Multilingual ECE Programs: How Preschool Children Learn Languages and How Administrators Can Help

Ana Lomba
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with
Karen Nemeth
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Welcome!

Beth A. Wise
Editor-in-Chief
Robert-Leslie Publishing

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Tips for Administrators in Multilingual Early Childhood Programs: How Preschool Children Learn Languages

By Ana Lomba
Who is Ana Lomba?

**Educator**
- Two M.A.’s in Spanish Literature (Binghamton, Princeton University)
- Taught Spanish Preschool-university
- Leadership at ACTFL, NNELL and FLENJ
- Advocate, presenter, consultant

**Entrepreneur**
- Parents’ Choice Award winning author - 8 books with McGraw-Hill
- Started Spanish program for young kids in ‘99
- Curriculum for ages 1-10
- iPad apps and e-storybooks
- Languages offered: Spanish, French, Chinese, English
Who is Ana Lomba? (Continued)

Mom

- Raising 3 children in bilingual household
- Children have taken Chinese and French in school
- Husband is American and began learning Spanish in study abroad program in Spain
- Follow a flexible OPOL approach at home

Language Learner

- From Madrid, Spain
- Started learning English in preschool
- Studied abroad in UK
- Bilingual in Spanish and English but have studied French, Latin, Greek, and German.
Who are you?
The list shows that you are:
Our preschoolers’ **world** is changing...

... and at the speed of light!
Preschoolers bring **fantastic language building blocks** to our schools

- Their home languages.
- The most powerful language-learning engine.
- An immense curiosity.
- An undeterred commitment to exploration.
- A wonderfully playful nature.

**But, it is up to us to continue adding blocks...**
In order to keep building, we need to know how **quality** early language education looks like

**Quality early language education is NOT about:**

- Drills, flashcards, random memorization, and hurrying our kids with exoteric academic stuff.

**It IS about:**

- Talking, playing, investigating, experimenting, acting, singing, creating, and having fun through the vehicle of a language.
In today’s webinar, we will focus on:

2. Strategies, activities, and resources for successful language education in school and at home.
Myths
Myths about early language learning

• Not developmentally appropriate for tots.
• Leads to language “confusion.”
• Slows down overall learning.

• Full immersion is best (the 1st or home language should be blocked).
• Teachers or parents must be native or fluent.
Let’s talk about that powerful and chameleonic word...

Not all “Immersion” is created equal

• Sink or swim means that many kids will drown.
• The child’s first (home) language is a tremendous asset! (3rd lang. easier)
• Language skills transfer.
• Thinking in two languages helps develop high thinking, cognitive skills.
However, it is important to note that:

• Proficiency scales with exposure.
• Proficiency is hindered by constant translation.
• Proficiency is hindered by flashcards and chopped language use.

Therefore, we have to find the middle ground between the ‘swim or sink’ and the ‘flashcard’ approach.
Let’s talk now about the need to be native or fluent…

Fact: There’s a scarcity of bilingual teachers.

- Native/fluent skills ≠ successful language teachers.
- Native/fluent skills ≠ successful bilingual parents.
- Our children CANNOT wait for the ideal situation – this may never happen!
- The key? Powerful STRATEGIES, ACTIVITIES and RESOURCES.
Bilingualism in the Home.

(Cummins, J. Heritage Language Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 10)
In order to be strategic, we need to know that

The path to proficiency does NOT look like this
It looks like THIS:

(Spirals by B. S. Wise)
Strategies, Resources, Activities

• Build a school/home partnership in language learning.
• Choose frequency of exposure over length.
• Build on background knowledge/familiarity with topic.
• Work on listening, speaking, reading, writing from day one.
• Give more weight to verbal communication.
• Spiral up the language through extended units or projects.

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Strategies, Resources, Activities

• Choose high quality bilingual resources – this is specially critical if you don’t have good command of the language.
• Don’t just do flashcards!
• Balance need for adult input with child ownership of learning.
• Interactive read aloud.
• Storytelling.
• Pretend play.
• Movement.
• Songs.
• Games.
• Art, science, nature, math, building...

