

A follow-up to the bestselling  
*One Child, Two Languages*

# TEACHING DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS



What Early  
Childhood  
Educators  
Need to  
Know

Lisa M. López  
Mariela M. Páez

# Teaching Dual Language Learners

## What Early Childhood Educators Need to Know

by

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and

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## Preface

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*Ko recently started in his preschool classroom. His teacher is worried about Ko's adaptation to the classroom, given that Ko is a recent immigrant with a refugee background. Today Ko was very quiet, mostly kept to himself, and had a difficult time with transitions. The teacher wonders if this is a language issue or if Ko is having difficulty adapting to the new routine. Ko's teacher is eager to help, but she is unsure about the best steps to support him. Should the teacher screen his language skills, and in what language should she do this? How can the teacher connect with Ko's family to learn more about his interests, developmental skills, and prior educational experiences? The teacher doesn't speak Ko's home language, Burmese, but she wants Ko to feel supported and welcome. What can the teacher do in the classroom to facilitate Ko's engagement and learning?*

The case of Ko and his teacher is not unique. Given current demographic changes in the United States, teachers in early childhood settings need further training and understanding on how to support diverse populations of children. Throughout this book, educators will learn more about Ko and other dual language learners (DLLs) enrolled in early childhood programs throughout the United States to better understand the diversity and needs of this population. Furthermore, this book informs teachers about instructional approaches and research-based strategies that can be used to better serve the DLL preschool population.

In the United States since the early 2000s, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of DLLs—that is, children who are learning more than one language in their early years (birth to age 8) (Park, O'Toole, & Katsiaficas, 2017; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, 2017). One third of young children living in the United States are DLLs (11.5 million children) (Park et al., 2017). This is reflected in early childhood programs across the nation, as 28% of the children in Head Start and Early Head Start are DLLs (Office of Head Start, 2018), and 23% of the preschool-age population in state-funded programs are DLLs (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2018).

The early childhood years are a key time for fostering bilingualism among DLLs, as researchers have identified this time period as particularly suitable for language learning (NASEM, 2017). Thus, there is a critical need for accessible knowledge and information about best pedagogical practices to effectively serve DLLs and their families. Early childhood researchers have identified distinct benefits for the participation of DLLs in high-quality early learning programs that focus on developing the language, social, and cognitive skills needed for academic success (NASEM, 2017). Mandates for working with DLLs, driven by policy recommendations from national organizations (e.g., National Head Start Association, National Association for the Education of Young Children) and federal agencies (e.g., DHHS, Department of Education), also have stressed the importance of targeted practices for working with this population. This book presents the newest research on the DLL early childhood population and discusses the most relevant findings for improving pedagogy and teaching practices for educating these children.

*Teaching Dual Language Learners: What Early Childhood Educators Need to Know* connects research to practice for educators and early childhood leaders who are struggling to serve this population. To improve early education for DLL children, the field needs a better understanding of factors that affect these children, including the role of language use and language development, both at home and school. In addition, it is important to understand the diverse experiences of DLL children and how to modify early childhood environments to support their learning and development. Early childhood educators can learn more about these topics throughout this book. We review information about research studies and educational programs documenting DLL children's development and learning in early childhood contexts, and we provide guidance on applying this information when working with DLLs. The beginning of each chapter includes guiding questions and a summary of the highlights discussed in the chapter. At the end of each chapter, there is a section for self-study and reflection. These sections offer questions and tools that educators can use to examine their own classroom or program to improve their practices with DLL children.

In addition, each chapter presents information on diverse samples of DLL children who are being exposed to two (or more) languages across different contexts and are developing English in their early childhood educational settings. Chapter 1 presents a review of the demographic profile of DLLs—including information about home, school, and community contexts—and research knowledge about different developmental areas. Chapter 1 also presents five case studies of children (with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and diverse language profiles and skills), which will be discussed throughout the book. The cases reflect an important theme regarding best practices: To be more effective with DLL children, educators need to consider DLLs' diverse profiles when designing learning environments, teaching, assessing, and working with families.



Chapter 2 focuses on families, describing these influential contexts, including language use and practices at home that support DLL children's development. Chapter 3 presents information and research related to teachers focusing on the connections between beliefs and responsive practices that support DLLs. Chapter 4 summarizes what is known about effective classroom educational practices that promote learning in DLL children. This chapter reviews evidenced-based curricular practices—such as home language support, classroom structures, and instructional strategies—that have been found effective when working with this population. Next, Chapter 5 outlines how language and literacy develop for DLL children and how to support this development in the classroom. Chapter 6 discusses important assessment considerations for DLL children, including the role of observations and strategies for enhancing and using data to improve practices. Finally, Chapter 7 discusses and summarizes implications for practice and for future research and programmatic policy.

In closing, this book brings together the latest research and information that teachers need to know to work more effectively with DLLs. We present theory, research, and practical strategies for educators and early childhood leaders to consider when serving the diverse population of DLLs. This book is for anyone involved in working with young children—early childcare workers, Head Start teachers, and public and private educators—and interested in improving and enhancing their practices to support the development and learning of DLLs.

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## CHAPTER 1

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# Introduction to Dual Language Learners (DLLs)

### **This chapter will:**

- Present important demographic characteristics of the DLL population, including information about the home, school, and community contexts
- Describe five diverse cases of DLL children
- Review the research on language and literacy development of DLLs
- Discuss recent studies of cognitive and social-emotional development
- Review recent national mandates for working with DLL children

As an early childhood professional, you have probably noticed the increased diversity of children and families in your program. Indeed, early childhood settings have been transformed in recent years given the rise in immigration and the expanding presence of DLL children and families from different language and cultural backgrounds. This increase in diversity has been experienced across the United States, including in low-incidence communities that in the past had only a few DLLs in their programs and schools. Some programs have seen their enrollment increase from serving zero DLLs to serving more than 80% DLLs. This shift in population requires all early childhood professionals to learn instructional strategies and best practices for working with a diverse group of children and families.

This chapter describes important demographic characteristics of the DLL population, including the heterogeneity of the population and

**REFLECT**

As you read this chapter, consider:

- Who are the DLL children in your programs or classrooms?
- What characteristics do they share?
- How are these children diverse with regard to their home, school, and community contexts?
- What developmental areas and skills are important for DLL children?
- What federal and/or state mandates influence your program or teaching?

descriptions of the home, education, and community contexts that support learning for these children. This chapter gives special attention to DLLs' language and literacy developmental processes, reviewing results from longitudinal studies and effective intervention studies in the field of early childhood development. In addition, the chapter discusses recent information about DLLs' cognitive and social-emotional development in the context of bilingualism. Finally, this chapter considers recent mandates from federal agencies and national organizations for working with DLLs in early childhood settings.

**DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW OF DLLs**

Across the nation, there has been an increase in the number of children who speak a language other than English at home and are learning a second language. Since 2000, the DLL population in the United States has grown by 24% (Park, O'Toole, & Katsiaficas, 2017). The term *dual language learner* (DLL) is used to describe young children who are exposed to and learning through two distinct languages (Castro, Garcia, & Markos, 2013). DLLs have also been defined as children learning two (or more) languages at the same time, as well as those learning a second language while continuing to develop their first (or home) language (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, 2017).

Demographic data for this group are difficult to obtain given that student data are usually collected starting in kindergarten. A 2017 report by Park and colleagues defined DLLs as children between the ages of birth and 8 years who have at least one parent who speaks a language other than English at home. These statistics describe DLL children age 8 and younger based on an analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) and surveys conducted by the Migration Policy Institute with state early childhood education and care (ECEC) agencies. According to this

analysis, DLLs make up nearly one third (more than 11 million children) of all young children in the United States.

The demographic profile of DLLs and their families is complex because they come from different backgrounds and ethnic groups, representing a diversity of values, beliefs, and practices, as well as resources. There are more than 350 languages represented within the DLL population, but Spanish predominates, with 59% of DLLs speaking Spanish in the home. Other prevalent home languages include Chinese (3.3%), Tagalog (1.9%), Vietnamese (1.9%), and Arabic (1.9%). These languages reflect trends showing a decrease in the immigrant population from Latin America and an increase in the immigrant population from Asia and the Pacific Islands, which will eventually become the largest immigrant group in the United States (Park et al., 2017). The two largest immigrant groups are Latinos and Asians; recent figures indicate that of the foreign-born individuals residing in the United States, approximately 50% were born in Latin America and 30% were born in Asia (Smith, 2018). Participation in early childhood programs also varies by ethnic group, with 3- to 5-year-old black and Latino children enrolling at lower rates compared to Asian and white children (McFarland et al., 2018).

Even though there is unquestionable variation within the DLL child population, certain general characteristics have been noted:

- The majority are born in the United States.
- Fifty-eight percent of DLLs are from low-income families.
- Twenty-six percent of parents of DLL children have less than a high school education.
- DLLs enroll in preschool programs at lower rates (42%) than their non-DLL peers (48%) (Park et al., 2017).

As noted by Castro, Espinosa, and Páez (2011), some of the demographic characteristics of DLLs support children's healthy development and learning, such as living in two-parent households and community contexts that place a high value on education. However, these families and their children face many challenges, primarily driven by poverty and consequences of life with limited economic resources. Special attention has been given to DLLs from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and research in this population has shown that these at-risk children can greatly benefit from participation in early childhood programs (Yoshikawa et al., 2013).

The increasing prevalence of DLLs has intensified the need for educators, researchers, and policy makers to provide effective programs that promote school readiness for these children. This book supports these efforts by presenting the latest research on early childhood programs and describing teaching practices that support learning and development among DLLs.

## THE MANY CULTURES AND EXPERIENCES OF DLLs

Immigration is a natural process as individuals and groups migrate from one region to another seeking out education, job opportunities, political or economic refuge, or a new life for themselves or their children. The United States was once known as “the nation of immigrants” due to its history of inviting immigrants into the country and supporting their goal of attaining the “American Dream.” This history of immigration has led to the large diversity seen across communities throughout the United States (Pew Research Center, 2015). Although the diversity is more apparent in border states, every state within the country has seen a rise in diverse populations since the early 2000s (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine [NASEM], 2017). Education and community agencies must quickly obtain knowledge of best practices for working with immigrant children and families of diverse backgrounds. There is a critical need for early childhood educators and leaders to seek out additional resources and professional development due to the heterogeneity of immigrant groups.

Research indicates that one-size-fits-all approaches will not work as best practices across diverse groups (Castro, Páez, Dickinson, & Frede, 2011). There is heterogeneity both within and across immigrant groups (Gonzalez et al., 2016). Notably, culture and language play a large role in defining the experiences of different groups with regard to language acquisition, assimilation, and acculturation. These ideas are also supported within ethnic and racial identity research conducted by sociologists, psychologists, and education researchers (Umaña-Taylor, 2011).

To represent the diversity and heterogeneity of the DLL population, the section that follows presents five case studies of children that highlight different cultural and linguistic backgrounds across multiple contexts. The cases were selected to reflect particular language profiles and different ethnic communities across the United States. They are a sample of the DLL children whom teachers might encounter in their early childhood classrooms. The cases include the following DLLs: 1) Javier, an immigrant Mexican child who is an emergent bilingual learner living in Chicago, Illinois; 2) Wang, a first-generation Chinese child who is an emergent English learner with foreign-born parents living in San Francisco, California; 3) Lucía, an English-dominant second-generation Puerto Rican child attending a two-way, or dual language program, in Boston, Massachusetts; 4) Roseline, a Haitian-born child whose parents immigrated in 2010 after the earthquake and who speaks Haitian Creole at home while learning English at school in Miami, Florida; and 5) Ko, a Burmese refugee who is a recent arrival and lives in New York, New York, with his family. We will return to each of these children’s cases throughout the book to provide analysis and concrete examples of factors that affect their development and learning and to highlight best instructional practices for both teaching and assessment.

## DLL CASE STUDIES

### Javier

Javier is a 4-year-old student who lives in the lower west side of Chicago with his parents, two older siblings, grandparents, and uncle in a three-bedroom apartment. Javier immigrated to Chicago from rural Mexico 2 years ago with his parents and siblings. His grandparents and uncle had already been living in Chicago for the previous 5 years. They joined an established Mexican community within the Pilsen area of Chicago, known for its history of Mexican immigrants. In fact, Chicago has the second largest population of Mexican-born immigrants in the United States. Although this area is becoming more gentrified, there are still many bodegas, panaderias, and taquerias, along with the National Museum of Mexican Art. The area is also home to beautiful murals representing Aztec history.



