The Effect of "Bilingualism" on Iranian Pre-university Students' English Grammar Proficiency

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Abstract—This paper presents the results of a study of the effect of bilingualism on the grammar proficiency of three groups of Iranian pre-university female students: two composed of Azeri-Turkish bilinguals and Armenian bilinguals the other, of Persian monolinguals. The study attempted to ascertain whether bilinguals would do better than monolinguals on a Standard English grammar test and whether those bilinguals who have had school education and academic courses in their mother tongue i.e., for examples Armenians in this study would out perform the other bilingual group who do not have a bilingual program. To get the answers for these two questions, it was necessary to form three homogenous groups, so subjects were given the Nelson's pre-intermediate test to answer as pre test. After forming 3 homogenous groups, all in pre-intermediate level they were trained for two months and finally they were given a post-test (Nelson's intermediate grammar test). The results were then analyzed, and it was concluded that bilinguals definitely outperformed monolinguals on the English Grammar and Armenian's group did better than Azeri-Turkish bilinguals. Given these results, bilingual education programs beginning in early elementary school were recommended for Iran.

Index Terms—learning a foreign language, proficiency, foreign language bilingualism, a multilingual person, cognitive structure, grammar, communicative competence, bilingual education, bipart-bilingualism, formal grammar of a language

I. INTRODUCTION

Bilingualism can be observed everywhere in the world. Among the reasons fostering bilingualism are various kinds of migration, intermarriages and educational/vocational opportunities. It is said that "more than half of the world's population is bilingual and two thirds of the world's children grow up in a bilingual environment" (Crystal, 1997)

Today, we live in an era in which learning English as a language of information is not optional but absolutely mandatory because every educated person needs to know English for different purposes such as communication, getting information from current sources and handling educational projects without getting help from others. As we know, our country, Iran is a multilingual and multicultural country in which we have many bilingual people who learn English as their third language. But there might be some differences between these bilingual people in learning English and Persian monolinguals. (i.e. Farsi speakers) . Bilingualism is one of the controversial issues, and researchers have been conducted to find its effect on individual's linguistic development, educational attainment and intelligence, Peal and Lambert (1962) concluded that bilingual children had a greater cognitive flexibility and a more diversified set of mental abilities than monolingual children. They found that bilingual children significantly outperformed monolinguals on factors such as cognitive flexibility, concept formation, picture completion and figure manipulation.

"Bilingual acquisition" is one of the most important topics for researchers. There is a widespread popular impression that the children of bilingual parents are linguistically at risk. It is said that their brains will not be able to cope, and that they will grow up "semi lingual", confused or retarded. There is no justification for the pessimism, as is evident from the confident fluency displayed by millions of bilingual and trilingual children all over the world. By the time these children arrive in school, the vast majority has reached the same stage of linguistic development as their monolingual peers do. But the process of learning two languages is not exactly the same as the process of learning one. Three main stages of development have been noted by Crystal (1997):

1. The child builds up a list of words, as does a monolingual child, but the list contains words from both languages. It is rare for these words to be translated when sentences begin to contain two or more elements

2. Words from two languages are used within the same sentences. The amount of mixing rapidly declines. In one study, at the beginning of the third year, nearly 30% of sentences contained mixed vocabulary; by the end of the year, it was less than 5%.

Keshavarz (2000) concluded that only a small proportion of multiword utterances were mixed and the rest were language specific.

3. As vocabulary grows in each language, translation equivalents develop. But the acquisition of separate sets of grammatical rules takes longer. For a while a single system of rules seems to be used for both languages until finally the two grammars diverge.

When bilingual children reach this stage, they have become aware that the two languages are not the same; they typically use each language to each person who speaks it, and not to the other. But Keshavarz (2000) found that this ability is attained a lot earlier.

On the basis of these processes in learning two languages and considering the different views on bilingualism and its effect on educational attainment and intelligence, it can be said that more researches are needed to be done bilingualism.

In this study, we want to compare two bilingual groups (Armenians and Azeri-Turkish speakers) in Iran with monolinguals (Farsi speakers). In other words there will be a third way comparison among Armenians who have systematic educational courses in Armenia in their schools, Turkish people who lack that systematic education in the state schools and Persian monolinguals have systematic education in their first language but they do not know two languages as their first and second languages, and compare their achievement in the syntax of English language.