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Storytelling
Games
Games
E-Games
Singing & Drawing
Play and Learn Spanish

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¡Buenos días! ¡Es hora de levantarse!
Despierta ya, cariño. Ha salido el sol.
¡Es hora de levantarse! ¡Buenos días!
¡Uy qué sueño!
Despierta, cariño.
Mira, es de día. Ha salido el sol.
Sol, solecito, calientame un poquito,
Hoy y mañana y toda la semana.
¡Arriba perezoso/a!
Dame la mano.
¡Uy qué sueño!
Venga, vamos.
Ten cuidado con los escalones.
Despacio, eso es.
Vamos a la cocina.
¿Qué quieres desayunar?

¡A levantarse!

Time to Get Up!

Good morning! It's time to get up!
Wake up, honey. The sun is out.
It's time to get up! Good morning!
Oh, how sleepy!
Wake up, honey.
Look, it's daytime. The sun is out.
Sun, little sun, warm me up,
Today and tomorrow and all week long.
Up, lazy one!
Give me your hand.
Oh, how sleepy!
Come on, let's go.
Be careful with the steps.
Slowly, that's it.
Let's go to the kitchen.
What would you like for breakfast?
Play and Learn Spanish

Venga, vamos.
Ten cuidado con los escalones.
Despacio, eso es.
Vamos a la cocina.
¿Qué quieres desayunar?

Come on, let’s go.
Be careful with the steps.
Slowly, that’s it.
Let’s go to the kitchen.
What would you like for breakfast?

Did You Know?

“Sol, solcito” is a traditional Latin American song. The diminutive ending ito/ita would be translated as “little” in English (sol, solcito/sun, little sun).
Other examples would be árbol (tree) and arbolito (little tree) and silla (chair) and sillita (little chair). Ito/ita can also be used with personal names to denote familiarity and love: Ana/Anita (Anns/little Anna); Roberto/Roboticito (Robert/Bobby); Juan/Juanito (John/Johnny).

El sol
¡Qué sueño!
Los escalones
La cocina
Boucle d’Or / Goldilocks

Boucle d’Or s’assit sur la grande chaise. “Aïe, cette chaise est trop dure!”

Goldilocks sat on the big chair. “Ouch, this chair is too hard!”
Ricitos de Oro / Goldilocks

Papá Oso probó la sopa del plato hondo grande y dijo, “¡Ay, ay, ay, me he quemado, me he quemado! ¡Esta sopa está muy caliente!”

Papa Bear tasted the soup in the big bowl and he said, “Ouch, ouch, ouch, I burned myself, I burned myself! This soup is very hot!”
Caperucita Roja / Little Red Riding Hood

la niña (Caperucita Roja)  
girl (Little Red Riding Hood)

la abuela  
grandmother

el lobo  
wolf

el camisón  
nightgown

el gorro  
hat

las gafas  
glasses
Upcoming family series
iPad apps

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E-Storybook Subscriptions

Thumbelina

By Ana Lomba

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Show unit *Vamos a jugar / Let’s Play (tots)*
Other Great Resources

• **Language Castle**, by Karen Nemeth
  [www.languagecastle.com](http://www.languagecastle.com). *Make sure to participate in her upcoming webinar!*

• **Multilingual Living**, a community for parents
  ([www.multilingualliving.com](http://www.multilingualliving.com))

• **Spanish Workshop for Children**, Spanish language program in Philadelphia
  [www.spanishworkshopforchildren.com](http://www.spanishworkshopforchildren.com)

• **Language Lizard**, bilingual books in over 40 languages,
  [www.languagelizard.com](http://www.languagelizard.com)
Other Great Resources

- Ñandutí, Center for Applied Linguistics – world languages prk to 8th, http://www.cal.org/earlylang/

- Colorín Colorado, bilingualism – focus on ESL, www.colorincolorado.org

- Associations: NNELL, ACTFL, TESOL, NABE

- Also, check out the resources area on my website! http://www.analomba.com/amazon.cfm
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LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/in/analomba
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How to Join my List – Go to www.analomba.com and opt in here
Learn more about The InvestiGator Club

www.InvestiGatorClub.com
1-888-345-PREK (7735)

The InvestiGator Club Demonstrations:
www.InvestiGatorClub.com/demos

Demonstrations:
March 15, at 2 pm
March 31, at 4 pm *
*Especially for Head Start!
The Early Childhood Administrator's Role in Engaging Outdoor Play
Vicki Ehlers
Date: March 23, 2011 at 2:00 PM EST

Hitting, Pushing and Name-calling: Bully-proofing Your ECE Program
Dr. Becky Bailey
Date: March 30, 2011 at 2:00 PM EST