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Attitudes Toward Bilingualism

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ABSTRACT

Questa tesi ha l'obiettivo di analizzare il bilinguismo dal punto di vista teorico, storico, linguistico e geografico. Il bilinguismo è un termine trattato in molti campi di studio tra cui quello linguistico, psicologico e pedagogico. Essendo un argomento così multidimensionale, il bilinguismo è un concetto dalla difficile definizione. Esso, infatti, non presenta una definizione univoca, ma piuttosto viene considerato diversamente dipendentemente dal campo di studi in cui viene trattato. Tra le numerose definizioni di bilinguismo, ad esempio, vi sono studiosi che sostengono che una persona sia bilingue solo ed esclusivamente se i genitori parlano due lingue diverse. Se si considerano altre opinioni invece, si può essere considerati bilingui anche nel caso in cui l'apprendimento delle lingue straniere -anche tardivo- sia avvenuto tramite il sistema educativo pubblico o privato. Altri linguisti affermano invece che esistono diversi livelli di bilinguismo: il bilingue "vero", il quale è in grado di padroneggiare entrambe le lingue in egual misura -estremamente raro-, e il bilingue più comune, che presenta una discrepanza nel dominio delle due o più lingue, ciò può tradursi in minore capacità di scrittura in una lingua, come maggior difficoltà ad esprimersi in un'altra. Nel corso del tempo quindi, il bilinguismo è stato definito in maniera diversa e l'opinione generale delle persone è cambiata drasticamente. In passato, infatti, la convinzione generale era che l'essere bilingui avesse un impatto deleterio nello sviluppo intellettuale e spirituale dello studente. Si credeva che un bilingue non fosse in grado di sviluppare una personalità completa pari ad un monolingue. Alcuni studi del tempo, successivamente smentiti, provarono che le persone monolingui erano intellettualmente superiori. I bambini bilingui, infatti, tendevano ad iniziare a parlare più tardi, mischiare le lingue che conoscevano e avere un vocabolario più limitato. Con l'avvento della globalizzazione però, l'opinione pubblica iniziò a cambiare in positivo, e i bilingui -in particolare quelli che padroneggiavano lingue considerate prestigiose- cominciarono ad essere ammirati e considerati più intelligenti dei monolingui. Questo cambiamento di opinione nei confronti del bilinguismo è stato poi trasmesso sia nella sfera familiare che in quella sociale. La considerazione che si ha nei confronti di una lingua infatti, non è innata, ma è acquisita e influenzata da agenti esterni. Se si considera l'individuo, ad esempio, è importante tenere in considerazione che la famiglia stessa, e la loro opinione e considerazione della lingua, avrà un impatto significativo nell'apprendimento dello studente. Inoltre, se l'allievo non si sente sotto pressione e considera l'apprendimento della lingua come un gioco o attività piacevole sarà molto più probabile che ottenga buoni risultati nel suo

percorso di acquisizione. Lo studente, in aggiunta, potrebbe avere un interesse personale o puntare ad una ricompensa o premio; basti pensare a come la convinzione di poter ottenere un lavoro migliore essendo bilingui, spinga numerose persone ad apprendere più lingue. Grazie alla realizzazione di numerosi studi, infatti, è stato scoperto che la considerazione che un soggetto ha nei confronti del bilinguismo contribuisce in maniera significativa all'apprendimento stesso delle lingue, è quindi estremamente importante che uno studente abbia una considerazione positiva della lingua per poterla apprendere al meglio delle sue capacità. Se si prende in considerazione l'opinione pubblica e sociale invece, si può affermare che la "normalità" oggigiorno è il bilinguismo, ciò è uno dei numerosi risultati della globalizzazione. Questa nuova realtà viene tradotta a livello sociale dai vari governi del mondo con l'ufficializzazione di più lingue. Il primo capitolo di questa tesi, dunque, si focalizza sulle varie definizioni di bilinguismo e sul cambiamento di opinione delle persone nei confronti del bilinguismo nel corso del tempo. Il secondo capitolo invece, si concentra sul ruolo della lingua inglese e di come, in particolare, sia arrivata ad essere considerata da molti la lingua franca attuale. Ne segue le definizioni di lingua franca e lingua globale e delle motivazioni che hanno portato l'inglese ad essere la lingua più studiata e ambita al giorno d'oggi. A seguire vi è una breve presentazione delle teorie e modelli che hanno l'obiettivo di spiegare lo status attuale della lingua inglese. Vengono inoltre elencati i lati positivi derivati da una lingua franca, tra cui il poter comunicare facilmente con persone provenienti da diversi paesi e culture e lo sviluppo e diffusione di organizzazioni internazionali che, grazie all'esistenza della lingua franca non devono investire in traduttori e interpreti. Successivamente sono presentate alcune delle problematiche derivate dalla propagazione della lingua franca come la potenziale creazione di gruppi elitistici e discriminazioni, la sparizione di lingue minoritarie e il dominio linguistico delle potenze mondiali. Il paragrafo successivo tratta l'importanza dell'inglese nel mondo dell'educazione, in particolare nel campo scientifico e informatico. Il capitolo include inoltre una presentazione delle tre politiche linguistiche principali adottate globalmente nel corso degli anni. Il primo programma educativo è quello monolingue. Questo tipo di programma era particolarmente diffuso negli anni '20 e tendeva a sostituire la lingua minoritaria con quella ufficiale. Il secondo programma è il programma bilingue debole. Tendenzialmente, questo tipo di programma era adottato da paesi che non avevano sufficienti risorse o che non investivano abbastanza in programmi bilingue. Il terzo programma porta a forte bilinguismo ed è basato sulla dedizione dei genitori degli studenti e sul coinvolgimento della società nella sua interezza. A conclusione del capitolo viene fornita una spiegazione generale delle politiche linguistiche nel corso del tempo dal punto di vista storico, e di quanto

dipendessero dal contesto geografico, storico e culturale del momento. Rimanendo in una prospettiva storica, il terzo capitolo descrive l'approccio al bilinguismo di ogni continente. Essendo gli Stati Uniti uno dei paesi che per eccellenza ha accolto un grande numero di immigrati, è uno dei paesi che più si è trovato a dover gestire una popolazione multilingue. Il paragrafo si focalizza nei principali eventi storici avvenuti, nei movimenti civili e nei processi giudiziari. Il secondo paese trattato è il Canada, con la fama di essere una società bilingue a tutti gli effetti. Sarà data una breve spiegazione storica e sarà presentato quello che viene chiamato "l'esperimento bilingue canadese". A seguire sono presentati altri paesi del continente americano, africano, asiatico, oceaniano, antartico e infine quello Europeo. L'elaborato si concentra particolarmente in quest'ultimo continente perché l'Europa è caratterizzata da un passato di multilinguismo da molti anni. L'Unione Europea stessa, inoltre, ha incorporato tra i suoi principi cardine il multilinguismo e ha adottato numerosi programmi educativi e internazionali con l'obiettivo di svilupparlo ulteriormente. Il capitolo, dunque, prosegue con la presentazione delle varie leggi a favore del plurilinguismo ed espone i programmi principali offerti quali Erasmus+ Programme o il Creative Europe Programme. Buona parte del capitolo, inoltre, viene dedicato alle politiche educative adottate dalle scuole pubbliche europee: CLIL, Immersion Programs, EMI and CBI. L'ultimo capitolo consiste nella presentazione e analisi dettagliata di cinque interviste semi-strutturate a dei soggetti bilingui. Lo studio condotto è un'indagine che ha come obiettivo l'analisi delle opinioni e considerazioni degli intervistati nei confronti del loro bilinguismo o multilinguismo. Le domande e risposte sono state raggruppate nelle seguenti sezioni: la prima sezione include le informazioni generali dei partecipanti -età, lingue in cui si considerano o meno bilingue, relazione che hanno con l'autrice della tesi, lingua in cui è stata condotta l'intervista-. La sezione successiva presenta domande riguardanti il contesto familiare -genitori immigrati della stessa nazionalità, genitori di due nazionalità diverse, fratelli etc.-. Successivamente sono state poste domande riguardo alla loro educazione -scuola pubblica, scuola bilingue, corsi privati di lingua etc.-. Ne segue poi, una sezione sulla considerazione personale che hanno delle lingue che parlano, e la loro definizione di bilinguismo. A seguire sono esposte le risposte a domande riguardo alla società in cui hanno vissuto e alle persone con le quali si sono relazionati nel corso della loro vita. Le ultime due sezioni, infine, riguardano la loro situazione attuale -accademica, lavorativa, familiare etc.- e le loro intenzioni future -continuare a studiare lingue, migliorarsi e trasmettere il proprio bilinguismo ai loro futuri figli-. In ultimo luogo vi è una sezione in cui vengono confrontate le varie risposte con l'obiettivo di analizzare le similitudini o differenze riscontrate tra i partecipanti. Tra i punti in comune analizzati vi è una particolare inclinazione di tutti i

partecipanti all'apprendimento delle lingue straniere. Gli intervistati, infatti, sostengono di essere particolarmente portati per le lingue straniere perché, a differenza dei monolingui, pensano di avere una miglior memoria, una maggiore adattabilità all'ambiente esterno, un orecchio più sviluppato, la capacità di integrarsi in nuove culture e società e una maggior dinamicità e velocità di pensiero. Tutti gli intervistati, inoltre, considerano l'essere bilingue un grande vantaggio, dal punto di vista non solo educativo ma anche sociale. Un altro punto in comune è come tutti partecipanti abbiano tentato di migliorarsi attivamente nelle lingue in cui più si sentono insicuri. Ciò può essere avvenuto tramite l'iscrizione a corsi privati di lingua o tramite particolare impegno a parlare la lingua in questione con familiari o amici con l'unico scopo di migliorarla. In aggiunta, a dimostrazione del fatto che l'opinione nei riguardi delle lingue non è immutabile, al contrario, cambia nel tempo, alcuni intervistati affermano che nel corso degli anni, grazie alla crescita personale e maturità che ne segue, sono riusciti ad ottenere sicurezza in sé stessi e considerare in maniera ottimale la lingua che in passato consideravano negativamente. Un altro fattore da menzionare è come tutti gli intervistati abbiano notato una discrepanza con i loro fratelli riguardo al loro livello di competenza linguistica, nonostante abbiano avuto simili esperienze a livello familiare. Dalle risposte date inoltre, è emerso un altro fattore interessante: sembra esserci una correlazione tra il prestigio di una lingua e la considerazione e opinione delle persone che la parlano. Un bilingue che parla una lingua che viene considerata prestigiosa dalla società in cui vive, infatti, tende ad avere un'opinione positiva nei confronti della lingua e sarà conseguentemente più motivato al suo apprendimento. Un'altra stimolante correlazione è quella tra necessità e considerazione di una lingua: se una lingua è considerata necessaria, allora l'individuo tende a sentirsi particolarmente motivato all'apprenderla e ci sono maggiori possibilità che abbia un'opinione positiva nei suoi confronti. È interessante, inoltre, come in base alle varie risposte, sia evidente la difficoltà nel definire il bilinguismo. Tutti i partecipanti hanno concordato nel definire una persona bilingue come "un individuo che domina più lingue in tutti i campi di competenza". Ma ci sono state discrepanze riguardo al livello di competenza necessaria -se sia necessario essere equamente abile in tutte le competenze che fanno parte di una lingua o se ci possano essere delle discrepanze-, l'età di apprendimento -se si possa diventare bilingui anche in età adulta o esclusivamente da bambini- e il metodo di apprendimento -se si possa diventare bilingui tramite l'educazione o se sia possibile diventarlo solamente grazie al contesto familiare-. Nonostante lo studio condotto abbia preso in esame le risposte di solo cinque partecipanti, ha potuto portare allo sviluppo di alcune conclusioni e supposizioni generali. In ogni caso sarebbe necessario ripetere lo studio

con un maggior numero di partecipanti in modo da poter eseguire un'analisi più completa e precisa.

INTRODUCTION

"To have another language is to possess a second soul."

-Charlemagne

This dissertation aims to analyse attitudes toward bilingualism. Particular attention is paid to the development and change of people's opinions both from the historical and geographical point of view. The last chapter is devoted to the presentation of an original study that has the objective of investigating the interviewees' attitudes toward bilingualism.

I decided to write a thesis about bilingualism because it is a concept that has always fascinated me. I grew up in a strictly monolingual family that was passionate about travelling. From a young age then, I had the chance to go abroad and come into contact with different cultures and languages. As my parents could not speak any foreign language, I soon understood the importance of multilingualism and, in general, communication. My experiences abroad strongly influenced my decision to attend private classes of English during my teenage years and then choose a linguistic path at university. In addition, I have always been quite jealous of bilingual people because in my eyes they are extremely lucky as they did not have to undergo the long process of learning a foreign language.

Despite knowing that I wanted to focus my dissertation on bilingualism, I was not sure from which point of view to study and analyze it. I decided to restrict my very general and broad ideas about the thesis and focus on attitudes toward bilingualism. Finding general information about bilingualism was not complicated, this is because much research has already been carried out about the topic. What I found difficult was finding specific and detailed information that helped me prove a point or specify a concept. Moreover, initially I had a hard time thinking how to conduct the original research for the fourth chapter. At the beginning, I was oriented toward a digital survey in which I would have asked the same series of questions to a large number of bilingual people. However, with the help of my supervisor, I decided to carry out a series of interviews in which quality was more important than quantity. Despite my initial worry, acting as a journalist and interviewing people was the task I enjoyed the most during the writing of this dissertation.

The goal of this thesis is to offer a thorough presentation of attitudes toward bilingualism, starting from a theoretical explanation and continuing by focusing on its changes over the decades and its development over the world. I attempted to gather information about bilingualism as much as possible, with the aim of presenting a general picture of the topic before concluding with the presentation of an original research.

The field research is described in the fourth chapter and consists in a series of interviews to bilingual people. The participants are both male and female and can all be considered young adults, their age in fact, range from 22 to 38 years old. I attempted to choose people with different backgrounds, from different countries and who spoke different languages at different levels of proficiency. The interviews were semi-structured as I had prepared a list of questions to follow as a general guideline, but I changed or added other questions during the process of interviewing depending on the answers of the respondents. The questions I prepared revolve around the following topics: family background, education, definition of bilingualism, attitudes, society, current situation and future plans. The interviews were conducted online due to the current pandemic and to allow international participation. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and I was able to obtain many interesting and extremely helpful responses. Each answer was very personal, and reflected the background and experiences of the interviewee. I was then able to confront all the data gathered and analyze it focusing on its similarities and differences.

Regarding the structure of the thesis, it is divided into four chapters. Chapter one focuses on the relation between attitudes and bilingualism. The definition of bilingualism, or rather lack of, is provided. Many opinions from different scholars are presented and compared. It follows the definition of attitudes and then its connection with bilingualism. The chapter also aims at presenting a general insight of the various variables influencing attitudes. A paragraph analyzes the change in attitudes toward bilingualism from an historical point of view. There follows an explanation on the levels of attitudes and on language status.

The second chapter revolves around English predominance and language policy choices. It is divided into two main parts. The first one starts with an illustration of the current English role as a Lingua Franca, its potential dangers, and its deployment in the educational system. The second section presents the main linguistic educational policies around the world and their history.

The third chapter looks at bilingualism from a geographical point of view. It aims at presenting bilingual policies around the world with a focus on the main countries in each continent: America, Africa, Asia, Oceania, Antarctica and Europe. The chapter particularly concentrates on the latter due to the fact that Europe is characterized by a considerable history of multilingualism and by a series of governmental policies that include multilingualism among the principles of the European Union itself.

The fourth chapter sets out the language interviews that were conducted and it is divided in six sections. The first five are about the interviews, whereas the sixth one concerns the analysis of their answers. It attempts to find differences, common grounds, correlations and variables, it aims at investigating the participants' attitudes toward bilingualism.

This thesis made it possible to analyze several significant aspects of attitudes toward bilingualism. In the conclusions at the end of the dissertation some hypothesis and suppositions are made on the basis of the theoretical research conducted for the writing of the thesis and on the basis of the answers obtained during the interviews.

CHAPTER 1
THE RELATION BETWEEN ATTITUDES AND BILINGUALISM

Bilingualism, as it will be examined in this thesis, is an extremely multifaceted and complex topic. This is why it is fundamental to first introduce its definition and present the shared or contrasting opinions of some scholars on the matter. Furthermore, attitudes are a quite multidisciplinary subject, and present as much complexity as bilingualism does. Putting these two concepts together, therefore, is not an easy task, but certainly, it is very interesting. Firstly a definition of both attitudes and bilingualism will be given. Then the focus will be on the relationship between these two concepts. An explanation on the importance of attitudes in the process of acquiring a language will follow, with the comparison of past and current attitudes, too. The following paragraph will tackle bilinguals and the various factors that affect the conservation or deterioration of multiple languages. Attitudes will be then analyzed focusing on both the personal and societal sphere. Finally, the last paragraph of the chapter will be devoted to the explanation of language status.

1.1 DEFINING ATTITUDES AND BILINGUALISM

Nowadays the notion of bilingualism and attitudes have been extensively studied. Despite the significant amount of research that can be found, the definitions are not clear and definitive. The concept of attitudes for instance, is extremely complex to define, and one of the reasons behind this difficulty is the existence of several related terms that can easily lead to confusion and ambiguity. For example, words like opinion, motive, trait, belief and ideology are all linked to attitudes, but some differentiation can be pointed out (e.g. see Shaw & Wright, 1967). For example, contrary to opinions, attitudes could be latent: they could be both communicated through verbal and non-verbal processes and they also contain an affective component.

Bilingualism, as has already been stated, is very hard to define, too. It cannot, in fact, limit itself to a linguistic definition because the discipline of linguistics focuses mainly on languages and its development and changes over time. Bilingualism cannot be defined by a psychological definition either as it would merely consider it as an influence on mental processes. The science of sociology has analyzed it from another point of view as well: it regarded it as a factor of culture conflict. Pedagogy, on its part, has concentrated on media instruction and school organization. All these disciplines taken singularly cannot properly describe a unique concept

such as bilingualism, they can however, widen the literature on bilingualism with analysis conducted from different points of view.

The best way to define bilingualism, however, seems to be the interrelationships between all these disciplines, and to analyze it as an individual phenomenon rather than a group one (Wei, 2000). As bilingualism is multidimensional and very difficult to define, many authors have contrasting opinions in its regard. Baker and Prys Jones (1998:2) tried to formulate a series of questions with the aim to shed some light on such volatile definition. They wondered what the level of fluency in the two languages should be, and if someone could be considered bilingual only if they were equally proficient in both, without discrepancies. They asked themselves if, in addition to language proficiency, also the criterion of how the two languages are used should be considered. Bilingualism is therefore not black and white, on the contrary, it is characterized by countless nuances and "in between". For instance, one needs only to think of all the people that can understand a language but not speak it, or that can speak it but not write it or vice-versa for both cases. The authors, therefore, wondered whether these cases were to consider as bilingualism or not. They also took into consideration whether self-perception should play a part in determining who is bilingual. And finally, they also examined the concept of time and how the degrees of bilingualism can change as time goes on.

As stated by De Mejía (2002), bilingualism cannot be examined as an isolated element, but rather as a consequence of globalization. The world is becoming more and more interconnected, and its inhabitants increasingly international. As was put forward by Li Wei (2000), bilingualism arises when different monolingual communities get into contact, hence, the more globalized the world becomes, the more bilingual people there will be.

With the spread of globalization, communication amongst people has shifted significantly, its changes going hand in hand with the development of technology. It has been calculated that approximately one-third of Europeans under 35 years old is of immigrant origins (Gogolin, 2002) and that more generally, one third of the world's population make use of multiple languages on a daily basis, whether in the family, for leisure or in a professional context. This is not considering the amount of people who studied a foreign language at school and rarely make use of it; in that case monolinguals would undoubtably be the minority (Wei, 2000).

In particular, the assumption that bilinguals prevail over monolinguals is particularly accurate when the definition of bilingual not only does include the "perfect" bilingual (almost nonexistent) or the "balanced" (extremely rare) one, but also many other "imperfect" or "unstable" versions (Dewaele, Housen & Wei, 2003). According to some research, it has been estimated that over 50% of the earth's population is bilingual (Kostoulas-Makrakis, Karantzola & Athanassiadis, 2006). This is the logical consequence of the fact that the languages spoken in the world are around 6,000, but they are only spoken in fewer than 200 countries. This is the reason why the interconnection and overlap of languages is not uncommon. (Wei, 2000). Furthermore, many authors agree on the fact that there are some external factors that influence languages coming into contact namely politics, natural disaster, religion, culture, economy, education and technology (Crystal, 1987; Baker and Prys Jones, 1998).

1.2 DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS OF BILINGUALISM

This lack of a clear-cut definition led each author to formulate their own opinion on the topic. Traditionally, bilingualism has been described as "the equal mastery of two languages" (Wei, 2000). In 1933 Bloomfield (1933:56) wrote that a bilingual person was someone who was able to have a native-like mastery of two languages. Fabbro (2004) agrees with this definition and believes that the "perfect" bilingual is the one who learnt both languages very early in life and has a native accent in both languages and correct grammatical knowledge. Haugen (1953:7) extended Bloomfield's definition and stated that bilinguals are those who can express themselves in a complete and meaningful way in both languages. Diebold (1961:11) also suggested that bilingualism could also refer to the "passive-knowledge" of someone who can read the language or have any "contact with possible models in a second language and the ability to use these in the environment of the native language". In addition, McNamara (1967) stated that a person, in order to be called bilingual, only needs to have minimum expertise in one of the following skills: reading, writing, listening or speaking. In Mosley's (1969:9) opinion, bilinguals are all the people that speak, "however inarticulately, two languages" because of family or environment background. And finally, according to Hamers and Blanc (2000:7), a bilingual person can speak the secondary language without paraphrasing from its mother tongue.

As far as these two above-mentioned authors are concerned, there are six dimensions that must be taken into consideration when defining bilingualism: age of acquisition, cognitive

organization, exogeneity, relative competence, cultural identity and sociocultural status (Ibid.). In Kostoulas-Makrakis' (1995) opinion, bilingualism can be defined in several different ways as well, depending on the proficiency and function of the speaker going from being truly bilingual -that is being able to use two or more languages at the same native level of proficiency- to a discrepancy in fluency between the two. Köktürk, Odacıoğlu & Uysal (2016:5) paraphrased Dittmann's (2002:92) words which stated that children are bilingual when they have been raised in a family where two languages are spoken. They also translated from German Küpelikilinc & Ringler's (2007:29) word for "biliteracy", a word that combines three levels that, in their opinion, describes when a child is bilingual. The first level states that the children's competence in the two languages must be the same and that they can apply the code-switching naturally and without difficulty according to each situation. Secondly, bilingual children can build correct sentences with a native pronunciation using adequate words. In addition, they are able to understand which language is more appropriate in each situation. Thirdly, at the lingual-cognitive level, they can understand the meaning of language.

Native equal proficiency is extremely rare: generally, one of the two languages prevails. Usually, the strong one is the environment language, which is the language that is spoken in the country where the child lives in. The reason for this is that the more children are exposed to a language, the better their proficiency will be. In any case, the imbalance between the strong and the weak language can shift and reverse (Köktürk, Odacıoğlu & Uysal, 2016). Over the years, researchers realized how blurry the line was between being fluent in the second language and being bilingual. As a consequence to this, the definition of bilingualism kept being modified and broadened.

For many authors, for instance, the meaning of "bilingual" began to go beyond the strict "bi-" which in Latin means two, and started to incorporate in the definition trilingual and multilingual people (Wei, 2000:22). As Mackey in *The description of bilingualism* (Ibid:23) stated, bilingualism is a relative concept, impossible to determine. This means that bilingualism is a behavioral pattern which depends on some mutually modifying factors. The first factor is the degree of proficiency that the individual has in the languages he uses; the second factor is its function, that is how the speaker uses the languages and the conditions in which they are used. Functions can be of two types: external and internal. The external ones are characterized by the areas of contact, that is all the ways through which languages are used and learnt, and how they vary in duration, pressure and frequency. Contacts can be the language-usage of the home: for

instance, the tutors and domestics that speak to the children in a different language from the one that is spoken by the family, and therefore, promote bilingualism. In addition, bilingualism could be encouraged when a member of the family speaks another language: the rest of the family could understand it but never use it or be completely proficient in both languages equally.

In order to attempt to define bilingualism as much as possible, researchers forged many subcategories of bilingualism, one for each variety such as late bilingual, balanced bilingual, receptive bilingual and so on so forth (Wei, 2000). Traditionally, bilingualism can be divided in three main types. The first one is compound bilingual, who is an individual who learns two languages in a single context at the same time. The second type is coordinate bilingual who is someone who acquires the two languages in two different contexts. Finally, the last type is the sub-coordinate bilingual who is a person who learns the second language through the use of their mother tongue (D'Acierno, 1990 ; Sugunasiri, 1971; Weinreich, 1953).

