Group production by: Berlin Cosmopolitan School Kindergarten & Preschool (Berlin), ICEC (Helsinki), Universidad Camilo José Cela (Madrid), Pikler-Ház (Budapest)

Supporting Children's Language Awareness and Cultural Identity

Handbook for Early Years Professionals

SUPPORTING CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE AWARENESS AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

HANDBOOK FOR EARLY YEARS PROFESSIONALS

"As a team, we will:

Communicate openly and honestly in order to build on one another's ideas.
Respect each other's differences, but keep the goal clear (for the children).
Encourage and motivate each other to enjoy the process through humour and positivity.
Use flexibility and critical thinking to collaborate on shared goals."

Berlin, November, 2017

Group production by:

Berlin Cosmopolitan School Kindergarten & Preschool (Berlin), ICEC (Helsinki), Universidad Camilo Jose Cela (Madrid), Pikler-Haz (Budapest)

(2017-2020)

Erasmus+

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

ICCC Group

Berlin Cosmopolitan School Kindergarten & Preschool, Invalidenstrasse 130, 10115 Berlin, Germany

www.iccc.group

Authors:

Alexander Bloom, Matthew Carlyle, Katharina Ehrenfried, Katherine Habben, Michael Habekost, Carolin Hermes, Julia Mariacher, Lauren Piper

Creator and experimental field, project lead, international kindergarten

www.cosmopolitanschool.de

Contributing Authors:

Sharon Leigh Auri, Hilary Carter, Miriam Fernández-Pacheco Laguna, Marja Kemppainen, Mihaela Nyyssönen, Heidi Schuchenegg, Andrew Watson

English-Finnish kindergarten, reflective practice and kindergarten to mirror and evaluate

Zsuzsanna Libertiny, Lilla Márkus, Nóra Máté-Féniász, Szidénia Baraksó

Former infants' home with large knowledge base accumulated during 60+ years of caring for infants and toddlers in an institutional setting

Angeles Bueno Villaverde, Pilar Ester Mariñoso, Isabel Morales Jareño, Jessica Moreno Pizarro

Long-standing experts in multilingualism and language acquisition

CONTENT

LEGEND

Information:

Additional explanations and theory.

Practical Tips:

Tips for daily routines and situations in kindergarten.

Case Studies:

Further points to consider and discuss.

AUTHORS' NOTE

In this book, we use the term "family" for all kinds of structures where adults take emotional, financial and legal care children. We use the term "parent" to describe the most significant adult taking care of the child/children, who has an emotional bond with them. We use the word "educator" to describe the person working with a group of children in an institutionalised setting. We use the word "kindergarten" to describe this institutionalised setting for early years education. When referring to the general "child," we use the plural pronoun "they," in order to remain gender neutral. We recognize gender, culture and identity as a spectrum and intend for everyone to be represented in this text.

A NOTE FOR TRANSLATORS

The authors request that the careful choice of terminology, gender neutrality and representations of all genders and cultures will be respected in all future translations of this text.

PREFACE

Project team members work daily in multicultural surroundings and have written this handbook to support educators on the topic of settling children into a multilingual setting. This handbook was created with professional modern early years centres in mind to help them provide children with a positive settling-in experience while being mindful of their individual cultural, social and emotional background. It is our hope to help educators understand and foster development in young children who are growing up in a diverse linguistic and cultural environment.

It is a selection of theory, experiences and tips from experienced educators as well as collected knowledge from all partner institutions. The following sections offer ideas and reflections of thoughtful pedagogical methods towards children in an institutionalised setting.

This handbook provides:

· Case studies

· Real-life examples

· Theories

· Practical tips

Main topics include:

· Language development in a multilingual setting

· Fostering language awareness

· Importance of non-verbal communication

· Cultural identity and its relevance in early childhood

The goal of this handbook is to provide support, guidance, and knowledge to work with multilingual and multicultural children and their families to the best of each educator's ability. It is our aim to provide educators with helpful tools to successfully handle a variety of situations in their professional career for a nurturing and beneficial care and education. This handbook offers input for educators in their lifelong learning process and focuses on best practice. It is contributing to a high-quality approach to education and care in working with a diverse group of children.

INTRODUCTION

This is a book about language, but it is not a linguistic book. It is a pedagogical approach to integrating the notions of early childhood education and care, language, culture, identity and the institutionalised sphere of a globally connected world. We, as a diverse and international team of professionals from the field of early childhood, have concluded that working with children and families in a multilingual and multicultural setting comes with unique experiences, opportunities, challenges and expertise. This is the reason why, taking our experiences from working in a diverse setting, we have consulted with experts from the field of early childhood education and care to bring together knowledge, a variety of views and approaches, personal experience and intellectual theory. The Berlin team and partners have connected over the urge to create materials and texts that evoke conversation, spark ideas, offer guidance and provide information to add to the picture in the field of early childhood and relate to educators' experiences in their teaching practice.

This book is an attempt to explore new and unique opportunities and challenges for children, educators and parents in an everchanging world and the many unique and complex social situations children, educators and parents face in a diverse institutionalised setting. We have focused on the process of settling a child into kindergarten as we feel this is a crucial event in a child's and family's journey through institutionalised care and education. It can have an immense impact on the child's time being in the institution and later life. It is a sensitive phase where the child, the family and the educators enter into a social setting that involves many complex aspects and is unique to everyone's personal experience.

Therefore, we are aiming to give an insight into theory and practice but do not claim to give universal instructions on how to approach this situation. We are hoping to give valuable and useful tips and information to be used in preparation for this phase of care and education. In this book, we are particularly looking at the influences of language and culture on the settling in process.

THE IMPORTANCE OF LOVE AND AFFECTION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

We, as educators, have committed to taking an empathetic, child-centred and affectionate approach to teaching and caretaking in early childhood education. Not only does this continue to be essential for strengthening our bonds with the children we work with, but we are also convinced that emotional care, love, affection and empathy are vital to a child's development and a fundamental aspect in the kindergarten as well as in the home. In recent years, the growing research in the fields of neuroscience, psychology, psychoanalysis and biochemistry with regards to emotional life are converging to offer a deeper understanding of emotion that supports our experiences and beliefs as educators. In Sue Gerhardt's, *Why Love Matters,* she references neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, and writes that "the rational part of the brain does not work on its own, but only at the same time as the basic regulatory and emotional parts of the brain" (Gerhardt, 2015). Feelings and emotions play a tremendous role in raising healthy and stable children: they are an undeniable aspect of human life, parenting and teaching. Through our work in early childhood education, we are dedicated to nurturing the feelings and emotions of children and hope to offer them a view of the world that is shaped by respect, empathy, love and affection. Therefore, all aspects of this handbook stand on the fundamental ideas of a respectful, empathetic and affectionate way of interacting with one another.

CHAPTER 1

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN A BILINGUAL SETTING

This section is an attempt to give a deeper understanding of the complexities of language acquisition and language development.

It gives a brief overview of relevant linguistic theory that can support educators in their understanding of early years language development. For a more in-depth look at each theory, please refer to the further reading section.

Case Study: Luca

Luca was born into a German/Portuguese family. Her dad speaks German and her mum speaks Portuguese. Luca started at a German-English kindergarten when she was about one year old.

Luca is exposed to German with her dad and to Portuguese with her mum at home, as well as to Portuguese with her babysitter with whom she spends and extensive amount of time.

At the kindergarten, she is exposed to German and English with her educators and peers.

Luca is two years old now and her language development is constantly progressing in all languages mentioned.

She seems to understand a lot that is being said and she is starting to respond more by expressing herself verbally. The language she uses to communicate her interests and needs (at kindergarten) is not always clear.

Luca chooses to speak German over English in many situations and appears to use German as her main language of communication at kindergarten.

When interacting with the English-speaking educator or English-speaking children, her expressions are unclear and can sound like a mix of several languages.

Remember, every child is unique and reaches milestones at their own pace. Below is a general guideline of when linguistic milestones occur in young children in their first language.

Age:	• 27 months
Home languages:	• German, • Portuguese
Additional language:	• English
Key words / Themes:	• translingualism • language performance • language competence • language transfer • code-switching

First Language Acquisition in Milestones:

After birth: Different forms of communication: Screaming, crying, 'mooing'

6 months: 'Babbling', more languagelike sounds (bababa, dada, mamama)

11-16 months: Usage of words, simultaneous to babbling (individual point in time for each child when the usage of words exceeds the usage of babbling)

2 years: Phonological progress, pronunciation differences occur (substitutions, deletion, simplification)

Syntax progress, sentence structure changes (from one-word sentences to a combination of words and more complex sentence structures)

Morphology progress, children learn word classes and different word forms, this progress follows a certain pattern (e.g. content words develop more quickly than articles).

Later in childhood: Pragmatics progress, understanding beyond literal meaning. "A child in learning a first language must learn to go beyond the literal meaning of utterances to understand the pragmatic force" (Gass & Selinker, 2008) .

FIRST, SECOND OR FOREIGN LANGUAGE? DESCRIPTIONS OF MULTILINGUALISM IN KINDERGARTENS

A child's first language and second language can generally be defined by proficiency or time of acquisition. As seen in Luca's case, the proficiency of her languages varies (Portuguese as her main language outside of kindergarten and German as her main language inside of kindergarten, English being her least preferred language).

The level of proficiency of a language usually depends on the practicality and relevance of the language for the child in everyday life and the amount of useful input that the child is exposed to on a regular basis. In Luca's case, the indicators of proficiency and time of acquisition show that German and Portuguese are her preferred languages and can be regarded as her "first languages". English, therefore, could be seen as her "second language" in this context.

