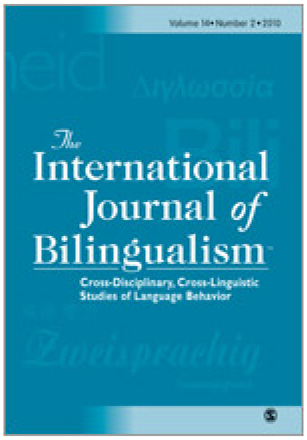

Bicultural bilinguals: juggling languages, shifting "personalities", destroying barriers.

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Abstract

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Introduction

Europe owes its name to the Phoenician princess Europa, a symbol of beauty and allure in Greek mythology. According to the myth, Zeus, enamoured by Europa's beauty, transformed himself into a white bull to abduct her. Europa, unaware of the bull's true identity, climbed onto its back, and Zeus swiftly carried her away across the sea. This tale not only signifies the mythological origins of Europe's name but also highlights the ancient connections between different cultures and languages. Europa's brother Cadmus, in his quest to find her, is said to have brought the Phoenician script to Greece, leading to the development of the Greek alphabet. This adaptation marked the beginning of written language in Greece, which eventually spread across Europe, influencing many modern alphabets (Jones, 2017). In Figure 1, Europa is depicted riding the bull (Zeus), surrounded by letters from various alphabets, symbolising the breaking down of communication barriers through language. This illustration emphasises the theme of linguistic diversity and its power to unite different cultures. In today's world, there are approximately 7000 living languages (Gordon, 2005), and although only about 400 of these are spoken by 95% of the world's population, multilingualism is more common than monolingualism (Grojean, 2010). The increasing global movement of people has led to a significant rise in the number of multilingual individuals. By 2020, the number of international migrants had grown to 281 million, representing 3.6% of the global population (United Nations, 2020). This shift underscores the diminishing relevance of monolingualism in our interconnected world.

