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Learning English in secondary school in Reunion Island: bilitery and age factor in foreign language learning

Mallaury Viry

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MEMOIRE DE RECHERCHE MASTER 1

**MASTER 1 LANGUES, LITTÉRATURES ET
CIVILISATIONS ÉTRANGÈRES ET RÉGIONALES
*PARCOURS ÉTUDES ANGLOPHONES***

L'anglais au collège à La Réunion : bilittératie et rôle de l'âge
dans l'apprentissage de la langue étrangère.

*Learning English in secondary school in Reunion Island:
biliteracy and age factor in foreign language learning.*

Mallaury VIRY

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Abstract

This paper deals with the role of age in foreign language acquisition and the influence of bilingualism and biliteracy in English language acquisition.

Our study is a replication of a Swiss study (The *Beyond Age Effect* project, Pfenninger, 2020), conducted in Reunion Island with 71 Year 10 students (*71 élèves de troisième, collège*).

The languages spoken by the participants included French and Creole. All the participants in this study could read and write in French. Regarding the English age of onset, we defined two age groups, a starting age of 3 to 6 years for those who had learned English from an early age, and an age group of 8 to 11 years for those who had learned English later.

The aim of the study was to analyse the influence of age on the acquisition of English language skills and to assess the influence of bilingualism and biliteracy on English language learning.

The results suggest that age does not have a statistically significant influence on English language skills and that French-Creole bilinguals do not seem to benefit from a positive transfer of their knowledge of their home languages to the target language.

Keywords: age factor, age of onset, bilingualism, literacy, biliteracy, L1, L2, Creole, second language acquisition, classroom L2 learning, English foreign language, young learners, late learners, replication.

Résumé

Cette étude traite du rôle de l'âge dans l'acquisition de la langue étrangère et du rôle du bilinguisme et de la littératie dans l'acquisition de la langue anglaise.

Nous présentons la réplique d'une étude suisse (*The Beyond Age Effect project*, Pfenninger, 2020), menée à l'île de La Réunion avec 71 élèves de collège en classe de troisième. Parmi les langues parlées par les participants on retrouve le français et le créole. Tous les participants de cette étude savent lire et écrire en français. Concernant l'apprentissage de l'anglais, nous avons défini deux tranches d'âges : un âge de début d'apprentissage allant de 3 à 6 ans pour ceux qui ont appris l'anglais dès le plus jeune âge, et une tranche d'âge allant de 8 à 11 ans pour ceux qui ont appris l'anglais plus tard.

L'étude avait pour but d'analyser l'influence de l'âge dans l'acquisition des compétences en langue anglaise mais aussi d'évaluer l'influence du bilinguisme et de la bilittératie dans l'apprentissage de la langue anglaise.

Les résultats suggèrent que l'âge n'influe pas de façon statistiquement significative sur les compétences en langue anglaise et que les bilingues français-créole ne semblent pas profiter d'un transfert positif de leurs connaissances dans leurs langues maternelles vers la langue cible.

Mots clés : rôle de l'âge, âge de début d'apprentissage, bilinguisme, littératie, bilittératie, L1, L2, créole, acquisition d'une seconde langue, apprentissage d'une L2 en classe, anglais langue étrangère, jeunes apprenants, apprenants tardifs, réplique.

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List of abbreviations

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

In alphabetical order

AO:	Age of Onset
BAE:	Beyond Age Project
BLP:	Bilingual Language Profile
CEFR:	Common European Framework of Research for Languages
CPH:	Critical Period Hypothesis
ECLs:	Early Classroom Learners
FL:	Foreign Language
L1:	First language
L2:	Second language
LAQ-LL:	Language attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners
LCLs:	Late Classroom Learners
MONO:	Monolinguals
OPT:	Oxford Placement Test
SEQBI:	Sequential Bilinguals
SIMBI:	Simultaneous Bilinguals
SLA:	Second Language Acquisition

Introduction

This study combines two debated subjects in the field of second language acquisition: the impact of the age factor in foreign language learning and the influence of the home language(s) in foreign language learning (biliteracy and skills transfer).

Regarding the influence of the age factor in the acquisition of an additional language, opinion on this issue is divided into two camps: those who think that “younger is better”, and those who think that “older is better”.

The scholars who studied the first affirmation argue that there is a critical period (Penfield & Roberts, 1959; Lenneberg 1967) at which an individual is predisposed to learning languages in order to achieve native-like proficiency. Supporters of this view believe that after this period, learning a language would be a difficult and tedious exercise that would only lead to a partial mastery of the language.

On the other hand, according to the second assertion, researchers are seeking to deconstruct the widespread idea that an early exposure to a language lead to bilingualism. In fact, studies analysing English learning in a guided context (Singleton, 1989; Pfenninger, 2014, 2017, 2020; Singleton & Pfenninger, 2019) have shown that late classroom learners (LCLs) were able to catch up very quickly in almost all skills (oral and written), while young learners (ECLs) had difficulty maintaining the advantages of their early exposure due to an unsuitable learning environment that did not stimulate their existing skills.

Regarding the influence of the home language(s) on the acquisition of foreign language literacy, researchers claim that a positive transfer of knowledge in a language can facilitate the acquisition of the foreign language. According to Cummins (1979), this transfer is possible if learners have a sufficient level in their home languages (L1s).

These two trends of the second language acquisition (SLA) field, were taken up by Simone E. Pfenninger in the Beyond Age Effects Project, in which she sought to answer the following questions: “Are early bilinguals more successful than late bilinguals and monolinguals at learning a new language from primary school through the end of secondary school?” and “How do literacy skills in the L1(s) affect literacy development in EFL?” (Pfenninger, 2020).

This research carried out in multilingual Switzerland, enabled the researcher to study the specific features of this multilingual country and to answer questions about the role of age in

language learning and the influence of literacy, or rather biliteracy, in the learning of a third language, English.

Our study is a replication of this research. Carried out in Reunion Island, our study aims to add to the literature on the influence of age in foreign language learning in a multilingual context and to study the influence of French-Creole bilingualism in the acquisition of English. In order to be able to analyse these two elements, we set up a precise research protocol which we carried out on a sample of 71 participants, made up of three Year 10 classes (*classes de troisième*), i.e., learners aged between 13 to 15. Working on this sample enabled us to analyse the influence of age of onset and literacy L1(s) literacy skills in learning English in bilingual, biliterate, and monolingual populations.

I. Literature Review.

1. Context: The Beyond Age Effects Project (Simone E. Pfenninger).

1.1. Presentation of the BAE project.

The present study is an adaptation of a study led in Switzerland between 2008 and 2016 by Simone E. Pfenninger, the Beyond Age Effect (BAE) project. The study aimed to examine the English development of a cohort of 636 secondary school students at two periods of time, the first in 2009 when the students were around age 13-14 and the second in 2014 at the age range 18-19, at the end of secondary school to investigate the “factors that prevent early starters from profiting from their extended learning period (compared to late starters)” and “to better understand the mechanisms that provide late starters with faster learning rates in the initial stages of learning, enabling them to catch up relatively quickly with early starters”, with a particular focus on the reasons of “older learners’ superiority” (Pfenninger, 2020).

The project (BAE) was carried out in Switzerland because, according to the expert, “Switzerland is a perfect place to examine non-native English acquisition and multilingualism (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2016d)”. Indeed, in her book co-written with David Singleton, *Beyond Age Effects in Instructional L2 Learning: Revisiting the Age Factor* (2017), Simone E. Pfenninger describes her research area as a multilingual territory with four official languages: German, French, Italian, and Romansh. She points out that “despite Switzerland’s commitment

to official linguistic diversity, a significant amount of intra-Swiss tension has historically centred on questions of language (Demont-Heinrich, 2005: 70)". Indeed, the Swiss territory depicts a functional diglossia between the Swiss German and the Standard German. The expert explains the relationship between Swiss Standard German and Standard German:

"As the Swiss term for Standard High German (*Schriftsprache* or *Schrifdeutsch*) implies, Swiss Standard German is primarily a literary and written language, its spoken form is used in some selected formal situations (e.g., in school, public speeches, some broadcasting and increasingly in communication with immigrants in their first years after arrival). While Swiss German is mutually intelligible with some (predominantly) southern dialects of Germany (like Swabian or Bavarian), Swiss German is hardly understandable to someone who knows only Standard German as the two varieties differ to a significant extent in lexicon, phonology and syntax (Demont Heinrich, 2005)".

Pfenninger (2017) adds that Swiss German children have a certain mastery ('receptive', 'productive') of Standard German before starting school, thanks to exposure to the media and that learning of this other variety (Standard German) begins in the first years of primary school, at age 7. On the other hand, she points out that "while Standard German might be the language of literacy, it is not a dominant societal language". Indeed, she mentions the results of recent studies which have shown that "over 50% of native Swiss German speakers mention Standard German as their first FL and that they would prefer switching to French or English (Werlen, 2004)".

As far as English is concerned, there is said to be a transition in the status of English on the Swiss territory: English would therefore move from the status of 'foreign language' to that of second language (L2), "by virtue of the fact that English is used as an intranational *lingua franca* in a number of domains (see, Durham, 2007; Dürmüller, 2001), which means that many of the learners of English as an FL strive for high proficiency in this language" (Pfenninger, 2017). The expert explains that English is 'used extensively in day-to-day life', especially within the younger population who are exposed to and evolved in environments that favour the use of English (e.g., working environment, 'multinational companies'). Pfenninger (2017) points out, however, that this increase in the use of English in Switzerland is worrying the linguistic community, which fears that English could threaten 'the harmonious coexistence' of the four official languages, particularly French, which is attracting less and less interest, linked to the fact that French is a difficult language to learn (Manno, 2004 as mentioned in Pfenninger, 2017).

1.2. Research questions

Considering the characteristics of the research area, the BAE project intended to analyse the role of age in relation to foreign language acquisition and the influence of biliteracy (L1, L2) on foreign language acquisition (L3). To do so, Pfenninger (2020) formulated the following two questions: 1) “Are early bilinguals more successful than late bilinguals and monolinguals at learning a new language from primary school through the end of secondary school?” and 2) “How do literacy skills in the L1(s) affect literacy development in EFL?”.

With this aim in mind, the expert studied four groups of learners: a group of monolinguals (MONO), two groups of simultaneous bilinguals (SIMBI I, SIMBI II), and one group of sequential bilinguals (SEQBI). Pfenninger (2020) described her different groups of learners of English as a Foreign Language (L3) as follows:

- Group MONO is composed of 200 Swiss monolinguals, born in Switzerland, and literate in the community language i.e., Standard German.
- Group SIMBI I is composed of 144 simultaneous bilinguals, born in Switzerland, biliterate (literate in both Swiss and Standard German).
- Group SIMBI II is composed of 107 simultaneous bilinguals, born in Switzerland, literate in Standard German (the community language), and illiterate in L1, i.e., Swiss German.
- Group SEQBI is composed of 185 sequential bilinguals. This group refers to participants who arrived in Switzerland at the age range of 5-6. They are illiterate in L1 (Swiss German) and literate in L2 (Standard German).

1.3. The Beyond Age Project: “Tasks and Instruments”

To answer her research questions as formulated earlier, Simone E. Pfenninger designed a precise protocol. The protocol, as used in the BAE project, was designed to assess the following skills: “productive and receptive vocabulary size (oral and written), grammaticality judgments, listening comprehension, oral and written fluency, syntactic complexity and morphosyntactic accuracy, motivation, learner beliefs and strategies” (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017).

The first part of the BAE’s project protocol was dedicated to collecting data regarding parental support. In a questionnaire intended for the participants’ parents, the researcher asked

about three elements: ‘the frequency with which the parents helped their child with L1 literacy’ (1), ‘parents’ attitudes toward L1 literacy’ (2), and ‘parents’ attitudes toward EFL learning’ (3).

Regarding the activities conducted with the participants, Simone Pfenninger provides a summary table of the activities offered to the participants at Time 1, in 2009 and at Time 2, in 2014 in her chapter 'Tasks and Measures' (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017). Below is a reproduction of the table describing the activities carried out with the participants during the data collection.

	Time 1	Time 2
Two standardised listening comprehension tasks (level CAE) ¹ .		x
Oral tasks (retelling tasks, spot-the-difference task).	x	
Productive vocabulary test: Productive Vocabulary Size Test by Laufer and Nation (1999).		x
Receptive vocabulary test: Academic sections in Schmitt <i>et al.</i> 's (2001) Versions A and B of Nation's Vocabulary Levels Test.	x	x
English argumentative essay on the pros and cons of (reality TV) talent shows.	x	x
English narrative essay: retelling of a silent movie.	x	x
German language experience essay.	x	x
Grammatically judgment task including 49 items and 15 distractors (reliability coefficient [KR-20] 0.90 for grammatical items and 0.95 for ungrammatical items).	x	x
Motivation questionnaire (28 closed-ended items).	x	x
Strategies questionnaire (15 closed-ended items).	x	x
Three open-ended questions enquiring about (1) participants' experiences with immersion vs regular instruction; (2) feelings of being overburdened by the multiple foreign language requirement; and (3) the transition from foreign language learning in primary school to secondary school.	x	x
Biodata questionnaire (demographic variables).	x	x

Table 1: "Tasks and Procedure: Table 2.3. Measures" (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017).

The researcher points out that the listening comprehension task and the productive vocabulary test were only administered during the second phase of data collection, to avoid the possibility of a “floor effect” in the results at Time 1. We have listed the 8 key points of the protocol below:

- “English listening comprehension”.
- “English oral proficiency”.

¹ "Level CAE" = C1 Advanced Level (Cambridge English).

- “English receptive and productive vocabulary”.
- “English grammaticality judgments”.
- “English writing proficiency”.
- “Learner beliefs and learning experiences”.
- “Foreign language learning motivation and learning strategies”.
- “Language background”.

According to Pfenninger (2017, Chapter 2), the tasks used in this project “[...] were designed to measure the knowledge that learners had gained through the English lessons. This knowledge is, to a large extent, declarative, e.g., vocabulary items or morphosyntactic rules (Munoz, 2006b: 17). The battery also involves tests that measure procedural knowledge acquired through practice in productive and receptive language skills, e.g., tests involving word recognition and grammaticality judgments”.

1.4. Results

Regarding the difference in performance between early and late bilinguals and monolinguals, the results showed at Time 1 that “there were main effects of AO in favor of the early starters at the first data collection for 50% of the measures [...], notably receptive vocabulary, written organization, lexical richness and fluency, oral lexical richness and accuracy, as well as grammatically judgments” (Pfenninger, 2020). On the other hand, it was found at Time 2 that late starters were able to catch-up with their early pairs in the span of six months: at the end of secondary school, the early and late starters of English had similar levels, except perhaps in terms of vocabulary, as the researcher pointed out that the groups differed in terms of lexical richness, early learners being the ones with a wider lexical range according to the expert. Regarding bilingualism and biliteracy, it was found that both aptitudes had “a positive influence on about half the measures at both data collection times” (Pfenninger, 2020). Nevertheless, Pfenninger points out that an earlier age of onset (AO) was proved beneficial for bilingual biliterates who received sufficient parental support and ‘positive parental attitudes’ regarding foreign language (FL) learning.

As for the second question, concerning the influence of literacy skills of the home language on the development of the additional language (L3 English), the results showed that “L1 literacy

skills were clearly positively related to L2 literacy skills in all groups, predicting written content, organization, lexical richness, fluency and complexity [...]” (Pfenninger, 2020).

2. Replication

Our study is a replication of Pfenninger’s BAE Project in Reunion Island. In this part, we will define what is a replication study (in the field of second language acquisition) and highlight the importance of replication studies.

Porte (2012) defines replication research as “a repetition, exact or approximate, of another study with the aim to test reliability and generalizability of its findings (the extent to which the findings can be generalized to other populations). Replication research is a common and, indeed, an essential practice in many disciplines”. This process aims to “test the reliability of a previous study’s findings by validating (or providing evidence against) its results, or to generalize findings in the same or under different conditions” (Marsden et al., 2018a; Porte & McManus, 2019, as mentioned in Jarlot Knight, 2023).

Jarlot Knight (2023) in her thesis mentions researchers’ position (Marsden et al., 2018a; Porte & McManus, 2019) about the aim of replication study and suggests that “the purpose of replication is to test the reliability of a previous study’s findings by validating (or providing evidence against) its results, or to generalize findings in the same or under different conditions”. However, researchers highlight the lack of replication studies in the field of applied linguistics, first because of the “risk of not being published” or because of the “poor availability of materials and raw data” (Jarlot Knight, 2023). Also, Mackey (2012) argues that, in the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), replication studies are less frequent since SLA is ‘interdisciplinary’, involving several domains such as linguistics, psychology, education, and sociology’. However, the expert (Mackey, 2012) notes that there are enough existing studies in the field today (SLA) to make replications and thus develop the literature on the subject. Also, the need for replication in the field of applied linguistics is justified by the impact it has on pedagogical practices (Jarlot Knight, 2023).

Jarlot Knight (2023) listed four categories of replication research: exact, close, approximate, and conceptual. Exact replication research implies that a researcher would do a literal replication of an initial study, however, in applied linguistics, this type of research is difficult to lead since social sciences is not an exact science and depends on social characteristics (human

behavior) (ibid). Mackey (2012) asserts that, in the field of SLA, “replication is almost nonexistent [...] due to the fact that it is impossible to get exactly the same type of subjects and exact stimuli as would be found in the original study”. Since exact replication seems problematic, researchers defined other degrees of replication: close replications “follows the initial study research design and procedures closely but that introduces one modification”, approximative replications “include two or more modified variables” (Porte & Manus, 2019, as mentioned in Jarlot Knight, 2023) comparing to the initial study and conceptual replications will likely follow the same research question and hypothesis as the initial study but will differ in terms of methodology (Jarlot Knight, 2023).

According to these definitions, the present study can be considered as an approximate replication since we will follow the same question research and hypothesis, but we will differ in terms of research area, methodology, and participants’ profiles. This study aims to provide a contribution to the literature in the field of SLA by looking at the effect of the age factor on the acquisition of an additional language, paying particular attention to French-Creole bilingualism in Reunion Island and comparing its specific features with those of other multilingual territories such as Switzerland.

3. The age factor and L2/FL acquisition: the “younger = better” or the “older = better”?

Is there a ‘critical period’ for language learning? In the field of second language acquisition, the correlation between language acquisition and the age factor is a subject vastly debated among researchers. There are two schools of thought: those who believe that the ‘younger is better’ with the argument of a ‘Critical Period’ or ‘Sensitive Period’ (Penfield and Roberts, 1959; Lenneberg, 1967, as mentioned in Ortega, 2009) suggesting that there is an ideal time for language learning and that language acquisition becomes much more difficult after this period. Conversely, researchers propose that ‘the older is better’, meaning that late learners of an additional language may catch-up and outperform early starters due to their advanced level of literacy in their first language, allowing a transfer of skills from the first language to the second language (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017: 2019).

