

BILINGUAL AND MULTILINGUAL SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION

Panasiuk Yu. V.

INTRODUCTION

The problem of bilingualism was always one of the main linguistic aspects, which attracted attention of philologists, philosophers, interpreters, teachers and other researchers. Nowadays it is still in the focus of thorough scientific interest of modern world, that is connected with a growing impact of globalization and integration processes, which penetrate in life of a civil society with a new power. Every day people of different cultures, backgrounds and languages keep in touch with each other and this interaction influences the state and quality of their communication. During this process diverse kinds of language interaction emerge and take place in future. As a result, it can cause different language phenomena.

The object of this work is bilingualism in modern and developing world. Nowadays a foreign language is not only a means of communication with representatives of different nationalities, it is getting a status of necessary tools in the dialogue of cultures and civilizations in the modern world. It is possible to assert, that bilingualism is a necessary means of developing our scope, it helps to become more intelligent and erudite. As a result, a lot of new mental skills and abilities can be developed, such as critical thinking, which is formed within the processes of analysis, comparison and evaluation of cultural peculiarities of different countries. In such a way a new kind of personality is formed, that exists in a cultural and civilized field, realized in language, public conscience at different levels, stereotypes and behavior standards.

The main purpose of this article is a comprehensive analysis of a notion of bilingualism, investigation of fundamental approaches to it, determination of benefits of bilingual and multilingual systems of education and outline future perspectives of the development of bilingualism in modern linguistics.

The realization of this goal requires to fulfill *the following tasks*: 1) to give a definition to the notion of bilingualism; 2) to determine specific peculiarities of bilingualism; 3) to outline and investigate main approaches to bilingualism; 4) to define the future of bilingualism for European educational systems.

Background and motivations. In modern world the problem of bilingualism gets a great significance and becomes an important issue in research papers by Ukrainian, Polish, American, Canadian and other authors, that can be proved by a big deal of critical material on the above mentioned issue. However, there are still many questions, which need to be solved and require further academic research. Individual works, devoted to this problem, include such names as T. Dufresne, D. Masny, P. Romanowski, M. Jedynek, H. B. Beardsmore, J.-M. Dewale, A. Housen, Li Wei and others. Among those scientists, who investigate benefits of being bilingual, it is necessary to mention works by V. Marian, A. Shook, S. Zhabotyńska and others.

Methodology

Taking into account, that bilingualism is a complicated phenomenon, it is relevant to use a complex of methods, that can clarify the meaning and specific peculiarities of this notion. Using *an analytical method* gives an opportunity to separate bilingualism as a particular linguistic category and define typical characteristics, that form the essence of bilingualism as itself. *A comparative method* provides with a special understanding of using scientific approaches to the problem of bilingualism at different stages of development. It helps to explore linguistic connections between them. *An interdisciplinary method* ensures a necessity in a thorough analysis of bilingualism on the basis of knowledge not only from philology, but from different scientific fields, such as psychology, education, economics, politics. Using *a systematic method* assists to define principles, laws and rules, on the basis of which bilingualism can function as a whole system. *A structural and functional method* marks the distinction between specific peculiarities and structural constituents of bilingualism and define their links and functions. All these methods are used to explore fundamental categories, patterns and applications of bilingualism, which are represented in many conceptions emerging in modern world.

1. The notion of bilingualism and its main peculiarities

In modern linguistics there are many definitions of bilingualism, but one the most laconic is given by W. Weinreich. According to him, bilingualism is a kind of alternate use of two languages¹. Nowadays outstanding researchers determine different peculiarities of bilingualism, which can help to distinguish some kinds of this phenomenon. One of the

¹ Weinreich W. Bilingualism and Second Language Acquisition. Second and Foreign Language Education. 2017. P. 43-55.

most popular classifications is represented by E. Vereschagin², who made a great contribution to the development of bilingualism and suggested classifying different kinds of bilingualism based on some criteria. First of all, bilingualism is evaluated according to the numbers of actions, which are done on the basis of this skill. In other words, this kind of bilingualism is called *receptive*, when a bilingual understands speech patterns of that language, which is not his/her mother tongue. Taking into account this criterion, it is also possible to distinguish so-called *reproductive bilingualism*, when a bilingual can reproduce that material, which he heard or read. A good example of reproductive bilingualism is learning a foreign language, which becomes a necessary means of cross-cultural communication. While learning a language, which is not a mother tongue, a bilingual understands and reproduces some extracts or texts, but at the same time he usually does it with a little garbling, that is reflected in the presence of an accent.

