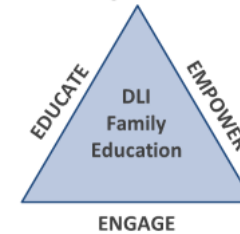


# SESSION II: BILINGUALISM & BILITERACY (HMONG DUAL IMMERSION)



1

## Dual Language and Immersion Family Education



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## Introductions



- Your name
- Number and ages of your children
- Your school
- Languages spoken at home

3

## Workshop Topics

1. Dual Language and Immersion Basics
2. **Bilingualism and Biliteracy**
3. The Challenges of DLI
4. College and Career Opportunities

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Tonight's topic is Bilingualism and Biliteracy and how we can help our children achieve those two goals.

## Session Objectives

I understand:

- what bilingual and biliteracy development typically looks like;
- how bilingualism and biliteracy develop in DLI programs.

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## Session Objective #1

I understand what bilingual and biliteracy development typically looks like.

6

## What is bilingualism?

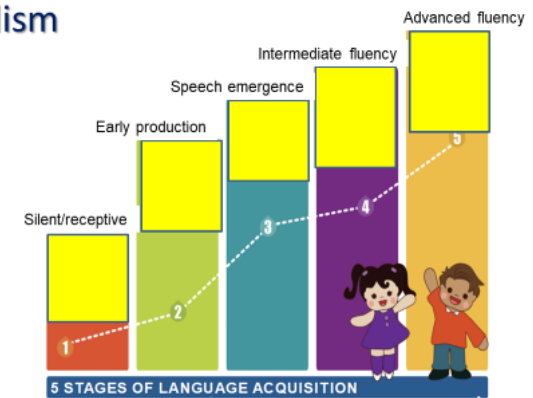


**Bilingualism** = being able to understand and speak two languages.

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Some of you here tonight are bilinguals, hoping to pass that on to your children. Others of you want to offer your children a language you never had a chance to acquire. All of you see

## Bilingualism



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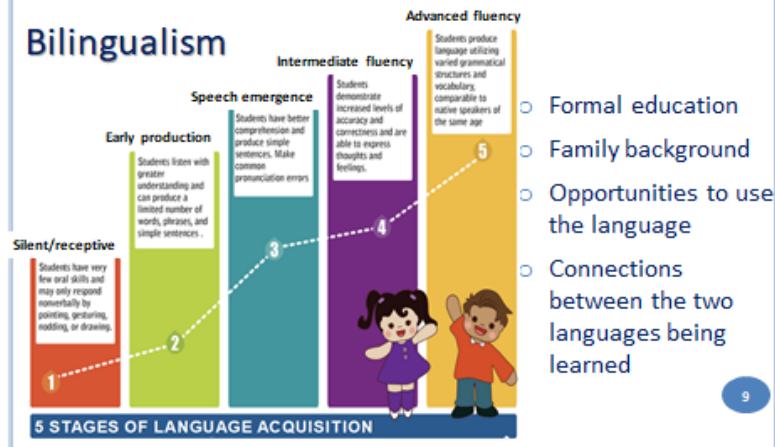
What does typical bilingual development look like? Here are 5 statements that describe each stage of language acquisition or language learning. At your table, see if you can put the



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the value of speaking another language, which we can see in this video clip.



Every language learner goes through these five typical stages of language learning. But each learner is unique and it may take more time for some to reach high levels of proficiency in both languages. There are several factors that can affect one's language learning journey. These factors include:

- Formal education in the language. Going to school in a DLI program sets your child on the path toward bilingualism.

statements in the right order from the first stage to the last one.

- Family Background. If your family language is represented in the DLI program (Hmong), your child will be more motivated to speak that language both at home and at school. She will have more opportunities to use the language with family members and in the community.
- Opportunities to use the language. We know that people learn languages by using them, so we need to ensure that children have many different kinds of opportunities to use the languages they're learning with different types of people. This is true for both English-language speakers and Hmong-language speakers. It may be face-to-face interactions with speakers of Hmong, films, online games, cultural events or travel opportunities. There are lots of ways to create opportunities for children to use the languages they're learning.
- Connections and similarities between the two languages. English and Spanish, for example, have many similar words – family/familia, television/televisión - but this is not the case for Hmong, so high levels of proficiency may be more difficult for Hmong language learners.



## Social vs Academic Language



**Social Language**

- Conversational, simple, interactive language
- Needed for social interaction



**Academic Language**

- Textbook and school language
- Needed for academic and professional success

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For Hmong-speaking children, social language begins at home. At school, social language is used at recess, in the lunchroom and on the bus. For English-speaking students, social language in Spanish is much more difficult to learn, since it must be taught in the same way that academic language is taught.

