TESOL *in* Context, Volume 30, No.1, pp. 11-31

Leveraging languages for learning: Incorporating plurilingual pedagogies in early childhood education and care

Caroline Cohrssen
Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong

Yvette Slaughter
Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne

Edith Nicolas
Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne

Abstract: *Children are members of families and communities, and the languages learnt within these contexts contribute to a child's sense of "belonging, being and becoming" throughout life (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009). Encouraging children to bring their home languages into early childhood education and care (ECEC) settings exposes all children to additional languages and supports key outcomes of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (EYLF; DEEWR, 2009). This article looks at the relationship between key tenets of the EYLF and conditions that support a plurilingual approach within ECEC settings, arguing that multilingualism can be encouraged and effectively supported within these environments. The authors outline Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory of development which continues to be influential in Australian ECEC, emphasizing the importance of proximal processes in child development. Examples are provided of educator behaviours set out in the EYLF that encourage linguistic diversity and promote language learning. The influence of three key variables on the valuing of languages is discussed, namely language ideologies, teacher beliefs and attitudes, and plurilingual pedagogies. Recommendations relating to the positive positioning of languages and the integration of plurilingual pedagogies into Australian ECEC contexts are provided.*

ISSN 2209-0916

Key words: *Plurilingual pedagogies, Language acquisition, Linguistic repertoire, Language ideology, Bioecological theory.*

Introduction

Globalization has contributed to high mobility and increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in many countries, including Australia (D'warte & Slaughter, 2021). Although English is the national language in Australia and the medium of instruction in the education system, it sits alongside increasing cultural and linguistic diversity across Australia's communities. In 2016, 21% of Australians spoke a language other than English at home with the most commonly spoken languages being Mandarin, Arabic, Cantonese and Vietnamese (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Consequently, there are increasing numbers of bilingual and English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners in the education system. Historically, the responsibility for children's learning and maintenance of languages other than English in Australia has been seen as the work of families, playgroups and religious or ethnic communities (Eisenchlas & Schalley, 2020), rather than that of educators and teachers. However, throughout our lives, the languages we speak contribute to our "belonging, being and becoming", a core tenet within early childhood education and care (ECEC) in Australia (Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations, 2009), and one that frames ECEC programs. As the number of culturally and linguistically diverse children attending ECEC programs continues to grow, the positioning of language, including English and other languages, gains increasing significance for the ECEC sector.

Reflecting an increasing cultural and linguistic diversity in many societies, the complexity and diversity of multilingual language practices have received substantial research attention in recent years (Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2021). Whilst 'monoglossic' approaches to language in education focus on single languages and tend to "privilege majority languages and legitimise monolingual, monocultural, and monomodal language practices" (Kirsch, 2020, p. 15), more recent research on second language teaching and learning has shifted significantly towards 'heteroglossic' conceptualisations of language use (e.g., Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2021; Garcia & Lin, 2017). Here, heteroglossic describes the way in which language speakers use their various languages and semiotic resources as a cohesive linguistic system shaped by the "linguistic, cognitive, social and emotional" characteristics of the individual (Seltzer & García, 2020, p. 2).

Research framed within heteroglossic perspectives has provided a new lens through which to recognise the dynamic and complex linguistic and cultural repertoires of learners and to deepen our knowledge of how responsive pedagogy can effectively capitalise on these resources in educational contexts (D'warte & Slaughter, 2021). In this paper we use the term 'plurilingual' to indicate a theory of language which views a person's linguistic identity as a *synthesis of linguistic resources* that are "integrated, variable, flexible, and changing" (Lau & Van Viegen, 2020, p. 12) rather than separated into different languages and other resources. We therefore use the term, 'plurilingual pedagogies' to describe teaching practices that acknowledge and encourage children's ability to draw on more than one language for learning.

The notion of drawing on children's cultural and linguistic resources is one that is familiar to many Australian ECEC professionals due to the cultural and linguistic diversity of ECEC communities. Further, the importance of supporting children's effective communication is already embedded in the *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia* (EYLF; DEEWR, 2009) which guides ECEC teaching and learning (see Table 1). Nonetheless, a recent review of pre-service early childhood teacher (ECT) preparation courses concluded that wide variability exists in the extent to which graduating ECTs are equipped to facilitate high-quality, targeted oral language and literacy learning (Weadman et al., 2021). Further, whilst a substantial body of international research examines heteroglossic approaches in education, including in the context of early childhood education (Burchinal et al., 2012; Coelho & Ortega, 2020; Mendez et al., 2015; Panagiotopoulos & Hammel, 2020; Wang & Plokta, 2018), few studies have focused on the positioning of and pedagogical support for such language practices in the Australian early childhood context (Escudero et al., 2020). While resources are available to support teaching practice with children from diverse language backgrounds (Clarke, 2009; VCAA, 2020), it is unclear how these recommendations are specifically implemented in ECEC settings. Consequently, this growing research priority is both timely and important as it informs the translation of theory into teaching practice.

