

CHAPTER 1

Introduction



LEARNING OUTCOMES

The information in this chapter will increase the reader's knowledge of the following:

- Different types of dual language children
 - How the sociolinguistic status for each language and the age of learning each language shape bilingual development
 - Case study profiles of dual language learners that are referred to throughout the book
 - What to expect in the subsequent chapters of the book
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INTRODUCTION

Children come in all shapes and sizes. They differ in myriad ways that delight, puzzle, and challenge their caregivers. These differences make children unique individuals and make parenting a challenge and a joy. For educators, doctors, speech-language pathologists (SLPs), psychologists, and other adults who provide professional support to children, consideration of these differences is a responsibility that can be particularly challenging when the sources of a child's differences are not part of their professional background. This book focuses on children who, in addition to having the differences that all children embody, are different linguistically and culturally. They are **dual language learners**—preschool and school-age children who have been learning two languages simultaneously from infancy or who are in the process of learning a second language (L2) after the first language (L1) has been established.

Simultaneous acquisition of two languages, or learning an L2 after an L1 has been learned, does not in itself make children exceptional or unusual; there are probably as many dual language children in the world as monolingual children

(Grosjean, 2000; Tucker, 1998). But learning two languages during infancy and childhood introduces variation in children's experiences that adds to their individual differences. Dual language children are often treated as if they are different, especially in communities where monolingual children are treated as the norm. The bias toward monolingual children is reinforced by the preponderance of research and theory on monolingual acquisition and the relative paucity of work on bilingual and second language learning children. The overall objective of this book is to provide a critical overview of the research on bilingual and second language learning in children and, in so doing, to uncover how dual language children can be different, and—most important—to show how differences in the case of dual language children is not a synonym or a euphemism for *deficits* or *disorders*. Our perspective is that there is more than one healthy and normal path to learning language(s) in childhood and that dual language learning leads to differences that need to be both better understood and better respected (Genesee, 2003). We also believe that knowing two or more languages and being able to use them appropriately and effectively is a personal, social, professional, and societal asset.

This book focuses on the typical features of language and literacy development in dual language children of various types (see the discussion in the next section, Dual Language Children). The book also focuses on the developmental characteristics of dual language children who have language, communication, or reading disorders and examines necessary considerations for assessment and intervention practices with these children. Appropriate identification of language and reading disorders in dual language children—and determining intervention strategies and educational programming for dual language children affected with disorders—are key concerns. The overall goal is to provide parents and professionals who work with children a comprehensive and up-to-date synthesis of what research says about typical and atypical bilingual and second language acquisition; understanding this information allows caregivers and practitioners to make informed decisions on issues ranging from language choice in the home and school to determining the presence of a clinically significant developmental delay or disorder.

This book's primary audience consists of SLPs who are at the forefront in caring for the language development of children with language, communication, or reading disorders. However, our audience also includes caregivers, early childhood educators, special education professionals (including reading specialists), psychologists, and school teachers with simultaneous bilingual children or second language learners in their child care centers or classrooms, postsecondary instructors who educate the professionals who work with these children, and pediatricians and community health care professionals who may be consulted on the health and well-being of these children. Last, but not least, parents of bilingual and second language children are also part of our intended audience because parents have the utmost interest in knowing what professionals know about dual language development. Parent concern is often the starting point of the referral process, and parents must ultimately interpret the advice given by professionals and must make important decisions on behalf of their children.

Because our audience is broad and varied with respect to its formal background in research, theory, education, and clinical practice, we have sought to be as nontechnical as possible; however, when technicalities are important, we have not avoided them. Key concepts are discussed in detail in the text or in boxes,

Table 1.1. Linguistic terms used throughout the book

Linguistic term	Definition
Phonetics	Articulation and perception of speech sounds; physical/acoustic aspects of speech events
Phonology	Patterns and contrasts of speech sounds in a language and rules for combining speech sounds into words (phonotactics)
Lexicon	Mental dictionary of words in a language; vocabulary
Morphology	Structure of words in a language (e.g., the word <i>cats</i> can be broken into <i>cat</i> [content word] and <i>-s</i> [function morpheme]); grammatical morphology refers to morphemes that mark grammatical features like plural (<i>-s</i>) or past tense (<i>-ed</i>) in <i>walked</i> , or stand-alone function words such as <i>the/a</i> or <i>is/was</i>
Syntax	Structure of phrases and sentences; the system of rules in the grammar of a language that determines the ways in which words are combined to form meaningful phrases and sentences
Morphosyntax	Grammar in general; combination of morphology and syntax
Semantics	Meaning and interpretation in language; how features combine to form meanings of individual words and how words and phrases combine to form meaning in sentences
Pragmatics	Language in context and the influence of situation on meaning; speaker's and addressees' understanding of the context in which a sentence is uttered; how discourse situation shapes choices of words and grammar

Sources: Fromkin (2006) and O'Grady and Archibald (2016).

and key terms (in bold) are defined in a glossary at the end of the book to aid readers who are less familiar with some of the terms that we use. Because this book is focused on language development, definitions of some common linguistic terms used throughout the book are given in Table 1.1. These terms are also included in the glossary.

Author Background and Expertise

Our background is in research on dual language learning in preschool and school-age children. We are also educators who bring specific interests and experience to the book. Johanne Paradis started her professional career as a teacher of English as a second language. Her educational background includes linguistics, second language education, psychology, and communication disorders. All of her research has focused on dual language children, both typically developing children and children with disorders, including both preschool and school-age children. Paradis's research has covered topics such as the development of French and English when acquired simultaneously, the development of English acquired as a second language by minority children, and the sources of individual differences in that process. Paradis's research has also focused on the linguistic characteristics of language disorders in French–English bilingual children and, more recently, language and communication disorders in learners of English as a second language. A major goal of Paradis's research with second language learners

who are typically developing and those with language and communication disorders has been to develop methods for differentiating between them effectively in an assessment context. An additional goal has been to document the capacity for bilingualism and the distinct profiles of first and second language development in children with language and communication disorders. Paradis has conducted numerous seminars and workshops on child bilingualism, learning of an L2 by children, and considerations for professional practice to local and national groups of SLPs and educators in the United States and Canada.