But the status and relevance of the languages adjust to changes in the child's life; One of Luca's current first languages, German, might become her second language later in life. One potential scenario could be that her family moves to another country and her exposure to the German language is halted. This scenario, as an example, could result in a change of status in Luca's languages (De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007).

Practical Tips:

Try to find out what languages the children feel most comfortable with and acknowledge each language influence the children show in their way of speaking. The children will signal which languages are their preferred languages or the languages they feel most comfortable with in specific situations or moods.

Respect the child's choice of language in the moment and avoid interfering by enforcing another language.

THE CONCEPT OF TRANSLINGUALISM

Although we refer to general linguistic theory and the terms "first language" and "second language" throughout this book, we have found that the concept of translingualism applies to the experiences in our practice in working with children in a linguistically and culturally diverse setting. The concept of translingualism reflects a holistic view on language and identity within the framework of a multilingual and multicultural setting, and is an umbrella term that encompasses the concepts of differing communicative modes and is used by speakers of multiple languages within their varying cultural contexts: It transcends individual languages and communication transcends words (Canagarajah, 2013). In other words, the clear distinction between individual language learning processes and cultural influences cannot represent the complexity of a child's social, cultural and linguistic environment (Dovchin, Lee 2018).

A child's language development and cultural identity are hybrid, complex and unique processes and the concept of translingualism helps overcome the idea of fixed and stable language boundaries. This results in a more accurate representation of a child's complex social reality in a diverse setting from a holistic and inclusive point of view.

HOW EXACTLY DOES LUCA ACQUIRE LANGUAGE AT THIS EARLY AGE?

LUCA IS "LEARNING" HOW TO SPEAK A LANGUAGE.

Understanding how children learn to speak a language is an important aspect of the settling in process of multilingual children and their time in kindergarten, especially if they do not

speak any of the languages offered. It can be helpful and supportive for educators to know how a child processes an unknown language and prepare for possibly difficult situations of communication due to a lack of a mutual language. It can also assist and empower the children in their language development at kindergarten. The process of how a child acquires language and "learns" a specific language is quite complex and influenced by different aspects. Luca learns a language by being exposed to the language on a regular basis or for a longer period while "taking in" the language offered and internalising it. There are four different ways of learning or internalising language.

Implicit Learning:

Soaking up language like a sponge

Explicit Learning:

Investigating language like a detective

Types of Language Learning

Incidential Learning

Learning through context clues

Intentional Learning:

Asking questions and making observations

IMPLICIT LEARNING

The child is exposed to unknown intonations, sounds, words or sentence structures. With time, the child becomes familiar with the specific characteristics of the language and begins implicitly taking in the underlying structure of the language without conscious effort. Luca implicitly takes in the language she is surrounded by "like a sponge" (Rebuschat, 2015).

EXPLICIT LEARNING

The child starts to notice the unknown characteristics of the language that they are exposed to on a regular basis. The child systematically "investigates" the differences of this specific language in order to make out the structures of it.

This is comparable to the process of adults testing hypotheses. It could be referred to as the image of the "investigator" or "detective" (Rebuschat, 2015).

Luca tries out different structures in her speech and waits for a confirming feedback from the person she is talking to (e.g. "bunny" - "no, this is a guinea pig") or she applies her acquired internal structure of a past tense form and says "catched" ("catched" - "no, it's caught").

INCIDENTAL LEARNING

The child learns certain features of a language from the context without further explanation of an adult. Then they can grasp the meaning of a word or an unknown structure in the language from the context and do so without obvious intention or awareness (Richards & Schmidt, 2013).

Luca does not speak English fluently yet, but when her educator asks her to please use either the spoon or fork for lunch and she knows what a spoon is, she will be able to grasp the meaning of fork.

INTENTIONAL LEARNING

The unclear meaning of a word leads to intentional inquiry (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). The child might observe or ask questions. Luca explicitly asks for a certain meaning when she is unsure (pointing towards an object - "This?" - "This is a chair") or might explain to her educator that what she is holding is a teddy bear ("me teddy bear").

UNDERSTANDING A CHILD'S LANGUAGE BEHAVIOUR: LUCA'S LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE VS. LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

The ideas of language competence and language performance can be helpful for educators to shed light on the level of proficiency in a child and open up ways of assisting and supporting the child in their current phase of language acquisition (Chomsky N., 1980). When observing a child's language development, the educator might notice that the child progresses in terms of language competence on the one hand but has difficulties in language performance or active language usage on the other hand. Poor language performance means that the children might not be able to express themselves in this particular language yet. This can be a frustrating experience for children and adults. Especially when the conversational partner is expecting verbal communication in return. It then increases social pressure to interact. The inability to produce language sufficiently or a lack of language performance can result in different behaviours, such as inwardness, frustration, anger, shame, fear or anxiety.

LUCA'S LANGUAGE COMPETENCE

This term describes Luca's abstract knowledge of the language (Chomsky N., 1965). In other words, how much Luca "knows" about a language. It refers to the mental representations of a language in Luca's mind and/or internalised structures of a language with which Luca is familiar.

Luca "knows" certain sounds, rules or meanings in a language, but it does not mean that Luca can actively use this knowledge for language production. This is important to consider when working with Luca, as she might not have the necessary linguistic means available.

LUCA'S LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE

This term describes Luca's ability to apply the acquired knowledge of a language (Chomsky N., 1965). Luca is able to actively produce language and transfer the mental representations into sounds, grammatically governed words and sentences. At this stage, she is able to communicate in the language.

Practical Tips:

Working with different levels of competence and performance

- Try to pay attention to the children and their reactions and behaviour when exposed to a certain language. What could the child's attitude mean?

- What kind of emotions do the children show?

- Can you observe externalising behaviours, such as aggression and frustration or internalising reactions like shame or insecurity when the child is exposed to a language or increased interactional pressure?

- Try to support and comfort them in difficult situations to ease stress and lower the pressure to speak.

- Provide a caring, respectful and understanding environment in which the child feels safe to open up and encouraged to speak. (Cummins, 2001)

LANGUAGE TRANSFER AND CODE-SWITCHING AS PART OF LEARNING A NEW LANGUAGE

Children can transfer their knowledge of language A to language B subconsciously.

This process, called language transfer, happens when the child tries to govern the new language with the help of the already acquired patterns and structures of another language (Cummins, 1980). This transfer can either be a positive transfer, where the applied rules work in both languages, or a negative transfer, where the applied rules do not work in both languages.

Language transfer is a tool for Luca to use when communicating in her second language with the help of al-

ready existing patterns and structures. Another tool that Luca might use is code-switching. This is when Luca's words and sentences show patterns and expressions of several languages at the same time (Cummins, 1986). This "mixing" of different languages while speaking is a means for Luca to freely communicate with the vocabulary and language features that are available to her. In her case, she communicates in English while filling in with words in Portuguese.

LEARNING LANGUAGE THROUGH SOCIAL INTERACTION

Language unfolds in social interaction. Children depend on interactional partners to be able to acquire language. The responsibility of the educator is to provide useful and comprehensible input in meaningful interactions with the child. Luca depends on her English educator as well as her German educator to continuously provide opportunities for language usage and conversational input in meaningful interactions (Krashen S., 1985).

Apart from the social aspect of language, there are also neuropsycho-

logical processes which help children "digest" the information and input they have received from their interactional partner. This process can be referred to as 'private speech' or 'inner speech,' which children use in different situations as a means to internally organise and process information, but also to self-regulate in situations of distress or excitement. This is an important part of language acquisition and helps the child process the amount of language they have been exposed to.

In kindergarten, this mechanism can often be observed in naptime when the child is alone in bed or during individual-focused activities or play situations when the child is calm and absorbed in play. Educators have the role to observe but should not interrupt these moments. Situations in which Luca chooses to speak (to herself, to a doll or other objects) is a valuable time where Luca can structure and organise the vast amount of input she has received in all the different languages she is exposed to. Only then is she able to take something away from it, input becomes intake and Luca is able to learn constructively (Krashen S. D., 1981) (Krashen S., 1985).

Language Input, Output and Feedback

Learning a language needs "input (exposure to language), output (production of language), and feedback that comes as a result of interaction" (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 317).

Input refers to the language information offered in our environment. Producing output, or the active usage of language, is crucial in a child's language development. Active usage relies on opportunities of using "language productively as opposed to using language merely for comprehension" (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 326).

In other words, making yourself understood and thereby meeting a need or achieving a goal pushes the child into the production of language in order to be understood.

Interactional feedback by others, verbally and non-verbally, is an important source of feedback and orientation for the child in the process of learning a language and happens in social interaction with the conversational partner. It refers to the social feedback and "information about the success of their utterances" (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 329).

METALINGUISTIC AWARENESS IN MONOLINGUAL AND MULTILINGUAL CHILDREN

Metalinguistic awareness is what makes acquiring and differentiating between more than one language successful (Mertz & Yovel, 2010). It is the mental ability to distance oneself from language and understand that words used to describe the world are not an aspect of the world itself. It is the realisation that an object can be referred to by different words or sounds according to the different languages. In more concrete terms, Luca could refer to an edible round, red or green object as an "apple" in English, "Apfel" in German or "maçã" in Portuguese. They are three different words referring to the same object. The different words used to describe the apple are not characte-

ristics of the apple but of the language (Mertz & Yovel, 2010). Therefore, Luca can choose which word to use when referring to this object and has acquired the mental ability to distinguish between the languages. Luca's metalinguistic awareness will give her a better understanding of languages in general and build the foundation for further language acquisition in her later life.

