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THESIS REPORT

***Bilingualism: Main Problems in Article Choice by Children Learning
English as a Second Language***

TESIS DE GRADO

***Bilingüismo: Principales problemas en la elección de artículos de los niños
que aprenden inglés como segunda lengua***

**PRIOR TO THE ACADEMIC DEGREE IN:
APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN TEACHING ENGLISH**

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RESUMEN

El objetivo de esta investigación era definir lo que es bilingüismo y describir las ventajas y desventajas que tienen los niños durante el proceso de aprendizaje de un segundo idioma.

Los datos fueron recopilados a través de una entrevista que se aplicó a los maestros con el fin de saber sus antecedentes y sobre la metodología que utilizan. También se utilizaron una entrevista y una prueba que se aplicaron a los estudiantes con el fin de diagnosticar el uso del idioma y su conocimiento sobre los artículos. La investigación se llevó a cabo en la Escuela Fiscomisional “Don Bosco” de la ciudad Esmeraldas. La muestra estuvo compuesta por 6 profesores y 114 estudiantes de la mencionada escuela.

Los resultados mostraron que la mitad de los profesores cuentan con un grado académico. Según los resultados, los profesores piensan que la gramática es la habilidad más apropiada y significativa que los estudiantes necesitan para convertirse en bilingües y que consideraban que la práctica verbal es la mejor forma de conducir al bilingüismo. De acuerdo con las respuestas de los estudiantes, la mayoría de ellos dijeron que no tenían ningún familiar que hable el idioma inglés y casi la mitad de ellos no saben utilizar los artículos.

Se recomendó que los profesores deben asistir a más seminarios para aprender acerca de las nuevas tendencias metodológicas para aplicar el bilingüismo en la escuela y ayudar a sus alumnos a mejorar su conocimiento sobre los artículos del inglés.

ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to define what bilingualism is and to describe the advantages and disadvantages that children have during the process of learning a second language. Data was collected through an interview applied to teachers in order to get information about their background and the methodologies they use. Also, an interview and a test were applied to students in order to diagnose their use of the language and their knowledge about articles. The investigation was carried out at “Don Bosco” Fiscomisional School in Esmeraldas. The sample was made up by 6 teachers and 114 students of the mentioned school.

Results showed that half of teachers have an academic degree. According to results, teachers think that grammar is the most appropriate and significant skill that students need to become bilingualism and they considered that practicing the speaking is the best way to lead bilingualism. According to students’ answers, most of them did not have any relatives who manage the target language, and almost half of them do not know how to use the articles.

It was recommended that teachers should attend more seminars to learn about new methodology trends to apply bilingualism in the school in order to help students improve their knowledge about English articles.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

In many cases, during the acquisition of a second language, there appear a large number of problems, especially at schools, where there are no enough resources or materials to help students improve their English knowledge. Also, the fact that teachers do not have a good methodology to teach English affects students, because they are not receiving sufficient or quality input that is why there is a poor language knowledge by students. Apart from the above mentioned problems, the size of the class, and the lack of students' interest also affect the learning of a second language and the possibilities of students to become bilingual.

Furthermore, because of the process of educational transformation that the country is going through, it is necessary to provide certain parameters in which the bilingual program becomes efficient, since nowadays the aspects in which this program needs to be adjusted to improve the way English is taught and perceived by students is not positive. These adjustments need to be done taking into account the necessities, resources and improvements required to successfully teach English.

At this point, it would be appropriate to do a research in order to find out what could be needed for children to become bilingual, as here in Esmeraldas (Ecuador) there is no sufficient help or support to acquire a second language. In the case of public schools, the government should give the needed support such as books, computers, cd players and good teachers with high quality of methodology to strengthen the English teaching where students can achieve a good English level.

In order to achieve the aim of this research the following question will be answered.

- What are the advantages and disadvantages that children have when they are learning a second language to become bilingual?

To help answering the previous question the following inquires need to be answered.

- What is bilingualism and how do children become bilingual?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages that children have during the process of learning a second language?
- What are some of the main grammatical problem caused by bilingualism?

1.2 OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

To state the advantages and disadvantages that bilingualism has for children who are learning English as a second language.

1.2.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

- To define the process children go through when they learn a L2 to become bilingual.
- To describe the advantages and disadvantages that children have during the process of learning a second language.
- To diagnose some of the linguistic problems caused by bilingualism.

1.3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

What does bilingual mean?

“Can you be perfectly bilingual? Is this possible? Can we know words equally in every language? Closely related to the term and concept of bilingualism is the question of what it means to be fluent in a second language.

I get a lot of people asking me “What language do you dream in?” “Do you think in English or Spanish?” I do not have a clear cut answer for all this as language is not just a rational response, but also kinetic and emotional.” (Di Mauro, 1989)

1.3.1 The meaning of bilingualism and how children become bilingual

The ability to communicate naturally and fluently in more than one language is considered bilingualism. In general, bilinguals can be children or adults. Sometimes a person becomes bilingual due to the region where he lives, because in some regions people speak two languages. Children also become bilingual in two different social environments, having a babysitter for example, (a rich family brings a babysitter from another country to take care of their children, and in this way a child can learn a second language). In addition, everywhere in the world, children learn their first language at home and their second language at school.

1.3.1.1 Classification of bilingualism

There is a general classification for bilingualism: early and late. Early bilingualism refers to someone who has acquired the second language in early childhood, it means that a child learns two languages at the same time from birth (before the age of 6). This is also called “simultaneous bilinguals”.

Late bilingualism, on the other hand, is related to someone who has become a bilingual later than childhood, it means that a second language is learned in adolescence or adulthood (after the age of 12) because they may have learned the second language at school or university or because they live in another country. This is also called “sequential or consecutive bilinguals”.

Therefore, the difference between them is that an early bilingual the child learns both languages from birth, whereas late bilingualism occurs after the acquisition of the first language. Bilingual people practically can be found in every country, in different age and social groups. (Lowe, 1985)

1.3.2 Some comparisons by researchers between monolingual and bilingual speakers

Hundreds of major research studies (Erlbaum, 2008; Houwer, 2007) have confirmed this, saying that this is especially true in cognitive flexibility, metalinguistic awareness, communicative sensitivity, field independence, delaying age-related diseases and common proficiency.

Research done by Peel and Lambert in the 1960s on French-Canadian children in Canada found that bilingual children tended to outperform their monolingual peers in important cognitive tasks. Therefore, bilinguals developed cognitive flexibility with more diverse intelligence. (as cited in Braine, 1999)

Divergent thinking is one of the areas which is often measured by providing a person with a starting point for thought, and asking them to produce series of possible solutions. For example, imagine you have a tin can or a brick. How many ways could you use it? Bilinguals regularly score higher in school, since they think of more uses than monolinguals. They have two or more words for each object or idea, and different meanings are attached to words by the two languages.

