



## **Cultural aspects of language heritage use and preservation: The impact of bilingualism on identity and social integration**

**Migena Arllati\***

Doctor of Sciences, Professor

Fehmi Agani University

50 000, 37 Urim Rexha Str., Gjakova, Kosovo

<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-0811-1567>

**Abstract.** This study aimed to investigate the influence of proficiency in two or more languages on forming individual identity and social integration. To achieve this goal, a methodology was employed that was based on an analysis of the cultural aspects of bilingualism and an exploration of strategies for preserving cultural values in a linguistic environment. The research was conducted by analysing data from various countries, including Canada, Switzerland, the USA, South Korea, Vietnam, and others where bilingualism is prevalent. This allowed for the conclusion that bilingualism has a positive impact on preserving linguistic heritage and promoting harmonious social integration. The article delved into the cultural facets of bilingualism in detail, specifically strategies for preserving linguistic heritage and the interaction between ethnic groups in multilingual settings. The paper also considered multinational marriages as one aspect that influences cultural heritage and bilingualism. Multinational marriages can contribute to the preservation and development of the diversity of linguistic experiences within a family. The study examined how multinational marriages impact the choice of languages used within the family, and how this affects the identity and social integration of children growing up in such families. The findings of this study demonstrated that bilingual individuals possess a deeper understanding of cultural diversity, fostering more profound intercultural interactions and integration among various ethnic groups within society. Research has revealed that bilingual individuals exhibit more developed competencies and a higher level of adaptability in diverse cultural contexts. The results underscored the significance of supporting and promoting bilingualism as a tool for preserving cultural diversity and facilitating social integration. The findings of this study can be applied to

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\*Corresponding author



educational programs, government and non-profit policies for preserving minority languages and social integration, as well as in international initiatives aimed at preserving linguistic diversity

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## Introduction

In modern globalised world, cultural diversity and the preservation of linguistic heritage are key components of the cultural landscape, reflecting the uniqueness and identity of different population groups. Increasing migration, rapid societal changes, and technological advancements present both new challenges and opportunities for language preservation and use. In the context of these changes, the study of the cultural aspects of using and preserving linguistic heritage, as well as their impact on identity and social integration, has become particularly relevant.

The challenges associated with the use and preservation of linguistic heritage arise from constant changes in social and cultural environments. One major issue is the preservation of language traditions and heritage in the face of the dominance of English as a global language. Another pressing concern is the impact of bilingualism on the formation of individual identity and self-awareness, especially in multicultural contexts. It is also crucial to study how languages adapt to modern realities and their role in intercultural understanding. Numerous studies have focused on bilingualism and its impact on various aspects of life. Many highlight the cognitive advantages of bilingualism, its influence on the development of speech and language skills in children and adults, as well as the development of intercultural competence. For instance, researchers Z. Xie & S. Zhou (2020) investigated the relationship between bilingualism, demographic factors, and cognitive control, focusing on how different aspects of bilingualism affect executive functions such as attention, task switching, and inhibition. The study was conducted

within a single group of participants, allowing for comparisons between bilingual individuals rather than comparisons with monolinguals. The results showed a correlation between bilingualism and cognitive control, but it was not straightforward. The authors found that those who learned a second language at an early age had higher levels of cognitive control compared to those who learned a second language later in life. Early bilinguals demonstrated a better ability to inhibit impulses and switch between different languages.

In their study, J. Song (2024) explored the preservation of linguistic heritage with a focus on emotions, identity, and power. The research analysed the behavioural patterns of a mother and her 15-year-old daughter who are learning and maintaining the Korean language in the United States. A significant aspect of the woman and her child's experience is managing complex emotions associated with language preservation, such as anxiety, shame, guilt, and regret, which require emotional labour. Other studies conducted by universities in the United States, Netherlands, and Spain have focused on examining the linguistic influence on the formation of cultural identity and social integration of immigrants. These studies have shown that multilingualism can be a resource for cultural diversity and can facilitate social adaptation in new cultural contexts.

Some scientists have also focused on the impact of bilingualism on cultural identity and social integration through the lens of interethnic marriages. For instance, H. Irving Torsh (2020) explored the relationships between multinational marriages and migration, with a particular focus on linguistic aspects.

This study explored how multilingual couples manage language use in their daily lives and how this influences their personal and social identities. Additionally, R. Kadir (2021) investigated the language selection process in families, using Canadian families with Indonesian wives as a case study, and examined how this affects the development of their children's communication skills. Overall, researchers have concluded that bilingualism can have both positive and negative effects on identity and social integration, depending on various factors such as cultural characteristics, language status, and language policies (Grundy, 2020; Beatty-Martínez *et al.*, 2020). However, most researchers agree that understanding these aspects of bilingualism is key to developing effective strategies for supporting cultural diversity and promoting harmonious social integration (Shodieva, 2024).