Javier is a quiet and shy boy. He does not speak unless spoken to and often struggles to verbalize his thoughts. Javier enjoys spending time with his two older brothers playing in the neighborhood with the other children. Most of the children in the neighborhood are also Mexican. Although Javier's parents and grandparents speak only Spanish, Javier's uncle and two older brothers have started learning English and enjoy speaking it with Javier. The children in the neighborhood also speak some English and often switch back and forth between English and Spanish. Even though this type of bilingual environment is common in some enclaves of the United States, it is not the norm in the majority of the country. Unlike Javier, many children are exposed only to English in their neighborhood and community. Javier is at an advantage because he is exposed to both languages on a daily basis. Javier's family attends church in Spanish, shops at the local bodegas, and is active in the local Mexican community. Javier's family moved to this area of the United States because of its established community. Javier's parents wanted to take advantage of the opportunities for their children in the United States as well as the increased availability of employment in good-paying jobs as compared to Mexico; however, they worried about their children losing their Mexican identity. This identity is a big part of who they are, so they intentionally make sure to engage their children in cultural activities throughout the city.

During the week, Javier attends a Head Start nonprofit community program. The community program serves children from birth to 12 years in the neighborhood. It is a full-day, full-year program that offers bilingual education. Javier has been attending the program since he moved to Chicago. The curriculum is play based, and most of the teachers and staff in the program speak Spanish. The majority of the children who attend the program are also of Mexican heritage. The program stresses the importance of bilingual language development and early childhood education as a means for social and cognitive development. The staff does a lot of community outreach to enroll families who otherwise might use family care. Although Javier is quiet and soft spoken, he is being exposed to a language-rich environment at school and his teachers have shared

techniques for maintaining a language-rich environment at home. His parents stress the importance of oral storytelling and book reading in Spanish. Javier's parents also speak an indigenous language and use it often with the other adults in the home. However, they use Spanish with the children and consider Spanish to be the home language when asked. The school encourages Javier's parents to continue using Spanish at home with their children. Given Javier's limited speech, the teachers have also started a conversation with Javier's parents about the possibility of bilingual speech services and are monitoring him closely for a suspected language delay or disorder.

Javier's two older brothers attend the community elementary school and are bussed to Javier's school for after-school enrichment until their parents or grandparents can pick them up after work. Here, the children receive help with their homework as well as additional learning opportunities. The community elementary school is 90% Hispanic, with 40% of the children having limited English abilities. The school uses a transitional bilingual model, where the children receive instruction primarily in Spanish in the younger grades and progressively move to more English as the children advance in grade. The school is ranked in the top tier when using the state rating system. The school also offers English classes for the parents; Javier's mother attends these classes as often as she can. She is concerned about being able to help her children with homework once they transition fully to English.

## Wang

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Wang is a Chinese, U.S.-born student who is 5 years old. He lives with his mother and father in a diverse community in the Sunset District in western San Francisco. His parents immigrated 7 years ago from Guangdong Province in China. His parents were doing well in China but decided to move to the United States because they wanted a better life and, in particular, better educational opportunities for their future children. They settled in San Francisco because they had relatives who had previously immigrated to the area. They speak Cantonese and Mandarin at home, and they hope that Wang will continue to speak these languages as he grows older.



Wang is an active and happy child who enjoys going to school and spending time with his friends. He has attended a community children's center preschool program near his home since he was 3 years old. His family found out about the center through their Chinese community, and it is conveniently located near Chinatown. The center provides health screenings and services to families, such as workshops on computer skills and resources for employment. Furthermore, the center provides care for 60 children between the ages of 3 and 5 years, with more than 80% of the children from families of low socioeconomic status (SES). Many Chinese families are part of the center, which has been very important for Wang's parents, who have been in this country for a relatively short period of time.

At school, Wang has been learning English, and his oral language skills have developed quickly over the past 2 years. The teachers are bilingual in English and Chinese, so there is a lot of support for his first language in the classroom. Most of the early literacy activities in the classroom are conducted in English because the teachers emphasize the importance of building these language skills in preparation for kindergarten. One of Wang's favorite activities in the preschool classroom is building things with small manipulatives and blocks. He usually plays by himself and needs scaffolding from teachers to collaborate with other children in the classroom. Wang's teachers report that he has shown a lot of growth in the past 2 years and is more sociable and talkative as a 5-year-old. Wang enjoys learning English but still prefers to speak Cantonese at home and Mandarin with his peers.

Even though Wang is an only child, he and his family are surrounded by other Asian and Chinese immigrants, so their language and cultural transition has not been difficult. In San Francisco, Chinese Americans are the single largest ethnic group, composing more than 20% of the population. In Chinatown, Wang's parents found work and connections to other families from their hometown in Guangdong Province. They own a small shop that sells electronics on Irving street, which hosts a variety of local businesses. They attend church on Sundays and then go to the community center, where Wang participates in Chinese school.

## Lucía

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Lucía is a 3-year-old second-generation Puerto Rican student living in Boston, Massachusetts. Lucía's grandparents were born and raised in Puerto Rico but moved to the mainland so her grandfather could attend graduate school. Shortly after finishing his graduate degree in education, Lucía's grandparents got married and started a family; they have lived in Boston ever since. Lucía and her parents live very close to their extended family, including her grandparents and two aunts. Lucía's parents are both professionals who work in the health industry; her mother is a hospital manager, and her father is a doctor. In the past, Lucía spoke more English than Spanish at home, but recently her parents have been using more Spanish and are trying to revitalize the language with Lucía and her two siblings.



All three children attend a dual language school in the city, and Lucía is the youngest, attending preschool for the first time this year. She is English dominant and prefers to use English with her siblings and friends at school. Lucía is an outgoing, happy girl who loves art and music activities at school. The teachers report that Lucía needs to be prompted to speak Spanish and that she is always an active participant during instruction in English. The goals of the dual language school are for students to develop as bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural individuals. During preschool and kindergarten, the program model is 80% Spanish and 20% English. The percentage of English instruction increases over time to 50% in second through eighth grades. Lucía's siblings are older



than her and have already experienced years in this program. The parents report great satisfaction with the model because it has prepared their children well for attending an English-speaking high school while ensuring that they speak Spanish, which holds a great cultural value for this family.

Lucía's parents used to travel to Puerto Rico every year during the summer months and would spend weeks visiting relatives on the island. After having three children, the visits to Puerto Rico have become more difficult, but they still try to go at least once every 3 years. Lucía's mother explains that even though she still speaks in Spanish with her family (i.e., Lucía's grandparents), she has gradually shifted to English at home with her children. This has been an issue for the grandparents, who help with childcare and often complain that the children don't speak enough Spanish. Both parents work outside the home, and it has been difficult to maintain a bilingual environment at home. That is why they selected a bilingual school for their family.

