Balanced Multilingualism

is this ever possible?

Dual Language Program

how to start your own

COLIN BAKER

INTERVIEW

A grandmother shares her top bilingual tips

Multilingual identities

Multilingual FAQs

Swedish kladdkaka

Language immersion with a Korean haemoni

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CONGRATULATIONS to our January-February 2008 WINNER: Veronica from Pennsylvania, USA
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Multilingual Living Magazine - March/April 2008 5
Ah, the coming of springtime! More sunshine, flowers and trees starting to blossom, and the sense of brand new beginnings on so many levels. This is a wonderful time to enjoy your family's language miracles along with those which are happening outdoors. Soon you will be taking more and more walks and spending more time outside. What wonderful opportunities to keep language moving along!

In this issue of Multilingual Living Magazine, we have brought you some exciting articles. We were delighted to have been contacted by Michał Paradowski, an Assistant Professor at the Institute of Applied Linguistics, University of Warsaw. We worked with him to create a shortened and condensed article (page 18) from his detailed paper on the benefits of multilingualism (you can read the full paper on our website). You will really be able to understand just how wonderful multilingualism is for everyone after reading his article!

We have sought out some of your most pressing questions about multilingualism to provide you with some easy-to-implement answers (page 26). Often it doesn't take a lot of information to learn how to add another language to our lives (or to stay on track when we are already living multilingual lives). Tips and inspiration are truly key!

Thanks to a great tip from our contributing author Madalena Cruz-Ferreira, we were able to reprint an exciting article from Bettina Ribes-Gil about multilingual emotions (page 30). She touches upon points which are sure to resonate with each of us, whether we learned our additional languages in childhood or later in life. You will certainly enjoy reading her poignant examples of our fabulously fascinating lives!

Have you ever wondered why your local school doesn’t provide a dual language program despite the fact that the community is overflowing with support? Take on Meagan Dawson’s suggestions (page 16) and start your own (or at least help your school district implement one with your informed guidance)! Often the reasons behind a lack of school language programs stem from overworked school administrators who don’t have enough time to find out what really works and what doesn’t work. Here is your chance to share your wealth of knowledge! The time is ripe for language-learning in the schools so your offer of support may really be appreciated right about now!

If you don’t already know of Colin Baker and about his fabulous book, A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide to Bilingualism, you will after you read a book review and interview by Suzanne Barron-Hauwaert, author of Language Strategies for Bilingual Families: The one parent one-language approach (page 22). As with Suzanne, it was Colin’s book (as well as Suzanne’s) which truly inspired my husband and me to raise our children in more than one language. His book is so easy to read yet is packed with researched information. It is like having your own seminar on raising bilingual children at your fingertips. Colin Baker’s interview is truly a delight. It is always a greedy pleasure to have the opportunity to learn more about the lives of those we respect and Colin Baker’s interview is no exception. Thank you Suzanne and Colin!

There is so much more included in this issue that you will simply have to find out for yourself. Thank you again for understanding our need to delay this issue. As you all know, Alice and I do this magazine purely as a volunteer effort and there are times when family issues simply have to come first. This was one of those times. Thank you everyone for your kind emails letting us know that no matter how delayed the magazine is, you will always be there supporting us!

Warm springtime wishes from Seattle and Austria!

Corey & Alice
Listen to Pueng Vongs as she shares her experiences in learning her native language, Thai, as an adult. As an adult, Pueng Vongs is relearning how to speak her native language. When she was a child, her family emigrated to the U.S. from Thailand. Isolated from other Thais in the Midwest, her parents decided that they should speak only English in their home.

Because of her parents’ limited English, Pueng Vongs says that it limited how intimate her parents could be with their children, and she’d listen to them speaking Thai in secret. As part of our series about students and teachers, she takes us to the Thai Buddhist temple where she is studying Thai.

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, USA:

We are thrilled to announce the launching of Cometa, the one and only Spanish Language Playschool in West Seattle! We will offer exciting Summer Camps in July and August and then our preschool program will start in the Fall.

Cometa is an innovative home based preschool located in the beautiful North Admiral District. Our curriculum encompasses early learning and second language acquisition in a fun and stimulating environment. It is a place for children to thrive and learn about themselves, their community and the world we live in. Children will learn Spanish through play, music, stories, baking, gardening and more! Teachers are native Spanish speakers trained in Early Childhood Education, Reflective Parenting, CPR and First Aid.

For more information please email us or visit www.cometaseattle.com

Hasta pronto!

I am sorry I don’t live in the Seattle area, I would very much like to hear your seminar.

I am a Salvadorean woman living in Washington, D.C., who raised a bilingual child on her own. My daughter is now in Hunter College in New York City pursuing a degree in Spanish. She speaks and writes Spanish perfectly well and it all started at home since she was born.

I think it would be interesting to hear from other Latino parents like me, to learn how they raised a bilingual child. I think raising bilingual children has a lot to do with culture not only language. Teaching them to love and appreciate their culture is key. Their love for their identity is the main motivator in learning another language.

Beatriz

If you ever want to come to the Geneva (Switzerland) area and run a seminar here, I’m in (and there are so many expats and mixed families here, I’m sure you’d have a full house so think about it!)

Best of luck for your seminar. If you have materials that you could email, I’d love to take a look. I love your magazine!!

Kind regards,
Emily

My name is Lauren Butler and I am the project manager for parent outreach for GEAR UP Lowell, a college access program. Our program, located in Massachusetts, serves a diverse population and I am currently seeking resources that would help parents communicate and understand their bicultural teens. I have found one workshop that has a workshop that
addresses the parenting of bicultural South East Asian teens, but am wondering if you know of any other resources or organizations etc that may address this issue. Thank you in advance for any assistance you may be able to provide me with.

Sincerely,
Lauren Butler
GEAR UP Lowell:
Associate Manager of Parent Outreach
600 Suffolk St.
First Floor, South
Lowell, MA 01854

I am a graphic designer who has created a novel concept for bi-national/cultural children and adults to show the true colors of their cultures. I would greatly appreciate if you could view some of my images and let me know what you think. My home page is: port-landgreetingcards.com/flagfaces/index.php

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,
Peter

I wanted to let you know that I recently started a little blurb in our school newsletter (I teach K-8 ELA and 8th grade Spanish at our charter) called Language Corner. My first blurb was mostly a promotional piece for your magazine! We have such a diverse range of language backgrounds here... I hope people will really take advantage of it!

Anyway, the ease of finding good information at hand helped inspire me to know I could come up with something interesting to note every other week -- thank you again for your hard work!

Take care,
Kate
Denver, Colorado

MULTILINGUAL DAY

To be multilingual doesn’t only mean that you know two or more languages. It also means that you have two or more cultures, belong in more places than one. To be multilingual does not only help the individual person but the whole society around that person. More multilingual people open more doors – doors of understanding and acceptance and it builds bridges between cultures, people and countries.

Our multilingual children are ambassadors of the world! Very seldom do these children get attention for their multilingualism and their double knowledge in language, traditions and culture. Sometimes the attention they get is negative.

There is so much positive coming out of multilingualism!

This needs to be celebrated!

We have proclaimed May 20th as the MULTILINGUAL DAY! 2008 will be the first year and then we will continue the celebration every year on May 20th.

For more info visit www.mymultilingualchild.com

If you or your organization are interested in joining us in the celebration, this could be at your local school, your home town or in some other way) send us an email to info@globemoms.com

Kindly, Michelle

We want to know what you think! Which articles do you enjoy the most? Did any impact you positively or negatively? Let us know! Email us at info@multilingualliving.com and tell us your thoughts!

Note that we reserve the right to edit your message for grammar and length if we include it in Multilingual Living Magazine.
Die besten Kinderklassiker

This beautiful collection contains the most famous and loved classical children's tales Max and Moritz, Struwwelpeter, Kleiner Häwelmann, Pinocchio and Peterchens Mondfahrt. Not only children will love the stories, but parents will feel like going back in time when they are reading these German classics. A must for every Kinderzimmer!

Wort für Wort

How do you write "Pirat"? Name the first letter in "Insel"!

This game allows children to learn German words in a fun way and several different play levels help to keep it interesting and challenging for older children. You have to place the right letter next to the picture and spell the word. The parrot on the spinning wheel will tell you how many letters you are allowed to take and you can self-correct your spelling by looking at the picture's backside.

The game contains 45 picture cards, 90 letter cards, 1 spinning wheel featuring a parrot, 4 sticker, German instructions

Mein Quiz-O-Fant

Learning is fun with this game from the popular series Wieso?Weshalb?Warum? aimed at children aged 4-7 years. 10 different topics like animals, vehicles, farm, food, dinosaur etc. can be explored and a magnetic elephant will help you find the answer if you need some help or want to confirm it. The game encourages children to discover and ask questions beyond the obvious and with its three different game levels it is attractive for older kids as well. The game contains 12 playing cards (printed on both sides), 1 magnetic elephant, 24 play chips, German instructions.
Wieso? Weshalb? Warum? Am Meer

This book is the newest of the series Wieso? Weshalb? Warum? Junior which is for children aged 2+ years. Life in, around and along the ocean is shown in different scenes and explained to the children on their level. The book helps to understand, for example, which animal is living in the ocean or in the dunes, how weather is changing the coast line and what you can do at the beach. There are many lift-a-flaps that reveal more details and are fun to find.

Felix bei den Kindern der Welt

Sophie's rabbit has been to many places and this time he visits the children from different parts of the world. The musical story CD includes 6 songs and takes you to the Sami in the North, the Tourag in the Sahara, the Maori in New Zealand, South Africa, San Francisco and Israel. Felix gets to know different cultures and shares his experiences with Sophie in his letters that he sends home.

Kinder brauchen Träume

A nice collection of 12 songs, including a picture booklet with 160 pages! Rolf Zuckowski and his friends are singing about stories that happen around the year like "Immer wieder kommt ein neuer Frühling", "Stups, der kleine Osterhase" or "In der Weihnachtstäckerei". A nice CD to listen to in the car or at home.

We offer a wide selection of popular German children books, CDs/DVDs/Software, toys, games & more products imported from Germany in our store and invite you to browse!

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Do you need a special book or other German product? Contact us and we will do our best to find it!
Did you know...

…that the first word spoken on the moon was “okay”?

… In Chinese, the words “crisis” and “opportunity” are the same?

…that “the sixth sick sheik’s sixth sheep’s sick” is said to be the toughest tongue twister in English?

…that the Chinese language does not require punctuation?

…that the name of the beloved character Pinocchio is Italian for “pine head”?

…that the longest one-syllable word in the English language is “screeched”?

… that Somalia is the only African country in which the entire population speaks the same language, Somali.

… that the language of a society changes slowly but steadily with the result that an educated person will not be able to read or understand words in his language written 500 years ago.

…that the combination “ough” can be pronounced in nine different ways? The following sentence contains them all: “A rough-coated, dough-faced, thoughtful ploughman strode through the streets of Scarborough; after falling into a slough, he coughed and hiccupped.”

…that cats have over one hundred vocal sounds, while dogs only have about ten?

Four-Leaf Clover: Celtic Lucky Charm

Greener pastures, flowers blossoming and the bursting forth of fields of clover. Ah, the joys of Springtime. But where oh where did the belief in the luck of four-leaf clovers come from? Being that only one out of every 10,000 clovers will have four leaves makes it a lucky find indeed!

The myths and symbolism of the four-leaf clover come from Celtic traditions. Not to be confused with the Shamrock (the three-leaf clover), the four-leaf clover is a symbol of “good luck,” while the three-leaf Shamrock is a mainly Irish Catholic symbol of the Holy Trinity.

According to superstition, four-leaf clovers bring good luck to their finders, especially if found accidentally. Each leaflet represents something: the first is for hope, the second is for faith, the third is for love, and the fourth is for happiness. If a lady hangs a four-leaf clover on her door, the next man to come in is her husband!

The significance goes back to the pagan period, when four-leaf clovers were Celtic charms and Celtic dominance extended across Ireland and much of Western Europe. It was the Druids (Celtic priests) who elevated four leaf clovers to the status of Celtic charms, allegedly potent against malevolent spirits. Their status as Celtic charms is the origin of the modern belief in their power to bestowed good luck.

Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four-leaf_clover
Spring into Celebration...

It is hard to ignore the changes that Spring brings, no matter where you live: the blossoming of buds on the trees and the first green sprouts pushing their way up from the soil. It is no wonder that cultures around the world celebrate this time of year! Below are some of the unique springtime celebrations which take place among different cultures around the world. Perhaps you will recognize some of these or start you very own based off of these!

**Basanth:** In Pakistan, boys celebrate the first day of spring in the Muslim calendar with exciting kite-fighting contests. After putting powdered glass on their strings, they use the strings to try to cut off each other’s kites. Whoever keeps his kite the longest wins.

**Holi:** For this Hindu spring festival, people dress in green. Children then squirt each other with water pistols filled with yellow- or red-colored liquid. They also blow colored powder on each other through bamboo pipes. Everyone gets soaked — and colorful — to celebrate spring.

**Songkran:** In Thailand, a special three-day water festival on April 13-15 marks Songkran, the Buddhists’ celebration of the new year. Parades feature huge statues of Buddha that spray water on passersby. In small villages, young people throw water at each other for fun. People also release fish into rivers as an act of kindness.