However, less attention has been paid to the study of the cultural aspects of using and preserving linguistic heritage and their impact on the formation of individual identity and social integration. Despite the significance of this topic, there is a relatively limited amount of research focusing on the cultural aspects of using linguistic heritage in the context of bilingualism. Thus, there is a need for more in-depth and comprehensive research into the impact of bilingualism on cultural identity and social integration. This article aimed to fill the gaps in understanding the influence of bilingualism on the social integration and identity of bilingual individuals, and to identify the role of bilingualism in the formation and preservation of linguistic heritage in contemporary society to develop effective methods of supporting multiculturalism. The key research questions include the impact of bilingualism on personal identity within the context of cultural affiliation, and which strategies for the use and preservation of linguistic heritage play a crucial role in fostering social integration in a bilingual environment.

## **Materials and Methods**

The research focused on the cultural aspects of the use and preservation of linguistic heritage in the context of bilingualism. This article employed various research methods aimed at analysing the cultural aspects of bilingualism and its impact on identity and social integration. The literature review in this study included an analysis of a wide range of scholarly sources, such as journal articles, books, dissertations, conference papers, and other publications related to the cultural aspects of using and preserving linguistic heritage in the context of bilingualism. The purpose of the literature review was to understand the current state of research in this field, to identify the main trends and gaps in knowledge. Various approaches to understanding these concepts and their relationship to bilingualism were analysed. The data obtained from the literature review served as the foundation for further comparative analysis. This information helped identify issues that require further investigation and provided context for interpreting the results of the current research within the framework of existing knowledge in the field. An analysis of literary and statistical sources, as well as surveys, was conducted. This approach enabled the identification of differences in approaches to cultural identity and social integration depending on linguistic affiliation and other factors.

A comparative analysis was conducted across various countries and regions to identify differences in language policies, practices, and cultural attitudes that may influence the cultural identity and social integration of bilingual individuals. The study focused on countries such as Canada, Switzerland, Israel, Vietnam, South Korea, and others. This analysis helped to determine which aspects of language policy or cultural norms may facilitate or hinder the integration process. Different models of bilingual education and cultural adaptation programs were also compared to assess their effectiveness and impact on participants'

cultural identity and social integration. The study explored models of bilingual education such as one-parent-one-language (where each parent speaks exclusively to the child in their native language), the time and context model (e.g., one language is used at home and another outside the home), the dominant language model (families may use one dominant language for family communication but also introduce a second language in certain situations), and the mixed approach model (using both languages both within the family and in everyday life). This study also examined cultural adaptation programs such as orientation programs that introduce participants to local customs, traditions, and social norms, facilitating a smoother transition to a new environment, language courses for migrants that cater to various language proficiency levels from beginner to advanced, as well as support groups and cultural events that allow migrants to better understand local traditions and values.

## Results

Bilingualism refers to the ability of an individual to speak two languages with a level of proficiency that allows them to use both languages effectively in various life contexts. This can include proficiency in a native language (a language learned in childhood or used in the home environment) and other languages acquired later in life. L. Tao *et al.* (2021) argued that bilingualism can manifest at various levels, from the full equivalence of two languages to the dominance of one language over another in specific situations. Individuals may become bilingual for a variety of reasons, such as growing up in a multilingual environment, receiving bilingual education, inter-cultural marriages, migration, learning languages outside of school or work, or being raised in a bilingual or culturally diverse context. Bilingualism can be acquired or native. Acquired bilingualism occurs when an individual consciously learns and acquires a second language later in life, for example, through

education or migration. A native bilingual is someone who grew up in an environment where they were exposed to two languages simultaneously or nearly simultaneously, and both languages developed in parallel.

One of the most common forms of bilingualism is code-switching, where an individual uses both languages in different situations or even within a single conversational act. Another form is additive bilingualism, where an individual is proficient in two languages but uses them in different contexts without mixing. Additionally, there is functional bilingualism, where each language serves specific social or cultural functions (López *et al.*, 2023). Bilingualism can be reflected not only in language use but also in cultural preferences, identity, and worldview. It can influence cognitive development, thinking, and perception of reality. Bilingualism also reflects social and economic realities such as migration, globalisation, and cultural exchange. In today's world, where intercultural interaction is becoming increasingly significant, bilingualism serves as a vital component of societal development and international relations.

The study of the cognitive advantages of bilinguals over monolingual individuals is a current and important area of research in modern science. Some of the most well-known studies in this field have explored the effects of bilingualism on cognitive functions, analysing various aspects such as attention, memory, language skills, and concentration (Bialystok, 2021). As a result of their research, the authors found that individuals who constantly use bilingual skills during translation have better attention and balance between executive brain functions. This suggests that translation skills can positively influence cognitive processes. It has been established that bilingual individuals have greater cognitive flexibility and the ability to switch between languages. They can switch from one language to another more quickly and efficiently, indicating their better adaptability and cognitive flexibility.