Bilinguals realize how many ways one can describe a thing, tend to play with language, and thus increase their creativity. Also, bilinguals have better performance in mathematics and logic skills. (Cummins, 1979)

Some researches around the world (Erlbaum, 2008) shows that bilingual people tend to do better on IQ tests, compared with monolingual people of the same socio-economic class. Bilinguals tend to have superior academic performances. Cognitive skills established in the mother or first language transfer across language. That is to say, the level of competence a child attains at some point in a second language is largely dependent on the level of competence already achieved in the first language. (Davies, 2003)

1.3.3 Bilingualism characteristics and some differences between a bilingual adult and a bilingual child

There is a “central operating system” in the brain that integrates the two. Although first and second languages seem distinct, they contain shared concepts and knowledge derived from learning and experience, plus the cognitive ability of the learners. The higher scales of cognition like synthesis, analysis, evaluation, assessment, and reinforcement are essential components of the academic improvement. Children and adults have no difficulties achieving bilingual proficiency if cognitive proficiency is achieved. On the other hand, bilinguals are better at recognizing and unfolding individualities and features of language. (Szwaj, 1999)

In effect, metalinguistic awareness is knowledge about language. This can be demonstrated at the level of phonological awareness (sound units), word awareness, and syntactic or grammatical awareness.

Bilingual students have more metalinguistic awareness because when they work with more than one language simultaneously, they need to have a greater awareness of how each language works, and how the two languages are similar and crucially

different. This in return requires them to think about the language they choose to use. Generally, bilinguals obtain better semantic development and classification skills. Another advantage of bilingualism is communicative sensitivity. This refers to a participant's level of awareness of what is happening in any language interaction. Adults are more communicatively aware because they know what language to use in a given situation and with whom. They are more sensitive to learners' needs. (Hess, 2008: p. 125)

As a result, code switching provides added mental flexibility when solving cognitive tasks. Research says that bilinguals have increased sensitivity about the social nature and communicative functions of language. Some researchers suggested that bilingual children and adults had more verbal originality and ability. They have better communicative skill, and therefore better self-esteem. As well, the influence of bilingualism on word awareness leads to better reading skills. Field independence is the visual ability to see an overall pattern, as well as the component parts. As children grow to maturity, they develop more field independence. They master better visual-spatial skills. They also achieve a better development of abstract thinking and greater ability to process sensory information. All these cognitive abilities enable bilingual adults and children to perceive situation or stimulus more analytically. (Cummins and Gulutean, 1974)

They can focus on the key parts of a problem and select the best ways for a solution. These analytical skills are applied in language, communication thinking and usual perception, and give bilingual learners advantages in divergent and creative thinking, as well as in analysis. Bilingualism enhances attention and cognitive control in children and adults. These give children advantages in school. They are better at focusing on a task. On the other hand, adults are found to have well-functioning working memory, which benefits them to a wider choice of jobs.

Bilinguals control both languages, it could help to develop their brain and keep their capacity to focus on important aspects, meanwhile they ignore irrelevant data. New

investigations in the area of neurobiology of bilingualism figured out that during the infant period it improves their concentration, and it guards against the dementia onset and other age-related decline. Cognitive reserve established by bilingualism can increase the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain, and hold to healthy nerve connections, way to prevent dementia.

Recently, scientists have found that bilingual adults have their gray matter denser in the brain's language dominant left hemisphere. This means bilinguals are more intelligent. Earlier studies provided support for negative effects of bilingualism on cognitive development. Scientists concluded from relevant studies that bilingual speech suffered a disadvantage when they are measured by verbal intelligence tests. It was suggested that bilinguals never reached comparable levels of language competence as monolinguals did. (John, 1953)

Children who learn two languages simultaneously may initially acquire language more slowly than monolingual children and relative to bilingual children who learned one language and then a second one later during school time (sequential bilinguals). (Collier et al., 1995)

Research also suggests a disparity in the kind of language proficiency necessary for higher order cognitive and academic linguistic skills. As an example, Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) versus More Conversational Proficiency necessary for day to day social interactions. Children can typically acquire conversational proficiency in a subsequent non-dominant language within two years. However, they tend to take much longer to acquire higher order language proficiency. Another disadvantage of bilingualism is vocabulary size. According to Cummins (2001), preschool bilingual children's vocabulary scores are often lower than monolingual children in either language, it could be in mother or target language in this case English. He also found that the more time the children spent in interacting in a language, the greater their vocabulary in that language. These results show that

there may be some limits on children's vocabulary size in their first years of life. (Cummins, 1984)

Bilingual children use fewer correct past tense forms and they are especially noticeable in their use of irregular past tense forms. Bilingual children make more errors by adding -ed to irregular verbs like 'drinked' and 'runned'. Monolinguals also make the same kind of errors, but in an earlier age. This delay is due to the fact that bilinguals hear less of each language than a monolingual speaker, and practice using verb forms less often as well. Bilingual children have smaller receptive and productive vocabularies, compared with monolingual counterparts (Bialystok and Feng, 2008). Receptive-willing to listen to or accept new ideas or suggestions, and the extent to which a person can understand and/or read the language. Young or older bilinguals are also disadvantaged in verbal fluency tests with a greater bilingual disadvantage on semantic than on letter fluency. (Gollen and Rosselli, 2002)

Bilingual people usually are better at one language or worse at the other, or they might not be able to completely grasp both. For example, let us say that a person knows English and Chinese. He may be more comfortable reading English newspapers and take more time with Chinese newspapers. But being bilingual is cognitively advantageous. There are four cognitive areas which a bilingual child or adult masters in. They are cognitive flexibility, metalinguistic awareness, communicative sensitivity, and field independence. In addition, bilingualism also delays the onset of age-related dementia such as Alzheimer's disease by up to 4 years. (Canagarajah, 2004)

Research and studies have proven benefits of bilingualism, Deaf and Lambert (1962) concluded that bilingual adults and children tend to be more intelligent compared to monolinguals. They also wrote that "It is impossible to state from the present study whether the more intelligent child became bilingual or whether bilingualism added to his intellectual development." That is to say, it is not necessary to be more intelligent than others to be bilingual.

Some studies report that bilingualism has a negative impact on language development, and is also associated with delays in lexical acquisition and a smaller vocabulary than that of a monolingual concluded that bilinguals suffer disadvantages in the language when they are submitted to tests of verbal intelligence. In conclusion, bilingual children and adults have shown slight advantages over monolinguals. It is also clear that bilingualism has more advantages than disadvantages in terms of cognitive development. (Darrey, 1983)

1.3.4 Myths about bilingualism

There are a number of myths about bilingualism that are discussed by linguists. The ones selected in the present thesis are the following. “Learning two languages confuses a child and lowers his intelligence.” (Dinocenti, 1998). When a person speaks more than one language he gets confused in different aspects of each one. For example ‘It’s raining cats and dogs’, is used to describe a heavy rain in English, meanwhile in Spanish instead of using the direct translation ‘llueven perros y gatos’, speakers use an equivalent ‘llueve a cántaros’. These mistakes may give the impression of the person not being very intelligent.

