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Attitudes towards Foreign Language Learning in Schools

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Abstract

The increasing need for multilingualism in the recent decades has brought language learning and teaching into focus, both on the national level, where governments need to ensure quality foreign language education for their citizens, and on personal level, with an increasing number of individuals being required to speak more than one language. It is not surprising, then, to find more and more individuals interested in foreign language learning, which is increasingly introduced in early childhood. When it comes to early foreign language learning, it is the parents who choose the target language(s) their child is going to learn, their number and succession. These decisions depend on a number of factors, some of them being the attitudes of parents towards foreign language learning in general, towards the target language and its speakers. It is obvious that the attitudinal aspect of foreign language learning is of great importance, particularly when it comes to the role of parental attitudes in their child's second language learning.

The main goal of this thesis is to elicit the attitudes of parents or potential parents towards bilingualism and foreign language learning in general, towards early foreign language learning, towards speakers/learners of foreign languages and towards foreign language learning in Croatian primary schools. Furthermore, the thesis aims to analyse the beliefs of the participants in relation to contemporary scientific findings in the field of bilingualism.

The second part of the thesis is dedicated to presenting theoretical explanations related to the focus of the thesis, as well as the conclusions of researchers concerned with (early) foreign language learning, which serve as a theoretical framework for the present study.

The third part of the thesis involves the research study, which was conducted in the form of a questionnaire completed by the participants. The results of the study are first analysed quantitatively and then further discussed and contrasted with the findings of modern research. The thesis ends with a conclusion, in which the main points of the study are summarised.

Key words: multilingualism, attitudes, foreign language learning

1. Introduction

1.1. The requirements of the modern world – an increasing need for multilingualism

In the modern world, where barriers between countries, cultures and languages are becoming blurred, the need for learning multiple foreign languages is on the rise. Multilingualism is today a necessity for most individuals in all kinds of settings, especially on the employment market (Baker and Sienkewicz, 2000: 15). It offers a range of advantages, including being able to communicate with a wider variety of people and build relationships with people from different cultures (Baker and Sienkewicz, 2000: 13 - 14). Baker and Sienkewicz (2000) suggest that there are some cognitive advantages to multilingualism as well, such as finer developed creative and flexible thinking abilities. In their discussion on the cognitive benefits of bilingualism, Steinberg, Nagata and Aline (2001: 227) conclude that, even though the effects of early bilingualism on the child's intelligence are not expected to be important or permanent, there is evidence that early bilingualism might benefit the child intellectually. Even though Cummins (2000: 37) argues that there is a threshold level of proficiency that learners must attain in both of their languages for bilingualism to exert important influence on their cognitive development, learning a second language cannot harm, especially when one considers all the advantages it offers.

Not only does being bilingual or multilingual provide more career opportunities and cognitive advantages, but it represents a skill which, especially for speakers of smaller language groups, is necessary for an access to the global media and other aspects of worldwide communication. Since major world languages, primarily English, dominate global advertising, internet communication, and other electronic media forms and technologies, as well as the entertainment industry, science, research, trade, politics and sport, it is hard to imagine a speaker of a smaller language group living in this largely multilingual world without speaking at least one other language, that language in most cases being English (Baker, 2006: 87; Bhatia and Ritchie, 2008: 513). Even though speaking any foreign language is beneficial, speaking English is a requirement of the modern world. Bhatia and Ritchie (2008), referring to the widespread phenomenon where native speakers of other languages acquire English as a foreign language because they cannot function without it in the modern world, used the term "English-based bilingualism".

1.2. National language policies and foreign language learning

It seems that the above mentioned advantages of being multilingual, as well as the importance of learning and teaching foreign languages, have been recognised not only by individuals, but also on the national level. Encouraged by the language policies of the European Union, many European countries have taken measures to ensure quality foreign language education (Karačić, 2009). More than twenty years ago, the European Commission declared multilingualism a “part and parcel of both European identity/citizenship and the learning society” in its *White Paper* (1995) and suggested that each member state give their citizens the opportunity to gain competence in at least two foreign languages spoken in the European Union (European Commission, 1995: 47). Another document, the *Common European Framework of Reference: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (2001), which is the fundamental document of the European Union concerning language policies of member states, summarises the aims set by the Council of Europe regarding modern European languages. Some of the general measures include ensuring that all European citizens have access to acquiring a language of another member state, and promoting and encouraging the development of methods and materials for teaching and acquiring communicative proficiency. The basic principle behind these measures is, among others, to facilitate interaction and communication among Europeans of different mother tongues in order to promote mobility, mutual understanding and cooperation (Council of Europe, 2001: 2).

As a member state of the EU, Croatia has adopted the recommendations of the Council of Europe. Even before entering the European Union, Croatia introduced an education act, according to which one foreign language is introduced as compulsory from the first grade of primary school and another foreign language can be added as an elective subject in the fourth grade. If the first foreign language is not English, then English must be added as a second foreign language in the fourth grade (Medved Krajnović and Letica, 2009). According to Medved Krajnović and Letica (2009), the most popular first foreign language in Croatian primary schools is English, with 85 – 90 per cent of children learning English as the first foreign language. Considering Baker’s (2006) division of countries regarding the status of English in the society, Croatia would belong to the category of countries where English has no official status and is not spoken by the majority of population, but is considered an important language. It is increasingly spoken by younger people and emphasis is put on teaching English

as a foreign language (Baker, 2006: 86 – 87). However, English has a prominent status not only in Croatia, but across Europe. In most countries, it is the preferred first foreign language introduced increasingly at the beginning of primary education (Hoffman, 1998: 146).

The fact that the predominance given to English by parents, the general public and educational institutions can, as Tabouret-Keller (2006) states, be seen as an issue shows the true extent of the impact that attitudes of the stakeholders in foreign language learning (FLL) have on it. Even though national language policies are important for FLL in a particular country, they also largely depend on the attitudes of individuals and groups of individuals (Baker and Prys Jones, 1998: 174). As Karačić (2009) argues, even though the law determines the age at which a foreign language must be introduced, language policies are also created by individuals, who can choose to learn one language or avoid another, and thus contribute to the implementation of the policies.

The importance of the attitudinal aspect of FLL is further discussed in this thesis. The first section focuses on giving a theoretical background and a review of previous studies on the influence of attitudes on FLL. The second section of the thesis presents the study, which was carried out with the aim to investigate the attitudes of parents and potential parents towards learning multiple foreign languages in Croatian schools. The participants' responses are compared to the claims presented in the theoretical part.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Definitions of attitudes and bilingualism

The influence of attitudes towards FLL on national language policies has been presented in the previous section, but before discussing in further detail the importance of attitudes towards foreign language learning in schools, it is important to provide a definition of attitudes found in literature, as well as evidence of their impact on second language acquisition (SLA) based on various studies researching this aspect of FLL.

Baker (1992: 10) defines an attitude as “... a hypothetical construct used to explain the direction and persistence of human behaviour.” One of the important traits of attitudes is that they are not static, but are prone to change over time under the influence of a variety of people and experiences (Baker and Prys Jones, 1998: 178).