METALINGUISTIC AWARENESS IN MONOLINGUAL CHILDREN

Metalinguistic awareness is not a phenomenon only found in multilingual children. Monolingual people acquire a metalinguistic awareness at an early age as well, even though they might not have an additional language in their life (Mertz & Yovel, 2010). It is possible to be aware of language, to be distant enough from it and to know there are many reference words to choose from, even within one language.

Let us pretend that Luca has never been exposed to another language but English: Luca needs to use the toilet. When Luca engages in an interaction about her need, she is aware that her educator refers to this as "going to the bathroom" and her mother says, "going to the toilet". Luca is able to communi-

cate her need and understand the response even with two different ways of referring to it. There are two reference words that Luca is aware of, "bathroom" and "toilet" and she can use either word to refer to the same object or situation. She is aware that there are different options and variations within the same language at her disposal. Another situation could be, that Luca would like to have more food at lunchtime.

She has two options: Polite or impolite language. She should be able to choose between two different ways of expressing herself. She could then choose between, "Can I please have some more," or "I want more now." At that point, Luca should be aware of two different ways of communicating the same desire.

METALINGUISTIC AWARENESS IN BILINGUAL AND MULTILINGUAL CHILDREN

A child with more than one language at their disposal can have a stronger awareness of languages and a higher metalinguistic awareness in their daily life. This awareness of the characteristics of language and differences between languages can be more sensitive. These are some ways in which a child with two or more languages may

show signs of metalinguistic awareness in their way of communicating.

Luca's ways of expressing herself might show signs of code-switching. Instead of switching between the languages when there is a change in setting (new conversation partner or new context), she would mix parts of the different languages available to her while being in the same conversation. This is a common phenomenon that we have observed in our kindergartens. Luca could possibly start a sentence in one language and finish it in another: "Ich bin finished" (combining vocabulary from two languages), or "Look, so viele Äpfels!" (mixing a German noun with the English plural ending –S).Luca may also switch between languages based on whom she is speaking to: German with her German dad, English with her English educator and Portuguese with her Portuguese mum and Portuguese babysitter. Luca may also start to decode non-verbal communication, such as body language or tone of voice, to decipher what is being asked from her. In a simple example, the meaning of "hand" and "sink" become clearer to the child when everyone goes to the sink to wash their hands (Siegmund, Gogolin,

Practical Tips:

- Use appropriate non-verbal communication at the child's eye level. In the case that the child does not understand the spoken language, body language will be the number one means of orientation and comprehension.

- Use visual aids to support understanding and give a feeling of security. Visual aids can also be a great way to link vocabulary to real-life situations, strengthening the child's language skills. Offer pictures of everyday items or routines (like lunchtime or nap time) and repeat the new vocabulary in interaction with the child as often as possible.

- Use simplistic and consistent vocabulary when interacting with the child.

- Daily routines and consistency can help a child decode and memorise new words. By following a daily routine and structure, the combined repetition of words and actions create a link in the child's mind between the action and the words used to describe it.

- Educators can encourage parents to continue to speak the first or home languages to their child in various settings. By doing so, they can support the child's natural language development in both the "home languages" and the unfamiliar language. Offering continued support and acknowledgement of all languages is a way for educators to help foster natural language development and metalinguistic awareness.

Discussion Questions:	How might Luca feel in situations when she does not understand or is unable to express herself in the offered language?
	What could the educator do to assist in this process?
	How can the educators strengthen their relationship with Luca without having to rely on a mutual language?
	How could the educators support the child's language development in both languages (English/German)?
	What could they advise the parents?

CHAPTER 2

LANGUAGE AS A TOOL TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS

Language is a powerful tool for building relationships with children. This applies to children who have verbal communication and speech available to them, and children who may not be using verbal speech to communicate and rely upon non-verbal communication. This section gives examples on how language can be used to foster and strengthen relationships with children.

Case Study: Momo

Momo was born to a German father and a Korean mother. He seems to be able to hear well but does not speak. At kindergarten, Momo has trouble connecting with other children or educators. He often plays on his own and avoids other children or educators most of the times. He seems to feel uncomfortable in the new setting of kindergarten. The languages spoken at home are German and Korean. Momo speaks none of the languages at kindergarten yet and communicates only with sounds from time to time. His overall body language is very silent and makes it look like he is trying not to be seen or wanting to be approached. His parents have not communicated any worries about Momo's language development or overall development to the educators.

Age:	● 27 months
Home language:	● German ● Korean
Additional language:	● -
Key words / Themes:	● sensory aids ● non-verbal communication ● conscious language

Discussion Questions:	What could be influences on Momo's communicative behaviour? What do you think Momo might need in these moments and in his time at kindergarten? Why is it important to closely observe Momo's language development and assess the current situation at kindergarten? How could the educators work together with the parents? What could they provide at kindergarten?

HOW TO NURTURE A RELATIONSHIP THROUGH THE CONSCIOUS USE OF LANGUAGE

Momo is currently not using verbal communication, but language can still be used by his educators as a bridge to establish a connection and nurture their relationship.

According to the Pikler approach, from the pedagogy of Emmi Pikler to sett-ling in young children, the educator aims to accompany children through language and attentiveness during their time at kindergarten.

The Pikler approach uses a consci-ous usage of language to accompa-ny children through their daily lives and can be used as a tool to build a connection with young children in an institutionalised setting. Using this kind of language and attitude might feel unfamiliar and might need some practice, as it can be an uncommon way of communicating with a child for

The Pikler Approach and Language

The educator and their language follow the child's lead and comment on what the child is doing, what they can observe or what they are ab-out to do/what will happen to the child soon. This prepares the child for any changes or unforeseen situations and provides a feeling of security and being in control which can be an empowering experience for the child. It puts the focus on the child, their experiences and activities and fosters an emotional bond and mutual language. The language used in this approach is:

- attentive
- esteeming
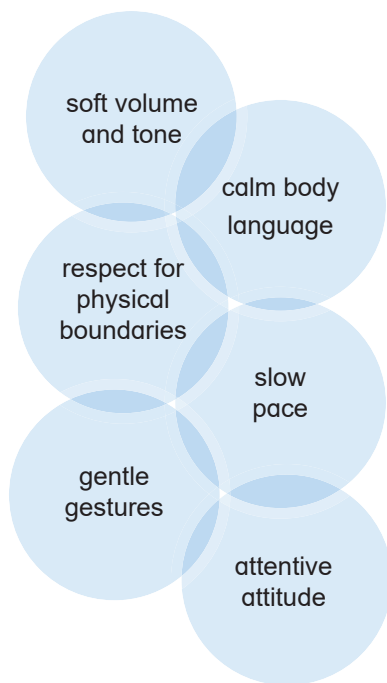- respectful
- appreciative
- considerate

some educators and requires a lot of attention and focus on the child. Nonetheless, Momo's educators can employ this type of language and style of communication to foster an authentic and deep bond, without Momo speaking a word.

THE TONE, PACE AND INTENTION OF LANGUAGE AND HOW THEY AFFECT THE CHILD

The conscious and mindful use of language towards children can help to build a positive and authentic connection with them. Educators can reflect on their tone and pace of their speech and the intent and meaning of the words they choose for communication, as this ultimately impacts the quality of the educator-child relationship and the child's wellbeing.

Speaking with a slower pace, soft volume and soft tone, for instance, will provide the child with enough information about the current situation and the emotional state the educator is in, even if the child does not speak the language offered. If the child does not fully understand the actual

spoken words, they will notice the responsive attitude and collected manner of the educator. The calm and interested tone of voice, the continued communication and focus on the child by the educator accompanies the child in their experiences and exploration of the world around them and gives the child a feeling of safety, guidance, meaningful interaction and appreciation, which helps build and maintain the relationship between the educator and the child.

soft volume and tone

calm body language

respect for physical boundaries

slow pace

gentle gestures

attentive attitude

CHAPTER 3

NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION AND SENSORY AIDES

Language can be distinguished between spoken language (verbal communication) and unspoken language (non-verbal communication), i.e. "body language".

Non-verbal communication can happen on a conscious or unconscious level. For example, we may use body language consciously to support our spoken words or we may use gestures or facial expressions without consciously intending to do so. But we, as educators, might also use our spoken words while subconsciously sending a contradictory message with our body language at the same time. This can be very confusing for the child, especially if they do not speak the language offered. It is important to note that we are always communicating. In his model on communication, Paul Watzlawik argues that one cannot not communicate: "As soon as two people are together, conscious or subconscious communication takes place" (Watzlawick, Beavin, & Jackson, 1967,p.51).

This is an important aspect to keep in mind when interacting with children and relevant when working in a multilingual setting, where body language and non-verbal communication becomes one of the main and most reliable sources of information for the child.

Case Study: Sofia

Sofia's family has recently moved from Madrid, Spain to Berlin, Germany. She has been in her new German/English kindergarten for a little over a month. Up until the move, Sofia had only been exposed to Spanish. She had a relatively easy time settling into the kindergarten but is now beginning to have trouble during transition times and structured play.

She has become very attached to one educator but has not made any other significant relationships with adults or children in the group. When she needs something, she seeks out the one specific educator and if she is unable to make her needs clear, she often gets very upset and it seems difficult for her to calm herself down afterwards.

Sofia has a 5-year-old sister in another group in the kindergarten, who has been having trouble since the beginning of the settling in process. Sofia's mother accompanied Sofia's settling in process and her father accompanied her older sister. The parents now alternate drop off, always dropping off Sofia first as they say this is easier for them. Sofia's sister often prolongs the drop-off of Sofia by refusing to let her go.