“A child should learn one language properly first; then they can start teaching the other.” (Tomlinson, 1995). In other words, children should first learn the first language and then the second language. This way, they avoid certain disadvantages in many fields. In vocabulary, for instance, sometimes they use a first language word in the second language, this could be due to the fact that they do not remember the word in the L2 or they simply do not know it. Also, Linder (2002) says that “A child who learns two languages won’t feel at home in either of them. She’ll always feel caught between two cultures.” Children that are bilingual have a very distinctive culture, since they take different parts or characteristics from each language, that is why they may not feel identified with any of the cultures.

“Real bilinguals never mix their languages. Those who do are confused semi-bilinguals.” (Gill, 2005). In other words, real bilinguals speak both language very well, with proper intonation, stress, pronunciation, etc., while some bilinguals may get confused, that is they speak well but they do not have a good intonation, pronunciation etc., or during the speech they may speak unconsciously without controlling the grammar part.

“Bilingualism is a charming exception, but monolinguals are of course the rule.” This statement aims at clarifying that human beings are universally driven to act or behave in certain way, so it could be said that monolingualism is normal while bilingualism is an exception.

“Be very careful; if you don’t follow the rules exactly, your children will never manage to learn both languages!” It discusses that a child should know the rules of both languages in order to manage them or to learn them properly. Also, there is the belief that there is a certain age in which you can acquire a language, Hewson (1972) said that “You’ll never manage to make him bilingual now. People really can’t learn a language after age X.” (Hewson, 1972).

Bilinguals have the ability to translate, they can translate from their native language to their second language or vice versa, in order to convey the same message in both languages. “Bilinguals have to translate from their weaker to their stronger language.” This quote means that bilingualism exercises our brain and offers many advantages in order to translate from one language into another; from the L2 into the first language. “Children who grow up bilingual will make great translators when they grow up.” Not all bilingual are good in translation, somehow studies have not shown that someone who has grown up as bilingual has advantages or disadvantages over those who become bilingual as adults when they try to translate something. There are many other skills that share both bilinguals and monolinguals; therefore it is difficult to make generalizations about the issue in question. There is an important exception, in this case, it is related to the fact that when sign language interpreters are making

talks on television, or even in public events, are in many cases children of deaf parents who grew up as bilinguals. (Nicoladis and Giovanni, 2000)

1.3.5 Researchers' point of view about the learning of a new language

When someone learns a new language he also learns a complex system of culture, values, points of view, feelings and acting. This helps students to be aware of their training and their implications, it should be noted that the second language is a powerful tool to adjust on the use of the new culture which is acquired. Emphasize that no culture is better than another, and that cross-cultural understanding is an important part of learning a language. (Deller and Rinvoluceri, 2002)

The mother tongue employs greater influence than the new language which a person acquires, in such a way that this affects the development of the new language. Often, expert linguists say that the foreign language learner must think in the foreign language, avoiding thus the famous "crutch" syndrome.

Studies show that children who learn a second language are more creative at the time of complex problem solving than children who do not. Research has shown that bilinguals exceed their monolingual peers in similar verbal and nonverbal intelligence tests, and tend to achieve higher scores on standardized tests. It is believed that that people who speak more than one language are capable of communicating with people who speak one language, likewise in the bilingual workplace are more competitive advantage than those whose strength is a single language.

Many linguists believe that there is a "critical period" (since the child is born until he is 12 years) when a child easily acquires any language, due to certain brain structures that allow you to store new information, including languages until puberty. After this stage it becomes more difficult to learn a new language. (Tomlinson, 1999)

Children and adults usually learn a second language through classes formally received at school. Bilingualism is actually not something that happens by chance. For children to succeed in learning a new language it is required a very careful planning, for this reason families who take time to consider how their children will develop two languages, and make the necessary concessions to meet this objective, tend to be more successful in raising bilingual children. (Quirk and Greenbaum, 1973)

Before starting a bilingual program, it is necessary to clarify the definition of bilingualism. The linguistic competence can be considered as the development of communication skills including listening, speaking, reading and writing. A person may speak a single language, but may have the reading comprehension in two languages. Another example could be a person who has the capacity to listen and speak just in one language, but reading and writing in two languages.

1.3.6 Tips to raise bilingual children

When children learn two languages at the same time, parents need to work on linguistic strategies to see strengths and weaknesses in both languages. There are cases in which parents handle different languages and this will create a lot of confusion in the child, this usually occurs in those parents who do not agree generating a real problem for school learning.

Here are some basic aspects to consider when raising children with more than one language. The right environment should be provided. The family should assure their children to hear both languages quite often and in different situations. Also, parents should create opportunities for their children to use all the languages they hear. Thus, the introduction of rich and varied vocabulary conversations will increase. As well as parents ought to provide books, music, and even videos in both languages. Do not forget that language is tied to emotions, and if parents talk more frequently in a language with only one child, others may feel excluded, which in turn could adversely affect their behavior. Likewise, evade sudden changes in the way they talk with their

children, especially when they are under six. Do not change languages from one moment to another, that is, in one moment switch to speak English if they have been accustomed to hearing only Spanish. (Chomsky, 2008)

Children should not be forced into a system of bilingual learning if this really makes them unhappy. It is necessary for the child to enjoy language. Learning two languages can be a very beautiful and enriching experience although children can learn two languages in what appears to be chaos, a fair amount of consistency will the language learning process simpler. Once children learn the pattern, it will be bothered when a parent breaks the established scheme.

Bilingualism should be seen as a natural and uncomplicated part of family life, children grow up enjoying being bilingual, and parents are most likely to succeed in maintaining the two languages active in the house. Language should not be made a problem, and children should not be punished for the use or non-use of a particular language. Mixing languages in conversation may make the child experience difficulties in separating the vocabulary and grammar in each language. Children can learn the "mixed" language or the hybrid one. (Chomsky, 2008)

Teachers and parents should be conscious of the individual differences of children. Each child learns language at his own pace and speed. It is closely related to a variety of factors such as the quality of time that the family remains in the community using the second language, relationships with family members who speak a second language, and opinions towards each language said by parents, school, community, and especially children.

There are language therapists and doctors who assure that the use of two languages at an early age causes retardation and language disorder. These practitioners claim that hearing two or more languages will confuse the child and causes serious problems in language acquisition. It is also stated that the acquisition of the principal language of the environment will be a better chance without competition from the other

language. However, there is no statically data to prove this version that the using of two or more languages produces delays or disorders in language acquisition. Many children worldwide are growing up with two or more languages since childhood, with no sign of delays or language disorders.

These kids are evidence to show that there is not a scientific data to give up a language to improve other. (Almond, 2013: p. 394)

1.3.7 Types of bilingualism

Many authors (D'Acerno, 1990; Lambert, Havelka and Crosby, 1958; Lambert and Fillenbaum, 1959) classify them in several ways, Weinreich (1953) differentiates three types:

1) Coordinate bilingualism is when a child learns two contexts and two languages, in separate environments. For example, when the two parents have different mother tongues and each parent speaks his or her own mother tongue to the child.

2) Compound bilingualism is when a child learns two languages used at the same time, in the same context, so a child grows up speaking both languages and can communicate with his parents easily without making any effort.

