

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN BILINGUAL CHILDREN

Children develop a language because they **need** it to communicate, participate in activities, follow teachings, watch TV...



Language_A + Language_B:
TWO DISTINCT BUT
INTERACTING SYSTEMS

The **speed** of development of each language depends on:

- The age at which the child is exposed to the language
- The extent of exposure (% of the time)
- The sociolinguistic context (social value of the language, opportunities to utilize)



In bilingual children, the development of L_A or L_B can be rapid, stagnating or regressing.

Language development in bilingual children - 1.

Specific and normal strategies of bilingual language:

- **Code switching:** switching from L_A to L_B in the same conversation.
- **Borrowing:** Insertion of a word from L_A in a conversation in L_B or vice versa.
- **Code-blending:** Simultaneous mixing of L_A and L_B (bilingualism oral language - sign language).

Developing these strategies:

- From 3 years old, voluntary use to make communication effective (see the principle of complementarity).
- From 8-9 years old, voluntary use to insist on an element, to show their bilingual skills, etc.



Discuss this with your child's speech therapist

WARNING SIGNS ?

- Developmental delay in L_A and L_B
- Difficulty understanding or speaking in L_A and L_B
- Many typical and atypical errors in L_A and L_B



Be aware of false beliefs:

- Bilingualism has **no negative effects** on language development.
- There is **no scientific reason** to avoid bilingualism in children with language difficulties.

Language development in bilingual children - 4.



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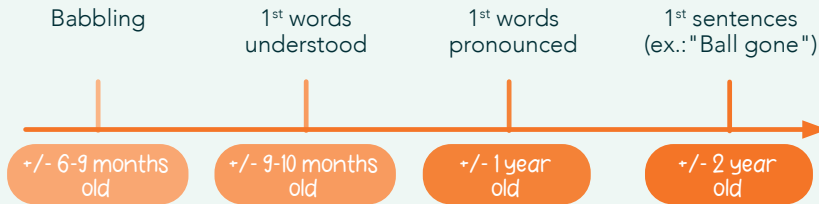
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SIMULTANEOUS EARLY BILINGUALISM

(L_A and L_B approximately before the age of 3)

STAGES



VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT

Complementarity principle:



= Total vocabulary

DEVELOPMENT OF PRONUNCIATION AND SENTENCES

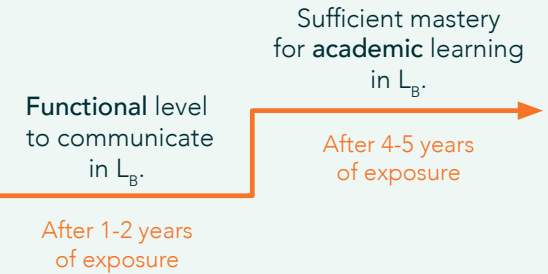
There are **interferences** between the speech sounds of L_A and L_B, and between the sentence structures of L_A and L_B. This can therefore lead to **errors** that are different from those typically observed in monolingual children. However, by the age of 5-6, the **accuracy** of pronunciation and sentences is similar in bilingual and monolingual children.

SUCCESSIVE EARLY BILINGUALISM

(L_B between 4 and 12 years old approximately)



The mastery of L_A supports the development of L_B.



LATE BILINGUALISM

(L_B introduced after 12 years old)



Development of L_B is possible at any age. Mechanisms for learning a second language as is the case with adults.