Fred Genesee's educational background is in psychology. The overall goal of his research and professional interests is to discover children's capacity for acquiring language by examining language development in second language learners and simultaneous bilinguals under diverse circumstances—in school, in the home, under conditions of L1 retention or L1 loss, and others. More specifically, he has conducted extensive research on the effectiveness of immersion and bilingual forms of education for language majority and language minority students in North America and internationally and has served as a consultant for dual language schools in countries around the world. His research has also focused on the language development of children acquiring two languages simultaneously during the preschool years to explore the assumption that dual language learning during this stage of development puts the child's development at risk. Most recently, his research has focused on the language development of internationally-adopted children and on reading development and reading impairment in children learning an L2. He has authored and edited a number of professional books for educators working with bilingual and second language learners.

Martha B. Crago worked for a number of years as an SLP and was responsible for clinical training in speech-language pathology at McGill University before obtaining her doctorate in communication sciences and disorders at McGill University. Her research interests have focused on language development and cultural identity, as well as on the cross-linguistic nature of acquisition by children with typical language development and those with language impairment. Her work, and that of her students, was carried out in the homes and schools of several Indigenous Canadian communities as well as with children from the mainstream Canadian populations. She is Vice Principal of Research at McGill University.

DUAL LANGUAGE CHILDREN

The terms **dual language children** and *dual language learners* are used generically throughout this book to refer to a diverse group of language learners. Before proceeding, we describe who these learners are and why they need to be considered as distinct groups at times. For our purposes in this book, dual language children can differ from one another in two important respects: 1) whether they are members of a majority ethnolinguistic community or a minority ethnolinguistic community and 2) whether they have learned two languages simultaneously from infancy or have learned an L2 after their L1 was established. The intersection of the dimensions of language status and age of acquisition is illustrated in Figure 1.1. There are differences among children within each of the four broad categories created by the intersecting dimensions of language status and age of acquisition, but these four categories are the ones referred to throughout the book.

	Majority language	Minority language
Simultaneous bilinguals	Both languages are widely spoken and have high status. Acquisition of both languages occurs before 3 years of age.	One or both languages are not widely spoken or high status. Acquisition of both languages occurs before 3 years of age.
Second language learners/ sequential bilinguals	First language is widely spoken and has high status. Education through the second language may be the majority or minority language of the community.	First language is not widely spoken or does not have high status. Education through the second language is usually the majority language of the community or wider region.

Figure 1.1. Types of dual language learners along two dimensions: language status and age of acquisition. Note the placement of a dotted line between the dimensions to illustrate that there are no definitive boundaries between them.

Up to this point, we have mentioned dual language learning and not multi-language learning or multimodal (sign and oral) language learning. There is little research on multilingual/multimodal learners during this early period of development, and the vast majority of research on dual language learning concerns the acquisition of oral languages. For this reason, we do not focus on these populations in this book. (Chapter 4 includes some discussion of young multilingual learners.) However, much of the information on dual language development could be applicable to multilingual and multimodal development.

Sociolinguistic Status of a Language

A **majority ethnolinguistic community** is a community of individuals who speak the language spoken by most of the members of the larger community and/or are members of the ethnic or cultural group to which most members of the community belong. The community may be as large as a country, or it may be a state or province within a country or some smaller unit. The majority language and culture usually have special recognition as the official language and culture of the community. In other cases, the language and culture are regarded unofficially as the high-status language and culture in the community. The **majority language** is the language used by most newspapers and other media, in the courts, in the schools, and by political bodies in the community. Examples are Anglo-Americans in the United States, English Canadians in Canada, and native German speakers in Germany. We also use the term **majority group** synonymously. A **minority ethnolinguistic community** is a community made up of individuals who speak a **minority language** and who belong to a minority culture within the larger community. The language and culture may be in the demographic minority; may have relatively low social, economic, and political power; or both. Examples are Spanish speakers or individuals of Hispanic background in the United States, speakers of Inuktitut or Cantonese in Canada, speakers of Navajo in the United States, and Turkish speakers in The Netherlands and Germany. We also use the term **minority group** synonymously.

The majority–minority distinction is not binary but reflects end points along a continuum. For instance, some minority linguistic communities are more of a minority than others. The Spanish-speaking minority community in California is closer to the middle of the continuum than the Korean-speaking community there because

the sheer number of Spanish speakers in California confers on them a certain status that Koreans, who are much fewer in number, lack. The status of a language can differ according to the region in which speakers of the language live; for example, in Canada as a whole, French speakers are a minority ethnolinguistic community, but in the province of Quebec, French speakers are the majority community. Because French is an official language of the country, even in the regions of the country where speakers of French are clearly a minority numerically, they enjoy a higher status than other minority ethnolinguistic communities that do not have official language status, due to access to French-language schooling and government services (by law), French-language media, and government-funded cultural centers and events. Similarly, the status of Spanish speakers varies considerably in the United States, from southern Florida and Texas (where it is relatively high) to the Midwest or Northwest (where it is relatively low). However, Spanish is not an official language of the United States and is frequently associated with newcomer communities and, thus, does not have the same status as French in Canada, regardless of the number of speakers in a region.

The majority–minority group distinction is important in predicting children’s language outcomes. For example, the size and status of the speech community can determine a child’s opportunities for frequent, varied, and rich input in a particular language and access to schooling in that language. It could also differentially affect motivation to maintain that language and attitudes toward the ethnolinguistic community or communities of origin. The more a language and culture is in the minority, the more vulnerable it can be to erosion and loss as children grow older. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

Age of Acquisition for Each Language

When we refer to **simultaneous bilingual children**, we mean children who are exposed to, and given opportunities to learn, two languages from birth or shortly after. Simultaneous bilingual children ideally are exposed to both languages fairly regularly from the outset, but this seldom means they are exposed to each language equally, and we discuss the implications of unequal exposure in Chapters 4 and 5 in particular. When we refer to **second language learners**, we mean children who have already made significant progress toward acquisition of one language when they begin the acquisition of an L2. These children are also often referred to as **sequential bilingual children** or *successive bilinguals*.

There is no definitive point in development that demarcates simultaneous bilingual from second language acquisition. Researchers have proposed different cutoffs between these groups that range from birth to 5 years of age, and cutoffs are often proposed based on whether differences in linguistic competence in adulthood can be traced to differences in age of acquisition within the preschool years (see Nicoladis, 2018, for review). We have chosen to consider 3 years of age as an approximate cutoff for this book for prospective developmental reasons. An L1 can be well established in terms of vocabulary and grammar at 3 years of age; thus, effects of already knowing and speaking one language and being neurocognitively more mature can be visible in the learning of the L2 (see Chapter 6). This effect is less obvious if an additional language is introduced to a child’s environment at the age of, for example, 12 months, but it is important to point out that, like the majority–minority language status dimension, the effects of age of acquisition on language development are also on a continuum.