The study showed that bilingual individuals have more developed language skills compared to monolinguals. They demonstrated a better ability to understand and solve problems in language tasks that require the ability to work with more than one language simultaneously. The study found that bilingualism can lead to changes in brain activity, especially in those areas responsible for language functions and cognitive processes. These changes indicated brain plasticity and adaptation to a bilingual

environment. Therefore, these studies provided compelling evidence that bilingualism can have a significant impact on human cognitive functions, improving attention, language flexibility, language skills, and even brain activity. Despite many positive aspects, bilingualism can also have a negative impact on adults in the context of preserving linguistic heritage, identity, and social integration (Nichols *et al.*, 2020). For ease of understanding, some possible negative consequences are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Possible negative consequences of acquired bilingualism in adults

Negative consequences	Example
Risk of losing linguistic identity	An individual who has moved to another country gradually forgets their native language and only uses the majority language.
Conflict of values and identities	A migrant experiences pressure to adapt to a new cultural environment while simultaneously wanting to preserve their linguistic heritage and identity.
Social isolation	An individual who does not speak the majority language in their new residence feels alienated and excluded from interactions with others.
Limited access to the labour market	An adult who does not speak the majority language in their region has restricted employment opportunities due to workplace language requirements.
Loss of community connectedness	An individual who ceases to use their native language in daily communication feels a loss of community connection with their family and ethnic group.

**Source:** compiled by the author based on the studies of M. Timmermeister *et al.* (2020) and F. Gallo & J. Abutalebi (2023)

To preserve linguistic heritage and maintain identity, it is important to find a balance between proficiency in one’s native language and other languages, as well as actively engaging in community language practices. The impact of bilingualism on child development has been the subject of intensive research in recent decades. The interest in this topic stems from the diverse effects that proficiency in two languages can have during the early stages of life (De Houwer & Bornstein, 2022). Studies have shown that bilingual children have certain advantages in various aspects of development compared to monolingual children (Gunnerud *et al.*, 2020). Firstly, the language development of bilinguals is usually at a higher level compared to their monolingual peers. Research suggested that bilingual children have larger

vocabularies, better grammar, and more developed expressive language skills. Studies have shown that bilingual children can use different lexical units depending on the situation and the interlocutor. Secondly, the cognitive advantages of bilinguals have also attracted the attention of researchers, as they demonstrate better results in tasks related to attention, memory, problem-solving, and thinking. For example, experiments have shown that bilingual children have a greater capacity for cognitive control, allowing them to effectively switch between languages and manage their language use.

Furthermore, bilingualism fosters children’s adaptation to diverse cultural environments. Bilingual children typically demonstrate a higher capacity for empathy, allowing them to better understand others and adapt to new

cultural contexts. For instance, studies have shown that bilingual children have a more positive attitude towards multilingual environments and a greater inclination towards intercultural communication. Finally, bilingualism promotes the development of metacognitive skills, such as awareness of language strategies and the ability to choose effective means of communication. For example, bilingual

children are more likely to demonstrate the ability to reflect on their language use and adapt their language to specific communicative situations. Bilingualism in children can have both positive and negative impacts on the preservation of their linguistic heritage, identity, and social integration. The following Table 2 provides examples of potential negative consequences of bilingualism for children in this context.

**Table 2.** Possible negative consequences of bilingualism for children

Negative consequences	Example
Risk of losing linguistic identity	A child growing up in a bilingual environment may forget their native language due to insufficient use and support.
Social uncertainty	Bilingual children may experience uncertainty regarding their own linguistic identity, which can affect their self-esteem and communication.
Mixing of vocabulary	Children may use mixed vocabulary, complicating their speech and comprehension of the language system.
Limited access to the language community	If children do not receive support for their native language in their environment, they may feel isolated and have limited access to linguistic resources.
Increased level of stress	Managing two languages can contribute to heightened pressure for children, especially if they feel psychological stress and uncertainty regarding their linguistic identity.

**Source:** compiled by the author based on L. Wei (2020), T. Peace-Hughes et al. (2021) and E. Bialystok & F.I.M. Craik (2022)

It is also worth considering the concept of multilingualism – a situation where a person is proficient in several languages. This can encompass varying levels of language proficiency, ranging from basic understanding to a high degree of bilingualism, or even polyglottery, where a person is fluent in three or more languages at an advanced level. Multilingualism can be the result of various factors, such as cultural environment, bilingual upbringing, migration, education, and others. Unlike bilingualism, multilingualism is not limited to two languages and can include any number of languages that a person is proficient in at different levels. In the modern world, multilingualism is becoming increasingly common due to the growth of globalisation, intercultural contacts, and other social factors. This opens up new opportunities for communication, the development of cultural diversity, and the broadening of perspectives.

However, at the same time, multilingualism can create challenges such as the convergence of linguistic identities, language learning, and cultural conflict. Thus, multilingualism is defined not only as a way of possessing languages but also as a complex phenomenon that reflects the diversity of cultural, social, and individual aspects of human life.

