



**Culture's Role in the Process of a Second Language Acquisition in
Children whose Parents Teach them at Home**

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**EAN University
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2012**

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Research paper

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1. INTRODUCTION

Culture awareness is the key to succeed and reach proficiency in a second language. Moreover, in the case of parents who teach their children a foreign language at home. Culture plays a crucial role when learning a second language, acquiring a foreign language is a commitment not just to the language but also to its culture. Culture awareness allows children not to be spectators but participants of the foreign culture.

Therefore, the lack of parents teaching their children a second language in Colombia was the motivation to develop a research paper focused on the culture's role in the process of a second language acquisition in children.

The aim of this research is to inspire bilingual parents to notice the benefits and the advantages of adopting the process of teaching their children a second language at home.

The structure of this research paper has four main chapters. The chapters include basic concepts with regard to the bilingual acquisition, tabulation results and data analysis, a plan created for the acquisition of a second language from a cultural perspective, and conclusions.

Based on authors with knowledge on this subject, two models of interviews were designed. One model of questions for parents who are experiencing the process of teaching a second language at home and another model for children who experienced this process. Parents and children from diverse nationalities and cultures shared their personal experiences in order to improve future processes and create a plan for the acquisition of a second language from a cultural perspective.

In conclusion, a plan should be established taking into consideration the expertise of the parents, the commodity of the house, and the relationship parent-child will offer the child confidence, motivation, commitment, and discipline; which will guide children to succeed in this discipline.

2. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To my mom who struggles every day to make sure our dreams come true.

Also to the people who love the world of languages.

“Language is the road map of a culture. It tells you where its people come from and where they are going” RITA MAE BROWN.

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3. BACKGROUND

The fast growing global economy has brought changes to societies. One of the biggest needs of this globalized era is the demand of learning a second language. Nowadays, the most spoken language in the world is Chinese. As stated by Carlos GarcíaTobón, - “The Chinese language (hanyu/Xiü) is the most spoken language around the world, with more than one billion of speakers (22% of the world population)” (2008, p.1). Secondly, with regard to the English language, “one out of five people in the world speaks English at some level. English is the main language of books, newspapers, airports, air traffic-control, international business academic conferences, science, technology, diplomacy, international competitions, pop music, and advertising” (1997, p.2), as maintained by David Graddol. Finally, according to the UN, the Spanish speaking population of the world is estimated to increase 103% between 1984 and 2040. Officially, there are 21 countries whose native language is Spanish worldwide.

François Grosjean in his book *Life with two languages: an introduction to bilingualism* states that “There are 3.000 to 4.000 languages in the world today. And only 150 countries to house them in”(1984,p.4). As shown in the *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education*, “it is estimated that there are around 80 languages in Colombia. After Spanish, the largest language group is the Guajiro. English is spoken in Sand Andrés Island by about 15,000 inhabitants, but it is not widely spoken in the mainland of Colombia”. (1998,p.458). As we can appreciate, our culture still has a considerable number of ancient languages spoken by our indigenous communities. On the other hand, the English language, spoken internationally, is not spoken nowadays by a large number of Colombian inhabitants, even though bilingual schools, language centers, and private teachers have been increasing rapidly. People who want to master English language do not have enough endurance, interest, or patience to understand the process of acquiring a second language. However, children’s connection with a second language is very different.

Acquiring a second language means more than understanding grammar, syntax, or vocabulary. It is necessary to step inside the mind, context, and culture in order to be able to understand people's behaviors, manners, and social relationships. Therefore, to embrace the complete concept of a particular language in its real context, as stated by Carol Morgan "language occurs within and forms part of a cultural context and that the lexical items and cognitive structures informing those items are all culturally bound, it is clear that in order to understand language we need to understand the culture that produced it and to which it refers."(2000, p.5). At this point, a very particular expression that I found when reading articles "Culture bound" which does not have a precise definition, however, it is mostly used as a syndrome referred to a health condition of a determined culture. Likewise, it is a particular behavior exposed in certain culture. The main point of this research paper is to make people realize that learning a second language is an approach to the peer; nevertheless, getting to know the cultural heritage is the effective tool to efficient communication and social interaction.

In culture definition, language and culture work together. Every day language is related to culture. It is possible to interact with both at the same time, which would be ideal. The big difference is that language skills are kept in our mind, however, culture is not. As Dale L. and Range L. stated on their book: "culture does not live in the mind of individuals. But rather in the interactions with one another as symbols. These symbols include words, gestures, and non-language sounds." (2003, p.47).

It is well-known that learning a second language is an enriching experience. Researches reveal that early ages are the best years to start learning a second language. According to Dr. Paul Thompson, professor of neurology at UCLA School of medicine (USA), children use a part of the brain called "deep motor area," which is the part of the brain that we use to unconsciously think, for example when we brush our teeth, we are using the deep motor area. In contrast, an adult's brain operates differently, Dr. Paul corroborates that " Adults usually think sentences through in a native tongue and then translate them word-by-word, instead of thinking in automatically in another language like a child

would.”(2006,p. 1). That is the reason why children accomplish a high level of a language with less effort and time.

Barbara Zurer, in her book: *Raising a Bilingual Child*, states “*I don’t know if I had understood my parents culture as well if I had learned it in English. I certainly would have been a spectator of my visits to India. Since, I spoke the language, I was a participant. I played a role in making them happen.*” (2008,p.11). The appreciation Barbara points out is clear: people need to learn the language in order to understand a particular culture and vice versa. Worldwide, there are many children who belong to the so-called “heritage language families,” a heritage language is one not spoken by the dominant culture, but spoken in the family or associated with the heritage culture.” (1998,p. 3). In this instance, children born in heritage language families become teenagers and reach language proficiency as the experts affirm. Most of the cases are having a successful development; however, there are some that end in failure. An unsuccessful example is when a child does not speak neither his native language nor his second one, or does not use the second language to communicate but other purposes for example to fool other children or avoid chores. To start, an analysis to the first case: a Hispanic child raised in the United States whose mother did not have enough information on how to teach him a second language, or spend time with him. The story of the second case has certain similarity with the first story: An Italian boy with a Russian mother. His mother did not spend quality of time with her son, and so he spoke in Russian to people who did not speak in Russian, so he used it in order to not being understood. To sum up, the fact that a child is born in a heritage language family does not always mean that there will not be obstacles; information, motivation, and time is needed.

Motivation reinforces positive attitudes toward the second language learning process. As stated by Ronald Perry, “motivation becomes a socio-cultural factor related to the learner’s perception of an attitude toward the target language” (2004, p.72), consequently, parents must develop a strong motivation strategy, according to Tracey Tokuhama - Espinosa “parents must agree upon a strategy to reach family language goals and be consistent in the approach.”(2001,p.14). On the other hand and considering the cases described above, “the latter to

situations where a second language displaces the mother tongue, as for example when learners have negative feelings toward their own culture and desire assimilation into the target culture,” the lack of motivation and cultural exposure conduct children attitude against the mother tongue or second language.

4. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The successful development of teaching a child a second language at home in countries where contact with different cultures and education facilitates parents to cultivate a new language, has also encouraged parents to implement the discipline in our country. Nevertheless, the problem subject to research is the lack of knowledge and accurate information in such situations in which culture has a role in the process of a second language acquisition process in children thought by their parents at home; an uncommon discipline in Colombia.

5. OBJECTIVES

a. General Objective

- To develop a strategy for the successful acquisition of a second language in children, having culture as the main resource, thus encouraging the modern language community and people interested in this challenging discipline to cultivate a second language or even a third language at their present or future homes.

b. Specific Objectives

- To set up the relationship between culture and language acquisition and the impact of culture that plays a crucial role in the development of a second language at home.
- To present accurate information and analyze the most common complications of real cases of children whose parents teach them a second language at home.
- To collect and analyze successful development of real cases that can be used as a guide for future generations.
- To refute common myths about the acquisition of a second language in children.

6. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

6.1 Basic Concepts with regard to Bilingual Acquisition

The field of bilingual acquisition has been a subject to research for linguists interested in this subject, Naomi Steiner, Susan Hayens, Barbara Zurer, Maria Delgado, among others are crucial authors for the development of this research. They were born in heritage language families. Reading their publications, key concepts emerged from understanding basic points and some others from analyzing concepts from the authors who established theories based on their researches and experiences in the field, some of the concepts are well-known and some others are as popular.

However, in order to develop a strategic plan of the acquisition on a second language it is vital to describe the topics related, give the ideas supported from authors, and identify specific examples of the following concepts; which are going to be supportive and vital in the elaboration of the research. The descriptive progress of each concept is fundamental for analyzing real cases throughout the process of the acquisition of a second language at home, when culture plays a role in the successful development of the process.

6.1.1 Bilingualism

First, in accordance with Steiner and Hayerns, “ Bilingualism is the ability to think and speak in a second language, even when a person is in the process of learning a second language. There is also the expectation that a person who is bilingual will always be able to find just the right words in both languages (something that monolinguals aren’t able to do in their single languages) “(2008, p.2).

It is very interesting to analyze that people who are in the process of acquiring a second language are also considered as bilinguals. The adequate use of the target language (mother tongue) and source language is crucial for the successful development of the abilities to master them. There are various types of bilingualism, as Rod Ellis states in his book *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. “ Additive

bilingualism, consists of a speaker adding a second language without any loss on competence to first language. Diversely, *Subtractive bilingualism* corresponds to the addition of a second language that leads to gradual erosion or competence in the first language.

Bilinguals have different brain processes compared to monolinguals. This particular biological difference appears to enhance attention and, in some cases, such as children born in heritage language families, they acquire a higher linguistic level in which they are able to improve their skills in their source language. Therefore, bilinguals become aware of their source language structures, bilingual children are very competent.

One of their most outstanding skills is their ability to switch from one language to another in a matter of seconds, when a situation requires it. On the contrary, a person who is already bilingual but does not have much practice in the language used in the context, it will be an activity that is going to take time, confidence, and practice in order to speak it the same way a bilingual child raised in a heritage language does.

6.1.2 Second language acquisition

The following terms are crucial because the study is grounded on the research of the acquisition of a second language.

As stated in the book *Introducing second language acquisition*, “language acquisition needs to be seen as the mastery of linguistic functions. Learning one’s mother tongue is learning the uses of learning and the meanings, or rather the meaning potential associated with them. The structures, the words, and the sounds are the realization of this meaning potential. Learning a language is learning how to mean” (2012, p.57), mastering a new language is learning how to find the right words to express what is needed. Word’s meaning is a vital part of the comprehension of the second language.

Second language acquisition is the result of a process that culminates with the proficiency of a target language. This procedure takes time, constancy, commitment, and disposition.

A child's brain is capable to learn a second or even a third language. In other words, the child's brain is like a sponge, they learn what their parents consciously or unconsciously teach them. Thereby, the successful development of a second language acquisition in children depends on their parents, who should be able and willing to teach their children. A second language acquisition is the final stage of children studied in this research paper. However, what is really important is to analyze the process itself, the attitude towards the second language, acculturation of target language, and personal experiences that lead to the formulation of successful strategies to teach a second language at home when culture plays a crucial role.

6.1.3 Source language

In this document, mother tongue and second language are used very often. "The *source* language is that acting as a source of interference, it is normally the Lerner's native language". (1974, p.55). Jim Cummins (1986) states, "The first language is so instrumental to the emotional and academic wellbeing of the child, that its development must be seen as a high priority of the early years of schooling. Thereby, parents need to give their children an approach to source language in the early ages before introducing the child a second language.

The source language is the language spoken in the country where the child is born. In heritage language families, parents introduce the child the second language in the very first ages. However, when the child starts the early years of schooling and the child begins to have social relationships and be surrounded by kids, the child is going to have the strongest abilities in the language that surrounds him the most because he is going to practice the language in different contexts. Therefore, this language is going to have a wider background.

6.1.4 Target language

The *target* language is that in which communication is being attempted; in the case of a Lerner, it is the language the child is learning. The target language is the second language acquired followed by the acquisition of the child's mother tongue or source language. In the case of children proficient in two languages or more, they do not have the decision of choosing a language that calls their attention, or that suits their future plans; the children's parents make a decision of starting the process of the acquisition of a target language, encouraging the child to be interested in both languages.

6.1.5 Culture bound

There is no a precise definition for "culture bound", as already explained. However, it is mostly used as a syndrome referred to a health condition of a determined culture. Likewise, it is a particular behavior exposed in a peculiar culture. Besides, analyzing the literal translation from a dictionary: culture bound is: "A state or quality of having relevance only to the members of a specific cultural group". Culture bound is an unfulfilled gap exposed in just one specific culture.

Cultural components are very different in every country. There are many reasons why families change their country of residence. In this situation, children have to face drastic changes in terms of the language and even more extreme changes to get to know a new culture. This kind of changes must be guided because children should learn to appreciate and be interested in the new culture, taking into account that the attitude towards the culture benefits the language progress as well.