Academic language is the language used in formal learning in school and textbooks. Examples of academic language are words such as "therefore," "however," "as a result," for example, and all vocabulary related to content areas such as math and science.

Academic language is really important for success in school and in the professional world and it takes, at least, 5 to 7 years to acquire it. This is one more reason why it is so important that students remain in the DLI program through high school and continue their study of the language even further.

## Social vs. Academic Language

1. There was no rain for a very long time, so all the crops died.
2. The people had nothing to eat, so many of them died.
3. The soldiers got a medal because they were so brave.
4. The caterpillar changes its form and out pops a beautiful butterfly.

(some examples from Gibbons, 2015)

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Social and academic language can also be thought of in terms of informal versus formal, or simple versus complex.

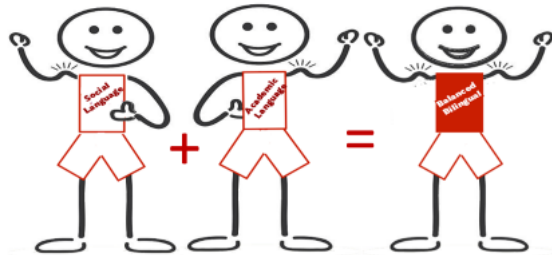
In the early grades, the language of instruction is more social in nature. Students begin by talking about themselves, their families, their pets, and even the instructional language in math or science is very simple. As students move up in the grades, concepts become more complex and the language becomes much more academic. Here are some examples of the two kinds of language.



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SOCIAL LANGUAGE + ACADEMIC LANGUAGE = BALANCED BILINGUAL

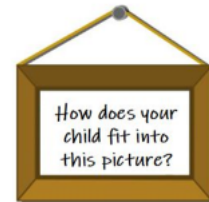


Both groups of students need to work hard to develop all their language muscles!

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Think about what you've learned about the five stages of bilingualism and the two types of language skills children need to acquire in order to become bilingual.



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## What is biliteracy?

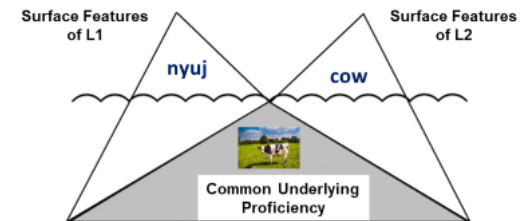


**Biliteracy = being able to read and write in two languages.**

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## Biliteracy

### THE "DUAL ICEBERG" REPRESENTATION OF BILINGUAL PROFICIENCY



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To understand how bilingualism and biliteracy work, we can use the Dual Iceberg Representation of Bilingual Proficiency. Let's imagine some icebergs – we know that the part of the iceberg that we see above the surface of the water is only a small part – underneath the water is a much larger part of the iceberg. In this figure, the part of the iceberg that's below the surface of the water represents the common knowledge that crosses languages. Above the surface are two peaks or the part of the iceberg that we can see. They represent the things that are different between the two languages. The words for cow

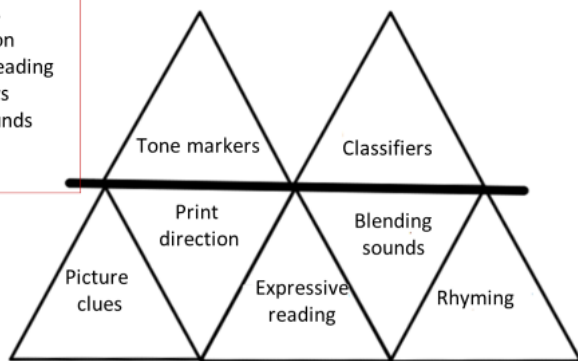


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are different in the partner languages, but the idea of “cow” is the same. The same thing applies to reading. Students have to learn how to read the word *nyuj*, but they don’t have to learn what a cow is since they already know what a cow is.

1. Picture clues
2. Print direction
3. Expressive reading
4. Tone markers
5. Blending sounds
6. Classifiers
7. Rhyming



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Students also rely on many reading strategies that they have already learned in one language in order to read in the other language. So, children aren’t learning everything all over again – they just learn a new way to express the concepts in the new language. Here are some examples of early literacy reading concepts. Some are “above the surface” – they have to be learned for a particular language. Some are “below the surface” and can be transferred from one language to another.

## Session Objective #2

I understand how bilingualism and biliteracy develop in DLI programs.

