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Daniel Theresa Foster

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**Bilingual First Language Acquisition (BFLA)
in Children of Bilingual/ Bicultural Families:
An annotated Bibliography for Parents and Teachers**

**APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

Supervisor: _____

Elaine K. Horwitz

Reader: _____

Almeida J. Toribio

**Bilingual First Language
Acquisition (BFLA) in Children of
Bilingual/ Bicultural Families:**
An annotated Bibliography for Parents
and Teachers

by
Damiel Theresa Foster, B.A.

Report

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Dedication

I dedicate this paper, wholeheartedly, to my loving parents- two people in a biracial, bilingual and bicultural marriage that has lasted over three decades- whose dedication, guidance, support, resilience and love has driven me to where I am today. My parents' prize-worthy marriage has taught me that infant bilingualism and later adult bilingualism is not mythological, not impossible and not something to disregard but to strive for and admire. My parents, who are not researchers, scholars or expert linguists, have confirmed that bilingualism is indeed case-specific and cannot be generalized despite all of the scientific research, decades of intense studies and intricate claims made by dedicated linguists. Bilingualism is an art to be molded and perfected. Because of my parent's decision over two decades ago to raise bilingual children, I can give my unborn children the best language instruction I know to be functional, given methods only the test of time can perfect.

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Abstract

Bilingual First Language Acquisition (BFLA) in Children of Bilingual/ Bicultural Families: An annotated Bibliography for Parents and Teachers

Daniel Theresa Foster, M.A.
The University of Texas at Austin, 2013

Supervisor: Elaine K. Horwitz

Bilingual First Language Acquisition is not a new concept in the field of bilingualism but it is one that has become increasingly prevalent today. Inspired by my own BFLA background, this report is designed to grant some insight into this phenomenon that is presently observable worldwide. It is designed as an annotated bibliography in that it presents literature summaries of twenty-three articles concerning the BFLA theme. It is meant as a guide for parents and educators who are raising bilingual children in a world where bilingualism is not only prevalent and essential but also incredibly admirable.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Chapter 1.1— My Personal Experience with Bilingualism

This report stems from my experiences growing up bilingually. As a product of a bilingual-bicultural family, I am a living testimonial that Bilingual First Language Acquisition (or BFLA) as a child language rearing strategy can give a person the gift of two languages without an adverse impact on the child's linguistic or cognitive development. BFLA is essentially the acquisition of two languages from birth as opposed to one language.

My linguistically unsophisticated parents unknowingly practiced what has generally become accepted as the one person- one language strategy (Döpke, 1997; Hulk & Müller, 2000; Lieven, 2011; Nicoladis & Genesee, 1998). Meanwhile, I was preoccupied noticing various cases in other families in which attempts to raise bilingual children were not as successful. While my parents' consistent approach did seem challenging at times, their determination and their unconditional love for me and for my sister was ultimately a rewarding experience.

Although my parents were triumphant in raising one bilingual child, their efforts were not as successful with their second child who was only three years my junior. Today, my younger sister comprehends Spanish, but she struggles to produce it. Her lack of oral proficiency is possibly a result of her refusal to use Spanish during most of her adolescence. While this is an unfortunate outcome, it is not at all uncommon for children growing up in bilingual homes. Defiance during

adolescence in itself is a common social phenomenon and some parents are better equipped to cope with rebellion than others. My family's situation, in which the younger of two children resisted speaking the heritage language, is not specific only to my family but a phenomenon often occurring in bilingual families (Silva-Corvalán, 2004). Younger children tend to have less opportunity to acquire the minority language because of several environmental factors. For instance, the older child may be highly proficient in both languages, but if English is used in the home, and if the minority language is not found at school, the minority language will often become the older child's non-dominant language (Gutiérrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2003). Consequently, the older child will typically communicate with his or her younger siblings in the majority, and dominant, language. With his or her role model using the more ubiquitously used language, the younger sibling is more likely to develop a stronger ability to articulate in the language that is most frequently used—the majority tongue.

This may not always be the case in families who speak only the minority language in the home. However, in my home where my father spoke English (the majority language) and my mother spoke Spanish (the minority language), as the first child, I had the advantage. Putting aside my American education, which was solely in English, my bilingual input in the home was balanced, with equal parts English and Spanish. My sister's experience was less balanced, given that her bilingual input was inequitable —English input from two sources (father and sister) and Spanish input from only one source (our mother). My sister and I are living experimental results of a study done unintentionally.

In addition to my own and my sister's experiences, while growing up, I had contact with a number of other individuals with a variety of

bilingual backgrounds. I will describe here some of my personal observations of my family members and friends with bilingual upbringings. These individuals will remain anonymous to respect their privacy. All of the subjects of these personal anecdotes are first, second and third generation immigrants to the United States.

Apart from my own case and my sister's, a third case of BFLA (also referred to as simultaneous bilingualism) that I have witnessed is one of an American-born adolescent, who is the only child of two Venezuelan parents with a highly educated level of Spanish. In some sense, her parents were more successful in her language development than mine, given the equal amount of input from each language that they offered their daughter; Spanish was used in the home and with family, and English was used everywhere else (primarily in scholastic settings). Her case can also be relevant to the one parent-one language strategy if we consider that each context promotes a separate language- we can refer to this case as a one context- one language approach. Now at age 17, this young woman has successfully acquired both languages. Despite her English dominance (which is inevitable in an English speaking society) her Spanish is at a level that SLA educators might categorize as *Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency*, or CALP (Cummins, 2008) which is a more scholastically-oriented jargon. According to Cummins (2008)

BICS [basic interpersonal communicative skills] refers to conversational fluency in a language while CALP refers to students' ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to success in school. (p. 2)

I am also familiar with the case of two American-born children of a Brazilian-American parent and an Egyptian-American parent. Although the parents had positive intentions regarding their children's linguistic

upbringing, their execution was inconsistent and they have struggled to communicate with their children in their non-English languages. These parents did not choose language strategies prior to raising their children (which is understandable since most people do not strategize beforehand). In my observation, both parents often code-mix between his or her heritage language (Portuguese or Arabic, respectively) and the majority language (English). Presently, it appears to me that their two daughters understand Portuguese and Arabic, but generally only give English responses with the occasional short phrases in the other two languages.

This family's situation could have been ideal and had high potential for nurturing multilingual children. In practice however, the lack of a consistent approach resulted in children who primarily speak only one language. However, research suggests that there may not be reason for concern, in this case. Several studies suggest that since these children were (and are) exposed to both languages regularly, they will have some degree of fluency, in time (Dartigue, 1966; Döpke, 1997; Genesee, 2001; Genesee & Lambert, 1983; Nicoladis & Genesee, 1998). As with my own family, our levels of proficiency are disparate but we are still capable of communicating in both languages to some degree; these children may also be able to maneuver their languages to some extent as they continue to mature.

