

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON BILINGUALISM AND MULTILINGUALISM

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Abstract: Language is a system that consists of the development, acquisition, maintenance and use of complex systems of communication, particularly the human ability to do so. Due to the existence of a large number of languages in the world, people tend to speak several languages apart from their mother tongue. This particular situation has caused the arrival of the theories called “Bilingualism and Multilingualism.” The main intention of this study is to discuss how bilingualism differs from multilingualism and the subcategories of these theories of linguistics. Bilingualism is the phenomenon of speaking and understanding two languages. Meanwhile, multilingualism is the use of more than two languages either by an individual speaker or a community of speakers. Many people become bilingual or multilingual considering several facts such as career advantage, broader education options and more interestingly according to the researches done by scientists, they have proven that bilingualism and multilingualism help to improve the power of thinking. Two categories can be seen under bilingualism namely Coordinate Bilingualism and Compound Bilingualism. Whilst Addictive and Subtractive Multilingualism are the two major categories of multilingualism. According to the current statistics, the percentage of bilingual speakers of the world is 43% meanwhile the multilingual speakers own a percentage of 13% of the world population. The statistics clearly demonstrate that the number of bilingual speakers in the world is outnumbered the number of monolingual speakers in the world which is 40% of the world population. In conclusion, the main objective of this research is to bring forward the linguistic background of Bilingualism and Multilingualism discussing the types, causes and effects of these two modern-day language concepts.

Keywords: bilingualism, multilingualism, linguistics, art in society

Introduction

Language is the ability to comprehend and produce spoken and written words. Language acquisition is the process by which humans acquire the capacity to perceive and comprehend language. It is something people begin right from birth. With time, people have tended to learn more languages because of many reasons according to the social status they inhabit. Thus, being educated about several languages in addition to mother tongue opened the gates to bring forward two major linguistic theories which have great importance for language acquisition. Those two theories are namely Bilingualism and Multilingualism. Bilingualism is known as the ability to speak and write two languages proficiently. Meanwhile, having proficiency in speaking and writing in more than two languages is known as multilingualism. Bilingualism and multilingualism cannot be considered as two theories that were introduced recently. It has a long history which began in the first century A.D. in Rome. In that era, there was a bilingual education system so that a debate arose regarding which language should be named as the first language as there were both Greek and Latin. Past researchers

used to think that growing up by learning two languages affected negatively the development of the children. But with the modern aspects of bilingual and multilingual education, bilingualism and multilingualism offer vast numbers of social, economic and cognitive benefits as well. Through this research paper, the main attention is paid to the different types of bilingualism and multilingualism in which the usage have been vastly spread all over the globe. The types of bilingualism and multilingualism are categorized based on the age of acquisition and the ability to acquire several languages. Moreover, the reasons, which have affected the learning process of several languages by individuals, are brought forward as another sub-theme of this research. In that section, a combination of past reasons and currently affecting reasons are presented as the reasons for the spread of bilingualism and multilingualism in the world. Another section spoken through this research is the cognitive benefits that an individual attains by being bilingual or multilingual. The connection of bilingualism and multilingualism with the brain is mainly discussed in this chapter explaining how the brain works when someone becomes bilingual or multilingual. The relationship between the brain and bilingualism has been a positive connection as being bilingual helps the brain to proceed even more logically and effectively. The experiments on the connection between brain and multilingualism have proved that having fluency in several languages improves the working memory of an individual. For this study, it was of interest to investigate the present status of bilingualism and multilingualism in the world. In this section, the percentage of bilingual and multilingual speakers in the world together with the countries which have essential and official bilingualism are investigated according to statistical reports on bilingualism and multilingualism. As the final chapter of the discussion, the application of bilingual and multilingual programmes to the education systems in the world is discussed and with this section, the main intention is to present how the previously mentioned programmes affected the development of the children. This research aims to investigate which kind of role is played by bilingualism and multilingualism in the current society and to present more sophisticated methods for the application of bilingual and multilingual programmes for every section of life inclusive of education as well. This study would have particular advantages in the field of linguistics by implementing and presenting the theories spoken in this study among the daily lifestyle of citizens all over the world.

2. Equipment and Methodology

Data collection for the research was based on the mixed methods category which included both quantitative and qualitative data.

