Bilingualism and Bilingual Education, Bilingualism and Translational Action

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Abstract

Bilingualism basically defined as having been brought up with two languages and being more or less equally competent in using both languages is a significant phenomenon in this information era requiring frequent access and communication among people. This study aims to identify the bilingualism phenomenon focusing on some of its components. First of all though it is not easy to make clear cut definitions regarding the term bilingualism, what the term stands for and which basic constellations can be associated with this term will be explained in the study in a detailed way. Following the definition of bilingualism, some

conditions such as second language acquisition which proposes a basis for bilingualism, the effects of bilingualism on the brain and certain individual factors affecting bilingualism are going to be dealt with. An important component of bilingualism, bilingual education, will be analyzed within the perspectives of the importance of bilingual family in raising bilingual children and bilingual education especially in pre-school and school as a preparatory phase for later stages of bilingual schooling. In addition, the concept of bilingualism is also dealt with in terms of its relationship with the translational action to gain the study an inter-disciplinary aspect.

Keywords: Bilingualism, Second language acquisition, Bilingual education, Bilingual family, Bilingualism & translation, Translational action theory, Skopos theory

1. Introduction

Speaking more than just one language has many practical benefits in a more and more globalized world. These advantages are obvious on the surface, but also scientists have proved in recent years that the benefits of bilingualism are even more profound and fundamental than just being the ability to communicate with a wider range of people. Now it is known that bilingualism makes the speaker not only smarter in many ways, it also has a deep and positive impact on the brain, because it also improves cognitive skills which are not even related to language. It is also assumed that bilingualism is a kind of shield against dementia in later ages.

Bilingualism has many faces and many constellations. This is why there shall be a focus on the definition and the question, what aspects are generally relevant for bilingualism, before the focus shifts to modern bilingual education in different surroundings and educational institutions.

Bilingualism is not the same; it strongly depends on the surroundings and circumstances. It is a big difference to be bilingual on the streets of Mumbai or in a private school in Geneva. A child can be bilingual when it speaks Spanish with the mother and English with the father, it is also bilingual, when it understands everything in Arabic, but always answers in German or when it speaks Turkish with its family, but French with the playmates on the playground. There are many more constellations and examples and equally complex are the factors for bilingual language acquisition. Of course, all these also influence the bilingual education that is not only a private matter of parents and families, but also for educational institutions like schools and also pre-schools. This is why it is interesting to look at the very essence of bilingualism and what the common denominator is for all these bilingual speakers.

2. Definition of Bilingualism

What exactly is bilingualism? The definition seems to be easy at first sight, but when we take a closer look, it becomes obvious that the definition of bilingualism is far more complicated and complex. The first answer to this question would be that a child has been brought up with two languages in which it is equally competent and that the use of both languages is perfect. Yet, the ability to communicate in two languages is individually different. Bilingualism means at first that the person is able to communicate in both languages and to apply the code-switching in adequate situations; this includes speaking and understanding as well as reading and writing. This is defined as the ability to articulate correctly, the use of adequate words in number and meaning and the knowledge of building correct words and phrases. The second level involves the correct way of using the language as a communicational means and also the ability to decide which language is the suitable one in which situation. The third level is the lingual-cognitive competence which means at first the ability to understand the meaning of language concerning words and meanings. These three levels combined are called biliteracy (Küpelikilinc, Nicola / Ringler, Maria, 2007, p. 29).

A child will never achieve the same proficiency in both languages, only few speakers can become real balanced bilinguals. There will always be a stronger and a weaker language. This

brings up the question how competent the speaker should be when it comes to communicating in more than one language.

Researchers have different answers to this question, because there are diverging definitions. For example when a child is brought up in a bilingual family and experiences a bilingual education s/he will learn the language in a controlled way. On the other hand, there are, for example, migrants whose children grow up in a bilingual surrounding, but their bilingual education is much less controlled. We speak of double first language acquisition if a child is exposed to two languages at the same time within the first two years (Dittmann, Jürgen, 2002, p. 92).