To me, the experience of this family relates to Genesee's (2001) hypothesis about maintaining the family languages separately. Genesee (2001) points out that the one parent-one language approach is typically recommended to parents of bilingual children. However, this family does not maintain the three languages separate, which is considered 'code-mixing' by some researchers. Genesee (2001) maintains that "*according to input-based explanations, young bilingual children code-mix because of*

the input addressed to them by others" (Genesee, 2001, p.156). Genesee also highlights another popular perception that "[...] *young bilingual children code-mix to fill linguistic gaps in their language proficiency*" (Genesee, 2001, p. 157). This may or may not be the case in this family. Nevertheless, Genesee (2001) confirms that despite some popular perceptions, code-mixing is not a sign of linguistic incompetence or lack of intelligence but rather a stage in BFLA that may or may not change with time. While the one parent-one language approach is popular and often effective, it is not the only method that works. Just being exposed to more than one language with regularity gives children an adequate amount of input to acquire two or more languages. As evidenced in Genesee's studies, these two children are likely to acquire the languages as long as they are consistently in contact with them.

Although their theory is considered among the older beliefs in bilingualism, to me, Lambert, Havelka and Crosby's (1958) theory of *compound* and *coordinate* acquisition is applicable here as well. In the case of the Portuguese-Arabic family, in my observation, the three languages were acquired through a compound system- or "[...] *developed through experience in fused contexts, as with vocabulary training in school, or where the same family members use two languages interchangeably to refer to the same environmental events*" (Lambert et al., 1958, p. 240). The input offered by these parents currently elicits only English output from the children. That is not to say that these young bilinguals will not later produce grammatically correct output in all three languages. However, since these children are third generation immigrants, there still exists the possibility that these children will lose their heritage languages later in life. According to several studies on the Hispanic population in the US and on bilingualism in general, minority-language

speakers tend to lose the heritage language by the third generation after immigration (Center, 2007, 2009; Taylor, Kochhar, Livingston, Lopez & Morin, 2009).

These experiences along with several other similar circumstances and my own upbringing are what sparked my interest in bilingualism, foreign language education and more specifically Bilingual First Language Acquisition- which is the focus of my paper.

Chapter 1.2-- Bilingual First Language Acquisition

Bilingual First Language Acquisition is an emerging field uniting both the well-established field of Second Language Acquisition (or SLA) and the much debated field of Bilingualism. However, while this topic continues to grow rapidly in both fields, linguists note that countless questions remain concerning children acquiring two languages simultaneously.

Bilingualism is a sociolinguistic condition that many people around the world share. Ellis, Kroll and de Groot (2005) note that with roughly 6,000 world languages and fewer than 200 countries, bilingualism and even multilingualism is rather inevitable (Ellis et al., 2005). Unfortunately, however, in the United States, a portion of educators and lay people generally view bilingualism (and accordingly multilingualism) as threatening to natural child growth and development- Pearson, Fernandez and Oller (1993) note that “*Despite scanty and at times contradictory evidence, the view that bilingualism is a risk factor in development seems to prevail*” (Pearson et al., 1993).

Nevertheless, researchers, like Dickinson et al. (2004), Genesee (2001), Hulk and Müller (2000), Lambert (1981), Pearson et al. (1993) and Perani et al. (1998), have conducted studies confirming that bilingualism

and/or Bilingual First Language Acquisition is not threatening to the child's cognitive development or literacy. These researchers maintain that bilingualism and BFLA contribute to a sound foundation in cognitive and logical reasoning and in linguistic awareness.

The term *bilingualism* itself sparks much debate among researchers. Valdés and Figueroa (1994) define bilingualism as “...*knowledge of ‘more than one’ language along a continuum of proficiencies*” (as cited in Gutiérrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2003, p. 268) while others attempt to categorize bilinguals into distinct levels of language knowledge and ability, according to Gutiérrez-Clellen and Kreiter (2003). In addition, although most current researchers reject negative views about bilingualism, they have differing and shifting views on the specifics of the phenomenon. For example, Lambert (1981) states “...*these ‘infant’ bilinguals show full command of the two (or more) codes, as though they were double monolinguals*” (p. 15) in his comparative article on bilingual acquisition versus second language acquisition. To him, bilingualism means that people are doubly monolingual (Lambert, 1981). Contrarily, Lieven (2011), in her review of Bosch & Sebastián-Gallés’ study on infant bilingualism, takes a drastically different position. She suggests that bilinguals be regarded as bilinguals and not as double monolinguals (Lieven, 2011). Lieven writes “*rather than treating bilinguals as monolinguals with two languages, and comparing them to monolinguals with one language, we may need to re-conceptualize bilingual development and how to study it*” (Lieven, 2011, p. 258).

There are also a number of important developmental questions that still need to be addressed. Ellis, Kroll and de Groot (2005) ask:

In acquiring two languages from birth with parents who accord to the ‘one person, one language’ principle, a situation referred to as Bilingual First Language Acquisition (BFLA), do children

undergo a double acquisition process in which the two morphosyntactic systems are acquired in parallel as fundamentally independent closed systems (the 'Separate Development Hypothesis', SDH)? (p. 3)

Or is it a single system, like the Unitary Language System Hypothesis suggests, as referred to in Hulk and Müller (2000)? “*Alternatively, does BFLA produce a single hybrid, a 'Mish-Mash' resultant from systematic morphosyntactic influence from each language on the other?*” (Ellis et al., 2005, p.3).

Chapter 1.3--An annotated bibliography

Given the importance of maintaining home languages and the sometimes confusing literature, this report gives an overview of the literature on Bilingual First Language Acquisition in the following chapter. It is designed as an annotated bibliography for parents of current and future bilingual children and to the educators of these children as a reference guide to BFLA.

This paper addresses topics associated with BFLA, such as the following five concepts. Firstly, we look at the one parent- one language strategy of raising bilingual children, which is discussed in Döpke (1997), Hulk and Müller (2000), Lieven (2011) Nicoladis and Genesee (1998). Secondly, the question of whether bilingual acquisition is threatening to cognitive function and development is debated in Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés (2003), Ben-Zeev (1997), Carrow (1957), Dartigue (1966), Deuchar and Clark (1966), Dickinson, McCabe, Clark-Chiarelli, and Wolf (2004), Ellis, Kroll and de Groot (2005), Lambert (1981), Lieven (2011), Padilla and Liebman (1975), and Pearson, Fernandez and Oller (1993). Thirdly, how parent discourse, strategies and code-switching affect BFLA are

presented in Döpke (1997), Genesee (2001), Gutierrez-Clellen and Kreiter (2003), Hulk and Müller (2000), Lambert, Havelka and Crosby (1958), Nicoladis and Genesee (1998). Fourthly, we will observe how society, biculturalism and education affect bilingualism, multilingualism or acquisition in Brooks (1969), Christian (1965), Hulk and Müller (2000), Lieven (2011) and Soffietti (1960). Fifthly, language dominance, bilingual proficiency, and language loss and maintenance are the roots of the following articles: Bahrck, Hall, Goggin, Bahrck and Berger (1994), Dartigue (1966), Genesee and Lambert (1983), and Perani et al. (1998).

