

**THEORETICAL NOTIONS AND CONCEPTS UNDERLYING THE ACQUISITION  
OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN A BILINGUAL SETTING**

**NOÇÕES TEÓRICAS E CONCEITOS SUBJACENTES À AQUISIÇÃO DA LÍNGUA  
INGLESA EM CONTEXTO BILÍNGUE**

**NOCIONES TEÓRICAS Y CONCEPTOS SUBYACENTES A LA ADQUISICIÓN DE LA  
LENGUA INGLESA EN UN CONTEXTO BILINGÜE**



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**ABSTRACT:** This paper is a dissertation clipping and discusses theories and concepts related to language acquisition and bilingualism. The goal is to analyze theoretical assumptions and concepts from the data of a bilingual individual. Specifically, the objective was to identify data related to the conception of languages and bilingualism, recognize a bilingual individual language status, and conceptualize terminology associated with the notions of L1, L2, FL (Foreign Language), AL (additional language), and bilingualism. This research is based on L2 acquisition and bilingualism studies developed by Grosjean and Moraes, amongst others. The methodology comprises a longitudinal case study based on a qualitative approach, the sample of which included data on a bilingual individual and his languages. As a result, we were able to portray an understanding of the elicited concepts, as well as formulate definitions for the terms L1, L2, FL, AL, and bilingualism.

**KEYWORDS:** Bilingualism. English Language. L2 Acquisition. Concepts. Terminology.

**RESUMO:** O presente artigo constitui um recorte de dissertação e versa sobre teorias e conceitos relacionados à aquisição de línguas e bilinguismo. Propõe-se analisar pressupostos teóricos e conceitos a partir de dados de um indivíduo bilíngue. Especificamente, objetivou-se identificar dados articulados às concepções de línguas e bilinguismo, reconhecer o status das línguas de um indivíduo bilíngue e conceituar terminologia referente às noções de L1, L2, LE, LA e bilinguismo. A pesquisa fundamenta-se nos estudos sobre aquisição de L2 e bilinguismo desenvolvidos por Grosjean, Moraes, dentre outros. A metodologia compreende um estudo de caso baseado em abordagem qualitativa de cunho longitudinal cuja amostra incluiu um levantamento de dados sobre um indivíduo bilíngue e suas línguas. Como resultado, logrou-se caracterizar o nosso entendimento sobre os conceitos abordados, bem como elaborar definições dos termos L1, L2, LE, LA e bilinguismo.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Bilinguismo. Língua Inglesa. Aquisição de L2. Conceitos. Terminologia.

**RESUMEN:** El presente artículo constituye un recorte de disertación y trata de teorías y conceptos relacionados a la adquisición de lenguas y bilingüismo. Se propone analizar presupuestos teóricos y conceptos a partir de datos de un sujeto bilingüe. Específicamente, se objetivó identificar datos articulados a las concepciones de lenguas y bilingüismo; reconocer el status de las lenguas de un sujeto bilingüe y conceptualizar terminología referente a las nociones de L1, L2, LE, LA y bilingüismo. La investigación se basa en estudios sobre adquisición de L2 y bilingüismo desarrollados por Grosjean; Moraes, entre otros. La metodología integra un estudio de caso basado en abordaje cualitativo longitudinal cuya muestra incluye una recolección de datos sobre un sujeto bilingüe y sus lenguas. Como resultado, se logró caracterizar nuestro entendimiento sobre los conceptos abordados, como también elaborar definiciones de L1, L2, LE, LA y bilingüismo.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Bilingüismo. Lengua Inglesa. Adquisición de L2. Conceptos. Terminología.

## Introduction

In the global world, instability and cultural miscegenation play a prominent role, with linguistic development significantly impacting the identity of languages and their speakers, as Rajagopalan (2001) expressed. Due to historical-political-economic factors, the value of one language over others is widely configured, according to the linguist (Rajagopalan, 2001), with English being led to a hegemonic status.

