Which language should I be speaking when at home?

It is generally recommended that you speak your first language with your child. Your first language is not necessarily the first language you ever learnt to speak. For instance, you might not have spoken the language since childhood and have, therefore, forgotten some or most of it.

Speak in the language which you are most confident and fluent in; your dominant language.  
  
Why should I speak my dominant language when they will attend an English speaking school?

**Provide a good language model - they will learn the language correctly**

When speaking to children who are learning to talk, it is extremely important to give them a good language role model to learn from. They need to hear the language from a competent speaker in order to pick up the correct grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of the language.

If you speak a language to your child that you do not know that well, you risk teaching your child the language incorrectly. They could make errors when they speak it because they have picked up the errors from you.

**Language of the heart**

They say your first language is the language of the heart. You feel emotions more strongly when using this language because you have a deeper connection with it.

**Bilingual Benefits!**

If your first language is the minority language you will be giving the gift of bilingualism to your child.

Bilinguals are better at paying attention and being flexible.

Being bilingual allows you to communicate with more people and learn about different cultures.

It can also open up opportunities in the future such as job opportunities.

Ability to speak with extended family members

**Risks of speaking a second language to your child**

If you speak a language to your child that you are not proficient in, you could be doing your child a disservice.

1.As mentioned above, if you cannot speak a language well then you may not be a good language role model for your child and risk them learning the language inaccurately.

2.You may not speak as much as you could because of the effort to use a language you are not so familiar with.   
  
3.You may have a hard time emotionally connecting with what you are saying.  
  
4.If the language you choose to speak is not the language of your close family members, you risk the child feeling left out at family gatherings as they will not understand what is being said.

***Can I speak a second language to my child?***

*If you are comfortable in speaking more than one language and can do so fluently, congratulations!*

*You have the option of choosing whichever language you want to speak to your child in but do not underestimate the importance of speaking to your child in a language which is close to your heart.*