



Supporting Bilingual Children: What Parents Need to Know

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BILINGUAL BICULTURAL EDUCATION

Why become bilingual?

- ▶ Bilingual people will be able to meet people from different countries and make friendships that span continents.
- ▶ On average bilingual people make \$3000 more annually. Over 40 years, that's \$128,000 more than monolingual peers (Burton, 2018).
- ▶ Becoming bilingual alters your brain! It improves attention, problem solving abilities, the ability to inhibit information, and more (Knoll & Dussias, 2017).
- ▶ Bilingualism slows down cognitive decay. Bilingual people, if diagnosed with diseases such as Alzheimer's, are diagnosed an average of 4 years later than people that only speak one language (Bailystok, 2011).





*"The limits of my
language mean the
limits of my world"*

Ludwig Wittgenstein

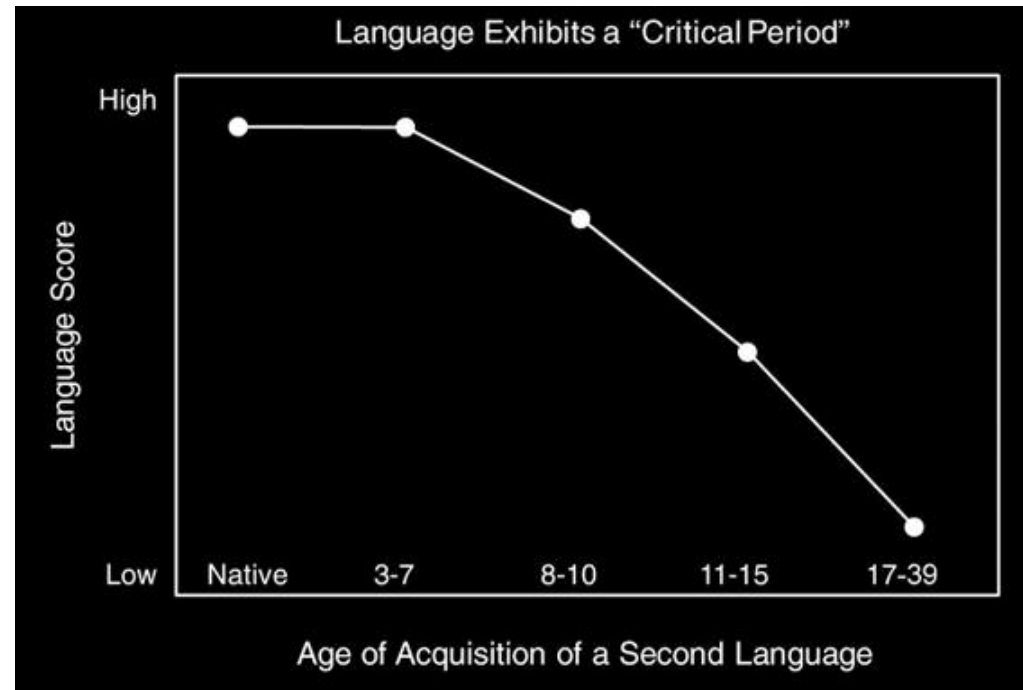
Go beyond your language limit

+Babbel

Is learning a language easier when you're younger?



Critical Period of Language Development



(Kuhl, 2011)

What this means for your child:

- ▶ Your children are currently in the “critical period” of language development and are more aware of different linguistic systems.
- ▶ What they are learning now will benefit them far into their futures.