3.1. The ‘Critical Period Hypothesis’

To support the view ‘younger is better’ in language acquisition, scholars rely on a widespread theory: the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH). This theory was first introduced in the field of biological science by Penfield & Roberts (1959) and Lenneberg (1967) (Ortega, 2009; Siahaan, 2022). Lenneberg's theory suggests that there's a critical period for a person to learn one language to reach native-like proficiency and that individuals exposed to language at an early age are meant to outperform those exposed to language later in life.

In her review of Lenneberg's theory, Siahaan (2022) reports that this period hypothetically takes place during the early years of life, from the age of 2 until puberty (around age 14), which according to him, coincides with the brain's lateralization process (Siahaan, 2022), which refers to “the specialization in all right-handed individuals to the left brain hemisphere for language functions” (Lenneberg, 1967 as mentioned in Ortega, 2009). Hu (2016) reviewed the position of different scholars (Lenneberg, 1967; Krashen, 1973; Lamendella, 1977; Bradshaw et al., 2017) regarding this process: if Lenneberg (1967) defined lateralization to be at its finest from the age of 2 until puberty, giving children cognitive superiority over adults, Krashen (1973) proposed that lateralization can be finished at 5 years old whereas Lamendella (1977), suggested that this process can happen after the age of 5.

Even though Lenneberg's suggested that his hypothesis can be extended to second language acquisition (for instance, the case of individuals who intend to learn a language different from their mother tongue), his findings are mostly based on first language acquisition in particular cases such as deaf children, feral children (cf. the story of ‘Genie, the feral child’), children with cognitive disorders or even children who experienced traumatic events (abuse, sequestration, abandonment) (Steinberg et al., 2006), which poses a problem of reliability (for a critical review of the critical age hypothesis, see Ortega 2009; Siahaan, 2022).

3.2. The ‘catch-up conundrum’: how do late starters outperform early starters?

If the Critical Period Hypothesis presents children as efficient language learners, studies of the second language acquisition field proposed an opposite view: ‘the older, the better’. Indeed, studies supporting this thesis suggest that older learners can ‘catch-up’ with younger learners

in formal learning settings. In this part, we will see in which conditions late starters can surpass early starters.

Singleton (1989) introduced the ‘catch-up conundrum’ which he defines as: “the apparent paradox of older beginners catching up with younger beginners in formal instructional settings and younger beginners catching up with older beginners in naturalistic settings.”

He mentions Burstall’s et al. (1974) project, one of the main contributors to the subject. This research aimed to study the acquisition of French in English and Scottish primary school subjects. The 10 years study (1964-1974), conducted on a sample of 17,000 participants from the age of 8 to 16, showed a progressive decline in the benefits of early exposure to French, as late beginners revealed to equal or surpass the supposed ‘early learners’. Recent studies, such as the Beyond Age Effects (Pfenninger, 2017), directed in Switzerland between 2008 and 2006 on primary school to secondary school students, examined the role of the age of onset in relation to language acquisition. Thanks to a series of activities examining student’s written and oral competences, the results revealed that the group of later classroom learners (LCL) of English seems to reach or surpass the group of early classroom learners (ECL) in the span of six months only, suggesting that a later exposure to a second language or a foreign language may be beneficial.

Some research points out that late learners may benefit from their better cognitive functions (Eguz, 2019) and their ‘well-developed L1’ (Pfenninger, 2014), and some highlight the importance of motivation and the identification to the second language’s culture as reasons why late starters may catch up with younger learners (Au & Oh, 2005).

This paradox (‘catch-up conundrum’), echoes Krashen *et al.*’s (1979) theory, exposing that older L2 learners are the efficient language learners whereas younger L2 learners are presumed to be the better language learners in naturalistic settings. However, Singleton proposes another perspective on this statement, including younger learners’ efficiency in naturalistic settings as much as in formal settings, but this perspective is only valid if and only if younger learners are in optimal formal settings (classroom) conditions where their knowledge is stimulated. If not, they would lose the supposed advantages linked to their extended exposure period. Indeed, Singleton (1989) suggests that most of the time, in the classroom, young and old starters are mixed which results in ‘boredom’, ‘demotivation’, and stagnation of knowledge for the younger starters of L2. At the same time, younger starters tend to ‘conceal’ their knowledge to avoid critics from other students, which may explain why they can’t benefit from their early exposure.

3.3. Are children or adults better L2 learners?

Supporters of the ‘Critical Period’ (Penfield and Roberts, 1959; Lenneberg, 1967 as mentioned in Bialystok, 2001; Ortega, 2009; Siahaan, 2022) suggest that the age factor in correlation to language learning is influenced by biological factors, meaning that after puberty, it is difficult for an individual to learn a language (first or second). According to this configuration, children are seen as the ‘ideal learners’. Bialystok (2001) explains that “we accept this capacity of children as part of their natural endowment and simultaneously belittle our adult aptitudes in the realm of language learning. The ordinary way of describing this difference between adults and children uses such terms as a “special access” and “natural talent” possessed by children”.

Although Pfenninger & Singleton demonstrated through several studies (Singleton, 1989; Pfenninger, 2020; Pfenninger Singleton, 2017) that late learners are able to catch up with early learners relatively quickly in a guided environment, they reflected on factors (other than biological factors) that can help young starters of L2 to “make the most” of their early exposure: “the role of (bi)literacy skills” (1), “the role of language learning motivation” (2), “the role of factors relating to the transition from primary to secondary school” (3), and “the role of intensity of L2 instruction” (4).

(1) “The role of (bi)literacy skills”:

The experts support the thesis that skills in the L1 may facilitate L2 acquisition. They mention Cummins’ theory (the ‘Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis’) (1979; 2000), suggesting that “[...] L1 and L2 skills should be regarded as Interdependent – as manifestations of a common underlying proficiency” (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019).

They mention Cummins’ (1980) theory of interdependence: to analyse data regarding the age factor, L2, and bilingual education (Cummins, 2016), he proposes that “cognitive/academic proficiencies in both L1 and L2 are manifestations of the same underlying dimension”, meaning that “previous learning of literacy-related functions of language (in L1) will predict future learning of these functions (in L2)”. Cummins suggests that “if the interdependence hypothesis is valid then L1 and L2 CALP² should relate strongly to each other and show a similar pattern

² CALP: Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (Cummins, 1980).

of correlations with other variables such as verbal and nonverbal ability” (Cummins, 1980, p.179).

Pfenninger (2014) reveals in her article the results of her longitudinal study on 200 Swiss learners of English. She found out that "advantages of an early start do not emerge even after a substantial amount of input has been gained" and that late starters caught up with their early peers in the span of six months. Also, the results revealed that late starters of English who "began L3 education with a better foundation in their L2 [...] seemed to have been better equipped to transfer their conceptual vocabulary and grammatical knowledge into the L3" (Pfenninger, 2014, p.13) which support the hypothesis of a 'linguistic interdependence'. On the other hand, Pfenninger notes that early starters were still processing their L2 when they began L3 learning, meaning that they didn't have sufficient knowledge to benefit from a 'positive influence' from L2 to L3. In other studies, Pfenninger (2017; 2020) the results of five-year longitudinal studies on the role of age and the influence of literacy on FL learning showed that the benefits of early bilingualism and biliteracy only have a significant impact on groups of “simultaneous bilinguals who were already biliterate and who received substantial parental support”. According to the experts (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019), this finding helps refuting the widespread idea that ‘the younger = the better’.

(2) “The role of language learning motivation”:

Motivation can be influenced by many factors, such as the learning environment: Pfenninger & Singleton (2019) note that it is important to consider ‘macro-contextual factors’ (i.e., the wider school context: school resources, teachers’ fluency, etc.) (Pfenninger, 2017), and more specifically, “the quality of early instruction”. They argue that a teaching approach that doesn’t appeal to early learners may lead to boredom, and young L2 learners may develop negative attitudes. Although motivation at an early age does not guarantee motivation in the long term (i.e., we understand from the literature on the subject that motivation needs to be maintained and stimulated by personal or external factors, Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019; Berdal-Masuy in Leclercq et al., 2022), 'positive motivation' seems more associated with secondary school learners, “with late starters feeling the urge to attain proficiency quickly [...] and evidencing more instrumental motivation” (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019, p.118-119). In her 2017 article, Pfenninger even considers AO effects as ‘malleable’ making this factor an individual variable, like aptitude (language aptitude), motivation, and so on.

(3) “The transition from primary to secondary school”:

Both experts (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019) warn about the ‘transition from primary to secondary school’. First, they note that there is a shift in the teaching method from primary to secondary school: from implicit and student-centred teaching, there is an abrupt change regarding the methodology in secondary school, which is more ‘teacher-directed’ and ‘faster-paced’ which may confuse young learners. Also, they note a “mismatch between student and teacher expectations regarding teaching methods”, students tend to miss implicit learning and may lose motivation once in secondary school if the primary school teachers lacked training (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019, p.118-120).

(4) “The role of intensity of L2 instruction”:

Pfenninger & Singleton (2019) make a clear distinction between intensity and quantity. If an early L2 exposure doesn’t guarantee better performance for students, the intensity of instruction might do so. With the example of the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning), an immersive program “which provides teaching via the L2 of some school subjects”, both experts explain that “an intensive language learning experience can lead to substantial progress in an L2 in relatively a short amount of time, for both children and adults, early and late starters”. However, they underline that, most of the time, the learners that enroll for this type of programs are “motivated to succeed”.

Although these factors are presented as helping to "make the most" of an early exposure, these same factors are the reasons why young L2 starters cannot benefit from their early exposure in the long run.

This section on the role of age helps us to understand the relevance of this factor in second language acquisition. Should language learning start very early or when L1 has been assimilated to a certain level? The literature on the subject shows us that there is no exact answer to this question, as the age factor is malleable and can be influenced by other factors: wider factors such as school, or individual differences such as literacy (Pfenninger, 2017; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019). The next section will look at the correlation between bilingualism and literacy and its impact on foreign language learning.

4. Bilingualism and (bi)literacy

According to the dictionary³, bilingualism refers to “the ability to speak two languages”, “the frequent use of two languages”, or “the political institutional recognition of two languages”. However, the adjective “bilingual”, makes a more specific qualification of the individual who can speak two languages as “using or able to use two languages especially with equal fluency”. This dictionary entry, as suggested, follows Bloomfield's (1935) definition that defined bilingualism as the “native-like control of two languages”. This definition of bilingualism has been strongly criticised, in particular by Grosjean (1997), who defines bilingualism as “the ability to produce meaningful utterances in two (or more) languages, the command of at least one language skill (reading, writing, speaking, listening) in another language, the alternate use of several languages, etc”. In his view, Bloomfield's definition is reductive and does not consider the functional dimension of bilingualism. Indeed, Grosjean (2018) associates the Complementary Principle with his definition of bilingualism: a principle according to which the bilingual individual “acquires and uses their languages for different purposes, in different domains of life, with different people”. The context will determine which language the bilingual speaker will choose to express themselves. This is the definition we will use in our research.

Regarding literacy, the dictionary⁴ defines the term as “the quality or state of being literate”, which refers to the ability to read and write. Bialystok (2001) mentions the three cognitive prerequisites to the attainment of literacy: preliteracy, early reading, and fluent reading. The researcher describes the three stages as follows:

“The first is the period of preliteracy in which children are building up concepts of symbolic representation and learning about the writing system. The second is early reading. At this stage children learn the rules for decoding the written system into the familiar sounds of the spoken language. Finally, in fluent reading, the meaning of the text takes priority and children can begin to use written texts for receiving and expressing ideas they did not have before. When we say that children are readers, or prereaders, it is helpful to be more precise by placing them at one of these levels” (Bialystok, 2001, p. 154).

In second language learning, Cummins made the hypothesis of the interdependence of languages (‘Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis’, ‘Threshold hypothesis’), meaning

³ Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Definition of BILINGUALISM. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bilingualism>

⁴ Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Definition of LITERACY. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/literacy>

that skills of L1 can be transferred in the acquisition of L2 under certain circumstances (Cummins, 1979 as mentioned in Pfenninger, 2014).

But how does bilingualism affect literacy? What is the correlation between bilingualism and the ability to read and write in one language (and plus) and what is their impact on foreign language learning? In this part, we will study the correlation between bilingualism, literacy, and their impact on foreign language acquisition, with a particular focus on bilingual children.

4.1. Factors favouring bilingualism.

Since our study focuses on the adolescent, we investigated the literature about the particularity of the bilingual child.

For Grosjean (2018) and Bialystok (2001), the factors that encourage bilingualism in children are diverse: for Grosjean, bilingualism comes from a necessity to participate in community life or a personal need (listening, speaking). If the need disappears, the child will stop using the language(s), which is why the expert stresses the importance of parental support in children's language learning, in order to maintain the skills and encourage learning (in the long term), and also highlighted the importance of the school: “if the language is recognised and appreciated by the school [...] the child will be encouraged to continue to use it” (our translation). On the other hand, Bialystok (2001) mentions various external factors: “immigration, education, extended family, temporary residence in another country, dislocation”, or simply being born in a place where it is assumed that bilingualism is normal. Like Grosjean, she stresses the importance of the family nucleus (education of parents, parents’ expectations for the education of children) but also the role of literacy. Concerning the use of languages in children, Bialystok (2001) agrees with Grosjean (2018) and confirms this notion of necessity as well as the fact that the level of proficiency will depend on a “set of needs and circumstances”.

4.2. Literacy and bilingual children

Bialystok (2001) notes that literacy is the main step to social integration and that it “is the central purpose of early schooling”. According to her, the mastery of this ability determines ‘future academic success’ of children.

In her view, social context and cognitive abilities are inextricably linked in the acquisition of literacy, particularly in bilingual children: she notes a difference in the acquisition of literacy for bilingual children and distinguishes on one hand, children whose first language is the majority language and children whose first language is the minority language. For the first one, children will develop sufficient skills to acquire literacy in the majority language whereas the latter would face difficulties since they have to learn literacy skills in the majority language, as she explains.

In order to explain the acquisition of this ability in bilinguals, she first explains the process of literacy acquisition in monolinguals. According to the expert, research on literacy acquisition in monolinguals has shown that literacy builds out of: “(1) oral competence with the literary (discourse) forms of language, (2) conceptual development that includes understanding the symbolic notational systems of print, and (3) metalinguistic insights that allow children to achieve awareness of the phonological forms of language”. Bialystok (2001) notes that these competences have been influenced by bilingualism, that’s why she makes the relation between bilingualism and the acquisition of literacy.

In a 2005 article, Bialystok, E., Luk, G., & Kwan, E. explain that monolinguals and bilinguals differ in their acquisition of literacy. According to her, there are two possible reasons for this:

- (1) “The first is that bilinguals develop several of the background skills for literacy differently from monolinguals;
- (2) The second is that bilinguals may have the opportunity to transfer the skills acquired for reading in one language to reading in the other.”

She then explains how oral competence and metalinguistic awareness influence the acquisition of literacy in bilinguals and monolinguals:

Regarding oral competence, Bialystok *et al.* (2005) indicate that bilingual children have a less varied lexical panel than their monolingual peers. She mentions a large-scale study carried out in Miami on a sample of 1,000 English-Spanish bilinguals by Cobo-Lewis *et al.* (2002), which showed that monolinguals had a wider lexical repertoire than their bilingual peers. She explains that this type of research suggests that bilingual children are at a disadvantage in terms of lexical (oral) skills in the early stages of literacy acquisition. Regarding metalinguistic awareness, researchers mention the importance of phonological awareness, especially for alphabetic languages. According to Bialystok (2001): “The importance of phonological awareness in learning to read is that alphabetic reading requires the segmentation of words into sounds and

learning the correspondence between letters and those sounds”. However, she points out that research has not yet shown any advantage for bilinguals regarding this competence. Similarly, concerning the ability of bilinguals to transfer skills from one language to another, Bialystok *et al.* (2005) note that studies carried out with bilingual children have shown that phonological skills are positively transferred from one language to another, which makes it possible to develop reading ability in the target language.

4.3. Literacy and FL learning

The argument of a possibility of skills transfer for bilinguals in the acquisition of literacy in a second language as mentioned in Bialystok *et al.* (2005) comes from two hypotheses formulated by Cummins (1979): the ‘Threshold’ hypothesis and the ‘Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis’.

The first one refers to the level a bilingual “must attain both in order to avoid cognitive disadvantages and allow the potentially beneficial aspects of bilingualism to influence his cognitive and academic functioning” (Cummins, 1979), meaning that bilingual individuals should have a sufficient level in their L1 to benefit from their knowledge and skills in the process of acquisition of an additional language (L2). Cummins (1979) defines the latter (the ‘Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis’), as a hypothesis that “proposes that the development of competence in a second language (L2) is partially a function of the type of competence already developed in L1 at the time when intensive exposure to L2 begins”. Teemant, A. & Pinnegar, S. E. (2019) explain the theory as follows: “cognitive academic proficiency in the L1 and L2 are interdependent. Increases in the capacity for cognitive activity in one language also enhances the same capacity in the other. Consequently, learners who develop more cognitive skills through the use of their native language before beginning the acquisition of the L2 will develop the ability to manifest those skills in the L2 more rapidly than those who have not”.

Pfenninger (2014) mentioned the theory of interdependence in an article about the role of literacy in L3 acquisition. This study specifically looks at the impact of L2 literacy on the development of writing proficiency in the L3, in relation to the age of onset of instruction of English. She agrees with the interdependence hypothesis and argues that L1 proficiency can help the acquisition of L2 literacy due to the fact that “many of the processes of writing in an

L2, such as planning content, revising texts, and using metacognitive and strategic knowledge of the writing process to direct cognitive resources efficiently, are comparable to those of writing in an L1, even when two languages use different writing systems”. Her study carried out on a cohort of 200 Swiss learners of English at different ages (including late and early classrooms learners), revealed that the late starters – who began learning English 5 years later than the early learners – were able to catch up with the young learners’ level. According to her, these results can be explained by the fact that “late starters began L3 education with a better foundation in L2 German, which is their primary language of literacy” and that there were many correlations between L2 and L3 literacy skills, even without the intervention of the age factor.

Our study focuses on the acquisition of the English language in Reunion Island by a French-Creole bilingual population. As well as finding out whether age influences foreign language acquisition, we are also looking at whether being bilingual and biliterate influences this acquisition. However, it is important to note that in Reunion Island, children learn to read and write only in French (in the classic school curriculum). Only pupils who choose to take ‘Creole’ as an option (in French, *LVR Créole*: *Langue Vivante Régionale*) can hope to learn to read and write in this language, which is initially transmitted orally due to the lack of codification of the language (since Reunionese Creole has no official spelling nor grammar rules, unlike French). In order to better understand the sociolinguistic situation in Reunion Island, we will look at the history of the island, the relationship between French and Creole, and the educational measures implemented by the French government to recognise Creole as a ‘full language’.