The circumstance of Brazil's economic and cultural dependence on the USA intensified in the post-World War II period, as declared by Souza *et al.* (2015). Later, in the 1970s, Brazil, with its economy increasingly based on international models and with public schools failing in foreign language teaching and learning, gave space to private initiative, which since then has flourished in offering foreign language education, especially English. According to Megale (2019), bilingual schools emerge, regular schools redefine themselves as bilingual, and others adopt a bilingual curriculum. Leffa and Irala (2014) acknowledge the need for the conceptualization of languages, particularly in the context of language teaching. In this sense, the definition of terms such as second language (L2), native language or first language (L1), foreign language (FL), additional language (AL), and bilingualism becomes essential.

Given the elucidated, two questions drove the construction of the article: How do theoretical concepts about L2 acquisition and bilingualism interact with realistic data from a bilingual individual and their languages? What beliefs, opinions, and feelings do a bilingual individual have regarding their languages? Considering these inquiries and aiming to obtain answers to the questions, we formulated two hypotheses: (i) Theoretical concepts about L2 acquisition and bilingualism are articulated with real and naturalistic situations, supporting the understanding and re-creation of concepts in the field; (ii) The bilingual individual holds beliefs, opinions, and feelings regarding the idiosyncratic relationship established with their languages. The object of analysis of the study comprises data from a bilingual individual from which theoretical notions and concepts are recognized, conceived, and recreated.

Referring to the aforementioned assumptions, we validate the merit of our research, whose scientific significance provides theoretical depth and advancements for the fields of Education, Applied Linguistics, and Language Acquisition. Subsequently, we address theoretical concepts in language acquisition.

## Theoretical Concepts in Language Acquisition

In this section, we allude to the field of concepts of L1, L2, FL, AL, and bilingualism in order to highlight the terms used and discussed in the context of L2 acquisition and bilingualism in our research. To do so, we draw on theoretical-scientific postulates to discuss the notions of each construct specifically.

Firstly, we discuss the concept of L1. Grosjean (2015) refers to L1 as the 'home language' and adds that it is the language that children acquire in the first instance. Moraes (2018) conceptualizes L1 as "(...) the language acquired and/or learned naturally, whether it is the language of the family environment or not" (Moraes, 2018, p. 17, our translation). According to Spinassé (2006), a language can be considered L1 if it is the first language learned by the individual, if it is the mother tongue, of the father, or of relatives, or even if it is the predominant language spoken at home.

Moreover, the language is classified as L1 if it is the most used in daily life, if there is an emotional relationship established with it, if it is the dominant language, or if it is the most comfortable language for the individual. Therefore, the concept of L1 is comprehensive and subject to various variables. Grosjean (2015) highlights that there are periods of language reorganization. Therefore, L1 may cease to be the main, strongest, and predominant language for the individual, and its status may be altered, changing over time, as Spinassé (2006) notes.

Corroborating notions implied in the concepts of L1, we understand that circumscription and differentiation in the conceptualization of each proposed term are complex tasks and involve other important issues and variables, especially when considering the context of multiple languages. Furthermore, with reference to L1, Leffa, and Irala (2014) advocate that its acquisition occurs integrated into a relationship that encompasses systemic aspects, social practice, and subject constitution, which develop from the language itself.

Regarding L2, Spinassé (2006) states that it is another language other than L1, regardless of the order of acquisition, and serves communication, with a significant role in the individual's inclusion in the community to which they belong. Moraes (2012) emphasizes that it refers to any language learned after L1. Spinassé (2006) also indicates that there is no recipe for differentiating languages, with the relationship established between individuals and languages being a predominant factor in assigning value and status. Grosjean (2015), in his work "*Bicultural, Bilingual*," posits that L2 is generally learned when children begin attending school.

Intertwined with the concept of L2 is that of FL, whose term, according to Leffa and Irala (2014), has traditionally been used to differentiate it from the former, based on location, considering the idea of geographical distance. Conversely, in Moraes' view (2018), FL "refers to a language from another country, learned in the student's country of origin or not" (Moraes, 2018, p. 17, our translation). Spinassé (2006) refers to the function of languages in the speaker's life and culture as a factor to be considered in differentiating languages as L2 or FL; however, he emphasizes that "the differentiation is not absolute, each case must be evaluated as a specific case" (Spinassé, 2006, p. 6, our translation).