1.3 THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTITUDES

One of the most accepted definitions of attitudes is the one formulated by Ajzen (1988:3). According to him an attitude is "a disposition to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event". Oppenheim (1982) also adds that attitudes are a psychological construct. As Garrett (2010) states, despite being an extremely abstract concept, attitudes can and are worth studying, but, as they lack a specific and final definition, much debate and arguments surround the topic.

Attitudes can serve a double function as they can be regarded both as an output and an input (Ibid.). For instance, having a positive attitude toward a certain language can foster the learning process, therefore influencing the educational outcomes. At the same time, attitudes can be the final result itself. On the contrary, a negative attitude can lead to the decay or even death of a language (Baker, 1992).

According to a classical view, attitudes are made of three elements: the cognitive, affective and readiness for action components (Baker, 1992). The former is about beliefs and thoughts: if a language is believed to be important, then people will likely show a positive attitude toward it. The second component, the affective one, is related to emotions, specifically, emotions that

revolve around a certain language. These two components do not always go hand in hand, in particular, what is expressed outwardly may not match the true feeling toward the language. The last component of attitudes is readiness for action, which means the will of an individual to act purposefully to improve a certain language. The image below (figure 2) shows this particular definition of attitude, shared by authors such as Ajzen (1988), Rosenberg & Hovland (1960) and Ajzen & Fishbein (1980).
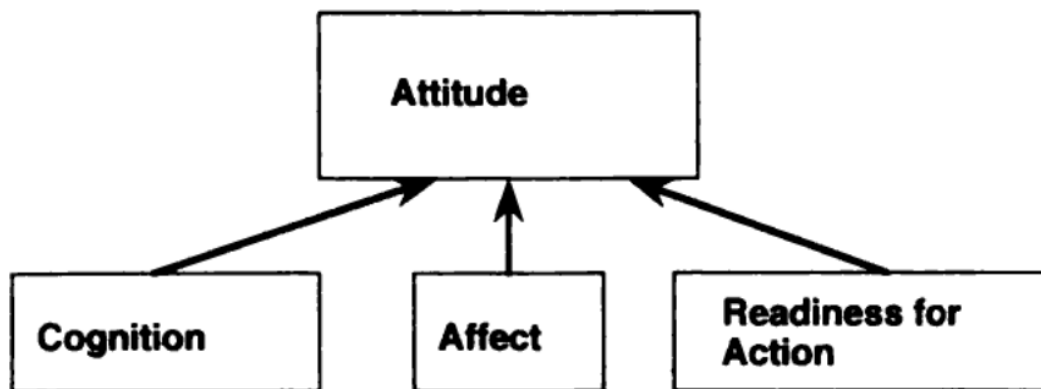
Figure 2

'In the end, language attitude is always one of the major factors in accounting for which languages are learned, which are used, and which are preferred by bilinguals'.
(Grosjean, 1982: 127).

If, for instance, a social group has a negative opinion toward a language that is being enforced nationally, the chances of a successful implementation are very small. It must always be kept in mind however, that attitudes are everchanging and that the inhabitants could become more favorable toward that language in any moment. According to E.G. Lewis (1981:262) any language program implementation must take into consideration the attitudes of all the people that will be influenced by it. As far as he is concerned, a language policy will only be successful if it blends well with the general attitudes of the people affected. Therefore, the goal of the decision-makers must be to convince those who do not have a positive attitude to change their mind or to bargain with them with the aim of reaching an agreement.

Marsh (1982) states that survey data is extremely useful to analyze the relationship between attitudes and its causes and effects. Studying attitudes can help widen the knowledge we have about human functioning. Numerous scholars (Darwin, 1872; Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918;

Thurstone & Chave, 1929) affirm that attitude is an extremely significant variable in the most disparate fields such as race, religion, sport and so on so forth. An attitude is a theoretical man-made construct used to illustrate a certain persistent behavior or pattern, that can allow researchers to make assumptions about how someone will behave in a certain context over time. In the 1960s however, some authors (Wicker, 1969; McGuire, 1969) started to question this statement, affirming that often, when looking at very similar events, the people involved showed little to no consistency between their behavior. At the same time, aggregation across occasions can be seen as an indicator of how likely the adoption of a certain behavior is, within a range of generality.

1.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTITUDES AND BILINGUALISM

As was explained, the term "attitudes" is as difficult as "bilingualism" to define. This is because they are both very multidisciplinary and authors show very contrasting opinions in their regards, based on different viewpoints and specificities of it.

Most of the time, when considering attitudes from a linguistic point of view, they are simply defined as all types of behaviors toward a specific language (Fasold, 1984). Some authors believe that attitudes toward bilingualism are different from aptitudes toward a certain language (Baker, 1992). According to authors such as Gardner (1985) and Gardner, Masgoret & Tremblay (1999) language attitudes are the reflection of the psycho-social attitudes of the language in question, which include the sentimental, social and cultural values of the individual.

The relation between attitudes and bilingualism specifically, was first tackled by Baker (1988), who suggested that there was a strong connection between bilingualism and the cognitive functioning; on the contrary, little research had been carried out regarding the relevance of attitudes toward bilingualism as a societal or individual phenomenon. This can be attributable to the fact that for many years this relation had been taken for granted. In particular, not much research has been conducted on the relationship between attitudes in general and attitudes toward languages specifically. In addition, the few data there is, does not take into consideration the evolutive aspect of attitudes, which means that it lacks most of the insight to be learned. Attitudes in fact, are very prone to changes. Furthermore, these studies were

oversimplified and suffered from technical deficiencies: attitudes measurements did not consider reliability and multidimensionality (Baker, 1992).

More recent studies based on testing of models enable researchers to define the indirect and direct effects of attitudes on bilingualism. Another deficiency noticed when analyzing past research on attitudes toward bilingualism was the focus. Much research, in fact, was solely concentrated on attitudes to individual languages. Lastly, a further deficiency revealed was how important attitudes were to explain language proficiency. As stated by Gardner & Lambert (1972) in their socio-educational model, attitudes are among the factors that influence both the linguistic performance and the non-linguistic results (Figure 1, Baker,1992:4).
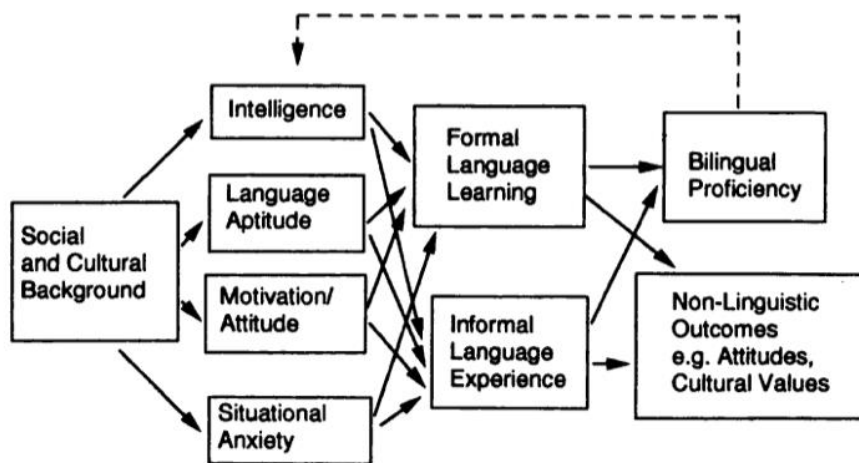
Figure 1

In order to measure attitudes toward bilingualism, the focus of examination must shift to the interaction and integration between the two languages rather than their separated analysis (Grosjean, 1985; 1989). There are many different attitudes regarding bilingualism, some are positive, others are not. For instance, the deficiency model of bilingualism is a subtractive and negative viewpoint of bilingualism itself and implies that if one of the two languages improves, the other necessarily declines, as if bilingualism was characterized by a balance. The second one, on the contrary, shows a positive attitude toward bilingualism as it states that two languages can harmoniously co-exist and mutually bring benefit to each other (Baker, 1992).

1.5 ATTITUDES TO BILINGUALISM: PAST AND PRESENT

Western ideology is traditionally rooted in the concept of linguistic unity, stemming from the idea of "one nation and one language ideology" (Thomas & Wareing, 1999; Luchtenberg,

2002). This is the conviction that in order to achieve national unity and social harmony, only one single language can be spoken. This ideology, therefore, does not support multilingualism, despite its increasing popularity (Thomas & Wareing, 1999; Luchtenberg, 2002).

This past in favor of monolingualism is the clear reflection of the beliefs that most people had on bilingualism at the time. Until about the 1960s bilingualism was believed to have a deleterious impact on the spiritual and intellectual development. Scholars of the time, in fact, thought that being able to speak two languages would lead children to grow only half of the personality they might potentially have developed if monolinguals (Laurie, 1890:15). In addition, some research, conceived with the purpose of analyzing who would be the more intelligent between bilinguals and monolinguals, confirmed the dominant belief that the latter were intellectually superior (Saer, 1923). Most of these studies however, were at a later time dismantled as they were discovered to conceal many flows. These studies on language proficiency usually did not consider the qualitative aspects and the many different competences revolving around languages. In addition, it is important to notice that language competence evolves as time goes by: if the participants to the studies are children, it is illogical to compare them to ideal adults.

It has proven to be extremely difficult to differentiate whether bilinguals are intrinsically quantitatively and qualitatively different from monolinguals. Furthermore, origins might not be the only cause of language underdevelopment: economic, social and political conditions could play a significant part as well (Wei, 2000:31). Moreover, it must be considered that often these studies were conducted in the non-dominant language of the bilingual speaker, a factor that most likely influenced their scores. A survey published by the Linguistic Minority Project (1985: 179) discouraged using research results from one bilingual situation to another, and it was even less recommended, as Baker suggested, in those cases in which there were discrepancies in power and status (1988: 160). Another survey carried out by the linguist Bloomfield examined the bilingual speakers' linguistic competence. Bloomfield believed that the participant under scrutiny did not speak any of the languages "tolerably", using "barbarous" inflections and insufficient vocabulary (Bloomfield, 1927:395).

It is from these kinds of studies that the term "semilingual" began to take hold: a semilingual person is a bilingual who does not dominate any of the languages they speak. The term itself holds a pejorative connotation, as if a semilingual person could never be whole, as if they could

never master either of the two languages completely. At the time, the common view shared by most scholars was that bilinguals showed deficiency in six areas of language (Hansegard, 1975; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981): the magnitude of vocabulary, the language correctness, the unconscious elaboration of language, the language formation, the grasp of the functions of language and the meanings and imagery. One of the main criticisms against bilingual speakers used to be their tendency toward the continue switching and mixing of the two languages. Despite its frequency in every bilingual community, this way of communicating was considered improper and "bad manners" both by monolinguals and bilinguals themselves (Haugen, 1977; Gumperz, 1982; Romaine, 1995).

Over the last decades -mainly the last two- the "one nation and one language ideology" has been constantly and inevitably losing ground, being replaced by an increasing acceptance of language diversity (Thomas & Wareing, 1999; Luchtenberg, 2002). This shift is due to the fact that further research and studies on bilingualism demonstrated that being bilingual offers many psychological, cognitive and social advantages at the societal and individual level. In fact, it has been proven that not only can bilinguals communicate with more diverse people, but they also have better cognitive skills and have fewer chances to suffer from dementia (Köktürk, Odacıoğlu, & Uysal, 2016).

Compared to monolingual speakers, bilinguals have a more limited vocabulary in the languages they speak, but at the same time, they tend to be less distracted, they can shift from one task to the other and they show better nonverbal executive control such as being able to detect the most important information selectively (Bialystok, 2010). This discovery led to the creation of many educational programs with the aim of achieving bilingualism (Garcia, 1996; Miramontes, Nadeau & Commins, 1997). This goal was also embraced by several institutional bodies and organizations such as ONU or the Council of Europe (see chapter 3) which underlined the importance of multilingualism by encouraging programs that promote the acquisition of more than one language (Council of Europe, 2007; Vítores, 2014).

As E.G. Lewis (1981) stated, "attitudes change over time—rarely are they static". There might be several different causes behind these changes such as institutions, power and prestige, fashions, shifting ideology and so on so forth. Ovando (2003) for instance, suggested that attitudes to or against L2 acquisition does not depend on the shift of ideas about that language, but rather on the changing of economic and social forces and localized politics.

For instance, a clear example of changing attitudes is the United States: in the 19th century bilingual education was adopted in more than 25 states and, in addition to English, languages such as German, Spanish, Czech and many more were regularly taught. From 1880 onward however, more rigorous language assimilation programs started to take hold because of the spread of apprehension toward ideological, cultural and linguistic competition between the minority communities (Salomone, 2010). Another example of changing attitudes is the case of the Welsh and the English language: in the 19th century Welsh was removed from all schools, with the aim of achieving a monolingual English education. In the 70s-80s however, the general attitude reversed, and Welsh went back to be considered useful as it opened more professional doors; it is now mandatory for students from 5 to 16 years old to learn Welsh, at least as a second language (Baker, 1992). A further example of changing attitudes is that several studies suggested that a positive attitude and motivation toward second language acquisition decreases in formal contexts over long periods of time (Chambers, 1999; Williams, Burden, & Lanvers, 2002). The reason behind this tendency seems to be that students, at a certain moment in their developmental stage (specifically the shift from a family setting to a more individual or peer identity), reject the school system. Another explanation for this refusal might also be the transition from a mostly oral methodological approach in primary school, to a predominantly written one in secondary school (Lasagabaster, 2014).

All these examples demonstrate how often attitudes change. Generally speaking, in the last decades attitudes toward bilingualism are changing for the better. One of the reasons for this improvement is that thanks to the many studies and surveys people are now realizing the many perks of being a multilingual speaker (Baker and Prys Jones, 1998). One of the most remarkable benefits of bilingualism involves communication: thanks to their linguistic skills, a bilingual can, for instance, have extended family or community relationships, build a deeper relationship with each parent, overcome transnational barriers or even show more sensitivity in communication. Another important advantage of bilingualism is the cultural aspect: as much as a monolingual can attempt to plunge into a different culture, the only way to truly do so is to learn the language. Bilinguals, therefore, are influenced by two or more cultures, and consequently have more experiences from which they can learn and grow (Wei, 2000).

Other reasons behind attitudes change can be the potential opening of professional doors for bilinguals, which are closed to those who only speak a single language. The more international

and globalized the world becomes in fact, the more positions requiring multilingualism there are. For instance, recent research has proven that immigrants are learning English more efficiently and quickly than in the past because they see the benefit in learning it. This is the clear demonstration that a positive attitude strongly influences the acquisition of the language. For example, according to Calvin Veltman (1988) immigrants of Hispanic origins are becoming dominant in English, following a two-generation language pattern change rather than a three-generation one, that was distinctive at the beginning of the 21st century (Nordquist, 2021; Baron, 1990).

Further studies that led to a positive attitude change toward bilingualism were those about cognitive advantages. Some research in fact, demonstrated that bilinguals show quicker advancement in early cognitive development and that they usually are more creative. All these advantages played a significant part in changing the general attitude toward bilingualism. Knowing that being bilingual has many benefits in fact, can serve as a motivation tool to maintain the two languages. It is clear then, that people's attitudes toward bilingualism change and will continue to change depending on cultural, political, historical, linguistic and other factors. To a progress in society, it will follow a growth of what it is known about bilingualism (Wei, 2000).

1.6 LEARNING TWO LANGUAGES

Much research has been conducted in order to prove how two languages can be learnt with the same effort as acquiring one (Ronjat, 1913; Pavlovitch, 1920; Leopold, 1939–49). It has been studied that most of the time, a child becomes bilingual when brought up by two parents who speak two different languages. In this case, parents tend to follow the partner principle or Grammont's formula "une personne—une langue" (Grammont, 1902), that is when each parent communicates to the child exclusively in their native language leading to a clear separation between the two languages (Köktürk, Odacıoğlu & Uysal, 2016:5). In the case of Grammont's formula, motivation plays a role of upmost importance in the learning process of the two languages as the child implicitly considers them necessary in order to be able to speak with both of the parents (Wei, 2000:34); in Haugen's (1972:309) words, "necessity is the mother of bilingualism". According to Köktürk, Odacıoğlu & Uysal (2016) the main influences on a child's language acquisition are: the language the family speaks, the language the siblings communicate in, the language of "playtime" and the environment language. The bilingual's

language contacts might also be with the languages spoken in the community, such as in the neighborhood or in their ethnic, occupation, church or recreation group. A further ground for contact is school and in which language the lessons are delivered. A certain language might be specifically taught or might be the mere medium of instruction.

Bilingualism can also be maintained through the use of mass media such as reading books or watching movies in the second language. Furthermore, correspondence can be considered as a factor which plays a significant role on the conservation of bilingualism. All the above-mentioned contacts can vary in duration, frequency, and pressure (Wei, 2000:29).

External factors, however, are not the only kind of factors that can have an impact on bilingualism. For instance, non-communicative uses, such as counting or praying, can influence bilingualism as well. Some people in fact, tend to internally count in a language but pray or curse in another one. In some cases, those who count in two different languages only reckon in one of the two (Wei, 2000). Another internal factor is the expression of intrinsic aptitudes that are sex, age, intelligence, memory, attitudes and motivation. The third factor that characterizes bilingual people is alternation, meaning the circumstances in which the individual alternates between the languages. Regarding alternation, there are some studies that demonstrate how an individual raised with the "one person- one language" principle shows a different linguistic behavior with respect to someone who has learnt two languages from the same person (Smith, 1935).

The last feature that distinguishes bilinguals is interference. Interference regards the ability of the speaker to differentiate the languages and not mix them together. It consists in using traits that are characteristic to one language while writing or speaking another. There can be several types of interference: cultural, semantic, lexical, grammatical and phonological. The latter, in turn, includes intonation, rhythm, catenation and articulation (Wei, 2000). In general, authors seem to agree on the fact that the most important criteria to define bilingualism are the modality of acquisition (MoA) and the age of acquisition (AoA) (Fabbro, 2004).

1.7 LEVELS OF ATTITUDES

The journal Educational Researcher (Pease-Alvarez and Hakuta, 1992) brought forward the belief that bilingualism was closely connected to sociocultural theory. This idea suggested that acquiring a second language was linked to cultural identification, personal identity and

communicative efficacy. As mentioned above, attitudes are among the main factors that play an important role in influencing language acquisition. Particularly important are attitudes at a personal and societal level.

1.7.1 ATTITUDES AT A PERSONAL LEVEL

Analyzing bilingualism as an individual phenomenon relates to the ability of an individual to use two or more languages. According to Crystal (1997) two- thirds of the world's children were raised in a bilingual environment. This could include both the family context, but also the educational influence. Often, in fact, whenever the family can afford it, education plays a significant part in the learning of several languages since a very young age. In Europe in particular, there are many public programs that allow children and teenagers to learn English and other European languages (Wei, 2000) (see chapter 3).

As already mentioned, attitudes are everchanging. At the individual level, in particular, they can vary depending on several factors such as personal interest or reward. For instance, if being bilingual leads to higher chances of obtaining a better paid job, the individual will be more encouraged to maintain and improve the use of both languages (Wei, 2000).

According to Katz (1960) the attitude of an individual is characterized by four functions, each of which can lead to attitude change. The first one is the utilitarian or instrumental function which states that a change in attitude may be witnessed if some sort of reward comes into play, or if by speaking a certain language one can avoid punishment. Another function is the ego defensive one: it has been examined that sometimes groups of people who speak the majority language hold a negative attitude toward a minority language and denigrate it only with the aim to defend their egos. The third function is the value-expressive one. This function put forward the idea that attitudes are dependent on self-concepts and personal values of an individual. The last function is the knowledge function: in this case Kats suggested that attitudes are more likely to change when an individual is aware of the benefits that learning a language can bring.

In addition, as it was proven during Ryan's research (1979), children's attitudes depend on the context -family or education- in which the second language was taught. This is also called the *classical* or *Pavlovian conditioning*. In other words, if children learn the second language in an

enjoyable and pleasant context, they will be very likely to develop a positive attitude toward that language. Furthermore, as it was mentioned above, reward plays a significant part on the development of a positive attitude. This is also called *reinforcement* or *operant conditioning*. Reward can be intended as simple verbal approval such as "good" (Insko, 1965) every time the second language is used correctly but could even be non-verbal as a smile or a nod of approval. Also, past experiences of success related to the minority language can highly influence positively the attitudes toward that language. Another element that can influence attitudes is imitating a human model. The imitators try to embrace some of the characteristics of the model, therefore initiating positive feelings of worth and status. Change in attitudes could also occur because, as suggested by some social-psychological theories (e.g. Festinger, 1957; Heider, 1958; McQuire, 1981), the human brain is designed to reach consistency and self-justification. According to Festinger's Cognitive Dissonance Theory (1957), attitudes must be in harmony, and if a contrasting attitude appears, the human brain will automatically attempt to bring back that harmony.

When considering the personal level, it is of outmost importance to analyze the influence of the parents' attitudes on their children, in particular when talking about languages. There is in fact, a correlation between the language that is spoken at home and attitudes. It has been analyzed that children tend to reflect the parents' attitude. This reflection, however, is likely to be influenced also by other factors such as school, friends and neighbors (Baker, 1992). As Garret (2010) affirms in fact, attitudes are not intuitive, but rather learnt. Children tend to learn and copy the attitudes that they see in their parents and in others in generals, this is called "observational learning". According to De Houwer (1998: 81) parental attitudes toward the children's language development is part of the broader attitudes toward the children's whole development. The influence of the parents' attitudes is so important that several studies have proven that it can make the difference in the academic path and language identity growth of their children. A clear example is brought by Richard Rodriguez's (1982) that in his autobiography describes how his family relationship changed after the visit of some nuns who suggested to his parents to speak in English only to their children. As their parents were not very proficient in English, family conversations gradually diminished due to continue misunderstandings or necessary repetitions that led to the annoyance and impatience of the children. This is a clear illustration of how harmful a subtractive immersion program can be (see chapter 2).

On the other hand, an individual's positive attitude can have a significant impact on one's educational accomplishments. According to J. Kádár-Fulop (1988) "language loyalty" -which is a positive attitude toward a certain language- can influence literacy instruction. Some research (Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Lindholm, 1990) has shown that educational development depends on cultural identity and the wish to maintain it (Ferdman, 1990). This desire often leads ethnic-minority parents to enroll their children in extracurricular programs in which they learn the parents' culture and language in addition to a feeling of pride toward their origins (Padilla, 1991).

1.7.2 ATTITUDES AT A SOCIETAL LEVEL

Nowadays the majority of the earth's population is bilingual, which is why, depending on the country, the "normality" or status quo is bilingual or even multilingual education. Because of the popularity of this phenomenon, usually it is not considered a burden or any novelty. Moreover, in a world that is becoming more and more interdependent, mastering more than one language can be extremely useful (Padilla, 1991).

Bilingualism is so common that there are entire countries that are officially bilingual or even multilingual. Specifically, societal bilingualism concerns societies in which two or more languages or varieties co-exist (Kostoulas-Makrakis, Karantzola & Athanassiadis, 2006). It has been estimated that more than 70% of the languages spoken on the world are locally restricted to about 20 states; this factor leads to the creation of bilingual societies. Many countries in Asia and Africa in particular, are populated by multilingual people, as they usually speak both the ethnic language of their community and another indigenous one which is used when communicating with other social groups. Often, these communities also speak the languages of the colonizers (mainly English, Spanish and French), languages that lingered many years post-decolonization in fields such as education and politics (Wei, 2000).

Societal attitudes change over time as much as the individual ones do. However, societal attitudes change at a different pace: it is usually a slower and gradual kind of change, that goes hand in hand with the shift in political ideology (Baker, 1992). A term in a minority language for instance, could initially be regarded with a negative connotation, but then, following an increase in ethnic consciousness, it could simply become a symbol of a certain ethnicity.

Often, in a multilingual community it is difficult to understand which language is influencing which: whether the minority language is influencing the main one or vice versa (Jones, 1990). Some research that focused on racial integration was conducted by authors such as Tajfel (1981): he suggested that the influence of community relationships is fundamental to understand and analyze attitude changes. In case the community integration lasts a significant amount of time, attitudes may undergo certain changes. At the same time, attitudes could change if people are forced to feel a certain way toward a language. Requiring a community to speak a language in fact, without considering their freedom of choice, has a very negative impact on attitude. Another factor that can change attitudes is the use of common areas between bilinguals and monolinguals to encourage integration and an improvement of attitudes. These common areas can be the most diverse fields such as sport, religion, music and so on so forth.

