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**Benefits and Drawbacks of Early Childhood Bilingualism in
an Algerian Speech Community: Case of MSA and French
of Third Year Primary School, Maghnia, Tlemcen (Algeria)**

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Dedication

To the soul of my grand mother

To my dearest parents

To my siblings and my niece

To my grand parents

To my family and relatives

To all my teachers

Amel

Acknowledgment

« Who ever is thankful (to God) is in fact thankful for his own self. But if anyone is ungrateful, God is self-sufficient and glorious »(Coran 31:12)

Thank to God

My dissertation would not exist if it were not for the collaboration I have received from many people.

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I am also very grateful to the children's parents and teachers for their help and patience. Thankyou for allowing me to take a quick look intoyourmind.

I am also deeply grateful to all those who have helped me on my work, to the ones who have shared with me their knowledge, their time, their friendship, and their patience, and to all my teachers and my friends.

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ALL MISTAKES REMAIN OF COURSE MY OWN.

Abstract

This study explored early childhood bilingualism in an Algerian speech community, examining the linguistic situation of bilingual children, the impact of bilingualism on their competence and performance, and parents' perspectives on bilingualism in early childhood. Data were collected through a questionnaire administered to parents and classroom observations of third-year primary school children learning French as a second language and Modern Standard Arabic as an official language. The results indicated that parents, predominantly females, had a high level of education and recognized the value of foreign languages in their children's education. Most children spoke Dialectal Arabic at home, while parents expressed a strong interest in teaching their children foreign languages. Bilingualism positively influenced children's cognitive and linguistic performance, although some faced difficulties in language acquisition. Parents recognized the benefits of bilingualism, including cultural awareness and improved career prospects, while acknowledging challenges such as language development and code-mixing difficulties. Classroom observations revealed varying levels of proficiency and confidence in using French and Mother Standard Arabic, with girls exhibiting higher participation and motivation. The study underscores the importance of parental involvement, effective language instruction, and the integration of technology to support early childhood bilingualism in Algerian speech communities.

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List of Abbreviations

AA: Algerian Arabic

ADA: Algerian Dialectal Arabic

BFLA: Bilingual First Language Acquisition

CA: Classical Arabic

CM: Code Mixing

CS: Code Switching

ESLA: Early Second Language Acquisition

FLA: First Language Acquisition

Fr: French

H: High variety

ICTs: International Communication Technologies

L: Low variety

LA / LB: The simultaneous acquisition of two mothertongues

L1: First language

L2: Second language

MSA: Modern Standard Arabic

SLA: Second Language Acquisition

UG: Universal Grammar

General Introduction

Early childhood bilingualism is a growing phenomenon worldwide, particularly in communities where multiple languages are spoken. Algeria, a country with a rich linguistic diversity, is no exception to this trend. In Algeria, bilingualism is commonly observed in the Berber and Arabic-speaking communities, where children are exposed to multiple languages from an early age. In fact, neurological researchers show that early years play a key role in brain development, and language development is one of the most important infancy cognitive developments. Thus, promoting early bilingualism could be the best thing that parents can do for their children. The benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism have not been extensively studied, particularly within the context of the Algerian speech community.

This topic is of particular interest because it sheds light on the advantages and challenges of early childhood bilingualism in Algeria, and how it may impact children's cognitive and linguistic development. Moreover, it highlights the social and cultural factors that influence language acquisition and use in the Algerian context.

This research aims to explore the benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian speech community and to provide insights into the factors that may influence language development in this context. Through a comprehensive review of the literature and an analysis of empirical data, this study seeks to contribute to the understanding of early childhood bilingualism and its implications for language learning and education in Algeria.

The Algerian speech community is characterized by its rich linguistic diversity, where children are exposed to multiple languages from an early age. While early childhood bilingualism has been associated with several cognitive and linguistic benefits, it may also pose some drawbacks, particularly in contexts where language policies and practices are

not well-defined or implemented. However, the benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian context have not been extensively studied.

Therefore, the problem statement for this topic is: What are the benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian speech community, and how do social and cultural factors influence language development in this context? This study aims to address this research gap by exploring the implications of early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian speech community, and the factors that may impact children's language acquisition and use. However, this study seeks to provide insights into the potential benefits and drawbacks of bilingualism in Algeria and to inform language policies and practices that promote positive outcomes for children's linguistic and cognitive development.

This study aims to investigate Early Childhood Bilingualism in an Algerian Speech Community. Specifically, this study seeks to:

- ✓ Investigate the benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian context.
- ✓ Explore the linguistic and cognitive outcomes of early childhood bilingualism in Algeria.
- ✓ Examine the social and cultural factors that influence language development and use in the Algerian context.
- ✓ Assess the effectiveness of language practices in promoting positive outcomes for children's linguistic and cognitive development in the Algerian speech community.
- ✓ Provide insights into the potential benefits and challenges of early childhood bilingualism for language education and learning in Algeria.

The study on early childhood bilingualism in an Algerian speech community is significant for several reasons:

- It adds to the growing body of research on bilingualism, by focusing on the Algerian context, which is relatively understudied in terms of language acquisition and use.
- It provides insights into the benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism, which can inform language policies and practices in Algeria and other multilingual contexts.
- It contributes to the understanding of the social and cultural factors that influence language development and use in the Algerian speech community, which can inform language education and learning practices.
- It sheds light on the linguistic and cognitive outcomes of early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian context, which can inform efforts to promote positive outcomes for children's linguistic and cognitive development.
- It can inform the development of language programs and curricula that are tailored to the needs of the Algerian speech community, and that promote linguistic and cultural diversity.
- It has practical implications for parents, educators, and policymakers in Algeria and other multilingual contexts, by highlighting the potential benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism, and by informing efforts to promote positive language development and use among children.

In the light of the background, the present study seeks to find answers to the following questions:

- What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of raising an early bilingual child in an Algerian speech community?
- What is the impact of the language of instruction (MSA) on these early bilingual children?

Through the present study, we hypothesize that:

- Children who are exposed to multiple languages and cultures from an early age will develop stronger cognitive and social skills as well as promotes linguistic abilities. Although raising a bilingual child can endow him with several benefits, it has some drawbacks that should be taken into consideration. These drawbacks include the potential for confusion and language deficits and decreased language proficiency.
- Early exposure to MSA has a significant impact on children's language development. It leads to improve their vocabulary, grammar, reading, and writing skills, which is beneficial for academic success due to its status as the official language

To check the proposed hypotheses, it is adequate to divide this research into two chapters: the Literature Review, Methodology and Data Analysis with a general introduction and general conclusion. Firstly, the general introduction includes the main problem of the research to be investigated by the researchers of the dissertation. Secondly, the chapter states the literature review: main definitions from several writers, key concepts, and points of view. Finally, the last chapter presents

the results and their interpretations. The General conclusion aims to sum up the content and propose new references for further investigations about the topic.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, early childhood bilingualism in Algerian speech communities can have both benefits and drawbacks for children's cognitive development and academic achievement. While bilingualism can provide children with valuable linguistic and cultural skills, it can also create challenges related to language dominance, language mixing, and educational opportunities. Understanding the complexities of early childhood bilingualism in Algerian speech communities requires a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates insights from linguistics, psychology, sociology, and education. Future research in this area should focus on developing effective language policies and interventions that support the development of bilingual children and their families.

Chapter One

Literature Review

Introduction

This chapter is mainly devoted to review the literature concerning early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian speech communities. It highlights the related key concepts that this dissertation is contented with including the linguistic situation in Algeria, the role of both MSA and French in the Algerian speech community and their impact on bilingual children. It also reveals the historical background of early studies on bilingualism along with the different theories and/or approaches to language acquisition. In the same vein of thought, we shall focus on early childhood bilingualism and second language acquisition, tackling the difference between bilingual and monolingual children.

1.1. The Linguistic Situation in Algeria

Algeria's sociolinguistic situation is unique. It is commonly known that Algeria witnessed many invasions that led to its linguistic diversity. Those conquests including Phoenician, Roman, Turkish, Spanish, and French resulted in the exchange and/ or coexistence of different languages, cultures and even religions. The coexistence of numerous languages (language contact) generated a specific sociolinguistic scenario that gave rise to various phenomena such as bilingualism, code-switching, and borrowing.

1.2. Language Contact Phenomena

If we listen closely to bilinguals conversing with one another, we can hear some characteristics that are absent from monolingual speech, such as the incorporation of terms or expressions from other language (s) or abrupt code shifts that may occur more than once in a single sentence. Borrowing, mixing, and

switching phenomena become useful for identifying trends and connections with other speech aspects.

Bilinguals appear to mix and switch more in one another's presence than while speaking to monolinguals for a variety of reasons, including signaling group membership to outsiders, demonstrating unity to other group members, or sharing a common experience. Herein, some characteristics of bilingual speaking are discussed in more details:

1.2.1. Code-switching

Code-switching is a widespread occurrence resulting from language contact. Speaking simultaneously in multiple languages or dialects is referred to as multilingualism (Gardner, 2009). Only bilingual or multilingual-speaking communities engage in code-switching, claim Paradis, Genesee, and Cargo (2011). Furthermore, the word "CodeSwitching" denotes the *"employment of elements from two languages in the same utterance or stretch of dialogue,"* suggesting that switching from one code to another takes place inside a single utterance

Many scholars who have tried to define this phenomenon have discussed code-switching. The mixing of words, phrases, and sentences from two different grammatical (sub) systems across sentence boundaries within the same speech event is referred to as code-switching by Bokamba (1989, p.278). By switching from one code to another, it happens inside the same single phrase.

The bilingual speaker has several lexical words at his disposal that enable him to interchange between codes for various purposes and circumstances. As Holmes (2000) asserts, *"Speakers have an actual choice about which words or*

sentences they will use in which language". In this regard, bilinguals can choose alternative words and languages while changing from one code to another as a result. Jakobson et al. (1952, p.604) state, *"Two styles of the same language may have divergent codes and be consciously interrelated within one utterance or even one sentence,"*. However, this implies that there is a code for each language style.

Code-switching describes the simultaneous use of multiple languages or dialects by bilingual individuals (Gardner, 2009). CS is the practice of bilingual individuals who speak in more than one code (language or dialect) at the same time.

1.2.2. Borrowing

Speakers throughout the world combine words from their native tongue and other languages to convey ideas or describe objects. These words are used because of the close contact between the two languages, the dominance of some languages over others, or just because their native tongue lacks an equivalent. The term "borrowing" refers to this behavior.

According to Spolsky (1998, p. 49), *"The switching of words is the beginning of borrowing, which occurs when the new word becomes more or less integrated into the second language,"*

In addition, Hudson (1996, p.55) claimed that, *"Borrowing includes mixing the systems themselves because an item is 'borrowed' from one language to become part of the other language".* While, Aikhenvald (2000, p. 44) said that borrowing is defined as *"the transfer of traits of any type from one language to another as the result of contact".*

Even in the speech of monolingual Algerian speakers, borrowing is a prevalent practice. Due to the periodic invasions, various foreign languages influenced the Algerian dialect linguistically. The foreign language that had the strongest impact on Algerian Arabic is French. Many phrases and terms have been changed from FR to AA. The following table lists a few instances of French to Algerian Arabic borrowings:

Table 1.1: Examples of borrowing from FR to AA

AA	FR	Gloss
/bu:sta/	Poste	Post-office
/bla:ša/	Place	Place
/vi:sta/	Veste	Jacket
/vali:za/	Valise	Suitcase
/neprovoki:h/	Je le provoque	I provoke him
/dubli:tuh/	Je l'ai doublé	I overtook him
/SarZi:tuh/	Je l'ai chargé	I charge it

1.2.3 Diglossia

Diglossia refers to the coexistence of two varieties of the same language. One form is regarded as superior to another, and vice versa. Standard Arabic is Algeria's official language, as we have already mentioned. There are other regional variations in addition to that. There is a dialect unique to each area. However, very few people in Algeria use SA, which is regarded as an official dialect of Arabic that is only

used in formal contexts. Traditionally, Algerians spoke their local dialect of Arabic in everyday discussions. (Marçais, 1930, p.401)

William Marçais used the term “Diglossie” in 1930 to describe the linguistic situation in Arabic-speaking countries. He says:

“The Arabic language appears under two perceptibly different aspects: 1) a literary language so-called written Arabic or regular or literal or classical, the only one that had always and everywhere been written in the past, the only one in which still today is written literary or scientific works, newspaper articles, Judiciary acts, private letters. In a word, everything that is written, but which is exactly as it is, has perhaps never been spoken anywhere. And which in any case, is not spoken now anywhere; 2) spoken idioms, patois... none of which has ever been written ... But, which everywhere and perhaps for a long time are the only language of conversation in all popular and cultural circles”

Arabic has two forms in Marçais’ view, one traditional for writing and the other almost entirely oral. He regarded CA as a language that has always been written but has never been spoken because it was not written during the "Djehilya," or pre-Islamic time. Although it was written quite some time after the prophet Mohamed passed away, it was not even written at the advent of Islam. Othman Ibn Affan's first draft of the Koran is where it all began.

Ferguson coined the term "Diglossia" to refer to a situation in which two dialects of the same language are utilized for various functions. He claims there is a high variety and a low variety. The other variation is employed in informal areas,

while the dominant variety is used in official settings. Diglossia is described according to him as follows:

“Diglossia is a relatively stable language situation in which, in addition to the primary dialects of the language (which may include a standard or regional standard), there is a very divergent, highly codified (often grammatically more complex) superposed variety, the vehicle of a large and respected body of written literature. Either of an earlier period or in another speech community, which learned largely by formal education and is used for most written and formal spoken purposes but it is not used by any sector of the community for ordinary conversation.”

(Ferguson, 1959, p. 16)

In Arabic-speaking nations as well as in the German and Greek communities, Ferguson established Diglossia. He defined diglossia as a form of bilingualism in which one language is of the high variety "H" and the other, which is a member of the same language, is of the low variety "L" in a particular community. He distinguished between the two dialects of the same language. He separated them into groups based on their roles. He regarded the high variety, which is utilized in formal contexts like education and formal speech, as the norm. The low variety, however, is employed in unconventional settings like at home or in one's personal life. It serves as the primary means of informal and daily spoken communication. Hence, "L" is regarded as being inferior. (Ferguson, 1959, p.245)

Table 1.2 The specialization of functions of the two different varieties of Arabic.

- Sermons in church or mosque	H
- Instructions to servants, workmen	L
- Personal letters	H
- Speech in parliament	H
- University lectures	H
- Conversation with family, friends, colleagues	L
- News broadcast	H
- Newspaper editorial news story	H
- Poetry	H
- Folk literature	L
- Radio "Soap Opera"	L

As a result, a distinct type is utilized in each setting, as indicated in the above table. "H" will be utilized in official or formal settings; but in social, familiar, or informal settings, "L" would be used. He made the case that sermons in a church or a mosque should be held in H because it is a sacred space where people should speak formally by outlining the roles of each type. However, what about the "Imam" of a mosque who occasionally shifts between CA and AA to be understood? Moreover, Personal letters are typically written in the colloquial style, or "L," to friends or relatives. The context of the parliament is formal, but if we study the President of Algeria's address, we can claim that it uses a combination of CA and AA. Even at universities, lecturers occasionally utilize AA to clarify ideas and be understood. When people talk to their family, friends, coworkers, etc., they use AA.

Since there has recently been a renewed interest in the concept of diglossia (Fishman 1983, Tabouret-Keller, 1982) and its applicability to the language situation in the Arab world, the phenomenon of diglossia has generated very heated polemics until doubts about its existence and spread from one society to another, in particular in Arabic. In Arabic, the terms "diglossia" and "bilingualism" are quite similar; the former describes the coexistence of numerous linguistic registers of the same language, while the latter refers to the coexistence of two different languages. (Mahmoud 1986, p.239)

1.3. Language Acquisition

Scholars agreed that first language acquisition refers to the natural imbibing of a given language; unlike language learning which necessitates lectures and practice through a systematic process. In addition, children who are exposed to two or more languages from their birth, will simultaneously acquire them with equal competence as their first language (Niruba: 2015). They will be called bilingual children only if they are exposed to language A and language B no later than one week from exposure to the first one and "*most do refer to acquisition before age three as simultaneous acquisition*" (ibid).

3.1. Theories of Language Acquisition:

Numerous paradigms are underpinning the study of child language acquisition, which is hard to cover all of them in this thesis; the following are the most common and repetitive ones among researchers:

3.1.1. Nature Vs Nurture

It debates whether children acquire certain language (s) naturally or whether it is a set of skills acquired through regulated activities as its name denotes. Noam Chomsky supports the first view; that is to say, language is acquired naturally when saying, *“Language is an innate process derived from human minds since birth. It is one unique characteristic contributing only to human and not influenced by external environment”* (2006).