3) Sub-coordinate bilingualism is one language that is stronger and faster than the other one; the weaker language, which is the second language, is interpreted through the stronger language which is the first language (mother tongue). So, one semantic system is from mother tongue to the second language.

The first two types, coordinate bilingualism and compound bilingualism, develop in early childhood and they belong to early bilingualism, while the third type, sub-coordinate bilingualism, is late bilingualism, which develops when a second language is learned after age 12.

1.3.8 Some benefits of a bilingual person

There are more than 6.000 languages around the world, and human beings usually speak just one language. Communicating with people from other countries using a second language, therefore has some benefits that can be seen as follows.

Cognitive: Bilinguals may have some specific advantages in the way they perceive things. For instance, it is quite common that they always have two or more synonymous for a word or an object. Thus, a creative person can develop amazing thinking and the ability to think more flexibly. Bilinguals are conscious that the language should be spoken only when necessary. Therefore, they are more sensitive to the needs of the listener than monolinguals. Being bilingual has a positive effect on intellectual growth.

Character advantages: Bilinguals have the capacity to talk with other people in different languages, this develops their self-esteem, therefore bilinguals create a good link wherever they go.

Curriculum: A bilingual education gives better results in its planning, and this is evidenced when children show higher grades at the time to take any test. It is associated with the thought that bilingualism has its benefits. For them it is easy to speak more than one language. (Cranmer, 2013: pp. 320 - 353)

Communication: Bilingual students even enjoy reading and writing in different languages. They figure out and appreciate some plays and masterpieces in several languages. It provides right understanding of the different thoughts and traditions knowledge. That helps them improve their beliefs and behavior.

Culture: Being a bilingual speaker provides the language user with an access to some cultures, which is quite important for their development. That is why if somebody is

being exposed to more than one language at the same time, he is involved in all about cultural awareness.

Employment: With no doubt, one of the biggest advantages of a bilingual person is the fact that they can always get a better job, in any field, whether it is related to tourism, transportation, administration, public relations sales, interpreting and, obviously, in the world of teaching a new language. (Thomas, 1989: p.118)

1.3.9 Identity/ Personality change in bilingualism

The “identity problem” has always occupied a serious position as a part of the foreign language teaching profession. Foreign language teaching as a job poses the need for identity adjustments in different environments of the teaching profession for the non-native foreign language teachers.

This involves acquisition of a second identity. All foreign language teachers besides their native, national, ethnic, and cultural identities develop another identity. This can force teachers to develop an identity crisis. A person’s self-image has two components: personal and social identity. One’s native language dialect permeates one’s personal identity, so it is essential in every individual’s advancement and further shaped by the national education process.

It is in the development of a personal sense of language that we shape our personality and learn to explore ourselves. Therefore, nothing should be done to reduce our regard for this local and most intimately known language, or our self-respect that goes with it.

In the process of Cultural identity does not depend only on language. Cultural identity is a collective identity case consisting of a couple of identity types, as members of a group, a nation, or a community, acquiring its cultural specific vocabulary, race, context-sensitive topics, shared beliefs, attitudes, superstitions, customs, structural

forms of related language, alongside with idioms and proverbs, as well as features of paralinguistics and mannerisms of the entire community, in many respects involves acquisition of a second language identity. A Czech proverb states: “learn a new language and get a new soul.” It has relation with a Turkish proverb says: “If you speak one language you are one person, but if you speak two languages, you are two people.” That is to say, if somebody is bilingual, he will have more opportunities to get a job or he will be more easily accepted than a person who is monolingual. (Canagarajah, 2013: pp. 15 - 18)

Professional identity refers to teachers’ subject matter knowledge of their field. Improving their professionalism should be one of the most important goals in the teachers’ life, this point assures their capacity to teach in a lifelong process. Thus, molding a professional identity is a developmental process of socialization, vocational behavior, and maturation, to perform professional duties, one must be professionally qualified. Therefore, professional identity calls for a specific career role which requires the acquisition of specific foreign language knowledge and teaching skills alongside critical thinking, interpersonal skills, conflict-solving skills, as well as an ability to use computer technology and alternative assessment techniques.

Then, a foreign or second language teacher’s self-conceptualization associated with the teaching role can be viewed as their professional teaching identity. It is this professional identity that requires professional socialization and advancement, person-environment fit, and a developmental process of vocational maturation. As well as Collective identity is an identity bundle in which more than one identity coincides peacefully. The first identity type that collective identity includes is the mother tongue identity or ethnic identity. Thus, collective identity is a combination of certain identities. People generally have a so-called integrative attitude toward their tongue- they identify with the speakers of that language and want to maintain that identification. (Lado, 1981)

One of the most interesting questions about the bilingual attitudes of language teachers is whether the bilingual teachers have one or two personalities. Some bilingual teachers may feel that they change their personalities when they change from their mother tongue to the target language; this is a socio-psychological situation. What is seen as a change in personality is simply a shift in attitudes and behaviors corresponding to a shift in the situation or context. Then, a shift from one language to another is not actually a shift in personality, but just a code shift in social roles and emotional attitudes. The topic of the speech act, interlocutors, and purpose of conversation, trigger the use of different impressions, attitudes, and speech behaviors. The teachers make these code shifts in a conversation setting.

In addition, environment and culture in this setting as a whole cause the bilingual teachers to shift from the mother language to the target language during the communication processes. Neurolinguistic investigations have tried to answer the question of how bilingual teachers manage to keep the two languages separate. According to Adler (1977), a bilingual is neither here, nor there; he is a marginal man, he goes back and forth from one language to another so bilinguals have a switch that allows the speaker to turn from one language to the other. (Roberts and Penfield, 1964)

Eventually, foreign or second language learning also involves acquiring a second identity. Learning a second language involves taking on a new identity; some contexts of foreign language learning involve an identity crisis. One of these contexts can be the teacher's ethnic identity, or national identity, or cultural identity, or bicultural identity. (Brown, 1994)

1.3.10 Advantages

Nowadays, people around the world teach languages to children in their early years, because there are some advantages by learning to speak two or more different languages in the early stage. So, learning a second language a child can have many

advantages, but it can also present some disadvantages, because children during the learning process of a second language will face difficulties.

One of the advantages of learning a second language is that children are exposed to another culture, which means that children are able to speak to people from different countries.

The second advantage of learning a second language is that it helps kids build new relationships, as we know communication is a center part of human relationships, which means that children find ways of communication to interact with each other. (Wardhaugh, 2002)

The third advantage that bilingual children have is confidence on themselves, because when a child is able to speak more than one language it enhances his self-esteem. The fourth advantage is that bilingual children can have economic benefits in the future, that means that a person who dominates two languages can have wider job opportunities.

1.3.11 Disadvantages

As a conclusion it could be said that the first disadvantage of learning English as a foreign language in early stage is that a child will be confused and will mix languages temporarily; it is normal for bilingual/multilingual children to mix up languages until about the age of 4, because, for example, if a child wants to say something and he does not know the right word in language A, he will borrow it from language B to say his messages. It means that children can temporarily mix the languages which affect the way they express their ideas to others.