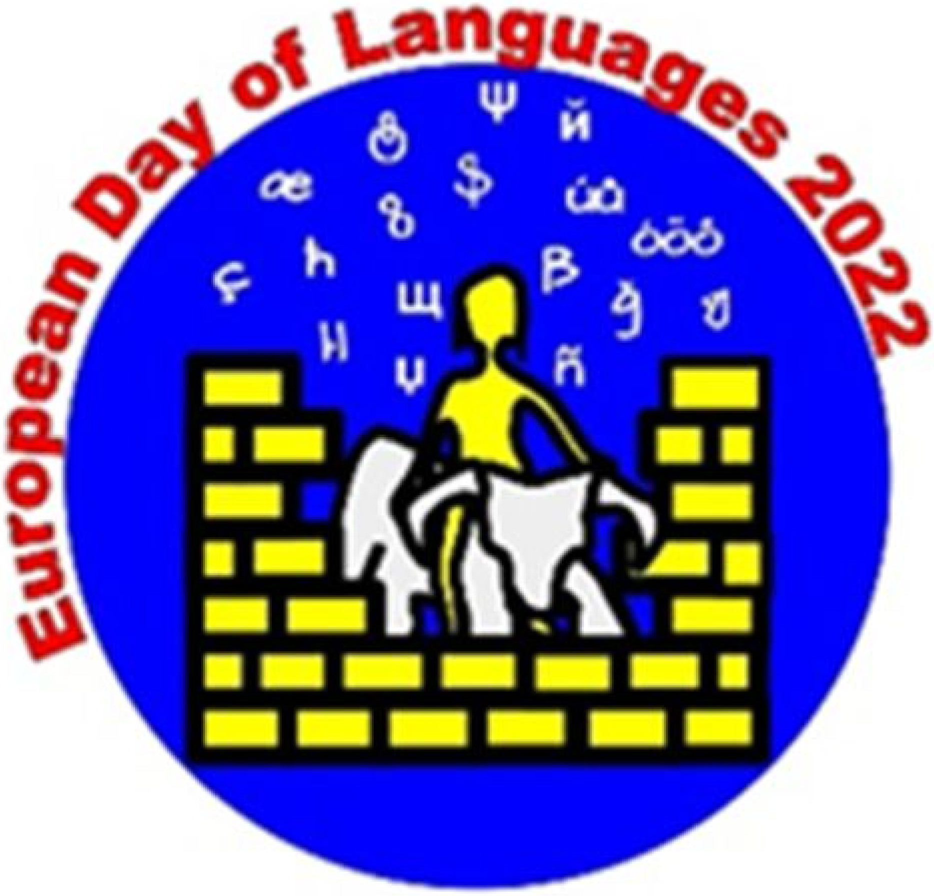

Figure 1. In the image above, created by Alessio Pace (son of Silvia Purpuri, first author of this paper) for the 2022 European Day of Languages, Europa, who is riding the bull (Zeus) and is surrounded by letters from different alphabets, is destroying a wall. This conveys the concept that languages destroy barriers, such as the inability to communicate.

At the start of the twenty-first century, one in every 35 people is an international migrant (Beacco, & Byram, 2003). The number of international migrants grew to 281 million in 2020, meaning that, according to the United Nations (2020), 3.6% of the world's population lived outside their country of birth that year. Monolingualism cannot be considered a universal criterion for citizens anymore, especially considering the increasing language diversity of migrants and national linguistic minorities (Moyer & Rojo, 2007). This global movement of people has led to a significant rise in the number of multilingual individuals. In today's world, in addition to the coexistence of multiple languages, the coexistence of diverse cultural identities has become increasingly prevalent. Bicultural bilingual individuals, who navigate multiple linguistic and cultural frameworks, represent a unique intersection of diversity and complexity that has become a more frequent reality.

This commentary article explores the experiences of bicultural bilinguals, in particular the ways in which language and culture intertwine to influence identity and behaviour. Building upon this foundation, we investigate contemporary research on bilingualism, examining the social, and cognitive implications of multilingualism. Through an exploration of language-dependent frame-switching, we uncover the ways in which bicultural individuals negotiate their cultural identities in different linguistic contexts. Furthermore, we examine the concept of Bicultural Identity Integration and its role in fostering a cohesive sense of self among bicultural bilinguals. This commentary aims to deepen our understanding of the interaction between language, culture, and identity among bicultural bilinguals.

Growing up bilingual/multilingual

In today's society, a significant number of children are exposed to and grow up acquiring more than one language (Grosjean, 2010; Peña et al., 2022). Aspects of multilingual communication include understanding and navigating the complexities of language use, encompassing disparities in lexicon, syntax, cultural subtleties, and non-verbal communication patterns. The lack of awareness and recognition of the diverse linguistic and cultural nuances within multilingual communities can prove to be a significant obstacle. Furthermore, socio-economic disparities and unequal access to educational resources can pose challenges for individuals navigating multiple linguistic and cultural identities.

Societal attitudes and prejudices towards certain languages or language varieties can create additional barriers, inhibiting meaningful communication and perpetuating linguistic inequality. McKenzie et al. (2023) demonstrated that the coexistence of multiple languages and cultures may introduce unforeseen challenges in the process of overcoming communication barriers and cultural divides. The challenges encompass intergroup discrimination (unfair treatment from other ethnic groups), intragroup marginalisation (rejection from within one's own ethnic group), and family cultural conflict due to differences in acculturation rates between parents and children (Romero & Piña-Watson, 2017). A comprehensive understanding of the intricacies involved in multilingual communication is pivotal to effectively tackle these aspects and facilitate meaningful interaction among individuals with diverse linguistic backgrounds.

Feeling different

Many people who speak more than one language report feeling somewhat different in each of their languages (Pavlenko, 2006). However, the precise mechanisms underlying this phenomenon and its intricate interplay with personal experiences and social interactions have yet to be unravelled (Brown & Lee, 2018; Garcia & Ramos, 2019; Purpuri et al., 2024). Despite very extended work on bilingualism and some research on biculturalism on their own, less work is available addressing the link between these two aspects together (e.g. Benet-Martinez, 2012, Maffini & Wong, 2012, Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2007, Padilla, 2006).

In this commentary article, we aim to go through the most significant points of view that take into account possible answers to the perceived sense of feeling different bilingual speakers experience. Through a brief review of previous studies, we will try to bridge the gap between the linguistic and the cultural components that build up a continuously rising number of people, bicultural bilinguals.