In other words, he denies the view that language can be influenced by external settings, and strengthened his stand with the notion of Language Acquisition Device (LAD), which is the natural mechanism of acquiring language that is unique to human beings (ibid); he reinforced it with the example of babies who learned the language spontaneously and none could disagree with.

However, we cannot neglect the role of the surrounding environment in a child’s language development. Jacqueline Sachs, Barbara Bard and Marie L. Johnson (1981) proved that environment plays an integral part in improving a child’s language by giving the example of deaf parents and their children who needed language therapists to develop their communicative skills. This will be explained further in Vygotsky’s “Social Interaction Theory”.

3.1.2. Cognitive Theory

Jean Piaget’s thought on language acquisition differs from the above-mentioned views. He believes that children are active learners and they operate in a systematic way to make sense of their surroundings. Trang Dao (2019) states:

“Piaget’s theory circulates that children’s language reflects the development of their logical thinking and reasoning skills through

concrete stages corresponding to age reference: Sensorimotor (up to 2 years of age), Preoperational (2-7 years of age), Concrete Operational (7-11 years of age), Formal Operational (11years old and up)”

Following Dao’s (2019) thought, during the first stage, kids start to get in touch with their outside world for the first time. Moreover, they socialize with and utter simple words to communicate their needs, feeling the outside world and classifying objects. In the next stage, they develop their vocabularies and formulate complex sentences characterized by being egocentric. For the last two stages, “7-11 years old kids can achieve systematic thinking about concrete events and from 11 years old, abstract reasoning starts to take place.” (ibid)

Following the same line of thought, when talking about bilingual child language acquisition, it is essential to shed light on the age factor. Ruyun (2016) mentioned the “Age Critical Hypothesis”. Stating that there is a period where children excel in acquiring language (s) better than other one (s). As mentioned by Ellis (1986, p. 107) “*There is the period when language acquisition can take place naturally and efficiently, but after a certain age the brain is no longer able to process language in this way*” (cited in Ruyun: 2016). Some followed the view “*the younger the best*” and others supported “*the older the best*”. Yet, the majority agreed that early age is the best to acquire a language.

3.1.3.Social Interaction Theory

Vygotsky is the pioneer of this paradigm; he sees the language acquisition process as complicated to be broken as Piaget did; moreover, he stressed the essential role of social interaction in language development contradicting Chomsky's view when saying that language is innate per se. Wherein, he introduced the term 'Zone of Proximal Development and defined it as:

"The distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky 1978, p68).

The scholar emphasized the importance of adults' guidance plays in the improvement of a child's cognitive skills. Besides, the ZPD term can be best exemplified through the collaborative work in classrooms between teachers and pupils or between peers themselves (Doe 2019).

2.3. Monolingualism Vs Bilingualism

2.3.1. Monolingualism

The capacity to speak only one language is known as monolingualism. By acquiring a second language, a person picks up a language other than their mother tongue or first language (s). Normal first languages are natural tongues, and second languages are learned as foreign languages (Jean-Mark, 2015).

General dictionaries and specialist linguistic dictionaries define monolingual variously as follows:

Richards & Schmidt(2002)stated,“*Monolingualism is a person who knows and uses only one language and a person who has an active knowledge of only one language, though perhaps a passive knowledge of others*”.

Other terms occasionally seen are monoglot “*that speaks, writes or understands only one language*” (Shorter Oxford Dictionary), or unilingual, which Crystal (1987) also gives as a synonym for monolingual.

These definitions are straightforward in one sense, but the one of Richards and Schmidt definition gives us a hint of complexity because it says that a person can be monolingual and still have passive knowledge of other languages. Even a basic review of the literature on bilingualism will introduce the reader to definitions that have ranged from one extreme (of double native-like competency) to the other, as well as to the widely held belief that bilingualism eludes straightforward descriptions of a few words in a second language.

Hence, according to Bloomfield (1933, p.56), a well-known definition of a bilingual is someone who has "a native-like control of two languages," although Diebold (1964) said that the first sign of incipient bilingualism is the ability to recognize words in a second language. Everyone is bilingual, declares Edwards (2004a) at the outset of his essay on the subject. In other words, nobody in the world (at least not an adult) is illiterate in at least a few words of languages other than their mother tongue. There is certainly a theoretical foundation for categorizing this as a sort of bilingualism because it is equally common to be unilingual (for example, in English), yet bidialectal, for instance, in Standard English and Aboriginal English (Eades, 2003).

Even monolingual speakers have access to various registers, giving them exposure to social and linguistic diversity. Yet, we must create a boundary between "being monolingual" and "being bilingual" if we want to recognize "monolingualism" as a phenomenon. Many people today agree that bilingualism is best understood as a continuum (Haugen, 1973), and as a result, the exact point on the continuum that distinguishes a bilingual from a monolingual will depend on the objectives and goals of those proposing it.

Therefore, we contend that while no single definition will be useful for all purposes because it may exclude many different types of experience that fall within the mentioned parameters, the broad definition presented above (Hamers & Blanc, 2000) has a place in the effort to establish how monolingualism and bilingualism can be distinguished from one another.

2.3.2. Bilingualism

The most notable quality of bilingualism is its diversity, which means that whether we approach it from a societal or an individual perspective, we must keep in mind that there are no clear boundaries. Bilingualism has many distinct definitions, descriptions, and interpretations since it defies categorization.

Since the start of the 20th century, the definition of bilingualism has changed. A variety of varieties, including balanced and unbalanced bilingualism, compound and coordinate, additive or subtractive, and passive or active, are commonly proposed in terms of dichotomies. Yet, there is not a unified definition encompassing all bilinguals, and some of the implications that have been applied are too wide or inconsistent.

Weinreich (1968), who is one of the founding fathers of bilingual studies, presents one of the shortest definitions of bilingualism: *"The practice of alternately using two languages will be labeled bilingualism and the individual participating, bilingual"*.

Hence, bilingualism refers to the capacity to switch between two codes in everyday interaction with the individual. The point at which a speaker of a second language becomes bilingual, however, is arbitrary or difficult to establish, and Mackey (1970) proposes a definition that integrates Weinreich's alternate usage of two languages, and he views bilingualism as something completely proportionate. He states as follows:

"It seems obvious that if we are to study the phenomenon of bilingualism we are forced to consider it as something entirely relative. We must moreover include the use not only of two languages but of any number of languages. We shall therefore consider bilingualism as the alternate use of two or more languages by the same individual". (p.555)

An individual who is bilingual to some extent has a greater command of one language than the other does. Nevertheless, as Spolsky (2004) noted, few individuals are both proficient and fluent in two languages.

"If we count as a bilingual only someone with an equal and native command of two or more languages, we exclude the vast majority of cases and are left with the least interesting. In practice, then, scholars in the field treat bilingualism as a

relative rather than an absolute phenomenon, and consider anyone able to produce (or even understand) sentences in more than one language as the proper object of their study; the explanation of different levels of control of the two or more languages (or varieties) then becomes an issue of central theoretical concern'. (PP.100-101)

The most important cause of bilingualism in Algeria is colonization. While French occupation up until 1830 brought the French into contact with Arabic, the Arabe conquest brought Arabic into contact with Berber. Hence, there are two types of bilingualism: Arabic/French and Berber /French;(a third type, which existed before the French colonialisation,is Arabic/Berber, though in just a few areas of the country).

3.2.1. Various Types of Bilingualism

Communities with different languages differ from one another because different factors are applied to each community and because each member of the society will react differently to these variables. According to Hamers and Blanc (2000), bilingual communities are comprised of the following elements.

'Every bilingual community is situated between the two poles of a continuum, ranging from a set made up of two unilingual groups each containing a small number of bilinguals to a single group with a more or less large number of members using a second language for specific purposes. At one pole most speakers in each group use only one language for all functions,

whereas at the other a varying number of speakers use both languages but for different purposes''. (Hamers and Blanc, 2000, p.31)

Sociolinguists perceive the possibility of identifying three basic types of societal bilingualism:

3.2.1.1. Horizontal Bilingualism

(Pohl,1965) declared that the two Luxembourg, it means that it presents trilingualism rather than bilingualism. The three languages are distributed in a complementary way in Luxembourg and are therefore possibly used functionally. It is officially trilingual, with the three languages being German, French, and Luxembourgish, allowing for the specialized use of each in a variety of contexts. By the country constitution, adults are required to be at least functional in all three languages, which they typically employ in complementary distribution.

3.2.1.2. Territorial Bilingualism

Carens (2000) mentions countries including India, Switzerland, and Canada. Territorial bilingualism does not apply to the whole country, but rather to more isolated regions where we observe a fairly parallel distribution of the two languages in the issue since each group lives inside its own officially defined zone. Despite being officially bilingual, these countries operate more like two monolingual regions within one country. For instance, Canada is a recognized bilingual nation, and the constitution protects the minority's rights to speak French. However, this comes after a contentious political battle in which Québec, a French-speaking province, threatened to quit Canada.

3.2.1.3. Societal Bilingualism

It refers to countries that are officially monolingual but have other languages of greater communication in their repertory, as suggested by Hamers and Blanc (2000). This kind is more prevalent in African and Asian countries where the languages either can be a lingua franca or superimposed languages forced by political decision-making typically inherited from a colonial past and only in specified official areas.

1.4. Early Bilingualism

Being multi-faceted is a linguistic phenomenon and a sophisticated human ability, bilingualism exhibits a variety of facets, including linguistic or structural, psychological or cognitive factors, social and sociopolitical. Because of this, it should come as no surprise that attempting to identify, classify, or label a bilingual speaker is difficult.

Early bilingualism emerges when young children start routinely hearing two languages instead of only one. These languages may be introduced to children at birth or they may begin to learn a second language much later. Children in the first situation have gone through a process known as bilingual first language acquisition, or BFLA. (Meisel, 1989; De Houwer, 1990, 2009), while the second type of bilingualism will result from learning a second language at school, for instance.

Many bilingual children grow up in settings that support their proficient and frequent use of two languages; others are not as fortunate. To their own or their family members' dismay, they may be able to speak two languages, but only comprehend one, or they may speak two languages in ways that are ineffective in

their setting. Bilingual families may also experience conflicts that are related to their status as bilinguals. Their parents, teachers, and speech therapists frequently expect bilingual children to operate in both of their languages at least as well as monolinguals. Although a sizable percentage of society still believes this myth, scientific data disproves it.

As the review in the opening section of this post has demonstrated, many English as a second language acquisition children (ESLA) can learn to speak their L2 pretty well indeed, while early BFLA children can speak each of their languages without discernible systematic influence from the other. The notion that youngsters can pick up a second language quickly is another prevalent fallacy. (Lanza, 1997).

While some young children who are exposed to a new language may quickly be able to say a few carefully chosen words and phrases in that language and may be able to effectively take part in casual conversations. It typically takes ESLA children several years to master a language. When they first begin speaking; ESLA children under the age of six may acquire their early bilingualism (new language) more quickly than monolingual and BFLA children. But the most recent research indicates that it still takes at least a year or two after initial regular contact with an L2 for young ESLA children to become fluent conversational partners (however, there is wide variation between young ESLA children in the speed with which they learn to speak their new language; (see also Meisel, 2009; De Houwer, 2011).

To put it simply, Bilingual children require the time and resources to master both of their languages. This straightforward reality urges parents in bilingual

households to speak to them as frequently as they can and should make an effort to speak to them frequently in each language. When parents use a second language outside the home but only one language is used at home, the first language should be spoken a lot. Parents should make an effort to increase their vocabulary in the home language as their kids enter school so that it continues to be a vital tool for communication and gives them the possibility to advance in their L1 (De Houwer, 2011).

The understanding that bilingual children require the time and chance to learn their L2 would hopefully help teachers and speech therapists avoid a common response to ESLA children's early silence at school, which can be interpreted as a sign of language impairment (e.g., Shin, 2005). This time of silence is a typical, common aspect of the L2 learning process: Youngsters must learn to grasp the new language and adjust to it, but such a process takes time.

1.4.1 Features of Child Bilingualism

Child bilinguals are those children who have been raised bilingually, that is, those who have picked up two languages early in life, as opposed to adult or late bilingualism. This sort of bilingualism is termed „infancy“ or „childhood“ bilingualism as opposed to „adolescent“ and „adulthood“ bilingualism. Early bilingualism is further divided into two groups according to Hamers & Blanc (2000): “simultaneous early bilingualism and consecutive, sequential, or successive early bilingualism. The former refers to early or newborn bilingualism, in which a kid simultaneously acquires two mother tongues (LA and LB)”. When a child is born into a mixed-language family, one parent speaks to them in their native tongue

while the other parent does so in a different language. In fact, the "one person, one language" tenet is the foundation of the majority of case studies of multilingual children. Another scenario is when both parents are bilingual, typically in a bilingual neighborhood.

However, when a second language (L2) is picked up in early childhood after mastering the fundamentals of the mother tongue, this is known as consecutive, sequential, or successive early bilingualism (L1). The context of acquisition in this kind might be formal or informal; for example, a kid may learn a second language in a formal setting, such as a school setting through classroom instruction. In addition, a child may acquire a second language informally as in the case of immigrant families.

Children who are bilingual and fluent in two languages are frequently regarded as geniuses, especially in societies like the United States where the majority of people speak one language (Baker, 2001; Myer-Scotton, 2006). Nonetheless, it is a natural ability of these individuals to learn any human language to which they are exposed, going through the same phases as their monolingual counterparts.

According to Myers-Scotton (2006:328), "*when children hear two languages from birth, Meisel (1989) has called this bilingual first language acquisition,*" whereas other researchers prefer to use the term "*bilingual child language acquisition*" in contrast to "*child language acquisition,*" which denotes the acquisition of only one language.

Although it is generally accepted that Second Language Acquisition (SLA) is "*less successful in older learners*" as proposed by Myers-Scotton, the subject of "*critical age*" is controversial and highly contested as it still needs solid proof (ibid: 367) in a less formal way (Baker, 2001, p.87).

To summarize, research on child bilingualism focuses on two primary issues: first, the subject of language differentiation, which seeks to determine whether a child who speaks two languages keeps them separate or mingles them. The second is the crucial age hypothesis, which requires persistent study to support and subsequently prove.

According to Myers-Scotton, there has been a rise in interest in researching bilingual child language since 1990. Given the foregoing, the primary query that remains is, "Why is it worthwhile to investigate child bilingualism? What, then, is the objective (or purpose) of studying bilingualism in children?"

According to Myers-Scotton (2006), there are theoretical as well as practical justifications for conducting this type of research. Practically speaking, ignoring such studies would leave a large portion of people without careful insight, and ultimately their language development might not be ensured, leading to pathological problems.

This is supported by the fact that many people have grown up speaking two languages simultaneously. On the other hand, there are theoretical justifications for researching child bilingualism, including those connected to the formation of bilingual languages. Research on language acquisition is frequently relied on

monolingual studies in the literature, without consideration for bilingual or multilingual acquisition.

According to Myers-Scotton (ibid), Code Switching among young bilinguals is likewise systematic in terms of the processes of (CS) code-switching and (CM) code mixing. Because they adhere to the structural limitations of CS, children behave linguistically in a manner that is similar to that of adults. According to Myers-Scotton (2006), there is mounting proof that a child's simultaneous use of two languages (code switching) is systematic. In this instance, to claim something is systematic indicates that only one language's grammatical patterns are permitted within the same "child phrase" (a single utterance). (p. 333)

1.4.2 Comparison between Bilingual and Monolingual Children

The ability to learn a language naturally and within its cultural context is referred to as acquisition in linguistics. This ability is typically human and is only found in humans. Children simply pick up the language of the community in which they are raised without making any conscious effort. A normal child—one without any speech defects—will pick up the language of the environment to which she or he is exposed, even without any coaching from parents eager to hear their child talk (Mayer-Scotton, 2006).

When a child is exposed to two or more languages when they are very young, they are said to acquire them. Youngsters who are exposed to two or more languages as they grow up pick up each one similarly to monolinguals. Bilingual Acquisition during childhood can thus be seen as an instance of simultaneous two 'first' languages. Children who are exposed to more than two languages at once can

learn each one with a proficiency that does not significantly differ from that of monolinguals. Hence, bilingualism is a unique instance of multilingualism.

Several researchers impose very strict temporal restrictions on what qualifies as multilingual acquisition. De Houwer (1990) suggested that for a child to acquire bilingualism, exposure to language B must occur no later than one week after exposure to language A and must be fairly consistent throughout the day. While not all researchers divide learning before the age of three into discrete and simultaneous learning, the majority do. In the course, the definition of bilingual may differ depending on the researcher. There are issues around the terminology used by scholars.