**Aboakyere:** The Effutu people of Ghana make a special offer to the god Panche Otu each spring with the deer-hunting festival. Two teams of men and boys, dressed in bright costumes, compete to be the first to bring back a live deer to present to the chief. Then they all dance together.

**Easter:** On Easter, Christians celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. People attend church and also enjoy different Easter customs. In Germany, people make “egg trees” that are decorated like Christmas trees. In Hungary, boys sprinkle girls with perfumed water — and in return, girls prepare a holiday dinner for them.

**Passover:** The highlight of this major Jewish holiday is the Passover seder. During these two special dinners, families read from a book called the Haggadah about the ancient Israelites’ exodus, or flight, from Egypt more than 3,000 years ago. As they honor their ancestors, Jews reaffirm the importance of freedom.

**May Day:** To celebrate the return of spring, children in England dance around tall poles decorated with ribbons, called maypoles. Their dancing wraps the ribbons tightly around the pole.

For an entire listing of celebrations around the world throughout the year, go to: [content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3211](content.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3211)

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**Calligraphy**

The word calligraphy comes from the Greek words κάλλος (kallos) “beauty” and γραφή (graphẽ) “writing,” and essentially means “the art of writing.” Societies around the world have their own traditions of calligraphy:

- The East Asian tradition of calligraphy originated and developed from China, specifically the ink and brush writing of Chinese characters.
- Persian calligraphy has very strict rules for graphical shape of the letters and for combination of the letters, words, and composition of the whole calligraphy piece.
- Islamic calligraphy is an aspect of Islamic art that has evolved alongside the religion of Islam and the Arabic language.
- Western calligraphic creativity stems from rigorous discipline followed by new techniques with colored, cursive and abstracted characters.

Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calligraphy](en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calligraphy)
French as Irish Mother Tongue?

A report looking at the Canadian 2001 census finds that the majority of Quebec descendents with Irish heritage list French as their mother tongue! This is primarily due to French-Irish marriages taking place during the 19th and 20th centuries. While contact between English and French Catholics was fairly uncommon in the early part of the 19th century, contact between Irish and French Catholics was common. The result being that by 1931, 15% of Quebecers with Irish descent had French as their mother tongue. In fact, “the impact of Irish-French marriages has resulted in a major transformation of the group to the point where it is the only Irish population in North America and perhaps around the planet whose majority is now of French mother tongue.” Based on the results of the 2001 census, numbers show that “some 58.4% of the population of Irish descent are of French mother tongue and on the basis of those declaring only Irish descent (single origin) the figure rises to 62.8%.” It just goes to show the influence marriage has on the language patterns of societies and cultural groups!


Forgetting Your Native Language?

Ever noticed that when you use a foreign language while visiting another country you actually start forgetting words in your own language(s)? Instead of worrying that you are slowly losing brain cells by using another language, know that it is simply your brain doing its job just as it should!

“In a study appearing in the January, 2007 issue of Psychological Science, Levy and his colleague Dr. Michael Anderson discovered that people do not forget their native language simply because of less use, but that such forgetfulness reflects active inhibition of native language words that distract us while we are speaking the new language. Therefore, this forgetfulness may actually be an adaptive strategy to better learn a second language.”

The good news is that the more fluent a person is in both languages, the less this will happen. “These findings suggest that native language inhibition plays a crucial role during the initial stages of second language learning. That is, when first learning a new language, we have to actively ignore our easily accessible native language words while struggling to express our thoughts in a novel tongue. As a speaker achieves bilingual fluency, native-language inhibition becomes less necessary, accounting for the better performances of fluent bilingual speakers in the study.” Basically, this means that the more fluent your children are in their languages, the less their brains have to push out the one language to give predominance to the other. It is amazing how our brains adapt to different situations. “Although the value of suppressing previously learned knowledge to learn new concepts may appear counterintuitive, Levy explains that ‘first-language attrition provides a striking example of how it can be adaptive to (at least temporarily) forget things one has learned.’”


Christina Aguilera: Bilingual Baby?

In January Christina Aguilera and her husband Jordan Bratman welcomed their new baby boy, Max. While pregnant last year, Christina stated that she intended to raise her child bilingually in English and Spanish. Although fluent in Spanish, she told InStyle magazine during an interview, “I definitely want my kids to know Spanish. And I’m taking my tapes on tour.” We’ll have to wait and see whether those language tapes paid off with little Max. Kudos for Christina for making the effort and we hope she will stick with it!

www.azcentral.com/ent/celeb/articles/0809aguilera-CR.html
Misdiagnosed as Language-Impaired

As if being an immigrant isn’t tough enough, immigrants are also facing the predicament of their children being incorrectly diagnosed as having a language impairment! It just so happens that the linguistic errors which English-language learners make are similar to monolingual English-speaking children with language impairments. It is an unfortunate diagnosis for both immigrants as well as the programs (often underfunded) themselves which are trying to help children with true language impairment.

“In studying 24 children aged four to seven who have been learning English as a second language for an average of 9.5 months, Dr. Paradis discovered that their accuracy rates and error patterns were similar to those reported in monolingual children who had been diagnosed with speech language impairment. The children were tested in their usage of verbs, prepositions and determiner words like ‘a’ and ‘the’. ... This overlap in linguistic characteristics between English second language children and language-impaired children is an issue for many countries: Canada, the U.S.A., the United Kingdom and Australia.”

Although English-language learners may receive useful language support from such special programs, it is not necessarily the best way to address their situation. “… While it may appear beneficial to have immigrant children enrolled for focused linguistic attention by receiving therapy services, the youngsters may suffer stigmatization, Paradis said. ‘Their parents may believe there is something wrong with the child. And receiving special education services can colour a child’s education future and self-esteem.’”

The solution? “The method of language testing for immigrant children must be changed, Dr. Paradis added. ‘The use of English standardized tests with non-native English-speakers is not a good practice. You can’t uncritically use tests developed for native speakers with kids who have been exposed to English for just one year.’” This seems an obvious solution but getting schools and the educational establishment to listen and change their process is another story. If you are an immigrant to a country and your multilingual child has been diagnosed as having a language impairment, make sure to inform yourself as much as possible! www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/08/050825071404.htm

Childhood Apraxia of Speech Rising

Childhood apraxia of speech is a motor speech disorder in which children have difficulty saying basic sounds and words. Recently there has been an increase in this diagnosis and parents and pediatricians are being urged to be more aware of this condition.

“While there is little national data available representing the number of children with apraxia of speech, speech therapists at Nationwide Children’s estimate as many as one to 10 children out of every 1,000 kids may have the disorder. Children with apraxia of speech know what they want to say, but their brains have difficulty coordinating the muscle movements of the lips, jaw and tongue necessary to say those words. Often, these kids speak in only vowel sounds or chunks of words and sentences are missing. ‘This is often very frustrating for the child, who desperately wants to be understood and can’t understand why he or she is unable to communicate,’ said Christina Doelling, a speech pathologist at Nationwide Children’s Hospital. ‘Many times, kids with speech problems will act out, become aggressive or exhibit other behavioral problems.’ Therapists say the earlier the condition is diagnosed and intervention begins, the greater the opportunity for significant improvement in speech and communication.”

For parents raising children in more than one language, it is important to remember that raising your child in multiple languages does not directly cause or aggravate this condition. Key is finding a speech pathologist who can provide knowledgeable support based on your child’s multiple language needs. (For encouragement, read one mom’s account of her bilingual son’s life with dyspraxia (a physical disorder which may also impact language development) in the May-June 2007 issue of Multilingual Living Magazine: www.biculturalfamily.org/backissues.html.) Source: www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/10/071029133114.htm
Building a Dual Language Program in Your District

A step-by-step guide to getting started

By Meagan Dawson, M. Ed.

In first grade, Kiara and Lupita are bilingual buddies. Kiara, an English expert, and Lupita, a Spanish expert, are discussing, in Spanish, what a plant needs in order to grow. Lupita is showing Kiara how “la tierra” goes into “el tiesto” and how “las semillas” are buried under “la tierra.” With a little “agua” and “sol,” and a few days of patient waiting, the little plants will begin to poke out of the soil.

This Dual Language model, which starts in kindergarten or even pre-K, is a growing trend in over 300 programs across the United States (www.cal.org/twi). Many families have moved to specific districts because they are seeking a Dual Language school for their children. But what if your roots are down and your district doesn’t have a second-language option in the early grades? Through research and careful planning, you could bring a Dual Language (DL) program to your district.

1. Examine your population
For starters, community members interested in advocating for a DL program need to look at the size, demographics, and statistics of their district. A large percentage of ELL (English Language Learners) is a good start – whether those students are Spanish-, Russian-, or Korean-experts. In the two-way immersion program (a specific DL model), at least 25 new kindergarteners who speak the minority language is an excellent sign of viability and sustainability.

What is Dual Language?

Dual language is a form of education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages. The majority of dual language programs in the United States teach in English and Spanish, although increasing numbers of programs use a partner language other than Spanish, such as Arabic, Chinese, French, Hawaiian, Japanese, or Korean. Dual language programs use the partner language for at least half of the instructional day in the elementary years.

Dual language programs generally start in kindergarten or first grade and extend for at least five years, although many continue into middle school and high school. These programs aim for bilingualism (the ability to speak fluently in two languages), biliteracy (the ability to read and write in two languages), academic achievement equal to that of students in non-dual language programs, and cross-cultural competence. Most dual language programs are located in neighborhood public schools, although many are charter, magnet, or private schools.

Dual Language programs vary in terms of the amount of a child’s week that is spent in their native language and the amount spent in their second language. “Research indicates that students who spend more time in the partner language do...”

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For starters, community members interested in advocating for a DL program need to look at the size, demographics, and statistics of their district. A large percentage of ELL (English Language Learners) is a good start – whether those students are Spanish-, Russian-, or Korean-experts. In the two-way immersion program (a specific DL model), at least 25 new kindergarteners who speak the minority language is an excellent sign of viability and sustainability.

What is Dual Language?

Dual language is a form of education in which students are taught literacy and content in two languages. The majority of dual language programs in the United States teach in English and Spanish, although increasing numbers of programs use a partner language other than Spanish, such as Arabic, Chinese, French, Hawaiian, Japanese, or Korean. Dual language programs use the partner language for at least half of the instructional day in the elementary years.

Dual language programs generally start in kindergarten or first grade and extend for at least five years, although many continue into middle school and high school. These programs aim for bilingualism (the ability to speak fluently in two languages), biliteracy (the ability to read and write in two languages), academic achievement equal to that of students in non-dual language programs, and cross-cultural competence. Most dual language programs are located in neighborhood public schools, although many are charter, magnet, or private schools.

Dual Language programs vary in terms of the amount of a child’s week that is spent in their native language and the amount spent in their second language. “Research indicates that students who spend more time in the partner language do...”
better in that language (Howard, Christian & Genesee, 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Lindholm-Leary & Howard, in press), and that language minority students (in the U.S., those whose native language is not English) do better academically when their native language is supported and developed (Thomas & Collier, 1997; 2002). Some schools, like Alicia R. Chacon Elementary School in El Paso, Texas include a third language for a small portion of the day at all grade levels. “Subject/language assignment varies at each school, but a common trend is for Literacy to be taught in both languages, Science and Social Studies taught in the minority language, and Math taught in the majority language.

Dual language programs in middle school and high school often merge students from several dual language elementary schools and exist as programs within larger mainstream schools. They often offer dual language students the opportunity to take language arts and at least one content area in the partner language, and many prepare students to take the Advanced Placement exams. (adapted from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dual_language)

Meagan Dawson, Principal - West View K-8

2. Survey the community
How can your community benefit from a DL program? Ask around at school board meetings, local businesses, teacher meetings, Booster Club events, and local agency front desks. How could the community grow stronger by valuing and celebrating the minority language? How could high school students, counselors, realtors, and police officers become a part of the DL team as it begins to build?

3. Know your facts and statistics
Don’t be alarmed when opposition and negative Letters to the Editor appear. Many people in our country are quite happy with one language and don’t want to be bothered by a second. But those very people will be interested to learn that DL programs are the quickest and most affordable method of teaching English to second-language learners. And a DL program will graduate English-experts who are completely fluent in a second language! What more could you ask for? When Americans visit European families and discover that their children are working on their fourth language, they are eager to look into a DL program close to home.

4. Research current models
Don’t try to reinvent the wheel! Study current DL programs across the nation by visiting schools, calling principals, and emailing teachers. There are many training opportunities in regional settings for district office personnel, teachers, and parents. Ask schools about their partnerships – whether it’s with a local university, business, or exchange program. DL advocates seem to come out of the woodwork!

5. Be patient when it comes to a data return
Since most DL programs start in kindergarten, it will be four full years before the first cohort of DL students take state exams. And another six months before the data is sent to the principal. It seems like a long wait, but it’s certainly worth the time when scores creep up (or in some cases, blast off of the charts!).

The most important advice is to remain a steady supporter of multicultural, multilingual education models while researching DL. Our journey is a long, but steady, trek into a colorful, global painting for our children’s future. When we support our bilingual buddies, our children become beautiful “flores” with “tallos, hojas, y pétalos,” just as Kiara and Lupita had planned.

