

How Do Students Use Two Languages When Learning Mathematics? Using Two Languages during Computation

Overall, strong evidence suggests that bilingualism does not impact mathematical reasoning or problem solving. Bilingual speakers sometimes switch languages when carrying out arithmetic computations. Bilingual adults may have a preferred language for carrying out arithmetic computation, which is usually the language of arithmetic instruction. Reported differences in calculation times between monolingual and bilingual adults were miniscule. Evidence suggests that switching languages for arithmetic computation does not affect the quality of conceptual reasoning. This language switching can be swift, highly automatic, and facilitate rather than inhibit solving word problems in the second language, providing the student's language proficiency is sufficient for understanding the text of the word problem.

Based on Using Two Languages When Learning Mathematics: How Can Research Help Us Understand Mathematics Learners Who Use Two Languages?

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