In distinguishing the study of monolingual children from that of bilingual children, the following four critical features of bilingual language acquisition are taken into account as necessary:

- The volume and variety of input from the two languages.
- The potential for an imbalance or predominance of one language over another.
- The interplay between the two language systems or their division.
- Sociopsychological aspects of multilingual development and use.

Genesee (2001) makes a compelling argument in favor of the importance of child bilingualism. The majority of people on Earth are bilingual, and many of them began learning two languages at the same time when they were young. This is the most practical explanation

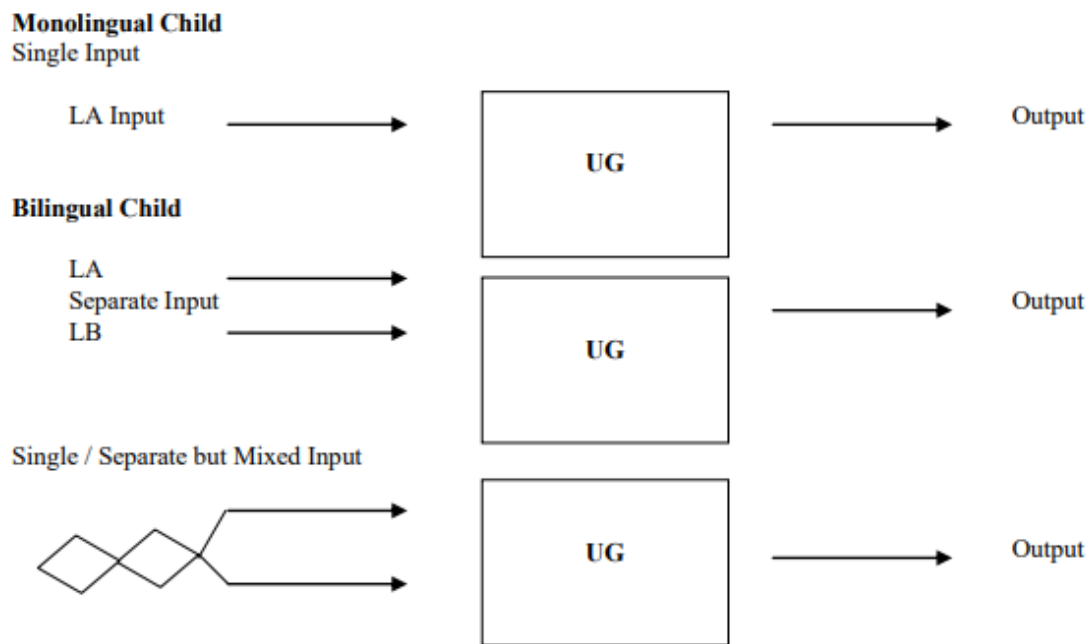


Figure 1.1: Language Input Diagram (Jayasundara, 2015, p.33)

The present figure presents that a language input diagram typically represents the flow and components involved in language processing or understanding. It visually illustrates the various stages or elements that contribute to the input and interpretation of language.

II. Introduction to the Concept of Bilingualism in Algeria

II.1. Overview of the Two Major Languages Spoken in Algeria (MSA and French)

"Raising your child bilingually will cause complications," An oft-repeated piece of advice offered to parents in the late 18th century, (Baker, 2001, p.135), indicates that bilingualism was believed to have numerous psychological and linguistic issues. Recently, this unfavorable viewpoint has been debunked. Yet, worries regarding bilingual or multilingual people's inability to control two or more languages still exist.

II.1.1. The case of MSA:

The complex sociolinguistic environment of Algeria is exemplified by the coexistence of numerous languages and dialects, including Arabic, Berber, French, English, and others. The Algerian context is notable for pushing Arabic as the national and official language of all Algerians, despite its acknowledged diversity (in addition to Berber nowadays). The other current codes have always been in contact with Arabic, which has fought to preserve its status and worth in Algeria. The term "Arabic" in this context is also ambiguous because it makes no mention of the validity of the defunct Classical Arabic (CA) or the need that Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) to be used in official contexts. The study at hand focuses on the formal written variation of Arabic (MSA), which is taught in all Algerian schools, out of all Arabic dialects present in Algeria. (Gabdon, 2002, p.63)

MSA, which is developed from the Quranic language, is often referred to as Literary Arabic or Standard Arabic (CA). Compared to CA, it is a more straightforward, less sophisticated form of modern Arabic with a broader vocabulary and simpler grammar. In the eighteenth century, MSA evolved from CA due to a large number of words and expressions that were added to Arabic from other languages. It was primarily created to foster solidarity among Arab nations, safeguard the language's integrity, maintain it, and modernize it to satisfy social and linguistic demands. MSA is viewed as a formal variant in both spoken and written form in Algeria. It is taught in schools and is utilized in academic instruction, political discourse, and national constitutions. Also, it appears in the media. The majority of Algerians with college degrees completed their primary and secondary

educations in MSA. Yet, since Algeria is a country with multiple languages and numerical codes, MSA is not the sole variation that Algerians are typically exposed to. The verbal vocabulary of Algerians comprises the following in addition to MSA (Gabdon, 2002, p.64):

II.1.1.1. Classical Arabic (CA)

With the initial Arab-Islamic invasion of North Africa, the stable variety and classical form of Arabic were introduced in Algeria. Arabic is recognized as the language of the Holy Qur'an, Islamic studies, religious affairs, and the first literature in Arabian countries (North Africa, the Middle East, and the Arabian Peninsula).

Furthermore, regardless of their nationality or mother tongue, all Muslims use it during prayers. The majority of Arabic literature is found in the codified variant of CA, which comprises a substantial number of religious, grammatical, and literary works. Classical Arabic is still used exclusively for religious texts and matters of faith today and is a frozen, nearly dead language. (Lahmer, 2020, p.59)

II.1.1.2. Algerian Dialectal Arabic (ADA):

Perhaps the more casual form of Arabic is called "Colloquial Arabic." Except for those whose mother tongue is Berber or one of its variations, or occasionally French, it is considered to be the mother tongue of the majority of Algerians. All continuums of Algerian dialects exhibit this diversity; a wide range of Algerian dialects may be mutually intelligible or not. In casual settings, oral situations, and everyday talks, ADA is employed. It was developed as a result of interactions between many tongues, including Arabic, Berber, French, Turkish, and Spanish. Due to this linguistic interaction, Arabic's lexicon changed and developed new

phonological traits. In contrast to MSA, ADA is spoken rather than written. (Lahmer, 2020, p.60)

II.1.1.3 Berber

This phrase described the native dialect of those who lived in North Africa, primarily in the central Maghreb (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Mauritania, and Libya). Together with other variants (Chaouia, Tamasheq, and Mozabie), Tamazight was the primarily spoken variety of Berber, and it continues to be the most common variety of Berber today. Tamazight and Arabic have coexisted since the arrival of Muslims in Numidia, and following the Arab conquest, Muslim Berbers started learning Arabic. It was only a matter of time before Arabic overran and took control. Tamazight was neglected after French colonization, and the French authorities at the time had a bad opinion of Tamazight variations because they were thought to be uneducated. Up until 2002, Tamazight was Algeria's second official national language and its official language. By 2016, Tamazight has replaced Arabic as the country's official language. (ibid)

II.1.2. The Role of MSA in the Algerian Speech Community

With the French colonization of Algeria in 1830, MSA has been experiencing a decline. The Arabic language, the language of Islam, and the Holy Qur'an were among the first aspects of Algerian identity that the French colonizer attempted to obliterate. The educated elite of the elderly now prefers French, whereas English and other foreign languages are preferred by the younger generation. It was challenging for MSA to prevail in this context because such languages dominated the linguistic landscape. (Lahmer, 2020, p.93)

Due to the general irreverence shown by Algerians for this particular dialect of Arabic, MSA usage is generally declining in Algeria. Furthermore, Algerian governmental officials restrict the use of MSA while having the power to revitalize and disseminate it throughout a variety of industries. Altwaijri (2017) said the following in this regard:

“The current situation of the Arabic language in general, and on many levels, is unbecoming; not due to the nature of the language itself (syntax, structure or patterns), but mainly on account of the inattention and carelessness shown by its speakers. Particularly, the exclusion and marginalization displayed by public officials who hold the key of bringing Arabic back to life, instead of constraining its use”. (P. 12)

Despite the progress MSA has made in social networks and media, according to Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, it is regressing at the educational level. He attributes this deterioration to flaws in the instructional strategies and the low standards of the teachers. He suggests:

“The category of students who join Arabic language departments at faculties of letters and education and teachers’ training centers. They are usually composed of students who failed to join other faculties and found themselves compelled to make this choice, which, in turn, impacts badly the knowledge level of these faculties’ graduates, particularly those hired as teachers in primary, secondary, and high school levels”. (2017, p. 12)

There have not been many studies on the decline of MSA, especially in Algeria. Yet, as the research reviewed in the two titles before investigates the state of MSA in the Arab world, it can be useful to Algerian speech communities.

II.1.3. The impact of MSA on bilingual children

Depending on the region they live in, children in Algeria are frequently exposed to a range of linguistic codes. Most Algerian children learn their mother tongue, or AA, from birth, with the knowledge that this variant is rich in French words and idioms. Additionally, some families are classified as "Francophones" since they want to promote French over Arabic. The "Arabophones" represent the other extreme, where some parents actively push their kids to learn and speak MSA. Besides the two extremes, many kids are motivated to learn and utilize Arabic and French, or Berber and French to the same degree.

The latter kind of family educates their kids in two languages and helps them feel comfortable speaking French, particularly during the academic years when French is taught as a foreign language. The children of Arabophones, meanwhile, are more likely to struggle with French yet succeed in MSA. The child's exposure to the languages in question is crucial in general, but it is unknown how much and how well they are exposed. Children unquestionably pick up the language or dialect that their parents or other caregivers employ when speaking with them. (Myers-Scotton, 2006).

Once in school, the child consolidates his or her knowledge of French but also encounters another issue because of the stark contrast and gap between the standard

forms of Arabic, which is the first language learned in elementary school, or MSA, and the child's mother tongue, which is the colloquial form of Arabic.

Yet, the Algerian infant is exposed to both AA and French to varied degrees and extents from infancy. As a result, he or she creates a linguistic structure consisting of a base language, typically the AA variation or the Berber variety in other locations, and an embedded language, in this case, French. Usually, through imitation, the child picks up these varieties unconsciously and without any apparent difficulty. Another situation occurs when parents only use AA and only a few French-established loans, while also noting that their kids are exposed to MSA through TV and then school, as well as CA if they are sent to the mosque to learn the Qur'an (Dendane, 2007, p.139).

With the most recent reform regulating the teaching of French in primary schools, French is now taught alongside Arabic in the third grade of primary schools. It should be noted that the Algerian language policy adheres to a traditional language education rather than a bilingual education, with Arabic serving as the primary language of instruction for all other subjects (including math, history, and geography), while French is taught as a separate subject. It is also important to note that while explaining lessons to students in primary schools, AA is also used, though to a lesser extent and depending on the student's proficiency. Unquestionably, the Algerian government offers free and required education; as a result, the educational system's motto is "education for all." On the one hand, this has increased the rate of literacy, but on the other, it may lead to a decrease in educational standards.

Briefly, the language development of an Algerian child happens in two phases: before and after they start school. The child first encounters at least one or two kinds of AA or Berber, French, MSA, and CA. Second, starting in the third year of primary school following the relative acquisition of French before school age as part of AA or individually, he or she begins studying MSA in a formal context, (Bensafi, 2002) i.e., at school, at the age of six. Bensafi (2002, p.839) reaffirms this when saying, "*School children in Algeria do not feel they are discovering a new language when they study French, but rather that they are somehow improving their "native acquaintance," targeting near-native performance.*"

It is unusual to hear certain English terms used in the speech of Algerian children given the development of ICTs and the process of globalization. This is not to imply that English will replace French in the basic grades; after all, it already did so when the Algerian government substituted English for French in the primary grades in the late 1980s (Bensafi, 2002)

Language planners of the time replaced the French language with the formation of a neutral language called "English" in a step towards worldwide recognition and modernization, driven by the idea of "Arabization". Although the experience demonstrated a desire to erase the language of the former colonizer, it was poorly executed and ultimately failed (Bensafi, 2002). The Algerian government has strengthened English in middle, secondary, and higher education in response to the need for English study and instruction. As a result, English is now taught in all academic departments and disciplines. (Djebbari, 2016: p.5).

II.1.4. The case of French:

Even though many nations conquered Algeria, the French language had a considerably greater impact on the Algerian linguistic system. In this respect, Calvet (1974, p. 219) states:

“Though the French left Algeria a long time ago, their language has not. This is so at several levels and works differently in Algiers. In Algeria, French was inherited from the colonial power and became the language of the bureaucracy. Statistically, Algeria is the most francophone country among the old colonies.”

As we already mentioned, the presence of French in Algeria is mostly due to colonial reasons in the past in addition to some economic and political factors in the present. French has not been classified as an official language, yet it is widely used by the government and members of Algerian society.

Following independence, Algerian officials attempted to Arabize their country by attempting to replace French with Modern Standard Arabic. They did not completely disregard the French language, though, as they mandated that it be taught as the first foreign language in schools. As a result, French continued to be spoken by younger generations.

Since many scientific disciplines, including biology, mathematics, physics, and others, are taught in this language, French is currently taught in elementary schools starting in the third year. It is also taught in higher education. Most Algerians, especially those in the north, are proficient users; some of them appear to be masters, while others, even if they can't write it, can still speak it. Due to

frequent contact with French during the colonial era and thereafter, Algerian dialects are now recognized as containing a considerable number of French vocabulary, particularly in the form of borrowing. (Derrouiche & Djeziri , 2015).

II.1.4.1 Influence of French Colonization on the language landscape in Algeria

Before France invaded Algeria, the Turkish roiled the seas and were feared by European countries, who were compelled to pay high tributes to maintain peace and were taxed heavily for passing across the Mediterranean.

The invasion of Algeria was merely used by Charles X as a pretext to drive out the Turks; his real objective was to increase his power in France. Except for Great Britain, other European nations supported the French expedition because it permitted them to drive out Muslim Turks while reclaiming the banner of the great Christian crusade against Islam.

According to Algerian history, a minor quarrel between the Turkish Dey Husain and the French Consul M. Duval in 1827—known as the fan stroke event—was the cause of the French invasion of Algeria(Derrouiche & Djeziri, 2015). That marked the start of a protracted and bloody history that would alter the course of Algerian history and its linguistic landscape. In actuality, the incident served as a justification for the Algerian revolution.

Since that time, France has had practically complete authority over the Algerian people. The French colonizers arrived with the intention of "civilizing" the land by introducing a new language and culture, and they wished to change the Algerians and their history. The French colonists ruled Algerian society until the country gained its

independence and imposed the French language everywhere; it eventually replaced other languages in the country's administration, education, and employment. (Chachoua & Chami, 2020)

In actuality, Trari (2020) claimed that the French strategy was clear from the beginning: the complete invasion and destruction of the state's geography, culture, and linguistic heritage. The French authorities utilized language as a colonization tool. Just a few interpreters were fluent in French before the arrival of the French, and the country's first encounters with French were evident in vocabulary borrowings for items that did not have Algerian Arabic counterparts, such as [traktu:r] from French "tracteur" (tractor).

According to the Duke of Rovigo, the first serious effort to introduce the French language to Algeria involved the demonstration of a new French educational system to replace the Algerian one.

Yet, the Muslim middle class was where Algerian nationalism emerged after the First World War. This second group initially only demanded equal rights with Europeans but later wanted complete independence. The two main nationalist leaders were Ferhat Abbas, who warmly embraced the Blum-Violet idea, which promised to expand citizenship without any religious parallel in 1936, and Ahmed Messali Hadj, who founded the North African Star Party in 1962. However, the colonists of France opposed the bill.

In the same context, Saadane & Habash (2015) stated that the boundaries of North Africa changed at different times throughout the conquests. The French, whose colonization of Algeria began in 1830, drew the boundaries of contemporary

Algeria. The northern Algerian region was later divided into foreign departments of France, with representatives in the French National Assembly, to the benefit of the colonists, the majority of whom were farmers and businesspersons. Although the entire nation was under France's jurisdiction, the people living in the countryside were cut off from the developed economic system of the European Union.