Meagan Dawson is the principal of West View K-8, a Dual Language School in Burlington, WA. She can be reached at mdawson@be.wednet.edu
The Benefits of Multilingualism

BY MICHAŁ B. PARADOWSKI
Multilingualism is the natural potential available to every normal human being rather than an unusual exception: “Given the appropriate environment, two languages are as normal as two lungs” (Cook 2002:23). It need not even require the ability to speak two unrelated languages; a user of e.g. the ‘literary’ and a vernacular/dialectal variety is already multicompetent, with today only “a handful of isolated pockets of ‘pure’ monolinguals, now hard to find even in the mountains of Papua New Guinea” (ibid.). At the same time, multicompetence does not require perfect fluency in all the languages at one’s command; thus, setting the boundary would probably be a mission impossible.

The advantages that multilinguals exhibit over monolinguals are not restricted to linguistic knowledge only, but extend outside the area of language. The substantial long-lived cognitive, social, personal, academic, and professional benefits of enrichment bilingual contexts have been well documented. Children and older persons learning foreign languages have been demonstrated to:

• have a keener awareness and sharper perception of language. Foreign language learning “enhances children’s understanding of how language itself works and their ability to manipulate language in the service of thinking and problem solving” (Cummins 1981);
• be more capable of separating meaning from form;
• learn more rapidly in their native language (L1), e.g. to read, as well as display improved performance in other basic L1 skills, regardless of race, gender, or academic level;
• be more efficient communicators in the L1;
• be consistently better able to deal with distractions, which may help offset age-related declines in mental dexterity;
• develop a markedly better language proficiency in, sensitivity to, and understanding of their mother tongue;
• develop a greater vocabulary size over age, including that in their L1;
• have a better ear for listening and sharper memories;
• be better language learners in institutionalized learning contexts because of more developed language-learning capacities owing to the more complex linguistic knowledge and higher language awareness;
• have increased ability to apply more reading strategies effectively due to their greater experience in language learning and reading in two—or more—different languages;
• develop not only better verbal, but also spatial abilities;
• parcel up and categorize meanings in different ways;
• display generally greater cognitive flexibility, better problem solving and higher-order thinking skills;
• “a person who speaks multiple languages has a stereoscopic vision of the world from two
or more perspectives, enabling them to be more flexible in their thinking, learn reading more easily. Multilinguals, therefore, are not restricted to a single worldview, but also have a better understanding that other outlooks are possible. Indeed, this has always been seen as one of the main educational advantages of language teaching” (Cook 2001);

- multilinguals can expand their personal horizons and—being simultaneously insiders and outsiders—see their own culture from a new perspective not available to monoglots, enabling the comparison, contrast, and understanding of cultural concepts;
- be better problem-solvers gaining multiple perspectives on issues at hand;
- have improved critical thinking abilities;
- better understand and appreciate people of other countries, thereby lessening racism, xenophobia, and intolerance, as the learning of a new language usually brings with it a revelation of a new culture;
- learn further languages more quickly and efficiently than their hitherto monolingual peers;
- to say nothing of the social and employment advantages of being bilingual – offering the student the ability to communicate with people s/he would otherwise not have the chance to interact with, and increasing job opportunities in many careers.

Thus, just like Latin once used to be taught as an academic exercise, mental gymnastics with the aim of cognitive training, it has been demonstrated that people who know more than one language usually think more flexibly than monolinguals. Many celebrated bilingual writers—such as John Milton, Vladimir Nabokov, Samuel Barclay Beckett, or Iosif Brodsky—attest that knowing a second language enhances the use of the first.

NOTE: This is a condensed, shortened version of the original article with all but a few of the references removed. To read the full article and the article’s full references go to: www.biculturalfamily.org/benefitofmultilingualism.html

REFERENCES
Colin Baker’s 3rd Edition of
A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide To Bilingualism

BY SUZANNE BARRON-HAUWAERT

I discovered the first edition of Colin Baker’s A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide to Bilingualism ten years ago, in 1997. At the time I had a two-month baby, and I was feeling rather overwhelmed by the idea of bringing up our son bilingually. I had taught bilingual children before so I knew it could work, but the reality seemed rather scary. How on earth am I going to bring up this baby bilingually, I wondered? I was browsing in the English Bookshop in Budapest, with Marc sleeping peacefully in his baby sling, and there I found a newspaper with an article on bilingualism written by Colin Baker. I ordered his book the same day. I had a bookshelf full of parenting guides telling me how to make my baby sleep and eat. It made sense to have a guide to bilingualism too.

The book’s essential quality is that it is a very accessible book, organized in sections with a question and answer format. The book begins with Family questions, raising issues such as the mother’s role, what to do if parents don’t agree and the extended family. The next section is all about Language Development, with a wide range of questions on age, gender, intelligence and how bilingualism develops over time. The third part bravely deals with Problems, the often ignored issues of children refusing to speak a language, mixing, speech delays or more serious linguistic conditions like autism. It also covers identity, personality and how children cope with being part of two cultures. We then take a look at Reading and Writing, being bi-literate and how we can help support these areas as parents or teachers. Education defines the types of programs available to promote bilingualism, along with how we can make the right decisions for our children, regarding their schooling and languages. The book concludes with a review of the role of politics, religion and economics and their links to bilingualism, and the thought-provoking question: Is bilingualism a natural right of any individual?

Within the book you find all the questions you have in your head answered (and discover things you hadn’t even thought about) in a comforting and clear way. It’s like sitting in someone’s kitchen with a cup of tea and chatting about bilingualism. At the same time you will get a crash course on all the important theories and books written on multilingualism, thanks to the knowledge Colin has built up over his years as Professor of Education at the University of Wales, Bangor. And if you are not sure of what OPOL, LEP or L1 means, the glossary is one of the best I have ever seen. Over the last ten years I have recommended the book to numerous friends around the world, bilingual families in my seminars and most importantly to teachers. All too often teachers find bilingual children a mystery and they don’t know how to help them settle into their classroom. This book is a godsend for teachers and if you know a newly graduated teacher, or a teacher who has bilingual kids in their class, do buy them a copy.

Thanks to Colin my three children became more-or-less bilingual, and he inspired my work as a researcher in the field of bilingualism. As for A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide to Bilingualism I bought ten years ago, it is now looking rather battered, after following us all around the world and being lent out to several friends. Due to its success around the world A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide to Bilingualism is now in its third edition. The good news is that the 2007 edition is updated, with extra information on moving between countries, helping with homework, trilingualism, dyslexia, language scaffolding in classrooms, adoption and how we can use the internet to support and learn more about bilingualism. The third edition is a refreshing update and will help to realistically reassure and inform bilingual families and people working with bilinguals.

What inspired you to write *A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide to Bilingualism* in 1995?

There were basically two incidents that prompted the beginning of the book. First, Mike and Marjukka Grover from the publishers, Multilingual Matters, asked me to consider writing such a book. To be honest, I initially rejected the idea as it was a non-academic book. Second, I had to go to hospital for an operation, and the surgeon told me to stay home for two weeks after the operation. I was in no pain, but I needed something to do. So in two weeks, working fairly flat out, I had drafted a very rough first edition of the book. One of the jokes about the book is that there is still the odd sign of anesthetic!

In the first edition you mentioned your colleague, Professor Ofelia Garcia from New York, who gave you an insight into the ‘plight of language US minorities’. Do you think that the same issues of language prejudices in America still exist in 2008?

One of my most important experiences in thinking about bilingual children has been three visits to New York. Two of those were to visit and work with Professor Ofelia Garcia, now at Teachers College, New York. She took me to schools, took me on the streets where bilinguals of different languages walked and talked, and taught me that bilinguals in United States were not as privileged as many of those in Europe. In the Bronx and Queens, I met Spanish-English bilinguals who were often economically poor but rich in languages, deprived of status and prestige but with hope and optimism of a promised land of opportunity and equality. Two decades ago, I would have predicted that bilinguals in United States would improve in their status and be much more accepted. That has happened in most of Europe, where bilingualism and multilingualism has become more desirable, even prized. The politics of the United States have worked against bilinguals, with assimilation, political cohesion, fear of difference in culture and
language, the impact of terrorism and religious fundamentalism all feeding political preferences for monolingualism in English rather than bilingualism. But the political tide changes. Nothing is static. I truly believe that in times to come in the United States that language diversity, the many advantages of bilingualism and multilingualism at an individual as well as a society level, will result in a much more positive attitude to bilingualism. It is hard to call when the tide will change, but change it will.

When your first book was published in 1995, the internet was just beginning. How can parents’ and teachers’ best use the internet to learn more about bilingualism?  

I am amazed how much the Internet has changed our lives, including how we learn, even in a short period such as the last five years. Fewer parents enter the library, and when they do, they have their laptop computers alongside books. Our students want their course reading to be electronic rather than on paper. They want instant access to information. There is no phrase which better sums up the recent generation of parents and students than ‘the Google generation’. We have to expect that parents will now look for information about raising children bilingually on the Internet. That is likely to be their first port of call rather than a bookshop. Since my Parents book is written in terms of frequently asked questions (FAQs), I guess that its electronic availability on the Internet is the way to proceed if it is to continue to help parents.

What role can computers and new technology play in supporting bilingualism in the home?  

I can well understand why parents put their children on a computer at the age of two and three. Computer literacy in children has become a vital competency. Just as young children acquire two languages so effortlessly, so they acquire Internet skills at a younger age than we think possible. Parents with bilingual children who want them to become biliterate and computer literate can valuably allow their children access to the Internet in different languages. The obvious danger is that children access the Internet through English, whereas there are a growing number of sites for children in different languages. A parent who shows the child the Internet in a language other than English may not only be helping literacy and computer literacy, but also the status of that other language in our digital world. That is an important lesson in itself. Children increasingly communicate socially through the Internet. Skype, blogs and chat rooms are just a few of the social networking facilities that make it possible for bilinguals to choose to use either or both their languages in electronic communication with others. How wonderful it is for bilingual children to communicate with native speakers of either language across thousands of miles, across nations and cultures, learning from others, as well as learning the benefits of bilingualism.

One of the strengths of the book is that you discuss in-depth several problem areas that many bilingual families may experience at one time, such as stuttering, mixing, learning difficulties, identity issues, racism or prejudice. Do you think that parents and teachers are now more aware of these potential problems in 2008?  

I still give talks to parents, and love doing so. At the end of the session when there are questions, what almost always comes up are children with particular problems, such as dyslexia, partial hearing, learning difficulties and experiences of prejudice from a whole host of people such as doctors, midwives, grandparents, teachers and politicians.

One thing I have learned over the last two decades is that families often have complex problems, where bilingualism is just part of wider issues such as divorce, relationship problems between partners, and well-meaning professionals who still give advice that is anti-bilingualism. The good news is that compared with 20 years ago, and certainly 50 years ago, there are many more positive

Bringing up children to be bilingual is an important decision. It will affect the rest of their lives and the lives of their parents. For children, being bilingual or monolingual may affect their identity, social arrangements, schooling, employment, marriage, area of residence, travel and thinking. Becoming bilingual is more than owning two languages. Bilingualism has educational, social, economic and cultural consequences.

There are many advantages and very few disadvantages in becoming bilingual. ... One of the advantages of a bilingual child and adult is having two or more worlds of experience. ... With two languages goes a wider cultural experience, and, very possibly, greater tolerance of cultural difference and less racism.

The monolingual also experiences a variety of cultures - from different neighbors and communities, who use the same language but have different ways of life. The monolingual can also travel to neighboring countries and experience other cultures. To participate and become involved in the core of a culture requires knowing the language of that culture. The bilingual has an improved chance of actively penetrating the two language cultures.

A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide to Bilingualism, by Colin Baker
associations made with bilingualism than ever before. There is never any overnight change in attitudes to something like bilingualism. It takes decades to get a major cultural change. But change there has been.

There seems to be much more awareness now bilingualism does not have negative consequences for thinking, that communication in different languages has employment, cultural as well as cognitive advantages, and that there is a beauty to bilingualism for the individual who can also act as a bridge between different language groups. Once such good news permeates politicians and the public in United States, then a new era will truly be heralded in.

How did your experiences as a parent of three bilingual Welsh/English children affect the content of the book?

It is perhaps an oddity of the book that I have tried very hard not to talk about our own experiences in raising three bilingual children. My instinct has always been that to make the book useful for as many parents as possible, I had to escape from my own particular environment and experiences, and try to produce something that was more generally applicable and valuable. In writing all three editions of the book, I have been influenced more by giving talks to parents, by giving answers to parents who raise particular questions, and also by reading the academic literature on the childhood development of bilingualism. However, I have shared in the book that one of my children had a difficult time with speech delay. During that period, I never believed that it was anything to do with his bilingualism. That turned out to be absolutely correct, and he recently graduated with a university degree of some distinction. While a person of few words, he is a wonderful listener, a most efficient communicator, and switches between his two languages with consummate ease. Perhaps I can also share for the first time that there was a family incident when I learned deeply the amazing giftedness of two and three-year-old bilinguals. My daughter, Sara, was two years of age. My wife had always spoken in Welsh to her, while I communicated in English (OPOL). Her English grandmother came to stay and was immediately unhappy that mother-child communication was in Welsh. As part of a previous generation, she believed that bilingualism would hinder the development not only of English but also of thinking. Sara, aged two, was in the kitchen and was asked, in Welsh, by her mother to tell grandmother to walk through to the dining room as food was ready. Sara simply went through from the kitchen to the lounge and told her grandmother in perfect English to accompany her to the table as food was waiting. In one simple event, Sara taught me how effortless it was to be a bilingual, and much more. She proved not only to be an efficient translator, but also how to bridge a generation and language gap at the tender age of two. From that day on, I always believed that bilingualism is a gift that all children should have, and those with monolingualism have some kind of disadvantage.