The preservation of native language and identity is particularly important in the context of migration. Moving to a new country necessitates adaptation to a new linguistic environment, which can significantly impact the maintenance of linguistic heritage and the formation of migrant identity. In migrant communities, bilingualism becomes not only a means of communication but also a key aspect of cultural preservation. On the one hand, the ability to speak one's native language contributes to preserving cultural heritage and supporting

migrant communities. Language is the primary carrier of cultural heritage, as it transmits knowledge, traditions, beliefs, and values from generation to generation. It reflects the historical development of a people, preserving traces of past events and interactions with other cultures through borrowed words and cultural adaptation. Each language has unique features, such as idioms, proverbs, and expressions, which reveal a unique worldview and psychology of a people. Literary works, poetry, and songs created in the native language not only reflect cultural characteristics but also maintain an emotional connection with past generations. Thus, language serves not only as a means of communication but also as a living archive of cultural memory and identity, inseparable from its speakers. Individuals are bearers of cultural heritage, as through language they transmit and actively use cultural practices, rituals, and customs. Through speech habits, word choice, and modes of expression, each person not only reflects their individual cultural identity but also maintains a living connection to the history and traditions of their community. People are also active participants in cultural exchange through language, where they not only spread their native traditions but also absorb new ones, contributing to the enrichment and development of cultural diversity on a global level.

On the other hand, the need to learn the language of a new country for social integration can lead to the loss of the native language and a sense of identity loss. Bilingualism in a migration context can also create certain barriers to the process of social integration. For example, migrants may feel isolated from their linguistic and cultural community if their knowledge of their native language is limited or if they face discrimination due to their linguistic background. Such factors can affect their self-esteem and perception of themselves in a new sociocultural environment. At the same time, bilingualism can also be a resource for migrants in the process of social adaptation. Proficiency

in two or more languages can provide them with additional opportunities in finding work, education, and social interaction. Bilingualism can help migrants more easily cope with the challenges of migration and find their place in a new society. Bilingualism within intercultural marriages presents a complex interplay of cultural and linguistic interactions. These unions often exhibit unique characteristics that can have both positive and negative consequences for preserving linguistic heritage, identity, and social integration. Intercultural marriages contribute to a broader cultural and linguistic diversity within families. Children growing up in such families typically have the opportunity to learn and use two or more languages from a young age. This develops their cognitive and linguistic skills and helps them better understand and appreciate cultural diversity. Additionally, bilingualism can be advantageous in later life, opening up new opportunities for education, careers, and international cooperation. However, amidst these positive aspects, there are also challenges and negative consequences. One such challenge is the risk of losing linguistic heritage and identity. In bilingual families where both partners speak different languages, children may not feel fully integrated into either linguistic or cultural community. They may lose their connection to their native language and culture, which can impact their self-identity and sense of belonging.

Furthermore, intercultural marriages can create sociocultural and communicative barriers to child-rearing. For example, if parents speak different languages with each other, children may feel lost between two worlds, lacking a stable linguistic environment for their personal development. Ultimately, the success of bilingual upbringing in intercultural families depends on many factors, such as active support from both parents in developing languages and cultural traditions, mutual understanding, and compromise. By building their family relationships on a foundation of respect and openness

to diversity, intercultural couples can preserve and develop their linguistic heritage, identity, and foster harmonious social integration for their children. Bilingualism plays a crucial role in preserving linguistic heritage, particularly in the face of globalisation and cultural homogenisation. Proficiency in two languages not only offers personal and professional advantages but also serves as an essential tool in safeguarding cultural and linguistic diversity. Preserving linguistic heritage through bilingualism involves several key aspects, such as education, legislative initiatives, cultural programs, and community engagement, which can be decisive in supporting languages at risk of extinction. Educational initiatives are among the most effective ways to preserve linguistic heritage. For instance, many countries, including Finland and Canada (Sterzuk & Shin, 2021), have national programs that support the teaching of Indigenous languages and minority languages in schools. In Finland, legislation guarantees children the right to learn their native language, even if it is a less widely spoken language like Sámi. Teaching native languages in schools not only helps students acquire them but also fosters a deeper understanding of their people's cultural heritage.

Legislative initiatives also play a crucial role. In some countries, governments enact laws that protect and promote the use of minority languages. For instance, Bolivia's constitution recognises 37 Indigenous languages as official, creating conditions for their use and preservation in all spheres of public life. This not only supports linguistic diversity but also plays a key role in preserving the cultural identity of Indigenous Peoples. Cultural programs, such as festivals, museum exhibits, and literary readings, can also contribute to the preservation of linguistic heritage. They provide opportunities to recreate and share cultural knowledge and traditions that are transmitted through language. Such events often place a strong emphasis on the use of language in poetry, music, and theatre.

Community involvement is crucial for preserving linguistic heritage. Community initiatives can include language courses, workshops, and gatherings where people can practice the language and pass on knowledge to younger generations. For example, in the United States, there are Navajo language preservation programs organised at the community level that involve language classes and cultural activities. However, despite these efforts, there are significant challenges. These include a lack of sufficient funding, inadequate youth engagement, and the pressures of globalisation which encourage the use of more dominant world languages. Therefore, effective language preservation requires ongoing attention, resources, and innovative approaches that could include modern technologies and international cooperation. Preserving linguistic heritage through bilingualism is, therefore, a complex process that involves multifaceted efforts but, with the right approach, can be incredibly successful in supporting the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world.