Juggling language, culture and thought

Language, culture, and personal identity are closely and intricately intertwined. A Czech proverb says, “Learn a new language and get a new soul”. Similarly, a Turkish proverb states “Bir dil bir insan, iki dil iki insan” (If you speak one language you are one person, but if you speak two languages, you are two people). Many multilingual speakers report being different in each of their languages (Dewalele, 2015; Pavlenko, 2006), but researchers have yet to fully grasp the underlying factors and comprehend the true origins of this phenomenon. Researchers have long grappled with the intricate relationship between language and identity, pondering whether acquiring a new language entails the development of a distinct "second-language self" that may either supplant or coexist with the primary self (Granger 2004, as cited in Medved Krajnović and Juraga 2008, 350). The inquiry extends to whether bilingual individuals exhibit disparate feelings and behaviours when communicating in different languages, and whether they are perceived differently by their conversational partners. There is a growing acknowledgment of the complexity underlying this phenomenon, and the quest to understand the symbiotic relationship between language and culture is an ongoing journey.

Results of a number of studies over the years suggest that language shapes the way people think (Boroditsky, 2001, Mykhailyuk, & Pohlod, 2015). According to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Sapir, 1961; Whorf, 1956), the language a person speaks influences how they think about reality and categorise their experience. Some studies (e.g., Ahearn, 2012, Boroditsky, 2011) indicate that individuals speaking different languages have different perspectives. The properties typically associated with nouns in languages where nouns have genders are a remarkable example. For instance, bridges are feminine in German (die Brücke) and masculine in Spanish (el puente), and this influences how people speaking the two languages describe them. German speakers often describe bridges as elegant and beautiful (stereotypical feminine adjectives), while Spanish tends to emphasise strength or length (stereotypical masculine adjectives) (Boroditsky, Schmidt, & Phillips, 2003). The agency attribution of events occurring to people is another remarkable example. In English, it is acceptable to say 'I broke my arm" to mean that it happened by accident. However, in some other languages (e.g. Korean and Japanese), this sentence construction would imply intent. Instead, they might use phrases like "the arm broke." These linguistic differences seem to be linked to cultural differences about blame attribution. For instance, in Japanese, there is a word ("amae") that is used to describe the desire to have someone take care of us. The "amae" concept, which is unique to Japanese culture, emphasises dependency, leading to attribution of blame on external factors (Kitayama & Uchida, 2005). Conversely, Western cultures emphasise personal responsibility, often blaming individuals (Choi & Nisbett, 1998). Thus, blame focus varies depending on language and culture; in Japan, external factors are often blamed, whereas, in the West, individuals are held accountable. Boroditsky (2011) investigated the influence of language on spatial and temporal cognition evaluating differences in spatial and temporal conceptualizations among Kuuk Thaayorre, English, and Hebrew speakers.-Firstly, the study revealed remarkable spatial orientation abilities among Kuuk Thaayorre speakers, evident even in unfamiliar environments, which was attributed to their language's emphasis on absolute cardinal directions. Beyond spatial cognition, the results of this study suggest that language can significantly shape temporal organisation. When asked to arrange shuffled pictures in temporal progression, English and Hebrew speakers arranged them according to their reading and writing direction (from left to right and from right to left, respectively), whereas Kuuk Thaayorre speakers arranged them according to cardinal directions (see also, e.g., Shaki, Fischer & Petrusic, 2009, and Treccani & Umiltà, 2011 for a discussion about the impact of reading direction habits on spatial representation of non-spatial concepts). Additionally, this study emphasises the interconnectedness of language, cognition, and bodily experiences, highlighting correlations between linguistic representations of time and body gestures.

These results suggest the existence of differences in cognition among speakers of different languages. But what happens when a speaker of one language acquires a second language? Malik-Moraleda, Mahowald, Conway, and Gibson (2023) studied how the acquisition of a second language influences the way people use their first language in categorising. They examined the impact of second language acquisition on the native colour-naming system of Tsimane' speakers. They found that Tsimane'-Spanish bilinguals showed a restructuring of their colour concepts, leading to increased consistency in the use of colour terms and the introduction of additional modal terms. This restructuring phenomenon goes beyond previous observations in language contact-induced changes and highlights the integration of semantic representations across languages. The study challenges notions of cross-cultural universality in colour-naming patterns (Berlin & Kay, 1969) and suggests that contact with a new language can influence concepts in the native language.

