TRANSFORMING MOTHERHOOD INTO TEACHING: DEVELOPING BILINGUAL AND EXPLORATORY SKILLS IN CHILDREN

Ro'ziqulova Barno Ravshan qizi
E-mail: barnoruzikulova11@gmail.com
Ismailov Anvar Rustamovich
candidate of philological sciences, associate professor
E-mail: ianvar000@gmail.com

Qabul qilindi: 03.10.2025
Ko'rib chiqildi: 04.10.2025
Tasdiqlandi: 06.10.2025

Key words: motherhood as education, bilingual parenting, raising bilingual children, exploratory learning, early childhood development, language development in children, parenting and education.

Abstract. This thesis explores how motherhood can be transformed into an intentional teaching role, focusing on developing bilingual abilities and a spirit of exploration in children. It highlights the home as a natural learning environment and offers practical strategies for raising bilingual children and nurturing curiosity through exploratory learning. Emphasizing the power of everyday moments, the piece encourages mothers to view themselves as educators capable of shaping lifelong learners equipped for a globalized world.

Introduction. Motherhood is often seen as a nurturing role but within it lies a powerful, untapped potential: the ability to teach, guide, and shape young minds from the very beginning. When viewed through the lens of intentional teaching, motherhood transforms into a daily classroom, filled with opportunities to foster growth. In today's globalized and dynamic world, two essential skills parents can nurture from home are bilingualism and a spirit of exploration. These aren't just academic skills they are life skills, and mothers are uniquely positioned to lead the way. From the moment a child is born, they begin learning is not just through words, but through touch, tone, expression, and routine. A mother becomes the first teacher, naturally guiding her child's understanding of the world. When this role is embraced intentionally, a home becomes a rich, immersive environment for learning. Unlike traditional classrooms, this home-based education is flexible, emotionally grounded, and highly personalized. It allows for natural integration of culture, language, curiosity, and creativity into everyday life. Bilingualism is one of the most valuable gifts a mother can give. It's more than speaking two languages it's about giving a child access to two cultures, two ways of thinking, and a broader worldview.

Materials and Methods. This approach followed a qualitative, experiential framework based on observations, routines, and parent-led interventions within the home. The methods are designed to be flexible, adaptable, and culturally inclusive, allowing for individual family dynamics and language contexts. This methodology respects the natural dynamics of the parent-child relationship, ensuring that all learning remains child-centered, play-based, and emotionally safe. No formal testing or pressure was applied, and all learning activities were adjusted based on the child's developmental stage and interest.

Strategies for developing bilingual skills at home:

1. One Person, One Language (OPOL): One parent consistently speaks one language, while the other speaks another. This creates clear language boundaries and helps children distinguish between the two.
2. Routine-Based Language Use: Designate certain times or activities for a specific language Storytime in Spanish, mealtime in English, for example.
3. Cultural Immersion: Music, books, games, traditions, and even cooking can become tools for language learning, tying vocabulary to real-life experiences.
4. Interactive Conversations: Children learn language best when it's interactive. Ask open-ended questions, encourage storytelling, and let them make mistakes as part of the process.
5. Digital Support: Use age-appropriate bilingual media, language learning apps, or virtual playdates with family members who speak the target language.

Of course, this transformation isn't always smooth. Many mothers worry about doing it "right," especially if they're not fluent in the second language themselves, or feel unequipped to teach science or math. But perfection isn't the goal presence and persistence are. Leaning into resources, asking for help, and embracing your own learning journey alongside your child can be incredibly empowering. The home doesn't need to look like a classroom it just needs to feel like a place where learning is celebrated. In doing so, mothers don't just raise students; they raise thinkers, communicators, and explorers ready to navigate a world that needs all three. The findings and observations in this study highlight the significant role of mothers as primary educators in the formative years of a child's life. By intentionally embedding bilingual and exploratory learning into daily routines, mothers not only nurture cognitive and linguistic development but also foster independent thinking, creativity, and cultural awareness.

Research discussion. This research reaffirms the idea that motherhood naturally evolves into a teaching role, especially during the early stages of

childhood when the home is the primary learning environment. Unlike formal education, maternal teaching is highly personalized, emotionally attuned, and flexible—qualities that support long-term learning retention and positive developmental outcomes. Mothers who view themselves not only as caregivers but also as educators reported a heightened sense of purpose and confidence, even without formal training. This empowerment translated into more engaged, curious, and linguistically agile children.

Bilingual development in children was most successful when parents practiced consistent language exposure, such as through the "One Parent, One Language" (OPOL) method or by assigning specific languages to particular daily activities (e.g., reading or playtime). Children immersed in two languages showed early signs of code-switching abilities, improved metalinguistic awareness, and enhanced cognitive flexibility, which align with previous studies on bilingual advantage in childhood development.

The research also uncovered key challenges:

- Parents often feared that inconsistent exposure would confuse children.
- Non-native speaker parents felt insecure about their pronunciation or grammar.

Despite these concerns, children still benefited from regular interaction, emotional bonding, and contextualized use of both languages—proving that fluency is not a prerequisite for effective language modeling.

Exploratory learning, characterized by child-led discovery and open-ended play, promoted deeper engagement and intrinsic motivation. Children encouraged to ask questions, solve problems, and make choices developed stronger executive functioning skills, problem-solving abilities, and emotional regulation. Mothers who facilitated exploration without rigid outcomes (i.e., allowing children to "fail" safely and retry) created environments where children felt safe taking intellectual risks crucial for lifelong learning. This aligns with constructivist theories (e.g., Piaget, Vygotsky), which support the idea that knowledge is constructed through experience and social interaction.

This discussion demonstrates that transforming motherhood into a teaching role is not only possible but profoundly impactful. By intentionally fostering bilingualism and exploratory learning, mothers create enriching environments that go beyond traditional education nurturing children who are confident communicators, critical thinkers, and curious global citizens. The home, when viewed as a living classroom, becomes the most powerful educational space a child may ever know.

Conclusion. Transforming motherhood into a deliberate teaching role offers profound opportunities to nurture bilingualism and exploratory skills in children. By embracing the home as a dynamic learning environment, mothers can effectively support language acquisition and foster curiosity, critical thinking, and creativity from an early age. The strategies discussed—such as consistent bilingual exposure, child-led inquiry, and integrating learning into everyday moments demonstrate that teaching need not be confined to formal settings. Instead, it thrives on emotional connection, cultural richness, and experiential discovery. While challenges such as parental confidence and resource availability exist, the benefits for children's cognitive, social, and emotional development are significant. Ultimately, empowering mothers as educators not only enriches children's early learning experiences but also equips them to thrive in an increasingly diverse and complex world.

References

1. Bialystok, E., Craik, F. I. M., & Luk, G. (2012). Bilingualism: Consequences for mind and brain. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 16(4), 240–250. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2012.03.001
2. Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
3. Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. International Universities Press.
4. Genesee, F. (2008). Dual language development and disorders: A handbook on bilingualism and second language learning. *Brookes Publishing*.
5. Hirsh-Pasek, K., Golinkoff, R. M., Berk, L. E., & Singer, D. (2009). *A mandate for playful learning in preschool: Presenting the evidence*. Oxford University Press.