According to Rehman (2010), “this disadvantage fortunately appears at the early process of learning the language. But, the good news is that this disadvantage is not

permanent on most of the children; they can be enhanced within the process of learning the foreign language”.

Another disadvantage that affects children during the learning process, which can be considered as problem too, are the teachers in schools, for there are teachers that are not specialized in the subject that are teaching, for example, an English teacher is assigned to teach mathematics rather than another subject, so teachers that are teaching some subjects that are not their specialties, will affect the children, because they will not get enough English lessons to acquire the second language. This happens especially in public schools, because they are not interested in their students to become bilingual.

So, bilingual education requires a number of trained teachers who are proficient in both English and their native language (Spanish), it means when teachers at school teach well, this helps children to learn both languages in an appropriate way.

1.3.12 Some grammatical problems caused by bilingualism

Many problems or difficulties are faced by children who are learning English as a second language. So learners have difficulties in several aspects; the first is in the syntactic area (grammar, how words connect in sentences). The difficulty that learners have with this area is the use of plurals and the agreement between subject and verb, and in writing they sometimes use incorrect verb tenses and incomplete sentences. Especially learners have trouble to conjugate verbs, it means by selecting the correct ending for a verb related to the subject of the sentence, for example instead to write ‘I work’ they write ‘I works’ in this point they are very confused, they conjugate the third person singular adding ‘s’ with any other subject.

Another mistake that the learners of a second language commit, the repetition of the subject in a sentence, for example instead to write ‘My country is very beautiful’ they

write ‘My country it is very beautiful’. So learners use a noun and its pronoun in the same sentence, this problem happens a lot.

Another problem learners have is the use of incorrect article, for example instead of writing ‘I saw a rainbow after the rain’ they write ‘I saw rainbow after the rain’. This occurs because learners of a second language are unaware that there are rules to follow to use an appropriate article in a sentence.

On the other hand, children do not know the right pronunciation of article ‘the’. English has only one written form of the definite article which is ‘the’, and the article ‘the’ has two pronunciations, [ðə] and [ði]. The first sound, [ðə], is the pronunciation of ‘the’ before words beginning with a consonant sound, example ‘the man, the woman’ whereas [ði] is used before words beginning with a vowel sound, example ‘the army, the uncle’ as well as the article ‘the’ is used the same form before the plural or singular noun with the same different pronunciation. (The Articles | English Language Tutorials, n.d.)

In addition, for going on deep about the correct use of article (definite and indefinite), below will be some explanation with details about it, to avoid confusion to children who are learning English as the new language.

1.3.13 Definite and Indefinite Articles

Articles are special modifiers that appear before nouns or noun phrases. Articles help to clarify the meaning of the noun in the sentence. According to Lipski, (1978) “Articles in English are one of the key indicators of native speaker competence, and the ease with which native speakers use articles can lead them to ignore the complexities of the system and often be unaware of their importance to English syntax.” That means, native speakers have a good competence using articles, they use them unconsciously and without their complexity being showed.

There are three articles in the English language ‘the’, ‘an’ and ‘a’. In general, the native speakers know where to place the article without thinking about it, this means, they know how to use articles, when they should go in front of the noun, etc. The learners of a second language (L2), on the other hand, have difficulties with the use of articles; sometimes they get confused and do not know where to place them. If the learner of a L2 learns well the rules of articles, with time and a lot of practice, he will start to use them correctly and naturally as native speakers do.

Hewson (1972) has called “the English article system a “psychomechanism”, through which native speakers use articles correctly but unconsciously.” That is to say, as native speakers they just talk and use all parts of speech without perceiving what their real usage is at the time to utter in order to communicate with others.

For children, it is very important to manage articles choice, because is at this step of language acquisition they work with vocabulary, afterwards they will be able to categorize the parts of speech such as nouns (countable and uncountable). A countable noun refers to an object or idea, it can form plural or occur in a noun phrase with an indefinite article or with numerals. In other words, a countable noun is a noun that you can count using numbers. They can be classified as having shape or not having shape; it means that a countable noun is one that can be articulated in plural form, usually with an ‘s’. For example, ‘one book’, ‘two apples’, ‘three people’, whereas an uncountable noun is a noun that cannot have a number in front of it. For example ‘water’, ‘oil’, ‘air’. It cannot be said ‘one water’, because we cannot count the ‘water’. So, the choice of articles depends on the nouns, if it is countable or uncountable. In order to make the correct use of articles, learners should follow the rules taking into account that the article ‘the’ is used for specific and for plural non countable nouns, whereas the articles ‘a’ or ‘an’ are used for singular countable noun.

In addition, the influence of the mother tongue produces confusions to learners with the use of article. For example, Spanish has four forms of the indefinite article which are (un, una, unos, unas). The indefinite articles in Spanish must agree with their

nouns in gender and number, whereas English has two forms of indefinite article which are (a and an), and are used for singular. 'A' is used before words beginning with a consonant sound, example 'a dog, a house', while 'an' is used before words beginning with a vowel sound, example 'an apple, an eye'.

So, for these rules children who are acquiring the second language have trouble with the use and pronunciation of English article choice because children whose L1 is Spanish, according to the rules Spanish articles must agree in number and gender with their nouns but not English articles.

Another thing that can affect the use of articles by second language learners (SLL) is the teaching method. One important aspect to take into account to teach articles is to be conscious of the fact that they could be divided into two categories: countable and non-countable nouns. There are some difficulties with article choice that children face during the learning process of the second language, because if they do not know if the noun is countable or not, they will not use the correct article with it. For this reason, it is quite important for learners to recognize that countability is part of the language's grammar. Also, they should be aware of some special noun cases. For instance, the word 'money' is countable when it is used to refer to the money in a wallet, but is not usually countable as a noun in other contexts. Another example is the word 'experience', can be countable or uncountable, depending on their meaning. It is determined by what someone wants to say or to refer to, as a result, the difference between both is that 'experiences' refer to someone that has a lot of experiences in the sense that something happens to someone that affects how he/she feels whereas 'experience' is the experience that someone has in the use of something such as knowledge or skill from doing or seeing things.

Another difficulty, according to Quirk and Greenbaum, (1973) "for many non-native speakers of English is that some nouns may be made plural in their own languages but not in English. Yet again, there is an increasing tendency for native speakers to make a noun countable by using it in a classificatory sense, omitting a container, so

that they speak of ‘three coffees and two waters’ instead of ‘three cups of coffee and two bottles of water’.” In other words, the non-native speakers may be confused by the influence of their first language. This is very common in non-native speakers, because they do not pay attention in semantics, they consider it better to communicate instead of using grammatical rules, the word ‘informations’ is correct in French, but in English it should be singular. So, this variability of forms represents difficulty for learners of a second language.