In 2021, a consortium of Australian universities is undertaking a review of the approved learning frameworks; this includes the review of the EYLF (DEEWR, 2009)[1]. There are two nationally approved learning frameworks upon which Australian ECEC services are required to base their programs: one for children

from birth to five years of age, the second for use by school age care educators[2]. The fundamental priority undergirding the revised early years learning framework will likely remain to "provide young children with opportunities to maximise their potential and develop a foundation for future success in learning" (DEEWR, 2009, p. 5). In this article, we examine the relationship between this priority and the conditions that would support plurilingual approaches within ECEC. To begin, we outline Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory of development which emphasises the contribution of context and 'proximal processes'; a theory which is influential in ECEC in Australia. We also detail how the current early years learning framework in Australia clearly identifies the critical role of language and identity in early childhood development, influencing pedagogical practice. We outline three key factors that influence the positioning of languages in ECEC settings, arguing for the importance of self-reflection for ECEC educators. We conclude by briefly outlining emerging research into plurilingual pedagogies in ECEC settings, proposing a set of recommendations to encourage and support plurilingual approaches in ECEC settings in Australia.

Contextual influences on child development and language learning

The notion that children both shape and are shaped by relationships with those people with whom they spend the most time, such as parents/caregivers and early childhood educators, aligns closely with Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory. This theory emphasizes the relationship between context and human development and has been highly influential in education research (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Navarro et al., 2020; Siraj & Huang, 2020). In its earlier form, then referred to as the 'ecological systems theory' (Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1979), children were situated at the centre of a relationship-based ecological system, often represented as a series of concentric circles. It is an influential theory embodied within ECEC frameworks in Australia and is evident in the positioning of children's learning as occurring in the context of family, ECEC,

---

(1) https://www.mq.edu.au/faculty-of-arts/departments-and-schools/macquarie-school-of-education/our-research/research-groups/approved-learning-frameworks-update/consortium

(2) https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-law-regulations/approved-learning-frameworks

and community. As he refined the theory, Bronfenbrenner placed increased emphasis on 'proximal processes' that occur within the 'engines of development', the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000, p. 118).

The most immediate – or 'proximal' – relationships, described by Bronfenbrenner as the 'microsystem', have the most direct impact on the child. The microsystem includes a child's primary caregiver, and for children participating in ECEC programs, early childhood professionals. From birth, children learn through observing and interacting with more knowledgeable others within their social milieux (Vygotsky, 1978). However, children are not passive recipients of information: this is evidenced by a vast body of literature that describes their perceptual, social, communicative, physical and cognitive capabilities (Salamon & Harrison, 2015). Infants contribute to back-and-forth interactions, initially communicating their needs through a repertoire of vocalizations that include crying, babbling, eye gaze, smiling and gesture. As active participants in their social worlds, conversational turn-taking between infants and mothers develops almost universally by the time children reach five months of age (Bornstein et al., 2015). In the context of out of home care, primary caregivers include early childhood professionals as elements of the microsystem with whom children engage in social interactions and develop attachments (Rolfe, 2004).

One step removed from the microsystem is the 'mesosystem' – this is where relationships between elements of the microsystem are positioned: relationships *between* ECEC professionals and families. The third level of influence in this model is called the 'exosystem' and includes, for example, a parent's workplace. Here, the impact of the parent's workplace has indirect impact. The most distal influences on the child are situated in the outermost ecological system: the 'macrosystem'. The macrosystem includes, for example, laws and regulations such as government undertakings to extend universal access to kindergarten for three-year-old children and national language policy decisions. Changes in the macrosystem are thus mediated by the systems of influence closer to the child. For example, policy decisions regarding language learning at national or state/territory level are mediated by their translation to practice by ECEC professionals' enactment of such policies – and here, language ideology and teacher beliefs play an important role in influencing whether, and to what extent, such policies are enacted.

