

Basic tools used to teach all children to communicate

- **Exposure-** Exposure means providing the child with the opportunity to hear various aspects of a spoken language. Being exposed to the different words, sentence forms and structures in the language is very important for language development.
- **Repetition-** Hearing a word or concept over and over increases the likelihood of a child remembering it and using it themselves.
- **Modelling-** When adults speak to children, they are providing the child with an example or model of how language can be used. This shows the child how sentences are structured and how different words can be used to express the same idea.
- **Imitation-** Children learn to communicate by copying those around them.

References:

Bedore, L.M., & Pena, E.D. (2008). Assessment of bilingual children for identification of language impairment: current findings and implications for practice. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 11(1), 1-29.

Genesee, F. (2001). Bilingual first language acquisition: exploring the limits of the language faculty. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 153-168.

Paul, R. (2001). *Language disorders from infancy through adolescence: Assessment and intervention*. (2nd ed.). St Louis, Missouri: Mosby.

Pert, S. & Letts, C. (2005). Code-switching in Mirpuri speaking Pakistani heritage preschool children: Bilingual language acquisition. *The international journal of bilingualism*, 10(3), 349-374.

Stow, C. & Dodd, B. (2003). Providing an equitable service to bilingual children in the UK. *The International Journal of Language and communication disorders*, 38(4), 351-377.

This brochure was created by:
Tasneem Abdul-Samad, Emily Batterham,
Lauren Caldwell, Stephanie Fornaro, Sana
Mahkri and Justina Su
(4th year Speech Pathology students)
under the supervision of Gillian Steel,
La Trobe University 2008



Myths about bilingualism: What you need to know as a kindergarten teacher



MYTH: Bilingual children are more prone to language disorders than monolingual children and their brains cannot cope with more than one language.



FACT: Research shows that bilingual children are not at a greater risk of developing a language disorder than monolingual children.

Sometimes we notice that a bilingual child speaks one language more fluently than the other language. This is not necessarily a cause for panic!

Research shows that a child's proficiency in a language is related to the amount of exposure they receive to the language. A bilingual child is likely to be dominant in whichever language they hear more.

MYTH: Code-switching (using two languages interchangeably) in bilingual children is a reflection of a poor grasp of either language

FACT: Bilingual children develop two separate systems for their languages and are able to keep these languages separate. When the need arises, they are able to 'borrow' words or phrases from their other language. Code-switching is a very natural and functional tool used by the bilingual population. Bilingual pre-school children engage in code-switching often, and are more likely to code-switch if they see their parents switching between languages.



MYTH: Bilingual children have language development milestones that vary greatly from those of monolingual children.

FACT: The underlying mechanisms through which bilingual children learn to communicate have been found to be similar to those of monolingual children.



They normally develop at the same rate as monolingual children!

Listed on the following page are basic tools used to teach all children to communicate. There is no evidence in the literature that suggests that language development milestones vary greatly between bilingual and monolingual children.