It goes without saying that the articles summarized in this bibliography do not offer sure-fire strategies or methodologies to raising bilingual children. None of them offer unambiguous answers to questions about raising children bilingually, but they do give some helpful suggestions and I hope that readers of this bibliography will feel more confident about giving children two languages. As is the case with all articles in the scholarly literature, they are not without bias.

The annotated bibliography portion of this paper is segmented into five sections. The section discussing the effects of Bilingual First Language Acquisition on cognitive development is the subsection with the most articles (eleven) because it tends to be the most popular topic in the field of BFLA. Although my paper draws attention to and supports the one parent- one language BFLA strategy, there is not yet much literature investigating this topic. This annotated bibliography barely scratches the surface of the potential of this theme; serving as more of a broad guide and introduction into the expanding literature than as an all-inclusive review.

Chapter 2: Annotated Bibliography

Bilingual first language acquisition is of growing interest and popularity in the United States, though it has been a world-wide phenomenon for much longer. This chapter is an annotated bibliography designed to offer some insight on Bilingual First Language Acquisition to parents and educators of bilingual children. It is organized into the following five sections: 1) Perspectives on the one parent- one language strategy for Bilingual First Language Acquisition. 2) Bilingual First Language Acquisition effects on cognitive function and development. 3) The effects of parental discourse, parental strategies and parental code-switching on BFLA. 4) Societal and cultural effects on BFLA. 5) Language dominance, language loss and language maintenance and their influence on BFLA. As will be seen in these summaries, the task of defining the margins of bilingualism and the very meaning of the word are still under debate.

Section 1: The One Parent-One Language Strategy

Döpke, S. (1997). Is the simultaneous acquisition of two languages in early childhood equal to acquiring each of the two languages individually? In *Child language research forum* (Vol. 28, pp. 95-112).

According to Döpke (1997) “The second half of this century has seen a turn-around in attitudes towards bilingualism from condemning it as harmful to the mind and the soul of the child [...] to acknowledging intellectual and educational benefits [...]”. Döpke’s article poses an important question essential to our understanding of bilingual first language acquisition. The author addresses the question:

A major theoretical question is whether children who are exposed to two languages simultaneously in early childhood accomplish the task by strictly separating the two languages and acquiring each of them like monolingual children do or whether the grammatical systems of the two languages are acquired in relation to each other. (p. 1)

Döpke presents De Houwer's (1994) Separate Development Hypothesis which suggests that "...simultaneously bilingual children develop the grammatical structures in each of their two languages based on the language specific input" (p. 2). Döpke also discusses Meisel et al. (1994) where the authors propose that bilingual children acquire each language like monolinguals, a concept with which Lieven (2011) strongly disagrees. Döpke's primary purpose in this article is to demonstrate that monolingual and bilingual acquisitions do not differ greatly from each other but that the complexity of processing for bilinguals creates structures usually not common in monolingual brains. Döpke advocates the one parent-one language approach, in which neither parent code-mixes or provides input in the other language.

This article presents a longitudinal case study done in Australia of three English and German speaking children in separate-language households. The study found that despite following this one parent-one language approach, some phases of acquisition still showed signs of linguistic interference of English on German. However, both languages were still produced by the children. The findings not only very weakly support the hypotheses of De Houwer (1994) and Meisel et al. (1994), but they also ease the minds of bilingual parents who fret about which methodologies to use in raising bilingual children.

Hulk, A., & Müller, N. (2000). Bilingual first language acquisition at the interface between syntax and pragmatics. *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition*, 3(03), 227-244.

In their study, Hulk and Müller seek to contradict the Unitary Language System Hypothesis, which was proposed initially by Volterra & Taeschner, 1978 (as cited in Hulk & Müller, 2000). They confirm the hypothesis that children acquiring two languages from birth indeed separate their grammars rather than adapting an existing solitary language system. Hulk and Müller hypothesize that early bilinguals experience cross-linguistic influence, or transfer, as a result of internal rather than external factors. These internal factors refer to cognitive language processing systems. The authors use a theory proposed by Platzack (1999) to suggest that a specific domain in the brain, namely the 'C-Domain', or the location of an interface between two linguistic conceptualizations, is so vulnerable that where syntax and pragmatics meet, cross-linguistic influence occurs. Three conclusions are offered about cross-linguistic influence: it is unidirectional, it is dependent upon the language combination and it follows a noticeable pattern. These phenomena are observed in the two bilingual children of 'one person- one language' families, where each parent speaks only a single language to the child, without code-switching. The study found that Germanic languages (e.g. English) have greater influence on Romance languages (e.g. Spanish) than vice versa. Root infinitives and object drop influences were specifically explored in this study; object drop being the only construction found to be influenced cross-linguistically. The authors conclude that in the case of Germanic and Romance languages, each develops separately, contrary to the initial Unitary Language System Hypothesis. The essential

factors to note about these findings are that the one person-one language approach is an effective method to encourage BFLA and that while bilinguals may experience some transfer between languages, their language systems are actually developed separately and are capable of functioning independently of one another.

Lieven, E. (2011). Bilingual Language Acquisition. *Human Development*, 53 (5), 256-263.

This review summarizes the work of Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés (2003). Lieven (2011) makes an important suggestion: “...*rather than treating bilinguals as monolinguals with two languages, and comparing them to monolinguals with one language, we may need to re-conceptualize bilingual development and how to study it*” (p. 258). The author notes that the study she observes differs from other studies in that its technique to use looking preferences works more effectively on infant subjects than experiments using active responses as indication of language recognition. Lieven (2011) identifies another important observation from the study by Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés (2003):

...Even if parents are using a ‘one parent-one language’ strategy in speaking to their children, this leaves out of consideration two potentially very important factors: the language spoken to each other by members of the family and how well each speaker knows the ‘non-native’ language- the latter point is raised by Sebastián-Gallés when she points out that bilingual children will likely be exposed to mispronunciation if neither parent is him/ herself a native speaker of the other language and this may well affect the development of fully separate phonemic inventories for the two languages. (pp. 260-261).

This quotation reminds parents choosing the one parent-one language method to think about the language that they use with each other and with

other family members because this language and their use of it affect the way their children acquire and produce each language of exposure. [See Bosch & Sebastián-Gallés (2003) for more information on this study.]