Myths and Misconceptions

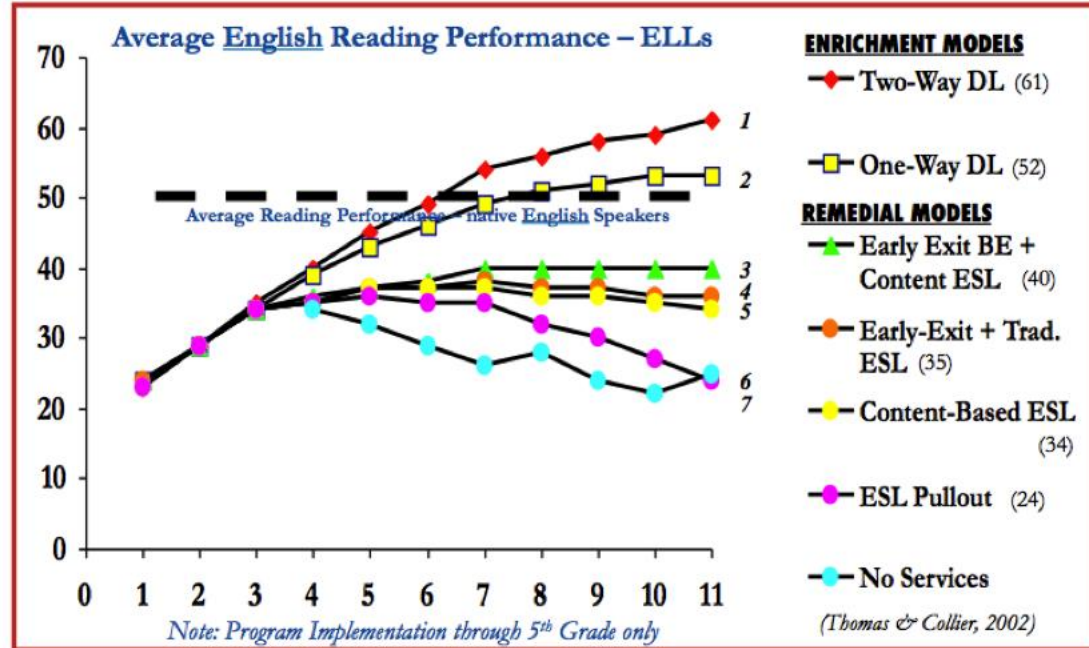
SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION EXPLAINED

Will learning two languages confuse my child?

- ▶ "A child shouldn't learn a new language until they master their first."
- ▶ "Kids need to learn the community language first so they don't get confused."
- ▶ "My child is using both languages and must be confused" (Codeswitching)

Will my child fall behind academically?

PATTERNS OF LOW-SES ELLs' LONG-TERM ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH READING ON STANDARDIZED TESTS (similar pattern for each SES group)



Study included over 700,000 minority language students in 5 large districts across the country. Findings were validated by comparing to school systems in 26 states during the following 2 years.

Reading skills

- ▶ Learning to read first in Spanish can also benefit English speakers.
- ▶ Spanish is phonetic and syllabic.



(Cummins, 1981)