3. Results and Discussion

The major finding of the research was that being bilingual or multilingual not only creates opportunities for access of the competitive globe but also it advances the brain with a vast amount of psycholinguistic and cognitive benefits for humankind. There are four major types of bilingualism and multilingualism which separately affect to the numerous numbers of metalinguistic, psycholinguistic and cognitive advantages. The main intention of this chapter is to bring forward the cognitive benefits and psycholinguistic aspects of bilingualism and multilingualism and finally, the expansion of bilingual and multilingual speakers of the world.

3.1. Types of Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Language acquisition is a factor that is improved since the birth of a person. First, they tend to acquire their mother tongue from what they hear from their surroundings. As the next step, from the childhood, they learn foreign languages with the need of competing in a competitive edge in career choices. Based on the age limit and the differences which occur in acquiring foreign languages, five major types of bilingualism and multilingualism have been introduced.

1. Early Bilingualism
2. Late Bilingualism
3. Subtractive Bilingualism
4. Additive Bilingualism
5. Passive Bilingualism

The first two types refer to the time when a person acquires his or her second language. And the next two types refer to the way that the learner acquires the second language.

Early Bilingualism

Learning a second language in early childhood is known as “Early Bilingualism.” Early Bilingualism consists of two types;

1. Simultaneous Early Bilingualism
2. Successive Early Bilingualism

Simultaneous Early Bilingualism refers to a child who acquires two languages at the same time from birth. Through this, strong bilingualism is generally produced and the development of the language of the child is also implied to be bilingual. Thus, the child starts to adapt to use both the languages where necessary according to the environment he or she abides. So both the languages the child acquires become the mother tongues of the child as he or she has practised it since birth.

Successive Early Bilingualism takes a different way of language acquisition. This concept means that a child has partially learnt a first language and then he or she tends to the second language in childhood. The major reason for this type of bilingualism is the movement to another environment. In such situations, the child must be given the chance to learn the second language as well because the second language is learnt at the same time where the child is acquiring the first language.

Late Bilingualism

Acquiring a second language after the age of 6 or 7 is called “Late Bilingualism.” Late bilingualism occurs especially when it is learned in adolescence or adulthood after acquiring their mother tongue in childhood. This is consecutive bilingualism which occurs after the acquisition of the first language (after the childhood language development period). This is what also distinguishes it from early bilingualism. With the first language already acquired, the late bilinguals use their experience to learn the second language.

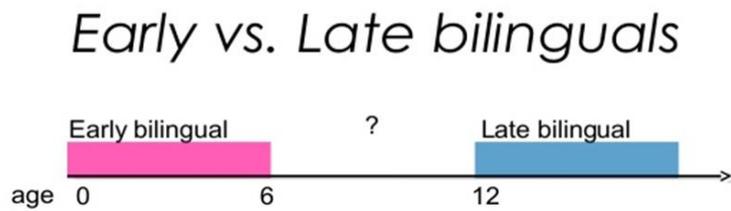


Figure 3.1.1. Age of Acquisition

Bilinguals who acquire both languages at the age of six use both hemispheres of the brain when speaking either of the two languages. Whilst those who acquire their second language after the age of six only use their dominant hemisphere for both languages.

Additive Bilingualism

The term additive bilingualism means a situation where a person acquires two languages in a balanced manner. This theory also comes under the category of strong bilingualism. In additive bilingualism acquisition of a second language is considered an asset. Learning a second language does not have any kind of negative influence on the native language in this category. Both languages are developed gradually and they have an academic advantage over monolinguals and subtractive bilinguals.

Subtractive Bilingualism

Subtractive bilingualism is the situation a person acquires a second language to the detriment of the mother tongue or the first language. The main result of this kind of bilingualism is replacing a new language instead of the native language of the speaker. Subtractive bilinguals may have oral proficiency in their first language but they will not be able to have the benefits and the literacy development for the language. This is also known as “Differential Bilingualism.”

Passive Bilingualism

This concept refers to being able to understand a language without being able to speak or write it proficiently. People who respond in a relevant way in one language (English) when they are addressed in another language (French) could become passive bilinguals, as their mastery of oral expression in the second language decreases. Passive fluency is often brought about by being raised in one language (which becomes the person's passive language) and being schooled in another language (which becomes the person's native language). People who are passively fluent in a language are often latent speakers who were raised in an environment where the language was spoken but did not become native speakers.