Whether children are simultaneous bilinguals or second language learners is important when assessing how much progress children have made in their languages. By definition, in a group of dual language learners the same age, the simultaneous bilinguals would have had more experience with both their languages than the second language learners would have had with their L2, other things being equal. Children could be expected to be more advanced in a language when they have had more experience learning it (see Chapters 4 and 6). In addition, simultaneous bilinguals are exposed to both languages very early in life, and as mentioned previously, the age at which children are first exposed to a language may have long-term consequences. Finally, the distinction between simultaneous bilinguals and second language learners could signal differences in the contexts where each language is used. Simultaneous bilinguals most commonly acquire two languages in the home, and second language learners often have a separate home versus school and community language.

Using the majority–minority group and bilingual–second language learner distinctions, we can consider dual language children to comprise four broad sub-groups, as illustrated in Figure 1.1:

1. Children from a majority ethnolinguistic group who have learned or are learning two majority languages simultaneously from birth or at least before 3 years of age.
2. Children from a majority ethnolinguistic group who have learned or are learning an L2 after their L1 was established. The L2 could be a minority or majority language of the community.
3. Children from a minority ethnolinguistic group who have learned or are learning two languages simultaneously from birth, or at least before 3 years of age. One language could be a majority language.
4. Children from a minority ethnolinguistic group who have learned or are learning an L2 after their L1 was established. The L2 is typically the majority language and the language of schooling.

Internationally-Adopted Children

Chapter 8 discusses the language development of **internationally-adopted (IA) children**, sometimes referred to as **second first language learners**. These are children who have been adopted by families that speak a language that differs from the one experienced by the children prior to adoption (e.g., children who were born and raised in China for 1 year but are adopted by English-speaking families in Canada or the United States).

The fictional case we include in the next section is a girl who was adopted from Russia and was thus exposed to Russian before beginning to learn English as her “second first language.” These children are unique dual language learners because they usually discontinue learning their first, or birth, language once they are adopted and are exposed to the language of their adoptive families. They are of particular interest in this book because they are often thought to be at risk for delays or disorders in their language development. There are a number of reasons for this: 1) they often experience social and physical deprivation pre-adoption; 2) termination of acquisition of the birth language could undermine the

neurocognitive foundations for learning the new language, according to some theories of language acquisition; and 3) their exposure to the new language is delayed, albeit well within the classic critical period for second language learning. All of these issues are discussed further in Chapter 8.

IA children are difficult to classify using conventional terminology or our own scheme as presented in Figure 1.1. They differ from simultaneous bilinguals because—although many learn the adopted language within the first year or 2 of life—they discontinue acquiring the birth language and are delayed in starting to learn the new language. They differ from typical second language learners who continue to acquire and use their L1. Nevertheless, their second first language is typically a majority language. Research on IA children is not sufficient at this time to determine with certainty whether their language acquisition resembles that of children who learn an additional language from birth, such as simultaneous bilinguals, or that of second language learners. Thus, they are a unique type of dual language learner.

PROFILES OF DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS

In order to put personal faces on these types of dual language children, we provide more details in the next section about each group by reference to individual fictional children who have the primary characteristics of their subgroup and who differ from each other in ways that could be important to educators and clinicians. We refer to these children throughout the book to illustrate the characteristics and concepts discussed in each chapter. The subgroups of dual language learners and the names of the profiled children who exemplify them are presented in Figure 1.2.

Profiles of Simultaneous Bilingual Children

The children profiled in this section were all exposed to two languages at home from birth and so fall under our definition of simultaneous bilingual children. However, they vary in terms of the sociolinguistic status of their two languages.

James

James lives in Montreal, the largest city in the French-speaking province of Quebec, in Canada. His mother is French Canadian, and although she speaks English and French fluently, she uses only (or primarily) French with James and has done so since he was born 5 years ago. James's father is an English-speaking Canadian and is functionally bilingual in English and French, but he uses only (or primarily) English with James. James's parents decided to speak their respective native languages to him so that he will grow up bilingual. In effect, James has two L1s—he is a simultaneous bilingual child. James hears and uses both French and English on a daily basis at home. He also uses both languages outside the home with schoolmates and friends of his family, some who speak only English or only French and some who speak both. His French is a little stronger than his English because his family lives in a neighborhood of Montreal that is predominantly French speaking and because he speaks French in kindergarten, but James is functionally proficient in both languages.

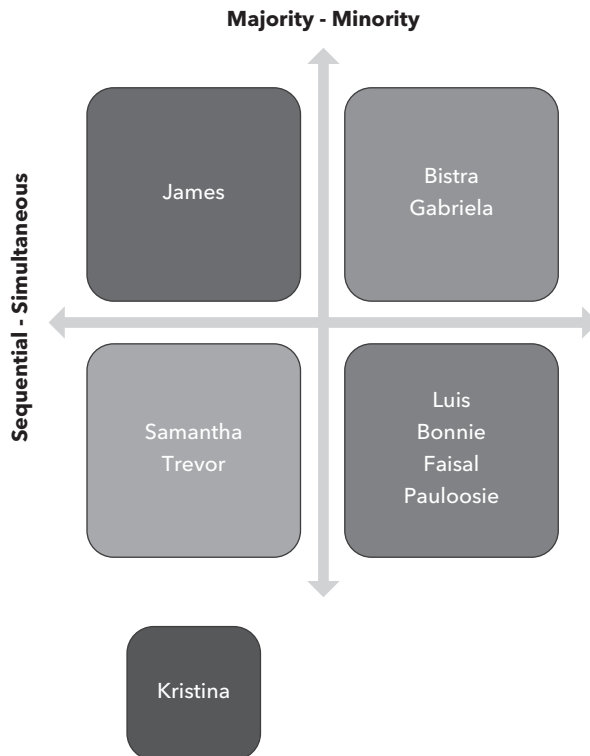


Figure 1.2. How the profiled children fit into the subgroups created by the dimensions of language status and age of acquisition. (Note: Kristina's name is separate because she is an internationally-adopted child who does not easily fit in any subgroup; we have placed her with the majority language speakers because her adopted language is a majority language.)

