

Presentation of Bilingualism in Preschools in Gjakova and Prizren

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Abstract

Through this paper it will be supported that the argument of child development can be stimulated, encouraged and accelerated through appropriate techniques for a healthy growth and development. The aim of this study is to research the impact that the teaching of two foreign languages has to do with the narrative skills of pre-school children. Also it will be discussed the global impact as an important factor for young parents in order to teach them in a slang form to their children as well. During this paper it will be presented the research which is done in the pre-school age group, by including the influence of the social and psychological system, where from this year the English Language as a foreign language has been incorporated. It will be noted that development can occur spontaneously as a result of maturity, which is the controlled growing the genetically process. Also, on the other hand, it is influenced by the appropriate practices of well-being and lifestyle that can encourage and accelerate, as well as inadequate practices and life forms that may hinder or slow it down. This paper focuses on linguistic development as a dimension of the cognitive sphere. In addition it will be precisely elaborated in the context of this combined approach between nature and welfare, by emphasizing the idea that the development of children can be stimulated, encouraged and accelerated through appropriate healthy growth techniques.

Keywords: Language, bilingualism, continuous learning, language development, adaptation techniques

1. Introduction

This paper aims to identify the difficulties in learning foreign languages in pre-school education: the scale and types of difficulties, then measure their impact on all pupils' involvement, where early childhood is the most suitable time for learning foreign languages.

The reason why focusing on bilingualism in these two cities is a result of my work in internship where we go to monitor the school's curriculum and subjects that our students have at the Faculty of Education.

We could notice the differences of the preschool children of Gjakova and Prizren.

The city of Gjakova has always been remarkable for having a very small percentage of other nationalities beside the Albanian one, as well as the presence of the Serbian community. Nevertheless, now with the global language that has included Kosovo, English language, as well as through media technology, we have seen quite a change in the city of Gjakova.

Meanwhile, the city of Prizren has always been remarkable for the multinationalism of the Turkish and Bosnian communities.

Therefore, considering these two elements and bilingual changes in preschoolers, I began to make comparisons between the two cities.

Language is used by the society to name the phenomena associated with its activity. It is constantly enriched to follow the changes and new developments. Hence, as the scholar Xh. Lloshi stated that, "a traditional purism has failed." It is known that the term "purism", (lat. "pürus"= pure, clear) should be understood as a cultural, scientific and educational movement

to preserve a language from the influence of other languages, a very current phenomenon throughout world. Such movements have taken place in several developed languages, where there have been attempts that aimed at preserving their language even with "fanaticism". Such efforts have been made in Germany since the XVII century where, for such purposes, there were established outstanding linguistic associations with scholars such as: Opic, Leibniz, etc. Purist movements can also be found in France, Germany and so on, especially against Anglicisms, particularly from the 70s of the twentieth century, with the establishment of legal grounds for the protection of the purity of language. The purity of the language in many cases relies on patriotic and national motives, where native language was rightly seen not only as a mere communication tool, but also as a primary basis for raising national awareness and source of identification.

The linguistic diversity of today's Albanian language in Kosovo should also be seen from the point of view of people's movement around the world, globalization as a liaison between states and peoples, that is to say: languages, foreign language literature, the use of which is being expanded, collaboration with joint projects, new technical, technological and electronic discoveries, etc. There are some of the reasons for the entering of different terms of fields from foreign languages in Albanian language. Another case is the use of two or more languages within a family, especially in Albanian Diaspora families, which is considered another source of interference and language transfer, which are also typical bilingual.

Bilingualism once used to be a treasure, when someone spoke two languages was something rare, and was used to be considered as a value. Today this phenomenon is very common; even it is considered that it "must definitely happen". Not only to be close to the great opportunities, such as in work, or outside of it, in school and society. Therefore, it is very important that in everyone's curriculum to appear as being known one, at least two languages, the native and a foreign one. Being bilingual, in a society that has only one official language, is a challenge that goes even beyond when it comes to knowing two or more foreign languages.

2. Preschoolers

We know that 4-5 year-old preschoolers have the characteristics of age behavior and the challenges of creating their personality. In the linguistic-communicative field development, teachers and parents should work based on several components: development through symbols, spoken language, listened language, written language, knowledge of books and signs, language intonation and learning strategies. According to scholars, the best period of learning one or more languages, in addition to what the child is most often practicing, is between 0 and 10 years old. From 12 to 20 months old, children start reproducing the sounds they hear and link them together to create the first words, even though they do not know the meaning of the words they say.