The most common reason why a child is raised bilingual is that the parents have two different native languages. They can act according to the partner principle, which means that each parent speaks to the child in his or her own language. This is a possibility for each parent to keep his or her own lingual identity while communicating with the child. This is also helpful to make it easier for the child to keep in contact with grandparents and other relatives who may live abroad. Sometimes problems can arise, when one parent is not familiar with the language of the other (Ebd., p. 93)

Not only the dissociation between the languages of mother and father is relevant for the childish language acquisition but some other functional language separations occur as well. For example the family language is important. This is the language that is spoken in the family. Also the language that is used between the siblings has a significant role and the third factor is the play language. This is the language the child uses when playing, monologising and which is constituted from other frequent play mates. The fourth aspect is the environmental language, which means the language of the country the child lives in. The last one is becoming more and more important to the child because of the growing influence of educational institutions, play mates etc. In most cases this will become the strong language eventually because the bilingual speaker is not just the sum of two monolinguals. The speaking systems depend on each other and influence each other at the same time. This brings up many aspects that go beyond the acquisition of the first language, like the strong and the weak language.

The distinction between strong and weak language shows that there is always a difference between the proficiencies in both languages. But this imbalance can shift and turn around. Harding-Esch/Riley (Harding-Esch and Riley, 2003, p. 23) speaks of "elitist" and "folk" bilingualism. But they claim that it is not easy to distinguish the categories exactly because the conditions for bilingual or multilingual families exist within a much broader spectrum now. Not only international marriages, but also teachers, soldiers, secretaries, business people, translators or technicians are crisscrossing all over Europe and they are mostly more privileged than work migrants from poorer countries without a good educational background. But this is no explanation that their richness would automatically solve the linguistic problems of the more elitist group.

Even though the distinction is relevant and "elitist" bilingualism refers mostly to middle-class, well-educated members of most societies, "folk" bilingualism means that people from ethnic

groups of societies had to become bilingual involuntarily in order to survive (Ebd., p. 25). The most significant difference is that elitist parents have the choice to support the acquisition of a second language. But the folk bilinguals are facing a necessity to learn a second language that was caused by political or economic circumstances.

Bilingualism is group related as well as individual, because it can also be that a country is bilingual, like for example Belgium, or an ethnic group is situated in a certain region. (Zydatiß, Wolfgang, 2010, p. 339). Bilingual societies and bilingual individuals face different conditions that determine their proficiency as well.

3. Conditions for Bilingualism

Before focusing on the conditions leading to bilingualism, it is necessary to give a short overview over the language acquisition of the child. This helps to understand the language acquisition process of the second language as well. The proficiency in a language is depending on the intensity a child is exposed to a second language. Before we look at bilingual language acquisition, the basic language acquisition conditions of the child will be described in the following.

3.1 Language Acquisition of the Child

Language acquisition theory proposes an important concept of time frame for optimal acquisition of any language: critical period hypothesis (henceforth CPH). The idea of CPH was first stated in 1961 by Eric Lenneberg, a German linguist who pioneered ideas especially about the biological foundations of language on language acquisition and cognitive psychology. According to Lenneberg, this critical time period starts with an onset of 2 years of age and ends with a closure at around puberty. Very basically Lenneberg explains the reason of such a closure as the end of "neural plasticity" or functioning and accordingly "the completion of hemispheric lateralization in the human brain", that is, the growth of mental abilities underlying language in different lobes of brain (Loup, 2005: p. 419). Lenneberg came to such a profound conclusion basing his proposal on different kinds of evidence: feral and abused children who grew up without being exposed to human language in childhood and who were not able to acquire a language completely after they were found somehow, deaf individuals who can achieve language acquisition having stored some sort of hearing before puberty and children with a brain injury resulting in aphasia (language loss) regaining normal speech as a result of receiving input before the end of critical period (Ioup, 2005: p. 420-421).

Although the basic language acquisition of a child is generally accepted to take place between the first and the fourth year of age, opinions vary on the age of closure for the critical period. For instance, Patkowski, Johnson and Newport (1989) state the cutoff point in mid to late teens whereas Marberry's 1993 research shows the closure fairly earlier (Ioup, 2005: 421). Yet, some researchers like Seliger pointed out multiple closure period for different components of a language due to the fact that the end of neural plasticity changes for different skills. These studies indicate that phonology is the first to close around the age of 6, followed by morphology and syntax at puberty and lexical semantics with the possibility of remaining available throughout an individual's life span (Ioup, 2005: 421).