6.1.6 Heritage language families

In the case of the *melting pot*, USA, *heritage language* has been used to refer to indigenous, colonial and immigrant languages. As stated by Fishman (2001), "Indigenous languages are those of Native Americans; colonial languages are those of immigrant settlers and immigrant languages are those spoken by immigrant speakers" (2009,p.18). Children raised in heritage language families, where the source language is spoken at home, are able to reach a significant proficiency and

accuracy in both languages. Instead, the exposure to the language is crucial; otherwise, the lack of grammatical knowledge in the heritage language would create an inconsistency. This concept gives the research an innovative perception towards the main goal of analyzing real cases of children learning languages from their parents. Constantly, couples from diverse cultures are getting married without noticing the advantages and cultural backgrounds that a relationship can benefit the child. Some of the heritage language families decide to teach their children everything about their cultures, including their languages.

Heritage language families are crucial in this research because the majority of cases that will be studied are derived from heritage language families. Children born in heritage language families are very interesting to analyze because they are exposed to learn both cultures and languages, and if their parents decide so. According to the expert's perception, children born in heritage language families reach a very interesting level because of the age they are exposed to the language.

Regarding language proficiency, in accordance with Mary Lachat, the full proficiency of a second language is achieved when four skills are mastered:

- Reading: *The ability to comprehend and interpret.*
- Listening: *the ability to understand and comprehend the target language speakers information.*
- Writing: *the ability to produce written texts.*
- Speaking: *the ability to use oral language appropriately and effectively.* (2004, p.26).

As appreciated above, being proficient in a language means to master the four communicative abilities. Hence, language proficiency and bilingualism are contrasted: a bilingual is a person who can speak and think in a second language; on the other hand, a person who is proficient in a language is someone who masters the four skills of a target language.

What matters for most people when talking about language proficiency is age, some adults state that they are not able to learn a second language because of their age and lack of time. Somehow, they are right. As Freeman M. & Long D. state in *An introduction to second language acquisition research*: “Young children could apparently do what the adult linguist could not: Induce the rules of grammar from performance data. Children mastered most of the rules of their first language by the age of five, regardless of intelligence, social class, of any those environmental factors thought to play a role in other aspects of development”(1991, p.114).

Children with proficiency in a target language are the successful proof of a well-carried process. Every process, cultural environment and personal experiences must be analyzed in order to understand the divergences and complications that can affect the process.

6.1.7 Goofs

An unfamiliar term, goof, as stated by *The American Heritage Dictionary of Idioms*, means to blunder, make a mistake or spoil. This expression emerged in the military during World War II, along with the synonym *goof off*. “(p. 263).

Goofs have four classifications:

- a. Interference-like Goofs: Those that reflect native language structure.
For example, “ Hers pajamas”, produced by a Spanish child reflects a Spanish culture.
- b. Developmental Goofs: Those that do not reflect native language structure but are found in target language acquisition data.

For example, “ he took her teeths off”: produced by a Spanish child , reflects an overgeneralization typically produced by children acquiring English as their first language”.

- c. Ambiguous Goofs: Those that cannot be categorized in neither interference nor developmental goofs.

For example, “Maria not can go”: Reflects a typical mistake in both children: American and Spanish.

- d. Unique Goofs: Those that do not reflect source language structures nor target language.

For example, “he name is Victoria” produced by a Spanish child.

Getting to know the classification of goofs, it also encourages us to consider that the generation of goofs depends on the culture and language.

For example, in the case of a Hebrew child, learning Spanish in Israel in a heritage language family, “R” has a different pronunciation than in Spanish, unlike French or Thai, knowing that in Hebrew “R” involves different phonemes to pronounce it, to be more specific, it is produced with the throat not with the tongue, as Spanish speakers do.

Therefore, goofs vary from language to language, from culture to culture. It is not a myth that target language transmits basic structures; the target language brings with it the scenario of a new setting such as new phonemes, structures, grammar, and so on. Goofs seem to be an obstacle in the acquisition of a second language. However, goofing is a stage of a second language acquisition, the average of goofs children generate depend on the language level and if parents correct them.

Having said that goofing is normal in the acquisition of a second language in children; goofs exhibit a misunderstanding or lack of information of the target language. According to all the classification of goofs, goofs show the source language structures.

6.2 Relationship between culture and language

Afterwards, the term “culture” has acquired several different meanings in the last two years, it is fundamental to understand its background. Goodenough says: *Culture, Language, and Society*“ The term itself (culture) came into anthropological use from the German word *Kulture*. The better-educated classes of Europe were presumed to be less ignorant and to have better understanding of the truth. The degree to which people differed in their customs, beliefs and arts from sophisticated Europeans was a measure of how ignorant they were” (1981, p. 47). Anciently, a member of a society who had lack of knowledge of beliefs, morals, customs, and any other habits was considered ignorant. Later, at the end of the nineteenth century, it was discovered that instead of different societies having different stages of cultural development, each society had a culture by its own what still remains today.

Since ancient times, it is known that culture and language are linked. Humboldt stated“ Each language draws a circle around the nation to which it belongs”. The case of a child or person who has been exposed to several cultures is different. According to Goodenough, “ A person finds people must attribute different standards of others, he perceives sets as recognizing different cultures. In this way, each individual’s propriospect (From latin *propio*, “peculiar to the self”), comes to include several different cultures that he associates with what for him are different sets of others”(1981, p. 98). It is a clear explanation of what it is noticeable in learners of a second language. They focused on morphology and phonology, the language itself; not all of them center their attraction in semantics and symbolism, what would belong to the culture.

Nevertheless, to illustrate a particular case, a child born in a heritage language family does not make the decision to get to know neither a language nor a culture, but it is motivated and, in some cases, exposed to the culture of both the source and target language. This definitely contributes to reaching the peak. Bilingualism itself and culture were stated by MacNab,“ To learn a second language is a commitment to a second culture, and people who learn to speak two languages are, therefore, very likely to be quite different from those who stay unilingual” (1979, p.243).

A fragment of a debate held in Cincinnati and Milwaukee presented by Steven Schlossman illustrates the perception towards a language, influenced by its culture: “The real opposition to the German language does not arise from the amount of money expended upon it, but rather from fear of the part of many citizens that children will be *Germanized*, as they express it” (1986, p.211).

Nonetheless, what are the contributions to external factors in the acquisition of a second language, According to Rod Ellis in *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, “The role played by the social situation in which learning takes place and how the learner is exposed to accounts for acquisition as evident in the language the learner produces” (1994, p. 16). Children are able to adapt their speech to either converge with a language; they learn to interact with the culture that surrounds them as fast as they learn manners, songs, games, and routines among others.

Learning a second language does not just mean to learn grammar structures by heart, it is a Word game, a puzzle that the learner has to adapt in order to have communicative ideas.

6.3 Benefits of having a cultural background or knowledge in the acquisition process of a second language

As stated by Arabaski and Vojtaszek, *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*, “The proficiency of a second language may be sometimes limited because of their cultural background”(2011, p.13). That statement pursues the theories that focuses on “The studies of the second language learners on language acquisition, a process understood by becoming a member of a given language community” (2011, p.13).

Consequently, there are two main facts to explain that the culture of a target language should be acquired. The first one is to reach the language proficiency as stated before, and the second one corresponds to understand the identity and being part of a particular language community. There are many advantages of having a cultural background of any language, bilingualism fosters skills and early awareness of the language as Hakuta states a study case in her book *Mirror of Language*, a

four-year-old said, "I can speak Hebrew and English", to which his five-year-old American friend said, "What is English?" (1974, p. 67).

In conclusion, parents who want their children to be proficient in certain language and be interested in its culture start to expose the culture of the language in early ages. But, how? There are many ways to get the attention of a learner. Parents cook typical food, travel, listen to music, play games, look for babysitters of a particular country, among other simple activities that can catch the attention of a child. Culture helps to understand language and vice versa.

Indeed, when a person explores certain culture, the person is able to understand a more complex level of language, concepts, expressions; those features that a teacher do not explain, precise characteristics such the way of writing, expressing ideas, and feelings that are particular in every country. For example, in writing, Colombians are very descriptive and we like to flourish every single idea. On the contrary, Americans are direct and they just go straight to the point. Another example can be punctuality, which is a cultural matter. Thus, people should adjust to the culture in every single task in order to have a high proficiency and knowledge of what is behind the language.

To clarify, the pursue of an individual in the attempt of culture understanding, in the socio-cultural sense, Richard's theory affirms that: "Limitations to the acquisition of standard English in the foreign language setting are hence not socially imposed limitations, which are rather *individual*, reflecting personal differences in motivation, perseverance and aptitude. " (1974, p. 88). Sometimes, it is usually seen that people complain about culture complexities and differences of their own cultures. Thus it is plausible to get a clear overview and certainly, the awareness of a culture. As stated by Richard, the aptitude towards the new culture, and the motivation gained are crucial.

Culture defines people thoughts and behaviors. It is vital to understand it clearly when the child who is learning a language should start to understand the context in which his second language is spoken. Culture is a crucial element of a country's heritage; culture is transmitted from generation to generation. Therefore, cultural

awareness is the most important step in avoiding potential cultural conflicts that may arise during trips to the country where the second language is spoken or when the child has the opportunity to interact with native people.

Culture is the “glue” that joins a group of people together. It can be defined as a pattern that guides the behavior of people in a community. It governs the behavior in groups, make people sensitive to social matters. Thus, culture guides people to know the responsibility with a determined group. Children belong to the culture where they were raised. However, it does not mean that they cannot be part of other cultures.

When a child absorbs another culture by learning a second language, apart from appreciating other people and their cultures, it also enables children to comprehend what role language plays in shaping people’s patterns. Often, other languages have better methods of expressing ideas, concepts, or thoughts compared to the child’s native language. Culture awareness allows the child to understand people’s behaviors and have a great language level. Teaching a foreign culture strengthen the development of communication in cross-cultural communication.

6.4The impact of culture in a second language acquisition process

Language is a generalized picture of ourselves, of what we actually are; it is part of our culture. Culture gives a “special touch” in any language it embraces. For example, when analyzing an idiomatic expression in Spanish such as: “*como mosco en leche*”, which means that a person does not feel comfortable with certain environment; this saying of our Colombian culture is a very common idiomatic expression. On the contrary, In English, the equivalent is: “*like a fish out of water*”. Both of them have different components, and that difference definitely shows what culture is.

Another example, Spanish speakers have the saying: “*se me fue por el mal Camino*”, which means that a person could not swallow some kind of food appropriately. In Hungarian, the equal expression would be: “*cigány útra ment*”, which literally translated means: “*It went on the gypsy road*”. But, why does the saying have such a

huge difference? Because Hungarians feel ashamed and upset to gypsies that is the worst offense anyone can tell Hungarians. However, they use that saying as a joke to fool themselves.

Idioms and expressions have an enormous cultural impact on language; non-verbal language is another branch. Like Italians who communicate their feelings and thoughts with their hands, or English people who express rude expressions. That does not mean anything for us. Another impact of culture in language is the order and the way people of certain culture express their ideas. Hence, it is a difficult task to write in any target language, because first it is recommended to comprehend the structures, think in the use of language, and adapt thoughts to the target language structure. That is the argument, among others, supporting that not all people can adapt to certain cultures, depending on their cultural background.

As stated by Arabaski and Vojtaszek, as an example of the impact of culture in language acquisition, as a background and illustration they stated that: “ At the end of the 60s and 70s in Western Europe, multicultural societies had impact on English language and culture. They use their linguistic and communicative resources to learn aspects of British, American and other cultures. The following decades they were more interested in culture “(2011,p.10).

Social factors play a vital role in the interactions of learners for not being spectators and start becoming participants of the culture with a proficient level able to understand behaviors, manners, expressions, and attitudes. As reported by Gardner’s *Socio-Educational Model of L2 Learning*, “ The social and cultural environment in which learners grow up determines the attitude and motivational orientations that learners hold towards the target language, its speakers, and its culture – which in turn influence the source of learning behaviors, learners engage in, and thereby learning outcomes” (Gardner 1985).

Culture as a process cannot be learnt entirely through superficial aspects like food, costume, and holidays. Culture is also experienced through language, however because language is inseparable from culture. Learning a second language requires learning the linguistic aspects of the target culture. Second language acquisition is

second culture acquisition. In order to have proficiency in the second language, parents should be concerned in culture awareness. Parents, independently if they are a heritage language family or not can raise their children in both cultures by means of a group of aspects such as food, movies, games, trips, among others; of course learning the language is the closest connection to culture. Every culture is unique in itself.

6.5 Bilingual's aptitudes

It is crucial to understand the benefits of distinguishing between the native and second language throughout the process of learning a second language because there are some phases to overcome and stages that may be not easy to surpass without knowing how to take action and address those complexities. In other words, when the child is experiencing the process of learning two or three languages simultaneously, children sporadically mix both codes due to the fact of the influence one language has over the other, besides, sometimes they switch languages when the conditions do not allow it. "code-mixing" and "code-switching" are seen as a sign of incompetence. However, these circumstances may influence bilingual's language positively.

Furthermore, some cases of parents teaching their children in Colombia are going to be contextualized. Similarly, the most common myths about second language acquisition are going to be uncovered.

6.5.1 Code mixing

The term *code mixing* (CM), according to Bathia and Ritchie in their book *The Handbook of Bilingualism*, refers to "The mixing of the various linguistics units (words, modifiers, phrases, clauses and sentences) primarily from two participating grammatical systems within a sentence"(2006, p.337).