On November 1st, 1954, indigenous Algerians started their uprising to reclaim the rights that were being withheld from them under French authority. The National Liberation Front (FLN), a tiny group of nationalists, started the revolution, which was a bloody conflict in which both sides employed terrorist strategies. The FLN and France eventually agreed to a cease-fire, which was signed on March 18, 1962, at Evian, France, after protracted discussions. In addition, until a vote on self-determination could be held, the Evian convention provided for continued economic, financial, technological, and cultural ties as well as temporary administrative arrangements. (Mouhadjer, 2002, p.36)

II.1.4.2. The Role of the French in the Algerian Speech Community Today and its Impact on Early Childhood Bilinguals

As the Arabization process was put into effect, which began in education, particularly at the elementary level, French was taught as a foreign language beginning in the fourth year (Hadri, 2018). During the academic year 2003–2004, there have been numerous changes in education. The government developed a new scheme. French is taught in elementary schools starting in the third year rather than the fourth. There have also been some changes made to how French is taught in middle and secondary schools (Hadri, 2018, p.51).

People's opinions toward the French language, which represented the French colonization of Algeria between 1830 and 1962, were hostile. In actuality, the colonized people rebelled "against both the French power and the French language" and refused to become French-speaking. (Bensafi, 2002, p.834).

Since the younger generation did not grow up under the cruelty and persecution of the French, sentiments about them have changed in Algeria today from unfavorable to good(Bensafi, 2022). As a result, the younger generation now equates French with grandeur, modernity, and advancement (Bensafi, 2002, p.189). It is false to claim that the recent attitude toward French has a favorable effect on pupils' academic achievement and performance. Academic failure in French is caused by a variety of other social and educational factors, including educational programs, instructional strategies, and the learners' various social contexts. (Hadri, 2018, p.60).

The use of French is still common outside of educational settings and among many Algerians, and those who use more French terms and expressions are seen as more sophisticated and educated(Hadri, 2018). Even individuals who do not speak French very well understand how important it is in the outside world.

They, therefore, make an effort to speak as much French as possible. In addition, it should be emphasized that females use French more frequently than boys do, which is consistent with their expressed preference for the language.

Conclusion

The complex Algerian environment offers an intriguing area of study for those interested in sociolinguistic studies. Its linguistic diversity has given rise to several phenomena that merit in-depth research. In this succinct assessment of bilingualism in Algeria, several facts have been presented, focusing solely on those that have had an impact on the current state of Algerian linguistic affairs and skipping over more historically pedagogically, and politically oriented ones.

The Algerian government has only recently acknowledged French AA bilingualism as an asset rather than a challenge or a detriment. Its linguistic strategy, which supports the teaching and learning of languages and encourages the study of French as a first foreign language and English as a second foreign language, reflects this. Although the official classification of these languages conflicts with the linguistic one, French has indirectly surpassed English since Algerians are more accustomed to the former. Nevertheless, English is also becoming more prevalent among Algerians in regular discourse.

There are undoubtedly too many French terms and idioms in AA because it is a socially accepted language. It appears that Algerians are increasingly favoring learning and using languages in general and French or English in particular.

Chapter Two

Research

Methodology and

Data Analysis

2.1 Introduction

Sociolinguistic research is a complex process that requires a well-structured methodology and careful analysis of the collected data obtained from informants. In the previous chapter, the focus was put on the literature related to the present research work. However, this chapter is devoted to the research to answer the questions raised. It states the research design and tools used to gather the data to analyze, and to discuss in an attempt to either confirm or reject our main hypotheses. To sum up, this chapter aims to provide a clear and comprehensive understanding of the methodology used to conduct this research and to ensure that the findings are reliable and valid.

2.2 Research design

The current study attempts to depict the benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism in Algeria. The nature of the exploration sets the choice of a mixed method, encompassing qualitative and quantitative tools, to attain our objectives: to explore and provide insights into the factors that may influence language development in this context.

2.3 Sampling and research informants

We have chosen a sample of participants from a large population by using a set of sampling techniques. The use of appropriate sampling methods can enhance the reliability and validity of the research findings.

2.3.1 Techniques

The first steps in sociolinguistic research involve determining the target population and selecting a suitable sample to investigate, which takes priority over

all other methodological considerations. To conduct the practical part of this research, a particular subset of the Algerian bilingual population was selected as a sample. A random sampling approach was employed to select a specific category of bilinguals, bilingual children in the region of Maghnia.

2.3.2. Participants' Profile

The participants can be classified into two distinct groups: those who completed the questionnaire (parents) and those who were observed (bilingual children).

✓ Bilingual children's profile

The participants in this study were children between 6 and 8 years old (males and females), who study in their third year and attend primary school. A sample of 130 children was chosen to make the results more valid.

On the whole, the sample population is made up of young Algerian bilinguals who share the same characteristics including age, level of education, and living in the same speech community, in Maghnia.

✓ Parents' profile

The parents raise bilingual children (males and females). The sample consisting of 100 parents was chosen to make the results more valid.

2.4 Research Instruments

The instruments used in this study, which may help to answer the hypotheses set at the beginning, are questionnaire and observation. The first one was administered to parents of bilingual children and the second one was conducted in three different schools in Maghnia. These instruments were used to get a

comprehensive view of the benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism in Algeria and to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

Overall, the questionnaire aimed to gather valuable insights from parents on their children's language acquisition and exposure to more than a language while the observation method allowed for the collection of first-hand data on children's language use and interaction in primary school settings. The combination of these instruments provided a comprehensive approach to studying the complex topic of early childhood bilingualism.

2.4.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are the most commonly used tool in sociolinguistic research and human sciences as a whole, primarily because they offer a straightforward method to gather a vast amount of information quickly and with less energy. This view is emphasized by Dörnyei (2007: 101) who believes that "the popularity of questionnaires is due to the fact that they are relatively easy to construct, extremely versatile, and uniquely capable of gathering a large amount of information quickly in a form that is readily accessible". Thus, and for our purposes, a questionnaire was designed for parents from Maghnia who raise bilingual children (males and females) to gather qualitative and quantitative data about their language use and their exposure to different contexts. Furthermore, to make the questionnaire more accessible and easier to understand for parents, it was written in Arabic to suit the needs of the population (see Appendix X). This can include simplifying language and ensuring that the questions are phrased in a way that is easy to understand. By doing so, the researcher can ensure that the questionnaire is culturally appropriate

and that parents can provide accurate and relevant information about their child's bilingualism.

As mentioned above, the questionnaire was addressed to 100 parents of bilingual children (males/females) who were selected randomly in Maghnia speech community. It comprises five (5) sections:

Section one (QU. 1- 2): deals with parents' data. It points to general questions about their gender and level of education.

Section two (QU. 3- 4): is devoted to children's personal information. It is about their age and gender.

Section three (QU. 5- 11): this section has to do with the linguistic situation of bilingual children.

Section four (QU. 12- 14): this section seeks to figure out the impact of being bilingual on children's competence and performance.

Section five (QU. 14-19): tries to infer parents' thoughts about bilingualism in early childhood.

2.4.2 Classroom Observation

Observation plays a central role in sociolinguistic research as it allows researchers to gather naturally-occurring data, including spontaneous speech. In line with this perspective, observation in the present study has been designed to verify hypotheses and provide adequate answers to the research questions. Thus, the observation is purposeful and selective, as the focus is on a specific group of bilinguals, namely child bilinguals aged between 6 and 8 years old. The research favors a disguised non-participant observation over participant observation(see

Appendix X), to reduce researcher bias and influence over the sample being studied. Note-taking was used as a technique to record the linguistic behaviour of the group being studied during the observation phase. This approach is advantageous because it enables the collection of factual data containing spontaneous speech by the participants, while also maintaining the researcher's complete invisibility, as note-taking can be carried out without the participants being aware.

The classroom observation was conducted in three different primary schools 'BENCHAGRA Ahmad' (28 pupils), 'MGHABAR Mohammed' (first class 35 and the second 37 pupils), and 'BEN DJELLOULE EL Jilali' (30 pupils), respectively in the city of Maghnia (Tlemcen). It lasted for 10 sessions (45 minutes for each). As already mentioned, this study focused on observing children in their third year of schooling.

The purpose of this stage is to observe children's behaviour towards French and MSA in the classroom. Twelve aspects were observed in the first part (French) and eight aspects were observed in the second part (MSA) to understand how children interact with the languages, their level of proficiency, their confidence in using them, and their overall engagement with French as a second language and MSA as a school language.

2.5 Data collection process

Data collection is a crucial step in the research process and should be carefully planned, especially when collecting data that cannot be replicated. Planning for data collection involves selecting and sampling participants or data sources.

In this research, the data collection process involved the use of modern technology to maximize efficiency and convenience. For the questionnaire, a link was generated through Google Forms to enable respondents to provide their feedback online. To expand the reach of the questionnaire, it was disseminated through social media platforms, specifically Facebook groups. The questionnaire was intentionally designed in English, which was then translated into Arabic to allow participants to respond in a language they feel at ease with. Google Forms was selected as the primary tool for creating the questionnaire to facilitate the analysis of data.

As for the observation, the data collection involved conducting it in three different schools located in Maghnia. To fulfill the objectives of this study, the observation focused on two classes: one for French and the second for MSA of third-year students. First, the researcher created a table outlining the main focus areas. This helped in staying organized to ensure that all relevant information was recorded. Then, we observed and recorded the children's language use and behaviour. The observations were conducted over a period of three weeks (10 sessions). For each observation, the most appropriate responses were selected from the table. By using this method, it was possible to gather consistent data across all three schools and ensure that the observation was systematic and comprehensive.

2.6 Mixed-method approach

Sociolinguistic research employs both quantitative and qualitative approaches to analyze data. In this context, (Dörnyei, 2007:45) states that:

We gain a better understanding of complex phenomena by converging numeric trends from quantitative data and specific details from qualitative data. Words can be used to add meaning to numbers and numbers can be used to add precision to words.

Some research instruments allow for the collection of qualitative data exclusively, while others may provide more qualitative or quantitative data. In general, the type of data obtained is determined by the type of questions asked in an interview or questionnaire. For instance, close-ended and multiple-choice questions are used to collect quantitative data, whereas open-ended questions are employed to gather qualitative information such as language attitudes and preferences. Therefore, the present study integrates quantitative and qualitative data analyses to explain the behavioural patterns of bilingual children aged between 6 and 8. By doing so, the study verifies the hypotheses and refutes them if necessary, or it may lead to the generation of new hypotheses for future research.

2.7. Analyses of Parents' Questionnaire

Section One: Parents' Personal Data

This section (Q1 and 2) deals with the personal data of the key informants

Question 01: Parents' Gender

Gender is one of the main variables that this paper deals with. The questionnaire has been distributed randomly to over 100 parents. It shows that females are more open to collaborate and more concerned with their children's studies and their well-being due to the traditional roles given by society to women (seeing them as housekeepers and child assistants).

Table 2.1: Parents' Gender

	Males	Females	Total
Parents' number	30	70	100
Percentage (%)	30%	70%	100 %

Question 02: Parents' level of education**2.** What is your highest level of education?

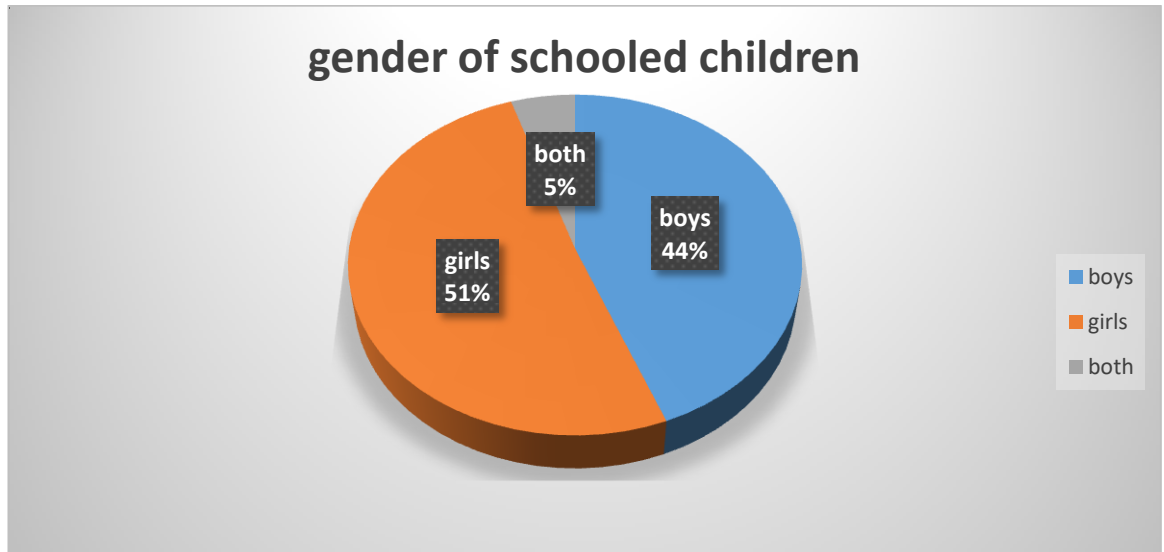
We believe that the level of parent's education is crucial in enhancing children's achievement. The gathered data show that the majority hold university level (60%), 30% secondary school, and 10% only stopped at primary school. One can denote that almost all parents are aware of the importance of learning foreign languages and the continuous development occurring in different fields over the world.

Table 2. 2: Parents' level of education

	Primary school	Secondary school	University	Total
Parents' number	10	30	60	100
Percentage (%)	10%	30%	60 %	100%

Section 2: children's personal information**Question 3:** Child's gender

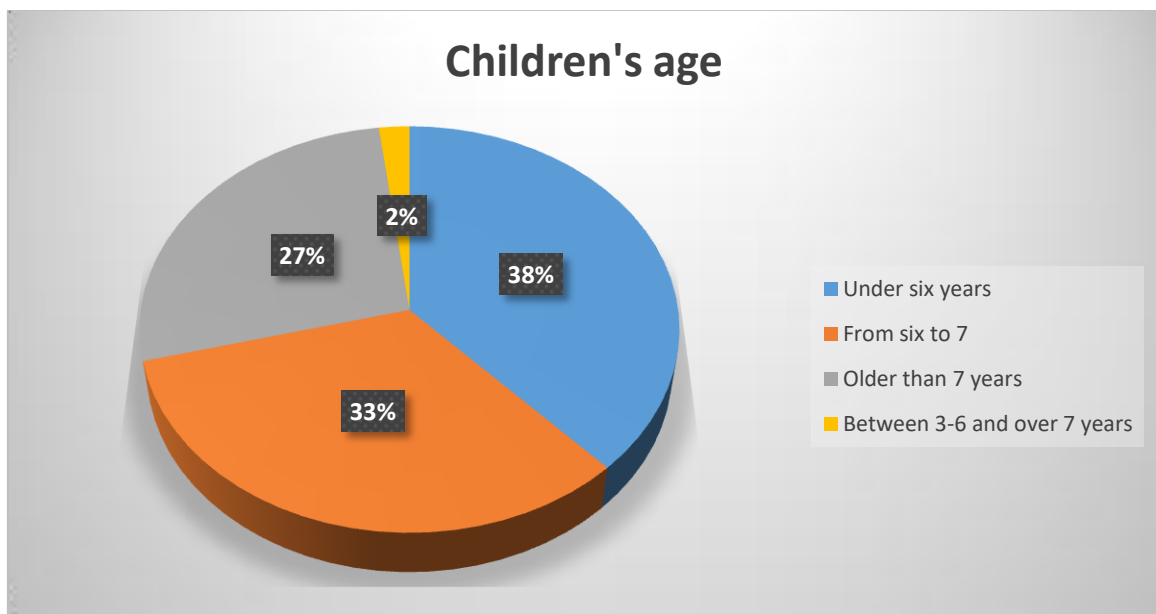
The obtained statistics show that the majority of schooled children are girls (51%), 44% are boys and 5% of parents declared that they have both boys and girls at school. It is known that girls are more open to learn foreign languages than boys are, classroom observation will confirm or denies this tendency.



Graph 2.1: gender of schooled children

Question 4: children's age

The pie below shows that the majority of schooled children age is under 6 years (38%), from six to 7 years old (33%), 27% are older than 7 years old, and only 2% range between 6 years and older than 7 years old. One can notice that there is a tendency among parents towards teaching their children foreign languages at an early age. At this age, children's minds are blank sheets to install what they want.

