Abstract
This project examines the lessons from research for les familles exogames. The expression “les familles exogames” is used in the French Early Childhood Education and Education sectors in Ontario to refer to families where one parent is French speaking, while the other has another language (predominantly English) (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004). The focus of this paper is on parental decisions with respect to language or languages spoken at home and choosing early childhood settings and schools. Given the focus on parental choice, the inquiry question is: What does the scholarly research say about linguistic and educational choices for young children from les familles exogames? The inquiry centres on the linguistic and educational choices for young children from les familles exogames from socio-cultural and ecological systems perspectives. I examine the extant literature on bilingualism, and more specifically on bilingualism in les familles exogames, and I share implications from research that are meaningful to parents and early years professionals. In addition, I present resources that can inform parents and early years professionals of the findings from current research for les familles exogames.

Résumé
sur le choix des parents, la question d’enquête est: Que disent les chercheurs au sujet des choix en matière de langue et d’éducation pour les jeunes enfants de familles exogames? L’enquête s’articule autour des choix linguistiques et éducatifs pour les jeunes enfants des familles exogames des points de vue socioculturel et des systèmes écologiques. J’ai ainsi passé en revue les ouvrages publiés qui traitent des familles bilingues, et plus particulièrement du bilinguisme dans les familles exogames, afin de communiquer des résultats de la recherche qui sont utiles aux parents et aux professionnels de la petite enfance. Je présente en outre des ressources qui peuvent renseigner les parents et les professionnels de la petite enfance sur les constatations émanant des travaux de recherche actuels qui sont pertinents aux familles exogames.
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Dedication

This project is dedicated to my father and mother for my Franco-Ontarian language and culture; and to “my guys”, my husband and our son, the reason for my interest in les familles exogames. Thank you for allowing me to tell our story.
Chapter One: Introduction

Within the broader topic of bilingualism, I will examine the early childhood research that is relevant to les familles exogames. The expression “les familles exogames” is used in the French Early Childhood and Education sectors in Ontario to refer to families where one parent is French-speaking, while the other has another language (predominantly English) (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004). In examining the research relevant to les familles exogames, I will focus on how les familles exogames make decisions with respect to the language or languages spoken at home and how these families choose early childhood settings and schools for their children. In Chapter One, I define key terms relevant to the examination of this inquiry question, the significance and rationale of the topic, as well as introduce the theoretical background.

Definitions of Key Terms

There are several key terms that are important to define before examining the scholarly research, these include: les familles exogames, bilingualism, and culture.

The expression “les familles exogames” is derived from the word exogamy, which is “marriage outside a specific group” (Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2014) or mixed unions. But when the term is used within the early childhood and educational contexts in Ontario, it refers to families where one parent is French-speaking, while the other has another language (predominantly English). By contrast, the expression “les familles endogames” is used to refer to families where both parents are French-speaking (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004).

Throughout this graduating project, I will refer to bilingualism as the use of at least two languages in everyday life (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 43). There are two other key terms associated with bilingualism, subtractive bilingualism and additive bilingualism, which will be useful for examining the impact of the linguistic and educational choices of les familles
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*Exogames* and the complex interconnections between the languages and the socio-cultural context. First, subtractive bilingualism is defined as a situation where learning a second language is at the detriment of the mother tongue, where extensive contact with the more prestigious language of a dominant group constitutes a threat of linguistic assimilation. Subtractive bilingualism is often a transitory phase toward unilingualism in the second language (Landry & Allard, 1990, p. 529). By contrast, additive bilingualism is defined as a situation where the second language learned does not have negative effects on the development and retention of the minority language (Landry & Allard, 1990, p. 529).

Since this inquiry will be explored within the context of a socio-cultural perspective, and since language and culture are inextricably related, it is important to define the term culture. The universal declaration of cultural diversity, adopted by UNESCO in 2001, defines culture as “as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs” (p. 4). This common definition however, may lead one to view culture as fixed. For the purposes of this paper, I broaden the definition of culture with Rogoff’s (2003) proposition to “think of cultural processes as dynamic properties of overlapping human communities, rather than treating culture as a static social address carried by individuals” (p. 63). Next, I will explore the significance and rationale for examining the scholarly research relevant to “*les familles exogames*”.

**Significance and Rationale for the Topic**

This topic is relevant to me both personally and professionally. First, this topic is personally relevant to me as I am part of a *famille exogame*. French is my first language, while my husband’s first language is English. As young parents, we received conflicting advice about
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the linguistic and educational choices we were considering for our son. This topic is also relevant to me professionally as a bilingual Early Years staff for the Ontario Ministry of Education. I provide field support to professionals working in family support programs, child care centres, and school boards who are serving an increasing number of children from *familles exogames*.

Given the conflicting advice that I hear as a parent and as an early years professional, it is important to examine what the research says about the linguistic and educational choices of *les familles exogames*, so that it can guide our practice and the information early childhood professionals share with families. Since these families speak different languages, they are faced with more choices when deciding which language or languages to speak at home. *Les familles exogames* may wonder what the best choices are for their children.

The choices of *les familles exogames* are within the context of Canada’s two official languages: English and French. French is the minority official language outside of Quebec, while English is the minority official language in Quebec. In order to ensure the preservation of both languages and cultures in minority settings, these minority groups have educational and linguistic rights. Some of these rights are enshrined in Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Under the heading, “Minority Language Educational Rights” it states:

> Citizens of Canada whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside; or who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of that province have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province. (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982, sec. 23)
Individuals who have the right to send their children to school in the official language of the minority group of their province are called right holders. In comparing 2001 and 2006 census information, Landry (2010) noted an increase from 64% to 66% of the proportion of children a *famille exogame* in Canada, while in Ontario an increase from 66% to 68% was noted. This means that *les familles exogames* are the largest client base for French language school boards outside of Quebec. Given these facts, it is important for early years professionals to understand how these families make educational choices for their children. In the next section, I will introduce the theoretical frameworks that will frame my inquiry.

**Theoretical Framework**

My inquiry into the linguistic and educational choices for young children from *les familles exogames* will be examined from socio-cultural and ecological systems perspectives. I will draw on Vygotsky’s (1978) socio-cultural theory and Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory. Whereas Vygotsky’s (1978) theory recognizes the importance of the social-cultural context, Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) theory acknowledges the influence of surrounding environments on the development of the child. Within the context of these theories, the acquisition of language is understood not only as a developmental process that follows various stages. Language acquisition is conceived also as socially, culturally and historically situated (Vygotsky, 1986). Therefore, acquisition of language is not merely learning the mechanics of a language, but is also about the cultural attachment and identities that are interconnected with language(s).

Some researchers have seen the importance of examining bilingualism from socio-cultural and ecological systems perspectives, rather than only from a language developmental perspective. For example, the socio-cultural theory frames the argument made by Cummins
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(2001, 2006) that the preservation of the child’s minority language actually supports the acquisition of the majority language, while affirming the child’s social and cultural identity. Within the context of an ecological systems perspective, other researchers have studied the complexity of interconnected influences of the home, early childhood settings, school, neighbourhoods and legislation on the choices of linguistic minorities (e.g., Hartman, 2003; Landry & Allard, 1997; Maltais, 2007; Patry, Legault, Lalonde, & Rodier, 2014). Now that I have identified the theoretical frameworks that will guide my inquiry, I will explain the purpose of this project.

**Purpose of this Project**

The purpose of this project is to examine what the scholarly research says about the linguistic and educational choices for young children from *les familles exogames*. This inquiry will help me develop my understanding and present my interpretation and analysis of the research to professionals working in family support programs, child care centres, and school boards in Ontario with the hope that they will use this information as a resource to better support *les familles exogames* in making informed linguistic and educational choices for their children. This capstone project will include resources in both French and English that will highlight responses to my inquiry question: What does the scholarly research say about linguistic and educational choices for young children from *les familles exogames*?

**Overview of Chapters**

In the Chapter Two, I will further explore the theoretical frameworks guiding this inquiry, and explore the extant research on bilingualism and *les familles exogames*. In Chapter Three, I will make connections to practice by drawing implications from the research, and in Chapter Four, I will reflect on my learning from this project, and suggest directions for future study.
**Chapter Two: Relevant Theory and Research**

In this chapter, I will further expand on the theoretical frameworks introduced in Chapter One. Then I will connect these theoretical frameworks with the extant research examining the broader context of bilingualism, and more specifically, bilingualism in *les familles exogames*.

**Vygotsky’s Socio-Cultural Theory**

According to Vygotsky’s (1978) socio-cultural theory, learning and development cannot be separated from the social and cultural contexts in which children live. Central to his theory is the role of adults and peers in the child’s learning and development, as well as the child’s active participation. Vygotsky (1978) explains that “human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them” (p. 88). Therefore, learning and development can be understood not only as biological processes, but also as processes mediated by social, historical and cultural contexts.

In addition to general development and learning, Vygotsky (1986) also applied his theory to language and thought more specifically. Language acquisition is not only about learning the mechanics of a language, but also about communication, forming relationships and social interaction. Vygotsky (1986) explained that children learn to speak from the people around them and that the “earliest speech of the child is therefore essentially social” (p. 34). In fact, he affirmed that the “primary function of speech, in both children and adults, is communication, social contact” (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 34).