3.2. Reasons for Bilingualism and Multilingualism

This section points out the reasons for the existence of the two linguistic fields; bilingualism and multilingualism. The historical, social, economic and different kinds of reasons which have affected to raise bilingualism and multilingualism are brought forward in this section as follows;

1. Population Movement

At present, a large number of people move across the world now and then. Because of this reason, the migrants have to learn to speak the dominant language of that country if they wish to interrupt and take part in the society. Migration accounts for a very large proportion of bilinguals in the world. In fact, all of the migrants will not be able to be fluent in that language as they are capable of their mother tongue. But to some extent, they use the second language in addition to the native language.

2. Colonial Influence

Most of the countries have been ruled by strong nations in the very early years and the strong nations have made colonies in several countries by invading them. This caused to enter the languages of invaders into the lifestyle of the citizens of the country. This resulted in creating the situation that the citizens had to essentially learn the language of the invader countries because the invaders spread their language in every part of the country. Thus, colonial influence is also considered as the main reason for bilingualism and multilingualism.

3. An edge in the job market

Being bilingual or multilingual opens the gates to significant career advantages. Most of the students who learn foreign languages answer the question “Why do you learn a second language?” with the reply of “It will be important for us in terms of salary and employability.” This is considered as one of the major reasons why most of people are becoming bilingual and multilingual in the modern world.

4. More fulfilling travel experiences

Travelling is a thing everyone likes to engage in. It is a truth that being bilingual makes travelling easier. Travellers can get more experiences and personal interactions and they can get deeper into the places they visit as well if they aware of foreign languages. Thus, in the perspective of travelling being fluent in foreign languages is a worthy advantage.

5. A global perspective

Learning a second language makes you aware of other countries, their lifestyles and people have the chance of knowing how groups of people in other regions do things in different manners. The learner not only improves the vocabulary acquiring a new language but also he or she learns to put that language in the context of a different culture.

3.3. Cognitive Benefits of Bilingualism and Multilingualism

Cognition and bilingualism is related in a positive manner as a modern phenomenon of language planning. Being bilingual or multilingual opens many advantageous gates of improvement advancing the cognition within an individual. Brain and bilingualism and multilingualism create a strong bond in making a person advanced in every aspect which affects the cognitive development within a person. Thus, this section discusses the advantages of bilingualism and multilingualism in the point of view of cognition.

1. Executive Function

Executive function is the domain of high-level cognitive processes that assists in goal-oriented tasks, such as problem-solving, mental flexibility, attentional control, inhibitory control, and task switching. Cognitive effects of bilingualism investigate a correlation between bilingualism and executive function. Bilinguals were noticed to have higher executive control than monolinguals.

2. Metalinguistic Ability

This is always bound with the executive function of a bilingual individual. It is said that bilingual individuals have shown superiority in metalinguistic ability. Metalinguistic awareness is the understanding of the separation between the structure of the language and its meaning. This ability could be practised by being bilingual, given that a bilingual individual has to suppress their knowledge in another language system while operating the native or another language. Bialystok stated that metalinguistic abilities of bilinguals versus monolinguals by having subjects whether a sentence was grammatical, regardless of its logical sense. Bilinguals outperformed monolinguals in judging that a nonsensical sentence was correct.

3. Parallel activation of both languages

It has been found that bilingual's two languages are activated during language use both semantically and phonologically. Even when the speaker is speaking using his or her dominant language (L1), the less dominant language (L2) is activated. The two languages are active even the necessity is for just one language in some moments. Two studies were done by Wu and Thierry in 2011 and Hoshino and Thierry in 2012 proved that both languages of an individual are constantly and unconsciously active and interfering with one another.