5. Foreign language learning in a creolophone setting: the case of Reunion Island

5.1. History of Reunion Island.

To describe the sociolinguistic landscape of Reunion Island, Ghasarian (2004) and Lebon-Eyquem (2013) both recall the island's migratory history. Colonised in 1665 by the French, Reunion Island has experienced several waves of immigration: firstly, because of slavery, the colonists captured populations coming mainly from Africa and Madagascar to exploit the lands (sugar cane fields, coffee plantation), and then as a result of the *‘engagisme’* (which can be translated by ‘indentured labour’): populations from southern India and elsewhere came to

replace slaves on the exploitations after abolition. Although workers had an established work contract, they experienced the same cultural oppression as their predecessors (Ghasarian, 2004).

From a linguistic point of view, it is known that the origin of Reunionese Creole is the result of contact between the ‘masters’ and the slaves. The freed slaves adopted Creole, which became the language spoken by the majority, French being spoken by only a small part of the population at the time of abolition. When the *engagés* (indentured workers) arrived in the territory, they systematically learned Creole. Lebon-Eyquem (2013) indicates that each ethnic group that joined Reunion Island has acculturated for the sake of integration, although each group has brought back their customs and traditions from their home country (Ghasarian, 2004).

In 1946, at the time of departmentalisation, only a small part of the population spoke and mastered French, and the divide – formed during the period of slavery – became even more apparent: French became the language of the elite and Creole, the language of the people, of inferior status. Although Ghasarian (2004) does not mention the word diglossia in his article, he recognises a distinction in the uses of the languages spoken in the territory: Creole is defined as the ‘language of the private/domestic sphere’ (L1) and French as the ‘language of second socialisation’, the language of schooling (L2). Lebon-Eyquem (2013) goes beyond this statement and presents us with how the linguistic situation or conflict in the territory was interpreted by the experts.

5.2. Description of the linguistic area.

The linguistic situation of Reunion Island was first defined under the term ‘diglossia’ during the 1970s by whom she calls the ‘founding fathers of Reunionese linguistics’, Michel Carayol and Robert Chaudenson (as mentioned in Lebon-Eyquem, 2013). They took up Ferguson's theory and applied it to the territory: French and Creole were in perfect opposition, with French having a notion of prestige (formal situations) and Creole, representing the opposite, spoken by the ‘natives’ (informal situations).

Later on, these same specialists will take a critical look at their theory and realise that the practice of French and Creole varies depending on the usage and not on the context: Lebon-Eyquem (2013), then, tells us about those ‘bourgeois families’ in which Creole is “forbidden when addressing the children” (our translation), Creole being considered inferior while French

is the language of prestige and success. Yet, Creole can be used in formal contexts, which makes the concept of diglossia obsolete.

Considering these new particularities, Lebon-Eyquem (2013) presents the French-Creole continuum as conceived by Carayol and Chaudenson (1978). This continuum, which represents the phenomenon of contact between languages, goes from ‘standard French’ to ‘Creole’. Lebon-Eyquem (2013) provides her definition of the terms of the continuum: ‘standard French’ (the language of the ‘white population’), ‘regional French’ (generally the language of schooling for bilingual Reunionese), ‘creolised French’ (spoken mainly in the higher part of the South of the island) and finally ‘Creole’ (spoken by the ‘black and mixed populations’ of the island). However, the “mixed speech” increase among the younger population disturbs the picture. Our expert then takes up the concept of *‘interlecte’* as Prudent (1981) discussed in reference to the French-Creole mix used in everyday life by a new majority of the population. Lebon-Eyquem (2013) warns us that despite the general adoption of this French-Creole ‘mix’ by the population, the domination of French over Creole persists – encouraged by school, which tends to refute this kind of practice.

5.3. The French-Creole conflict

Since the last century, Reunion Island saw a movement of valorisation of Creole. Indeed, since the beginning of the 2000s, the Ministry of Overseas France has granted regional language status to the four Creole languages of the French overseas departments (Guadeloupe, French Guiana, Martinique, Reunion). The Ministry of Education, for its part, encouraged the introduction of Creole in teaching competitive exams (primary and secondary levels) and the creation of a Creole degree at university – but also the incorporation of Creole in a few secondary schools on the island (Ghasarian, 2004; Prudent, 2005; Lebon-Eyquem, 2013).

Despite this attempt to calm down the conflict, Lebon-Eyquem (2013) highlights a paradox: school conveys a monolingual ideology where the mixed speech would be disapproved of because it does not correspond to the norm used by the teachers, who use this same norm to evaluate the Reunionese pupils who will find themselves penalised by a teaching and grading system that does not take into account their specificities and who find themselves, for a good number, in a position of academic failure. At the same time, the Ministry of Education (Bulletin Officiel n°33 du 15 septembre 2011) expects teachers to take into account “the diversity of the

pupils” as well as “the linguistic reality of the languages spoken by the pupils” in their teaching – a situation, our expert points out, that applies not only to Reunion Island but also to other French departments with the same specificities.

Prudent (2005) also criticises this lack of guidance from national authorities. According to Prudent, instead of trying to standardise Creole (like French) by imposing inappropriate grammar, Creole could have been integrated into the school curriculum in a different way: “We could have done things differently: for example, we could have built a new type of 'Creole language and culture' curriculum, based on an analysis of the particular role of the vernacular alongside the standard, neither classic bilingualism nor strict diglossia” (our translation). According to the researcher, this new stage in the recognition of Creole as a language in its own right could have taken account of the specific features of each Creole (each overseas Creole) and “invented an original pedagogy of oral expression”, and taken an interest in the phenomena of language contact and mixed speech, or even set up a debate on overseas France and its identity (cohabitation of cultures) and relations with the outside world (for instance, the relationship with Europe) (Prudent, 2005).

II. The study

1. Main question

On the model of the Beyond Age Effects project led by Pfenninger (2020), we will study the following question in cohesion with local linguistic specificities: What is the role of age in foreign language acquisition?

How does foreign language performance vary according to the age at which English is first learned? Do learners who have been exposed to the foreign language from an early age (e.g., in primary school) perform better than late FL learners? Do bilinguals perform better than their monolingual peers? Or is it the opposite? We will determine whether the age of onset (AO) has a significant influence on learners’ performances and whether being bilingual has a significant influence on their English language skills.

To do this, we chose to carry out the study in a secondary school in the south of Reunion Island with three Year 10 classes (*classes de troisième*), representing a sample of 71 pupils from

ages 13 to 15. We will analyse the role of age in the acquisition of a foreign language (English) in bilingual (French-Creole) and monolingual (French) populations in Reunion Island. The monolingual group refers to children who didn't learn any languages other than their home language (French) before learning English. On the other hand, the bilingual group will refer to children who have learned French and Creole before learning English. Within this group, we will distinguish two types of bilinguals: simultaneous bilinguals, who have learned French and Creole at the same time (before schooling), and sequential bilinguals, who have learned their L2 (French or Creole) after the age of three or more.

In order to collect these data, we established a precise research protocol to evaluate the students' performance and also, to collect biographical data to find out more about the participants' profiles (personal context and participants' behaviour towards foreign language learning).

2. Research area

2.1. Local linguistic situation

Reunion Island is a multicultural and multilingual territory. It is characterised by the “coexistence of cultures and languages on its territory” (Davilla Verdun, 2017) (our translation), the main ones being French and Reunionese Creole. A hierarchy is established according to their usage: Creole, the regional language, is mainly used in the private sphere (family, peers), while French, the national language, is used as the language of schooling and in formal situations (e.g., administration, institutions). In constant competition, these two languages reflect a situation of diglossia: French is considered ‘prestigious’ (Ferguson, 1959 cited in Tabouret-Keller, 2006), with education being done in French in schools. Pupils in Reunion Island learn to read and write in French in the classroom whereas they learn Creole orally at home. However, there are several different learning situations regarding French and Creole languages within Reunionese families:

- 1) Creole and French are learned simultaneously at home, with French continued and developed at school (this is the case for most Reunionese families). During the period from age 0 to 3, bilingual Creole-French children will develop both languages synchronously. However, it is important to note that, although it is the family nucleus

that gives the first trends in language use, it is the child who will decide, according to their personal uses of language, whether or not they will appropriate the two languages.

- 2) Creole is learned at home (Creole L1) and French learning only begins when the child starts school (around the age of 3). French becomes the language of schooling (L2). The learner uses Creole and French according to the context in which they find themselves, in this case, the dominant bilingualism in Creole can lead to difficulties of expression in French for the speaker.
- 3) Creole and French are learned at home and at school. Since 2005, “regional languages and cultures may be taught throughout the schooling period in accordance with arrangements defined by agreement between the State and the local authorities where these languages are used” (our translation) (Ministère de l’Éducation nationale, 2007). This law is applied to Reunionese Creole which is taught and assessed according to the skills criteria of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR). However, as noted in the literature review, this possibility of Creole language teaching is not offered in all schools on the island, and some parents are reluctant to learn Creole at school since they believe that learning Creole would be a ‘barrier’ to mastery of the French language. This situation (Creole and French learning at school) concerns very few families in Reunion Island, despite identity-based movements regarding Creole culture.

2.2. English language learning in France.

What does the Ministry of Education say about English learning in France? At what age do French pupils start learning English in France?

In France, including in Reunion Island, foreign language is learned from preschool onwards. Foreign language learning is not limited to English, even though considered as the ‘privileged language’ due to its worldwide use, other languages such as German or Spanish (or other foreign languages or even the regional language, Creole) can be taught in preschool or primary school

depending on schools' appraisal. According to the official curricula⁵, English is only compulsory in secondary schools, in Year 7 classes (*classes de sixième, 6^e*). Regarding the school context, the starting age for English learning is not the same for all pupils in France. It can start from the age of 3 (in preschool), the age of 6 (in primary school, or begin at the age of 10-11 (at the beginning of secondary school, Year 7).

2.3. Participants

As mentioned earlier, we chose a sample of 3 classes (Class A, B, C) of Year 10 classes (*classes de troisième, 3^e*) of different levels ranging from 'beginner' to 'advanced'. The classes were chosen with the help of the headteacher according to the overall level of the classes: Class A showed a higher portion of pupils with 'satisfactory results', Class B had a higher number of pupils with 'unsatisfactory results' and Class C is a mixed level class, with as many pupils with satisfactory results as with unsatisfactory results. Carrying out the research in Year 10 classes enables us to establish a picture of what has been achieved at the end of Cycle 4 (which corresponds to the "*cycle des approfondissements*", i.e., the deepening of the basic skills of the Common Base) and to determine whether the pupils' performance corresponds to the targeted CEFR level A2. According to the official curricula, by the end of the year, Year 10 students are expected to have achieved at least level A2 in all skills: "[...] Regarding the first foreign language, by the end of cycle 4, all students should have achieved at least level A2 in the five language activities. The activities on offer enable pupils to reach level B1 in several language activities" (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, 2023).

The three groups represent a total sample of 71 students aged 13 to 15. The study was carried out in January, in the second term of the school year. We recorded the number of pupils in English classes and the options they had, i.e., Creole, and advanced English.

⁵ Ministère de l'Éducation nationale et de la jeunesse. (2019). Les langues vivantes étrangères et régionales. Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Jeunesse. <https://www.education.gouv.fr/les-langues-vivantes-etrangeres-et-regionales-11249>

	CLASS A	CLASS B	CLASS C	TOTAL
Class Level	Good (+)	Debutant (-)	Average (+/-)	-
Total number of students in English classes	23	23	25	71
Number of students enrolled in Creole classes	6	0	1	7
Number of students enrolled in advanced English (LCE)	3	0	12	15

Table 2: Presentation of the sample

After selecting the groups, we gathered the opinions of the teachers (Teacher A and Teacher B) of the classes concerned. Teacher A is the teacher of classes B and C, and Teacher B is Group's A teacher.

Regarding Group B, the teacher described a group that is “not very committed to the work done in class”, with “an apparent lack of motivation”. According to her, the pupils in this group don't execute the tasks required “seriously” unless the work is marked. On the other hand, Group C was described as a dynamic group of students, despite some difficulties for some. The pupils show a willingness to learn. With this group, Teacher A finds it easier to propose varied tasks (e.g., oral production).

Teacher A adapted her teaching methods according to the group: with Group C, she proposes to the students more activities related to cultural competence, whereas, with Group B, she tends to deal with grammar points in-depth (e.g., revision of notions such as: simple present, present BE+V-ing, preterit – concepts, according to the teacher, that are supposed to be acquired at this stage of learning).

Regarding Group A, Teacher B described a dynamic and committed class. According to her, the students have reached A2 level in each of the language skills and B1 level in one or two of these skills. She told us that she can offer a variety of activities in class despite the ‘lack of time’. In her opinion, 3 hours of English per week “is not enough” and prevents her from devoting the same amount of work to all the language skills, particularly oral skills. With a large class size (over 20 pupils per class), she finds it difficult to set up oral tasks. To overcome this difficulty,

the pupils are invited to record themselves, so that the teacher can listen to them and mark them outside class time.

All three groups have the same amount of exposure to English in the school context. The official programs specify 3 hours of compulsory English in the timetable. Only students who have taken the ‘advanced English’ option have 5 hours of English per week (3 hours of English + 2 hours of ‘advanced English’). The three groups are exposed to the same contents: they all work in the same textbook (*So English! 3e*, Hatier 2017) even though the teachers (Teacher A and B) prefer to work with their own resources (sources found online on the Internet or, for example, other personal resources such as books or copies of activity books). Despite the different teaching methods to better match the groups’ profiles, the teachers make sure to follow the end-of-Cycle 4 program as established by the Ministry of Education and aim for their students to acquire oral and written skills: ‘listening and understanding’, ‘reading and understanding’, ‘speaking continuously’, ‘reacting and interacting’ (orally) and ‘writing and reacting in writing’ (our translation) (Ministère de l’Éducation nationale, 2023).

Biographical data on the participants was collected with the help of questionnaires, asking learners about their linguistic profile, i.e., whether they are bilingual in French and Creole, and when they started learning French, Creole, and English. These data enabled us to group the participants into several groups:

- According to their linguistic profile: monolingual (French), bilingual (French-Creole). We identified two types of bilinguals: those who learned French and Creole simultaneously (simultaneous bilinguals) and those who learned French first and then Creole (or the reverse, i.e., Creole and then French) (sequential bilinguals).
- According to the English age of onset: Early Classroom Learners (ECLs) of English and Late Classroom Learners (LCLs) of English, referring to participants who started learning English early in their early schooling years, i.e., during preschool, primary school (between 3 and 6 years old) and those who started learning English between the end of primary school and the beginning of secondary school (between 8 and 11 years old).

In her study, Simone Pfenninger described the groups as follows: MONO (for Swiss Monolinguals), SIMBI (for simultaneous bilinguals of Swiss and Standard German), and

SEQBI (for sequential bilinguals). She defined an age of onset of 6 years old for ECLs and an age of onset of 13 years old for LCLs.

We used the same typology (MONO, SIMBI, SEQBI), but we redefined the age range of ECLs and LCLs in order to be faithful to the characteristics mentioned earlier. Thus, we defined the age of ECLs at 6 years, i.e., the age at which pupils started to learn English at the beginning of primary school. For LCLs, we defined AO at the age of 11, which refers to pupils who began learning English in their first year of secondary school. However, because of the different starting periods (preschool, primary school, secondary school), we have defined a range of ages rather than a precise age. As a result, we count as ECLs those pupils who began learning English between the ages of 3 and 7, and we consider as LCLs those pupils who began learning English between the ages of 8 and 11. Based on this classification, we were able to identify the headcount by category:

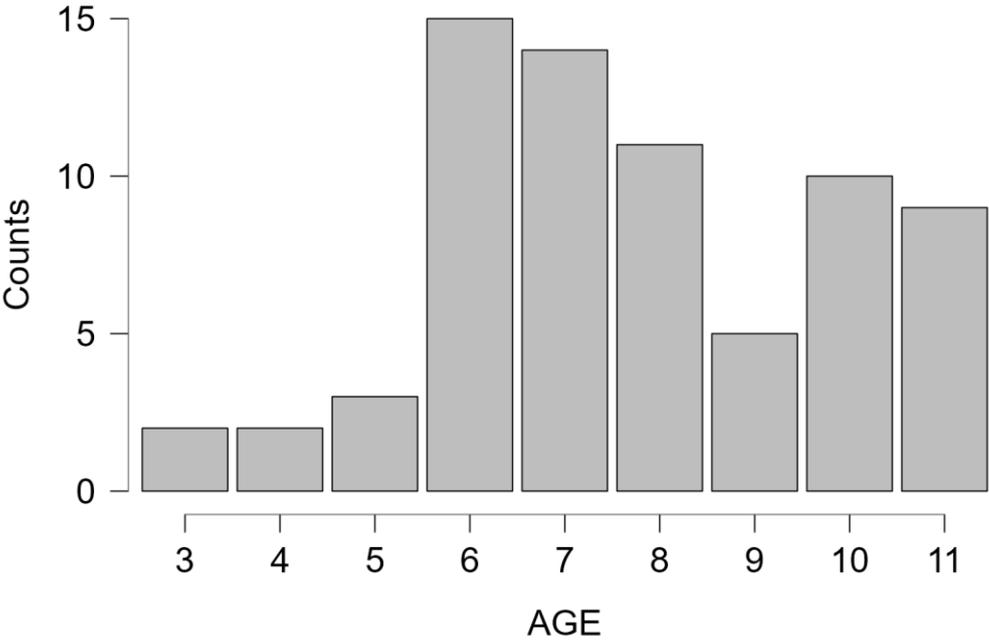


Figure 1: English age of onset by participants

The graph above shows the age groups mentioned. We can see that for ECLs, English starting age begins at 3, with the greatest number of children starting to learn around the age of 6-7, which corresponds to the start of primary school, i.e., the same time as they begin to learn to read and write in French (French literacy).

In the case of the LCLs, the age range of 8-11 years is clearly noticeable, placing the start of learning English well after the acquisition of French literacy.

Without distinguishing the monolingual groups from the bilingual groups, we have a total of 36 ECLs (age 3-7) and 35 ECLs (age 8-11), meaning that we have the same headcount of ECLs and LCLs.

However, if we take into account the linguistic profiles and the English age of onset, we have a representation of the learners as follows:

- Group Mono: 38 French monolinguals, literate in French.
 - 18 early classrooms learners (ECLs) (AO 6 or 3 to 7).
 - 20 late classrooms learners (LCLs) (AO 11 or 8 to 11).

- Group SIMBI: 29 simultaneous bilinguals of Creole-French.
 - 17 early classrooms learners (ECLs) (AO 6 or 3 to 7).
 - 12 late classrooms learners (LCLs) (AO 11 or 8 to 11).