In addition to communication and building relationships, learning a language is also about learning social and cultural norms. Vygotsky (1981/1960) explained that “[s]peech plays a central role in the individual’s social ties and cultural behavior” (p. 159). Therefore, the linguistic choices that families make not only determine the sounds, signs and symbols of the
language or languages that children will learn, these choices also influence the “social ties” (Vygotsky, 1981/1960) that children will make, as well as their “cultural behavior” (Vygotsky, 1981/1960). In order to expand the socio-cultural framework, I now turn to the second theory that will guide my project.

**Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory**

In Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory, development is examined within the context of the child’s specific environments, as well as the broader environments - how they interact and influence one another. Bronfenbrenner (1979) defines development “as a lasting change in the way in which a person perceives and deals with his environment” (p. 3). In this definition are some important concepts including: lasting change, perception, and the environment. In other words, development occurs when there is a change of perception with respect to the environment that has a significant impact on the individual.

Bronfenbrenner (1979) conceived of the ecological environment “as a set of nested structures, each inside the next, like a set of Russian dolls” (p. 3). The individual is at the centre as an active participant, within immediate and remote environments that are all interconnected. Bronfenbrenner (1979) called these environments the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem and macrosystem. I will now examine each system with illustrations from the language development of children from *les familles exogames*.

The first system and the one closest to the child is the microsystem. It is defined as “as a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given setting with particular physical and material characteristics” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 22). For children from *les familles exogames*, the microsystem would include the language or languages spoken at home by each of their parents, as well as the languages spoken by educators.
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in the early childhood setting chosen by their parents. It would also include the languages spoken by their peers in play situations.

The second system is the mesosystem, which “comprises the interrelations among two or more settings in which the developing person actively participates” (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 25). With respect to a child from a *famille exogame*, it would be the relationship between the home and the early childhood setting. For example, it involves how the English parent from the *famille exogame* communicates with the French educators from the child care centre.

The third system is more remote environments where the individual may not be present, yet it still influences the person’s development. Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls this system the exosystem and explains that it “refers to one or more settings that do not involve the developing person as an active participant, but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in the setting containing the development person” (p. 25). In the case of the child from a *famille exogame*, this would be the languages spoken by extended family, such as grand-parents, aunts, uncles and cousins. It would also include the languages spoken predominantly in the neighbourhood, in particular the attitudes and influence of the linguistic majority environment.

The final system called the macrosystem is the most removed from the child; however, it provides the context for the other three systems. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explains that the “macrosystem refers to the consistency observed within a given culture or subculture in the form and content of its constituent micro-, meso-, and exosystems, as well as any belief systems or ideology underlying such consistencies” (p. 258). For the child from a *famille exogame*, this would include the historical context of Canada’s two official languages, along with cultural beliefs and ideologies. Another example of the influence of the macrosystem would be the educational rights of official language minorities under section 23 of the Canadian Charter of
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Rights and Freedoms that was presented in Chapter One. As a result of the historical and legislative context, *les familles exogames* can choose to have their children instructed in either English or French. In the next sections, I will further connect Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory, as well as Vygotsky’s (1978) socio-cultural theory with the extant research.

**One or Two Languages**

One of the first decisions for *les familles exogames* is whether to introduce their children to more than one language. Scholars confirm that worldwide, bilingualism and multilingualism is the rule, rather than the exception (Kohnert & Median, 2009; Paradis, Genesee, & Cargo, 2011). In Canada, the number of bilingual and multilingual individuals is increasing. Statistics Canada (2012) confirms that the number of Canadian families speaking more than one language at home is increasing. As well, the number of Canadians reporting having more than one mother tongue is also increasing (Statistics Canada, 2013).

Still, some families wonder if it is in their child’s best interest to learn two languages. In trying to understand this reticence to bilingualism, I turn to the work of Hartman (2003). Referring to the English-only movement in the United States, he explains that “the spread of English seems to be analogous to the spread of capitalism” (Hartman, 2003, p. 187) and that “the English-only movement embodies the colonial model of language as oppression” (Hartman, 2003, p. 199). In other words, according to Hartman, attitudes that favour monolingualism are closely tied to colonialism and capitalism.

Despite the hesitance toward bilingualism, there is an increasing body of research demonstrating its benefits. One of the most significant findings is increased cognitive skills in children and adults, specifically in executive functioning, for bilinguals in comparison to monolinguals (Bialystok, 2010). In addition to this cognitive advantage, which will be examined...
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in more detail later in this project, there are economic advantages to being bilingual. In Canada, those who are French and English bilingual are more likely to be employed (Canadian Council on Learning, 2008). As well, Canadian, French and English bilinguals are more likely to have a higher income, particularly for those in Ontario (Canadian Council on Learning, 2008).

Another important advantage to being bilingual is the social and cultural benefits. Bialystok (2010) explains that it “has always been self-evident that bilingualism conferred certain social and communicative advantages because of the increased possibility for interacting with groups of people, for an enriched understanding of different nations, cultures, and rituals” (p. 10). This aligns with the socio-cultural theory presented earlier in which learning a language is also interrelated with learning socio-cultural practices, values and beliefs (Vygotsky, 1981/1960). Children from *les familles exogames*, therefore, have the opportunity to identify with the language, culture, history and heritage of both of their parents (Dalley, 2006). As well as connections to culture, bilingualism allows the children of *les familles exogames* the opportunity to communicate and form relationships with family, friends and extended family from both languages.

**When to Introduce a Second Language**

Once parents have decided to introduce their children to two languages, the next question is when to introduce a second language. Since each parent has a different mother tongue, they have the opportunity to introduce two languages from birth, yet, there seems to be some conflicting research findings with respect to recommended age for acquisition of two languages.

There are some findings that would lead one to believe that it is best to wait until a child has a strong foundation in a first language before introducing a second language. For example, Healy (2004) affirms that “once the grammar of one language is mastered, it is easier to learn

In order to resolve this apparent conflict, I turn to the work of American researcher, Krashen (1982). He seems to agree with Healy (2004) and Ball (2010) when he asserts that “older children acquire faster than younger children, time and exposure held constant” (Krashen, 1982, p. 40). Nevertheless, Krashen (1982) goes on to explain that it is equally true that “acquirers who begin natural exposure to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency than those beginning as adults” (p. 40). Another way to explain it is that in the short term adults and older children will generally make more progress, while in the long run, younger children will generally attain higher proficiency.

**Benefits and Challenges of Learning Two Languages From Birth**

The findings from the extant literature of children who are exposed to two languages from birth establish that there are both benefits and challenges. Previously I mentioned that one of the benefits to bilinguals is improved cognitive skills, particularly executive function. Executive function involves cognitive abilities such as self-control, working memory, and mental flexibility. Studies have demonstrated that early bilingualism leads to improved self-control, focus and the ability to ignore distractions (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008; Kovács & Mehler, 2009; Poulin-Dubois, Blaye, Coutya, & Bialystok, 2010).

One of the most significant studies was conducted by Kovács and Mehler (2009) in Italy. They compared the performance of 7-month-old infants who were exposed to one language or two languages from birth on tasks requiring the use of executive functions. The researchers
stated that in “3 eye-tracking studies [they] show that 7-month-old infants, raised with 2 languages from birth, display improved cognitive control abilities compared to matched monolinguals” (Kovács & Mehler, 2009, p. 6556). Other researchers have demonstrated that the cognitive advantage continues past infancy into early childhood (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008; Poulin-Dubois et al., 2010).

In a Canadian study by Poulin-Dubois, Blaye, Coutya, and Bialystok (2010), 24-month-old children exposed to English and French from birth outperformed “monolingual children on tasks measuring functioning skills” (p. 567). These findings were corroborated in the study by Carlson and Meltzoff (2008) with kindergarten-aged children who were exposed to English and Spanish from birth, as well as in the study by Bialystok and Viswanathan (2009) with 8-year-old children who were exposed to English and another language from birth.

The cognitive advantage is not only present in childhood. Elevated executive functioning continues into adulthood and seems to be associated with continued proficiency in both languages (Paradis et al., 2011). One study documented the increased executive functions from 30 to 80 years of age for bilinguals (Bialystok, Craik, Klein, & Viswanathan, 2004). Another study found that from the point of diagnosis for dementia, symptoms appeared four years later for bilingual individuals than for their monolingual counterparts (Bialystok, Craik, & Freedman, 2007). Hence, bilingualism may actually be a protective factor against diseases such as Alzheimer’s.

Although studies have documented the cognitive advantage in executive functioning for children learning two languages from birth, there are also some perceived challenges. The first is with respect to the vocabulary of children introduced to two languages from birth. There is a significant difference in expressive vocabulary for these children when comparing the
vocabulary of one of the languages to their monolingual counterparts (Junker & Stockman, 2002; Pearson, Fernandez, & Oller, 1993; Thordardottir, 2011). For example, this difference was noted in three studies: the first for infant and toddlers exposed to Spanish and English (Pearson et al., 1993); the second for toddlers exposed to German and English (Junker & Stockman, 2002); and the third for 5-year-olds exposed to English and French (Thordardottir, 2011).