In an attempt to differentiate constructs, Leffa and Irala (2014) propose the term Additional Language (AL), which is more contemporary and emerges as an alternative term to designate the language(s) that is (are) learned; it presupposes the idea of language(s) acquired in addition to the native one, without the need to consider contexts, purposes, and order of acquisition; besides being more comprehensive than the concepts of L2 and FL. Among the notions about bilingualism, Spinassé's (2006) conception of an L2 is presented, with childhood bilingual development related to the acquisition of two or more languages simultaneously from birth, as proposed by Genesse (1987).

Decades ago, Bloomfield (1950) treated bilingualism as the native control of two languages; speaking with perfection. It is worth noting that the linguist (1950) resorts to the idea of a perfect foreign language learner in his validation of bilingualism, which, in our view, besides being inconsistent, does not correspond to reality, especially when contrasted with the more comprehensive and realistic characterization provided by Grosjean (2018) on the subject.

The author points out myths and clarifies that bilingualism occurs in all countries worldwide, and bilingual individuals are part of this global context, regardless of social class and age group, acquiring languages at different times in their life trajectories. Grosjean (2018) also observes that bilinguals are generally not equally fluent in the languages they know and/or use, have an accent in the language learned later, and few are proficient translators and interpreters.

In the work "*Bilingualism: A short introduction*", Grosjean (2012) defines bilingualism as the daily use of two or more languages or dialects. The author emphasizes the broader and more realistic nature of his definition, as it encompasses a larger number of speakers. Along the same line of thought, in his article "*Être Bilingue Aujourd'hui*" he reaffirms his proposition and elucidates:



[...] I use 'bilingual' instead of 'multilingual' or 'plurilingual' [...], the definition I have given to bilingualism, for many years, does not limit the number of languages; it is about the use of two or many languages (or dialects) in everyday life. Many of us know many languages, but since it is about their regular use, the number decreases, and bilingualism dominates over multilingualism (Grosjean, 2018, p. 7-8, our translation)<sup>4</sup>.

Furthermore, on the subject of bilingualism, Grosjean (2012, 2015) highlights two defining factors: language use and language fluency, which are subject to changes over time - the 'wax and wane' of languages. Our approach follows Grosjean's theoretical perspective, and based on his definitions, we guide our understanding regarding the generic conception of bilingualism; there is no need to include, in this study, other terminology such as trilingualism, quadrilingualism, plurilingualism, or multilingualism. Similarly, the umbrella term 'bilingualism' encompasses another construct, extending to individuals who, in this context, are always bilingual and not trilingual or polyglots. In this regard, in the present study, an individual is considered 'bilingual' if they use two or more languages in their daily life, regardless of their proficiency level in said languages.

Bilingualism, according to Grosjean (1998), originates from languages in contact situations due to various causes such as migrations, nationalism and federalism, education and culture, business and trade, mixed marriages, deafness, etc. For the researcher, bilinguals use their languages for different purposes, individuals, and areas of life, prompting the development of linguistic fluency at varied levels, as demanded by each arising need, as not all facets of life require the same language or always two or more languages.

Moraes (2018), building upon Grosjean's concept of bilingualism, emphasizes that languages play distinct roles, with the possibility of one of them predominating. Generally, bilingual individuals express professional and social life matters in the language of the society they live in, while issues related to emotions, private life, and religion are expressed in their first language. According to Moraes (2018), bilingualism refers to languages from the perspective of their users, referring to the language repertoire that bilinguals can use. Therefore, the definition encompasses the first language (L1) and any number of other languages (L2, L3...), with access to the linguistic repertoire occurring at different times, based on specific

