

# Attachment, Identity and the Home Language

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*Talent Development of the  
Early Childhood Workforce*



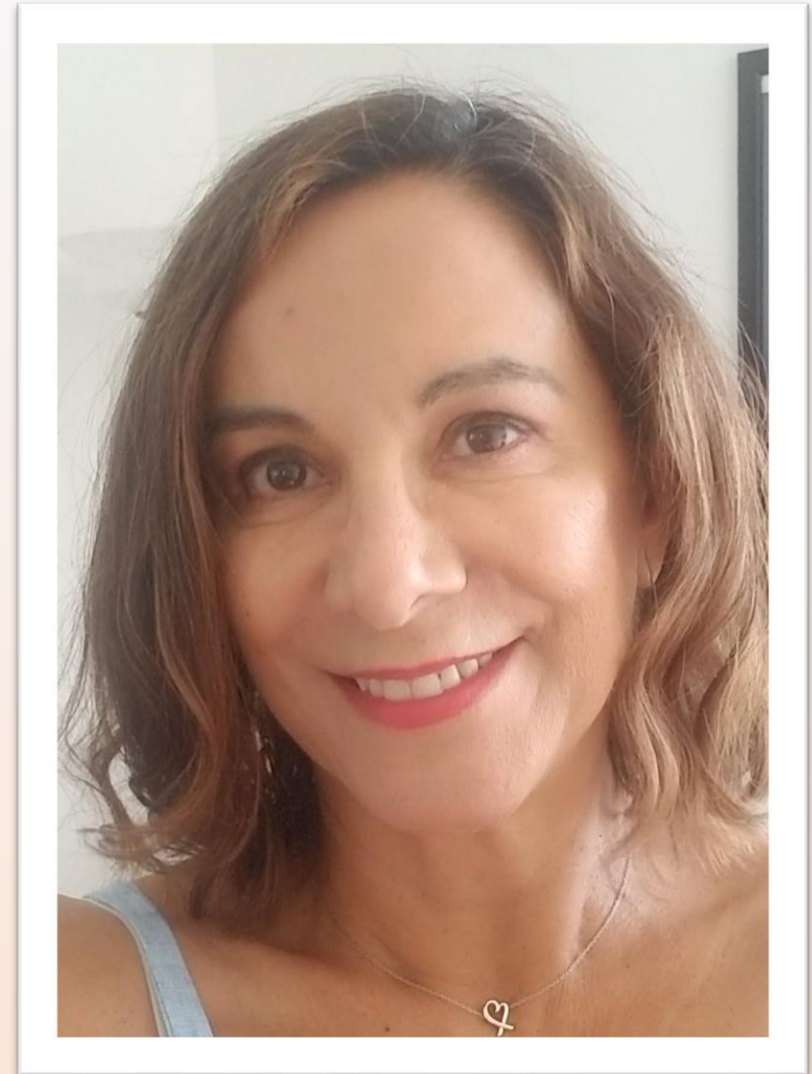
# Dual Language Learning

## Webinar Series

1. Dual Language Learning and the Brain
2. Language Development of Dual Language Learners
3. Attachment, Identity and the Home Language
4. Supporting Early Language Development of Dual Language Learners
5. Culture, Equity and Bias in Infant and Toddler Settings
6. Culturally Consistent and Empowering Care
7. Family Engagement and Culturally Responsive Practices
8. Using Identity Texts in Infant and Toddler Settings

# The Presenter

- Born and raised in Colombia
- 25 years plus in the ECE field
  - Teacher, Program Director, University Professor, Consultant, Provider of Training and Technical Assistance
- 19 years with a large Migrant Head Start
  - Leadership of education services and talent development
  - Lead development of culturally responsive bilingual curriculum
- Former Chair of NABE ECE-SIG
- Raised four dual language learners
- Salsera! 😊





- 
- Do you know an infant or toddler who is growing up learning two or more languages?



# Meet Two DLLs

**Leone-** Born in the USA, mother speaks Spanish and English, father speaks Italian and English. At home, parents and grandparents speak mostly Spanish and Italian.



**Stella-** Born in Mexico, mother speaks a Central America indigenous language and some Spanish, father speaks Spanish and some English. At home parents speak mostly Spanish.