This study intends to identify the effective factors in learning a foreign language in bilingual societies to distinguish among positive factors from negative ones, and to apply the positive factors by making educational-cultural suggestions, hence removing the existing misunderstandings about bilingualism. And if there is any success in learning English due to bilingualism, to introduce it to authorities, syllabus designers, and those who are interested in the bicultural- bilingual studies.

For example if the findings of this study may be considered, evaluated and included in giving all the bilinguals in Iran (i.e., Kurdish people) with school education.

The experience of becoming bilingual in a subtractive context is common for young children in Iranian educational institutions. According to Makin, Campbell & Diaz (1995), in some situations, mother languages are gradually replaced by second or dominate languages. In our society, the dominant language in schools is Farsi. Although many minority bilingual children are successful in learning Farsi at school, their bilingualism is often limited because their first (home) language is not supported in the mainstream educational settings. As Cummins (1981) mentioned, children must attain a critical level of proficiency in their native language in order to avoid cognitive deficits associated with bilingualism, and that a critical level of proficiency in L2 must be reached if advantages in cognitive functioning are to develop. As Bialystok (2001) noted, children need a great amount of support from their communities, their families, and above all, support from their school, particularly when they are socio-economically disadvantaged.

And the other problem is that; there are contradictory views regarding the effects of bilingualism on individuals' linguistic development, educational attainment and intelligence. Here the aim is to investigate whether there is any difference among two bilingual groups and monolingual pre university learners in learning English language syntax as a second or third language, and if there is a difference, which group has a better achievement and control over target language syntax.

Key terms of the study: Learning a foreign language, Proficiency, Foreign language Bilingualism, A multilingual person, Cognitive structure, Grammar, Communicative Competence, Bilingual education, Bipart- Bilingualism, formal grammar of a language

Definitions of the main key terms

Key terms of this study: learning a foreign language, proficiency, foreign language**,** bilingualism**,** a multilingual person**,** cognitive structure and syntax.

Learning a foreign language: learning English in a very limited context in terms of facilities no contact with native speakers, no encouragement from the side of administration which plays the most important role in pushing the students toward learning English Ur (1996).

Proficiency: The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language *(1978)* defines *Proficient* as *"*Performing in a given art, skill or branch of learning with expert correctness and facility" and further specifies that the term implies "a high degree of competence through training" (cited in Hadley 2003). Hadley (2003) defines proficiency as a somewhat idealized level of competence and performance attainable by experts through extensive instruction.

Foreign language*:* A foreign language is a language not spoken by the people of a certain place: for example, English is a foreign language in Iran, China, and Japan…. It is also a language not spoken in the native country of the person referred to, i.e. an English speaker living in Japan can say that Japanese is a foreign language to him or her. These two characterizations do not exhaust the possible definitions, however, and the label is occasionally applied in ways that are variously misleading or factually inaccurate. In the United States, for example, Spanish has been present longer than English, but since the majority of the population is native speakers of English, Spanish is often termed a foreign language. (Retrieved from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_language).

Bilingualism*:* Definition 1: The use of more than one language.

Definition 2: The ability to communicate naturally and fluently in more than one language in all areas of life. The term bilingual refers to individuals who can function in more than one language. The category of bilinguals is very broad - encompassing individuals who are sophisticated speakers, readers, and writers of two or more languages, as well as those who use a limited knowledge of a second language (L2) for purposes such as work or schooling, and who

may be literate in only one language or even completely illiterate (Cited in http://www.geocities.com/bilingualfamilies/bilingualism.html).

No single definition for individual bilingualism is broad enough to cover all instances of individuals who are called "bilingual". The range can be from native-like control of two or more languages to possessing minimal communicative skills in a second or foreign language. Also, the term 'bilingualism' has not been used in a consistent way among researchers and theoreticians. Most of the writers use a simple definition, such as follows: Bilingualism is the practice alternatively using two languages (Wienrich 1968); Native-like control of two languages (Bloomfield, 1993).

A multilingual person: in the broadest definition, is anyone who can communicate in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (through listening and reading). More specifically, the terms bilingual and trilingual are used to describe comparable situations in which two or three languages are involved, respectively. A generic term for multilingual persons is polyglot Faingold (2004).

Cognitive structure: T. Saetti (2001) in her book speaks about cognitive scientist's explanation of a mental structure of learners. According to her; cognitive scientists have looked at three things to explain the mental structure of the learners. They have explored the "knowledge base", the store house of information, concepts, and associations that human beings build up as they develop from childhood to adulthood.

formal grammar of a language: A formal grammar (sometimes simply called a grammar) is a set of formation rules for strings in a formal language. The rules describe how to form strings from the language's alphabet that are valid according to the language's syntax. A grammar does not describe the meaning of the strings or what can be done with them in whatever context—only their form.