The Dual Iceberg Model

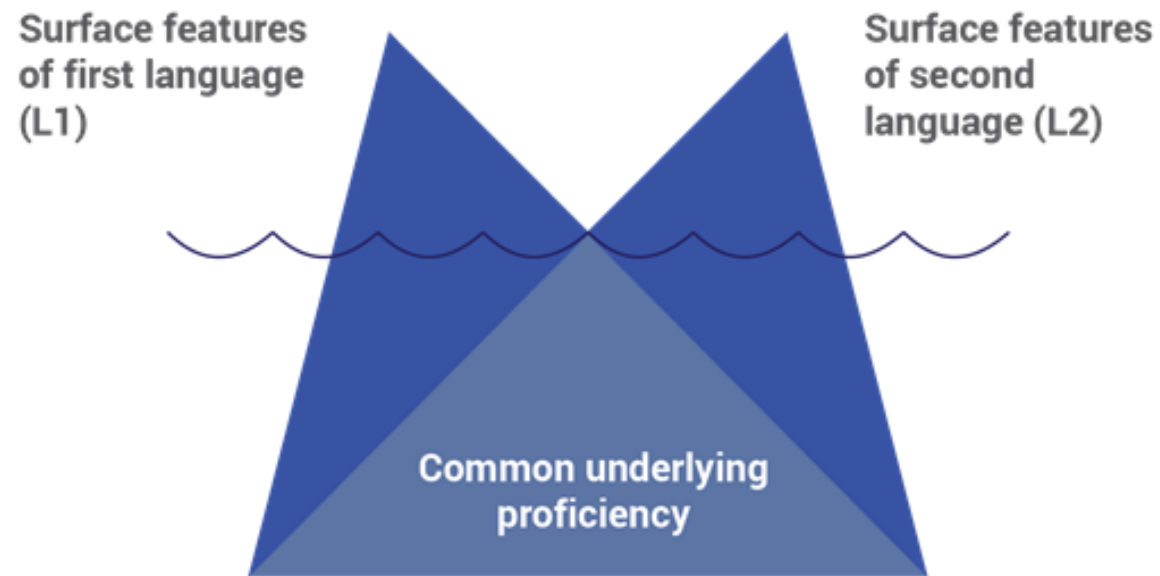


Photo from The Bell Foundation: <https://ealresources.bell-foundation.org.uk/eal-specialists/research-1970s-onwards-jim-cummins>



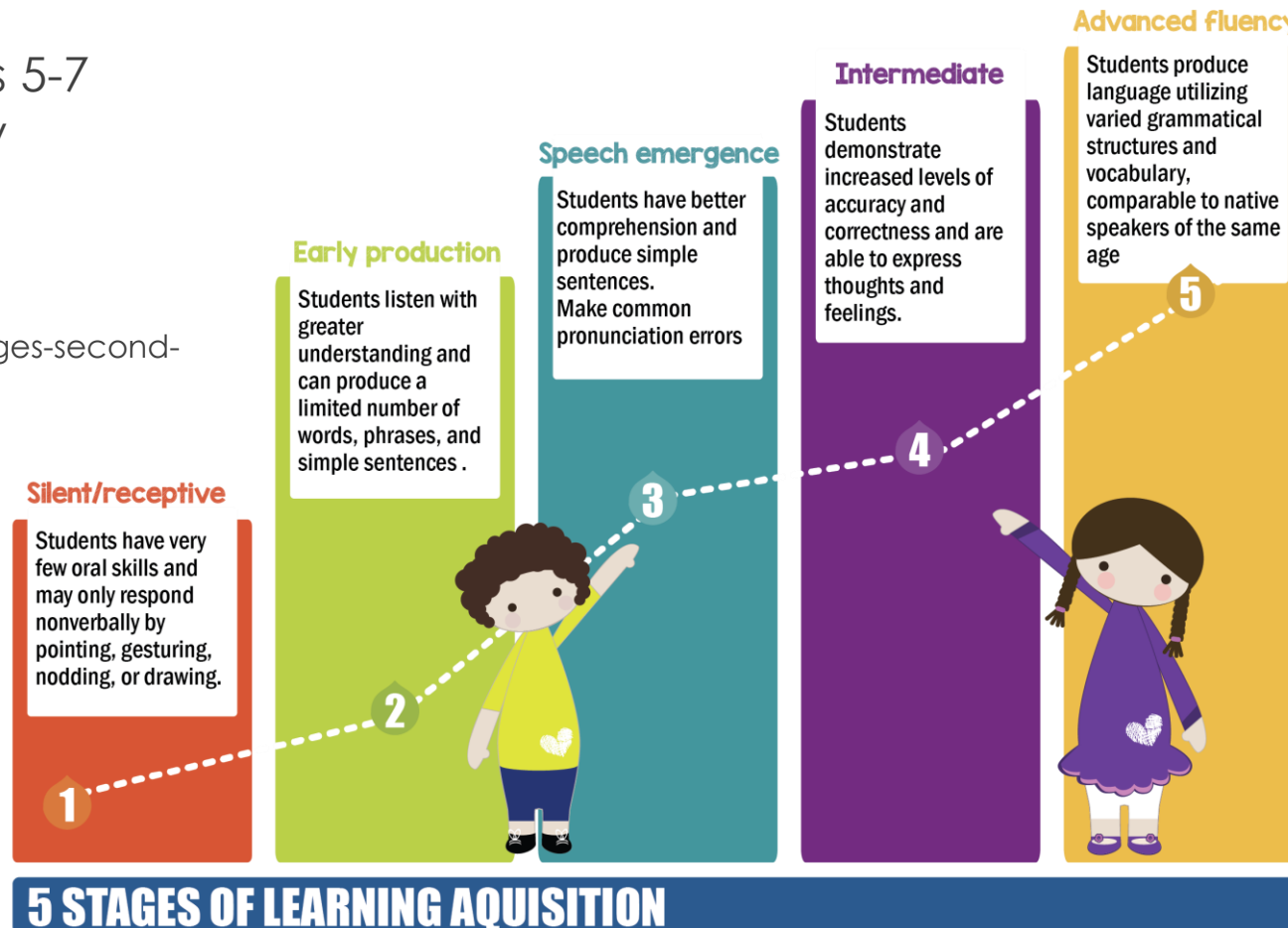
How long, on average, will it take for my kids to learn a new language?