Nicoladis, E., & Genesee, F. (1998). Parental discourse and codemixing in bilingual children. *International journal of bilingualism*, 2(1), 85-99.

To settle popular misconceptions of code-mixing versus code-switching and how they affect BFLA, Nicoladis and Genesee have compiled a few explanations and definitions of these terms. The authors quote Grosjean (1982), who like Genesee does in his (2001) article: “*Indeed, parents in bilingual families are often counseled to follow a one parent-one language rule in order to minimize their children’s codemixing*” (as cited in Nicoladis & Genesee, 1998, p. 85). To clarify the use of ‘codemixing’ versus ‘codeswitching’, Nicoladis and Genesee (1998) state “*We use the term ‘codemixing’ to refer to the use of two languages within a single unit of discourse regardless of whether or not the use was deliberate, as in codeswitching*” (p. 85). The common concern that codemixing interferes with child language proficiency is addressed in this article and it is found to be somewhat true. An important factor for parents to consider when raising bilingual children is their own parental performance.

Lanza (1992) has suggested that bilingual children’s rates of codemixing may be influenced, not by their prevalence of their parents’ codemixing but by the particular discourse strategies they use in conversation with their children. (p. 86)

The article introduces a theory known as the *Parental Discourse Hypothesis* (or PDH) which proposes that the manner in which parents

respond to their children's speech production will affect child processing in different ways. Keeping this hypothesis in mind will help parents choose bilingual child rearing strategies. This study, which revolves around the work of Lanza (1992), tests five PDH strategies. They are as follows: Codeswitching (on the part of the parent) which encouraged child codemixing; the Adult Repetition Strategy where the parent would translate the codemixed word or phrase for the child which also encouraged codemixing; the Move-on Strategy in which the parent acknowledged a child's codemixing by answering their questions in the appropriate language; the Expressed Guess Strategy where the parent repeats what they think the child said after a codemix in the appropriate language; lastly, the Minimal Grasp Strategy in which the parent directly asks for clarification. The results of the study did not fully support the PDH but did conclude that parental speech acts affect child code-mixing. It also found that children are not sensitive to the one person- one language rule and it is not the only method that produces positive results. The take-away from this article is that while one person-one language is not the only productive strategy in BFLA. However, if the one parent-one language strategy is chosen, *Minimal Grasp* strategies- or simply asking for clarification- will elicit slightly better results from bilingual children.

Section 2: The Effects of BFLA on Cognition and Development

Bosch, L., & Sebastián-Gallés, N. (2003). Simultaneous bilingualism and the perception of a language-specific vowel contrast in the first year of life. *Language and Speech*, 46(2-3), 217-243.

In a study of infant bilingualism, Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés (2003) offer some insight into bilingual first language acquisition and

present a technologically advanced idea about how the human brain begins to develop and process linguistically diverse sounds. These authors find that:

...even though some evidence exists suggesting that adults might show greater sensitivities than infants for certain non-phonemic VOT contrasts, it is generally accepted that very young infants are better able to perceive phonetic distinctions than adults. (p. 218)

Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés designed this study knowing that vowel detection occurs much sooner in infants than consonant distinction, to analyze the effects of bilingual exposure on perception between native and non-native sounds and development of distinction capabilities. Using a 'looking' procedure, the researchers test infants on vowel preference; ultimately, learning that infants distinguish vowels through wave lengths and intonation. The authors find that both bilingual and monolingual infants show early sensitivity to the distinct vowels but that after eight months of age, the researchers can distinguish between language preferences in the infants. We can conclude from this discovery that it supports the claim that bilingualism is a feasible option for first language acquisition. The researchers believe it more effective to start the BLFA process sooner rather than later.

Ben-Zeev, S. (1977). The influence of bilingualism on cognitive strategy and cognitive development. *Child development*, 1009-1018.

This study addresses a few of the concerns common to parents and educators of bilingual children. Ben-Zeev proposes three hypotheses. First, she suggests that “*bilingual children process syntactic rules with special flexibility*” (p. 1009). Similarly to monolinguals, bilinguals develop the ability to distinguish between codes, and registers. Unlike monolinguals

however, bilinguals must learn to adapt to interference from language to language. They are more linguistically-aware than their monolingual counterparts and often encounter situations in which trial and error help them to decipher between correct and incorrect responses. Ben-Zeev explains that a participant's ability to translate shows a resolved conflict between linguistic interferences. The second hypothesis addresses semantic processing and lexical capacities. The author notes that bilinguals typically have a more limited vocabulary than monolinguals in each language because bilingual word recognition is double that of one language. However, this familiarity with the vocabulary that they do possess gives them an advantage in categorization tasks. The third hypothesis is that bilingual children develop a stronger sensitivity to nonverbal structures. This being said, Ben-Zeev points out that since vocabulary acquisition may be slower in bilinguals than in monolinguals, it is unfair to analyze their language proficiencies based on lexicon. The essential message we can take from this study is that bilingual children- including those raised with BFLA- cannot be judged against monolingual children because the language systems and cognitive development of monolinguals and bilinguals greatly differ from one another.

Carrow, S. M. A. (1957). Linguistic functioning of bilingual and monolingual children. *Journal of Speech and Hearing Disorders*, 22(3), 371.

Contrary to the findings of Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés (2003), an earlier publication by Carrow (1957) finds evidence that bilingualism hinders, rather than assists language learning in primary school individuals. In her study on the connection between bilingual speech and language mastery, Carrow considers the emergent controversy regarding

bilingualism in children and their (allegedly, inferior) performance and development relative to monolingual speakers. While the study does find that in some areas, such as oral reading accuracy and comprehension, hearing and speaking vocabulary, as well as arithmetic reasoning, monolinguals were superior to bilinguals; there were no significant differences between the two groups in areas, such as silent reading comprehension and vocabulary, oral reading rate, spelling, verbal output, length of clause and degree of subordination. The bilingual children were also found to produce more grammatical errors than the monolingual group. Meanwhile, although in most areas males and females did not differ, girls in both groups were superior to boys in oral reading rates. While these results are counter to my thesis that bilingualism does not have negative consequences, Carrow concedes that these results may be symptoms of inconsistent patterns of input in the home. While this paper is much older than the more recent publication by Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés (2003), the findings are problematic and generate questions about the consequences of BFLA and the true nature of its effects on children growing up in bilingual and bicultural environments.

Dartigue, E. (1966). Bilingualism in the nursery school. *The French Review*, 39(4), 577-587.