The scope of our study is defined in a particular linguistic group. The operation used in this analysis is the linguistic comparison, which is called the Contrastive Comparison of two language systems. While the data and the results achieved during the contrast analysis process can be used in research of language theory as well as in the applied¹ linguistics. Language psychologists advise working with educational methods and learning with illustrated books, DVDs, and sound recordings. However, the best solution is to hire a teacher, or send the child to language courses, so that he/she can learn correctly².

Language development is the process by which children can understand and communicate language during early childhood. From birth to age five, children develop language at a very fast pace. Language development phases are universal for all people. However, the age and pace with which a child can learn the language varies among children. Therefore, the language development of a child should be compared with the norms, not with another child.

Language comes to us in two forms: in the listening (receptive) and in the spoken (expressive). These two forms are applied through communication. Communication is a broader notion. Communication / Speech is the formation of oral sound patterns that we use fluently, while we speak;

✓ The receptive language is the one which gets the message, is what we "get" during a conversation.

¹Sénéchal, M. (1997). *The Differential Effect of Storybook Reading on Preschoolers' Acquisition of Expressive and Receptive Vocabulary*. *Journal of Child Language*, 24, 123-138

²MASHT (2011). *Standardet e zhvillimit dhe të mësuarit në fëmijërinë e hershme 0-6 vjet*. http://ëëë.masht.gov.net/advCms/documents/ELDS_report_ALB_for%20ËËB.pdf

✓ Expressive language is the language that conveys thought, is what we "talk".

Traditional cognitive development theories are grouped into four categories¹. Nativist approach postulates that children have an innate cognitive system, which is unfold through interactions with the world. The behaviorist approach is based on the mechanisms of associating and generalizing of stimuli to explain learning by avoiding discussions on mental representations. The third approach refers to the Piaget's constructivism and relies on the idea of complex mental representations learned through the interactions of the child with the world and the cognitive stages characterized by different forms of representations and logical actions. Another constructivist approach is Vygotsky's interactionist theory, according to which cognition is developed through the interaction of the child with the cultural and linguistic system. The more the child's vocabulary expands, the easier it becomes to learn new words. This is mainly due to the paradigm effect. This means that children can understand the pragmatic relationship between words and can quickly learn new words that fill the empty spaces in their paradigm. So as soon as the child has learned the colors: red, green, yellow, blue, black and white, they can begin to learn less common colors such as: purple, oranges or pink. Therefore, in the preschool age, vocabulary and language use are expected to develop faster and more fully, since linguistic bases have already been established. Language skills continue to improve during early childhood. Language is the result of children's ability to use symbols. As their brains develop and they gain the ability for representative thinking, children also learn and improve language skills. (Zgourides, G. (2000)). John Ston evidenced a number of determinants of language development divided into five areas that she accompanied with examples from the two main discoveries for each field:

Social: Infants understand the communicative purpose of the speaker and use this information to guide their language learning; b) the verbal environment affects language learning; *Perceptive*: Perceptual habits of the baby determine the stage of learning; b) perceptiveness is related to the learning of language forms; *Cognitive processes*: Frequency affects the degree of learning; b) collaborations between different language areas can occur when the sentence that "needs" to be expressed requires more mental resources than the child possesses; *Conceptual*: Rational terms relate to mental age; b) language skills are influenced by speech recognition; *Linguistic*: The suffixes of the verbs are helpful for the verb meaning; b) Current vocabulary affects new lessons.

In the process of language development, communication skills and literacy, educators should pay attention to some of the basic elements of speaking:

1. Phonological awareness - the ability to recognize the different voices of speech (rhythm, rhyme, recognition of similarities and differences of voices).
2. Understanding the language - the ability to understand the meaning of spoken and written language.
3. Awareness of printed materials - the ability to understand how printed material is organized and how it is used in writing and reading. Children learn that speech and writing convey thoughts and ideas.
4. Awareness of letters - awareness that there is a relationship between letters and voices.

Parents along with educators can do a lot to encourage and enrich the development of language in young children, leading to the development of language literacy and eloquence. Literacy and linguistic eloquence is an important part of the child's preparation for school, but also of the later period of life during the professional development of the personality.