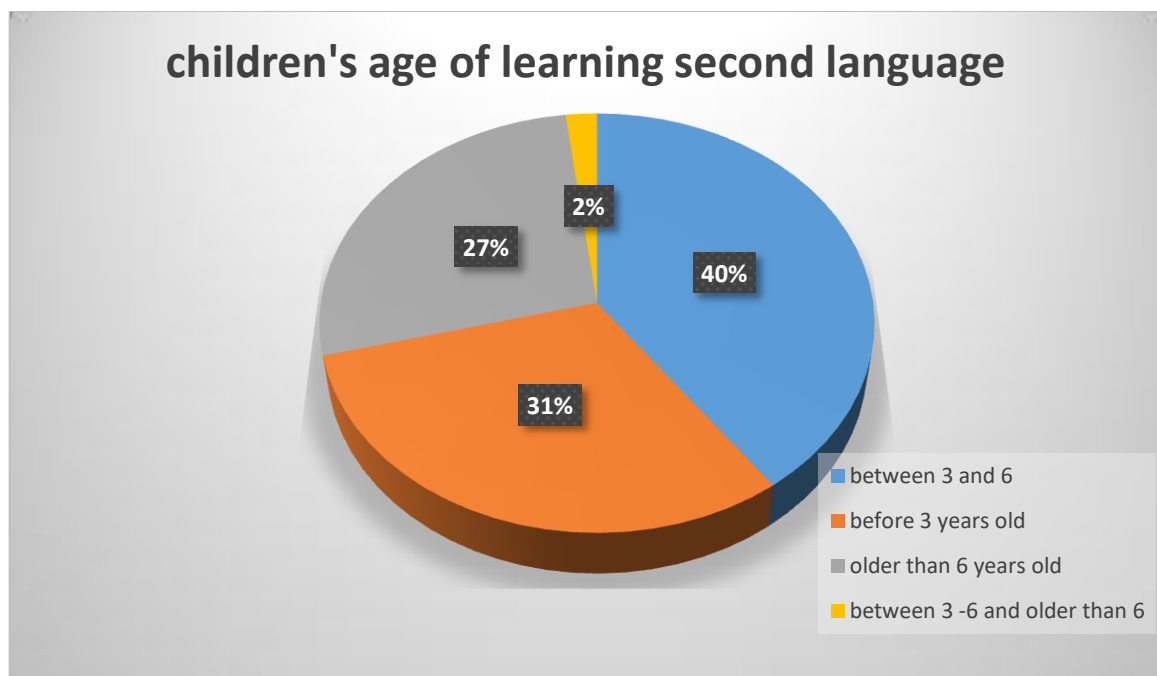


Graph 2. 2: children's age

Section 3: the linguistic situation of bilingual children

Question 5: At what age did your child begin learning a second language?

According to parents, the majority of children (40%) started learning a second language between the age of three (3) and six (6), 31% began before three (3) years old, 27% after six (6) years and only 2 % of parents declared that their children commenced acquiring second language between 3-6 years and older than 6 years old.

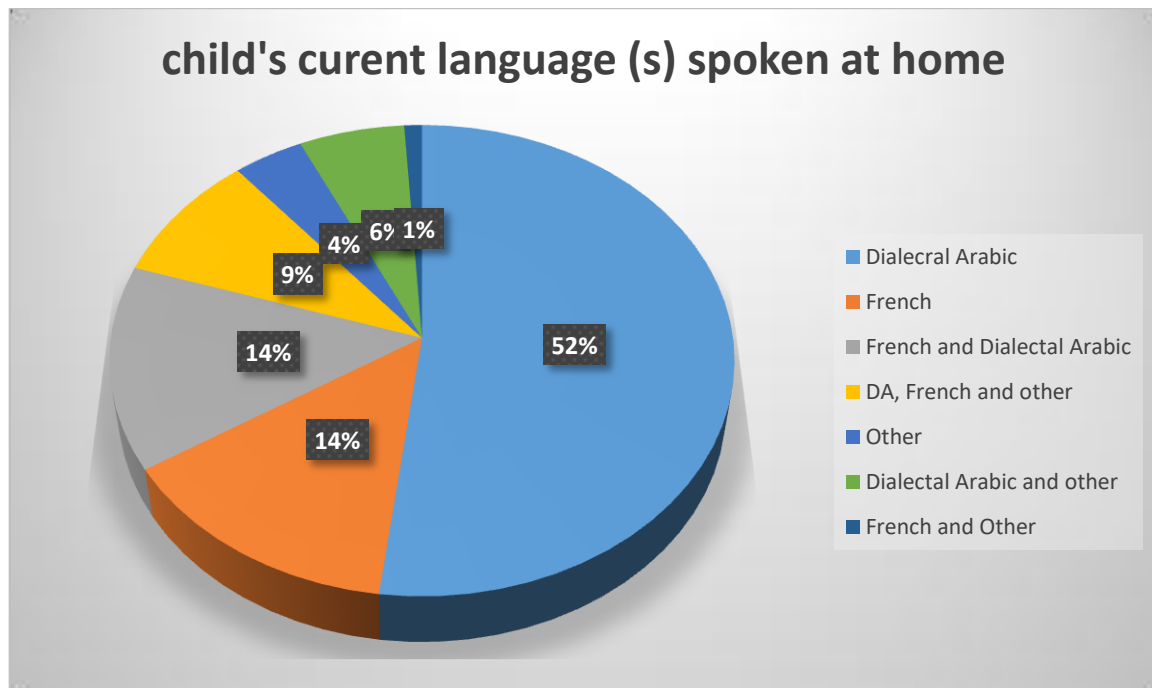


Graph 3. 3: children's age of learning a second language

Question 6: child's current language (s) spoken at home:

The graph below shows the different languages children use at home to communicate. 52% use Dialectal Arabic indoors, 14% speak the French language; similarly, 14% mix between French and Dialectal Arabic in their speech at home, 9% alternate between Dialectal Arabic, French, and other language (s). Four percent

(4%) use other language (s) at home, 6% switch between Dialectal Arabic and other language (s), and 1% communicate using French and other language (s).

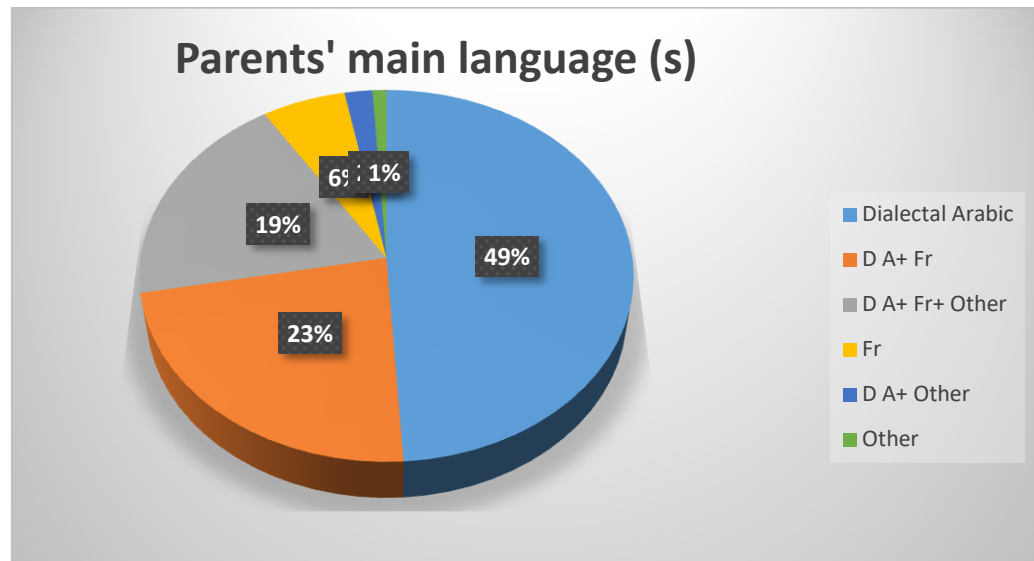


Graph 2. 4: Child's current language (s) spoken at home

Question 07: primary language spoken by parents:

Believing that parents' language influences their children's language as they encounter it right from their birth. The child will acquire that language without learning it. Thus, the researcher asked this question to infer the impact of parents' language on the language their children achieve in the upcoming questions.

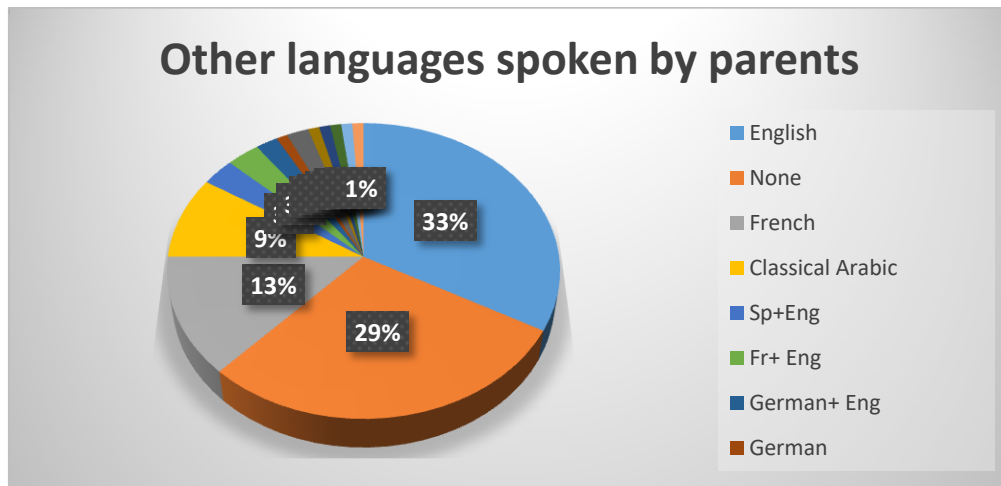
The obtained data shows that the majority of parents 'main language is Dialectal Arabic (49%). Followed by those who switch between Dialectal Arabic and French (23%). Nineteen percent (19%) declared that they mix between Dialectal Arabic, French and other ones; six percent (6%) stated that they use the French language only. Two percent voiced that they use Dialectal Arabic and other varieties and 1% said they use other language (s) in their communication.



Graph 2.5: Parents' main language

Question 08: Other languages spoken by parents ...

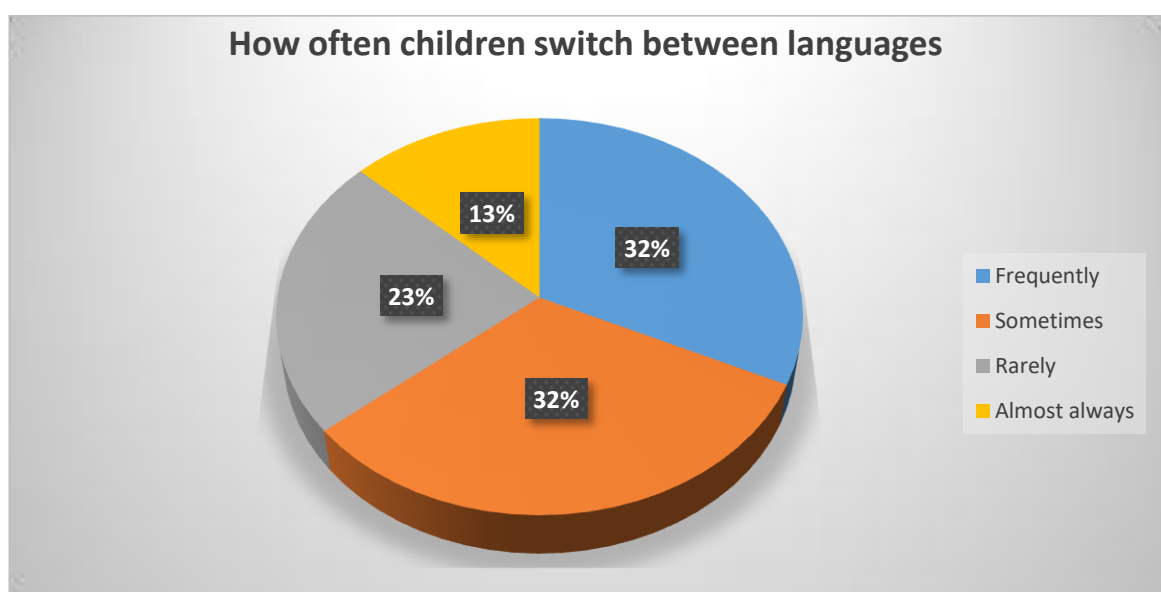
It is noticeable that the majority (33%) use the English language besides their principal language. Twenty-nine (29%) use only their main language, either French or Arabic. Thirteen percent (13%) use French in addition to their primary language (s). Nine percent (9%) speak Classical Arabic, 3% master Spanish and English plus their primary language. 3% utter French and English; 2% for German and English; similarly (2%) for Spanish. Moreover, 1% for each of the following: English plus Classical Arabic; German; English, French and Spanish; Tamazight, French and Classical Arabic; Spanish and Italian; Tamazight, Arabic, English, and Spanish. As the graph below shows:



Graph 2. 6: other languages spoken by parents

Question 09: How often does your child mix or switch between languages?

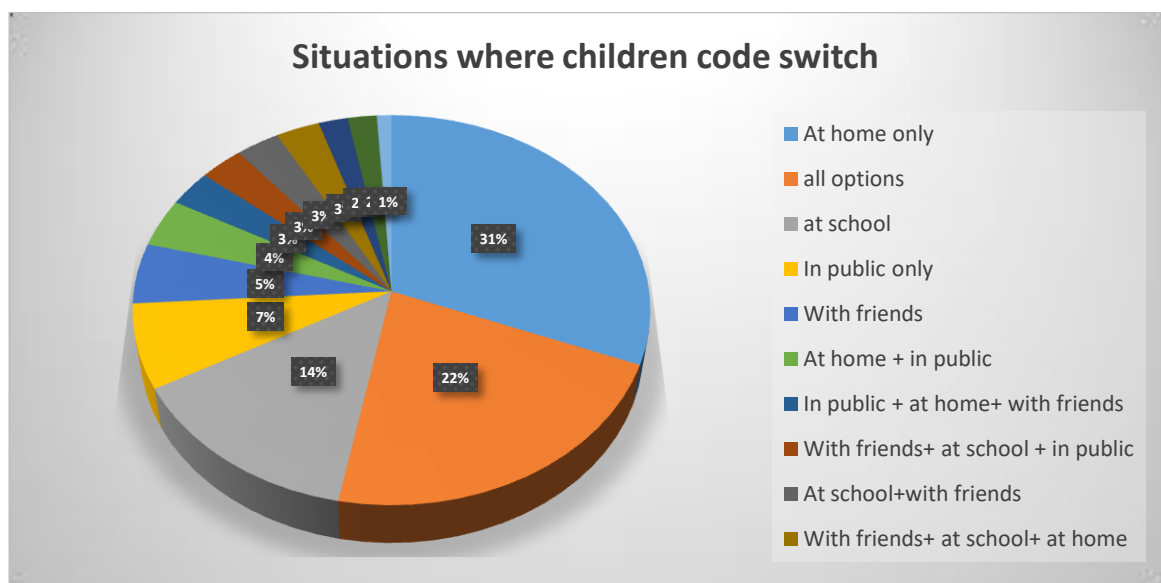
The researcher asked this question to infer whether children utilize the languages they acquired and how often they code-switch. The data reveals that 32% frequently code-switch; similarly, 32% of respondents declared that their children sometimes mix between languages. In addition, 23% of their children rarely alter between languages and only 13% almost always code switch as the chart below demonstrates:



Graph 2. 7: How often do children switch between languages

Question 10: In what situations does your child mix or switch between languages?

