song, and have your child pretend play.

*Time for Sleeping* (sung to the tune of *Sing a Song of Sixpence*)

Now it's time for sleeping, The bears go in their caves. Keeping warm and cozy, Time for lazy
days. When the snow is gone and the sun comes out to play, The bears will wake up from
their sleep and then go on their way.

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Monster Mobile

- Cardboard tube
- pipe cleaners
- googly eyes
- craft paint (purple, black, green and orange are perfect for Halloween)
- yarn
- scissors
- glue

Have your kids begin by painting the toilet roll tubes. Show them how to hold the tube by inserting a few fingers into it. That makes it easy for them to paint the whole tube without getting too much paint on their hands. When the paint is dry, poke a hole in either side of the cardboard roll (use a pen or a skewer), and poke the pipe cleaner right the way through to create a pair of bendy arms.
Have your child glue on a bunch of googly eyes. The more eyes, the sillier the monster.
Crafts and Activities


- Gather your materials. You will need some painters tape, plastic spiders, a prize for the end of a glow stick and if the simple version (explained below) is too easy have some other obstacles like these ghosts ready to make it a challenge.

- Start by making a web with tape on your floor. You can do a full web or if like me space is limited just do a half.

- Make an obvious start and finish. We call our finish home base.

- Add some spiders around the web and the prize (glowstick) in the center. After the first go I let my son scatter the spiders himself. TIME TO PLAY

- So the object of this web walking game is to stay on the web and pick up all the spiders then the prize (glow stick) without falling off the web. Now, this can be made very difficult by requiring tippy toes or much easier by only counting a fall onto the floor as a true fall. For us, he was out and had to start again if he took a step off the tape.

- It was not a big enough challenge, so we added ghosts! He could step over them, but if his foot touched one, he was out. Another way to make it much more of a challenge for older kids is to turn it into a timed challenge with a stop watch.

- When he did step off, I’d make a cackling witchy laugh and proclaim “You fell into the goo, ew, ew, ew!” He’d laugh and start again Spooky ... a little but definitely not scary! I think this game will be coming out every October for years to come.

You may know the song “One Elephant” This is a Halloween version that fits this activity perfectly. In my class, I used to sing this with me starting at one side of the circle time rug calling each child over. My assistant teacher would be last. I have had so many requests for songs; I couldn’t ignore this perfect match of song and activity.

One little ghost went out to play upon a spider’s web one day
He had such enormous fun that he called for another little ghost to come.

Two little ghosts went out to play upon a spider’s web one day
They had such enormous fun that they called for another little ghost to come.

And so on and so on...
5 Little Bears

1. One little bear
   Wondering what to do
   Along came another
   Then there were two!

2. Two little bears
   Climbing up a tree
   Along came another
   Then there were three!

3. Three little bears
   Ate an apple core
   Along came another
   Then there were four!

4. Four little honey bears
   Found honey in a hive
   Along came another
   Then there were five!