This theory of development underpins the key tenets of the EYLF (DEEWR, 2009). Within this framework, *belonging* is integral to human experience and influential in identity formation: who children are and who they become. *Being* is about relationships in the here and now and similarly impacts on identity formation. *Becoming* reflects the significant development that occurs in early childhood as children participate increasingly independently as full and active members of society – and again, has implications for identity formation. Communication skills – in whichever form they take – are critical to this process, since "children's wellbeing, identity, sense of agency and capacity to make friends is connected to the development of communication skills" (DET & VCAA, 2016, p. 22). The contribution of children's languages (home languages as well as English) to each of the learning areas within the EYLF (DEEWR, 2009) – is thus explicit. ECEC educators, as important elements of a child's microsystem, are required to engage with and promote the breadth of children's language skills. Educator behaviours to support the development of language and identify are clearly outlined in the EYLF, as illustrated by examples in Table 1.

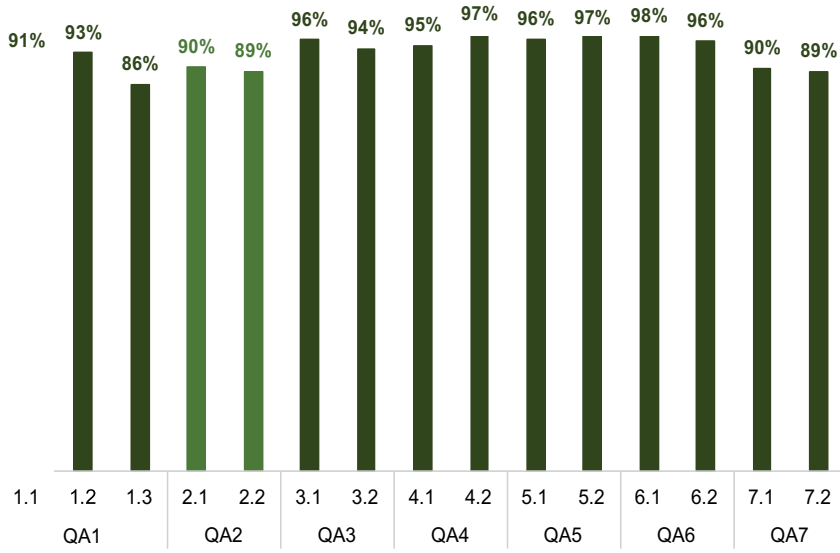
Table 1: EYLF (DEEWR, 2009) examples of educator behaviours that encourage linguistic diversity and promote language learning

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity	Educators promote [children's development of knowledgeable and confident self identities], for example, when they (p. 26): • build on the knowledge, languages and understandings that children bring • actively support the maintenance of home language and culture
Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world	Educators promote [children's response to diversity with respect], for example, when they (p. 30): • expose children to different languages and dialects and encourage appreciation of linguistic diversity
Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners	Educators promote [children's development of dispositions for learning...], for example, when they (p. 37):

Outcome 4: (cont.)	• build on the knowledge, languages and understandings that children bring to their early childhood setting Educators promote [children's ability to transfer and adapt what they have learned from one context to another], for example, when they (p. 39): • understand that competence is not tied to any particular language, dialect or culture
Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators	Educators promote [children's verbal and non-verbal interaction with others], for example, when they (p. 43): • value children's linguistic heritage and with family and community members encourage the use of and acquisition of home languages and Standard Australian English • recognise that children enter early childhood programs having begun to communicate and makes sense of their experiences at home and in the communities • model language and encourage children to express themselves through language in a range of contexts and for a range of purposes Educators promote [children's engagement with a range of texts...], for example, when they (p. 44): • provide a literacy-enriched environment including display print in home languages and Standard Australian English

Framework guidelines are thus unequivocal. Recognition of the important relationship between early childhood professionals and other influential interlocutors in a child's microsystem – parents, families, and guardians – is also well established. Arguably, the right conditions are in place for families and ECEC educators to leverage language to support child learning, as identified in the annual National Quality Framework review undertaken by the Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA, 2020) (see Figure 1 next page).

Figure 1. Proportion of services rated Meeting NQS or above for each standard of the NQS, as at 30 June 2020 (ACECQA, 2020, p. 22)



Specifically, the 2020 annual report found that 98% of services were rated as Meeting NQS or above for Standard 6.1 – *Supportive relationship with families: Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are support in their parenting roles* and 96% of services were rated as Meeting NQS or above for Standard 6.2 – *Collaborative partnerships: Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing.* Indeed, these are among the highest rated quality areas across the country. In summary, the threshold conditions to support the development of language (both English and other languages) and identity across home and ECEC settings are clearly set out in the EYLF (DEEWR, 2009) and assessed by ACECQA.

There are three variables that operate across the micro-, meso- and macrosystems that we believe require careful consideration in understanding the positioning of languages in ECEC settings and the opportunities afforded by the threshold conditions described above. These include (i) language ideology, (ii) educator belief systems and (iii) pedagogy, which we proceed to address in turn. The extent to which language learning can be leveraged in ECEC contexts is strongly influenced by these variables and exploring these issues may help stimulate targeted and productive reflection for individuals and teams of educators.