Some factors that can cause code mixing are circumstances, goals of the speech, and sometimes bilingual children cannot find proper words or expressions in their second language. Moreover attitudes, messages, and emotions generate code-

mixing. Code-mixing harmonize positively with the educational accomplishment of individuals. As shown also, these phenomenon have distinctions as well as demerits in the speech repertoire of their users.

The following example is the result of the interaction of two languages. Sometimes, code mixing is expressed to show off that a person is able to manage two languages.

“C'mon girls, *waqt hai shine karneka!*”

The expression above is used in a T.V. commercials for certain shampoo, because “Hinglish” has become *la lingua franca* for the upper class of Indians.

In the case of children, Kenji Hakuta, explains the role of code mixing in bilingual children as follows: “In most children, by the age of three to four, languages are rarely mixed (although intentional mixing of languages for stylistic purposes is common). In addition, many children are reported to express conscious awareness of their use of two languages. “(1986).

Secondly, in the case of bilinguals, Kenji Hakuta states that “ At some level, bilinguals have a common conceptual store for both languages. Otherwise, it would be impossible, for example, for me to tell a story in English about a trip to Japan, during which I did not use a word in English. It is obvious that must be independent at some level”(1986). The bilingual mind has the ability to keep two languages separately.

Code-mixing is important and common in bilingual children. It is also a vital aspect of bilingualism. Code-mixing is caused by attitudes, messages, and emotions perceived from the language. It also demonstrates the avoidance of circumstances and knowledge in foreign languages.

6.5.2 Code-switching

By deeply examining the goofs emerging in a target language, it is crucial to talk about the code switching, stated by Jeff Macswan (2006, p.284)“the alternate use of two (or more) languages within the same utterance”

According to Rod Ellis, “Code-switching occurs when a speaker changes from one language to another language in accordance with substitutional or purely personal factors” (1994, p.696).The code switching is an interference between languages, it is a quite normal stage of a bilingual interaction; and it contains a psychological effect of the acquiring process of the target language. After recognizing the code of both the source and target languages, bilingual accommodation is the next step. Accommodation is a psychological and dynamic process of the understanding process of a bilingual. It is vital to take into account that bilingual accommodation is strongly linked to the attitude towards the culture. It is a balance of social relationships and interactions.

“There are large individual differences in the rate at which children acquire a second language. It is probably a myth that children find the process of second-language acquisition “painless”. There are number of reports that suggest emotional stress with second language acquisition”(1986, p.232).

There are a variety of reasons for switching from one language to another. The first of these is the fact of having a notion that a child is not able to express himself/herself in one language, therefore the child switches the language and compensates the deficiency. Secondly, the child expresses solidarity with a social group; nonetheless this type of practice may also exclude children. Code-switching allows children to convey with their attitude. Code switching is disruptive but it provides language development.

6.5.3 Contextualization of some bilingual cases in Colombia and references of bilingual cases abroad.

Teaching children a second language at home is not a common practice in Colombia. Nevertheless, there are foreign people who move to Colombia with diverse cultural

backgrounds, they decide to cultivate their children the language and the culture that they belong to. The second case are parents born and raised in Colombia but with knowledge in foreign languages, they determine to teach their children a second language at home knowing the benefits and advantages that proficiency in two or three languages would bring to their future opportunities.

A very particular case of an Italian boy whose father is Italian and whose mother is Colombian is described as follows. The boy was raised in Italy until he was five years old; he was certainly raised in a heritage language family. When the boy was six years old, they all moved to Colombia. The boy had Spanish knowledge because his mother always talked to him in Spanish, so when he got to Colombia it was not a dramatic change at all.

The boy sometimes mixes both languages, as a natural process; however, he knows when to use each of the languages. Still, the child has some goofs. His parents repeat patiently the grammar structure, until the child mechanizes it.

The boy has constant contact with both languages: Spanish at home and Italian at the school. Furthermore, his parents are always motivating and encouraging him to keep in touch with the Italian culture. The child speaks with his grandparents frequently and they all schedule activities, such as, cooking pasta, or watching an Italian movie, for example *Pinocchio*.

The successful development of this case gathers: motivation, correction of goofs, good attitude toward the language, and culture exposure. According to evidence from several studies, Cummins points out that, “within one and a half to two years of arrival in the host country most immigrant students have acquired relatively fluent and peer-appropriate face-to-face communicative skills in the second language” (1986, p.184).

A child imitates the words they hear, but also the attitudes, manners, and habits they perceive from their parents. Parents need to be creative in order to catch the child’s attention and therefore maintain the child’s motivation to learn the second culture and language. There are many parents who are very dynamic and have the disposition to

teach their children a second language. On the other hand, there are many others who do not have enough time or they just do not make the decision to develop a plan to foster their children a foreign language and culture.

6.5.4 Common myths of second language acquisition in children whose parents teach them a second language at home

In all the cultures, there are myths and misconceptions about bilingualism in children created by each community. This chapter attempts to clarify the most common myths about bilingualism in children. Myths are born due to the fact of assumptions and lack of accurate information. The three most common myths are uncovered with the support of experts on the topic.

The most common myths about bilingualism are:

1. "Only really intelligent children can be bilingual": An infant's brain is prewired to learn all of the different languages in the world. "(2008, p.4). Any child of any culture is available to acquire a second language, the IQ (intelligence quotient) does not have a starting point where the child can or cannot learn a second language. What is really important is to start introducing the second language in an early stage of the child's life. Preferably, during the pregnancy.

Actually, there are cases of parents who do not master a second language and even so they teach their children a second language. They can motivate their children with shows in English, movies, and with a person who can talk to the kids in the target language. That is the case of a citizen from Bogotá who is not proficient in English. On the contrary, he has a basic knowledge of the language, and he is teaching his child who is gradually developing skills.

2. Bilingualism leads to confusion, thus making children mix languages and never become proficient in either one: mixing is a natural course when learning two languages, as explained above. Still, educators sometimes misunderstand this natural process as being "confused", because if a

language and its culture are consistently studied that leads to proficiency in both languages.

There is no influence that bilingualism leads to confusion. On the contrary, no matter what language is using the child at the moment, both languages are active in the brain. Teaching children a second language enhances a child's mental development. There are cases of children who at the age of seven are proficient in two or more languages and they do not feel confused between two languages.

3. If a child does not speak English by the time of kindergarten, would have trouble learning and reading in the school.

The IQ of any child is enough to learn a second language very fast thanks to the socialization and culture exposed. In fact, experts believe that the capacity to learn a second language declines slowly until puberty" (2008, p.9). As also analyzed by Dular and Burt, in looking a second language learning pace of capability of adults and children, they said that: " A child is constantly in the process of reorganizing his processing system and adding knowledge to his storage will have quite different approaches to the new input.. The most adaptable, sensitive language learner we can find is a young child" (1974, p.100).

There are heritage language families who teach their children one language at home, for example French. A family lives in the United States but speaks in French since the first stage of the child until the age of three or four years when children go to kindergarten. When these children start kindergarten they have almost no knowledge in English, due to the fact that little children have the majority of contact with their parents. These children socialize with monolingual children, they start to listen to a practically new language, they develop language skills with no difficulties, even more easy for them because children gather through playing.

7. METHODOLOGY

Most of the collection of the information is based on recently released books, most of the publications are from authors that were raised in heritage language families. The accurate methodology for this research is mainly comprised by interviews. The target of study is parents who are currently developing this discipline with their children; therefore, study cases of diverse countries and different cultural backgrounds are necessary. The parents to be interviewed are from Colombia, with additional cultural backgrounds or foreigners. It is vital to recall cases of parents teaching their children abroad, because they would provide a guide and interesting cultural contexts.

The main goal of the creation and implementation of interviews is to analyze the different environments where parents cultivate a second language at home, the response of children and development of source and target language skills. Moreover, the idea is to detect, if so, unexpected problematic cases emerging during the process.

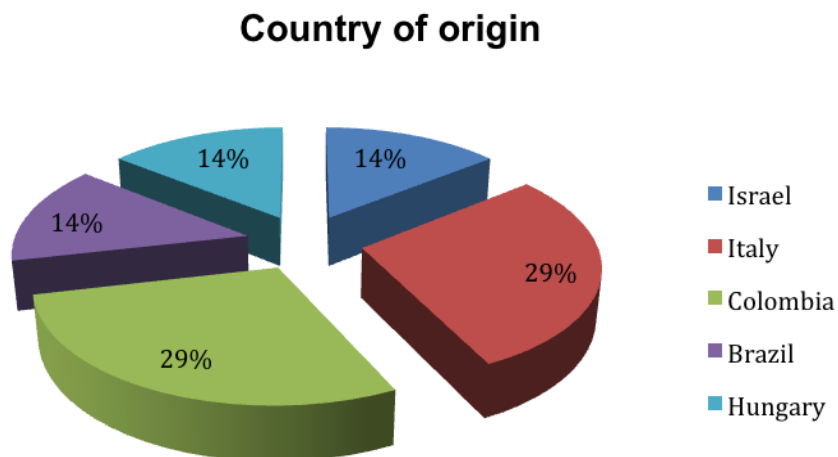
Based on the interviews, it is crucial to take into account all the details, experiences in authentic processes, children's behaviors, and activities that motivate children to remain learning the second language and its culture. Additionally, an action plan will be identified, however in case parents do not implement a strategic plan for developing a process of teaching a second language, it will be designed.

8. Tabulation Results and Data Analysis

The main goal of the research is to analyze contrasting personal experiences of parents from different backgrounds who taught their children a second language at home and adolescents who experienced the process of learning a second language at home.

Most of the interviews were recorded. It is also relevant to make clear that the countries of origin were not randomly chosen. There were some contacts with people who disclosed their own experiences in order to analyze the right and wrong decisions made during their processes. Similarly, the analysis of the outcomes of the interviews and the culture's role in the achievement of goals and proficiency in two or more languages established the guidelines for developing a plan for the acquisition of a second language from a cultural perspective.

Figure I

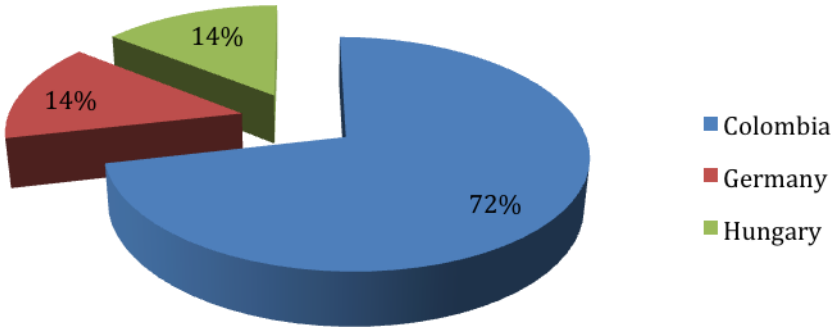


As appreciated above 29% of the people interviewed are originally from Colombia. 29% of people are from Italy, 14% from Brazil, 14% from Hungary, and 14% from Israel. Figure I shows the presence of Latin American countries and European

countries. Most of the interviewed people have some link with Colombia. There are three different models of questions. Some questions were specifically designed for parents, another type of questions for adolescents who learned a second language and were born in heritage language families, and some other questions suited for both generations. 4 out of 7 people are parents who taught their children a second language or are currently teaching their children a foreign language. Those parents and young men from different cultures and backgrounds shared their personal experiences, opinions, and knowledge on this subject. All of them are still very interested in this research paper, and in some way, they are currently very connected with their languages in terms of work, hobbies, and interests.

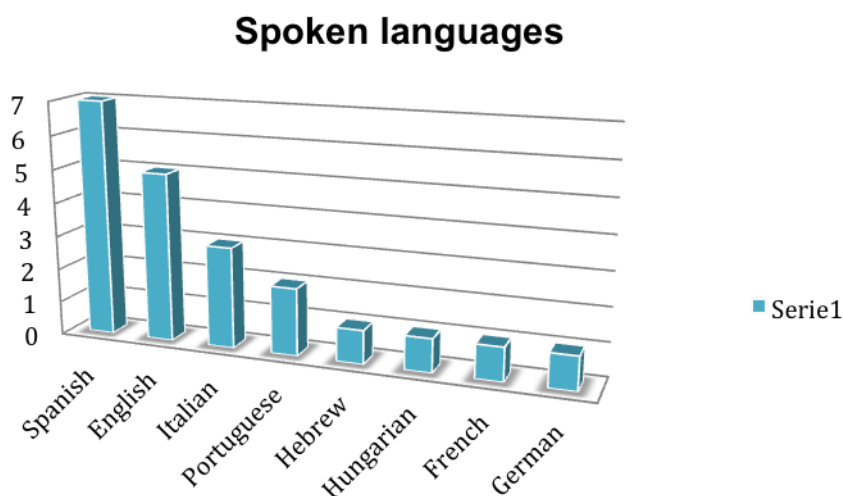
Figure II

Country of residence



As appreciated above 72% of the people interviewed reside in Colombia. 29% of them moved to Colombia because one member of the wedlock was originally from Colombia. Thus, familiar reasons were the cause for changing the country of residence. The families that changed their country of residence are 2. One of them is from Italy and the other one from Israel. Currently, they have been living in Colombia for a period for more than 3 years. The minorities reside in Germany and Hungary (14%)

Figure III



As shown, Figure III, 100% of the interviewees speak Spanish. Therefore, the unique common feature within the researched group is the Spanish language. Even though, there were 28% of people who do not have any link with Colombia. The second most spoken language is English, spoken by 5 out of 7 people. Furthermore, there are also Italian, Portuguese, Hebrew, Hungarian, French, and German people, a wide variety of languages spoken in a small but very academic group of people.