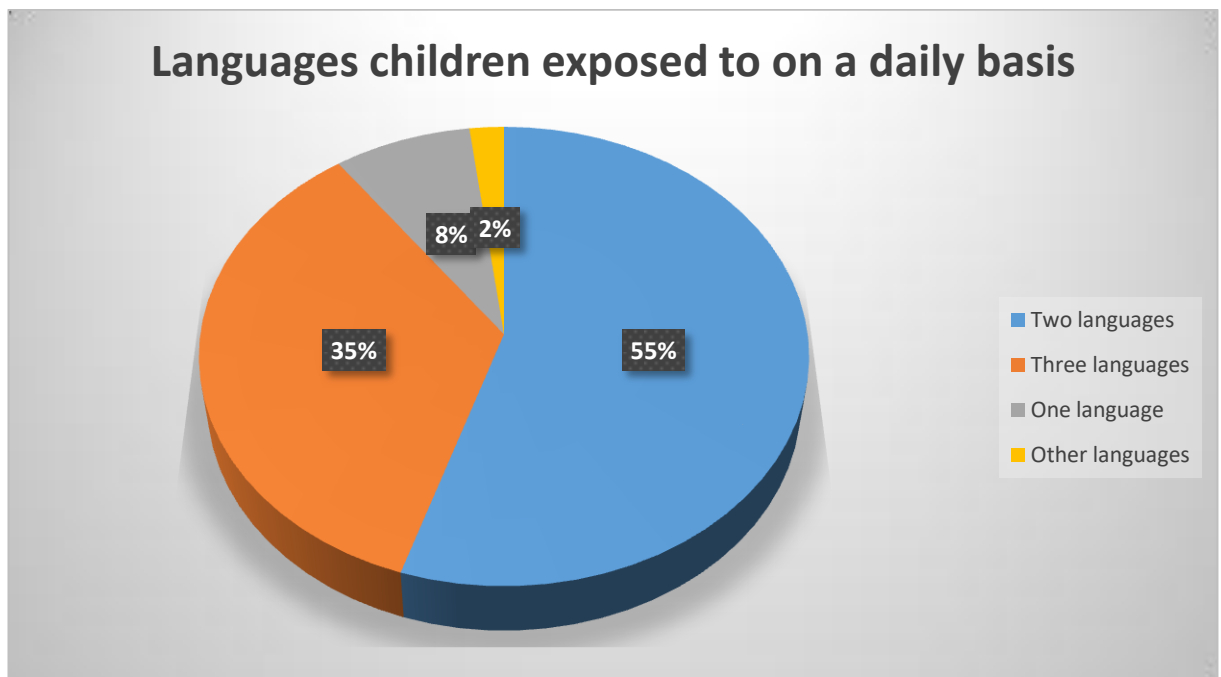
This question was addressed to see if the children are open up to speak the languages they acquired. The school (14%) and home (31%) are the most preferred places where children feel comfortable to code-switch. Other children are more open to mix languages in all places (22%). Other children prefer certain places rather than others as follows: 7% of children favour to code mix in public places only, 5% with friends only; another group like better home and public places (4%). Another category 3% would rather code mix at school and with friends; correspondingly. Two percent (2%) opt for home and friends; likewise, 2% feel comfortable switching between school and at home, and 1% prefer mixing with friends and in public. Other section chose multiple choices including 3% stated that their children code mix with friends, at home and in public; equally, 3% prefer to code switch with friends, at home and school and 3% too go for the options: with friends, at school and in public.



Graph 2. 8: Situations where children code switch

Question 11: How many languages is your child exposed to on a daily basis?

It is known that children will acquire the language (s) they expose to in their daily life. The researcher asked this question to figure out how many languages a child can acquire through their daily routines. Fifty-five (55%) of fathers assert that their children are exposed to two (2) languages daily; 35% of them said that their sons open up to three (3) codes; eight percent (8%) stated their youngsters are susceptible to only one language and the minority 2% said their youths exposed to other languages as shown below:



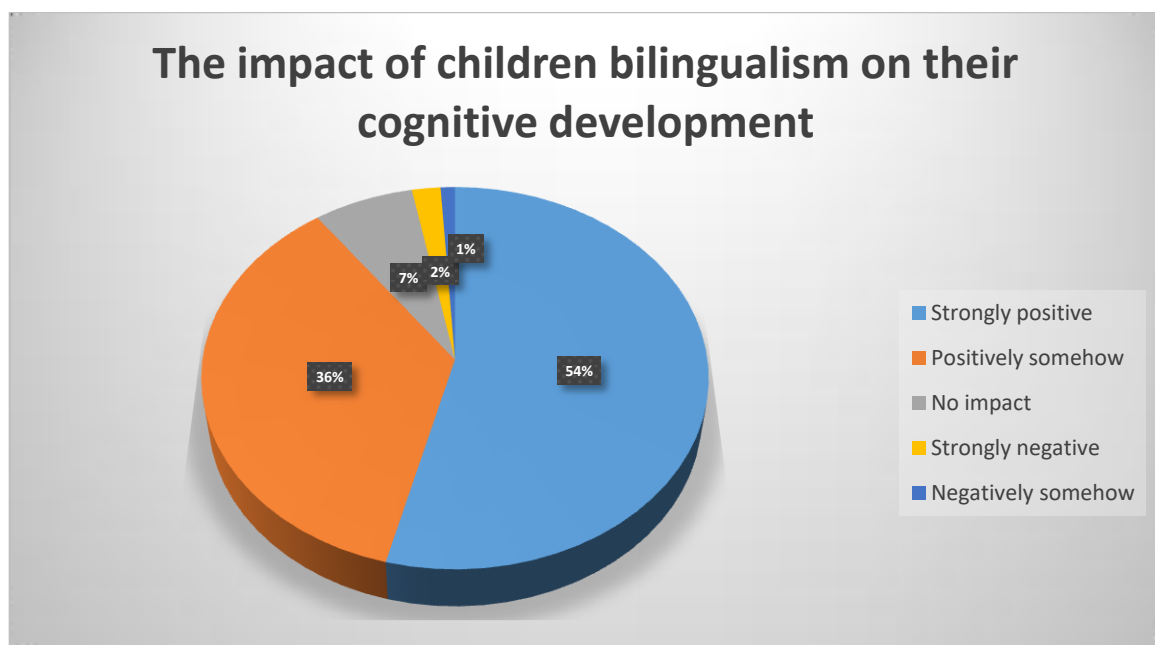
Graph 09: Languages children exposed to daily

Section 4: The impact of being bilingual on children's competence and performance.

Question 12: To what extent do you believe that being bilingual has positively or negatively affected your child's cognitive development?

This question seeks to portray the impact of being bilingual (the child) on the children's cognitive development. Learning new language (s) will reinforce their knowledge and skills hence, their achievement will be ameliorated.

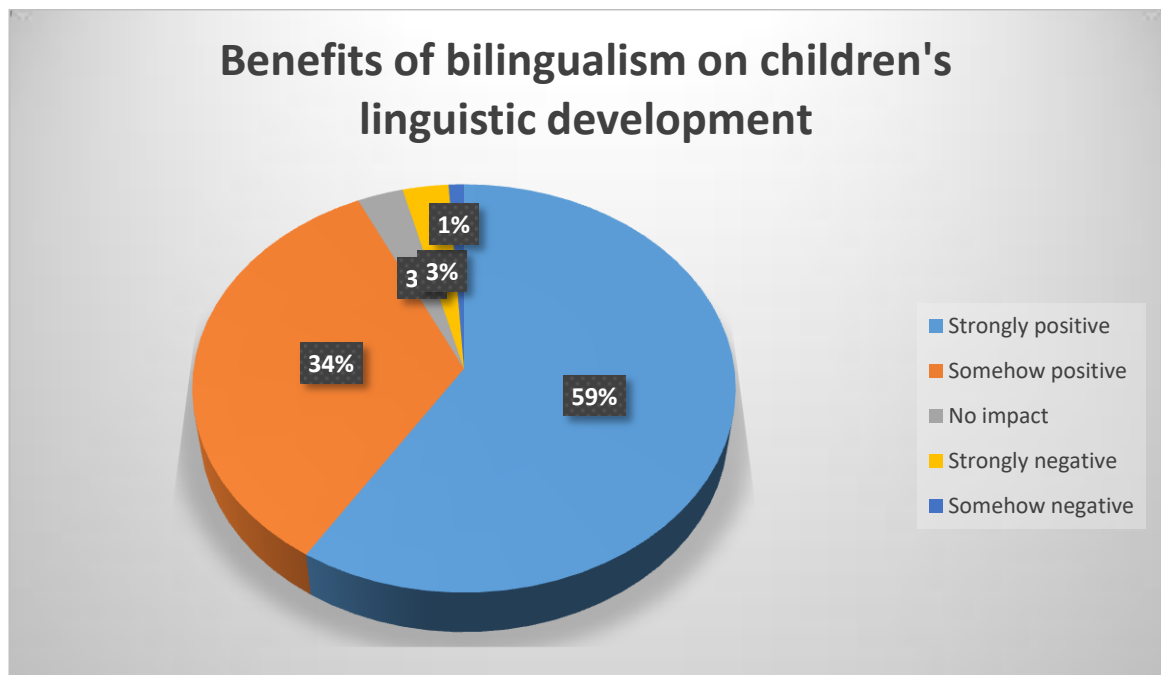
Fifty- four percent (54%) of interviewed parents exhibit that their children's bilingualism strongly positively affected their children's cognitive skills. Thirty-six percent (36%) of kids' intellectual competencies were influenced positively to some extent, 7% of parents declare that the fact that their children being bilingual does not affect their rational competencies and the minority 2% of children were affected strongly negatively, 1% impacted negatively to some extent. The obtained data are going to be presented next respectively:



Graph 10: The impact of children's bilingualism on their cognitive development

Question 13: To what extent do you believe that being bilingual has positively or negatively affected your child's linguistic development?

It is known that acquiring new language (s) enriches learners' repertoire thus, developing their verbal language. For this sake, this question tries to reveal the impact of bilingualism on children's linguistic development.



Graph 11: Benefits of bilingualism on children's linguistic development

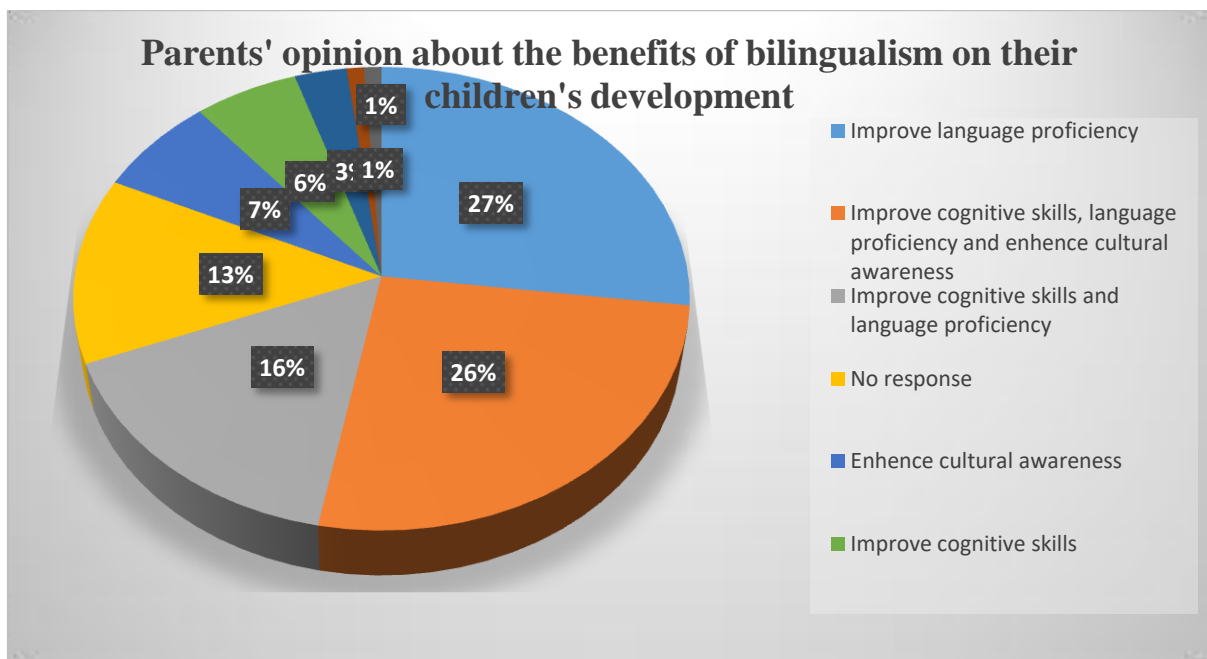
From the above-mentioned graph, we notice that bilingualism has a strong positive effect on children's linguistic development (59%); 34% announced that it has to some extent positive impact; 3% said it has no impact; similarly, 3% declared that it has a strong negative effect and 1% only stated that it has a somewhat negative impact on their children's linguistic improvement.

To sum up, even though parents gave different opinions yet one can say that bilingualism has a positive impact on the child's linguistic development.

Section 5: Parents' thoughts about bilingualism in early childhood

Children maintain the first contact with their parents therefore the researcher decided to get precise pieces of information and portray their thoughts about bilingualism in early childhood based on their experience with kids.

Question 14: In your opinion, what are the benefits of bilingualism for your child's development?



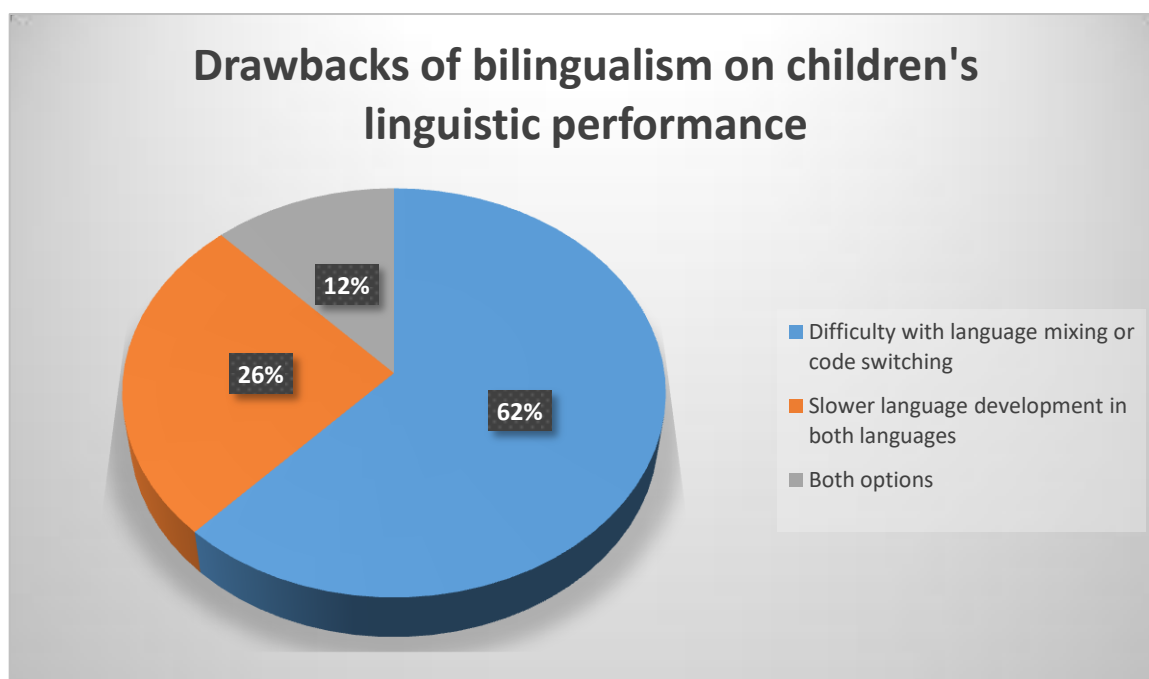
Graph 12: Parents' opinion about the benefits of bilingualism on their children's development

The graph above illustrates the different opinions parents gave concerning bilingualism in early childhood. The majority agreed that it has a great impact on their children's cognitive and linguistic skills as well as their cultural awareness (26%). Twenty-seven percent (27%) declared that it improved their child's language proficiency only. Sixteen percent (16%) state that it improves their child's language proficiency and cognitive skills. Thirteen percent (13%) abstained from answering. Seven percent (07%) opt for improving cultural awareness only. Six

percent (06%) said it improves their cognitive skills only. Three percent (03%) chose all the above-mentioned options. One percent (01%) say that it has other impacts besides the ones provided by the investigator; similarly, One percent (01%) has the opinion that it enhances cultural awareness and improves language proficiency.

Question 15: In your opinion, what are the drawbacks of bilingualism for your child's development?