Other factors affecting attitudes change could be the relationship between bilinguals and monolinguals, or when the cultural, political, social and economic context is encouraging bilingualism and the use of minority languages. The institutional level in fact, can influence language attitudes: when a language is uplifted to a certain status and used in formal institutional context such the government, the court or in school it is likely to lead to a change in attitudes. This increase in prestige through the institutional system in fact, is likely to enhance the development of positive attitudes. School, in particular, seems to be the most influential institution that has a significant impact on language attitudes. In proof of this, several studies have shown that similar students are influenced differently depending on which school they attend (Mortimore et al., 1988; Reynolds, 1985; Rutter et al., 1979; Smith & Tomlinson, 1989).

A topic of upmost importance when analyzing the phenomenon of bilingualism is the distinction between "folk" bilingualism and "elite" bilingualism (Romaine, 1998; Harding-Esch & Riley, 2003:23). The former can be found among ethnic minorities or immigrants. This kind of bilingualism is involuntary, and it is seen as the natural result of integration and surviving in a new social and cultural environment, often due to economic or political circumstances. Contrarily, "elite" bilingualism is when an individual -usually from the middle class- learns the language formally at school and their parents strongly encourage its acquisition (Harding-Esch & Riley, 2003:24). This type of bilingualism is generally seen as more valuable than "folk" bilingualism (Luchtenberg, 2002).

Correlated to attitudes at the societal level, another extremely important aspect worth considering is the status of a language, or, in other words, its prestige. As Thomas and Wareing (1999) have pointed out "there is an ambivalent attitude toward bilingual speakers and their languages are valued hierarchically". For instance, if a person is bilingual in what are considered the prestigious languages by the society in which they live in -usually English, German or French or in the language of the dominant society-, bilingualism will be seen as an advantage and with a very positive connotation. The dominant language is usually supported at the institutional level and promoted through mass media (Wei, 2000). On the contrary, when one of the languages spoken by the bilingual person is a migrant language it is likely to have much less positive impact and, in those cases, bilingualism tends to be ignored or considered less valuable (Thomas & Wareing, 1999).

As stated by Hélot (2003:271) "bilingualism is not envisaged in the same way when it concerns migrant languages as opposed to foreign languages". In proof of this, Baker & Pry Jones (1998) reported that historically, there has been no debate about all the problems and disadvantages of bilinguals when the languages in question were the "prestigious" ones. Mažuolienė and Jankūnienė translated Mazolevskienė's words (2003) from Lithuanian that stated that undervaluing a child's minority native language is wrong as it has a negative impact on the child's learning of the state language. For instance, it has been estimated that 71.3% of the teachers teaching in Lithuanian kindergartens ignore the children's mother tongue when coming from a linguistic minority, adopting the principle of "swim or sink". The teachers express quite a negative attitude toward children who do not speak Lithuanian at home as they see them as "a problem" as they are not able to keep up with the topics tackled during the lessons. The direct consequence of this mindset is the worsening of the linguistic abilities on the minority language.

CHAPTER 2

ENGLISH PREDOMINANCE AND LANGUAGE POLICY CHOICE

And who in time knows whither we may vent
The treasure of our tongue, to what strange shores
This gain of our best glory shall be sent,
To enrich unknowing nations without stores? Which worlds in the yet unformed Occident May
come refined with the accents that are ours.
Samuel Daniel, poem Musophilis (1599).

2.1 THE LINGUA FRANCA OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The following chapter focuses on the privileged status of the English language and its position of importance in a world which is increasingly globalized and international. The chapter will explain how English is considered by many the Lingua Franca and the political, historical and linguistic reasons behind this belief. The second paragraph will present the three main linguistic educational policies and a brief historical background.

2.1.1 LINGUA FRANCA

Seidlhofer (2001) suggests a definition for the term "lingua franca". She states that a lingua franca has no native speakers, and it is an acquired language system that has the goal of allowing international people who speak different languages to communicate. A lingua franca is a common language, a language that is understood by every community of a certain area, continent, or even the entire world.

In countries characterized by multilingualism it is hard to find a way to mediate and understand each other among speakers of different communities (Crystal, 1997). It is often believed, in fact, that multilingual countries have to face a wider range of problems in the most disparate fields with respect to monolingual ones: these problems can go from issues such as miscommunications in commerce and industry, to the very delicate choice of which language to use for politics and governance (Fasold, 1984; Edwards, 1994).

A solution was found in the establishment of a lingua franca. It does not have to necessarily be a proper language, but it can be a mix of the languages spoken by the various communities and

can be used exclusively to trade or communicate about specific domains. Most of the time, however, as was explained in the paragraphs above, a lingua franca is a language that is spoken by the powerful and that is accepted, willingly or unwillingly, by the communities. This was the case of French and English in the colonies (Crystal, 1997).

The need for a lingua franca emerged in particular in the 20th century, a period characterized by the emergence of many international alliances. In 1945 in fact, the United Nations were formed and, as a consequence to the unprecedented number of international members, a common language was necessary. Following 1945 many other international organizations were brought to life such as the European Union and the Commonwealth. Early in the life of these organizations, it was clear that the less languages were spoken, the less misunderstandings and unnecessary translation expenses there were. In addition, in the case a language choice had to be necessarily made, it was always a sensitive stage that could lead to tensions among the countries involved. Having a lingua franca would avoid any critical situation, every participant in fact, would use it without question or complain. English therefore, became the leading language in political and community meetings (Crystal, 1997).

Having a lingua franca is also praised by international businesses and academic communities: conducting studies and having confrontations among colleagues in a single language in fact, is much easier and quicker than if it was done in multiple languages. Moreover, with the development of technology, international communication has become simpler, involving every single country in the world, no matter how far. Globalization hit quickly, to illustrate this, suffice it to consider that the United Nations started in 1945 with 51 members and in 2002 the members were already 190 (Crystal, 1997).

2.1.2 THE SPECIAL ROLE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

English is nowadays considered a global language. Historically speaking, English started to spread worldwide thanks to the achievements of the British Empire, that in the 17th and 18th centuries was able to colonize many countries all around the globe, therefore spreading its mother tongue. During the first decades of the 1800 Britain became the trading and industrial center of Europe. At the end of the century, across the ocean, the USA became the country with the most productive economy in the world, with an unprecedented growth rate.

In addition, as soon as innovative technologies allowed unprecedented linguistic opportunities, English became the leading language in the most disparate fields: communication, transport, advertising, press and so on so forth. In addition, the number of US' inhabitants became larger than any European nation, approaching 100 million (Crystal, 1997).

In particular, in the last fifty years the "special role" of English started to be officially recognized in every country. Globalization in fact, went hand in hand with the advancement of the English language, which is nowadays seen as a "key literacy feature worldwide" (Dalton-Puffer, 2011), a "basic educational skill to be developed from primary level alongside literacy and numeracy" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), or a "pre- requisite for individual success" (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010). This role is very clear in any nation inhabited by large numbers of people that speak English as their first language. This is the case of Britain, Ireland, South Africa, the USA and so on so forth (Crystal, 1997).

English was able to achieve such a prestigious status through acceptance. It is worth noting that this acceptance came mainly from non-English speaking countries. The most common way toward acceptance is by making the language official. After officialization, the language will start to be used as a way to communicate in fields such as media, education, government and legislation. In the countries in which English was officialized in fact, knowing English is fundamental and people are strongly encouraged to learn it since a very young age. To mention some examples there are Nigeria, Singapore and India: all of them gave English a "special" status. Another way to give English a special place in a community is to teach it and make its acquisition easily achievable through the offering of language courses for adults or English lessons for children at school. Nowadays English is the most taught foreign language in the world: over 100 countries such as Brazil, Germany, China etc. made its acquisition compulsory in school (Kovacs, 2008;Crystal, 1997). English classes often take the place of other languages that were previously being taught but that are now gradually declining. In 1996, for example, in the former French colony Algeria, the French language was outclassed by English in school education (Crystal, 1997).

A language, therefore, can be considered official in several different ways: it could, for example, be a country's only official language, or it might be one among others. There is even the possibility of having a "semi-official" status, which means that a certain language is used in specific domains only. Usually countries -such as India - officially recognize the status of a

language in their constitution; others, on the contrary, -such as Britain- will not even mention it. In other countries still -such as the USA-, language official recognition can be cause of great controversy (Crystal, 1997).

2.1.3 A GLOBAL LANGUAGE?

As Seidlhofer (2004) states: "For the first time in history, a language has reached truly global dimensions, and as a consequence, is being shaped, in its international uses, at least as much by its non-native speakers as its native speakers".

Some believe that English has achieved its current international global status because 'It has less grammar than other languages' and therefore it is supposed to be easier to learn. Some linguistic aspects of the English language in fact, might suggest some reasons for its current status of prestige: for instance, there is no masculine, feminine or neutral gender. This idea has started to emerge since the 1848, year in which the British periodical "The Athenaeum" reported: "our mother-tongue seems well adapted by organizations to become the language of the world".

A further linguistic aspect worth considering comes from the acquisition of foreign words in the English vocabulary. This is due to centuries of contacts with other languages that have influenced and affected the English language. This often leads to a sense of "familiarity" to foreign students that are learning the language. This international aspect is considered by many, as an additional driving force that helped English to reach the status of lingua franca. With a focus on the English vocabulary, in fact, English can be considered a Romance language rather than a Germanic one because it shares more vocabulary with the Romance family. Also, the fact that English does not offer a grammatical way to differentiate social class differences, could be seen as the best language option for a lingua franca in any democratic country (Crystal, 1997).

All these statements, however, do not hold as Latin was a language characterized by many grammatical difficulties and despite this, still became and maintained its status as the main international language for centuries (Crystal, 1997).

Moreover, when a language is widely spoken it does not directly mean that is global. Historically, languages such as Latin for example, make us understand that it is not about how

many people speak the language, but it is all about who the speakers are: Latin was the international language during the Roman Empire because the people who spoke it, were the most powerful. Even after the decline of the Roman Empire, Latin has maintained its international status for a millennium thanks to the ecclesiastical power of Roman Catholicism (Crystal, 1997).

In order to become global, therefore, a language must be spoken by the powerful elements of a society, and it must be linked to technological and economic dominance (Crystal, 1997).

It is clear then, that the main reasons why a language becomes global are the military and political power of the speakers. Once the primacy of the language spoken by the powerful is well established, an economically powerful nation is needed to maintain and expand it (Crystal, 1997). In other words, languages are powerful and each one of them carries political meaning, historical traditions and culture. Choosing to make a specific language official over another, is therefore an important choice (Crystal, 1997). Language in fact, is an ingredient of what makes national identity and can be a display of power. Since the language chosen for governance is often the language of the powerful and of the elite, it tends to benefit uniquely those at the top of the social class, consequently widening the economic gap between the poor and the rich (Kaplan & Baldauf, 1997).

Despite English popularity some scholars do not consider it a global language yet. Crystal (1997), for instance, states that at least two-thirds of the earth's population do not speak it, and therefore, it is still too soon to consider it "the common language". Others, on the other hand, state that it can be regarded as an unofficial lingua franca (Stefic, 2018).

2.1.4 DANGERS OF A GLOBAL LANGUAGE

Despite the several perks of having a lingua franca, it is worth considering that some drawbacks could emerge as well. Limiting organizations and international institutions to a single language might lead to the creation of an elite monolingual linguistic class that despise any other language that is not the common one. Therefore, those who speak the lingua franca as mother-tongues would find themselves in a position of power with respect to those who have to learn it. In addition, native speakers would have an upper hand in any discussion in their language as they would be arguing with non-natives, who would likely struggle to find the words and feel more self-conscious (Štefić, 2018).

Another potential negative side is the tendency of minority languages to disappear. History shows us in fact, that it is not uncommon for an ethnic community to be assimilated in a more dominant society. This assimilation also includes language. Nowadays in particular, indigenous languages are disappearing quicker than ever before. It was estimated that at least half of the world's 6000 living languages will be extinguished within the 22nd century (Kovacs, 2008). Lastly, native speakers might be less motivated to learn other languages because their mother tongue is the language that is used internationally (Crystal, 1997).

2.1.5 ENGLISH AS A LINGUA FRANCA (ELF)

Fist of all, it is important to point out that English as a lingua Franca (ELF) is different from English as a Foreign Language (EFL). The latter in fact, aims at teaching students to talk to English native speakers, ideally without any variation from the standard English taught in schools. On the other hand, ELF has the goal of allowing international non-native English speakers to communicate and understand each other, no matter variations or supposed mistakes they make (Cogo & Dewey, 2012). ELF speakers in fact, often adapt their linguistic skills and expertise on the base of who they are talking to and in which communicative situation they are in, making use of communicative strategies that come from their cultural and linguistic background (v. Mauranen, 2006; Cogo, 2010).

Many scholars (Jenkins, 2014, 2011, 2009) believe that ELF belongs to the same group as World or Global English. Initially, the definition of ELF left out native speakers (Firth 1996, in Seidlhofer, 2001), but then they were included considering their influence when speaking with non-native speakers (v. Jenkins, 2014). In Seidlhofer (2011) words, ELF includes: "any use of English among speakers of different first languages from whom English is the communicative medium of choice, and often the only option". As English is nowadays spoken by an overwhelming majority of non-native speakers, it is evident that it is highly influenced by non-native speakers rather than native ones (Seidlhofer, 2004).

As mentioned before, English has entered every aspect of the international fields such as business, technology, communication, entertainment, education and politics (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011; v. Mauranen & Ranta, 2009; Crystal, 1997). It also offers a large cultural legacy through the media: the press, advertising, broadcasting, the cinema and popular music (Crystal, 1997). The frequency in which ELF was used in the economic domain led to the formation of

a separate field called BELF (Business English as a Lingua Franca) (Fortanet-Gómez & Räisänen, 2008; Gatti, 2010; Kankaanranta & Louhiala-Salminen, 2013; Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009). Another area whose importance led to the creation of an exclusive field is ELFA (English as a Lingua Franca in Academic settings) (Björkman, 2016).

English as a Lingua Franca started to become a field of study and research in the '80s (Jenkins, Cogo & Dewey, 2011). According to Braj Kachru (1988) the prevalence of English can be explained through a model made of three concentric circles (see image below). Each circle represents the ways in which English was learnt and how it is currently used. Firstly, the inner circle includes the countries in which English is the primary language. Examples of countries in this circle are the UK, Australia or the USA. The extended or outer circle refers to the countries in which English has a key role and is considered a "second language" in different domains. The main area in which it is used is the administrative one. For instance, India and Singapore are part of this circle. The last circle, called extending or expanding circle is related to the countries that acknowledge how important English is as an international language. These countries invest in English teaching through foreign language policies. Some of the countries of this circle are Poland, Japan and China (Crystal, 1997). This last circle in particular, is the most densely populated of the three: non-native English speakers in fact, largely outnumber native speakers (Hülmbauer, Böhringer & Seidlhofer, 2008).
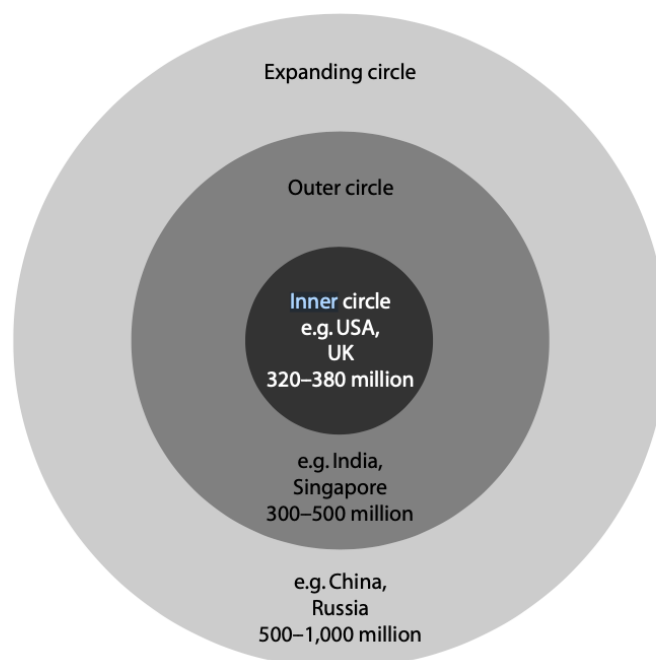
The three 'circles' of English

Despite the current prevalence of English worldwide, there are other languages that threaten its position of power. The one that is most likely to overthrown English is Chinese. Chinese in fact, is the language that is spoken the most in the planet: over a billion people speak Mandarin Chinese, whether as mother tongue or as a foreign language. In spite of this, English enjoys far more significance and prestige. This is also the case of Hindi, an extremely large number of people speak it, but its international status is not even comparable to the one enjoyed by the English language (Kovacs, 2008).

2.1.6 ENGLISH AND EDUCATION

As mentioned above, English is extremely important in the academic field as it often is the more popular medium of instruction in fields such as IT and science. This explains why recent years were characterized by a boost in English learning programs worldwide. The English language teaching (ELT) industry is extremely valuable, and witnessed one of the most significant increase in the world in the last 50 years (Crystal, 1997). Many countries elevated English and officialized it, others have described it as the most important foreign language to teach in school. The logic behind this spread is: since most of the academic research is in English, it is more practical and convenient to deliver lectures at a higher education level in English, because students will likely encounter documents and information in the English language both during their career as students and as professionals or researchers (Crystal, 1997). In this case therefore, students "are 'users' of English, not 'learners' of it" (Pilkinton-Pihko, 2010:59). In addition to this, lately, universities are welcoming an increasing number of international students. This means that offering lectures in the common language gives foreigners an equitable chance to learn and understand lectures (Crystal, 1997).

2.2 LINGUISTIC EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

Throughout history, all over the world, different bilingual educational policies were adopted. According to Baker (1992), and then adapted by García (1996) there are three types of linguistic policies that can be used for teaching to bilingual children, each of them have different consequences and results. The first type is monolingual education and it is adopted for language minority students; this type of policy usually leads to relative monolingualism. The most popular program of the category is the immersion program. The second types of policies are weak bilingual programs that usually lead to limited bilingualism or relative monolingualism.

The third and last types of programs are strong bilingual programs, which lead to relative biliteracy and bilingualism.

2.2.1 MONOLINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Historically speaking, from the 1920s to the 1960s monolingual educational programs in the dominant language for language-minority children were the most widespread. In particular, the more commons were the English immersion policies. The term "immersion" was initially used to define intensive language programs designed for US troops that had to fight in the Second World War abroad. In 1960 the term became a form of bilingual programs, which were also referred as "sink or swim" policies. These programs aimed at not developing the minority language but rather replace it by the majority language (Baker, 2001).

Sink or swim policies were generally adopted for conquered colonies. It is clear then, that the subversion of language rights was often to the benefit of the powerful; suffice it to mention colonial domination, exploitation of the workforce, cultural genocide, anti-immigration campaigns and land theft (Crawford, 1989). Looking at it from this perspective, the spread of the English language around the world was not as unifying as many English speakers initially believed. Actually, using Crawford (1989) words: "Language has served as a tool, not a cause, of social conflict.

Among some of the most ardent supporters of the structured immersion programs were the members of the English Only movement (see chapter 3) and some scholars from the U.S. Department of education.

2.2.2 WEAK BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Weak bilingual education programs usually lead to limited bilingualism or relative monolingualism. This usually happens when educational institutions do not invest enough on bilingual programs or do not have enough resources to put into practice the programs they planned to implement (García, 1996). When these kinds of weak bilingual programs are implemented, schools do not dedicate enough time to the acquisition of the second language. The same poor results in the level of bilingualism can also appear when instruction in the minority language stops once the pupil has reached a certain level of proficiency in the majority language. A very common program of this category is the Transitional Program. This method is quite widespread in the United States and consists in starting the first years of school in the

students' minority language. During this period the majority language is taught as the second language. Gradually, the majority language takes up an increasing number of classes, to the point in which students are moved from bilingual to monolingual class (García, 1996).

2.2.3 STRONG BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Strong bilingual education programs are characterized by much investment and significant resources with the aim of developing bilingualism. These programs require effort on the part of societies and parents (García, 1996). Among the most common programs there is the dual-language program which consists in heterogeneous classes composed by students from the majority and the minority language. Both languages are used, usually with different teachers and at different moments throughout the day. Other ways to develop bilingualism is enrolling children to mainstream schools in which they are taught the majority language, but then making them study the second language in the weekends or after school. These kinds of heritage classes not only do they teach the minority language, but also the culture. Other types of bilingual programs are maintenance programs. These programs aim at improving the minority language, but at the same time developing the majority language as well. In Canada these programs are also called "heritage language bilingual education" (Cummins, 1992). Another very common bilingual program goes under the name of "immersion bilingual education". This name comes from a series of experiments that took place in Canada (see chapter 3). Immersion programs can be early, middle or late immersion, depending on the age of the students; and they can be total or partial, based on frequency of immersion (Baker, 2001). Immersion programs were created for speakers of the majority language that wanted to become bilingual. In Canada in fact, usually English-speaking children are enrolled in immersion programs so that they can become as fluent in French as they are in English. These kinds of program usually lead to both bilingualism and biliteracy (García, 1996).

2.3 HISTORY OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

For a very long time, educational systems have been monolingual. Generally, the only language spoken and taught was the one of the elites. In Europe specifically, this tendency comes from the Greek and Roman tradition which did not take into consideration local languages. In the scholastic system in fact, only Greek or the Roman language were taught (Lewis, 1976). People who could speak these two languages in addition to their local dialect were well-respected and regarded with awe. Until the 19th century, the influence of this tradition could still be perceived

in how the "prestigious" language was prioritized in school and how those who spoke it were considered more intelligent than those who only spoke the local language. This monolingual supremacy was the cause of the language suppression of several speech groups, of the language change of different ethnolinguistic communities (Fishman, 1991) and of the spread of many of the so-called prestigious languages such as English (Fishman, Conrad & Cooper, 1977).

With the birth of the United States during the 18th -19th centuries, the monolingual tradition started to be affected. In the US specifically, ethnolinguistic communities regarded their native language as a symbol of their homeland over the English that was spoken in the United States. The 19th century in fact, was the period in which bilingual education started to spread not only in the US but in the world in general, mainly thanks to the ethnolinguistic communities who organized themselves and established their own schools that offered bilingual programs (Pearlmann, 1990). The spread of universal public education, however, was counterbalanced by a surge of nationalism that hindered the growth of bilingual education. That is why the first part of the 20th century was characterized by monolingual education for the minorities.

From the 1960s, on the other hand, there was an increasing interest in ethnic identity (Fishman, 1981). This interest was also fed by the long-awaited independence of many ex-colonies, the rise in spirit of indigenous communities in Europe, in the Americas and in Asia, the officialization of an increasing number of civil rights, and the continuous movement of both refugees and immigrants all over the world. The shift in attitude toward bilingual education was major: monolingual educational programs started to be considered responsible for the marginalization of language minorities from society. That is the reason why from the 1960s education programs started to include both the mother tongue and the majority language (in particular with children of a young age). For instance, countries with a strict monolingual past, such as Spain and Great Britain, started to open up toward language diversity and embrace bilingual education for regional minorities.

2.3.1 EDUCATIONAL POLICIES: A HARD CHOICE TO MAKE

In the last decades governmental policies on bilingual education and beliefs on how to educate minority groups have been through major changes. Each country shows a different opinion toward what agenda is best to follow, often depending on the status and power of the various world languages, and often resulting on the most diverse reforms in public institutions (Mora

et al., 2001; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). According to Lambert and Tucker (1972), there are two types of bilingual educations that depend on each country's linguistic goal. The first type is the additive form of bilingualism, that consists in educating students with the aim of achieving biliteracy and bilingual skills. The other form of bilingualism is its contrary: subtractive bilingualism, which are programs developed to obtain proficiency in a second language, which is usually the dominant one.

These two kinds of bilingual educations sparked a heated debate on whether one type is better than the other. Consequently, much research was conducted over the world with the aim to prove each parts' point. Baker (1981) and de Kanter (1998) for instance, carried out a study that demonstrated that bilingual programs were not helping minority children in any way and encouraged the adoption of immersion programs. To respond to their study, another scholar, Ann Willig (1985, 1987), employed a meta-analytic method to re-analyze the report the two researchers had interpreted. She studied 183 variables that they had not considered, and she looked for any weakness in their findings. At the end of her studies, she was able to prove that higher quality research tended to lead to more positive results in favor of bilingualism, and she was able to identify their inaccurate conclusions.

Evidence of the relevance of the debate on educational policy choice is the fact that a major sponsored study was conducted with the aim to understand which one between English Immersion or Bilingual program was the best (Ramirez, IYuen & Ramey, 1991). The study consisted in a four-year-long longitudinal comparison of three educational programs: first of all the "early-exit" program, which was the most popular model to implement bilingual education and acquire English mainstream proficiency in a short time. Secondly there was the "late-exit" program that consisted in maintaining the native language and at the same time gradually learning English over the years. And finally, the third program was the "structured English immersion" program, a program that was taught by bilingual teachers exclusively in English. In this case immersion programs differentiated from the traditional way in that teacher understood both languages, but only answered in English (traditionally in fact, the teacher only speaks and understands English). The study compared the academic results of over 2300 Spanish speakers in different subjects. The outcomes went in support of bilingualism, in particular, in support of the late-exit bilingual programs as it was demonstrated that students achieved the best results in the English language, and they tended to reach the same academic level of their monolingual classmates.