Formal language theory, the discipline which studies formal grammars and languages, is a branch of applied mathematics. Its applications are found in theoretical computer science, theoretical linguistics, formal semantics, mathematical logic, and other areas.

A formal grammar is a set of rules for rewriting strings, along with a "start symbol" from which rewriting must start. Therefore, a grammar is usually thought of as a language generator. However, it can also sometimes be used as the basis for a "recognizer"—a function in computing that determines whether a given string belongs to the language or is grammatically incorrect. To describe such recognizers, formal language theory uses separate formalisms, known as automata theory. One of the interesting results of automata theory is that it is not possible to design a recognizer for certain formal languages. Retrieved from: (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Formal_grammar)

Communicative Competence: is a linguistic term which refers to a learner's L2 ability. It not only refers to a learner's ability to apply and use grammatical rules, but also to form correct utterances, and know how to use these utterances appropriately. The term unlies the view of language learning implicit in the communicative approach to teaching (Brown, 2000). The term was coined by Dell Hymes in 1966, reacting against the perceived inadequacy of Noam Chomsky's (1965) distinction between *competence* and *performance*. Hymes' ideas about communicative competence were originally research-based rather than pedagogical. Specifically, to address Chomsky's abstract notion of competence, Hymes (1972; 1977; 1994) discussed the ethnographic-oriented exploration of communicative competence that included 'communicative form and function in integral relation to each other. His research-oriented ideas have undergone an epistemic transformation: from empirically oriented questions to an idealized pedagogic doctrine (Leung, 2005). Chomsky's view of linguistic competence, however, was not intended to inform pedagogy, but serve as part of developing a theory of the linguistic system itself, idealized as the abstract language knowledge of the monolingual adult native speaker, and distinct from how they happen to use and experience language. Hymes, rather than Chomsky, had developed a theory of education and learning.

Canale and Swain (1980) defined communicative competence in terms of four components:

1. grammatical competence: words and rules
2. sociolinguistic competence: appropriateness
3. discourse competence: cohesion and coherence
4. strategic competence: appropriate use of communication strategies

Canale and Swain's definition has become canonical in applied linguistics.

A more recent survey of communicative competence by Bachman (1990) divides it into the broad headings of "organizational competence," which includes both grammatical and discourse (or textual) competence, and "pragmatic competence," which includes both sociolinguistic and "illocutionary" competence. Through the influence of communicative language teaching, it has become widely accepted that communicative competence should be the goal of language education, central to good classroom practice (e.g. Savignon 1998). This is in contrast to previous views in which grammatical competence was commonly given top priority. The understanding of communicative competence has been influenced by the field of pragmatics and the philosophy of language concerning speech acts as described in large part by John Searle and J.L. Austin.

Bilingual education: According to definitions available on (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilingual_education), bilingual education

involves teaching most subjects in school through two different languages - in the United States, instruction occurs in English and a minority language, such as Spanish or Chinese, with varying amounts of each language used in accordance with the program model. The following are several different types of bilingual education program models:

• Transitional Bilingual Education. This involves education in a child's native language, typically for no more than three years, to ensure that students do not fall behind in content areas like math, science, and social studies while they are learning English. The goal is to help students' transition to mainstream, English-only classrooms as quickly as possible, and the linguistic goal of such programs is English acquisition only. The overwhelming majority of bilingual programs in the U.S. are transitional.

• Two-Way or Dual Language Bilingual Education. These programs are designed to help native and non-native English speakers become bilingual and biliterate. Ideally, in such programs in a U.S. context, half of the students will be native speakers of English and half of the students will be native speakers of a minority language such as Spanish. Dual Language programs are less commonly permitted in US schools, although research indicates they are extremely effective in helping students learn English well and aiding the long-term performance of English learners in school.

• The most effective form of Bilingual Education is a type of Dual Language program that has students study in two different ways: 1) A variety of academic subjects are taught in the students' second language, with specially trained bilingual teachers who can understand students when they ask questions in their native language, but always answer in the second language; and 2) native language literacy classes improve students' writing and higher-order language skills in their first language. Research has shown that many of the skills learned in the native language can be transferred easily to the second language later. In this type of program, the native language classes do not teach academic subjects. The second-language classes are content-based, rather than grammar-based, so students learn all of their academic subjects in the second language.