When considering the relationship between attitudes and SLA, Baker and Prys Jones (1998) refer to foreign language attitudes as both a predisposing factor and an outcome of SLA. For instance, a person with positive attitudes towards a foreign language may be more successful in becoming proficient in that language. However, it is also possible that a person who has reached a higher level of proficiency in a language also develops more positive attitudes towards the language, in which case the positive attitudes are the result of foreign language learning (Baker and Prys Jones, 1998: 174).

Gardner (2010), one of the authors who have been particularly concerned with the investigation of the role of motivation in SLA, defines attitudes towards learning the target language as one of the three components of motivation in his socio-educational model of second language acquisition. He also mentions positive attitudes towards other ethnic communities as one of the elements of the integrative motivation to learn a foreign language (Gardner, 2010: 20). This means that if a person dislikes speakers of a certain foreign language as a group, it is not very likely that they will be motivated to learn their language.

Furthermore, he expects various attitudes connected with an individual's cultural background to have an effect on their foreign language learning, due to the fact that language is "...an integral part of the individual's very being" (Gardner, 2010: 23). In his socio-educational model, he refers to such attitudes as integrativeness, "... a complex of affective variables that reflect an individual's openness to other cultures" (Gardner, 2010: 23). Some of the variables that constitute integrativeness include attitudes towards other communities and/or the target language community, an interest in language learning in order to be able to communicate with members of the target community and social attitudes such as ethnocentrism, anomie, authoritarianism and others. Gardner and Lambert (1972) also found that attitudes and motivation were related to achievement in foreign language learning. Achievement in SLA was found in their study to be largely associated with favourable attitudes towards the target community, as well as with an instrumental motivation of the students and the support to do well in a foreign language they received from their parents.

Some authors, on the other hand, focused on negative attitudes towards FLL and their impact on the target language acquisition. Discussing the importance of attitudes in SLA, Steinberg (1982: 177) goes so far as to suggest that not only can negative attitudes towards the target

language or its speakers affect one's persistence in foreign language learning, but they can also "... impair memory functions and detract from focusing on the target language."

As can be seen from the literature on the role of attitudes in foreign language learning, they are an important variable of SLA. However, apart from attitudes towards specific languages and language communities, it is also important to consider attitudes towards bilingualism and bilinguals in general, since they might be an important factor in one's decision on whether to learn a foreign language at all. Thus, attitudes towards bilingualism will also be accounted for in the present study, but first it is important to provide a definition of bilingualism.

To define bilingualism as a linguistic phenomenon is not an easy task, since the literature offers no universal definition that all researchers agree upon. According to Edwards (2006), earlier definitions of bilingualism tended to define the phenomenon as an equal mastery of two languages. For instance, Bloomfield (1984: 56), a researcher concerned with bilingualism in the mid-twentieth century, defined bilingualism as an addition of a foreign language in one's linguistic repertoire whose proficiency is native-like. Contemporary research (Baker and Prys Jones, 1998; Bialystok, 2001; Cook and Singleton, 2014; Grosjean, 1989), however, allows greater variation in the competence level. When it comes to determining bilingual proficiency, Edwards (2006: 9) mentions some tests that have been used, including rating scales and fluency, flexibility and dominance tests. However, the question of the level of bilingualism or of when one becomes bilingual is still a difficult one, due to the fact that individual bilingualism can be analysed from many various perspectives. Baker (2006), for instance, suggests that bilingualism can be analysed along multiple overlapping and interacting dimensions, such as ability (productive or receptive), use and balance of the two languages, development, culture and contexts.

Since the answer to the question of the degree of bilingualism is quite vague, it would be interesting to see how the stakeholders in foreign language education in schools see bilingualism. This study offers some insight into the perceptions of participants on bilingualism. Their answers to the questions related to bilingualism will be compared to their responses to the questions related to FLL in schools, in order to see whether attitudes towards bilingualism in general are related to attitudes towards FLL.

2.2. Parental attitudes and foreign language learning

As stated in the overview of studies on attitudes and SLA, there is no doubt that attitudes are an important aspect of foreign language learning. Especially important in this respect are parental attitudes. Even though decisions concerning the age of onset of SLA can, for instance, be predetermined by law, a range of other decisions regarding the foreign language education of children depend on their parents. It is the parents who decide on the number of foreign languages their child will learn, the succession of introducing other foreign languages, whether their child will be included in a foreign language learning programme even before the beginning of formal schooling and for how long they will be included in a programme. So, parents obviously have a significant impact on their children's foreign language education.

In his discussion on multilingual education, Tucker (1998: 10) observed that, in all successful foreign language learning programmes, it is precisely parental and community support that is essential. Medved Krajnović and Letica (2009) also highlighted positive attitudes of the public, especially of parents, along with positive attitudes of state institutions, as one of the key prerequisites for a successful development of sequential bilingualism in children. Gardner (2010: 64), among others, described "early home and cultural experiences as the basis of the elements of integrativeness"¹. The results of his studies showed that students' favourable attitudes towards the learning situation, motivation intensity, foreign language class anxiety and the encouragement they received from their parents were significantly intercorrelated. These positive attitudes towards the learning situation had an influence on the level of motivation and integrativeness, which, in turn, impacted the learner's attitudes towards bilinguals and speakers of the target language (Gardner, 2010: 64). In other words, students with parental encouragement were more likely to develop integrative motivation towards language learning, which, according to Baker and Prys Jones (1998), is defined as a wish to learn a foreign language in order to be able to join or identify with another language and culture group.

It is obvious that parental attitudes towards language learning play an important role in foreign language education. Especially when it comes to young children, it is their parents'

¹ According to Gardner (2010: 114), integrativeness is an effective characteristic of a language learner which can have an important influence on their motivation to learn a second language. It is defined as "a desire, willingness to (...) adopt features of another cultural community and make them part of one's own behavioural repertoire."

attitudes towards the target language and foreign language education that largely influence their learning (Bartram, 2006: 212). Young (1994: 86) mentions some of the ways in which parents can impact their children's attitudes towards foreign language learning, such as through discussion, by encouraging them to participate in foreign language exchange programmes, by encouraging them to read material in foreign language or simply by helping them with homework.

Furthermore, there are a number of factors that influence parents' attitudes towards foreign language learning and their decisions concerning the education of their children in a foreign language. Bartram (2006), for instance, hypothesises that parents with a background of foreign language learning might encourage their children more readily to learn a foreign language. In his study, which investigated the influence of parental attitudes on the attitudes of children, he found out that the majority of children whose parents exerted positive influence when it comes to FLL were positive about FLL for utilitarian reasons. In other words, they recognised the benefits their parents had from having learned a foreign language. Another factor of parental influence on learners' attitudes Bartram (2006) mentions is the parents' prior knowledge of the language, which does not necessarily have a positive influence on the child's attitudes. Some parents, namely, regret "wasting" time on learning a language they did not use later in life. Some children also felt that their parents did not consider foreign language to be as important as other school subjects. As Bartram (2006) concludes, positive parental attitudes appear to be broadly mirrored in their children's attitudes.

