



Workshop 6:

Language and Literacy in Every Culture



Workshop Outcomes

1. Understand some of the challenges children face when they are learning a second language - and how we can help them overcome those challenges.
2. Gain new ideas for supporting the parents of children from other cultures/with different languages.



Language Development

The same rules apply to a child learning a second language as they do to a first.

Parents and child care practitioners need to sound out words, label things using those words, and talk with the child all the time. The child has to *hear* the language because children learn more words in the language they hear most often.



Children learning a second language may:

Need a “settling-in” period

A toy or puppet may help to make the child feel safe in a new language environment. Routines might also help so they always know what to expect and can follow easily.

Be very quiet at first

This is normal. They are absorbing the sounds of the new language. The more they hear a word - especially when you can “show” them what it means - the sooner they will understand its meaning and the faster they will use it.



Help!

Community resources

Parents

Peers



Cultural Diversity

“Because each family has its own values, beliefs and child-rearing approaches, communication and understanding are difficult at the best of times. When families and child care providers come from different cultures, it becomes even more difficult to make a meaningful connection.”

Barbara Kaiser and Judy Sklar Rasminsky,
Partners in Quality: Relationships



For Successful 2nd Language Acquisition:

1. Children need regular and abundant exposure to both the first and the second language to become successfully bilingual.
2. Learning to read and write in the first language supports success with reading and writing in the second language.
3. Maintaining the first or home language is just as important as learning a second language in supporting a child's cultural identity and ties with family.
4. Caregivers must be careful to acknowledge both languages as equally important and valuable.



Parents

“Parents are so keen for the children to learn English, they do not see the value of speaking the home language with their child.”

www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk