

## İki Dillilik:Dil ve Biliş

*Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*

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### **Anahtar Kelimeler:**

*İki dillilik,*

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### **ÖZET**

İki dillilik dünyanın her yerinde görülebilir. İki dilli olmanın farklı nedenleri vardır, örneğin göç, evlilik, eğitim ve mesleki fırsatlar. Her ikisinde de belli bir dereceye kadar yeterlilik sahibi olan kişiye iki dilli denilir. Longman Dil Öğretimi ve Uygulamalı Dilbilim Sözlüğü' ne göre iki dilli, iki dili eşit derecede iyi konuşabilen, okuyabilen veya anlayabilen, ancak bir dili diğerinden daha iyi tanıyan kişi anlamına gelir. Bazı iki dilli kişiler, konuştukları her iki dilde de beceriklidirler, ancak diğer iki dilli kişilerin baskın veya tercih ettikleri bir dil olduğu açıktır. Bu çalışmada, iki dilliliğin farklı dereceleri ve türleri incelenmiştir. Bunu başarmak için, iki dillilik ile ilgili mevcut makaleler incelenerek belge analiz tekniği kullanılmıştır.

### **Keywords:**

*Bilingualism,*

*Language,*

*Dominant language*

### **ABSTRACT**

Bilingualism can be seen everywhere around the globe. There are different reasons for being bilingual for instance, migration, intermarriages, educational, and vocational opportunities. A person who uses at least two languages with some degree of proficiency in both of them is called bilingual. According to Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics bilingual means an individual who can speak, read or understand two languages equally well, but he/she has a better acquaintance of one language than another. Some bilingual people are skillful in both languages they speak, but other bilinguals obviously have a dominant or preferred language. In this study, different degrees and types of bilingualism is examined. To achieve this, document analysis technique was employed through investigating the existing articles about bilingualism.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bilingualism can be observed everywhere in the world. Among the reasons fostering bilingualism are various kinds of migration, intermarriages, educational, and vocational opportunities. Crystal (1992), states that more than half of the world's population is bilingual and two thirds of the world's children grow up in a bilingual environment.

Taking bilingualism into consideration from different viewpoints, different descriptions have been proposed. In Crystal's (1992) view, bilingualism is a speech situation where an individual or community controls two or more languages; less usually called polyglottism. Bloomfield (1933, as cited in Romaine, 1995) describes bilingualism as a native-like control of two languages and states that there should not be any kind of inadequacies in the second language. In order to be considered as bilingual according to Bloomfield's definition, a speaker has to have an extensive vocabulary as well as perfect skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking.

On the other hand, Titone (1967, as cited in Hamers & Blanc, 1989) defines bilingualism as "the individual's capacity to speak a second language while following the concepts and structures of that language rather than paraphrasing his or her mother tongue" (p. 6). He continues that people who have the ability to hold a conversation in a different language are bilingual. His definition comprises people that manage to communicate in a second language without being perfectly proficient. This means that in order to consider someone as bilingual that person does not need to have perfect skills in reading and writing.

In another definition Haugen (1995, as cited in Karosas, 2004) explains that bilingualism begins when the speaker can produce complete and meaningful sentences in another language. He does not mean native control and states that someone is already bilingual when he/she can make useful and meaningful utterances in another language. That means that almost anyone who acquires another language can be seen as bilingual, even though he/she would never consider himself/herself as bilingual.

Macnamara (1967, as cited in Hamers & Blanc, 1989) reveals that anyone is bilingual as soon as he/she has sufficient skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. That leads to the assumption that native speakers from the same language family, for example all Romanic languages, who can understand each other without having ever acquired the other one's languages, could be considered to be bilingual. According to this definition, bilingualism exists when languages are related to each other.

Put simply, bilingualism is the ability to use two languages. However, defining bilingualism is difficult since individuals with different bilingual characteristics may be classified as bilingual. Some bilinguals are highly proficient in both languages they speak, while other bilinguals clearly have a dominant or preferred language. Therefore, when classifying bilinguals, it is important to consider varying degrees of bilingualism. However, this article wants to investigate different degrees and types of bilingualism according to the available literature.