Other more recent studies have shown that high-quality bilingual instruction can lead to positive psychological outcomes and greater results in all subjects and, in particular, to the learning of both languages (Holm & Holm, 1990; Lindholm, 1990). These studies have demonstrated that students from states that sustain bilingual education and less restrictive English Only policies tend to achieve better scores in reading during the fourth grade (F. López & McEneaney, 2012). A similar study (López, McEneaney, and Nieswandt, 2015) was conducted on a larger scale, and demonstrated that states with a long history of Hispanic immigration and bilingual policies could boast better academic results for their non-English students. Over time, the belief that dual language immersion programs are the more favorable programs to achieve bilingualism took hold. Not only do these programs lead to the development of bilingualism, but also they offer equitable education to minority groups (Christian, 1996; Collier, 1995; Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2005; Garcia, 2005; Thomas & Collier, 1998; Cummins, 2000). The idea behind these dual language immersion programs is to craft bilingual students that are able to achieve optimal academic results in both languages (Mora et al., 2001). Some scholars in fact, affirmed that the students that participated to these programs showed "impressive levels of performance on oral language, reading, and writing measures in English and Spanish" (Howard, Sugarman, and Christian, 2003: 32).

On the other hand, the "traditional" immersion programs or "sink or swim" models seem to bring less psychological outcomes (Lambert, 1987) and less results both academically and linguistically speaking (Hakuta & Gould, 1987; General Accounting Office, 1987; Gándara & Hopkins, 2010; Guo & Koretz, 2013; Parrish et al., 2006). In California for instance, a legislation outlawing bilingual education passed and it was demonstrated that after five years only 30% of the students were able to have conversational English, and only 7% could understand the textbooks (Freeman et al., 2005). Collier (1995) stated that children attending schools in which the "sink or swim" program is the only option, statistically take seven to ten years to achieve the same linguistic level of the native speakers.

Another example is given by American colonies such as Hawaii and Philippines. In these cases, immersion programs were adopted and they had very little success. Students usually felt marginalized and as if they were losing their identity and suffered a loss of self-esteem (Berry, 1983). This is allegedly due to the close connection between identification and languages (Lambert, 1987). Some scholars affirm that learning another language did not counterbalance the negative impact of losing the native one (Taylor, 1987; Lambert, 1984). Subtractive English

immersion programs, therefore, can be detrimental on minority children's self-confidence and their sense of being part of an ethnic community or of the U.S. society itself (Lambert, 1984). Most of the times, non-English speaking children were forced to remain in the same grade level until they became proficient enough in English to understand the content of classes (Castillo, 2003).

Some scholars, however, do not agree with this and carried out studies in order to prove it. Valentina A. Bali (2001) for instance, analyzed Proposition 227, which is a Californian initiative passed in 1998 that aimed at eradicating bilingual programs in public institutions. With her research she argued that thanks to the spread of sink or swim programs, limited-English-proficient (LEP) students were able to improve their reading skills. This result called into question the preconception that predominantly white countries such as California tend to adopt linguistic policies that are unfavorable for minorities (Giles and Evans, 1986; Hero and Tolbert, 1996).

What is certain regarding the controversy about bilingual programs and English Only ones is that it is still too soon to assess their long-term effects on students. Historically speaking, chances are that bilingual programs are likely to spread regardless of the financial support of federal policies (Baker, Basaraba & Polanco, 2016).

CHAPTER 3
BILINGUAL POLICIES AROUND THE WORLD

This chapter presents the linguistic context and historical background of each of the six continents: America, Africa, Asia, Oceania, Antarctica and Europe. In particular, it will deal with the countries which provide some of the most interesting examples of multilingualism from the linguistic point of view. It will also tackle the kinds of linguistic policies that have been adopted and the responses that the inhabitants had toward them, depending on their attitudes and beliefs of the time.

3.1 THE AMERICAN CONTINENT
3.1.1 THE UNITED STATES

Nowadays, the country that is seen as a melting pot par excellence of different languages is the United States. The U.S. is likely to be the country with the highest number of bilingual or multilingual speakers. Only considering that in North America more than 500 Native tongues were spoken is self-explanatory enough (Castellanos, 1983). Since the 18th century British missionaries were admitted into some native communities in North America in which they founded the first bilinguals schools. Hence, even before the considerable immigration toward the United States that started in 1830, North America was the home of massive language diversity. Because of the considerable number of languages spoken, in the U.S. choosing a language policy has always been a delicate matter. Politicians in fact, have different consideration concerning what would be best for the country. For instance, the United States was the birthplace of the English-Only movement that aimed at the supremacy of the English language. The English-Only movement aimed at a subtractive form of bilingualism. The driving force of the movement questioned the effectiveness of bilingual programs for language minority students. According to the members of the organization federal funds should be invested in other educational programs. The controversy between bilingual education supporters and English Only members was rooted on the inability of both parties to find the clear evidence that one or the other program was successful for every language minority student, no matter what school they were attending or what background they had (Crawford, 1989). Leaders such as Roosevelt or Benjamin Franklin were strong supporters of the movement and were against multilingualism.

"We must have but one flag. We must also have but one language... We cannot tolerate any attempt to oppose or supplant the language and culture that has come down to us from the builders of this Republic with the language and culture of any European country... We call upon all loyal and unadulterated Americans to man the trenches against the enemy within our gates" (Roosevelt, 1917).

On the other hand, there were also some leaders that despite being members of the movement, decided to adopt a more democratic approach with the goal to assimilate immigrants: this approach was bilingual higher education. The belief was that these programs would make immigrants understand the importance and necessity of English and therefore encourage them to learn it willingly (Heath, 1976).

To counter the lack of consideration toward the learning of a second language, the National Defense Education Act of 1958 was published. This act was made with the purpose of increasing second language instruction (Crawford, 2004). This change happened at the same time of the Civil Rights Movement of the '60s and the Cuban Revolution in 1959. In 1965 another milestone for bilingualism was the passing of the Immigration Act, during Lyndon B. Johnson presidency. This act helped immigrant families to reunite and encouraged skilled labor to move to the United States. The law was successful as it attracted 18 million immigrants, mostly from Latin America and Asia. Due to this large increase of non-English speakers, bilingual education became central (Baker, 2001). 1965 was also the year of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), a law that offered support to educational agencies and helped financially low-income families with their children's education.

All these historical events combined, led to the passing of the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, which resulted in the implementation of instructional programs specifically for immigrant children that never spoke English at home (Lyons, 2013). This bill offered funds to any school that implemented educational programs that used the students' mother tongue (Lambert, 1984).

The belief that these children needed personalized programs started to emerge (Gándara, 2015) and federal funds began to be devoted explicitly to them. Even if the funding did not directly require institutions to offer bilingual instruction, these kinds of programs started to spread (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). President Lyndon B. Johnson in particular, played an important part on the adoption of the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) (Blanton, 2005).

From the 20th century, many civil lawsuits started to be filed in favor of bilingualism regarding alleged unequal opportunities for immigrant students. In 1924 for instance, the Meyer v. Nebraska Supreme Court decision subverted an English-only instruction in private schools (Leibowitz, 1969). The fourteenth amendment was referred, in particular the right to choose the children's language of schooling, and the case was declared unconstitutional (Crawford, 1989). Parallel prohibitions were overturned in Ohio and Iowa (Kloss, 1977). Another case worth mentioning is the Independent School District v. Salvatierra (1930, 1931) case. This was the first case ever in which segregating on the grounds of race was declared illegal.

Through the years, it can be seen that the more common ways to tackle the education of minority groups in the U.S. is through bilingual education or programs that include English as a second language. The USA adopted a flexible multilingual policy, including languages from minorities groups such as refugees and immigrants (Cummins, 1992). As Brisk (1988) stated in fact, the "presence of many languages in U.S. schools was an accepted reality". Therefore, bilingual programs are expanding exponentially (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2008). In Texas for instance, over 600 schools embraced the dual language policy (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2008; Lara-Alecio, Galloway, Rodríguez & Gómez, 2004). In 1980 the already adopted Bilingual Education Act was further officialized and featured no longer only programs that led to the mere acquisition of English over the mother tongue, but actual dual-language or immersion programs (García, 1996).

Years later, in 2001, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act passed in Congress. This law aimed at increasing states' liability on students' education through the development of a series of measurable goals and standards to make sure that school funding was not being wasted. In order to estimate the efficacy of the programs (whether bilingual or English-Only) every student had to take a test after three years of taking part of the program. This test would evaluate their English proficiency and their progress (Menken, 2010).

In 2015 the NCLB was replaced with ESEA -the Every Student Succeeds Act- designed by President Barack Obama. This Act does not explicitly address bilingual students and their education, but rather generalizes the topic by including any student in difficulty.

Even though it is now common knowledge that bilingual education often brings economic benefits (Callahan & Gándara, 2014), the United States' linguistic policy often go in the direction of assimilationist policies rather than bilingual ones. In the 2000s for example, an "English-Only" law was passed in several states such as Arizona and Massachusetts. Even the "No Child Left Behind" policy of 2001 includes the underlying idea of language seen as a problem (Evans & Hornberger, 2005).

In conclusion, in the United States the topic of bilingual education has been cause of much controversy for many years, both from the educational and the political point of view. Overall, each state shows a very different opinion on the matter, that consequently reflects on a different linguistic policy. Some prioritize bilingualism, whereas others the achievement of proficiency in English only. The latest studies, however, bring forward the idea that the more restrictive a policy against bilingual programs is, the less chances English learners have for educational achievement (Baker, Basaraba & Polanco, 2016).

3.1.2 CANADA

Canada is probably the most well-known case of societal bilingualism. Historically speaking, it is important to remember that Canada has always been a binational state (Padilla, 1991).

English is believed to have arrived in Canada in 1497 with the pioneer John Cabot. English migration, however, only started a century later thanks to the economic potential of trading goods such as fur and fishing. With the arrival of the French in 1520 tensions developed but were then put to an end when the French were defeated in 1713 in Queen Anne's War and the Indian War in 1763. In 1776 in addition, the US Declaration of Independence was released and many American British loyalist felt betrayed and preferred to move to Canada. In a period of fifty years the province boasted 100,000 inhabitants. In 2001 the number increased to 31 million, two-thirds of which considered English their native language (Crystal, 1997).

Canada was the first country to ever establish a voluntary immersion program. This happened in Montreal (Quebec) in St. Lambert elementary school in 1965 (Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Rebuffot, 1993). The idea was strongly encouraged by English-speaking parents who lived in Quebec province, where French is the most spoken language. They understood the economic, social and political advantages that their children could obtain if they grew up bilingual in both

English and French. Parental approval, however, would not have been enough without the support of socio-economic and political factors that allowed the spread of "The French Immersion Phenomenon" (Stern, 1984). Historically speaking in fact, the British North American Act of 1867 led to the creation of the Canadian confederation and officialized the use of French and English in courts and the Federal Parliament (Mejía, 2002). According to Joseph Magnet (1990) the Canadian Constitution is the result of a compromise enshrined in 1867 between Protestant anglophones and Catholic francophones. This shift did not go smoothly as francophones hoped as conflicts between the two parts soon emerged. (Magnet, 1990). Most of Catholic schools taught classes in French, whereas the majority of Protestant schools taught them in English (Rebuffot, 2000).

The 20th century was the beginning of a large immigration to Canada. As English was the language that was spoken in most of the country, it soon started to be seen as the language of education and integration. French was relegated to family and social relation. This is a very clear case of diglossia -two languages that have two different social roles- (Rebuffot, 2000). In the '60s the "Quiet Revolution" started and the relations between the francophone community and the anglophone one began to change: French speakers were able to obtain better educational opportunities and jobs.

Over the years, it became clear that the only "true" Canadian bilinguals were the francophone ones, because English speakers did not see the need to speak French. Business dealings in fact, could simply be carried out in English as both monolinguals and bilinguals understood it. As Rebuffot (2000) puts it, this was seen as "la voie royale menant á l'anglicisation et á la assimilation" which means that English monolingualism was a straight path toward anglicization and assimilation. That is why the Quebec government passed a series of laws with the goal of promoting and protecting the French language.

In 1969 another important law was the Official Languages Act. This act stated that both French and English were equally official languages in the federal domain. This meant that all employees working for the government had to be bilingual. Since 1977 French was recognized as the official language of the provincial government of Quebec. That was the year of the passing of *La Charte de la Langue Française*, which in English was translated with Bill 101. Since then, French became the language of education, social services and business (Padilla, 1991). With the aim of promoting bilingualism for federal employees the government

sponsored some French immersion programs which were also called "Youth Option". Since 1965 a series of French immersion programs started to spread all over the country. The Quebec Department of Education for instance, stated that 60% of the children who were enrolled in primary education were studying in immersion programs (Rebuffot, 2000).

It is worth remembering that one of the reasons why bilingual programs in Canada were very successful was because both English and French are prestigious languages. This factor led to the creation of an additive bilingual situation. This situation differs from "immersion" or "structured immersion" programs characterized by language minority children immersed in the majority language. Another reason for the success of bilingualism is the fact that it was not forced over people, but parents willingly enrolled their children in bilingual schools because they understood the potential for their children's future career (Baker, 2001; Eurydice, 2006). Moreover, children did not constantly have to speak the second language: for instance, in the dining hall or playground they were allowed to use their first language, this likely led children to form a positive attitude toward the second language. In addition, teachers were bilinguals but even if they understood English they avoided speaking it to children, encouraging them to talk in French only (Baker, 2001). These Canadian bilingual experiments paved the way toward much research with a particular interest in teaching (Eurydice, 2006).

3.1.3 THE CARIBBEAN

Going south of the American continent we find the Caribbean. These islands first got into contact with the English language during the American settlement. They were highly influenced by African slaves that were imported with the aim of exploiting workforce on the sugar plantation in the triangular trade: Europeans traded cheap goods for African slaves, who were then sent in terribly overcrowded ships to the Caribbean islands. Once there, they were traded with commodities such as molasses, rum and sugar. These goods were then brought back to England, where these kinds of commodities were seen as rarities and were highly paid (Crystal, 1997).

In order to decrease the chances of rebellion in the ships shipping the African slaves, the masters ensured that most slaves on the ships spoke different languages, so that it would be more difficult for them to organize a potential uprising. This resulted in the creation of some pidgin way forms of communication. These pidgins languages were a mixture between

different African dialects and English -which was spoken by the sailors-. Once the slaves arrived in the Caribbean the pidgin did not decline but rather stayed as a way of communicating between the new landowners and the black population. The first generation was taught the pidgins as a mother tongue, which was then defined as creole English. Influence of other colonizers led to the creation of other Creole forms such as Spanish, French or Portuguese (Crystal, 1997).

3.1.4 LATIN AMERICA

Most of the countries in Latin America have Spanish as their first language. Brazil is one of the few exceptions, with Portuguese as the first language, this is due to past colonization. No matter what the first language is, however, in countries such as Argentina, Colombia and Brazil learning a foreign language -English in particular- is considered quite important (Mejía, 2002).

The Brazilian government promotes the "myth of monolingualism" even though it is a country that is highly populated by various immigrant communities such as Italians, Germans, Ukrainians and so on and so forth. (Cavalcanti, 1996). Portuguese in fact, is the only language that is officially and legally allowed for primary education. Despite this, if we consider the field of international economy and global market, English can be regarded as Brazil's "second language" (British Council, 1997). It is in fact clear that being fluent in English offers many benefits, this is the reason why many private English schools are spreading over the country. During the 19th century any family that could afford it started to send their children to Britain with the aim of making them bilingual. Since the 1950s however, the destination choice to learn English shifted from Britain to the U.S.. Nowadays, a large number of exchange programs are offered to Brazilian students that allow them to attend American high schools for an academic year. However, contrary to countries such as Colombia and Argentina -that have included English in the curricula-, Brazil continues to regard its acquisition as an extra-curricular activity (Mejía, 2002).

Concerning Argentina, Spanish lost its official status in 1994 but despite this, it keeps being the language which is spoken by the large majority of the population. Spanish is also the language used in school and in the administrative field (Banfi, 1999).
English is the most widely spoken foreign language in Argentina even if some backlash emerged during the South Atlantic Conflict in which Argentina and Britain flighted for two

British territories. English enjoys a prestigious status also in Colombia and many elite bilingual schools started to emerge as well (Mejía, 2002).

3.2 AFRICA

The African continent is characterized by a wide range of different minority languages. For African people in fact, the normalcy is multilingualism rather than monolingualism. This is due to Africa's significant colonial past: by 1914 in fact, France, Portugal, Germany, Belgium, Italy and Britain had colonized an overwhelming number of territories of the continent. After 1960 most of these territories obtained independence but the colonial background marked permanently each country. The best way to trace the history of a global language in fact, is by examining the expeditions of its sailor/soldier speakers (Crystal, 1997).

Moroccans for instance, speak Maroccain Arabic and a variety of Berber (Baker & Prys Jones, 1998; Blanton, 1998). Due to its colonial past most inhabitants learn French at school, and in the north of the country Spanish is taught as well. English learning is quite limited to the main cities and is mostly spoken by young people (Blanton, 1998). Also Tanzania is another example of multilingualism: since 1960 in the country there has not been an ethnolinguistic community that prevailed over all the other regional languages therefore it was then decided that children would attend the first three years of school in their mother tongue but then, from the fourth year, shift to Swahili which is the national language (Abdulaziz, 1972). In the case of Tanzania the language spoken by the former colonizers became an official language. English in fact, is still considered a very prestigious language despite the nationalistic surge that aims to elevate Kiswahili. The nationalistic movement in fact, embraced the expression "Land without a language, land without a heart" (Lyon & Ellis, 1991). Losing a minority language, as stated by Crystal (1997) would be a social and intellectual tragedy. Behind a language in fact, lies the history and identity of a population. It is often oral, and comes in various forms such as songs, proverbs and rituals. Once a minority language is lost, it is forgotten permanently.

Also South Africa presents an interesting array of languages. The first British influence in the country dates to the 1806. After 16 years English became the official language and the colonizers tried to spread it with the aim to replace Afrikaans. English soon started to be used for education, legislation and many other domains. As a result, a new English variety emerged, which was spoken by the black population. Most of them had acquired English in mission

schools and its learning depended on the different language background of each speaker. English was also used by the "mixed-race" and by Indian immigrants from 1860. In the case of south Africa, English can be considered a minority language because in 2002 it was spoken as a first language by only 3.7 million people out of 43.5 million inhabitants (Crystal, 1997).

Afrikaans is the language that is spoken by the majority of whites and by those who hold the power and was elevated to the official status in 1925. During the period of apartheid Afrikaans began to be seen by the black community as the language of repression, enslavement and authority. English, on the contrary, was regarded as the language of self-determination and riot. A language that was spoken in many other countries outside South Africa and which had therefore more possibilities to reach assistance internationally (Crystal, 1997).

In recent years Afrikaans speakers have become progressively bilingual. Nowadays, the south African accent shares some peculiarities with the Australian accent, but still, there are many different varieties and differences. This unique linguistic situation is due to the fact that in South Africa, language is a very delicate topic related to the political and social status and connected to the oppression of an entire ethnicity. In 1993 the Constitution officialized eleven languages -among which Afrikaans and English- in the hope of boosting the indigenous languages spoken in the country. Despite this multilingual attempt it is very likely that English will continue to play the role of lingua franca (Crystal, 1997).

3.3 ASIA

The Asian continent is characterized by many different countries, each of which with both linguistic similarities and differences. Japan for instance, has been considered for many years a monolingual country. Nowadays however, Japanese people are showing much interest toward bilingualism and are finally recognizing that despite being largely monolingual, bilingual people with immigrant origins have been living in the country for years. This acknowledgment led to the witnessing of the surge of immersion programs throughout the nation (Mejía, 2002).

Hong Kong on the contrary, is a territory which has a very different history from Japan. Multilingualism has always been widespread because of Sino-British colonialism during the 19th and 20th century. These two centuries significantly affected the formation of the current language which is characterized by mostly Chinese-speaking middle schools and a small

number of Anglo-Chinese schools. In 1997 Hong Kong was incorporated into China once more and English was further limited to the field of international commerce (Mejía, 2002).

The Philippines is another example of government that favors bilingualism. After the release of the new Constitution in 1973 Filipino was declared the other official language in addition to the already officialized English language (Sibayan, 1991).

Brunedi Darussalem is another Asian country which is very multilingual. In this territory indigenous languages and the Malay language are widely used. Also in this case, the arrival of English was the consequence of colonization: in the 19th century the territory was a British Protectorate. In the last years the government has applied an official bilingual instruction program in both Malay and English (Mejía, 2002).

In India English enjoys a position of significant importance and it was estimated that around three to five percent of the population use English on a daily basis. Translated into numbers this means that in 1999, around 30-50 million people made use of English (Kachru, 1986). As the years go by, the number of English speakers seems to grow constantly (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2002). A 1997 survey for instance, stated that a third of the Indian population can understand English and most of these can also speak it (Kachru, 2001). Also in this case colonization is the reason behind the spread of English: in 1600 there was the first official contact with the British Empire, that then established the British East India Company which was a group of merchants that were able to monopolize the entire commerce of the area (Crystal, 1997). From 1879 the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs was originated and consisted in placing Indian children in boarding schools located far from their birthplace, so that they could be totally immersed into the English language and Christian religion. Campbell (1988) claims that the first word the children usually learned was "soap" because instructors used to wash their mouths with it every time they spoke in their native languages. Another blow against Indian bilingualism was the lack of funds: by 1886 they were only directed to monolingual English schools.

Over the course of the British rule in India, until independence (1947), English became the language used for education and administration. For years, India was at the center of a linguistic controversy that led to the formation of a "three language formula" in 1960, which consisted in establishing English as the main alternative to the local state language which was usually

Hindi or a regional language (Sridhar, 1991). Nowadays Hindi is India's official language, whereas English is its "associate". This means that English continues to hold a privileged status and is used in several domains such as the media, business, government administration, armed forces and higher and secondary education. Because of the presence of many different regional languages, English is truly regarded as a lingua franca (Crystal, 1997).

3.4 OCEANIA

A further continent that presents a worth mentioning linguistic situation is Oceania.

Officially, in 1770 the first British explorer, James Cook, reached the shores of Australia. In the following twenty years, a penal colony was established in Sydney, which would be the first of many due to overcrowded British prisons. Most of the prisoners were from Ireland and London, this is why the Australian accent shares some similarities with the brogue of Irish English and the Cockney accent. At the same time, many are the differences, due to the influence of Aboriginal languages and, more recently, American language (Crystal, 1997).

From the middle of the 19th century immigration started to grow exponentially, and for many years never ceased. In 50 years the population of Australia went from about 400,000 to 4 million in 1900 (Crystal, 1997). Nowadays Australia is populated by approximately 17 million people. Almost all of them -around 90 percent- are of European origins, in particular British who arrived in Australia after the Second World War (Baker & Prys Jones, 1998).

English is Australia's official language and is spoken as a L1 by about 82.6% of the country's population. The language enjoys a prestigious status in both the economic and social field. Because of the high percentage of immigrants inhabitant however, other languages such as German or Italian are spoken, too. Despite the presence of many immigrant languages, in the '60s and '70s the Australian government implemented some official assimilationist language policies with the aim of offering instruction programmes in English as L2 for all immigrants, overshadowing the importance of maintaining their ethnic language (Baker & Prys Jones, 1998; Clyne, 1991). In proof of this, de Bot & Clyne (1994) stated that Dutch immigrants were "quick to discard their language and culture and adapt to the dominant group". Nevertheless, in the '80s this trend reversed with the National Policy on Languages (1987). This policy had 4 goals: first of all, aimed at teaching English to everyone, secondly reinforcing ethnic languages such as Aboriginal languages, thirdly providing the acquisition of a foreign language in addition to

English and lastly the equal right to learn a language (Moore, 1996). This was only the beginning of a widespread positive attitude toward multilingualism. In Clyne's words (1991): "a widespread official and societal acceptance of bilingualism as something legitimate, desirable and advantageous to the Australian nation as well as to individuals". This trend however, only lasted until 1991, when there was a change in policy that regarded learning a foreign language as a mere step "to enhance Australia's rise as a trading nation" (Moore, 1996: 479). In 1994 a report publicized by the Council of Australian Governments suggested the acquisition of neighbouring languages such as Mandarin, Korean or Indonesian (Moore, 1996). In any case, now more than ever, the Australian government encourages foreign language teaching at primary and secondary school level and today Australian schools offer classes to learn up to 60 foreign languages (Mejía, 2002).

