

Bilingualism as a protective factor in age-related neurodegenerative disorders

<https://neurodegenerationresearch.eu/survey/title-of-pibilingualism-as-a-protective-factor-in-age-related-neurodegenerative-disorders/>

Title of project or programme

Title of PI Bilingualism as a protective factor in age-related neurodegenerative disorders

Principal Investigators of project/programme grant

Title	Forname	Surname	Institution	Country
Professor Linda	Clare		Bangor University	UK

Address of institution of lead PI

Institution Bangor University

Street Address

City Bangor

Postcode LL57 2AS

Country

- United Kingdom

Source of funding information

Economic and Social Research Council

Total sum awarded (Euro)

582288.12

Start date of award

22-01-2010

Total duration of award in months

36

The project/programme is most relevant to

- Alzheimer's disease and other dementias
- Parkinson's disease
- Neurodegenerative disease in general

Keywords

Alzheimer's disease, dementia, bilingual, parkinson's disease

Research abstract in English

Various lifestyle factors are thought to reduce the risk of developing age-related conditions such as Alzheimer's disease (AD) or other dementias. Recent studies of people with AD suggest that people who are bilingual develop symptoms several years later than people who are monolingual. However previous studies have left open the possibility that this effect may be due to other differences between the two groups.

This study aims to establish whether this delayed onset effect is robust by comparing bilinguals and monolinguals drawn from a population which is otherwise similar in social and cultural terms. It is also important to understand why this delayed onset effect arises. In general people who are bilingual tend to outperform monolinguals in capacities such as planning or switching between different tasks. These capacities are called 'executive functions'. Executive functions become impaired in age-related conditions such as AD and Parkinson's Disease (PD).

This study aims to find out if people who are bilingual are more resilient in the face of impairments in executive functions when they develop these disorders. This will be done by comparing the performance of bilingual and monolingual healthy older people, people with AD, and people with PD on tests of executive function.

In which category does this research fall?

- Basic research

Lay Summary