How did your experiences as a family living in a bilingual country affect the content of the book?

I was raised in a monolingual English village near London. I can only remember one lady in the village speaking a language other than English. She was Belgian and spoke French and English. As children, we thought of her as a lovely person but quaint because she spoke a language other than English. At high school, I learnt French, and because we spent almost all the time translating on paper from French to English and English to French, I thought it quite tedious. At the age of 18, bilingualism was about the most uninteresting topic in the world. In order to walk mountains, I chose to attend Bangor University as an undergraduate. I fell in love with the hills, but also with the daughter (Anwen) of the Chaplain of the large local hospital. Anwen’s
In 2005, you became a grandfather to Ioan Thomas. How does it feel to be a grandfather and what is your role in helping him become bilingual?

I never academically studied my own three children in the way that some academics faithfully record the language progress of their children. I am not the kind of person who can stand aside and watch. Rather, my need is sit on the floor and thoroughly enjoy playing and parenting. My natural grandparent behavior is still to sit on the floor with Ioan Thomas, and enjoying playing with his toys as much as he does. We both love cars and trains. However, what has changed is that I observe his language development from week to week, and simply find that the speed with which very young children pick up new words in both languages, and then use them in a creative way, is something close to a miracle. Over just a short space of time, and at a very low level of physical and cognitive maturity, they develop vocabularies in each language at an amazingly fast rate, and become bilingual just as easily as they learn to walk, eat and play. It is wonderful how children of a very tender age become effortlessly bilingual especially when two languages are experienced from birth onwards. We can define bilingual development linguistically, psychologically and increasingly neurologically. But there is also something that is joyous and exhilarating about very young children learning two or three languages.

Has the book been translated into any other languages?

Yes, it has been translated into Estonian, Swedish, Spanish, Turkish, German, Mandarin Chinese and Korean. I sometimes wonder what back translation would produce – it may be that there are improvements in translation. That can happen.

What areas of the book have you added and updated for the 2007 Third Edition?

The new material includes:
• Moving between countries, cultural adaptation
• Identity issues
• One parent- one language families
• Helping with homework
• Pre schools and nurseries
• Multiliteracies
• Dyslexia
• Language scaffolding in classroom learning
• Dual Language Peace schools
• Multilingualism and trilingualism; trilingual families
• Adoption
• WWW links, articles and books for further reading
Frequently Asked Questions about Multilingualism

Why are some families multilingual?
Most families are multilingual because life happens! You marry someone from a different nationality and move to a third country. This is the perfect setup for a trilingual family situation. Maybe you move with your monolingual family to Indonesia, have a French au pair at home and send your children to an English-speaking school. Or, Papi and Mami, who met as exchange students in the UK, speak different languages, but use English with each other because that is the language that they used since they met. They may decide to speak their native languages to their children, but keep English for themselves. For many families multilingualism is a necessity. They couldn’t communicate otherwise. For many others multilingualism is a choice. For both, it is a commitment they make towards raising their children as multicultural, global citizens.

We are bilingual, but want to be trilingual. How do we add another language?
Assuming that moving abroad is out of question right now - you can try to enlist outside “help” with the third language, like acquiring a nanny, or sending your child to playgroups, kindergartens and schools that represents the third language. It is easier to use OPOL and leaving the third to the environment. You can, otherwise, have one partner switch between two languages if you designate certain situations or times when you speak each language. It is a little tricky but not impossible. You can build in language-islands; designate certain days in which you speak the third language; make the third language a special language when you and your child are alone (e.g. bedtime language); speak a certain language whenever a certain topic crops up (discuss school and homework); have a ‘vacation’ language which you speak only when you are on vacation, or enlist the help of extended family members (see Sarah Dodson-Knight’s column in this and pas issues of Multilingual Living Magazine. She speaks non-native French with her nephew, thereby helping him to grow up bilingual).

Neither my spouse nor I speak the third language. As we learn the language, can we teach our child a third language anyway so all of us become trilingual?
It can’t harm to try! But do a reality check with regards to your goals: If your aim is to achieve native-like fluency in all three languages, you may be setting yourself up for disappointment. If there’s no actual need for your child to speak the language other than you just wanting her to learn it, she will most likely only grasp a passive command of it – which is better than nothing at all! And who knows, she may even start chatting a few sentences and using words in her every day discussions. Ways to do it: How about having a Spanish hour in the afternoon? Meet up with other families. Sign up for a family-friendly language learning program!

What language should we speak when the family is together?
Children become good at switching between languages. After a while you will be so used to switching yourself that you don’t have to actively think about what language to speak to whom when the family gathers at the dinner table. If you find that too strenuous, you can consider adopting a family language for when the family is together. You could decide that whenever the family sits down together at the dinner table, that you all speak French. When interacting on a one-on-one basis, you could revert to your individual languages again. Again here, do what is most natural for you.
If we have three languages in our family, are my children going to be equally fluent in all languages and be able to speak them with native-like ability?

The chances of acquiring equal, native-like fluency in all three languages is probably a bit unrealistic. As with bilingualism, language aptitude is subjected to change over time, as the child’s needs and circumstances change. There are always stronger and weaker languages, and some languages are only acquired passively. Tell yourself this is not a bad thing. Identity issues and language preference will also come into play sooner or later. Sometimes it seems our children have ‘forgotten’ a language, only to pull it out again as soon as the need arises. I have found that fluency waxes and wanes as my child moves from one life stage to another. In her preschool years, Spanish dominated. As soon as she entered German kindergarten, she preferred German. Then we relocated and adopted English as a family language, and lo and behold she prefers English over all languages. As soon as abuelita comes to visit us for several weeks, suddenly Spanish is “in” again. It is not that she forgot her aptitude in the other languages, but she simply decides to focus on a certain language depending on her needs and circumstances. Knowing this, we shouldn’t set ourselves up for failure by setting unrealistic goals such as aiming for ‘equal, native-like fluency’ in all three languages. We relax more knowing that it is natural for our children to go through phases when they just don’t speak with native-like ability – at least not yet.

How many languages are too many?

The child will speak as many languages as s/he needs to communicate with her environment. That can mean 3, 4, even 5 languages. There is no such thing as limited space in the brain, or languages in competition with one another. If being multilingual caused verbal or mental problems, then the majority of the world would be very ill indeed! The limit to your children’s languages should be based on need, enjoyment and exposure. How often will your children be able to hear each language and use it? If you or your spouse is not around your child very often, then the chances are that your child will avoid speaking that language since he won’t have as much of a mastery over it as his other languages. He may learn to read and write in some of his languages but not all of them - this doesn’t mean he shouldn’t be exposed to all of the languages. Even a passive grasp of a language is a wonderful gift!

Is it OK to speak a language to my child that is not my native language?

It is certainly possible and there are families who have established successful trilingual situations this way. The main thing is that you feel comfortable interacting in a language that is not your native one. What about songs, nursery rhymes, and the emotive language of cuddle-time? It is never too late to learn children’s songs and nursery rhymes in the other language. Ask language teachers or other native speakers to teach you. Otherwise there are tons of resources online! (see Corey Heller’s article, “Going Non-Native” in the May-June 2007 issue of Multilingual Living Magazine: www.biculturalfamily.org/backissues.html).

For more information on raising multilingual children, see Madalena Cruz-Ferreira’s article, “Raising Multilingual Children: Why the Fuss?” in the March-April 2007 issue of Multilingual Living Magazine: www.biculturalfamily.org/backissue.html.

As with bilingualism, when dealing with multilingualism there is only one main rule: let it be as natural as possible. Whatever works for you is the right method.
Balanced Multilingual...

“Balanced Multilingual” is an extremely appealing label, because it involves weight-watching. To check whether you’re a balanced multilingual, you measure the degree of bulk of each of your languages by sampling them item by item. For example, how many words you have in each, or whether you can use the present perfect continuous and tell jokes in each of them. When you’ve done that, you calculate the differential weight of each of your languages. If there is no difference, you are a balanced multilingual; if you find any difference, you are unbalanced.

This is undoubtedly a neat way of getting neat data and neat labels for your findings, but funny enough we run into immediate trouble. Balanced means ‘equally weighted’, which therefore means equally good -- or equally bad. I doubt that I am a balanced multilingual in Russian and Greek if I can say ‘Good morning!’ fluently in both languages and this constitutes my entire repertoire in these languages, or if I consistently misuse grammatical gender in all my languages. So, being a word with positive connotations, because nobody wants to be called ‘unbalanced’ about anything, balanced cannot mean ‘balanced’ here, because ‘of equal weight’ is a statement about observed quantities, and hence neither positive nor negative. The word in fact means ‘with perfect command of all languages in all four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing’.

Wow! you may think. Wow indeed: this is where things get really, really funny, for all sorts of reasons. Let me enumerate a few.

First of all, the assumed standard of ‘perfection’ is, as always, monolingual. That is, multilinguals are expected to behave linguistically like several monolinguals tucked away inside one same body and mind, which is not so much funny as downright spooky.

Second, how do we measure the counterweight to, say, different French past tense forms in Mandarin, which has no past tense forms? Languages don’t map themselves neatly onto each other. If they did, learning a new language would be a simple matter of translating words, grammatical constructions and pragmatic uses.

Third, that languages pattern behave idiosyncratically means that languages are unbalanced, not their speakers.

Fourth, multilingualism is, by definition, unbalanced, which turns out to be a very positive term after all: it means ‘differential’. Nobody would be multilingual if different languages could all be used in the same way. A single all-purpose language would be enough.

Lastly, it is exceedingly funny to invent a technical label to describe the fruits of your fantasy: if you believe that there are balanced multilinguals in the real world according to the Wow criterion, you might as well expect to find unicorns in your backyard.

Madalena Cruz-Ferreira, a native of Portugal, is the author of Three is a crowd? Acquiring Portuguese in a trilingual environment, (2006). She is currently a Senior Lecturer at the National University of Singapore. She has lived in Singapore for over 10 years with her Swedish husband and their three trilingual children.

Coming in the next issue:

“Native-like user of language”
Call for Submissions

Do you have a knack for writing?

If you have a multilingual family, enjoy writing, and are interested in contributing to our magazine, we would like to hear from you!

We seek short articles up to 800 words in which you report about the daily joys and challenges of raising children in more than one language.

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We also seek research articles or articles by experts. These may be longer (max. 1500 words). Articles should be geared towards our audience in style and should not be too academic/technical in language (academic articles may be published on our website instead).

Please note that we do not publish articles if its main aim is to advertise a business or product. For this purpose you may purchase advertising space.

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“My research revealed that bi- and multilinguals often feel that one of their languages is more appropriate for capturing and experiencing particular emotions.”
Multilingual Emotions
Understanding the link between emotions and language

BY BETTINA RIBES-GIL

Emotions are a fundamental facet of human psychology and social life. Recent studies have opened up a new field of research into the connection between emotions and language used by bi- and multilinguals (henceforth BMs). The above-mentioned incident prompted me to analyse my own circumstances and investigate experiences of others. We are already born with the ability to vocalise our emotions which creates the initial unique bond with our mother. Verbal communication involves oral, aural, visual and gesticulatory modalities. BMs are therefore fortunate to have a built-in modus operandi to express their feelings in distinct affective styles. Readers may refer to my article in IATEFL Issues No. 183 (Feb/March 2005) which describes my own multilingual background.

GOOD MANNERS?
In face-to-face cross-cultural communication there is no guarantee that lexis is functionally equivalent, and emotional reaction is very much geared towards awareness of cultural and situational factors. For example, the relationship between politeness and directness can be illustrated by the Spanish culture which favours directness, both positive and negative. I am able to claim, in Spanish, that I cook excellent tortillas, or tell a friend that her new dress does not suit her. In the first case my English persona would emotionally consider this boasting and would circumvent culinary successes with a “sometimes” or “usually” to correspond to an English perspective. In the second example, from an English viewpoint, this is rude, so I would tell a white lie not to hurt feelings. The use of certain formal features such as imperatives in Spanish: dame un café [give me a coffee], is also acceptable in this specific socio-cultural situation in spite of being basically impolite and illustrates how appropriateness is highly situation-dependent.

DIFFERENT PERSONAE
The above illustrates how we use discourse strategies to assume different affective personae in individual languages. My research revealed that BMs often feel that one of their languages
is more appropriate for capturing and experiencing particular emotions. It is not yet evident what factors influence their language choice when they code-switch or borrow words in everyday utterances. Is there something emotionally gratifying in exclaiming the German gesundheit [good health] - an onomatopoeia, if ever there was one, of a sneeze! Does it feel less spiteful to speak of schadenfreude [malicious joy at someone’s misfortune]? Can angst [anxiety] convey a more profound emotion? The latter two words adopted from German are now current in English language newspapers. In the Swiss francophone region the utterances s’il vous plait – merci - au revoir are largely overplayed repetition. BMs learn to feel different emotions through different languages by borrowing words with their links to mental representation and romantic allegiances play a great part in emotional attitudes to languages. A beautiful Portuguese word is saudade, preferably with the softer Brazilian pronunciation – a fond remembrance with undertones of melancholic nostalgia – a word that conjures up indefinable emotions unattainable in another language. Italian ballads invoke sentimental recall. On the contrary emotion terms such as “love” can be de-stressed by writing “Luv”, or “I luv u”!

