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会议手册

FORUM SERVICE MANUAL



Creating opportunities for confident and curious learners: the importance of multilingual teachers in ECE learning environments

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Overview

- Why expose our young learners to a second language?
 1. Can develop cognitive agility
 2. Opportunities in a globalized world
 3. Maintain heritage language
- How do young children learn language?
- We need ECE teachers with ...
- Conclusion
- References

A male gymnast in a red leotard is performing a handstand on rings. He is holding two rings with both hands, and his body is extended horizontally. He is wearing white and blue wristbands on both wrists. The background is black.

Bidigitally and agile
multilinguals are
like gymnasts

Why is this?

Can develop cognitive agility

- Bilinguals and multilinguals are used to:
- Switching between meanings & phonemes

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- Dealing with conflicts between languages (Diamond, 2010)
- Stronger focus - filter out misleading or unimportant information (Engel de Abreu et al., 2012)
- Identify the key aspects of a problem

Opportunities in a globalized world

- “With the increase in globalization, countries around the world have a strong need for citizens and residents who are proficient in languages other than the dominant language of the country ... and who have knowledge and the ability to function effectively in other cultures and with individuals from diverse cultures” (Seals & Peyton, 2017, p. 88)
- This does *not* mean just English
- Mandarin, Cantonese, Farsi, Spanish, Arabic etc. could be the *second* language required in an ECE context
- If our children can acquire another language, it will create opportunities for them and their communities

Maintenance of a heritage language for migrants (1)

- Heritage language broadly defined as a language (other than the dominant language) with which a person has a **cultural connection**
- Migrants from all over the world are working / living in new cultural and linguistic contexts
- Want their children to learn their heritage language

In NZ
150+ languages spoken



CANADA





A U S T R A L I A



Maintenance of a heritage language for migrants (2)

- It is vital that subsequent generations learn these heritage languages
- Maintain cultural identity & communicate in ethnic community, with grandparents (Park & Sarkar, 2007)
- Positive self-identity (to feel good about who they are, where they come from)
- Learning with parents may not be enough
- Need support of schools, ECE centres

How do young children learn a language?

- Too young to study grammar and memorize words (Tough, 1977)
- *Acquire* language (not *study* it)
- Need a naturalistic setting – *not* taught
- Focus on communication skills where “the language is the medium of instruction not the object” (Jalkanen, 2009, p.98)
- Results from immersion programmes suggest positive communicative outcomes (Jalkanen, 2009)
- if an immersive programme is *not* possible we can at least get our young learners started

We need ECE teachers with

- ... confidence, empathy, passion and ...
- ... language skills
- You, the ECE educators of this world are the 2nd most important people in our society
- The most important, of course, are our kids
- Thank you for your attention



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