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<sup>4</sup> Original text: “(...) j'utilise 'bilingue' à la place de 'multilingue' ou 'plurilingue' (...) la définition que je donne du bilinguisme, depuis de nombreuses années, ne limite pas le nombre de langues: il s'agit de l'utilisation de deux ou de plusieurs langues (ou dialectes) dans la vie de tous les jours (...). Nous sommes nombreux à connaître plusieurs langues, mais lorsqu'il s'agit de leur utilisation régulière, le nombre diminue, et le bilinguisme domine le plurilinguisme” (Grosjean, 2018, p. 7-8).

linguistic needs. These needs determine when and how the languages will be used, regardless of frequency, as each situation will differ according to the individual bilingual's life circumstances.

Furthermore, it is acknowledged that definitions may differ from Grosjean's propositions for deaf individuals. In the specific case of this study, aspects of bilingualism will relate to the English, Portuguese, and Spanish languages. In the following section, we describe the theoretical-methodological postulates developed to achieve the objectives proposed in the study.

## **Methodology**

This study is a case study based on a longitudinal qualitative approach, encompassing data collection about a bilingual individual and their languages, from which theoretical notions and concepts are analyzed, identified, and constructed. Data collection took place in a home environment at two moments: a) from a narrative text written by the mother of the bilingual individual, who is also the author of this article, detailing the young man's life trajectory as a bilingual subject from birth until the age of 27, at the time of narrative production; b) a bilingual informal interview, with questions written in English and Portuguese, and responses written in English, conducted via text messages using the WhatsApp messaging app, focusing on the individual's beliefs, opinions, and feelings regarding their perception of themselves as bilingual subjects and the relationship established with their languages.

It is essential to clarify that the researcher, who is the participant's mother, utilized her extensive knowledge of her bilingual son's language trajectory to create an authentic and detailed narrative. While this approach may introduce potential biases in data generation due to the strong familial bond shared by both, it allowed for a clear and insightful analysis of theories, gradually relating them to real-life events in an individual's bilingual journey. This ultimately led to the concrete possibility of developing essential concepts for the fields of language acquisition and bilingualism.

The use of the WhatsApp messaging app as the chosen medium for conducting the written interview is justified by the fact that the interviewing mother and research subject's son reside in different countries, as well as the convenience and informality that make the research

more inviting and relaxed. Additionally, the regularity, availability, and speed of the app's use on mobile devices, always at hand, contribute to its suitability for this purpose.

The analysis of the collected data involved identifying relevant information aligned with theoretical assumptions and concepts about languages and bilingualism. This included identifying the beliefs, opinions, and feelings of the bilingual individual regarding their languages, recognizing the status of these languages, and defining terms related to notions of L1, L2, LE, LA, and bilingualism. Subsequently, the analysis and discussion section proceeded.

### **Analysis and Discussion of Data**

The discussion proposed for each concept was established from the analysis and reflection of realistic and naturalistic data from the life of a bilingual individual. The data are presented in the form of narratives, which outline the participant's profile, justified by the relevance of the information for discussing the data, and whose context will be explained and articulated with the issues to be addressed in this section, as follows.

#### *Narrative Situation 1*

Young, codenamed 'T', native of Recife; of a Brazilian mother and Panamanian father, residing in the maternal grandmother's house, who is Colombian. Since birth, he has had contact with Portuguese, spoken by his mother, grandfather, and uncles, and with Spanish spoken by his father, grandmother, friends, and relatives. At school, he received formal education in Portuguese until the age of 9; there, he also learned English as a school subject and attended a language course. At home, he studied Spanish with his grandmother, a teacher, in addition to trips to Colombia and Panama.

In the first narrative situation presented, the concept of L1 is elucidated. We discuss the conception proposed by Grosjean (2015), according to whom L1 is the 'home language,' the one first acquired as a child; we reflect on the contribution of Moraes (2018), who clarifies: "L1 is the nomenclature referring to the language acquired and/or learned naturally, whether it is the language of the family environment or not" (Moraes, 2018, p. 17, our translation). Additionally, the concept of L1, according to Spinassé (2006), was considered, defining it as



the first language learned by the individual, the mother tongue of the father or relatives, or the predominant language spoken at home.