The Foreign Language Effect (FLE)

Research on the Foreign Language Effect (FLE), comparing bilinguals using their native and foreign language, has shown that the use of a foreign language can have an effect on our decisions and moral judgement (for a review see Purpuri et al., 2024). In particular, research on the FLE suggests that the use of a foreign language elicits less intense emotional reactions if compared to the native language, makes people more rational, and increases utilitarian choices (Corey & Costa, 2015). The foreign language has been found to reduce risk aversion, making people more prone to accept harm in order to maximise outcomes (Keysar, Hayakawa, & An, 2012; Winskel & Bhatt, 2020; Xing, 2021). The use of the non-native language has also been shown to reduce causality bias, that is, the illusion of a relation of causality between two events when they are not causally related (Díaz-Lago & Matute, 2019), and common superstitious beliefs (Hadjichristidis et al., 2019). Research has also shown that bilinguals perceive dishonesty as less inappropriate in their non-native language (Alempaki et al., 2020), and perceive crimes described in a foreign language as less severe (Woumans et al., 2020). Furthermore, new evidence suggests that processing information in a foreign language does influence the personality trait of tolerance of ambiguity: participants are more tolerant to ambiguity in their foreign language than they are in their native language (Purpuri et al., 2023).

The Proustian flavour of the native (and each) language

A compelling line of evidence suggests that the native language carries with it emotions, images and memories that are stronger than those carried by a language acquired later in life. As underlined above, research on the FLE suggests that, when speaking the non-native language, less intense emotional reactions are elicited in bilinguals (cf., Corey & Costa, 2015). Additional evidence comes from the study by Pavlenko (2005) who asked a group of multilingual participants which of their languages seemed most strongly soaked with emotions. A vast majority chose the language they had learned earlier in life. This might depend on the fact that the most emotionally intense experiences occurred during the period of life in which sequential bilinguals or multilinguals (i.e., people learning first one language and then another/others) spoke (or mainly spoke) the native language (i.e., youth). Indeed, researchers have also found that, when bilinguals report a personal memory, they tend to report more details and with more emotion if they describe that memory in the same language they used when they had lived it (Javier et al., 1993). American writer (raised in Italy) M.J. Fitzgerald wrote "*The word candy does nothing to my taste buds, whereas the word caramella brings instantly back the sweet crunch of the teeth through the shell, softened by sucking for as long as possible, to the soft centre*", suggesting that the emotional resonance and vividness of the imagery evoked by words in the native language tend to be more intense than those associated to the non-native language.

Shifting perspectives: bicultural bilinguals

Biculturalism refers to the coexistence of two distinct cultures within an individual (Berry, 1997). People become bicultural because, at some point in their lives, they come in contact with other cultures and live, to various degrees, with them (Grosjean, 2015). This often occurs when individuals are exposed to or grow up in two different cultural settings, such as, for instance, in the case of people who have parents from different cultural backgrounds, or people who have migrated to a new country and have adopted the new culture while maintaining their original cultural identity (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997).

Biculturalism occurs when there is an integration of elements from the two separate cultural backgrounds to which a person is exposed, allowing individuals to navigate and adapt to both cultural environments effectively (LaFromboise et al., 1993). Biculturalism represents comfort and proficiency with two cultures in terms of language use, choice of friends, media preferences and likes (Cabassa, 2003). A (true) bicultural person, according to Grosjean (2008), is characterised by at least three traits. They participate in the life of two cultures, adapt to these cultures, and combine aspects of these cultures. Indeed, some researchers (e.g. Benet-Martínez et al., 2002; Nguyen, Benet-Martinez, 2007) have suggested that true biculturalism involves integrating cultures into a unique and personalised blend, combining them into an individualised new ‘culture’.