*Take a moment and reflect on YOUR learning objectives*

**I already know...**

**I would like to know...**





# Definitions

## ***DLLs-***

A term usually used when referring to young children from birth to 5 years of age who are learning two or more languages

### ***Simultaneous***

- Learns two or more languages from birth

### ***Sequential***

- Learns one language before another





# Who Wants to Win a Million?

(..Good luck points I mean..)

Check your knowledge by playing this  
10-question game



*Time to check your knowledge!*

*Find out how many good-luck points you made today.*

10	\$1 MILLION
9	\$640,000
8	\$320,000
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**1.** Attachment is the same than bonding

**A:** Don't know

**B:** True

**C:** False

**D:** What!?

**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**1,000**

**Ready for your  
next question...?**

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**2.** What type of attachment is a protective factor?

A: Secured

B: Disorganized

C: Simple

D: Complex

**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**5,000**

**Ready for your  
next question...?**

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**3.** Ethnic identity refers to the feelings of \_\_\_\_\_  
to an ethnic group

**A:** Belonging

**B:** Happiness

**C:** Fear

**D:** Romance



**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**10,000**

**Ready for your  
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**4.** Attachment molds our expectations  
of how \_\_\_\_\_ should be

A: Bilingualism

B: Love

C: Language

D: Fear

**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**20,000**

**Ready for your  
next question...?**

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**5.** Children do well in school when they have a positive sense of \_\_\_\_\_

**A:** Their teachers

**B:** The weather

**C:** Ethnic identity

**D:** Their toys

**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**40,000**

**Ready for your  
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6. Attachment and ethnic identity is mediated by  
the \_\_\_\_\_

A: Community at-large

B: Caregivers' outfit

C: Country history

D: Home language



**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**80,000**

**Ready for your  
next question...?**

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1 \$1,000

**7.** A child who lost the home language will not have school success

A: What?

B: True

C: False

D: Don't know

**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**160,000**

**Ready for your  
next question...?**

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**8.** Using \_\_\_\_\_ is a good strategy to support children's home language

A: Adverbs

B: Cognates

C: Paragraphs

D: Jargon

# Congratulations!

## You made it to

# 320,000

## Ready for your next question...?

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**9.** An example of a 'Family Favorite' is ....

**A:** A shopping center

**B:** A pet

**C:** A childhood rhyme

**D:** A shirt

**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**640,000**

**Ready for your  
next question...?**

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1 \$1,000

10. Using \_\_\_\_\_ texts supports a positive ethnic identity

A: Simple

B: Natural

C: Identity

D: Negative

**1 Million...  
Points!**



1. What is attachment and ethnic identity
2. Why attachment and identity are important
3. Attachment, identity and the home language
4. Impact of the loss of the home language



# Attachment



A photograph of a woman with dark hair lying down, holding a newborn baby. The baby is wearing a white headband and a white onesie. The woman is looking down at the baby with a gentle expression. The background is a light blue wall with vertical panels.

## Attachment is...

- ... where the child uses the primary caregiver as a secure base from which to explore and, when necessary, as a haven of safety and a source of comfort
- Attachment is a powerful predictor of a child's later social and emotional outcome



# Attachment Is Not Bonding

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- Infant's attachment system is 'activated' e.g., when the infant's feelings of safety and security are threatened
  - he/she is ill
  - physically hurt
  - emotionally upset; particularly, frightened
- Attachment is determined by the caregivers' responses to infant's distress based on daily interactions with the specific caregiver



# Activity...

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Think in someone you felt attached during your childhood...

- What did that person do and say that helped you feel attached to her/him?
- What feelings these memories bring to the present moment?