This also explains why every child has his/her own speed of language acquisition and proficiency. This is perfectly normal. Infants start to learn already in a very early age, because the parents speak to them in a special way: They use a higher voice and a broader pitch of sound frequencies, different speed, rhythm and melody. This way they send easy to understand messages to the child: Appreciation, attention, comfort, a regulation of the babies' emotions and none the least the knowledge of the first words. (Szagun, Gisela, 2007, p. 23)

The melodic way of speaking is very old and it exists in different cultures and languages. The use of it is automatic and intuitive. Babies don't communicate verbally with adults, but the non-verbal communication is the foundation for language acquisition and it also enhances the emotional binding. In the first six months a baby is able to distinguish fine differences of sounds even if they don't belong to their native tongue. This is why they have the potential to learn every language of the world. In the second half of their first year, babies show a significant preference for sounds, syllables and words from their mother tongue and they orient themselves within it (Szagun, Gisela, 2007, p. 35). Yet they need to be in contact with people and a surrounding of this language environment to be able to learn a language and give meaning to its world.

Small children talk about things, persons, animals or places of their immediate environment. Also some words concerning inner conditions or emotions already exist. The lexicon of small children is constituted of their individual experiences and it contains more nouns and synsemantic words than verbs and adjectives. Every child has its own speed and way of acquiring his or her linguistic knowledge. Within the second year they start to develop the grammatical language. Until the fifth birthday most children have reached control over the grammar of their language. (Dittmann, p. 88).

The acquisition process follows single phases which build on each other. This way a complex system that evolves in an actual language is generated. Each step or phase is succeeding and essential to establish complicated structures like grammar. This process is complex and complicated and it is not necessary to simplify this as the brain evolves exactly according to its capacities. (Küpelikilinc, Nicola / Ringler, Maria, 2007, p. 35).

As explained above, in relation with the CPH, it is assumed that the described language acquisition process is mainly completed before puberty, regardless if it is monolingual or multilingual. Studies indicate that there is a maturational constraint on L2 acquisition. That's why, the earlier the learners are exposed to a second language, the more likely they are to gain native like command of the language. Yet, this does not mean that from this age on it is not possible to learn a new language. Still, the process takes place; the acquisition process will be different though. Scientists think that the neuronal network that is responsible for the language acquisition process is not as fast and flexible any more (Ebd., p. 36). Besides that, the process goes on in a different way. Krashen clearly makes a distinction between two language processes as language acquisition and language learning. Krashen defines language learning as a conscious knowledge of a second language, knowing the rules of the language and being able to talk about them whereas acquisition is described as a subconscious process like the way a child learns language, that is, picking up a language, not consciously being

aware of the rules but developing a "feel" for correctness (http://calabretta.files.wordpress.com/2011/12/reid-wilson-a-summary-of-stephen-krashens-principles-and-practice-in-second-language-acquisition.pdf, p.1).

On the other hand, DeKeyser states fundamental difference hypothesis which argues that children can acquire language through "an innate language specific bio-program", nonetheless, adults have to make use of the knowledge they have gotten from their first language and general cognition, cognitive and metacognitive strategies as they miss the advantage of this bioprogram (Ioup, 2005: p. 432). This bioprogram must be similar to what Chomsky calls Language Acquisition Device (LAD). Chomsky bases his claim concerning language acquisition on the argument of Universal Grammar (UG). UG is asserted as a theory indicating humans possess an innate endowment about the principles common to all languages such as all phrases have heads in all languages. But the position of the head may differ and this is accepted as a parameter, so all languages have common language-specific parameters, these parameters may show certain differences from one language to another forming principles. Chomsky believes when children are in the process of acquiring language, information they gather from the surrounding environment cannot include all possible grammatical structures and this is what he calls poverty of stimulus. Still children can acquire the language without specific teaching or error correction, so what stimulus lacks is produced by the organism, in other words, by a specific language acquisition device (DeKeyser&Juffs, 2005: 438-439). Even researchers who accept a role for UG and LAD in first language acquisition do not accept that it plays a role in second language acquisition after the closure of critical period. There acquisition inevitably turns into learning and factors like language learning aptitude, motivation, attitude towards the language, L1, learning strategies, learning styles, length of residence in the L2 environment, education, type or amount of input, aptitude, age, the capacity of working memory and etc. highly affect the process (DeKeyser&Juffs, 2005:443-448; Ioup, 2005: p.430-432).