The neighbouring country, New Zealand, was also colonized by the British empire but at a slower peace (the official colony was declared in 1840). Missionary of Christian religion arrived in the country with the aim of converting the Maori population from 1814 (Crystal, 1997). Linguistically speaking, three events marked permanently the social history of New Zealand. Firstly, compared to Australia, New Zealand maintained a closer relationship with Britain and preserved the British institutions and values. This proximity also reflects on the accent, which shares many features with the British one. The second event was the strong sense of national identity that highlighted the differences between Australia and New Zealand. This is one of the reasons why many of the words used in the two countries are different. Thirdly, the Maori community forms approximately 10 percent of the country's population, and in the last decades their needs and rights became of upmost importance for the country. Linguistically speaking, this caused the introduction of Maori vocabulary in New Zealand English (Crystal, 1997).

Regarding the Maori language and other ethnic languages, since 1970 the government of New Zealand committed to reverse the old trend of repressing the indigenous languages of the Maori population (Fishman, 1991) . In this country in fact, in 1984 the movement Kohanga Reo developed with the aim of starting preschool facilities in which it was only spoken Maori with the exception of an hour of English each day. Since 1990 in particular, its conservation became a priority and Oceania witnessed the emergence of several international organization and language rights movements with the goal of preserving declining languages (Crystal, 1997).

3.5 ANTARCTICA

Antarctica is an extremely unique continent. Most of the inhabitants are not permanent residents because of the extreme weather conditions. These people usually are researcher from many different countries, this is why Antarctica can be considered a multilingual continent. In Antarctica there has not been a language census yet, but English is used as the main lingua franca (Moore, 2019). English in fact, is the language in which most of the scientific studies are conducted, or the language in which more scientific information can be found. Speaking English in such a context, therefore, seems to simply be more practical. In addition, English-speaking countries are the owner of most of the bases on the territory. The second most spoken language is Spanish, as some of the bases are also managed by researchers who speak Spanish from countries such as Argentina, Spain, Peru and so on so forth (Kelly, 2019).

3.6 EUROPE
## 3.6.1 A PAST OF MULTILINGUALISM

The European continent has had a history of plurilingualism and bilingual education for many years. Before the '70s bilingual schools were mostly established in regions that shared a close border with another country in which a different language was spoken. It resulted in a quite small number of students that were able to speak more than one language. For instance, in 1967, in addition to the English language, the Welsh language was officially declared as a medium of instruction throughout Wales (Baker, 2001). Also Spain offers a very clear illustration of the spread of societal multilingualism: in the new Spanish Constitution of 1978 Galician, Catalan and Basque were acknowledged in the respective autonomous regions. These languages became compulsory in school as well (Siguán, 1992). The 70s and 80s were periods that were highly affected by the immersion teaching surge that followed the Canadian experiment (see paragraph on Canada). Despite the fact that the Canadian context differs significantly from the European one, it still has played an important part in encouraging European research and experiments (Iskra, 2021).

As early as the '60s the movement for language rights emerged, in particular, in the US. This movement was strongly encouraged by international bodies such as UNESCO, the United Nations, the European Union and the Council of Europe. All these institutions promoted multilingualism and incorporated it into their ranks. The United Nations for instance, have five different official languages: English, French, Spanish, Russian and Chinese (Crystal, 1997).

Europe is the continent that has promoted the spread of multilingualism the most and invested the more resources in its success. The European Union in fact, has made language learning a priority and in order to put this concept into practice, it has been founding several projects and programs that aim at multilingualism. As reported in *The Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*:

(Language education polices) should *"promote the learning of several languages for all individuals in the course of their lives, so that Europeans actually become plurilingual and intercultural citizens, able to interact with other Europeans in all aspects of their lives."* (Council of Europe, 2003).

In Europe in fact, multilingualism is considered a skill that can enhance the continent and make it more competitive. What the European union has planned to achieve then, is to be populated by people who are proficient in two other languages in addition to their mother tongue (see table below which presents the results of the report conducted by Eurostat in 2016 in which people answered the question: "Do you know one or more foreign language?").
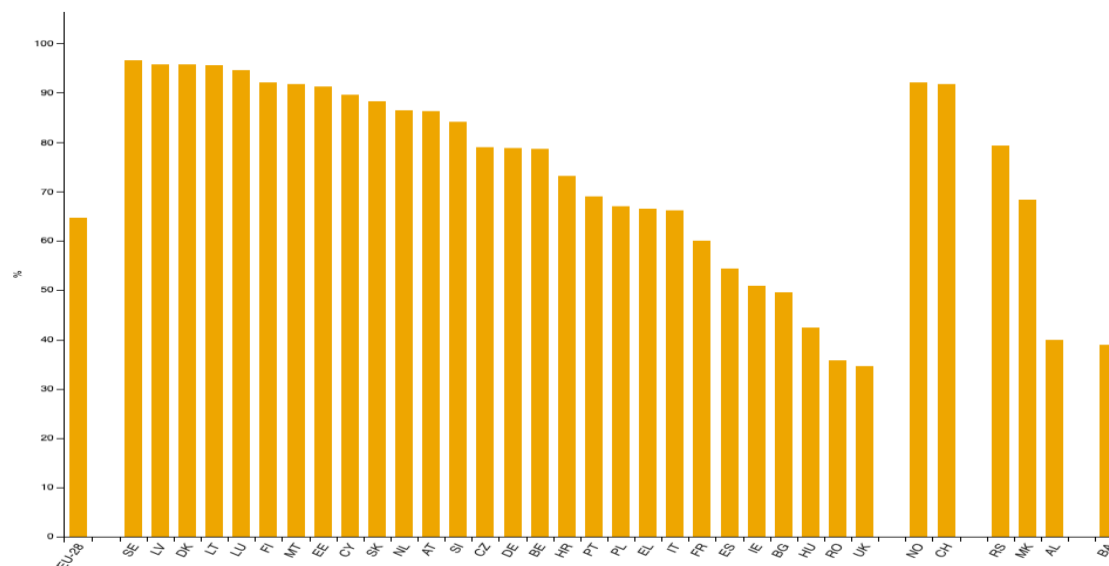
In Europe speaking a total of three languages is considered a basic skill that it is hoped will become the norm. Each citizen in fact, should put effort in acquiring the foreign languages as it will enhance their chances to obtain better employment opportunities in their future (Iskra, 2021). Multilingualism in Europe can also be seen as a tool to avoid a probable monopoly of English as the only foreign language taught. An English only situation in fact, would be a very likely scenario if plurilingualism was not a European goal. Furthermore, it is important

considering that one of the main cornerstones of the European Union is democracy, and as stated in the Guide for the *Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* the implementation of social inclusion and democracy relies on language instruction policy: one can only participate in the social processes and be socially included if they have the skills and chances to use their linguistic repertoire (Council of Europe, 2003).

1858 can be considered a milestone for Europe's plurilingual history as it was the year in which the first regulation was adopted. It defined which languages were the Union's official languages. Once determined, any European citizen could have written to any of the EU bodies in one of the newly declared official languages and expect an answer in that same language (Iskra, 2021). In the eyes of the European Union's members, linguistic diversity is a fundamental value to preserve. They created the motto "United in diversity" (European Commission, 2017) and implemented it through Article 3 of the Treaty on European Union (TEU) which claims that the Union "shall respect its rich cultural and linguistic diversity". Furthermore, Article 165(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states that each European country should adopt a similar positive educative policy, in particular when learning the languages of the Member States (Iskra, 2021). The EU does not only focus on official languages but also minority languages, specifically, the institution that deals with them is the Council of Europe's European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Iskra, 2021). A regulation (77/486/EEC) on minority languages was published and declared that all member states should foster the acquisition of the culture of the native country and the mother tongue of all migrant children (Wei, 2000). In 2000 the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, was adopted and introduced the obligation to show respect toward linguistic diversity and the prohibition of any discrimination on the grounds of language. The articles included in the charter were initially not binding, with the Treaty of Lisbon however, they became so. To implement mutual respect not only does the EU foster the acquisition of foreign languages but also encourage the mobility of every European citizen with the programs developed specifically for vocational and educational training (Iskra, 2021).

3.6.2 TOOLS TO ACHIEVE MULTILINGUALISM

In order to promote multilingualism, the European Council encouraged the training of language teachers, offering them the opportunity to spend some of their school years abroad, or providing them with groundbreaking tools such as eTwinning and the School Education Gateway. The

former for instance, provides a platform for teachers that work in European schools with the goal to collaborate, create projects, communicate and develop a feeling of being part of a European learning community. The latter on the other hand, consists in a place to put into practice European policies regarding school education. This includes Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC).

Another tool that helps promoting multilingualism is the establishment of a common indicator to assess language competence around the Union [(COM(2005)0356)]. This tool consists of a series of ranking levels, called "CEFR Levels", that were forged by the Council of Europe in order to evaluate proficiency. Thanks to the use of this instrument, it is much easier to estimate the levels of language proficiency in each member state (Iskra, 2021). In addition, these levels fostered methodological approaches and innovations and clarified what kind of skills a student had to acquire in order to reach a certain level of mastery of the CEFR scale (Council of Europe, unknown).

Furthermore, the EU collaborates with two language research bodies: the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe (ECML) and the European Research Centre on Multilingualism and Language Learning (Mercator). The former focuses on helping member states to put into practice efficient language-teaching policies, whereas the latter tackle the minority and regional languages in Europe and is responsible for the research, inventory and acquisition of language learning at home and school (Iskra, 2021).

An important achievement on the part of the EU is the development of EMT: The European Master's in Translation. This master aims at forming highly skilled people who wants to undertake a career in the EU (Iskra, 2021).

3.6.3 THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND MULTILINGUALISM

To demonstrate the effort toward multilingualism, the European Parliament itself implemented many projects and policies with the aim of promoting the use of multiple languages. These policies are rooted on equality, meaning that every single language of the EU is declared to be equal to the others and not prevail. This concept was put into practice through the translation of all parliament documents into all the official languages of the EU. In addition, each member of the Parliament is free to talk in any of the twenty-four languages and visits to the

Parlamentarium and the House of European History are offered in every language (Iskra, 2021). This results in an institution to which any European citizen can have equal access to, and have the possibility to communicate without any problem of language. In addition, any European citizen can stand for election at the European Parliament, this reflects the democratic principles and morals of the institution itself (European Parliament, unknown).

On 24 March 2009, Parliament stated that multilingualism was a strength for the continent. On 11 December 2020 an agreement between the Council and the Parliament was reached in which it was determined a continuation to the Erasmus+ programme for the following years. It was stated that one of its goals was to promote, develop and safeguard linguistic and cultural diversity (Iskra, 2021).

Regarding minority languages, in 2013 a resolution was adopted with the objective of urging member states to take action to protect linguistic diversity and endangered minority languages. In 2018 as well, another resolution was approved concerning non-discrimination and protection of minorities in the EU. In particular, the European Parliament stressed the importance of respecting linguistic rights with regard to minority languages in countries that have more than one official language. It also aimed at teaching and promoting the minority language with the goal of maintaining it over the course of time and generations (Iskra, 2021).

3.6.4 PROGRAMMES AT THE EUROPEAN LEVEL

It is safe to say that the most well-known language program founded by the EU is certainly the Erasmus+ Programme. This programme fosters the learning of foreign languages and linguistic diversity. The final aim of the project is to boost learning results and increase the mobility of European citizens. What the program hopes to achieve is to encourage participants to learn the language and culture of the country in which they go study abroad (Iskra, 2021).

Other programs are the Creative Europe Programme -which offers support to translate manuscripts and books- or events such as the European Day of Languages. The first edition was in 2001 and was very successful, this is why the Council of Europe and the EU took the decision to repeat the celebration every year organizing many events that encouraged multilingualism. The 2021-2027 edition boasts a budget of € 2.44 billion, which is almost the double of the budget that was dedicated to the program of the years before (Iskra, 2021).

Additional ways to promote foreign language acquisition is through projects such as the award European Language Label. This award in fact, is given to the countries which present the most original language-acquisition projects, or the best foreign language teachers. Another award is the Juvenes Translatores. To gain this prize a 17-year-old student of a European member state must translate from or into any official language of the EU (Iskra, 2021).

3.6.5 EUROPEAN APPROACHES TOWARD MULTILINGUALISM: CLIL, IMMERSION PROGRAMS, EMI AND CBI

3.6.5.1 CLIL

In the 1990s the need to find a more innovative program to teach foreign languages started to be acknowledged in Europe (Pérez-Cañado, 2012; Eurydice, 2006). In particular, in those years the Council stated in the Lingua programme that "promoting innovation in methods of foreign language training" was extremely important (Eurydice, 2006). In this new scheme, European bodies aimed at giving students "… opportunities to use language/s in a variety of settings and contexts in order to enable them [students] to operate successfully in a plurilingual and pluricultural Europe." (Marsh, 2002).

In this context, the programme that was developed and soon started to spread all over Europe was CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) (Eurydice, 2006). The acronym was created by a number of European language educators and experts of the period (Coyle, Hood, & Marsh, 2010; Beacco, Bouquet, & Porquier, 2003; Coyle, 2008). Another acronym that is often used to refer to language integration in content is ICLHE (Integrating Content and Language in Higher Education) whose only difference from CLIL is that it is more specific for high school students (Costa & Coleman, 2013; Costa, 2016).

Between 1993 and 2000 (Marsh, Maljers, & Hartiala, 2001) many scholars and language experts determined practices that combined language teaching and integrated content (Coyle, 2002; Eurydice, 2006; Marsh, 2002; Marsh et al., 2001). The resulting program, CLIL provision, is a groundbreaking method that went beyond mere language teaching. Coyle defined CLIL as "a fusion of subject didactics, leading to an innovation" (Coyle et al., 2010). Its aim is to put at the same level of importance both the subject taught and the language in which it is taught. When implementing the CLIL programme, the foreign language in fact, is

no longer the subject, but only the channel in which whichever subject can be taught (Eurydice, 2006). Coyle and other scholars in 2010 put forward a conceptual representation that was called the "Language Triptych". This is represented in the image below. It was created to show how to use language in CLIL provisions: first of all, "language of learning", which is needed in order to understand the basic concepts treated in class. Secondly, "language for learning", which helps the formation of an array of linguistic acts. Lastly, "language through learning", because the more students are stimulated to use the language, the deeper the acquisition of the language itself.

Img: https://journals.openedition.org/ced/1836?lang=en
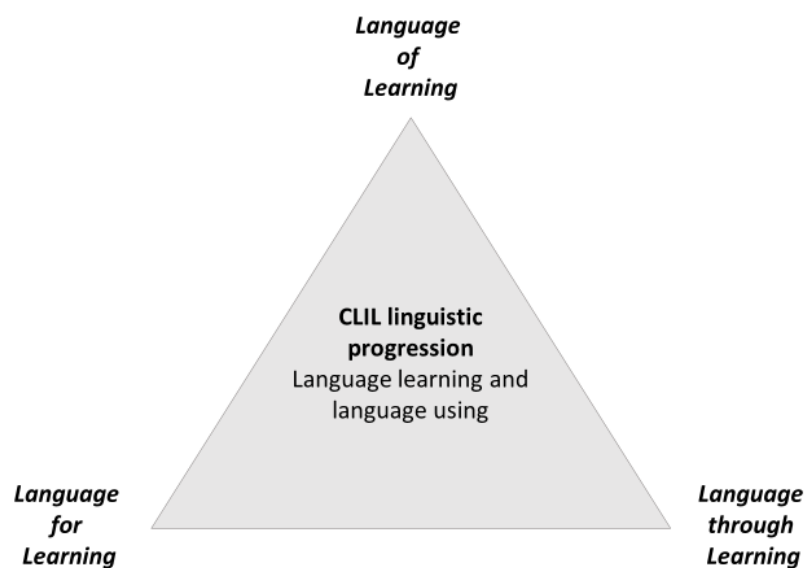
Initially, this kind of approach was not widely known in Europe, but had already been tackled in North America where a series of studies had been conducted and brought forward the idea that not only language teaching does help the learning of academic and linguistic competencies, but also bring motivational and cognitive advantages (see Canadian immersion program experiment) (Coyle et al., 2010; Cummins, 1980).

In addition to the goal of teaching different subject through the use of a foreign language, therefore developing critical thinking and getting students used to solve problems and communicate in another language, CLIL also aimed at different objectives (Gabillon, 2020). Each country gave importance and priority to some specific aspects of CLIL provisions: regarding socio-economic objectives, they wished to prepare students to an increasing international world and to allow them to find a successful career. Concerning socio-cultural

objectives, they wanted students to learn about different cultures other than theirs, making them more open toward who is different. Thirdly, as far as the linguistic objectives are concerned, they wanted students to develop language skills with a focus on communication and the ability to use them in real life. Finally, regarding educational objectives, they aimed at teaching different subjects through an innovative method (Eurydice, 2006).

The resolution[1] in which Europe presented the plan of cooperation in foreign language teaching and bilingual education through CLIL was released in the 1995 by the Council of Europe. This project also improved language teachers' ability to teach by encouraging mother-tongue language assistants all over Europe to support the teachers. In addition, funds were devoted to support and train teachers of non-language subjects that wished to teach in a foreign language[2]. 1995 was also the year during which the European commission stated that their goal was to promote not only bilingualism but trilingualism for European students. This objective was reiterated also in March 2002 by the Barcelona European Council that underlined the importance of early teaching of at least two foreign European languages. This goal was put into practice when the Commission, in 2003 set in motion the Action Plan 2004-2006[3]. In this plan it was stated that the CLIL programme played a significant role in helping the EU to achieve its language goals. In this plan an important survey by the Eurydice Network was conducted, with the aim to collect data on CLIL provisions (Eurydice, 2006).

CLIL was extensively implemented at primary and secondary levels of education in most of the European countries. The image below depicts the European situation of CLIL provisions in primary and secondary education, 2006/07. While not up to date, it gives an idea of the linguistic provisions offered throughout Europe.

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[1] Council Resolution of 31 March 1995 on improving and diversifying language learning and teaching within the education systems of the European Union, Official Journal C 207 of 12.08.1995.
[2] Decision No. 253/2000/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 January 2000 establishing the second phase of the Community action programme in the field of education 'Socrates', Official Journal L 28 of 3.2.2000.
[3] Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity: An Action Plan 2004-2006', Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions of 24.07.2003, COM (2003) 449 final.
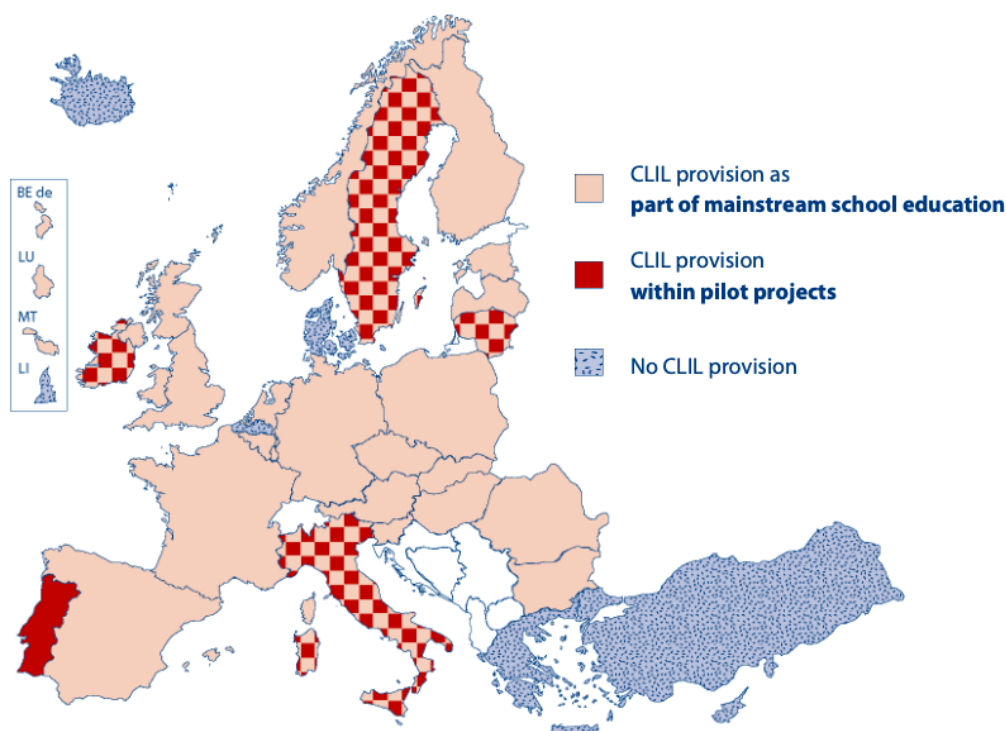
In some cases, however, the use of foreign languages through CLIL provisions can be organized even sooner at pre-primary level. In the entire European continent there are only six countries that did not implement the CLIL provisions. This may be due to geographical distance and historical reasons.

However, it is important to mention that the countries that properly implemented the provisions, meaning that CLIL is applied in every single school, are only Malta and Luxembourg. In the other countries on the other hand, CLIL provisions are available only in some schools. Usually, when the second language taught is the foreign language, CLIL is more widely implemented, on the contrary, if the language taught is a minority language, then it is less widespread.

CLIL success and implementation vary depending on the country: for instance, Italy, the UK, Spain and the Netherlands applied it favorably (Eurydice, 2006). The Italian government for instance, was the only state that made CLIL compulsory for students enrolled in their last year of high school since 2010 through a series of reforms (Langé, 2007). Furthermore, students enrolled in the linguistic curricula started to take CLIL lessons as soon as their third year, with the addition of another foreign language in their fourth year (Saccardo, 2016). The variables can be the number of official state language, geographical matters, demographic reasons, the

presence of cooperation agreements and more in general administrative and political factors (Eurydice, 2006).

The first countries that applied the provisions were those who had more than one official language such as Malta and Luxemburg, that implemented the project in the 19th century. They introduced CLIL with the goal to teach their citizens their official languages. Between the 1940s and the 1950s many countries followed their example and offered CLIL provisions to teach a minority language (such as the UK or Poland). Generally, CLIL spread all over Europe during the '90s after the introduction of specific legislations (Eurydice, 2006).

Regarding what kind of languages are taught through CLIL provisions, usually, one is the official State language, whereas the other one is the target language which could be either another official language, a foreign language or a minority language. This language choice can vary depending on the country. For example, in England and the Czech Republic the second language taught is the foreign language, whereas in Northern England, Wales and Scotland it is the regional language. On the other hand, the countries that have more than one official language such as Ireland or Belgium are able to combine the acquisition of the two through CLIL provisions. There are some countries that do not limit themselves to the teaching of bilingual instruction but go beyond and offer classes in three languages such as Spain, Sweden and Austria. Most of the time, the target languages are the one that enjoy the highest status and are considered from an economic, social and political point of view "more important" such as English, German and French. In spite of this, CLIL provisions also include the teaching of minority languages with the aim to maintain and protect them. As expected however, despite the wide range of languages that can be taught through CLIL type provisions the one that is more often taught is English. However, this has not prevented teaching in other foreign languages, such as French, German, Spanish or Italian (Eurydice, 2006).

In addition to the most evident linguistic advantages, CLIL also presents organizational perks: thanks to this program students can be in contact to the foreign language much longer than if it was a conventional language class (Eurydice, 2006). During traditional lessons in fact, often it was not possible to devote more teaching hours for foreign languages on the school curriculum (Cenoz, 2015; Gabillon & Ailincai, 2013; Marsh, 2002). CLIL was then the solution to increase the time of language teaching without sacrificing any subject (Gabillon & Ailincai, 2013; Marsh, 2002). A further advantage is that CLIL is reported to increase the learning of

specific terminology and vocabulary due to the fact that CLIL lessons tackle real-life situations (Lasagabaster, 2014).

Furthermore, this kind of approach is assumed to bring a positive attitude toward foreign language acquisition. Students in fact, tend to feel less pressured and stressed in a learning environment in which the acquisition of the language is not the only goal but rather on communication and content. The CLIL approach then, leads to an increase in motivation in most students. At the same time, despite the strong motivation, most students felt less confident about their proficiency on the foreign language (Lasagabaster, 2008).

Generally, any student can participate in CLIL lessons; there are some countries however, that limit the enrollment through admission tests that evaluate the pupils' proficiency of the language in question. In France for instance, students must take an examination to prove that they are able to follow and understand the lessons in the foreign language. In other countries the exam is more general, testing the students in all the main subjects such as mathematics and their mother tongue (Eurydice, 2006).