In addition, it is important that teachers use some strategies to teach English articles to children who are learning it as a second language to become bilingual. One effective way to teach articles would be for the teacher to teach the rules of articles and then the learning will come through practices. The teacher has to prepare a lot of tasks for the students to practice using the forms of articles. Also, reading stories is a good way to teach articles in English, which help children to learn them easily, because the teacher asks children to read the story and after reading the teacher has to explain the three forms of articles. After, he asks them to go back to the reading and circle or underline all the articles and as children enjoy colors, it is a good idea to ask them to use colored marker for each different type of article. (English Grammar – Articles, 2014)

1.4 JUSTIFICATION

Nowadays, society requires professionals with a good command of languages that allows them to face the challenges of communicating with other cultures and have broader chances to find a job. The academic job opportunities multiply when professionals master more than one language. (Chen, 2010)

This research is worth doing because of the following reasons: A bilingual education may help children develop their communication skills in different languages, which means that they will learn about many cultures. Also, it is shown that starting in the first years of schooling with a second language reinforces and facilitates the learning of it. According to Lightbown (2008) learning another language adds value to the educational system by encouraging the development of different skills and integrating values such as respect and tolerance.

The characteristics of modern society; open and globalized, requires bilingual competence as a basic part of the development of citizens, in order to have greater opportunities in the future. From this follows the need to have a good knowledge of at least two languages and a good command of them.

Other reasons that encourage researcher to seek the bilingual educational program with the intention of increasing knowledge and use of English from an early age are the following: The need of our students to acquire English skills which help them to express and understand messages and communicate in everyday situations, and the need of our educational community, which claims the strengthening of the English language in the formation of children in a way that allow them to acquire knowledge.

Children in Ecuador should be able to use two languages, Spanish and English. In the same way, the need to respond to the new requirements of the world today, preparing students and children to successfully take on the challenges of a good knowledge of the English language in a society that is becoming more and more demanding, has to be taken into account.

This thesis report aims at improving the linguistic competence of students and children in English, helping them to get a quality education adapted to today's society, which allows the global development of the students, children and the country.

2. METHODOLOGY

The investigation was carried out at “Don Bosco” Fiscomisional School in Esmeraldas. In order to collect the data, two different tools were used. First, an interview was made to teachers in order to determine the degree of suitability of the methodology used by them in developing the English skills; the same to be graded by level as appropriate, such as suitable and unsuitable. The questionnaire that was applied to teachers consists of 7 yes/no questions, 2 multiple choice questions and 1 open question. In the institution, there are 7 teachers; of them, only 6 participated in the research.

Students were part of the second group that participated in the present investigation. The test is used in this phase of the research was made in order to diagnose the level of mastery of the article choice in students. The test application was made in the facilities of the mentioned school. There were a total of 228 students, from which a total number of 114 participated in this investigation. All the participants were Spanish-speaking students of the seventh year of basic education, which are learning English as their L2 and all of them live in Esmeraldas (Ecuador). Their ages range between 10 and 12 years old. The questionnaire applied to students was made out of 2 different parts; the first part consisted of 5 questions related to English language usage; 4 of them were multiple choice questions and 1 was an open question. The second part consisted of 11 multiple choice activities related to the use of articles in English, that is, students were asked to choose the correct article for each sentence.

The results of the research were tabulated and percentages were calculated using Excel. Then, they were presented in tables in order to facilitate the understanding and to be able to reach some conclusion. After some suggestion were made for the improvement of the learning of a second language for children in Esmeraldas.

The materials and resources that was used were computer, internet, printer, papers, books and flash memories.

2.1 TYPE OF INVESTIGATION

The type of the present investigation is descriptive, because the results of the investigation were described and explained, because by means of the results, a proposal was made.

2.2 VARIABLES

Dependent: Children's English language learning.

Independent: Bilingualism

2.3 METHODS

Inductive: It was used to interpret the generalities of the bilingualism and its influence upon children's English language learning.

Deductive: It allowed from the general data obtained, to explain the problem of the research.

Statistics: The statistical method was used to process the data obtained from the surveys applied.

3. RESULTS

3.1 INTERVIEW TO TEACHERS

Alternatives	Percentage
Yes	50%
No	50%

Table 1. Academic degree.

In table 1, question 1, answers in relation to whether teachers have an academic degree and what type of degree they have, if any, are found. 50% of the answers show that the respondents have an academic degree related to English language teaching, meanwhile the rest of the participants (50%) claim not to have a professional degree. It gives students the image of a teacher who lacks professionalism and interest in teaching. This is disadvantage into the process to get bilingual students.

Alternatives	Percentage
Yes	100%
No	0%

Table 2. To be bilingual is important.

In relation to if being bilingual is important results for question 2, table 2, show that 100% of the participants assured that it is important to be bilingual. This means that being bilingual is an advantage because it gives a lot of opportunities such as travelling abroad, interaction with foreign people, good job and so on.

Alternatives	Percentage
To travel abroad	10%
To find a better job	75%
To communicate	15%

Table 3. The advantages of being bilingual.

In relation to advantages of being bilingual table 3, question 3, show that 75% of the teachers in this institution give their point of view that the advantages of being bilingual help to find a better job whereas 15% said that is the communication and 10% considered that travelling abroad is an advantage. The results demonstrate that being bilingual will give a range number of job opportunities, both in their own country or in abroad.

Alternatives	Percentage
Yes	100%
No	0%

Table 4. Because of the influence of L1 upon L2 students imitate the grammatical rules.

According to question number 4, table 4, which has relation with the influence of L1 upon L2, if students tend to imitate the grammatical rules, 100% of the participants guaranteed that students imitate the grammatical rules because of the influence of their native language. This is a disadvantage, but it should take into account that this disadvantage could be just temporary.

Alternatives	Percentage
Verbal tense	10%
Article choice	85%
Pasive voice	5%

Table 5. Difficulty of the grammatical rules of L2 because of the influence of L1.

To know the most difficult grammatical rules of the English language for students, because of the influence of L1 in question number 5, table 5, it can be seen that 85% of teachers confirmed that students have difficulty with the use of articles (definite and indefinite) meanwhile 10% said verbal tense and 5% claimed passive voice. This means that teachers may do not apply an adequate strategy to teach articles for this reason students have a high number of difficulty in article choice or students confused the use of article because of the influence of their mother tongue.

Alternatives	Percentage
Yes	100%
No	0%

Table 6. Importance of grammar to become bilingual.

In relation to teaching grammar in the process of bilingualism in question 6, table 6, results show that 100% of teachers think that grammar is the most appropriate and significant skill that students need to become bilingualism. Grammar is essential to pick up bilingualism because when an individual manage the grammar part well, he will speak correctly and he will become a real bilingual speaker.

Alternatives	Percentage
Watching movies	7%
Practicing the speaking	66%
Role plays	17%
Listening to music	10%

Table 7. Best way to teach a second language.

In relation to teaching a second language at the school in order to work on bilingualism, which belongs to question 7, table 7, teachers were asked which teaching way they think is the most appropriate to apply bilingualism in their institution, and they considered that practicing the speaking, with an 66%, as the best way to lead bilingualism. This means practicing speaking is essential because the more you practice, you will be more fluent in speech, and storing a range number of new vocabulary, so practicing speaking is an advantage.

