Multilingualism in Speech & Language Therapy

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Reading Multilingual Matters
Who am I?

- Mum!
- Multilingual speaker
- **Speech and Language Therapist**
- **Bilingual Specialist**
- Advisor for Royal College of SLT
- Learning facilitator
- Private practice for SLT in NW London
FACTS ABOUT LANGUAGES

- There Are Approximately 200 Countries In The World And Approximately 6912 Living Languages.
- There Are Over 300 Languages Spoken In London Schools (Literacy Trust 2000)
- 59% Of SlT’s Working With A Paediatric Caseload In England Have At Least One Bilingual Child On Their Caseload. 11% Have Twenty Or More. (Winter 1999)
- The Main Languages In Brent Are Gujarati, Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Tamil, Somali, & Portuguese.
TYPICAL REACTIONS OF SLT’S WORKING WITH BILINGUAL CLIENTS....
Ref: Jane Stokes “Strategies for working with clients from multi-cultural backgrounds”
LANGUAGES FROM SLT TEAM

Afrikaans
Albanian
Arabic
Aruba (Nigerian)
Ashanti (African)
Bangladeshi
Bengali
Bini (Nigerian)
BSL
Bulgarian
Burnese
Cantonese
Czech
Dagbani (Ghana)
English
Farsi
Finnish
French
German
Gujerati
Hausa (Canada)
Hebrew
Hindi
Hungarian
Igbo (Nigerian)
Italian
Konkani (south Indian)
Kurdish
Lingala (Central Africa)
Lithuanian
Lukiga (Hindi)
Malayalam (South India)
Manadrin
Marathi
Ndebele (Zulu)
Pashto
Persian (Iranian)
Philippino
Polish
Portuguese
Punjabi
Romanian
Russian
Serbian
Shona
Singhalese
Slovak
Somali
Spanish
Swedish
Tagalog (Malay)
Tamil
Telugu (South India)
Tigrinya (Ethiopia)
Tswana (Botswana)
Tulu (Karanataka India)
Turkish
Twi (Ghana)
Ukrainian
Urdu
Yoruba (West Africa)
Finding out what languages are used....

- Helps you support development of setting language (English/welsh)
- Helps develop relationships with children and their families
- Helps you identify if children are having difficulties
- Helps communication with parents and families
- Promotes children and families feeling included
- Enables you to support home language development
Dispelling Myths

Children learning more than one language should be encouraged not to mix words from both languages in one sentence.

FALSE
Dispelling Myths

Parents should be encouraged to speak to their child in English

FALSE
Dispelling Myths

Bilingualism places extra demands on a child who is learning a language.

FALSE
Dispelling Myths

Bilingualism can benefit a child’s overall academic progress.

TRUE
IMPORTANT TO NOTE….

Supporting the bi/multilingual child does not demand different principles, but it is the application of these principles which can be challenging.
AIM OF ASSESSMENT

The main aim of assessing children from a bilingual community is to diagnose between a language acquisition problem affecting all language learning and a problem affecting the acquisition of an Additional Language.
## Different ways to work together

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Using specialist skills</th>
<th>Learning from specialists</th>
<th>Joint activities</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>• Direct work/specific advice for children</td>
<td>• Training</td>
<td>• Resource development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Helping with assessments</td>
<td>• General advice</td>
<td>• Policy development</td>
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<td>• Making links with parents and other agencies</td>
<td>• Demonstration</td>
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<td>• Adapting resources</td>
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<td>• Consultancy</td>
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<td>• Opportunities for observation</td>
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The Communication Trust
Every child understood
WHAT DOES RCSLT SAY?

“Providing intervention in the individual’s mother tongue and support the family in their use of mother tongue when necessary/appropriate, i.e. when it is the individual's preferred/dominant language. Language choice should be discussed and agreed with families.” (Pg 269-270 CQ3)
BILINGUAL ADVICE

- It is important that you continue to use all languages introduced to the child.

- Do not be concerned about mixing different languages in one sentence. This is natural for a bilingual speaker.
The focus should be helping the child feel successful in giving and receiving a message. Continue speaking your chosen language/s to your child even if he or she speaks back to you in a different language. If the child responds the message has been understood.

Use short phrases with lots of gesture and facial expression, as well as expression in your voice. This will help the child understand the meaning behind the words.
Cultural Competence – LEARN model

- Listen
- Explain
- Acknowledge
- Recommend
- Negotiate

Berlin EA. & Fowkes WC, Jr.: A teaching framework for cross-cultural health care--Application in family practice
Value the child…

- Recognise the central role of relationships in learning and teaching
- Understand and empathise with the social political factors that impact on children’s lives
- Know something about the children’s language and their cultural and religious traditions
- Build confidence and self esteem
- Value diversity and bilingualism
- Encourage children to learn actively and collaboratively
- Prepare to learn from the children
- Recognise parents, carers and families as key partners
- Incorporate child’s own interest.
ONLINE RESOURCES

- www.londonsigbilingualism.co.uk
- www.speechtherapy.co.uk
- www.bilingualism.co.uk
- www.edu.bham.ac.uk/bilingualism/database/database.htm
- www.eastwesteducation.org/index.htm
- www.positive-identity.com
- www.mantralingua.com
- www.literacytrust.org.uk/Database/EALres.html
- www.newburypark.redbridge.sch.uk/langofmonth
- www.naplic.org.uk
- www.naldic.org.uk
AN ADVANTAGE....

There is overwhelming evidence (Juarez 83, Duncan & Gibbs 1989, Leung 1996, Rodby 1998, Cummins 2000) to suggest that mother tongue development does not hinder but indeed can support English acquisition.

“The RCSLT recognises that bilingualism in an adult or child is an advantage and does not cause communication disorders” (CQ3:270)