Once started the CLIL lessons, the students' level of proficiency and improvement in the language and in the subject taught is usually examined, some countries have a test in the target language, others in the mainstream one. In any case, once evaluated positively, each pupil earns a CLIL certificate that recognize and officialize their level of the language. These certificates often enable the students to pursue their academic career abroad, thanks to bilateral agreements between countries. These certificates in fact, prove their proficiency and allow them not to take the foreign language test when applying for foreign schools (Eurydice, 2006).

Ideally, any subject can be taught through CLIL provisions. Usually however, they tend to revolve around specific activities or subjects. Many countries in fact, for secondary level education choose social science subjects or scientific ones. In some others physical education or artistic subjects are preferred.
Regarding primary education the choice tend to be toward subjects as sports and creative or environmental activities (Eurydice, 2006).

Another topic in which many European countries differ in the implementation of CLIL provisions is the amount of time dedicated to the teaching of the foreign language. Each

country, or even each region or school follow different rules and belief in what it is best for the students. Some pupils are only taught CLIL classes in one subject and only once a week, whereas others have lessons every day in multiple subjects. In Malta for instance, half of the classes are held in English, the other half in Maltese (Eurydice, 2006).

Besides the assessment of all students, assessment of the teacher competency is equally fundamental. The teachers that are to teach CLIL lessons not only do they need to know about the specific subject, but also to be fluent in the foreign language enough to teach it clearly. Most of the time teachers are selected if they possess a language certificate or qualification. Many obtained a double degree in language and another subject (Eurydice, 2006).

No matter the certificate, degree or experience of teacher, in about half of all the European countries the governments have implemented training courses and specific qualifications that aim at preparing teachers to held CLIL type classes. These kinds of courses differ in each country, for instance, Austria offers a few lessons or a one or two-semester course whereas countries such as England or the Netherlands put at disposal postgraduate certification with a focus on international and bilingual education (Eurydice, 2006).

Other ways to form teachers are in-service training, when courses are provided for specific occasions by groups or bodies that gathered to encourage CLIL provisions. In addition, more innovative ways to train teachers were found such as the creation of websites. In order to promote language training some countries offered a series of benefit for the teachers such as salary increases, free accommodation or additional time to organize lessons (Eurydice, 2006).

Teachers can also make use of the CLIL Matrix which is a useful tool that helps plan lessons and resources with the aim of maintaining students on what, according to Vygotsky (1978), is the 'zone of proximal development' (ZPD), that in other words, is a zone in which students feel challenged and motivated if the correct guidance is offered" (Coyle et al., 2010). Another useful tool that teachers can take advantage of is the "European framework for CLIL teacher education" (Marsh et al., 2010) that sets a series of guidelines for teaching and define the competences required to teach CLIL provisions. Teachers in fact must be able to recreate a learning environment in which culture, communication, content and cognition -the 4Cs framework- are taught (Coyle et al., 2010).

Implementing CLIL provisions is not an easy path because the obstacles that could hinder the countries' attempts are many. As it was mentioned before, very specialized and prepared teachers are fundamental, in addition, compared to the traditional foreign language teaching, more teaching materials is required, leading to higher costs. An obstacle could also be restrictive legislation that do not encourage or even allow the teaching of another language in addition to the mainstream one.

3.6.5.2   IMMERSION PROGRAMS

Many European schools also adopted immersion programs according to the belief that a complete immersion in the foreign language was the best way to teach it. For instance, some research was conducted with the aim to demonstrate that in Catalonia, students that participated to a fully immersion program became fluent both in Catalan and Spanish, with no deterioration of the latter (Artigal, 1993). At the same time, in the Basque Country which adopted an immersion program based on half lessons in Basque and the other half in Spanish showed equally successful results as well (Sierra & Olaziregi, 1989; Gardner, 2000).

3.6.5.3   EMI

The acronym EMI stands for English as a Medium for Instruction. According to Wilkinson's definition (2017), EMI is about "teaching and learning through an additional language, English". This approach has been included in many high-level educational institutions such as universities. Nowadays in fact, it is quite common for universities to offer at least one course completely held in English. The reason for this sudden popularity is because of the increasing internationalization and globalization of the world, which allows a higher number of students and scholars to go study abroad. The high level of international enrollment therefore, brought universities to offer these kinds of courses to give foreign students the same opportunities to study that local students have (Wäcther and Maiworm, 2014). Furthermore, universities are embracing EMI courses also because they boost their international prestige (Gazzola, 2017). In addition, as already mentioned, English has become the main language for many scientific fields, which is why often some courses are held in English (Airey, 2003). This kind of approach has been spreading in European high-level educational institutions for the last few decades and contrary to CLIL provisions, only focuses on the content taught, not the acquisition of the language. That is why the English that is usually used is ELF (English as a Lingua Franca), that gives priority to fluency rather than grammatical accuracy (Jenkins, 2014).

EMI courses have been taking root all over Europe at different time and rates of success. Some of the reasons behind this inconsistency are brought forward by teachers, such as: no training, short notice and more preparation (Airey, 2011). Organizational problems in fact, seem to be the main obstacle that prevent teachers to prepare their EMI lessons successfully. According to a study conducted by Vinke, Snippe e Jochem (1998) 67% of the teachers asked for more time to prepare English-medium courses. This led to the need to provide a support for teachers in order to help them prepare their lessons in English (Martin del Pozo, 2017; Fortanet, 2008). Teachers stated that when teaching in English they were not able to hold a lesson as complete as it would have been if it was in their mother tongue. They affirmed in fact that they were not able to provide as much detail, flexibility and fluency (Airey, 2011). These problematics led to the discussion on what kind of level of proficiency should be required to teachers that need to hold EMIs lessons. As far as Klaassen (2008) is concerned, ideally, a teacher should have a C1 level of the CEFR. It was proven in fact, that teachers that were not very proficient tended to distract students from their explanations due to long pauses between sentences and strong accents (Lavelle, 2008; Klaassen, 2008).

On the part of students, on the other hand, contrary to CLIL, EMI courses require a certain level of English proficiency in order to follow and understand the lessons (Unterberger, 2012). This competency is usually proven through an admission test or the obtainment of certain linguistic certifications or qualifications.

3.6.5.4   CBI

Another type of approach that is often implemented to achieve multilingualism is CBI (Content-Based Instruction). This kind of provisions present several definitions as the acronym is a quite vague term. Some authors describe it as a term to refer to any kind of instruction that teaches a subject through the use of a foreign language (Stoller, 2008; Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 2003). According to Met (1998) on the other hand, CBI places itself between content-driven programs and language -driven ones. This means that immersion secondary schools such as the Canadian high schools, EMI programs at university level, CLIL and simply language classes that include content are all under the umbrella term that is CBI. As Macaro (2018) observes, CBI programs do not limit themselves to a certain age or field of study, however, it can be assumed that most of the time CBI courses are offered to students of

anglophone countries such as the United States in which English is the L1. In Krashen (1982) opinion, CBI approaches have a positive impact in students' attitude because it decreases anxiety. The pupils in fact, as long as these activities are understood and clear, learn the language indirectly through the use of educational activities or interesting text without as much pressure on the acquisition of the language itself as if it was a traditional language lesson.

The inclusiveness of the term is advantageous because it embraces many different CBI models depending on whether the stress is put on the acquisition of language or content. At the same time however, it also presents some drawbacks: because of how general it is, according to Butler (2005) it might be one of the reasons for a potential scarce implementation as it would be difficult to put it into practice trough educational policies that requires more specific directives.

CHAPTER 4
INTERVIEWS

The fourth chapter of this theses will present the data gathered during a series of interviews that were conducted during the months of November and December 2021. The subjects that were interviewed are of both genders and can all be considered young adults whose age range from 22 to 38 years old. Each interview lasted on average one hour and it was recorded. The subjects were selected based on the fact that they are bilingual. Despite this common ground, as it will be seen, the participants affirm having different conceptions, attitudes and experiences toward the knowledge of the two languages. This thesis attempts to present each case and then analyze and confront the topics covered. Each participant was informed that they could withdraw at any stage of the interview, and was assured that their data would remain anonymous and would be used only for this study.

4.1 INTERVIEWEE N° 1

The first interviewee -MJ- is 24 years old, she speaks Italian, Moroccan (Arabic dialect) and Arabic. The author met her during undergraduate studies in foreign languages at Ca' Foscari University. The interview was conducted in Italian.

MJ's parents are both from Morocco. Her father arrived in Italy for employment purposes ten years before the rest of the family joined him. As soon as she, her mother and brother arrived, her parents forbade the use of Arabic at home as much as possible and her father started to talk to them in Italian only in order to help them learn it quickly. They arrived when she was six years old, in May, a few months before the beginning of the first year at the Italian public school. Therefore, she had the summer months to gradually come into contact with the Italian language. In particular, at the time she used to live in an apartment and her neighborhood was full of families with children of a similar age. She had the chance to play with Italians from the beginning and she had to try to communicate with them using basic words or gestures. The first words she learned in fact, all revolved around the lexical field of children games. In addition, her parents allowed Italian tv only, so that every cartoon and movie she watched was in Italian.

As mentioned, MJ started elementary school after a few months in Italy. Her school had an extremely good impact on her Italian because it offered several extracurricular courses for

immigrant children. Many of these courses were based on the teaching of Italian through the use of games. She clearly remembers that she found them quite enjoyable. She loved to participate and talk to her friends, so she started to consider Italian as a necessity from the beginning. These kinds of extracurricular courses continued also in the summer. MJ claims that by the beginning of the second year of elementary school already, she was able to write and speak in Italian.

After two years in Italy, their parents decided that it was time to switch back to Moroccan dialect at home because her brother and her were clearly losing their native language. What made them take this decision was that during one of their summer trips to Morocco, their parents realized that MJ and her brother could not communicate easily with their relatives. MJ remembers the frustrating sensation of being unable to follow and participate in the conversation in Moroccan. She affirms that what stopped her from communicating was not having difficulty speaking, but rather being afraid of making mistakes. As soon as they went back home then, their parents strongly encouraged them to speak in Moroccan as they agreed that their level of Italian was good enough and that they could improve it in situations and contexts other than family. Moreover, during her fifth year of high school, her parents added Moroccan and Arabic TV channels. MJ specifies that with her parents she spoke Moroccan only, but she learnt to speak and write in Arabic when she lived in Morocco during the Muslim classes and the mosque. After a few years in Italy, however, she states that she could not speak nor write in the language any longer because of lack of practice, and she was deeply upset by it because she really enjoyed the religious classes, reading the Koran with her friends and having the possibility to learn a new language. She remembers a specific episode in which she found a Koran at home, opened it and tried to read it without success. After that, when she came back to Morocco for the holiday, she secretly asked one of her relatives to help her remember how to read in Arabic. Once she came back home, she surprised her father by reading in Arabic in front of him and she felt very proud.

In high school she noticed that she was particularly keen on languages and therefore she decided to continue the study of foreign languages at university level as well. During these years she never attended CLIL classes. She decided to pursue her academic career by going to the university and she decided to undertake the foreign languages curricula. It is worth mentioning that one of her language choices was Arabic. This was because, despite knowing

how to read and speak it thanks to the Arabic tv and the books she read, she wanted to know the grammar and improve her language proficiency.

During university, specifically during her master's studies, she had the chance to attend some English Medium Instruction (EMI) courses, in regards of which she had a very positive experience. She strongly believes in fact, that they were extremely useful and that learning English through the acquisition of different subjects is one of the best methods she has ever experienced to learn a foreign language. In particular, according to her, it is an excellent method to learn specialized vocabulary and to learn about the etymology of a word.

In her opinion, it is a very positive factor that the European bodies are making an effort to include bilingualism as one of their main principles. On the other hand, however, she thinks that there is still much work to do as most of her friends speak English poorly and their proficiency in the compulsory second language taught during middle school is even worse. As far as she is concerned, the best solution to achieve proficiency in foreign languages would be to hire more native and competent teachers to teach Italian students at a very young age.

According to MJ, a bilingual person is somebody who masters both languages equally in all fronts. She considers herself bilingual because she can write, read, speak and listen perfectly in both Arabic and Italian.

In general, her parents were able to pass on a positive attitude toward both Arabic and Moroccan. In any case, she never felt pressured about continuing to study languages at a higher level as she did. She states that choosing a linguistic field at university was her own choice. She decided to study Arabic because she liked it and she was particularly interested in it. She highlights that many believe that all children of Moroccan immigrant origins speak Arabic but often this is not the case: many of her Moroccan friends in fact, do not speak it, they only speak the Moroccan dialect.

She noticed that there are some emotions and feelings that she can better express with a specific language. For example, when she is angry, she only curses in Italian because she feels like when she tells them in Moroccan the bad words that she uses do not convey as much anger. Her Moroccan friends told her in fact, that when she uses them, she does not seem angry, rather composed and proper, which is not the kind of message that she wants to pass on. This might

be due to the fact that she learnt Moroccan when she was a child, so she never really had the occasion to use bad words, this might be the reason why when she tries to use them, they do not feel "natural".

To the question "Do you ever feel like you have different personalities based on the language you are speaking?" MJ answered affirmatively: when she speaks Arabic she is much more relaxed and quiet, whilst when she speaks in Italian she feels more herself, she can fully express her personality. She thinks that in Arabic she feels quieter because there are much more formal rules that always must be kept in mind, such as showing respect toward others and several formal rules of conduct, therefore, her personality is more restrained.

MJ affirms that she has no personal preference in language. Regarding culture, she claims she has no preference either because as Arab and Italian cultures are so different, she feels as if she cannot fit in any of the two. She is considering going to live in Turkey, a country that, according to her, reflects her bi-culturalism: a mixture between the Italian and the Arab culture.

To the question: "Are there some topics that you would prefer to talk about in a specific language?" MJ answered affirmatively once more. The main topic in which she would have more difficulties speaking in Italian is religion: she is Muslim and as she always went to the mosque and read the Koran in Arabic, she feels more comfortable tackling this specific topic in Arabic rather than Italian, because she knows much more vocabulary on the matter. In addition, she claims that even if she tried to talk about religion in Italian, she would still need Arabic words to clarify and explain the concepts fully.

If she had to choose in which language to hold a speech, she claims that she would choose Italian, but she is sure that if she went to an Arab country for some time, and had the time to practice the language a bit more she would have no problem at all.

Moreover, she strongly believes that she has an advantage over monolingual people because knowing multiple languages allow people to travel and speak with people all over the world. She noticed that Arabs highly appreciate the fact that despite living in Italy for most of her life, she can still speak and read in both Arabic and Moroccan. This is not as common as it is believed to be in Italy. A further advantage is that she was offered more jobs thanks to her knowledge of several languages, for instance, she had the chance to translate some texts from

Italian to Arabic and vice versa. In addition, knowing more languages was useful during her university studies: she was able to read articles in different languages, thereby discovering quite different points of view from journalists from cultures that have very little in common.

Looking at the Italian society point of view, it must be considered that at present, Arabic is not considered a prestigious language. Many prejudices revolve around it, all caused by ignorance and fear toward people who are different. MJ remembers that when she was in middle school and high school, she had some racist classmates tell her to "only speak in Italian" even if she said an Arabic word by accident. Their comments affected her negatively, to the point that she started to feel uncomfortable speaking Arabic in public, even when she was speaking to another Arab-speaking person. She was scared of what other people might think of them, and she did not want them to believe they were speaking badly of them. MJ is sure that if she had spoken what is nowadays considered a prestigious language such as English, French or Spanish no one would have commented. In any case, she is under the impression that lately things are improving; teenagers are more open toward diversity and rather than criticize the unknown are curious toward it and ask questions to learn.

Contrary to the past, now she does not feel ashamed of speaking Arabic and Moroccan. On the contrary, she feels proud of all the languages she knows. If when she was younger, she tried to hide the fact that she could read and speak in Arabic and Moroccan, now she considers them an asset and takes advantage of it. In particular, in the last year she really focused on the study of Arabic because she felt the need to master it further and she is quite satisfied with the level she was able to achieve. When she was younger her confidence in her Arabic skills were low, but then, as she grew older, she had more chances to practice it and was positively surprised with the level she obtained.

It is worth mentioning that she does not have an accent, so people never mocked her for it. A little accent can emerge when she speaks Moroccan, but usually, if she is uncertain about how to pronounce a Moroccan word, she usually pronounces it in Arabic standard, just to avoid pronouncing it wrong, and most of the time people understand her anyway.

At the moment she is living with her brother so they only speak Italian because they both grew up in Italy and it "simply feels more natural". When she is in Italy, she rarely has the chance to use Moroccan or Arabic. In any case, she has some Moroccan friends who she talks to in

Moroccan. She practices Arabic every time she prays, and thanks to the social network she can keep in touch with her Moroccan and Arab friends who live abroad. In particular, she specifically put effort in maintaining non-Moroccan friendships with Arabic speakers, so that she would have the occasion to practice standard Arabic. She also attended some courses of Arabic at the university and passed an exam on Italian-Arabic translation.

Concerning the future, she states that as soon as she feels that she is starting to lose a language, she will act accordingly, putting more effort in her studies and practicing more. In any case she is quite sure that at this point she can no longer forget either of the two as she feels that the languages have been internalized. She plans to pass both languages on to her future children. In her opinion, in fact, even if they do not need Arabic or Moroccan in their everyday life, they could always be useful, add value to their professional life and broaden their mind.

In any case, she is aware that passing a language on to children is not an easy task as she witnessed her nieces struggling with Moroccan. They were born in Italy, and now that they are older and their parents are trying to make them learn it, they find it extremely hard. She would like to speak to her future children in Moroccan and Arabic only, in particular at a very young age because she believes that they would have plenty of chances to learn Italian beyond the family context.

"Arabic is called "an ocean of words" and despite its difficulties, it is a beautiful language that I've always wanted to learn well".

4.2 INTERVIEWEE N° 2

The second interviewee -MP- is 38 years old and he is bilingual in English and Italian. He is the husband of one of the author's cousins. The interview was conducted in Italian.

MP's parents are of different nationalities: his father is Italian and met his British mother during his Erasmus year in Bath, England. When his year abroad came to an end he went back to Italy, and his mother, despite the opposition of her parents, followed him.

MP was born in Italy, so initially, even if his mother spoke to him in English, his main language was Italian. At the time, in fact, MP's had an Italian accent and a limited vocabulary when speaking English.

Things changed drastically at the beginning of the second year of elementary school (he was seven years old), when his family moved to England. At the beginning, for the first four months only his father moved, but then the entire family followed him. They stayed in England for six and a half years. After their relocation MP's Italian accent when speaking English diminished to the point of disappearing and his English vocabulary went beyond his knowledge of Italian. During this period English started to prevail over Italian. In England, MP attended English public school and studied French and German. He noticed that he was particularly keen on learning foreign languages, he supposes that the reason behind this is because he was already used to speak two different languages. When he spoke French and German he had an English accent, probably because he learnt these languages in an English context with English classmates (the teachers, however, were native speakers). During this period his parents made him and his sister attend an extra-curricular course of Italian to learn how to write.

His family and him went back to Italy when he had to start high school. It was a very difficult change for him because during elementary school in England, despite private lessons of Italian, he did not learn how to write Italian well, and he did not know any grammar. Specifically, he attended the scientific high school, so he also had to attend a compulsory course of Latin that to him, was extremely difficult. He states that the English course was very easy, but he had some difficulties trying to explain to his classmates grammar rules because in England he never studied English grammar. In general, he did not like Italian high school at all. In England he was a very good student, his scores were among the best ones and if he had stayed in England he would have attended a prestigious high school. He remembers that in England he was very excited to learn, he liked the challenge, but when he started Italian high school everything changed and he no longer put effort in his education.

He then continued his studies at university, choosing the engineering curricula. He decided to attend university in Italy and considered going to England for a year through the Erasmus program but then he realized that the university he was attending was full of international students, so he always went out with English-speaking people and was able to surround himself with foreign students. He really enjoyed his years at the university. His entire course

unfortunately, was in Italian. He recalls a specific conference, in which a British scholar came to make an explanation of a scientific project and he was the only one that was able to ask questions and interact with the professor fluently. His Italian professor was so proud of him that during the finals almost did not ask him anything about his course and simply gave him the top grade.

He is the oldest of two brothers and one sister. Usually, they speak Italian with their father and English with their mother. Her mother learnt how to speak Italian when she arrived in Italy but she still has a strong British accent and prefers to speak English. When their parents are alone his father tends to talk to her in Italian, whereas she answers in English. In any case, in particular when they were younger and his mother did not know Italian well, English was their main communication channel as his father has a foreign language degree and knows it very well. When MP talks to his sister (three years younger than him) they make use of English because they grew up together when they lived in England. On the other hand, when he speaks with his two brothers (one of 10 and one of 15 years younger) he uses Italian, because they grew up in Italy and spent most of their lives in Italy. In the case every member of the family is at home it is always a mix of languages.

His siblings all grew up in a very similar way but still they have very different levels of bilingualism, depending on their experiences and the amount of time they spent in which country. For instance, his two younger brothers spent most of their youth in Italy but attended University in England and obtained a British degree. Since then, their English level improved exponentially but they still have a slight Italian accent, and their main language remains Italian. He states that his two brothers stayed in England the same amount of time his sister and he did, however, they are less proficient in English. He thinks that the reason behind this is that his sister and he were in England when they were around ten years old, a period in which children are particularly receptive toward language acquisition, whereas his brothers went to England much later, when they were 18 years old, so their ability to learn the language as mother tongue had diminished already.

To the question: "Did you start speaking later than other kids of your age?" he answered that it was not the case. On the contrary, his mother told him that when he was two years old, he acted as an interpreter between his two grandmothers who did not know how to speak each other's languages. The only linguistic drawback that he has experienced was not being able to

find the words in the right language. If he is speaking in Italian and he has to say a word, often that word will not come up to his head, only the English version will, and vice-versa.

He feels extremely lucky. He never had to do anything special to know such important and prestigious languages. It was simply lucky enough to know them and learn them passively from a very young age. He never felt forced, in his eyes the acquisition of both languages has always been a very natural process. He stresses that in his mind, he never learnt two separate languages, but rather one single language with many synonyms: the same sentence can be said in two ways with different words.

To the question: "Are there some topics that you would prefer to talk about in a specific language?" MP answered negatively once more. To his family the choice of language never depended on the topic of conversation, but always on who was taking part in it. For instance, in a context in which the majority of people speak Italian, even his mother would speak it, even if to him it sounded strange. The same thing applies when his father speaks English, he only speaks to him in English if the majority of people taking part of the conversation are English-speakers only, or in the case they do not want to be understood by others.

To the question: "Are there some feelings that you feel more comfortable expressing in a specific language?". His answer was negative, and even in this case, the only factor that makes him choose a language over the other is who he is talking to. If he hurts himself and wants to express frustration, he changes his exclamation depending in which country he is in that moment: if he was in Italy he would say "ahi!", whereas if he was in England he would say "ouch!".

When he has to engage in certain "internal tasks" such as counting, his choice of language usually depends on what he is doing in that moment: if he was writing an e-mail in English, then he would count in English. On the other hand, if he had to do calculus and mathematical expressions, he does them in Italian because he attended his engineering master in Italy and learnt the methods in Italian.

In addition, he never felt like he has a split personality. He always felt himself, and the two languages he masters are simply part of him. People tells him that when he switches language his voice changes as well.

He feels more sentimentally attached to the Italian culture. He feels a British-Italian rather than the contrary, he calls himself a "Britallian". On the one hand he does not have a personal preference as to language choice, but on the other hand he does have a preference on culture, and he prefers the Italian one. For example, when the Italian football team plays against the English team, he cheers for the former. This cultural preference is probably due to the fact that he has lived in Italy for 31 years and only 7 in England, so he had more experiences in Italy and more time to grow fond of the culture. If he had been asked this question when he was fourteen years old, during his seventh and last year in England, he would have probably answered that he felt more English than Italian.

He feels more intelligent than others, and he strongly believes that he has an advantage over monolinguals in some tasks such as logical problems and learning foreign languages. He thinks that everyone could solve a hypothetical logic problem, but he is likely to be quicker at it. He never had problems at school, he feels like his mind is very dynamic and prone to quickly adapting to external changes. This is the reason why it is important for him to continue speaking to his daughter in English.

According to MP, bilingualism is not a fixed concept. On the contrary, there are many different levels of bilingualism. As mentioned above, clear evidence of this are his siblings: all of them are bilinguals, but if he feels that in his case Italian and English are exactly at the same level and he has no accent or difficulty in vocabulary in neither of the two languages. Unlike him, his brothers, due to the fact that they lived in England at an older age, despite speaking English very well and understanding everything, have a slight Italian accent and a reduced vocabulary.