3.2 Second Language Acquisition as the Basis for Bilingualism

Some children are exposed to a second language from birth on or within the first two years. This is called double language acquisition and it can often be found when the parents speak two different native languages. When a child is intensively exposed to a second language in an age of two to four years we speak of infantile second language acquisition. If the acquisition of the second language is not replacing the first language, but both languages have the chance to develop, this is called additive multilingualism.

Recent research proves that this is a very beneficial condition for the lingual and cognitive development of the child (Küpelikilinc, Nicola / Ringler, Maria, 2007, p. 31). Further language acquisition in later years will also benefit from this as well as the linguistic growth of the child. If the first language is mostly displaced by the second language, this is called subtractive multilingualism. This can cause disadvantages in the child's linguistic and cognitive development. Experts assume that in this case important lingual-overlapping knowledge concerning linguistic structure and logic from the first language gets lost and cannot be activated and used for the development of similar structures in the second

language.

Here the interdependency theory should be mentioned which claims that both languages the child acquires are depending on each other in the process of development. But still scientists discuss the exact conditions of this interdependency considering the stages, the time and the way they occur. It is also important to consider the socio-cultural circumstances in which the child acquires the two languages to evaluate it scientifically. The socialization takes place in the first years and also in the dominating language.

The main factor for bilingual language acquisition is that a child and its socialization are determined by two languages. It learns two different meanings for each word or thing. This is how the lexicon is extended significantly and also cognitive processes are enhanced because the meanings of two words are sometimes not identical in the two languages. For example the English word "brush" can be translated as "Bürste" in German, but also as "Pinsel". This way a child learns how to express itself in different ways (Triarchi-Herrmann, Vassilia, 2006, p. 46).

Often bilingual parents are told it would be normal that a bilingual child starts to speak in a later age. At first sight it might seem obvious that the language processing will start a little later. A monolingual child hears the mother say "ball" referring to a round object again and again. A bilingual child may be confused when it hears this word in one language and then another expression for a round object in the other language. But the bilingual child is very much able to acknowledge that every object has its own name, even though mother and father might use different words for it. (Küpelikilinc / Ringler. p. 43).

In the end the child benefits from the broader range of ability of emotional expression since the children experience their feelings and emotions in two different languages. Since language is always strongly connected with its culture, bilingual children are affected by two cultures which is a great advantage as we will see in the later chapter. Bilingualism also means a special relation towards two different cultures. The language a child learns in a very early age is highly emotionally connected to the person. Language symbolizes the connection to a specific group and constructs feelings of affiliation and security. Some bilinguals switch from one language to the other and while doing so, they also change their mimic and gestures. (Ebd. p. 49)

3.3 The Bilingual Brain and the Benefits of Bilingualism

Nowadays the view on bilingualism has changed due to modern scientific knowledge. For a long period second language was seen by researchers and educators as an interference that is more like a hindrance for the academic and intellectual development of a child. In fact in the bilingual brain both language systems are active even when only one language is used. This can cause situations in which one system restrains the other one. Now the question is whether this can be seen as a benefit or not.

In fact the interference is more a benefit than a handicap. It is accepted as some kind of training for the brain. The brain is in constant conflict and challenged to resolve this internal conflict. This mind-workout strengthens the cognitive muscles of the brain significantly.

(Chilla et al, 2010, p. 51). In parallel to this, bilinguals seem to be more adept than monolinguals at solving certain kinds of mental puzzles. This is what psychologists Ellen Bialystok and Michelle Martin-Rhee proved in a survey. They asked bilingual and monolingual preschoolers to sort objects of different shapes and colours. The first task was comparatively easy, but when the task got more challenging, the bilinguals were significantly quicker. (Matter, Gray, 2012, page SR12, New York Edition). There are many more studies which show similar evidence. Bilingual experience improves the brain's executive function. This refers to "a command system that directs the attention that we use for planning, solving problems and performing various other mentally demanding tasks. These processes include ignoring distractions to stay focused, switching attention willfully from one thing to another and holding information in mind, like remembering a sequence of directions while driving"(Ebd.).