Notwithstanding that there is a difference in expressive vocabulary; researchers found no difference is receptive vocabulary between the bilingual and monolingual children that they studied. Further, the pooled expressive vocabulary of both languages was equivalent to that of monolingual children. Pearson, Fernández, and Oller (1993) explain it this way:

In our data, the bilingual children’s productive capabilities seemed more evenly split between the languages, and although each individual language showed fewer words than in the monolingual children, measures of the bilingual child’s production in the two languages together indicated comparable vocabularies for bilingual and monolingual children. (p. 113)

In other words, children may understand a word in both languages and they may be able to say the word in one language, but not in the other language.

A second perceived challenge with bilingualism is with respect to mixing of languages. When young children are using their expressive vocabulary, they may actually use a mixture of both languages. For example, they may say “veux milk” which is “want milk” in English, or “my poupée” which is “my doll” in English. This is called code switching (Paradis et al., 2011). Some have interpreted this as evidence that the child is confused and has only one language system with both languages mixed together (Volterra & Taeschner, 1978). Yet, code switching is a common part in the process of becoming bilingual (Genesee, 2009; Goldstein & Kohnert, 2005).
In fact, other scholars see code switching in young children as a sign of resourcefulness in communicating by making use of the burgeoning vocabulary of both languages (Deuchar & Quay, 1998; Genesee, 1989).

**Bilingualism and Children With Special Needs**

One of the things that *les familles exogames* may wonder is whether it is in their child’s best interest to have two languages if the child has a special need. Therefore, in this section, I will introduce some of the research examining bilingualism for children with special needs. This is an area that has been under-researched. To illustrate my point that there is a dearth in the research, consider the study by Kohnert and Medina (2009) where they conducted a research retrospective of communication disorders and bilingual children. They found that “the number of peer-reviewed empirical studies investigating monolingual children speech or language disorders in a single year far surpasses the number of studies published at the intersection of bilingualism and communication disorders over five decades” (Kohnert & Medina, 2009, p. 222).

Yet, scholars are beginning to research bilingualism and children with special needs. Strikingly, the research is suggesting that bilingualism is not a risk factor for young children with special needs such as Down Syndrome (Edgin, Kumar, Spanò, & Nadel, 2011; Feltmate & Kay-Raining Bird, 2008; Kay-Raining Bird, Trudeau, Thordardottir, Sutton, & Thorpe, 2005; Valdivia, 2005), Autism Spectrum Disorder (Hambly & Fombonne, 2011; Ohashi et al., 2011; Petersen, Marinova-Todd, & Mirenda, 2012) and Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (Hermodson-Olson, 2012). In fact, based on initial research conducted with bilingual children with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, some scholars wonder if the increased executive functioning found in bilingual children lessens the expression of the disorder (Bialystok, 2010; Wodniecka & Cepeda, 2007).
Now that I have reviewed the research surrounding the linguistic choices that *les familles exogames* face, I turn to the research regarding the educational choices of these families.

**Early Childhood Settings**

After determining what languages to speak at home, *les familles exogames* need to consider early childhood settings for their children. Research demonstrating the benefits of early childhood settings such as family support programs, child care and kindergarten are well documented and summarized in reports commissioned by the Government of Ontario such as the *Early years study: Reversing the real brain drain* (McCain & Mustard, 1999), which resulted in the creation of family support programs called *Ontario Early Years Centres* in every riding in Ontario. Another report that compiled the growing research on this topic was *With our best future in mind: Implementing early learning in Ontario. Report to the Premier by the Special Advisor on Early Learning* (Pascal, 2009). This report resulted in the implementation of universal, full-day junior and senior kindergarten in Ontario.

In fact, some of the research supporting the recommendation for the Government of Ontario to go from half-day to full-day kindergarten was conducted on pilot full-day, every day kindergarten programs in French schools in Ontario (Maltais, Herry, Emond, & Mougeot, 2011). French school boards wanted to see if full-day kindergarten programs improve outcomes for children attending French schools. However, it was not simply academic skills that interested the school board, it was also the cultural and social dimension of the program (Lajoie & Masny, 1994). In the early 1990s, French school boards began to offer full-day, senior kindergarten programs, although only half a day was funded by the Ontario Ministry of Education. One of the first studies on the impact of these programs was a longitudinal study comparing half-day and
full-day senior French kindergarten (Masny, Lajoie, & Pelletier, 1993). The study documented improved French pre-writing and writing skills (Masny et al., 1993).

Once full-day senior kindergarten was implemented in the French school boards across Ontario, studies began to emerge with respect to junior kindergarten-aged children from both *les familles exogames* and *endogames* (Herry, Maltais, & Mougeot, 2008; Maltais, 2005; Maltais, 2007; Maltais et al., 2011). One longitudinal study compared half-day and full-day junior kindergarten. At Grade 2, improved language and reading were noted in children from the full-day program (Herry et al., 2008), whereas at Grade 4 “linguistic and academic development in reading and mathematics” in children from the full-day program (Maltais et al., 2011, p. 67) was enhanced. Another important finding at Grade 2 was the increased rate of retention of children within the French school system. The study found that while 68% of children in the half-day junior kindergarten program were still with the school board in Grade 2, 76% of children in the full-day junior kindergarten program remained in the French system (Herry et al., 2008). This transfer out of the French system between Grades 1 and 2 has been a concern for French school boards in their mandate to promote and preserve the French language and culture.

Once the Government of Ontario began to fund full-day, every day junior and senior kindergarten in both the French and English school boards in Ontario in 2011, one French school board began to pilot half-day nursery school programs for 3-year-olds with program evaluation and performance measurement being conducted by the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (Social Research and Demonstration Corporation, 2013). These studies have yet to be published. The pattern is clear that French school boards in Ontario are offering programs to children at younger and younger ages, while researchers study the language outcomes for these young children.
There are also studies from Ontario that examine the effectiveness of family literacy programs for families who are right holders, meaning they are eligible to send their children to French schools (Bissonnette, 2009; Letouzé, 2005, 2006, 2007). Letouzé’s (2005, 2006, 2007) studies were conducted over five years, with five cohorts participating in seven family literacy programs throughout Ontario. She found many benefits to the programs, including increased parental engagement with their child in literacy-related activities in the home both in general and in French. Letouzé (2005, 2006, 2007) also found that the programs were most successful when the model allowed parents and their children to participate together, rather than parents only.

One of the seven literacy programs that was assessed through Letouzé’s (2005, 2006, 2007) studies was the program offered at the French literacy centre in Kingston, Ontario. Bissonnette (2009) credits the success of the program to adaptations that were made in response to cultural, educational, community and individual literacies of participants from this Francophone minority setting. All of the aforementioned studies on the effect of French kindergarten and French family literacy programs in Ontario acknowledge the impact of living in English majority communities, as well as the impact of the languages spoken in the home on outcomes for children as they present their findings. This an example of the influence of the various systems outlined by Bronfenbrenner (1979). The interconnectivity of systems will be examined in the next section.

Ecological Systems for les Familles Exogames

Within an ecological systems perspective, one of the goals of the French early childhood programs highlighted in the previous section is to increase exposure to French, particularly when English is spoken at home in the case of some familles exogames, and when English is the majority language in the community. Although there is a point where exposure no longer has an
effect on language development (Gathercole & Hoff, 2007), some scholars argue that the exposure threshold is higher for minority languages (Pearson, 2007; Pearson, Fernandez, Lewedag, & Oller, 1997; Vihman, Lum, Thierry, Nakai, & Keren-Portnoy, 2006), including French in minority settings (Landry, Allard, & Deveau, 2007). Therefore, examining the interconnectedness between the home, educational setting, and the community is important in order to understand the linguistic and educational choices of les familles exogames that lead to additive bilingualism and those that lead to subtractive bilingualism. I will present findings from these studies.

In the first study, Maltais (2007) examined family and school literacy for junior kindergarten-aged children in Ottawa, Ontario. She compared children with high levels of “French in their home literacy activities” (Maltais, 2007, p. 6) with children with low levels. Both groups were attending a full-day junior kindergarten program. She found that children with low levels of “French in their home literacy activities” (Maltais, 2007, p. 6) made significant gains in language that were maintained at the end of Grade 2. Although these children never reached the same level of children with high levels, Maltais (2007) found that “the full time kindergarten program is compensating in part for the low level of French in home literacy activities” (p. 6). A study from Manitoba also sees the importance of increasing exposure to French in the early years and documents improved language development up to Grade 3 as a result (Chartier, Dumaine, & Sabourin, 2011).

Another important study examined the impact of the community, school, and home on both French and English proficiency (Landry & Allard, 1997). This would be important for les familles exogames if they value having high proficiency in both official languages. Participants in this study were students in their last year of high school where at least one parent was of
French heritage. Participants were from all Canadian provinces, except Quebec, as well as two American states. In all communities, French was a minority language, while English was the majority language.

One significant finding was that when the Francophone parent from a *famille exogame* living in a minority setting communicated with his/her child in French and the child attended a French school, it was strongly associated with high scores in French oral and cognitive-academic competencies. Another important finding was a strong association with high scores in English oral and cognitive-academic competencies as well. Landry, Allard, and Deveau (2007) call this “the counterbalance model of bilingual development” (p. 142). Therefore, for children to be equally proficient in both languages, the minority language needs to be present in the home and in school to counterbalance the linguistic vitality of the majority language in the surrounding community.

