

Analysis of Activity Video

Bore Da a Croeso i bawb! Good morning and welcome everyone! I am Katie Cornelius-Davies, and I would like to welcome you to the analysis of my latest activity video you have recently viewed.

During my activity video I included the idea of ensuring I met a few criteria points. Today I will be discussing those points while backing up my thoughts and reasons with references from those who agreed or may have disagreed with my ideas. Areas including, the benefits of bilingualism, Welsh as an Additional Language, brain development as a bilingual speaker, and divergent thinking, while linking these areas of development to Early Years Framework and Programmes.

Bilingualism

What is Bilingualism? According to Multilingual Matters (2021) bilingualism emphasises on regular use of languages rather than fluency itself. They continue by saying, bilingual individuals are those who use two or more languages or dialects within their everyday lives within communication with others.

However, Naldic (2011) disagrees with this statement as they propose bilingualism has not got a defined definition. Naldic says that bilingualism can mean many different things to different people. Therefore, it is more of an opinion from an individual point of view. This can range from communicating orally in two or more languages, reading in different languages, or understanding some words or phrases within the types of communication.

Benefits of bilingualism

Multicultural Kid Blogs (2021) says that children who are bilingual tend to gain greater concentration, improved communication skills, improved memory, have a greater social life with their family and friends, and have the ability of open-mindedness within their future events as children exercise the brain to be alert and active, even when communicating in one language at a time.

Within my own practice experiences and research, I have gained great knowledge of what bilingualism really is from different perspectives. One organisation, Raising Children (2024) believes that reading with practitioners, family members and friends enables children to

Katie Cornelius-Davies
2315284

ECEY4004 – Multilingualism, Multi-thinking (3000 words)

develop and learn an additional language successfully as they connect and intertwine words and phrases together with their first language to form a better understanding. Within an early years setting reading books and singing songs with adults is a key feature to encourage children's learning as they enjoy new vocabulary being frequently used in two or more languages. Singing in an additional language is a fun way to help the children remember the sounds and word structure as often the words are repeated throughout.

Welsh as an Additional Language (WAL)

Welsh Assembly Government (2024) announces, within an early year's environment, there are many ways practitioners can introduce Welsh as an Additional Language to children in their care. Children can hear, see, and experience the Welsh language through play and active learning. For example, children can learn the language gradually and naturally through support in circle time, phrases of praise in Welsh, and singing songs with a musical background to promote sounds and fluency.

Lebron (2013) says culture is a set of values and beliefs that we share with others in an area of society, this gives us a sense of belongingness and identity. For example, Wales and the Welsh language. Wales has a culture of their own language, food, music, and social habits. The Welsh culture has developed seven core aims for every child and young person as they provide the United Nations Convention of the Rights on the Child, these elements can be found on UNICEF (2024). As a result of this, two of the seven key aims are for every individual to have access to cultural activities and to be treated with respect as they have their race and cultural identity recognised. This helps confidence, fluency, and knowledge at a young age of an additional language.

However. According to LearnWelsh.cymru (2024) as a language, the Welsh vocabulary has had a dramatic decline in fluency. In 1911, 43% of the population spoke Welsh, due to the First World War that percentage declined rapidly, now only three years ago in 2021 only 17.8% of the population speak Welsh as an additional language. Visit Wales (2024) agrees and adds that World Wars and recent pandemics such as Coronavirus, has had a huge impact on the learning and teaching methods.

Brain Development

Early Years Alliance (no date) suggests that bilingual new-borns can differentiate between two languages just hours after birth! Bilingual babies as young as four to five months old can respond more positively to the sounds of languages that they have heard from birth. By the age of two years old children begin to point out which language to use depending on the circumstance and the person they are communicating with. As an early year's practitioner, it is important to have good communication techniques with bilingual families to help enhance the child's home language to support their development. For example, if a family has a different first language, then it can be challenging for the parents/carers to understand the professionals, it is important as a professional to build connections with these individuals by using translator tools such as apps or cue cards to show and explain while both parties learn techniques to communicate effectively.