When it comes to positive parental attitudes, significant differences have been found in the type of domestic encouragement according to the socio-economic status (SES) of the family (Brumen, Lešnik and Ivanuš Grmek, 2015). It is mostly parents with a higher SES who read books or sing songs to their children in a foreign language. They also tend to play word games in a foreign language with their children in their early childhood, while parents with a lower SES do this rarely or never. Parents with a higher SES also buy their children foreign language learning CDs, as well as books and magazines in a foreign language more often. These parents also encourage their children to watch movies or programmes in a foreign language and help them with their homework in a foreign language. Consequently, children from families with a higher SES are usually more successful in foreign language learning.

Following the theoretical part comprising definitions of some relevant linguistic terms and a short overview of studies on the attitudinal aspect of FLL, the following section of this thesis describes the study and represents its results, along with a short discussion, where the results are compared to the claims of other researchers.

3. The present study

3.1. The aim and study questions

The aim of the present study was to investigate the beliefs of parents and potential parents about bilingualism, and their attitudes towards foreign language learning in Croatian primary schools. The study also focused on singling out the responses of the participants and comparing them to the theoretical claims presented in the previous parts of the paper.

The main questions guiding this study are:

- (1) Do people have positive attitudes towards foreign language learning in general?
- (2) Do people have positive attitudes towards speakers/learners of foreign languages?
- (3) Do people have positive attitudes towards early foreign language learning?
- (4) Do people have positive attitudes towards learning multiple languages in schools?

The study is based on two hypotheses that follow from the study questions:

- (1) People generally have positive attitudes towards (early) foreign language learning and towards speakers/learners of foreign languages.
- (2) People generally have positive attitudes towards learning multiple foreign languages in schools.

3.2. The sample

The study included 23 participants, 9 female and 14 male, who are all native speakers of Croatian. The age range is between 19 and 55 years of age (mean age 34.43). As can be seen in *Table 1*, presenting overall data on the participants, about 30 per cent have spent the largest part of their lives in a village with up to 300 inhabitants, 39 per cent in a place with 300 – 2 000 inhabitants. About 9 per cent have lived the longest in small towns with 2 000 – 10 000 and 10 000 – 40 000 inhabitants respectively, whereas 13 per cent have spent most of their lives in a city with more than 100 000 inhabitants. When it comes to the education level of the participants, 11 of them have attended a university, 5 a vocational university, 4 have

completed a vocational high-school and 3 a grammar school. Regarding the occupation of the respondents, 6 of them are students, whereas the other 17 participants are employed.

All of them have learned at least one foreign language, in most cases English or German, with only a few exceptions. Twelve participants have learned only one foreign language, for 7 of them it was German and 5 have learned English. Out of the 11 respondents who have learned two or more languages, 7 have learned English and German, 2 English, German and Spanish, one English and Italian and one German and Slovenian. There was considerable variation when it comes to the duration of the learning period, which ranged from one month to 21 years of FLL. Participants were also asked to self-assess their competence in each of the languages they have learned. Their assessments ranged from grade 1 to 5, but the most frequent grades were 4 and 2.

Table 1: Demographical data on participants

		number and percentage of participants
age	under 20	1 (4.35 %)
	20 - 30	8 (34.88 %)
	30 - 50	10 (43.58 %)
	above 50	4 (17.41 %)
sex	F	9 (39.13 %)
	M	14 (60.97 %)
place of residence according to the number of inhabitants	under 300	7 (30.43 %)
	300 – 2 000	9 (39.13 %)
	2 000 – 10 000	2 (8.71 %)
	10 000 – 40 000	2 (8.71 %)
	>100 000	3 (13.04 %)
education	university	11 (47.83 %)
	vocational university	5 (21.74%)
	grammar school	3 (13.04 %)
	vocational high-school	4 (17.41 %)
occupation	student	6 (26.19 %)
	employed	17 (73.91 %)

foreign languages	1	12 (52.27 %)
	>1	11 (47.83 %)
period of learning the first foreign language	1 – 5 years	2 (8.71 %)
	5 - 10 years	6 (26.19 %)
	>10 years	15 (65.22 %)
self-assessed competence level in the first foreign language	1	2 (8.71 %)
	2	6 (26.19 %)
	3	4 (17.41 %)
	4	9 (39.13 %)
	5	2 (8.71 %)

3.3. Instrument and procedure

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire (see Appendix) consisting of two sections. Considering that all participants were native speakers of Croatian, the questionnaire was originally administered to them in a printed version in Croatian. The participants were asked to read the questions and the statements carefully and to give responses to all the questions.

The first part of the questionnaire elicited demographic data of the participants. The second part of the questionnaire included questions related to the aim of the study and was divided into three sections. The first one was comprised of a set of nine statements eliciting the participants' beliefs on bilingualism and bilinguals. The participants were asked to choose one or more statements about bilingualism and bilinguals they agreed with. In the following section, participants were given a set of twenty eight statements related to foreign language learning in general and its benefits to the child's development. The participants responded by indicating their agreement with each statement on a five-point Likert scale. The last section was aimed at gaining insight into the participants' beliefs about foreign language learning in Croatian primary schools. The participants were asked to respond by writing down short answers to ten open-ended questions.

The questionnaire's design was partly based on works by Baker and Sienkewicz (2000): *The Care and Education of Young Individuals*, Baker (2007): *A Parents' and Teachers' Guide to*

Bilingualism, Baker and Prys Jones (1998): *Encyclopedia of Bilingualism and Bilingual Education* and Mihaljević Djigunović (2013): *Multilingual attitudes and attitudes to multilingualism in Croatia*.

4. Results and discussion

4.1. Attitudes towards bilingualism

In the first section of the questionnaire, the participants were asked to choose among the definitions of a bilingual one or more statements they agree with. The data gathered from this section are presented in *Table 2*.

Table 2: Views on bilingualism, ranked according to frequency.

Definition of a bilingual person	Frequencies	Percentage
A person who is equally proficient in their first language and a foreign language.	19	82.61
A person who is proficient in a foreign language and uses it regularly.	7	30.43
A person who is proficient in their first language and a foreign language, regardless of the level of competence.	3	13.04
A person who, apart from their first language, has a certain level of competence in a foreign language.	3	13.04
A person who is proficient in a foreign language, but does not use it regularly.	3	13.04
A bilingual is a person who is not very proficient in a foreign language, but uses it regularly.	1	0.04
A person who can speak in a foreign language, but not write.	1	0.04
A person who understands a foreign language, but does not speak it.	0	0
A person who can read and write in a foreign language, but cannot speak or understand spoken language.	0	0

As is evident from *Table 2*, the first definition of bilingualism was chosen by 19 participants (82.61 %). For 12 participants, it was the only definition with which they expressed their agreement, while the other 7 also chose another one. So, most participants agreed that a person needs to be equally proficient in their first language and a foreign language to be called bilingual. This definition is not in line with the definitions provided in the literature on bilingualism, which mostly allow more variance in the level of competence. The belief expressed by most participants in this study is closer to an early definition of bilingualism by

Bloomfield (1984: 56), which suggested an equal mastery of two languages. Two other statements, placed third and fourth in *Table 2* also highlight the importance of the proficiency level in defining bilingualism. They, however, allow certain variance in the level of competence and do not restrict bilingualism to an equal competence of two languages. These definitions were chosen by 3 participants (13.04 %) respectively.