The key difference between bilinguals and monolinguals is the ability to switch from one language to the other somehow naturally. This demands the much elaborated ability to monitor the environment very fast and act adequate to it. Bilinguals perform better and with less activity in parts of the brain which are involved in monitoring. This indicates that they are more efficient in monitoring. This was proved by several other studies which came to similar conclusions. In addition, bilingualism brings more advantages to the elderly brain. A neuropsychological study of the University of California, San Diego, found out that bilinguals are more resistant to dementia and other symptoms of Alzheimer's disease. Interestingly the higher the degree of bilingualism is evolved; the more resistant the people are (Ebd.).

The sharing of two cultures is also an essential benefit of bilingualism. Culture influences our habits, customs, beliefs and values as well as other aspects of our life. The knowledge is mostly assimilated unconsciously by our environment. For many people it is like a shock when they are confronted with something they don't know, which applies to other cultures for example. Bilingualism and biculturalism are not necessarily the same and many people live in one dominant culture. People who live between different cultures have the ability to feel at home in both cultures and behave appropriate in both communities. And children from bilingual families are aware of the fact that people expect them to identify themselves with the behaviour of two different cultures and they can be truly bicultural as surveys show (Harding-Esch, p. 48). This means the patterns of use and the cultural context influences a child and his or her type of bilingualism.

Bilingualism is often idealized. But some languages are more prestigious than others and that is why certain aspects of bilingualism are somehow neglected, especially when it comes to the educational institutions. But there are other problematic aspects of bilingualism which we will focus on now.

3.4 Problems of Bilingualism and Influential Individual Factors

Almost daily most people are exposed to other languages. But bilingual children display a special mixing of languages. First the so called semilingualism should be mentioned. This means that when the first language is not yet fully learnt, the second language acquisition can

also be problematic. This assumption is based on the interdependency hypothesis which claims that the second language can only be learnt in an optimal way when the fist language is proficient. The threshold theory says that the second language can only prosper when the foundation of the first language is sufficient. But in reality these theories cannot withstand linguistic question. The outcomes are the display of a special bilingual identity and the mixing of languages is not a sign for deficiency but multilingual competence (Chilla et al. p. 55).

The mixing of languages contains code-switching, borrowing and transfer. The use of it is a sign for the dominant language hypothesis or for gap filling. They can be caused by linguistic factors or by social or psychological factors. For example certain youth slangs are influenced by the use of a mix of different languages, like the German "Kanak-Sprak". Different studies imply that this language is designed by specific communication patterns of youth culture and in-groups. It developed under complex social conditions of young people who grew up in a multilingual environment (Ebd., p. 62).

Code-switching means that the speaker switches from one language to the other in certain situations. It follows certain rules and is defined by social functions. Kaplan (2002) claims that in many societies where more than one language is being used, code-switching is the normal way of expressing oneself. Studies pertaining to code-switching can help us understand how languages can interact in language processing and in this way the cognition of bilingualism can be better understood (p. 288). Code-switching can be caused by new conversation-partners, change of topic or place or other factors. When it happens within a sentence it is called intrasentential, when it happens from one sentence to another, it is called internsentential. (Chilla et al. p. 63).

Further than intrasentential code-switching goes the so called borrowing. Here the speaker uses single lexemes from one language in sentences that basically consist of the other language. Another form of language mixing is transfer, which can happen from the first to the second language as well as the other way round. It is not exactly clear if the language mixing might be a display of the so called interlanguage. Interlanguage "is founded upon the assumption that an L2 learner, at any particular moment in his learning sequence, is using a language system which is neither the the first language nor the second; it is a third language, with its own grammar, its own lexicon and so on" (Second Language Acquisition Theory, p. 35). As to linguists like Nemser, Pitt Corder and Selinker, the lesson to be learnt from interlanguage in the light of bilingualism is that in the language acquisition process learner develops a system in its own right and learners "tend to go through s series of interlanguages in systematic and predictable ways" (p.35) But then here arises the question if every bilingual child can become a competent bilingual speaker?

The age is again an important issue for this development. But also the conditions of first and second language acquisition and the individual progression have significant impacts. For the successful acquisition many factors are relevant. They are responsible for the cognitive and affective differences between learners. They include intelligence and the ability to learn. Also the cognitive style, motivation, attitudes, personality factors and learning and teaching

conditions play a vital role. Edmonson/House (Edmonson, Willis / House, Juliane, 2000, p. 215) pronounce a holistic principle of acquiring and teaching languages opposed to an analytic one based on this information. The bilingual education is a complex field and happening in different stages and surroundings.