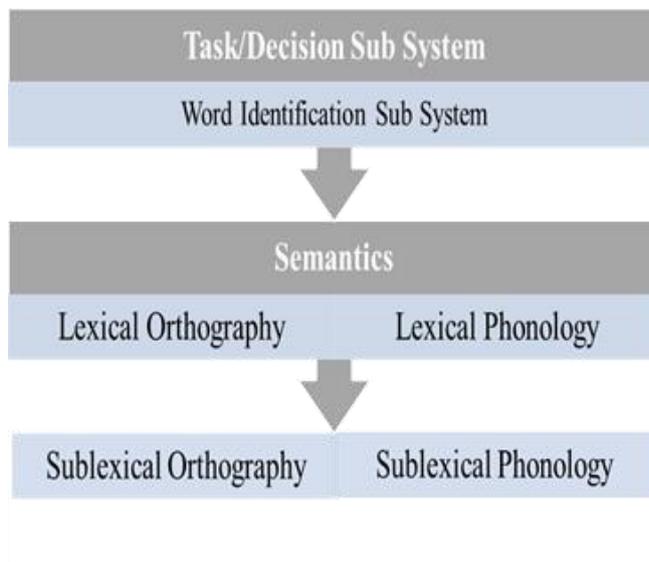


Figure 3.3.1. Parallel Activation of Languages

4. Semantic Development

Anita Ianco-Worrall, the author of *Bilingualism and Cognitive Development*, tested two groups of monolingual and bilingual at ages 4-6 and 6-9. These participants were given tasks to assess whether they showed a semantic or phonetic preference when categorizing words. An example of one task given in the experiment was to decide which of the two words, either can or hat, was similar to the word cap. The outcomes of the study showed that although both monolingual and bilingual children had no differences in the way they understood the words used, 54% of the younger bilingual children consistently showed a semantic preference than their monolingual peers. In monolingual children, semantic development increased with the age, suggesting that bilingual children reach a stage of semantic development 2-3 years earlier than monolingual children.

5. Reading Ability

As an attempt to further analyse bilingualism as it relates to reading capability, there was another study done by Bialystok. This study was conducted by testing a group of children ages 4 to 5, equally familiar in secondary language as with their native tongues. The assessment was made using what Bialystok discussed as a representational principle; which refers to a symbolic representation of spoken language or the connection between the spoken and written language systems. For the testing of this principle, she gave children a "Moving Word Task" where a child would have to appropriately match a written word to an object on a card. If they could correctly match the two after some rearranging of the cards, it suggested that they could understand the written words as representations of specific words whose meanings cannot change. The study was taken further to see when bilinguals grasped this principle in comparison to monolinguals. The results showed that bilingual children were correct on their "Moving Word Task" over 80% of the time, which is a percentage equal to that of monolinguals who were one year older than the bilinguals being tested. Overall, the bilinguals seemed to understand the representational principle earlier than monolinguals, meaning they were earlier prepared for literacy acquisition.

3.4. Expansion of Bilingual and Multilingual Speakers in the World

Bilingualism is and has currently become an essential phenomenon in the world. There are approximately 3000 languages in the world and 150 nations where those languages are spoken. The previously mentioned fact is the main consequence of bilingualism and multilingualism. Due to this, there are a large amount of bilingual and multilingual countries in the world rather than monolingual nations. The percentage of bilingual speakers in the world at present covers about 43% of the world population. Meanwhile, 16% of the world are multilingual. Bilingual and multilingual speakers together outnumber the percentage of monolingual speakers which is 40%. Apart from these monolingual, bilingual and multilingual inhabitants of the world, there is 1% of polyglots who use five or more languages fluently. While it should be logical that monolingual countries have a lower number of bilingual citizens, the United States, for example, embraces 20% of bilinguals, while Canada, a nation considered to be bilingual in both English and French only embraces about 13% of the bilinguals (Grosjean, 2001). Grosjean also stated that countries, which are represented only one official language, are highly multilingual. For example, in Ghana, there are around fifty different languages and in Nigeria, there are about four hundred languages. Many countries follow the essential bilingualism and multilingualism theory in the world. For example, Canada, Haiti and New Zealand are in the category of essential bilingualism. Canada is officially bilingual under the Official Languages Act and the Constitution of Canada that require the service from both official languages.

56.9% of the population in Canada speaks English as the first language and while 22% are native French speakers. As witnessed, bilingualism is often a consequence of contact between two linguistic groups which do not have the same numerical, political and economic importance. When a country has large minority language groups, its multilingual aspect may be recognized and the linguistic rights of each group officially respected.

Table 1: Most Multilingual Countries

Country	Number of Indigenous Languages	Number of Immigrant Languages
Papua New Guinea	839	0
Indonesia	706	1
Nigeria	520	6
India	447	7
China	297	3
Mexico	283	6
Cameroon	280	1
United States	216	206
Brazil	216	13
Australia	212	33

3.5. Bilingual and Multilingual Education

Education in multiple languages has become a rapidly growing phenomenon around the world. It is something which is well accepted in some regions and controversial in others. As mentioned, it takes different meanings in different places. For instance, in Chinese schools, bilingual education refers to the growing number of Mandarin/English programmes for the Han majority as well as to programmes that use a combination of Mandarin and a regional language such as Yi in Hunnan. On the other hand, in Germany, bilingual education means subjects such as Geography, Maths and History being taught

in two languages (German and English). The purposes of bilingual and multilingual education programmes are similarly diverse, ranging from the development of advanced levels of proficiency and academic achievement in both target languages to the promotion of academic skills in a dominant language but not in the pupils' home language. A framework presented by the previous researches on bilingual education is as follows;