**Taboo Words**

There is a great deal of emotionality involved in the use of taboo words in different socio-cultural environments, thus the use of synonyms or euphemisms in perceived delicate situations such as bodily functions, insults and political correctness, becomes apparent. The use of “looe” instead of “lavatory” avoids embarrassment; hyperbolic expressions such as “keyboard skills” encourage a typist; the euphemistic “alphabetically challenged” shields the illiterate. Where parent-child communication is concerned, following research among my peers it became clear that when it comes to discussing sex with children, the detachment effect is manifest and conversations invariably took place in another language than the BM’s L.1. In my experience this disconnection also plays a large part in swearing. For example, the exclamation merde does not have the same connotation for me as s**t. In spite of conveying a strong sentiment, its offensive force is diluted by not using my dominant language, therefore expressing a more excusable emotion frame. Humour is influenced by cultural and social variables and is perceived differently depending on the language. Jokes are decoded according to socio-cultural perception. The Latin culture spawns a tendency towards scatological jokes or with a religious or political theme, Anglo-Saxons are more likely to appreciate black humour.

**Vocal Cues**

Another factor used to interpret emotions are vocal cues which differ enormously between languages depending on stress, loudness, intonation, etc. Vocal cues in language are often misleading. It is not always possible to evaluate the depth of emotion cross-linguistically: Nordic races tend to “suffer in silence” whereas elsewhere grief is expressed by customary wailing. Spanish or Italian voices are raised just to be heard during discourse, circumstances where in English the vocal level would indicate anger, otherwise loudness would be considered not only unnecessary but rude. It is well known that foreigners tend to shout when trying to make themselves understood which can be interpreted as an emotional shield to mask ignorance. Misunderstandings can easily arise – a personal illustration of emotional states being misinterpreted is that of my parents on their first visit to Spain in the 1950s who hastily moved to another hotel when convinced that a revolution was about to take place from the volume, excitability and gesticulations of some men gathered for a drink in the hotel bar. Now I live in Spain I can identify with this emotional perception of “noise”!
IMMIGRANTS

Immigration, in my opinion, is a dichotomy: there are those who immediately reject their L.1 and immerse themselves in the language of their new country, adopt the social stereotype of the host culture and are emotionally integrated feeling no shame of their accent or non-local appearance. On the other hand there are those who resist assimilation and thus never acquire proficient linguistic or socio-cultural competence in their new country. Many former colonials and, more recently, radicals of all genres fall into this category. It depends very much on age, education, class, religion, political opinion and an assumed superiority. My personal experience comes from having lived in Geneva for many years and observing that immigrants who became shop assistants, waiters and other service personnel tended to integrate rapidly by virtue of the fact that they needed to feel comfortable in the local language, nonetheless without rebuffing their origins. The international officials had dissimilar reactions: many settled in their national groups emotionally bound by linguistic shyness and affective stability. Others happily branched out into the multinational and local socio-cultural code-switching environment! Third-generation children, paradoxically, are now reasserting their origins, demonstrating national pride especially in the sporting arena. On the other hand, many citizens from the ex-USSR States reject Russian, whether it was their L.1 or L.2, in favour of recuperating their national language. A specific example of affective style directing language occurred during Pope Benedict XVI’s visit to Auschwitz where we can only conjecture why he prayed for peace using German, his L.1, a language he had eschewed in favour of Polish and Italian during the rest of his tour, revealing the significance of language choice in emotional expression.

WRITERS

Translingual writers sometimes feel guilty when writing in a language other than their L.1, but they often feel they can express certain emotions better in another idiom. Their indigenous culture may have been undervalued or marginalized by cultural imperialism in colonial times. When a writer has the ability to operate with two or more linguistic codes it is unclear what in their psyche influences the choice of creative language. However, writers must feel free to express themselves in the language that best illustrates their emotional vision.

CONCLUSION

The study of emotions as experienced and expressed by BMs is complex and empirical research is only now being undertaken. Perhaps this overview will prompt you to interpret your own experiences and reflect on the concept asking are we two or more isolated monolinguals in one body or rather an amalgam of multicompetences and affect? Should we also consider how we can help students incorporate emotional components into their approach to languages? ✤

Reprinted with permission from the Sept-Oct 2007 issue of IATEFL Voices: www.iatefl.org/content/newsletter/index.php
Interview with Bettina Ribes-Gil
The author of the article “Multilingual Emotions” shares her thoughts

BY COREY HELLER & ALICE LAPIERRE

Can you start by giving us an overview of your multilingual, multicultural background?
I have both British/Spanish nationalities – the latter by marriage. I was educated in England, followed by a year living with a French family and attending the local Lycée. I subsequently took a bi-lingual English/French commercial course at the Institute Français in London. This led to employment with an Anglo-French company working in London and Paris.

What motivated me to learn Italian was the ability to correspond with and visit Italian friends in Rome. This knowledge led to employment as London personal assistant to an Italian film producer. Between gaps in filming, I worked on the United Nations conference circuit in Europe and America in various capacities. I returned to London as PA to President of Paramount Pictures (UK) and studied Spanish as I was to marry a Spaniard!

We moved to Geneva, Switzerland, and both joined the United Nations family of organizations. I worked in many departments of one of the UN organizations, finally running the Liaison Desk for Latin America and the Caribbean, when I added Brazilian Portuguese to my languages and travelled to Central and South America.

Began, but never completed, German courses - three years running. However, living in Geneva (francophone region of Switzerland) where products are labelled in three of the Swiss official languages (German, French, Italian - as the fourth, Romansch, is not used commercially) and there are the German, Swiss and Austrian germanophone TV channels available, one automatically picks up a small German vocabulary.

Tell us more about your experience as a TEFLA teacher as well as international official.
On retirement I took a three-month intensive TEFLA course. However, being a native speaker (NS), I had previously been engaged by our local Swiss school to teach young learners extra-murally during periods when not working for the UN (at the same time I also took in translations French/Spanish/Italian into English). Subsequently I have concentrated my studies on young learners. I am especially interested in multiple intelligences. My teaching experience before and after obtaining the Certificate has been mostly private lessons one-to-one with adults and adolescents or small groups of young learners in Switzerland and Spain.

My experience as an international official has been fascinating when dealing with the many cultures and languages, attitudes and idiosyncrasies of delegates from the over 190 nations comprising the UNO.

In your article you discuss mixing languages. Won’t all of this language and cultural mixing turn our world into a kind of “melting-pot”? What will happen to the distinctive language and culture divisions which allow us to appreciate diversity if we are jumbling them all together all of the time?

Based on personal experience I don’t see much melting! In Switzerland the four languages are still going strong in their specific regions, although English is often used between the Swiss who are weak in their other languages. The regional customs are very much enshrined in the local cultures, differing due to geographical location with their respective Teutonic or Latin influences.

The position in Spain is unlikely to melt. The Catalans and Basques, along with the Gallegos and others speaking minority dialects, strongly defend their language and culture, clinging to their local customs, religious parades, regional costumes and gastronomy. At the same time the Government is planning for English to be taught in schools as from four years old to enable easier communication within the European Union and worldwide.
It has been many years since I actually lived in the UK, but I visit my family often, and from my personal observations in London and in other regions, it seems to me that the immigrant multi-racial and multi-cultural populations, in spite of adopting British ways, preserve their own customs. They are proud of their heritage, celebrating different New Years, religious ceremonies, retaining their dress code – saris, turbans, hijabs, etc. - and their L.1 is ever present within the core family.

In your article different personae are mentioned. In the past, parents were concerned that if they raised their children in more than one language there would be a risk of their children having multiple-personalities. Today we know this is not a problem yet how DO multilingual families manage their different personae embodying each language-culture mix?

Here again I disagree that there is a problem. From personal experience it appears that our personae adapt to our surroundings: I know myself that I am a different person depending on location - in Spain I gesticulate and sometimes interrupt another speaker; in Switzerland my persona is calm and patient; and in England, polite, which entails the continuous use of speech “softners” (eg. “I don’t think so” instead of an outright “no”). Thus, it is important culturally to take into consideration one’s immediate linguistic situation.

Although it cannot be considered the norm, in my own family we tend to communicate in our respective mother tongue when together: I speak English, my husband Spanish, our daughters in either of the two or in French (having had their basic education in French it is considered their mother tongue) and the grandchildren in French or Spanish (my daughter chose to bring them up in Spanish) but their English is improving now; they learn it at school and when they spend time with me. There is, naturally, a certain amount of code-switching which is inevitable in a multi-lingual context. In summary, adaptation is the crux of the matter, and our separate personae interact with others according to the specific socio-cultural sphere at any one time.

You also mentioned in the article a dichotomy between immigrants: those who immediately reject L.1, and those who are never able to acquire competence in the majority language. Based on observations and personal experience, what advice can be given to immigrants that could help them find a healthy balance between the two extremes?

In my opinion it is essential for immigrants to learn the host language as soon as possible to decrease the initial sense of alienation of new minorities. This provides them with confidence and a source of security in their new socio-cultural environment. It opens up not only employment possibilities but also social integration, making friends, comprehension of local humour, involvement in local traditions, etc., albeit not losing sight of their own culture. A pluralistic approach is necessary to enable both immigrants and the hosts to become aware of each other’s language and culture, thus fostering mutual acceptance.

Observations show that there is a tendency for children of better educated immigrant parents to integrate more easily culturally and linguistically. Children of the less educated in low-paid manual employment make slower progress. An example is the many Indian communities established in towns in England. In some places an English/Indian dialect has developed over time, influenced by code-switching, and students often comment that when on vacation in India their families no longer understand their “Gujarati”! Many of the lower-paid workers still speak very little English because they live in an environment where many of the amenities and services are bilingual, eg. Indian supermarkets, dentists, doctors, cinemas, etc. This helps neither the parents nor especially the children and there are already problems with second and third generation children who have integrated more rapidly following education in English schools and now find themselves in contradiction with traditional family values.

The above example illustrates that it is therefore of the utmost importance for the authorities of the host countries to divert resources to teaching functional language together with local cultural traditions and accepted behaviour patterns, and not to permanently rely on interpreters and translators in given situations (for example when dealing with the social services, police, local authorities, or when seeking accommodation, etc.). In this way misunderstandings will diminish and integration will be established in a shorter term, which can only lead to a more beneficial life for all of us.
**A Baker’s Dozen**

Purchase 13 of anything and you are said to have bought a ‘baker’s dozen.’ But does this really have anything to do with bread, cakes etc? What do you think? The answer is...

**YES!** But the history behind this phrase may be a surprise!

King Henry 111 (1216-1272) introduced the Assize of Bread and Ale during the 13th century. Were your local baker to give you short measure, he or she could, if found guilty, find his or her kneading ability severely curtailed by the loss of one hand to the axe. It was therefore considered prudent to bake an extra item for an order of twelve, to avoid allegations of cheating and thus the fear of a reduction in manual dexterity. It also ensured that, should one item be dropped, eaten, stolen, damaged in the baking process etc. you got the quantity you had asked for.

Take the “Where Everyday Phrases Come From” Etymology Quiz and learn even more interesting phrases: [www.funtrivia.com/quizzes/humanities/english/etymology.html](http://www.funtrivia.com/quizzes/humanities/english/etymology.html).

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**Eye Halve a Spelling Chequer**

Eye halve a spelling chequer  
It came with my pea sea  
It plainly marques four my revue  
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea.

Eye strike a key and type a word  
And weight four it two say  
Weather eye am wrong oar write  
It shows me strait a weigh.

As soon as a mist ache is maid  
It nose bee fore two long  
And eye can put the error rite  
Its rarely ever wrong.

Eye have run this poem threw it  
I am shore your pleased two no  
Its letter perfect in it’s weigh  
My chequer tolled me sew.

—— *Sauce unknown*


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**Hong Kong**

Chinese and English are both official languages of Hong Kong under the Hong Kong Basic Law (Article 9) and the Official Languages Ordinance (Chapter 5).

English was declared the primary language in former Colonial Hong Kong for more than 130 years. Chinese was standardized in 1974 due to the large population ratio of Chinese speakers to English speakers in the territory.

In March 1987, the Official Languages Ordinance was amended to require all new legislation to be enacted in both English and Chinese.

In 1990, the Basic Law declared English’s co-official language status with Chinese after the 1997 hand over.

Since the hand over, the government of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has adopted the “biliterate and trilingual” policy. Under the principle, Chinese and English must both be acknowledged as official languages, with Cantonese being acknowledged as the de facto official spoken variety of Chinese in Hong Kong, while also accepting the use of Standard Mandarin.

The majority of the population in Hong Kong are descendants of migrants from mainland China. Smaller minority groups include expatriates and descendants of expatriates from countries such as India, Nepal, United Kingdom and the Philippines. The assortment of languages found are a direct correlation to the diversity in population.

