Standard Australian English as an additional language: Annotated resource list

This annotated resource list suggests materials useful for professional reading and discussion for teachers to support children learning English as an additional language. While these resources are not exhaustive, they make a good starting point.

Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center — Dual Language Learners

http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/Dual Language Learners

This US website is a rich resource for professionals, families and community. It offers a range of reports, research, and multimedia resources about dual language learners, as well as tools, articles, tips and topics to address almost any issue or need to support learners with English as an additional language.

- The site is arranged by topics, each of which opens into more and more information: links to other sites, resources, discussion papers and support

  e.g. Professional Development

  – Myths and Realities About Dual Language Learning

  – Young Dual Language Learners: What You Need to Know

  – Strengthening Professional Development.

- The tools supplied for teachers are both relevant and of high quality — they include video, PowerPoints, PDFs and specialised readings.

- The tools/checklists for readiness, or support, or program effectiveness, among others could be highly valuable for centres and schools with significant populations of children learning English as an additional language or dialect.

Supporting bilingual children in early childhood (Jane Purcell, Michelle Lee and Janette Biffin)

www.learninglinks.org.au/pdf/infosheets/LLIS 50_Bilingualism.pdf
J Purcell, M Lee & J Biffin, 2006, *Supporting bilingual children in early childhood,* Information sheet 50. Learning Links, Peakhurst, NSW, accessed 23 Jun 2011.

This article, authored by speech pathologists and early childhood teachers, outlines how more than one language is acquired and the stages of acquisition. The article explodes some myths surrounding bilingualism and describes how a professionally informed, family supported program can support bilingual children in early childhood settings.

- An excellent resource for all staff in a school or early childhood education setting, the paper is grounded in practice with a high population of bilingual families and students, from the western

suburbs of Sydney in particular. The Australian context gives the article significant authenticity and perhaps more transference to other Australian situations.

- It could also be valuable resource for parents and families to read.

- The paper describes:

  – How children acquire a second language

  – Factors that influence positive and successful acquisition of two languages

  – Similarities and differences in simultaneous and sequential acquisition

- The paper also covers importance of planning, the need for multi-strategy approach and family commitment/involvement.

The Combine Project: An experience in a dual-language classroom (Rebecca Wilson)

http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v3n1/wilson.html
R Wilson, 2001, 'The Combine Project: An Experience in a Dual-Language Classroom', *Early Childhood Research and Practice,* vol. 3, no. 1.

This article details a kindergarten 'project approach' from the teacher's perspective, exploring the teaching and learning of literacy in a dual-language (Spanish/English) classroom in rural Iowa, USA.

- Author Rebecca Wilson is a well-known exponent and professional development presenter in the Project Approach methodology that is supported by Lillian Katz and Silvia Chard. It is not the same as the Reggio Emilia approach, and the project methodology used in this article reflects the Project Approach structure, which is more teacher developed than a Reggio project.

- The teacher-directed approach merged with an emergent curriculum approach to engage children at various levels of interest.

- The language acquisition and specific tasks are worth staff room discussion and analysis, e.g. an analysis of the teacher's role, the children's' ownership and investigative processes.

- The processed used in the *Combine Project* have significant transferability to an Australian context and working with dual language learners.

- The paper is a very useful tool for teachers on how to construct a learning project, and it also gives idea for language development, peer mentoring and documentation to support children learning English as an additional language or dialect.

Supporting Children Learning English as a Second Language in the Early Years (birth to six years) (Dr Priscilla Clarke)

www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/earlyyears/supporting_children_learning_esl.pdf
P Clarke, 2009, *Supporting Children Learning English as a Second Language in the Early Years (birth to six years)*, Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA), Melbourne.

This discussion paper was commissioned by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority as a supporting document to the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*, 2009. It identifies the factors that contribute to success at school and encourages teachers to see the positives and strengths that children learning English as an additional language can bring to the classroom. The tone of the paper is affirming and encouraging.

- This is a very good resource for outlining the nature and characteristics of dual language learning.

- The discussion paper:
  - outlines strategies for supporting children's second language acquisition
  - discusses the natural acquisition of more than one language and dispels some myths surrounding the capacities of children learning English as an additional language or dialect
  - describes the identifiable stages of second language acquisition
  - explores the role of early childhood professionals and inclusive environments in supporting children in their acquisition of a second language
  - describes assessment as ongoing observation and recording to document children's progress
  - offers a perspective on the importance of maintaining the first or home language in early years settings by developing supportive partnerships with parents and community.
- This resource would have application:
  - In staff development and/or as professional reading for staff. It is accessible to most readers and audiences while maintaining a strong research basis.
  - As a presentation for use in a staff or parent PD session examining children learning English as an additional language in a positive light. The paper's clear structure and writing would translate easily into a PowerPoint presentation.

Working with Young English Language Learners: Some considerations (Bronwyn Coltrane)

HTML www.cal.org/resources/digest/0301coltrane.html or
PDF www.cal.org/resources/digest/digest_pdfs/0301coltrane.pdf
B Coltrane, 2003, *Working with Young English Language Learners: Some considerations*, Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), Washington DC.

This digest outlines considerations for teachers and learning communities working with young English language learners. Like the previous resource, it has a positive and encouraging tone. It is an accessible, easy-to-use digest that could give useful starting points for staff discussions and planning about attitudes and practice in teaching children learning English as an additional language.

The digest:

- focuses on pre-primary school children
- describes the concept of an additive approach to teaching and learning, which supports children's native language use and explains the role of that language in supporting acquisition of English as an additional language
- values the home and family language contexts as a basis for developing appropriate practice for second language acquisition
- discusses the importance of teacher development, and of sufficient opportunities for coordinated planning. This could be a focus in discussions with principals, directors or teachers of children learning English as an additional language.
- discusses the crucial role of parents of children learning English as an additional language with a particularly interesting section under the heading — *Using Funds of Knowledge*.

Links to all resources were functional on 23 June 2011.