The community context is mixed, with a significant number of Latino families; however, an increasing number of young professionals have been moving into the neighborhood. The grandparents tell stories of how much the neighborhood has changed and recall the many friends that have left as the rents and home prices have increased over the past 10–15 years. In fact, Lucía's parents decided to stay in this neighborhood and renovate an old house given its proximity to Boston and the gentrification tracts, which have increased investments in home values. Her father notes that he likes the diversity of the neighborhood and appreciates the energy and high expectations of families, especially with regard to education and job opportunities.

## Roseline

Roseline is a 6-year-old student who lives in Miami, Florida, with her parents and four siblings. Her parents immigrated to the United States from Haiti immediately after they lost their home and possessions during the 2010 earthquake. One in seven Haitians became homeless as a result of the natural disaster. All Haitians living in the United States were granted Temporary Protected Status (TPS), and Roseline's family was able to benefit from the new policy. Roseline and two of her siblings were born in the United States. There is some concern regarding the family's status if the TPS is lifted because three of the five children are U.S. born. Roseline's family has settled in the Little Haiti area of Miami. This area became a thriving Haitian community in the 1980s and has continued to embrace Haitian immigrants arriving in the United States. The community is 65% Black and is known for its French Creole signage, Caribbean restaurants, and rich Caribbean culture. There is a rich presence of Haitian influences, and long-standing immigrants have risen to leadership positions within the community and political arena. In addition to the rich culture, this area is also known for increased violence, with gang presence, drug deals, and homicides. Little Haiti borders an up-and-coming artistic area of Miami, which is starting to affect rent prices and poses the threat of gentrification.



Roseline is the middle child, with two older siblings and two younger siblings, including a newborn. She is in kindergarten at the neighborhood elementary school, which is named for the father of the Haitian Revolution. This is her second year at the school because she also attended voluntary prekindergarten (VPK) at the school. Roseline's older siblings are in third and fifth grade at the same school. The school has a diverse staff, including Haitian immigrants who also live in the community. It is a true community school. The school prides itself in conveying the culture of the community and also serves as a community center by hosting community events. The school infuses Haitian heritage and African and Hispanic history throughout its curriculum. The school is working to try to increase the test scores and reduce the dropout rate for the students it serves. The majority of the students, including Roseline, are high risk due to their low socioeconomic and immigrant status. The administrators have increased the school day by 60 minutes to provide reading enhancements for all students and have added a strong social-emotional component to the curriculum, which includes a dropout prevention program for the fifth graders.

Roseline is struggling in the areas of self-regulation and executive functioning. Her parents work several jobs, and—with the addition of the newborn—they are unable to dedicate much time to Roseline, who is usually cared for by her older siblings. Sundays are family days, when the family dresses up and attends the local church, where Mass is held in Haitian Creole. After church, they gather with friends at a local Caribbean restaurant. Roseline loves Sundays the best because she gets to spend time with her family. On other days, Roseline spends much of her free time indoors watching television. It is too dangerous for her to play outside due to the crime rate in the neighborhood. There have been several shootings just blocks from her residence.

Roseline is fluent in English and has a receptive understanding of Haitian Creole. Her parents were taught in French in Haiti and are therefore literate in French but speak primarily Haitian Creole. Haitian Creole did not become an official language in Haiti until the late 1980s. Therefore, Roseline's parents did not learn to read and write in Haitian Creole, although that is their primary language for communication. They also have very limited English language skills. They speak to Roseline in Haitian Creole, and she typically responds in English. This makes it difficult for them to communicate. Roseline has little interest in learning Haitian Creole, even though it is her family's language.

Roseline's teachers are concerned about her challenging behavior in school. Although Roseline has strong English language skills, she is often distracted, doesn't complete her work, and has a difficult time following the rules of the classroom. The teachers have requested a parent-teacher conference with Roseline's parents to discuss this behavior; however, they have not yet received a response. Roseline takes the bus to and from school with her siblings, making it difficult for the teachers to establish communication with her parents. Roseline's teachers have sought the help of the school discipline team to start a plan for Roseline, with the long-term goal of improving her behavior. They worry Roseline's behavior will result in her being at academic risk and a candidate for dropping out of school. Due to the nature of the community environment, the teachers and administrators at the school are trying to be proactive in providing early intervention to ensure success for all students.

**Ko**

.....

Ko is a 5-year-old student from Burma (Myanmar) living in Queens, New York. Ko and his family are ethnic minorities (Karen refugees) from the Thai–Burmese border in the Myanmar region and were living in a refugee camp in Burma prior to the family’s immigrating to the United States 4 years ago. Ko’s family went to live in the camp after their village was burned down by the Burmese military. Ko was born after his parents lost their first child as a result of a landmine injury. Ko means “brother” in Burmese. The parents felt it would be safer for Ko if they moved to a refugee camp instead of another Karen village. Ko’s parents won the green card lottery after applying to the Diversity Visa Program in the hopes of raising Ko in a safer environment. They originally left Ko at the refugee camp with family as they explored their options in the United States. Once they settled in Queens last year, Ko joined them.



Ko lived with family and friends at the refugee camp between the ages of 1 and 4 years old and does not remember or have an attachment to his parents. Ko never developed a strong attachment to a caregiver and is having a difficult time transitioning to life in the United States. Food was rationed at the camp, and Ko often went days without eating more than one small bowl of rice and mung beans. The Burmese culture, as reflected in Ko’s Karen ethnic group, focuses on the role of community and harmony. Ko has been taught to be respectful of elders and not to ask questions. Questioning is considered rude and disrespectful. Ko has also been advised to avoid confrontation and instead be cooperative and agreeable. Ko has also been taught to say “no” when offered something, even if he wants or needs it. Ko only speaks Burmese and the S’gaw dialect. He is confused both by the cultural norms in the United States and the English language.

Ko attends preschool at the public school three blocks from his apartment in Queens, New York. The preschool program he attends is very diverse, with children who have immigrated from all over the world. The children all speak different languages; however, the teacher only speaks English. Ko has experienced a great deal of trauma as a refugee of Burma, with having been estranged from his parents for most of his life, limited food, no medical care, and no stable caregiver. He has witnessed violence and was forced to work in the rice fields at a very early age. The sights and sounds of New York City overwhelm him. He is withdrawn and disconnected. The local Burmese Baptist church is his only sanctuary, where he feels most at home. His parents have noticed that he is much happier and has a different disposition when participating in church events as compared to his demeanor at home and at school.