Source: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hong_Kong](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hong_Kong)
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“Italian is beautiful, German is ugly”

French is romantic but Arabic is dour. English, however, is somewhere in the middle, “evoking few accolades of aesthetic merit but few comments of utter disdain” (85). Some British accents are definitely vulgar, while others are charming. And let’s not even mention those American dialects, some of which are an “affront to the ears”! It is the ‘inherent value hypothesis’ that advocates why we find certain languages more attractive than others, say some scholars. Some languages are just more inherently beautiful, what can one say. This is a myth! protest others. “ It is the social connotations of the speakers of a language variety – whether they are associated with poverty, crime and being uneducated on one hand, or cultured, wealthy and having political muscle on the other – that dictates our aesthetic (and other) judgments about language variety” (89). In short, our beliefs about the aesthetics of a language are dictated by our cultural norms. Thus, the ugliness of German “might dissipate rapidly when listening to an engaging Mozart opera whilst partaking delicious Swiss-German Emmental cheese or delicate Austrian tortes washed down with either a first-rate Beerenausler wine or a remarkable Bavarian beer” (91). In this context, Prost Mahlzeit sounds like music to our ears!

(for further reading on this fascinating topic see “Italian is Beautiful, German is Ugly” (p. 85-93) by Howard Giles and Nancy Niedyielski in Language Myths by Laurie Bauer and Peter Trudgill, eds. Penguin, 1998).
Two years ago, when my nephew Carl was born, I never imagined that he’d have learned so much French by now. I’ve been taking care of him one afternoon a week and speaking only French with him, even though everyone else in the family speaks English (other than his mom, who studied French in high school but hasn’t had to use it since). At this point, he can say four and sometimes five-word sentences, sing parts of songs, count to 15, and respond appropriately to most of my questions in French. It surprises and delights us all!

I have worried, however, about how long this can last. For now, Carl accepts that his “tatie” (auntie) speaks a different language with him than with everyone else and he willingly replies in kind. But at some point, I suspect that he’ll realize that none of his peers use French and that it’s easier just to talk to Tatie in English like with everyone else. While I have some ideas of how to try to ward off or mitigate that realization—find or create a French playgroup in the area, bring more adult Francophones into his circle, and so on—I still fear that he will choose not to speak French when he’s older, that he won’t see a reason to need or want to speak it.

However, now I fear this potential rejection less: Carl has a cousin! My husband and I welcomed our first child, Griffin Brooks, into the world on January 26. As I compose this column less than a week after that life-changing event, sleep-deprived and in awe of my son, I still manage to get excited about sharing my second language with both him and Carl. Now Carl will have another boy not too far apart in age to speak French with! It may become a special, nearly secret language between the two of them, something they value rather than something that makes them stick out on the playground.

On the other hand, maybe it will be less secret that I think: now my parents-in-law, who live nearby, are expressing interest in learning some French! They babysit Carl once a week and will also take care of Griffin another day a week, and they want to be able to decipher what the boys are talking about and be able to say common sentences to them in French. My husband, who has always described himself as “hopelessly monolingual,” has also decided that he needs to learn some French in self-defense so that his son and his nephew can’t conspire together in front of him! So perhaps I should change the title of this column to “Tatie Teaches a Toddler, His Baby Cousin, Her Husband, and His Parents”—but that doesn’t roll trippingly off the tongue! Let’s hope that in a few years, though, that French will—for everyone in the family.
Going Dual?

Make bilingualism even more fun with books in Two languages!

In celebration of World Folktales and Fables week (March 2-8), Language Lizard is offering Multilingual Living subscribers a 10% discount on the following dual-language world folktales through the end of March. Use these to teach children about new cultures while exposing them to multiple languages. To receive the discount, simply apply Coupon Code CCS-WFT upon checkout (through March 31, 2008).

Yeh-Hsien: A Chinese Cinderella

The Cinderella story appears to have originated in China about 1000 years ago. The Chinese version contains many elements of the more recognized European/Disney versions, yet it provides a wonderful way to introduce children to Chinese culture and stories. In this version, our clever heroine Yeh-Hsien is left to the care of her tyrannical stepmother and stepsister. Her only friend is a fish, which her stepmother lures and kills. Receiving her wishes using magical fish bones, Yeh-Hsien attends the Spring Festival. When she flees from the party after her stepmother recognizes her, she loses one of her slippers. The king vows to marry its owner. This book is available in English with translations in Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese-Traditional, Chinese-Simplified, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Japanese, Kurdish, Panjabi, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu, and Vietnamese. www.languagelizard.com.

Buri and the Marrow

This is a famous Bengali folktale and is a great way to introduce Indian stories, culture and customs. An old woman travels through the forest to meet her daughter. On her way she meets a fox, a tiger and a lion and they all want to eat her! Buri manages to convince them to wait until her return, when she will be nice and fat. When she meets her daughter, they eat a delicious meal and devise a plan to outwit the tiger and the lion. The fox is more difficult to fool, but Buri comes up with a clever solution. Teachers and parents who would like to introduce children to Indian culture and customs may be interested in seeing the “Language, Customs, Culture in India” units which can be downloaded at www.languagelizard.com/lessonplans.htm. Buri and the Marrow is available in English with translations in Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese-Traditional, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Panjabi, Polish, Somali, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese. www.languagelizard.com.

Lion Fables

This book contains two entertaining fables. In the Tibetan fable, The Hare’s Revenge, Hare is fed up with the bullying Lion and finds a way to outwit him. In Aesop’s The Lion and the Mouse, Lion spares the life of little mouse never expecting that one day the mouse might save his life. These stories a great way to teach about being clever and kind. Lion Fables is available in English with translations in Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, Chinese-Traditional, Chinese-Simplified with Pinyin, Farsi, French, Lithuanian, Panjabi, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tamil, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese. www.languagelizard.com.
When I became pregnant with my first child, I knew beforehand that he would be raised in a bilingual household. As my son’s first birthday rolled around, he didn’t say much at all, just kind of listened, which was okay with me. I figured it takes time to learn one language so how about learning two at the same time. By the time his second birthday came around he did start to talk, but only his father’s native language, Arabic. Although he did understand what I was saying to him in English, he would answer me back in Arabic, and this pattern continued on for 3 years. I was so disappointed. It felt weird speaking to your own child in one language, and yet getting a response in another. I was about to give up the bilingual thing altogether, but when I brought up the topic with a friend of mine who...
Spanish classes through our local community college. His support in me taking classes has really motivated me to continue learning a second language myself.

-Rachelle from Salem, OR

My daughters (11 & 7) are fully bilingual (speaking, reading and writing) and even speak German with each other. This wouldn’t have been possible without my husband’s unwavering support, whose German has improved tremendously, too!

-Cornelia from Seattle, WA

I think the best support was when friends (themselves with multilingual children) praised us for being so consistent about using our respective languages - it helped to strengthen my resolve and make sure I really did use my ml all the time (because I often felt I wasn’t being as consistent as I could have been).

-Nicola from Germany

A friend told me to always ask myself “why?” when confronted with a decision about how to raise children bilingually. This question has served as a useful reminder to always step back and reevaluate what my language goals really are, which are really important, and how much am I willing to compromise to achieve them.

-Ambika from Seattle, WA

My support has always been my American friend who lives in Germany. She has always told me to follow my instincts, have fun with it and don’t listen to what other people say. Enjoy teaching your children about your culture and just be proud of your ability to give you children this gift.

-Tanya from Spain

My mother gave me the support to raise my two children bilingually. As young children after my father’s death in Texas, my family moved to Mexico. The best thing my mother did with us children was to tell us to never to forget our English; she said at school you speak Spanish but at home you will speak English. Now that I have children of my own I tell them the opposite, at school you speak English at home speak Spanish. I will always be thankful to my mother for what she did for us as a struggling single mother of 5.

-Rosie from Appleton, WI

children are also bilingual, she just told me it was normal and to take it easy, when he was ready, he would speak both and switch between the two easily. So I took her advice and continued speaking to my son in English. Then one day when he was about 6 years old, he just woke up and started speaking to me in English. I would ask and he would answer in the same language. It was an amazing feeling to finally be communicating with my child. I am grateful for my friend’s advice because it made me realize that my child was an individual and just like with crawling or walking, when he is ready, he will do it without any pressure from me. It also kept me motivated in teaching my child and of course proved to me that good things really do come for those who wait.

-Melanie from Saudi Arabia
**OUR INSPIRATION**

**CHILDREN**

My 2 year old kid is definitely the little person who is motivating me the most to continue cultivating his bilingual skills. His endless curiosity, responsiveness and enthusiasm for English as well as Italian and the endless opportunities that open up to him daily (reading different books, watching different TV shows, travelling to different countries and getting to know different people) help him to grow up happily in an open, diverse and tolerant multicultural environment, which is what the world is turning into a bit more every single day.

-Fabiola from Italy

**THE MOST HELPFUL ADVICE**

Have patience, do not compare your child with other children. Every child has an individual way of developing their language skills.

-Romana from Sweden

The Parental Guides are important.

-Arthanari from India

Although the website is no longer actively updated, humanities.byu.edu/bilingua/ provided me with invaluable information when I was in a vulnerable spot, considering whether or not to seriously raise my children in English and German.

-Martha from Boston, MA

The best advice I have received from my parents was to keep speaking German with my child and not to give up or stop. They knew too many people who gave up too soon and now their children are grown and can't speak or understand a word of German. It is too sad to lose your heritage that way! This advice has kept me going strong on teaching my child German and I know it will benefit him in the future.

-Sonja from Bothell, WA

I was having a hard time figuring out a way to speak to my son in Spanish and English. I was only reading to him in Spanish but I realized that wasn't enough exposure so my friend who learned Portuguese and English at her school suggested doing half days. I now speak Spanish to him from 12:00-5:00pm. This advice was helpful because my husband was afraid if I spoke to him all the time in Spanish that his first language would be Spanish.

-Suzette from Hurricane, WV

Maintain consistency and never give up.

-Yusreen from Australia

Wow. There are so many examples I could use, but I would have to say that the best is the unexpected compliment that we get “good for you - that is great that you are teaching your children a language other than English - stick with it!” Every time it reaffirms our decision, and perhaps the most valuable comments come from strangers in the grocery store, in the park, etc. Despite running into the occasional naysayer (“Aren’t you afraid they’ll get confused? Don’t you think you should concentrate on just English?”) it turns out that there are a lot of everyday-people out there who value bilingualism/multilingualism!

-Martha from Boston, MA
As a grandma of two lively, trilingually-raised kids, (5-year-old girl, 3-year-old boy) I would like to share my experience with you concerning the problem “raising kids multilingually” from a grandmother’s perspective. First, I would like to introduce myself and my family so that you get an idea of our situation here. It seems to be a little confusing, but for me this situation is quite natural!

We are living in Austria, where German is the majority language. I, the grandma, am born Austrian, my husband was Korean. My daughter is married with a South-American and they are living in the same Austrian village where I live. Therefore, we have very good and frequent contact with each other. I speak with them in German.

My daughter was raised bilingually (German, English) due to the fact that she attended an International School. Now her family language is English. Her husband speaks English with the kids too, but sometimes tells stories in Spanish and sometimes the kids watch DVDs in the Spanish language. In the Kindergarten they only speak German. As a result, the kids have quite a good command of German and English, and a passive knowledge in Spanish.

When the South American abuelita (grandmother) visits us in Austria (which is the case once a year and she stays about four to five weeks), she speaks only Spanish. When talking to her grandchildren she does not pay special attention to the fact that the kids are not that fluent in Spanish yet and I think that is the reason why they can benefit quite a lot from her visit.

Kids understand a language on another level than grown-ups do and they simply pick it up quite naturally. That’s why I think that the language they hear should be natural too. When my daughter was three years old we once visited Korea. The Korean grandparents only spoke Korean with her, though she could not say one word. The grandfather took a walk with her in the garden from time to time and told her old Korean stories. She said that those were the most precious moments during her stay in Korea. She said she could not understand the words at the beginning, but gradually understood the story.

Young (international) parents sometimes worry about the education of their siblings. Should they be raised in one language or bilingually? Aren’t they becoming confused when they hear two different languages? I, a grandma who has considerable experience in the field of raising children bilingually, can only give one piece of advice: take the opportunity to raise your kids in two languages. Don’t feel confused when they mix up languages at the beginning. If every person in the family sticks consequently to one language, the kids will separate and distinguish the languages gradually.

I would like to stress a few points which I think are very important if you, as a grandparent, are living with an international family and the kids are brought up multilingually:

- No matter what language you have chosen to speak to your grandchildren, stick to that one language!
- Speak in correct grammar to your grandchildren, but do so very naturally, as you would speak to someone who knows the language already.
- Do not over-articulate words and speak extra slowly, thinking this way your grandchildren will understand you better. This is not natural!
- When your grandchildren make mistakes, correctly repeat back to them what they said; they must never get the feeling that they are being corrected.
- Use positive reinforcement: praise them for every word they say right instead of making comments on what they didn’t say right.
- Sometimes your grandchildren will answer you in another language than the one you use when speaking to them. Repeat whatever they say calmly in “your” language.
- Rhymes, songs and finger-plays are a good help for your grandchildren to start talking, especially if they do not have any command yet of that language you are using.
- Never ignore your grandchildren, asking their parents over their head “Did she understand what I just said?”
- Don’t feel threatened or left out when one of the parents speaks a language to your grandchild that you don’t understand. If you do feel like this, keep telling yourself that they are not doing this to make you feel bad, but because they want to raise their children in several languages. They simply want the best for your grandchild. The greatest gift you can give them is your support.
- Just be yourself. This is going to become an old shoe in no time.
A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide to Bilingualism

By Colin Baker

Written in a very reader-friendly style, the book is a practical introduction for parents and teachers to bilingualism. Straightforward and realistic answers are given to a comprehensive set of frequently asked questions about bilingualism and bilingual education. Areas covered include family, language, culture, identity, reading, writing, schooling and issues.