Bicultural Identity Integration (BII) is a psychological construct proposed by Benet-Martínez et al. (2002) to understand how bicultural individuals perceive and integrate their mainstream and ethnic cultural identities. It focuses on individuals' subjective perceptions of cultural overlap and compatibility rather than just their levels of identification and competence in each culture. It is measured through self-report questionnaires assessing perceptions of overlap, harmony, and conflict between cultures. It suggests that higher levels of BII are associated with psychological well-being, optimal adjustment, fewer behavioural problems among adolescents, enhanced creativity, and more integrated social networks. According to Yampolsky (2013), integration involves reconciling and connecting one's diverse cultural identities by perceiving similarities between them, while also recognizing and valuing their differences. This integrated approach allows individuals to feel belonging in all their cultural groups while engaging in various cultural activities.

Several aspects of biculturalism have been identified. The first one is cultural identity, which refers to the sense of belonging and identification with a particular cultural group (Phinney, 1990). Bicultural individuals often develop a dual cultural identity, identifying with both of their cultures simultaneously (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). This can lead to a richer understanding of both cultures and a unique perspective on the world, providing insights that can enrich their overall worldview (Chen et al., 2008). Secondly, bicultural individuals typically have social networks that include people from both their cultural backgrounds, allowing them to maintain connections and stay informed about the customs, beliefs, and values of each culture (Chen et al., 2008). The third aspect is cultural competence, the ability to effectively interact and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds (Pedersen, 1994). Bicultural individuals are usually good at navigating the cultural norms, practices, and expectations of both cultures, which can be beneficial in personal and professional settings (Padilla & Perez, 2003), allowing them to better understand others' culturally-based perspectives and to respond appropriately to them. Biculturalism can enhance an individual's adaptability and flexibility in different cultural contexts, making bicultural people more resilient to change and better able to cope with the challenges of living in a diverse society (Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013). The last aspect, but certainly not the least, is language, as biculturalism is often associated with bilingualism (Grosjean, 2012).

Chen et al. (2008) examined the relationship between bicultural identity, bilingualism, and psychological adjustment in multicultural societies. Their findings suggested that bicultural individuals who are also bilingual exhibit higher levels of cultural competence compared to bicultural monolinguals, leading to better psychological adjustment and adaptability (Pulakos et al., 2000). Bilingual speakers (Li, 2000) use different languages for different purposes, in different contexts, with various degrees of proficiency to communicate with other speakers and it is possible to become bilingual speakers at any time during one's life (Grosjean, 2010, 2013). In bilingualism it is possible in certain cases to temporarily deactivate a language in favour of the other (Grosjean, 2010; but see, e.g., Treccani & Mulatti, 2015, for a discussion of other possible mechanisms underlying language shifts in bilingualism). In contrast, bicultural bilinguals cannot always deactivate certain traits of their other culture(s) when in a monocultural environment (Grosjean, 2015). It can be said that bicultural bilinguals behave biculturally, partially adapting to the context they find themselves in (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2007).

When tongues shape frames

The process through which multicultural individuals with experience in different cultures can switch between different culture-specific mental frames is termed *frame switching* or *frame shifting* (Hong et al., 2000). Frame switching enables biculturals to fit in with both of their cultural groups (LaFromboise, et al., 1993; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Mistry &

Wu, 2010) and it has been suggested to be dependent on (or also to result from) the languages used. Luna et al. (2008) wrote that "*Language can be a cue that activates different culture-specific frames", i.e.* people who are bicultural and speak two languages may shift their cultural perspectives when they switch from one language to another. Marian and Kaushanskaya (2007) conducted a study that revealed how bilingual individuals may exhibit variations in their thoughts and behaviours, based on the language they are using (for example, Mandarin-English speakers were more likely to name the Statue of Liberty when questioned in English and the Statue of Mao when questioned in Mandarin), suggesting that language can trigger changes in cultural frames. An early study (Ervin, S.,1964) showed how Japanese-American bilingual women, having to complete sentences in both Japanese and English, gave very different endings depending on the language used. For example, for the sentence "When my wishes conflict with my family", the Japanese ending was "it is a time of great unhappiness", whereas in English it was "I do what I want". Ringberg, Luna, Reihlen, and Peracchio (2010) studied a group of Hispanic-American women, all bilingual, but with varying degrees of cultural identification. They found changes in participants' self-perception (frame-shifting) when interacting with members of participants' native culture (and speaking their native language) compared to when participants were in an environment dominated by a different culture (and spoke another language). Moreover, when participants were asked to interpret target advertisements picturing women, they perceived women in the ads as more self-sufficient and extrovert when addressed in Spanish and more traditional, other-dependent, and family-oriented when addressed in English. The language-triggered frame switching seemed to happen unintentionally and occurred only with biculturals, not with bilinguals who were not bicultural. Evidently, a deep integration and identification with both cultures is necessary for a frame switching to occur when the spoken language is changed.

