

Ideas for Language, including bilingual learners

Receptive language:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• say the child's name to gain attention
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• teach and practise "good listening", ie teach/make explicit "good sitting", "good looking" and "good thinking"
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• work in a quiet area
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use visuals to support communications - real objects/photographs/pictures/symbols/gesture to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- illustrate what you are saying- to provide extra information- to help "fix" new concepts and vocabulary- to be a tangible reminder of what has been talked about after the spoken word has gone- show a sequence (eg, changing for PE)- offer a choice (eg, school dinners, activities etc)- demonstrate activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use video
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use a visual timetable or cue cards
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• visual/kinaesthetic teaching where possible (eg, hands on practical activities when teaching maths)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• keep communications short and simple
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use the same style/language/phrases when giving instructions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• speak at a slower rate with pauses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• emphasise and repeat key words/important points
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• wait for the child to respond - they may need extra time to process information - (10 second rule)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• give instructions in a step-by-step manner, eg "First get your pencil"
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• check understanding by asking the child to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- say what they have to do next- repeat what they have heard
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• encourage children to ask for repetition of instructions if they don't understand
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• teach new vocabulary, this may be subject/topic specific, - mind maps, semantic links
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• use visuals to support understanding of new vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• when asking questions give alternatives, eg "Did John or Sam find the treasure?"
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• be aware of words that have more than one meaning and use alternatives if possible
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• activities to target work on questions:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- explain the difference between a statement and a question. Explain how wh words can signal that a question has been asked. Play a game where you or the pupils make a statement or ask a question and the pupils have to say which it is

- use a set of picture cards which show people carrying out various activities. First use the cards to focus on **who** questions then use the cards to focus on **what** questions, **where** questions, **when** questions and **why** questions. Then go through the cards again changing the questions you ask (e.g. either who or what).
- ask the pupils to make up questions; these could be based on a topic or a picture.

Expressive language:

- accept the child's erroneous communications and encourage him to verbalise
- model - say what the child has said but say it correctly. Expand on the child's utterances (eg, "Me dot a tat." Respond - "You've got a cat. Tell me about your cat.") DO NOT ASK THE CHILD TO REPEAT AFTER YOU
- encourage other means of expression - show/draw what they mean
- do not pretend to understand - suggest they slow down etc
- check that you have understood correctly by asking the child a question and/or saying back what you thought they said
- remember to value what the child says and show the child that you do
- emphasise correct grammar (eg, Pupil says, "Sam ranned to the park." Respond -Yes, Sam **ran** to the park, he was very quick.)
- if the child is beginning to use morphology give forced alternatives, eg "Is it Sam runned or ran?"
- through carefully worded questions provide the pupil with the vocabulary and/or sentence structure they need
- use a statement that provides the child with language they need
- P.E. is a useful context for teaching verbs
- word finding - if you know the word the pupil is struggling to access give:
 - forced alternatives (eg, "Is it a cow or a horse?") or
 - give the first sound (eg, "It's a c....")
 - If you are not sure, ask the child to describe (eg, "What is it for?" "What does it look like?" "Where do we find it?")
- to teach new vocabulary teach as many links to the new word as possible:
 - the group it belongs to
 - another item in the same group
 - where it is found
 - what it is used for
 - what it looks like
 - does it make a sound/feel soft/have a smell etc
 - use topics where possible to build up vocabulary
 - find pictures/objects to match the word
 - introduce key words before talking about topics in detail
 - what does it rhyme with/how many syllables/what's the first sound in the word etc

- sequences:
 - practise describing everyday sequences, such as washing your hands
 - do story sequences using pictures
 - demonstrate/have pictures to show sequences of actions
 - cut up sentences and reorder them so that they make sense
 - use sequencing cards - stories and activities in pictures
 - teach the words "first" "then" "last" and consistently use them when explaining the order of something
 - teach rote sequences in small chunks with plenty of repetition and revision
- create opportunities for the pupil to use language:
 - home corner, role play, telephone, puppets etc
 - set up a situation that encourages the child to speak/comment/request (eg, ask the pupil to give everyone at their group a pencil but don't provide enough pencils so that they have to ask)
 - take time to talk over shared experiences
 - ask the pupil to tell you what they have just done - interpreting and modelling can be done from a known context, eg "I a io" "Yes, you did a jigsaw"
- help the pupil to plan, do and review during activities:
 - before the activity, encourage the pupil to talk about what they will do, what equipment will be needed etc
 - during the activity, talk about what the pupil is doing and is going to do next, and what equipment they are using
 - after the activity, encourage the child to talk about what they have done (use props/photographs to help the pupil recall what they have done)
- explain the thought process (listen - think about the information - answer). Give the pupil time to respond
- give the pupil thinking time to formulate ideas and express themselves
- use commentary to encourage joint attention
- bring the conversation back to topic if the child goes off at a tangent, eg "Remember we are talking about the park"
- Talk to the pupil about what they find most helpful