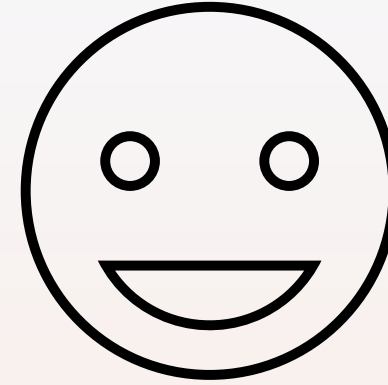
# Types of Attachment

Quality of Caregiving	Strategy to Deal with Distress	Type of Attachment
Sensitive - Loving →	Organized →	Secured
Insensitive- Rejecting →	Organized →	Insecure- Avoidant
Insensitive- Inconsistent →	Organized →	Insecure- Resistant
Atypical →	Disorganized →	Insecure- Disorganized



## Children with disorganized attachment

- Are more vulnerable to stress
- Have problems with regulation and control of negative emotions
- Display oppositional, hostile, aggressive behaviors
- Exhibit coercive styles of interaction



Organized and secured attachment is a protective factor

# Ethnic Identity



# Ethnic Identity Is...

- Complex and dynamic
- Refers to a person's commitment towards and feelings of belonging to an ethnic group
- Is influenced by individual differences and contextual constraints
- The developing child begins to see him- or herself - through the reflected evaluations of individuals who matter to them





# Activity...

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Reflect for a moment...

- If someone asks you to what ethnic group do you identify with, what would you respond? Why?







# Ethnic Identity

- The process of forming an identity begins at birth, as children absorb who they are from those around them
- In the first few hours they can tell one smell from another, one voice from another... and they prefer their mother's

- Infants are astute observers of differences and similarities
- When engaging with others, infants receive messages about who they are
- Infants begin to imitate and later identify with others in their lives



# From Knowing to Doing



How does this information impact your work with Leone and Stella?



# Perhaps you thought about....

- Stella and Leone probably have already developed attachment to a caregiver
- Also, they both have already begun to develop some type of ethnic identity
- Stella and Leone already has been exposed to more than one ethnicity
- Observing the behaviors of both children may give some clues to whom they are attached and what ethnicities they begin to identify with



# Why Attachment and Ethnic Identity **Are Important**

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# Importance of Attachment

- It impacts all types of relationships later in life
- Secure attachment helps children and adults learn positive ways to manage feelings, relationships and stressful situations.
- It contributes to the development of trust, autonomy and self-esteem
- It molds our expectations of how love should be



## Importance of Ethnic Identity

- A positive sense of identity is crucial to the development of self-esteem and confidence
- Children who feel worthy and capable are more likely to be optimistic and to do well in school.



A photograph of three young children of diverse backgrounds (Caucasian, Hispanic, and African American) holding up fresh vegetables like carrots and radishes with joyful expressions. The image is partially covered by a semi-transparent grey box on the right side, which contains the title and a list of bullet points.

# Importance of Ethnic Identity

- Helps children be more open to diverse backgrounds
- Less likely to fear differences or put other children down
- Helps children feel safe and confident about themselves and their roots

# Attachment, Ethnic Identity and The Home Language

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Attachment is mediated by language,  
usually the child's home language

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All of the affectionate talk and  
interpersonal communication of  
children's childhoods and family life  
are embedded in the home language  
and culture

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A secured attachment between  
parents and children is connected to  
development and maintenance of the  
home language





# Language and Culture

- Children learn language in the highly specific cultural context of their homes
- Through the earliest interactions between children and their caregivers, children learn
  - What types of language are valued
  - When one should talk
  - How to use language as a tool for thinking

# Activity...

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Think of a distinctive saying from your culture...

- What message it conveys?
- Why does it represent your culture?

**No dar  
papaya...  
(Don't give papaya..)**

# When a Child Loses The Home Language

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- Immigrant children have a high probability of losing their home language
- The commitment of adults to continue the development of home language is vital