Some participants, however, seemed to take into account not only the level of proficiency in a foreign language, but also the frequency of usage. The next most frequently chosen definition, marked as true by 7 participants (30.04 %), was the one stating that a bilingual is a person who is fluent in a foreign language and uses it regularly. It is also interesting that 3 participants (13.04%) agree with the statement placed fifth in *Table 2*, suggesting that a person is bilingual if they are proficient in a foreign language, but do not use it regularly. Another statement that considers the frequency of use, the one in the sixth place, was chosen by one participant (0.04 %). These three definitions are partly in line with Baker's (2006) suggestion that bilingualism cannot be defined from only one perspective, but one has to consider its various aspects, such as the level of competence, the frequency of use and the modality.

The last three statements in *Table 2* take account of the modality when defining bilingualism. One participant (0.04 %) seems to have agreed that a person who can speak in a foreign language, but not write, is bilingual, but none of the participants agree that a person who is proficient in writing, reading or listening, but not in speaking, is bilingual.

What can be observed from this data is that most participants, regardless of their sex, age, level of education or the knowledge of foreign languages, hold the traditional view of bilingualism, defining it as an equal competence in two languages. Some participants expressed their agreement with two other statements considering the level of competence, which shows that they take into account this factor when defining a bilingual person. In fact, this seems to be the most important factor for the participants in this study, since the largest number of them agreed with definitions that account for the competence level.

A significantly smaller number of respondents seem to consider the frequency of usage an important factor in determining if a person is bilingual. A person who regularly uses a foreign language they are proficient in is considered to be bilingual by 30.43 per cent of participants,

but by only 13.04 per cent if they do not use it regularly. Even though, the level of competence still seems to be a more important factor. Namely, only one participant (0.04%) agrees that a person is bilingual if they are not very proficient in a foreign language, but they use it regularly.

The factor that seems to be of least importance for the participants in determining whether a person is bilingual is the modality. None of the participants considered a person to be bilingual if they cannot speak a foreign language, but are proficient in another modality, such as reading or writing. Only one participant agreed that a person is bilingual if they can speak a foreign language, but are illiterate in it.

4.2. Attitudes towards foreign language learning

In the following section of the questionnaire, the participants expressed their agreement with twenty eight items referring to attitudes towards foreign language learning in general, towards speakers/learners of foreign languages, towards early foreign language learning and towards the role of parents in their child's foreign language learning. The respondents were asked to rate the items on a five-point Likert-type scale according to the level of their agreement with each statement. For reasons of convenience and simplicity, the items will be divided into the four aforementioned subcategories of attitudes and analysed within them.

Table 3: Attitudes towards FLL in general.

	Statements	Means
1	It is important to learn foreign languages.	4.74
2	It is important to be able to read and write in a foreign language.	4.48
3	To acquire a foreign language, it is enough to learn it in school.	2.35

As the results in *Table 3* show, participants highly agree with the first two items, which indicates that participants generally believe foreign language learning to be important, as well as the ability to read and write in a foreign language. However, a significantly lower mean value was found for the third item, suggesting that participants believe that acquiring a foreign language requires more than just having the target language as a school subject.

What can be concluded from the participants' ratings of the items related to attitudes towards FLL in general, participants in this study generally have highly positive attitudes towards foreign language learning and recognise the importance of FLL.

Table 4: Attitudes towards speakers/learners of foreign languages.

	Statements	Means
4	It is easier for a person who is already proficient in one foreign language to acquire another foreign language.	3.40
5	Foreign language speakers have more opportunities to communicate and build relationships with a variety of people.	4.48
6	Foreign language speakers have a deeper understanding of their first language.	2.91
7	Foreign language speakers have more opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of other cultures.	4.43
8	Foreign language speakers are more tolerant and respect differences.	2.82
9	Foreign language speakers think more flexibly and creatively.	2.87
10	Foreign language speakers are more patient during communication and find it easier to adapt to their collocutor.	3.04
11	Foreign language speakers have an advantage before monolinguals on the employment market.	4.61
12	Foreign language speakers are usually equally successful communicators in both of their languages in most situations.	3.43
13	A bilingual person can be seen as “two monolinguals”.	2.55

The results presented in *Table 4* indicate the levels of the participants’ agreement with the items referring to speakers or learners of foreign languages. The highest agreement was found with items 5, 7 and 11. Two of them are related to the opportunities that bilinguals or multilinguals have when it comes to communication with people from other cultures and the understanding of different cultures. The third highly ranked statement refers to the advantages that bilingual people have on the employment market. This data can be connected to Gardner’s Motivation Theory (Cook and Singleton, 2014: 95 - 96), which differentiates between two types of attitudinally based motivation to learn languages, the integrative and instrumental orientation. The first two items relate to the integrative orientation, “a desire to learn a language to come closer to the other language community” (Cook and Singleton, 2014: 95). The third item, on the other hand, exemplifies the instrumental orientation, “the desire to obtain something practical from studying a second language” (Cook and Singleton, 2014: 96). In other words, the participants in this study largely see FLL as a tool to bring them

economic, financial and communication advantages, but also as an opportunity to learn about different cultures and socialise with people from other countries.

Slightly lower mean values were found with items 4, 10 and 12, with average ratings below 4, which indicates a slight agreement. There has been a lot of research studying the issue of the effect of L2 on an L3, which was addressed in item 4. For instance, a study by Bild and Swain (1989) investigated the acquisition of French as a third language in immersion programmes in Canada and found advantages among bilinguals in comparison to monolinguals. A more recent study by Falk and Bardel (2010) found that L3 learners rely on their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar from the languages they already speak, at least to some extent. However, Cenoz and Genesee (1998: 21) argue that there has also been research where no significant differences between second and multilingual language acquisition have been found, such as in studies by Jaspaert and Lemmens (1990) and Zobl (1993).

Two other items with average ratings below 4 refer to the communication advantages of foreign language speakers. One of them suggested that foreign language speakers are more patient communicators that adapt more easily to their collocutors. According to Baker and Sienkewicz (2000: 28), bilinguals often subconsciously develop a sensitivity to the communication needs of their collocutors. This is especially true of bilinguals living in a bilingual environment, where they are constantly exposed to two different languages and have to choose a language in which they are going to respond. Baker and Sienkewicz (2000: 14) even suggest that bilinguals may be more patient listeners than monolinguals when talking to weaker speakers of one of their languages.

Even though the participants generally slightly agreed with item 12, researchers concerned with bilingualism claim that such levels of balanced bilingualism, where speakers are equally successful in both of their languages in most situations, are rather rare. Baker and Sienkewicz (2000: 17), for instance, suggest that bilinguals use their languages for different purposes, in different contexts and with different people. As a result, the level of proficiency is expected to depend on the domain of use.

There were four items with which the participants generally slightly disagreed and gave them average ratings below 3. Item 6, suggesting that foreign language speakers have a deeper understanding of their first language, was given an average rating of 2.91. However, some

researchers, such as Cook (2003), suggest that this might, in fact, be true of multilinguals. According to him, all the languages a person knows form a system instead of being isolated, which means that they must exert some influence on each other. A study by Kecskes and Papp (2000) found that children who can speak a foreign language use significantly more complex sentences in their first language than monolinguals. This widely discussed concept, called metalinguistic awareness, refers to the “ability to think of language (...), the ability to separate meanings and forms, discriminate language components, identify ambiguity and understand the use of grammatical forms and structures” (De Angelis, 2007: 121). As Cook (2003: 11) suggests, it can also be applied to the first language and even enhance its use.