• Late-Exit or Developmental Bilingual Education. Education is in the child's native language for an extended duration, accompanied by education in English. The goal is to develop bilingualism and biliteracy in both languages. This program is available to students whose native language is not English, and also less common than transitional programs.

Bipart- Bilingualism: Information about bipart- bilinguals is rare. This might be because the term itself and the definition behind contain facts that are not very common in the phenomenon of bilingualism.

Bipart- bilingualism appears in areas where more than one language is spoken, but where the minority population is monolinguals. In these ethnic minorities, the people still have contact with their neighbourhood. this type of situation is called bipart- bilingualism. Usually people from the Balkan countries are considered to be bipart-bilingual (Wikipedia2005)

II. THE STUDY

Building on literature outlined above, and the importance of raising awareness of bilingualism as an area which has potentials for serious misunderstandings to arise, the present study is aimed at answering the following research questions:

A. Research Questions

RQ1. Is there any advantage due to bilingualism in learning English Grammar in Iranian schools?

RQ2. Does school education in first language for bilinguals have any effect on learning English Grammar as their third language?

B. Hypotheses

The above mentioned research questions are the basis for the following null hypotheses:

H0. Bilingualism in Iranian schools does not bring any advantage in learning English Grammar

H0. Having academic education in first language doesn't contribute to learning English grammar in bilingual groups

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Participants

In this study, the subjects consisted of pre university female students with three different languages; Azeri-Turkish, Armenian, and Farsi. The subjects were selected from state and private schools according to Nelson's grammar test. Based on this test, the learners who were in pre-intermediate level were selected for this study. The subjects were divided into three groups, based on their language background each consisting of 30 students. The age range was between 17-19. A grammar course was offered for two days a week, each session lasting for 1:30 minutes for eight weeks) in their schools. It is important to say that the course book and material for this purpose was provided by their teacher herself based on the Nelson test's requirements and the teacher would council in choosing the material and course book with the experts of this field.

Groups	No. of Subjects
A: Tabriz(Azeri-Turkish- Persian) Nafis Institute	30
B: Tabriz(Armenian-Persian Bina Institute	30
C: Tabriz(Persian) Nafis Institute	30
Total	90

B. Instrumentation

In this study there two tests were used; both were Nelson's grammar tests, one at the pre-intermediate level as the pretest for placement purposes and the other at the intermediate level as the post-test for achievement purposes. For validating the test, first of all the emphasis was on content validation approach. According to Bachman (1990) the content validation approach is squarely on the judgment of experts. In assessing the CVR(Content Validity Ratio), a panel of subject matter experts (English teachers here) was asked to examine each item on the test to determine whether the item is "essential", "useful" or "not necessary" to the operationalization of the construct. Across raters, the CVR for an item was determined as follows:

$$CVR = \frac{Ne - N/2}{N/2}$$

Ne is the number of subject matters rating the item as essential and N is the total number of subject matter experts making a rating.

$$CVR = \frac{25 - 30/2}{30/2} = \frac{25 - 15}{15} = 10/15 = 0.66$$

According to (Schmitt& Ostroff 1986) the CVR can range from +1 to -1 for a particular item. This formula was used for all of the test items (all 50 items) to determine its content validity and each time the gained CVR was 0.66. and according to (Schmitt& Ostroff 1986) the CVR of 0.66 for eavh item would be sufficient with 30 experts. So the test was used for measuring the mastery of grammatical structure.

C. Pretest

In order to find a homogenous, pre intermediate group, a valid language proficiency test (Nelson's pre-intermediate test) was administered to 120 pre-university students. There were two subtests in this test namely cloze and structure tests. A brief discussion of each subtest and the number of items is depicted in table 3.2.

TABLE 3.2
SUBTESTS OF PRETEST

subjects	No. of Items
Cloze test	14
Structure test	36
Total	50

Since these subtests were separately validated, their correction coefficients were calculated. The result revealed there was high correlation between these two subparts. The correlation coefficient between subtests was as follows:

Cloze/ Structure =. 84

And as we know when a test is reliable it is valid too (Bachman 1990), therefore these parts were safely matched with each other.