- Group SEQBI: 4 sequential bilinguals of Creole-French.
 - 1 ECL early classrooms learners (ECLs) (AO 6 or 3 to 7).
 - 3 LCLs late classrooms learners (LCLs) (AO 11 or 8 to 11).

- Total Bilingual group: 33 Creole-French bilinguals.
 - 18 early classrooms learners (ECLs) (AO 6 or 3 to 7).
 - 15 late classrooms learners (LCLs) (AO 11 or 8 to 11).

This classification includes 7 biliterate students in French and Creole (i.e., taking French and Creole classes at Collège) and 14 pupils taking the advanced English option (see Figure 2).

CLASS	STUDENT NUMBER	Monolinguals (1) or Bilinguals (2)	ADVANCED ENGLISH (LCE)	ENGLISH AO
A	EE3	1	x	5
C	EE2	2	x	6
C	EE3	1	x	8
C	EE4	2	x	8
C	EE6	1	x	8
C	EE9	1	x	5
C	EE12	1	x	7
C	EE14	1	x	8
C	EE15	1	x	7
C	EE17	1	x	7
C	EE18	2	x	8
C	EE20	1	x	11
C	EE23	1	x	8
C	EE25	1	x	10

Figure 2: Advanced English learners

ECLs (5-7)	LCLs (8-11)	French-Creole bilinguals	French Monolinguals
6	8	3	11

Among the ‘biliterates’ (French-Creole) there are 5 ECLs of English and 2 LCLs of English and among those taking the ‘advanced English’ option, there are 5 ECLs of English and 9 LCLs of English. In this sample (advanced English), there are 3 bilinguals (ECLs: 1 / LCLs: 2) and 11 monolinguals (ECLs: 5/ LCLs: 6).

CLASS	STUDENT NUMBER	Monolinguals (1) or Bilinguals (2)	Creole	ENGLISH AO
A	EE6	2	x	4
A	EE9	2	x	6
A	EE13	2	x	8
A	EE20	2	x	6
A	EE21	2	x	3
A	EE23	2	x	9
B	EE5	2	x	7

Figure 3: French-Creole bilinguals

ECLs (5-7)	LCLs (8-11)	French-Creole Bilinguals	French Monolinguals
5	2	7	-

Thus, we can say that the chosen research field has the necessary conditions to reproduce the Swiss study (Pfenninger, 2020). The presence of different starting ages of English learning

(ECLs: AO 6, LCLs: AO 11) and the multilingual configuration of the territory, offering various groups of learners (MONO, SIMBI, SEQBI), allow us to replicate this study, with, of course, some adjustments to consider local specificities.

III. Research protocol

To answer our research question, we established a research protocol enabling us to take stock of the participants' linguistic skills and knowledge of the foreign language and evaluate the impact of age and bilingualism on foreign language acquisition. To do so, we adapted Pfenninger's protocol as led in the BAE project to match the profile of our participants. We focused mainly on written activities and an assessment of written skills, this format being more suitable for carrying out a protocol in a limited time.

1. The present study: research protocol

Regarding our research protocol, the data was collected in January of this year, at the start of the second half of the school year. As the year began in August for the pupils in Reunion Island, this represents 5 months of Year 10 (*troisième*, 3^e) class instruction.

For each class, we had three hours to set up the data collection. As a result, we carried out the activities in 3 sessions: the first was dedicated to collecting biographical data and information about learners' attitudes towards the foreign language (to use Pfenninger's terms (2017) we were interested in the following items: 'Language background', 'Foreign language learning motivation and learning strategies', 'Learner beliefs and learning experiences') via two questionnaires adapted from ('The Bilingual Language Profile' and the 'Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners'), and one open-ended question (to do this, we used the same question used by Pfenninger in her protocol 'You should write about your feelings, thoughts, opinion, motivation as well as any experiences with regard to the early or late introduction of multiple foreign languages', translated into French so that the participants could answer with their language of literacy). The second session was devoted to carrying out a placement test (Oxford Placement Test) and a productive vocabulary exercise (Lex30), and the

final session was devoted to a written production exercise in English based on audiovisual content.

This part will be dedicated to a description of the tasks of the research protocol carried out on 3 Year 10 classes, i.e., a sample of 71 participating pupils.

2. Questionnaires

During the first session (1 hour), we devoted 30 minutes to the Bilingual Language Profile (BLP). Although the instructions state that the questionnaire can be completed in 10 minutes, we gave the participants half an hour (30 min) to answer the 19 questions designed to gather information about their language practices. The second part of the session was devoted to completing a questionnaire on learner's attitudes (10 min) and a writing exercise in French on 'learner beliefs and learning experiences' (20 min) (see Appendix A).

2.1. Bilingual Language Profile (BLP)

The Bilingual Language Profile (BLP) was designed by Birdsong *et al.* (2012). The designers of this questionnaire define the BLP as “an instrument for assessing language dominance through self-reports that is concise, quick, and easy to use. The BLP is intended to produce a continuous dominance score and a general bilingual profile taking into account a variety of linguistic variables. The BLP is an open and free assessment tool for researchers, educators, and anyone with an interest in assessing language dominance” (COERLL, Bilingual Language Profile)⁶.

Through this questionnaire, our aim was to gather biographical information on the participants, in particular concerning their language history (languages spoken among French, Creole, and English and others; the age at which they began to learn the languages spoken; the years of courses taken in each of the languages mentioned and the time spent in a country where the languages mentioned are spoken, their use of languages (at what intensity and in what context; e.g. peers, family, school), attitudes towards the languages spoken and their personal opinions concerning their language skills (speaking, understanding, reading, writing).

⁶ <https://sites.la.utexas.edu/bilingual/>

The questionnaire is divided into five parts:

1. Biographical Information
2. Language history
3. Language use
4. Language proficiency
5. Language attitudes

Pupils were asked to tick boxes and their answers were expressed either as percentages (particularly concerning language use) or on a scale from 0 to 6, ranging from 'disagree' (0) to 'agree' (6) (concerning linguistic skills and attitudes).

Since we were asking for personal information, but also to avoid any problems in understanding the questions, we worked with the French version of the questionnaire⁷ (see Appendix A.1) and adapted it to our study by manually adding the line concerning Creole, which did not exist in the original questionnaire.

This questionnaire enabled us to differentiate between bilingual and monolingual groups and, at the same time, to determine the age of onset of English language learning, i.e., to distinguish between early English classroom learners and late English classroom learners. It also enabled us to categorise the different types of bilingual (simultaneous, sequential) and to define whether the participants were literate in one language (French) or biliterate (French and Creole).

2.2. Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners (LAQ-LL).

The second questionnaire proposed in the first session (Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners) seeks to identify participants' attitudes and representations towards learning a foreign language, which in our context is English.

This questionnaire, presented in the form of a table, was initially designed for non-native learners of Spanish (see Appendix A.2). This questionnaire prompts learners to reflect on their experience of foreign language learning ("Spanish classes are always among my favourite classes", "Studying languages is fun"), about the socio-cultural interest toward the foreign language, i.e. whether learners are interested in the culture of the countries where the foreign language is spoken ("Spanish sounds nice", "I find Latin American cultures interesting") and

⁷ <https://sites.la.utexas.edu/bilingual/files/2012/01/BLP-FRAN%C3%87AIS-ANGLAIS.pdf>

about their conception of multilingualism, i.e. their opinion of the importance of multilingualism, whether learners are interested in the culture of the countries where the foreign language is spoken ("Spanish sounds nice", "I find Latin American cultures interesting") and their conception of multilingualism, i.e. their opinion on the ability to speak several languages ("I have no interest in learning languages", "I like the idea of being/becoming bilingual") (Artamónova, 2020).

To adapt it to our research, we replaced the term 'Spanish' with 'English' and then modified some of the items. We have proposed a French version of the questionnaire for the participants. However, we kept the three categories: "Language learning experience (Description: Evaluation of language learning activity and language use)", "Sociocultural appeal (Description: Evaluation of attractiveness of the language, its people, and cultures)", and "Value of multilingualism (Description: Evaluation of benefits associated with multilingual ability and interest in developing such ability)".

There are 8 to 10 propositions per category (ex: "*Les cours d'anglais sont plus divertissants que les autres cours.*", "*Je trouve les cultures du monde anglophone intéressantes.*", "*Il n'est pas nécessaire d'apprendre d'autres langues si vous parlez français.*"), participants were asked to answer each item with a number from 1 to 7, corresponding to the following terms: Strongly disagree (1) / Disagree (2) / Somewhat disagree (3) / Neither agree nor disagree (4) / Somewhat agree (5) / Agree (6) / Strongly agree (7) (see appendix A.2).

As the questionnaire was short and did not pose any comprehension problems, participants were given 10 minutes to answer each item. We used this information to find out about their motivation regarding learning foreign languages in general and English in particular, their attitudes towards the learning situation, their cultural interest, and their opinion regarding multilingualism.

2.3. Open question: "learner beliefs and learning experiences".

To find out more about 'Learner beliefs and learning experiences', we added to the LAQ-LL the open-ended question used in the BAE project (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017): "You should write about your feelings, thoughts, opinion, motivation as well as any experiences with regard to the early or late introduction of multiple foreign languages".

We proposed the instruction translated into French ('Selon vous, faudrait-il apprendre les langues étrangères dès le plus jeune âge, ou au contraire plus tard ? Faites part de votre opinion, vos motivations et de votre expérience personnelle') so that the participants could give us their opinion in their language of literacy, in French. Participants were given 20 minutes to write their response, and no length was specified.

The answers to this question enable us to find out whether their conception of foreign language learning (the age at which they start learning in relation to their personal experience) will influence their foreign language results.

The questionnaires (BLP, LAQ-LL) and the open-ended question were chosen because they enabled us to gather the information necessary for our research: general presentation of the interviewee, the age of onset of the foreign language (English) but also whether the participants were bilingual or not, practices and representations concerning foreign language learning, and the interviewees' personal opinions concerning plurilingualism and the 'early' or 'late' introduction of foreign languages.

3. Tasks

Sessions 2 and 3 of the research protocol were devoted to written activities: a placement test (Oxford Placement Test), a productive vocabulary test (Lex30) and a written production activity based on a short, silent cartoon (Simon's Cat).

3.1. Oxford Placement Test

The Oxford Placement Test was used to determine the students' level of English. This test enables us to classify the participants according to their CEFR level (e.g., A1, A2, B1, etc.). As mentioned on the first page of the form, students were given 30 minutes to complete the entire test. This test, designed for non-native learners of English, was developed by Oxford University Press. The first part consists of 40 questions and the second part of 19 questions. Students had to tell us how they were progressing before moving on to the next part (Part 2).

The placement test consists of multiple-choice questions and fill-in-the-blank texts, calling on participants' knowledge of the English language (grammar, vocabulary, appropriate use of articles, tenses, and so on). According to Purpura (2009), this placement test aims to "(1) to

measure the language knowledge that these students have and to place them as accurately and reliably as possible into levels that align with the CEFR; (2) to provide students, teachers, and institutions (i.e., the stakeholders) with detailed information, so that they can make informed decisions about teaching and learning; (3) to provide stakeholders with an online placement test that is highly practical (i.e., inexpensive, flexible, easy-to-use, and adaptable), and reliable in its measurement of students' abilities”.

We did the pen version (instead of the computer-based version) of the test and the participants were given no help nor explanation of the instructions. Our aim was to encourage learners to mobilise their implicit understanding of the instructions. Students who had difficulty completed only part 1 of the test, while those who felt more comfortable completed both parts.

3.2. Lex30

The Lex30 test is a productive vocabulary test. It allows us to evaluate the number of words that a speaker can produce by associating a word with an idea. Meara & Fitzpatrick (2000) define Lex30 as “a word association task, in which test-takers are presented with a list of stimulus words and required to produce responses to these stimuli. There is no predetermined set of response target words for the subject to produce, and in this way, Lex30 resembles a free productive task”.

The instructions given to the students were as follows: ‘Write down the first four (English) words you think of when you read each word in the list’. To avoid comprehension problems, the instruction was also given in French (‘Écrivez les quatre premiers mots (en anglais) auxquels vous pensez lorsque vous lisez chaque mot de la liste’). Indeed, before carrying out the activity, five minutes were devoted to describing the task in French to optimise the chances of success of the pupils, who were not used to this type of exercise, which, as Meara & Fitzpatrick (2000) explain, does not generate right or wrong answers.

As indicated in the instructions, participants had to write down the first 4 words that came to mind when they encountered a word in the slideshow (see appendix). For this activity, participants were given 30 seconds to produce a maximum of 4 words per item, i.e., 30 minutes to complete the whole activity.

Meara & Fitzpatrick (2000) explain the principle of the Lex30 in their study: “All the stimulus words are highly frequent — In our experiment, the words were taken from Nation's first 1000 wordlist (Nation, 1984), i.e. they are words which even a fairly low-level learner would be expected to recognise. This is a deliberate choice, in order to make it possible to use the test with learners across a wide range of proficiency levels” and that “None of the stimulus words typically elicits a single, dominant primary response [...]”. Each word will challenge the student to think about words and associations that are different from the words proposed. Participants proposing words that are not in Nation's reference frame (1,000 words) will be considered as having a large lexical repertoire.

3.3. Written Production: “Simon’s Cat”

In order to get an idea of the participants' writing skills, we proposed a written production task in English based on audio-visual content. This exercise enabled us to see how learners organised their ideas in writing, and how they manipulated the knowledge they had acquired during their learning (grammar, conjugation, use of vocabulary, etc.).

The chosen material depicts the interaction between a cat and its owner (Simon's Cat, Hot Water). The scene takes place in a bathroom: the cat, hungry, prevents its master from taking a shower. There is no dialogue in the extract, which puts aside the problem of understanding the language. The aim here is to report the actions of the two characters, based on what the participants have seen. The material was chosen in accordance with the general level of the 3 groups: it mobilises the skills of level A2 of the CEFR (i.e., elements of everyday life, close environment), and the narrative exercise is accessible to them because according to the descriptor referring to written production, the A2 level speaker: 'can produce a series of simple phrases and sentences linked with simple connectors like "and", "but" and "because"' (Europarat, 2020).

We carried out the activity in 30 minutes, including three viewings of the extract (the first viewing was for students to discover the extract, the second viewing was for them to take notes and the third viewing was for students to complete their notes) and the writing exercise. To eliminate any comprehension problems when carrying out the task, the instructions were given in French and English: “Vous raconterez, en détail, ce qu'il s'est passé dans la vidéo suivante” (“You will write with as much detail as possible about what happened in the following video”)

(Appendix A.5). Participants were also given a ‘Toolbox’ vocabulary sheet in the form of a screenshot of one of the main scenes in the video, with a caption containing the vocabulary useful for written production (see picture below).

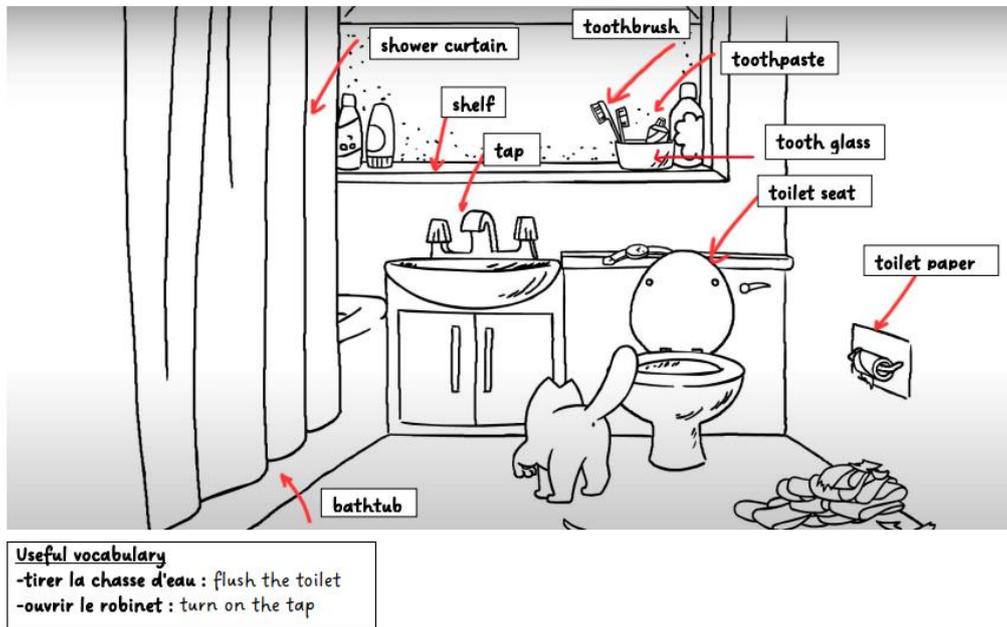


Figure 4: Toolbox English Written Production

IV. Data Analysis

1. Corpus description

The sample (71 participants) represents only students who completed all the data (PLB, LAQ-LL, OQ, OPT, LEX30, English Written Production). See Table 3, Table 4, and Table 5 for a representation of the activities carried out with each class.

CLASS A

CLASS	STUDENT NUMBER	ENGLISH AO	MONOLINGUAL (0) / BILINGUAL (1)	LAQ-LL	OQ	OPT	LEX30	EWP
A	EE1	7	0	x	x	18	17	x
A	EE2	7	0	x	x	15	29	x
A	EE3	5	0	x	x	19	18	x
A	EE4	7	0	x	x	26	17	x
A	EE5	11	0	x	x	27	36	x
A	EE6	4	1	x	x	38	47	x
A	EE7	9	0	x	x	26	28	x
A	EE8	9	0	x	x	22	17	x
A	EE9	6	1	x	x	12	27	x
A	EE10	7	0	x	x	18	22	x
A	EE11	6	0	x	x	39	35	x
A	EE12	9	0	x	x	19	23	x
A	EE13	8	0	x	x	18	15	x
A	EE14	7	1	x	x	21	12	x
A	EE15	8	0	x	x	15	28	x
A	EE16	6	1	x	x	23	13	x
A	EE17	6	1	x	x	24	10	x
A	EE18	9	0	x	x	31	33	x
A	EE19	7	0	x	x	21	9	x
A	EE20	6	0	x	x	21	24	x
A	EE21	3	0	x	x	27	25	x
A	EE22	7	0	x	x	13	14	x
A	EE23	9	1	x	x	11	15	x

Table 3: Class A Tasks

Abbreviations: English AO = English Age of Onset; LAQ-LL = Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners, OQ = Open Question; OPT = Oxford Placement Test; EWP = English Written Production.