Age:	● 26 months
Home language:	● Spanish
Additional language:	● -
Key words / Themes:	● non-verbal communication ● visual aids ● transition times ● language as a tool

Discussion Questions:	What could the settling in situation tell the educator about Sofia's needs at kindergarten? What could Sofia's emotional state be related to? Why might Sofia show difficulties during transition times and structured play? How could this be related to language? How can the educator support Sofia in her language development and social-emotional development?

WHAT EXACTLY IS NON-VERBAL COMMU-NICATION?

Communication always requires that at least two people are involved in the situation. There is the sender of a message and the recipient. Different mediums of communication exist:

- Acoustic (what you can hear)
- Visual (what you can see)
- Tactile (what you can touch)
- Emotional (what you can feel)

These four aspects show how closely non-verbal communication is linked to relationships and emotions. It affects all of our senses and is determined by a broad variety of influences from our environment. Becoming sensitive to this matter and using it as a tool to build and maintain a relationship and navigating through social situations can be helpful and a valuable skill for educators. Therefore, it is of high importance when working with young children.

NON-VERBAL COMMU-NICATION IN MULTI-LINGUAL SETTINGS

Non-verbal communication allows a person to make his or her wants and needs known and recognised without using words. The Reggio Emilia approach claims that children have over "one hundred modes of expression" such as words, painting, and music (Edwards C. P., 1993). In our view, it is of essential importance to allow children to express themselves freely in all the many forms available to them (Edwards & Forman, 1993).

Children such as Sofia, who have a different preferred language or first language than the language offered may be in need of other communicative resources in order to express herself at all. Freedom of expression is another vital aspect for the healthy development of the child. Educators can integrate different artistic activities and allow space and time to encourage the child's imagination and provide

alternative ways of expression which can be a helpful tool in working with a diverse group of children. It allows communication, free expression, social interaction and an emotional outlet without the necessity of a shared language. In this case, the free movement of their bodies is also of importance (Kultti & Pramling, 2017).

When language is not an available tool to express themselves, being able to rely on their body and non-verbal communication can have a positive impact on their social-emotional development, self-confidence, self-awareness, positive self-image and overall well-being. This form of participation in a social setting includes all children with all their different forms of expression and does not make the children feel as if they were limited by their language. It also supports them to be more in tune with their body and feel more comfortable (Grøver Aukrust, 2007).

Practical Tips:

- Songs, such as "Head, shoulders, knees and toes", encourage children to move their bodies in a way that pairs specific words with their corresponding body parts.

- Allowing time and space for free movement will encourage the children to listen to their body and needs instead of simply following instructed play.

- Picture books also provide a way for children to pair familiar-looking objects with new words and sounds.

FINDING A DEVELOP-MENTALLY APPRO-PRIATE APPROACH

Sofia is not three years old yet. At such an early age, expecting a child to be able to fully communicate verbally, particularly in an unknown multilingual setting, might not be age-appropriate in some cases. It is important to consider each child's individual development and understand age-appropriate means to communicate, both verbally and non-verbally. Overwhelming a child or having expectations that do not match the child's abilities, can be counterproductive and have negative consequences for the child's development. It can lead to stress, anxiety and undesirable experiences connected to language and social situations and result in inhibition.

Non-verbal communication can be a common ground for communication in a group setting, between the educator and the child or amongst the children.

Therefore, we suggest agreeing on a set of fixed gestures that are going to be used by all educators in the group and discuss the meaning of them. It can then become a universal way of communication for all children and educators in the group without the necessity of the spoken language. For example, shaking one's head from side to side, horizontally, means "no". Or there might be a gesture to communicate "stop" or "more please". It can also help to find gestures and non-verbal communication for different situations in the day at kindergarten to support the spoken words and provide clear communication for the children. This will help children navigate through social interaction more easily and leave them with the pleasurable feeling of being competent, in control and self-sufficient in social interaction.

HOW TO IDENTIFY DIFFICULTIES IN COMMUNICATION

Without the ability for a child to communicate fully, a lack of comprehension, not knowing what is going to happen during their day and without the reassurance of competency and self-sufficiency, a child might feel out of control, lonely, overwhelmed and helpless. These feelings, especially over an extended period, might lead to behaviour like regression, aggression, frustration or ambivalent behaviour. Sometimes the child's difficulty in communicating is not recognised as a cause for challenging behaviours. Taking an empathetic and attentive point of view might help in understanding the child's experiences and provide them with the guidance and support they need in these situations.

It is also important to consider that a lack of comprehension might lead to fewer opportunities of participation and learning in the classroom environment, especially amongst peers, which might lead to social exclusion or affect the child's self-esteem (Hanline, Nunes, & Brandy Worthy, 2007).

Here, the educator's role is to observe the classroom setting and social interactions of the children closely in order to identify difficulties in communication and assist if necessary. Therefore, the educator will help the child gain positive experience, regardless of the ability to use language. The children will feel more in control and start feeling more comfortable with unknown situations or unclear communication. They learn that they will be okay and are able to rely on themselves and others, which promotes self-efficacy and a positive self-image.

MAKING USE OF SENSORY AIDS

In addition to verbal and non-verbal communication, there are a variety of other sensory tools that can be used to help a child understand.

Sensory Aides

36
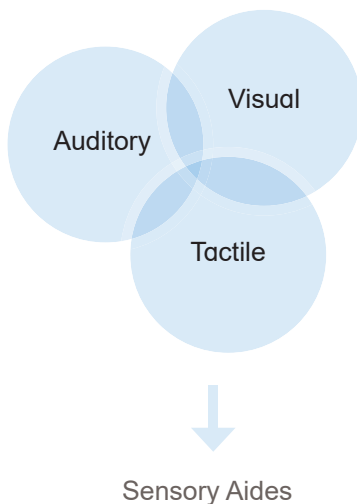
AUDITORY AIDS

Auditory tools provide another means for a child, who does not understand the spoken language, to navigate their classroom environment confidently. As mentioned before, any other way of communication or expression can help the child feel more included and confident.

● SINGING BOWL, BELL, TRIANGLE, ETC.

Singing bowls, bells, triangles or other auditory means can be used as a tool to focus the attention on the educator or situation. We also like to use it to indicate the beginning or end of a specific activity or time of the day, such as morning circle or mealtime. It is a soothing sound, which is not unsettling, but clear and calming. It is often used for meditations or other mindful activities and we have found that it helps for a calm and mindful atmosphere in the classroom as well.

● SONGS

Songs are a great way to structure the day and implement in daily activities. We incorporate songs in our daily routines at kindergarten, like tidying up, going outside, washing hands and many more. When songs are used to initiate or accompany certain activities throughout the day, it is helpful for children to be able to easily differentiate them from one another. Therefore, a specific melody, pace and rhythm can be identified and recognised by the child without having to understand the exact words. In the early stages of a child being in an institution, especially if they do not understand the spoken languages, the child should be able to rely on this audible information and repetitions before familiarising and internalising the words of the songs. The audible dimension of it, like the educator's voice and attitude, is of importance in the early stages and can be a helpful tool in interacting with the child. An additional benefit is the aspect of language in songs and the accessibility of words and vocabulary through singing.

VISUAL AIDS

Visual aids can be another helpful tool to structure the child's environment at kindergarten and provide guidance and orientation, especially when they do not speak the languages offered. It can be a useful tool for structuring the day, supporting daily routines and organising the classroom. It helps children to connect pictures and mental representations with vocabulary and its meaning in the foreign language. Therefore, it promotes a smooth settling in process, building relationships with teachers and children and offers input for language acquisition.

● **SCHEDULES**

A daily or weekly schedule uses the visual dimension, in an age-appropriate way, to help children get an idea of time and place and allows them to plan and anticipate events in the future. This provides the children with a feeling of security, self-efficacy, being in control and allows participation. It enables the child to plan, prepare and act, regardless of language barriers or boundaries. The accessibility of the schedule on the child's eye level throughout the day is important, as it allows the child to check, plan and prepare independently for transitions or events during the day. It is helpful to use child-friendly pictures and focus on images over language. The visual dimension and communication through pictures are important.

● **LABELS**

We have found labels very helpful in our daily practice. Labels should include the child's name, or the name of the object for example, but must also include the child's photo or a photo of the object that is being labelled. We label all boxes and drawers with a picture of what is inside, although the box should be clear, and the objects should be visible for the child. But by labelling the boxes or items, the children should be able to find the according place for the object and know where to put it. This enables participation when tidying up the classroom as well as providing visual guidance in the classroom. It can also help overcome language boundaries, as the children know how their classroom is organised without constantly needing instructions from the educator. Pairing pictures of toys and objects in the classroom and their place can help all children to understand and navigate their environment and clarify expectations from the educator when it comes to tidying up the room or take over certain tasks. Children, who do not necessarily have the needed language accessible to them, will still be able to experience the feeling of having successfully mastered the task.

TACTILE AIDS

Tactile support in terms of communication means using gestures and touch to convey a message or establish a connection. This can be as simple as a handshake or a comfort-

ing hug. Usually, these kinds of gestures or touch are determined by cultural influences or certain social norms. Therefore, a respectful and reflective mindset towards cultural diversity and personal boundaries is of importance. When the educator acts carefully and respectfully, the use of tactile aids is a great way to establish a connection, build a relationship with the children and convey the feeling of trust and care.

Within the team or institution, the meaning and boundaries of these physical or tactile cues should be discussed and clear so the educators can integrate them into their communication. This way, all educators in the team offer a consistent and coherent style of communication and interaction.