Both a scholar and a nursery school teacher, Dartigue (1966) offers an internal view of Second Language Acquisition in nursery school children from the perspective of a caregiver who is purposefully non-interfering. She composed an enlightening account of her observations, experiences, anecdotes and personal conclusions in a French pre-school. The United Nations Nursery School was situated in Paris and at the time of this article in 1966; (it is still in existence). Dartigue recounts her

experiences with these multi-national children who arrive speaking their mother tongue(s) and who succeed in acquiring yet another language or two: French and English. Dartigue writes about the student's cultural awareness: "*Most of them are awake to the social and prestige values of a second language in our society, and recognize that bilingualism is all around them*" (p. 582). The school instructors share a similar philosophy concerning child-rearing and the importance of language acquisition:

We feel that one language needs to be chosen as the main one for formal schooling. It is also important for these children to learn group living, individual responsibility and self control, as well as to participate in the group activities, contribute to the group projects and to pursue individual bents. (p.582)

Dartigue makes a noteworthy case regarding children and their reactions to new language by stating that "*They hear only what they want to hear. Little by little, as they gain mastery in one language, they open their ears to the other*" (p. 583). This observation is a crucial finding that can both comfort and unnerve parents and instructors eager to educate young individuals in more than one language. While this discovery is might be meant as a trivial observation, it is actually ground-breaking and unfortunately, commonly forgotten by researchers today who oppose the concept of early bilingualism. This quote reveals a notion often observed by parents- children tend to have selective listening so they are more likely to learn language (or any subject) when they are emotionally and psychologically disposed and ready.

Deuchar, M., & Clark, A. (1996). Early bilingual acquisition of the voicing contrast in English and Spanish. *Journal of Phonetics*, 24(3), 351-365.

Deuchar and Clark's case study looks at the acoustic aspects of bilingual acquisition in a single child. In particular, the study observes the voicing contrasts between English and Spanish of a female toddler who is half Welch and half Cuban. The voice onset time (typically referred to as VOT) of the variations between voiced and voiceless stops in both languages are observed in this young girl. Voice Onset Time, VOT, is defined here by Lisker and Abramson as "*the duration of the time interval by which the onset of periodic pulsing either precedes or follows release*" (as cited in Deuchar & Clark, 1996, p.352). In Spanish and English VOTs should either precede or follow a consonantal stop, respectively. Three established hypotheses are given in the article. They are: the voiced distinction hypothesis (where Spanish contrasts are acquired before English ones), the spread distinction hypothesis (where English contrasts would be acquired first) and the acoustic difference hypothesis (the assumption that *lag differences* apply, where a situation somewhere in between is present.) In this case, it was found that the acoustic differences hypothesis best suited the situation. The authors also suggest that there are two voicing systems developed in simultaneous bilinguals, where their initial no-system status at birth develops into a dual-system once they begin speaking. This research is relevant because it addresses concerns about foreign accents in children acquiring two languages simultaneously. Given the results of this case study, we can assume that acoustic differences in children vary somewhat and are dependent upon factors like age of acquisition.

Dickinson, D. K., McCabe, A., Clark–Chiarelli, N. & Wolf, A. (2004). Cross-language transfer of phonological awareness in low-income Spanish and English bilingual preschool children. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 25(03), 323-347.

This article touches on several controversial topics, including the claim that low-income bilingual children attain some cognitive and linguistic skills (including literacy) later than their monolingual counterparts. Dickinson, McCabe, Clark-Chiarelli and Wolf (2004) note that proficient literacy is dependent upon initial age of literacy and even more so on good reading habits. The authors claim that these habits are a factor of nurture, which leaves parents ultimately responsible for success or failure. The intent of this study is to identify the pattern of development of phonological awareness of three and four-year-old bilingual children—which, in turn, should predict future literacy. The authors observe that phonological awareness is greatly affected by socio-economic status, initially. However, they muse that once language development is equalized, socio-economic status becomes a less influential factor of phonological awareness. While literacy may be less proficient among children of low SES families, primarily, (whose level of reading is more so that of basic interpersonal communication skills, or BICS) bilingualism seems to facilitate conscious meta-linguistic knowledge and by extension phonological awareness. Dickinson et al. (also Bosch & Sebastián-Gallés, 2003), found that like Spanish-speakers who recognize vowel differences before consonants, English-speakers' developed attunement to rhyme is a result of abundant exposure to nursery rhymes. This study uses three separate measures to determine phonological and general linguistic awareness in young children: the Early Phonological Awareness Profile (which includes two tasks), the Emergent Literacy Profile (which includes

four tasks) and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. While tests show that low socio-economic standing creates strong transfer from one language to the other, so do readings tasks designed to increase phonological awareness. This susceptibility to language transfer ultimately facilitates rather than hinders development of the other language. Dickinson et al. (2004) conclude that bilinguals no disadvantages in terms of literacy.

Ellis, N. C., Kroll, J. F., & de Groot, A. M. B. (2005). Bilingual language acquisition. *Handbook of bilingualism: Psycholinguistic approaches, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 3-8.*

In an article formatted like a compilation of works in bilingualism Ellis, Kroll and de Groot (2005) discuss: 1) vocabulary, 2) syntax, 3) the human language processor, grammar, transfer, and acquisition, and 4) computational simulation. The authors call attention to the fact that with roughly 6,000 world languages and less than 200 countries, bilingualism and even multilingualism is not an abnormal condition and really almost inevitable. Like Lieven (2011) and Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés (2003), Ellis et al. (2005) first agree that Bilingual First Language Acquisition is very unlike Second Language Acquisition. However, they ultimately conclude that these two modes of acquisition do not differ as much as some linguists claim. When comparing lexical acquisition between BFLA and SLA, Ellis et al. (2005) give BFLA the advantage by stating:

Early L2 vocabulary acquisition is parasitic upon L1 phonological representations, L1 conceptual representations, and L1 word-concept mappings, and L2-L1 independence only comes as a result of considerable L2 experience. (p. 3)

This means that early bilinguals have the benefit that their lexical development does not require background knowledge because their vocabularies are learned simultaneously. Second language learners however have to use their background knowledge in their L1 to grasp concepts in the L2. Ellis, et al. (2005) wonder whether any increased difficulty increased difficult to acquire a language is “...a function of age or increasing L1 entrenchment” (p.9)?

They especially note the differences in lexical development. “*In contrast to infant (B)FLA, L2 learners already know a great deal about the world, their brains are committed and entrenched in their L1, and they cannot rely on an intense system of social support from their caregivers*” (p. 4).

Lambert, W. E. (1981). Bilingualism and language acquisition. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 379(1), 9-22.

Two influential sociolinguistic domains are observed in tandem through the in Lambert’s comparative and contrastive analysis of what he categorizes as two realms: first-language acquisition versus second-language acquisition in tandem with bilingualism. The purpose of this article is to describe the interactions between these two linguistic realms. The author discusses the differences of cognitive processes between the monolingual and bilingual, additive versus subtractive bilingualism, advantages and disadvantages between early versus late bilingualism, second language education varieties and neuropsychological correlates for adult linguistic differences. One particular comment in this article would likely be debated by Bosch and Sebastián-Gallés (2003) and by extension Lieven (2011): “...these ‘infant’ bilinguals show full command of the two

(or more) codes, as though they were double monolinguals” (p.15). The principle aspect to consider from this article is that despite a few disadvantages, the rewards to bilingualism outweigh the weaknesses and prove highly helpful in cognitive and social development.