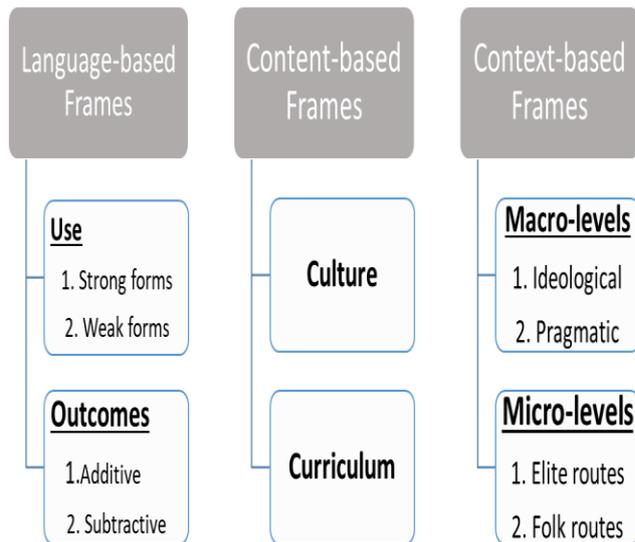


Figure 3.4.1. Three frameworks for understanding bilingual and multilingual education

Language-based Frames

This frame emphasizes language use and language outcomes. In strong forms, two or more languages are used frequently and systematically for academic purposes inclusive of reading, writing in subjects like mathematics, science and history. Using non-dominant languages sparingly and typically for clarifying the instructions or for interpersonal communication only is the process of weak forms. The categorization of strong and weak programmes needs to take into account contextual factors which are economic and ideological in nature. This includes localized forms of diglossia in bilingual and heteroglossia in multilingual communities which have developed beliefs and practices concerning the role each language should play.

The second type of language-based frames emphasizes the linguistic outcomes of schooling in multiple languages. This perspective compels about the changes in pupils' abilities to use their first and additional languages after completing a bilingual or multilingual programme of study. Subtractive programmes are those in which the student's home language is not used at all as a medium of instruction or its use is progressively diminished as early as the first year of the school. Although the students in such programmes may learn new vocabulary, develop reading and writing and be introduced to the new genres in the mother tongue, these gains are often the result of out-of-school experiences such as religious instruction and social networks (Wong Fillmore, 1991). In contrast, additive bilingual and multilingual programmes aim to support and extend the student's home language and additional language(s) through the systematic and sustained use of both/all as languages of instruction. Such programmes typically have as a goal that learners will leave the programme as more fully developed speakers, signers, readers and writers of their home language

across a variety of genres, discourses and contexts. Thus, subtractive programmes lead the way to the diminishing of home language and oppositely additive programmes help to add a new language without losing the home language.

Content-based Frames

The second frame of bilingual and multilingual education programmes is the content-based frames which pay more attention on the culture and the curriculum of a society or the environment. In these contexts where schooling in multiple languages is more widely accepted, educators more often emphasize the acquisition of academic content. In this type of situation, the languages of instruction are portrayed primarily for intercultural communication and content learning rather than as the defining feature of the programme. There is growing awareness that the forms of knowledge that linguistically diverse learners bring to school should be treated as valuable resources to be tapped in bilingual and multilingual programmes.

Implicit use of students' existing conceptual and content knowledge has been described as *de facto* bilingual education (Krashen, 1999), in recognition of the fact that students with a strong educational background in their first language are better able to transfer or apply the conceptual knowledge they have already developed through L1-medium education to learning in additional languages. There are several most common forms of bilingual and multilingual education which come under content-based frames; they are submersion education, transitional bilingual education, maintenance bilingual education, community language teaching and heritage language programmes. In submersion programmes, little or no effort is made to acknowledge the special needs of second language learners. The main process in these types of programmes is keeping the students in the classroom with native or proficient users of the dominant language, and their academic progress is evaluated gradually. Transitional bilingual education features the temporary use of L1 or another regional language as an academic bridge to highly proficient users of the dominant language. Transitional bilingual education is a subtractive form of bilingualism as the first language is considered as a temporary medium. Maintenance bilingual education is an additive source of bilingual education which refers to the upkeep of the non-dominant language. This model is mainly intended for immigrant pupils thought likely to return to their home countries and whose successful return would ideally include being able to participate in schools there.

