

RAISING CHILDREN TO BE BILINGUAL IN EARLY AGES: Some Considerations to be Aware of

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Abstract

As the awareness of second/foreign language need is getting bigger from time to time, parents start thinking of giving their children early lesson of second/foreign language. For that, some considerations are needed to be taken into some account by parents. The first is the starting point of when the teaching should begin. It mostly deals with the view of critical period hypothesis which some experts consider as the perfect time to introduce second/foreign language to children. The second is the factor affecting the second/foreign language teaching. Since teaching for children is completely different from teaching for adults, parents need to know what factors that could inhibit and motivate the learning. And the last is the language to teach, parents need to consult with the situation they face in order to know which language is mostly appropriate to choose for their children to learn.

Key words: childhood bilingualism, critical period hypothesis, second/foreign language

INTRODUCTION

Today, for some people, being able to speak more than one language is not simply a trend anymore but also a need. People who are able to speak more than one language are familiarly known as bilinguals. Some studies show that bilinguals, apparently, own some qualities that are not likely to be possessed by monolingual speakers such as, the awareness and understanding of other people and cultures, the ability to make friendships across social lines, and the skills necessary for creative problem-solving (Bialystok, 2008:2). In addition, King and McKay (2007; 9) explain in their book “The Bilingual Edge” that bilingual people will have more self esteem and pride in their own heritage, particularly for those who learn the second language as a