Ko’s parents are having a difficult time adjusting but know this is the best environment for Ko to be raised safely and have his best interest at the root of every decision they make. The resource team at Ko’s school has established a relationship with both the neighborhood Burmese Baptist church and the Burmese community center after seeing an increase in refugees from Burma moving into the area. They understand that these

refugees have experienced trauma and have hired a part-time staff member from the Burmese community as part of their team. This staff member reaches out to families, such as Ko's parents, and is conducting a needs assessment to determine the best resources to assist the new families. Ko's parents hope the school will help Ko adjust to this new environment because they place high value on education and deeply respect the teachers and staff at the school.

## DIVERSITY OF PROFILES ACROSS THE CASE STUDIES

Reviewing the stories of Javier, Wang, Lucía, Roseline, and Ko, one can see how each of these DLL children is having very different experiences at home, in their educational setting, and in their community contexts due to factors related to their language and culture. Although Javier and Lucía are both part of a similar ethnic group, their cases highlight the heterogeneity that exists within ethnic and racial groups (Genesee, 2010; Lambert, Kim, Durham, & Burts, 2017). This idea is sometimes forgotten when working with diverse populations. Although Javier and Lucía may share a common home language, Spanish, the process of their language acquisition will vary because Lucía is a simultaneous learner of the two languages, Spanish and English, and is considered English dominant. Javier is more of a sequential language learner, learning Spanish first and then English. It is important to point out that Javier may be considered an emergent bilingual who is struggling in his acquisition of both languages, a possible indicator of language delay. In addition, there may be dialectal differences to consider in their pronunciation of sounds, which will affect their phonological awareness, and differences in Spanish vocabulary, which must be considered when administering oral language assessments. Javier's family is from Mexico, whereas Lucía's family is from Puerto Rico. Research has shown that children from different Spanish-speaking countries may perform differently on standardized oral language assessments (Sandilos et al., 2015).

Similarly, both Ko and Wang are from Asia, yet their immigration experiences, language, and culture are extremely different. These differences are common across Asian populations in the United States (Umaña-Taylor, 2011). Although Wang is U.S. born, his parents immigrated from China only shortly before his birth. Therefore, although Wang is not considered foreign born, it is necessary to point out that Wang began speaking Chinese and Mandarin at home and not English. First-generation children born in the United States are often considered DLLs or emerging bilinguals because they are often spoken to in the parents' native language at home and learn English within an educational context. Therefore, English is often not the first language spoken by children who may have been born in the United States (Páez, Tabors, & López, 2007). Wang is successfully interacting across three languages. Ko, on the other hand, is a foreign-born child who has migrated from Southeast Asia. Ko speaks Burmese along with a regional

dialect. There are over 50 national languages and thousands of dialects spoken across Asia. His cultural experiences of being raised by a village within a refugee camp are very different from those of Wang, who spent his first few years of life in San Francisco. Although both Ko and Wang would be characterized as Asian, the stark differences in their stories are indicative of the heterogeneity among Asian populations living in the United States. When working with DLLs, it is important to go beyond their racial or ethnic background and understand their home and community contexts as mechanisms for informing their educational context. Each of the key components to understanding a DLL's experience is discussed further in the sections that follow.

## HOME ENVIRONMENT

The home environment plays an important role in the development of all children. Research conducted within the United States has shown that the caregiver's attachment to the child as early as infancy informs the child's interactions with the world around him or her (Bretherton, 1992). Researchers studying attachment have identified cultural differences in the secure attachments of young children (Mesman, van IJzendoorn, Sagi-Schwartz, Cassidy, & Shaver, 2016). For example, in more collectivist cultures, it is common for children to form attachments with multiple caregivers, including extended family members. Collectivist cultures include some Asian and Latin American countries. However, there are also some within-culture differences in how parents and caregivers engage with their children. As such, early childhood teachers should have open communication with parents regarding their attachment style and obtain an understanding of the important caregivers in the child's life. We provide further recommendations on how to consider families' cultures in Chapter 2.

The family and cultural values must also be considered. For instance, within many Latino cultures, adults value and emphasize positive social-emotional traits in how they raise their children (Calzada, Fernandez, & Cortes, 2010). These include having a child who is considered *bien educado*, or well raised in the sense of being polite and respectful. There is an emphasis on *respeto*, or respect, and on *familismo*, the emphasis on family above all else. Latino adults are often successful in teaching their children these specific traits through authoritarian parenting. Parenting styles are also discussed further in Chapter 2.

Other research has focused on the responsiveness of the caregiver when interacting and playing with the child (Tamis-LeMonda, Kuchirko, & Song, 2014). Research on maternal responsiveness has identified cultural differences in the way mothers respond to their infants and toddlers (Ramirez, 2017). In regard to language development, language exposure is a main outcome of responsiveness. Research has identified that Latino

mothers tend to be more intrusive in their children's play, often redirecting what the child is doing. Although this type of responsiveness is considered a negative indicator of maternal-child relationships within some cultures, it is considered a protective factor within the Latino family and enhances children's bilingual language development (Ramirez, 2017). Understanding the different ways context may be culturally relevant in the development of children from varying racial and ethnic societies can help educators respect the diversity of and establish relationships with the families and children in their classrooms.

Bronfenbrenner's theory of human development contends that the relationships between the child and the people in the home are some of the most important relationships in the child's life (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998). It is necessary to understand that development does not look the same for all children and across all cultures. Although some developmental markers are considered universal, the different context in which a child is raised, the expectations for the child within that context, and the diversity within individual homes result in large variability in performance across children of the same age (Vélez-Agosto, Soto-Crespo, Vizcarrondo-Oppenheimer, Vega-Molina, & García Coll, 2017). These individual differences will be further explored in Chapter 2.

## EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Contextual factors are critical in understanding the heterogeneity of the DLL population in the United States. In addition to relationships that develop as a result of the DLL child's home environment and racial/ethnic background and identity, early childhood educators should also consider the educational context in which the young child is immersed. The diverse variation in abilities, languages, and experiences that young children bring with them into an early childhood classroom results in large heterogeneity across students (Sawyer et al., 2018). Early childhood teachers and administrators are tasked with understanding how to most effectively engage with the diverse group of children in their classrooms to ensure that these children are on an appropriate developmental trajectory to succeed upon formal school entry (Ramirez, Cycyk, Scarpino, López, & Hammer, in press).