Sometimes concerns are expressed that the bilingual child might be emotionally or linguistically irritated by the use of two languages. But since bilingualism is the rule rather than the exception worldwide, this must automatically mean that most of these multilingual speakers would be affected.

4. Bilingual Education

Even though there are still voices that claim multilingualism could be a hindrance rather than a benefit, it is now widely accepted that bilingual education can be a great advantage for the child, because the advantages outnumber the possible disadvantages. As mentioned before there are many factors and conditions why parents decide or are forced into the decision of raising a child with more than one language. Bilingualism exhibits extremely varied patterns throughout the world and bilingual individuals live in an equal variety of linguistic situations (Harding-Esch, p. 77). This is not only limited to the familiar or private condition but also the educational institutions should be a part in the consideration. Before we focus on the bilingual educational institutions, it is recommended to take a look at the familiar conditions and surroundings concerning bilingualism.

4.1 The Bilingual Family

The most important factors that are involved in determining whether or not a child should be educated bilingual are many. First of all a family should look at its personal language background and history. This can bring a decision for or against bilingualism. Also it is important to analyze which language is used mainly between the parents and if it is easy to teach it to the child. "If the parents were previously in the habit of talking to each other in the language of the outside community, then the parent who wishes to pass on his or her other language to the child will clearly have to put a lot of time and effort into the child's language education" (Ebd., p. 78). If the parents use another language, they should accept that they will have a foreign home, when speaking to their child.

The next question is how the respective languages should be used. Most parents commonly stick to one language each. Yet, at this point, the decision about how to use which language in which context can be a problematic issue. It is also worth considering who will take care of the small child and what will be the dominant language. Another important issue is the parent's attitude towards their own languages. Moreover, the other family members and what contact the child will have with them play a role, too. These may be even more important than the objective situation of the language in the foreign society. Still, the prestige of a language cannot be considered unimportant.

Some golden rules for the bilingual family are that they should make the decision by themselves and not let others influence them. They have to be very strong and determined and always consider the social benefit of bilingualism, instead of being afraid of the alleged

intellectual harm. If a bilingual education causes misery or frustration, parents should bear in mind that the happiness of the child should always come first, but they should also make every effort to encourage and maintain bilingualism.

4.2 Bilingual Education in Pre-School and School

Not only the families but also educational institutions should take part in the bilingual education. This should take place before school and therefore the kindergarten is playing an important role. This is important because the child has contact to the second language for three more years and this way s/he gets enough time to develop a certain degree of competence to maintain later in school. Also the time before the sixth year of age is very fertile for language acquisition as explained previously and a prosperous foundation for the learning-process in school is built up this way. The pre-school education has a very positive impact on the bilingual development of a child. So the linguistic knowledge and competence of the children will improve significantly. Also the passive lexicon is benefiting very much. These are very good conditions for the start of school.

"Der Grundgedanke ist, immersive Kitas so zu organisieren, dass sich für die Kinder möglichst günstige Gelegenheiten ergeben, ihre natürlichen Sprachlernfähigkeiten auf kindgemäße Weise zu aktivieren." (Wode, Henning, 2009, p. 74). This means that language should be used in a way that children are able to comprehend the linguistic structures without further explanations from the educators. The new language should be integrated in the daily routines so that the children will not experience completely new situations.

The problem is that bilingual preschool institutions should not be the same for all children but be chosen according to the specific group they belong to. Wode (Ebd., p. 75) suggests four different types: Type A should be for monolingual children who shall learn another language like English, French or Spanish. Type B should address children from language minorities like Frisians, Sorbes (in Germany), who live in the region for long time. Type C is for children of minority migrants who shall learn or improve the first or second language. Type D is for heterogenic linguistic groups from many different cultures.

Bilingual education within the pedagogic context of the school should also include bilingual classes in different subjects. The second language should be the language used in class. Bilingual teaching should involve an improvement in the language as well as competence and knowledge in the subject itself. This is what intercultural learning is about and it brings a lot of new perspectives and chances for teachers and learners as well as concerning the language and the specific subject knowledge (Otten, Edgar / Wildhage, Manfred, 2003, p. 24).