“Families around the world raising bilingual and multilingual children will sigh a breath of relief to find Colin Baker’s third edition of A Parents’ and Teachers’ Guide to Bilingualism. With its expert answers and easy-to-read format, this book will be a touchstone for families just getting started as well as those needing guidance along the way. As the world changes quickly, Colin Baker has taken the initiative to seek out and answer the most pressing questions and concerns of today’s bilingual families including questions on dyslexia, multiliteracies and autism with the same ease and expertise that we have come to expect from him.”

Corey Heller, Bilingual/Bicultural Family Network founder and publisher/editor of Multilingual Living Magazine

For more information: www.Multilingual-Matters.com
I remember waking up from an afternoon nap in a typical Korean room, with ondol floor and paper doors. My parents were gone, my brother was gone. I was alone. And so I did what every little child does when she finds herself in unfamiliar surroundings, alone: I opened my mouth and howled. The paper doors were pushed aside, and in came my halmoni, my grandmother. She spoke in a language that sounded harsh and odd to my ears. I did not understand a word she said. She took me in her arms and rocked me back and forth, back and forth, and I could’ve guessed what she said: don’t cry, everything is OK, your parents are returning soon, they just went out to the market for some shopping … but I was so busy sobbing that even if I wanted to, I couldn’t stop.

My grandmother, on seeing that I was not going to be comforted so easily, brought forth food and drinks, and offered each to me in turn. Do you want some rice? No! Some tea? No! A glass of coca cola? No! A banana? No! Some popcorn? No! No! No! I pushed her away. My grandmother sighed and returned each item back to the kitchen. After a while I did not have any more tears and my body racked in dry sobs and hiccups. I stopped crying.

My grandmother gave me two bowls with strange black and white little stones. They were smooth, shiny and round. These were not for eating, but for playing. So I played listlessly with those for a while. Then I grew hungry. I wanted that little white fluffy stuff, which my grandmother had offered me before, but did not know how to tell her. I did not even know what it was called in German. And so I went over to my grandmother, pulled at her sleeves, and gestured. My grandmother was relieved that I finally stopped crying, but could not figure out what I wanted to tell her.

“I want the little white balls,” I told her in German. She replied something in Korean. I didn’t understand.

“I want the little white balls,” I kept repeating, over and over again, my voice increasing to a shout. But she didn’t understand. I motioned eating with my hands. My grandmother’s face brightened. She went to the kitchen and brought a little bowl with seaweed soup and some rice. I pushed the bowls away. “No! I want the white little balls!” I motioned with my hands eating again. My grandmother was clueless. What on earth did the child want? So she pulled everything out again, one by one. The tea. The coke. The banana. And finally, finally the popcorn! I grabbed it and stuffed it into my mouth. My grandmother sat back, relieved, and laughed.

“Igosin pap-kon ida,” she said, pointing to the popcorn.

“Pap-kon ida,” I repeated in between bites. My grandmother nodded, pleased. And then she pointed to the tea cup.

“Cha,” she said.

“Cha.”

“Banana.” She lifted the banana.

“Banane,” I nodded. It’s just like German! Korean really isn’t that difficult at all, I decided.

This was my first lesson in Korean. Many more were to follow.

Half a year later, I was chatting away in Korean with my grandmother as if I had always spoken the language.

Alice Lapuerta is the Managing Editor of Multilingual Living Magazine. She is raising three multilingual children in Austria. She can be reached at editor@multilingualliving.com.
Question: My husband and I are expecting our first child in February, and are planning on raising him/her as a bilingual/trilingual child. I am originally Canadian and speak English as my mother tongue. I grew up in Finland though and therefore speak Finnish perfectly also. I was basically raised bilingual because of my mother being Canadian and my step-father Finnish. My husband on the other hand is Finnish. To make things more complicated we live in Germany. We have decided on the one person-one language way, i.e. I will speak English and my husband Filipino. We think that the child will learn German later on pretty much “automatically” by playing with other children or attending kindergarten. I’ve read a lot on bilingualism/multilingualism, but haven’t come across my problem. In most cases the couple either speaks a third language to each other or live in a country where one of the languages they speak is spoken.

My question is how should my husband and I speak to each other? We usually speak a mixture of both Finnish and English, but I would say that more Finnish. I am afraid of us continuing this way as the only time the child will hear English then is when speaking to me. It is very important to us that the child learns both English and Finnish as otherwise communicating with our families would be very difficult. We are also planning on moving to Canada sometime in the future. We have thought of possibly speaking our own languages to each other, i.e. I speak English to my husband (his English is almost perfect and therefore would not be a problem for him) and he would speak Filipino to me. Does this sound like something that could work? In this case the child would always hear me speaking my language and my husband speaking his. Thank you in advance!

Answer: Same ‘problem’ here, Portuguese and Swedish parents living in English-speaking country, and same ‘problem’ in several other families. I’m not sure that speaking one language to someone and being spoken another works out all that well. I, for one, find it extremely off-putting. If nothing else, your child(ren) will have proof that people don’t need to stick to one language, so why should they bother, say, speaking yours back to you? One strategy we followed in my family was for us parents to use my husband’s language with one another when the children were around (he speaks my language too), because the children were more exposed to my language daily, for most of each day. This felt ‘right’ in some way, but again I’m not so sure that I should recommend it as some kind of ‘fool-proof’ practice. You and your husband can go on speaking both your languages between yourselves, children pay special attention to the language(s) directed to them anyway.

I wish you lots of trilingual fun!
Question: I have a question about One-Parent-One-Language families. Let's take a hypothetical child, Jamie, and her hypothetical parents. Mom and Jamie communicate to each other in French, and Dad and Jamie communicate to each other in Spanish. But what does Jamie do when she wants to address both parents simultaneously? When the family is sitting down at the table, eating dinner, does Jamie look at Mom and say "School was fun today" in French and then look at Dad and say "School was fun today" in Spanish? Wouldn't this get tedious? Wouldn't Jamie quickly tire of (sometimes) having to repeat herself in two languages?

Also, let's say that Jamie comes home from school one day with a bad report card. Mom and Dad call her into the family room and lecture her, in their respective languages. If they're both speaking at the same time (I've learned from experience that lecturing parents tend to do this), does Jamie have trouble comprehending both languages? Wouldn't the confusing languages, her parents' angry tones, and the subject (her bad grades) cause her to tune Mom and Dad out, something that hundreds of kids have done, even when being lectured in one language?

Answer: Jamie wouldn't have to repeat herself if both parents understand both languages, and she knows that they do. She could use either, if she is addressing 'the family', rather than one particular parent. She wouldn't need to interpret one language or the other for the benefit of the parents.

Children that are raised with two (or more) languages from birth are used to being talked to in two languages, and processing both, including simultaneously. That's part of being bilingual. Monolinguals do think that this state of affairs is confusing, as you say, bilinguals don't. And if she tunes out her parents in mid-lecture, she does it because hundreds of kids do it, as you also say, not because of the languages involved. Hope this helps.

Question: I have four-year-old identical twin boys (born Dec 2003) who were born in the UK and raised following the OPOL approach (father English, mother German). When they were 18 months, we moved to the Netherlands, where they attended a Dutch-speaking nursery for 2.5 days a week, while we continued with English and German at home. The boys began speaking Dutch at the nursery, even playing in Dutch at home sometimes or singing songs, i.e. clearly feeling at home in the Dutch language. In Dec 2007, we moved to Germany, where they now attend a Germany-speaking nursery, and their main language is German now. Dad continues to speak only English with them, but is mostly only home in the weekends. There has not been any exposure to Dutch since we moved here, apart from occasionally listening to Dutch children's cds in the car. Our question is now whether you could offer any advice on whether it would make sense to try and keep up their Dutch (maybe finding a Dutch playgroup, Dutch friends), even though we don't speak Dutch at home. Or wether it would make much more sense to try and support English more (which is quickly becoming their minority language through lack of exposure). Is there any point in trying to keep up a language with minimal (once a week) input? Thanks a lot for your help.

Answer: This really depends on your (the family's) plans. I had an almost exactly similar experience in my family, where the children were much more exposed to my language than dad's, all the while living in countries speaking a third language throughout the children's childhood. The children were exposed to a fourth language, German, when we lived in Austria for a period of time. Our decision was to stick to the parents' two languages at home, because we thought they would allow the children to develop their identification with relatives and friends back home -- or back 'homes', in our case... We never thought of keeping up German after we'd left Austria and there were no plans of returning to German-speaking countries. If the children should end up needing German again, we reasoned that they would (re)learn it there and then.

Children will learn any language and any number of languages, so long as they have it clear that the languages matter. Playing and having fun with Dutch-speaking friends can be one way of keeping that language relevant to them, but introducing or reinforcing a language just for the sake of the language itself or just because that language was once relevant may be problematic. I hope this helps!
Pen Pal

What better way to keep language alive than with a real, live pen pal? Do you know a family in your native country who has a child close to your child’s age? Or perhaps one of your nieces or nephews is interested in staying in touch with your child, their cousin? Try to find someone who is close to the same age as your child so that topics of interest can be mutually shared.

If your child is young, start by talking with the other child’s parents. Find out what would be the best form of communication. You can even help your child establish a pen pal situation before she can write. You would just do the writing. It can be via email or hand written. Then later, when your child is able to write herself, she can take over from there.

The thing to watch out for is the language of communication. It is possible that your child and her pen pal will each want to write either in their native languages or in their non-native language. This could mean that one or the other child will lose out in the language benefits. You can work this out by helping to set up things ahead of time. Decide who will write in which language. Perhaps one child will write in their non-native language. Or each week/month one language is used. Keep these ideas in mind when setting up everything.

Word Topics

This game can be played wherever you might be - riding in the car, going for a walk, sitting in the living room, waiting for the bus. It involves thinking of words that fit into a given category. One person thinks of a topic or a category and the others try to think of words which fit. For example, if the person says “pets” then the others might say “dog, cat, bird, horse” etc.

There are numerous topics which can be used for this game. Try not to limit your younger children from coming up with topics as well. The topics which are too constraining just won’t last as long. However, even a topic as basic as dog can be a ton of fun: “fur, eyes, ears, nose, panting, running.” With younger children you may need to help them, especially at the beginning, to understand how the game is played. It isn’t always easy to understand what “topic” or “category” means. A few rounds of the game will certainly start to make sense for them but a specific explanation may still be necessary. You can also draw a picture or use a photo to show the topic.

Night Sky Viewing

Time to get outside and do some star searching! If you don’t know anything about the constellations, here is your chance. Start by getting your hands on a star chart for your hemisphere (the southern hemisphere has a different one than the northern hemisphere). National Geographic has a digital one (www.nationalgeographic.com/stars/chart), print out your own (www.midnightkite.com/starcharts.html) or get one at a local map or science store.

After you have become familiar with your star chart, take your child out for an evening of star-gazing. Use this chance to talk about more than just the stars. Talk about the universe, satellites, the atmosphere, rockets and much more. Try to find as many constellations as you can find. Start with the easiest ones: the Big Dipper, the North Star, Orion. Then move on to the ones which are more difficult to identify.

Go out as much as possible in the evenings and talk about different topics and subjects each time - this will help to add more vocabulary. Or just spend time together without talking much. The time spent together is also extremely important in forming bonds with your child. It isn’t always all about language!
Go Camping!

In the northern hemisphere the weather is starting to warm up which means summer and camping are just around the corner! Get ready for some fabulous summertime language fun with camping trips. Just think of all of the opportunities for using new vocabulary and with the relaxation of a camping trip, everyone is bound to be more open to language immersion.

Start while packing for the trip: talk with your children about items that should be packed such as shorts, suntan lotion, hats, sandals, sunglasses, sleeping bags, tent. On the way to your camping site, talk about the surroundings: trees, lakes, ocean, meadows. And once there try to incorporate your language into as much as possible. Even if your children complain that they don’t want to speak the language (or even have you speak it) during the trip, do it anyway but with gentle encouragement. You want to make sure that having a good camping trip is the main goal. If worse comes to worst, even if you don’t have the opportunity to get your children talking, spending time with your children is key to a healthy bilingual and bicultural relationship. If they enjoy spending time with you then hearing your language will be less of an issue to them.

Put it Together

In this game your children need to come up with as many word connections as possible. Have one person call out a word that can be combined with other words. For example, the word “book” can be used as: book worm, book shelf, library book, to book a flight, telephone book, etc. Have your children come up with as many combinations as possible until they can’t think of anymore. Then choose another word and see what everyone can come up with. Encourage your children to come up with words which you have to combine. It can be a verb or noun. For example, “look” can be used in looking glass, lookout point, looking good, etc. You can take things one step further by having your children explain what each word combination means. This adds to their language comprehension. For even more language learning, have your children write down the word as well as all of the word combinations. This will help their written vocabulary as well as penmanship skills.

Ethnic Cooking

A fabulous and fun way to introduce your children to other cultures is via their stomachs! Look up some recipes from other cultures and have your child help you prepare them. Obviously you will want to pick out recipes which are easy enough to keep your child’s interest. Here are two mouth watering sites: ethnicrecipes.us/ and homecooking.about.com/od/ethnicrecipesandfoods/Ethnic_Recipes_and_Foods.htm.