## 2. METODOLOGY

Formal reports or documents have been some of the most fundamental tools in qualitative research studies for a long time. Recently, a growth has been detected in the number of scientific articles that point out document analysis as part of their methodology (Xu & Croft, 2017). It is quite conspicuous that the lack of satisfactory data in most documents may be compensated by other documents. Furthermore, it is evident that document analysis has not constantly been utilized adequately in research areas, even by competent researchers (Bowen, 2009). Document analysis is a standardized process for revising or analyzing document or reports—both paper-based and online materials. Just like other analytical methods in qualitative research design, document analysis also necessitates that the data is analyzed and explained to obtain interpretation, understanding, and practical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Based on a qualitative research design, this study utilizes document analysis technique through which the researchers investigated the existing scientific articles, records, or documents (Karasar, 2012). In other words, the researchers utilized the document analysis technique with the aim of giving a word about the topic (Peute, 2013).

### 3. TEXT

#### 3.1. Degrees of Bilingualism

The degree of bilingualism stands for someone's knowledge of his/her second language. On the other hand, different bilinguals have different degrees of competence. A bilingual may have very high levels of proficiency in both languages or may have only limited proficiency in one and be more proficient in the other. It is noteworthy to say that definitions of bilingual competence have ranged from persistence on "native speaker" competence to minimalist definitions. Thiery (1978, as cited in Karosas, 2004) states that a "true bilingual" is the individual who is taken to be one of them by the members of two different linguistic communities, at the same social and cultural level. In contrast, Macnamara (1967, as cited in Hamers & Blanc, 1989) believes that bilingualism begins when a person possesses even a minimal degree of proficiency in at least one of the skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. However, there are many degrees of bilingualism, and there may be variation within the same person over time.

#### 3.2. Types of Bilingualism Concerning Cognitive Functions

Though bilingualism may be classified according to the pairing up of the languages spoken, Weinreich (1968, as cited in Romaine, 1995) divided bilingualism into three groups according to the ways language was encoded in the individual's brain: coordinate, compound, and sub-coordinate.

**3.2.1. Coordinate bilingualism.** According to Weinreich (1968, as cited in Romaine, 1995) coordinate bilingualism develops in situations when one learns the two languages in separate environment therefore each word independent of the other language has its own specific meaning. The two languages interact independently of each other meaning that the environment does not affect the learner at all. An example can be a person who learns one language at home and the other one at school. So, the English term 'book' and Turkish term 'kitap' would each have their own meaning.

**3.2.2. Compound bilingualism.** Compound bilingualism according to Weinreich (1968, as cited in Romaine, 1995) occurs when one acquires the two languages in the same context where they are used concurrently. Therefore, there is a compound representation of the two languages in the brain of the bilingual individual and thus the individual would know both terms 'book' and 'kitap', but would have one common meaning for both of them.

**3.2.3. Sub-coordinate bilingualism.** Subordinate bilingualism is very similar to compound bilingualism. It refers to a situation where a speaker tries to explain words of his/her weaker language through words of his/her stronger language (Weinreich, 1968, as cited in Romaine, 1995). For example, if we take the Turkish 'kitap' as the weaker language then the Turkish word evokes the English 'book'.

#### 3.3. Types of Bilingualism concerning the Degree of Proficiency

##### 3.3.1. Balanced bilingualism

The term balanced bilingualism is used to describe an individual who has the same fluency in two languages (Rosenberg, 1996). Spolsky (1998, as cited in Hoffman, 2001) states that, balanced bilingualism occurs when a person has a very strong command of both languages.

##### 3.3.2. Dominant bilingualism

In this case, the individual has much stronger command of one of the two languages. It usually refers to early stages of bilingualism when the first language is much stronger and also preferred (Spolsky, 1998, as cited in Hoffman, 2001). However, the individual's dominant language need not be his/her first language. In addition, it is possible to show language dominance in one language for one domain (e.g. first language for home) and dominance in the other language for another domain (e.g. second language for work).