In Germany the chances of bilingual children from poor migrant-families are not very well. While in bigger cities between 30 and 40 percent of the students have a migrant background and many of them grow up bilingual, the rest do not have the chance to pursue the potential of linguistic competence coming from the native languages (Spohn, Cornelia, 2007, p. 8). Yet, some other countries like Canada have a well developed school system that promotes the bilingual education on a holistic level and is operating very well.

4.3 Bilingual Reflection upon Translational Action

Bilingualism can also be linked to the translational action in many respects. As noted before, bilingualism requires being competent or at least the ability to speak, write or express feelings in two languages. People who live in a bilingual family or learn the second language at educational institutions and thus later become bilinguals might be a translator in their future careers. Here one can ask whether there is a difference between these two types of bilinguals in the translation profession or not. Besides whether a bilingual whose parents speak two languages at the same time in the family setting or the ones who learn the second language outside their houses develop different translation competences or not can also be discussed .

It should also be mentioned that having a good command of both languages at the same time is really challenging and forces brain heavily. In addition, a bilingual who starts learning the second language in the family setting may feel closer to one of the languages his/her parents speak as a native language. This situation can cause cultural problems. Therefore, whereas a family who usually speaks two different languages in the house can easily teach their children linguistic knowledge, they may not stipulate where their sons and daughters culturally belong to. This situation can affect the translation competence of such bilinguals.

As for the second group who learns another language in later ages mostly at educational institutions, it can be said that translation skills that they develop may also cause obstacles. Because this group learns the second language later, which means they may not have a good command of it or their translation ability may not be good enough for the process mostly because they tend to think in their mother language. And the problem doubles if the first language is not fully learnt. As discussed earlier, even when the first language is taken into consideration, the competence level of speakers may vary to a great extent.

What translation theories puts forward at this point can alleviate these problems remarkably. Besides translation today is more than a code switching, a term used mostly by linguistic oriented translation approaches.

Related with this, one of the functional translation approaches, Skopos Theory is introduced in this study as a problem solve in the translation projects in which these two bilinguals take action having different backgrounds. Indeed, functionalist approaches are mostly associated with both translational action theory by M äntt äri and Skopos Theory, which was developed by Reiss&Vermeer in the late 1970s and 1980s as a general theory of translation (Nord, 120: 2010). "Skopos" is a Greek term meaning purpose, intention, aim. This theory argues that all actions have a purpose and translation is also an action. "Vermeer highlights the translator's skopos or aim as a decisive factor in a translation project" (Venuti, 2000: 217). Being developed as a general theory in translation studies, the starting point of Skopos is an action theory (handlungstheorie) and it is a part of translational action theory which was developed by M äntt äri .These theories regard translators as experts in the translation process and they defend translator-based approaches.

In Skopos, the aim of the translation can be determined by the client, commissioner or translator himself/herself. Besides, according to Skopos Theory, the translator is a bicultural expert who must take the responsibility in the translation process and accordingly determines the convenient translation strategies (see also Reiss&Vermeer, 1984). The fact that the translator is a bicultural expert comes from his/her bilingual family who speak two languages as their native languages or through the second language acquisition in the case that he/she lives in a family in which a single language is spoken. The challenging factor arises here as a cultural proximity or distance. What Skopos Theory brings here as a solution is the determined aim or purpose. Besides in Skopos Theory the translator, though being an expert, can be limited in their decisions by other individuals including client and commissioner. In fact, this is not an obstacle at all since the translator's responsibility is shared by others. And because the decisive factor in a translation project is mutually determined in the light of Skopos or aim, the burden of the translator in parallel is alleviated.

Some other prominent translation scholars and linguists such as Hönig and Wills also conducted research on cognition through think aloud protocols. Cognition means "the mental act or process by which knowledge is acquired including perception, intuition and reasoning or the knowledge that results from such an act or process" (http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/cognition). Stolze (2013) highlights the need for conducting research on which cognitive operations are at use during the translation process in order to describe the way to translation clearly (p. 302). In other words, that's is analyzing the "black box" of the translator, as explained by Levy (1969:163), to grasp what's taking place in the process of going from the source text to the translation (as cited in Stolze, 2013: p. 302). Then, it can be implied that think aloud protocols are carried out in translation studies to understand what translators keep in their mind and what decisions they tend to take in the translation process. Such tests give favourable findings to detect the problems mentioned above. For instance, if the translator takes wrong decisions in the translation process and what he/she thinks is faulty, it can show that the second language acquisition is not wholly achieved.