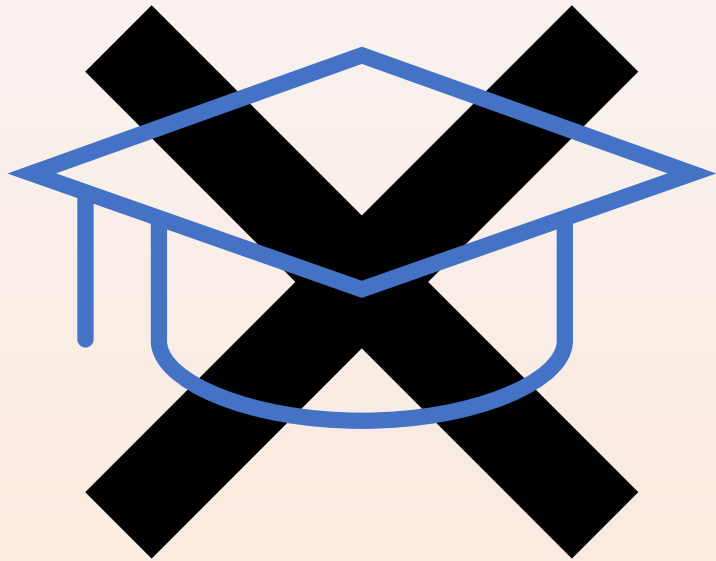
# Loss of the Home Language

Two case studies



# Academic Impact

A child who lost the home language will  
not have school success



- Differences of dual language development may be interpreted as a disability
- Longer time to develop academic language proficiency
- Diminished transfer of skills from the home language to English

# Socio-Emotional Impact

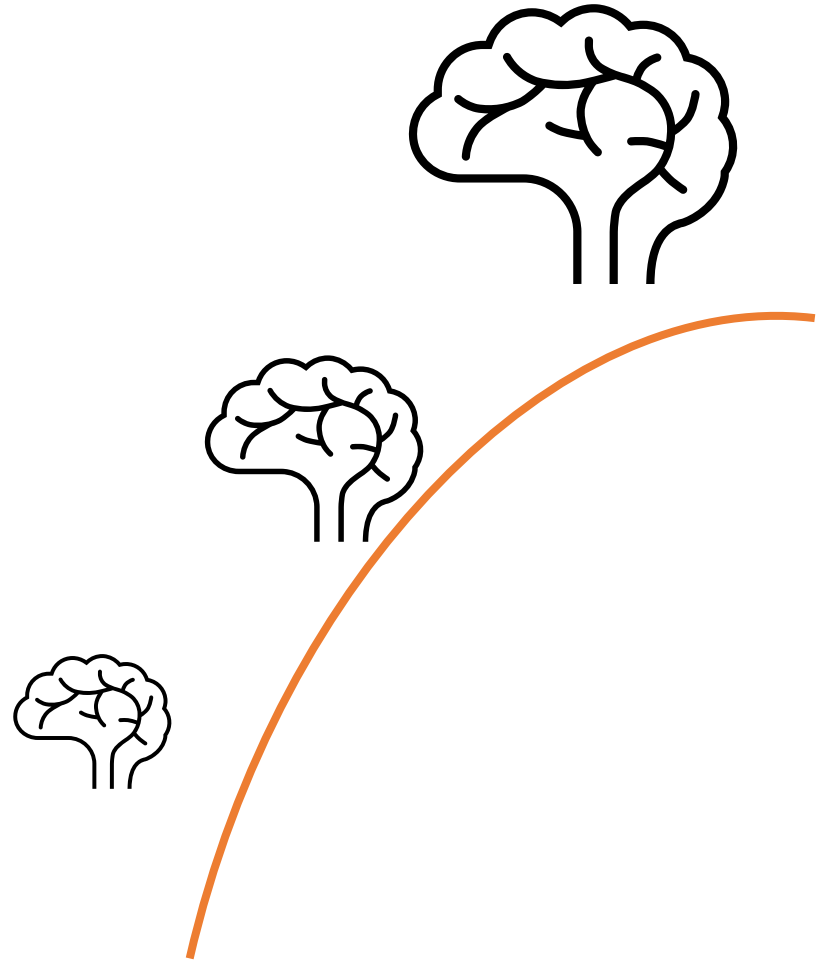
- Diminished communication with parents, family and community
- Linguistic and cultural disconnect
- Impact on identity and self-esteem



# Continuity IS Imperative

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- Maintaining the home language is NOT enough
- It is imperative to **continue** the development of the home language
- Prevent interruption of cognitive development



# From Knowing to Doing



How does this information impact your work with Leone and Stella?