3. Language Development at Pre-school Age

The assessment of children's language development to date has generally been carried out in clinical cases to identify language deficiencies, backwardness or other disorders such as aphasia. CELF Preschool-2 (Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals)² of the year 2006, by the authors Semel, Ęig and Secord, is one of the clinical tests used to assess language skills in children aged 3-6 years. CELF Preschool-2 produces a thorough assessment of language, perceptive language content, expressive language content, and index scores. Another clinical tool is the Index of Narrative

¹Genther, D., & Loeēenstein, J. (2002). *Relational Language and Relational Thought: The Development and Consequences*. Nē E. Amsel, & J. P. Byrnes, *Language, Literacy, and Cognitive Development of Symbolic Communication* (fv. 81-98). Nēē Jersey: Laērence Erlbaum Associates.

²Semel, E., Ęig, E. H., & Secord, Ę. (2006). *Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals*. San Antonio: Pearson Education

Microstructure (INMIS) ¹ prepared by Justice and her colleagues in 2006, which is used to assess the productivity and linguistic complexity of 5-12 year olds. These will then be used to compare with the results of school tests. Another tool is the Index of Narrative Complexity (INC) ² designed by Petersen and Gillam in 2008, to be used as a monitoring tool for progress as a result of a clinical intervention. Beyond clinical aspects, there is a constant need to monitor children's language development, by educators, teachers or government education programs and campaigns. To assess the narrative skills of children in the natural development trend, Laura Justice and her colleagues in 2009 presented a language pre-school language assessment tool. A tool suitable to be used by educators and other professionals in order to evaluate language speaking skills of preschoolers in a narrative context, e.g. telling a story that is previously evaluated, if the pre-school child has already created the ability to understand, absorb and acquire³.

4. Family Literacy Environment

The home-based family environment for child rearing is of crucial importance. Young children use all their senses, sight, touch, hearing, smell and taste as they interact with the surrounding environment and learn about it. The complexity of the family environment combined with this multi-sensory experience enables the categorization of family environments. Because of this, it is important that the dimensions of family environments have to be measured and used as development indicators in children's studies⁴. One of the most important components of a supportive environment is parental practice of reading aloud to their children from an early age. All reading activities as well as other interactive activities with children such as: telling tales, singing songs, literary games, as well as parents' beliefs and behaviors toward reading and their demographic data, constitute the Family Literacy Environment (FLM). Studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between family literacy environment and children's language skills⁵. One of their most important discoveries was finding that the amount of discussions (conversations) that took place in the family, especially social conversations, had an important link with the major changes in the child's vocabulary growth and his/her achievements. In later studies, Sénéchal explored more deeply by discovering that the rich family literacy environment and the exposure of children to books increases not only their vocabulary but also their phonological knowledge⁶. In this study, children's exposure to books did not necessarily mean that parents gave them instruction on language learning or written words. Therefore, they emphasized that children would learn to know in part the letters and texts in a passive way.

Being a polyglot or a bilingual child means his or her mental ability to speak two or more languages, despite the essential differences between languages in the field of lexicon, syntax, expression, and so on. Thus, despite the multitude of different phenomena, words, syntactic structures, rules, and different morphological traits, children are able to acquire two or rarely more languages and therefore be called poly or bilingual. These languages can be learned at different age periods and in various ways. Then they can be learned separately as well as in parallel. They can be taught at school according to previously verified curricula, in kindergartens, in families, in other areas of life, or in free forms of daily communication. Usually, under normal conditions and normal age and time, these languages can be learned naturally and without any special difficulties and of course they comprise a precious cultural asset of the child. The presence, influence and interaction of many psychosocial factors and cultures of the host country environment as well as the country of origin together with the respective diversity makes the language learning process even more complex.

It is known that if a child up to the age of 7 has not acquire any language for various reasons, then the probability of its perfect acquisition will later be lost forever. So the so-called age-sensitive phase of language acquisition is very important and justified also in terms of the preparation and biological ability of the brain for language learning, or languages and children being natural bilinguals without great sacrifices. So, the brain capacity itself enables this and in terms of receptivity where the language acquisition premise is born. Then, over time, opportunities for language acquisition will be ever smaller

¹Justice, L. M., Boëls, R., Pence, K., & Gosse, C. (2009). A Scalable Tool for Assessing Children's Language Abilities within a Narrative Context: The NAP (Narrative Assessment Protocol). *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 25, 218-234.

²Petersen, D. B., Gillam, S. L., & Gillam, R. B. (2008). *Emerging Procedures in Narrative Assessment: The Index of Narrative Complexity*. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 28, 115-130.