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## Bilingualism and Biliteracy

### Hmong language learning

- ALL students in Hmong DLI programs develop proficiency in Hmong.
- **Hmong home language/bilingual students** develop higher levels of Hmong than English home language students, but their level of Hmong depends on:
  - the continued use of Hmong in the home;
  - highly developed academic language in Hmong through a rigorous DLI curriculum.



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(Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2014)



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## Bilingualism and Biliteracy

### Hmong language learning

- **English home language DLI students** can achieve high functional levels of proficiency in Hmong, but:
  - their Hmong often lacks grammatical accuracy;
  - their vocabulary tends to be limited.



R.J. Lazada

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(Center for Applied Second Language Studies, 2013; Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2014)

## Bilingualism and Biliteracy

### Hmong language learning



Pixabay

**English home language students** need to be given many opportunities to use Hmong **outside of the classroom and beyond grade 12** if they are to reach advanced levels of proficiency.

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(Genesee, 2007)

## Bilingualism and Biliteracy

### English language learning

- **ALL DLI students** do as well as or better in English than similar students schooled only in English – why?
  - The DLI program supports English development.
  - Students have ongoing support for the development of English in the community (and, for some, at home).



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(Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2014)

## Bilingualism and Biliteracy

### English language learning



**Hmong home language/bilingual students** are surrounded by English and are highly motivated to use it outside of the classroom. But they need many years of formal instruction to acquire English proficiency, especially in terms of academic language.

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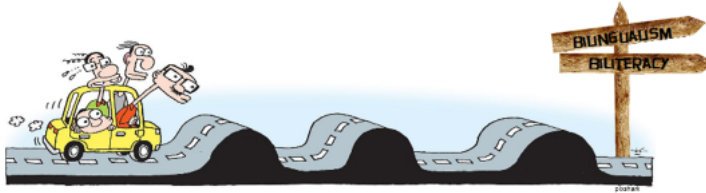
(Lindholm-Leary, 2001)



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## The Road to Bilingualism & Biliteracy



- Read each “bump in the road” statement.
- Share ideas you have for responding to these “bumps.”

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In 5<sup>th</sup> grade, when the content becomes much more complex and difficult, your child might get very discouraged and you may feel helpless, especially if you don't speak the language of instruction.

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At the end of elementary, when it comes time to move into middle school, your child may want to quit the DLI program and go to middle school in English only. *You* may even be ready to give up!

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Slide 26: Take a Break



DLI superparents!

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Enrolling your child in a DLI program is not enough to ensure that your child will be bilingual and biliterate. Parents have an important role to play – and it will be different depending on whether your home language is English or Hmong.



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### DLI superparents - tip #1

Support your home language. Speaking your home language and providing a rich language environment for your child is the most important thing you can do for them.

Share your hopes and dreams for your child's future as a bilingual.

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### DLI superparents - tip #2

Read to your child in your strongest language to encourage development of the home language and to model fluent reading.

Listen to your child read, even if you do not speak/read the language.

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### DLI superparents - tip #3

Bring Hmong into your home: music, TV, DVDs, educational websites, tablet apps, library books, etc.

Look for authentic opportunities to use Hmong: restaurants, markets, family and friends who speak the language, etc.

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### DLI superparents - tip #4

Ask questions about the homework so the child explains the assignments in his/her first language.

Find a "homework buddy." If your child does not understand an assignment, he or she can contact this child for help.

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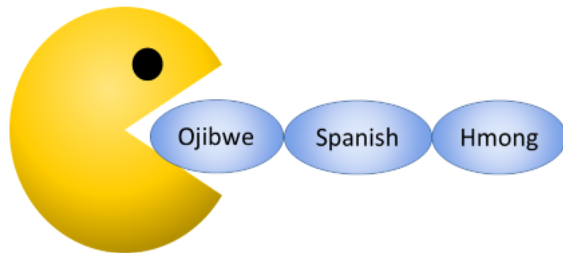


The basis of learning a language begins in early childhood. Language skills will develop depending on the exposure and experience that the learner has with the language throughout his or her life.

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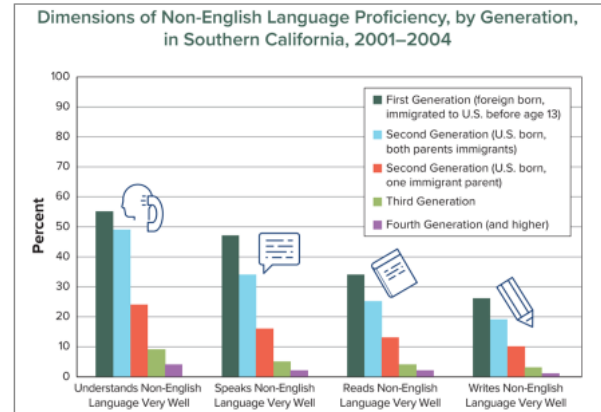
33



(Fortune, 2018)

In the U.S., English is the Pac-man of all languages! Across the United States we have tens of thousands of children who come into our school system as bilinguals and leave the system as monolinguals. This break with the language oftentimes means a loss of cultural identity as well.

