

Welcome to my
presentation on
Multilingualism and
Multi thinking.
(ECEY4004)

**I AM LAKSHAMI
KAUR, MY
STUDENT NUMBER
IS: 2218479**

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**This
presentation
focuses on:**

Bilingualism and
multilingualism in
the Early Years.

I will be discussing:

- ❖ THE ADVANTAGES OF CHILDREN BEING BILINGUAL OR MULTILINGUAL
 - ❖ SUPPORTING INDIVIDUALS THAT SPEAK WELSH OR ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
 - ❖ HOW BEING BILINGUAL OR MULTILINGUAL IMPACTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRAIN
 - ❖ DIVERGENT THINKING
- AND.....
- ❖ WILL BE MAKING LINKS TO RELEVANT FRAMEWORKS SUCH AS THE CYMRAEG 2050: A MILLION WELSH SPEAKERS FRAMEWORK AND THE UNCRC.

Bilingualism and Multilingualism: What do they mean?

- ❖ Although Issa and Hatt (2013) believes the original definition of bilingualism is were individuals connect the medium of the use of two languages in communication.
- ❖ Over time, in accordance with Baker and Wright (2021) the meaning of bilingualism/multilingualism has become intricate and is not very specific , as it is becoming more common and more people have critical thoughts towards both terms. Baker and Wright (2021) have suggested that with the a critical thoughts and understanding of each term being different, it is being defined in accordance with each person's interpretations and their points of views.
- ❖ Although over time the definition of bilingualism/ multilingualism has become complicated according to Baker and Wright (2021), Baker and Wright (2021) agrees with Issa and Hatt (2013) and believes bilingualism is the association of individuals interconnecting the use of their native language with an additional language.
- ❖ Baker and Wright (2021) have also suggested that the meaning of multilingualism is where a third or more language acquisitions are developed.

Bilingualism: The Benefits:

- ❖ Smidt (2016) have suggested that obtaining a language enables children to gain an insight and develop knowledge and understanding of the world they live in, and develop an awareness of their diverse society. Acquiring an additional language enables children to adapt quickly in different cultural communities. This has positive advantages towards children's social and emotional development. It provides children the sense of belonging they need and helps children become confident and emotionally comfortable when in social interactions.
- ❖ According to Gort (2019), bilingualism is becoming more natural and is commonly developing all over the world. Gort (2019) believes being bilingual enhances the development of children's language. Bilingual children are able to use and have more knowledge of different vocabulary in comparison to monolinguals.
- ❖ Similarly to Smidt (2016) Baker and Wright (2021) have suggested that bilingualism early in childhood has many benefits for children and their developmental needs.
- ❖ Baker and Wright (2021) say being bilingual enhances children's cognitive skills. It gives the children the capacity of being cognitively intuitive. The ability to understand and acknowledge new languages intelligently and are able to switch from one language to another quickly when and in communication.
- ❖ As well as bilingualism have advantages towards children's cognitive development, according with Baker and Wright (2021) being bilingual is beneficial for children's communication skills. It enables children to communicate effectively when interacting socially. In communication bilingual children are able to easily identify the language used by an individual and is able to quickly and simply adapt and reciprocate effortlessly.

Multilingualism: The Benefits:

❖ In the annual review of applied linguistics, Cenoz (2013) points out that being multilingual has positive advantages and influences towards individuals social and economic future, it provides positive opportunities of building successful relationships with other people and enables people to easily get into employability around the world.

UNCRC

To encourage the beneficiaries of both bilingualism and multilingualism in the early years, it is important the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Children is considered. It helps all adults in the Early years understand how children can be protected when acquiring a language acquisition or using their native language.

- ❖ According with the UNICEF (1989) The United Nation Convention on the Rights of Children is a convention to help the protection of young children in all aspects of their childhood.
- ❖ Embedded within the UNCRC children have cultural rights that they are entitled to, this helps practitioner's keep children safe when encouraging the use of different language acquisitions as well as their native language.
- ❖ Article 7, is one of three of the cultural rights children are entitled to, It is important for all early years practitioner's/ adults to understand that children have the right to belong within a nationality and is respected for the use of their native language.
- ❖ Article 8, is another cultural right, in the convention it explains that children have the right to their identity and have the right to be able to express themselves freely with the protection from adult's through their language acquisitions.
- ❖ Article 30, is the right children have to be able to learn and acquire their own native language acquisitions within their community. Children have the right to use their home language in the community they live in and should feel comfortable with their language.

Makaton and EAL

In section 1 I used the sandwich method as a way of promoting different language acquisitions. I was speaking in English then translated what I was saying in Welsh. As I was speaking in English I had transferred some phrases into Makaton signs, which in accordance with Thomson (2015) only 18.1 % of children in early education acquires English as an additional Language and Makaton signing can be used as a way of supporting individuals that acquires English as an additional language and those that are multilingual. Thomson (2015) says using Makaton to support bilingual and multilingual individuals can encourage inclusiveness.