FabuLingua (2023) suggests that being bilingual has wide benefits for a child's brain development. As children are shown, taught, and spoken to bilingually the brain starts to develop and progress with more grey and white matter. This means that children can retain more knowledge due to the growth of memory cells to enhance better memory, better focus, and attention skills.

However, World Humanitarian Movement (2023) believes being bilingual can often confuse children as they may mix the languages when trying to communicate with others or have difficulty differentiating between their first and additional language when responding or learning how to communicate effectively. They continue by saying children may take longer to reach milestones and can often have delayed language development.

Divergent Thinking

ScienceDirect (2021) As children grow up being bilingual, divergent thinking begins to grow. Bilingualism has many links to a range of cognitive skills and linguistics. For example, creativity. It is suggested that being bilingual as a child enhances executive functions and more diverse cultural experiences.

However, Zheng *et al.* (2023) disagrees that bilingualism is a skill for children as research conducted by Booton *et al.* (2021) demonstrated that there is no significant difference between bilingual children compared to children who can only speak one language. In fact, more research commenced by Rosselli *et al.* (2000) and Gollan *et al.* (2002) suggested that

Katie Cornelius-Davies
2315284

ECEY4004 – Multilingualism, Multi-thinking (3000 words)

children who only used and was fluent in one language outperformed bilingual children in a verbal activity produced by them.

Links with Early Years Frameworks and Programmes

GOV.UK (2024) As an early year's practitioner, it is important that all children are supported in all languages available to them. Practitioners have a critical role in modelling the language being learnt. Such as, having the child's first language at key areas informing them what the area is used for and what they are likely to do, as well as having books in the language being taught or introduced to help the children to see the images that connect with the words they often hear. Professionals are advised to produce a visual timetable to help and support the children to know what is happening next in both their first language and additional language, have emotions displayed and photographs of areas, resources, and routines to help children interact and work with practitioners effectively.

The Welsh Government (2024) suggests that Welsh-medium or bilingual nurseries can promote the Welsh language in a fun way, these activities and phrases should be used frequently for the child to become more comfortable and aware of the sounds produced by the language. For example, singing Welsh songs, Welsh and English intertwined, reading simple stories in the Welsh language, these stories could be a well-known English book but translated into Welsh and having place mats that show numbers, colours, or animals to introduce in small ways.

As seen in my activity video singing songs, reading books in the Welsh language while adding the known language to the children helps them understand, imagine, and express these words and phrases together as they begin to intertwine these connections. Twinkl (2024) agrees with this by adding, singing songs, counting blocks in Welsh and then in English (or vis versa), colouring with adults while mentioning the colours in an additional language helps children develop more of a confidence when completing the activities in the near future.

Conclusion

As I come to an end of my presentation, I would like to conclude by saying I have undertaken a variety of opinions, research, and knowledge from professionals themselves they demonstrate what it can be like to be bilingual with the children we care for every day. I would like to take this knowledge into my own practise bilingualism to the children within my care. To do this I will encourage more of the Welsh language within my setting as well as

Katie Cornelius-Davies
2315284

ECEY4004 – Multilingualism, Multi-thinking (3000 words)

learning more languages myself to help and support any children or parents that I may encounter. Thank you very much for listening and understanding my views. Please find a reference list attached.

References

Booton, S. *et al* (2021) *Children's divergent thinking and bilingualism*, Thinking Skills and Creativity, pp 1. (Accessed, 18 April 2024).

Baker, C, & Wright, WE 2021, *Foundations of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, Multilingual Matters, Bristol. Available from: ProQuest Ebook Central. (13 April 2024).

Early Years Alliance (no date) *Bilingualism in the Early Years*. Available at: https://www.eyalliance.org.uk/sites/default/files/bilingualism_in_the_early_years_1.pdf (Accessed: 14 April 2024).