Also considered is the language most used by the speaker in their daily life, the one with which they establish an affective relationship, the dominant language, or the one in which the individual feels most comfortable. In narrative situation 1, described above, we indicate that the subject in question has two L1s, Portuguese and Spanish, acquired in a family context, in first order, and simultaneously. English is assigned the status of LE in this scenario. We proceed to narrative situation 2, from which we discuss the concept of L2 and theoretical notions that address conceptual concerns.

### *Narrative Situation 2*

At the age of 9, 'T' moved to the USA with his mother; there, he studied English and, within 6 months, had already been exempted from special classes for foreign students and enrolled in the program for gifted students. He used English proficiently, above average for his age and that of his peers; he had close contact with the Spanish language, spoken by classmates and community members. Since the preferred language used in his Brazilian home in America was Portuguese, he shared his experiences at home in this language. However, the use of Portuguese gradually became more challenging, with pauses and deviations.

Five years later, the teenager interacted exclusively in English with his siblings, who were born in the local area. Around the age of 15, it became practically impossible for him to express himself in Portuguese; although he demonstrated an understanding of the language, he no longer spoke it. His speech was entirely in English. During this period, in addition to English, he studied Spanish at school, integrating a special class for native speakers of that language, although he was not considered a native Spanish speaker...or was he?

To corroborate the analysis of narrative situation 2, previously discussed, we considered the theoretical definitions of Spinassé (2006), who refers to L2 as any language other than L1; of Moraes (2018), for whom L2 is any language learned after L1; and of Grosjean (2015), who considers L2 as the language acquired by children upon entering school.

In the context of narrative 2, we articulate the provisions with the issues addressed in the research. Regarding the use and fluency, languages are subject to change over time, as Grosjean (2012, 2015) emphasizes; therefore, in this scenario, the exchange of values, functions, and dominance of languages occurred over 15 years.

In the presented situation, English becomes an L2, which exercises dominance in fluency and use in 'T's life, in relation to Portuguese and Spanish, his L1s. From this perspective, Grosjean (2012) addresses the issue of status change in terms of L1 dominance. Narrative situation 3 stages a different moment in 'T's life, with the reorganization of his languages over time and new relationships established between him and his languages.

### *Narrative Situation 3*

Two years later, he returns to Brazil, now at 17 years old, and enrolls in a school where he studies Portuguese as the main language, in addition to regular English classes as a school subject. Interestingly, Portuguese did not seem to be an obstacle for the teenager who had not used it for so long; he remained average in his grades, spoke, read, and wrote in Portuguese, even though he had gone 8 years without any formal contact with the language. After 6 months, he traveled to Panama, where he has been residing to this day. With his father and relatives, he always used Spanish, and at school, he completed the last year of high school, with Spanish as the main language, in addition to English as a school subject.

He graduated in Literature with a focus on English and Spanish. He married a Panamanian who speaks English; thus, at home, he speaks English, and at work, he uses English more than Spanish; Portuguese only very rarely when traveling to Brazil or when communicating through digital social networks with his mother and some relatives; however, he always prefers to use English in his daily life.

Initially, we observed changes that occurred over 27 years in the life of individual 'T'. The languages Portuguese and Spanish were assigned the status of L1, and English as L2, named as such by the support of relevant theoretical foundations and the alignment of each construct with the conceptual framework in question.

However, we emphasize that, regarding the topic, the individual's perception denotes a unique disparity compared to our interpretation of the relationship between his languages and the consequent categorization. During a bilingual interview, questions were posed in English and Portuguese, and when asked which language he considered to be his L1, he answered in English that Portuguese is his L1. He explained that although he does not master Portuguese as he did in the past and does not consider it his "best" language currently, it is the language he learned first and was first introduced into his life.

First language would depend on, whether you mean first language that I learned, that came into my life...I consider my first language to be Portuguese, but it's not my 'best' language (Frye, 2019).