Bilingualism plays an incredibly important role in preserving linguistic heritage. It enables communities not only to keep their languages alive and relevant in the modern world but also to foster cultural identity and social integration. In Europe, for example, bilingualism is key to preserving regional languages. In Wales, where the Welsh language has historically been under pressure from English, the government is making significant efforts to support and develop it. Welsh education includes compulsory Welsh language learning as a first or second language. This not only helps to preserve the language but also supports its status and recognition in public life and the media, laying the foundation for future generations who will identify with this culture. In Canada, bilingualism is also part of national policy, where French and English have equal status. This is reflected in all areas of government and education, especially in provinces like Quebec, where French is the dominant language. Language rights are protected at the

legislative level, ensuring the use of French in commerce, education, and government institutions, which helps to preserve and promote its use among younger generations. One of the most successful examples of using bilingualism to preserve a language is the educational policy in Catalonia, Spain. The Catalan language, once under threat of extinction due to political repression, is now actively taught in schools as the primary language. This policy has not only revitalised the language but has also strengthened the cultural identity of the Catalans. The school system ensures that every child can learn Catalan on an equal footing with Spanish, fostering future generations who are bilingual and capable of sustaining and developing their cultural heritage. Cultural festivals, such as the Catalan La Mercè in Barcelona or the Francophone Festival International de la Chanson de Granby in Quebec, exemplify how bilingualism can be used to preserve and promote a language through cultural events. These events not only draw attention to the language but also create a platform for expressing linguistic and cultural identity on an international stage.

In the United States, where Indigenous Peoples like the Navajo in Arizona reside, bilingualism plays a vital role in preserving linguistic traditions. Schools on Native American reservations often offer programs that incorporate both English and Indigenous languages, such as Navajo. These programs not only contribute to language preservation but also foster a cultural connection between generations, enabling young people to learn the language and culture of their ancestors. Beyond Navajo, other programs exist to preserve Indigenous languages, such as Lakota and Choctaw, which are also taught in schools in their respective communities in South Dakota and Mississippi. These programs extend beyond language instruction, delving deep into history, art, and traditional knowledge, helping students to better understand and appreciate their unique cultural heritage. School programs on reservations

are often complemented by local initiatives and cultural centres that conduct workshops, seminars, and festivals focused on learning crafts, rituals, and ceremonies that are transmitted through language. For example, in Arizona, annual gatherings take place where Navajo elders transmit knowledge about medicinal plants, traditional songs, and stories to the younger generation, integral parts of their language and cultural identity. Contemporary technology and media also play a crucial role in language preservation. In recent years, initiatives such as the creation of mobile applications for learning Indigenous languages, online courses, and video materials in Native American languages have made these languages more accessible to younger generations and encouraged their active use in everyday life. These efforts are supported not only at the local level but also nationally through various government and non-profit programs aimed at preserving Indigenous languages and cultures. This not only strengthens the nation's cultural diversity but also fosters greater understanding and respect for Native American heritage across all segments of society.

Bilingualism also plays a crucial role in modern media, where multilingual content can foster cultural diversity and language preservation. For instance, in multilingual India, television channels and radio stations often broadcast programs in dozens of languages, including Hindi, Tamil, and Marathi, allowing viewers and listeners to maintain their cultural connections. Such media initiatives not only support linguistic diversity but also facilitate cultural exchange between different ethnic and linguistic groups, strengthening mutual understanding and social harmony. In the digital age, social media and internet platforms have become spaces for nurturing and developing language communities. Platforms like YouTube and Facebook enable the creation of content in native languages, empowering linguistic minorities to express themselves and share

information in their first language, which is essential for their preservation and promotion. Literature and libraries are also significant agents of language preservation through bilingualism. Many libraries in multilingual countries like Belgium or Switzerland offer literature in multiple languages, promoting linguistic diversity and providing access to cultural resources for all language groups. Thus, bilingualism is not only a way of supporting cultural and linguistic diversity but also a means of fostering social cohesion and cultural exchange. It allows communities to preserve their traditions, enhance mutual understanding between different cultural groups, and maintain linguistic diversity in a globalised world.

The dominance of the English language as a global means of communication has both positive and negative aspects that directly impact the preservation of linguistic heritage, identity, and social integration within bilingual communities. On the positive side, English is the language of international communication and business, opening doors to numerous opportunities for education, career advancement, and global connections. Proficiency in English allows individuals to interact with people from diverse cultures and nations, broadening their horizons and enriching their experiences. In bilingual communities where English is used alongside other languages, children and adults have a unique opportunity to develop their language skills and use them in various contexts, contributing to the preservation of linguistic heritage and the development of a bilingual identity. However, there are also negative consequences of English dominance. It can lead to a loss of linguistic diversity and the decline of other language communities. In countries where English becomes prioritised, there may be a decrease in demand for speakers of local languages, which can lead to their gradual decline and even extinction. Bilingualism can also pose challenges to preserving linguistic heritage and identity, as children may

feel lost between two linguistic and cultural environments. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that a bilingual environment can be a conducive factor for preserving linguistic heritage and developing cultural identity under certain conditions. Active support for bilingual programs, educational initiatives, and cultural events can strengthen the positive impact of English on the development of multilingualism.

