”It’s like the Rosetta stone!”. A Sociocognitive Cross-sectional study of Metasyntactic Awareness and Cross-linguistic Influence in French-Norwegian Bilingual Children in Oslo

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A SOCIOCROSS-COGNITIVE STUDY OF METASYNTACTIC AWARENESS AND CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE IN FRENCH–NORWEGIAN BILINGUAL CHILDREN

Purpose of the research

This research aims to study metalinguistic strategies and crossing linguistic awareness on bilingual first language acquisition French Norwegian children (n=33, age 10) from families claiming to use the one person one language strategy. In a socio-cognitive and interactionist theoretical framework, the study assesses the following research questions:

1. Are there (conscious) crossing transfers?
2. Are there impacts from parental attitudes and correction practices on metasynthesis skills and transfers, and crossing linguistic awareness in bilinguals?
3. To what extent does metalinguistic discourse of bilingual children inform about transfer organization and indicates metalinguistic reflection?

Results and conclusions

✓ Bilingual children show metasyntactic skills but weakened when preposition involved.
✓ Syntactic transfers occur when prepositional constructions are involved.

✓ Parents use an explicit corrective feedback without using metalanguage.
✓ Ideology of bilingualism (1 bilingual = 2 monolinguals) from Norwegian parent correlated with score to ungrammatical phrases judgment.
✓ Type of parent feedback correction correlated with score to ungrammatical phrases judgment.
✓ Bilingual children from Norwegian father/French mother couples show better syntactic awareness about preposition stranding.

Qualitative analysis

2 types of children (age 10)

TYPE I (LESS FREQUENT)

Metalinguistic discourse show epilinguistic skills (perception, meaning, difficulties to explain)

TYPE II (MOST FREQUENT)

Metalinguistic discourse show conscious manipulation of syntax, metasyntactic skills and awareness.

Usage of metaphors showing crossing linguistic awareness:

THE ROSETTA STONE: Crosslinguistic awareness and strategies

SEB: Do you think it can help to know several languages to understand what’s written in French?

IN4: Him it’s like the Rosetta stone so he can understand the norwegians, so he used the languages he knows to understand another one.

THE PARK: Crosslinguistic interactions and transfers

IN7: French, Norwegian, it’s at the same park but with different paths.

InQ: I can use parts of paths so if I feel a desire which could direct if things between languages were different. You create them automatically, you don’t think of doing it.

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