



The Effect of Bilingualism on Language Development: An Evidence from Kalhori Kurdish And Persian Bilingual Children

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Received: 16/10/2021

Accepted: 29/05/2022

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue with bilingualism is the level of fluency and fluency of bilingual speakers in the non-dominant language. The present study aimed to investigate the effect of bilingualism on the language development of Kurdish (Kalhori dialect) and Persian bilingual students in the first to third grades of elementary school. Given the importance of language development and the phenomenon of bilingualism, research on the factors affecting language development, especially in bilingual children, can help us understand the nature of language, how it is learned, the learning process and its function. On the other hand, due to the multilingual nature of Iran and the fact that most people in different cities speak two or more languages, the importance of the research topic is doubled. In this regard, in the city of Kermanshah, most people are able to speak both Kalhori Kurdish and Persian. Some children in this area learn both Kurdish and Persian at an early age, and others learn Persian from the educational environment after entering school. Therefore, the aim of the present study was to investigate the effect of bilingualism on the language development of Kurdish and Persian language students in the first to third grades of elementary school. Few studies have been conducted on the effect of bilingualism on language development, each of which shows different perspectives. Researchers have reached conflicting conclusions about the effect of bilingualism on children's cognitive development and academic achievement. Some studies suggest that learning a second or more languages at the same time may be accompanied by a delay in one language for some time. However, other research has shown that these results are temporary and that bilinguals eventually learn both languages.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is cross-sectional in terms of time and quantitative, which has

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been done by comparative method. To this end, 120 first, second and third grade male and female elementary school students in Kermanshah were selected. Subjects consisted of 40 male and female elementary students in each grade (two groups of 20 monolinguals and of 20 bilinguals). Sampling method was performed by available sampling. To evaluate the language development of the subjects, TOLD test and continuous speech test were used.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical analysis of the data showed that the performance of first grade bilingual students was delayed in all TOLD subtests and continuous speech test ($P < 0.05$); However, in the second grade, no significant difference was found between the performance of bilingual and monolingual students. In the third grade, statistical analysis showed that the performance difference between monolingual and bilingual students in the subtests of grammar comprehension, grammar completion, word differentiation, phonological analysis and mean length of utterance was not significant ($P > 0.05$); Nevertheless, Compared to monolinguals, bilingual students had better performance in the subtests of visual vocabulary, related words, verbal words, sentence imitation, word production and lexical richness, and their performance difference was significant ($P < 0.05$).

4. CONCLUSION

The results also showed that bilingualism has a positive effect on children's language development. However, it seems that several factors such as degree of language proficiency of bilinguals in both languages (bilingual type), degree of exposure and the use of the two languages in different situations, linguistic types, education, and factors like these, can involve in the effect of bilingualism on language development. Statistical analyses showed that in the first grade, monolingual students performed better than bilingual students in language development and their functional differences were significant. As we mentioned in this article, the main question of this article can be answered as follows: In the present study, the poorer performance of first grade bilingual students in language development tests than monolingual students, the reason for factors such as the degree of linguistic proficiency of bilinguals in both languages, the degree of exposure and use of two languages in different environments. The justification for this argument can be found in the results of second grade bilingual students and especially third grade students compared to the results of their monolingual counterparts in language and multilingual development tests. Because it seems that with the arrival of bilingual students into the educational environment, they are more exposed to the Persian language and also the educational language used in schools, which is the Persian language, on their mastery of the Persian language. Has been added. As a result, over time, the positive effect of bilingualism gradually appears in the second and third grades, and the performance of Kurdish and Persian-speaking bilinguals in language development tests has reached the level of their monolingual counterparts, and even They have gone beyond in the third grade.

Keywords: language development, bilingualism, continuous speech test, TOLD Test