The next study by Landry, Deveau, and Allard (2006) also examines the interconnectedness between the home, school and the community, but in relationship to cultural identity. Some of the participants were the same high school students in the previously mentioned study. For this study, students from communities where French is the majority language were also included, along with communities with varying percentages of Francophones as a minority population. In total, the study included close to 4000 students from all 10 Canadian provinces and two American states.

The first interesting finding was that it is possible to have both a strong Francophone identity, while also having a bilingual identity. In addition, a strong correlation was found between the percentage of Francophones in a community and identification with the French language and culture on a sliding scale, meaning that the higher the linguistic vitality, the
stronger the French identity. This same correlation on a sliding scale was found between the level of French oral and cognitive-academic competencies and French identity. Yet, just like in the previous study by Landry and Allard (1997), “this study shows how language socialization in the family and at school compensate for the low ethno-linguistic vitality of the French-speaking communities” (Landry, Deveau, & Allard, 2006, p. 55). The combination of one parent from a famille exogame speaking French in the home and attendance at a French school was correlated strongly with both a French and bilingual identity.

In the final study, Patry, Legault, Lalonde, and Rodier (2014) examined the effects of a preschool program specifically designed for children living in French minorities settings combined with a family literacy component. The study was quasi-experimental with two cohorts followed from age 3 to Grade 2. Participants were from French minority communities in Alberta, Ontario and New Brunswick. Over 300 children and their families participated in the study and were in three experimental groups: The program group; the control group in child care; and the control group not in child care. Before publishing the results this year, the Social Research and Demonstration Corporation (2012) explained the purpose of combining the preschool program and the family literacy component on their website as follows: “Because the two components of the program have already been evaluated separately and shown to be effective, the real research question is to find out if, together, the two components make a difference” (How the project works section, para. 3).

In the recently released report, Patry et al. (2014) share the finding in the short term (age 5), medium term (age 6) and long term (age 7) for children and their families in the program group. In the short term, children with low exposure to French in their home environment have increased language skills, while children with high exposure to French in their home have
increased cognitive skills. In the medium term, parents have increased their literacy activities, as well as the use of French in the home. In the long term, all children in the program group continue to progress, with results most significant for children with high exposure to French in their home environment. Patry et al. (2014) explains that this “advantage in favour of the children in the Program Daycare group with high exposure confirms the importance of exposing children to a high degree of French to offset the majority Anglophone setting of the community in which the children are being raised” (p. 115). Patry et al.’s (2014) conclusion aligns with those of Landry & Allard (1997) and Landry et al. (2006) on the importance of the home and educational settings to counterbalance the influence of the majority language community setting.

**Summary**

I began Chapter Two by explaining how Vygotsky’s (1978) socio-cultural theory frames my inquiry into the linguistic and educational choices of *les familles exogames*, as language acquisition perceived as socially, historically and culturally situated. Using Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) ecological systems theory, I demonstrated the interconnectedness of the various socio-cultural systems surrounding the child of a *famille exogame* for making decisions about languages and educational settings. Within the context of these theoretical frameworks, I examined the scholarly literature relevant to the linguistic and educational choices of *les familles exogames*, such as the benefits of introducing a child to two languages from birth and choosing to send a child to a French school when living in a French minority setting such as Ontario.

In the next chapter, I will present the implications to practice as emanating from the examination of the theory and research.
Chapter Three: Connection to Practice

I return to my inquiry question: What does the scholarly research say about linguistic and educational choices for young children from *les familles exogames*? Throughout this chapter, I will draw implications from the research that are meaningful to my personal experience as the Francophone parent in a *famille exogame* and to my professional experience in working with early years professionals who support *les familles exogames*. As I mentioned previously, in my context as a parent and as an early years professional, I hear conflicting advice about linguistic and educational choices for young children from bilingual families. Therefore, I will examine how the research presented in Chapter Two could guide practice and inform early childhood professionals as they communicate with *les familles exogames*.

**Linguistic Choices**

Given the social, cultural and economic benefits of bilingualism presented in Chapter Two, I am generally surprised with the reservations expressed by some individuals to support bilingualism. Bialystok (2010) explains: “It has always been self-evident that bilingualism conferred certain social and communicative advantages…Yet for a long time it was believed that these benefits came with a significant cost, especially for children” (p. 10). I call this approach the “yes, but” reaction, where an individual recognizes the advantages, but is discouraged by the assumed challenges. As stated earlier, being exposed repeatedly, both professionally and personally, to these “yes, but” assertions with regards to linguistic choices for bilingual families motivated me to examine the extant research. In my study of this issue, I discovered that some of these assumed challenges are based on long held beliefs that are not necessarily grounded in research. To this end, in the next section I attend to these myths by examining them critically.
“The English will suffer” myth.

The first “yes, but” assertion I often hear is: “Yes, knowing two languages is good, but the child’s English will suffer”. Yet, the research presented in Chapter Two affirms that bilingualism should not be equated with less proficiency in a majority language such as English (Cummins, 2001; Krashen, 1982; Landry, et al., 2006). In fact, researchers believe that a bilingual person may actually know the English language better. Cummins (2001) substantiates this when he explains that bilingual children:

- gain a deeper understanding of language and how to use it effectively. … (T)hey are able to compare and contrast the ways in which their two languages organize reality. More than 150 research studies conducted during the past 35 years strongly support what Goethe once said, “The person who knows only one language does not truly know that language.” (p. 17)

“The child will be confused” myth.

The second “yes, but” assertion I often hear is with respect to introducing two languages simultaneously, rather than sequentially, once the first language is established. It is often said that: “Bilingualism is good, but the child will be confused if they learn both languages at the same time”. Code switching is often cited as evidence of this confusion. Yet, the research cited in Chapter Two confirms that code switching is common for children exposed to two languages (Genesee, 2009; Goldstein & Kohnert, 2005) and may actually be a sign of resourcefulness by making use of the burgeoning vocabulary of both languages (Deuchar & Quay, 1998; Genesee, 1989). When our son was a toddler, we affectionately called the code switching “Frenglish” or “franglais”. It seemed to us as if he was trying to make a sentence with the limited vocabulary that he had, regardless of the language. I still remember the day our then preschool-aged son
expressed himself in a complete sentence in English to his father, then turned to me and repeated everything in French. I was thrilled with his progress and relieved that our experience countered the perceived challenge to learning two languages simultaneously. I now know that our experience also aligned with the extant research.

**Executive function and proficiency benefits.**

It is not only important to inform parents that code switching is part of typical development for young bilingual children, but it is also important to familiarize them with the benefits of introducing two languages simultaneously from birth. In Chapter Two, I introduced research that supported the assertion that there are cognitive benefits to early bilingualism including improved executive functioning (Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008; Kovács & Mehler, 2009; Poulin-Dubois, Blaye, Coutya & Bialystok, 2010) and these benefits continue into adulthood as long as there is continued proficiency in both languages (Paradis et al., 2011). Further, we learned that children who are exposed “to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency” (Krashen, 1982, p. 40).

It is imperative that early childhood professionals be informed by the extant research, in order for them to support families in making informed linguistic choices. In addition, families would then be better positioned to defend their choices when faced with conflicting advice and opposing points of view. In the next section, I will examine conflicting advice given by some special needs professionals.

**Misconceptions about bilingualism for children with special needs.**

Thordardottir (2006) explains: “Traditionally, avoidance of bilingualism was routinely recommended for children with developmental deficits and indications are that this practice is still widespread” (p. 7). As a bilingual early childhood professional, I routinely hear from parents
of children with special needs that they are being counselled to focus on the English with the rationale that the majority language is needed for their child to function in society, but that the minority language is not. Recommendations such as these may lead to subtractive bilingualism and ultimately to assimilation in the majority language and culture not just for the child, but potentially for the family as well.

Underlying this advice is the misunderstanding that bilingualism is simply an add-on, rather than an integral part of the child’s identity, particularly when the parents have different first languages and cultures and when the child’s mother tongue is other than English. To illustrate my point, I will recount my experience as a parent of a child suspected of Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Given that my brother and sister both have Attention Deficit Disorder, I have carefully observed my son’s high levels of activity and struggles to focus. When he was 4 years old, I booked an appointment with a social worker at a local children’s mental health agency to see if she would have strategies to better support our son. After listening to my observations and experiences with my son, the social worker asked me if I would consider “forgetting the French”. I left the appointment in shock and grief. I called back a week later when I had gained some composure to ask that my file be transferred to the Francophone social worker that I knew was on staff. I explained that her comment about “forgetting the French” had troubled me and I felt the Francophone social worker on staff would understand that French is more than a language; it is part of who we are.

As Vygotsky (1981/1960) explained, “[s]peech plays a central role in the individual’s social ties and cultural behaviour” (p. 159). Thus, to “forget” a language would be analogous to asking someone to forget their identity and their culture. It would further impair their ability to fully communicate with family and friends from that language group. Therefore, early childhood
intervention professionals could benefit from awareness to the idea that language is interconnected with culture, history, heritage and social competence. As such, bilingualism is a legitimate goal for all children, including children with special needs.