The participants also generally disagreed with item 8, which suggested that speakers of foreign languages were more tolerant, even though research shows that this might be a trait of multilinguals. For instance, Dewaele and Wei (2013: 238) concluded that the knowledge of more languages makes individuals more tolerant of ambiguity. They argue that multilinguals, especially those who have lived in a foreign environment, have become more aware that their beliefs and communicative practices are not necessarily the same as their interlocutor’s, which makes them more tolerant of differences.

A low mean value was found with item 9. Despite the disagreement on the part of the participants, research generally supports the conclusion that foreign language speakers think more flexibly and creatively. Baker and Sienkewicz (2000: 14) suggest that bilinguals may have advantages in thinking. Since they have more words for a single concept, as well as a number of bilingual connotations related with some words, links between a word and its concept are looser. This allows bilinguals to think more fluently, flexibly and creatively. However, Cummins (2000: 37) argued that there is a threshold level of proficiency that learners must attain in order to gain these cognitive advantages.

The lowest mean value within the category of attitudes towards speakers/learners of foreign languages was found with item 13, the claim that a bilingual person can be seen as “two monolinguals”. The participants’ belief goes in line with similar conclusions supported by research. Grosjean (1989: 4) was one of the first researchers who argued that “the bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person”. He claimed that a bilingual’s linguistic knowledge does not consist of two perfectly acquired languages they can use in each situation like the corresponding monolinguals. According to Grosjean (1989), monolinguals should not be the

point of reference to which bilinguals should be compared because bilinguals use their languages differently depending on the domain.

Based on the participants' ratings of the items 4 - 13, a conclusion can be made regarding their attitudes towards speakers/learners of foreign languages. Firstly, they seem to recognise the advantages that speakers of foreign languages have when it comes to employment, communicating with people from other countries and understanding other cultures. However, they generally do not think that bilingualism offers many cognitive advantages and has a positive impact on a foreign language learner's first language. This leads to the conclusion that the participants in this study recognise the advantages of bilingualism that are immediately useful and can bring communicational and financial benefits. On the other hand, they seem to be less aware of the less obvious cognitive advantages.

Table 5: Attitudes towards early FLL.

	Statements	Means
14	A foreign language can be acquired at any age.	4.13
15	Early foreign language learning has a range of advantages.	4.88
16	It is better for a child to fully acquire their first language before the beginning of SLA.	2.83
17	Children can easily acquire their first language and a foreign language simultaneously.	3.83
18	Each child has their own foreign language acquisition rate.	4.43
19	Early foreign language learning could interfere with the acquisition of the child's first language.	2.61
20	Children who start learning a foreign language in a very early age often mix their languages, which can hinder communication.	2.83
21	Foreign language learning has a positive impact on a child's linguistic abilities (both in the first and second language)	4.14
22	Children who learn a foreign language become aware of the possession of two different linguistic systems very early on.	3.57
23	Foreign language learning has a negative impact on a child's intelligence.	1.52
24	Early foreign language learning can confuse a child.	2.04

Table 5 shows the average ratings that participants gave to items referring to early foreign language learning. The highest agreement was found with items 14, 15, 18 and 21. This indicates that the participants strongly agree that a foreign language can be acquired at any

age. There has been extensive research in this area and researchers have come to various conclusions. For instance, Baker (2006: 128) discusses the differences between people at different ages learning a foreign language. Basically, he states that a foreign language can be learned at any age. However, he also argues that young children are more successful foreign language learners because they acquire language rather than learn it. This is why their long-term proficiency is usually greater, even though young adults are thought to learn a foreign language more efficiently and quickly due to their cognitive maturity. When talking about the differences between a child and an adult learning a foreign language, Hakuta (2001) argues that there are no qualitative differences between them, but a considerable environmental effect on the outcomes needs to be taken into account. Baker (2007: 32) mentions factors such as the amount of practice, attitudes and motivation, aptitude and persistence. Cook and Singleton (2014: 19) agree that older learners can also be successful, especially in some domains, such as reading skills, grammar and storing lexical items. On the other hand, they sometimes have problems with pronunciation, memorizing and oral response. However, the two authors do advocate the general belief that the best time to start learning a foreign language is childhood. They compare it to learning other skills, such as playing an instrument, which in most cases also yields most success if started at an early age.

The participants in the study largely agreed that early FLL offers a range of advantages, which was suggested by item 15. In his discussion of this issue, Baker (2007: 31) suggests that starting to acquire a foreign language at an early age does offer a range of advantages. Young children, according to him, acquire language subconsciously, without much conscious effort, pressure or the fear of making mistakes. Besides, children acquire pronunciation much more easily than older learners. On the other hand, children are relatively slow language learners when compared to more efficient young adults and adults, who have “better developed thinking, information handling (and) analytical and memorization capacities” (Baker, 2007: 32).

Item 18 was given an average of 4.43, which indicates that the participants strongly believe that each child has their own acquisition rate. According to Lightbown (2000: 442), there are predictable sequences in SLA which have been shown to be considerably similar in different learners. However, when it comes to the rate of acquisition, Espinosa (2007) claims that there is considerable variety among children in the rate at which they acquire a language. According to her, the speed of SLA depends on a number of factors, including a child’s personality,

aptitude, motivation, as well as some external factors such as the quantity and quality of input and opportunities to use language.

The participants also seem to have largely agreed with item 21, which claimed that FLL had a positive impact on a child's linguistic abilities. In support of this statement, researchers dealing with FLL have found that bilinguals and multilinguals tend to have more developed metalinguistic awareness than monolinguals (De Angelis, 2007: 120). In other words, they inspect language instead of just using it. This "may include reflection about the intended meaning, being sensitive to what is implied rather than stated, inner meanings (...) and being analytical towards language" (Baker and Prys Jones, 1998: 73). This awareness about language is not only used in FLL, but also applied to a bilingual's first language. Interestingly, when the participants were asked to rate item 6, suggesting that speakers of a foreign language have a deeper understanding of their first language, their agreement was significantly lower than with item 21, even though both items referred to a higher developed level of metalinguistic awareness in multilinguals.

Slightly lower means were found for items 17 and 22. The first of them suggests that children can successfully acquire their first language and second language simultaneously. This phenomenon of simultaneous acquisition of two languages before the age of about three is called simultaneous bilingualism and has excited considerable interest of researchers (Baker, 2006; Grosjean, 1982; Meisel, 2001). All of them mention examples of children who simultaneously acquired two or more languages.

Item 22 suggested that children learning a foreign language are aware of the possession of two different linguistic systems early on. This issue has also been the focus of a number of studies. Grosjean (1982), for instance, mentions an example of an English-German bilingual girl who at first mixed words from the two languages when speaking to monolingual speakers. However, at the end of her second year, she started to distinguish between her two languages. Similarly, Baker (2007: 33) argues that bilingual children under two years of age can appropriately switch from one language to another depending on the context and the person they are talking to. According to him, research has also shown that a bilingual child aged three always chooses the appropriate language in a conversation with a monolingual person, but uses two languages much more readily with fluent bilinguals, which clearly indicates that the child is able to differentiate between their two linguistic systems.

