Teaching Children Whose First Language is not English

If you are concerned about my language development in English, ask my parents about my first language development.

Please encourage my parents to continue to speak to me in my first language at home.

I might be quiet for up to a year once I have arrived in school in the UK – don’t worry this is called a silent period and is normal.

I am learning English as a second language . . .

Bilingualism is a great advantage. Bilingual children with good literacy development in both languages score better on IQ tests than monolinguals.

I need cognitive challenges – just because English isn’t my first language doesn’t mean I am not intelligent!

It may take me up to 7 years to develop proficiency in academic language – please be patient!

When I mix English and my first language it is a sign of grammatical sophistication, so don’t worry – I am doing fine!

If you have bilingual support, help me to learn new vocabulary and concepts in my first language as well as English.