What is the reason for the frame switchings related to the change in the language used? Is it the language switch itself or the change in other aspects that co-vary with the language switch? One may think that, in a bicultural bilingual person, different linguistic (lexical and syntactical) systems are linked to different cultural and cognitive frameworks. Consequently, when switching languages, one may find oneself adopting different perspectives, attitudes, and behaviours, almost as if temporarily embodying a different aspect of oneself (Ringberg et al., 2010).

Alternatively, one may propose that changes in behaviours and attitudes following language switches are actually due to context shifts induced by the switch of language (Ervin, 1964, Ervin, 2015). A change of context does not necessarily result from a modification of the physical elements present in the environment but can also be represented by the activation of different mental representations (e.g., memories of events) that are somehow linked to the language used. As previously emphasised, the use of different languages can lead to the reactivation of different memories, corresponding to the different moments in life when the languages were learned and/or predominantly used. Different contexts, in turn, may trigger different attitudes and behaviours.

According to most studies, indeed, there are no direct causal links between language switching and attitude, feeling and behaviour shifting (e.g., Grosjean, 2015; c.f., Purpuri et al., 2024). Rather, it is the combined influence of the environment and interactions with others (alongside language use) that leads to changes in mental contexts among bicultural bilinguals, resulting in changes in attitudes, feelings, and behaviours.

As underlined by Grosjean (2015), however, there remains much to explore regarding the mechanisms underlying these language-triggered frame switchings, as well as how bicultural bilinguals behave (similarly or differently) in their cultural contexts, both independently within each culture and when blending their cultural backgrounds. Notably, while the impact of bicultural bilinguals' degree of identification in their cultures has been investigated (Ringberg et al, 2010), the influence of native and non-native language proficiency on these phenomena has not yet been examined.

Clash and harmony: the journey ahead

Biculturalism can be seen as a positive force for bridging cultural gaps and fostering understanding, tolerance, and respect among people from different backgrounds (Berry, 2005). However, it can also lead to challenges, such as conflicting cultural values and expectations, or feelings of marginalisation if an individual feels they do not fully belong to either culture. The potential difficulties that bicultural bilinguals may encounter when navigating the complexities of two distinct cultural identities are real. Conflicting values and expectations can arise when cultural norms and customs from each culture clash, creating a sense of tension and uncertainty for individuals. Additionally, bicultural individuals may perceive themselves as being caught between two worlds (Ward, 2001).

BII (i.e., the perceived compatibility or opposition between the two cultural orientations of a bicultural person - see above) seems to be a critical moderator of these challenges and difficulties (Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). It also influences the frame-switching induced by cultural cues. Biculturals with high BII, who perceive their cultural identities as compatible, tend to respond in culturally congruent ways to cultural cues (Benet-Martínez et al., 2002). For example, it has been found that Chinese-American biculturals with high BII, when compared with low BII biculturals, made more external attributions, a behaviour more common in Chinese culture, when primed with Chinese cultural cues, and made more internal attributions, a behaviour more common in American culture, when primed with American cultural cues (Benet-Martínez et al. 2002).

An experimental study conducted by Cheng and Lee (2013) manipulated recall of positive or negative bicultural experiences. The researchers found that recalling positive bicultural experiences increased BII, whereas there was a decrease in BII when recalling negative bicultural experiences. When experiences irrelevant to biculturalism were recalled, BII did not change.

This line of research appears promising and could provide useful insights to support bicultural individuals in their journey of bicultural identity integration. This requires acknowledging the challenges they face, promoting cultural sensitivity, offering resources to navigate cultural conflicts, and creating inclusive environments that can facilitate positive bicultural experiences. Bicultural bilinguals are "*unique and complete linguistic and cultural beings*" (Grosjean, 2015) and the future challenge should tackle their special combination of linguistic and cultural traits.