³Dunn, L. M., & Dunn, D. M. (2007). *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Fourth Edition (PPVT-4)*. Pearson.

⁴Itus, S. (2006). *Significance of home environments as proxy indicators for early childhood care and education*. UNESCO

⁵Eeigel, D. J., Martin, S. S., & Bennett, K. K. (2006). Contributions of the Home Literacy Environment to Preschool-Aged Children's Emerging Literacy and Language Skills. *Early Child Development and Care*, 176, 357-378.

⁶Sénéchal, M., LeFevre, J.-A., Thomas, E. M., & Daley, K. E. (1998). Differential Effects of Home Literacy Experiences on the Development of Oral and Written Language. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 33, 96-116.

and the process will be more difficult, although the awareness and personal thirst for more cultures and more languages will increase, even more in the conditions of modern life and the need for dynamic cultural intercommunication in the global dimension and in the context of globalization.

Phonology: Phonology is that aspect of language that deals with rules that govern the structure, distribution and order of speech sounds as well as syllables. Each language uses a variety of sounds or phonemes. A phoneme is a small language unit of sound that can signal a difference in meaning¹. Phonological rules regulate the distribution and ranking of phonemes within one language. This arrangement is not the same as in a speech, which, in fact, is a mechanical action of producing phonemes. If phonological rules were missing, the distribution and ranking of phonemes would be random. The sounds are classified according to the role played by these organs of articulation.²

Morphology: Morphology is the branch of grammar that deals with the study of forms and inner structure of words. Words consist of one or more small units, known as morphemes. In the hierarchy of linguistic, morpheme stands a degree below the degree of the word, as its constituent element.³ A morpheme is the smallest grammatical unit that makes sense and is bound. For example, stone, yes, snow, flowers etc. These are words composed of a morpheme: root word (or root).

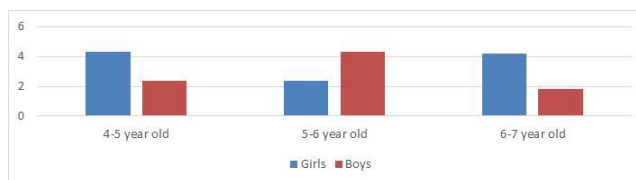
Syntax: The shape or structure of a sentence is governed by syntax rules. These rules specify the words, phrases, and order of simple sentences or parts of sentences. Syntax rules also include word organization and the relationship between words, word classes, and other sentence elements. Syntax specifies which combination of words is acceptable and grammatically correct in the discourse and which is not.⁴ Syntax is the science of discourse and as any science, it seeks to explain and describe. It studies and explains some word combinations of why they are regular and some are not, recognizing syntax as that part of the language that is interested in the possible conjunctions of the words and the legalities that govern these unions. (Dhima, Th. 2012).

5. Research Results

1. Gender of the child- In selecting the target group we have decided to have 25 participants, mainly parents of both genders, aiming to better study the language analysis of children and their development. This target group was surveyed in the region of Gjakova and Prizren, making our research easier, because we faced their behavior directly. Graphically it looks like this:



2. Child age- Based on the importance of the research and especially the case of the analysis, the study is oriented to age groups ranging from 4-5 years old, where more of the surveyed parents had girls, the 5-6 group is dominated by males and 6-7 years is dominated by girls.



3. What language (languages) do you speak with your child? - In the question - What language do you speak to the child? They all responded that the language they speak to children is Albanian, different from the children of Gjakova, while

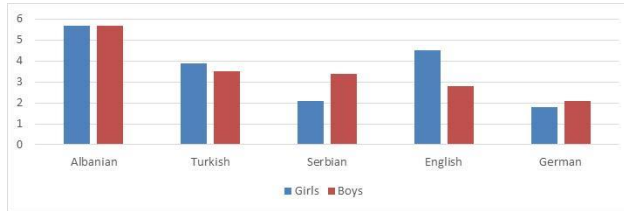
¹Diesendruck, G. (2007). *Mechanisms of Ęord Learning*. Në E. Hoff, & M. Shatz, *Blackēell Handbook of Language Development* (fv. 257-274). Hong-Kong: Blackēell Publishing

²Beci, B. (2010). *Gramatika e Gjuhēs Shqipe*. Tiranē: Botime EDFa.