Make sure you set things up in your kitchen so that your child can really get involved. Find a solid, safe chair so that he can reach the countertop (or move everything to a low table at his height). Explain each ingredient to your child. Have him feel it and/or smell it as well as taste it if it makes sense. Make the whole experience one of personal warmth and enjoyment as you also incorporate your vocabulary. Remember, the more questions your child asks, the better. So make sure to set aside enough time and patience to take things slowly. The last thing your child needs in a cooking experience is a frustrated, hectic parent who is speaking their language in a rough tone. Save that for when it really matters.

Once the dish is done, taste it together with your child. Talk about the flavors present (can he taste the different ingredients which went into the dish?) as well as how much fun it was to cook together! Spending this language time together will be remembered for a lifetime!
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Kladdkaka

Swedish for ‘sticky cake.’
A delicious recipe for a gooey chocolate cake!

Ingredients:
100g butter – melted
250g sugar
2 eggs
60g flour
50g cocoa
1 teaspoon vanilla
Some salt

Directions:
Heat the oven to 160 degrees C.
Mix dry ingredients together.
Mix butter, sugar and eggs together until creamy. Add to the dry ingredients and stir.

Bake 20 min.
Don’t overbake, it has to be soft and creamy inside!

Serve with ice cream or whipping cream

NOTE: Your final Kladdkaka will not necessarily be as liquid inside as the photo shows.
INFORM YOURSELF!

From research to anecdotes. Whether you are raising your children in two languages or more, these books could be just what you need to stay inspired and informed in your language journey.

**Bilingualism in Development - Language, Literacy, & Cognition, by Ellen Bialystok**

How do bilingual children learn two languages? How is their language acquisition different from monolingual children? And what happens during early development? In order to provide answers, Ellen Bialystok's *Bilingualism in Development* assesses an impressive range of research on bilingual children's language development. Bialystok examines issues in language acquisition, language and the mind, literacy, as well as children's cognitive and metalinguistic skills, and analyzes the influence of bilingualism on all these areas. While it is not exactly a practical how-to handbook for parents, the book makes a valuable read due to its thorough overview of the various scientific studies that have been made on the subject.


**Noa's Ark: One Child's Voyage into Multiliteracy, by David Schwarzer**

In *Noa's Ark: One Child's Voyage into Multiliteracy,* David Schwarzer introduces us to his daughter, Noa, as he documents her way through literacy in her three languages: Hebrew, English and Spanish. He smoothly outlines Noa's language progression from a familial level as well as sheds light on the over arching complexities involved in the process. We are given a glimpse into ways in which multilinguals use their languages in different contexts and how school and home impact their language use in different ways.

The author makes a successful effort to explain the role that Noa's classroom played in her multiliteracy. In many ways the classroom experience was far from constructive and the teachers ill-prepared for Noa's multiliteracy. Yet with the author's attentiveness and inquiry, Noa was able to benefit from the language opportunities which her school offered. Readers should note that this book is part personal anecdotes, part subjective observation and is not a book written to teach parents specifically how to raise a multiliterate child. Information gleaned from this book must be obtained through Noa’s own personal experiences in her unique circumstance as well as her father’s interpretations and analysis.


InfoRM Yourself! From research to anecdotes. Whether you are raising your children in two languages or more, these books could be just what you need to stay inspired and informed in your language journey.
**Minutka**  
**The Bilingual Dog**

She’s cute, she’s funny, she’s friendly and she’s bilingual! Minutka may be tiny but she is full of spirit and charm while living with her two languages. My six, four and three year old children delighted in Minutka’s antics: as she digs in the dirt, drinks from the sprinkler, runs in circles, swims in the pond, dances like a ballerina and definitely when she “leaves a little present.” Being bilingual is not strange for Minutka - it is just a splendid part of her joyful life. She even dreams in more than one language - what a lucky dog!

This adorable book from Anna Mycek-Wodecki is printed in shades of grey, white and black, which is surprising at first as it lacks the traditional splashes of primary colors which we have come to expect from Milet books. Yet with nothing fancy to distract your little readers, they can focus on tiny Minutka who is front and center on each page. This book is offered bilingually in English-Spanish, English-Chinese, English-French, English-Italian, English-Polish, and English-Turkish.

Make sure to enter our drawing and win your very own copy: [www.biculturalfamily.org/drawing.html](http://www.biculturalfamily.org/drawing.html).

**Website:** [www.milet.com](http://www.milet.com)  
**Cost:** $9.95 / £6.99.

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**Speekee**  
**Where language learning begins**

Kids love Speekee! From the first moment my kids saw Speekee’s face appear on the screen, they were giggling with delight. His sweet voice and adorable wide ears have a way of making children love learning Spanish. Speekee makes it so fun and easy! Everyone will enjoy it with Speekee. Even my 3 year old has become Speekee’s biggest fan! We definitely recommend Speekee for families who are looking for language exposure for their preschool and early grade school children.

The Speekee language-learning package comes complete with 4 DVDs, one audio CD and a 70 page guide. Each DVD is packed with many fun episodes. Each episode is short and varied - perfect for the attention spans of young children. The DVD language guide is very helpful, especially for those parents who don’t know Spanish very well. It is amazing how many subjects are covered on each DVD! Luckily for Speekee, she doesn’t do this all alone. He shares his time with Spanish-speaking children, his friend Jim, and two lovely hand puppets.

**Website:** [www.speekee.co.uk](http://www.speekee.co.uk)  
**Cost:** £95.00 (individual); £275.00 (school package)
**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

Presentations, workshops, conferences and more for your learning pleasure!

### CONFERENCES & SEMINARS

**March 6-8, 2008**  
CABE 2008: 33rd Annual Conference  
“Bilingual Education: Connecting Cultures, Reclaiming our Future”  
San José McEnery Convention Center  
San José, California, USA  
[www.bilingualeducation.org/conferences_annual.php](http://www.bilingualeducation.org/conferences_annual.php)

**March 17-18, 2008**  
International Language Teaching Conference  
“Seeking most effective methods at different levels organisation methodology, tools”  
Independent University of Business, Public Administration and Computer Technology  
Warsaw, Poland  

**March 17-19, 2008**  
1st International Conference - Filipino as Global Language: Future Directions and Prospects  
University of Hawaii at Manoa  
Manoa, Hawaii, USA  

**March 17-19, 2008**  
International Conference on Foreign Language Teaching and Learning 2008  
Institute of Modern Languages and Communications (IMLC), Multimedia University  
“Innovating Minds, Communicating Ideas: Reinventing Language Teaching & Learning”  
Hilton Petaling Jaya Hotel, Malaysia  
[imcicon.mmu.edu.my/](http://imcicon.mmu.edu.my/)

**April 1-4, 2008**  
III Simpósio Internacional sobre Análise do Discurso. O Núcleo de Análise do Discurs (NAD) e o Programa de Pós-Graduação da Faculdade de Letras da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais  
“Nele serão enfatizados as Emoções, o Ethos e a Argumentação.”  
Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, Brazil  
[www.ufmg.br/inscricoes/simposioad/index.html](http://www.ufmg.br/inscricoes/simposioad/index.html)

**April 10-12, 2008**  
The 36th Annual NMABE State Bilingual Conference  
“Language and Culture Alive for the Next 35”  
The Embassy Suites Hotel  
Albuquerque, NM, USA  
[www.nmabe.net/nmabe_conference/index.html](http://www.nmabe.net/nmabe_conference/index.html)

**April 12, 2008**  
The Annual Multicultural Education Conference  
The Department of Bilingual and Multicultural Education hosts a multicultural conference directed towards K-12 teachers, student teachers, administrators, university educators, paraprofessionals, community members, activists, parents, and all others interested in multicultural and social justice issues.”  
**This conference is free**  
California State University, Sacramento, USA  
[edweb.csus.edu/bmed/conference/index.html](http://edweb.csus.edu/bmed/conference/index.html)

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**Send us information!**

Are you giving a presentation, workshop or seminar on bi/multilingualism or bi/multiculturalism? Know about an upcoming conference or event which would be of interest? Send information to:  
[editor@multilingualliving.com](mailto:editor@multilingualliving.com)
Emergent Literacy:

Did You Know?

“Reading aloud to young children is so critical that the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that doctors prescribe reading activities along with other advice given to parents at regular check ups.”


Basic findings: What children need to acquire in order to learn to read:

◆ The ability to distinguish pictures from print.
◆ An awareness that once something is written it says the same thing no matter who reads it.
◆ An awareness of the left to right and the top to bottom progression of text.
◆ The knowledge that there are spaces between words.
◆ A familiarity with the configuration or basic structure of words.
◆ An awareness of the function of letters in the formation of words.
◆ The ability to pretend read, to tell the story from the pictures or from memory.
◆ Phonetic awareness, the understanding of the relationship between letters or groups of letters and the sounds they represent.
◆ The recognition of individual words.

Tips for parents to encourage children to learn to read:

1. Select age appropriate books from the public library or bookstore and read them with your children from birth for at least 30 minutes a day.
2. Talk about or discuss the book, pictures and ideas before reading the book.
3. Point out or ask questions about what the child sees before reading the page.
4. Pause so that the child can fill in a predictable word or phrase.
5. Make comments or carry on a conversation which relates the story to the child’s real personal experiences. Include books in the toy box so children can choose to look at them anytime.
6. Extend stories and written language into activities that relate to the child’s everyday life and have meaning.
7. Provide models in daily life to validate and give meaning to the printed word.
8. Fill your house with newspapers, books, magazines, signs, recipe cards, grocery lists, food labels, and calendars.
9. Provide many opportunities for children to interact with print like the items above and to handle manipulatives such as alphabet letters, word games, and toys.
10. Make frequent trips to your local public library to borrow print materials for your child, to borrow parenting books and videos and to attend family programs with your babies and preschool children.

Books and Videos:


World Wide Web:

Read me a story; reading checkup guide. American Academy of Pediatrics.

Reprinted with permission from the Urbana Free Library website:

Multiple languages, multiple cultures, multiple identities. It is difficult not to wonder how all of these languages and cultures influence our identities. Do they create confusion inside of us? Do we feel like we belong in two different worlds? Colin Baker reminds us not to worry - you’re normal!

MULTIPLE IDENTITIES & SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

“The identity of second language learners has hitherto sometimes been seen as relatively stable and enduring, essential to a cohort ‘core’ in an individual’s psyche. Just like IQ and personality traits, identity was seen as fairly fixed. A contemporary view is that identity is multiple, complex, context contingent, varied, overlapping, sometimes fragmented and even contradictory across different contexts. Our identities constantly develop and change, across time and across situations. We are made and remade in our conversations across time, place and person.

Language learning may change how we think of ourselves, how others see us, and importantly (in turn) how we then confirm their expectations in our behavior. Acquiring a second language goes beyond linguistic competence to having the potential to be heard in that language, the means to address an audience in that language on chosen stages, and to mix with other actors using that language. Language learning is not just a cognitive activity operating in the mind, but is also about becoming part of a new language community and developing multiple identities.

An important component in being accepted as a speaker is our other identities (e.g. gender, race, religion) that interact with being a second language learner. A second language learners’ identity is multiple and goes well beyond language to gender, social class, ethnicity, sexuality, age, creed, lifestyle, networks and many other constantly changing scenarios. Sometimes, despite achieving linguistic proficiency in a second language, access to a language community is difficult, as other dimensions of identity (e.g. race, gender, social class) bar easy (or any) access.”


NEGOTIATING IDENTITIES

“At one end of an ‘identity adjustment’ dimension are children who learn to switch between two cultures as easily as they switch between two languages. They are Spanish in Spain and English in England; a Hebrew-speaking Jew in Israel, a Yiddish-speaking Jew in the home in New York and an English-speaking American at school. For some, there are few problems of cultural mixing or identity. Theirs is biculturalism fully flowered, easily exhibited and much admired by all who view. They are not a hyphenated person (e.g. Irish-Canadian) but are fully Irish and Canadian.

Then there are those who celebrate being ‘hyphenated’; a blend of two or more national identities, for example, the Anglo-French, Swedish-Finn, Chinese-American bilingual. This hyphenated variety is neither purely French nor English, nor solely Finnish or Swedish, neither Chinese nor purely Canadian. The bilingual, bicultural child has a broadened repertoire of custom and culture that allows high self-esteem, a positive self-concept, and a potential for choosing for oneself which cultures to accent in the future.

Close to this are those whose identity is securely rooted within their language culture. Welsh speakers, for example, primarily belong to their language minority and belong to a larger group (e.g. British or European) sometimes with reluctance, sometimes marginally. Welsh speakers often regard themselves as Welsh first and foremost, English definitely not, British possibly and European increasingly. For such people there is little identity crisis as there are strong roots in a minority language culture.

At the other end of the ‘identity adjustment’ dimension are those who experience rootlessness or dislocation between two cultures. For example, with older in-migrants, there is sometimes a passive reaction, isolation, numbness and loss of a rooted identity. In younger in-migrants, there can be an aggressive reaction, having lost the identity of home and heritage, and finding it difficult to penetrate the thick walls to enter the new host culture. For some in-migrants, there may be a sense of rootlessness, confusion of identity, feeling neither one ethnic identity nor the other.