



## Balanced bilingualism: A cognitive advantage in emotional words processing

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### Abstract

The impact of bilingualism on cognitive and emotional processing is the topic of recent psycholinguists & Educational Psychologists' studies. Bilingualism researchers (Harris, 2020; Kazanas & Altarriba, 2015; Pavlenko, 2012; and Ayçiçeği & Harris, 2004) believe the first language is more emotional than the 2nd Language in bilinguals. Iranian studies (Bahrami et al., 2020) also approved this. However, this research shall evaluate the formation of early Mental Emotion Lexicon in adult balanced bilinguals and the impact of positive emotions on lexical access as cognitive executive functions. To evaluate the hypothesis through the experiment, forty Turkish-Persian bilingual students with an average age of 22-30,  $SD=2.25$ , were selected from Islamic Azad University students in Tehran to participate in this quasi-experimental research. Participants were asked to complete the Bilingual History Questionnaire, the General Health Questionnaire, the Positive and Negative affect schedule, and a DMDX word selection task to induce positive emotion/word. The emotion words list from WEAL (Word Emotion Association Lexicon) was validated under translation advantage. Repeated measures in ANOVA revealed that the participants' significantly spent fast reaction time determining both languages' emotion words to images, induced with intense positive emotion. The results showed that positive emotion processing facilitates the RT more than inhibitory (negative) emotions in bilinguals. Early formation of a bilingual emotion lexicon causes balance in emotional distance. These approve the findings of previous studies. The results can be further referred to as literature on bilingualism cognitive advantage studies and propose mental emotion lexicon as criteria for bilingual proficiency assessments.

**Keywords:** Balanced bilingualism, Positive emotion words, Lexical access, Bilingual emotion lexicon, Bilingual lexical, Cognitive advantage

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