● TOUCH

Touch can be a meaningful way of providing a sense of security, building positive relationships and promoting social and emotional development. These positive aspects of the touch in communication is especially the case when there is a language barrier. Not being able to understand the spoken words or not being able to make

yourself understood can be experienced as frustrating and exclusionary. At the same time is it difficult to successfully interact over time when there is no shared language. Therefore, integrating the physical dimension of communication can be a useful tool in interacting with children in a multilingual context. Naturally, the child's personal, emotional and physical boundaries have to be respected at all times and every touch or action requires consent. It is vital to observe the interactional partner first and wait for a sign of consent. Anything else crosses personal boundaries and is unacceptable. It is the educator's responsibility to teach the children to protect their personal boundaries and encourage them to set personal boundaries on their own.

After receiving a social cue of consent from the child, a gentle and careful touch can be a meaningful message without the use of language. For instance, if a child does not understand verbal instruction, a careful touch to the shoulder can help communicate the meaning of "go ahead" or to change direction. At the same time, it will make the child feel included and seen.

To show a child around the room, or the way to the bathroom, it can be helpful to gently guide the child with an inviting gesture or offering to hold the hand of the child and go together. This might provide a sense of safety if a child seems to feel unsettled or insecure.

When using tactile communication with children as an educator, try and approach their bodies from the furthest point, for instance, fingertips or arms. This ensures that you allow the child to guide you as to how much physical interaction the child is comfortable with and the child stays in control over the interaction, without feeling overwhelmed. Always make sure the child is aware before using tactile support with them, as they might not be prepared and might have not given consent to the physical interaction. This again requires a culturally sensitive mindset and point of view and should only be used thoughtfully and carefully.

CHAPTER 4

EMOTION-BASED CODE-SWITCHING

Case Study: Yanmei

Yanmei and her mother and father moved to Ireland from China one month ago. Before the move, she was in a Chinese/ English bilingual kindergarten in Beijing since the age of two. She is now beginning to settle into her new kindergarten class, and even though she has a broad vocabulary and seems to enjoy answering questions during morning circle, she is often quiet and keeps to herself during playtime. Yanmei is the only Chinese student in school.

Learning a language is a unique experience that can affect both the identity of multilingual children as well as their families. This section will explore:

- The role of emotions in the speech of multilingual children

- The concept of emotional code-switching

- practical tips for understanding the connection between language and emotions

Discussion Questions:	How could the educator assist Yanmei in her language development?
	How might Yanmei use language for emotional regulation?

Age:	● 4 years 3 months
Home language:	● Chinese
Additional language:	● English
Key words / Themes:	● language aquisition ● emotional regulation ● cultural frame switching

WHAT IS CODE-SWITCHING?

Code-switching is the alternation between two or more languages within a single conversation (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

In the past, code-switching has often been stigmatised and seen as a sign of confusing language usage, but current research shows this is not the case. In fact, code-switching is a sign of linguistic competence that requires a high structural understanding of both languages. It can be understood as a tool to effectively communicate in certain contexts (Williams, Srinivasan, Liu, & Pearl Lee, 2019).

It can be used on a conscious level or happens unconsciously, especially in a diverse multilingual setting.

Current theories provide a link between code-switching and emotional experiences.

THE LINK BETWEEN CODE-SWITCHING AND EMOTIONS: COGNITIVE CONTROL

Cognitive control allows the brain to make conscious decisions based on goals rather than habits. Multilingual speakers have more than one language available to them and can, to an extent, consciously control which language they speak.

Usually, a speaker changes their language with different settings or

interactional partners. In this consciously controlled choice of language, however, emotions play a big role. Heightened emotions can interfere with the process of cognitive control (Williams, Srinivasan, Liu, & Pearl Lee, 2019).

For example, if Yanmei were to fall and hurt her knee, she might not instinctively speak English with the educator although she usually speaks English with her. Due to emotional distress, it would be natural for her to speak in her native language. If there is no shared language or the child does not feel like she can speak freely, she might not speak at all. When intense emotions take over, we switch to our most comfortable and natural way of speaking. There is a strong connection between emotions and language, which should be considered in the daily work of an educator in a diverse setting and approached in a reflective manner.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Multilingual speakers also use codeswitching as a form of emotional regulation, using a preferred language to express intense emotions and other languages for different conversations (Pavlenko, 2012).

Even without the influence of multiple languages, the way children express themselves at home can be very different from the way they express themselves at kindergarten. Home should be a private space where children can express themselves openly and freely. Home can also be a person in the child's life. Regardless, the language connected to the feeling of home will leave the child with a strong, positive connection to the language. The mostly public space of kindergarten can lead to different emotions and forms of expression for the child. They can also experience all kinds of situations and emotions which then, in turn, could be connected to a certain language. For example, Yanmei may feel comfortable speaking about the weather and colours during morning circle in English, or who is her friend in class, as she might feel familiar and comfortable with these topics in English and they may not trigger overwhelming emotions for her. She might struggle to speak in English, however, if something affected her on a deeper emotional level, such as the move away from China or living in a new country. The educator should show the necessary social skills and empathy, as well as an open and sensitive mindset.

CULTURAL FRAME SWITCHING

Multilingual speakers may choose one language as more appropriate over another for conveying their emotions according to a certain cultural frame (Panayiotou, 2004).
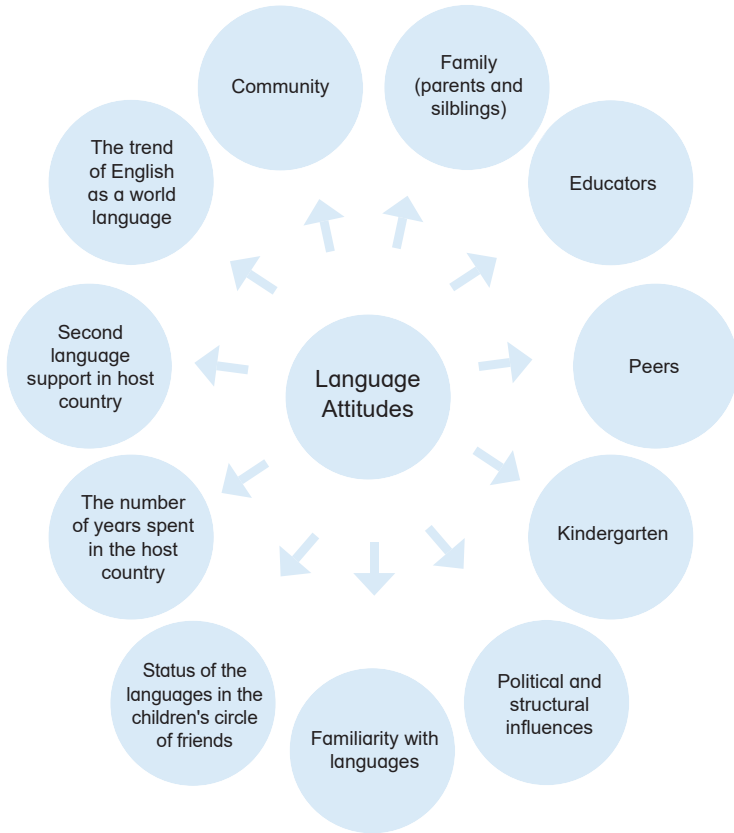
Emotional expressions can be unique to a certain language or cultural influence, so it can be difficult for the child to find the exact words to express certain emotions or feelings in another language. Therefore, multilingual speakers may code-switch in order to fluently and cohesively continue with their speech and train of thought.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDES AND PREFERENCES OF LANGUAGES

Beyond these three theories, there are other cultural and linguistic influences why children may code-switch.

This could be related to the way children view their first language(s) or the languages in the new setting. They can develop both, positive and negative opinions, about the languages in their life and show preferences in languages. Children develop social awareness of language differences between the ages of three and six years and can start to express their preferences for language varieties (Yu-Hsiu Lee, 2018).

Some factors such as political and structural influences on languages and cultures need to be considered when addressing multilingualism and working with multilingual children and families. Educators should act reflectively in their professional role which will ultimately have a positive impact on the children. It can be helpful for the educators to reflect on their own language development, language influences and cultural background in this regard.

Community

Family (parents and silblings)

The trend of English as a world language

Educators

Second language support in host country

Language Attitudes

Peers

The number of years spent in the host country

Kindergarten

Status of the languages in the children's circle of friends

Familiarity with languages

Political and structural influences

There are several aspects to the development of language attitudes and preferences represented in the graphic above.

CHAPTER 5

DIVERSITY, CULTURAL IDENTITY AND LANGUAGE

Children construct their cultural identity, their individuality and their group affiliation in relation to their family. An awareness of cultures that might be different from their own develops in children similarly based on their understanding of their own cultural experiences. Children experience a unique and diverse cultural life with several children and families during their time in kindergarten. We have found that the feeling of community and being able to relate to each other as a diverse group plays an important role. Educators can facilitate this process of experiencing diversity and different cultures by providing a diversity-sensitive curriculum (Cummins, 2001).

A reflected, respectful and mindful point of view by the educators and the institution, in addition to being trained and educated accordingly in the field, is essential. The concept of cultures and cultural life are not abstract to young children. It is an important part of their social life and influences their sense of self and identity. Cultures are lived and experienced daily through the children's family life and how family members, friends, educators and children relate to each other; through language, food, music, lifestyle, clothing, family stories, values, household practices and traditions (Grøver Aukrust, 2007) (Cummins, 2001).

This section will provide tips and tools on how to create a culturally sensitive classroom and foster a positive mindset towards cultural diversity in the institution.