Conclusions and future directions

Within our diverse global society, many children are raised in environments where they encounter multiple languages and actively learn them (Grosjean, 2010). This multilingual upbringing creates a unique and intricate linguistic and cultural environment during childhood. Growing up bilingual offers a transformative journey, shaping the linguistic and cultural development of individuals through distinctive experiences and challenges (Grosjean, 2010). In this commentary article, we have examined some of the most important points of view concerning bicultural bilingualism, taking into account possible explanations for the split vision, shift of perspective and sense of feeling different bilingual speakers who are also bicultural experience when speaking different languages and operating in different cultural contexts.

The idea that speaking different languages can have effects on cognition (e.g., Sapir-Whorf hypothesis) is a fascinating hypothesis. While having been questioned for a period, it has recently regained prominence, particularly concerning bilingualism. The focus has shifted from perceptual and cognitive differences among individuals speaking different languages to the potential cognitive restructuring following the acquisition of a second language and its possible impact on the use of the native language.

Bicultural bilinguals often get the impression that changing language alters their perspective and worldview. Research on frame-switching has not provided evidence supporting the idea that different linguistic systems within an individual are linked to different cognitive, emotional, normative, and value frameworks that are activated and deactivated when switching between languages. It seems more reasonable to assume that the change in language prompts a change in context, which, in turn, activates different aspects of an individual's cognitive, normative, and affective system.

In our opinion, there are still many unexplored areas concerning biculturalism in general, and bicultural bilingualism in particular. Research areas to explore in the future should include, firstly, focusing on the interaction between language proficiency and cultural identity among bicultural bilinguals. Investigating how varying degrees of language proficiency in each language impact cultural identity formation and expression could provide valuable insights. For example, exploring whether individuals feel more aligned with their cultural identity when communicating in their dominant language or if proficiency in a second language enhances their sense of belonging to multiple cultures. Moreover, in order to investigate the actual role of language in language-triggered frame switching, it is crucial to evaluate whether this phenomenon is somehow linked to proficiency in the native and/or non-native language.

Secondly, there is a need to delve deeper into the psychological (cognitive and affective) mechanisms underlying frame switching among bicultural bilinguals, its implications for personal identity, and its effects on behaviour. Understanding the triggers beyond language (e.g., different personal roles required by the social context or different situational contexts that are made salient), the moderator variables and the consequences of frame switching can contribute to a better understanding of how bicultural individuals navigate diverse cultural contexts.

Additionally, investigating the impact of societal attitudes and stereotypes on bicultural identity development is crucial. Stereotypes and prejudices have a remarkable impact on the attitude (openness vs. closeness) with which people interact with individuals belonging to different cultures and, thus, play a significant role in intercultural relations (Filpisan et al., 2011). The influence of external perceptions, stereotypes (based on cultural or linguistic backgrounds) and even experiences of discrimination or marginalisation on self-perception has been widely investigated (e.g., Steele, 2010). However, little is still known about their impact on identity negotiation and bicultural identity integration among (true) bicultural individuals, as well as about the moderating effect that other critical variables (such as language proficiency) may have on this impact.

Furthermore, future studies could explore the role of familial and societal support systems in facilitating bicultural identity development. Family dynamics can strongly influence how we see ourselves, others and the world around us (Becvar & Becvar, 2013). Previous research suggests that ethnic identity in a host country is strongly linked to everyday family-related activities, as well as familial connections (Parke, 2004). Understanding how family dynamics, peer relationships, and broader societal contexts influence the negotiation of multiple cultural identities can provide insights into effective interventions and support mechanisms for bicultural individuals.

The struggle to remain connected to an ancestral language and culture while adapting to different ones is a site of common ground for so many people from all backgrounds nowadays more than in the past. As we have underlined and discussed in the first part of our commentary article, language has a role in forming a sense of self and it is an important part of adaptation into a new culture. Charlemagne had guessed right when saying that to speak a different language is to possess a second soul, but, as a man of his times, he had probably underestimated (or possibly just not recognized) the indisputable power of culture that lies behind and is deeply intertwined with a language.

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