Further, the current research at the intersection of bilingualism and young children with special needs does not support the recommendation to focus only on the majority language. Current research on bilingual children with Down Syndrome (Edgin et al., 2011; Feltmate & Kay-Raining Bird, 2008; Kay-Raining Bird et al., 2005; Valdivia, 2005) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (Hambly & Fombonne, 2011; Ohashi et al., 2011; Petersen et al., 2012) suggests that bilingualism is not a risk factor. In fact, bilingualism may actually be beneficial for children with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder by improving their ability to focus, concentrate and ignore distractions (Bialystok, 2010; Hermodson-Olson, 2012; Wodniecka & Cepeda, 2007). This is important information for early childhood professionals to have so they can support the linguistic choices of les familles exogames. It is equally important for families with children with special needs to be aware of this information as they interact with early childhood professionals and specialists.

In addition to information, les familles exogames rely on the support of programs and institutions for the transmission and preservation of the French language and culture. This will be examined in the next section.

**Educational Choices**

In reviewing the literature, it has become clear that French early years programs such as child care, family support programs and kindergarten support the linguistic and educational choices of les familles exogames towards additive bilingualism (Chartier et al., 2011; Létouzé, 2005, 2006, 2007; Maltais, 2007). While full-day junior and senior kindergarten is a universal
program in Ontario, child care and family support programs are not. This is problematic when the current capacity is insufficient to meet the demand for service.

**Limited educational choices.**

For example, in one of the communities in the region where I work, municipal partners report significant wait lists for child care spaces, including spaces in French programs. I remember as a Francophone parent calling the French daycare repeatedly asking where I was on the waitlist. I was desperate for my son to have a space in a French environment because I noticed the ever-widening gap between his English and French skills the longer he was in an English child care setting. In my work for the Early Years Division of the Ontario Ministry of Education, I also work with partners who operate family support programs, such as Ontario Early Years Centres. They report that they limit parent and caregiver visits to once per week due to limited funding. Other family support programs struggle to offer services in French.

**Implications for system leaders.**

This is regrettable given the benefits of these programs in increasing exposure to the French language. This has implications for system leaders within the early years sector, such as the provincial government, French school boards and community agencies, in planning for and expanding the availability of French early childhood programs and services. *Les familles exogames* cannot choose French early childhood settings if they do not exist or they cannot access them because of long waitlists. Landry (2010) asserts that “*la petite enfance est le fondement de l’éducation et que sa contribution essentielle ne peut plus être sous-estimée*” (p. 46), meaning that since the early years is foundational to the education system, we can no longer underestimate its critical contribution (p. 46) in the transmission of the French language.
Consequently, one of the priorities of the Ontario Ministry of Education in partnership with the French language school boards and French child care operators is to have a French child care centre in 75% of the French schools in Ontario (Giguère, 2013). The capital funding to increase the current percentage is being provided to French school boards through a grant under the Canada-Ontario Agreement. With respect to family support programs, Francophone partners in Eastern Ontario where I work are advocating that the government’s new approach (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2013) include a strategy specifically designed by and for Francophones. It is clear that system leaders in Ontario are increasingly conscious of the importance of early childhood settings for French language acquisition and cultural identification. In the next section, I will explore the understanding of *les familles exogames* with respect to the interconnectivity of their linguistic and educational choices.

**Linguistic and Educational Choices in the Ecological System**

In Chapter Two, it was established that a child’s language development is mediated by the collective environments including the home, early childhood setting, community, media, policy and societal beliefs (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In Ontario, English is generally the majority language, while French is a minority language. *Les familles exogames* and early years professionals in Ontario may not understand how combined linguistic and educational choices impact the bilingualism of young children.

**Underestimating the influence of the majority English community.**

In my experience, families generally underestimate the influence of the broader English community on their child’s bilingual development. Landry et al. (2007) claim, “that a majority of Francophone parents believe that the best bilingual program for their child is the 50/50 model” (p. 141). As a young parent, I also believed that my son would be proficient in both English and
French if I exposed him equally to both languages. However, I had only accounted for exposure at home and in an early childhood program; not considering the English majority community where we lived, played, shopped and attended church.

My husband and I had even considered sending our son to a French immersion program, rather than a French school. Our thought was that there would be more of a balance between the two languages. *Le Centre canadien de leadership en évaluation* (Le CLÉ) explains the difference between a French immersion program and a French school. A French immersion program is a program offered by an English school board that allows “students to learn French as a second language” (Le CLÉ, 2010, para. 2), whereas a French school is operated by a French school board “where students learn and live in a French environment” (Le CLÉ, 2010, para. 2). I have often heard it said that French immersion is French as a second language, whereas French school is French as a first language. As young parents, we also came to understand that the French school is not simply concerned with the acquisition of the language, but with creating a space to live and learn in French and to identify with French cultures. Although my husband and I chose to speak both languages at home, we quickly learned that in order for our son to be proficient in both languages, we had to give him more exposure to the French language given that we lived in an English majority community. Therefore, we were thrilled when we finally secured him a space in a French child care centre and were able to enrol him in a French school for kindergarten.

Through my work, I continue to meet other familles exogames with the same misconception about the effectiveness of the 50/50 model. Some do send their children to French immersion programs. Another variation of the 50/50 model I have often seen among les familles exogames is English at home and French at school or at child care. The reasoning underlying this
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approach is that the entire family unit speaks the one language which both parents understand - English. The transmission of the French language is left to the school. Although the child’s first language is English in this instance, the family can still send their child to French school because the Francophone parent is a French minority language educational right holder. In my experience, this scenario is particularly prevalent when the Francophone parent has experienced subtractive bilingualism through limited use of the French language in their daily life. When I meet these parents, they often apologize for not speaking French to me, explaining that they have “lost their French” through lack of use. These parents hope the English at home and French at school approach will lead to high proficiency in both languages.

**Toward high proficiency in English and French.**

Unfortunately, high proficiency in both languages is not strongly associated with the 50/50 model. Research conducted by Landry and Allard (1997) demonstrated high proficiency in English and moderate proficiency in French for children living in minority settings and where the school was the only exposure to French. This pan-Canadian study found that when the Francophone parent from a *famille exogame* speaks French to the child and the child attends a French school, it is strongly associated with high proficiency in both French and English, resulting in additive bilingualism (Landry & Allard, 1997). Other research presented in Chapter Two (Chartier et al., 2011; Landry et al, 2006; Maltais, 2007; Patry et al., 2014), supports the “counterbalance model of bilingual development” (p. 142) advanced by Landry et al. (2007) where the home and the educational setting counterbalances the linguistic vitality of the majority language in the surrounding community. Given that parents may be making decisions based on this and other misconceptions examined in Chapter Three, in the next section, I will introduce resources I developed highlighting lessons from research relevant to *les familles exogames.*
Resources Highlighting Lessons From Research

In an effort to share the information from this project with early years professionals working with les familles exogames, as well as the families themselves, I have developed three resources. The resources were inspired by a comment made by Landry (2010):

_"il ne reste qu’une option pour promouvoir le bilinguisme additif des enfants, celle d’une forte sensibilisation/conscientisation des parents et des membres de la communauté. Des personnes conscientisées et engagées peuvent exercer une forme d’autodétermination et tenter de vivre en français en dépit des obstacles."_ (p. 51)

Landry (2010) explains that the only option for promoting additive bilingualism in children is strong awareness/engagement of parents and members of the community. Informed and engaged individuals can exercise a form of self-determination and attempt to live in French in spite of the obstacles (p. 51).

The first resource is a research monograph summarizing the findings from the literature review (See Appendix A for the French version and Appendix B for the English version of the research monograph). In summarizing the research for professionals working in family support programs, child care centres, and school boards in Ontario, I hope they will use this resource to better support les familles exogames in making informed linguistic and educational choices for their children. Early years professionals may also share the research monograph with interested families, in order to better understand the research relevant to their linguistic and educational choices, including factors that generally lead to subtractive or additive bilingualism and the significance of cultural identity.

The second resource is a fact sheet addressing misconceptions about bilingualism that I have come across professionally and personally and countering each misconception with my
interpretation and analysis of the current research (See Appendix C for the French version and Appendix D for the English version of the fact sheet entitled “Bilingualism: Debunking the Myths). This second resource is intended for both early years professionals and les familles exogames as they navigate conflicting advice with respect to bilingualism.

The final resource is a poster that summarizes the “counterbalance model of bilingual development” (Landry et al., 2007, p. 142) for the famille exogame. The aim is to get the attention of the famille exogame, so that they understand the influence of the majority English community as they consider their linguistic and educational choices (Refer to Appendix E for the French poster. Appendix F is the English poster). The poster can be posted by early years professionals in places where les familles exogames are likely to go, such as pre-natal classes, play groups and community centers. The poster can serve as a conversation starter for early years professionals to introduce the fact sheet and research monograph to families.

Now that I have presented the implications of the theory and research about the linguistic and educational choices of les familles exogame to practice, in the next chapter I will draw conclusions from this project.
Chapter Four: Conclusions

In this concluding chapter, I will offer some of my reflections on this project. Additionally, I will also present some of my planned next steps for the dissemination of the research findings and the resources developed. Finally, I will note limitations to the scope of this project and make suggestions for further research.

Reflections

I was motivated to review the scholarly literature relevant to les familles exogames because I was hearing conflicting advice both personally as a parent in a famille exogame and professionally as a bilingual early years professional. All of the research presented in this project helped me to respond to my inquiry question: What does the scholarly research say about linguistic and educational choices for young children from les familles exogames? There were however three findings I consider the most significant.