Next, the interviewed participant questions whether the L1 referred to in the question is the language he thinks in when he wants to communicate, because if that is the case, then he considers English to be his L1:

If you mean my first language, as the first one I think about when wanting to communicate, I consider that to be English (Frye, 2019).

We note that, before getting to the heart of the response, 'T' reflects on L1 and factors associated with the concept. He then asserts that his L1 could be either Portuguese or English, depending on the consideration of certain facts. In Situation 3, we substantiate the information provided through the narrative on the premises of Spinassé (2006). The author discusses the absence of a 'recipe' in differentiating languages and how 'another' relationship established with the language can lead to a change in status among languages, which clarifies the variation in strata to which the languages mentioned were subjected when analyzing the previously listed narrative situation 3. The 'other' relationship formed can generate differences in fluency and language use, as well as the space to be occupied by the language, altering the degree of importance and, above all, impacting the individual's self-perception regarding the change in status of languages in their life.

After characterizing data, considering relevant theoretical meanings, and alluding to the narrative situations presented, we affirm that the English language has the status of L2, as it was acquired after L1 when 'T' was 9 years old, a period when he started attending school in the USA. However, during the interview, 'T' is questioned about the role of the Spanish language in his life and, in response, he reveals considering Spanish to be his L2, as he does not consider it his best language or the first one he learned:

I see Spanish as a second language for me, since it's neither my best nor the first one I learned (Frye, 2019).

We emphasize that, through the analysis of narrative situations and appropriate theoretical support, 'T' acquired Portuguese and Spanish simultaneously. Both languages constitute the familiar languages with which he had contact since birth. However, in his perception and personal understanding, Spanish is considered his L2. This fact guides us along

a path where assigning concepts to languages must consider, in addition to (re)configurations and status changes, the peculiar relationship that the individual establishes with languages, usage contexts, language fluency, and linguistic skills.

Moving on to the conceptual sequence of L2 and, anchored in the premises of Grosjean (2012, 2015); Moraes (2012, 2018); Spinassé (2006); Leffa and Irala (2014), we characterize our understanding of the concepts addressed, more specifically in accordance with Grosjean's (2012) postulation regarding the dominance of L2. In this line, the author continues and discusses the caution we must exercise when assuming that a person's L1 is automatically the dominant language.

According to linguists, the change in status and the different phases that languages go through over the years also have a significant effect on the psycholinguistic processes of the bilingual individual. From this perspective, similarly considering the idiosyncrasy of the individual regarding their languages, we maintain that 'T' has Portuguese as his L1 and English and Spanish as his L2s. It is worth noting that Spanish was acquired before English, but the latter began to dominate over Spanish and Portuguese. Subsequently, we list a discussion about LE, in contrast to the notion of L2; we proceed with an appreciation of the idea of LA and bilingualism, as well as a consecutive definition of the terms.

In accordance with the points raised in the section on "Theoretical Concepts in L2 Acquisition," the concepts of L2 and FL (Foreign Language) correlate as they both constitute a non-L1, as indicated by Spinassé (2006). However, the notion of FL evokes an idea of distance from the learner, according to Leffa and Irala (2014), being characterized as the language of another country, which may or may not be learned in the learner's home country, according to Moraes (2018). Regarding the concept of L2, Grosjean (2015) indicates that it is the language learned upon entering school, and Spinassé adds that L2 serves communicative and social integration purposes, knowing that the differentiation between the terms L2 and FL must take into account specificities in each case.

Returning to the storyline presented in the three narrative situations and confronting the narrated facts with the theoretical foundation, it is concluded that English, during the individual's 27 years of life, holds the status of L2 with absolute dominance. However, in the past, when 'T' was a child and studied the language in school as a subject and in extracurricular courses, English was considered his FL.

Regarding the FL, authors Leffa and Irala (2014) bring up the idea of Additional Language (FL) as a language that adds to the learners' linguistic repertoire and has a broader

scope. Thus, we would be correct in stating that 'T' has Portuguese as his L1, with Spanish and English being his FLs.