James is a majority group simultaneous bilingual child because he is growing up in a family that is part of Quebec's two dominant cultural groups—English and French. This means not only that there is strong support for both his languages in the family, but also that both have widespread utility in the community at large—in stores, with friends, at the movies, and eventually in the job market. James's parents have the choice to send him to an English medium school or a French medium school, or even to a French **immersion program** designed for English-speaking children to learn through the medium of French. They have chosen a French medium school but intend to enroll him in English-language summer day camps.

Many children around the world resemble James; they are children of parents from majority groups who learn two L1s. Other children like James could be growing up in the Basque country or Catalunya in Spain, where Basque and Catalan are high-status languages alongside the national language, Spanish. Another example would be children learning French and Dutch (Flemish) in Belgium from their parents at home. Psycholinguistically speaking, simultaneous bilingual children such as James are robust language learners who are likely to acquire full proficiency in both languages because the environment in which they live supports the learning of additional languages with no cost to either language.

Bistra

Bistra is 4 years old and lives in Iowa, in the United States. Her parents are graduate students completing their doctoral degrees in the same Slavic Studies department, which is where they met. Bistra's father, an American, is a native speaker of English, is a proficient second language speaker of Russian, and knows some Bulgarian. Bistra's mother is a Bulgarian who immigrated to the United States. She is a fluent second language speaker of both English and Russian as well as a native speaker of Bulgarian. Bistra's mother has spoken to her exclusively in Bulgarian from birth, and her father uses exclusively English with her. The parents speak to each other in English or sometimes in Russian. Bistra attends a child care center where only English is spoken. Like James, Bistra is a simultaneous bilingual child because she has been exposed to two languages consistently since birth. Unlike James, however, one of her two languages is not widely spoken outside her home, so she could be considered a member of a minority ethnolinguistic community of Bulgarian speakers in the United States.

Bistra's mother considers it a high priority for her daughter to speak and eventually read and write Bulgarian fluently; however, achieving this goal will be a challenge. There is no Bulgarian-speaking community in Bistra's city, so aside from her family and a few of her parents' friends, Bistra has no exposure to Bulgarian and, in particular, she has no opportunity on a day-to-day basis to use Bulgarian with peers. In addition, Bistra's child care center uses English, and her schooling will be in English. Even at 4 years of age, she speaks English more proficiently than she speaks Bulgarian, and sometimes she switches to English when speaking with her mother.

Maintaining the **heritage language**, or the language of the home country, is often a struggle for many immigrant and refugee families like Bistra's. Children such as Bistra may go through a stage in which they refuse to speak the minority language and insist on using only English, even with people with whom they have used their heritage language most of the time. Some children will lose most or all of their fluency in their heritage language once they attend school. Sometimes it is impossible for parents to find resources such as cultural events or books and screen media in the heritage language in order to give their children a broad and rich range of experience with the language. However, the more parents persist in speaking the heritage language, and the more contexts they expose their children to in which that language is used, including traveling back to the country of origin, the more likely it is that their children will retain an ability to speak that language after school entry. It is especially important to give minority language children opportunities to interact with a diverse set of interlocutors, especially other children the same age, in the heritage language. Bistra is a simultaneous bilingual child at age 4, but whether she will become a fully proficient bilingual adult is not entirely certain. Chapter 7 discusses heritage language acquisition.

Gabriela

Gabriela is 6 years old, and like Bistra and James, she is a simultaneous bilingual child because she has been exposed to both Spanish and English from birth. Gabriela was born in the New York City area, as were both of her parents, and her family still lives near New York City, in the United States. Her mother is a nurse, and her father works for an insurance company. Gabriela's grandparents on both her mother's and her father's sides moved to New York from Puerto Rico when they were young adults. Gabriela's parents and grandparents all speak both Spanish and English in the home and in the community,

although they try to speak more Spanish than English in the home. Gabriela lives in a neighborhood where there are many families of Puerto Rican heritage, so she is exposed to Spanish not just in the context of her family but also at local businesses, in church, and with other children on the playgrounds and at school. She attended a bilingual child care facility before kindergarten and is now in first grade at a Spanish–English bilingual school where Spanish is taught until third grade. More details about language and academic development in bilingual/dual language programs are given in Chapter 9.

Gabriela is unusual among bilingual children in that she is a third generation immigrant, yet she still speaks the heritage language. Many second generation immigrants lose their heritage language. Gabriela's family has managed to maintain Spanish because of their pride in their heritage and their belief in the importance of passing on that heritage. In addition, Puerto Ricans in New York City can easily travel back and forth between Puerto Rico and the United States. As a result, Spanish is a prevalent minority language in New York City, and Gabriela's family lives in a community where Spanish is used every day. She has already traveled to Puerto Rico twice for extended holidays.

Unlike James and Bistra, Gabriela is exposed to English and Spanish from both her parents, so neither parent is associated with only one language and both parents speak Spanish and English fluently. For some families raising simultaneous bilingual children, it is difficult to maintain the child's bilingualism if one parent is monolingual. For example, Bistra's father speaks some Bulgarian but not well enough to have an extensive conversation with his daughter. In contrast, Gabriela can speak either English or Spanish freely with both parents. Because Gabriela's parents speak both English and Spanish, they sometimes mix words from the two languages together in one conversation, even within one sentence. This phenomenon, called **code-mixing**, is common in bilingual communities across the globe. Chapter 5 includes details about how code-mixing works and how bilingual children code-mix.

It might seem that Gabriela is growing up in a similar environment to that of James; however, in Figure 1.1 we considered her a minority simultaneous bilingual child such as Bistra. This is because even though Spanish is widely spoken in New York and in many regions of the United States, it does not have the same high status that French does in Canada. However, even though Gabriela is a minority bilingual child, she has a good chance of maintaining her bilingualism throughout her life because Spanish is widely spoken in her community and she will grow up with many opportunities to use Spanish.

Contrasting Bistra's and Gabriela's situations exemplifies another point made previously—minority language is on a continuum. Some languages are much more in the minority than others, and this can affect children's exposure to and attitudes toward those languages and, in turn, affect their chances of becoming bilingual adults. The language development of simultaneous bilingual children such as James, Bistra, and Gabriela in the preschool and early school-age years is examined in detail in Chapter 4.