The first significant finding was the cognitive benefits of bilingualism from birth to adulthood. Given the perceived challenges that were identified throughout the project, it was significant to discover that research confirms improved executive functioning for bilinguals in comparison to monolinguals. Secondly, the research presented for specific disorders suggested that bilingualism was not a risk factor for children with special needs. These findings are significant since they impact how early childhood professionals and specialists approach intervention for young bilingual children with special needs. The final significant finding was the veracity of the “counterbalance model of bilingual development” (p. 142) advanced by Landry et al. (2007) where the home and the educational setting counterbalances the linguistic vitality of the majority language in the surrounding community. It was important for me to understand the impact of the combinations of linguistic and educational choices of les familles exogames.
These significant findings and others from the review of the literature, were used to debunk myths that may be contributing to subtractive bilingualism such as the “English will suffer myth” and “the child will be confused myth”. This inquiry has been beneficial to me both personally and professionally. I am more confident in the linguistic and educational choices my husband and I are making as a famille exogame because of the lessons I have learned from the research. In my work as a bilingual early years professional, I am eager to share the research and the resources with other professionals and les familles exogames.

Next Steps for the Project

I intend to share this project with colleagues within the Ontario Ministry of Education, in particular colleagues within the Early Years Division and the French Language Education Policy and Program Branch. It is also my plan to share this project with partners such as the French school boards, child care operators and family support programs, as well members of the nine Regional French Language Networks in Ontario. In addition, I will give copies to the French provincial and national early years and educational associations. My hope is that this review of the relevant literature and the resources are useful in their work supporting and system planning for les familles exogames. Finally, I will also share this project with Francophone friends and family who are asking themselves how to ensure the transmission and preservation of the French language and culture.

Limitations and Future Research

One of the limitations of this project was that the research I examined did not give linguistically mixed families, including les familles exogames, a strong voice. It would have enriched my project to include research that gave these families an opportunity to explain the linguistic and educational choices they have made, including whether their choices were
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influenced by misconceptions. In addition, the children from *les familles exogames* were also not given a strong voice so that their perspective on their experiences could be considered. Giving parents and children from linguistically mixed families and specifically *les familles exogames* a voice is an area for additional research.

Another area where additional research is needed is at the intersection of bilingualism and children with special needs. With the predominance globally of bilingualism and multilingualism, research needs to broaden beyond monolingual children with special needs. The researchers reviewed through this project have acknowledged that literature is limited on bilingualism and children with special needs and have called on others to replicate their studies. There are factors that make research in this area complex. Finding a group of children and families exposed to two languages by specific special need is a challenge. As a result sample sizes tend to be small. This challenge is compounded by questions with respect to the differences depending on the particular language combinations (tonal languages versus languages from the same language family) and the age of bilingual exposure (learning two languages simultaneously versus learning two languages sequentially).

Finally, throughout this project, it was important for me to examine the broader literature on bilingualism through an ecological systems lens. When researchers were presenting the implications from their studies, I would remind myself of the context of the families represented in the studies. For example, it is important to understand whether scholars were speaking to the English majority such as Healy (2004), newcomers to Canada such as Cummins (2001) or the French minority such as Landry (2010). *Les familles exogames* are unique in that the language of instruction may be in the minority French language, rather than the majority English language and their children may have more than one mother tongue.
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DEUX LANGUES,
DEUX CULTURES

Choix offerts en matière de langue et d’éducation aux familles mixtes dont un parent est titulaire du droit à l’instruction dans la langue de la minorité francophone

Contexte
À l’échelle mondiale, le bilinguisme et le multilinguisme constituent la règle plutôt que l’exception (Kohnert et Median, 2009; Paradis, Genesee, et Cargo, 2011).

Le nombre de familles canadiennes ayant déclaré parler plus d’une langue à la maison est à la hausse (Statistiques Canada 2012).

Le nombre de Canadiens ayant déclaré avoir plus d’une langue maternelle est à la hausse (Statistiques Canada, 2013).

Les enfants issus de familles mixtes sur le plan linguistique forment la plus importante clientèle des conseils scolaires de langue française hors Québec et leur proportion augmente aussi bien dans l’ensemble du Canada qu’en Ontario (Landry, 2010).

Définitions
Le bilinguisme soustractif est défini « comme étant une situation où l’apprentissage de la langue seconde se fait au détriment de la langue maternelle où les contacts intensifs avec la langue plus prestigieuse d’un groupe dominant constituent une menace d’assimilation linguistique. Le bilinguisme soustractif n’est souvent qu’une phase transitoire menant vers l’unilinguisme dans la langue seconde » (Landry et Allard, 1990, p.529).

Le bilinguisme additif est défini « comme étant une situation où la langue seconde est apprise sans avoir d’effets néfastes sur le développement et le maintien de la langue de la minorité » (Landry et Allard, 1990, p.529).

Quels choix en matière de langue et d’éducation sont plus susceptibles de donner lieu à un bilinguisme additif plutôt qu’à un bilinguisme soustractif?
Choix en matière de langue

Une ou deux langues?

Avantages du bilinguisme

Avantages économiques

Au Canada, les personnes bilingues (français et anglais) ont de meilleures chances de se trouver un emploi et d’être mieux rémunérées (Conseil canadien sur l’apprentissage, 2008).

Avantages sociaux et culturels

Il existe des avantages sociaux et culturels, comme le fait de s’identifier à la langue, à la culture, à l’histoire et à l’héritage des deux parents, de la famille élargie et des amis (Dalley, 2006). La possibilité de croiser des groupes de personnes est plus grande, favorisant ainsi une meilleure compréhension des différentes nations, cultures et coutumes (Bialystok, 2010, p. 10).

Avantages sur le plan cognitif

Le bilinguisme chez les jeunes enfants comporte des avantages sur le plan cognitif, dont le maitrise de soi, le mémoire de travail et la flexibilité mentale (Bialystok et Vaynman, 2009; Carlsen et Melzoff, 2008; Kovács et Mehler, 2009; Poulin-Dubois, Bleye, Coutye, et Bialystok, 2010). Ces avantages demeurent présents à l’âge adulte pourvu que le personne continue de maitriser les deux langues (Paradis, Clineanu, et Cargo, 2011). Le bilinguisme peut également constituer un véritable facteur de défense contre certaines maladies, comme l’Alzheimer (Bialystok, Craik, et Freedman, 2007).

Quand initier les enfants à une seconde langue?

Même s’il est vrai que l’apprentissage d’une seconde langue se fait plus facilement lorsque l’on maitrise sa langue maternelle (Healy, 2004; Krashen, 1982), il est également vrai que les enfants qui sont exposés à une deuxième langue au cours de leur enfance maitrisent, en général, davantage celle-ci (Krashen, 1982, p. 40).

Autrement dit, les enfants plus vieux accomplissent, de façon générale, plus de progrès à court terme, alors que les enfants plus jeunes parviennent généralement à une meilleure maîtrise à long terme.
Un compte rendu de recherche

Difficultés perçues lorsque les enfants sont initiés à deux langues dès la naissance

Vocabulaire réceptif et expressif - On ne constate pas de différence importante au point de vue du vocabulaire réceptif entre les jeunes enfants bilingues et ceux monolingues. Il existe, cependant, une différence notable pour ce qui est du vocabulaire expressif des jeunes enfants bilingues par rapport à ceux qui ne parlent qu'une seule langue. Mais si l'on met en commun leur vocabulaire expressif dans les deux langues, alors il n'y a plus de différence notable (Junker et Sideman, 2002; Pearson, Fernandes, et Oller, 1991; Thordardottir, 2012).

Alternance de codes linguistiques - L'alternance de codes s'entend de l'utilisation, en alternance, de deux langues pour s'exprimer (Paradis et al., 2012). L'alternance de codes fait partie du développement typique des jeunes enfants bilingues (Genese, 2009; Goldstein et Kohnert, 2007). Certains chercheurs interprètent l'alternance de codes chez les jeunes enfants comme un signe de débrouillardise à communiquer en empruntant leur vocabulaire florissant des deux langues (Duchar et Boy, 1992; Genese, 1992).

Maîtrise de l'anglais - Le bilinguisme n'est pas synonyme avec une faible maîtrise de la langue parlée par la majorité, comme l'anglais (Cummins, 2001; Krashen, 1981; Landry, Devereux, et Allard, 2008).

Qu'en est-il lorsqu'un enfant a des besoins particuliers?

Les chercheurs commencent à s'intéresser au bilinguisme chez les enfants ayant des besoins particuliers. La recherche donne à penser que le bilinguisme ne constitue pas un facteur de risque pour les jeunes enfants ayant des besoins particuliers, comme le syndrome de Down et le trouble du spectre de l'autisme. En fait, s'inspirant des résultats des premiers travaux de recherche réalisés auprès d'enfants bilingues ayant un trouble d'hyperactivité avec déficit de l'attention, les chercheurs ont émis l'hypothèse que l'amélioration des habiletés intellectuelles, dont il s’est question précédemment, contribue à atténuer la manifestation du trouble.

- Pour le trouble du spectre de l'autisme, voir Hamby et Fontonne, 2012; Ohashi et al., 2012; Peterson, Marvinova-Todd, et Miranda, 2012.
- Pour le trouble du spectre de l'autisme, voir Hamby et Fontonne, 2012; Ohashi et al., 2012; Peterson, Marvinova-Todd, et Miranda, 2012.

