


Chapter 15


Neuropsychological Acquisitions, Communication, and Language Skills in Bilingual Children With Neurodevelopmental Disorders

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ABSTRACT

Bilingualism is a multifaceted concept with over fifty percent of the world population speaks at least two languages. Research indicates that maintaining many languages may provide greater cognitive enhancements than other cognitively challenging activities. However, most of this research involved typically-developing children, and not so much those with neurodevelopmental disorders. Therefore, the main objective of this comprehensive literature review is to provide clarity on the neurocognitive characteristics of bilingual children with neurodevelopmental disorders and also to identify the pertinent clinical implications and areas in the literature which require further research. Acquiring, articulating, comprehending, and writing simultaneously in two languages is actually a unique circumstance that necessitates suitable strategies and improvements to assist bilingual children in efficiently integrating and interacting with their monolingual counterparts.

1. INTRODUCTION

The presence of many geographical and ethnic groupings globally has resulted in the emergence of several languages, a term (i.e., *language*) that denotes an array of modalities used by people for communication. The rapid development of communication among various groups and globalization processes underscored the unique capacity of people to acquire and articulate several languages. This unique capability is known as *bilingualism* and has a vital impact on societal development, since it is a socio-linguistic phenomenon impacting almost every country, all social strata, and every age demographic (Mouthon et al., 2013). Presently, over fifty percent of the global population is multilingual, and due to the diminishing of the boundaries in specific regions, particularly in Europe, the need for acquiring more foreign languages is rising.

At the conceptual level, there are various definitions that describe the emergence of bilingualism. A constrained definition proposed by Bloomfield (1935) posits that bilingualism entails the concurrent acquisition of two languages during infancy, achieving a comparable skill in each (Mouthon et al., 2013). From a more liberal standpoint, a *bilingual individual* is characterized as the one who has proficiency in at least one of the three primary linguistic skills - comprehension, communication or writing - in a language distinct from his or her native one. Grosjean (1998) also

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