Participants slightly disagreed with items 16, 19, 20 and 24, whose means were below 3. The participants generally did not agree that it is better for a child to fully acquire their first language before starting to learn a foreign language. Baker (2007) agrees that there is no reason to start learning languages later, and suggests that FLL should be introduced as early as possible. Concerning the advantages of early FLL, they have already been discussed in this thesis, so they will not be addressed here.

There was also slight disagreement among the participants with the item suggesting that early FLL could interfere with the acquisition of a child's first language. This goes in line with the claims of a number of researchers who have found no evidence that learning a second language in early childhood negatively affects the child's first language (Bruck, Lambert and Tucker, 1976; Cook, 2003; Swain and Lapkin, 1982). Addressing the issue of detrimental effects of a second language on the development of the first language, Baker (2007) concluded that learning a second language does not interfere with a child's first language. However, he does mention that there is a possibility of subtractive bilingualism, where the majority second language causes the loss of the minority first language (Baker, 2007: 37). Cook (2003) also discussed the harmful effects of a second language on the first in the context of language loss or attrition, where a person loses the command of their first language because of a significant decline in its usage. This phenomenon, however, does not result from acquiring a second language, but from a lack of the first language use.

The results indicate that the participants slightly disagreed with the item suggesting that children who start with FLL at a very early age often mix their languages. According to Baker (2007), it is possible that bilingual children mix words from their two languages, but this is only a temporary phenomenon which should be reduced when children gain sufficient lexical knowledge from both of their languages. Genesee (2006: 61) explains it by the fact that bilingual children have smaller vocabularies than their respective monolingual peers, even though their conceptual vocabulary may be the same. This reduced vocabulary knowledge can be explained by various factors, such as the amount of exposure to each language, overlapping in contexts of learning and memory capacity. Genesee (2009) stresses that code-mixing is not a sign of confusion, but simply a method that bilingual children use to fill the gaps in their developing languages. Eventually, they learn to use their languages separately or to code-mix when appropriate.

A slight disagreement was also found with item 24, stating that early FLL can confuse a child. Similarly, the lowest mean value was found with item 23, which claimed that FLL had a negative influence on a child's intelligence. The participants' beliefs on the issue go in line with contemporary research in the field of bilingualism and early FLL. However, early research on bilingualism (Darcy, 1946; Saer, 1923; Smith, 1923) tended to find monolingual children ahead of bilinguals on IQ tests, which led to the conclusion that bilingual children were mentally confused (Baker, 2007). The explanation behind the early findings was that having two languages in the mind hindered effective thinking, but it was later found that such conclusions were the result of a poor research design. According to Baker (2007: 42), modern research has found that bilinguals are equal to monolinguals on IQ tests or even show a slight intellectual superiority. As already mentioned earlier in the thesis, bilingualism can, if well-developed, provide some cognitive advantages, such as divergent thinking and creativity, as well as metalinguistic awareness (Baker and Sienkewicz, 2000; Bialystok, 2005; Cook, 2003; De Angelis, 2007).

In conclusion, the participants in this study seem to believe that a foreign language can be acquired at any age, which has been confirmed by modern research. They also highly agreed with the statements suggesting that early FLL offers a range of advantages and has a positive impact on the development of a child's linguistic abilities, which goes in line with scientific findings. They are, however, slightly less convinced that children can simultaneously successfully acquire their first language and a foreign language and that they become aware of the possession of two languages early on, even though research supports both statements. The participants did not believe that FLL has negative effects on a child's first language or intellectual abilities, which has been confirmed by a lot of extensive research.

Table 6: The role of parents in a child's FLL.

	Statements	Means
25	The role of parental support is of exceptional importance in the development of their child's foreign language competence.	4.39
26	For a child to acquire a foreign language, it is enough that the parents have a positive attitude towards the target language, but they do not necessarily need to be actively involved in FLL.	2.83
27	Children usually adopt their parents' attitudes towards foreign languages, which then influence their foreign language acquisition.	3.39

28	Children's attitudes towards the target language and their motivation to learn a FL have a great impact on their success in FLL.	4.30
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Table 6 shows average levels of participants' agreement with the last set of items related to views on the role of parents in their child's FLL. The participants seemed to highly agree that the parental role is very important in the development of their child's foreign language competence and that children's attitudes towards the target language and their motivation have a great impact on their success in FLL. The belief that the parental role is of crucial importance in the child's FLL goes in line with the conclusions of various researchers, such as Bartram (2006), Tucker (1998), Medved Krajnović and Letica (2009), Gardner (2010) and Brumen, Lešnik and Ivanuš Grmek (2015), whose findings have been discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis. When it comes to achievement in FLL, Gardner and Lambert (1972) found that positive attitudes and high motivation were related to success in learning a foreign language.

The participants agreed slightly less with the remaining two items. The first one suggested that children usually adopt their parents' attitudes towards foreign languages. As it was already mentioned in the theoretical framework of the thesis, parental attitudes towards the target language and foreign language education largely influence their children's learning, especially if the learners are very young (Bartram, 2006: 212). Mihaljević Djigunović (2012) agrees that young learners generally adopt the attitudes of their parents, siblings, friends and other people from their immediate environment. However, Vilke (1979) found that, once the learners gain some first-hand experience in FLL, they tend to develop their own attitudes.

The least agreement in this category of attitudes was found with item 26, suggesting that if parents have a positive attitude towards the target language, it will be enough for a child to acquire the target language. Even though researchers largely confirmed the importance of parental attitudes towards a foreign language in their child's foreign language learning process, Brumen, Lešnik and Ivanuš Grmek (2015) argue that the active role of parents also plays a significant role. Their findings suggest that children whose parents can afford buying foreign language learning resources like DVDs, magazines, and books, and who spend time in sharing activities, such as reading books or watching films in a foreign language, are generally more successful learners.

To sum up, the participants generally view the role of parents in their child's FLL as very important and they mostly agree that parents need to be actively involved in the process of their child's FLL. They also believe that children's attitudes towards the target language have a big influence on their achievement, but are less convinced that children adopt their parent's attitudes towards foreign languages.

4.3. Beliefs about foreign language learning in Croatian primary schools

The final section of the questionnaire was aimed at eliciting the participants' beliefs about FLL in Croatian primary schools. To this end, they were asked to answer ten open-ended questions related to the age when FLL should start, the number of languages that children should learn and their perceived importance, and other related issues.

When asked about the age at which they think children should start learning a foreign language, participants stated an average age of 5, which is below the age when children are obliged to take up a foreign language in Croatia. Even though the age suggested by the participants is past the age of three, when it is possible to develop simultaneous bilingualism, it indicates that participants believe that FLL should ideally start before the beginning of primary school education in Croatia. This goes in line with Baker's (2007) suggestion that a second language should be introduced as early as possible in order to achieve greater levels of competence later on.

The second question referred to early FLL programmes. Out of 20 participants who stated that they would want to include their child in a programme of early foreign language learning, 16 would choose an English learning programme. Four of them would include their child in a German learning programme, while the others would prefer their child to learn Mandarin, Russian, Italian, French or Spanish.