#### 3.4. Types of Bilingualism Concerning Social Status

**3.4.1. Elite bilingualism.** It is sometimes called prestigious bilingualism and occurs when competence in two languages is developed and maintained. Paulston (1975, as cited in Romaine, 1995) defines elite bilingualism as a privilege of middle classes in majority societies.

**3.4.2. Folk bilingualism.** This kind of bilingualism occurs when individual family bilingualism or multilingualism is part of a natural societal pattern. Tosi (1982, as cited in Romaine, 1995) claims

that folk bilingualism is a result of the circumstances in which ethnic communities live and whose bilingualism is involuntary and necessary for survival.

### **3.5. Types of Bilingualism Concerning Language Acquisition**

**3.5.1. Simultaneous bilingualism.** In this case, the languages are learned at the same time (Crystal, 1992) or as De Houwer (1994) defines, simultaneous bilingualism is considered to occur when two languages are acquired from birth or prior to one year of age.

**3.5.2. Sequential bilingualism.** In sequential bilingualism, the second language is acquired after the first language has been established (Crystal 1992).

**3.5.3. Additive bilingualism.** In this situation a bilingual's first language continues to develop while he/she is learning a second language. This continuing development of the first language provides a better basis for second language development (Irujo, 1998, as cited in Hoffman, 2001).

**3.5.4. Subtractive bilingualism.** In this case, the first language of individual does not continue to develop after his/her exposure to a second language (Irujo, 1998, as cited in Hoffman, 2001). The individual's first language skills usually decrease or are lost in favour of the majority language. Subtractive bilingualism is particularly common in children of immigrants.

### **3.6. Stages of Bilingual Development**

According to Volterra and Taeschner (1978, as cited in De Houwer, 1994), the most convincing model of the linguistic development of bilingual children can be described in three stages.

In the first stage, a bilingual child starts out with a single system, containing words from both languages. In other words, the terms used in one language have no equivalent meaning that correspond on the term in the other i.e. the bilingual child is claimed to have a single lexical system.

In the second stage, the child starts to establish two separate lexical systems, but applies the same syntactic rules within both of the systems.

In the last stage, both lexical and syntactic rules of both languages are separate. The child associates the particular language with particular people. He/she is mapping the 'social' world he/she lives in, i.e. who speaks which language; this tendency to label people according to which language they speak declines with the child's awareness of their bilingualism and the fact he/she uses two languages.

It is noteworthy to say that, different children enter these stages at different ages; also, the lengths of the stages differ.

### **3.7. Bilingual Behavior**

Bilingual individuals are known to show some of the following dominant traits which are themselves subject to different interpretations.

#### **3.7.1. Interference**

This occurs in a case where the individual consciously or inadvertently brings in his/her pronunciation, sentence formation and vocabulary of the source language while using a target language. According to Romaine (1995), interference is always present in bilingualism, especially when the two languages are closer in their phonological, syntactic and morphological features. Haugen (1995, as cited in Karosas, 2004) also defined interference as the use of formal elements of one code such as any phonological, morphological, lexical, or syntactic within the context of another.

Dulay (1982, as cited in De Houwer, 1994) defines interference as the automatic transfer, due to habit, of the surface structure of the first language onto the surface of the target language. Ellis (1997, as cited in De Houwer, 1994) also refers to interference as 'transfer', and says that it is the influence of the learner's first language that exerts over the acquisition of second language.

#### **3.7.2. Code-switching**

It is a feature of bilingual speech in which the speaker changes from one language to another. Code-switching can occur between or within clauses or sentences and may comprise a single word, a phrase, a sentence, several sentences, or longer stretches of discourse (Romaine, 1995).

Koppe and Meisel (1995) define code-switching as a skill of the bilingual speaker having pragmatic and grammatical competence in both languages. They continue that code-switching refers to the ability to choose the language due to external factors such as the particular interlocutor, the situational context, the topic of conversation, etc. concerning pragmatic competence. As for

grammatical competence, code-switching requires that switches within one sentence observe specific grammatical constraints.