Research within the areas of early childhood education and developmental psychology has focused primarily on the normative development of middle-class white children in the United States. The development of diverse children has been typically compared to these norms (Cabrera & the SRCD Ethnic and Racial Issues Committee, 2013). This cross-group comparison means that children who do not meet the same standards may be categorized as "at risk." The field is beginning to understand that differences in normative development of skills should be focused less on labeling children as at risk and more on understanding individual differences that



might require additional support for successful outcomes. To support individual development in the classroom, teachers need a better understanding of the research-based best practices and classroom strategies that can help children from diverse racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds succeed in today's early childhood classrooms (Sawyer et al., 2016).

The focus of early childhood education has moved beyond just socializing the child into a schooling environment (Pianta, Cox, & Snow, 2007). Young children in the United States are now expected to start kindergarten with a set of skills that classify them as ready for school. These school readiness skills include knowing a certain set of language, early literacy, and early numeracy skills; knowing how to approach learning; knowing how to self-regulate and monitor their attention, cognition, and emotions; and developing gross and fine motor skills (Snow, 2007). DLLs are often learning these skills in two or more languages.

It is important to realize that obtaining school readiness skills in more than one language can serve as an asset in many regards (Espinosa, 2013a). Although one often considers the barriers to learning when a child does not speak the majority language, considering the strengths the child brings to the classroom in his or her first language will facilitate the acquisition of skills in English. Children build on their knowledge and skills in their first language in acquiring their second language (López, 2011). There are many skills they do not need to relearn. For example, research supports the cross-language transfer of metalinguistic skills, such as phonological awareness, an important precursor for literacy development (López, 2012). In addition, children who are able to integrate their home culture and majority culture develop a stronger sense of identity, leading to positive social-emotional outcomes (Huynh, Nguyen, & Benet-Martinez, 2011). Therefore, it is important to respect each child's language and culture and continue to support the development of that language and culture while also introducing the majority language and culture. Engaging in dual language learning or allowing space for the child to make connections across languages will result in positive long-term language, cognitive, and social outcomes for the child (Garcia & Wei, 2014). These ideas and strategies are discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 of this book.

## COMMUNITY CONTEXTS

In addition to the home and educational context, the community context also plays an important role in DLL children's language, cognitive, and social development (NASEM, 2017). The community context is the social environment in which the child's family engages in daily interaction. This may include the church or other religious community to which the family belongs and/or a community center that supports the cultural and linguistic community with which the family identifies. In addition to social supports, the community context may also provide linguistic support (Goldenberg,



Reese, & Rezaei, 2011; Páez & Hunter, 2015). Communities that house large ethnic enclaves often have billboards and store signage in the residents' home language. The home language is regularly used in grocery stores, shops, churches, restaurants, and throughout the neighborhood. Examples of such communities include Wang's Chinatown neighborhood in San Francisco and Roseline's neighborhood of Little Haiti in Miami. Wang has community support in his neighborhood to maintain his cultural and linguistic roots. He attends a school with bilingual teachers who speak his home languages, he is able to attend Chinese school at the local community center, and his parents own a small shop in Chinatown. He is surrounded by other children and families that have similar cultural experiences to his own. Similarly, Roseline lives in a community rich in linguistic and cultural supports, including Haitian Creole signage, religious services held in Haitian Creole, and a neighborhood school that infuses Haitian heritage culture into the curriculum and school activities. These ethnic enclave communities support the development of bicultural and bilingual individuals. Supporting the home culture and language by integrating it with the development of the majority culture and language has been shown to result in successful long-term language, cognitive, and social outcomes for DLL children throughout the world (Huynh et al., 2011).

The experiences of Wang and Roseline, who live in communities that help enrich their home language and culture, are very different from the experiences of many DLLs. Ko, for example, lives in a diverse community; as such, he is less exposed to Burmese culture and language in his daily interactions. Although he does attend a Burmese Baptist church and there is a newly established Burmese community center in the area, a strong history of Burmese immigrants in the area is lacking. Therefore, linguistic and cultural supports are less salient. Unlike Wang's experience, Ko's teacher does not speak his home language, and there are fewer linguistic and cultural supports available at school and in the community. Due to the limited supports, Ko's process of learning English will be very different from Wang's language learning experience. The process of learning a second (or third) language will vary according to the context of the community, including the status of the home language in the community and the opportunities for exposure to languages other than English in the neighborhoods, shops, community centers, and religious institutions, among other community resources (Goldenberg et al., 2011).

## LANGUAGE AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT

Notably, uneven development across different language and early literacy skills is common for DLLs, especially during early childhood (Gonzalez et al., 2016). For example, a child might be orally proficient in the home language but might not develop literacy abilities in that language. In the same way, DLL children exhibit different skills in their different languages across

speaking, listening, reading, and writing domains. Evidence from different studies with children in the United States and international contexts such as Canada and Europe demonstrates that not all DLLs develop the same way, with certain domains of language and literacy progressing at different rates given different learning conditions (NASEM, 2017).

For DLLs, the development of language and literacy involves the integration of component skills (e.g., sound-symbol awareness, grammatical knowledge, vocabulary knowledge), as well as more elusive sociocultural variables, critical to the development of reading and writing (Castro et al., 2011). These component skills and the corresponding variables are explored and explained in Chapter 5. Bilingual children can and do develop second language literacy while they are acquiring second language oral proficiency. Furthermore, the oral, reading, and writing skills of a bilingual learner interact with one another, creating complex relationships of mutual support (Brisk & Harrington, 2007). As evidenced by DLL children's developmental trajectories, these students do not approach native-speaker proficiency in all linguistic domains at the same pace (Paradis, Genesee, & Crago, 2011). For example, longitudinal developmental studies have found that DLL students develop word-decoding skills at the same rate as monolingual same-age peers, whereas they can lag behind in other areas of language such as vocabulary (Mancilla-Martinez & Lesaux, 2010; Oller, Pearson, & Cobo-Lewis, 2007; Páez et al., 2007).

Oral language skills such as vocabulary are critical for developing literacy in all children. For DLLs, vocabulary development has been identified as an area requiring attention by early educators (August & Shanahan, 2006). This is particularly an area of need for children from low-SES status backgrounds, such as those participating in Head Start early childhood programs (Páez et al., 2007). DLL students' level of vocabulary knowledge is an important predictor of reading ability, comprehension, and achievement on reading assessments (August, Carlo, Dressler, & Snow, 2005). DLLs learn new words at home and at school. Children develop vocabulary skills based on the quantity and quality of exposure to language. For example, a child such as Javier is exposed to both his home language and English on a daily basis, allowing him to develop vocabulary skills in both languages as an emergent learner. In contrast, a child such as Wang, who speaks only Chinese at home, is a beginner English learner who, when assessed, might show stronger vocabulary skills in his home language. With increased vocabulary skills, DLL students are better prepared to deal with more difficult comprehension tasks and the increasing challenge of academic language in schools.

