

Case Study: The Impact of Creative Play on Children's Bilingualism

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Abstract : This case study focused on a bilingual child named Emma and her play. Emma was a four-year-old girl born in Australia while her parents were both Chinese. Emma could speak fluent English, while her Mandarin was not as good as her spoken English. With the research question to figure out whether creative play had an impact on children's bilingualism, this case study mainly used the anecdotes method to observe Emma's play and this report presented five observations of Emma, describing detailed information about her play and recording her language use. Based on Emma's interests and daily activities, this case study chose her creative play for observation, which incorporates a whole range of activities from dancing to drawing, as well as playing instruments. From the five observations, it could be seen that Emma often mixed languages to help her express her meaning. It could be seen that Emma made an effort to use her bilingualism in her creative play. In other words, play encouraged Emma to use the two languages. In conclusion, the observations with Emma showed that although her Mandarin was not good enough, she displayed confidence in speaking both languages and had gradually shifted from mixing languages to code-switching. Recommendations were provided to support Emma's bilingual abilities for further development in the end.

Keywords : bilingual, case study, code-switching, creative play, early childhood

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