The second criterion of the classification of bilingualism is correlation of two language systems, which can function independently or can be interconnected in the act of speech. According to this criterion, Vereschagin distinguishes pure and mixed kinds of bilingualism. Pure bilingualism takes place in case, when mother tongue is one language and at work, while studying, in public transport, in other words outside family another language is used. Mixed bilingualism occurs, when languages can replace each other, and there is a connection between two language systems. Mastering a foreign language presupposes, that while learning, it is very difficult to avoid distortion of different words, set expressions, grammar constructions and intonation patterns. All these processes cause different linguistic changes in both languages, which usually lead to so-called *linguistic interference*. According to it, some researchers distinguish between the following kinds of linguistic interference: phonetic (which includes phonological and sounds changes); poor spelling (orthographic peculiarities); grammar (morphological, syntactical, punctual features) lexical; semantic; stylistic; intralinguistic and interlingual. The author of this classification considers it to take place not only when two languages interact, but he is pretty sure, that linguistic interference can also arise within the limits of one language³.

At one of the first stages of learning mutual interference of languages, bilingualism was considered to have more disadvantages and negative features. Since then, the situation has changed greatly. In a recent survey,

² Верещагин Е.М. Психологическая и методическая характеристика двуязычия (билингвизма). Москва, 1969. 160 с.

³ Alimov V. Grammatical interference in bilingual speech. Moscow, 2020. 36 p.

conducted by researchers in the XIX century, it was emphasized, that bilingualism positively affect cognitive abilities in young learners and adults, have a great impact on reading development, bilinguals have better attention and task-switching capacities. It is believed, that “bilingual children as young as seven months can better adjust to environmental changes, while bilingual seniors can experience less cognitive decline”⁴.

Along the lines of multilingualism, it also seems to be possible to distinguish between voluntary and compulsory bilingualism *by means of the way it is used*. *Voluntary bilingualism* presupposes mastering a foreign language by a person, who intends to learn it and there is not a big social difference between knowledge and lack of knowledge of a foreign language and inability to pick up a language does not cause a life crisis. In this context a person, who knows a foreign language, considers it an individual advantage, which provides with self-esteem boost.

Compulsory bilingualism implies, that an individual has to pick up a language, that is a necessary condition of his/her socializing in a multilingual society. In this way a language becomes a fundamental instrument for future successful life. When a person learns a language of the country, where he lives, it provides him with a greater guarantee, that he will be able to find a better workplace, make new friends and keep in touch with representatives of different cultures and nationalities. This situation illustrates life in many European countries, where people have to master a language for vital activities.

Bilingualism is a social and cultural phenomenon, which is represented in a modern society, where the majority of population knows foreign languages. Bilingualism takes place in different countries and regions and can be usually realized at social, economic, political, law and cultural levels. Nowadays bilingualism is getting a significant meaning, as foreign languages are a necessary means of cross-cultural communication with representatives of different cultures and ethnic groups. Bilingualism accomplishes a very important function: on the one account, it promotes mutual rapport for people of different nationalities, on the other, it grows tolerance and respect to other languages, cultures, religions.

Bilingualism is a necessary means for peaceful co-existence of different cultures and religions, but at the same time there are a lot of contradictions and it combines contradictory ideas about the world and life in it. Bilingualism broadens cultural outlook and compiles universal values, besides it is a positive factor in an international interaction.

⁴ Spolsky, B. Cooper, R.L. Case studies in bilingual education. Rowley, MA: Newbury House. 1978. 544 p.

Bilingualism deals with a problem of relations between language and the way of thinking, between culture of bilingual and culture of the country, where he lives. In a polylingual society effectiveness of learning foreign languages is toughly connected with a conception of linguistic education, the main idea of which is a necessity to combine learning of languages and cultures. Forming and developing cross-cultural skills and polylingual thinking, language, communication and culture competences become one of the most important objectives in a modern system of European education⁵.