New research on vocabulary development in DLLs is providing a more nuanced understanding of how children develop these language skills during the early childhood years. DLL students typically have fewer vocabulary skills in each of their languages than monolingual students;

however, when assessing dual language abilities (i.e., knowledge of words in each language), the vocabulary skills are comparable to monolinguals (Hoff et al., 2012). These findings suggest that early childhood educators should consider students' total vocabulary for both assessment and instruction. Another line of research is considering conceptual vocabulary, which is the number of concepts the child knows regardless of the language, by measuring distinct words. Either metric, total vocabulary words or conceptual knowledge, will result in a more accurate understanding of the DLL child's vocabulary capabilities (Mancilla-Martinez & Vagh, 2013). A 2016 study found that DLL preschool children who attend English-speaking programs are more likely to learn translation equivalents than learn new words in their second language (Goodrich, Lonigan, Kleuver, & Farver, 2016). Other studies have focused on conceptual vocabulary in Latino DLLs by studying their development of vocabulary across English and Spanish from preschool through kindergarten (Goodrich & Lonigan, 2018) and comparing English-only vocabulary instruction to bilingual vocabulary instruction (Méndez, Crais, Castro, & Kainz, 2015). Results from both of these studies indicate that children might show stronger skills in their home language initially, with increasing English skills by kindergarten, and that dual language instruction can support vocabulary skills in both of the child's languages. These results highlight the added benefits of considering total conceptual vocabulary for promoting language development of DLLs.

Although most of the language and literacy studies have been conducted with Spanish-speaking populations, comparative research with diverse bilingual populations has found similar patterns of developmental differences across domains. For example, research comparing Hebrew-English, Spanish-English, and Chinese-English bilingual students with English monolingual students has shown an advantage for bilinguals in skills such as phonological awareness, but also confirmed vocabulary deficits among bilinguals (Bialystok, Luk, & Kwan, 2005). In addition, this line of comparative research has also demonstrated the potential for transfer from one language to the other, especially when the languages share linguistic characteristics such as similar writing systems (e.g., Spanish-English alphabetic system). This information is important when working with children such as Wang and Ko, who speak a language with a different writing system than English, because then teachers can be aware of the challenges these students face when learning English. Conversely, with children such as Javier, Lucía, and Roseline—who speak Spanish and Haitian Creole, which have the same alphabetic writing system as English—early childhood educators can maximize similarities and opportunities for transfer.

Thus, early childhood educators can expect DLL children to demonstrate a variety of language and literacy skills in their classrooms.

Emphasis should be given to oral language development, as these skills play an important role in predicting reading and writing in later years.

### **Importance of Supporting Home Language**

Substantial research has demonstrated the benefits of supporting the simultaneous development of young DLLs' home languages and English in the early years (Barnett et al., 2007; Buysse, Peisner-Feinberg, Páez, Hammer, & Knowles, 2014; Magnuson et al., 2004; McCabe et al., 2013; NASEM, 2017; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, 2017; Winsler et al., 2014). Studies have found that DLL preschoolers who receive more instruction in their home language in high-quality early learning programs make significant gains (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, 2017). For example, a study across 11 states with 357 Spanish-speaking 4-year-old children in 701 preschool classrooms found that DLLs' gains in reading and math were larger when children received more instruction in Spanish in high-quality classrooms with responsive and sensitive teachers (Burchinal, Field, López, Howes, & Pianta, 2012). Moreover, there are additional benefits to supporting home language development for DLLs during early childhood, such as promoting bilingualism, establishing a strong cultural identity, and maintaining strong ties and communication with family members (Espinosa, 2013b). Therefore, early childhood educators need training to support home languages in the classroom even when they are monolingual. Yet, support for the home language in early learning settings varies widely and is influenced by program types and policies in early childhood education.

### **COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF BILINGUALISM**

Although more is known about DLLs' language and literacy development compared to other domains of child development, important findings have been uncovered regarding DLL children's cognitive and social-emotional skills in the context of bilingualism. Research studies on the relationship between bilingualism and cognition have found that particular aspects of cognitive functioning such as executive functioning develop more rapidly in children with bilingual experiences (Bialystok, 1999, 2001; Bialystok & Martin, 2004; Bialystok, Martin, & Viswanathan, 2005). These studies compare monolingual and bilingual individuals (usually those who have balanced skills across languages, also known as balanced bilinguals) to examine differences in cognitive skills. This research has provided some evidence for links between bilingualism and specific cognitive skills such as attention and inhibitory control (e.g., Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008; White & Greenfield, 2017). More research is needed to better understand the

applications of these findings to diverse populations of bilingual children from diverse backgrounds and with different levels of proficiency in their languages.

In addition to cognitive development, research has also been conducted to investigate the social-emotional development of DLL students. A review of the literature in this area focused on key social-emotional developmental constructs such as attachment, social competence, social cognition, emotion regulation, and behavior regulation (Halle et al., 2014). Findings from this review suggest that there are social-emotional benefits for children who are bilingual. For example, bilingual children have higher rates of following directions and task orientation and lower rates of problem behaviors compared with monolingual preschool children (De Feyter & Winsler, 2009; Han, 2010; Winsler et al., 2014). In addition, they exhibit advantages in sociolinguistic awareness (Cheung, Mak, Luo, & Xiao, 2010), self-control, and interpersonal skills (Han, 2010). Similar to studies of cognitive development among DLL children, methodological concerns limit the generalizability of these findings. More research is needed to disentangle the associations between bilingualism and these skills and to better understand the influence of factors such as immigrant status and heritage culture. However, early childhood educators should note that there are benefits of bilingualism for these domains of development, which can support the view of additional languages as a resource and asset for children.

## **EARLY EDUCATION POLICIES THAT AFFECT DLLs**

Access to and participation in high-quality early childhood programs are key, given the demonstrated positive effects of preschool on children's development. Research shows that all children can benefit from participation in these programs to learn language, early literacy, and math skills, which are key contributors to school readiness (Yoshikawa et al., 2013). Moreover, DLLs who speak a language other than English at home have been shown to particularly benefit because they experience greater gains from early childhood education (Buysse et al., 2014). Yet scholars have argued that high quality for DLLs means taking into account their language skills and development and learning about effective practices with this population (Castro et al., 2011).

