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## **ASPECTS OF THE BILINGUALS' DEVELOPMENT**

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Each person is born able to distinguish and reproduce sounds in all the world's languages, and therefore can learn any of them. Already during the first year of life, babies learn to understand the language spoken to them by the surrounding people. This suggests that the formation of language skills occurs already during the prenatal period.

Research over the last 20 years has shown that the structure of the human brain is far from static. Beyond natural processes that accompany age-related changes, the acquisition and use of a new skill can be accompanied by structural changes in the areas of the brain responsible for this skill, which contributes to the expansion of both the gray and the white matter of our brain.

Although the use of more than one language in everyday life has been proven to have a positive effect on brain development, it cannot prevent the natural age-related decline in cognitive functions, although it greatly slows down these processes.

There are three stages in the history of approaches to bilingualism in children: a period of negative results, a neutral period and a positive period. In parallel, two hypotheses regarding the construction of the bilinguals' language system are developing and coexisting.

Several studies have shown that bilingual children have a creative approach and the ability to focus their attention better when solving mathematical problems and tasks that require careful processing of information. During the experiments, bilinguals demonstrated faster formation of an associative link between the signal word and visual reinforcement. Multilingual children have several words for the same subject, that sometimes differ in meaning, which allows them to have a broader and more versatile understanding of the subject or idea itself. This feature largely contributes to the development of a creative and original approach.

Aside from proven positive impact of bilingualism on brain development and intellectual activity, broadening child's language environment also affects his concept of culture. Since each language belongs to a certain one or more national-historical communities, learning a new language children also learn the behavior of the society and its cultural customs.

Early bilingualism can be considered as a proven prevention of the early onset of many neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and Pick's disease.

Bilingualism has significant advantages, especially if the child exists in a multilingual environment since birth. Those advantages for the most part cover shortcomings, are most often temporary.

Some of the disadvantages are smaller vocabulary of bilingual children, delayed speech development noted by some scientists, language interference and some logopedic problems caused by it.

If there isn't any pathology in a speech development of a child and they grow up in a favorable language environment, the assimilation of several languages can proceed smoothly.

Due to the large number of research done recently, we can confidently say that raising a child in a bilingual environment is going to boost their brain development, enrich them with deeper understanding of the world and create a "a cushion of safety" for their elderly years.