FabuLingua (2023) *Top 6 Benefits of Being Bilingual from Childhood: advantages of bilingualism and bilingual education*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qD8Ct-TOO0s> (Downloaded: 1 April 2024).

GOV.UK (2024) *English as an additional language (EAL)*. Available at: <https://help-for-early-years-providers.education.gov.uk/get-help-to-improve-your-practice/english-as-an-additional-language-eal> (Accessed: 17 April 2024).

Gupta, N. (2021) 'Multicultural Kid Blogs', *10 Childhood Benefits of Being Bilingual*, 12 July. Available at: <https://multiculturalkidblogs.com/2021/07/12/10-childhood-benefits-of-being-bilingual/> (Accessed: 6 April 2024).

Katie Cornelius-Davies
2315284
ECEY4004 – Multilingualism, Multi-thinking (3000 words)

Lebron, A. (2013) 'What is culture?', *Merit Research Journal of Education and Review*, 1(6), pp. 126 – 132. (online). Available at:
<https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/023b/0223f2673be190d6978e85f4d7fb606125ad.pdf>
(Accessed: 13 April 2024).

LinkedIn (2023) *The effects of bilingualism on problem-solving and critical thinking*. Available at: <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/effects-bilingualism-problem-solving-critical-bianca-mister-phd> (Accessed: 15 April 2024).

LearnWelsh.cymru (2024) *Wales and the Welsh Language*. Available at: <https://learnwelsh.cymru/about-us/wales-and-the-welsh-language/> (Accessed: 14 April 2024).

Naldic (2011) *What is bilingualism?*
<https://www.naldic.org.uk/Resources/NALDIC/Initial%20Teacher%20Education/Documents/B1.pdf> (Accessed: April 5 2024).

RaisingChildren.net.au (2024) *Singing in a Second Language: activity for children 0-6 years*. Available at: <https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/activity-guides/sounds-songs-music/singing-in-a-second-language-activity-for-children-0-6-years> (Accessed: 14 April 2024).

ScienceDirect (2021) *Children's divergent thinking*. Available at: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S1871187121001334?casa_token=mFXbyQSaHvYAAAAA:BTECpbqum21gOjiX-BXc0SrLvnvLlS-RpztYe0cJ4ZvQNOmf_1Qj9hg1XkYRXwTMYzO_WxFyVL8 (Accessed: 18 April 2024).

Twinkl (2024) *Welsh Activities*. Available at: <https://www.twinkl.co.uk/search?q=welsh+activities&c=247&r=parent&fco=19131L> (Accessed: 17 April 2024).

Katie Cornelius-Davies
2315284
ECEY4004 – Multilingualism, Multi-thinking (3000 words)

UNICEF (2024) *How we Protect Children's Rights*. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/> (Accessed: 30 March 2024).

Visit Wales (2024) *The History of the Welsh Language*. Available at: <https://www.visitwales.com/info/language/poetry-motion-discover-language-wales#:~:text=The%20Industrial%20Revolution%20and%20World,Welsh%20during%20the%2019th%20century.> (Accessed: 14 April 2024).

Welsh Assembly Government (2024) *Welsh Language Development*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/b4174a47-34fb-447d-8a11-46f21d12c804/welsh-language-development.pdf> (Accessed: 14 April 2024).

World Humanitarian Movement (2023) *The Advantages and Disadvantages of Bilingualism in Child Development*. Available at: <https://wohum.org/the-advantages-and-disadvantages-of-bilingualism-in-child-development/> (Accessed: 3 April 2024).

Welsh Government (2024) *Early Years*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/cymraeg-for-kids/early-days> (Accessed: 17 April 2024).

Zheng, Y et al. (2023) *Bilingualism and creativity across development: Evidence from divergent thinking and convergent thinking*. Available at: [https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9859714/#:~:text=\(2021\)%20did%20not%20find%20any,to%20the%20divergent%2Dthinking%20task.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9859714/#:~:text=(2021)%20did%20not%20find%20any,to%20the%20divergent%2Dthinking%20task.) (Accessed: 16 April 2024).