James, Bistra, and Gabriela are all learning their two languages from their parents at home. For other simultaneous bilingual children, however, the sources of language input might be different—from grandparents or child care workers. Box 1.1 shows an excerpt from *The New York Times* (Navarro, 2002) about English-speaking parents who are choosing to employ Spanish-speaking au pairs (nannies) who take care of the children while the parents are at work; by entrusting the care of their children to Spanish-speaking child care providers, these parents are seeking to give their children the opportunity to learn Spanish along with English.

BOX 1.1

The New York Times, September 19, 2002: “Hello Mommy, Hola Nanny: Immigrant Babysitters Double as Language Teachers”*—by Mireya Navarro*

When Daniel Etkin first spoke, he said words like “mommy” and “vacuum,” perhaps not what his daddy most wanted to hear but a reflection of his fascination with the vacuum cleaner.

But Daniel’s first words also included “agua” (water) and “bonito” (pretty), taught to him by the Salvadoran nanny who has been at his side since he was a week old.

The nanny, Morena Lopez, does not speak English and his parents are not fluent in Spanish, so at the tender age of 2, Daniel is the only person in the household with the facility to communicate between them. And as with many other children in New York City and other areas with large immigrant populations, the nanny in Daniel’s case not only feeds him and watches after him but has become his language instructor.

The rising demand for nanny services by working parents over the last decades and the niche that new immigrants have found in such work have combined to make nannies de facto language teachers to children of English-speaking parents. That trend, along with many children whose immigrant parents speak other languages, has given higher visibility to a cultural phenomenon in many playgrounds: the bilingual toddler. (p. B1)

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Profiles of Second Language Learners

The children profiled in this section all began to learn their L1 before a second language was introduced, so they are sequential bilinguals or second language learners. However, like the simultaneous bilingual children profiled previously, they do vary in terms of the sociolinguistic status of their two languages.

Samantha

Samantha is 7 years old and lives in Tucson, Arizona, in the United States. Samantha’s parents are both monolingual English speakers; consequently, Samantha learned and used English in the home during her preschool years. Samantha’s parents, however, decided to send her to a Spanish-speaking child care center when she was 3 years old and then to a Spanish immersion program when she turned 5 so that she could become bilingual. They felt that it would be good for Samantha to be bilingual in Spanish and English because there is a large Hispanic community in the southwestern United States, as well as in other regions of the country, and because Spanish is one of the most widely spoken languages

in the world. Knowing Spanish would afford Samantha opportunities for travel and professional work on a global scale.

Like James, Samantha is also considered a majority group dual language learner because her family and the community in which they live are members of the majority ethnolinguistic group. As a result, Samantha also has all of the linguistic and cultural advantages of being part of a high-status ethnolinguistic group. There is no question of her losing her English, even if she has extensive exposure to Spanish in preschool and later in elementary school. She has intensive exposure to English and mainstream American culture at home and in the community, and she will undoubtedly learn the values and orientations of that group at the same time as she learns Spanish and some of the cultural ways and values of Spanish-speaking cultural groups in her community. As discussed in Chapter 9, immersion programs typically offer language arts instruction and some content instruction in an L2 along with instruction in the children's home language; exact proportions of home versus second language instruction vary with different programs. Therefore, Samantha will receive academic instruction in both English and Spanish at school.

In contrast to James, Samantha is a second language learner, for the obvious reason that she began acquiring her L2 after her L1 had been established. Samantha is a fortunate second language learner because, with a little bit of effort on her parents' part, she has access to many native Spanish speakers, including adults and children, and this will greatly enhance her probabilities of acquiring full functional proficiency in Spanish. Other second language learners are not so fortunate because there are few or no native speakers of the L2 in the community. For example, some children in the state of Oregon begin to learn Japanese at 5 years of age, when they start elementary school in one of the Japanese immersion programs in that state. Because all of the other children in the Japanese immersion program are native English speakers and there is no sizable Japanese-speaking population in Oregon, the Japanese immersion students have relatively little access to native speaker models; thus, they have a much greater challenge in acquiring full proficiency in Japanese. In response to this challenge, the Japanese immersion schools have arranged for exchange visits with schools in Japan so that the immersion children can spend part of their summer vacation living with Japanese families. Many parents around the world are choosing to send their children to second language immersion schools so that they will become functionally proficient in two languages (see Chapter 9).

Trevor

Trevor is 6 years old. He was born in a small suburban community north of Chicago, in the United States. Trevor's parents are both native-born Americans who speak English. Trevor's father works for a large pharmaceutical company that has extensive international business dealings, and he was relocated to Berlin, Germany, 2 years ago to head up the European office. Trevor had not yet started school in America when they moved. Trevor's parents could have sent him to the American International School in Berlin, where English is used to teach other American and English-speaking children of relocated parents, but they decided to send him to a German public school so that he could learn German and socialize with other children from Germany. Trevor found the first 6 months of schooling in German difficult because of his lack of competence in German, so his parents arranged

for him to have a German language tutor who helped him learn German and keep up with his schoolwork. In addition, Trevor's teachers met with his parents and developed an individualized program of instruction for him so that he had time to learn German before he was exposed to the same curriculum of studies as native German-speaking students.

The transition to the all-German school—although a challenge for Trevor—went smoothly because he had a number of advantages that helped him adapt. First, he was already well on his way to learning to read and write in English when he entered the German school because he had advanced **emergent literacy skills**. This is common among children in families of professional parents who read and write frequently for work and during their leisure time and are keen to pass on these skills to their children. Most children who can read and write in one language make the transition to reading and writing in another language relatively easily. Above all else, Trevor was highly motivated to learn German in order to fit in and make friends with his German-speaking classmates.

Although German has become Trevor's primary language in school and outside school when he is with his friends, English continues to be a dominant force in his life; indeed, there is no question of Trevor giving up his English as he learns German. Although Trevor is learning German as an L2 in Germany and is surrounded by the German language all day, every day, he is considered to be a member of a majority ethnolinguistic group because of the status of English in his family and internationally. Also, Trevor and his family belong to an expatriate community, which is distinct from an immigrant community, in that the members of the community are usually in the host country temporarily and will eventually move back to their country of origin. Trevor, in the same way as Samantha, has a lot of advantages that help him become bilingual, and both of these children speak a major international language, English, as their L1. Children such as Trevor and Samantha (and also James) are examples of **additive bilingualism** (see Chapter 3).