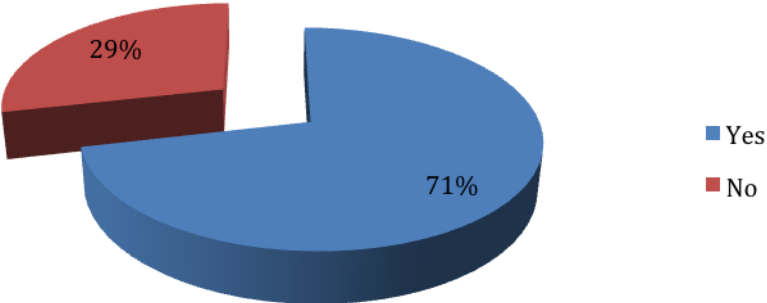
Understanding the difference of having two generations in this researched group, (the first generation is parents teaching their children - from 37 to 54 years old; and the second generation is young people who were born in heritage language families - from 20 to 23 years old) and the difference in number of languages spoken in the first generation compared to the number of languages spoken in the second generation is noticeable. 57% are parents who taught their children a second language or who are currently teaching a second language, half of them speaks 2 languages, and the other half speaks 3 languages. In the case of young people born in heritage language families with parents with similar backgrounds as the ones who belong to the first generation, one of the guys speaks 3 languages, and the others 4 languages each.

Analyzing this data, it was found an increase of languages spoken in the new generation. For this new generation of children born in heritage language families,

facilities for traveling, the use of technology for learning languages, and new systems of education represent a plus for their academic development.

Figure IV

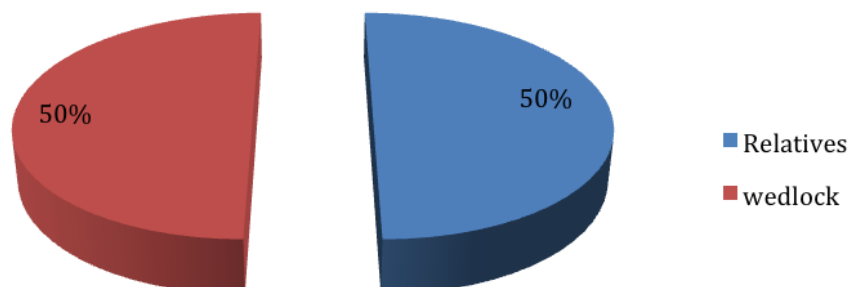
Parents who influenced the process of second language



FigureIV presents the percentage of people from both generations whose parents influenced the process of learning a second or even a third language. 71% of the interviewees had the guidance of their parents for learning a second language. In this research, all of the parents who influenced their children - it was not a simple influence - but they all started to teach their children at a very early stage of the children's lifetime, some of the parents started teaching simple commands and some others started the process of teaching a second language during the pregnancy or as soon as the child was born. However, there is a 29% remaining who had no influence from their parents but from other relatives. In some way, all of them had an influence of someone from their familiar circle who thought or displayed them the world of languages. As a conclusion, the majority of people have a great influence from their parents.

Figure V

Other people who influenciatiated



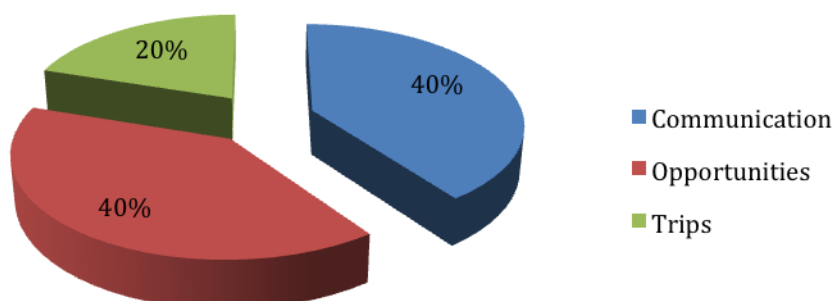
As shown in Figure 4, 29% of remaining people had no direct influence from their parents. This remaining percentage (two cases) belongs to the first generation.

One of them did not have the influence of their parents but Fernando's older sister was really interested in languages and that was his first contact with foreign languages; moreover, having a failure in English at school encouraged him to overcome that failure.

In the second case, an Italian man met a Colombian woman who later became his wife. The fact of marrying her stimulated him to learn Spanish. As analyzed before, people who did not have their parents influence, had either a relative or a couple who introduced them to the bilingual sphere.

Figure VI

Way of influenciating



This figure shows 3 different ways of influencing the process of acquiring a second language. 40% was communication. Communication is just one word for describing people whose key for success was communication itself; in other words, their parents communicated with them in the second language.

In a heritage language family, Itai, he was living in Israel while his mother talked to him in Spanish at home. He received the influence of learning a language by listening to it and speaking it; he learned his second language the same way he learned his native language.

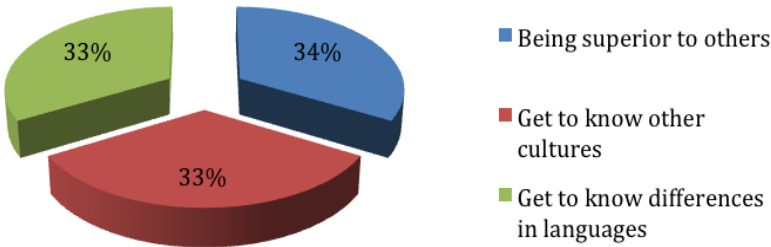
The other 40% of people, since they were little children, their parents explain them the opportunities that being proficient in a second language would bring them in life. Hence, they grew up recognizing that they would have a bonus over the rest of the society; they knew that in the future, they would use the languages they were learning.

The remaining 20% discovered the languages by means of trips; for example, when Alberto was a little child, he had the chance to travel abroad his home country (Italy). He traveled to France, England, among other countries. Alberto discovered that there was not just Italian language spoken worldwide; he uncovered by himself that there were a variety of languages spoken. Besides, he learned, at an early stage

of his life, the importance of knowing the language of the country visited. He understood the role of communicating in different languages.

Figure VII

Delighted interests



This question is one of the most interesting one because it has a very personal point of view and personal experiences. They did not hesitate to say what they like and enjoy the most the process of learning a second language at home.

This question was targeted just to the adolescents who experienced being taught by their parents. “Being superior to others” was an unexpected answer. However, that saying is very realistic because as Itai said he was proficient in two languages at a very early age; he grew up with a condition that no many kids are capable to experience.

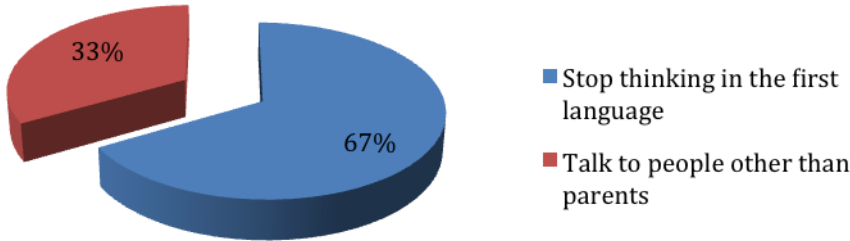
33% appreciated the fact of knowing more than one culture by means of the food, trips, music, and, of course, the language itself; and the remaining 33% was very interested in languages. Nãendy is fluent in four languages. He learned Portuguese in Brazil and started to learn German in his home country. When he was a teenager he learned his third language –English. He highlighted the special enjoyment of learning English -his third language- because he started to realize the complexities, phonetics, and grammatical structures of each language. By that time, he decided to learn Latin in order to understand better the roots of the languages he was learning.

As a result of a constant process, there is a prominent result. Children feel very attracted by languages and new cultures. They feel very curious of other languages as well. For example, when Emmanuelle (Albertos's kid) watches cartoons in other languages, so he learned Chinese words by himself, and later on, he teaches his parents some new vocabulary he already learnt by himself.

As explained before, the three men interviewed are between 20 to 23 years. One of them is working in an embassy thanks to the proficiency in various languages; the other person is working in a language center; and the last man is working in an enterprise in the languages field. Therefore, they enjoy the area of languages and, of course, their proficiency in different languages helped them achieve good job positions in environments where they have to deal with languages.

Figure VIII

Most difficult stage



This section is completely the opposite question of Figure VII. This question was also designed for the second generation.

Since starting a complex process was not an easy decision for their parents because they knew that some difficulties would emerge during the process. Children's perceptions according to their likes, capabilities, and personalities are exposed in Figure VIII.

67% agreed that the most difficult stage to overcome in the process of a second language acquisition is to stop thinking in the first language, and start stimulating the brain in order to think in the language the person need to use. This mechanism is not as easy as it may seem. It requires concentration, listening abilities, and lots of practice. Knowing that every single language has a unique way of communication, children apprehend features of their first and second language without noticing it; for example, someone who wants to communicate a simple message in English does not have the need to think it in his native language (Spanish) and then pronounce it in English again; the consequence is that the message can be misinterpreted, or it may not sound natural.

Thus, for the majority, 67% start thinking in the second language was not an easy task; it took time. The remaining 33% had a hard time trying to speak the second language or, in some cases, the third language with people other than their parents.

Understanding that parents in heritage language families have a crucial role to guide their children to reinforce their abilities, they expressed that the most difficult stage was when kids had the chance to communicate with native people, they felt shy because those people did not give them the same confidence their parents did; therefore, a reaction can be listening to the other person but not answering because of the fear of messing up. This behavior is not usual in all children; it actually depends on the personality of the child. There are children who feel very confident of their knowledge and there are also children who are very sociable and talk to everyone. Similarly, there are some children who are shy.

As a conclusion, a process that brings so much success and advantages in the children's future has also its complexities. Both parties have to make a big effort: parents with communication and empathy, children with communication, attitude towards the language, and acceptance in mistake-correction process.

Figure IX

Interest in language

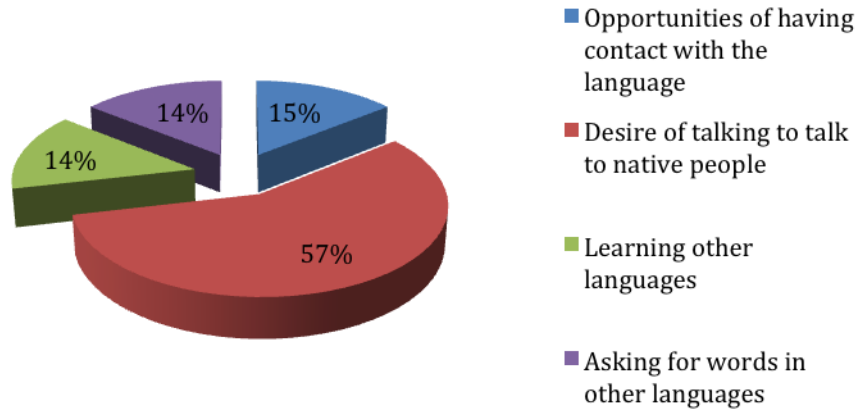
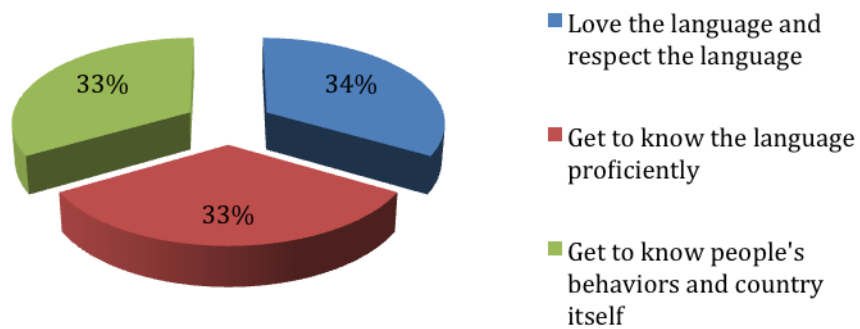


Figure IX above shows a variety of possibilities that children demonstrate during the process, and those parents also discovered in their children. This question was targeted to both generations. It is vital to take into account that all the children in this research have been always very interested in the second language process. As we can appreciate above, there are many ways to show interest in a foreign language. 57% of people affirmed the interest relied on the need of requiring information.

Figure X

Role of culture



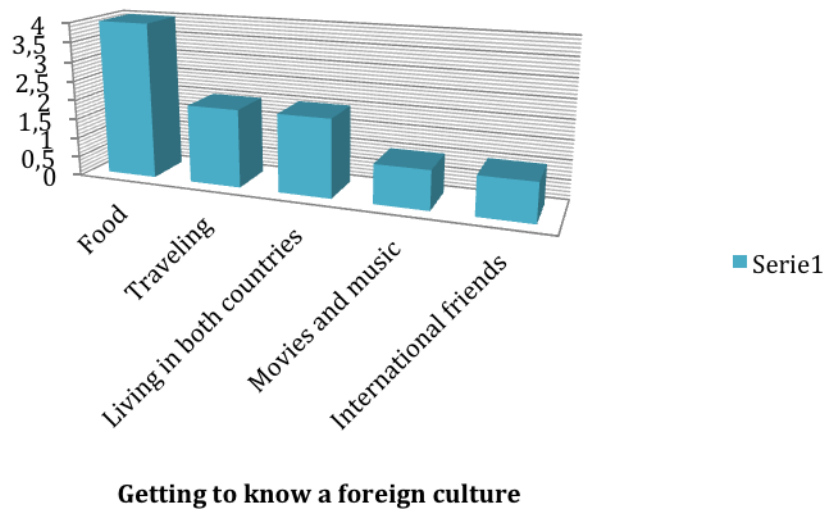
Taking into consideration that the question was asked to realize whether the researched group believed that knowing the culture of the languages spoken was important, the answer is 'yes'. The entire researched group assented that knowing the culture of the language that is being learnt is fundamental.