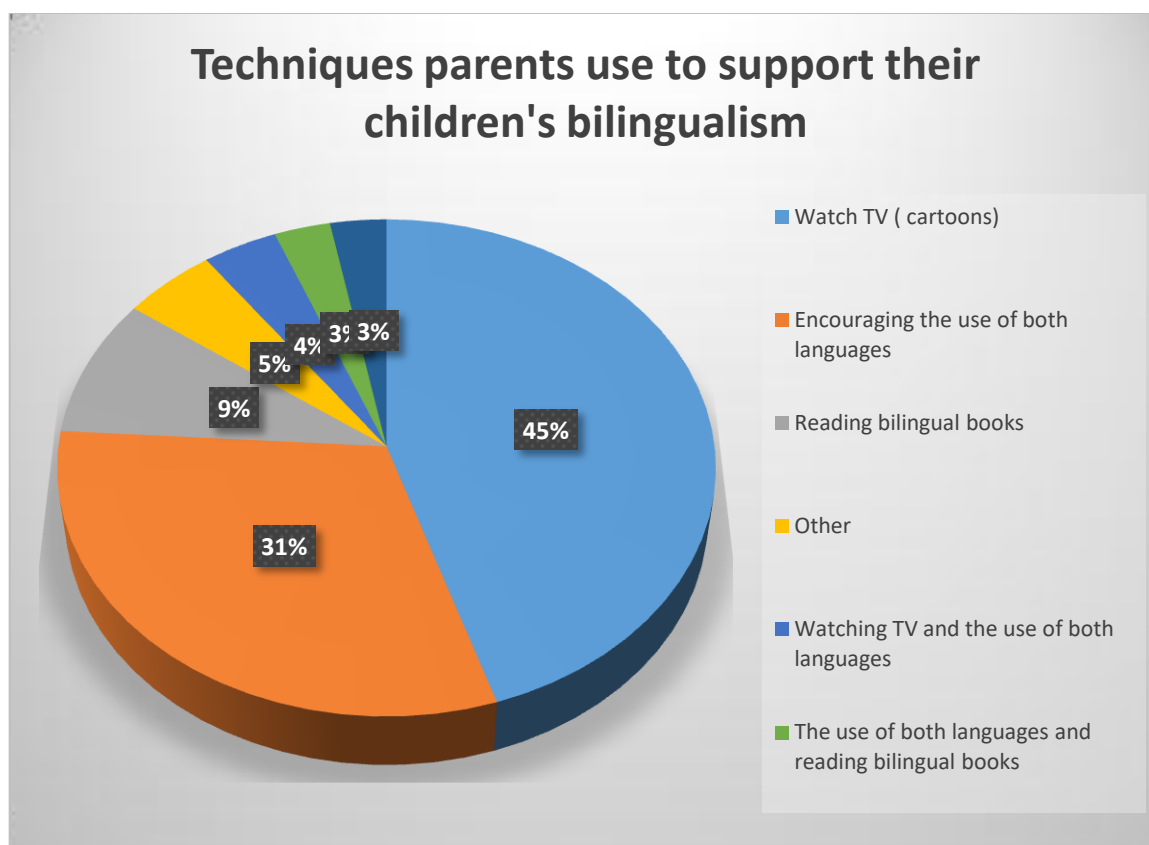
Bilingualism has positive as well as negative impact on children's development. The previous questions tried to infer the benefits of bilingualism for children (QU. 12- 14) whereas; this question tries to infer the drawbacks of bilingualism on children's development.



Graph2. 13: Drawbacks of bilingualism on children's linguistic performance

The data shows that 62% of children find difficulty with language mixing or code-switching. Another group (26%) pronounce that it slower language development in both languages and the minority chose both options. We can conclude that bilingualism has a negative impact on a child's linguistic performance at an early age.

Question 16: How do you support your child's bilingualism and language development at home?

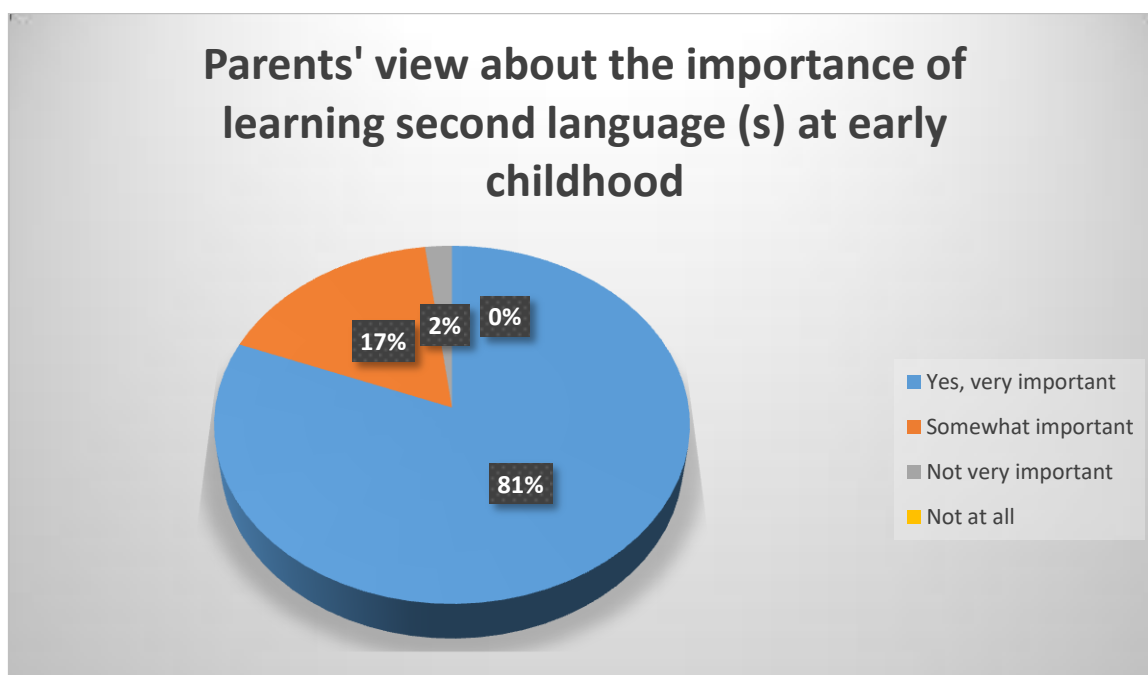


Graph 2. 14: Techniques parents use to support their children's bilingualism

The results show that watching TV especially cartoons has a crucial role in the development of the child's second language, parents' response reflected that where 45% of them supported this view. Thirty-one percent (31%) of them went for encouraging the use of both languages. Nine percent (9%) reinforced reading

bilingual books. Other category selected multiple choices; 4% for watching TV (cartoons) and the use of both languages, 3% for the use of both languages and reading bilingual books; similarly, 3% went for the use of both languages, reading bilingual books and watching TV together.

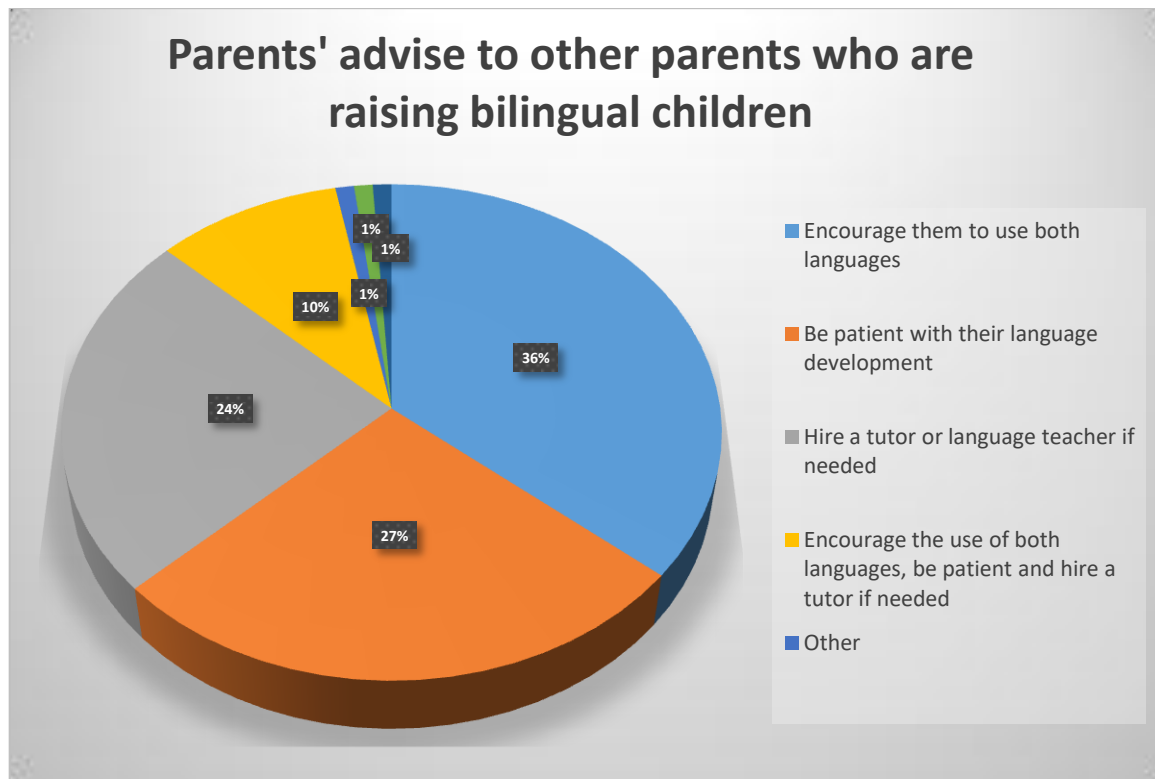
Question 17: Do you think it is important for children to learn a second language at an early age?



Graph 15: Parents' view about the importance of learning a second language (s) in early childhood

Almost all parents (98%) supported the importance of learning a second language (s) in early childhood; they differ only in the degree: 82% said, “Yes, very important” and 16% chose “somewhat important”. Only 2% declared that it is “not very important” to learn a second language (s) at an early age.

Question 18: What advice would you give to parents who are raising bilingual children?



Graph 2. 16: Parents' advice to other parents who are raising bilingual children

This question is addressed to parents to infer their attitudes towards raising a bilingual child and how they enhance the learning of a second language (s) in early childhood. Thirty-six percent (36%) advise them to encourage the use of both languages, twenty-seven percent (27%) stressed the option of “be patient with their language development”, and 24% have the view of hiring a tutor or language teacher if needed. Other parents gave multiple choices: 10% recommend encouraging the use of both languages, being patient with their progress, and hiring a tutor whenever needed. One percent (1%) has other views rather than the given ones, another 1% endorse the use of both languages and being patient with their

improvement; equally, 1% advocate hiring a tutor if needed and encouraging them to use both languages.

2.8 Interpretation of the main results

The data obtained from the parents' questionnaire would help to infer an overview of early childhood bilingualism, the linguistic situation of bilingual children, the impact of being bilingual on the child's competence and performance, and parents' thoughts about bilingualism in early childhood in the city of Maghnia.

- **Section one**

From the answers to question one (parent's gender), it has been observed that the majority of parents are females. This supports the claim that women are more concerned with their children's education and well-being due to the traditional roles they play in a given society and being open to collaborating in the first place. Moreover, it is crucial to shed light on parents' level of education (Q2). It is observed that none of the parents is illiterate; on the contrary, the majority hold university degrees. This means that they are aware of the changes occurring in the world, the status foreign languages are gaining over time in addition to the inevitable title role they play in enhancing their children's achievement.

- **Section Two**

It is noticed that the majority of schooled children are girls (Q3); this may explain parents' interest in teaching their children foreign languages. As it is known that girls are more interested in learning prestigious languages (especially French and English). From a biological perspective, it has been explained in the literature

that the brain develops through time; consequently, children's mental abilities seem to be the same as all children's age ranges nearly the same category.

- **Section Three**

From parents' answers to QU. 5-11, we wanted to check the linguistic situation of bilingual children. It is known that the brain changes as we grow. Several studies reveal it is fundamental for children to learn foreign languages at an early age (before 12). Moreover, it has positive effects on the cognitive functions of the brain thus; the brain establishes new neural connections, as it is mentioned in the literature review.

In addition, it is common for children to achieve their parents' language. Most of the children speak Dialectal Arabic at home and the minority voice other foreign languages including French and English. Even though their parents are multilingual. This denotes that the parents use their mother tongue at home in an attempt to preserve it from language death, as their children mix between the different codes and varieties in their daily communication with friends, in public settings, and at school.

Children also are exposed to numerous languages to facilitate their acquisition following the assertion that "children around the age of three are building their vocabularies and would continue to be extremely receptive up until the age of eight" This may explain why parents are keen on to teach their kids foreign tongues.

For those children who rarely mix between languages, one might infer that they are not good at that variety; they do not have enough repertoire or suitable

register to use in that specific setting or they feel shy to express themselves in public or with friends using foreign languages.

- **Section four**

In this section, parents have been asked a set of questions to disclose the impact of being bilingual on children's competence and performance.

From QU. 12 & 13, the researcher intends to infer implicitly to what extent being a bilingual child affected both their cognitive and linguistic performance. It is noticed that bilingualism at an early age influenced children's both cognitive and linguistic performance to a great extent positively. This goes in parallel with a study conducted at Harvard University declaring that "starting to learn a new language before the age of ten will give a learner the best chance of achieving proficiency similar to that of a native speaker". As a result, the learners will discern in their schooling and exhibit impressive communicative abilities in their discourses.

For those who declared that their children were affected negatively possibly, their kids find difficulties in acquiring the new language or they are against the decision of incorporating foreign languages (French & English) at primary schools.

- **Section five**

The last section is devoted to parents' thoughts about bilingualism in early childhood. They gave their point of view concerning the benefits and drawbacks of bilingualism at an early age, in addition to insights from other parents who are raising bilingual children.

From Q14, being bilingual will enrich the cultural awareness of other countries among children; they will be open to the world as each language reflects the culture of its speakers and brings their customs and traditions. Additionally, in the future, they will not find difficulties to deal with the indigenous speakers of a given language when they travel. Furthermore, it will ameliorate their CVs and they are more likely to be recruited compared to others who did not learn foreign languages.

Concerning the idea that bilingualism improves both cognitive skills and languages goes consistently with what has been said in the sections above. This affirms that parents are aware and have constantly thought about the importance of learning foreign languages at an early age. These results confirm the first hypothesis of the present study.

Regardless of the significance of bilingualism in early childhood, parents see that it has some drawbacks. It slows the development of both languages and children find difficulties in code mixing. This supports the view 'the older the better' as stated by Ruyun Hu 2016 in their article 'The Age Factor in Second Language Learning'.

Referring to the respondents' answers to Q 16, most of them support their kids' bilingualism through watching TV Cartoons. Maybe because children are attracted to colors used in cartoons, animation, and personification, plus it is a way to entertain them. They wanted to benefit from their exposure to TV in a positive way (learning new languages). Others see benefit from reading bilingual books believing that it will ameliorate their vocabulary, reading skill and facilitates the

learning of languages; moreover, children will find it easy to make similarities between the two languages and learn the different sentence structures as stated in several studies.

One more time, parents stress the importance of learning a second language at an early age (Q17) supporting the idea of ‘the older the better’ by Ruyun Hu 2016. Furthermore, when they asked about the advice they would give to those who are raising bilingual children (Q18), they stressed the use of both languages. By doing so, children will not forget the new code and get used to it and master it as native speakers do.

Another important piece of advice is to be patient with their language development; a child’s brain develops over time, thus they need time to master the new input. In addition to hiring a language teacher. For the reason that teachers are trained in the different approaches to teach language to children, they are more knowledgeable about the neuro-psychological changes children go through during their infancy, except one parent uses other techniques rather than the stated ones. Perhaps they use songs or rehearsing...

2.9 Classroom Observation Analysis

Classroom observation was the second data collection method used by the scholar to build up on the data gathered from the questionnaire.

The researcher divided the observation stage into two main parts:

- Children’s behaviour towards the use of French
- Children’s behaviour towards MSA

Twelve (12) features were assigned to the first part (French) and eight (8) aspects were observed in the second part (MSA) to understand how children interact with the language, their level of proficiency, their confidence in using them and their overall engagement with French as a second language and MSA as an official one.

The results of the first part, which examined the children's behaviour towards the use of French, are summarized in the following table:

Table 2. 3: Aspects observed in French sessions

Behaviors	Observed			Comments
	Yes	Partially	No	
Interaction with peers				not observed
Talking to teacher	3/ 10	5/10	2/10	The young learner's performance in speaking French with their teachers varied. Some are fluent and confident, while others struggled with comprehension and expression.
Asking questions/initiative	7/10	2/10	1/10	The majority of pupils asked questions actively and took initiative in their learning, showing curiosity and a desire to understand more.

Answering questions	9/10		1/10	Most of the pupils actively engaged in class discussions
Writing sentences	10/10			All pupils can formulate and write a full sentence
Good Pronunciation of words and sentences	6/10	3/10	1/10	Children exhibited varying levels of proficiency in using the French language
classroom participation	9/10	1/10		Active participation was observed in almost all classes due to the teacher's guidance and support.
Confidence in language use	2/10	5/10	3/10	The children demonstrated different levels of confidence in using the language.
Anxiety with language use	3/10	5/10	2/10	While some pupils felt confident and comfortable in using the language, others experienced varying degrees of uncertainty or lack of confidence
Struggle with using or understanding the language	5/10	3/10	2/10	Certain pupils faced challenges in using and understanding the language. While a few of them have a satisfactory level of proficiency.
Motivation to learn	9/10		1/10	Most of the pupils demonstrated a

the language				strong motivation to learn the language.
Switching between languages	10/10			Young learners switch between languages spontaneously, and sometimes they employed different languages to convey a message or when they lack knowledge of specific vocabulary

The results of the second part, which examined the children's behaviour towards MSA, are presented in the following table:

Table 2. 4: Children's behaviour towards MSA

Behaviors	Observed			Comments
	Yes	Partially	No	
Interaction with peers	2/10	3/10	5/10	Most of the pupils combined between both MSA and DA
Speaking in MSA in the classroom	7/10	2/10	1/10	Most of the teachers tried to encourage the use of MSA inside the classroom.
Talking to teacher	8/10	1/10	1/10	The majority of young learners are strictly required by their teachers to use MSA. Although; a few of them may have some problems.