Language ideology

Language ideology is understood as "the beliefs and attitudes that shape speakers' relationships to their own and others' languages, mediating the social practice of language and the socioeconomic and political structures within which it occurs" (Cavanaugh, 2020, p. 52). Language ideology, therefore, is relational and needs to be understood as a dynamic process between speaker/community and society.

Within increasingly multilingual ECEC contexts, language ideologies focus on and interact with the positioning of English and languages other than English, both for speakers of English as well as first language speakers of minority languages. Here, we emphasize the importance of English language learning since English proficiency is essential for success in Australian education and employment environments (Centre for Policy Development, 2017; Scanlon Institute, 2020). However, there is a strong tradition of what Clyne (2005) called the "monolingual mindset" in Australian education systems, as education policy, curriculum and assessment position language and literacy development as English-centric. This may reflect a misperception that for speakers of other languages, English is the only language resource on which learners can draw for academic and professional success (e.g., Cross, 2009; Schalley et al., 2015).

A wide range of research challenges assumptions of monolingualism as the norm and moves away from the positioning of the native, monolingual speaker as the ideal model for language learning. This should come as no surprise in a linguistically diverse country such as Australia. Whilst English language learning remains essential, research for understanding and framing multilingual language development has proliferated in recent years (Bonacina-Pugh et al., 2021). The influence of this work on educational frameworks is beginning to emerge, with policy and curriculum support materials in Australia calling for the development and integration of support for multilingualism and first language maintenance in educational settings, including ECEC settings (see e.g., DET & VCAA, 2016; VCAA, 2020 in the Victorian context). There is also increasing interest in the learning of additional languages for English language speakers within ECEC contexts (e.g., Benz, 2017; DET, 2019), while, as we have already discussed, the EYLF already provides guidance on supporting the development of English and other languages in ECEC settings.

However, the legacy of a monolingual orientation and dominance of English as the prevailing language of education remains deeply ingrained and predominates in policy discourse and across educational curriculum and assessment (e.g., Schalley et al., 2015). Even within bilingual ECEC programs in Australia, strongly-held language ideologies can perpetuate the dominance of English (Benz, 2017). In arguing for the central role of sustainable multilingual ecologies in ECEC contexts, we need to reflect on perceptions and practices that sustain a monolingual, English-dominant approach to language development in contrast with educator behaviours described in the EYLF (DEEWR, 2009). An important part of this complex issue is understanding teacher beliefs and attitudes and the role these play in shaping language ecologies.

Educator beliefs and attitudes

Whilst English remains the dominant language in education settings in Australia, it is important to recognise first, that many educators are welcoming and supportive of the linguistic diversity of children (e.g., Slaughter & Cross, 2021; D'warte, 2018) and second, that a range of attitudes exists in any educational context. However, there is little available Australian ECEC-centred research on linguistic diversity and teacher beliefs, and existing research by Cabezas and Rouse (2014) and Jenkins et al. (2019) report on small qualitative studies with four participants in each study. Within these parameters, both studies found that teacher participants had limited theoretical knowledge of bilingual language development such as the typical stages of development, code-switching/mixing, or the benefits of bilingualism for cognitive development. One study reported higher knowledge levels of these concepts in degree-qualified teachers than diploma-qualified educators (Jenkins et al., 2019) and Cabezas & Rouse (2014) suggest that teachers rely primarily on personal experience to engage and support bilingual language learners. Monolingual teachers were more likely to have negative beliefs about bilingualism and its impact on children's language development (Jenkins et al., 2019), but both studies stressed teacher beliefs associated with the difficulties in communicating with children and families, concerns about children confusing two languages, and anticipated academic disadvantage. Indeed, monolingual teachers were also more likely to focus on disadvantages, confirming their deficit approach to this population of children.

A recent preschool study in California provides a different perspective. Sung & Akhtar (2017) researched the beliefs of 21 pre-school teachers and found that in general, educators saw opportunities rather than difficulties in children's linguistic diversity, although differences were observed in pedagogical strategies to support children's development. In this study, differences were observed between educators whom they categorised as 'aesthetic caregivers', who focused on the transmission of knowledge with more limited engagement with realities of children's lives, and educators they termed as 'advocates and accommodators', whose teaching practices were responsive to individual children's needs. In positioning linguistic diversity as a valuable resource, Sung and Ahktar (2017) argue that "effectively supporting language-minority students' success, even at this young age, may require preschool teachers to re-conceptualize the connection between student diversity and teaching practices" (p. 169). More recent work in Australia, albeit at the school level, has illustrated this precise point – that professional learning focusing on appropriate pedagogical approaches can raise the cultural and linguistic awareness of teachers and support teachers to incorporate new practices and possibilities within educational contexts (e.g., Choi & Ollerhead, 2018; Slaughter & Cross, 2021).