The development of a modern society and expansion of intellectual and cultural borders lead to the dissemination of bilingualism, which causes a necessity to develop so-called metalinguistic consciousness. According to A. Schepilova, metalinguistic consciousness is a specific form of language consciousness of a person, who is able to carry out different abstract and logical tasks within a few language systems⁶. Metalinguistic consciousness has a great significance not only in a system of education, but it includes those values, skills and abilities, which are necessary for future professional activity.

2. Bilingual and multilingual conceptions of education

Nowadays it is difficult to imagine, that a modern system of education can exist without taking into account economic, social and political factors, which influence bilingual and multilingual peculiarities. One of the most overriding priorities in the European system of education is learning foreign languages systematically and effectively. Multilingualism and linguistic competence are considered to be major directions in a language policy of modern countries. A thorough study of European experience, particularly successful patterns of bilingual education, should be used at the current stage of the development of the Ukrainian society. Picking these systems up will probably help to form and develop a suitable system of education in Ukraine, where bilingual education is focused on. To our mind, it will integrate the Ukrainian system of education in a widely spread European language space. Different bilingual projects, which can be put into practice, can also outline future perspectives of the development of Ukraine in general. European integration causes increase

⁵ Панасюк Ю.В. Мультилінгвальність в українському суспільстві. *Науковий вісник Дрогобицького державного педагогічного університету ім. Івана Франка*. Дрогобич, 2017. № 8. С. 37-40.

⁶ Шепилова А.В. Коммуникативно-когнитивный подход к обучению французскому как второму иностранному языку. Теоретические основы. Москва, 2003. 468 с.

of significance of language skills, which are formed and developed through a system of education. There are reasons to suppose, that such projects will influence not only linguistic, but the whole system of education in Western Europe. All these projects and plans influence language and education, that leads to double-sided cooperation between different universities and colleges. This cooperation can be of different character with some typical features, which depend on establishments of higher education. The programme of European integration involves acquisition of particular language skills, as learning new information is realized by means of another language. This information exchange is fulfilled enriching students' general language skills and their future perspectives to find a well-paid job in international market.

Bilingual approaches to the system of education own a long list of benefits. Throughout learning process, students are forced to deal with new cultures and languages, interact and exchange information within new language circumstances, are aware of the rich European diversity; there is mutual enrichment from the methods exchange and teaching techniques, there are some structural changes about curriculum and values analyzing, motivational schemes for innovation and adaptation at all levels.

Bilingual approaches aim at the development of linguistic competences at different levels of education either at school or at university. A European community encourages students to learn three foreign languages in spite of academic purposes of the class. One important advantage that is typical of European system of education is a free access to the choice of official languages of state members. Students are allowed to go for any foreign language that appeals to them. No restrictions are imposed on those students who are free in their choice. Students are never forced to learn a particular foreign language, as the European community is heterogeneous and diverse. It is a fundamental principle of the European system of education.

Flexible and universal curriculum gives an excellent opportunity to implement different foreign languages in learning process at the same time. A bright example that can illustrate this idea is a school in Luxembourg, where all the pupils study three foreign languages. And in this context it is necessary to speak not only about bilingualism, but multilingualism. As a child, a resident of this country is monolingual, but later he begins to learn one language – Luxembourgish – at the kindergarten and throughout the first year at primary school. After that, children deal with German, that is taught during the following six years at school. German is used as a means of education and involved in disseminating information in all school subjects.

Some time later, German is replaced with French that is used for teaching more and more subjects. It usually takes place at secondary school and continues up to the end of the school education. German is still on, but as a separate subject, not as a means of education any longer. According to the curriculum, French and German should be not only school subjects, but also a necessary source of information.

At the end of school education residents of Luxembourg become multilingual participants of communication. It is a long and time-consuming process, that brings successful results with years.

The Luxembourgish approach to the system of education is based on the theory of languages connection. It is possible to distinguish between three main stages in education in Luxembourg. First of all, children study using their mother tongue, then they move on to the language that is genetically related language and they finally focus on genetically unrelated language⁷.