D. Design

According to the literature evidence reviewed in chapter 2, much of the research conducted in the discipline of "the effect of bilingualism", takes a quasi-experimental design, because this study, made comparisons among the mean performances of groups that occur normally. These are groups into which subjects would not usually be randomly assigned because individuals naturally belong to one group or the other.

Procedure

To accomplish the purpose of the study, a step-by-step procedure was followed.

At first the aim of the researcher was to select a homogenous group of subjects. They were homogenous concerning their level of proficiency in English, nationality, sex and age .As for their proficiency, a homogenous group "increases the range of the true score variance, and tends to increase the reliability coefficient" (Brown, 1983). The more a group is homogenous the more consistent the results are. For this purpose, the proficiency test (Nelson's pre intermediate grammar test) was given to 150 students. The students' English proficiency was measured through the sum of the two sub-scores of cloze and structure test. The evaluation of the subjects' performance on this test was perfectly objective because it was a multiple-choice test and every item had only one correct answer.

After getting the subjects' scores 90 students whose score fell half standard deviation above and half standard deviation below the mean were selected as pre-intermediate students for the purpose of the present study.

Secondly, the treatment (teaching intermediate level English grammar) were given to them in a systematic way; two days a week, each session lasting for 1:30 minutes for eight weeks, in their schools.

The material for teaching them was prepared by the researcher, since the goal of the study was to measure syntactic knowledge of the learners; she scrutinized Nelson's intermediate level tests carefully for several weeks to provide a suitable material for her goal. After contemplating on test she extracted those structural categories which were included in intermediate level tests. She found out that for handling the cloze test which was the first part of the test, having command on English tenses, possessives, pronouns, parts of speech, conjunctions and conditional forms are required, then she dealt with part B of the test which was multiple choice grammar test, she found out that having knowledge in all those required structural categories for cloze test were needed here too, but there were some additional grammar focuses in part B, like adverbs, adverbs of frequency, prepositions, superlative adjectives and so on. Then she had to put those structural categories in a standard sequence in order to be sensible for students and to provide her students with a comprehensible input, here the requirements for a comprehensible input were satisfied because she didn't add anything to the content of the tests and the tests were just one level different of each other. (Nelson's pre intermediate test and intermediate test) .It seemed that Krashen's (i+1) theory was satisfied here. If we take the student's current level as I, the provided material was just one level above their current level and it was (i+1). Although there are many agreements and disagreements on Krashen's (i+1) but according to it we can claim that the material was comprehensive. Then she was to organize the categories/structures in a standard sequence, for a standard sequence she referred to experts of the field for example Interchange books of Jack. C. Richards. She found the categories/structures among Richards' intermediate level books, Intro &Interchange (1) and some of them in Interchange (2). She noticed the sequence of the structures and tried to put them in the same order as Richards had done. So she started with simple present tense and as followed them along the Intro, Interchange 1 and 2, she taught all of the structures. So it took her 16 sessions (24 hours totally) to teach all those structures to the learners. Fortunately none of the subjects were absent during the treatment in all three groups. And this would increase the reliability of the conclusions later. Because the researcher could make sure that all of them had equal exposure to the taught material, of course there can be other matters to question the equal exposure like teacher's mood, tiredness, the time of the class and etc. but here we take just the amount of class hours into account and take her teaching as granted since she has done her best to make balance among all three groups.

Finally, at the end of sessions, the subjects were given three free days to study for the final exam (post-test) and as we know three days is not a long time to bring about a gap for the subjects to forget whatever they had learned in class or practice more than what was needed for the exam, it seemed fair for those who wanted to review the structures. And this could help the reliability too. There were many other factors which she should consider for reliability of scores, first of all the time of exam, which was same for all 90 subjects. It was 9 a.m on Friday in Bina institute in Tabriz. The setting was completely reliable because there was not much noise from outside in the street to disturb the testees. The channel (the language in which the instructions was presented) was the subjects' second language "Farsi". Because all of them had school education in Farsi and as official language of Iran, it was guaranteed that all of the subjects are literate in Farsi and they can handle it easily. The allocated time for 50 grammar questions was 90 minutes. And those who finished the test earlier could leave the class.

It was worth to say that the post test with 50 items again consisting of the same sub tests of cloze and structure was completely similar to pre-test in style and framework but its content was different and it was a level ahead of the pre-test.