Alternatives	Percentage
Yes	83%
No	17%

Table 8. Difficulty to learn a foreign language.

According to question 8, table 8, the intention of this question was to determine if teachers consider their students are able to acquire the new language, and it was determined, by an 83% said that is difficult for their students to learn a foreign language. Just 17% said that students could learn the language in an easy way. According to the results, it can be said that students are not motivated to learn a new language they have lack of interest toward L2, also teachers may not have a sufficient experience to teach a new language.

Alternatives	Percentage
Listening	50%
Speaking	0%
Writing	17%
Reading	33%
Grammar	0%
Vocabulary	0%

Table 9. English language knowledge as a weakness.

In relation to question 9, table 9, which has relation with English language knowledge, it can be seen that the most difficult knowledge for students to develop the language, 50% of the participants is listening, while 33 % assured that reading is the most difficult skill that students develop and 17% considered that writing is the weakness of their students. This means that students have difficulty with the speaking skill, they may not practice it and this is a disadvantage.

Alternatives	Percentage
I agree	67%
I do not agree	17%
I do not know	16%

Table 10. Effect of bilingual program.

The last question applied to teachers of English at “Don Bosco” was related to bilingual program, 67% of the participants considered that bilingual program is a real help to develop the language in their students, in opposite to this point of view, 17% claimed that they did not agree. This means is an advantage to apply bilingual program at schools for strengthen students toward a foreign language, which nowadays in our society English is very important.

3.2 INTERVIEW AND TEST TO STUDENTS

Alternatives	Percentage
Yes	0%
No	31,57%
Null	68,43%

Table 11. Relatives who speak English.

In table 11, question 1, the idea was to know if the participants have any relatives who speak English. 31,57% said they did not have any relatives who manage the target language. It reveals that students do not have with whom to practice the new language, they just listen English at school and this may not sufficient for them, and this a disadvantage to them.

Alternatives	Percentage
Always	54%
Sometimes	26%
Once in a while	15%
Almost never	5%
Never	0%

Table 12. English Practice.

In table 12, question 2, the intention was to determine how often students practice English outside the school, and the interview showed that 54%, of the students always practice English at home. Practicing English is an advantage.

Alternatives	Percentage
Highly agree	24%
Agree	42%
I do not agree	22%
I don't know	12%

Table 13. Effectiveness to study abroad.

In table 13, question number 3, the intention was to know how effective it is to study abroad according to the students' opinion. 42% of the sample claimed that it is effective to learn English or any languages.

Alternatives	Percentage
Highly agree	24%
I agree	37%
I do not agree	26%
I don't know	13%

Table 14. Bilingualism affecting intelligence.

In table 14, question number 4, has relation to the idea that learning two languages affects the intelligence 26% of the students did not agree with this statement.

Alternatives	Percentage
To control all grammatical rules	47%
To manage fluency properly	28%
To manage both fluency and accuracy	25%

Table 15. Appropriate way to speak English.

The intention in question number 5, represented in table 15, was to determine what the best way to manage English as second language is. The obtained responses 47% who claimed that to manage all grammar rules is the best way to acquire the language. It reveals that students focus more on grammar but they should take account that all parts of speech must be considered as important points to be a real bilingual user.

Alternatives	Percentage
To travel abroad	6%
To find a better job	79%
To communicate	15%

Table 16. The advantages of being bilingual.

In relation to advantages of being bilingual table 16, question 6, show that 79% of the students in this institution give their point of view that the advantages of being bilingual help to find a better job whereas 15% said that is the communication and 6% considered that travelling abroad is an advantage.

Alternatives	Percentage
Correct	44,50%
Incorrect	55,50%

Table 17. Article use.

From question 7 to question 17, represented in table 17, the intention was to define how effective the students were in the use of the definite and the indefinite article. 44,50% of the results were correct. According to the results, it means that teachers are not using the appropriate strategies for these students to improve the use of the articles.

4. DISCUSSION

To discuss the results obtained, there are some comparison with the ones received by other authors in relation to the theme of this investigation was made.

4.1 INTERVIEW TO TEACHERS

Question 1 had the intention to inquire about whether teachers have an academic degree and what type of degree they have, results showed that half of them already have an academic degree related to English language teaching; meanwhile the rest of the participants did not have any professional degree. It coincides with the results obtained by Rehman (2010)

Questions 2 was about of being bilingual is important and this showed that all of the participants assured that to be a bilingual is very important. Also, question 3 showed that the most of the participants assured that the advantage of being bilingual help to find a better job. It coincides with the results obtained by Thomas (1989). These two questions (2–3) are very important for students to be engaged their attention to learn the foreign language, in this case English.

However, answers in question 4 all of the participants guaranteed that the influence of L1 upon L2 students imitate the grammatical rules. It coincides with the results obtained by Dinocenti (1998). This affirmation is highly debatable, because to acquire any languages consists of confusion and imitation the grammatical part because of the influence of the mother tongue.

Later on, to know which grammatical rules of the English language are difficult for the students because of the influence of L1, question number 5 demonstrated that the majority

of the teachers confirmed that most of the students have difficulty with the use of article choice. It coincides with the results obtained by Hewson (1972).

Also, at the time to check question 6, which objective was to know what way is the best to achieve bilingualism with students in the institution, all of teachers assured that grammar is the most appropriate and significant skill that students need to become bilingual. So, teachers are probably going to strengthen the grammatical part of their classes in order to help students improve it.

As a way to confirm teachers' opinion, question 7 had the intention to figure out ways to apply bilingualism at schools, the majority of the participants considered that practicing the speaking is the best way to lead bilingualism, meanwhile 7% claimed that watching movies are quite useful to learn the target language. In other words, they consider the oral productive skill the most important for students to become bilingual.

Question 8, which intention was to determine if teachers considered their students to be able to learn the new language, got 83% of the participants being a little negative, because they considered students did not learn the language. That means they did not see their students as potential learners. Only 17% guaranteed that their students could learn the language in an easy way.

The purpose in question 9 was to define which language skills is the most difficult to develop bilingualism, and half of the participants claimed that listening is the weakness that students showed, while 33% assured that reading is the most difficult ability for students to develop. 17% considered that writing is the weakness of their students. Taking these results into account, it could be good for teachers to use activities such as dictation and story reading for students to improve the mentioned skills.

The last question asked teachers about the application of bilingual program. 67% of the participants considered that bilingual program was supporting to develop the language in their students. Opposing this point of view, 17% claimed that they did not agree, finally

16% confirmed that they did not know if the bilingual program could be a good choice to acquire the new language.

4.2 INTERVIEW AND TEST TO STUDENTS

Question number 1 was about if any student has a relative who speaks English. None of the participants affirmed having an English speaking relative. This means that no student has the chance to practice English in a familiar context. Although, around half of the participants affirmed practicing English outside the classroom and the school environment.

Also, in question 3, related to how effective it is to study abroad, 42% of the students demanded that they agree with the statement. So, not many of them are interested in travelling abroad in order to learn English better. A way to change students' point of view could be through schools, they could help them with scholarship to give them the opportunity to study abroad in order to improve the use of the second language.