CLASS A	
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	23
NUMBER OF BILINGUALS	6
NUMBER OF MONOLINGUALS	17

CLASS B

CLASS	STUDENT NUMBER	ENGLISH AO	MONOLINGUAL (0) / BILINGUAL (1)	LAQ-LL	OQ	OPT	LEX30	EWP
B	EE1	6	1	x	x	30	17	x
B	EE2	10	1	x	x	15	4	x
B	EE3	10	1	x	x	14	9	x
B	EE4	6	0	x	x	38	24	x
B	EE5	7	1	x	x	9	16	x
B	EE6	10	0	x	x	16	27	x
B	EE7	10	1	x	x	26	24	x
B	EE8	11	0	x	x	13	18	x
B	EE9	4	1	x	x	16	14	x
B	EE10	10	1	x	x	19	3	x
B	EE11	10	1	x	x	14	11	x
B	EE12	6	0	x	x	13	4	x
B	EE13	11	0	x	x	21	1	x
B	EE14	6	1	x	x	22	33	x
B	EE15	3	1	x	x	12	10	x
B	EE16	8	0	x	x	20	22	x
B	EE17	5	1	x	x	19	21	x
B	EE18	11	1	x	x	18	9	x
B	EE19	7	1	x	x	23	14	x
B	EE20	8	0	x	x	26	32	x
B	EE21	7	0	x	x	20	27	x
B	EE22	10	1	x	x	14	19	x
B	EE23	10	1	x	x	12	2	x

Table 4: Class B Tasks

Abbreviations: English AO = English Age of Onset; LAQ-LL = Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners, OQ = Open Question; OPT = Oxford Placement Test; EWP = English Written Production.

CLASS B	
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	23
NUMBER OF BILINGUALS	15
NUMBER OF MONOLINGUALS	8

CLASS C

CLASS	STUDENT NUMBER	ENGLISH AO	MONOLINGUAL (0) / BILINGUAL (1)	LAQ-LL	OQ	OPT	LEX30	EWP
C	EE1	6	1	x	x	21	20	x
C	EE2	6	1	x	x	35	41	x
C	EE3	8	0	x	x	25	19	x
C	EE4	8	1	x	x	22	15	x
C	EE5	6	1	x	x	22	12	x
C	EE6	8	0	x	x	35	31	x
C	EE7	8	0	x	x	27	9	x
C	EE8	11	0	x	x	18	18	x
C	EE9	5	0	x	x	30	14	x
C	EE10	7	1	x	x	20	15	x
C	EE11	6	1	x	x	18	4	x
C	EE12	7	0	x	x	20	23	x
C	EE13	6	0	x	x	20	14	x
C	EE14	8	0	x	x	14	8	x
C	EE15	7	0	x	x	14	14	x
C	EE16	11	1	x	x	12	8	x
C	EE17	7	0	x	x	24	28	x
C	EE18	8	1	x	x	17	17	x
C	EE19	11	1	x	x	14	1	x
C	EE20	11	0	x	x	27	23	x
C	EE21	10	1	x	x	20	22	x
C	EE22	6	1	x	x	13	7	x
C	EE23	8	0	x	x	18	9	x
C	EE24	11	1	x	x	12	3	x
C	EE25	10	0	x	x	31	23	x

Table 5: Class C Tasks

Abbreviations: English AO = English Age of Onset; LAQ-LL = Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners, OQ = Open Question; OPT = Oxford Placement Test; EWP = English Written Production.

CLASS C	
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	25
NUMBER OF BILINGUALS	12
NUMBER OF MONOLINGUALS	13

The data reported in the OPT and Lex30 columns correspond to the participants' results in these two tests. These results will enable us to carry out a statistical analysis, relating the students' profiles (bilingual and monolingual; early and late classroom learners of English) to their performance in English. Using this data, we will be able to answer the following questions:

1. Does the age of onset significantly impact English language skills, as measured by the Oxford Placement Test?
2. Does being bilingual significantly impact English language skills, as measured by the Oxford Placement Test?
3. Does being biliterate (French-Creole) significantly influence English language skills, as measured by the OPT?
4. Does the age of onset significantly impact English language skills, as measured by Lex30?
5. Does being bilingual significantly influence English language skills, as measured by Lex30?
6. Does being biliterate (French-Creole) significantly influence English language skills, as measured by Lex30?

Each task has a different purpose. Given that we used the PLB data to collect biographical data and thus define the different groups (bilingual and monolingual; early and late classroom learners of English), we will use the results of the LAQ-LL and the answers to the open question to establish a motivational profile of the learners, i.e. to find out whether they have positive or negative attitudes to language learning and to find out their position on foreign language learning, the age at which they think foreign languages should be learned and the relevance of mastering several languages. For the LAQ-LL we will study the following entries:

Subscales	Question Items
Expérience de l'apprentissage de la langue <i>Language learning experience</i>	3. Apprendre l'anglais est amusant. <i>3. Learning English is fun.</i>
	11. Je suivrais des cours de langue même s'ils n'étaient pas requis. <i>11. I would take language classes even if they were not required.</i>
Intérêt socioculturel <i>Sociocultural appeal</i>	5. L'anglais est une belle langue. <i>5. English is a beautiful language.</i>
	9. L'anglais est une langue importante en France d'aujourd'hui. <i>9. English is an important language in France.</i>
Représentations du plurilinguisme <i>Value of multilingualism</i>	3. J'aime l'idée d'être ou de devenir bilingue. <i>3. I like the idea of being/becoming bilingual.</i>
	7. Ne parler que français me suffit. <i>7. Speaking just French is enough for me.</i>

Table 6 : Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners (LAQ-LL) Analysis

As for the written production task in English, the analysis of 8 productions (see Appendix A.2) will enable us to establish whether the length of the production is proportional to the student's level, i.e., the longer the production (words, clauses), the better the student's performance.

2. Method

The data from the Lex30 and OPT tasks will be analysed statistically. In order to answer the questions formulated above (6), we will use JASP, a statistical analysis software that will enable us to describe and analyse the relationships between the results obtained on the OPT and Lex30 tasks and the profile of the learners. Our aim is to carry out a correlational analysis between the factors (bilingualism, monolingualism, age at which English was first learned, and biliteracy) linked to the results obtained on the tests (OPT, Lex30).

The first step is to determine whether the data are normally distributed, i.e., whether real data follow a normal distribution or not. The normality or otherwise of the data will enable us to choose the appropriate test (e.g., T-Test for normally distributed data or Mann-Whitney for non-normally distributed data).

2.1. English age of onset, Lex30, OPT.

Concerning the correlation between the age at which English was first learned and the results obtained in the OPT and LEX30 tests, Shapiro Wilk's test of normality reveals a deviation from normality for both tests (OPT, Lex30), meaning that since these are quantitative variables, the data are not normally distributed.

Therefore, to analyse the data relating to the English AO and the scores obtained, we will use the Spearman correlation. This test will enable us to answer the following questions: “Does the age of onset significantly impact English language skills, as measured by the OPT?” (1), and “Does the onset age significantly impact English language skills, as measured by the OPT?” (4).

Assumption Checks

Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)

		W	p
OPT	0	0.936	0.032
	1	0.912	0.011

Note. Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

Assumption Checks

Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)

		W	p
LEX30	0	0.980	0.727
	1	0.897	0.004

Note. Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

2.2. Bilingualism, Lex30, OPT.

Concerning the correlation between bilingualism and the results obtained in the OPT test, the Shapiro Wilk's test statistic revealed that the data are not normally distributed (see Method 2.1.). As a result, we will use the Mann-Whitney test to answer the following question: “Does being bilingual significantly impact English language skills, as measured by the OPT?” (2).

However, regarding the correlation between bilingualism and the results obtained in the Lex30 test, the Shapiro Wilk's test statistic (AI Therapy) revealed that $W = 0.978$, $p\text{-value} = 0.236$. According to AI Therapy⁸: “since the p -value is greater than 0.05, there is not sufficient evidence to reject the hypothesis that the data is normal. In other words, it appears that the data points are approximately normally distributed”. Which allows us to use an independent T-test to answer the following question: “Does being bilingual significantly impact English language skills, as measured by the Lex 30?” (5).

Histogram

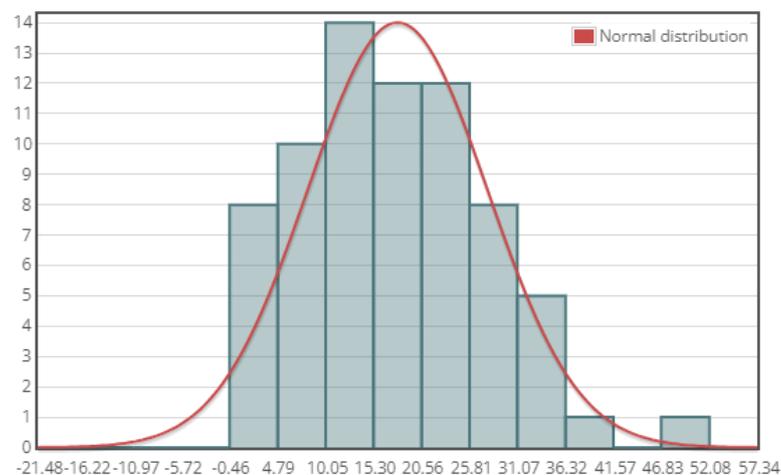


Figure 5 Shapiro Wilk statistic test of normality, Lex30 and bilingualism (Source: AI Therapy)

2.3. Biliteracy, Lex30, OPT.

Regarding the correlation between biliteracy (Creole-French) and test results the Shapiro Wilk's test statistic revealed a deviation from normality.

⁸ AI Therapy: <https://www.ai-therapy.com/psychology-statistics/results/20230526170115709>

Assumption Checks

Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)

		W	p
LEX30	0	0.980	0.727
	2	0.729	0.008

Note. Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

Assumption Checks

Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)

		W	p
OPT	0	0.936	0.032
	2	0.893	0.292

Note. Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

To measure the influence of biliteracy on the results obtained in the Lex30 test, we will use an independent t-test and to measure the influence of biliteracy on the results obtained in the OPT test, we will analyse the data using the Mann-Whitney test. These manipulations will help us answer the following questions: Does being biliterate (French-Creole) significantly influence English language skills, as measured by OPT? (3) / Does being biliterate (French-Creole) significantly influence English language skills, as measured by Lex30 (6)?

It is important to precise that for this analysis, we removed the ‘bilingual’ criterion (code ‘2’), as the tests did not allow us to analyse 3 data items (monolingualism, bilingualism, and biliteracy) at the same time. This analysis allows us to see if biliterates have better scores than their monolingual peers.

To sum up, for research questions involving a quantitative variable (Lex30, OPT) and a qualitative variable (bilingual or monolingual), we should compare the means of the two groups using a t-test. This type of test will tell us whether the results obtained (Lex30 or OPT) are significantly influenced by one of the groups (bilingual, monolingual). When the data are normally distributed (Lex30) an independent t-test should be performed. If the dependent variable (OPT) is not normally distributed, a Mann-Whitney test should be used.

V. Results

In the following, we answer to the six questions formulated earlier and present our findings regarding the tasks led with the participants.

1. Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners (LAQ-LL)

We collected data from the 3 classes (A, B, C), which we converted into the form of a graph. The items we chose enabled us to find out what participants thought about learning English (whether they enjoyed English lessons, whether they enjoyed learning English in class) but also about their interest in English culture and their perception of the importance of English in the world. Indeed, as English is a *lingua franca*, its worldwide use leads learners to reflect on the importance of this language in their daily lives (see results to the open question). Similarly, these questions invited learners to reflect on language use in general, their perception of multilingualism, and their relationship to this ability (whether they would like to be able to use more than one language or whether they are content with French alone).

The graphs below show learners' attitudes toward foreign language learning and English. The scale enables us to understand to what extent learners agree or disagree with the various statements.

Scale:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Kind of disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Okay	Totally agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Apprendre l'anglais est amusant.

71 réponses

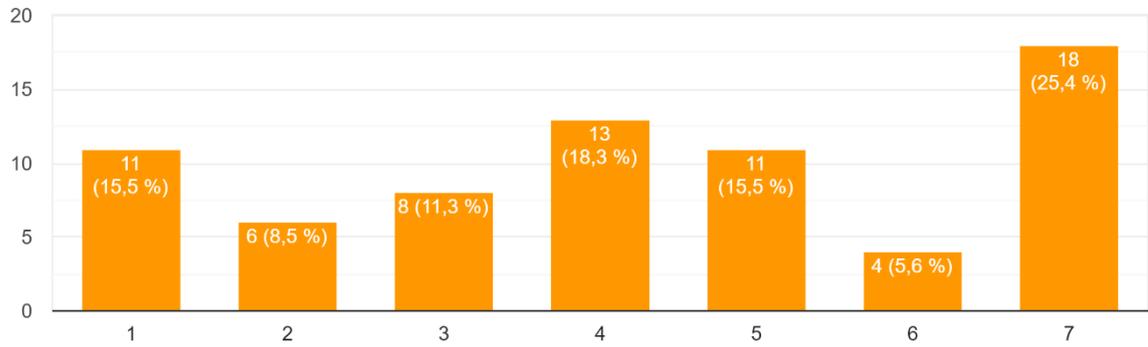


Figure 7: 3. Learning English is fun.

Je suivrais des cours de langue même s'ils n'étaient pas requis.

71 réponses

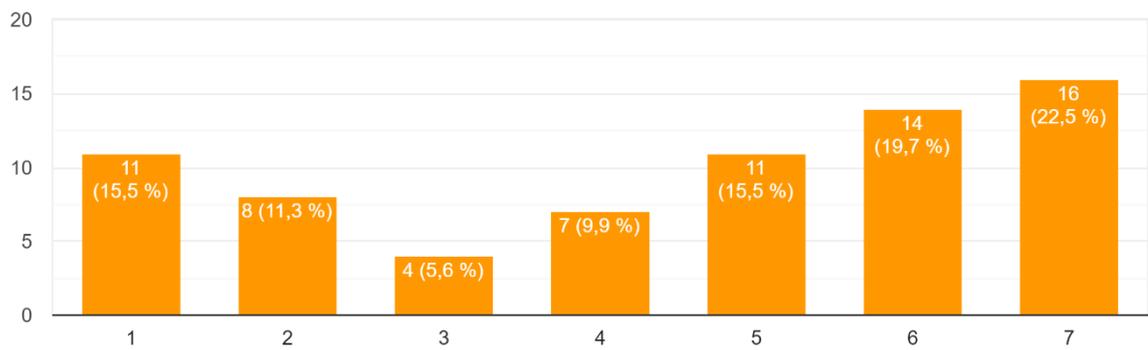


Figure 8: 11. I would take language classes even if they were not required.

L'anglais est une belle langue.

71 réponses

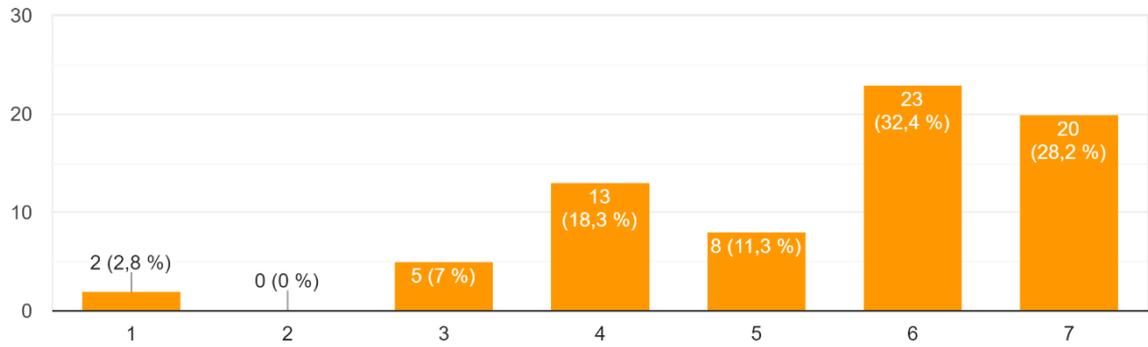


Figure 9: 5. English is a beautiful language.

L'anglais est une langue importante en France d'aujourd'hui.

71 réponses

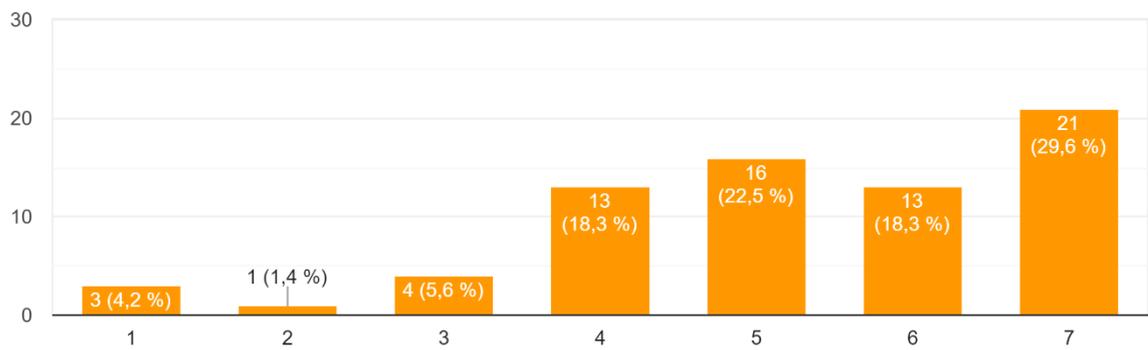


Figure 10: 9. English is an important language in France.

J'aime l'idée d'être ou de devenir bilingue.

71 réponses

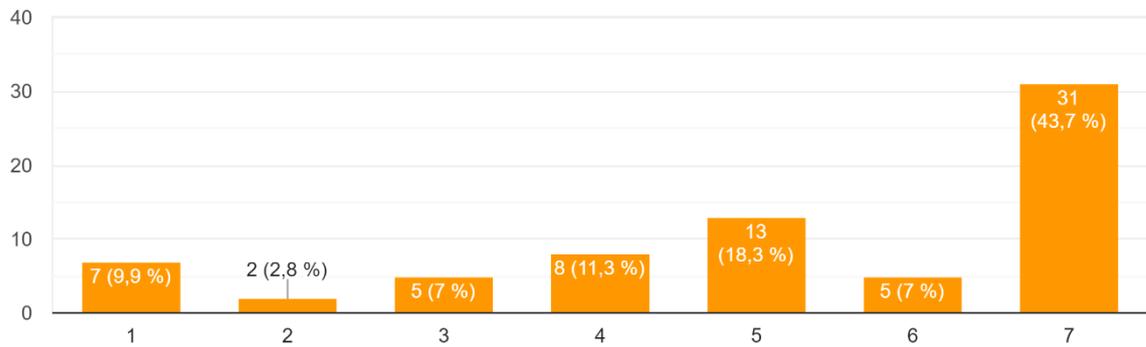


Figure 11: 3. I like the idea of being/becoming bilingual.

Ne parler que français me suffit.