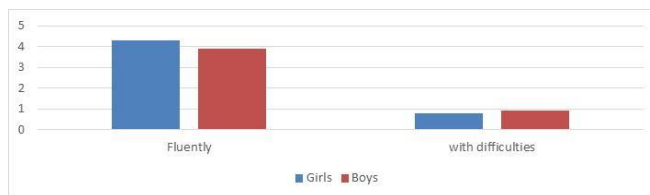
³Memushaj, R. (2012). *Hyrje në Gjuhēsi*. Tiranē: Toena.

⁴Owens, R. E. (2012). *Language Development: An Introduction* (bot. i 8). Neē Jersey: Pearson Education Inc

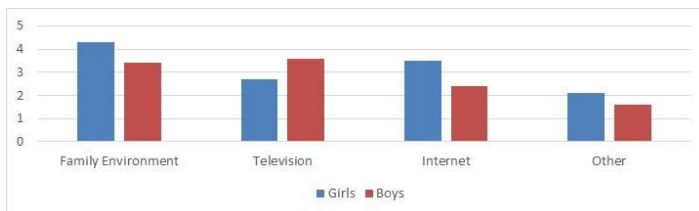
those of Prizren said Albanian as well as a part in Turkish. However, based on the technological developments and numerous games that children play every day using telephones or other technological tools, has influenced in the acquisition of English language. Languages such as: Serbian and German were spoken by children who had contact with relatives who spoke the same language.



4. Is your child fluent in your mother tongue? - To this question, a small number had problems in speaking the standard language.

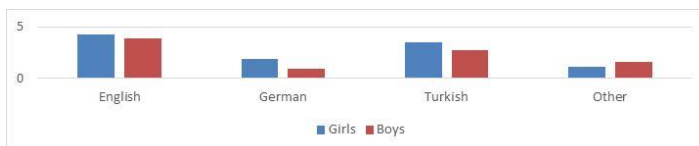


5. Does your child know any other language, if so, where did he/she learn it? - In acquiring foreign languages, an important role has played the ongoing communication with members of family, watching different TV shows, as well as playing computer games and programs.

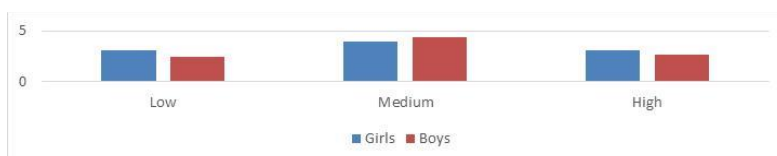


6. How does your child react when he or she listens to foreign language words? - Some participants answered that the children expressed interest in learning that new word, asking about the meaning and what that word symbolizes. Some of the children skip the word and do not express interest in understanding the essence neither concept.

7. Does your child watch cartoons in foreign language, if so, in which language?



8. What are the chances that the child learns to speak fluently a foreign language?



The result of this project proves the importance of the contrastive description of native language and foreign language for pedagogical purposes. Different descriptions represent elemental importance in language learning, because most of the difficulties that occur while learning a second language are actually the result of differences of the first language. Therefore, if we avoid the distinctive features of the first and second language, the remaining ones can be assumed to present the list of student's difficulties. All that we have mentioned so far suggests that contrastive analysis tries to first clarify the student's response to interference sites, as a result of the interference of the first language with the second language. Likewise, children's knowledge of their mother tongue affects second language learning. As a result, we can conclude that when the formal and semantic structures are similar between the mother tongue and the language that is the object of study, learning it is easy, and when it changes, it is understood that learning it is difficult. A child in order to be fluent in two languages, he/she should hear it often and have the opportunity to speak it. You need to read to your child stories in different languages, as an effective and fun way to stimulate language. In some communities, such learning occurs naturally if these languages are spoken as much as possible, and if the child is in contact with different family members or his/her companions who speak one of them, or both. If a parent speaks the same language and the other, a linguistic minority, it is important to create opportunities where the child is exposed to the minority language. Some factors influence the learning of the two languages and the choice of the language spoken by the child: age, time of exposure to languages, status of these languages instead of approving etc. However, regardless of the context and environment the child evolves, it is important for parents to demonstrate a sense of pride and a positive attitude toward using these languages. A parent must also remember that bilingual children remain children, above all, with their personality, needs and preferences, and can choose one language over another despite the will expressed by their relatives.

Therefore, it seems that the difficulty and facilitation of the first language is dependent on the relationship with the mother tongue, which plays an important role in this aspect. Of all that was mentioned, it is clearly seen the difficulty that presents the changing of language structure of the language that is to be learned.

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