However, it is also important to note that negative beliefs and attitudes may manifest not just consciously, but unconsciously as well. In generating a model of racial microaggressions, Sue et al. (2007) argue that microaggressions include microinsults (e.g., being rude about or demeaning a person's heritage or identity), microassaults (verbal or nonverbal attacks in the form of name-calling or purposeful discriminatory behaviour) and microinvalidation which they describe as being "characterized by communications that exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color" (p. 274). In our application of the model to cultural and linguistic diversity in this paper, microinsults and microassaults are underemphasized since, in general, the quality of emotional support provided in Australian ECEC settings is high (Tayler, 2016). However, a particular challenge with regard to microinvalidations is that they are typically unconscious. Consequently, unintended comments or behaviours may impact on a child or family with a cultural or linguistic background other than English. Examples may include spoken assumptions that families who look or sound different are not Australian, claims

that 'everyone is the same here' (i.e., denying language-related differences), claims that 'everyone succeeds if they work hard enough' (i.e., denying the challenges associated with negotiating the world in a language other than the first language), or insisting that a child use an English word when they use a word from a different language. There is no doubt that further research in this regard at the ECEC level is urgently needed, however, this challenge also implicates pedagogy, to which our attention now turns.

Plurilingual pedagogies

Heteroglossic approaches to the teaching and learning of languages encompass the dynamic use of a speaker's linguistic, semiotic (i.e., signs and symbols) and cultural resources for communication, and from a pedagogical perspective, the purposeful use and strengths-based positioning of these resources for learning (Lau & Van Viegen, 2020). The implications of recognising that a speaker draws on *all* of their language knowledge as a toolkit, rather than on discrete languages individually, may require significant shifts in thinking and additional professional development for many ECEC professionals, despite it being visible within the EYLF (DEEWR, 2009) (see Table 1).

A growing body of research into plurilingual pedagogies is focusing on ECEC, providing guidance on what these practices could look like for ECEC educators. This is critical, for two reasons. First, pedagogical approaches in early childhood, which are play-based, differ significantly from school-based pedagogies, which are curriculum-based. Consequently, specific research that focuses on appropriate pedagogy is needed. Second, ECEC preservice teacher education also needs to be informed by contemporary research into the teaching and learning of additional languages to support the development of cohorts of educators who are better equipped to facilitate high-quality language and literacy learning that takes into account the diversity of children's linguistic backgrounds.

To date, research has been undertaken into a range of practical play-based strategies to support additional language learning at the ECEC level, including the use of book-reading and photograph booklets in preservice ECEC training to support child linguistic development in any language (see Britsch, 2010), and the use of songs and rhymes for multilingual language development (Coyle & Gomez Gracia, 2014). Mourão's (2015) research has

focused on the use of games and art and craft activities for multilingual language development, while Scrafton and Whitington (2015) investigated the circumstances that support children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to engage in sociodramatic play in ECEC contexts. Other research has focused on supporting young children's additional language development through exposure to a rich language environment (Aukrust & Rydland, 2011); focused book-reading (e.g., Huennekens & Xu, 2016; Mendez et al., 2015; Soderman et al., 2013), as well as multimodal literacies such as multimedia stories (Yang, 2016) and gaming (Jensen, 2017).

While this research provides practical insights into plurilingual practices, the practices of ECEC educators and the learning experiences of children are influenced by a broad range of variables from across the macro-, meso- and microsystems. Further research is thus needed into specific contexts across diverse Australian ECEC settings within which 'proximal processes' occur to help us understand the interaction of factors, including language ideology, educator beliefs and attitudes, and the contribution of differing educator practices.

Key recommendations

In this paper, we have outlined how the national early years learning framework addresses the critical role of language and identity in early childhood learning and development, as well as setting out educator behaviours that encourage linguistic diversity and promote language learning. However, with the limited research pointing towards monoglossic views of language and communication, significant work is needed to support ECEC educators' understanding of and engagement with plurilingual approaches to children's learning. While there are many possible avenues of research and support opportunities, we make three interconnected recommendations.

First, ECEC educators should be encouraged to model *plurilingual pedagogies* within early learning programs and, where possible, in the presence of parents/caregivers. Demonstrating that all languages are valued while encouraging the development of English as well as additional language learning validates children's identity and supports belonging, being and becoming.