E. Results

In order to find an appropriate answer to these questions, three statistical analyses were carried out: three correlational procedures, one-way analyses of variance (One way ANOVA), and Post-hoc Scheffe. In the next section a detailed description of the above-mentioned statistical analyses

F. Descriptive Statistics

TABLE 4.1
THE MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF STUDENTS' PRE-TEST SCORES BASED ON THREE GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Armenians' group	30	35.33	6.93
Turks' group	30	28	5.53
Persians' group	30	14.16	4.11

pre-test

| ☐ **Armenians group** | ■ **Turks group** | ☐ **Persians group** |
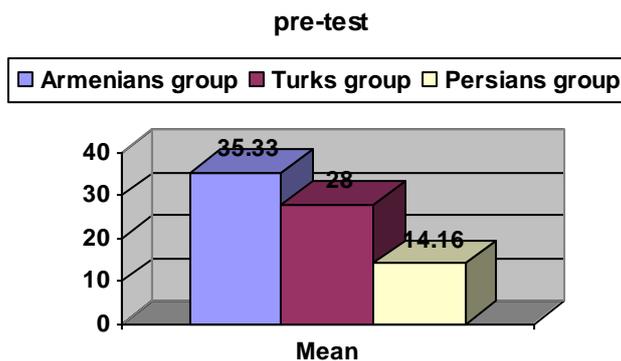
The F observed value for the comparison of the score in the pre test is 0.113 which at 2 and 87 degrees of freedom is much lower than the critical value of F, 3.11. Thus, it can be concluded that there is no significant differences among the means of the pre-test. The three groups are homogenous in terms of their language proficiency.

TABLE 4.2
RESULTS OF THE PRE-TEST FOR HOMOGENEITY OF THE SUBJECTS

Source	D.F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F observed	F Probe
Between groups	2	890.022	445.011	1.534	.145
Within groups	87	2553.133	29.346		
Total	89	3443.156			

G. Deductive Statistics

In this section, the hypotheses of the research are tested and as we know we have two hypotheses in this research which are to be answered via the analysis of One-Way ANOVA. It must be noted that both hypotheses are going to be tested by this analysis.

Since we have three groups with pre-test and post-test in this research, so for data analysis, the post-test score of every subject was subtracted from her pre-test score and for obtaining the mean of scores ANOVA statistics was used.

TABLE 4.3
THE MEAN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PRE-TEST &POST-TEST IN THREE GROUPS

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Armenians' group	30	12.46	7.43
Turks' group	30	8.36	7.15
Persians' group	30	2	2.25

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1657.756	2	828.878	22.289	.000
Within Groups	3235.400	87	37.189		
Total	4893.156	89			

P<0.05

For inspecting the mean differences between pre-test and post-test, One way ANOVA analysis was used and calculated F is (F= 22.28, df=2.87), considering the obtained significant (p=0.000) which is smaller than Error 0.05. So it can be concluded that the mean differences between pre-test and post-test of three groups is different from each other.

The comparison among the means of three groups in the test shows that the means of Armenians subjects (i.e. 12.46) are greater than Turkish subjects' means (i.e. 8.36) and the Persian group's means(2) are smaller than the others(Table 4.3).

As can be seen, the F observed value for the effect of the first language factor is 22.289 at 2 and 87 degrees of freedom, which is much grater than critical value of F, i.e. 3.06 thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference among the means of the three language groups. Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that there is no relationship between the subjects' first language and their performance on English syntax is rejected.

TABLE 4-5
POST-HOC TESTS
MULTIPLE COMPARISONS

Post Hoc Tests
Multiple Comparisons
Scheffe

(I) groups	(J) groups	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Armenian	**Turks**	4.10000*	1.57456	.038	.1786	8.0214
	Persians	10.43333*	1.57456	.000	6.5119	14.3548
Turks	Armenian	-4.10000*	1.57456	.038	-8.0214	-.1786
	Persians	6.33333*	1.57456	.001	2.4119	10.2548
Persians	Armenian	-10.43333*	1.57456	.000	-14.3548	-6.5119
	Turks	-6.33333*	1.57456	.001	-10.2548	-2.4119

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

According to estimated significant in post hoc Scheffe test the following results have been obtained:

1) The mean differences between pre& post test is different between the Turkish and Armenian group (p= 0.038) and regarding the descriptive table (4.3) the mean differences in both tests (pre& post) in Armenians' group is larger than Turkish group.

2) The mean differences between pre& post test is different between Armenian and Persian group (p=0.000) and regarding the descriptive table (4.3) the mean differences in both tests (pre& post) in Armenians' group is larger than Persian group.