In addition, he stresses that in his opinion someone can become bilingual not necessarily thanks to their parents. For example, he considers his mother bilingual, even if she was born in England and both her parents are British. Despite her origins in fact, she has lived in Italy for almost two decades and learnt Italian while in the country. When she speaks Italian she has a strong English accent and a limited vocabulary but nowadays Italian is her main language. Any Italian who hears her speak, despite her fluency, will understand that she is not native. He strongly believes that anyone can become bilingual at an older age, through education and specific courses. This kind of bilingualism however, will be less developed compared to his bilingualism. Moreover, he stresses that bilinguals through education will miss the entire

cultural background that people with immigrant parents or parents of different nationalities have.

When he considers his personal view of bilingualism, he sees the two languages at the same exact level in every single skill: writing, listening, speaking etc. He does not have any accent in either of the two languages. When he speaks English he has the standard English accent, English-speakers from around the world always take for granted that he is from England. Usually, it is only when he introduces himself and says his name that people understand he is not an English person. He also thinks that he gesticulates more than the average British person so that could give his origins away. When he speaks Italian he has the Veneto accent because he grew up in the region and is currently living there.

He never felt embarrassed by speaking the two languages in any context. He strongly believes that both Italian and English are very prestigious languages, and he thinks that if they were not, he would probably have experienced some racist episodes or felt embarrassed. He noticed that whenever he speaks English in Italy it makes him look "cool". The same applies when he speaks Italian in England, or even more, in America. As far as he experienced in fact, the Italian accent is considered very charming. To Americans in addition, also the British accent enjoys a good reputation, so whichever language he chooses to speak in, it makes him look good.

He has always felt extremely proud of his bilingualism, he always felt grateful and he never felt ashamed. On the contrary, many were jealous of him. So his attitude never changed over the years and remained positive. In the case of his brothers however, the situation is different: as they spent most of their youth in Italy, they only heard English from their mother so they did not have a strong interest in its acquisition. Nevertheless, once his brothers grew up and understood the importance of English, their attitude changed drastically.

The only "negative" example that he can think of about being bilingual is that in the eyes of others he never fit into a single nationality, he has always been seen as "the foreigner". For instance, when he is with his Italian friends he is called "the English one", and when he is with his English friends he is introduced as "the Italian one".

He is currently the manager of an Italian branch of a British company. His job requires the use of both English and Italian. Everyday, he has to make use of the two languages, therefore he

feels like he is maintaining a perfect level of bilingualism and can switch between the two very easily. He is sure that being bilingual helped him obtain his current job and be professionally successful. He stresses that, contrary to a native Italian who can speak English well, not only can he speak English perfectly, but he also knows the British culture, all the references and inside jokes. This is what made him stand out and be hired for the job. When he speaks with his British colleagues it is as he was one of them because he is aware of everything that is happening in England, its history and traditions. He believes that in a professional context, when speaking with costumers and colleagues, being able to talk and make jokes is extremely important to build a bond of trust. For example, if he did not have a strong British cultural knowledge, he would probably know nothing about cricket because in Italy it is not very popular. On the contrary, thanks to his upbringing he can participate in a conversation on traditional British sports whereas his Italian colleagues, no matter their English proficiency, cannot.

He believes that as he can practice both languages often, his fluency in the two languages is at the same level, but sometimes he notices that he has some problems with idioms and figures of speech. It can happen in fact, that he "Italianizes" something such as saying "wash my teeth" rather than the correct English way: "brush my teeth".

He underlines that normally he considers himself perfectly bilingual, but sometimes it takes some time to "enter" completely into a language. Usually after a week in England he can clearly feel the English language prevailing over Italian, and after a week in Italy the exact opposite happens.

He has a daughter of one. He tries to speak to her in English as much as possible, while his wife, being Italian and not feeling very comfortable using English, speaks to her in Italian. Ideally, he would like his daughter to grow up as he did. Despite his efforts, however, he thinks that his daughter will become less bilingual than he is, because she spends most of her time with his Italian wife, so she has a greater influence on her than he has. Moreover, contrary to MP's experience, they live in Italy and have no intention of moving to England, therefore any other people that interact with his child usually speak Italian. He foresees that his daughter's bilingualism will be more similar to the one of his brothers rather than his. He thinks that they should enroll her in a bilingual school and go to England often to make her acquainted with the language and culture. At the moment, the child is enrolled in a bilingual nursery. His intentions,

therefore, are to pass on the language to his daughter and continue to feel equally proficient in the two languages, using them in both his professional and family life.

He believes that his daughter's bilingualism will not be as "perfect" as his because he has some experiences with his friends or relatives' bilingual children: his sister for example, is as bilingual as he is, she has two daughters to whom she has always talked in Italian. Now the two girls understand English but do not like speaking it and only speak it if forced. On the other hand, an American friend of his convinced his Italian husband to speak to their children in English only. The result is that their children speak English perfectly, and as they live in Italy, they can speak Italian as natives as well. These examples made him clearly understand the importance of the family language. He would like for his wife to speak to their daughter in English but she does not feel comfortable and confident enough. In any case, they agreed that as soon as the child starts watching tv all the channels will be in English.

"Thanks to bilingualism, I was able to recreate an English-speaking community in my Italian university".

4.3 INTERVIEWEE N° 3

The third interviewee is NAD. She is 21 years old and speaks Portuguese (Brazilian dialect and accent), Italian and English. She is the daughter of a cousin of the father's author who lives in Brazil. The interview was conducted in Italian.

NAD's parents are of two different nationalities: her mother is Brazilian whereas her father is Italian. She has a brother two years younger than her. Her brother and she had a very similar upbringing but despite this, their level of fluency in the two languages is quite different: he has always had more difficulties in Italian than her because, unlike NAD, he is not a very outgoing person and he is not as interested in foreign languages and different cultures as she is.

Her parents met in Italy. Her mother came to Italy ten years before meeting his father. During this time, she was able to learn Italian quite well. Before NAD was born, in 1999 they went back to Brazil. His father did not know any Brazilian and never took Portuguese classes, but he was able to learn the language fluently in the field, working and having to survive in a foreign country.

NAD grew up in Brazil knowing both Portuguese and Italian. Regarding Italian, she never knew it perfectly but for as long as she can remember, she has always understood and spoken it. When she was born, in 2000, his father had only been in Brazil for a year, so he did not know much Portuguese. Therefore, the communication language used by her parents initially was Italian only. She remembers that there were some words that she only knew in Italian, and that she thought were Brazilian words like "tovagliolo"[4]. She used to speak fluent sentences in Portuguese and then add Italian words because she did not know they belonged to another language. His father has always spoken Italian to her, in particular when she was very young and he did not know Portuguese. When he started to learn it too, he began to mix the two languages as well. With her mother, on the other hand, she always spoke in Portuguese. When they were all together it was a mix of the two languages, it did not matter what language they were speaking, the important thing was communication and understanding each other.

To the question: "Did you start speaking later than other kids of your age?" she answered negatively. She has always loved talking and she started speaking at an early age. A drawback of multilingualism, however, is that she often involuntarily mixes the languages and that the word she is looking for does not come to her mind in the language she needs, only its translation in another language does. Moreover, she noticed that whenever she is not sure about how to say something in Italian she "Italianizes" the Portuguese word hoping that in Italian is something similar. This is because both Italian and Portuguese are Latin languages that share much vocabulary, so the chances to have similar words in the two languages are considerable.

Growing up, the only chance she had to speak Italian was with her family or with some Italian friends of her father. Her friends, classmates and any other people she spoke to were Brazilian. Her father, in addition to speaking to her in Italian and telling her bedtime stories and anecdotes in Italian, also listened to Italian songs and watched the Italian channel "Rai" so she could watch Italian news and cartoons in Italian with him.

She did not attend a bilingual Italian-Portuguese school, and Italian has never been among the foreign languages she could choose to study at school. During her academic career she studied

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[4] Tovagliolo is the Italian word for napkin.

the compulsory foreign languages established by the Brazilian government: Portuguese, English and Spanish.

She started studying English at 10 years old, but she has always been influenced by it through music, movies etc. In 2011 she also started an after-school English class to improve her English proficiency because she was interested in the language. Nowadays she certified her English level and she got the maximum score: C2.

She attended an American-Portuguese bilingual high school so she obtained a double degree. Half of her lessons were in Brazilian, which is a dialect of Portuguese that mainly differs in accent and some vocabulary. The other half of her lessons were held in English, but she did not have any language problem thanks to the private English classes she attended when she was younger. She could have attended a year in America in an affiliated high school but she decided not to. In any case she met American friends online and she kept in touch with them. After finishing high school she went to Australia for a month to live with some relatives and improved her English skills even more.

Three years ago she decided to start an Italian class to improve her Italian and to learn the grammar. She knew how to speak it from her father but she did not know the formal rules of the language.

She feels particularly keen on learning foreign languages. For instance, she has never studied French, but thanks to the fact that she knows many Latin languages she usually understands most of written French. Due to her linguistic background and knowledge, she feels like she can connect the dots and guess the meaning of most words. In addition, she considers herself a very communicative person that loves to speak and learn new things. She has always been very curious toward different cultures and foreign countries; it is part of her personality. In general, she thinks that being bilingual and being particularly outgoing made her inclined to foreign language acquisition.

She never felt forced to learn Italian, and she never felt annoyed or had a negative attitude toward the language. This is because as long as she remembers, she has always understood it, to her Italian has always "made sense". In case there was a new word that had no similarities

to any of the Latin languages she already knew, she was usually able to guess its meaning from the context, so she never felt the frustration of not understanding.

Her parents have always encouraged her to maintain the two languages and she thinks that they were able to pass on a positive attitude in language acquisition. In addition, her parents let her free to choose the language she preferred speaking, never forcing her to speak one or the other. She remembers that her father in particular, when she was younger, was able to encourage her to use Italian by challenging her, pushing her and asking her to speak in Italian to see how well she knew it, whether she knew a certain word or not etc. He was able to make learning Italian a game in which she wanted to win and demonstrate she was good at.

In her opinion being multilingual has many advantages in almost every field: multilingual people are more likely to obtain better-paid jobs, to have more friends, to enjoy less traditional and touristy trips and discover the true culture of a new country. In addition, they can speak a language that others do not understand, the choice whether to make themselves understood or not is completely up to them and this is something that she really likes.

She feels more intelligent than monolinguals because she thinks that due to the fact that she knows several languages she has developed a greater memory than most. In addition, she feels like she is a quick thinker and she has a dynamic mind. She does not think that her mind is built differently from others, but she thinks that it works differently, in a more developed and enhanced way.

To the question: "Are there some feelings that you feel more comfortable expressing in a specific language?" she answers positively. It happens that when she is angry and she is speaking in Italian, she switches involuntarily to Brazilian because she can express her emotions better. In fact, she feels that in Italian she has not the same range of vocabulary that she has in Brazilian to fully convey her anger so she often becomes frustrated. Moreover, she states that when she is particularly tired she prefers to switch to Brazilian because it is less demanding and feels more natural. She considers Brazilian her "comfort language", the language that she feels more relaxed using and that requires less effort.

Regarding the three languages in which she feels multilingual -Brazilian, Italian and English- she does not think that one is more important than the other but she has a personal preference

toward English. If she had to pick the more beautiful, she would choose Italian, whereas if she had to choose a "comfort language" she would pick Brazilian.

Concerning her proficiency in the three languages in question, she feels like her skills differentiate: in Italian for instance, she is quite uncertain when she has to write, she always has to re-read what she wrote, she checks on internet and she has doubts, whereas when she writes in Portuguese she has no problems at all.

If she had to choose in which language to hold a speech, she claims that she would choose Brazilian because she would feel more confident, she would have a broader range of words which to choose from, and she would be able to use more specific and formal words. In English she would not have many problems either, whereas in Italian she thinks that she would not be ready yet, she would be afraid to make mistakes.

To the question "Do you ever feel like you have different personalities based on the language you are speaking?" NAD answered negatively. She only changes herself based on the culture of the country she is living in, but not based merely on the language.

To the question: "Are there some topics that you would prefer to talk about in a specific language?" NAD answered that generally no, she would not have problems speaking in any of the three languages she knows about any topic. But she noticed that there are some topics that are very specific to a certain country with specific words that must necessarily be used. In those cases, she thinks that she would probably have a hard time trying to translate them.

She does not consider herself bilingual but rather multilingual because in addition to Portuguese and Italian, she feels very proficient in English as well. She believes that multilingualism is not a definitive concept but it is characterized by levels of fluency. There was a period in fact, in which she considered her English skills superior to her Italian ones. Now she thinks that they are approximately at the same level.

She is not bothered by her accent, she actually likes that people can guess where she is from because she is proud of her origins. Sometimes however, when people ask her where she is from, she wonders if it is because of her accent or because her Italian is not good enough. She claims that she has less accent when she speaks English than when she speaks Italian. Ideally,

she would like to diminish her accent, make it slighter, but she would like to maintain it. In any case, she never felt embarrassed, she is very open to corrections and she likes to learn and improve herself because she knows that as Italian and English are not her first languages it is normal to make mistakes.

She never felt embarrassed speaking Italian in Brazil or speaking Brazilian in Italy. She never had bad experiences, on the contrary, when she was little she felt like a genius.

She does not think that either Brazilian or Italian are prestigious languages because they are not among the most spoken languages. The one that is certainly more important is English.

She is currently living in Italy, having arrived in Milan two months ago. She feels that in these two months her Italian has improved exponentially. Italian words come to her mind much quicker and she can speak faster than before, in addition her Portuguese accent has diminished and her Italian pronunciation is becoming more and more precise. It is as if her bilingualism in Italian and Portuguese was reversed: now her first language is Italian. She does everything in Italian: work, study, social life etc. The only occasion in which she uses Portuguese is when she talks to her mother or her Brazilian friends on the phone. Actually, now that she is in Italy and she has switched to an "Italian mindset" she finds going back to Brazilian very difficult and lately she talks in Italian to her mother as well because the Portuguese words do not come to mind as quickly, and her mother answers in Italian or a mix of Portuguese and Italian.

Concerning her future, she would like to stay in Italy and start Italian university next year. This is why it is important to her to continue improving her Italian. She is sure that Italian will also be useful for her future professional career as she would like to enter the fashion industry. If she ever decides to have children, she would like to pass multilingualism on as her parents did with her because she thinks that knowing several languages is a significant advantage that can open many doors.

"Being multilingual is not only about knowing more languages, but also about discovering an entire new culture that goes beyond the language. It is experiencing a different way of seeing things and living life. It really makes you understand how different we are and how each of us has different beliefs and opinions. It makes you realize that the reality you live in is not the

same reality of everyone and that what makes the world beautiful and worth discovering is its differences".

"Italian to me is not a mere language that I learnt on a whim, it is much more, it is strictly correlated to my family and is part of me and my personality. Without it I would feel incomplete, half".

4.4 INTERVIEWEE N° 4

The fourth interviewee's name is MG. He is 22 years old, and he speaks French, English and Spanish (Argentinian accent). Regarding the last language it is worth pointing out that Argentina's official language is Spanish, but, in contrast to European-Spanish, it is characterized by a different accent and some differences in vocabulary. The author met MG during an intensive English course in Brighton, England, in 2015 and they have kept in touch ever since. The interview was conducted in French.

His parents met in Boston, US. His father is from France and at the time he was studying in the United States for his university theses, whereas his mother is from Argentina and was working in the city. His sister (she is five years older than him) was born there. When his parents met her mother did not speak any French and his father did not speak Spanish so their communication language was English. Before he was born the family moved to Marseille, France. Her mother never went to French school, initially, she learnt the language from her father and when they moved to France she learnt it in the field. When MG was very young and his mother was not fluent in French yet, she always spoke to him in Spanish, singing him Spanish baby songs and telling him Spanish fairytales. Regarding his father skills in Spanish, nowadays when he goes to Argentina he can communicate in Spanish with his wife's family, but he does not consider himself bilingual, he can simply make himself understood and communicate at a basic level.

When he is with his father and sister, they always speak French. When his mother joins the conversation it depends: her sister knows Spanish much better than him because she spent a year in Argentina with an international study program, so she does not feel the need to practice Spanish as much as he does. That is why she usually speaks French with her mother whereas he speaks Spanish to her: he does not have many chances to improve himself so he takes

advantage of having a Spanish-speaker mother and talks to her in Spanish as much as he can. Generally, when their mother is taking part in the conversation a mixture of the two languages is used, for instance, most of the time his mother asks his sister something in Spanish and her sister answers in French and vice versa. Even if his parents can speak English very well, they never use it, and they never used it in the past. When his parents are alone, they usually speak in French only.

They never had Spanish TV and he never had Latino or Spanish friends. His chances to speak Spanish, therefore, have always been very limited to when he goes on holiday in Argentina, when he speaks to his mother, whenever he meets Spanish-speaking tourists or when he watches Spanish TV shows or movies.

He attended French public school. His first classes of English started in elementary school when he was seven years old. He started to seriously study English and be particularly interested in it in middle school, at about ten years old. This was the age during which he started to watch tv series in English. In middle school he also decided to take Italian classes rather than Spanish. This is because he already knew how to speak Spanish and he would rather learn a new language. He studied Italian from the age of 10 to 13 and he now can hold a simple conversation. He was particularly advantaged in Italian because as it is a Latin language it shares many aspects with Spanish.

In high school, on the other hand, he chose Spanish because he wanted to learn the grammar. The Spanish class was extremely easy to him and he used to help all his classmates with homework. He never attended CLIL classes because he would have had to stay in class for two additional hours per week and he was lazy.

He continued his studies at university, where he chose the engineering path. He spent his last year of university in Korea thanks to an international program. He attended Korean university and all the lessons were in English.

His parents never forced him to speak both languages, but they highly encouraged him to do so. The main reason was because if he could not speak Spanish he would have had a hard time during their trips to Argentina because he could not have communicated with his mother's family. His parents then, were able to make him understand that Spanish was an important

language and that he needed to be fluent in order to understand his Spanish-speaking family. He remembers that they pushed him with kind suggestions like "you should probably read in Spanish more". Generally speaking, he always saw Spanish acquisition as a pleasure and nowadays he is extremely grateful to his parents for teaching him two languages.

To the question: "Do you think you are particularly advantaged on the acquisition of foreign languages because you are bilingual?" he answered affirmatively. He thinks that the fact that he had to switch from one language to the other from a very young age helped him. He also adds that his elementary school was full of bilingual children, and since that age, it was clear to him the difference between bilinguals and monolinguals: bilinguals were more advantaged in foreign language acquisition. In general, he has always loved language classes, he loved participating and being particularly good at them. However, he also stresses the fact that when he went to Korea for a year, he tried to learn Korean and he found it extremely difficult. In any case, he points out that he did not put as much effort as he could have in its acquisition.

He states that he considers himself equally French and Argentinian, but he knows French culture much better. In fact, he does not have a personal preference on culture, only in language choice, and he chooses French.

To the question: "In which language do you think?" he answered: "Always in French, unless I go to Argentina for more than three weeks". The longest he stayed in Argentina in fact, was one month, and after the third week he was already much more fluent and he did not have to think before speaking.

In particular, he remembers that when he was younger, at about 10 years old, he went to Argentina, and when he went back to France he had trouble speaking French. At that age in fact, he really felt like a "sponge", absorbing the language extremely quickly.
In addition, he states that it is very common for him to forget a word in the language he is using and remembering its translation in another language only.

If he had to choose in which language to hold a speech, he claims that as he has come to terms with the fact that it is normal to make mistakes, he could manage in Spanish as well. This is because he is quite outgoing and not shy, so he is not scared of making mistakes or being judged

by others. What is important to him is to make himself understood, even at the cost of making mistakes.

To the question: "Are there some topics that you would prefer to talk about in a specific language?" MG answered affirmatively. Engineering topics would be extremely hard to explain in Spanish. In general, he would feel more at ease and comfortable speaking in French any kind of topic.

To the question "Do you ever feel like you have different personalities based on the language you are speaking?" he answered that he is not sure, he never thought about it. He is probably different but he does not know precisely in which aspect. He is sure that his voice changes.

He does not think that he is more intelligent than others. He just believes that he is particularly keen on learning foreign languages thanks to his bilingualism. In addition, he thinks that bilinguals are able to adapt more easily than monolingual to external factors. They can fit in in the society or in a certain culture quicker.

As far as he is concerned, being bilingual offers many advantages such as obtaining more prestigious jobs, travelling, meeting more people and being able to help them.

To the question "Do you wish your parents had done more to make you learn Spanish?" he answered negatively. In his opinion in fact, after a certain point language acquisition no longer depends on the teaching of the parents but is rather up to the individual and the amount of effort that they put into the learning of the language. For instance, his sister and he had the same upbringing but she is much better than him because she committed to it and took the decision to go abroad.

According to MG a bilingual person is someone who can pass as a local to native speakers. It is someone who has no accent and that is able to use idioms and local expressions.

To the question: "Do you consider yourself bilingual?" MG initially does not answer directly. He states that as he has never lived in a Spanish-speaking country it is difficult to answer to the question. He only learnt Spanish from his mother, so he feels like he lacks much vocabulary and that he does not have the slang from Argentina. After some thought and consideration, he

states that he does not consider himself bilingual, but he is sure that if he lived one to six months in a Spanish-speaking country he would become bilingual. Looking at it from another perspective, he could consider himself bilingual, but a bilingual who lacks practice and do not know much about the culture of Argentina.

He thinks that bilingualism is not a definitive and static concept, but rather it has many different levels of fluency. In his opinion, as languages are such personal matters, each individual should define it as they see fit. Certainly, there must be a level which is considered the bare minimum to be included in the definition of bilingual. As far as he is concerned, the minimum requirement should be that the individual does not hesitate to have a conversation and is fluent in both languages.

Even for monolinguals there are different levels of French proficiency: someone could be better at speaking than others, while someone else could be particularly keen on writing and so on so forth. It really depends on the person. Therefore, he thinks that it is difficult to define precisely such a personal concept.

He considers his first language French. Even if he is fluent in Spanish, there are some skills that need to be improved such as his writing. If he thinks about it, he believes that his speaking skills are better in English than Spanish. English in fact, has always been a language he really enjoyed learning and had more chances to practice. In addition, he thinks that his English proficiency is at professional levels, whereas his Spanish is not: he does not know many Spanish specialized words and formal idioms. If he had to move to a Spanish-speaking country and work in a context in which he had to speak Spanish, he thinks he would have some issues. Specifically, he does not know any Spanish vocabulary concerning the engineering field.

When speaking Spanish MG has a peculiar accent: it is a mixture of Buenos Aires accent - which is an accent from the north of Argentina- and European French. Usually, when he speaks with Spanish-speakers they can guess he is speaking Spanish with an Argentine accent and with a strange inflection.

To the question: "Have you ever felt embarrassed when speaking Spanish in France?" he answered negatively. He never had bad or racist experiences due to his bilingualism. He thinks that this is because both Spanish and French are prestigious languages and many would like to

speak them as well as he does. He thinks it is a matter of how prestigious a language is because he has many Algerian friends who do not even speak Arabic because their immigrant parents refused to teach it to them as Arabic is not considered prestigious by many. There was a period of significant Italian immigration in France and the same thing happened: as French people felt threatened and suspicious toward Italian immigrants, the first generation of Italians in France was not taught Italian by their parents and grandparents. Social acceptance of bilingualism therefore, in his opinion is purely connected to the historical moment and to the importance and power that a certain language holds.

Regarding his accent, he does not really feel embarrassed about it because he knows that he is not a native speaker of English or Spanish. What it is more frustrating to him, it is not knowing or remembering the words in a certain language.

To him speaking Spanish has always been like a statement. This is his mother's influence, who has always been extremely proud of her origins. In his opinion, by speaking a foreign language you encourage people who hear you to be more open-minded ad welcoming toward who is different.

He is currently living with his older sister in Paris, so he only talks in French. He uses Spanish only if he calls his mother and if he watches Spanish TV shows.

He is quite satisfied with his current Spanish level because at the moment he has no interest in going to a Spanish-speaking country for academic or professional reasons so improving his proficiency is not among his priorities. He thinks that it is more likely he will need his English skills in case he goes abroad. In any case, if his future job required it, he would be ready to improve his Spanish proficiency.

If he has children in the future, he would like to pass the languages he knows on to them because they could always prove useful. If he continues to live in France, he would probably try to speak to them in Spanish most of the time.

At the moment he has no intention of moving to a Spanish-speaking country. He could have an experience of a few years in Argentina in the future but not in a short time.

"When people ask me what I am, French or Argentinian I tell them I am both. Look over my door, what do you see? Those are the Argentinian and the French Rugby flags. I cannot choose, I cheer for both of the teams".

4.5 INTERVIEWEE N° 5

The last interviewee's name is SV. She is a 31-year-old Canadian woman and she is French-English bilingual. The author met her during a work experience in a Canadian summer camp. The interview was conducted in English.

She was born in Ottawa, which is a region bordering the French province of Quebec. Due to this proximity, despite being born in a region in which the first language is English, French is very present because of the high number of federal buildings and government employees who must necessarily be bilinguals. Being bilingual in Ottawa in fact, is considered the norm, and the general attitude toward multilingualism is very positive.