Second, to achieve this, preservice and in-service ECEC educators need to be better supported to assess and plan for children's language learning as they progress along their learning

trajectories, regardless of whether children are monolingual or multilingual speakers.

The first two recommendations speak to the need of our third recommendation – the development of an appropriate languages learning continuum for the ECEC level. Indeed Cohrssen (2021) has advocated for the inclusion of evidence-based learning continua within a revised national framework to better equip ECEC professionals to facilitate individualised learning within Australian play-based programs. Whilst Table 1 sets out educator behaviours that encourage linguistic diversity and promote language learning described within the EYLF (DEEWR, 2009), there is a need for improved descriptions of language learning that are informed by research and support effective teaching practice within a variety of early childhood contexts. Language learning continua have been developed for primary classrooms that lend themselves to use within ECEC settings (International Baccalaureate, 2009). However, incorporating such continua within core guiding documents rather than providing them as additional resources would contribute to supporting the confident enactment of plurilingual pedagogies.

Our fourth and final recommendation is for ongoing research into the pedagogical practices of ECEC educators that either validate or invalidate the linguistic and cultural identities of children in the diverse ECEC settings in Australia. Only through self-reflective interrogation of practice can we better understand the conscious and unconscious practices of educators that impact on the potential of plurilingual pedagogies in Australian ECEC settings.

References

ACECQA. (2020). *NQF annual performance report.* https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-02/NQF-Annual-Performance-Report2020.pdf

Aukrust, V. G., & Rydland, V. (2011). Preschool classroom conversations as long-term resources for second language and literacy acquisition. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 32*, 198-207. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.appdev.2011.01.002

Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2017, 27 June). *Census reveals a fast changing, culturally diverse nation* https://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/lookup/media%20release3

Benz, V. (2017). *Bilingual Childcare: Hitches, Hurdles and Hopes.* Multilingual Matters.

Bonacina-Pugh, F., Da Costa Cabral, I., & Huang, J. (2021). A state-of-the-art review of translanguaging in education. *Language Teaching*. 1-52. https://www.pure.ed.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/206123719/BonacinaPughEtal2021LTAStateOfTheArtReview.pdf

Bornstein, M. H., Putnick, D. L., Cote, L. R., Haynes, O. M., & Suwalsky, J. T. D. (2015). Mother-infant contingent vocalizations in 11 countries. *Association for Psychological Science, 26*(8), 1272-1284. https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797615586796

Britsch, S. (2010). Photo-booklets for English language learning: Incorporating visual communication into early childhood teacher preparation. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 38*(3), 171-177. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10643-010-0412-2

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist, 32*(7), 513-531. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066x.32.7.513

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development: Experiments in nature and design*. Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Evans, G. W. (2000). Developmental science in the 21st century: Emerging questions, theoretical models, research designs and empirical findings. *Social Development, 9*(1), 115-125. https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9507.00114

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In W. Damon & R. M. Lerner (Eds.), *Handbook of Child Psychology: Theoretical Models of Human Development* (6th ed., Vol. 1, pp. 793-828). Wiley.

Burchinal, M., Field, S., López, M. L., Howes, C., & Pianta, R. (2012). Instruction in Spanish in pre-kindergarten classrooms and child outcomes for English language learners. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 27*(2) 188-197. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecresq.2011.11.003

Cabezas, C., & Rouse, E. (2014). How do early childhood teachers understand and support the needs of young English language learners? *Asia-Pacific Journal of Research in Early Childhood Education, 8*(1), 57-78. http://www.pecerajournal.com/

Cavanaugh, J. R. (2020). "Language ideology revisited". *International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 263*, 51-57. https://doi.org/10.1515/ijsl-2020-2082

Centre for Policy Development. (2017). Settling Better Report. https://cpd.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Settling-Better-Report-20-February-2017.compressed.pdf

Choi, J., & Ollerhead, S. (Eds.). (2018). *Plurilingualism in teaching and learning: Complexities across contexts*. Routledge.

Clarke, P. (2009). Supporting Children Learning English as a Second Language in the Early Years (birth to six years) (pp. 1-31). Melbourne: Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority.

Clyne, M. (2005). *Australia's language potential.* UNSW Press.

Coelho, D., & Ortega, Y. (2020). Pluralistic Approaches in Early Language Education: Shifting Paradigms in Language Didactics. In S. Lau & S. Van Viegen (Eds.), *Plurilingual pedagogies: Critical and creative endeavors for equitable language in education* (pp. 145-160). Springer.