In question 4, related to the idea that learning two languages may confuse and lower a child's intelligence, the opinion of the participants was that they agree, this means that the majority of students think that learning two languages affects their intelligence. In that way, this can demotivate them during the learning process so, they will acquire the language slowly and with more difficulty. It coincides with the results obtained by Dinocenti (1998).

The purpose in question 5 was to define what an appropriate way to speak English as second language is. Almost half of the participants responded that to manage all grammar rules is the best way to acquire the language, that is, for students it is easier to speak English well if they know the grammar rules. Also, question 6 showed that the most of the students assured that the advantage of being bilingual is that helps to find a better job. It coincides with the results obtained by Thomas (1989).

The second part was a collection of questions in which students could show their knowledge of article use in English. Results show that students do not have a good command of articles in English. The responses for both options, correct and incorrect, are almost leveled, they appear around half of the times, having more incorrect answers than correct.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

After making the analysis and interpretation of the collected data with teachers and students of “Don Bosco” Fiscomisional School, the following conclusions were reached.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

- One important result of this thesis report is that children acquiring two or more languages from birth are able to differentiate the grammatical systems of their languages from early stages and without apparent effort.
- The advantage is that children can communicate with others easily without effort and the disadvantage is that when children speak more than two or three languages they sometimes are confused and they mix the language.
- Advantages and disadvantages could also be less or more depending on the age in which the second language is acquired.
- Children who learn two or more languages in very early stages present more significant advantages than those who are monolingual and children becoming bilingual present some disadvantages at the beginning of the process of learning a foreign or second language.
- The disadvantages that children face at the moment of learning another language are not permanent: they can be improved within the process itself. Learning an

additional language allows children to grow in areas such as cultural, personal, professional, academic, among others.

- As a result, between kids and adolescents this investigation shows that the children who learn both languages in early years are able to express their ideas easier than the adolescents. That means that learning another language in early stages creates more opportunities to express ideas and to communicate easily despite of the disadvantages mentioned above.
- In addition, according to the results of this research teachers consider that the application of bilingual program will be effective for the improvement of a foreign language.
- The majority of the teachers and students claimed that being bilingual is an advantage because it helps to get a better job. Also they considered grammar is the way to manage the new language which is quite essential to pick up bilingualism.
- Students do not live the language in context, since most of the contestants do not count on any relatives who manage the target language, and this is a disadvantage.
- Also, the results for the test on the use of articles that was applied to students showed that less than half of the times they know how to use articles. This could mean that their knowledge of articles is low, since the amount of errors in their answers is high, either students do not feel comfortable answering the questionnaire, this show that they do not work in English as much as they should, or that teachers are not using the appropriate strategies for these students.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

After analyzing, the following recommendations could be suggested:

- Educative institutions should apply bilingual program to strengthen students with a foreign language.

- Teachers should attend more seminars to learn about new methodology trends to apply bilingualism in the school.
- Students should be conscious that all parts of speech must be considered as important points to acquire English properly. Therefore, they should practice grammar, speaking, listening, reading, writing, and of course vocabulary. All those components should be considered if a learner wants to be a real bilingual user.
- Students who do not have relatives who speak English, they should find ways to practice the new language such as listening to music, watching movies, etc.
- As almost half of the students do not know how to use articles, it is recommended that teachers give students more activities about the mentioned grammatical point in order to strengthen their knowledge.
- After checking some critical aspects of this research, it is highly recommended that teachers apply different strategies that may be more appropriate for their students.
- To follow this investigation with other studies, such as:
 - A pedagogical experiment to demonstrate the influence of bilingualism upon grammar learning.
 - A workbook of exercises to improve the lexicon and grammar in bilingual students.

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6.2 ANNEXES

ANNEXE 1: INTERVIEW TO TEACHERS

Dear teachers

As part of my thesis research, I am carrying out the following questionnaire about bilingualism

In order for you to help me, I need you to read all the items and answer them. It will be anonymous, you do not need to write your name, so please be confident and trustful.

1. Do you have an academic degree related to English teaching awarded by any university?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. Do you think that to be bilingual is important?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
3. What are the advantages of being bilingual?
 - a. To travel abroad
 - b. To find a better job
 - c. To communicate
4. Do you think that because of the influence of L1 upon L2 students tend to imitate the grammatical rules?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. Which grammatical rules of the English language are difficult for the students because of the influence of L1?

- a. Verbal tense
 - b. Article choice
 - c. Passive voice
6. Do you think grammar is important on the process of becoming bilingual?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
7. How do you think is better to teach a foreign language in order to improve bilingualism?
- a. Watching movies
 - b. Role plays
 - c. Practicing speaking
 - d. Listening to music
8. Do you consider it is difficult for your students to learn a foreign language?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
9. Which of the English language knowledge do you think students show weakness?
- a. Listening
 - b. Speaking
 - c. Writing
 - d. Reading
 - e. Grammar
 - f. Vocabulary
10. With the application of the Bilingual Program in this institution, the process of learning English as a foreign language will be improved.
- a. I agree
 - b. I do not agree
 - c. I do not know

Why?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION!



ANNEXE 2: INTERVIEW AND TEST TO STUDENTS

Dear students

As part of my thesis research, I am carrying out the following questionnaire about bilingualism

In order for you to help me, I need you to read all the items and answer them. It will be anonymous, you do not need to write your name, so please be confident and trustful.

1. Does anybody in your family speak English? If it were so, who?

- a. No
- b. Yes

Who?

2. How often do you practice English at home?

- a. Nothing
- b. 1 hour/day
- c. Between 1 hour and 3 hours per week

3. How effective do you think it is to study in another country in order to be a bilingual person?

- a. Very effective
- b. At little effective
- c. Not very effective
- d. Not effective at all

4. Do you consider learning two languages confuses a child and lowers his/her intelligence?

- a. I highly agree
- b. I agree
- c. I do not agree
- d. I do not know

5. Choose the most appropriate way to speak English

- a. To control all grammatical rules
- b. To manage fluency properly

c. To manage both fluency and accuracy

6. What are the advantages of being bilingual?

- a. To travel abroad
- b. To find a better job
- c. To communicate

Choose the correct answer:

7. According to this statement choose the correct definition

- a. We use the indefinite article to talk about just plural nouns.
- b. We use the indefinite article to talk about just a singular noun.
- c. We use the indefinite article to talk about both singular and plural nouns.

8. I want _____ apple and two oranges.

- a) an
- b) a
- c) _____
- d) the

9. I live in an apartment. _____ apartment is big.

- a) an
- b) a
- c) _____
- d) the

10. I want to buy _____ laptop computer next week.

- a) an
- b) a
- c) _____
- d) the

11. _____ president of Ecuador will be visiting Australia next month.

- a) an
- b) a
- c) _____
- d) the

12. Please meet me at the train station in _____ hour from now.

- a) an
- b) a
- c) _____
- d) the

13. She likes to watch tennis on television. It is _____ very interesting sport.

ANNEXE 3: PICTURES

PICTURES 1



PICTURES 2