71 réponses

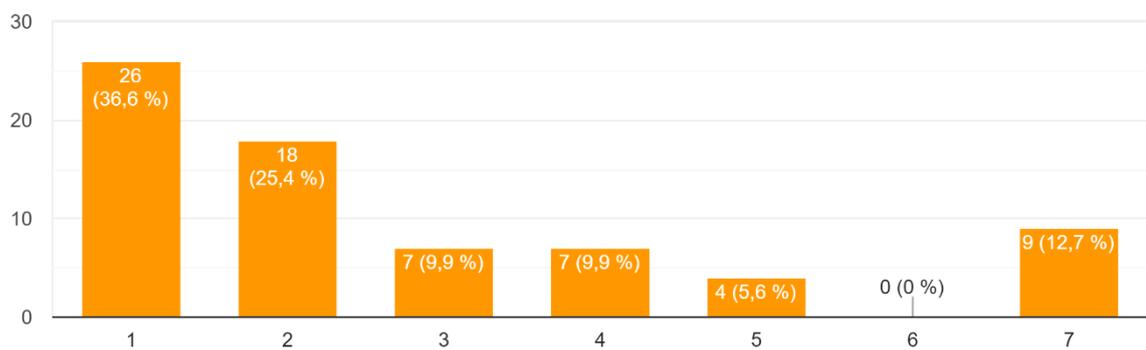


Figure 12: 7. Speaking just French is enough for me.

The majority of responses were close to the 5, 6, and 7 range ("somewhat agree", "okay", "totally agree"), which shows a positive attitude towards the various statements. Most of the participants think they would take language courses even if they weren't required to, think that English is a good language and that English is an important language in France, and are open to the idea of learning other languages. Indeed, more than half of the participants think that speaking just French isn't enough for them (62%, if we add the values "Strongly disagree" and "Disagree" for the proposition "7. Speaking just French is enough for me").

The only proposition to cause mixed results was "3. Learning English is fun" (Figure 7). Even though there were 25% who "completely agreed" with this statement, there was a percentage of

participants who disagreed with it (around 35% of students, if we add up the values 1 to 3), which gives us some information about their feelings and motivation for learning English.

2. Open-ended Question

After studying the participants' answers to the open-ended question 'Selon vous, faudrait-il apprendre les langues étrangères dès le plus jeune âge, ou au contraire plus tard ?' ("You should write about your feelings, thoughts, opinion, motivation as well as any experiences with regard to the early or late introduction of multiple foreign languages", as in Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017), we identified three types of response: the opinions in favour of early foreign language learning (1), the opinions against early foreign language learning (2), and the mixed opinions about the question (3). The results revealed the following figures:

- 59/71 participants are in favour of foreign language learning at an early age, which represents approximately 83.1% of the answers (results rounded to the nearest hundredth).
- 2/71 participants are against foreign language learning at an early age, which represents approximately 2.82% of the answers (results rounded to the nearest hundredth).
- 10/71 participants seem to have mixed opinions about the question, which represents 14.09% of the answers.

2.1. Opinions in favour of FL learning at an early age.

We have identified 5 recurring statements by participants who appear to be in favour of language learning from an early age. We have rephrased them as follows:

1. Early exposure to foreign language learning makes a foreign language easier to learn.
2. Early FL learning leads to bilingualism.
3. An early age of instruction means a longer exposition to a foreign language.
4. Early FL learning allows students to develop learning habits.
5. Early FL learning guarantees long-term motivation.

Most participants who were in favour of early FL learning regret not having learned English earlier and think that it is now too late to be bilingual and/or reach high proficiency in this language.

For the participants who learned English at an early age (ECLs), the students justify their 'good level' by their early exposure to the language.

However, opinions are divided when it comes to the age at which FL learning begins: some support simultaneous learning (at the same time as the mother tongue, L1) in order to learn the foreign language naturally, like their native language. They suggest an age of onset between years 0 and 3.

On the other hand, some suggest FL learning at an early age but at the beginning of primary school, i.e., successive learning of the language (as opposed to simultaneous learning) so as not to interfere with the development of the first language (L1).

2.2. Opinions against FL learning at an early age.

The two participants (2/71) who are against the idea of an early exposure to foreign languages argued that English/foreign languages should be learned later in life when the learners feel the need to acquire a new language (this argument is in line with the principle of necessity). Another argument is that learning a foreign language at an early age is “useless” because children might forget the language if it is not practiced enough. The participant also argues that acquiring the French language is a complex process, and learning a foreign language while processing the first may interfere with the acquisition of literacy in the L1.

2.3. Mixed opinions about the question (FL learning at an early age).

Many students emphasise the importance of the motivation factor instead of the age factor. Indeed, the opinions collected suggest that "forced learning", regardless of the age of onset, can lead to a loss of motivation. Some even suggest that foreign language learning should be based solely on motivation.

Some participants consider the importance of the mother tongue and propose that, regardless of the age factor, people who don't have enough proficiency in French “do not necessarily want

to learn a foreign language”. Similarly, some added that it is possible to live solely with one language.

Finally, some of the answers suggest a neutral opinion among the participants. According to them, age is not a significant factor, since FL learning can’t be fully continuous (i.e., there may be pauses in the language learning process). Similarly, some of the responses reveal the nullity of this factor, saying that there is no age for learning a foreign language and that acquiring a new language can be done at any time in life.

3. Oxford Placement Test, Lex30.

The results of the OPT and Lex30 test can be presented as follows:

Descriptive Statistics		
	OPT	LEX30
Valid	71	71
Missing	0	0
Mean	20.606	17.930
Std. Deviation	6.962	9.852
Minimum	9.000	1.000
Maximum	39.000	47.000

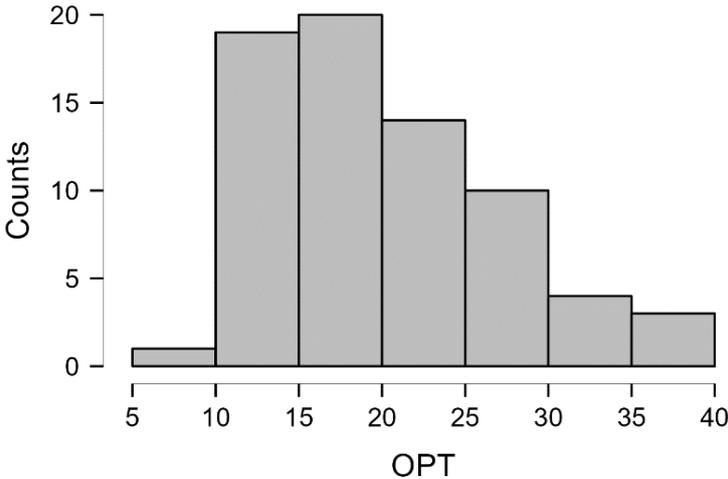


Figure 13: Recap chart of OPT test results for the 3 classes.

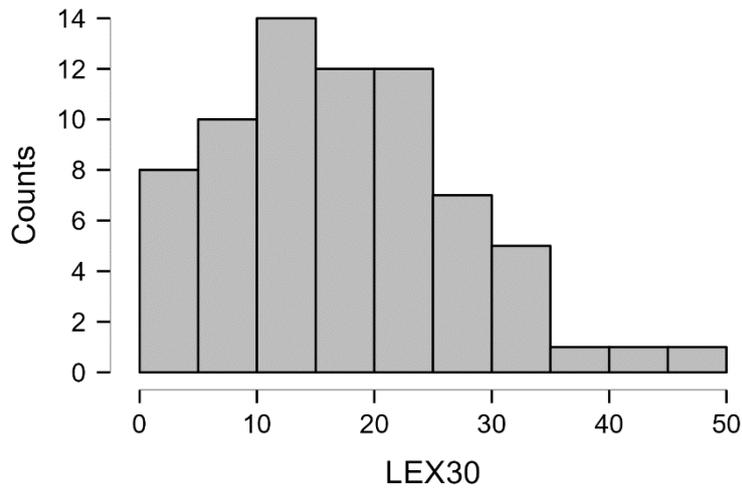


Figure 14 : Recap chart of Lex30 test results for the 3 classes

Out of a sample of 71 participants, the highest score on the Oxford Placement Test was 39/60 (the lowest being 9/60) and for the Lex30, the highest score (i.e., the participant who proposed the most word-ideas that did not appear in Paul Nation's 1,000 words beds) was 47, and the lowest score was 1, which shows a significant difference between the highest and lowest scores in the two tests, implying a variability in the participants' English skills (OPT, Lex30).

3.1. Age of onset and lex30, OPT;

- **RQ1: Does the age of onset significantly impact English language skills, as measured by the OPT?**
- **RQ4: Does the age of onset significantly impact English language skills, as measured by Lex30?**

Spearman's Correlations

Variable		AGE	OPT	LEX30
1. AGE	Spearman's rho	—		
	p-value	—		
2. OPT	Spearman's rho	-0.213	—	
	p-value	0.075	—	
3. LEX30	Spearman's rho	-0.157	0.507	—
	p-value	0.191	< .001	—

As mentioned in (Method 2.1.), we used Spearman's Correlations statistic test to measure the impact of the age factor on the English competences as measured by Lex30 and OPT tests.

The results revealed that there is a negative correlation between the values: rho = -0.214 for Lex30 test and rho = -0.213 for OPT.

There is no significant relationship between the values (age and score) for the two tests (Lex30, OPT). This suggests that participants who started learning English early (ECLs) may have very high and/or very low scores regardless of age. The wide range of test scores as presented in the descriptive statistics shows significant variability within the results, which allows us to say that the age of onset does not predict foreign language performance.

3.2. Bilingualism and Lex30, OPT .

- **RQ2: Does being bilingual significantly impact English language skills, as measured by the OPT?**

Independent Samples T-Test

	W	d_f	p
OPT	823.000		0.024

Note. Mann-Whitney U test.

Group Descriptives

	Group N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
OPT 0	38	22.237	6.820	1.106	0.307
1	33	18.727	6.742	1.174	0.360

OPT

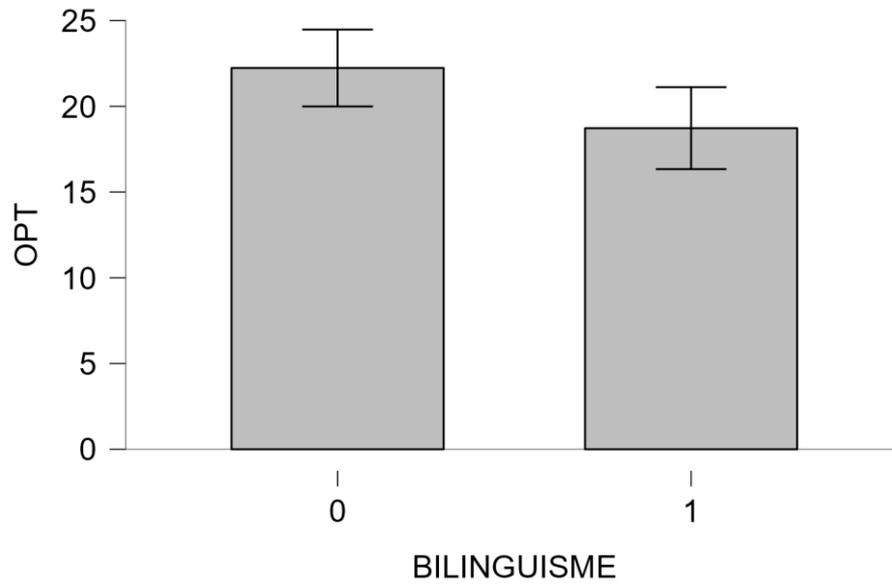


Figure 15: Correlation OPT results and French-Creole bilingualism.

- RQ5: Does being bilingual significantly influence English language skills, as measured by Lex30?

Independent Samples T-Test

	t	df	p
LEX30	2.414	69	0.018

Note. Student's t-test.

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
LEX30	0	38	20.474	8.561	1.389	0.418
	1	33	15.000	10.539	1.835	0.703

LEX30

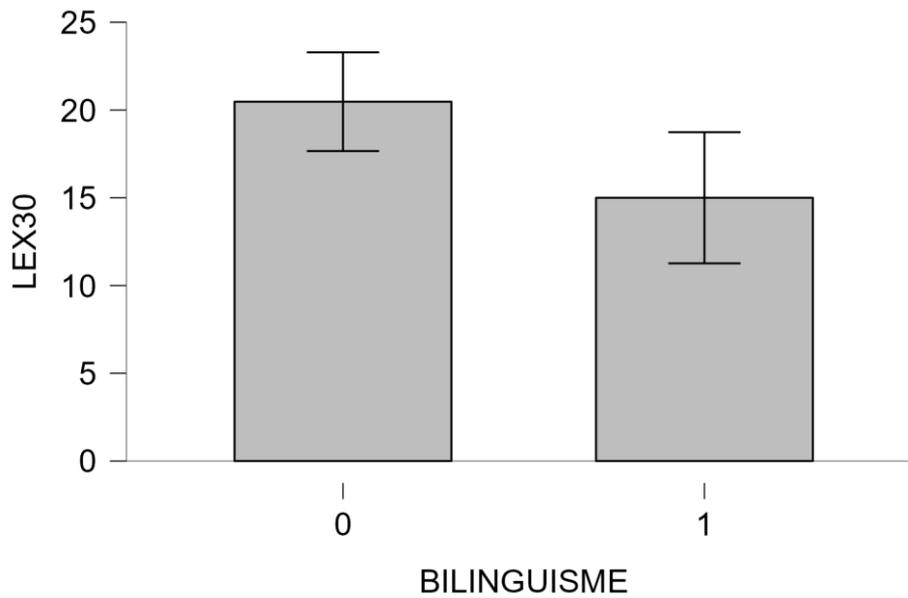


Figure 16: Correlation Lex30 results and French-Creole bilingualism

If we look at the data distribution in the two tests (Lex30, OPT) as analysed by the independent t-test (Lex30) and the Mann-Whitney U test (OPT), we can see that those who are not bilingual (i.e., monolinguals) have scores in Lex30 and OP that are globally higher than those who are bilinguals. Thus, we can say that French-Creole bilingualism has no significant effect on English language performance for bilingual participants in the Lex30 and OPT tests. Bilingual participants do not appear to have a linguistic advantage over their monolingual peers.

3.2. Biliteracy and Lex30, OPT.

- **RQ3: Does being biliterate (French-Creole) significantly influence English language skills, as measured by the OPT?**

Independent Samples T-Test

	W	d f	p
OPT	140.000		0.838

Note. Mann-Whitney U test.

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
OPT	0	38	22.237	6.820	1.106	0.307
	2	7	21.571	8.960	3.387	0.415

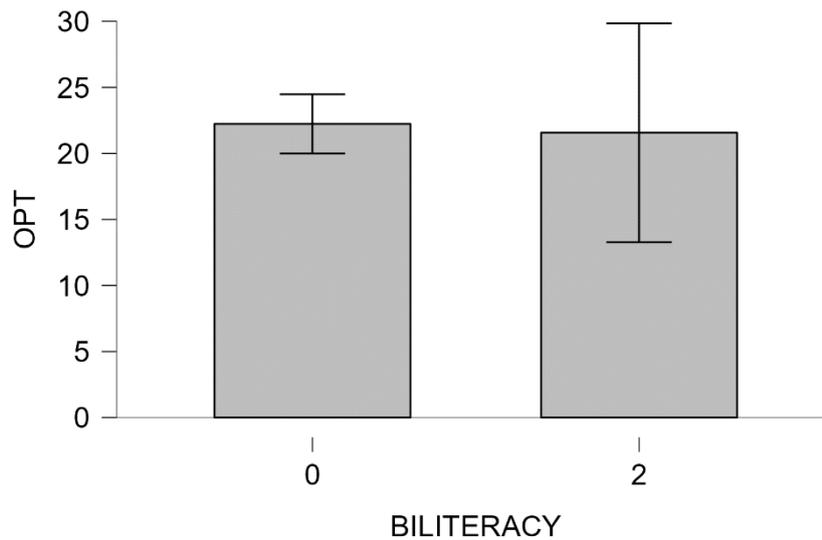


Figure 17: Correlation OPT results and French-Creole biliteracy

- **RQ6: Does being biliterate (French-Creole) significantly influence English language skills, as measured by Lex30?**

Independent Samples T-Test

	t	df	p
LEX30	0.271	43	0.788

Note. Student's t-test.

Group Descriptives

	Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	Coefficient of variation
LEX30	0	38	20.474	8.561	1.389	0.418
	2	7	19.429	13.402	5.066	0.690

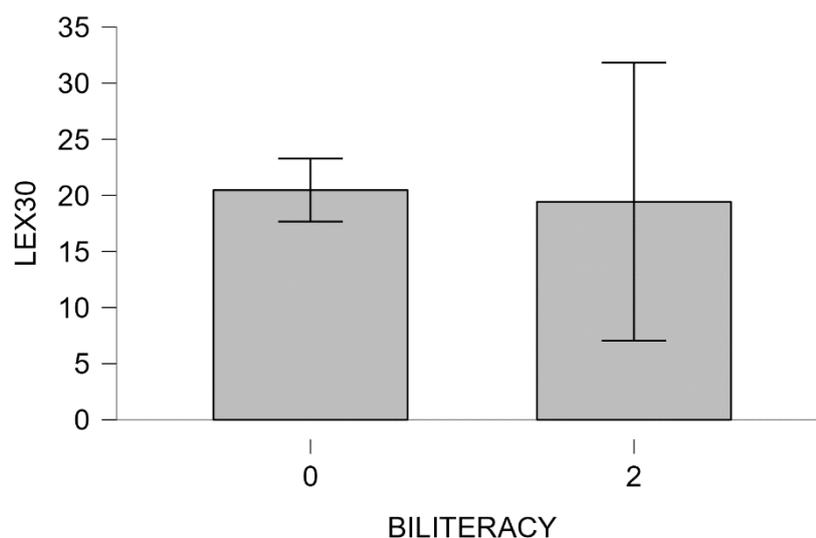


Figure 18: Correlation Lex30 results and French-Creole biliteracy

To support the previous hypothesis that the bilingual participants in our sample would not be advantaged by their bilingualism (French-Creole), we investigated whether biliteracy (i.e., the ability to read and write in French and Creole) influenced English language skills as measured by our two tests (Lex30, OPT). To do this, as mentioned in Method 2.3. we removed the 'bilingual' criterion (code '2') in order to find out whether biliterates have better scores than their monolingual peers. We performed a Mann-Whitney U test with the OPT data and an independent t-test with the data obtained with the Lex30 test. Based on the results, the superiority of the monolinguals over the other groups (bilinguals, biliterates) is validated. The approximative 10-point difference between the two groups (monolinguals, biliterates) as represented in the graphs above allows us to say that biliteracy has no positive effect on English language performance for biliterate participants on the Lex30 and OPT activities.

