Bilingual Language Development

There are many ways to learn more than one language and one is not better than the other. The bilingual language development profile of your child will depend on how and when each language is acquired.

1. Simultaneous Dual Language Learners

- These children learn 2 languages from birth
- One parent or caregiver talks to them in one language and the other parent or caregiver talks to them in another language
- One language is spoken in the home and another is spoken in the community AND the child is exposed to both languages regularly before the age of 3.
- These children develop language similarly to their peers who only speak one language.
- There is evidence in differences in phonological development. By the age of 5, those differences should disappear.

2. Sequential Dual Language Learners

- A person learns another language after their primary language has been established.
- One language is spoken in the home and a second language is introduced when the child starts school, after the age of 3.
- When the second language is introduced, some children may have a "silent period." They may not talk as much and "revert back" to using just 1-2 word phrases in their primary language. This can last for a few months but it is normal and to be expected. It DOES NOT mean that they are behind or losing language skills.
- Remember, knowing more than one language is an asset and a GREAT idea.

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