Case Study: Fola

Fola is a girl who was born in Massachusetts, United States, to Nigerian parents, growing up in first in America and then the UK. She currently goes to kindergarten in London. Fola speaks English with an American accent but starts adopting British words and speaks Yoruba, a language from the group of Kwa languages, with her parents. Fola expresses herself differently depending on the language she speaks. Fola chooses Yoruba to speak with her parents at home and family gatherings. She starts speaking with a British accent at kindergarten but switches to an American accent whenever she gets excited or upset. Sometimes the other children make fun of how Fola pronounces certain words.

Age:	● 5 years 2 months
Home languages:	● English ● Yoruba
Additional language:	● -

Key words / Themes:	● cultural identity ● cultural diversity ● emotion-based code-switching ● language acquisition

Discussion Questions:	What could the educator do to support Fola in her language development and ensure she can maintain her self-confidence and her way of speaking?
	What could the educator learn from the information that Fola usually speaks Yoruba at home with her family and at family gatherings?
	What could influence Fola's language choice?
	Why should the educator not understand Fola's cultural identity in terms of nationality or the languages she speaks?

HOW DO LANGUAGE AND DIVERSITY RELATE?

The foundation for developing a secure sense of identity is only given when there is a balance between one's own cultural identity and openness towards other cultural influences. In addition, adults have an impact on their children as role models, which offers the children guidance and orientation in social situations and are interactional partners in the process of social learning.

The aspects of language, culture, and identity are linked and form an important part of the child's development. Our sense of self and individuality, as well as our roles as members in different communities such as generations, certain social and cultural groups, being a mother or a father, being a teacher, speaking a certain language or celebrating certain cultural values have a large influence on how we relate to ourselves and others. In other words, we construct a certain image of ourselves over time. This self-image and sense of identity are open to changes, can be considered fluid and are expressed in many ways, but to a large extent through our words and language.

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND REPRESENTATIONS

The word identity describes those characteristics, specific to human

beings, that make a person a unique individual. It is influenced by a person's self-image and the image other people have of the person which they communicate to them, consciously or subconsciously. Therefore, a reflective attitude and critical thinking towards their own role and approach as an educator are essential for working with a diverse group of children. As educators, we need to be aware that our own self-image, the image we have of the children and how we communicate it has a meaningful impact on the children. All forms and means of expressing their own identity in terms of language, culture and gender should be appreciated, supported and represented in the classroom environment. It is vital for the child's personal development and for the dimension of promoting a diverse, multicultural and multilingual environment.

Factors That Can Influence Cultural Identity

- Experiences with significant adults, family members and within the community
- Other children and adults as role models
- The sense of belonging and home

Certain Events or Experiences Might Have a Negative Impact on Cultural Identity

Factors that can create uncertainties in one's own identity:

- Lack of an appreciative atmosphere in the home
- Experiencing exclusion
- Sudden changes (such as relocation, the birth of a sibling)
- Separation/loss of important caregivers
- Loss of a familiar group or community
- Lack of social acceptance

Signs of uncertainty in a child's identity can include:

- Insecurity, loneliness
- Low self-esteem, critical self-image
- Despondency, listlessness
- Feeling excluded
- Feeling uncomfortable in unknown situations
- Inflexibility and emotional instability
- Aggressions, harmful behaviour
- Retreating

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AND THE EFFECTS ON A CHILD'S SENSE OF SELF

Language acquisition in early years is not an isolated process but a holistic process of the child's individual development. Acquiring new languages influences and alters a child's sense of self, as language is one of the main means of self-expression and part of constructing the self-image. Acquiring general language skills is a milestone for the child and exhilarates many other processes in the development. Language helps express internal views of the world and inner mental processes to the outside. As a result of this ability of self-expression and expressing personal views, acquiring languages is an empowering process for children.

Children's identity is largely shaped by the experiences they have encountered in their life as well as their verbalised sense of self. Children are then able to determine their very personal and unique sense of self and express it through language.

As seen in the example of Fola and her story, the different languages she speaks serve different functions for her and come together as a kaleidoscopic picture.

Because Fola's story is unique to her, some children or other people might not be able to relate to her situation. This inability to relate could lead to defensive or discriminating attitudes

and behaviour towards her and her family. It is important for the educator to act accordingly, responsibly and to provide a diversity-sensitive and inclusive classroom environment in which discrimination is counteracted and diversity and uniqueness are appreciated, respected and represented.

MULTILINGUALISM AND THE DIFFERENT FACETS OF A CHILD'S PERSONAL STORY

Identity is not a fixed and stable construct which is determined at an early age.

Early experiences shape our view on ourselves and the world to a large extent and cannot be erased in later life, but a sense of self and identity is a fluid and open concept which is based on our everyday experiences. In terms of cultural identity, a person's individual sense of cultural identity is unique and bound to their experiences in life and it cannot be defined by anyone else but the person themself. This is especially important for children as they should be protected and empowered to develop freely at this early stage in their life, in which they are sensitive to influences. Although every family has their own cultures, parents and their

Language Acquisition as Empowerment:

Language enables the child to gain:

- self-confidence
- self-awareness
- autonomy
- independence

Allowing them to verbalise:

- needs
- wishes
- boundaries
- preferences
- dislikes
- interests

children might not necessarily have the same cultural or personal story. A person's sense of identity is based on personal experiences and within a family, the different family members might have experienced different things in their lives. Shared experiences create bonds which can lead to a shared sense of identity in a family or community, but every child is entitled to the freedom of exploring their own cultural and personal identity over time. A person's cultural identity can be expressed by the way they dress or how they speak, which dialect or variant of a language

they speak, in their traditions and customs, their views and beliefs, their values and in many other ways. With an open mindset, however, differences will be appreciated and valued. Hence, cultural identity should not be understood in abstract terms of nationalities, geographical spaces, languages or other categories. A person's identity is not defined by categories, a look or a nationality: It is made of experiences and therefore is unique to each person. For children in multilingual and multicultural settings, this means their experiences are shaped by diversity, different cultures and languages and offer a diverse sense of self with many facets. With every language, dialect or variant of a language, and every cultural influence comes another facet of the self for the child.

LANGUAGE, IDENTITY AND BELONGING

Questions children might ask themselves are:

'Who am I and where do I belong?'
'What makes me unique and special?'
'Which group of people do I identify with and what is my personal story?'

It is important to allow the child to find their own personal story based on their experiences in a diverse world. The educator should not try and in-terpret or define the child's cultural identity based on the child's country of origin or languages that the child speaks. These aspects can only give suggestions and the importance lies in listening to the child's personal story. It is the educator's responsibility to understand the child's diverse cultural identity not as a national identity but as a complex and unique hybridity of cultures (Hall & Du Gay, 1996).

We as educators can support children in the process of constructing their identity and self-image. Children with a strong sense of self will become adults who have learned to find trust and take pride in themselves and their personal story.

CHAPTER 6

THE IMPORTANCE OF BOOKS

This handbook so far has discussed many topics on language development, identity, culture and the ways in which they relate.

The following section will look at the importance of children's literature, as it is a useful tool to foster a diversity-sensitive classroom environment,

inclusion and representation, as well as building a connection with a variety of languages.

Age:	● 6 years 5 months
Home language:	● Swedish
Additional languages:	● English ● French

Case Study: Dina

Dina is six years old and has moved with her mothers from Sweden, where she attended a bilingual Swedish/ English kindergarten, to France. One of her mothers is Swedish, one is French, so Dina speaks both languages at home, and has high language competence in English as well. Her new kindergarten in France is also bilingual, French/ English, and she settles in quickly as she is comfortable in both languages. When telling her new group about her family, she happily explains that she has two mothers, that two women or two men can have children and children do not always have a father or a mother. She explained, that her mothers decided to get a donation and that this is how she was born.

Key words / Themes:	- children's literature - identity - diversity - mirror neurons

Discussion Questions:	How could the educator use the conversation with Dina as a starting point for a more diverse curriculum and classroom environment?
	Why is it so important for all children to feel represented in the curriculum and the classroom?
	What role could the educator's own upbringing play in the classroom and in conversations with the children?

MIRRORS, WINDOWS AND SLIDING GLASS DOORS

Picture books are a wonderful educational tool for all children, particularly during their early years. They can serve as

- mirrors: a way for children to see themselves reflected in literature,

- windows: a way for children to see the lives of others,

- sliding glass doors: a way for children to see themselves as able to transverse between groups and worlds (Bishop, 1990).

The right book in the hands of a child at the right time can be a powerful tool. Educators have the chance to have a positive influence on the children in their group. For example, if the children in Dina's group do not understand or react defensively to her story and how she was born, this could be an opportunity for her educator to find a picture story for the class about different types of families.

With the help of the book, the educator could foster an understanding of the situation and educate the children on the topic.

MIRROR NEURONS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF BOOKS

Mirror neurons are special nerve cells in the brain that make humans compassionate and responsive creatures. These cells react not only when we experience suffering, pain or joy ourselves, but also when we perceive these sensations in someone else through verbal and non-verbal communication. For example, if Dina observes that someone else has cut their finger while cooking, Dina herself might experience discomfort and can sympathise with how the pain feels. Dina can learn to expand her circle of empathy through reading literature and picture books with her family members and educators (Graf & Seide, 2019).

From birth, humans are equipped with mirror neurons but the ability to reflect does not develop on its own - Dina needs a partner and communication which is understood by her. A story with diversity sensitive characters and content can provoke thought and discussions with Dina. In toddlers, it is the family who activates mirror actions through their social interactions. Dina must first learn to understand and feel the feelings of others. Researchers assume that mirror neurons are fully developed between the ages of three and four years. The fact that mirror neurons are active in toddlers could be seen, if Dina began to console her parents and other children. Dina recognizes and understands that her parents were sad and mirrored this emotion (Graf & Seide, 2018).