3) The mean differences between pre& post test is different between Turkish and Persian group (p=0.001) and regarding the descriptive table (4.3) the mean differences in both tests (pre& post) in Turkish group is larger than Persian group.

Now, considering the results of one-way variance analysis Scheffe test (ANOVA) we can examine two null hypotheses of this research.

1)H0= Bilingualism in Iranian schools does not bring any advantage in learning English syntax.

Regarding the results of the one way variance analysis test and post hoc Scheffe test, which showed that the mean differences among three experimental group(Armenian, Turkish and Persian) was (p=0.000, p<0.005) and also considering the descriptive table 4.3 in which the mean of Armenians was greater than Turkish and Persian And Turkish group's mean was larger than Persian group's mean, it can be concluded with 95% of insurance that the null H0 is rejected and it can be claimed that bilingualism has advantage over monolingualism in Iranian students' syntax learning.

2) H0= Having academic education in first language in bilingual groups doesn't contribute to learning English grammar as their third language.

Regarding the results of the one way variance analysis test and post hoc Scheffe test, which showed that the mean differences among three experimental group (Armenian, Turkish and Persian) was (p=0.000, p<0.005) and also considering the descriptive table 4.3, the mean of Armenian group who have academic education in their first language was larger than their Turkish counterparts. It can be concluded that the null is rejected and it can be claimed that having academic education in first language contributes to learning English grammar for bilinguals.

H. Discussion

The study of bilingualism has not been exempted from the scholarly tendency to create dichotomies. Popular ones include coordinate vs. compound bilingualism (Weinreich 1953), early vs. late bilingualism (Lambert 1975) simultaneous vs. subtractive bilingualism (McLaughlin 1984, cited in Garcia & Baker1995), additive vs. subtractive bilingualism (Lambert1975, cited in Bialystock1991), and elite vs, folk bilingualism (Skutnabb-Kangas 1981). While such distinctions have served as a purpose in drawing attention to certain aspects of bilingualism, perhaps the most important lesson to be learned from these distinctions is that some of them refer to characteristics of individuals(the first three mentioned), and the others to characteristics of social group(the latter two). Linguists and psychologists have paid primary attention to the individual mental and cognitive properties of bilinguals; linguists and sociologists have primarily attempted primarily to characterize social groups in terms of the configuration of the language with respect to robustness, prestige, and other sociological and institutional features. (Krashen 1994) .And as we have discussed; Bilingualism is a feature not just of individuals, but also of societies. Societies in which two languages are used regularly, or in which more than one language has official status or a recurrent functions, can be called bilingual. For example, Canada is a bilingual country because French and English are both official languages, even though many citizens of Canada are monolingual English speakers. Saudi Arabia is also a bilingual society, as most Saudis speak both Arabic and English, though English has no official status. The nature of individual bilingualism is quite different in different communities–there are those where bilingualism is the norm for all educated citizens (as it is, for example, in relatively small language communities like Scandinavia and The Netherlands); those where bilingualism is the norm for

the minority language speakers but not those with the greatest political or economic power in the society (e.g., for Quechua speakers in Peru, for Turkish speakers in the Netherlands, for Spanish speakers in the United States); and those where bilingualism is the norm for the upper classes and better educated but not the relatively powerless (e.g., Colombia). It must be noted that the United States and other traditionally English-speaking countries observe a norm of monolingualism (low expectations for second/foreign language proficiency, low value placed on immigrant languages, universal emphasis on the need to speak English) that is possible only for speakers of a 'language of wider communication' living in an economy that is globally highly influential.

Our present understanding of the process of bilingual learning is far from complete, but our knowledge has increased greatly in the past thirty years. Indeed, our knowledge of bilingual learning can not be separated totally from important increments in our general understanding of language and learning.

The main objectives of this research were to answer to two following questions:

1) Is there any advantage due to bilingualism in learning English Syntax in Iranian schools?

2) Does school education in first language for bilinguals have any effect on learning English syntax as their third language?

The two null hypotheses in this research are as follows:

1) Bilingualism in Iranian schools does not bring any advantage in learning English syntax.

2) Having academic education in first language for bilinguals doesn't contribute to learning English syntax as their third language.