Padilla, A. M., & Liebman, E. (1975). Language acquisition in the bilingual child. *Bilingual Review/ La Revista Bilingüe*, 2(1/2), 34-55.

The language development and production of three bilingual children are observed in this case study. Padilla and Liebman (1975) refer to the development of speech production described by Brown (1973). According to the authors, Brown categorizes the five stages of language in the following sequence: telegraphic speech (nouns and verbs), the use of ‘*functor*’ words (adjectives, prepositions, and articles); the use of modalities (negatives, interrogatives and imperatives); the use of embedding; and finally, the use of coordination and conjunctions (and, but, or, etc). Padilla and Liebman (1975) reference Swain (1972) regarding delayed linguistic development in bilingual children stating:

Swain suggests that bilingual language development is 4 to 5 months behind monolingual language development because the bilingual child has more to acquire and differentiate than the monolingual child. (p.36)

However, the results did not support Swain’s claim given that the children in this study did not appear to develop at a slower rate than monolingual children. The authors also rejected Swain’s (1972) hypothesis that children do not have two separate language systems. This study is helpful to parents monitoring their children’s output and speech progress. It is also comforting to read that bilingual children are as likely to develop at a comparable speed as their monolingual counterparts.

Pearson, B. Z., Fernandez, S. C., & Oller, D. K. (1993). Lexical development in bilingual infants and toddlers: Comparison to monolingual norms. *Language learning*, 43(1), 93-120.

Like Genesee (2001), Pearson, Fernandez and Oller's (2006) empirical study on Bilingual First Language Acquisition seeks to contradict the hypothesis that bilingual acquisition impedes growth in language and cognition. The authors reflect on the unfortunate status of public opinion noting "*Despite scanty and at times contradictory evidence, the view that bilingualism is a risk factor in development seems to prevail*" (p. 94). Their study on a mixture of 60 monolingual and bilingual infants and toddlers, illustrates evidence against the common belief that bilingual acquisition delays child development. The Communicative Development Inventory (or CDI) was used in this study to measure typical lexical competence in bilingual infants as compared to a monolingual infant control group. This study demonstrates that while bilingual children's linguistic ability may be comparable to monolinguals in each language separately, when both languages are measured as one schema, bilingual capacity is superior to that of the monolingual.

Section 3: Parental Discourse, Parental Strategies and Parental Code-Switching and How They Affect BFLA

[Also see Döpke (1997).]

Genesee, F. (2001). Bilingual first language acquisition: Exploring the limits of the language faculty. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 153-168.

This article provides evidence of the linguistic and cognitive capacities of bilinguals and refutes arguments against the notion that bilingual acquisition is more hindering to natural development than it is helpful. Like most researchers in this field, Genesee argues that research supporting misconceptions about BFLA is not case specific and does not necessarily relate to bilingual or multi-lingual acquisition, explicitly, but rather to general bilingualism. Genesee rejects the Unitary Language System Hypothesis, first proposed by Volterra and Taeschner (1978), because it implies that human cognitive ability is limited to one language at a time, therefore suggesting that bilingualism in children is absent until three years of age, and ultimately causing language delays. The author maintains that Genesee, Nicoladis and Paradis (1995) invalidated this hypothesis. Genesee sees “code-mixing” as the root of negative researcher views toward early bilingualism. Genesee believes that linguistic errors (and/or “*code-mixing*”) stem from the linguistic environment rather than biological “*incapacities*” and eventually these errors will be improved upon through exposure. He concludes that child and adult code-mixing both have similar linguistic constraints. He also maintains that child code-mixing follows conformity with appropriate grammatical properties associated with each stage of development. We can take from this that code-switching and code-mixing are not necessarily the root of linguistic errors but phases of speech acquisition and development.

Gutiérrez-Clellen, V. F., & Kreiter, J. (2003). Understanding child bilingual acquisition using parent and teacher reports. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, 24 (2), 267-288.

In this empirical article, Gutiérrez-Clellen and Kreiter discuss their sociocultural study about how various factors affect bilingual performance

in children as observed by their parents and teachers. A secondary objective of this study was to determine whether laypeople, educators and parents could accurately judge language proficiency given a thorough survey. The authors paraphrase Valdés and Figueroa (1994) to define bilingualism in a broad way that many of the authors cited in this bibliography would likely agree upon: “...as knowledge of ‘more than one’ language along a continuum of proficiencies” (p. 267). The authors point out a well-known philosophy regarding Schumann’s (1976) Social Distance Theory and motivation that “*The degree of proficiency in a language may depend on the need for that language to be spoken*” (p. 268). Although the methods of this study may spark debate about the reliability of depending on parents and teachers to predict proficiency levels, there is an advantage to observing teacher and parent reports on bilingual children. The quality of interaction between student and mentor is much more authentic than standardized, cookie-cutter tests for individuals who vary greatly from one to the next; so the assessment of child proficiency levels are more accurate and personal. The completed questionnaires were analyzed by researchers. The notion that the use of English at home reduces proficiency in the target languages is confirmed. Another more curious finding is that, like Dickinson et al. (2004) mentioned, after three years of exposure to a language, proficiency stabilizes and plateaus; therefore, the length of exposure is not significantly related to proficiency. Furthermore, the study confirmed that teacher ratings of their students’ levels of proficiency are accurate to predictors of the observed grammatical performance of the children. Finally, Gutiérrez-Clellen and Kreiter agree with Valdés and Figueroa’s (1994) “*conceptualization of bilingualism as a continuum of proficiencies in both languages*” (p. 278).

[Also see Hulk and Müller (2000).]

Lambert, W. E., Havelka, J., & Crosby, C. (1958). The influence of language-acquisition contexts on bilingualism. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 56 (2), 239.

There are various theories focused on the systems for acquiring multiple languages simultaneously. Studies like that of Lambert, Havelka and Crosby (1958) seek to disprove certain theories and validate others. In this article, Lambert et al. (1958) present the various contexts and methods for language acquisition. The authors utilize four terms that were coined by Ervin and Osgood, in 1954 (as cited in Lambert et al., 1958) to distinguish the two principle types of bilingual first language acquisition; a *compound* system, or *fused* acquisition, is that which language input varies between school and home and is not consistent or kept separate (namely, code-switching environments) while the *coordinate* system, or *separate* acquisition, is developed through separate and consistent forms of language input (namely, rare instances of code-switching like one person- one language homes). The authors argue that *coordinate* bilinguals maintain more functionally independent, semantically distinct language systems than *compound* bilinguals, who do not. However, the authors' hypothesis that language switching would be more attainable for the *compound* bilingual, who already code-switches regularly than for the *coordinate* bilingual, who maintains separate language systems, was invalidated; there was not a significant difference between the two groups in the fluency and ease of language switching, despite the amount of practice or familiarity with code-switching.