- ❖ Lee (2022) says although BSL in the UK is more commonly used, there is still over 1 million individuals that are using Makaton signing.
- ❖ According with Lee (2022) Makaton signing is an easy way of communicating using signs, lee (2022) says that when using Makaton signing in communication, verbal communication is also used.

Welsh as an additional Language:

- ❖ Jacob (2017) says the Welsh language is known to have aged overtime and is now one of the oldest of languages used throughout Europe. It is a language that developed through the Celtic language, and was spoken by the Ancient Britons which later emerged as a Brythonic Language.
- ❖ In accordance with the Welsh Government (2017) the 2011 survey, which measured how many children develop the Welsh language when being exposed to it at home, outlined that 82% of children from 3 – 4 years can speak the Welsh language when being brought up in a household where both of the adults can speak Welsh. When being brought up in a household where only one of the adults speaks the Welsh language, only 45% of children from 3- 4 years inherit the language and speak Welsh. This shows that when children are exposed to the Welsh language constantly by both adults speaking Welsh becomes a language that is innate within the children.
- ❖ As the main aim of the Cymraeg 2050: A Million Speakers Framework, established by the Welsh Government (2017) is to increase the numbers of Welsh Speakers by the year 2050. To encourage and progress the number of Welsh speakers, the Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years Charity (no date) has suggested ways the Welsh language can be promoted in Early Years settings, enabling Children to acquire the Welsh Language as an additional language acquisition.
- ❖ The Professional Association for Child care and Early Years (no date) says the Welsh language can be encouraged through the use of singing Welsh rhymes/ songs, listening to Welsh story books or having the Welsh language embedded within play activities by having Welsh phrases spread throughout the environment.

How Bilingualism/ Multilingualism impact the brain

- ❖ Marian and Shook (2012) believe that being bilingual positively impacts the function of the cognitive area of the brain.
- ❖ Marian and Shook (2012) say bilingual individuals are more able to have good control over their cognitive area of the brain, in communication bilingual individuals have the power of being able to switch between different language acquisitions quickly, allowing them to reciprocate and respond faster than monolingual individuals.
- ❖ According with Russell (2020) the study published in the Brain structure and function paper that have been put in place to assess an thoroughly determine the condition of the brain of individuals from 3 – 21 years, the results has shown that, individuals who has the ability of speaking a medium of two language acquisitions or more have the capacity of being considerably more intelligent, the results show that bilingual individuals Gray matter in their brain is more active and functions quicker than monolinguals.
- ❖ Russell (2020) also points out that bilingual individual's white matter is more responsive in respectful ways. Russell (2020) says from the results of the study, it shows that when having the ability of speaking a medium of two language acquisitions or more, the bilingual/ multilingual brain is able to function successfully a bit longer than monolinguals, the results from the study shows that bilingual individuals has a slower chance of developing Alzheimer's disease as well as dementia.

Divergent Thinking:

- ❖ In Robinson's (2016) video, Ken Robinson's describes Divergent thinking as being a quality associated with creativity and is not the same as being creative. It is the quality of being creative where individuals have the ability develop creative ideas and innovate those ideas in different ways.
- ❖ According with Huang (2021) Individuals that are bilingual have an increased chance of being flexible when it comes to creativity and develop critical thoughts that leads individuals divergent thinking being influenced.
- ❖ Ali (2019) says the results from a test were both bilingual and monolingual individuals are measured regard to their ability of perceiving an idea in multiple ways, shows that those individuals that speak a second language are more accomplished in divergent thinking than those who are only able to speak the one language. The results show that bilingual individuals are better at navigating an idea in different ways as they are more experienced and are exposed to more vocabulary that is an influence to their creativity and stimulates one idea to be perceived multiple ways.
- ❖ However, Booton *et al* (2021) on the other hand says in the study of Children's divergent thinking and bilingualism that the results of the study they undertook found that monolinguals are just as capable of stimulating and navigating an idea in multiple ways than those that are bilingual.

Conclusion

- ❖ Overall in conclusion to this presentation, bilingualism/ multilingualism is beneficial in all aspects of children's life and has positive effects on their future. It enables individuals to academically and economically thrive.
- ❖ Acquiring the Welsh language as an additional Language can start early in childhood as it is embedded within the curriculums/ frameworks in Wales, which are recognised and acknowledged by Early Years practitioner's and is by legal requirement that it is implemented as part of their role in practice.
- ❖ Bilingualism and Multilingualism positively changes the functioning of the brain in the cognitive areas. A bilingual/ multilingual brain functions are more advanced than monolinguals.

Thank you