Out of 23 participants, only one does not think that a foreign language should be a compulsory subject in primary school. As an explanation of why they believe a foreign language should be compulsory, some participants expressed their conviction that good foundations of a foreign language competence and of general communicative skills are laid at an early age. One participant believes that a foreign language should be a compulsory subject, but it should not be English, because "the child will learn English anyway."

When asked how many foreign languages should be taught in Croatian primary schools, two participants believed that it should be one language or at least one language respectively. Thirteen other participants stated that two languages should be taught and 5 believe that children should learn at least two languages, whereas 3 participants stated that three foreign languages should be taught in primary schools. What follows from this data is that the participants view multilingualism in primary school as a positive phenomenon and most of them would like their children to learn more than one foreign language.

When it comes to the question of which languages primary school children should learn, the two highest ranking languages according to the participants' perceived importance were English and German. Most importance was assigned to English, with 20 participants ranking it first. Two participants thought German is the most important language to learn and only one participant thought it was Russian. The language which was most frequently ranked second according to its importance is German, with 20 participants placing it second. Two participants ranked English and one ranked Spanish as the second most important language to teach in schools. Even though there is greater variety of languages in the third place, Italian was ranked third most frequently. Other languages the participants ranked as third were Swedish, French, Spanish, Turkish and German. Languages that are, according to the participants, fourth in the order of importance in schools are Japanese, French, Spanish, Italian, English and Mandarin.

As the answer to the question of which language they would choose as their child's first foreign language in school, 19 participants offered English and 3 chose German. Twenty one participant said they would want their child to learn a second foreign language in school, too. Seventeen participants would choose German as their child's second language, one participant would want it to be Spanish and three Russian. When it comes to the age of the introduction of a second foreign language, the participants stated that the best age for that would be an average of 9.78 years of age, even though their answers ranged from one to fourteen years. This indicates that the participants generally believe that a second foreign language should be introduced in the fourth grade of primary school, as it is the case in Croatian primary schools. When asked whether schools should offer their students a wider variety of foreign languages as subjects, 21 responded affirmatively, which indicates that the participants would like Croatian schools to have a wider choice of languages that students could choose from.

The answers to the questions related to the perceived importance of particular languages are not very surprising, especially concerning the two languages at the top of the list, English and German. As it was already mentioned in the theoretical part of this thesis, English is seen by most parents as the language that everyone needs to know and use (Medved Krajnović and Letica, 2009). Taking the public awareness of the importance of English into account, it is not surprising that most participants in this study would choose English as their child's first foreign language. The reasons behind the frequent choice of German as a second foreign language and its high rank on the list of the most important languages to be taught in schools could be found in history. As Mihaljević Djigunović (2013) suggests, German has played an important role as a foreign language in Croatian history due to political reasons, but also due to a large number of Croatian guest-workers in German-speaking countries. Since a large part of participants come from the northern part of Croatia, which has historically been deeply connected with German-speaking countries, it is not surprising that they perceive German as an important language to know. The fact that many Croatian families have moved to Germany or Austria in recent years may also have played a role in the popularity of German among the participants. When it comes to the choice of Italian as the third most popular language, it can be assumed that historical reasons and the geographical proximity of Italy played a role in the participants' choice.

The last question referred to the benefits and harms of FLL. Most participants expressed the belief that there were a lot of benefits of FLL. The majority of respondents mentioned communicational advantages ("being able to communicate to a wide variety of people") and more career opportunities ("being competitive on the employment market", "being able to work in multinational companies") as the most important benefits of the knowledge of foreign languages. Some participants also mentioned cognitive advantages, being able to function in a foreign country, the development of social and communicational skills, openness to other cultures, and independence of the native country.

On the other hand, only 7 participants mentioned potential harms of FLL. Five of them focused on the fact that FLL is time-consuming and can put children under additional pressure, not leaving them enough time to do other things. Other potential harms of FLL that were mentioned were the fact that not everyone is a good language learner, as well as the possibility of developing a negative attitude towards FLL due to a wrong teaching method. It

is also interesting that one participant mentioned code-switching (“using a word from a foreign language when there is a word with the same meaning in the first language”) as a potential danger of FLL.

The participants’ beliefs elicited by the last section of the questionnaire show positive tendencies in their attitudes towards learning multiple foreign languages in primary schools. All but one participant believe that it is important to have a foreign language as a compulsory subject in schools. Most respondents would want to include their child in an early foreign language learning programme and advocate early introduction of a foreign language, around the age of 5. A large majority of them would also want their child to learn a second foreign language, which should be introduced around the age of 10. When it comes to the choice of a foreign language, English was found to be the most popular first foreign language, while German ranked highest in the category of a second foreign language. They largely believe that children should be taught at least two languages in schools and would want schools to offer a wider choice of foreign languages.

5. Conclusion

Due to the increased need for multilingualism in the recent decades, foreign language learning has been in the focus of the public, with a growing number of individuals recognising the importance of FLL and enrolling in a FLL programme. Numerous decisions regarding FLL, such as the number and succession of target languages, are dependent on a number of factors, including attitudes towards bilingualism in general, as well as attitudes towards the target language and its speakers. When it comes to very young learners and their FLL, the role of parental attitudes towards FLL is particularly significant. Namely, the encouragement a child experiences at home has been found to influence the child’s motivation, class anxiety level and, eventually, achievement in second language learning (Gardner, 2010).

The present study investigates the attitudes of parents and potential parents towards foreign language learning in Croatian primary schools and contrasts them with the findings of contemporary research. The study was based on the hypotheses that people generally have positive attitudes towards (early) foreign language learning and FLL in schools, as well as towards speakers/learners of foreign languages. The research was conducted in the form of a questionnaire administered to the participants.

The findings in this study indicate that the participants generally have highly positive attitudes towards foreign language learning. Even though the participants' view on bilingualism corresponds to that of early researchers, who considered bilingualism to be an equal competence in two languages (Bloomfield, 1984), they consider foreign language learning to be of great importance. The results also show positive tendencies in attitudes towards speakers/learners of foreign languages, whose communicational and economic advantages have been largely recognised by the participants. However, they do not seem to be convinced of the cognitive advantages of bilingualism suggested by contemporary researchers (Baker and Sienkewicz, 2000; Bialystok, 2005; Cook, 2003; De Angelis, 2007). When it comes to early FLL, positive attitudes were also found, with most respondents believing it to have positive effects on the child's development and recognising the importance of the parental role in the child's second language learning. Finally, most participants were found to have highly positive attitudes concerning FLL in Croatian primary schools. They largely support early introduction of a foreign language, as well as the idea that at least two foreign languages should be taught in primary schools. It can be concluded based on the analysis of the research findings that both hypotheses proposed in the initial part of the study have been confirmed.

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ANKETA

Poštovani,

pred Vama je anketa čiji je cilj istraživanje stavova prema učenju stranih jezika u hrvatskim školama. Istraživanje se provodi u svrhu izrade diplomskog rada studentice Mirne Dvorski na Odsjeku za anglistiku Filozofskog fakulteta Sveučilišta u Zagrebu.

Ispunjavanje upitnika dobrovoljno je i anonimno te u svakom trenutku možete odustati od sudjelovanja. Svi dobiveni podaci promatrat će se samo na grupnoj razini te će se koristiti isključivo u svrhu izrade diplomskog rada. Za ispunjavanje upitnika bit će Vam potrebno između 10 i 15 minuta.