Cohrssen, C. (2021). Considering form and function: A commentary on the review of the Early Years Learning Framework for Australia. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood*. http://doi.org/10.1177/18369391211018518

Coyle, Y., & Gómez Gracia, R. (2014). Using songs to enhance L2 vocabulary acquisition in preschool children. *ELT Journal, 68*(3), 276–285. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccu015

Cross, R. (2009). Literacy for all: Quality language education for few. *Language & Education, 23*(6), 509–522. https://doi.org/10.1080/09500780902954224

D'warte, J. (2018). Recognizing and leveraging the bilingual meaning making potential of young people aged 6-8 years old in one Australian classroom. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy, 20*(2), 1-31. http://doi.org/10.1177/1468798418769361

D'warte, J., & Slaughter, Y. (2021). Introduction: Reframing language in teaching and learning: Leveraging students' meaning-making repertoires. *Language Teaching Research 25*(1), 5-11 https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820971753

Department of Education (DET), Victoria. (2019). *Early Childhood Language Program.* https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/eclanguageprograms.aspx?Redirect=1

Department of Education (DET), Victoria., & Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). (2016). *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework: From all children from birth to eight years (VEYLDF)*. Victoria: DET & VCAA. https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/childhood/providers/edcare/veyldframework.pdf

Department of Education Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). (2009). *Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.* Canberra: Council of Australian Governments.

Eisenchlas, S. A., & Schalley, A. C. (2020). Early language education in Australia. In M. Schwartz (Ed.), *Handbook of Early Language Education* (pp. 1-26). Springer.

Escudero, P., Jones Diaz, C., Hajek, J., Wigglesworth, G., & Smit, E.A. (2020). Probability of heritage language use at a supportive early childhood setting in Australia. *Frontiers in Education, 5*. https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2020.00093

García, O., & Lin, A. M. Y. (2017). Translanguaging in bilingual education. In O. Garcia & A. M. Y. Lin (Eds.), *Bilingual and Multilingual Education* (pp. 117-130). Springer.

Huennekens, M. E., & Xu, Y. (2016). Using dialogic reading to enhance emergent literacy skills of young dual language learners. *Early Child Development and Care, 186*(2), 324–340. https://doi.org/ 10.1080/03004430.2015.1031125

International Baccalaureate. (2009). *Primary Years Programme: Language Scope and Sequence.* Cardiff: International Baccalaureate.

Jenkins, L., Duursma, E., Neilsen-Hewett, C. (2019). Perceptions and knowledges of bilingualism and bilingual children among early childhood educators in Australia: implications for teacher education. In S. Zein & S. Garton (Eds.), *Early Language Learning and Teacher Education: International Research and Practice.* (pp. 217-241) Multilingual Matters.

Jensen, S. H. (2017). Gaming as an English language learning resource among young children in Denmark. *CALICO Journal, 34*(1), 1–19. https://doi.org/10.1558/cj.29519

Kirsch, C. (2020). Translanguaging pedagogies in early childhood education in Luxembourg: Theory into practice. In C. Kirsch & J. Duarte (Eds.), *Multilingual approaches for teaching and learning* (pp. 15-33). Routledge.

Lau, S., & Van Viegen, S. (2020). Plurilingual pedagogies: An introduction. In S. Lau & S. Van Viegen (Eds.), *Plurilingual pedagogies: Critical and creative endeavors for equitable language in education* (pp. 3-22). Springer.

Mendez, L. I., Crais, E. R., Castro, D. C., & Kainz, K. (2015). A culturally and linguistically responsive vocabulary approach for young Latino dual language learners. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research, 58*(1), 93-106. https://doi.org/10.1044/2014_JSLHR-L-12-0221

Mourão, S. (2015). English in pre-primary: the challenges of getting it right. In J. Bland (Ed.), *Teaching English to Young Learners: Critical Issues in Language Teaching with 3-12 Year Old*s (pp. 51-70). London: Bloomsbury.

Navarro, J., Doucet, F., & Tudge, J. (2020). Bioecological systems influences on early childhood education. In D. F. Gullo & M. E. Graue (Eds.), *Scientific Influences on Early Childhood Education: From Diverse Perspectives to Common Practices* (Chp. 4). Routledge.

Panagiotopoulos, J. A., & Hammel, M. J. (2020). What shall we sing now, Amir? Developing a voice through translanguaging pedagogy – an ethnographic research and professional training project in day-care centres and schools. In J. A. Panagiotopoulou, L. Rosen & J. Strzykala (Eds.), *Inclusion, Education and Translanguaging: How to Promote Social justice in (Teacher Education)* (pp. 203-217). Springer VS.

Rolfe, S. (2004). *Rethinking attachment for early childhood practice.* Allen & Unwin.