Language policy is a complex set of strategies, rules, and measures designed to regulate language use in various societal domains. In bilingual communities where multiple languages coexist, language policy becomes a crucial tool for preserving linguistic heritage, shaping identity, and promoting social integration. A. Lundberg (2020) examined this issue using Sweden as a case study. The effectiveness of language policy is determined by its focus, clear objectives, and consideration of the needs of different linguistic and ethnic groups. Primarily, language policy should promote the preservation and development of linguistic diversity. This means supporting all languages present in a bilingual environment, regardless of their status. Specifically, it is essential to provide access to education in various languages, develop language programs, and preserve linguistic resources. For instance, schools may offer programs in different languages, allowing children to maintain and develop their linguistic heritage. Furthermore, language policy should ensure equal language rights for all citizens. This means that every linguistic group should have the opportunity to use their language in all areas of public life, including government institutions, legal proceedings, media, and cultural events. Guaranteeing equal rights in language use fosters the development of linguistic and cultural identities for all groups.

However, language policy can also have negative consequences, particularly if implemented incorrectly. For instance, the dominance of one language over others can lead to the assimilation of linguistic minorities and

the loss of their linguistic and cultural heritage. Additionally, unfair language policies can contribute to the formation of linguistic and cultural conflicts within society. In the context of bilingualism, language policy should promote the development of bilingual skills and support multilingualism. This involves creating conditions for the learning and use of two or more languages in society, as well as supporting bilingual programs and initiatives. Language policy should also foster the development of a bilingual identity, allowing individuals to freely communicate and identify with multiple linguistic and cultural communities. Therefore, language policy in bilingual communities is crucial for preserving linguistic heritage, shaping identity, and ensuring social integration. It should aim to support linguistic diversity, equal language rights, and the development of bilingual competence, thereby facilitating the harmonious development and functioning of multilingual societies.

In Canada, bilingualism is reflected in all aspects of the country's cultural and social life, serving as a key feature of its identity. The country officially recognises both English and French, a reflection of its unique historical and cultural context. Canada stands alone as the only nation in the world where English and French hold equal official status at the federal level (Ponomarenko, 2021). This distinctive feature is a product of the nation's historical development, colonisation, and various migration patterns. One of the primary regions of Francophone culture in Canada is the province of Quebec, where the French language predominates and plays a vital role in preserving linguistic and cultural heritage. For instance, Quebec has legislative measures regulating the use of French in various sectors of public life, including education, culture, and media. Even in areas where French is not the dominant language, its presence is evident in local culture and infrastructure. For example, in many western Canadian cities, such as Montreal, Toronto,

and Ottawa, there are French-language educational institutions and cultural centres where the French language is a part of everyday life (Kubota & Bale, 2020).

Moreover, bilingualism in Canada is reflected in the country's language policy. The federal government promotes bilingualism in all aspects of life, ensuring equal language rights and fostering the development of bilingual skills. The federal language program supports the development of bilingual abilities and encourages the use of both official languages in society (Andrea *et al.*, 2024). The successful implementation of bilingual policy in Canada helps maintain the diversity of linguistic and cultural traditions within the country. For instance, student exchange programs, which allow students to study in different provinces, promote cultural exchange and understanding of Canada's diverse cultures. However, bilingualism in Canada is not without its challenges. For example, there are some discrepancies regarding the use of both official languages in various areas of public life. Some organisations and institutions in western provinces have a limited understanding, and sometimes even resist the use of the French language. Overall, however, bilingualism in Canada is seen as a fundamental resource for cultural development and social integration. It provides the country with a unique intercultural identity and fosters understanding and interaction between linguistic and ethnic groups while preserving the uniqueness of each language and culture.

In Switzerland, multilingualism is an integral part of the cultural and social landscape. The country is renowned for its linguistic diversity, with four official languages: German, French, Italian, and Romansh (which is derived from Latin) (Schmid, 2020). This linguistic variety stems from the historical, cultural, and geographical characteristics of the nation. Additionally, the use of English is widespread throughout the country. In the German- and French-speaking regions of Switzerland, which

encompass the majority of the territory, both German and French serve as the primary languages of communication in schools, government institutions, and public life. These areas also feature multilingual road signs, indicators, and official documents. In the Italian and Romansh-speaking regions, Italian and Romansh are employed as the main languages of communication. Furthermore, these regions host official institutions and educational establishments where Italian and Romansh are actively used.

Bilingualism in Switzerland is also reflected in the cultural life of the country. Various regions host cultural events that celebrate the heritage of each linguistic group. For instance, festivals showcasing French and German culture are frequently held in Geneva and Zurich, respectively, featuring literary activities, musical performances, and other artistic movements. The Swiss government actively promotes multilingualism and the development of linguistic competence among the population. Federal institutions support the advancement of both official languages and ensure access to educational resources for language learning. For example, federal government websites provide information in both German and French. Switzerland's bilingual policy fosters the country's cultural and linguistic diversity by safeguarding the language rights of each linguistic group. This approach helps preserve the cultural heritage of every group and facilitates social integration, allowing individuals from different linguistic backgrounds to communicate and interact with one another.