The increase in DLLs in early childhood settings and the urgency for improving the quality of these programs have prompted the attention of national and state policies designed to support this population. One important change in the early childhood landscape has been the number of preschool DLLs in public school settings. Across the nation, the number of children served in early childhood education programs has increased in recent years, influenced by the expansion of state-funded preschools. As noted earlier in this chapter, nationwide, young DLLs compose 23% of the



preschool-age population in state-funded programs (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2018). There are concerns regarding the ability of these programs and teachers to meet the needs of this population, given the lack of information and policies to support them. For example, the National Institute for Early Education Research reports that only 26 state-funded preschool programs can report the home languages of children enrolled in their programs, and only 35 programs reported having policies to regulate services for DLL children (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2018). Furthermore, few programs require lead teachers to have qualifications and training related to educating preschool DLLs, and no programs report having similar requirements for assistant teachers (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2018). These trends make it difficult to implement effective practices for DLL children and their families. We hope that the information provided in this book helps early childhood leaders and educators develop the knowledge and skills necessary to support these students.

Unlike state-funded preschools, Head Start national early childhood programs have been at the forefront of developing policies, structures, and procedures to support the DLL population. For example, Head Start developed the *Dual Language Learners Program Assessment*, which is a self-assessment guide for programs to ensure effective services for DLLs (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 2018). In addition, Head Start focuses on quality and teacher training for DLLs through the establishment of the National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness, which provides information, practices, and strategies for working with diverse children and their families. Finally, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education, developed a policy statement supporting the development of children who are DLLs and encouraging early childhood programs and schools to address the specific needs and developmental characteristics of this population (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, 2017). It is clear that we need to continue to expand access to and quality of early childhood programs, including developing the appropriate workforce of leaders and educators who are trained in developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant practices to serve this diverse population. This book integrates important information from these different initiatives and policy reports, making it more accessible for leaders and educators of young DLL children.

## CONCLUSION

In sum, research with DLLs demonstrates that early childhood educators need to consider the importance of individual and developmental factors

in understanding bilingualism. First, as shown in this chapter, the DLL population represents a diverse group of children and their families. The five cases presented in this chapter illustrate this diversity and will be used as examples throughout the book. Research has shown the importance of considering the unique profiles and differences that exist among bilingual and multilingual children. In addition to individual developmental factors, it is important to consider contextual factors related to the home, classroom, and community environments that support language and development for these children. Home environments and home language use by families often set the foundation for the process of bilingualism and language development in children. Beyond the home context, children are also influenced by their school, community, and societal contexts, which all contribute in shaping their language learning experiences and outcomes. Moreover, research has established the critical role of language and literacy development for DLLs while also identifying certain areas (e.g., vocabulary) as particularly challenging for some DLLs, such as Spanish-speaking students from low-SES status backgrounds. Although more is known about what influences language and literacy development than other areas of growth for DLL children, this chapter also discussed aspects of cognitive and social-emotional development that vary in the context of bilingualism. Finally, the chapter concluded with a call to action by reviewing recent policy initiatives from federal agencies and national organizations to support the education of DLL children in the United States.

### SELF-STUDY AND REFLECTION

Consider your early childhood classroom and the DLL children with diverse developmental and contextual profiles.

1. Create a graph or chart that helps you to identify the heterogeneity of the children and families enrolled in your program or classroom. The heterogeneity may be reflected as cultural, linguistic, social, and/or academic diversity. How does your program or classroom compare to the heterogeneity discussed in this chapter?
2. How do the children in your program or classroom compare to the five case studies presented in this chapter? Consider similarities and differences related to the home, school, and community contexts.
3. For further reflection, develop a profile for a student in your program or classroom. Identify specific characteristics that are relevant for learning, such as the language and early literacy skills of this student, level of exposure to different languages, and other factors that might influence his or her experience in the early childhood classroom. Consider using the template in Figure 1.1 for developing the case study.



Case Study Template	
Child Name	
Age	
Gender	
History and background for immigration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where is the family from (i.e., ethnicity, race, cultural background, and/or country of origin)?</li> <li>• How many years has the child been in the United States (if foreign born)?</li> <li>• What aspects of the child's experience are salient (e.g., refugee status, second generation, family separation)?</li> </ul>	
Family background <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who lives at home with the child?</li> <li>• What languages are spoken at home?</li> <li>• Do parents work outside of the home?</li> <li>• What kind of social support and other resources are available?</li> </ul>	
Language skills and individual factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for exposure and use of both languages</li> <li>• Skills in both home and school languages, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills</li> <li>• Receptive and productive vocabulary</li> <li>• Personality, temperament, and motivation factors</li> </ul>	
School description/experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous school/program experience</li> <li>• Current school/program experience</li> <li>• Type of language program</li> </ul>	
Community context <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity in the community</li> <li>• Cultural and linguistic opportunities</li> <li>• Value and status of child's population, including culture and language(s)</li> </ul>	

**Figure 1.1.** Template for case study of DLL child.

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"Timely, well researched, and highly accessible . . . addresses the need for research-based approaches that all early childhood educators can implement. Bravo to Lisa López and Mariela Páez for their much-needed contribution to the effective education of DLLs."

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"A comprehensive resource for all professionals who engage with DLLs and their families. The research-to-school (and home) practices are excellent and essential for ensuring positive language and learning outcomes of DLLs."

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As the number of dual language learners (DLLs) in early childhood settings continues to rise, educators need to know how to teach, engage, and assess children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. They'll find the effective strategies they need in this timely book, a reader-friendly guide that expertly connects research to practice for teachers of young DLLs.

Early childhood educators will get the up-to-date research, in-depth case studies, and practical guidance they need to

- Connect and work with families, with consideration for their cultural context, practices, beliefs, goals, and diverse experiences
- Internalize eight key beliefs every teacher should have about dual language learning and apply those beliefs to practice
- Implement specific, evidence-based classroom practices that promote the learning and development of young DLLs
- Use best practices to help DLL children develop language and early literacy skills
- Implement appropriate assessment practices that inform instruction and promote the learning of DLLs

**PRACTICAL MATERIALS INCLUDED:**

- Learning objectives
- Guiding questions
- Self-study and reflection activities
- Downloadable forms
- Helpful resource guide to share with families

Extending the groundbreaking work of Patton O. Tabors and ideal for use as a textbook or in-service guide, this concise book compiles everything teachers need to know about working with young DLLs—and setting them up for a lifetime of school success.

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