Salamon, A., & Harrison, L. (2015). Early childhood educators' conceptions of infants' capabilities: The nexus between beliefs and practice. *Early Years, 35*(3), 273-288. https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2015.1042961

Scanlon Institute. (2020). *Australia's English Problem: How to renew our once celebrated Adult Migrant English Program*. https://scanloninstitute.org.au/publication/australias-english-problem-how-renew-our-once-celebrated-adult-migrant-english-program

Schalley, A.C., Guillemin, D., & Eisenchlas, S.A. (2015). Multilingualism and assimilationism in Australia's literacy-related educational policies. *International Journal of Multilingualism, 12*(2), 162–177. https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2015.1009372

Scrafton, E., & Whitington, V. (2015). The accessibility of socio-dramatic play to culturally and linguistically diverse Australian preschoolers. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 23*(2), 213-228. https://doi.org/10.1080/135029 3X.2015.1016806

Seltzer, K., & García, O. (2020). Broadening the view: Taking up a translanguaging pedagogy with all language-minoritized students. In Z. Tian, L. Aghai, P. Sayer, & J.L. Schissel (Eds.), *Envisioning TESOL through a translanguaging lens: Global perspectives* (pp. 23–42). Springer.

Siraj, I., & Huang, R. (2020). Operationalizing Bronfenbrenner's PPCT Model in Researching Human Development: Commentary on Xia, Li, and Tudge. *Human Development, 64*, 21-25. https://doi.org/10.1159/000508341

Slaughter, Y., & Cross. R. (2021). Challenging the monolingual mindset – understanding plurilingual pedagogies in English as an Additional Language (EAL) classrooms. *Language Teaching Research. 25*(1), 39-60. https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168820938819.

Soderman, A. K., Clevenger, K. G., & Kent I. G. (2013). Using stories to extinguish the hot spots in second language acquisition, Preschool to Grade 1. *YC Young Children, 68*(1), 34–41.

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A. M. B., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist, 62*(4), 271–286. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.62.4.271

Sung, P., & Akhtar, N. (2017). Exploring preschool teachers' perspectives on linguistic diversity: A Q study. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 65*, 157-170. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.03.004

Tayler, C. (2016). *The E4Kids study: Assessing the effectiveness of Australian early childhood education and care programs. Overview of findings at 2016. Final report to the Partner Organisations of the Effective Early Educational Experiences (E4Kids) study.* Melbourne Graduate School of Education, The University of Melbourne. https://education.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/2929452/E4Kids-Report-3.0_WEB.pdf

Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA). (2020). *Supporting bilingualism, multilingualism and language learning in the early years.* https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/earlyyears/SupportingMultilingualismResource.pdf

Vygotsky, L. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes.* Harvard University Press.

Wang, X., & Plotka, R. (2018). Lending a helping hand for English-Chinese bilingual children's idiom comprehension and retention: Implications for early childhood Educators. *Early Years: An International Journal of Research and Development, 38*(3), 298–315. https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2016.1258693

Weadman, T., Serry, T., & Snow, P. (2021). Australian Early Childhood teachers' training in language and literacy: A nation-wide review of pre-service course content. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 46*(2). https://doi.org/10.14221/ajte.2021v46n2.3

Yang, S. (2016). Supporting oral narrative development of kindergarten English language learners using multimedia stories. *Journal of Interactive Learning Research, 27*(4), 381–397. https://www.learntechlib.org/primary/p/172691/

Dr Caroline Cohrssen is an associate professor in the Faculty of Education at The University of Hong Kong and Honorary Fellow, Melbourne Graduate School of Education at The University of Melbourne. Her research interests encompass children's learning in the home learning environment and in preschool settings. She is leading a project that investigates the impact of smartphone technology to disseminate information on playful caregiver practices that support literacy, numeracy and spatial thinking of three-year-old children at home.

cohrssen@hku.hk
ccohrsse@une.edu.au

Dr Yvette Slaughter is Senior Lecturer in Language and Literacy Education within the Melbourne Graduate School of Education. She is co-editor of the Language Teaching Research special edition entitled, *Reframing language in teaching and learning:*

Leveraging students' meaning-making repertoires (2021) and is currently working on research focusing on the use of plurilingual pedagogies and engagement with linguistic repertoires in early childhood, primary/secondary and adult educational contexts.

ymslau@unimelb.edu.au

Dr Edith Nicolas is a linguist and lecturer in early childhood education. She is currently investigating mentoring practices in early childhood, identifying positive practices to improve practicum experiences. An additional area of research is early childhood language development and bilingualism. She has recently collaborated on projects to support the introduction of a second language in EC settings as well as training early childhood teachers in language and literacy development.

nicolas.e@unimelb.edu.au