- ▶ 0-1 years?
- ▶ 1-3 years?
- ▶ 3-5 years?
- ▶ 5-7 years?

Learning a new language takes time.

On average, it takes 5-7 years to learn a new language.

<http://michuchutren.com/stages-second-language-acquisition/>



Simultaneous v Sequential Bilinguals



Simultaneous bilingual learner

A student who is acquiring two languages in the home (a caregiver or sibling speaks one language while the other caregiver or sibling speaks a different language).



Sequential bilingual learner

A student who has developed one language and is adding a second language in school (i.e., the student's home language differs from the language of the school system). Sequential bilingual learners include newcomer and immigrant students, who may have been schooled outside of the United States.

Fluency depends on age

A five year old that is fluent in English and Spanish will show characteristics of a normal, native speaker five year old.

What this means: They will still make mistakes! Compare their language to native speakers that are the same age.

Speech Milestones

Age	Milestone
1 to 6 months	Coos in response to voice
6 to 9 months	Babbling
10 to 11 months	Imitation of sounds; says "mama/dada" without meaning
12 months	Says "mama/dada" with meaning; often imitates two- and three-syllable words
13 to 15 months	Vocabulary of four to seven words in addition to jargon; < 20% of speech understood by strangers
16 to 18 months	Vocabulary of 10 words; some echolalia and extensive jargon; 20% to 25% of speech understood by strangers
19 to 21 months	Vocabulary of 20 words; 50% of speech understood by strangers
22 to 24 months	Vocabulary > 50 words; two-word phrases; dropping out of jargon; 60% to 70% of speech understood by strangers
2 to 2 ½ years	Vocabulary of 400 words, including names; two- to three-word phrases; use of pronouns; diminishing echolalia; 75% of speech understood by strangers
2½ to 3 years	Use of plurals and past tense; knows age and sex; counts three objects correctly; three to five words per sentence; 80% to 90% of speech understood by strangers
3 to 4 years	Three to six words per sentence; asks questions, converses, relates experiences, tells stories; almost all speech understood by strangers
4 to 5 years	6 - 8 words per sentence; names four colors; counts to 10 correctly



Milestones for Bilingual Language Development

Simultaneous Acquisition of two languages

Age	Stage	Milestone	Red Flag
Birth - 2 months	Undifferentiated	Cooing	
2 - 6 months	Undifferentiated	Babbling	No bilabial sounds
6 - 15 months	Undifferentiated	First Words (might appear later than monolinguals but are still within normal range)	Less than one word per week
1 - 2 years	Undifferentiated	Language Blend (parts of words from both languages are blended into the same word)	Less than 20 words in both language combined by 20 months
2 - 3 years	Undifferentiated	Language mixing (words from both languages used in the same phrase and/or adapted to the grammar one of the languages)	A countable number of words by 30 months. No word combinations.