Molim Vas da odgovorite na sva pitanja.

Hvala Vam na uloženom trudu i vremenu!

I. dio: Osnovni podaci

1) Spol: M Ž

2) Godine: _____

3) Koliko otprilike stanovnika ima naselje u kojem ste proveli veći dio svog života?

a) do 300 stanovnika

d) 10 000 – 40 000 stanovnika

b) 300 – 2 000 stanovnika

e) 40 000 – 100 000 stanovnika

c) 2 000 – 10 000 stanovnika

f) više od 100 000 stanovnika.

4) Razina obrazovanja:

osnovna škola

srednja strukovna škola

gimnazija

viša škola

fakultet

doktorat

5) Zanimanje: _____

6) Molim Vas da navedete koji ste strani jezik/ jezike učili tijekom svog života (ako jeste), koliko dugo ste učili pojedini jezik te da procijenite svoje sposobnosti u svakom od jezika koje ste učili.

	jezik	vremenski period (u godinama)	sposobnosti				
1			1	2	3	4	5
2			1	2	3	4	5
3			1	2	3	4	5
4			1	2	3	4	5

II. dio: Stavovi prema učenju stranih jezika

Molim Vas da na sljedeće pitanje odgovorite označavanjem kvadratića pokraj odgovora s kojim se slažete. Moguće je više odgovora.

1. Tko je za Vas dvojezična osoba?

- a) Osoba koja je, uz svoj materinji jezik, podjednako dobro ovladala jednim stranim jezikom. ☐
- b) Osoba koja je, uz svoj materinji jezik, ovladala jednim stranim jezikom, bez obzira na razinu kompetencije. ☐
- c) Osoba koja je, uz svoj materinji jezik, ovladala određenom razinom stranog jezika. ☐
- d) Osoba koja je fluentna u jednom stranom jeziku, ali ga rijetko koristi. ☐
- e) Osoba koja je fluentna u jednom stranom jeziku i redovito ga koristi. ☐
- f) Osoba koja nije toliko fluentna u stranom jeziku, ali ga redovito koristi. ☐
- g) Osoba koja savršeno razumije strani jezik, ali ga ne govori. ☐
- h) Osoba koja govori strani jezik, ali u njemu nije pismena. ☐
- i) Osoba koja čita i piše na stranom jeziku, ali ga ne govori i ne razumije usmenu komunikaciju. ☐

Molim Vas da na sljedeća pitanja odgovorite označavanjem na ljestvici koliko se slažete s pojedinom izjavom.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 – nimalo se ne slažem | 2 – uglavnom se ne slažem |
| 3 – niti se slažem niti se ne slažem | 4 – donekle se slažem |
| 5 – u potpunosti se slažem | |

1. Važno je učiti strani jezik.	1	2	3	4	5
2. Važno je znati čitati i pisati na stranom jeziku.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Za usvajanje stranog jezika dovoljno je učiti ga u školi.	1	2	3	4	5
4. Osobi koja već zna jedan strani jezik lakše je naučiti još jedan strani jezik.	1	2	3	4	5
5. Ljudi koji govore strani jezik imaju više mogućnosti za komunikaciju i prijateljstva s različitim ljudima.	1	2	3	4	5
6. Ljudi koji govore strani jezik dublje shvaćaju i svoj materinji jezik.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Ljudi koji govore strani jezik imaju više mogućnosti da dublje upoznaju različite kulture.	1	2	3	4	5
8. Ljudi koji govore strani jezik tolerantiniji su i poštuju različitosti.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Ljudi koji govore strani jezik razmišljaju fleksibilnije i kreativnije.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Ljudi koji govore strani jezik strpljiviji su u komunikaciji i lakše se prilagođavaju sugovorniku.	1	2	3	4	5
11. Ljudi koji govore strani jezik u prednosti su nad jednojezičnima na tržištu rada.	1	2	3	4	5
12. Ljudi koji govore strani jezik uglavnom su jednako uspješni u komunikaciji na oba jezika u većini situacija.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Dvojezična se osoba može promatrati kao „dvije jednojezične“.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Strani se jezik može naučiti u bilo kojoj životnoj dobi.	1	2	3	4	5
15. Učenje stranog jezika u ranoj dobi ima mnoge prednosti.	1	2	3	4	5
16. Bolje je da dijete najprije u potpunosti usvoji materinji jezik, a tek onda počne učiti strani jezik.	1	2	3	4	5
17. Djeca s lakoćom uče strani i materinji jezik istovremeno.	1	2	3	4	5
18. Svako dijete ima svoj tempo učenja stranog jezika.	1	2	3	4	5

19. Učenje stranog jezika u vrlo ranoj dobi moglo bi ometati usvajanje materinjeg jezika.	1	2	3	4	5
20. Kod djece koja uče strani jezik u ranoj dobi često dolazi do „miješanja“ dvaju jezika, što može ometati komunikaciju.	1	2	3	4	5
21. Učenje stranog jezika pozitivno utječe na jezične sposobnosti djeteta (i u materinjem i u stranom jeziku).	1	2	3	4	5
22. Djeca koja uče strani jezik već u vrlo ranoj dobi imaju svijest da posjeduju dva različita jezična sustava.	1	2	3	4	5
23. Učenje stranog jezika negativno utječe na inteligenciju kod djece.	1	2	3	4	5
24. Učenje stranog jezika u ranoj dobi zbunjuje dijete.	1	2	3	4	5
25. U razvoju jezičnih sposobnosti stranog jezika djece potpora je roditelja od iznimne važnosti.	1	2	3	4	5
26. Da bi dijete usvojilo strani jezik, dovoljno je da roditelji imaju pozitivan stav prema stranom jeziku, ali ne moraju biti aktivno uključeni u učenje stranog jezika.	1	2	3	4	5
27. Djeca uglavnom preuzimaju stavove svojih roditelja o stranim jezicima, koji onda utječu na usvajanje jezika.	1	2	3	4	5
28. Dječji stavovi prema stranom jeziku i motivacija za učenje imaju velik utjecaj na uspjeh u usvajanju stranog jezika.	1	2	3	4	5

Molim Vas da na sljedeća pitanja odgovorite kratkim odgovorima.

1. Od koje bi dobi, prema Vašem mišljenju, djeca trebala početi učiti strani jezik?

2. Biste li svoje dijete (bez obzira na to imate li djecu) upisali u neki program ranog učenja jezika (prije polaska u školu)? Koji jezik biste odabrali?

3. Treba li strani jezik biti obavezni predmet u osnovnoj školi?

4. Koliko se stranih jezika treba učiti u hrvatskim školama?

5. Koji se jezici trebaju učiti? Poredajte ih po važnosti:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

6. Koji biste jezik izabrali za svoje dijete kao prvi strani jezik u školi?

7. Biste li upisali svoje dijete na drugi strani jezik i koji?

8. U kojoj biste dobi uveli drugi strani jezik?

9. Trebaju li škole imati u ponudi više stranih jezika?

10. Što je, prema vašem mišljenju, najveća korist, a što najveća štetnost učenja stranih jezika?
