

Research Based evidence

Research evidence to answer the question “English-only or native language support”?

Based on a convergence of evidence it is recognized that supporting a child’s native language better supports later academic outcomes in English(August & Shanahan, 2006; Christian, 1996;1979; Oller & Eilers, 202; Espionosa, 2008; Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass, 2005; Slavin & Cheung, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 2002; + many more)

Practical Evidence

- Over ½ of the world’s population is bilingual (deHouwer,1995)
- Many other countries have instituted and researched bilingual education including: Canada, Norway, The Netherlands, Sweden, Australia, Mexico and China (Krashen, 1999)

Reasons to support a child’s native language

The child will be surrounded with English speakers and will quickly recognize English as the language with higher status and power in this society. The greatest likelihood is actually that immigrant children will discontinue their native language (Portes & Hao, 1998)

In early childhood a child’s native language is still in the process of development. In Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) and in general Early Childhood (EC), we are often working on basic communication in the family context and it only makes sense to provide support in the language the child will need in their natural setting.

Given the global economy and increasing diversity in our country there is actually a great demand for fully proficient bilinguals. Why should we not support this capacity in native speakers? (Portes & Hao, 1998; Valdes, 1997)

The child must be able to communicate with his/her family and community so that he /she does not become socially isolated. Maintaining strong native language skills will allow parents to communicate affection, discipline and teach cultural values (Wong-Fillmore, 1991)

Studies have shown that bilingual individuals consistently outperform their monolingual counterparts on tasks involving executive control. The present paper reviews some of the evidence for this conclusion and relates the findings to the effect of bilingualism on cognitive organization and to conceptual issues in the structure of executive control. Evidence for the protective effect of bilingualism against Alzheimer's disease is presented with some speculation about the reason for that protection. ([Reshaping the mind: The benefits of bilingualism.](#) Bialystok, Ellen)