[Also see Nicoladis and Genesee (1998).]

Section 4: Societal Effects on BFLA.

Brooks, N. (1969). The Meaning of Bilingualism Today. *Foreign Language Annals*, 2(3), 304-309.

In 1969, Brooks provides insight through his concise overview of the academic perspectives on three important questions on bilingualism at the time. These questions primarily focus on 1) how bilingualism is defined (which, even now, is still a vigorously debated matter), 2) how bilingualism is attained (earlier versus later in life) and 3) how it is taught in the classroom. Brooks gives us several personal opinions. The author notes that bilingualism is not solely a leisurely pass-time or a unique personal characteristic but a growing necessity. Brooks quotes the American College Dictionary definition of *bilingualism*, also used by Soffietti (1960).

Brooks demonstrates his support for what he terms the ‘*Vygotsky Spectrum*’ after Russian psychologist, Lev Vygotsky, who describes thoughts and language in his (1964) book. His proposed spectrum includes nine stages of speech as abstract happenings, in the following stages: consciousness→ thought→ thought in words→ inner speech→ spoken monologue→ dialogue→ normal social talk→ writing→ fine art (p. 305).

Brooks discusses his subscription to the Critical Period; the theory that with age, difficulty to acquire a second language increases. Even so, Brooks promotes that language learning is a lengthy process and not something that happens overnight, despite various claims that one language teaching method may triumph over another. With regards to methodological preferences, Brooks writes:

Those who are in hot pursuit of the method of language learning-- indeed who claim at times to have found it--overlook individual differences and the fact that the learning of the mother tongue, which is universally so successful, proceeds without any method whatsoever. (p. 308)

To encourage language learning, even later in life, Brooks shares a perspective that serves as a peace-inspiring, holistic and realistic look on bilingualism: *“Knowing another man’s language is by no means a guarantee that friendly relations will be established and maintained. But not knowing the other man’s language is a sure guarantee that normal human relationships will be impossible”* (p. 304).

Christian, C. C. (1965). The Acculturation of the Bilingual Child. *The Modern Language Journal*, 49(3), 160-165.

In compatibility with Soffietti’s (1960) cultural outlook, Christian presents the advantages and disadvantages typically undergone by bilingual-bicultural children in a monolingual society, claiming that the bilingual and/or bicultural child is *“...a victim of this social situation into which he has been born”* (p. 160). Christian argues in favor of bilingual children who find themselves struggling to fit into a social community. The author offers his view on bilingualism, the necessity of bilingualism in our society, the value of bilingualism, and the conflicts it presents in the mind of a bilingual:

We often fail to realize that those who speak a language other than English are thereby psychologically and culturally prepared to enter a realm of thought, feeling, imagination, which is different

from that available to them in English, but which is not therefore less important to their development. (p. 164)

Christian suggests how teachers need to view the situation, stating that teachers are not technicians, but artists whose canvases/or clay models each require unique/individualized attention.

[See also Hulk and Müller (2000).]

[See also Lieven (2011).]

Soffiatti, J. P. (1960). Bilingualism and biculturalism. *The Modern Language Journal*, 44(6), 275-277.

Regarding terminology, we look to Soffiatti (1960), who in this article provides the American College Dictionary definition of the term *bilingualism*. Soffiatti speculates that this categorization is too vague and broad given that it does not include specific individual situations nor does it allow for a spectrum of linguistic ability. According to the American College Dictionary, bilingualism is “(1) *the habitual use of two languages; and (2) the ability of being bilingual*” and a bilingual “*has the ability to speak one’s native language and another with approximately equal facility*” (as cited in Soffiatti, 1960, p. 222).

In lieu of this hazy definition, the author solicits a better definition for bilingualism. According to James Soffiatti, bilingualism seems to be viewed by other linguists as a “*much more complicated condition of affairs than that of the use of two languages by an individual*” (p. 222). The author notes, however, that among these enthusiasts there is a misconception that bilingualism and biculturalism are all-inclusive. He writes:

While it is true that language behavior is an integral part of cultural behavior and that the latter would be impossible without its linguistic components, it does not mean that to a given language system there has to correspond a specific cultural structure or area. (p. 223)

Soffiatti offers four classifications of bilingualism and biculturalism in contact to define a person's linguistic and cultural status: (1) *bicultural and bilingual*, (2) *bicultural but monolingual*, (3) *monocultural but bilingual* or (4) *monocultural and monolingual*. Soffiatti also observes that *linguistic accents* and (even) *cultural accents* are two factors that contribute to the unique speech of each individual, whether bilingual, bicultural, both or neither.

Section 5: Language Dominance, Language Loss and Language Maintenance

Bahrack, H. P., Hall, L. K., Goggin, J. P., Bahrack, L. E., & Berger, S. A. (1994). Fifty years of language maintenance and language dominance in bilingual Hispanic immigrants. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 123 (3), 264.

Bahrack, Hall, Goggin, Bahrack and Berger (1994) investigate the effects of immigration into the United States on a diverse pool of participants whose varying lengths of residency in the US span over a period fifty years. The main rationale of this study is to determine whether exposure to English, the second language (L2) of the participants, interfered with their use of Spanish, which was the study-wide native language (L1). The authors quote McLaughlin (1977) who proposed that

first language interference indeed could be avoided, contrary to popular belief. They maintain that interference with the native tongue is not an inevitable fate for L2 learners. Bahrick et al. (1994) openly reject and challenge the Critical Period Hypothesis, stating that while younger immigrants acquire syntax and phonology quicker than adults, adults have the advantage when it comes to lexical capacities, given their more developed background knowledge in the L1. The authors recognized that there was a particular factor in this study that was impossible to control: exposure to Spanish. Although Spanish may be a minority language in the United States it is hardly scarce. The participants of the study were never fully isolated from opportunities to get Spanish input or to produce Spanish, which may have been contributed to maintaining their Spanish. A few conclusions were deduced from this investigation. First, the authors found that using a hybrid language, one they refer to as 'Spanglish'- where Spanish and English are in contact and code-mixed - does not mean ignorance of one of the languages or their properties. Second, when and if interference of English in Spanish forms and Spanish 'language stagnation' do occur, they are likely due to the lack of a solid linguistic foundation in the L1 before immigrating to the United States. The authors state: *"The likelihood of English dominance is greatest for individuals who are younger than 13 years at the time of immigration; have relatively little Spanish schooling; are good students; and speak, read, write and listen to more English than Spanish"* (p. 282). What we can take away from this study is that as long as there are equal amounts of input from each language, there should be no threat of language loss in either the first or second language.