Figure X above displays several ways that influenced the researched group to be concerned about the culture of the countries where the second language is spoken. The whole group makes a special relevance in this point; in other words, they have no doubt that knowing the culture is critical.

34% established that it is essential to perceive the culture in order to reinforce the love for the language, and also develop a respect for the people, culture, and language itself. 33% said that it is important to have, at least, a glimpse of the culture with the purpose of having a higher language level. The remaining 33% affirmed that it is crucial to get to know the behaviors, manners, and a perception of the way of thinking of native people. As can it be observed, the role of culture in the process of a second language is crucial.

Furthermore, there is not just one reason to be familiar with the culture. The whole researched group distinguishes the advantages of understanding the culture, which the language belongs to. There is not a single incentive that the majority of people follow; their perspectives depend on their background, personal experiences, and areas of interest. A person who was interviewed mentioned a statement that called the attention: "learning cultures are the best way to educate oneself." This statement is an overview of the importance of culture in a second language acquisition.

Figure XI



As analyzed in Figure 10, the entire researched group felt very confident about the role of culture in the second language acquisition. Straightaway, it is also relevant to grasp their knowledge and realize the various ways to get to know a foreign culture. Most of the interviewees mentioned more than one option. However, there is one way that stands out over the other ones: Gastronomy; a feature of the own cultural heritage. The whole researched group had the possibility to compare the food of their native countries to the food belonging to the language is being learnt. Even if they were not able to travel, parents learned how to cook typical dishes and often prepared them at home; besides, they celebrated the national holidays (for example, St. Patrick's Day or Thanksgiving). To illustrate, one of the Italian families ate Italian food at least three times a week.

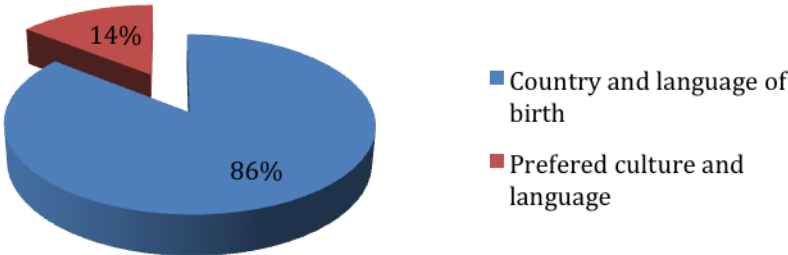
In addition, traveling is basic. Especially for the families who have changed their country of residence and people who had the chance to travel constantly it is necessary to perceive a foreign culture thanks to the memories a child can have, the contact with foreigners, and the communication they can establish. On the other hand, living in both countries is the best way of appreciating and comparing both languages and cultures due to the fact that living or dwelling for an extended period of time in the real context is always the leading alternative.

In this researched group, there is a parent (Alberto) who moved with his family, so his child lived for 4 years in Italy and 3 years in Colombia. Albertos’s child analyses the environment surrounding him, and adapts himself to the atmosphere he is exposed to. The second case is that of Itai, who lived in Israel for 12 years and has been living in Colombia for 8 years. His skills in the languages he speaks are strong, as well as his perception of different cultures.

Continuing on this subject, movies are nowadays an excellent option to learn vocabulary, idioms, places, and small pieces of culture. Movies are ideal when the child is beginning to acquire the language, as well as to reinforce what is already learnt. Most of the parents in this research do not like their children to watch television for extended periods of time; nevertheless, when television educates, parents are open to create a space for this type of activities. Furthermore, facilities for traveling and technology boosts some ways to make friends from different countries, friends are a great choice to get to know a foreign culture.

Figure XII

Country and language identification



As people may think, bilinguals should be identified with the country where they were born and their native culture. Nonetheless, this perception is not always accurate; there are some reasons why few people may feel identified with a foreign culture.

To start, 86% of the parents interviewed and the young generation affirmed that the country where they were born has a strong connection to the person itself, they also said that the country where they spend their childhood is meaningful because of the memories, to sum up “the printing language”.

Nonetheless, 14% refuted the choice to feel identified with the country where the person has been living for the last 23 years and his native language. One interviewee confirmed that he feels Italian due to the fact that Italy was the country that opened a door of possibilities for his family since his family struggled with a very tough economic situation at that time. Also, he stated that feeling Italian being born in Colombia is caused by the love of Italian more than anything else. This ensures that the love of a foreign language and culture can be as strong as it can make a person feel part of its culture.

Figure XIII

Shyness

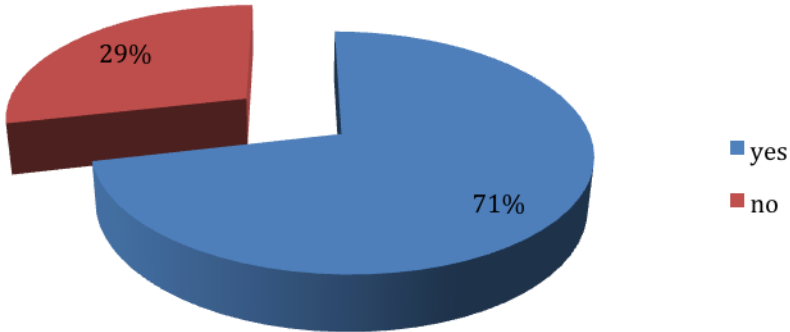


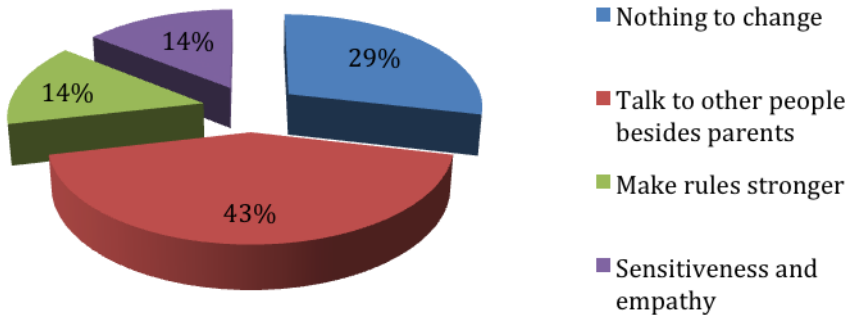
Figure XIII provides an outlook of the percentage of children who are or where shy speaking to people other than their parents. Most of them (71%) confirmed that there were some situations in which they were shy for divergent reasons. In a compilation of reasons why children were shy speaking the second language, there were: The disability to understand the complete and accurate message, the reaction of people (monolinguals) that ashamed children with comments for the fact of speaking two or

more languages, the personality of a non extrovert child, having the fear of messing up, and the lack of having confidence with the person.

As appreciated above, there is not just one reason that makes children feel shy. Learning a second language is a long process that has stages to overcome. Fortunately, practice and frequenting people are two choices to come out on top that fear. In the cases explained above, children were very shy in some opportunities. However, they surpass that consternation successfully. On the other hand, there were also 29% of remaining people who maintain that they never felt shy; they assured to feel very confident of their knowledge furthermore they were no longer afraid of making linguistic mistakes.

Figure XIV

Issues to improve



This question assesses the process of the second language acquisition since the very beginning to the present. Taking into account that 100% of these children who experienced the process of learning a foreign language at home, have been successful. Understanding this fact, both generations agreed with a 71% that there are some issues that are subject to change and some others to improve. On the contrary, there is a 14% that states that there is nothing to be corrected.

43% of the people interviewed consent that having contact with more people besides their parents or familiar circle would have helped them a lot more. Talking to a person other than the children parents would have given the children more confidence of what they had already apprehend, also that experience is a practice with people who may use different words and a diverse way of communicating the ideas. This issue should not be ignored because as we appreciate before it was also one of the main causes of shyness in children learning a foreign language.

An area that needs to be improved, according to a parent, he affirmed that this process has to be carried out with empathy and sensitiveness with the child, these values should be reinforced during the process; a parent who is teaching his child should never forget the parent-child relationship.

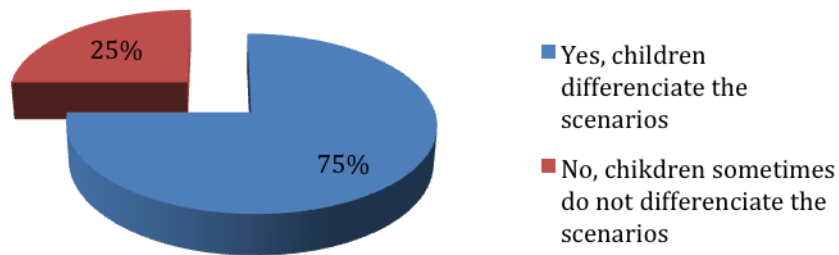
An especial case that should be subject to change is the case of a Colombian Parent, Fernando, he is teaching his children English as a second language. However, since the first stage of the process he spoke to their children in both languages and afterwards he let them speak in both codes at home, in other words he made no rules about the scenario when the first and the second language should be spoken. This very small detail let their children to randomly choose language A or B in certain situations. Fernando's reflection on this issue is that he should have attempted to create some rules, so that would have supported his children to have specific scenarios to use the native language and the second language as well.

On the contrary, there is the situation of Itai who lived in Israel for more than twelve years, later on when he and his family moved to Colombia they keep on talking Hebrew at home.

The last perception on this topic was that there is nothing to change. Tünde, from Hungary, enjoyed herself during the process of teaching Spanish to her little girl, she had read books about this topic and with the help of that information she felt more confident. As she explained, there were some complex situations in the process but the results are incredible, as she affirmed. Tünde could transmit the love of the Spanish language to her girl, currently Réka-Tünde's daughter-loves Spanish as well.

Figure XV

Differentiation of scenarios of using each language

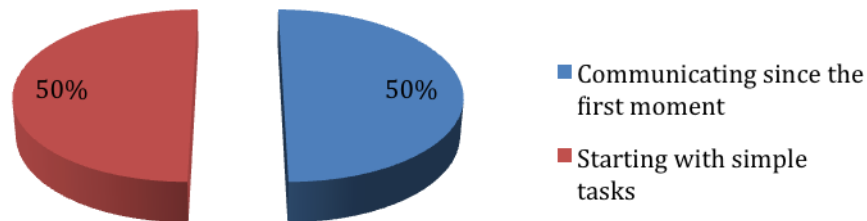


The core question of this figure was to have knowledge of the main reasons that motivate parents to start to develop a technique to teach their children a second language. This question was targeted to the first generation, the generation of parents who taught their children or are currently teaching their children a second language.

50% of them realized that getting to know a second language would bring their children profitable opportunities in life, as they have a role of parents, they know what is best of their children, they have the knowledge and of course they make an effort to see results in a long-term period. Secondly, for 25% of the interviewees learning a second language was a necessity due to a change of residence, the necessity of communication with people in people's environment is mandatory.

Figure XVI

Development of process



Considering the vital fact that the parents were asked if they had a strategic plan to teach their children the second language. None of them had planned a procedure beforehand. For example, Tünde read a book in which the author explained that she talked to her daughter in one language one day and the next day she used the second language. By means of this example, she understood that her daughter would not get confused with Spanish and Hungarian, which are very different languages.

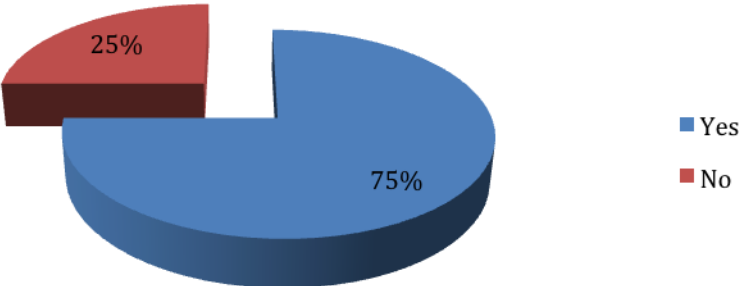
Conversely, Alberto and Fernando were certain that communication was the key to succeed. They did not have a scheme. Nevertheless, they started to teach their children as soon as the babies were born. Immediately, they began to talk to their children in the second language. The last case, Giuseppe from Italy started to teach his children Italian in Colombia with the guidance of some books and he started to talk to their children in Italian and instruct workshops that helped them develop their language skills. Even though, all of these fortunate children had or are currently having a great progress with their abilities, however a strategic plan is missing.

