

# Enhancing learning of children from diverse language backgrounds: Mother tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education in early childhood and early primary school years <sup>[1]</sup>

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## AVAILABILITY

- [Summary in pdf](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

- [Full report in pdf](#) <sup>[3]</sup>

Excerpts from the report:

In every corner of the world, young children are learning languages at home that differ from the dominant language used in their broader social world. These children arrive at early learning programs such as preschool and primary school with a precious resource: their mother tongue. Since 1953, UNESCO has supported children's right to learn their mother tongue, and advocated maintenance of linguistic and cultural diversity through language-in-education policies. A recent review of research and program reports discusses mother tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education for children starting in early childhood. The review is intended to:

(1) inform policy-makers of existing research and practices in mother-tongue instruction in early childhood and early primary school years; and

(2) raise awareness of the value of maintaining the world's languages and cultures by promoting and resourcing mother tongue-based education for young children.

Discussion of this topic is especially timely given the slow and uneven progress in meeting international targets for universal education articulated in the Education for All Goals 1 (ECCE), Goal 2 (Primary Education), and Goal 6 (Quality of Education). Impetus for the current review was provided by the UNESCO "Global Monitoring Report on Education for All: Will we make it?" This report calls for unwavering political will to ensure that education from early childhood onwards is a priority of national governments, civil society and the private sector in order to ensure educational inclusion for the 72 million children out of school and to reduce the numbers of young learners who leave school without acquiring essential skills and knowledge. The report calls for increased investments in the provision of quality preschool education for children aged 3 and above, and for policy measures to provide care and early learning programs to children below 3 years of age. UNESCO emphasizes the role of early childhood care and development programs in laying the foundation for learning and setting the stage for successful engagement in formal education.

**Region:** [Canada](#) <sup>[4]</sup>

**Tags:** [aboriginal](#) <sup>[5]</sup>

[diversity](#) <sup>[6]</sup>

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**Source URL (modified on 13 Apr 2010):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/10/03/enhancing-learning-children-diverse-language-backgrounds-mo>

## Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/10/03/enhancing-learning-children-diverse-language-backgrounds-mo>

[2] [http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/UNESCO\\_Summary\\_2010.pdf](http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/UNESCO_Summary_2010.pdf)

[3] [http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/UNESCO\\_Mother-tongue\\_based\\_EY\\_2010.pdf](http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/UNESCO_Mother-tongue_based_EY_2010.pdf)

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