Quel est le degré nécessaire d'exposition?

À un certain moment donné, l'exposition n'a plus d'effet sur le développement langagier (Gathercole et Hoff, 2007).


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Educational Choices

Early Childhood Settings

Research demonstrating the benefits of early childhood settings, such as family support programs, child care and kindergarten, is well documented and summarized in reports such as McCain and Mustard (1999) and Pessel (2009).

Research also confirms the benefits of programs being offered in French, such as full-day kindergarten and family literacy programs.

- For kindergarten see Hery, Malnais, and Monguet, 2008; Malnais, 2007; Malnais, 2007; Malnais, Hery, Emond, and Monguet, 2011; Marcy, Lapointe, & Pelletier, 1993.


Minority Language Education Rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Citizens of Canada whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside; or who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of that province have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province.

(Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982, sec. 23)
Un compte rendu de recherche

Autres définitions

École de langue française - École gérée par un conseil de langue française « où l’on apprend et évolue dans un environnement francophone » (Le CLÉ, 2010, paragr. 2).

Programme d’immersion française – Programme offert par un conseil de langue anglaise qui permet « d’apprendre le français en tant que langue seconde » (Le CLÉ, 2010, paragr. 2).

Interdépendance et influence du milieu familial, du milieu d’apprentissage et de la collectivité

Les milieux de vie collectifs, comme la famille, le milieu de la petite enfance, la collectivité et les médias, exercent une influence sur le développement du langage chez l’enfant (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Une majorité de parents francophones sont d’avis que le modèle 50/50 favorise davantage le bilinguisme chez leur enfant (Landry et al., 2007, p. 141). Malheureusement, ce modèle ne tient pas suffisamment compte de l’influence qu’exerce la collectivité majoritairement anglophone sur l’enfant.

Une étude pancanadienne a révélé que lorsque le parent francophone d’une famille mixte sur le plan linguistique vivant dans un milieu minoritaire communiquait en français avec son enfant et que l’enfant fréquentait une école de langue française, ces deux facteurs contribuaient grandement à la maîtrise de la langue française ET de la langue anglaise par l’enfant (Landry et Allard, 1997). En opposition au modèle 50/50, ce modèle est connu sous le nom de « modèle des balanciers compensateurs » (Landry et Allard, 1997, p.568) du développement bilingue.

References


Un compte rendu de recherche


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LESSONS FROM RESEARCH FOR *LES FAMILLES EXOGAMES*

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Appendix B

English Research Monograph

A Research Monograph

**TWO LANGUAGES, TWO CULTURES**

Linguistic and Educational Choices for Mixed Families
Where One Parent has French Language Minority Rights

**Context**

- Worldwide, bilingualism and multilingualism is the rule, rather than the exception (Kohner & Melen, 2009; Paradis, Genesee, & Cargo, 2011).

- The number of Canadian families speaking more than one language at home is increasing (Statistics Canada, 2012).

- The number of Canadians reporting having more than one mother tongue is increasing (Statistics Canada, 2013).

- Children from linguistically mixed families are the largest client base for French language school boards outside of Quebec and their proportion is increasing both in Canada and Ontario (Landy, 2010).

**Definitions**

**Subtractive bilingualism** is defined as a situation where learning a second language is at the detriment of the mother tongue, and where extensive contact with the more prestigious language of a dominant group constitutes a threat of linguistic assimilation.

Subtractive bilingualism is often a transitory phase toward unilingualism in the second language (Landry & Allard, 1990, p.529).

**Additive bilingualism** is defined as a situation where the second language learned does not have negative effects on the development and retention of the minority language (Landry & Allard, 1990, p.529).

**What linguistic and educational choices are more likely to lead to additive bilingualism, rather than subtractive bilingualism?**

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**Linguistic Choices**

*One or Two Languages?*

**Benefits of Bilingualism**

**Economic Benefits**

In Canada, those who are French and English bilingual are more likely to be employed and have a higher income \((\text{Canadian Council of Learning, 2008})\).

**Social and Cultural Benefits**

There are social and cultural benefits such as identification with the language, culture, history and heritage of both parents, extended family and friends \((\text{Dalley, 2006})\). There is "increased possibility for interacting with groups of people, for an enriched understanding of different nations, cultures, and rituals" \((\text{Bialystok, 2010, p. 10})\).

**Cognitive Benefits**

There are cognitive benefits to early bilingualism including improved self-control, working memory and mental flexibility \((\text{Bialystok & Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2006; Kovács & Mehler, 2009; Poulin-Dubois, Blaye, Coutya, & Bialystok, 2010})\). These benefits continue into adulthood as long as there is continued proficiency in both languages \((\text{Paradis, Genesee, & Cargo, 2011})\). As well, bilingualism may actually be a protective factor against diseases such as Alzheimer’s \((\text{Bialystok, Craik, & Freedman, 2007})\).

*When to introduce a Second Language?*

While it is true that it is easier to learn a second language once the first language is mastered \((\text{Healy, 2004; Krashen, 1982})\), it is equally accurate that children who are exposed "to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency" \((\text{Krashen, 1982, p. 40})\). In other words, older children will generally make more progress in the short term, while younger children will generally attain higher proficiency in the long term.
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A Research Monograph

**Perceived Challenges When Two Languages are Introduced from Birth**

Receptive and Expressive Vocabulary - There is no significant difference in receptive vocabulary between young bilingual and monolingual children. There is, however, a significant difference in expressive vocabulary of young bilingual children when comparing only one language. But if the expressive vocabulary of both languages is pooled, there is no significant difference (Junker & Stockman, 2002; Pearson, Fernandez, & Oller, 1993; Thordardottir, 2012).

Code Switching - Code switching is using a mixture of both languages to express oneself (Thordis et al., 2012). Code switching is part of typical development for young bilingual children (Genesee, 2009; Goldenstein & Kelhurst, 2003). Some researchers see code switching in young children as a sign of resourcefulness in communicating by making use of the burgeoning vocabulary of both languages (Deuchar & Orey, 1998; Genesee, 1987).

Proficiency in English - Bilingualism should not be equated with less proficiency in a majority language such as English (Cummins, 2002; Krashen, 1982; Landry, Devereux, & Allard, 2006).

**What About When a Child has Special Needs?**

Scholars are beginning to research bilingualism and children with special needs. Research is suggesting that bilingualism is not a risk factor for young children with special needs such as Down Syndrome and Autism Spectrum Disorder. In fact, based initial research conducted with bilingual children with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder, scholars hypothesize that the improved cognitive skills mentioned earlier lessens the expression of the disorder.

- For Down Syndrome see Edgin, Kumar, Spani, and Nasdi, 2011; Feltmate and Key-Raining Bird, 2008; Key-Raining Bird, Trudeau, Thordardottir, Sutton, and Thorpe, 2005; Valdivia, 2005.
- For Autism Spectrum Disorder see Hamshy and Fombonne, 2012; Obashi et al., 2012; Peterson, Marinova-Todd, and Miranda, 2012.
- For Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder see Bialystok, 2010; Hermosan-Olson, 2012; Wixted and Cepeda, 2007.

**How Much Exposure is Needed?**

There is a point where exposure no longer has an effect on language development (Gathercole & Holf, 2007).

Scholars argue, however, that the exposure threshold is higher for minority languages (Pearson, 2007; Pearson, Fernandez, Lewedeg & Oller, 1997; Vihman, Lule, Thierry, Nakel, & Feern-Potnow, 2006), including French in minority settings (Landry, Allard, & Deveall, 2007).

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Educational Choices

Early Childhood Settings

Research demonstrating the benefits of early childhood settings, such as family support programs, child care and kindergarten, is well documented and summarized in reports such as McCain and Mustard (1999) and Rssel (2009).

Research also confirms the benefits of programs being offered in French, such as full-day kindergarten and family literacy programs.

- For kindergarten see Harry, Malnais, and Masset, 2008; Malnais, 2007; Malnais, Harry, Emond, and Masset, 2011; Massy, Lapointe, & Pelletier, 1993.

Minority Language Education Rights in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

Citizens of Canada whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside; or who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French and reside in a province where the language in which they received that instruction is the language of the English or French linguistic minority population of that province have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province. (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, 1982, sec. 23)

In Ontario, that means that you have the right to send your child to a French school if your first language is French, or if you attended a French elementary school.

LESSONS FROM RESEARCH FOR *LES FAMILLES EXOGAMES*

A Research Monograph

**More Definitions**

*French School* - School operated by French school board “where students learn and live in a French environment” (Le CLÉ, 2010, para. 2).

*French immersion program* - Program offered by English school board that allows “students to learn French as a second language” (Le CLÉ, 2010, para. 2).

**Interconnectedness and Influences of the Home, Educational Setting, and Community**

The language development of a child is influenced by the collective environments, including the home, early childhood setting, community and media (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

“A majority of Francophone parents believe that the best bilingual program for their child is the 50/50 model” (Landry et al., 2007, p. 141). However, this model underestimates the influence of the English majoritiy community.

A pan-Canadian study found that when the Francophone parent from a linguistically mixed family living in a minority setting, communicated with his/her child in French and the child attended a French school, it was strongly associated with French language proficiency AND English language proficiency (Landry & Allard, 1997). In contrast to the 50/50 model, this is called “the counterbalance model of bilingual development” (Landry et al., 2007, p. 142).