IV. CONCLUSION

In the data analysis section it was indicated that the subjects' bilingualism in both languages (Turkish and Armenian) has positive effect on third language acquisition. Thus, the null hypothesizes which implied that 1) there is no significant relationship between bilingualism of Iranian pre-university EFL learners and their achievement in syntax, was rejected and 2) the second null hypothesis which had implied that having academic education in first language doesn't contribute to learning English syntax, was rejected too. The results of the tests and analyses also showed that Armenian students who had learned L1 and L2 academically and orally were more successful than Turkish subjects who learned their L1 orally.

The analyses also showed that Armenian-Persian bilingual students are more successful than Turkish-Persian subjects in vocabulary achievement in English. This is due to the fact that Armenian, Persian, and English belong to Indo- European languages, and there are some similarities in grammar and vocabulary between these three languages. Turkish belongs to Altaic family, which has no relation to English and Persian. Also the result of test implied that there is a relationship between the syntactic knowledge of two languages with the same language families and syntactic production of the third or second language as a foreign language. And also the results proved that having academic education in bilingual groups brings superiority to them in learning a third or a foreign language. In this study, Armenians as the group who possess academic education in their mother tongue did better than Turkish bilinguals who do not have school education in their mother tongue.

V. PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

Suzette Haden (1974:187) argues that providing a bidialectal or bilingual education for the students, maintaining the language skills in the native speech medium while at the same time teaching the student's Standard English in order to use both modes. And according to her this is a compromised version of standard and non standard English in America mainly for two purposes first) to reach a justly education for all the minorities in America in order to improve learning English in her book (1974:187) she recommends:

"Let the student begin school in his or her native dialect or language and master the essential skills of reading and writing as well as the equally essential role skill of functioning in an academic environment in that native speech medium. Then at the level of perhaps the third or fourth grade, begin the shift to teaching in Standard English, while still allowing ample opportunity for the native speech medium to be used in enough areas of the curriculum to maintain competency"

Based on the findings of the present study the following implications apply to bilingual subjects and syntax achievement. It has been tried out to broaden the result to the areas of teaching, testing, and curriculum & syllabus design.

Implication for teaching

This research has theoretical and practical implications in the field of languages teaching. It provides a basis for improving the quality of practices in the teaching of first, second, and third languages' syntax.

This research is important in the design of the syntactic component of teaching programs as teachers can learn about their students' syntactic knowledge. The shortage of teachers who are qualified to teach in the first language of linguistic minority students and/or use specialized L1 techniques designed for working with second language learners has been a critical impediment to the implementation of appropriate education programs. So based upon the above mentioned statements, the review of the related literature, and the obtained results, we can conclude that if bilingualism

has positive impacts on learning syntax of a foreign language i.e English in Iran, we should provide the students of Iran with bilingual programs beginning in elementary schools. Providing this opportunity to all Iranian students will improve their chances for a better life and perhaps help to cerate a more equitable society.

Implications for curriculum and Syllabus Design

A number of international studies have shown that Iran is not alone in experiencing major changes in the linguistic and cultural diversification of its student body. Indeed, many nations of the industrialized world are facing similar issues and hold similar beliefs (including the belief that their country is alone in this 'problem' and has little to learn from the experiences of other nations). Greater comparative research on how bilingualism is promoted or thwarted through the institution of schooling can help overcome our parochialism in addressing the needs of our language minority students.

Bilingual subjects who have formal classes for both of the languages that they know (Armenian-Persian bilinguals) are more successful in syntactic achievement and we should have extra classes for our bilingual students. We should give more help to those that have no classes for both of the languages they know (Turkish students) and we should work more on their both language more easily. And in the case of monolinguals (Persian students) we can turn them into bilinguals by using bilingual education programs early in our schools like many other European countries who start English early in their childhood through bilingual education programs and produce bilinguals who do not inherit bilingualism from their parents but they can possess some of the advantages of bilingualism via bilingual education programs. Given these results, bilingual education programs beginning in early elementary school were recommended for Iran.

As it was proved bilingualism has positive effect on third language's syntactic achievement and we can start our primary schools with two languages from the first years of schooling (e.g. English and Persian).

Implications for Testing

Another implication of this test is related to test constructors and raters. Large bilingual test corpora are urgently needed in order to evaluate and compare methods in an objective manner. Existing test databases are monolingual, mainly in English. Large-scale test databases which are truly multilingual (i.e. with texts which are strict translations of each other) are needed. It will then be necessary to elaborate a set of queries in the various languages tested as well as to find the entire relevant document for each query.

Implication for Parents

We should encourage bilingual parents to maintain bilingualism at home and encourage their children to use both languages.

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