Luis

Luis is an example of a second language learner from a minority group. Luis is 6 years old and lives in California, in the United States, with his parents, both of whom speak Spanish and very little English. They are migrant workers who maintain contact with family and friends in Mexico but spend most of their time living and working in the United States. Luis was born in the United States but grew up speaking only Spanish until he started school. Luis's first real contact with English came when he started kindergarten in a rural school in southern California. All of Luis's teachers speak only English, and all of their instruction is in English. Luis is faced with a triple challenge: to learn English for purposes of schooling, to keep up with his schoolwork in English, and to begin to integrate into the larger Anglo-American culture.

Because Luis has grown up in a Spanish-speaking, largely Mexican enclave in California, he is most comfortable and competent in cultural contexts that are Mexican in orientation. In fact, he has some difficulty knowing exactly how to behave with monolingual English-speaking children because their cultural norms for interacting with one another and with adults are different. The educational challenges faced by Luis and children like him are considerable, not simply because his education is entirely in English, but also because his parents' literacy skills in Spanish are not well developed, and as a result, they do not read and write well in either English or Spanish. This means that Luis has not

had the benefits of family literacy, unlike many children from more socioeconomically advantaged homes, which are typically characterized as having plenty of books at home, parents who read to their children at home, and children who observe their parents reading and writing for both work-related and personal reasons. Family or **home literacy practices** can have an impact on bilingual development and school achievement (see Chapters 2, 6, 7, and 9).

Despite his lack of full functional proficiency in English, Luis is often referred to by teachers and educational authorities as “bilingual.” This is misleading because in fact he was really monolingual in Spanish upon school entry. The situation is even more complicated because, in reality, there is no single way to classify all Hispanic American children; the homes and communities in which they live are incredibly diverse. The same is true for children of East Asian and South Asian backgrounds. Of particular importance to our concerns in this book is that not all children of Hispanic background necessarily speak Spanish or are bilingual, even though there is a tendency to label all such children bilingual. Many children of Hispanic background, but not all, come to school speaking only Spanish (e.g., Luis); some come to school speaking only English; some come to school speaking both (e.g., Gabriela); and yet others may primarily speak an indigenous language. Those who speak only Spanish at school entry will learn English only once they have begun schooling. Thus, some children of Hispanic background would fall into the simultaneous bilingual learner group (Gabriela), whereas others would be considered second language learners (Luis). Obtaining information about the language learning background of minority children such as Luis is important for educators and other professionals because simultaneous bilingual children and second language learners often face different challenges and have different patterns of development. Because of these differences, we discuss language development in simultaneous bilinguals and second language learners in separate chapters (see Chapters 4 and 6) and focus on their minority or heritage language in particular in Chapter 7.

Bonnie

Bonnie is 7 years old and was born in Taiwan. Her parents are both speakers of Mandarin (Chinese), and the family immigrated to Vancouver, Canada, when Bonnie was 4 years old. Bonnie has a younger sibling who is presently 8 months old. Both of her parents are professionals with well-paying jobs in the private sector, and unlike many immigrant families, they both spoke English reasonably well before arriving in Canada, although Bonnie did not. She is a second language learner like Samantha because her L1, Mandarin, was well established before she began learning her L2, English. When Bonnie began kindergarten after having been in Canada a few months, she spoke very little English; however, she already had emergent literacy skills in Chinese, which helped her acquire comparable skills in English.

Bonnie belongs to a minority ethnolinguistic community, as does Bistra, but Mandarin is much more available to her than Bulgarian is to Bistra. Vancouver is a large, cosmopolitan city on the west coast of Canada with a substantial Asian community. Bonnie’s parents rarely socialize with non-Chinese people, so she has a great deal of social contact with adults and other children her own age who speak the heritage language. Her parents read Mandarin newspapers, read to Bonnie from Mandarin books, and have hired a Mandarin-speaking piano teacher. Bonnie has access to a wide selection of multimodal media in Mandarin. Despite being competent English speakers, Bonnie’s parents choose to speak

Mandarin exclusively, or nearly exclusively, at home. In Vancouver, there are numerous restaurants, and even entire shopping centers, where mainly Mandarin and Cantonese are spoken and the signs are in Chinese. In addition, Bonnie attends a weekend school so that she can develop her literacy in Chinese. Bonnie and her family travel back to Taiwan at least once a year to visit friends and relatives. Thus, even though English is the majority language, there is every reason to believe that Bonnie will grow up to be bilingual in both Mandarin and English. Bonnie is fortunate because knowing these two languages fluently will maximize her educational and professional choices.

Not all minority second language learners are as fortunate as Bonnie. Many immigrant families do not have easy access to other speakers and resources in their language and do not enjoy the kind of social status that Chinese Canadians and Chinese Americans have in cities such as Vancouver and San Francisco, respectively. As mentioned previously for simultaneous bilingual children in a minority group (e.g., Bistra), without strong support outside the home, many minority second language children develop only limited proficiency in their L1. Moreover, in contrast to Bonnie's parents, many immigrant and refugee parents struggle to earn a living, work several jobs at the same time, and cope with difficult issues of integration into their new communities. These challenges all add to the complexity of raising children and supporting their education. Luis's parents, and the parents of the next profiled child, Faisal, are examples of newcomers facing these challenges.

Faisal

Faisal was born in a refugee camp near the border of Kenya and Somalia. His family fled the violence and poverty of the ongoing civil war in their home country, Somalia, and lived for 2 years in the camp before coming to Edmonton, Canada, as refugees, when Faisal was 4 years old. Faisal, his parents, and his four older brothers and sisters live in a three-bedroom apartment in the northeast area of the city in a neighborhood of low socioeconomic status. After a period taking government-sponsored English second language courses and living on social assistance, Faisal's father started working as a taxi driver; however, his income barely supports the needs of this large family. Faisal's mother did not have the opportunity to take English-language classes due to taking care of five children at home. Some members of Faisal's extended family have died as a result of the war, and the children in his family witnessed violence—sometimes fatal violence—in Somalia and on a regular basis in the refugee camp. Faisal's parents have had very little schooling, and their children had even less when they arrived in Canada.