Supporting your children at home

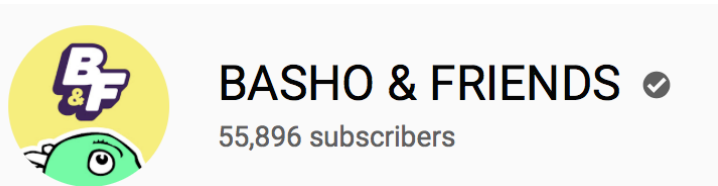
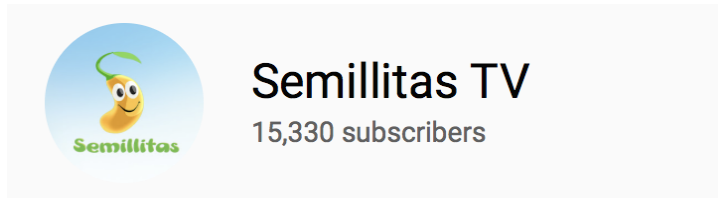
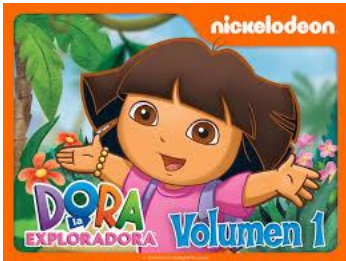
TIPS TO HELP THEM LEARN A NEW LANGUAGE

Read!

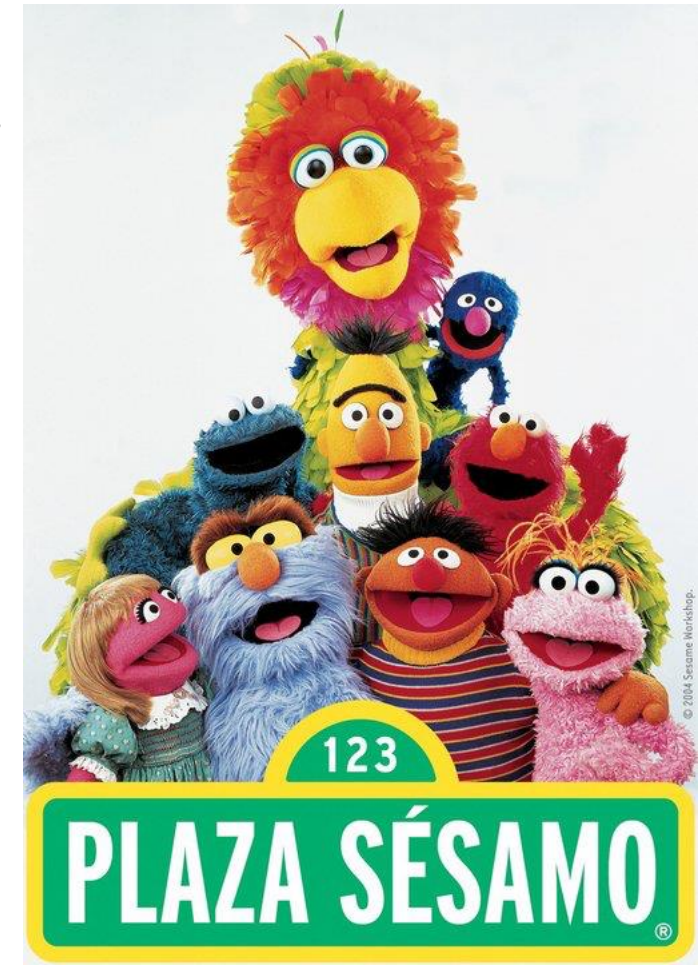
- ▶ It doesn't matter what language you read in.
- ▶ Children will transfer what they learn (concepts, numbers, etc) to their new language.
- ▶ Concepts about print transfer between languages.

Use technology

- ▶ Find Spanish shows, apps, and songs to listen to with your children.



Endless Spanish



Become involved

- ▶ Communicate with teachers
- ▶ Volunteer
- ▶ Community events
 - ▶ Emma Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center
 - ▶ Community Theater (Scottish Rite Theater)
 - ▶ Culture nights



Questions?