A plan should have been developed in order to have general and specific goals and scheduled tasks for the purpose of preventing the children's negative attitudes towards the language, the culture, and apathy in the process. In conclusion, even though parents have some knowledge and perceptions of what is needed to teach a

second language, a scheduled plan reinforces skills and prevents the failure in one or more areas.

Figure XVII

Differentiation of scenarios of using each language

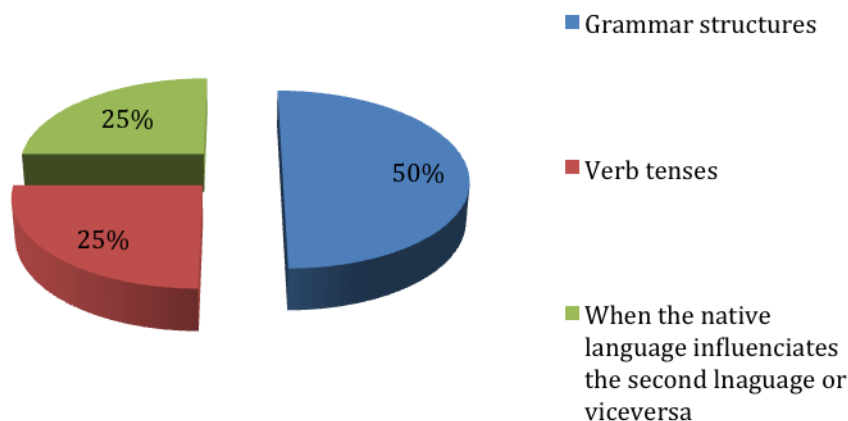


The purpose of this Figure is to gather specific situations in which children did not distinguished when to use the appropriate language for the occasion and why that circumstance had happened, furthermore analyze if children simply made the wrong choice using a language in certain circumstances.

45% of parents interviewed agreed that their children distinguished the scenarios and where they should use their native language or their second language. Another point of view is the remaining 29% that attest that there were few occasions when the girl at the age from 4 to 6 years old distinguished the scenarios when to use each language, but she did not understand that there were people who were not able to understand Spanish. As it is the case of Réka a Hungarian girl, her mother talked to her in Spanish since the first stages of her life until she had to enroll kindergarten. In this period of time her grandmother sometimes took care of her, and Réka talked to her grandmother in Spanish (her grandmother did not understand Spanish). In this sense, Réka’s mother had to make a list of the most used vocabulary, so that Reka’s grandmother could deduce the message.

Figure XVIII

Most common mistakes



The Figure above exhibits a percentage of the most common mistakes made by children during the process of the second language acquisition. Some parents were reluctant to call them mistakes because they never had the perception to call them Mistakes comprehending that those are a crucial stage in the process, errors are steps to be followed for the development of the process.

50% of them agreed that their children made grammar mistakes depending on the target language and the second language. For example, in the English language some mistakes were that children forgot to put the “s” in the third person. In the case of the Hungarian, a girl learning Spanish, for her it was a complex method to learn some structures that Spanish does not have or vice versa, of course phonetics play a crucial role; because children who learn a second language at home do not sit with a grammar book but listen to the language and start to recognize phonemes, so that they start to babble words in the second language.

25% mentioned verb tenses as a common mistake, children had all the knowledge of the language structures of the irregular verbs and they said what they thought it was correct, as we did also when we were little children with our own language. To

illustrate this situation, the example of a child learning Spanish: “ponido” instead of “puesto”.

25% were Italian parents who are teaching Spanish. Italian parents agreed that the influence that Spanish has over Italian and Italian has over Spanish, make children mix both codes due to the fact that both languages belong to Romance languages and therefore they have lots of similarities.

As a conclusion, mistakes are a phase that all children and any other person learning a second language have to go through. Mistakes should be corrected with empathy and also as many times as the child requires it. Mistakes have to be corrected with the same patience as the first time. It is a myth that some people think that if a child learns two or more languages at the same time he is going to get confused, as it is the case of an American wife who discussed with her Colombian husband, she did not want the child to get overwhelmed with the language and be criticized by their classmates for not understanding English in the first stage of the process, she preferred English over Spanish for that reason she took a huge opportunity away from the child's future. It is scientifically proven that children's brain capacity lets children learn two or even three languages depending on the parent's strategic plan.

9. Plan for the Acquisition of a Second Language from a Cultural Perspective

One of the more significant findings to emerge from this research is that none of the parents interviewed had a strategic plan to teach their children to learn a second language. Based on the analysis of the interviewees and some experts on the subject such as Freeman M. & Long D., Naomi Stainer, Susan Hayens, Barbara Zurer, Maria Delgado; parents should have a plan according to their goals, and the environment where the child grows up. The culture's role is the core of this research paper. Fortunately, in this research there are 5 diverse cultures belonging to the interviewees. The culture's features are demonstrated in their point of views in exhibited in interviews.

The findings in this research make several contributions to the issues that should be taken into account to develop a strategic plan:

- To start communicating with the child in the foreign language since the child's early ages:

Freeman M. & Long D. state in *An introduction to second language acquisition research*:“ Young children could apparently do what the adult linguist could not: Induce the rules of grammar from performance data. Children mastered most of the rules of their first language by the age of five, regardless of intelligence, social class, of any those environmental factors thought to play a role in other aspects of development”(1991, p.114)

- To have time, disposition, and empathy to teach the child a second language:

As an example, there are cases of parents who want their children to learn two languages. As Arabaski J. and Vojtaszek A stated in their book *Aspects of Culture in Second Language Acquisition and Foreign Language Learning*“language teaching today can be described as an intercultural change

in the sense that culture is thought with the aim of promoting intercultural understanding, tolerance, and empathy”(2011, p. 29).

However, they work all day and spend just a few hours with the children during the day. In this case, the lack of time supposed to be shared with children slows down the process of the child acquiring the language. If a couple of parents do not spend quality time in order to interact with their children, expecting that children will be proficient in one or two foreign languages is an unrealistic goal. According to Xiao-Lei Wang in her book *Learning to Read and Write in the Multilingual Family*“ It is already difficult for busy parents to cope with the mundane routines of their everyday lives and it is even harder for them to find time to teach their children in heritage language literacy activities, there was simply no time” (2011, p. 2).

- To define the scenarios where each language should be spoken:

It is basic to determine the scenarios where the first and the second language will be spoken. As an example, there is the case of a family who is really ambitious. The mother speaks to their children just in Spanish, the father speaks in English, and when they are together they speak in French all the time. Another example is a mother who speaks to their children in one language all day, and the next day she uses the second language. Another clear example is a mother who speaks Spanish to her children at home and English out of the house.

The examples above let new parents expectations to teach their children a second language at home to have an idea of diverse plans that other parents adopt according to their expectations and necessities.

On the contrary, in the case of Fernando (interviewed) who is teaching English as a second language to his children, since the beginning he used both codes at home. Nonetheless, as time went by he noticed that his children would have had a better language level.

- To explain the child why is he/she learning a foreign language:

40% of the parents had an influence on their children by explaining the opportunities that the participants in a second language would bring to their lives. One of the interviewed affirmed that knowing the reasons and the favorable prospect that he would have in his future encourage him to be more interested in learning his second language.

- To expose the foreign culture:

In accordance with Claire Kramch in her book *Context and Culture in Language Teaching* she states that “ Culture is often seen as a mere information conveyed by the language, not as a feature of language itself; cultural awareness becomes an educational objective in itself, separate from language. However, culture becomes the very core of language teaching. Cultural awareness must then be viewed both as enabling language proficiency and as being the outcome on reflection on language proficiency” (2004 p. 8)

In one case as Tatiana Gordón states in her book *Teaching Young Children a Second Language* she affirms that “ For most children the transition from the old home culture to the new culture is relatively smooth and easy It is important to bear in mind, however, that even the children who are confidently bilingual and bicultural may have difficulty reconciling their two cultural selves” (2007, p. 26)

- To plan monthly activities of cooking, games, movies, story telling, and other activities that will catch the attention of the child. Moreover, it will motivate and encourage children to continue learning a second language:

Motivation is essential in learning a second language because it develops a pleasure for the language and it's process. This enjoyment of learning the language makes the child unconsciously strive and learn autonomously the

second language. On the contrary, what could happen is that the child loses the interest in the second language.

- To look for children in the city with the same discipline of learning a second language. Make contact with native people, so children can talk to people other than parents:

Finding children learning a foreign language may not be an easy task especially in Colombia. Nonetheless, if it is possible to have contact with other children, they have the possibility to socialize with kids with similar habits. It is important that children explore diverse environments other than their familiar circle. This practice also prevents shyness in the near future.

At this point, it is better that children have contact with children of their age due to the fact that they have the same interests. Nevertheless, if it is not possible to find other children, they should have an approach with native speaker or people who have knowledge in that particular second language.

Colin Sandra Smith stated in her book *The Early Years- A Reader* "young bilingual children are highly motivated to learn a second language and they need to communicate in different situations and with many different groups teachers, friends, and so on. Bilingual children need to develop a wide range of language use in order to survive in the informal contexts of the peer-group world and other formal contexts." (1998, p. 61)

- To not break rules or let children choose the code in different scenarios:

Breaking rules will confuse children especially in the scenarios where a language should be spoken, and sometimes if the parents contradict themselves about the rules that they create, children will doubt about the seriousness and importance of the process.

10. Conclusions

The outcomes of this investigation show that 5 out of 7 parents and children interviewed belong to the group of heritage language families. Parents who have diverse cultural backgrounds and a native language different than the one spoken in the country of residence correspond to a heritage language family.

These parents decided to start teaching their children with simple commands or communicating since the first stage of the child's life. Heritage language families have the capability to travel continuously or dwell in two or more countries for significant periods of time. This benefit allow children reach a very high language level, as Cummins points out, " Within one and a half to two years of arrival in the host country most immigrant students have acquired relatively fluent and peer-appropriate face-to-face communicative skills in the second language" (1986, p. 184).

Besides, there are few people who decided to teach a foreign language to their kids without having a different cultural background. These parents read about the subject and support their ideas in other people's experiences -what heritage language parents did not do-.

Afterwards, parents with one cultural background thought their children a foreign language. It was not an easy task for them because their children live in just one environment, besides children had to learn to interact in two languages, according to Rod Ellis in *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*, " The role played by the social situation in which learning takes place and how the learner is exposed to accounts for acquisition as evident in the language the learner produces" (1994, p. 16). In Colombia, teaching a child a second language at home is not a common discipline.

The results of this investigation show that comparing the number of languages spoken by the first generation and the second generation, there is an increase of languages spoken in the new generation.

The new generation of children born in heritage language families experience facilities for traveling, the use of technology for learning languages, and new systems of education that represent a plus for their academic development. There are many advantages of having a cultural background of any language, bilingualism fosters skills and early awareness of the language as Hakuta states in a study case in her book *Mirror of Language*, a four-year-old said, "I can speak Hebrew and English", to which his five-year-old American friend said, "What is English?" (1974, p. 67), her example reinforces the statement that bilingual children have certain behaviors that monolinguals do not have, like the case of Emmanuelle (interviewed) who gets very interested by knowing vocabulary in languages that he does not know already.

In this research paper it was found that 71% of parents of the interviewees influenced and strengthen the work required for learning a second language. The 29% of remaining people had the influence of a close relative who introduced a foreign language. These findings suggest that in general the interviewees started at a very early stage of their lives and none of them decided to learn a foreign language without having the influence of someone.

The current findings add substantially to the understanding of the culture's role in the acquisition process of a foreign language, as Humbolt stated " Each language draws a circle around the nation to which it belongs".

Similarly, Parents and children agreed that learning the culture of the second language is crucial. Some of them had the chance to live in both countries, some others, tried to travel. Nevertheless, the whole researched group affirms that food, traveling, music, and watching movies are meaningful ways to assume an overview of a foreign culture.

All of the interviewees agreed with MacNab's statement " To learn a second language is a commitment to a second culture, and people who learn to speak two languages are, therefore, very likely to be quite different from those who stay unilingual" (1979, p. 243).

Analyzing the attitude towards languages and beliefs of the interviewees children never lost the interest of acquiring a second language. Motivation was crucial to improve the child's abilities.

As every process that brings magnificent results has its complexities, in this research most of the children (75%) accurately differentiated the scenarios where to use each language. On the other hand, it was a minority of a 25% who in some occasions used language A when language B should be used.

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12. Annexes

The following annexes are two models of interviews. The first model (four interviewees) were targeted to parents from diverse nationalities with amazing backgrounds and experience that clear up doubts. On the other hand, the second model was designed for children, currently young men who experienced the process of learning a second language.

First Interview

This interview was designed with the purpose of finding precise information and, personal experiences that certain parents had experienced during the process of teaching a second language at home. Such information is going to be analyzed in order to create an accurate strategy for the successful development of such process. The results of the following interview will be used in a minor thesis research entitled Culture's Role in the Process of a Second Language Acquisition in Children whose Parents Teach them at Home.

Name: Fernando

Age: 42 years old

1. *Where are you from?*
I am from Colombia.
2. *What is your country of residence?*
Colombia.
3. *How many languages do you speak?*
I speak three languages. Spanish, English, and Portuguese.
4. *Did your parents influence the process of learning the second language?*
No, they didn't.
 - *If so, how did your parents encourage you to learn a second language?*
 - *If not, what did motivate you to learn a second language?*

Well, my sister was interested in languages and she encouraged me to learn English. Also I had a failure in English at school, so it was a challenge for me to overcome that failure.