Hans G. Hönig is mainly known for his studies on academic teaching and cognitive studies. Like Reiss, Vermeer, Mänttäri and Nord, he defends that the translation has a purpose and this purpose arises according to various situations. According to Hönig, the translator fulfilling the aim has two options in the process. He/she either selects micro or macro translation approaches. Micro translation strategies are basically linguistic oriented approaches and it relies on finding lexical or phraseological equivalents of the source text in the target language. However, macro strategies are related to the overall text. Use of adaptations, domestications can be accepted as macro strategies. Hönig also attaches importance to intuitions which should be reinforced with cognition (see Tosun, 2002).

Wills, on the other hand, is another translation scholar and linguist, who carries out studies on cognition. According to him, intuitions should take place in the translation process but what comes first should be cognition. Unlike Hönig, who seems to defend a target oriented approach since he talks about purpose and different situations, Wills argues that the translation must be source oriented. In the light of these, bilingual translators coming from

different backgrounds must ideally decide which translation theories they must benefit from. And the question whether intuition or cognition is the priority for them and whether they must adopt macro or micro strategies throughout overall translation process so as to solve problems can be well understood with the help of theoretical information in Translation Studies.

5. Conclusion

It is not easy to define bilingualism. There can be many conditions and individual circumstances that influence the bilingual speaker, from intellect to motivation, from social background to the personal attitude and the individual learner type. Also there is a distinction between bilingual societies and bilingual individuals, which expose the speaker to diverging scenes. These factors make it very hard to find a definition that covers all bilingual speakers. Another factor is the degree of bilingualism. Because it is relative and depending on many individual factors, it is not possible to judge when a person is "native-like" or not since monolinguals also vary in the degree of speaking competence.

Although in the past it was considered to bring disadvantages to a child when growing up with more than one language, bilingualism is largely accepted as providing important advantages to people. Nowadays we know that bilingualism has many positive aspects on different levels. Apart from the better chances on the international business market and the ability to communicate with a broader range of people, a bilingual speaker has an ideal basic condition to easily learn other languages, too because the ability to learn is well trained and the different lexica for each language are supporting the building of yet another one with much less effort than a monolingual.

Apart from these practical advantages the bilingual brain also benefits from this condition in other aspects that have nothing to do with language. Many parts of the brain are accessed in a different way in bilinguals than the brain of a monolingual speaker. This causes a better training of these muscular parts and the ability to react quicker in certain situations. This leads to the conclusion that bilingual speakers are probably even more intelligent. None the less they seem to be protected somehow from the health threats of older ages, since bilinguals suffer from dementia or Alzheimer's disease less.

Also the surroundings and conditions that promote bilingual education are numerous. Therefore it is not possible to generalize bilingual development in every way. A bilingual child on the streets of an Asian Megacity will have a totally different environment than a child on a private school in Switzerland. This will of course have a great influence on their ways and degrees of bilingualism. Also children in the same country can face very diverging conditions, think of a child whose parents come from a poor country and don't have much education, on the other hand, this child may have a classmate coming from a middle-class, well-educated background.

Apart from this, languages have different prestige levels and some like English or French are seen as more prestigious as for example compared to Tamil or Urdu. Here it is important to involve a bilingual educational concept in an educational institution like pre-school or

elementary school. In Germany for example there are many good bilingual pre-schools and schools, but still they do not really promote the educational chances of bilingual children from poor migrant families.

We also see that bilingualism is neither easy to define, nor to generalize into a strict pattern. Still it is a phenomenon that occurs increasingly all over the world. It is interesting to follow further studies and researches because bilingualism is an everyday routine for many speakers and the numbers of bilingual individuals rise increasingly. Bilingualism is a reality and a chance that deserves even more research under holistic aspects to fully cover the broad range of the field.

There is also a relationship between bilingualism and translational action. Throughout the translation process, bilingual translators may face some challenging problems due to their different backgrounds. However, the practice must always be combined with theories. Benefiting from some translation theories like Skopos, translational action theory and so forth, problems may be minimized and the translation product or translatum, in Vermeer's definition can be more qualified. Therefore, all academic institutions which train two kinds of bilinguals in terms of the translation competence must update their curriculum by equally combining translation practice with theory courses.

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