Bilingual learners

Create a supportive learning environment:

- Ask child to sit next to a peer who can model good use of English and behaviour
- Designate a buddy/buddies (and make their role clear)
- Be consistent in classroom routines
- Encourage use of bilingual dictionary / working with a partner who shares the first language
- Be aware that some children may remain silent for some time. They are actively listening and observing.
- Be aware that some learners may become tired due to the considerable concentration required to access the lesson in an additional language
- Be aware that learners new to English will require longer thinking time

Consider the language and materials needed by the learner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give direct instructions, speaking slowly and clearly • Consider your questioning style - be direct, ask one question at a time • Consider how you clarify and check understanding of the lesson with the pupil • Provide key words and phrases in various formats, e.g. On whiteboard, flashcards, glossaries • Ask literate bilingual pupil to record new vocabulary in a notebook • Model the language needed to complete tasks with speaking or writing frames
Present the lesson in a linguistically clear way
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present information both verbally and visually • Use graphics such as mind-maps, timelines, Venn diagrams, graphs and charts • Be aware that some pupils are not familiar with Roman script so write legibly on the board and handouts • Be aware that bilingual pupils at stages 1 and 2 may be confused by idioms or colloquial phrases; try to avoid using these to explain key concepts
Plan activities and tasks that consolidate and newly learned language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include all pupils by asking them questions appropriate to their linguistic ability, in order to boost confidence • Help pupils to analyse reading texts by asking them to highlight or underline key words and phrases • Organise groups to provide effective 'good' language and learning models for collaborative tasks • Use active listening activities such as listing 5 key points of a presentation • Encourage active oral participation. If pupil gives correct information but is grammatically wrong, repeat the answer in the correct form.
FAQ for parents- Nursery/Primary
<p>Q <u>Will my child fall behind in both languages?</u></p> <p>A No, children acquiring two languages proceed through the stages of language development and attain milestones at similar times as monolingual children.</p>
<p>Q <u>Will our child learn English faster if we try to speak it at home?</u></p> <p>A No, research shows that developing the home language gives a good foundation for other languages to develop.</p>
<p>Q <u>How can we help our child at home?</u></p> <p>A Use you own language(s). Borrow dual language books from the library and read them together. Spend time talking about books in the home language.</p>
<p>Q <u>Will my child be confused if I change language inside a sentence or across sentence?</u></p> <p>A Try to avoid this. If you jumble the two languages your child may think this is one language system. Keep the languages separate.</p>
<p>Q <u>What should I do if my child uses his/her other language with me?</u></p> <p>A Just say 'Please say that in our language' and your child will soon learn consistent language boundaries.</p>
<p>Q Can we get help in communicating with other services?</p> <p>A Yes, you can access Dundee Translation and Interpretation Service (01382 431563).</p>
FAQ for parents - Secondary
<p>Q <u>Will our child learn English faster if we try to speak it at home?</u></p> <p>A No, research shows that developing the home language gives a good foundation for other languages to develop.</p>

Q. How can we help our child at home?

A Use your own language! Encourage your child to use a bilingual dictionary. Emailing friends and relatives and using the internet to read the news or research a school topic in the home language will maintain and develop literacy skills.

There may be opportunities in S3 and above to take exams in the home language e.g. Urdu, Mandarin or Polish.

Q The teacher tells us our child never speaks in class, what can we do?

A Wait! Children need time to listen and observe before they are ready to speak a new language. This 'silent period' is normal and can vary according to personality.

Q Can we get help to communicate with the school?

A Yes, the BPSS employs a number of bilingual assistants to help both pupils and parents in their home language. You can also access Dundee Translation and Interpretation Service (01382 431563 or 435825)

Q. How can we find out about our child's progress?

A. There will be a parent meeting and a report every year. However, if you have any concerns you can arrange an appointment to see your child's Guidance teacher. Bilingual support staff or assistants are also available to help you understand the Scottish Education System.

Q. How can we help our child to settle into Secondary school?

A. Scottish schools may be very different from schools in your own country. On arrival your child will be allocated 'peer support'. It takes time to adapt and making new friends can be a very important factor. Encourage your child to see new friends outside school or join lunchtime or after school activities.

Q If we are new to the city can I enrol my son/daughter in school if they are over 16?

A Young people aged 16-18 may be offered a school place or may be advised to go to college depending on their prior educational achievement and their level of English.