We discuss, following the theoretical perspective of Grosjean (2018), the concept of bilingualism, and based on his definitions, we guide our understanding regarding the meaning of the generic conception of bilingualism; there is no need for the inclusion, in this study, of other terminology such as trilingualism, quadrilingualism, plurilingualism, or even multilingualism. Considering the narrative situations elucidated previously, in which the individual 'T' develops, from birth, in a bilingual interactive atmosphere where two or more languages are used, we reaffirm the characterization of a case of bilingualism, whose definition we list later in the results section.

The analysis focused on the responses given to the two questions that composed the interview: 1st question: Which do you consider to be your mother tongue, first language (L1)? Portuguese, English, or Spanish? 2nd question: What is the role of Spanish in your life? Following this, in the results section, we present our conceptual elaborations on the terminology related to the notions of L1, L2, FL, AL, and bilingualism.

## Results

Aligning with Grosjean's theoretical precepts, we have developed our own definition of L1, as follows:

- **First language, mother tongue, or L1** – Terminology referring to the first language with which the child comes into contact, learned/acquired in a family or non-family context, subject to status changes over time.

Next, we proceed with the definitions we have elaborated for the terms L2, FL, and AL, as follows:

- **Second language, L2** - Terminology referring to any language learned/acquired after L1, formally or informally, serving purposes of communication and social inclusion, with immersion context envisaged at a global or local level.
- **Foreign language, FL** - Terminology designating the language of another country, learned/acquired formally or informally, regardless of immersion context.

- **Additional language, AL** - Terminology referring to any language learned/acquired after L1, formally or informally, with a comprehensive character, presupposing the addition of those languages to the individual's linguistic repertoire and irrespective of specification of contexts and purposes.

It is noted that, in our consideration, the term 'formal' refers to the school context; and 'informal' refers to the situation of learning/acquisition processes outside the school context. Following this delineation, we proceed to outline our understanding and develop the definition of bilingualism engendered from the concepts of Grosjean (2012, 1998, 2018), as follows:

- **Bilingualism** - Terminology refers to the use of two or more languages in everyday life, regardless of proficiency (language knowledge), usage mastery, area(s) of linguistic skill(s), and fluency.

With that said, we proceed, in the subsequent section, to the final considerations.

### **Final considerations**

Through this investigation, data emerged that aligned with the conceptions of language and bilingualism, forming the basis for the development of theoretical constructs related to the terminologies of L1, L2, FL, AL, and bilingualism. Responses obtained through facilitated interviews and narratives about a bilingual individual and their languages were examined, from which data were extracted for analysis.

In our research context, the hypotheses were confirmed; theoretical constructs on L2 acquisition and bilingualism were articulated with concrete data and realistic-naturalistic situations, promoting the consolidation of knowledge and the development of concepts. Furthermore, the value of the subjective and idiosyncratic nature of beliefs, opinions, and feelings in the relationship between a bilingual individual and their languages was reaffirmed. Specifically, we were able to achieve the research objectives by finding that theoretical assumptions and concepts resonate with authentic data about a bilingual individual and their languages. From a specific perspective, we identified information that aligns with the conceptions of language and bilingualism; we recognized the status of the languages of a



bilingual individual and conceptualized terminology related to the notions of L1, L2, FL, AL, and bilingualism.

The revealed data provide relevant information about theoretical concepts in L2 acquisition and bilingualism and drive the discovery of new insights on the subject. This enables the (re)formulation of updated foundational concepts based on previously established theoretical constructs in the field of L2 acquisition and bilingualism. Furthermore, the findings related to L2 acquisition and bilingualism validate the scientific importance of the research, as constructs were debated and concepts were delineated. Regarding social relevance, it reinforces awareness and teacher training, where knowledge and practice will directly benefit students.

This scenario of achieved objectives, starting from the understanding of concepts to the development of suitable theoretical definitions of the terms referenced in the study, fosters a promising horizon for the fields of Language Sciences, Applied Linguistics, and Education.

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