Conclusions from other studies (e.g., Landry, Deveau, & Allard, 2006), including studies of children in the early years (Chartier, Dumaine, & Sebourin, 2011; Maltais, 2007; Petry, Legault, Lainode, & Rodier, 2014), are consistent with the counterbalance model of bilingual development where the combined home and educational settings counterbalance the influence of the language spoken in the community setting.


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BILINGUISME
Briser les mythes

À l’intention des familles mixtes sur le plan linguistique dont l’un des parents est anglophone alors que l’autre parent est francophone.

Ce que vous avez déjà peut-être entendu . . .

Le bilinguisme est un atout, mais il est fort probable que votre enfant ne maîtrise pas la langue de la majorité (par ex., l’anglais).

Il est préférable d’attendre qu’un enfant maîtrise une première langue avant de l’initier à une seconde langue.

Ce qui découle des travaux de recherche actuels . . .

Le bilinguisme n’est pas synonyme avec une faible maîtrise de la langue parlée par la majorité, comme l’anglais (Cummins, 2001; Krashen, 1982; Landry, Deveau, et Allard, 2006).

Même si l’il est vrai que l’apprentissage d’une seconde langue se fait plus facilement lorsque l’on maîtrise sa langue maternelle (Healy, 2004; Krashen, 1982), il est également vrai que les enfants qui sont exposés à deux langues au cours de leur enfance atteignent, en général, un niveau de compétence plus élevé (Krashen, 1982, p. 46).

Le bilinguisme chez les jeunes enfants comporte des avantages sur le plan cognitif, dont la maîtrise de soi, la mémoire de travail et la flexibilité mentale (Bialystok et Viswanathan, 2009; Carlson et Meltzoff, 2008; Kovács et Mehler, 2009; Poulin-Dubois, Blaye, Couya, et Bialystok, 2010).

Ces avantages demeurent présents à l’âge adulte pourvu que la personne continue de maîtriser les deux langues (Paradis, Genesee, et Cargo, 2011).

Le bilinguisme peut également constituer un véritable facteur de défense contre certaines maladies, comme l’Alzheimer (Bialystok, Craik, et Friedman, 2007).

L’alternance de codes fait partie du développement typique des jeunes enfants bilingues (Genesee, 2009; Goldstein et Kohnert, 2009).

Certains chercheurs interprètent l’alternance de codes chez les jeunes enfants comme un signe de débrouillardise à communiquer en empruntant leur vocabulaire florissant des deux langues (Deuchar et Quay, 1968; Genesee, 1989).
Ce que vous avez déjà peut-être entendu...

Si un enfant a des besoins particuliers, il est préférable qu’il s’exprime seulement dans la langue de la majorité (par ex., l’anglais).

Il est recommandé d’exposer de manière égale les enfants au français et à l’anglais afin qu’ils acquièrent de l’aisance dans les deux langues.

Ce qui découle des travaux de recherche actuels...

Les chercheurs commencent à s’intéresser au bilinguisme chez les enfants ayant des besoins particuliers.

La recherche tend à penser que le bilinguisme ne constitue pas un facteur de risque pour les jeunes enfants ayant des besoins particuliers, comme le syndrome de Down et le trouble du spectre de l’autisme (Edgin, Kumar, Spano, et Nagel, 2011; Felman et Kay-Raining Bird, 2008; Embly et Formbonne, 2011; Kay-Raining Bird, Troise, Thoralardottir, Sutton, et Thorpe, 2005; Ohashi et al., 2011; Pearsen, Marinova-Todd, et Mirenda, 2012; Valdivia, 2005).

S’inspirant des résultats des premiers travaux de recherche réalisés auprès d’enfants bilingues ayant un trouble d’hyperactivité avec déficit de l’attention (Hermodson-Olsen, 2012), les chercheurs ont émis l’hypothèse que l’amélioration des habiletés intellectuelles, dont il a été question précédemment, contribue à atténuer la manifestation du trouble (Bialystok, 2010; Wodniecka et Cepeda, 2007).

L’apprentissage d’une langue ne consiste pas seulement à s’initier aux mécanismes de cette langue, mais également à la culture, à l’héritage et à l’identité qui l’entourent, et à nouer des liens avec les amis et les membres de la famille (Cummins, 2001; Bygottz, 1981/1960, 1986).

Si vous vivez dans une collectivité où le français est la langue de la minorité et l’anglais est la langue de la majorité, il est habituellement nécessaire d’exposer davantage les enfants à la langue française afin de faire contrepoids à l’influence exercée par la langue anglaise dominante (Chartier, Dumaine, et Sabourin, 2011; Landry, Allard, et Deveau, 2007; Landry, Deveau, et Allard, 2006; Patry, Legault, Lalonde, et Rodier, 2014).

En réalité, dans les collectivités où le français est minoritaire, il est plus probable que les enfants maîtrisent le français ET l’anglais si le parent francophone parle français à la maison et si l’enfant fréquente un milieu d’apprentissage de langue française (garde, école) (Landry et Allard, 1997).

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References - continued


BILINGUALISM
Debunking the Myths
For linguistically mixed families where one parent is an Anglophone and the other parent is a Francophone.

What you may have heard...

Bilingualism is an asset, but your child is not likely to be proficient in the majority language (i.e., English).

It is better to wait until a child is proficient in a first language before introducing a second language.

What the current research says...

Bilingualism should not be equated with less proficiency in a majority language such as English (Cummins, 2001; Krashen, 1982; Landry, Devereux, & Allard, 2006).

While it may be true that it is easier to learn a second language once the first language is mastered (Horn, 2004; Krashen, 1982), it is equally accurate that children who are exposed “to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency” (Krashen, 1982, p. 40).

There are cognitive benefits to early bilingualism including self-control, working memory, and mental flexibility (Bialystok & Kuran, 2009; Carlson & Meltzoff, 2008; Koda & Mehler, 2009; Poslin-Dubost, Bilova, Coutte & Bialystok, 2010).

These benefits continue into adulthood as long as there is continued proficiency in both languages (Paradis, Genesee, & Cufaro, 2011).

As well, bilingualism may actually be a protective factor against diseases such as Alzheimer’s (Bialystok, Craik, & Freedman, 2007).

When young children mix two languages (i.e., code-switching), it is a sign that they are confused.

Code switching is part of typical development for young, bilingual children (Genesee, 2009; Goldin-Meadow & Kohnert, 2005).

Some researchers see code switching in young children as a sign of resourcefulness in communicating by making use of the burgeoning vocabulary in both languages (Deschar & Quay, 1998; Genesee, 1989).
LESSONS FROM RESEARCH FOR **LES FAMILLES EXOGAMES**

**BILINGUALISM**

*Debunking the Myths*

**What you may have heard…**

If a child has special needs, it is best to use the majority language only (i.e., English).

**What the current research says…**

Scholars are beginning to research bilingualism and children with special needs.

Research is suggesting that bilingualism is not a risk factor for young children with special needs such as Down Syndrome and Autism Spectrum Disorder


Based on initial research conducted with bilingual children with Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (Barmodsen-Olsen, 2012), scholars wonder if the improved cognitive skills mentioned earlier lessen the expression of the disorder

(Bialystok, 2010; Wiendicks & Cepeda, 2007).

Language is not only about learning the mechanics of a language, but also about culture, heritage, identity, and forming relationships with friends and family


It is better to expose children equally to French and English for them to be proficient in both languages.

If you live in a community where French is the minority language and English is the majority language, you actually need to put more emphasis on the French in order to counterbalance the predominantly English language community

(Charrier, Dumaine, & Sabourin, 2011; Landry, Allard & Deveau, 2007; Landry, Deveau, & Allard, 2006; Pairy, Legault, Lalonde, & Rodier, 2014).

In fact, in French minority settings, children are more likely to be highly proficient in both French AND English if the Francophone parent speaks French at home, and the child attends French educational settings (child care, school)

(Landry & Allard, 1997).
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QUE NOUS APPREND LA RECHERCHE SUR CE DONT LES JEUNES ENFANTS ONT BESOIN POUR ACQUÉRIR DE L’AISANCE AUSSI BIEN EN FRANÇAIS QU’EN ANGLAIS?

La recherche donne à penser que...

Il peut être nécessaire pour les familles vivant dans une collectivité majoritairement anglophone d’exposer davantage leurs enfants à la langue française afin que ces derniers s’expriment avec aisance en français et en anglais.

LES FAMILLES COMPOSÉES D’UN PARENT ANGLOPHONE ET D’UN PARENT FRANCOPHONE QUI VEULENT S’INFORMER SUR LE BILINGUISME PEUVENT DEMANDER DE RECEVOIR LA FICHE DE RENSEIGNEMENTS INTITULÉE « BRISER LES MYTHES »

WHAT DOES RESEARCH SAY ABOUT WHAT YOUNG CHILDREN NEED TO BE EQUALLY FLUENT IN BOTH FRENCH AND ENGLISH?

Research suggests that . . .

For those living in a community where English is the majority language, more exposure to French may be necessary for children to be fluent in both French and English.

For information on bilingualism for families where one parent is anglophone and the other parent is francophone, please ask for the fact sheet: “Debunking the Myths”