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(American Academy of Arts and Sciences 2016)

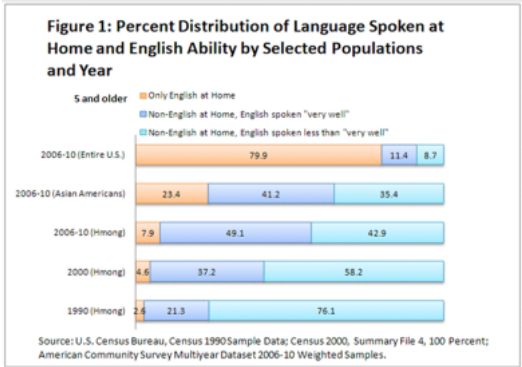
**For immigrant families**, the ability to understand, speak, read, and write the home language disappears very quickly. A study in Southern California found that only 45% of first-generation adults who immigrated to the United States before the age of 13 could still speak the language of their parents well. Only 35% of second-generation immigrants could speak their home language. And only 5% of third generation immigrants could speak the language of their grandparents. Without making a conscious effort to maintain it, families can lose their home language in 3 to 4 generations, showing just how powerful English is in the U.S.

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This chart shows that from 1990 to 2010, the percentage of Hmong home language speakers who speak “Only English at Home” has grown steadily from 2.6% to 4.6% to 7.9%. This chart suggests that number will continue to grow if there is no effort to maintain the home language.

This short video demonstrates Saint Paul Public School’s commitment to preserving the Hmong language and culture.



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**If you are an English home language parent,** you have different challenges. Despite the tremendous growth in Dual Language and Immersion programs over the last 45 years, you are still swimming against the tide. Most Americans - who could include your family, friends and coworkers - don’t know about, don’t understand or don’t agree with DLI education and you may be criticized for the choice you made. Your child will also have a harder time developing high levels of proficiency without additional exposure to the second language.





*"One language sets you in a corridor for life.  
Two languages open every door along the way."*

- Frank Smith

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We thank you for coming this evening  
and for your active participation!

Please complete the short  
questionnaire to help us  
to see what you learned in  
this workshop and how  
we can improve it.



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## Answers to discussion questions

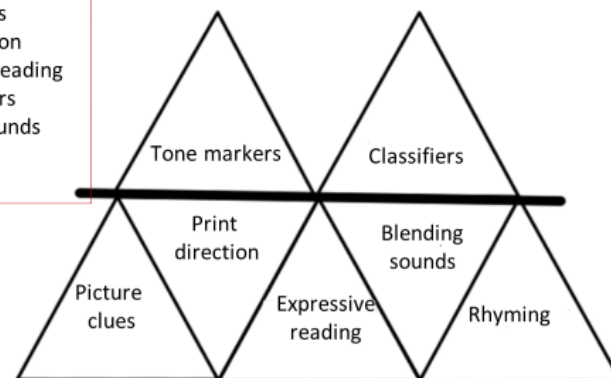
### Social vs. Academic Language

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1. There was no rain for a very long time, so all the crops died.       | The extended drought caused the crops to fail.  |
| 2. The people had nothing to eat, so many of them died.                 | There was widespread famine, resulting in many deaths.  |
| 3. The soldiers got a medal because they were so brave.                 | The soldiers were awarded a medal due to their extraordinary courage.                                       |
| 4. The caterpillar changes its form and out pops a beautiful butterfly. | After a certain amount of time, the metamorphosis is complete and the butterfly emerges from its chrysalis. |

(some examples from Gibbons, 2015)

11

1. Picture clues
2. Print direction
3. Expressive reading
4. Tone markers
5. Blending sounds
6. Classifiers
7. Rhyming



16



- Children often feel it's not fair that they have to work so much harder than their non-DLI friends.
- As parents, you will probably feel bad you can't help more.
- Acknowledge your child's feelings as well as your own, but don't let them overpower you. The struggle is worth it!

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- The road to bilingualism and biliteracy is a long one.
- Students need to continue their studies in both languages through high school and even beyond.
- Research is clear that DLI education offers Spanish-speaking students the best shot at maintaining their home language and developing high levels of English proficiency.

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