# Perhaps you thought about....

- It is important to support the attachment relationship between the caregivers and Stella and Leone
- The implicit messages Stella and Leone receive about their ethnic group will impact the rest of their lives
- It is important to convey positive messages about Stella's and Leone's ethnic identities
- It is imperative to continue the development of their home languages to prevent the interruption of their cognitive development

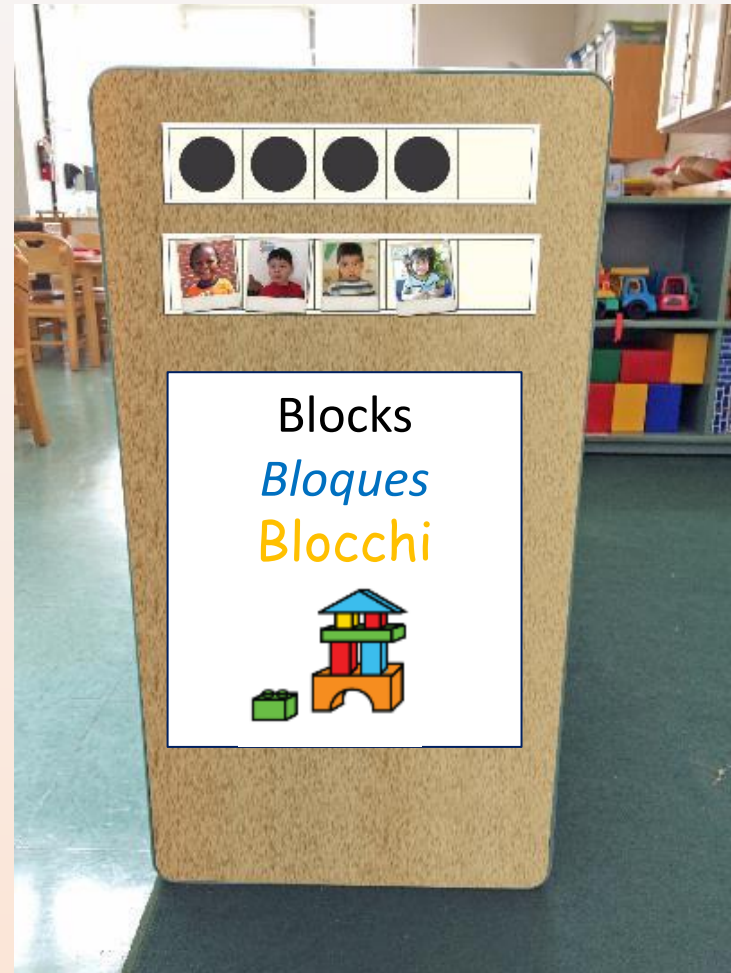


# How to Support the Home Language





- Classroom labels and displays



- Family photos

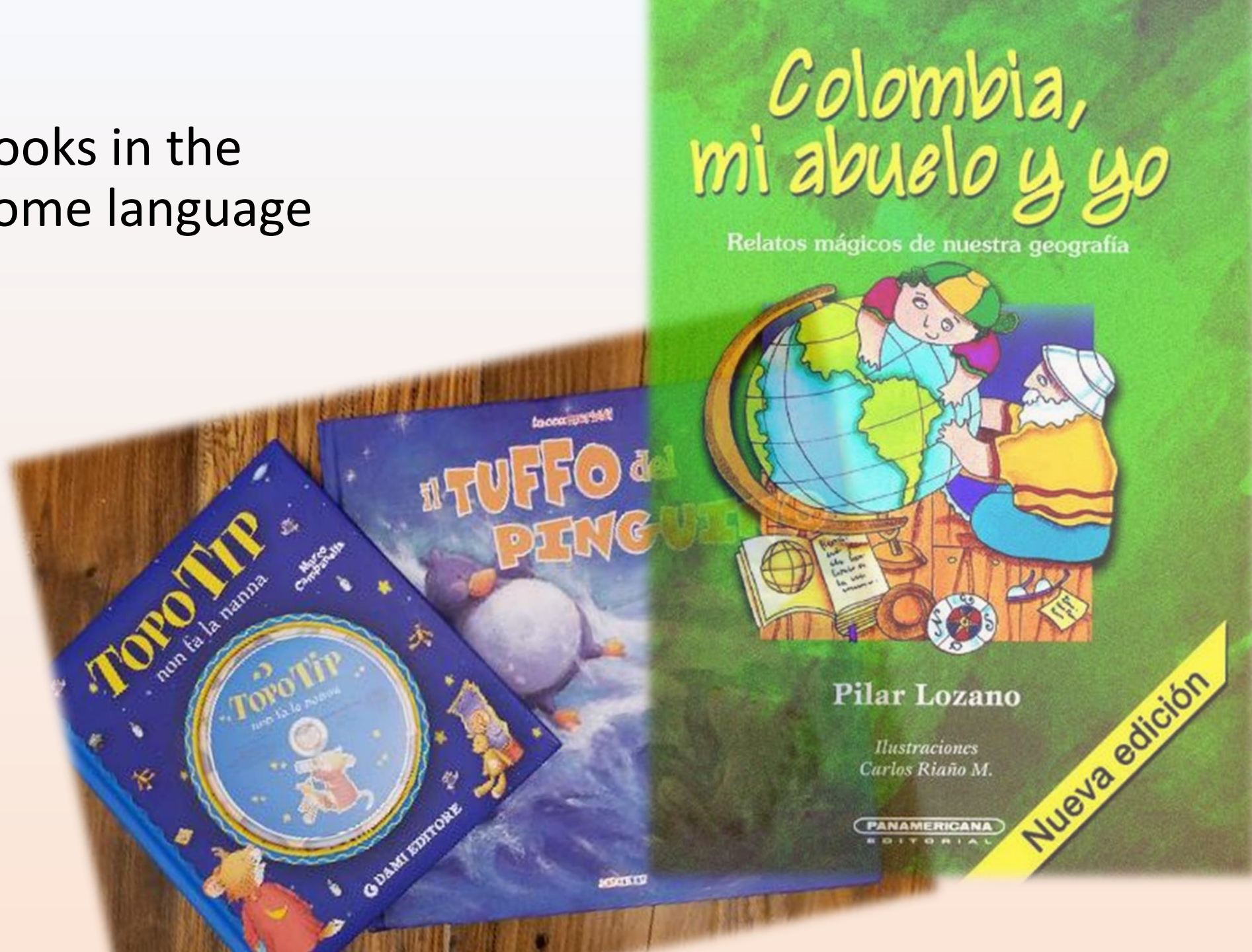


- Empathize cognates





- Books in the home language



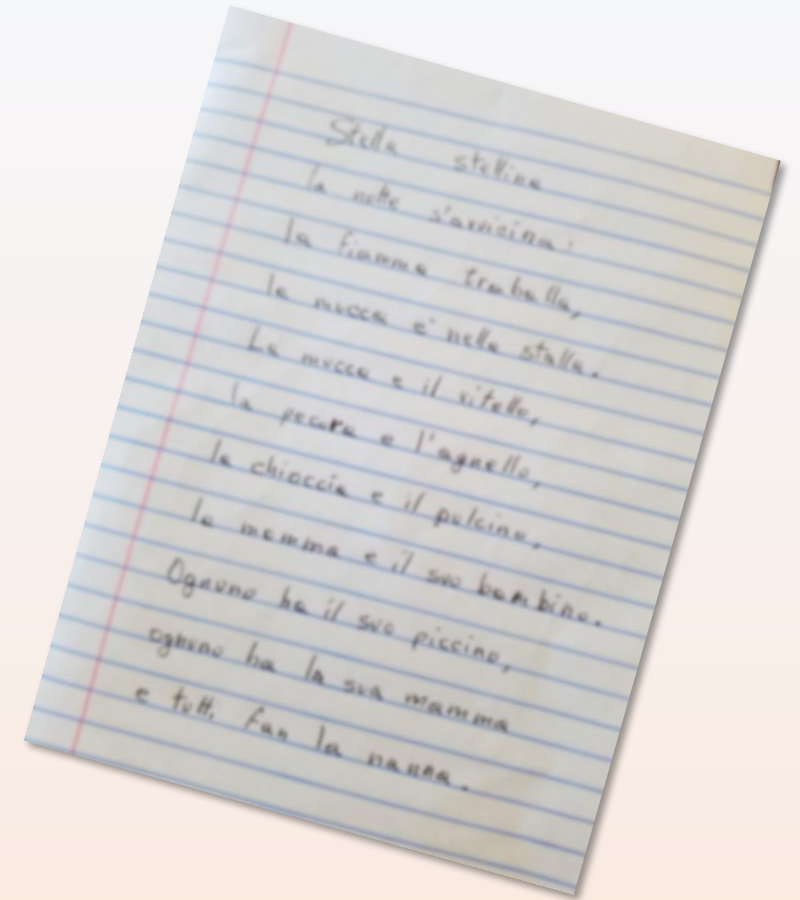
- Culturally relevant props



Children's  
Songs



- Family Favorites:
  - Games, rhymes, stories





- Create identity texts  
(Details in Webinar #8)

### Mi juego favorito cuando niño/a



Con mis 8 hermanos construíamos  
carpas con sábanas, almohadas  
y mantas

### Mi rima favorita cuando niño/a



Jugábamos y cantábamos  
A la rueda, rueda  
De pan y canela  
Si no quieres ir  
Acuéstate a dormir!

- Family notes and letters



- Learn a few words and simple sentences

### Use the home language

- Good morning
- *Buenos días*
- Buongiorno
- Lunch time
- *Hora del almuerzo*
- Ora de pranzo

### Use affirmations

- Good work!
- *Buen trabajo!*
- Buon lavoro!
- Good listening
- *Escuchas muy bien*
- Ascolti molto bene

# From Knowing to Doing



Which of the previous strategies will you implement...

- Next week?
- Next month?

Time to check your  