4. Written production

For the written production, we used CLAN, a linguistic analysis software, to measure the types and tokens on a total of 8 selected productions from Class A (see Appendix B), ranging from CEFR levels A1 to B2 (Class A).

Through the written productions, we sought to find out whether the length of the production is proportional to the learner's level, i.e., the longer the production (words, clauses), the better the student's performance.

We chose to analyse two written productions at A1 level, two written productions at A2 level, two written productions at B1 level, and two written productions at B2 level. As class A was the only one containing all these levels, we chose this sample for our analysis. The results are as follows:

PARTICIPANTS	CEFR LEVEL (1)	NUMBER OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
EE9	A1	12	30	61
EE22	A1	11	34	63
EE1	A2	14	29	70
EE3	A2	20	39	100
EE5	B1	26	64	138
EE6	B1	26	67	139
EE11	B2	34	106	214
EE18	B2	26	106	214

Table 7: Written production: Types and Tokens (Class A, 8 participants)

The clauses refer to "a group of words, consisting of a subject and a finite form of a verb"⁹, each clause was defined by the presence of a conjugated verb (1 verb = 1 clause). The tokens refer to the number of words in the text and the tokens to the frequency of a type (the occurrence of a type in the text).

According to this sample, the results seem ‘proportional’ and in accordance with our hypothesis. We can see clearly that the productions of level B2 students (EE11; EE18) are longer than those of level A1 participants (EE9; E22). If we look at the productions of students EE9 and EE18, we note a difference of 76 types and 153 tokens. We can assume from these results that student EE18 has a more enriched vocabulary. Similarly, if we study the production of this participant (EE18) (see Appendix ??), we can see that they used more lexicon: adjectives, connectors – elements which are not very present in A1 level productions.

With this task, we were interested in looking at how the content was organised. The vocabulary (specific to the context) was given to the participants beforehand so that every participant (regardless of their English level) could produce a text describing what was happening in the short cartoon. However, when we studied the productions, we noticed that the A1/A2 participants' productions lacked cohesion and organisation, particularly in the order of the words in the sentence (syntax problem). We also noted the repetitive use of simple sentences and the lack of fluency (for example, with the repetition of “a cat” or the repetition of the personal pronoun “he” in reference to Simon, the cat's owner).

⁹ Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.) Definition of clause. <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/clause>

For further research, it would be interesting to study the productions taking into account the different types of sentences used (main, subordinate), the different lexical problems (spelling errors, morphological errors), how the thought is organised (if the text follows a certain structure such as introduction, development, conclusion, with the presence of linking words), i.e. the elements that make up the conceptualisation of the message. Similarly, it would be particularly interesting to carry out the same exercise in French (using a similar medium to produce the same type of text in the language of literacy and in English) and make a comparison, to see whether there are any transfers from the production in L1 to the foreign language text.

VI. Discussion

Pfenninger's research (2020) revealed two results: firstly, the results deal with the influence of the age factor in English learning, and secondly, the influence of home languages on the acquisition of the English language.

Thus, the researcher indicates that at Time 1 (during the first data collection), the “ECLs outperformed the LCLs in receptive vocabulary, written lexical richness, written fluency, oral lexical richness, oral accuracy and written grammaticality judgments” (Pfenninger, 2020, p.179). This trend was quickly reversed as the LCLs were able to catch up with the young learners’ group in the span of six months. Pfenninger (2020) comments on this result: “Parity between early starters and late starters had already been reached after six months of secondary school EFL instruction in terms of written and oral complexity, written accuracy, and oral fluency”.

Regarding bilingualism and biliteracy, the expert notes that “bilingualism and biliteracy alone did not predict FL learning outcome” (Pfenninger, 2020, p.179). However, the results revealed a positive influence of biliteracy in the acquisition of skills only for bilingual biliterates who received sufficient parental support.

Unlike Pfenninger's study, our study contains a single collection of data, which perhaps justifies the fact that we cannot significantly assess the influence of age on the acquisition of English language skills. Similarly, the present study was unable to demonstrate a positive transfer from

French-Creole biliteracy to the acquisition of English language skills, as measured by our two tests (OPT, Lex30). In this section, we will attempt to explain the obtained results.

1. The age factor.

The results of our research revealed that the English age of onset does not have a statistically significant influence on skills as measured by the Lex30 and OPT tests. In fact, the varied results do not give us an idea of the impact of age on English language skills: pupils with an early age of onset (ECLs) may have obtained very good results as well as unsatisfactory ones, and the same applies to late classrooms starters of English (LCLs).

In the case of ECLs, it can be assumed that this group of pupils does not benefit from their early exposure for reasons mentioned by Pfenninger and Singleton (2019): the influence of motivation (and all the factors that might trigger this parameter), the influence of the learning environment (school policy, teacher's fluency, mixed-level classrooms), the transition from implicit learning to explicit/guided learning, and so on.

These results can also be explained by the fact that English is only compulsory from secondary school onwards in France (*collège*). Although learning English can begin as early as preschool or during cycle 3, which begins in primary school and ends in the first year of secondary school, the results obtained from the ECLs suggest that exposure to the foreign language (English) was not continuous and that there was probably a loss of motivation and/or the intervention of other individual or external factors which compromised the learning process.

For the LCLs, the results obtained do not allow us to establish a superiority of late learners over early learners. However, in view of the high results achieved by some LCLs, we can say that it was possible for part of this group to catch up with the level of the ECLs, but the results do not allow us to verify this hypothesis in a statistically relevant and meaningful manner.

2. Bilingualism and biliteracy

The results relating to bilingualism and biliteracy revealed that these two factors did not have a positive influence on English language acquisition as measured by the placement test and the productive vocabulary test, given that the group of monolingual pupils outperformed the other two groups (bilinguals, biliterates).

According to Cummins (1979), a sufficient initial level in the L1(s) is necessary for a positive transfer of skills in order to facilitate and optimise the learning of the additional language (the 'Threshold Hypothesis'). It seems that in our context, the results do not follow this condition, which would explain the advantage of the monolinguals (at least for written competence, given that the proposed tasks only tested written competence).

We can therefore formulate the following hypotheses: does bilingualism, in our context, represent a negative factor in the acquisition of an additional language? Does this type of result support the 'the later, the better' hypothesis?

Another hypothesis is that interference between the different languages spoken by the speaker leads to difficulties in language acquisition. In other words, the 'approximate knowledge of French' would lead to a "poor understanding of instructions in the Reunionese school environment and makes language learning difficult" (our translation) as suggested by Vingadessin (2014) who proposes a typology of errors in English by Reunionese learners.

Thus, to deepen the research, it would be relevant to link the results obtained with the participants' French (the literacy language of all the participants) and analyse the crosslinguistic interferences of the French-Creole bilingual participants and study their impact on English language skills.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to evaluate the influence of the age of onset on the English language skills of different groups of learners (monolinguals, bilinguals, and biliterates). The results provide answers to the formulated questions ("How does foreign language performance vary according to the age at which English is first learned? Do bilinguals perform better than their monolingual peers?") and demonstrate that age does not have a statistically significant impact on English language skills. Regarding bilingualism, the results showed that monolingual learners were superior to biliterate and bilingual learners (French-Creole).

Our hypotheses lead us to suggest that early classroom learners of English cannot take advantage of their early exposure or their extended learning period because of individual variables (family support, motivation) or external factors (the 'wider school context' as mentioned by Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019). Similarly, for the bilingual and biliterate groups, it is assumed that the approximate mastery of French (Vingadessin, 2014) but also of Creole

does not allow them to benefit from a positive transfer of knowledge, i.e., to benefit from a linguistic advantage over the monolingual group.

However, there are a few limitations to our study. As mentioned in the discussion, our study notes a single collection of data, which does not allow us to establish an evolution in participants' results on the same tasks, unlike the results presented by Pfenninger (2020). Similarly, our protocol only tested written skills. It would have been relevant to measure oral skills in English and include a test in French in order to assess participants' fluency in their language of literacy.

The addition of this type of task to the research protocol would have provided an overview of the participants' skills and we can assume that the results might have been different, or at least have provided a basis for explaining the different levels and/or justifying the lower results of the bilinguals compared with the monolinguals.

Nevertheless, this type of study enables us to take an overview of the participants' skills (all the language skills or just one in particular) and to pinpoint the specific features of a linguistic area based on a small sample of the population. Our study has shown that bilingualism can have an insignificant, or even negative, influence on foreign language acquisition. Is this due to a lack of valorisation of French-Creole bilingualism, as mentioned by Prudent (2005)? Is it due to a lack of support from the learners' families? These are questions that deserve to be explored in greater depth in order to provide a fuller explanation of our results and thus gain a better understanding of our research field.

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Appendix A

A.1. The Bilingual Language Profile

❖ Questionnaire n°1 : The Bilingual Language Profile

Profil Langagier Bilingue: Français-Anglais

Nous vous remercions pour votre participation à cette étude de recherche. Vous répondrez aux questions concernant votre histoire langagière, votre pratique des langues, vos attitudes envers vos deux langues, et votre compétence linguistique. La création de cette étude, qui vise à mieux comprendre les profils langagiers des populations bilingues diverses, a bénéficié du soutien du Center for Open Educational Resources and Language Learning à l'Université du Texas-Austin. Cette étude consiste de 19 questions, et il faudra moins de 10 minutes pour tout compléter. Il n'y a pas de bonnes ou de mauvaises réponses: il faut seulement essayer de répondre le plus honnêtement possible aux questions qui vous sont posées. Veuillez répondre à chaque question. Encore, merci pour votre participation. Elle est hautement appréciée.

I. Renseignements biographiques

Nom/Prénom _____		Date ____ / ____ / ____	
Age _____	Sexe <input type="checkbox"/> M / <input type="checkbox"/> F	Résidence actuelle: Ville _____	Pays _____
Plus haut niveau d'éducation complété:	<input type="checkbox"/> Sans diplôme	<input type="checkbox"/> BAC/lycée	<input type="checkbox"/> Un peu d'université
	<input type="checkbox"/> Licence/B.A., B.S.	<input type="checkbox"/> Un peu d'université au delà de la licence	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Masters	<input type="checkbox"/> Doctorat	<input type="checkbox"/> Autre: _____

N.B: Document modifié pour le bien de l'enquête.

Please cite as :

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1

II. Histoire langagière

Dans cette section, vous répondrez aux questions qui traitent de votre histoire langagière. Cochez la réponse qui vous convient.

1. A quel âge avez-vous commencé à **apprendre** les langues suivantes?

français

Depuis ma naissance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

anglais

Depuis ma naissance 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

Créole:

2. A quel âge avez-vous commencé à **vous sentir à l'aise** d'utiliser les langues suivantes?

français

Dès mes premiers souvenirs 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+ pas encore à l'aise

anglais

Dès mes premiers souvenirs 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+ pas encore à l'aise

Créole:

3. Combien d'années de **cours (grammaire, histoire, maths, etc.)** avez-vous suivies dans les langues suivantes (école primaire à l'université)?

français

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

anglais

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

Créole:

4. Combien d'années avez-vous passées dans **un pays/une région** où les langues suivantes se parlent?

français

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

anglais

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

Créole:

5. Combien d'années avez-vous passées dans **une famille** qui parle les langues suivantes?

français

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

anglais

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

Créole:

6. Combien d'années avez-vous passées dans **un lieu de travail** où les langues suivantes se parlent?

Français

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

Anglais

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20+

2

III. Pratique des langues

Dans cette section, vous répondez aux questions qui traitent de votre pratique des langues. Cochez la réponse qui vous convient. L'usage total pour toutes les langues doit égaier 100%.

7. Pendant une semaine typique, quel pourcentage du temps utilisez-vous les langues suivantes **avec vos amis**?

français	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
anglais	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
autres langues	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Créole :

8. Pendant une semaine typique, quel pourcentage du temps utilisez-vous les langues suivantes **avec votre famille**?

français	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
anglais	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
autres langues	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Créole :

9. Pendant une semaine typique, quel pourcentage du temps utilisez-vous les langues suivantes **à l'école/au travail**?

français	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
anglais	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
autres langues	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Créole :

10. Quand vous vous parlez à vous-même, à quelle fréquence **vous parlez-vous à vous-même** dans les langues suivantes?

français	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
anglais	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
autres langues	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Créole :

11. Quand vous comptez, à quelle fréquence comptez-vous dans les langues suivantes?

français	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
anglais	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%
autres langues	<input type="checkbox"/>										
	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Créole :

IV. Compétence linguistique

Dans cette section, vous jugerez votre compétence linguistique sur une échelle de 0 à 6. Cochez la réponse qui vous convient.

- 0=non, pas du tout bien 6=oui, très bien
12. a. Parlez-vous bien **le français**? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b. Parlez-vous bien **l'anglais**? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c. Parlez-vous bien **le créole** ? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
13. a. Comprenez-vous bien **le français**? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b. Comprenez-vous bien **l'anglais**? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c. Comprenez-vous bien **le créole** ? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
14. a. Lisez-vous bien **le français**? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b. Lisez-vous bien **l'anglais**? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c. Lisez-vous bien **le créole** ? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
15. a. Ecrivez-vous bien **le français**? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b. Ecrivez-vous bien **l'anglais**? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c. Ecrivez-vous bien **le créole** ? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

V. Attitudes linguistiques

Dans cette section, vous répondrez aux questions qui traitent de vos attitudes linguistiques. Cochez la réponse sur une échelle de 0 à 6 qui vous convient.

- 0=pas d'accord 6=d'accord
16. a. Je me sens moi quand je parle **français**. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b. Je me sens moi quand je parle **anglais**. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c. Je me sens bien quand je parle créole: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
17. a. Je m'identifie à une culture **francophone**. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b. Je m'identifie à une culture **anglophone**. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c. Je m'identie à une culture créolophone. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
18. a. Pour moi il est important d'utiliser (ou d'utiliser un jour) **le français** comme une personne de langue maternelle française. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b. Pour moi il est important d'utiliser (ou d'utiliser un jour) **l'anglais** comme une personne de langue maternelle anglaise. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c. Pour moi il est important d'utiliser (ou utiliser un jour) **le créole** comme une personne de langue maternelle créole. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
19. a. Je veux qu'on croie que le **français** est ma langue maternelle. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- b. Je veux qu'on croie que **l'anglais** est ma langue maternelle. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
- c. Je veux qu'on croie que le créole est ma langue maternelle. 0 1 2 3 4 5 6

A.2. Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners (LAQ-LL).

❖ Original version of the questionnaire

Source: Artamónova, T. (2020). L2 learners' language attitudes and their assessment. *Foreign Language Annals*, 53(4), 807-826.

Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners (LAQ-LL)

Subscales	Question Items
Language learning experience (Description: Evaluation of language learning activity and language use)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spanish classes are always among my favorite classes 2. Spanish classes are more entertaining than other classes 3. Learning Spanish is fun 4. Studying languages is fun 5. I really enjoy learning Spanish 6. I like learning languages 7. Spanish classes are boring[†] 8. I like communicating with Spanish speakers 9. Studying languages is interesting 10. Learning Spanish is worth the effort that it takes 11. I would take language classes even if they were not required
Sociocultural appeal (Description: Evaluation of attractiveness of the language, its people, and cultures)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spanish-speaking countries are fascinating countries 2. Spanish sounds nice 3. I find Latin American cultures interesting 4. I enjoy meeting Spanish speakers 5. Spanish is a beautiful language 6. I like hearing Spanish 7. I find Spanish culture interesting 8. I like Spanish speakers 9. Spanish is an important language in the U.S.
Value of multilingualism (Description: Evaluation of benefits associated with multilingual ability and interest in developing such ability)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have no interest in learning languages[†] 2. There is no need to learn other languages if you speak English[†] 3. I like the idea of being/becoming bilingual 4. Speaking more than one language is a valuable skill 5. Language study is a valuable pursuit 6. I admire people who speak multiple languages 7. Speaking just English is enough for me[†] 8. Learning Spanish is a waste of time[†]

[†]These items were reverse-coded.

Scale

Strongly disagree 1	Disagree 2	Somewhat disagree 3	Neither agree nor disagree 4	Somewhat agree 5	Agree 6	Strongly agree 7
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❖ **Questionnaire n°2 : Language Attitudes Questionnaire for Language Learners (LAQ-LL).**

Source: Artamónova, T. (2020). L2 learners' language attitudes and their assessment. *Foreign Language Annals*, 53(4), 807-826. *Traduit de l'anglais et modifié pour l'enquête.*

Catégories	Questions	Echelle
Expérience de l'apprentissage de la langue (Description : évaluation de l'apprentissage et utilisation de la langue étrangère)	1. Les cours d'anglais ont toujours fait partie de mes cours préférés.	
	2. Les cours d'anglais sont plus divertissants que les autres cours.	
	3. Apprendre l'anglais est amusant.	
	4. L'étude des langues est amusante.	
	5. Je prends vraiment plaisir à apprendre l'anglais.	
	6. J'aime bien apprendre des langues.	
	7. Les cours d'anglais ne sont pas intéressants. †	
	8. J'aime communiquer avec des anglophones.	
	9. L'étude des langues est intéressante.	
	10. Cela vaut la peine de faire des efforts pour apprendre l'anglais.	
	11. Je suivrais des cours de langue même s'ils n'étaient pas requis.	
Intérêt socioculturel (Description : évaluation de l'attrait de la langue, sa population et sa culture).	1. Les pays anglophones sont fascinants.	
	2. L'anglais sonne bien.	
	3. Je trouve les cultures du monde anglophone intéressantes.	
	4. J'aime rencontrer des anglophones.	
	5. L'anglais est une belle langue.	
	6. J'aime entendre l'anglais.	
	7. Je trouve la culture anglaise intéressante.	
	8. J'aime les anglophones.	
	9. L'anglais est une langue importante en France d'aujourd'hui.	
Représentations du plurilinguisme (Description : évaluation des bénéfices/avantages associés au multilinguisme et l'intérêt de développer cette compétence).	1. L'apprentissage des langues ne m'intéresse pas.	
	2. Il n'est pas nécessaire d'apprendre d'autres langues si vous parlez français.	
	3. J'aime l'idée d'être ou de devenir bilingue.	
	4. Parler plus d'une langue est une compétence précieuse.	
	5. L'étude des langues est une activité précieuse.	
	6. J'admire les gens qui parlent plusieurs langues.	
	7. Ne parler que français me suffit.	
	8. Apprendre l'anglais est une perte de temps.	

Echelle

Pas du tout d'accord	Pas d'accord	Plutôt pas d'accord	Ni d'accord ni en désaccord	Plutôt d'accord	D'accord	Totalement d'accord
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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Name:

Date:

**quick
placement
test**

Version 1

This test is divided into two parts:

Part One (Questions 1 – 40) – All students.