5. *Which were your motivations to teach your child a second language?*

The opportunities in life that a person with proficiency in two or more languages can have. Also, when traveling the knowledge of languages is very useful.

6. *Did you have a strategic plan when you started teaching a second language?*

Yes and no.

- *If so, how did you implement that plan?*

- *If not, how did you develop the process?*

I just knew that communication is the key, I read that in a couple of books. The process began speaking to my children in English since they were born. It wasn't easy because I was at home with my wife, it is not an easy determination. But I thought, if I do not make the decision my children will not learn.

7. *Does your child distinguish the scenarios when to use each language?*

Yes, they do.

8. *What were the most common goofs/mistakes that your child made?*

I wouldn't call the mistakes. It is part of the process. In grammar structures, they forgot to put the "s" or they say a wrong form in past of an irregular verb.

9. *Was your child always interested in the process of learning a second language?*

Yes, now they are 6 and 7 years old, but they are interested in knowing more about vocabulary and the culture.

- *If so, how did he show that interest?*

They ask me how to say some words in Portuguese.

- *If not, what do you consider was it missing?*

10. *Do you think exposing the culture of the second language is important? Why?*

Yes, it is definitely important.

11. *If so, how did you cultivate both cultures in your child?*

I read them stories, sometimes we have Colombian breakfast, and sometimes we have American breakfast with pancakes. We love lots of movies in English. Besides, I want to take my children to the states next year.

12. *Does your child feel identified with one language and one culture over the other? Which one?*

They just know the Colombian culture.

13. *Has your child ever been shy when speaking the second language to people other than those he is used to talk to?*

Maybe, shy of the reaction of people who are not bilinguals and say "ohh, these children can speak two languages" they feel shy of the people's comments. But, it actually depends on the attitude of the people. For sure, It

14. *Is your child interested in unfamiliar languages and cultures? Why do you think this happens?*

Yes, they are. They are very interested in other languages. They ask me how can they say a word in Portuguese or other languages.

15. *According to your experience, is there anything you would change or add in order to improve the process of teaching a second language?*

Maybe the fact that I allow them to speak in both languages at home. They play with both codes. As they know I speak both languages, they sometimes speak in English and other times in Spanish, there is not a rule. If I had forced the a little bit to speak at home just in English, they would have learned more.

Second interview

Esta entrevista se diseñó a fin de encontrar información precisa y experiencias personales que los padres han vivido durante el proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma y serán analizadas para crear una estrategia en el desarrollo exitoso de dicho proceso. Los resultados de la siguiente entrevista se utilizarán como material de investigación en la monografía titulada El papel de la cultura en el proceso de adquisición de una segunda lengua en niños cuyos padres les enseñan en casa.

Nombre: Giuseppe Rizzi

Edad: 50 años

6. *¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?*

Yo soy italiano

2. *¿Cuál es su país de residencia?*

Mi país de residencia es Colombia

6. *¿Cuántos idiomas domina?*

Hablo italiano y español

6. *¿Sus padres influyeron en este proceso de aprendizaje?*

No. La verdad es que ellos no tuvieron nada que ver. Aprendí el español por necesidad, puesto que mi señora es colombiana y también por interés, por la importancia cada vez mas grande del español a nivel global.

•*En caso afirmativo, ¿De qué forma lo motivaron sus padres para que aprendiera un segundo idioma?*

•*En caso negativo, ¿qué lo motivó a aprender otro idioma?*

5. *¿ Cuáles fueron sus motivos para enseñarle a su hijo un segundo idioma?*

El motivo es que en el mundo globalizado en que vivimos hablar mas idiomas es muy importante para trabajar y a la hora de salir del país.

6. *¿Contaba usted con un plan estratégico antes de empezar el proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma?*

No.

•*En caso afirmativo, ¿ cómo implementó dicho plan?*

•*En caso negativo, ¿ cómo desarrolló este proceso?*

Primero compré una gramática básica en Italia(1991 mas o menos),luego cuando llegué a Colombia empecé a ver televisión y leer prensa. Empecé a enseñarles a mis hijos hablándoles en italiano y con pequeñas tareas en italiano.

7. *¿Su hijo distingue las situaciones en las que debe usar cada idioma?*

si

8. *¿Cuáles fueron los errores lingüísticos más comunes que cometió su hijo durante el proceso de aprendizaje?*

Confundir los tiempos de los verbos.

9. *¿Su hijo siempre se interesó en el proceso de aprendizaje del segundo idioma?*

No, no siempre , ya era algo que hacía parte él. Era algo natural

•*En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo lo manifestó?*

•*En caso negativo, ¿ qué hizo falta?*

10. *¿ Cree usted que la enseñanza de la cultura del idioma de llegada es importante? Explique*

si es importante porque' puede crear o fortalecer el interés por el idioma

11. *Si así lo cree, ¿cómo inculcó ambas culturas en su hijo?*

Hablando italiano con el y con la mamá, escuchando programas de televisión en italiano solo o conmigo, con un viaje a Italia.

12. *¿Su hijo se siente identificado con un idioma y con una cultura más que con el otro (a)?*

El se siente colombiano, pero siente mucho cariño por Italia, y de hecho quiere terminar sus estudios allí

13. *En alguna ocasión, ¿su hijo mostró timidez al hablar el segundo idioma con personas con las que no tenía contacto?*

Nunca

14. *¿Su hijo está interesado en culturas e idiomas que no conoce aún? ¿por qué cree que sucede esto?*

Definitivamente

15. *De acuerdo con su experiencia, ¿hay algo que usted cambiaría o añadiría al proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma con el objetivo de mejorar los resultados?*

Personalmente me parece mucho mejor enfocarse en el aspecto práctico que en el teórico, es decir escuchar hablar y leer es más importante que la gramática.

Third interview

Esta entrevista se diseñó a fin de encontrar información precisa y experiencias personales que los padres han vivido durante el proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma y serán analizadas para crear una estrategia en el desarrollo exitoso de dicho proceso.

Los resultados de la siguiente entrevista se utilizarán como material de investigación en la monografía titulada El papel de la cultura en el proceso de adquisición de una segunda lengua en niños cuyos padres les enseñan en casa.

Nombre: Alberto Bruzzone

Edad: 40 años

1. *¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?*

Italiano

2. *¿Cuál es su país de residencia?*

Colombia.

3. *¿Cuántos idiomas habla? Cuales?*

En este momento 2. Italiano por mi nacionalidad y español por la presencia en Colombia, pero conozco otros.

4. *¿Sus padres influyeron en este proceso de aprendizaje?*

Si.

•En caso afirmativo, ¿ de qué forma lo motivaron sus padres para que aprendiera un segundo idioma?

La motivación nació gracias al hecho que ellos siempre me llevaban de viaje con ellos. Y como somos italianos desde muy pequeños íbamos a Francia, Inglaterra, España, entonces el viaje fue un descubrimiento que me hizo pensar que tanto era importante poder hablar el idioma de la cultura hospedante y poder comunicar.

5. *¿Cuáles fueron sus motivos para enseñarle a su hijo un segundo idioma?*

Lo mismo. El motivo es el hecho que estamos viviendo en Colombia, país hispanohablante, pero él nació en Génova, Italia. Entonces por la realidad le toca, por decirlo así, aprender el idioma para poderse comunicar con los adultos y la gente, pero yo siempre le mantengo el italiano.

6. *¿Contaba usted con un plan estratégico antes de empezar el proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma?*

Realmente un plan estratégico no. Pero, la atención siempre la tuve en la comunicación. Mi esposa, en Italia le hablaba algo de español. Entonces, se fue acostumbrando. De pronto actividades lúdicas.

•*En caso afirmativo, ¿ cómo implementó dicho plan?*

•*En caso negativo, ¿ cómo desarrolló este proceso?*

Con palabras simples. Por ejemplo, “ponte los zapatos” , con pequeñas instrucciones pero esto más mi esposa. Yo, corroboraba lo cotidiano, aquí sobretodo, con actividades lúdicas e incluso aprovechando el use del ordenador para crear situaciones de juego, pero juegos de habilidades lingüísticas.

Cuando el habla por *skype* con sus abuelos, al principio le costo, le da timidez pero luego se suelta, se ríe con ellos.

7. *¿Su hijo distingue las situaciones en las que debe usar cada idioma?*

Si

8. *¿Cuáles fueron los errores lingüísticos más comunes que cometió su hijo durante el proceso de aprendizaje?*

Como tiene 6 años, esta en proceso de aprendizaje. Los errores más comunes son los de influencia del español al italiano o cuando el italiano influencia el español. Pueden ser artículos

9. *¿Su hijo siempre se interesó en el proceso de aprendizaje del segundo idioma?*

Si

•*En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo lo manifestó?*

Lo manifestó pidiendo y necesitando comunicación. La interrelación. Él es un niño sociable, siendo un niño sociable y amigable necesita comunicar. Antes, cuando no conocía código, lo hacia jugando, como todos los niños. Requería comunicar, y si son dos idiomas mejor, o con los niños italianos cuando vamos de vacaciones allá.

•En caso negativo, ¿ qué cree usted que hizo falta?

10. *¿Usted cree que la enseñanza de la cultura del segundo idioma es importante? Por favor explique.*

Claro. Una lengua no puede estar separada de los contextos culturales. Sobretudo, para los que viven en el extranjero, hay que mantener un rasgo o una imagen de la cultura de origen es bueno, porque se le mantiene viva la cultura tanto como el aspecto de socialización y comunicación lingüística.

11. *Si así lo cree, ¿cómo inculcó ambas culturas en su hijo?*

La vida. Una persona vive diferentes contextos. Entonces, a través de la experiencia vivencial una persona, el niño en este caso, se da cuenta de las diferentes culturas. Hago un ejemplo práctico, en Italia la gastronomía tiene una normalización que se desarrolla en cierto modo, un plato como se sirve o como se presenta, en Colombia es otra cultura. Mantener viva, y enseñar ambas, una no anula la otra. Ambas son vivas. Con los mismos ingredientes colombianos según la modalidad que el prefiere.

12. *¿Su hijo se siente identificado con un idioma y con una cultura más que con el otro (a)?*

Si. De todas formas, hasta ahora con sus 6 años. Habiendo nacido en Italia y vivido sus primeros cuatro años allá. Hasta ahora llevamos dos años en Colombia, añora Italia. Entonces, la cultura italiana es su cultura de huella, "printing" en inglés. No rehúsa la cultura colombiana, acepta, compara, analiza, observa que hay cosas en Italia diferentes, por ejemplo el transporte urbano allá funciona de otra manera.

13. *En alguna ocasión, ¿su hijo mostró timidez al hablar el segundo idioma con personas con las que no tenía contacto?*

Si, con las personas que no tiene contacto al principio se muestra tímido. Independientemente de la cultura de la otra persona, de todo. Entonces, poco a poco su timidez se va soltando a través de la actitud que la otra persona

muestre, Por ejemplo, si la otra persona se muestra interesada en su mundo, ya no tiene timidez

14. *¿Su hijo está interesado en culturas e idiomas que no conoce aún? ¿Por qué cree que sucede esto?*

Si y sucede simplemente por la curiosidad de nuevas expresiones comunicativas. Por ejemplo, a veces miramos dibujos animados en inglés, conoce expresiones pregunta, o incluso, no es en plan de pregunta pero en canales temáticos educativos, me dice como se dice abuelo en chino “yeye”, me retroalimenta el conocimiento de otro idioma.

15. *De acuerdo con su experiencia, ¿hay algo que usted cambiaría o añadiría al proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma con el objetivo de mejorar los resultados?*

Según mi experiencia, en lo que trato de ser reflexivo en esto es facilitar la comunicación. El aprendizaje de una lengua no es solamente técnica, hay que tener sensibilidad para que el niño se sienta bien. No hay que ser demasiado exigente como educador o padre. Pero, agregar sensibilidad y empatía.

Fourth interview

Esta entrevista se diseñó a fin de encontrar información precisa y experiencias personales que los padres han vivido durante el proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma y serán analizadas para crear una estrategia en el desarrollo exitoso de dicho proceso.

Los resultados de la siguiente entrevista se utilizarán como material de investigación en la monografía titulada El papel de la cultura en el proceso de adquisición de una segunda lengua en niños cuyos padres les enseñan en casa.

Nombre: Tünde szilágyi

Edad: 52 años

1. *¿Cuál es su nacionalidad?*

húngara

2. *¿Cuál es su país de residencia?*

Hungría

3. *¿Cuántos idiomas habla?*

Con el idioma materno: 3. Húngaro, español, inglés.

4. *¿Sus padres influyeron en este proceso de aprendizaje?*

Sí, mucho

•*En caso afirmativo, ¿de qué forma lo motivaron sus padres para que aprendiera un segundo idioma?*

En su pensamiento el saber hablar otro idioma significaba ser una persona más! En húngaro tenemos un dicho también: *Ahány nyelvet beszélsz, annyi ember vagy*“: tanta persona vales cuantos idiomas hablas.