Past experiences play a significant role in the function of mirror neurons. For Dina, who might have never learned that friendly people could unexpectedly show not so friendly sides, her mirror neurons may respond differently to friendly people than those children who have not had a positive experience like Dina. Mirror neurons can be stimulated for a lifetime and are able to gain new experiences that are then stored and later able to be retrieved.

The functioning of mirror neurons is part of our social everyday life. We have patterns stored in our brains that tell us what certain actions or communication of others mean (Cummins, 2001).

CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Children's literature can be an excellent starting point for discussion and celebrating the differences and similarities of different groups of people. By using texts that feature diverse characters and settings, educators can foster values like tolerance and mutual respect. It is important that educators consider a broad understanding of diversity when reviewing the texts and books they make available in their classrooms. The power of literature in creating understanding and awareness is a tool to develop Dina's understanding of and increase the exposure to a range of different influences and situations. A study in 2006 found that reading stories that showed characters with disabilities developed positive attitudes and acceptance towards others with disabilities among its participants (Cameron & Rutland, 2006).

Educators, who are mindful of the nuanced message respectful and empathetic stories may convey to children, can provide a counter-narrative to exclusion by providing books with sensitive and emotionally balanced characters and books that successfully challenge stereotypes. Children read and explore picture books repeatedly, therefore the messages, including those that are implicit, are repeated. This proves the need for quality diverse literature (Burke, 2013).

In addition, educators need to make sure that the diverse literature they select does not confirm negative stereotypes of already marginalised groups (Symeonidou & Loizou, 2018). By ensuring that books feature diverse characters, educators can foster values of tolerance, understanding and respect. This is particularly important in diverse social settings and the connected world we live in (Esteves, 2018).

CONCLUSION

This handbook aims at encouraging the reader to reflect and build upon their knowledge as educators. The topics discussed in this handbook are complex and every situation is unique. There is no specific answer for every situation with every child, but the information provided tries to guide the reader to find their own personal solution and feel confident in supporting children in a diverse environment. When learning about transitions, such as settling a child into a kindergarten, professional educators understand that children and their families make personal choices during the process of transitioning into a new environment and do what they think is best for them. Keeping in mind the challenges families are facing, it is important to remain culturally sensitive to families of all backgrounds. Early intervention in a diverse settling in environment helps to prevent potential risk factors. Educators, families and institutions aim to focus on building essential skills whilst remaining sensitive to a person's sense of identity. This starts in early education. A well-prepared team of educators and well-informed families help to create the best possible scenario for settling in a child in a diverse setting. It is necessary for the settling in process that the safety, well-being and best interests of a child are both the educators and parent's priority. Children need healthy environments in which they can grow, play and learn. This handbook can serve as a toolbox for educators in fostering confident, independent and resilient children in a global world.

MATERIAL LIST: EDUCATORS AND PARENTS AS PARTNERS

In addition to these handbooks, the research team has provided a series of materials to help educators as well as families as they embark on the settling in process. One intention of the materials for educators is to bring more attention to the care and the effort educators must put into this process. From the connection and communication between the teaching team, attention to the individual child, to the way educators communicate with parents, it is important to highlight how these tools can go a long way.

The second intention of these materials is to help educators and families work together from the beginning to strengthen the home/school connection. The members of this project believe that parents are the experts of their children in the home, and educators are experts of children in the classroom and that it is important that we work together to learn and grow from one another. Without this connection, a positive settling in process cannot occur. Below, you will find a list of the materials we have included with information on what each material entails.

MATERIALS FOR EDUCATORS FOR WORKING WITH CHILDREN

CASE STUDIES

The team has included case studies from the handbooks as well as other case studies to help educators think about different situations and how to work with them. They come with provoking questions to help the educators think deeper about the case studies. These are useful in a professional development setting for groups of teachers to sit together and learn from each other about different ways they could help in these situations.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EDUCATORS

This questionnaire provides a set of questions for educators on a new team to think about their own intentions as a team and what they see their roles to be, as well as how they overcome stressful situations. The questionnaire includes follow-up questions for the end of the year for educators to reflect and think about what they have learned and how they have worked together. If the educators have worked

together previously, there is a different reflection questionnaire for them to go through as these topics continue to be relevant. Communication is key, and learning about each other's practices and pedagogy is the best way to get on the same page as a team.

STORY CARDS DAY STRUCTURE

This material is a set of simple schedule cards with the words and the illustrations of each part of the day. There is space on the other side for educators to edit and type in their own labels and include real life images of their classroom. These cards help children familiarise themselves with their new schedule in order to understand and predict what comes next in the day.

MATERIALS FOR EDUCATOR/PARENT PARTNERSHIP

CLASS GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS

When a family starts to prepare for the settling in process, there is a lot to think about. This team has prepared a list that educators can edit to tailor for their families with information about what would be needed in the children's cubbies/lockers, where strollers can be parked, the best mode of communication with the educators, as well as how to celebrate birthdays. All this information in one place can help educators guide a conversation in a meeting as well as help families feel more prepared for this new adventure.

HOME VISIT DETAILS

Our team strongly recommends home visits or one-on-one visits with the educators and the family before or directly after the first day of settling in. These materials provide a description of what that meeting can look like, what types of questions could be asked, how to strategise, communicate with families and schedule home visits. It also provides questions to reflect upon after the visit.

This type of meeting is a great way to strengthen the partnership with families as well as a way to build trust before the children enter kindergarten.

THIS IS ME BOOK

This material helps families feel connected to the kindergarten and helps children feel connected to their home when they are in the classroom. It is a series of questions per age group that educators send home in the form of a book to the families prior to the start of the year.

WELCOME BOOK

The Welcome Book is a sample material to be edited and changed by the educators. This material is a book addressed to the child, welcoming them to the classroom. It includes images of the classroom, the educators as well as the children, and walks the child through their day. This book is to be sent home for the child to read and look at in the beginning phase of settling in and will help the families feel connected as well as excited about coming to kindergarten.

PARENT & CHILD MATERIALS

PARENT / CHILD RECIPE SAMPLE

This material is an example of what educators could do to help families feel more comfortable with the food served in their new kindergarten. It provides a sample recipe, written in a child-friendly way, with pictures, big letters and simple instructions, so that families can cook at home with their child in anticipation of what may be served at the kindergarten.

SPOTIFY PLAYLISTS

This material focuses on the auditory connection children can make with music between home and school. There are a variety of pre-made playlists provided as an example of how music from different cultural celebrations can be played both at home and school to reinforce this home/school connection as well as the importance of celebrating all cultures.

COLOURFUL FRIENDS

This material explores language connections through drawings and colours and is recommended for children three years and above. These pictures can be given to families to help children learn simple words, such as colours and how to say hello in the language of their new kindergarten.

GLOSSARY

Definitions to apply in kindergarten context:

BILINGUALISM

Fluency in or use of two languages (Lexico, 2019).

CODE-SWITCHING

The alternation between two or more languages within a single conversation (Myers-Scotton, 1993).

COGNITIVE CONTROL

The brain makes conscious decisions based on goals rather than habits (Williams, Srinivasan, Liu, & Pearl Lee, 2019).

CULTURAL FRAME SWITCHING

Bilingual and multilingual speakers choose one language as more appropriate than another for conveying their emotions (Panayiotou, 2004).

CULTURAL IDENTITY

The definition of groups or individuals (by themselves or others) in terms of cultural or subcultural categories (including ethnicity, nationality, language, religion and gender) (Oxford Reference, 2019).

DIVERSITY

A range of different things or people being included in something (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019).

FIRST LANGUAGE

The acquisition of one's native language or "mother tongue", usually learned in the family setting and with a primary bonding person (De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007, p. 7).

FOREIGN LANGUAGE

The acquisition of another language "in a setting in which the language to be learned is not the language to be spoken in the local community", usually in a formally instructed way, in a classroom or school context (De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007, p. 7).

LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

The act of acquiring a language.

LANGUAGE ATTITUDES

The feelings, beliefs and attitudes people have about language in general, their language and the language of other people (Yu-Hsiu Lee, 2018).

LANGUAGE HIERARCHY

Language attitudes reflect language-based social evaluations and expresses an explicit preference and judgement of a language, its speakers and users (Yu-Hsiu Lee, 2018).

LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE

Practical experience and use of a language (Chomsky, 1980).

LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

The unconscious knowledge of grammar that allows a speaker to use and understand a language (Chomsky, 1980).

METALINGUISTIC AWARENESS

The ability to objectify language as a process and an artifact.

MIRROR NEURONS

A type of sensory-motor cell that is activated when an individual performs an action or observes another individual performing the same action.

MONOLINGUALISM

Monolingualism considers people who speak one language.

However, monolinguals usually use different varieties, styles and registers of their language. Most commonly these are different dialects, creoles or slangs within a language (De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007, p. 7).

MULTILINGUALISM

The ability to use more than two languages equally. These languages can be acquired simultaneously, learning multiple languages at the same time from birth, or by successively learning languages after the first language has already been established (De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007, p. 7).

SECOND LANGUAGE

The acquisition of another language "in a setting in which the language to be learned is the language spoken in the local community," in an instructed or non-instructed way (De Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007, p. 7).

FURTHER READING

Bishop, R.S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. Perspectives:Choosing and using books for the classroom, 6(2).

Huyck, D., Park Dahlen, S., Griffin, M. B. (2016). Diversity in Children's Books 2015. infographic. sarahpark.com blog. Retrieved from https://readingspark.wordpress.com/2016/09/14/picture-this-reflecting-diversity-in-childrens-book-publishing/.