According to some research, that took place in different periods, students proved that multilingual system of education is very effective and beneficial. They passed exams with flying colors to enter European universities. These results demonstrate that multilingual system of education can be more successful if it is applied properly. The outcomes, that students have, do not depend on such factors as social status, backgrounds, cultural or religious views. This pattern of education is unique, because multilingual approach can be effectively implemented within the whole period of school education. Linguistic requirements have to be high and demanding enough to provide students with a chance to get higher education in any European country. It is not a luxury to speak three languages in Luxembourg, but a necessity to study at university and move forward to the future career goals.

Multilingual systems of education provide Europeans with one language as a mother tongue, another as a language of communication and English as a lingua franca. English has become a language of science, education, business, space exploration and is widely used in all other fields of human lifetime.

At the same time there are some important aspects that have to be taken into account: it is an integrated approach that is cohered with bilingualism. Implementing one pattern of bilingual or trilingual systems of education should be realized in a comprehensive way. In other words, application of any model of education has to take into consideration cultural peculiarities and local needs and it does not matter if this pattern was successfully used

⁷ Поченюк Я. Зміст європейських моделей білінгвальної освіти: від теорії до практики. *Проблеми підготовки сучасного вчителя*. 2012. № 5 (Ч. 2). С. 245-251.

in other countries. Simple copying of an education model can not satisfy all the needs that students have, because, on the one hand, they live in Europe, but on the other hand, they belong to diverse local communities. And education models, which are effective in one society, are not so useful in another. Therefore, any model has to be adapted and cohered with local traditions, customs, needs and objectives.

A conception of bilingual and multilingual education is open to improvements and innovations. One advantage of using it is not only a process of mastering a new foreign language, but its instrumental character, that enhances intercultural competences and contributes to the general level of knowledge. A foreign language is a goal and means of education at the same time. One of the crucial issues in this context is a determination of place and role of the language.

In this context, language is a fundamental aspect of the conception of neutral dialogue introduced by B. Ackerman⁸. According to this conception, justification of social justice principles can be realized by means of neutral dialogue. Focus on the language proves an idea, that in modern society such an element as communication plays a major role in finding solutions to political, economic and social issues. Triad of liberal principles, upheld by Ackerman, such as communicative equality, neutrality and rationality are main grounds of the development of democratic society. Obviously, language is a key element of communicative equality realized at various levels of information perception.

Breaking any of these principles calls into question an existence of liberal state. This neutral dialogue begins with rights confirmation of equal resources and neutral dialogue is defined by the following principles: 1) *principle of neutrality* that consists of refusal of individual priority position and individual conception of the good; 2) *principle of rationality* that refers to keep consistency and impartiality within the system of individual social, political, cultural and educational ideals of each participant of the dialogue; 3) *principle of equality without domination* which presupposes existence of such a society where power is distributed equally and no one is privileged to acquire extra resources in major life areas.

Principles of neutrality, rationality and equality are realized in the system of bilingual and multilingual conceptions of education in Europe. In this situation a foreign language is expected to be a tool for learning new material and a choice of strategy of mastering a foreign language refers to methods of teaching and training courses. A linguistic aspect is not excluded. It can be connected with semantics of new lexical units,

⁸ Ackerman B. Social Justice in the Liberal State. New Haven and London, 1980. 392 p.

definitions of unknown terms and notions, learning grammar and stylistics peculiarities of the language.

Different approaches can be applied to the issue of multilingual society. They are as follows: a social approach, a law approach, multicultural and political. Each of them is reflected in bilingual education. In some countries bilingual education is a crucial component of education of ethnic minorities. In others bilingual education is established by two or three official languages. For instance, in Canada French and English are considered state languages. Therefore, at Canadian schools curriculum can focus either on English-French education (with English as prevailing language) or French-English (with French as predominant language).

A similar situation can be observed in Switzerland where bilingual education is realized by means of two or three languages. Children begin to deal with a few languages in the kindergarten and at the end of studying at secondary school are expected to speak two official languages that they can choose and English as compulsory.

Proponents of a social approach to education claim, that national minorities are marginal groups. Getting education for them is a condition of successful life. Such marginal groups were Spanish in the USA at the beginning of the XX century.

