This poster reviews the interface of bilingualism and autism spectrum disorder relative to their combined effects on social and linguistic development in children. Parents raising children diagnosed with autism have consistently been advised by interventionists to raise their child monolingual so their home life is not confusing; however, new research provides evidence that bilingualism has no negative effects on children with autism, and even promotes a child's social and cognitive development. In a disorder which hinders social connections, the ability to connect through multiple languages could be exponentially beneficial. Children on the spectrum need to make social connections in as many ways as possible, and communicating in their parents' language is an advantage to their early development. This poster shares research findings that support such positive revisions.

One of the defining aspects of ASD is difficulty making social connections, yet language is one of the most effective ways to make social connections. If a bicultural family attempts to speak only English to the child on the spectrum, much of the linguistic meaning may be lost in translation. This practice potentially shuts down the child's social skills instead of enhancing them.

A major implication of these findings is that more research into the intersection of autism and bilingualism needs to be performed. Currently, the conclusions of new research combined with all previous research implies that, while seemingly illogical, it is beneficial to raise children with ASD as bilingual. If the child's family speaks another language, that is the language that the child should speak at home. Experts and interventionists must consider no longer advocating for an English-only household approach, because it can be detrimental to the development of social language.