Solter, A. (1992). Understanding tears and tantrums. Young Children, 47(4), 64-68. (National Association for the Education of Young Children).

Cologon, K. & Mevawalla, Z. (2018). Increasing inclusion in early childhood: KeyWord Sign as a communication partner intervention, International Journal of Inclusive Education, 22:8, 902-920.

Souto-Manning, M. (2007). Honoring children's names and, therefore, their identities. School Talk 12(3) 1–2.

Juul, J. & Meer, H. (2012). Family life: the most important values for living together and raising children. Authorhouse UK.

Children's literacy resources. Young Children, 60(6), 12-18 Volk, D. & Long, S. (2005). Challenging myths of the deficit perspective: Honoring children's literacy resources. Young Children, 60(6), 12-18.

Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2018). The yes brain: How to cultivate courage, curiosity, and resilience in a child. New York: Bantam.

Tardos, Anna (2007). Bringing Up and Providing Care for Infants and Toddlers in an Institution. Pikler-Lóczy Association for Young Children Budapest.

FOR CHILDREN:

Allancé, M., & Weber, M. (2008). Robbi regt sich auf: deutsch-englisch. Frankfurt am Main: Moritz-Verlag.

Çelik, A.-S., & Korthues, B. (2014). Sinan und Felix - Mein Freund Arkadaşım. Pulheim: SchauHoer Verlag.

Ehrenfried, K., & Junge, E. M. (2019). When I am one (2. Edition). Berlin: Berlin Cosmication Content.

Ehrenfried, K., & Junge, E. M. (2019). When I am two (2. Edition). Berlin: Berlin Cosmication Content.

Ehrenfried, K., & Junge, E. M. (2019). When I am three (2. Edition). Berlin: Berlin Cosmication Content.

Ehrenfried, K., & Junge, E. M. (2019). When I am four (2. Edition). Berlin: Berlin Cosmication Content.

Ehrenfried, K., (2019).
Story Cards Letters. Berlin: Berlin Cosmication Content.

SOURCES

Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. In Perspectives: Choosing and Using books for the Classroom.

Bowleg, L. (2012). The Problem With the Phrase Women and Minorities: Intersectionality — an Important Theoretical Framework for Public Health. American Public Health Association.

Burke, A. (2013). Connecting visual literacy and cultural awareness through picture book illustrations.

Cameron, L., & Rutland, A. (2006). Extended Contact through Story Reading in School: Reducing Children's Prejudice toward the Disabled. Journal of Social Issues.

Canagarajah, S. (2013). Translingual Practice: Global Englishes and Cosmopolitan Relations. London and New York: Routeledge.

Chomsky, N. (1965). Aspects of a Theory of Syntax. Cambridge: MA, MIT Press.

Chomsky, N. (1980). Rules and Representations. New York: Columbia University Press.

Cummins, J. (1980). The cross-lingual dimensions of language proficiency: Implications for bilingual education and the optimal age issue. TESOL Quarterly, 14, 175-187.

Cummins, J. (1986). Empowering minority students: A framework for intervention. Harvard Educational Review,56, 18-36.

Cummins, J. (2001). Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: California Association for Bilingual Education.

Cummins, J. (2001). Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society (2nd ed.). Los Angeles: California Association for Bilingual Education.

De Bot, K., Lowie, W., & Verspoor, M. (2007). A dynamic systems theory approach to second language acquisition. Bilingualism: Language and Cognition 10 , 7-21.

Edwards, C. P. (1993). The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education . New York: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Edwards, C. P., & Forman, G. E. (1993). The hundred languages of children: The Reggio Emilia approach to early childhood education. Norwood, N.J: Ablex Pub. Corp.

Esteves., K. J. (2018). Fostering Global Perspectives with Children's Literature. In Kappa Delta Pi Record (pp. 72-77).

Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (2008). Second language acquisition: An introductory course (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge.

Graf, D., & Seide, K. (2018). Das gewünschteste Wunschkind aller Zeiten treibt mich in den Wahnsinn - Gelassen durch die Jahre 5 bis 10. Weinheim: Beltz Verlag.

Graf, D., & Seide, K. (2019). Das gewünschteste Wunschkind aller Zeiten treibt mich in den Wahnsinn - Der entspannte Weg durch Trotzphasen. Weinheim: Beltz.

Grøver Aukrust, V. (2007). Young Children Acquiring Second Language Vocabulary in Preschool Group-Time: Does Amount, Diversity, and Discourse Complexity of Teacher Talk Matter? Journal of Research in Childhood Education.

Hall, S., & Du Gay, P. (Eds.). (1996). Questions of cultural identity. Sage Publications, Inc.

Hanline, M. F., Nunes, D., & Brandy Worthy, M. (2007). Augmentative and Alternative Communication in the Early Childhood Years. In N. A. Children, YC Young Children, Vol. 62, No. 4 (pp. 78-82). Retrieved from Augmentative and Alternative Communication in the Early Childhood Years.

Krashen, S. (1985). Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition. Oxford: Pergamon.

Krashen, S. (1985). The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications. New York: Longman.

Krashen, S. D. (1981). Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning. Oxford: Pergamon.

Kultti, A., & Pramling, N. (2017). Translation activities in bilingual early childhood education: Children's perspectives and teachers' scaffolding. Multilingual - Journal of Cross-cultural and Interlanguage Communiciation, 703-725.

Mertz, E. E., & Yovel, J. (2010, September 26). Metalinguistic Awareness. Retrieved from Handbook of pragmatics highlights: https://ssrn.com/abstract=950741.

Myers-Scotton, C. (1993). Common and uncommon ground: Social and structural factors in codeswitching. Language in Society, 22(4), 475-503.

Panayiotou, A. (2004). Switching Codes, Switching Code: Bilinguals' Emotional Responses in English and Greek. Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, 25(2-3), 124-139.

Pavlenko, A. (2012). Affective processing in bilingual speakers: Disembodied cognition? International Journal of Psychology, 47(6), 405-428.

Rebuschat, P. (2015). Implicit and Explicit Learning of Languages. John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. W. (2013). Logman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics. Routledge.

Siegmund, P., Gogolin, I., Schulz, M. E., & Davydova, J. (2013). Multilingualism and Language Diversity in Urban Areas: Acquisition, identities, space, education. Amsterdam/ Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Swain, M. (1985). Communicative Competence: Some roles of Compre-

hensible Input and Comprehensible Output in its Development. In S. Gass, & C.Madden, Input in second language acquisition (pp. 235-253). Rowley; MA: Newbury House.

Symeonidou, S., & Loizou, E. (2018). Disability studies as a framework to design disability awareness programs: no need for 'magic' to facilitate children's understanding. In Disability & Society (pp. 1234-1258).

Watzlawick, P., Beavin, J., & Jackson, D. (1967). Pragmatics of Human Communication. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Williams, A., Srinivasan, M., Liu, C., & Pearl Lee, Q. Z. (2019). Why Do Bilinguals Code-Switch When Emotional? Insights From Immigrant Parent- Child Interactions. Emotion. Advance online publication.

Williams, K. (1994). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Colo. In M. Albertson, The Public Nature of Private Violence (pp. 93-118). New York: Routledge.

Yu-Hsiu Lee, H. (2018). The Effect of Multicultural Family Structures on the Language Attitutdes of Children and Adolescents. Journal of Language Studies, 18(1), 122-139.

Dovchin, S. & Lee, J. W. (2019): Introduction to special issue: 'the ordinariness oftranslinguistics', International Journal of Multilingualism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank colleagues at the Pikler Ház (Budapest) for offering us a concise training in the basics of the Pikler Approach as well as the opportunity to observe their daily practice at the Pikler Day Care Centre.

We would like to thank colleagues at the Universidad Camilo José Cela (Madrid) for offering us various workshops and trainings in regards to multilingualism, language acquisition, transcultural identity building and mindfulness.

We would like to thank colleagues at the The International Childcare and Education Centre for the continuous collaboration and implementation of our collective work within your bilingual English / Finnish setting. It was a pleasure to learn more about your approach as an early years education centre during our visit to Finland, specifically in regards to your outdoor classroom concept.

To all of our partners, it was a pleasure to visit with each of you, learn about your values in early childhood education and incorporate them collaboratively into our overall project. This time spent for us is invaluable and we are grateful to all of you for embarking upon this endeavour with us.

We would like to thank the diverse and immense amount of educators and families at Berlin Cosmopolitan School and all transnational partnering institutions for your reflective feedback and support while reviewing our preliminary handbook and material drafts at various stages of our research journey.

We would like to thank Mikko Auri, Doris Gastinger, Jenny Gehrmann, Ariana Gonzalez, Solveig Harloff, Randi Impson, Katrin Meier, Ralf Noack and Kirsi Sallinen for your organisational efforts. From preparing various accountability documentation needed to booking flights and hotel accommodations, your assistance has immensely supported this project and means the world to us.

As we collectively aim to nurture lifelong learners for a more respectful, enlightened and compassionate world, it is our hope that you as the reader have gained helpful knowledge and insights by reading this handbook that you can implement into your professional and/or personal practice with your students and/or children.

Yours in Early Years Education,

Alexander Bloom, Matthew Carlyle, Katharina Ehrenfried, Katherine Habben, Michael Habekost, Carolin Hermes, Julia Mariacher and Lauren Piper

Berlin Cosmopolitan School - Erasmus+ Research Team

Children need healthy environments in which to grow, develop, play and learn. Their environments are complex and ever-changing.

The adult can be a role model, providing children with appropriate, healthy options and behaviour in all aspects of life.

This way, educators and families are helping children develop into confident, independent people who have a strong sense of self-efficacy, empathy and are internationally minded.