Community language teaching also known as mother-tongue teaching has the advantage of accounting for the effects of language shift and the inclusion of non-migrants (dominant language users) who want to study migrant languages (Extra and Yagmur, 2005). Heritage language programmes share the assumption that there is educational value in teaching students in and about the historic language(s) of their community. Heritage language programmes have evolved in many places, although they are not always known locally as such. Other labels include community, complementary, ancestral, ethnic, immigrant, minority, original, non-official and second/third languages (Duff and Li, 2009). Community language teaching also comes under the heritage language programmes.

Context-based Frames

The third frame for bilingual and multilingual educational programmes is based on the nature of the contexts in which are designed, enacted and evaluated. This frame is further divided into two main

contexts; macro-level contexts and micro-level contexts. In macro-level contexts, the diversity in public and official attitudes to bilingual and multilingual education are observed.

Most attacks on bilingual education arise from an unfounded fear that English will be neglected in the United States, whereas the rest of the world fears the opposite; the attraction of English and interest in American cultures are seen by non-English-speaking nations as a threat to their languages and cultures. It is regressive and xenophobic because the rest of the world considers ability in at least two languages to be the mark of a good education (Brisk, 1998). While it is true that ideological imbroglio in the USA contrasts sharply with more pragmatic approaches elsewhere, there has been also considerable resistance to bilingual schooling by authorities in China (Feng, 2005). Thus, although national-level characterizations are useful for cross-country comparisons, they may also oversimplify or ignore the complexity of regional and local situations.

In micro-level contexts, the major task is creating and implementing specific programmes on bilingual and multilingual education in local conditions. Suzanne Romaine's distinction between elite and folk bilingualism in children is the best instance for this. According to Romaine (1999), much of what linguists know about the development of childhood bilingualism is based on studies of 'middle-class and relatively privileged populations' and it is less known about the more numerous cases of bilingual and multilingual development in 'folk' contexts. In elite contexts, we find that bilingual and multilingual programmes almost always involve at least one major European language or another language of wider communication such as Mandarin and Arabic. As Romaine states, we know just a little about how the majority of the world's children become bilingual or multilingual. In 'folk' contexts, including schools attended by refugees and indigenous children, pupils seldom enjoy the high levels of economic and educational resources common among their 'elite' counterparts. Their home language is seldom the prestigious language of the community and, in most cases, acquisition of the dominant language is regarded as a matter of economic survival rather than choice. The home language of these young bilinguals are often underutilized and frequently ignored in school. Thus, bilingual education becomes a subtractive process in which pupils may lose aspects of competence in one language while attempting to gain competence in another.

4. Conclusions

Being bilingual and multilingual is something which is advanced gradually within humans from childhood. This aspect of this research suggested that bilingualism and multilingualism are two phenomena that have a long history originated from the first century A.D. in Rome. Learning and acquiring second and foreign languages is a passion for several individuals and in the meantime, it is experienced by some people because of the educational system of a nation. Whatever the situation or purpose is, being fluent in several languages bring a valuable package of advantages both physically and cognitively. It affects both economically and psychologically in a positive manner for the learners. The results of this research also provided details on the diffusion of bilingualism and multilingualism. For this, many historical, geographical, educational, economic and cultural reasons have been affected. People's desire for travelling around the world made bilingualism and multilingualism common factors as well. Another significant intention of this research was to explain the psychological and cognitive benefits an individual receives being bilingual or multilingual. Importantly, the results of this research provide evidence about the cognitive advantages of bilingualism and multilingualism. Moreover, the research proves that there is a positive relationship

between the brain and bilingualism based on the performance of the brain of bilingual and multilingual persons compared to the monolinguals in significant stages of life. In addition, by using the statistics officially presented by several organizations such as UNO, it was discovered that there are countries that have established official bilingualism in their nation like Canada and there are countries that have been using a lot of languages, but bilingualism or multilingualism is not officially established in the country like South Africa. Bilingualism and multilingualism have been used in several significant stages at present. The modern aspect of using bilingualism and multilingualism in education. Bilingual and multilingual programmes are created to implement educational programmes for students in many regions of the world. Collectively, the results appear to be consistent with the current utilization of the two major theories discussed in this research; bilingualism and multilingualism. Future research should be devoted to the development of the usage of bilingual and multilingual knowledge for the advancement of the economy and culture. Finally, these two linguistic theories should be interconnected with technology to gain the best of it in the fields where they are used essentially.

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