The analysis of code-switching is under two terms: inter-sentential switching and intra-sentential switching. The former refers to an alternation from one language to the other at clause or sentence boundaries; that is, between clauses and sentences. The later, on the other hand, entails switches within sentence boundaries (Poplack, 1982).

### **3.8. Related Empirical Studies**

Studies (e.g. Anastasi & Cordova, 1953; Bialystock, 1986; Darcy, 1953; Diaz, 1985; Eisenstein, 1980; Hoffman, 2001; Saer, 1923; Thomas, 1988) conducted with bilinguals attempt to define how language is organized in the brain and whether languages assist each other (positive transfer) or interfere with each other (negative transfer) and whether bilingual individuals show advantages or disadvantages on language skills in comparison to their monolingual peers.

With regard to the advantages and disadvantages of bilingualism, different opinions have been proposed by researchers. Some of the earlier studies proposed that bilingualism was related with negative results (Anastasi & Cordova, 1953; Darcy, 1953; Saer, 1923, as cited in Keshavarz, 2004). These studies maintained the idea that bilingual children suffered from academic retardation, had a lower IQ, and were socially maladjusted as compared with monolingual children.

In contrast to these claims, some studies in the 1970s and 1980s revealed that bilingualism positively influences the child's cognitive and social development (Bialystock, 1986; Diaz, 1985). These studies indicated that bilinguals have a more enhanced awareness of the arbitrary relationship between words and their referents and superior metalinguistic skills. Bialystock (1986) offered that bilingual children have an advantage over monolinguals in their control of the linguistic processing needed for metalinguistic problems.

Many researchers have also found that bilingualism has a positive effect on foreign language achievement (Eisenstein, 1980; Hoffman, 2001; Thomas, 1988). For example, Eisenstein (1980) found that childhood bilinguality had a positive effect on adult aptitude for learning a foreign language. That is, those who learned a second language during childhood would have a greater success in learning foreign languages as adults. Thomas (1988) also compared the acquisition of college French by English monolinguals and English-Spanish bilinguals. Her study yielded striking differences between the two groups, with the bilinguals outperforming the monolinguals.

Mixing results of studies on the consequences of bilinguality caused some scholars to conduct experiments with more controlled variables. The findings of some of these studies led to a neutral attitude toward bilingualism. In some studies (e.g. Barik & Swain, 1978; Lambert & Tucker, 1972, as cited in Keshavarz, 2004) researchers examined the performance of larger samples controlled for sex and age, and found no significant difference between monolinguals and bilinguals in terms of their intelligence, mental development and school achievements.

## **CONCLUSION**

Being bilingual is equivalent to being able to speak two languages perfectly. Bloomfield (1935) defines bilingualism as "the native-like control of two languages". In contrast to Bloomfield (1935) definition which includes only "perfect bilinguals", McNamara (1967) suggests that an individual who possesses a minimal competence in only one of the four language skills in a language other than his mother tongue can be called bilingual. By studying and comparing different articles related to bilingualism we can conclude that there are different causes of this linguistic behavior. The first one is the choice. Person who wants to become bilingual may be is interested in a language. The second cause is geography. Geography plays a big role in this phenomenon. To a certain extent, it seems as a forced way of being bilingual. Everywhere in the world, there are small or big regions which are the home to different groups of people who speak different languages but in their daily life they often use another language. The third reason is migration. When people migrate to another country, they must learn to speak the formal language of that country if they want to continue to live there and have an interaction in the society. They often use their own mother language at home to interact with their family members but outside home they have to speak in a dominant language of that country. The

fourth reason is religious. Some religions consider their language as a holy language and call it “The Language of God”. Some religions welcome bilingualism for spreading of their religion. They praise their language and neglect or discriminate other nations’ languages only for being different.

In conclusion, we can say that bilingualism is the norm these days and it may change in the future, but researchers of this field must be tolerant to the fact that all definitions suggested by scholars concerning bilingualism are supposed to be correct, as this linguistic phenomenon is seen from different perspectives. Then again, as far as advantages and disadvantages of bilingualism are concerned, we can conclude that the negative sides of individual bilingualism are barely kept in view when being compared with the positive effects.

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