The adjustments and struggles that Faisal and his family have had to make are often difficult for Canadians who are native born and mainstream to comprehend. Everything from coping with winter to food shopping in supermarkets is unfamiliar to them. The war, displacement, and migration have taken a toll on their mental health as well. Faisal finished 1 year of kindergarten in Canada and is beginning first grade. He is approximately 6 years old. His Canadian documents list his birthday as January 1 because his actual birth date is unknown. Faisal was very uncertain about how to behave and what to do during his first days at school because he had never seen or been in a classroom before. Faisal is aware that none of the teachers at school look, dress, or act as Somalis do. However, three quarters of the children in his class are from newcomer families from Africa, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, and the Middle East. Two of his classmates are Somali.

Similar to Luis, Faisal is a minority second language learner from a low socioeconomic background who faces challenges in school beyond simply learning the majority language. Unlike Luis, however, he does not belong to a relatively large minority community, and his family suffered traumatic experiences before their migration to the host country. Faisal lives in a linguistically and culturally diverse community of mainly newcomers, with some Canadians of European origin and some indigenous Canadians. English is the common language for all. At home, Faisal's parents often do not have time to interact much with the children because his father works long hours in shifts and his mother is busy with child care and housework. Faisal's oldest sister, Ladane, is often responsible for the other children and for handling communication in English with financial, government, and educational institutions. The children in the family now speak mostly English with each other. Because of his community and family situation, Faisal is even more at risk for losing his L1 than Luis is (see Chapter 7). Also, because of the family's past and present struggles, Faisal might be in need of extra support and understanding from educators and other professionals (see Chapters 2 and 6).

Pauloosie

Pauloosie is an 8-year-old Inuk boy who lives in a small community (populated by 500 Inuit residents and 15 non-Inuit residents) in Northern Quebec (Nunavik), Canada. He is the fourth child in a family of six children. Both of his parents and all of his siblings speak Inuktitut as their L1. Although Inuktitut is the language of his home and of the community, many people in his settlement, including Pauloosie's parents and all of his nuclear and extended family members, speak some English. Two of his brothers have received second language schooling in French; they speak Inuktitut, French, and whatever English they have picked up from watching television and overhearing English-language interactions with people who are non-Inuit and who live in or visit the settlement. Pauloosie's community is many hundreds of miles and a prohibitively expensive airplane ride from the cities of southern Canada. He is not likely to go to a non-Inuit community unless he becomes very ill and needs medical services or until he goes to postsecondary school. There are, however, numerous television channels available that broadcast in English and French. In comparison, there is only one television channel that broadcasts in Inuktitut.

Pauloosie attends a school in which he was taught in Inuktitut exclusively in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. As a result, not only is he a fluent native speaker of Inuktitut, but he can also read and write it. This year, he entered third grade. His family had to decide whether he would be educated in French or in English. They chose English for Pauloosie because they knew the third-grade English teacher and liked her teaching style. From this year until the end of secondary school, Pauloosie will have only 1 hour of instruction each day on the Inuktitut language, the Inuit culture, or the Inuit religion.

Pauloosie, like many of his classmates, finds third grade an unsettling year. For the first time, he has a non-Inuit teacher. In fact, this is Pauloosie's first sustained contact with an adult who is not an Inuk. This is also the first time that Pauloosie has had to speak English on a regular basis and for a number of hours each day. His teacher is in her second year of teaching. Her teacher education program had no courses in second language or multicultural education. Many things in these first weeks at school have surprised Pauloosie. In his previous classes, he was never asked to speak alone in front of others, to raise his hand when called on by his Inuit teachers, or to look a teacher in the eye. He and his classmates

answered together as a group, shared their work, and often copied the work of the smartest girl in class to learn from her. These ways of learning were considered appropriate by his Inuit teachers, but his third-grade teacher wants all of his work done alone. He was surprised when she called what he considered to be sharing work with others *cheating* or *copying*. Pauloosie finds it uncomfortable to be called on and to have his answers to the teacher's seemingly incessant questions evaluated. He feels ashamed, even if he knows the correct answer, and he misses the comfort of answering as one voice in a group of other children's voices. Pauloosie, like the other children in his community, has the special challenge of encountering another culture and language for the first time in school at age 8. Cultural mismatches between home and school are discussed in Chapter 2.

Profile of an Internationally-Adopted Child

Children who are adopted from another country have a profile distinct from simultaneous bilinguals and second language learners. This is because they stop learning their L1—the language of their birth country—when they are exposed to an L2 from their adoptive family. For this reason, we have a separate section for our profiled IA child.

Kristina

Kristina is 5 years old and lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, in the United States. She was born in Russia, and her name at birth was Tatiana, which is now one of her middle names. Kristina is a special dual language learner; she is learning English as a second first language and has discontinued learning her birth language, Russian. Kristina's adoptive parents are both professionals—one is a lawyer and the other is a university professor—and have been married for 15 years, but they were not able to have a child of their own. It took them about 5 years from making the initial decision to adopt to bringing Kristina home with them from the orphanage in Russia. Like many IA children, Kristina's family has a high socioeconomic status, and she benefits from a home environment in which she receives a great deal of attention and support as an only child of two highly educated parents. These benefits are important for her because the conditions in the orphanage in which she was previously raised from birth were not optimal; for example, there were few caregivers for the large number of children. Kristina entered the orphanage at about age 2 and was adopted at the age of 2½ (30 months).

After she first arrived in the United States, her parents arranged for her to have a complete medical examination and a developmental assessment. Like many IA children from Eastern Europe, Kristina displayed some physical delays and medical problems. More specifically, at the time she was first examined, at almost 3 years of age, her head circumference was smaller than expected for her age and her body weight and length were also less than normal for her age group. She also had some gastrointestinal problems like other IA children from orphanages with suboptimal resources. It was not clear how much Russian Kristina learned before being adopted because the orphanage personnel were reluctant to talk about her language abilities when Kristina's parents inquired. However, Kristina appeared to have lost any knowledge of Russian within several months of adoption; Kristina's parents had a friend who tried speaking Russian to her when she

was approximately 3½ years old, and Kristina did not appear to understand anything he said. This is not uncommon for IA children.

Within a year or so of living in her new home, Kristina's medical problems were resolved, and her body weight and length improved considerably, although her head circumference continued to be of some concern. Kristina was slow to produce her first words in English, and her vocabulary development was not as fast as her parents had expected, but her parents were happy with the progress she made at learning English over the first 2 years after adoption. At the time she started preschool, when she was 4 years old, Kristina's comprehension of English was good and her expressive language was fluent and easy to understand. After a year in the preschool program, Kristina made even more progress, possibly as a result of the additional stimulation in language she got from the other children and her preschool teachers.