Language anxiety	1/10	1/10	8/10	Pupils were less anxious and had a positive attitude toward learning MSA
Confidence in language use	9/10	1/10		Most children felt confident in using MSA because it is the official language and they perceived it as a familiar language.
Asking questions/initiative	10/10			Active participation in the whole classes
Switching between languages	10/10			
Motivation to learn MSA	9/10	1/10		Most of the pupils showed a great interest in learning MSA

- The number of pupils in the ten observed classrooms ranged between 24 and 37. Session time is often insufficient for teachers to make different activities and provide individual attention to all pupils.
- The teachers skilfully employed a combination of French and Arabic to deliver their lectures, ensuring comprehension among children.
- Almost all pupils have good interaction with their teachers.
- The majority of young learners mixed between French and Arabic.
- It was observed that girls showed a higher level of participation, exhibited better pronunciation skills, and were more actively involved in using both French and MSA languages compared to the boys.

- During the whole of the ten observed classrooms, young learners showed a great interest in learning French as a foreign language. Indeed, in each classroom, pupils with advanced levels have been observed.
- The results of the observation indicate that most teachers did not use any form of technology or visual aids in their teaching except for small handouts displayed on the board. Hence, the use of technological tools was limited or not existing.
- It was also observed that most pupils who demonstrated a good level of proficiency in MSA engaged in memorizing the Quran in mosques or religious societies.
- The researcher noticed that most of the pupils had a great interest in learning MSA as they found it familiar and shared many similarities with DA.
- Effectively speaking, pupils were less anxious and had a positive attitude toward learning MSA. That would result in developing both their linguistic and communicative skills.
- The majority of pupils could easily switch between MSA and DA since they share a lot of vocabulary. Yet, they tend to rely on DA's grammar structure because it is rigid and lacks complexity.

2.9.1. Classroom Observation Interpretation

The data obtained from the observation was meant to back up the quantitative findings gathered from the questionnaire and get more details about pupils' behaviour towards the use of both French and MSA languages. The researcher chose third-year primary school pupils as they start learning a new/ second language

(s) for the first time this academic year. As a result, they will capture pupils' attitudes toward the above-mentioned languages.

The observation focused on both receptive and productive skills. Some of them discerned and others struggled to convey the targeted message; it can be explained by the fact that some parents are bilingual/ multilingual and they use foreign languages at home, as it is mentioned in the questionnaire's analysis above. Furthermore, we noticed the absence of interaction between peers during the French session in all schools. We can refer to the fact that pupils are passive learners at this stage; they are learning the basic rules of the language.

Concerning asking questions, answering them, and writing/uttering full simple sentences in French, the majority actively engaged with teachers possibly due to the simplicity of the tasks; children first start with learning the alphabet, numbers, and short expressions of greetings in addition to naming different objects (school, home ...).

For self-confidence in using the French language, some of them were confident however, others experienced varying degrees of uncertainty or lack of confidence. They switch between the different languages to transmit their messages; this language use deficiency clarifies their lack of confidence. This was for the French language part on one hand.

On the other hand, unlike the French language, pupils actively interact with their classmates using both MSA and DA; it could be justified by their daily use and exposure to these varieties in all settings. However, teachers encouraged the use of MSA only in their classes as it is the official language and the government is setting

different laws to promote and revitalize it in the course of the changes the country is witnessing.

Moreover, children show a positive attitude towards MSA. They are also less anxious about its use compared to the French language. We can refer to the status of MSA in Algerian society beyond that it is the language of the Quran. Additionally, pupils right from starting to speak, their parents take them to the mosque to learn by heart the Quran and prophet's speeches (PBUH).

Furthermore, it has been observed that female pupils outperform their counterparts in terms of learning foreign languages as it has been said earlier in the questionnaire (Q3).

Finally, the absence of technology may effect negatively kids' performance, especially visual ones. As we all know, nowadays kids are addicted to technology. Herein, we call for the importance of incorporating technology and training teachers accordingly to keep up with the developed countries.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to pick out early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian speech communities. To achieve this objective, an empirical study has been conducted in the city of Maghnia - Tlemcen using a questionnaire addressed to parents in addition to classroom observation at ten primary schools. The questionnaire seeks to identify the impact of bilingualism in early childhood and confirm the first hypothesis. In addition, to pupils' attitudes towards both MSA and the French language, and refining them within the course of classroom observation.

The obtained data revealed that multilingualism in early childhood affected positively children in terms of their cognitive and linguistic skills besides the challenges they encounter. Parents stress the importance of acquiring a second language at an early age. As advice given to other bilingual parents, they encourage the use of both codes; being patient with their kids' language development, and hiring a language teacher whenever needed believing that they are more knowledgeable and trained about how to deal with the neuropsychological changes kids go through. Additionally, bilingual children demonstrated a high level of self-confidence in using the French language in addition to their active engagement in classroom discussions exhibiting curiosity and the desire to learn more in general. On the other hand, pupils showed positive attitudes towards MSA use due to its status as an official language, its daily use, and the position it is gaining after language revitalization policies.

General Conclusion

Based on the analysis of the questionnaire and classroom observation, several key findings emerge regarding early childhood bilingualism in an Algerian speech community. The data gathered shed light on the linguistic situation of bilingual children, the impact of bilingualism on their competence and performance, and parents' thoughts about bilingualism in early childhood.

Firstly, the majority of parents in the study were females, indicating their active involvement and concern for their children's education and well-being. Furthermore, it was observed that parents had a high level of education, suggesting their awareness of the importance of foreign languages in enhancing their children's achievement.

Regarding the linguistic situation of bilingual children, it was found that most children spoke Dialectal Arabic at home, even though their parents were multilingual. This indicates a preference for preserving the mother tongue and a tendency for code-mixing among children. Additionally, parents expressed a strong interest in teaching their children foreign languages at an early age, recognizing the positive effects on cognitive functions and future opportunities.

The impact of bilingualism on children's competence and performance was evident. Bilingualism at an early age positively influenced both cognitive and linguistic performance, aligning with previous research on language acquisition. However, some children faced difficulties in acquiring the new language, potentially due to a lack of exposure or personal preference.

Parents expressed various perspectives on the benefits and drawbacks of bilingualism in early childhood. They highlighted the enrichment of cultural

awareness, improved communication skills, and enhanced career prospects as benefits of bilingualism. However, they also acknowledged potential challenges, such as slowed development of both languages and difficulties in code-mixing.

The classroom observation provided further insights into children's behavior towards French as a second language and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) as an official language. It was observed that children displayed varying levels of proficiency and confidence in using these languages. Girls generally exhibited higher levels of participation and pronunciation skills compared to boys. Additionally, children showed a strong motivation to learn both languages, with a greater interest in MSA due to its familiarity and religious significance.

All in all, early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian speech community offers numerous benefits, including cognitive and linguistic advantages, cultural awareness, and improved career prospects. However, it also presents challenges such as language development and code-mixing difficulties. The findings emphasize the importance of parental involvement, proper language instruction, and the integration of technology to enhance children's language learning experiences.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations can be made:

- **Enhance Parental Education and Awareness:** While the majority of parents in the study had university degrees, it is important to continue promoting the benefits of early childhood bilingualism and language development. Workshops, seminars, and informational campaigns can be organized to

educate parents about the advantages of bilingualism and provide them with strategies to support their children's language learning.

- **Support Language Instruction in Schools:** The study revealed that children showed varying levels of proficiency and confidence in using French and Modern Standard Arabic (MSA). Schools should invest in training teachers in effective language teaching methodologies to improve language instruction. Teachers should be encouraged to create engaging and interactive language learning environments, incorporating technology and visual aids to enhance students' language skills.
- **Foster Peer Interaction in Language Learning:** The observation data indicated a lack of interaction among peers during French sessions. Encouraging collaborative learning activities, group discussions, and language games can facilitate peer interaction and create opportunities for students to practice their language skills in a supportive and interactive environment.
- **Address Language Anxiety:** Some students exhibited anxiety or lack of confidence in using the target languages. To alleviate language anxiety, teachers should create a safe and inclusive classroom environment where students feel comfortable making mistakes and expressing themselves in the target languages. Positive reinforcement, praise, and encouragement can help boost students' confidence and motivation to learn.
- **Integrate Technology in Language Instruction:** The absence of technology in the observed classrooms suggests the need to incorporate educational technology tools and resources into language instruction. Interactive

language learning apps, online language platforms, and multimedia resources can make language learning more engaging, interactive, and accessible to students.

- **Promote Cultural Awareness:** Bilingualism offers the opportunity to expose children to different cultures and traditions. Schools and parents should emphasize the cultural aspect of language learning, organizing cultural events, storytelling sessions, and language exchange programs to broaden students' cultural awareness and appreciation.
- **Strengthen Language Policy and Planning:** Given the importance of both MSA and French in Algeria, there should be a well-defined language policy and planning in place that ensures the balanced development of both languages. This includes providing adequate resources, qualified teachers, and curriculum development that promote the learning and proficiency of both languages.

To sum up, early childhood bilingualism in an Algerian speech community presents numerous benefits for children's cognitive, linguistic, and cultural development. However, it also poses language proficiency, confidence, and code-mixing challenges. By implementing the above recommendations, parents, schools, and policymakers can better support and enhance early childhood bilingualism, creating a nurturing and inclusive environment for children to develop their language skills effectively.

Limitation of the study

1. Sample size due to constraints such as time, resources, or limited access to participants.
2. Assessing language proficiency in young children can be challenging, especially in a bilingual context.
3. The study adopts a cross-sectional design; it may only provide a snapshot of the participants' bilingualism at a particular age or developmental stage.
4. Limited socioeconomic considerations in which the study may not thoroughly examine the impact of socioeconomic factors, such as parental education, income, or access to educational resources, on early childhood bilingualism in the Algerian speech community. These factors could potentially influence language development and affect the study's findings.
5. The study face ethical constraints related to conducting research involving young children, such as obtaining informed consent from parents or guardians.
6. Limited parental perspectives by which the study relies primarily on parental reports or interviews to assess the benefits and drawbacks of early childhood bilingualism.
7. Limited geographical scope in which the study focus on a specific region or city within the Algerian speech community, potentially overlooking variations in bilingualism practices, language attitudes, or cultural factors across different regions or communities within Algeria.

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Appendices

Appendix A
Parents ' Questionnaire in English

Dear parents,

It would be a great pleasure if you can answer the present questionnaire which aims at collecting information about the benefits and drawbacks of bilingualism in early childhood from the parent's perspective. All responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes.

Please tick the appropriate answer which best fits your opinion (you can choose more than one answer) or answer freely.

1. Gender : M F

What is your highest level of education?

Primary school Secondary school University

2. Child's gender: M F

Child's age: under 6 6 to 7 Older than 7

3. At what age did your child begin learning a second language?
before age 3 between 3 and 6 after 6

4. Child's current language(s) spoken at home:
Dialectal Arabic French Other

5. primary language spoken by parents:
Dialectal Arabic French Other

Other languages spoken by parents:

6. How often does your child mix or switch between languages?
Rarely frequently sometimes almost always

7. In what situations does your child mix or switch between languages?
 at home with family with friends at school in public

8. How many languages is your child exposed to on a daily basis?
 One Two Three Other

9. What is the main language spoken at home?
 Dialectal Arabic French Other

10. To what extent do you believe that being bilingual has positively or negatively affected your child's cognitive development?

strongly positively	somewhat positively	strongly negatively	somewhat negatively	no impact
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. To what extent do you believe that being bilingual has positively or negatively affected your child's linguistic development?

strongly positively	somewhat positively	strongly negatively	somewhat negatively	no impact
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. In your opinion, what are the benefits of bilingualism for your child's development?

improved cognitive skills	enhanced cultural awareness	Improved language proficiency	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. In your opinion, what are the drawbacks of bilingualism for your child's development?

difficulty with language mixing or code-switching
 slower language development in both languages

14. How do you support your child's bilingualism and language development at home?

Encouraging the use of both languages
 Watch TV (cartoons)

Reading bilingual books
Other

15. Do you think it is important for children to learn a second language at an early age?

Yes, very important somewhat important
Not very important not at all important

16. What advice would you give to parents who are raising bilingual children?

Encourage them to use both languages
Be patient with their language development
Hire a tutor or language teacher if needed
Other

Appendix B

Parents ' Questionnaire in Arabic

نشكرك على الوقت الذي أمضيته في إكمال هذا الاستبيان. الغرض من هذا الاستبيان هو جمع معلومات حول مزايا وعيوب ثنائية اللغة في مرحلة الطفولة المبكرة من منظور الوالدين. ستبقى جميع الردود سرية ولن تستخدم إلا لأغراض البحث. الرجاء تحديد أفضل إجابة تنطبق على حالتك.

1. الجنس: ذكر أنثى

2. مستواك التعليمي: المدرسة الابتدائية

المدرسة الثانوية

الجامعة

3. جنس الطفل:

ذكر أنثى

4. عمر الطفل:

اقل من 6 سنوات

6_7 سنوات

اكبر من 7 سنوات

5. في أي عمر بدأ طفلك يتعلم لغة ثانية؟

قبل سن الثالثة

بين سن الثالثة و السادسة

بعد سن السادسة

6. اللغات التي يتحدثها الطفل في المنزل حالياً:

اللهجة العربية

الفرنسية

لغة أخرى

7. اللغات الأخرى التي يتحدثها الوالدان:

.....

8. كم مرة يخلط طفلك أو يبدل بين اللغات؟

نادرا ما

كثيرا

أحيانا

تقريبا دائما

9. في أي مواقف يختلط طفلك أو يبدل بين اللغات؟

في المدرسة

في المنزل مع العائلة

في الأماكن العامة

مع الأصدقاء

10. كم لغة يتعرض لها طفلك يوميا؟

واحدة

اثنان

ثلاثة

لغات أخرى

11. إلى أي مدى تعتقد أن ثنائية اللغة قد أثرت بشكل إيجابي أو سلبي على نمو طفلك المعرفي؟

إيجابي بشكل قوي	إيجابي بشكل ما	سلبي بشكل قوي	سلبي الى حد ما	لا تاثير

12. إلى أي مدى تعتقد ان ثنائية اللغة قد اثرت بشكل إيجابي او سلبي على نمو طفلك اللغوي؟

إيجابي بشكل قوي	إيجابي بشكل ما	سلبي بشكل قوي	سلبي ال حد ما	لا تاثير

13. ماهي برأيك فوائد ثنائية اللغة لنمو طفلك؟

تحسين المهارات المعرفية

تعزيز الوعي الثقافي

تحسين الكفاءة اللغوية

فوائد أخرى

14. في رأيك، ماهي عيوب ثنائية اللغة لنمو طفلك؟

تطور ابطاً لكلا اللغتين

صعوبة في خلط او تبديل اللغة

15. كيف تدعم ازدواجية طفلك وتطوره اللغوي في المنزل؟

تشجيع استخدام اللغتين

مشاهدة التلفزيون (الرسوم المتحركة)

قراءة كتب ثنائية اللغة

أخرى

16. هل تعتقد أنه من المهم للأطفال تعلم لغة ثانية في سن مبكرة؟

ليس مهماً جداً الاطلاق	ليس مهماً جداً	مهم نوعاً ما	نعم، مهم جداً

17. ما هي النصيحة التي تعطيها للآباء الذين يقومون بتربية أطفال ثنائيي اللغة؟

تشجيعهم على استخدام كلتا اللغتين

كن صبوراً مع تطور لغتهم

تعيين مدرس لغة إذا لزم الأمر

أخرى

Appendix C

Classroom Observation

School:

Class:

Date: / /2023

Time: from to

Observation: 1st/2nd/3rd/

- **Children's Behaviours Towards the Use of French**

	Observed			comments
	yes	partially	no	
behaviours				
Interaction with peers				
Talking to teacher				
Asking questions/initiative				
Answering questions				
Writing sentences				
Good Pronunciation of words and sentences				
classroom participation				
Confidence in language use				
Anxiety with language use				
Struggle with using or understanding the language				
Motivation to learn the language				
Switching between languages				

• **Children's Behaviours Towards MSA :**

Behaviours	observed			comments
	Yes	Partially	No	
Interaction with peers				
Speaking in MSA in the classroom				
Talking to teacher				
Traslatig to/ from MSA				
Language anxiety				
Confidence in language use				
Asking questions/initiative				
Switching between languages				
Motivation to learn MSA				