knowledge again



# Who Wants to Win a Million?

(..Good luck points I mean..)

Check your knowledge by playing this  
10-question game





*Time to check your knowledge!*

*Find out how many good-luck points you made today.*

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**1.** Attachment is the same than bonding

A: Don't know

B: True

**C: False**

D: What!?

**Congratulations!**  
**You made it to**

**1,000**

**Ready for your  
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**2.** What type of attachment is a protective factor?

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C: Simple

D: Complex

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**3.** Ethnic identity refers to the feelings of \_\_\_\_\_  
to an ethnic group

**A:** Belonging

**B:** Happiness

**C:** Fear

**D:** Romance

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4. Attachment molds our expectations  
of how \_\_\_\_\_ should be

A: Bilingualism

B: Love

C: Language

D: Fear

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**5.** Children do well in school when they have a positive sense of \_\_\_\_\_

A: Their teachers

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D: Their toys

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6. Attachment and ethnic identity is mediated by  
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D: Home language



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**7.** A child who lost the home language will not  
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A: What?

**B: True**

C: False

D: Don't know

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**8.** Using \_\_\_\_\_ is a good strategy to support children's home language

A: Adverbs

**B: Cognates**

C: Paragraphs

D: Jargon

# Congratulations!

## You made it to

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## Ready for your next question...?

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**9.** An example of a 'Family Favorite' is ....

**A:** A shopping center

**B:** A pet

**C:** A childhood rhyme

**D:** A shirt



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**10.** Using \_\_\_\_\_ texts supports a positive ethnic identity

A: Simple

B: Natural

**C: Identity**

D: Negative

**1 Million...  
Points!**



*Take a moment and reflect on YOUR learning objectives*

**I would like to know...**

**I learned...**

# Resources

- Espinosa, L. (2010). *Getting it Right for Young Children from Diverse Backgrounds*. Washington, D.C: NAEYC.
- Nemeth, K. (2009). *Many Languages, One Classroom: Teaching Dual and English Language Learners*. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House.
- Nemeth, K. (2012). *Basics of Supporting Dual Language Learners*. Washington, D.C: NAEYC
- National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. (2017). *Promoting the Educational Success of Children and Youth Learning English: Promising Futures*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.  
<https://doi.org/10.17226/24677>
- Office of Head Start- ECLKC- Topics- Culture and Language



obrigado

Dank U

Merci

mahalo

Köszí

chacubo

Grazie

Thank  
you

mawuuru

Takk

Gracias

Dziękuję

Děkuju

danke

Kiitos