Her father's first language is French, in fact her father's side of the family is all French Canadian, this means that they are all French-English bilinguals but they speak mainly French. They grew up in Quebec, which is a region in which French is the first language and every inhabitant is bilingual. She stresses that the rest of Canada has English as first language and the majority of the population is monolingual. Her father can speak fluently both French and English, and works in the two languages. She thinks that her father is more bilingual than she is because his entire family always spoke French to him while growing up. When she was younger, she had many chances to speak French because half of her family spoke mainly French. She also spoke it whenever she travelled to the Quebec province or when she went to French mass. In addition, since kindergarten half of her lessons at school were in French. However, she has always lived in an English-speaking region and all of her friends are English speakers.

Her mother speaks English only, so when she is taking part in the conversation the entire family talks in English, too. Now her mother understands French well but she rarely speaks it. SV has a younger brother; he, however, had a very different linguistic upbringing from the one she had, because when he was 7 years old he was diagnosed with leukemia. From then on everyone

started to talk to him mainly in English, even his father's family. In addition, he was enrolled in a bilingual immersion program as she was, but he had to quit as soon as the illness was diagnosed. When he was healed, the following year their parents tried to put him back into the immersion program but as he had missed the entire second year -a year in which the foundations and basic rules of French grammar are taught-, he was not able to keep up with his classmates. In general, therefore, he had much less contact with French than she had, so she does not think he would consider himself bilingual. He only took the compulsory course of French, which teaches basics, and can understand French quite well thanks to his origins, but he has trouble speaking due to the lack of practice.

When she was younger, she grew up with her cousins who were bilinguals as well. They mixed languages all the time. For instance, her cousins spoke French and SV answered in English. Nowadays they keep mixing the two.

To sum up, when she is with her close family she always speaks English unless it is only her father and her, in that case they speak French only or they mix French and English. It often happens in fact, that the word in the right language does not come up, but only the translation in the other language does.

Canadian TV has channels in both languages, so she has always watched tv shows and movies regardless of the language.

In Canada children have two educational options: they can enroll in monolingual English schools or into immersion schools. These latter are part of a bilingual educational system based on the teaching in equal basis in both French and English. She was enrolled in the program during kindergarten and her entire academic career was in both languages.

Immersion programs are public and free. Despite this, many parents who speak English only prefer to enroll their children in monolingual schools because if no one in the family can speak French, usually the children have trouble doing their homework and keeping up with their bilingual classmates. Generally speaking, she thinks that immersion programs are made for all bilingual children but only for monolingual children who come from wealthy families that can afford hiring a private French teacher to help with homework.

In any case, whether children are enrolled into immersion programs or not, since grade four they have to attend a compulsory French class until grade nine called "Core French" which teaches the basics. She also noticed, as a foreign language teacher herself, that the general attitude toward French acquisition in monolingual classes is more negative than the attitude of students in immersion programs. Students feel less confident of their skills and do not believe they can learn how to speak French well.

At university she decided to attend an extra class to learn German. She decided to do so because her grandmother from her mother's side is German and she wanted to try to communicate with her.

She thinks that her two languages are approximately at the same level. Sometimes, when she has to speak French she needs a minute to "warm up". In general, she is a little more comfortable communicating in English and a slightly more insecure speaking French. This is probably because she had fewer social opportunities in French.

To the question: "Which language would you choose if you had to hold a speech?" she answered that she would prefer English but she could hold it in French as well, she would only want to practice more.

To the question: "Are there some topics you would have difficulties explaining in a language?" she answered affirmatively. During her academic career, she has always attended science classes in French. At university however, she had a science course in English. During the exam she was in difficulty because she did not know the terminology in English, but only in French.

There are not specific emotions that she feels more comfortable expressing in a certain language. What matters to her is who she is talking to and what language the other person feels more comfortable speaking.

She feels divided in two very different cultures. On one hand, French-Canadian culture is very unique, on the other hand, English-Canadian culture is not very defined and clear, it is more of a mixture of all the cultures that the immigrants brought through the years, it is like a melting pot. In her words:

"English-Canadians have an identity crisis, their culture is so mixed that it is not identifiable. When they are asked for a traditional food they do not know how to answer and they usually go with Maypole Syrup".

Most of French-Canadian people come from a Catholic background, they are very traditional, nationalistic, proud and have different holidays and laws than the rest of the country. For instance, French-European influence can be felt in the fact that no religious representation can be wore in public places such as school or governmental buildings, exactly how it is in France. Many in fact, regard French-Canadian culture as very similar to the European culture.

To the question: "Do you feel more represented by one culture in particular?" she is not sure how to answer. She never says: "I'm French-Canadian" but she always says: "My family is French-Canadian". She feels pride in that, she likes that French-Canadian culture is so characteristic and different.

To the question: "Have you ever felt forced?" she answers that when she was younger, she had quite a negative attitude toward French learning, not in the academic context -she has always loved school- but in the family setting. She did not see the point in having to make an effort and speaking French with her family when she knew that everyone could speak English fluently anyway. It often felt like a chore and her thought was: "Why are you making me speak French?". She had some resistance to learning French also because all of her friends only spoke English. Whenever it was her choice then, she would talk in English. When she watched TV for example, she always chose English programs. In addition, she was insecure of her French skills and felt as if she could not talk and express her personality as well as she could in English, so she often felt frustrated. When she speaks English, in fact, it is as she had a different personality: she is much more outgoing and dramatic, whereas when she speaks French she is more composed and thinks through things.

Now that she is older, she feels extremely grateful to her parents for teaching her French and she never felt as they could have done more to teach her.

She states that she thinks in both languages. If she is surrounded by French speakers for some time she will start thinking in French. At the same time, when she is surrounded by English speakers it is hard for her to switch to French. To the question: "In which language do you

count?" she answered that she does it in French, even if she is doing something in English. She does not know the reason behind this, thinking about it, it is probably because she is used to teaching children the French basics, and numbers are among the first things that she teaches.

To the question: "Do you feel more intelligent than monolinguals?" she answered that she does not necessarily feel more intelligent, but people think she is. She believes that her ears are very good, she can listen and replicate sounds easily. For example, when she meets a new person with a foreign name, she usually repeats it and most of the time her pronunciation is correct. She does not think that her mind works differently from monolinguals. She believes that she is particularly keen on the acquisition of foreign languages because she is simply more used to making mistakes and she knows that language learning is a long process and practice makes perfect.

She thinks that globally, English is more important than French because it is spoken by more people. At the same time, she thinks that as French is spoken by fewer people knowing it make her special and stand out.

In her opinion a bilingual -or multilingual- person is someone who is comfortable and fluent speaking two or more languages. Initially she included in the definition only those who grew up speaking more languages since a young age, but then she changed her mind and broadened her definition including those who learn the language later on and become fluent. As far as she is concerned, therefore, a bilingual person is someone who speaks more than one language, no matter at what age they learnt them.

She stresses that bilingualism is like a spectrum. Even bilinguals that are very good at both languages feel more comfortable and confident in one of the two. She considers herself bilingual because she grew up speaking English and French. She feels comfortable communicating in both and she is currently teaching both.

To the question: "Are there prejudices toward the regions that speak English or French?" she answered affirmatively. She is not mocked by any of the two part because she "has a foot in both camps", but she heard people from the English-speaking regions saying that those from the French region are rude.

Her parents always encouraged her to learn both languages, they always saw the value in being bilingual. In Canada in particular, being bilingual is highly valued, especially if someone wish to obtain a government job. Bilinguals tend to be paid more and have more prestigious jobs.

She never felt embarrassed speaking French in the English-speaking regions because in Canada being bilingual is quite widespread, even if the majority of Canadian are monolinguals-. The only occasion she ever felt scared of speaking French was during the first stages of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. She used to live in Halifax, Canada with her father. Halifax is a very English city in which few people can speak French. During the pandemic everyone was suspicious toward tourists and foreign people spreading the illness, so her father and her only spoke in English when they were in public to avoid distrustful looks.

There are several advantages of being bilingual. For example, she can watch movies and read books in the original language without subtitles or translations that are often misleading and have different meanings. In addition, she is particularly keen on learning foreign languages because there are some similarities with the languages she already knows. For instance, German was not particularly difficult to her because she already knew English, and this is because both of these two languages are Germanic languages. For bilinguals it is easier to make certain sounds, and the more languages you know, the more connections between them you can make. For instance, you can remember one word in a language because it sounds like another word of another language; it is easier to retain that information.

In general, being bilingual made her life easier. She can travel to French speaking countries, in a professional context she would be able to communicate with more costumers, and she is much more likely to be hired as a teacher as demand for mother tongue is very high.

In her opinion living in a bilingual society is very positive because it gives citizens more possibilities and opens more doors. At the same time, the topic is quite controversial because Canada is having a hard time finding teachers that speak French as their mother tongue. Due to the high demand of French-speaking teachers, it often happens that non-native teachers have to teach the language. This results in not very prepared students, who were taught by not very prepared teachers in the first place. She thinks that if, ideally, there were enough French teachers to cover the demand, a bilingual society would be great. If anyone could learn from a young age the two languages it would be much easier than learning them at an advanced age.

Regarding her accent, when she speaks English she does not have a foreign one. Whereas when she speaks in French she has the Quebec accent which differs from the European French accent. Sometimes when she speaks to French people from Europe she wonders what they think about her accent and she feels a little embarrassed.

Nowadays she feels much more confident in French than when she was in the past. Her attitude completely changed and she loves to speak and teach both languages. She thinks that this change in attitude comes from maturity and the fact that through the years and intensive study she improved significantly.

Looking back at it, having her family push her to speak French often despite her complains helped her to feel comfortable now. Another factor that helped her boost her confidence is that she has been living in an English-speaking region, surrounded by monolingual people who admire bilinguals. When she travels to Quebec in fact, where bilingualism is the norm, she feels self-conscious.

Nowadays, she still has many chances to use both languages in the professional and family context. She is currently a substitute teacher, depending on the year, she teaches English, French or both. She prefers teaching French to younger children, this preference comes from the fact that teenagers are usually less excited and tend to have a more negative attitude toward language acquisition. For example, one of her seven-year-old students was extremely excited to learn French because she told SV that her parents spoke French every time they did not want her to understand, so she could not wait to know what they were saying to each other in secret.

Regarding the family context she does not have as many chances to speak French as she had in the past because her father's side French family live far away, but at least she is still living with her father so she can speak in French with him. Now that she lives in a mainly monolingual context, she values her bilingualism even more.

She thinks that she will always be bilingual, it will always be part of her. She does not think that any of the two languages will fade away. She foresees that if she does not practice a language for some time she will feel "rusty" and forget words easily, but she is sure that she will never forget it completely. Actually, her intention is to continue teaching them both, so she highly doubts that any of the two will fade away.

If she has children in the future, she would like to pass French on. She would talk to them in French all the time because she knows that if they continue living in Canada, they will learn English perfectly in any case.

4.6 SURVEY ANALYSIS

All the people who contributed to the creation of this survey were able to give extremely relevant answers. Some of which were similar, whereas others differed in some aspects. In particular, it is important to keep in mind that each one of the interviewees had a different life experience and consequently a different attitude toward the languages they speak.

MJ's upbringing, for instance, is the one that differs the most from the others as both her parents are immigrants from the same country. In addition, she is the only one who is bilingual in a language that is not considered prestigious by many: Arabic. Due to this, she is also the only participant who had negative experiences speaking Arabic in Italy. During her teenage years in fact, she had a negative attitude toward the language and preferred speaking Italian only to avoid any discriminatory comment. Even if this survey analyses the answers of a small number of participants, a connection between prestige of a language, racism and the development of a negative attitude toward that language can be clearly drawn. On the other hand, the interviewees who speak prestigious languages such as English, French or Spanish were always admired and never scorned or looked down upon.

With regards to their accents, most of the respondents never felt embarrassed or had a particular problem with it. Some participants do not have any accent (MP, SV), while those who have it were able to come to terms with the fact that having an accent is the normalcy and they accepted and embraced it (MG, NAD).

It is interesting to notice how almost all of them decided on their own to improve their second language by choosing the language in question during public school (MG) or even enrolled in after-school private classes (NAD). In addition, MG tries to take advantage of his mother's Spanish skills and talks to her in Spanish as much as he can with the goal of improving himself. In the case of MJ, she chose to study the language at university level for religious purposes and because she enjoyed it so she was highly motivated.

Another common aspect is how easily they fit in the second language whenever they are surrounded by it. This usually happens when they travel for some time to a country in which their second language is the main language. When they go back, they noticed that it is particularly hard to switch back to their first language and they tend to mix the languages they know more than ever.

The respondents also share the fact that their parents were generally able to pass on a positive attitude toward language acquisition. Some of them had a negative attitude for a period of their life (MJ, SV) but then, with maturity and adulthood their attitude changed drastically. MJ even continued to study foreign languages at university. SV is so passionate about French and English that made them her profession and she is now a foreign language teacher.

It is clear how all of them saw second language acquisition as a necessity: some needed it to communicate with one of their parents (MG, MP, NAD), some with both parents (MJ) and one participant with her entire family on her father's side (SV). It is evident how necessity encouraged children to learn the language well, for instance MJ started to forget Arabic when her family moved to Italy, because she no longer needed it in her everyday life. When she went back to Morocco for the holidays however, her parents and her realized that she could not speak it anymore. After that, it was clear to her that Arabic was a necessity in her life, and she committed to its acquisition. SV, on the other hand, had a very different experience: when she was a teenager, she felt forced by her family to speak French even if everyone was bilingual and could speak English, too. In her mind, therefore, French was not a necessity, and as English was understood by everyone, she did not see the point in learning it.

Another aspect worth considering regards the interviewees' siblings: despite having a very similar upbringing, the participants' siblings all have different levels of bilingualism compared to the respondents. The reasons behind these differences are many. For example, some siblings, like MG's sister, decided to go live in a foreign country in which the second language is spoken, others had more unfortunate experiences such as SV's brother who suffered of Leukemia. MP's family moved from one country to the other in different periods of time and as each sibling has quite an age difference, they have a different level of English or Italian depending on where they were born and for how long they lived in a certain country. In the case of NAD and MJ's brothers on the other hand, their fluency differs simply because they have different

personalities from their sisters, and they do not have such a positive attitude toward the second language.

All of them believe that bilinguals are advantaged, no matter the prestige of the language in question. They all share in fact, a sense of gratitude and appreciation toward their parents for teaching them several languages. The advantages that most of the participants mentioned are: higher chances to obtain a better-paid job, more possibilities of travelling abroad, meeting new people, discovering new cultures and having a "secret language" that only few people can understand. MJ also added that knowing multiple languages helped her during university because she had access to a wider range of articles she could read in different languages. SV also stated that thanks to her bilingualism she does not need any translation when reading or listening to something in French or English.

Furthermore, some of the participants believe to be more intelligent than monolinguals, in particular, in aspects such as foreign language acquisition (MJ, MP, NAD, MG). NAD thinks that this is because bilinguals develop a better memory than most in order to remember all the words in the different languages they know. MG believes that the reason is because bilinguals can fit in a different society and culture quicker than monolinguals because they are used to shifting from one to the other. SV on the contrary, does not believe to be more intelligent than monolinguals, but she thinks that thanks to her bilingualism, she is particularly keen on foreign language acquisition because she has a very good ear and can imitate sounds easily.

MP and MJ in addition, believe to be more intelligent than monolinguals because they think that they can solve logic problems more easily and quickly. MG adds that he considers himself more intelligent because he is a quick thinker and believes his mind to be particularly dynamic and adaptable thanks to bilingualism.

In terms of the definition of bilingualism, they all agreed on the fact that a bilingual person is someone who can speak more than one language. To be bilingual, they claim, someone must be above a certain level of fluency and mastery of the languages in all skills (speaking, listening, writing etc.). Furthermore, they all agreed on the fact that bilingualism is not a fixed concept but rather it is characterized by levels of proficiency that can go from being perfectly bilingual -meaning mastery of the two or more languages equally in all aspects- to having one language that clearly prevails over the others.

Only MP considers himself perfectly bilingual. It is interesting that he is the only one that in addition to having parents of different nationalities, lived several years in both countries. SV, despite living in Canada, a country which is known for being inhabited by a high rate of bilingual people, and despite considering herself fully bilingual, still does not feel completely comfortable speaking her second language (French).

There were contrasting opinions on whether someone could become bilingual through education or at an advanced age (SV agreed). Moreover, MG and MP also differentiated linguistic bilingualism and cultural bilingualism. According to them, the former is something that can be achieved through education, whereas the latter can only be attained by having parents who are immigrants or of different nationalities, or by moving for years to a place in which the second language is spoken. MG in fact, is the only one who does not include himself in the definition of bilingual because he has never lived in a Spanish-speaking country for a significant amount of time. In addition, both MG and NAD have had a period of their life in which their proficiency in English (a language that they learnt in school) in their opinion was superior to their second language. This demonstrates how bilingualism can also be achieved through intensive study.

Some of them (MJ, SV) feel as if speaking another language influences and changes their personality. The others on the contrary, do not perceive any change in personality, but rather on the sound of their voice.

Generally speaking, those who consider themselves almost or perfectly bilinguals (MP, SV) do not have topics that they consider difficult to explain or emotions that have difficulty expressing. On the other hand, those who have less practice on the second language (NAD, MG) or that have studied a subject in a specific language (like religion for MJ) would have some difficulties and would feel more insecure about explaining certain topics in the other language.

To the question: "Do you have a personal preference on language?" there were contrasting answers. MG stated that he has a personal preference for his first language (French), but he cannot choose between the two cultures. NAD states that her favorite language is English, the most beautiful is Italian, whereas her first language, Portuguese, is simply the most comfortable

and easy to use. SV loves both languages equally (French and English), but prefers the French-Canadian culture because it is much more defined than the English-Canadian culture. MP has no preference in language either (Italian and English) but is more fond of the Italian culture. MJ has no preference in language, regarding culture she states that she cannot choose because she feels divided between two completely different cultures, so it is as if she did not fit in any of the two.

Regarding their future, all of them would like to pass bilingualism on to their children because they think it is an advantage in several fields and it could help them be successful both professionally and socially, whatever the language and its level of prestige is. Two of the interviewees already have children or experience with bilingual children and they foresee that maintaining bilingualism is particularly difficult unless at least one of the parents consistently speak to the children in the second language. In MP's experience it would be fundamental if both parents spoke the second language, especially the mother, because according to him she tends to spend more time with the children than the father does.

All of the participants want to maintain their bilingualism. Some want to improve the language in which they feel more insecure (MJ, NAD), others feel confident that they will never forget it, and in case they start to feel more self-conscious they will act accordingly and focus on the maintenance of that language (MP, SV). MG, on the contrary, at the moment has no interest in improving his second language because he does not think that he will necessarily need it for his future, so currently it is not among his priorities.

The conclusions will be tackled in more detail in the following chapter.

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis had the objective of investigating attitudes toward bilingualism. The first chapter presented the definitions of the two main topics of the dissertation: attitudes and bilingualism. The two terms are quite difficult to define, and many scholars have different opinions on their meaning and relationship. Furthermore attitudes, as it was explained, are everchanging and are strictly correlated to variables such as politics, fashion, economics, prestige and so on so forth. Over time therefore, history witnessed several shifts in attitudes toward bilingualism, depending on the time period and the location. In the past, the general belief was that multilingual people were inferior compared to monolinguals. Most people in fact, believed them to have only half of the personality that monolinguals have, and that they were incapable of holding a proper conversation due to constant interference between the languages they spoke. However, nowadays science and recent discoveries were able to prove that bilingualism brings many advantages to people, and therefore, the general attitude consistently improved to such an extent that in recent times entire continents adopted multilingual programs at governmental level with the aim of spreading multilingualism. Attitudes are not intuitive, but rather they are learnt. There are two possible levels of attitudes, being attitudes at personal and societal level. Regarding the latter in particular, it highlights that often attitudes depend on the status of a language; in other words, they depend on how prestigious a certain language is considered in a certain country in a specific moment in history.

Chapter two tackled what is considered by many the lingua franca of the twentieth century: the English language. An increasing globalized world has resulted in the need of a common language, a language that can be spoken and understood by most people and that has as main goal effective communication rather than grammatical accuracy. This need was fulfilled by the introduction of a lingua franca. Having a lingua franca promoted the formation and creation of international institutions such as the United Nations and the European Union, in which people from many different countries gathered to debate and discuss. The lingua franca, despite allowing people of different nationalities to interact without language problems, also presents some serious drawbacks. Often in fact, the choice of lingua franca is exclusively given to the elite. Therefore, most of the time, the powerful choose their own mother tongue as lingua franca and less powerful countries do not have a say in the matter. This can lead to the disappearance of minority languages and to the further power increase of the already powerful. Historically

speaking, the English language was able to achieve the status of lingua franca thanks to its colonial past and the authority of the British Empire that spread English all over the world and made it what can be called a global language today. Due to its prestigious status, English nowadays is the language that is taught the most. There are some educational fields such as science and technology, that consider the acquisition of English as fundamental because most of the research papers and studies are conducted in English. To meet the global demand of English learning, English acquisition programs spread worldwide. Different countries adopted different linguistic educational policies, depending on whether they wanted to achieve perfect bilingualism or rather replace the first language with the second one. The adoption of linguistic educational policies went hand in hand with the change in attitudes through the years: in the past monolingual educational policies were preferred, whereas recently in most countries bilingual programs are seen as the best option.

Chapter three focused on bilingual educational policies around the world. The choice of linguistic policy is considered from the point of view of each continent: America, Africa, Asia, Oceania, Antarctica and Europe. In addition, it concentrates in particular in the countries with the most interesting linguistic cases of multilingualism. Regarding Europe, the paragraph goes into further detail as it is one of the continents that invested in bilingual acquisition the most. Multilingualism in fact, is one of the principles of international institutions such as the European Union and the European Parliament. Many multilingual programs have been adopted through the years with the goal of promoting multilingualism and the maintenance of minority languages. Some of the main programs offered are CLIL, immersion programs, EMI and CBI.

The fourth chapter presented the original study conducted with the aim to investigate attitudes toward bilingualism. The study consisted in five semi-structured interviews that followed a series of common questions that changed and differed based on the respondents' answers. The questions were divided into seven categories: family background, education, definition of bilingualism, attitudes, society, current situation and future plans. In the last paragraph the answers of the interviewees were confronted and analyzed. In spite of the small number of participants, and despite language and bilingualism being extremely personal matters, a few conclusions can be drawn: there is a strong relationship between the societal prestige of a language and attitudes. MJ in fact, who was the only participant that spoke what is not considered a prestigious language, was the only one that experienced racist comments.

Another interesting fact that emerged is that it would seem that necessity plays a significant part in attitudes. The participants that felt as if knowing two languages was necessary were more motivated to learn them, therefore, they tended to show a positive attitude. The participants' answers in addition, would suggest that despite having the same parents and family settings of their siblings, each one of them states that their level of bilingualism differ from the one of their brothers or sisters. This can depend on personality: someone can be more interested in language acquisition and more extrovert, therefore readier to try to speak the second language even at the cost of making mistakes. Others can have had different life experiences such as living in a certain country for longer than the other siblings, therefore having the possibility to practice the language for longer.

The most remarkable conclusion, however, is that as it was anticipated in the first chapter, attitudes toward bilingualism are extremely personal, and the definition of bilingualism itself varies from person to person. To illustrate this, suffice it to mention the participants' answers to the question: "How do you define bilingualism?". The common ground was that a bilingual person can be anyone who speaks more than one language. They all agreed on the fact that a certain level of fluency is required in both languages. In addition, they stated that bilingualism is not a fixed concept and that it can depend on the level of fluency of the individual. Some differences arose when trying to specify whether someone could be considered bilingual only through multilingual family settings or even through education. Also age was source of argument as some believed that someone could become a "perfect" bilingual only if they were taught the languages at a young age.

On the whole, it is clear that due to the small size of the study it is not possible to offer certain conclusions that reflect attitudes to bilingualism. In addition, trying to compare different attitudes toward such a personal matter as bilingualism is extremely difficult and can only lead to generalizations.

Undoubtedly, additional research needs to be done, and it must be based on the answers of a larger number of people. The participants should also have a more similar age range and be bilingual in the same languages with the same status and power. The more similar life experiences the interviewees have, the more chances to obtain less generalized data on bilingualism. However, it must be kept in mind when comparing bilingual situations that no

one will ever experience bilingualism the same way due to the countless variables that can affect attitudes toward languages.

To sum up, writing this thesis was an extremely interesting journey. In particular, I appreciated having the possibility to interview people about a topic that has always been extremely fascinating to me and I enjoyed listening to everyone's stories and linguistic experiences.

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