DISORDERS OF LANGUAGE, COMMUNICATION, AND READING

The profiled children we have described in the previous section are all typically developing children. This means that they have no identified language, communication, or reading disorders affecting their development. Children can present with delayed or atypical development for a variety of developmental and environmental reasons. **Developmental disorders** are those that a child is born with, meaning their origins are genetic, which can be inherited or arise during neurodevelopment without a family link. Examples of developmental disorders that influence language communication and reading development are **dyslexia**, **autism spectrum disorder (ASD)**, syndromes that include intellectual disabilities (e.g., **Down syndrome**, fragile X syndrome), or **developmental language disorder** (also known as **specific language impairment**). Disorders that are environmental in origin occur after a child is born and thus are not genetically determined. Environmental factors that can affect language and communication development include acquired neurological damage or hearing loss due to disease. In addition, delayed or atypical language and communication development can emerge as a result of severe deprivation or traumatic experiences. In this book, we focus mainly on developmental disorders because there is more research on developmental disorders and bilingualism that can form a basis for our discussions and recommendations.

Our primary goal in this book is to provide information on typical dual language development, but at the same time, we discuss the implications of various aspects of typical dual language development for the decision making of educators and clinicians regarding referrals, language assessments, and educational programming. Our secondary goal is to provide information about dual language children who might have language, communication, or reading disorders to people who care for these children so that they can understand these children better and, in turn, provide them with additional support. In other words, we aim to provide some guidance with respect to best clinical and special education practices that can support dual language children with developmental disorders. Diagnosing language, communication, and reading disorders and planning intervention and special education programming require different approaches for bilingual than monolingual children. For this reason, we focus on these topics throughout the book and, in particular, in the final two chapters.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

This book is organized into three sections that are in turn broken down into chapters, each with a specific focus. Section I: Foundations includes Chapters 1–3. Here, in Chapter 1, we define dual language learners, and we also seek to put faces on dual language learners so that readers have the same reference points as we do. Chapter 2 discusses the language–culture connection—that is, the process that links language learning with becoming a member of a cultural group or groups and the influence of culture of ways of speaking to children and expectations of how children should use language. This developmental process shapes the lives of all children and is especially important in the case of dual language learners because they are usually exposed to more than one culture and must learn to live in and mediate between these cultures. Interacting with multiple cultures has important implications for our understanding of dual language learners’ language acquisition and ultimate language use. We continue to consider the foundations of language learning in Chapter 3 by examining the language–neurocognition connection. Chapter 3 considers both the cognitive prerequisites and the cognitive consequences of dual language learning and, more specifically, considers whether there are neurocognitive limitations to learning more than one language at a time or whether infants are capable of learning two languages without experiencing deficits in either. We also examine whether the acquisition of additional languages, simultaneously or in succession, affects cognitive development—for better or for worse.

Section II: Understanding Bilingual and Second Language Development consists of Chapters 4–9. This section discusses specific aspects of dual language learning in detail. Chapter 4 reviews research concerning the preschool and school-age language development of children who acquire two languages simultaneously during infancy, such as in the cases of James, Bistra, and Gabriela. The emphasis is on the typical patterns of language development in children raised bilingually and the aspects in which they are similar and different to children raised monolingually. Chapter 5 continues the focus on this group of learners by discussing an aspect of simultaneous bilingual acquisition called code-mixing, which is often controversial and poorly understood, yet very important when trying to understand children who grow up with two languages. Chapter 6 addresses issues in second language development in children, with a special focus on children from minority backgrounds, such as Luis, Bonnie, and Faisal, who are often referred to as *English language learners (ELLs)*, *English learners (ELs)*, *English as an additional language (EAL)* children, or *English as-a second language (ESL)* children in English-dominant countries. Chapter 6 includes information on patterns and rates of second language acquisition—in particular, how long it takes for these children to develop linguistic competence similar to that of monolingual native speakers and what factors influence how quickly children learn an L2. Chapter 7 is concerned with the acquisition of heritage languages, that is, minority languages of children who have immigration backgrounds, regardless of whether they are simultaneous or sequential bilinguals, such as Bistra, Gabriela, Luis, Bonnie, and Faisal. Chapter 7 examines how children’s proficiency and acquisition patterns in the heritage language can change as they grow older and what factors determine success in and challenges for developing and maintaining the heritage language into adulthood. Chapter 8 focuses on information about the initial and long-term language development of IA children such as Kristina, who can be considered second first language learners. Chapter 9 discusses schooling in

an L2. This chapter extends the scope of our discussion to include children who are exposed to two or more languages in the context of schooling. These may be children who come to school speaking the majority societal language, such as Samantha, or children who speak a minority language, such as Trevor, Luis, Bonnie, and Faisal. For the former group, dual language learning is usually a choice, whereas for the latter, it is a necessity. Language- and education-related issues—in particular, reading development and achievement—are discussed. In addition, Chapters 4–9 include a Key Points and Implications section at the end of each chapter to draw readers' attention to information that is of particular relevance to parents, educators, and clinicians.

The final section of the book, Section III: Dual Language and Disorders, includes Chapter 10, which focuses on oral language, and Chapter 11, which focuses on reading. The content in these chapters is aimed primarily at professionals such as SLPs, special educators, and psychologists. These chapters 1) provide information on the characteristics of language, communication, and reading disorders in dual language learners; 2) discuss approaches for how best to identify dual language children with, or at risk of having, a language or reading disorder; and 3) propose research-based strategies for developing effective intervention practices to support dual language learners who are struggling with language and reading.

SUMMARY

Dual language development is an important field of study because many, if not the majority of, children across the globe learn more than one language in childhood. Dual language children learn their two languages at different ages and in different sociolinguistic circumstances, which influence their developmental trajectories and long-term outcomes. For this reason, we can categorize dual language children as simultaneous bilinguals as opposed to second language learners based on age of acquisition. We can also categorize dual language children according to whether their languages have majority or minority status. This chapter introduced several profiled children from four broad categories based on the dimensions of age of acquisition and status. These profiled children are referred to throughout the book to provide concrete examples for the research results discussed.

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