## Discussion

It is important to consider the issue of bilingualism from various perspectives, as this allows for a comprehensive understanding of a wide range of experiences and viewpoints. On one hand, bilingualism influences identity by enabling individuals to communicate in different linguistic environments and maintain a connection to their culture of origin. On the

other hand, it affects social integration by promoting intercultural understanding and interaction among diverse communities. The study by J. Hutson *et al.* (2024) highlighted the role of digital technologies in preserving linguistic heritage and facilitating cultural continuity. One of the key aspects of the research is the use of digital archives for safeguarding linguistic resources. This involves the collection, digitisation, and preservation of various forms of language resources, such as audio recordings, video recordings, written documents, and other materials that contain languages at risk of extinction. Digital archives provide access to these resources for future generations and promote the study and preservation of linguistic heritage. The research also emphasises the importance of creating language learning tools that utilise digital technologies. These tools may include software and platforms for language learning, online courses, mobile applications, and other interactive means that assist individuals in learning languages in a way that suits them best. Such tools can be particularly beneficial for language minorities or individuals wishing to preserve their linguistic heritage. This study, along with the research of J. Hutson *et al.* (2024), acknowledged the significance of maintaining linguistic diversity in the contemporary world, especially in the context of globalisation and technological advancement. However, while this research focused more on bilingualism and its impact on identity and social integration, J. Hutson *et al.* (2024) paid particular attention to the application of digital technologies for the preservation of linguistic heritage.

D. Thi Le Huyen (2022) focused the research on a specific ethnic group, namely Korean-Vietnamese families in Busan and the Gyeongnam region. This focus allows author's study to provide a deeper analysis of the particular challenges faced by these families, especially teenagers who may be at risk of losing their bilingual competence and experiencing identity crises. The research highlights the

factors influencing families' decisions to forgo bilingual education and to not support the Vietnamese ethnic identity of their children from Korean-Vietnamese households. It examined the reasons that limit bilingual upbringing and the preservation of ethnic identity, employing mixed methods for data collection and analysis. The distinction between D. Thi Le Huyen's research and this study lies in the context and focus of the research. This study encompassed a broader range of cultural and linguistic situations, whereas D. Thi Le Huyen (2022) research concentrated specifically on Korean-Vietnamese families. The benefit of both studies lies in their development of recommendations for improving the lives of multicultural children and creating a healthy environment for their growth.

A. Stavans & M. Ashkenazi (2020) arrived at intriguing conclusions in their study, establishing that Spanish serves as a heritage language for approximately 130,000 Spanish-speaking residents of Israel. A distinctive feature of this immigrant community is their successful preservation of Spanish as a language of heritage. The research findings indicated that the first two generations continued to use Spanish for communication with family and immigrant friends, while also quickly mastering Hebrew for professional and social interactions. The support for the heritage language is typically provided by older family members, while the second generation seeks to maintain it, recognising its significance for both older and younger generations. The third generation sees practical benefits in using the heritage language to communicate with elder relatives. The study emphasised the crucial role of the educational system in transmitting the heritage language and highlights the need for increased efforts to support it. This research, along with the article of the aforementioned scholars, examined language heritage within the context of migration processes and analyses how the native language and culture are preserved across different generations. However,

the primary distinction lies in the research context. This study encompasses various aspects of bilingualism and social integration in a broader framework, whereas the research by A. Stavans & M. Ashkenazi (2020) focused specifically on the case of Spanish speakers in Israel. This allows them to concentrate on the unique challenges and strategic decisions involved in preserving the language within a particular cultural community.

T.T.T. Nguyen (2021) investigated the bilingual identity of students from Vietnamese ethnic minorities, focusing on their language practices, beliefs, and language management. The author examined the influence of ethnic, cultural, and social factors on the development of their bilingual identity. The findings suggested that while it is possible to harmoniously balance maintaining ethnic identity and adopting the dominant culture, there is also a tendency towards assimilation in some cases, which threatens the preservation of the native language and ethnic identity. This research, alongside the study of the aforementioned author, explored bilingual identity and its impact on social integration, while also considering the role of bilingualism in shaping cultural identity and its implications for ethnic minorities. The distinction between the two studies lies in their context: this research encompassed various cultural and linguistic situations, whereas T.T.T. Nguyen (2021) study specifically focused on the bilingual identity of ethnic minority students in Vietnam, resulting in differing geographical and cultural emphases.

A group of researchers A. Jo *et al.* (2023), examined the emotional aspect of family language policy, focusing on the experiences of a second-generation Korean-American bilingual teenager to reveal their emotional state and sense of belonging in the context of preserving the Korean language as a heritage language. This study, alongside the research conducted by A. Jo *et al.* (2023), addressed the issues of language heritage preservation and bilingual

identity, albeit from different perspectives. Both studies investigated how language policies and practices influence the sense of belonging and linguistic skills of second-generation immigrants. While this research centred on the impact of bilingualism on identity and social integration, the scholar's article highlighted the emotional dimension of family language policy and its effect on the sense of belonging of a specific Korean-American teenager. Both studies emphasised the importance of preserving the native language as a key aspect of cultural heritage; however, this research adopted a more general approach to bilingualism and its sociocultural implications, whereas research by A. Jo *et al.* (2023) focused on the personal experiences of a particular family.