[See also Dartigue (1966).]

Genesee, F., & Lambert, W. E. (1983). Trilingual education for majority-language children. *Child Development*, 105-114.

In their article on immersion education programs, Genesee and Lambert (1983) discuss a topic tangential to BFLA. This study looks at bilingual acquisition at the primary school level. Therefore rather than observing bilingual *first* language acquisition, it gives some insight to bilingual/dual *second* language acquisition, specifically double-immersion programs. The authors pose several questions including: how effective double immersion programs are; how age affects children learning two new languages in primary school as opposed to from birth; whether two new languages at once negatively affect the first language; whether late primary immersion or early primary immersion is more beneficial to development. Lastly, the authors study the general long term effects of immersion programs on academic success. According to the authors, the early immersion programs generally had better overall results. With regards to English (the L1) being affected by the simultaneous L2's, the authors concluded that there is no threat of first language loss because of second language gain. In fact, "...*this pattern of results can be expected even if English language instruction is postponed and reduced more than is customarily the case*" (p. 113). Moreover, dual immersion programs proved to be more effective than single L2 immersion programs. This article is relevant to BFLA because it soothes concerns of bilingual parents and educators who fear that English, as the dominant and majority language, will be compromised as a result of exposure to a minority language. What we can gather from this article, is that exposure to more

than one language, when done in a consistent manner yields positive results.

Perani, D., Paulesu, E., Galles, N. S., Dupoux, E., Dehaene, S., Bettinardi, V., ... & Mehler, J. (1998). The bilingual brain. Proficiency and age of acquisition of the second language. *Brain*, 121(10), 1841-1852.

This empirical article investigates the bilingual brain, how languages are represented in the brain and primarily, how proficiency and age of acquisition correlate. While Ellis et al. (2005) may disagree, Perani et al. (1998) argue that age has great biological influence on language acquisition. The authors note that after puberty, although phonological and morphological competencies suffer, lexicon is acquired with more ease. The assessment tools in this study consisted of word translation tasks and listening tasks. This study observes brain activity and reaction to specific stimulations. The most important result from this study is “...while listening to stories in L1 and L2 yields very different patterns of cortical activity in low proficiency subjects, [...] no such major difference was found in high proficiency subjects [...] regardless of the age of L2 acquisition” (p. 1845). The authors argue that brain activation does not differ with regard state to language processing but with single-word processing tasks, it does. The authors state that the study is not meant to question whether early or late acquisition determines proficiency, but whether the conditions of brain activity influence successful L2 acquisition. The authors caution parents to be aware of a few consequences to particular actions. The first is “[...] if an infant is not precociously exposed to two languages she/he will become dominant in one of them and consequently will not process L2 like native speakers” (p.

1849). The second aspect to consider is “*In some cases, acquisition of L2 around the age of 3 years may yield a foreign accent regardless of the amount of practice*” (p.1849).

Conclusions

For educators and parents (whether current or prospective), the information and findings in these studies are practical. For those with apprehensions regarding Bilingual First Language Acquisition, this paper may not answer all uncertainties but it does lay a starting point; a foundation on which we can begin to understand the BFLA methods, strategies, theories and predicted results.

For instance, we have seen from these literature summaries that the one parent-one language strategy (which is also called ‘ the one person-one language strategy’ since it is not only parents who should adhere to this strategy, but educators and other family members, as well) is an effective method (Döpke, 1997; Hulk & Müller, 2000; Lieven, 2011; Nicoladis & Genesee, 1998). However, we have also seen that while this strategy is strongly recommended by some researchers (Grosjean, 1982- as cited in Nicoladis & Genesee, 1998), it has been found to be only one of several methods that influence early bilingualism (Döpke, 1997; Nicoladis & Genesee, 1998). In these summaries, straight forward methodologies for raising children of BFLA are not present but a one approach shown to produce positive results is the Minimal Grasp Strategy, in which parents and educators are encouraged to elicit output from their children that is strictly in one language, not code-mixed (Nicoladis & Genesee, 1998).

The second topic that was discussed questioned the influence of BFLA on language development and academic performance. This is a sensitive topic that has been the root of many concerns by lay

monolinguals and some researchers. However, what we have seen in these studies is that bilingualism- and specifically BFLA- does not pose a threat to linguistic development or academic achievement (Bosch & Sebastián-Gallés, 2003; Ben-Zeev, 1977; Dartigue, 1966; Dickinson et al., 2004; Ellis et al., 2005; Lambert, 1981; Padilla & Liebman, 1975; Pearson et al., 1993).

The third and fourth subsections of this annotated bibliography examined parental input, parental discourse strategies and societal influences on BFLA. We learned that ultimately, language acquisition whether early, later, monolingual, bilingual or multilingual was very environmentally dependent (Dickinson et al., 2004; Nicoladis & Genesee, 1998; Döpke, 1997; Lieven, 2011; Genesee, 2001; Gutiérrez-Clellen & Kreiter, 2003; Lambert et al., 1958; Brooks, 1969; Soffiatti, 1960; Hulk & Müller, 2000; Christian, 1965). Another take-away from this section is that although the environmental factors (parental influence, societal influence, education, etc.) play large roles in language development, they are not the only factors involved in the bilingual language learning process; there are also personal cognitive factors, such as language processing or motivations.

The final subsection studied language dominance, loss, interference and transfer, which we learned are also largely dependent upon environmental causes according to Bahrck et al. (1994), Dartigue (1966), Gutiérrez-Clellen and Kreiter (1983) and Perani et al. (1998).

To educators and parents, I recommend taking a look at the articles summarized in this paper. In addition, from the references in these articles, one can find many additional educational studies relevant to this topic. There is still much to be researched on BFLA but the purpose of this report was to offer some representative studies that could be used to

educate ourselves on the importance and usefulness of raising bilingual children in such a diverse society.

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Vita

Daniel Theresa Foster was born in Austin, Texas to her Venezuelan mother, Zenaida Foster and her American father Crockett Foster on May 13, 1987. She graduated from Pflugerville High School in 2005, where she spent her extra-curricular time as a dancer. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Spanish, French and Italian from the University of Texas at Austin in 2008. She is currently a graduate student in the Foreign Language Education (FLE) department at the University of Texas at Austin; soon to receive her Master's Degree in FLE August of 2013. She has taught children (in Montessori School settings and public school extra-curricular activities and adults (English as a Second Language). She has studied abroad twice in her academic career; in France and Argentina, both with UT affiliate programs. Daniel hopes to become an instructor of Spanish in a community or state college and to become a volunteer firefighter and volunteer medical missionary in her free- time.

Permanent Address: 17114 Valley Glen Road

Pflugerville, Texas 78660

This report was typed by the author.