•*En caso negativo, ¿qué lo motivó a aprender otro idioma?*

5. *¿Cuáles fueron sus motivos para enseñarle a su hijo un segundo idioma?*

Para mí el poder estudiar y aprender el idioma español me dieron mis padres y eso me sigue por toda mi vida. Pensé que yo también quiero seguir el ejemplo de mis padres. También escuché un programa en la televisión sobre el tema de aprender desde 0-3 años más idiomas. Una madre comentó que un día le habla a su hijo un idioma y el otro día otro. Y no va a confundir los idiomas dentro de algún tiempo.

6. *¿Contaba usted con un plan estratégico antes de empezar el proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma?*

Mi plan estratégico fue solo que yo y mi papá, es decir su abuelo y yo hablábamos en español desde el primer momento.

•*En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo implementó dicho plan?*

Desde saber de mi embarazo, ya le hablé en español y desde que nació yo y su abuelo siempre le hablamos en español.

7. *¿Su hijo distingue las situaciones en las que debe usar cada idioma?*

Algunas veces ocurrió que dejándola con su abuela (que no comprendía español), no le entendieron, así que tuvimos que darles un vocabulario

8. *¿Cuáles fueron los errores lingüísticos más comunes que cometió su hijo durante el proceso de aprendizaje?*

Algunos aspectos de gramática. Pues, el húngaro y el español son idiomas muy diversos

9. *¿Su hijo siempre se interesó en el proceso de aprendizaje del segundo idioma?*

Sí, siempre

•*En caso afirmativo, ¿cómo lo manifestó?*

Pero esto no fue un proceso, fue una vida normal con dos idiomas, porque vivimos hablándole yo y su abuelo español y los demás familiares en húngaro. También algunas veces cuando el abuelo le llamaba y por teléfono le decía palabras españolas las tradujo y le gritó al teléfono las palabras en húngaro. Pero esto a sus 2 años de edad fue solo un juego de palabras.

•*En caso negativo, ¿qué cree usted que hizo falta?*

10. *¿Usted cree que la enseñanza de la cultura del segundo idioma es importante?*

Por favor explique.

Sí, muy importante, aunque el idioma español lo hablan tantas personas que la cultura es una sin fin. Pero procuramos enseñar lo más posible.

11. *Si así lo cree, ¿cómo inculcó ambas culturas en su hijo?*

Escuchamos mucha música y miramos muchas películas en español. También hicimos comidas, miramos muchas veces el mapa para ver donde hablan este idioma más lindo.

12. *¿Su hijo se siente identificado con un idioma y con una cultura más que con el otro (a)?*

Sí, el idioma materno es el primero en toda forma y es porque no teníamos la posibilidad de enseñarle viajando a los países donde hablan de verdad el español.

13. *En alguna ocasión, ¿su hijo mostró timidez al hablar el segundo idioma con personas con las que no tenía contacto?*

Sí, claro y por la misma razón del punto anterior.

14. *¿Su hijo está interesado en culturas e idiomas que no conoce aún? ¿Por qué cree que sucede esto?*

Sí, y creo que es porque llegó a entender que conociendo un idioma más ya puede aprender otro más mucho más fácil. Y así tener más posibilidades en la vida.

15. *De acuerdo con su experiencia, ¿hay algo que usted cambiaría o añadiría al proceso de enseñanza de un segundo idioma con el objetivo de mejorar los resultados?*

No, nada. Me resultó muy interesante y si tendría posibilidad de hacerla otra vez la haría.

Fifth interview

This interview was designed with the purpose of finding precise information and, personal experiences that certain parents had experienced during the process of teaching a second language at home. Such information, is going to be analyzed in order to create an accurate strategy for the successful development of such process. The results of the following interview will be used in a minor thesis research entitled Culture's Role in the Process of a Second Language Acquisition in Children whose Parents Teach them at Home.

Name: Itai Dror

Age: 20 years old

1. *Where are you from?*

I am originally from Israel

2. *What is your country of residence?*

Currently I am living in Colombia

3. *How many languages do you speak? (Which ones)*

I speak 3 languages. Hebrew, Spanish, and English.

4. *Did your parents influence the process of learning the second language?*

They surely did. My second language is Spanish. Being born in Israel, I learn Hebrew. My mom is Colombian so I spoke to her and to my grandma all the time in Spanish. That influenced my process a lot.

•If so, how did your parents encourage you to learn a second language?

It was mostly that second language again, being Spanish. They would not speak to me in Hebrew. My grandma did not ever learn Hebrew and my mother did but she talked to me in Spanish. So, from an early stage in my life I started learning both languages, and English when I was 5 years old, they put me into a little homeschool thing, where I was taught. So, I had three languages being a very young child.

5. *What did you like the most of the process of learning a second language?*

I think it was just being superior to others. At my age, not many kids knew other languages. The only language their native language which was Hebrew.

I liked to tell them:

"I know Spanish too" that was fun.

6. *What was the most difficult stage to surpass during the process of acquiring the second language?*

In terms of the most difficult it would be stopping to think in your own language, in the native one. That is what a lot of people struggle when learning a second language. But, it wasn't that difficult for me because I

learned both languages from an early age, so it wasn't a big difference. Cause, I improved a lot in Hebrew, and a lot less in Spanish, cause I was surrounded by Hebrew 24/7, so the difference was greater.

7. *Were you always interested in the process of learning the second language?*
Definitely. The more languages you know the better you will do in life and the more opportunities you will have.

•If so, how did you show that interest?

I always showed that interest. For example when my friend invited me to a movie I beg them that it would have to be subtitled in the original language, if not I am not going. Just a part who I am, to see the original language to see how the phonetics work, all that staff. I've always been interested in that.

•If not, what do you consider was missing?

8. *Do you think being exposed to the culture of the second language is important? Why?*

It is indeed because just like I said, my younger brother, he was born in Israel but we moved here to Colombia when he was 1 year old. He knows a lot more Spanish than Hebrew. Although, we speak Hebrew all the time in the house. If he were in Israel, he would have known more Hebrew than Spanish.

9. *If so, how did you get to know both cultures?*

I know Israeli culture because I lived 12 years there. The Colombian culture because I came to visit every four years or so, and living here know.

10. *Do you feel identified with one language and one culture over the other? Which one?*

Yes, Israeli culture Hebrew is all I am part of who I am. My native language, country and culture. I am always going to have a stronger connection to Israel and to Hebrew. I am more Israeli than Colombian.

11. *Have you ever been shy when speaking the second language to people other than those you are used to talking to?*

I would not say shy cause I was very confident of what my knowledge. So it wasn't a big issue for me. When I mess up talking to someone take away a little bit of that confidence away. I never felt really shy, I was really open when talking to other people, native people.

12. *Are you interested in unfamiliar languages and cultures? Why?*

Yes. I would definitely learn more languages and cultures. Currently I don't have the time or disposition to do so but whenever I get some free time I would definitely start to learn more languages. I am planning traveling the world and knowing as many cultures as possible. In my opinion, learning cultures is the best way to educate oneself.

You can learn a theoretical part of a culture and languages. But, if you do not see it by yourself you are never going to actually grasp the idea of it.

13. *According to your experience, is there anything you would change or add in order to improve the process of teaching a second language?*

In many courses there is too much emphasis on grammar and structures rather than focusing on speaking the language, learning how to say the words, how to feel comfortable with the language. I guess watching more movies.

At home, I think my parents thought me well. It has to be early on. If you let your child to grow up and not teaching him a second or a third language, he is not going to grow up with that knowledge. He is not going to value the fact that he knows that. It is very important that the child knows that.

Sixth interview

This interview was designed with the purpose of finding precise information and, personal experiences that certain parents had experienced during the process of teaching a second language at home. Such information is going to be analyzed in order to create an accurate strategy for the successful development of such process.

The results of the following interview will be used in a minor thesis research entitled Culture's Role in the Process of a Second Language Acquisition in Children whose Parents Teach them at Home.

Name: Carlos Ruiz

Age: 23 years old

1. *Where are you from?*

I am from Colombia. I was born in Bogota.

2. *What is your country of residence?*

Colombia

3. *How many languages do you speak? (Which ones)*

4 Languages. Spanish, Italian, English, and French.

4. *Did your parents influence the process of learning the second language?*

Yes, of course they did. In fact, it was my father who started to teach me the Italian language.

•*If so, how did your parents encourage you to learn a second language?*

My parents told me that if I learn Italian I could travel to Italy and study there.

•*If not, what did motivate you to learn a second language?*

5. *What did you like the most of the process of learning a second language?*

To know other cultures and make a comparison of what you know and what you learn.

6. *What was the most difficult stage to surpass during the process of acquiring the second language?*

To understand that you are not talking in Spanish some times because I was used to talk in Spanish and once I started I had to learn to use both languages,

7. *Were you always interested in the process of learning the second language?*

Yes, of course

•*If so, how did you show that interest?*

I think, I had the dream to travel to Italy. So I star to study very very hard. Sometimes, I wanted to talk with my Italian family and I asked my father to schedule some time in which I could talk to them.

•*If not, what do you consider was it missing?*

8. *Do you think being exposed to the culture of the second language is important? Why?*

Yes, of course. It is very important because in order to learn a second language you need to love the language. It is important to learn the culture, so you can be proficient in that language. It is also important to know the reason why you are learning that language, that is important for me.

9. *If so, how did you get to know both cultures?*

I had the opportunity to travel to Italy when I was a child. I developed this love for this language traveling and trying to communicate my ideas in Italian. Also, my father cooks Italian food every single day, I love it.

10. *Do you feel identified with one language and one culture over the other? Which one?*

Yes. I feel identified with Italy because I love it and my family had a very difficult economic situation and it was Italy the country that opened the door to a better life for us.

11. *Have you ever been shy when speaking the second language to people other than those you used to talk to?*

Yes. Because when I talk to my family do not judge mistakes. I remember that I talked to an Italian who I met at a shopping center and he started to talk and I could understand him. I needed him to repeat, and I felt shy.

12. *Are you interested in unfamiliar languages and cultures? Why do you think that happens?*

Of course. I love learning languages. Once I learn a language I wanted to know more. For example, I want to travel around the world. I know I am not going to talk Italian in France or England.

13. *According to your experience, is there anything you would change or add in order to improve the process of learning a second language?*

I would have loved to talk to people besides my familiar circle. When I was talking to them I felt comfortable. For example, in the case of the Italian an Italian that I met at the shopping center, I felt nervous talking to him because he did not understand me and I had to repeat many times. I know that if I would have more practice, it would have been better.

Seventh interview

This interview was designed with the purpose of finding precise information and, personal experiences that certain parents had experienced during the process of teaching a second language at home. Such information, is going to be analyzed in order to create an accurate strategy for the successful development of such process. The results of the following interview will be used in a minor thesis research entitled *Culture's Role in the Process of a Second Language Acquisition in Children whose Parents Teach them at Home*.

Name: Nãendy Queiroz

Age: 22 years old

1. *Where are you from?*

I am from Brazil

2. *What is your country of residence?*

Currently, I am living in Germany.

3. *How many languages do you speak? (Which ones)*

I speak 4 languages. Portuguese, German, Spanish, and English

4. *Did your parents influence the process of learning the second language?*

Yes, They certainly did.

•*If so, how did your parents encourage you to learn a second language?*

My mother started to talk to me in German since early age. She studied opera in Austria and she introduced me to German language and culture since we lived in Brazil.

•*If not, what did motivate you to learn a second language?*

5. *What did you like the most of the process of learning a second language?*

It was pretty exciting and interesting to learn especially English, which is my third language because I started to realize the differences in structures and complexity of each language. Also because I was proficient in two languages and my third language was easier to learn.

6. *What was the most difficult stage to surpass during the process of acquiring the second language?*

I am shy person. In my case, it was really difficult to start speaking to native people, when we moved to Germany. I felt comfortable talking to my parents they gave me confidence. Learning the language in the real context and making friends of my age was interesting.

7. *Were you always interested in the process of learning the second language?*

Yes, sure.

•*If so, how did you show that interest?*

I was really interested in the roots of the languages I learned. So I started to learn Latin.

•*If not, what do you consider was it missing?*

8. *Do you think being exposed to the culture of the second language is important? Why?*

Yes, it is. When we moved to Germany, everything was different than Brazil, even though my mother showed me the German culture. The country itself, the organization, and the people of course.

9. *If so, how did you get to know both cultures?*

Well, I lived in Brazil and Germany. So I could appreciate both cultures myself. In the case of English, I have many friends from the United States and England. And I like to read about cultures and countries.

10. Do you feel identified with one language and one culture over the other? Which one?

Yes. I feel totally identified with Brazil and Portuguese because I spend my childhood there. And I think the country where I spend the childhood is more important than the country where I spend my teen years. I have many memories in Brazil

11. Have you ever been shy when speaking the second language to people other than those you used to talk to?

Yes, as I said before I am a shy person. For that reason, I had to surpass my shyness and the fact of start studying with Germans, start to be fluent in German and socialize with them.

12. Are you interested in unfamiliar languages and cultures? Why do you think that happens?

Yes, of course I am. I am interested in Italian language not only because it is beautiful, but it is really similar to Portuguese, and for me it is interesting culture. However, I do not have the disposition now to learn another language, but I will do so as soon as I can. Also, I would like to learn Russian as well.

13. According to your experience, is there anything you would change or add in order to improve the process of teaching a second language?

Yes, maybe I would have like to have contact with people who speak German in Brazil. It would have helped me a lot.

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