A different aspect of bilingualism is explored in the study of S. Sharaan *et al.* (2020). The researchers examined the impact of bilingualism on executive functions – specifically sustained attention, focusing control, cognitive flexibility, and working memory – in Anglo-Arab children with autism. They concluded that bilingualism may positively influence sustained attention without negatively affecting other executive functions. Both this study and that of S. Sharaan *et al.* (2020) share a common goal: to investigate the effects of bilingualism on cognitive functions, particularly executive functions, in children with autism. These articles underscore the importance of studying this topic to better understand how bilingualism can affect children with autism, providing a scientific basis for future research and the development of practical recommendations. However, this study focused on somewhat different aspects of bilingualism, while S. Sharaan *et al.* (2020) specifically concentrate on Anglo-Arab children with autism and found positive effects of bilingualism on sustained attention, but did not identify significant advantages in other executive functions.

Bilingualism is important to consider from various perspectives, as it influences individual identity by maintaining a connection to one's

culture of origin and fosters social integration and intercultural understanding. Research focused on the preservation of linguistic heritage through digital technologies, as well as the study of bilingual loss and crises of ethnic identity within intercultural families. Other studies examined the preservation of heritage languages among immigrants, the bilingual identity of ethnic minority students in different countries, the emotional impact of family language policies on second-generation bilingual adolescents, and the effect of bilingualism on executive functions in children with autism. These studies highlighted the significance of bilingualism for the preservation of linguistic heritage, cultural identity and social integration.

## Conclusions

This study has confirmed the significance of bilingualism in maintaining connections to one's cultural heritage and fostering social integration within diverse communities. The research has revealed that bilingualism has a positive impact on the development of cognitive functions such as cognitive flexibility, attention, and the ability to switch between languages, thereby enhancing linguistic and cultural competence. These improved cognitive abilities enable individuals to communicate, interact, and work more effectively in multicultural environments. One key finding is that bilingualism can contribute to the preservation of linguistic heritage, particularly when there is active support for the native language from both families and educational institutions. This may involve implementing language learning programs, supporting cultural events, and encouraging the use of the native language in everyday life. The results of the study suggested that bilingualism can be a means of addressing issues related to cultural assimilation and the loss of linguistic heritage. It promotes greater mutual respect and understanding between different communities, while also upholding the value of cultural diversity.

The study identified several limitations that should be considered in future research. The limited range of assessment methods may have impacted the accuracy of the findings. Additionally, the specific context of the study, including geographic and cultural factors, may influence the interplay between bilingualism, identity, and social integration. Future research should explore bilingualism across diverse contexts and among various age and social groups. This will allow for a deeper understanding of how bilingualism

influences the development of individual and collective identities, as well as intercultural communication.

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None.

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## **Культурні аспекти використання та збереження мовної спадщини: вплив білінгвізму на ідентичність та соціальну інтеграцію**

**Мігена Арллаті**

Доктор наук, професор  
Університет Фемі Агані  
50 000, вул. Урім Рекса, 37, м. Джяковиця, Косово  
<https://orcid.org/0009-0006-0811-1567>

**Анотація.** Метою дослідження було вивчення впливу володіння двома або більше мовами на формування ідентичності та соціальну інтеграцію особистості. Для досягнення цієї мети використовувалася методологія, яка базувалася на аналізі культурних аспектів білінгвізму та дослідженні стратегій збереження культурних цінностей у мовному середовищі. Дослідження проводилося на основі аналізу даних з різних країн, таких як Канада, Швейцарія, США, Південна Корея, В'єтнам та інші, де білінгвізм є загальним явищем. Це дозволило зробити висновок про позитивний вплив білінгвізму на збереження мовної спадщини та сприяння гармонійній соціальній інтеграції. У статті детально розглянуто культурні аспекти білінгвізму, зокрема стратегії збереження мовної спадщини та взаємодія міжетнічних груп у багатомовних середовищах. У статті також розглянуто мультинаціональні шлюби як один із аспектів, який впливає на культурну спадщину та білінгвізм. Мультинаціональні шлюби можуть сприяти збереженню та розвитку різноманітності мовного досвіду у сім'ї. Досліджено, як мультинаціональні шлюби впливають на вибір мов, які використовуються в родині, і як це впливає на ідентичність та соціальну інтеграцію дітей, які виростають у таких сім'ях. Отримані результати продемонстрували, що білінгвальні особистості мають більш глибоке розуміння культурного різноманіття, що сприяє більш глибоким міжкультурним взаємодіям та інтеграції різних етнічних груп у суспільстві. Дослідження виявило, що білінгвальні особистості мають більш розвинену компетентність та вищий рівень адаптації у різноманітних культурних середовищах. Отримані результати засвідчили важливість підтримки та розвитку білінгвізму як інструменту збереження культурної різноманітності та сприяння соціальній інтеграції у сучасному світі. Результати даного дослідження можна застосувати в освітніх програмах, урядовій та неприбутковій політиці для збереження мов меншин і соціальної інтеграції, а також у міжнародних ініціативах зі збереження мовної різноманітності

**Ключові слова:** асиміляція; міграція; суспільство; сім'я; шлюб; освіта