Part Two (Questions 41 – 60) – Do not start this part unless told to do so by your test supervisor.

Time: 30 minutes

Part 1

Questions 1 – 5

- Where can you see these notices?
- For questions 1 to 5, mark **one** letter **A**, **B** or **C** on your Answer Sheet.

1

**Please leave your
room key at Reception.**

- A in a shop
- B in a hotel
- C in a taxi

2

**Foreign money
changed here**

- A in a library
- B in a bank
- C in a police station

3

**AFTERNOON SHOW
BEGINS AT 2PM**

- A outside a theatre
- B outside a supermarket
- C outside a restaurant

4

CLOSED FOR HOLIDAYS
Lessons start again on
the 8 th January

- A at a travel agent's
- B at a music school
- C at a restaurant

5

Price per night:
£10 a tent
£5 a person

- A at a cinema
- B in a hotel
- C on a camp-site

Questions 6 – 10

- In this section you must choose the word which best fits each space in the text below.
- For questions **6** to **10**, mark **one** letter **A**, **B** or **C** on your Answer Sheet.

Scotland

Scotland is the north part of the island of Great Britain. The Atlantic Ocean is on the west and the North Sea on the east. Some people (6) Scotland speak a different language called Gaelic.

There are (7) five million people in Scotland, and Edinburgh is (8) most famous city.

Scotland has many mountains; the highest one is called 'Ben Nevis'. In the south of Scotland, there are a lot of sheep. A long time ago, there (9) many forests, but now there are only a (10)

Scotland is only a small country, but it is quite beautiful.

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|------------------|----------------|
| 6 | A on | B in | C at |
| 7 | A about | B between | C among |
| 8 | A his | B your | C its |
| 9 | A is | B were | C was |
| 10 | A few | B little | C lot |

Questions 11 – 20

- In this section you must choose the word which best fits each space in the texts.
- For questions **11** to **20**, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

Alice Guy Blaché

Alice Guy Blaché was the first female film director. She first became involved in cinema whilst working for the Gaumont Film Company in the late 1890s. This was a period of great change in the cinema and Alice was the first to use many new inventions, **(11)** sound and colour.

In 1907 Alice **(12)** to New York where she started her own film company. She was **(13)** successful, but, when Hollywood became the centre of the film world, the best days of the independent New York film companies were **(14)** When Alice died in 1968, hardly anybody **(15)** her name.

- 11** A bringing B including C containing D supporting
- 12** A moved B ran C entered D transported
- 13** A next B once C immediately D recently
- 14** A after B down C behind D over
- 15** A remembered B realised C reminded D repeated

UFOs – do they exist?

UFO is short for 'unidentified flying object'. UFOs are popularly known as flying saucers, (16) that is often the (17) they are reported to be. The (18) "flying saucers" were seen in 1947 by an American pilot, but experts who studied his claim decided it had been a trick of the light.

Even people experienced at watching the sky, (19) as pilots, report seeing UFOs. In 1978 a pilot reported a collection of UFOs off the coast of New Zealand. A television (20) went up with the pilot and filmed the UFOs. Scientists studying this phenomenon later discovered that in this case they were simply lights on boats out fishing.

- 16 **A** because **B** therefore **C** although **D** so
- 17 **A** look **B** shape **C** size **D** type
- 18 **A** last **B** next **C** first **D** oldest
- 19 **A** like **B** that **C** so **D** such
- 20 **A** cameraman **B** director **C** actor **D** announcer

Questions 21 – 40

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence
- For questions 21 to 40, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

- 21 The teacher encouraged her students to an English pen-friend.
A should write B write C wrote D to write
- 22 They spent a lot of time at the pictures in the museum.
A looking B for looking C to look D to looking
- 23 Shirley enjoys science lessons, but all her experiments seem to wrong.
A turn B come C end D go
- 24 from Michael, all the group arrived on time.
A Except B Other C Besides D Apart
- 25 She her neighbour's children for the broken window.
A accused B complained C blamed D denied
- 26 As I had missed the history lesson, my friend went the homework with me.
A by B after C over D on
- 27 Whether she's a good actress or not is a of opinion.
A matter B subject C point D case
- 28 The decorated roof of the ancient palace was up by four thin columns.
A built B carried C held D supported
- 29 Would it you if we came on Thursday?
A agree B suit C like D fit
- 30 This form be handed in until the end of the week.
A doesn't need B doesn't have C needn't D hasn't got
- 31 If you make a mistake when you are writing, just it out with your pen.

- A cross B clear C do D wipe
- 32 Although our opinions on many things , we're good friends.
- A differ B oppose C disagree D divide
- 33 This product must be eaten two days of purchase.
- A by B before C within D under
- 34 The newspaper report contained important information.
- A many B another C an D a lot of
- 35 Have you considered to London?
- A move B to move C to be moving D moving
- 36 It can be a good idea for people who lead an active life to increase their of vitamins.
- A upturn B input C upkeep D intake
- 37 I thought there was a of jealousy in his reaction to my good fortune.
- A piece B part C shadow D touch
- 38 Why didn't you that you were feeling ill?
- A advise B mention C remark D tell
- 39 James was not sure exactly where his best interests
- A stood B rested C lay D centred
- 40 He's still getting the shock of losing his job.
- A across B by C over D through

Part 2

Do not start this part unless told to do so by your test supervisor.

Questions 41 – 50

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best fits each space in the texts.
- For questions 41 to 50, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

The tallest buildings - SKYSCRAPERS

Nowadays, skyscrapers can be found in most major cities of the world. A building which was many (41) high was first called a skyscraper in the United States at the end of the 19th century, and New York has perhaps the (42) skyscraper of them all, the Empire State Building. The (43) beneath the streets of New York is rock, (44) enough to take the heaviest load without sinking, and is therefore well-suited to bearing the (45) of tall buildings.

- | | | | | |
|----|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
| 41 | A stages | B steps | C storeys | D levels |
| 42 | A first-rate | B top-class | C well-built | D best-known |
| 43 | A dirt | B field | C ground | D soil |
| 44 | A hard | B stiff | C forceful | D powerful |
| 45 | A weight | B height | C size | D scale |

SCRABBLE

Scrabble is the world's most popular word game. For its origins, we have to go back to the 1930s in the USA, when Alfred Butts, an architect, found himself out of (46) He decided that there was a (47) for a board game based on words and (48) to design one. Eventually he made a (49) from it, in spite of the fact that his original (50) was only three cents a game.

- 46 A earning B work C income D job
- 47 A market B purchase C commerce D sale
- 48 A took up B set out C made for D got round
- 49 A wealth B fund C cash D fortune
- 50 A receipt B benefit C profit D allowance

Questions 51 – 60

- In this section you must choose the word or phrase which best completes each sentence
- For questions 51 to 60, mark **one** letter **A, B, C** or **D** on your Answer Sheet.

- 51 Roger's manager to make him stay late if he hadn't finished the work.
A insisted B warned C threatened D announced
- 52 By the time he has finished his week's work, John has hardly energy left for the weekend.
A any B much C no D same
- 53 As the game to a close, disappointed spectators started to leave.
A led B neared C approached D drew
- 54 I don't remember the front door when I left home this morning.
A to lock B locking C locked D to have locked
- 55 I to other people borrowing my books: they always forget to return them.
A disagree B avoid C dislike D object
- 56 Andrew's attempts to get into the swimming team have not with much success.
A associated B concluded C joined D met
- 57 Although Harry had obviously read the newspaper article carefully, he didn't seem to have the main point.
A grasped B clutched C clasped D gripped
- 58 A lot of the views put forward in the documentary were open to
A enquiry B query C question D wonder
- 59 The new college for the needs of students with a variety of learning backgrounds.
A deals B supplies C furnishes D caters
- 60 I find the times of English meals very strange – I'm not used dinner at 6pm.
A to have B to having C having D have

A.4. Lex30

LEX 30

(WORD VERSION OF THE SLIDESHOW)

Instruction: “Write down the first four (English) words you think of when you read each word in the list”.

Consigne en français: “Écrivez les quatre premiers mots (en anglais) auxquels vous pensez lorsque vous lisez chaque mot de la liste”.

N°	Item
1	attack
2	board
3	close
4	cloth
5	dig
6	dirty
7	disease
8	experience
9	fruit
10	furniture
11	habit
12	hold
13	hope
14	kick
15	map
16	obey
17	pot
18	potato
19	real
20	rest
21	rice
22	science
23	seat
24	spell
25	substance
26	stupid
27	television
28	tooth
29	trade
30	window

❖ **Productive Vocabulary : Lex 30**

Name :	Class :
Surname :	Date :

Instruction: Write down the first four (English) words you think of when you read each word in the list.

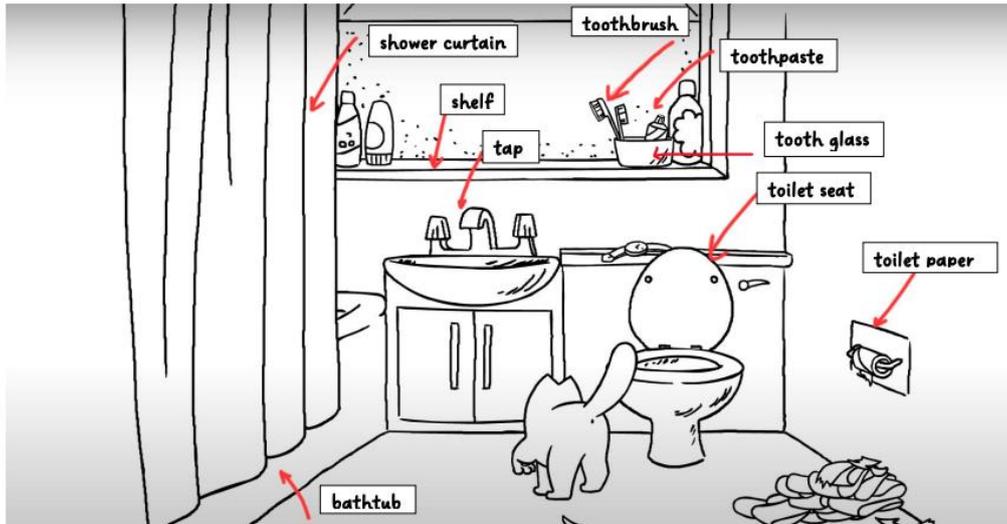
Consigne : Écrivez les quatre premiers mots (en anglais) auxquels vous pensez lorsque vous lisez chaque mot de la liste.

1	a.	c.
	b.	d.
2	a.	c.
	b.	d.
3	a.	c.
	b.	d.
4	a.	c.
	b.	d.
5	a.	c.
	b.	d.
6	a.	c.
	b.	d.
7	a.	c.
	b.	d.
8	a.	c.
	b.	d.
9	a.	c.
	b.	d.
10	a.	c.
	b.	d.
11	a.	c.
	b.	d.
12	a.	c.
	b.	d.
13	a.	c.
	b.	d.
14	a.	c.
	b.	d.

15	a.	c.
	b.	d.

16	a.	c.
	b.	d.
17	a.	c.
	b.	d.
18	a.	c.
	b.	d.
19	a.	c.
	b.	d.
20	a.	c.
	b.	d.
21	a.	c.
	b.	d.
22	a.	c.
	b.	d.
23	a.	c.
	b.	d.
24	a.	c.
	b.	d.
25	a.	c.
	b.	d.
26	a.	c.
	b.	d.
27	a.	c.
	b.	d.
28	a.	c.

	b.	d.
29	a.	c.
	b.	d.
30	a.	c.
	b.	d.



Useful vocabulary
-tirer la chasse d'eau : flush the toilet
-ouvrir le robinet : turn on the tap

Figure 29 : Toolbox English Written Production

Appendix B

APPENDIX B DATA ANALYSIS

PARTICIPANT	CEFR LEVEL	WRITTEN PRODUCTION
CLASS A	A1	this is simon
EE9	A1	he is in the bathroom
A1.1	A1	and he is hungry.
	A1	he play with the toilet paper
	A1	he drink the water of the toilet.
	A1	he eat the toothbrush
	A1	because he is very hungry
	A1	and he turn on the tap
	A1	because when he turn on the tap
	A1	the guys in the bathtub the water is hot
	A1	and the guys broken the shower curtain
	A1	and he fallen.

NB OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
12	30	61

PARTICIPANT	CEFR LEVEL	WRITTEN PRODUCTION
CLASS A	A1	in this video we can see a cat and a boy in a bathroom.
EE22	A1	the cat church food
A1.2	A1	also he touch hold.
	A1	he flush the toilet paper,
	A1	he flush the toilet,
	A1	he drink a water toilet
	A1	then he turn on the tap
	A1	and wen he turn on the tap
	A1	the water in the shower is hot
	A1	also simon is burnt
	A1	and he fall.

NB OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
11	34	63

PARTICIPANT	CEFR LEVEL	WRITTEN PRODUCTION
CLASS A	A2	i can see
EE1	A2	a cat in a bathroom.
A2.1	A2	the cat play whit a toilet paper.
	A2	i can see

	A2	a cat drink water in a toilet
	A2	and flush the toilet.
	A2	i can see
	A2	a cat eat a toothbrush.
	A2	i can see
	A2	a cat try to drink in a tap.
	A2	and finally i can see
	A2	a cat turn on the tap
	A2	for (make?) fall the men
	A2	for the men feed a cat.

NB OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
14	29	70

PARTICIPANT	CEFR LEVEL	WRITTEN PRODUCTION
CLASS A	A2	the cat is in the bathroom
EE3	A2	simon is shower
A2.2	A2	at left there is the bathtub
	A2	at a middle there is the tab
	A2	at right there is the toilet seat and the toilet paper
	A2	the cat meow
	A2	he shoot an the toilet paper
	A2	he meow
	A2	he drink the water toilet
	A2	and he flush the toilet
	A2	simon is burnt
	A2	the cat eat the toothbrush
	A2	and he put the toothpaste in the toilet
	A2	he maket fall the toothbrush
	A2	he turn on the tap
	A2	simon is burnt
	A2	the cat turn on the tap
	A2	simon is burnt (x2)
	A2	simon is very burnt
	A2	the cat must eaten

NB OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
20	39	100

PARTICIPANT	CEFR LEVEL	WRITTEN PRODUCTION
CLASS A	B1	in this video there is a cat
EE5	B1	who wants to eat
AB1.1	B1	simon is in the shower.
	B1	the cat plays with the toilet paper

	B1	and unrolls it.
	B1	then, he jumps on the toilet seat
	B1	and drinks the water.
	B1	the cat lets fall the hour of his owner
	B1	and flush the toilet.
	B1	he jumps on the shelf
	B1	and plays with the toothbrush
	B1	by eating it.
	B1	he throws away the toothbrush and the toothpaste.
	B1	his owner don't care about his cat
	B1	and the cat continues to play.
	B1	then the cat turns on the tap.
	B1	when it do it,
	B1	the water in the shower becomes hot.
	B1	the cat sees it
	B1	and play with the tap
	B1	and turn on
	B1	then turn off the tap.
	B1	after simon get "burnt" by the hot water
	B1	and falls.
	B1	even if simon catch the shower curtain
	B1	he falls.

NB OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
26	64	138

PARTICIPANT	CEFR LEVEL	WRITTEN PRODUCTION
CLASS A	B1	the owner of the cat, simon was taking a shower
EE6	B1	and he was singing.
AB1.2	B1	his cat was probably hungry
	B1	so it went to the bathroom.
	B1	he saw the toilet paper
	B1	and started playing with it.
	B1	it then started to drink water from the toilet
	B1	and then it climbed
	B1	and flushed it.
	B1	which turned the water
	B1	to boiling hot for the owner.
	B1	it climbed on the shlef
	B1	and started eating the toothbrushes.
	B1	the toothglass fell
	B1	and it kind of scared it.
	B1	it turned on the tap
	B1	and started messing with the temperature.
	B1	it's owner fell
	B1	because how hot the water was

	B1	and he broke the shower curtain.
	B1	it was waiting
	B1	for it's owner to feed it.
	B1	that's why
	B1	he did all of this mess.
	B1	it's owner will probably be mad,
	B1	even his watch and his toothbrushes fell into the toilet.

NB OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
26	67	139

PARTICIPANT	CEFR LEVEL	WRITTEN PRODUCTION
CLASS A	B2	at the start, it shows a toilet, a bathtub and other things, like a toothbrushed, shampoo, etc.
EE11	B2	simon is taking a bath,
AB2.1	B2	when the cat arrives.
	B2	the cat, bored, plays with the toilet paper
	B2	and unroles it.
	B2	then, the cat try to communicate, with simon,
	B2	by playing at his mouth,
	B2	by meowling,
	B2	he probably wants to tell to simon
	B2	that he is thirsty or hungry.
	B2	the cat, understanding
	B2	that simon didn't hear on
	B2	understand what he said
	B2	jump on the toilet
	B2	and start drinking the toilet's water.
	B2	he seems to liking it.
	B2	after thatn the cat jumps to a shelf, near a window,
	B2	but throw a watch
	B2	that was sitting here, in the toilet.
	B2	he also flushes the toilet
	B2	but didn't realize it.
	B2	at the same time simon's water go really hot
	B2	and start smoking for a second.
	B2	then, on the shelf, the cat saw two toothbrushes
	B2	and start eating them a little bit.
	B2	next, the cat realizes that
	B2	there is a tap
	B2	and turns the tapwater to drink it.
	B2	but opening the tap also made simon's water go hot
	B2	and simon, surprised, jump outside of his bath
	B2	and when he saw him
	B2	he was proud of himself.
	B2	and, he shows to simon his bowl

	B2	and simon seems kind of disappointed of his cat.
--	----	--

NB OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
34	106	214

PARTICIPANT	CEFR LEVEL	WRITTEN PRODUCTION
CLASS A	B2	the cat enters the bathroom
EE18	B2	while simon is showering.
AB2.2	B2	the cas as an idea :
	B2	he starts grabbing the toilet paper
	B2	and he pulls it
	B2	until there's no more paper left.
	B2	after that, he starts to drink the toilet's water,
	B2	then he gets on the toilet seat
	B2	and accidentally flush the toilet.
	B2	the cat doesn't stop here :
	B2	he gets on the shelf
	B2	and starts to eat the toothbrush
	B2	until the entire tooth glass falls in the toilet's hole.
	B2	simon tries to take his shampoo and soap
	B2	but the bubbles goes right in his pet's eyes.
	B2	the cat starts to turn on the tap
	B2	but everytime he does it,
	B2	simon gets burned by the water.
	B2	in the end he falls on the floor
	B2	and nearly breaks the shower curtain
	B2	and then he finally realises
	B2	that it was his cat since de beginning !
	B2	Poor man !
	B2	His cat did it only
	B2	because he was hungry
	B2	and wanted simon to feed him.

NB OF CLAUSES	TYPES	TOKENS
26	106	214