Those who are in favour of a law approach believe, that human rights are fundamental for the development of democratic society, that is why overcoming inequality and discrimination is a priority task. It provides national minorities with a right to get education in their mother tongue.

According to a political approach, national minorities are functioned as political communities and concentrate on their autonomy and independence in education. National minorities have free access to education at all levels of intercultural interaction.

Educational programmes for national minorities in the USA and Canada are realized in the conception of immersive education when students plunge into the environment of the second language. Such programmes were first used in 1960s in Quebec. After that, immersive programmes were applied for learning national minorities who did not know an official language. A notion of immersion can be interpreted in two different ways. On the one hand, it is a lifelong process of plunging into another language environment excluding the use of the mother tongue or using it from time to time. A notion of immersion is interpreted in different ways by various experts. There are two main approaches to the definition of immersion: 1) a complete plunging into foreign cognition of the world, into the second language which is unknown to students; 2) a

kind of bilingual education predicting students to speak a language that is commonly used by the majority of the population; students are partly taught by means of the second language, and partly by the means of the first language⁹.

Some experts claim, that there are some stages of immersion that are possible to distinguish. They speak about early or late stages of immersion which can have total or partial character.

Early immersion takes place at the pre-school stage and includes using the second language for teaching all the subjects. At the same time pupils keep in touch with each other by means of communication of their mother tongue. They usually do it while socializing after lessons or participating in extracurricular activities.

Late immersion can be observed in a situation when adult learners move to another country and have to master a language in the surrounding of communication in a foreign language. In this context a method of immersion is founded on some achievements of suggestopedia and is an element of concentrated training. This approach has become very popular among those philologists and educators who were responsible of creating a fast method of mastering a foreign language.

Total character of immersion is reflected in such a model of education which presupposes teaching all the courses in the second language. Partial immersion is limited with some particular subjects which are focused on in bilingual education. It means, that the second language is used only in a few courses while others are given in the mother tongue. It is clear, that early and late immersion can have either total or partial character¹⁰.

A method of immersion is typical of bilingual or multilingual education and has some specific features. First of all, it neglects such methods as explanations and persuasion, but to put it into action educators can involve a method of complete plunging into a particular field. It is reached by means of taking into consideration some individual peculiarities such as age, educational interests and preferences, some psychological features.

In Europe the method of immersion is considered one of the most effective ways for mastering a new foreign language. Proponents of immersion emphasize, that it is the most successful pattern which guarantees a high level of knowledge which is reached simultaneously

⁹ Бузовський А.В. Двомовна освіта у школах США та Європи. *Науковий вісник Донбасу*. 2011. № 2. С. 24-42.

¹⁰ Бузовський А.В. Функціонування двосторонніх програм у державних школах США. *Вісник Луганського державного педагогічного університету ім. Тараса Шевченка*. 2006. № 6. С. 189 – 194.

when students deeply master the subject content of separate courses that are taught by means of a foreign language.

At the same time there are some opponents to the method of immersion. Such educators insist on a contradiction between a form and contents, or, in other words, between a foreign language and a level of perception of new material that is given in this language. According to them, it is a predominant task to set a particular goal: either a foreign language is used as a means of communication without scrutinizing academic subjects or courses are taught in the mother tongue and the second language is considered a separate subject.

Immersive education emerged in European countries and North America with two or more official or state languages. The main purpose of this kind of education was to develop bilingual features in young learners. A specific aspect of the method of immersion is not a purposeful process of mastering a foreign language or the second mother tongue, but teaching all academic subjects in a learning language.

It is possible to define the following features of immersive education which is a part of bilingualism: 1) focus on motivation corresponding some objective reasons which cause conditions for self-development by means of learning foreign languages;

2) using a psychological approach as a method of integration while having an impact on students taking into account their age and psychological characteristics; 3) predominance of verbal assignments being completed in pairs of students or with an instructor; 4) getting rid of grammar-oriented tasks, focus on communication rather than grammar rules; 5) active involvement of modern set expressions (idioms), phrasal verbs and colloquial phrases which are state-of-the-art and are in ongoing use at the moment of learning this or that foreign language; 6) a class can be organized as a speaking club with the predominant role of listening and speaking as main kinds of communication¹¹.

Preparation of listening tasks can include modern and topical exercises with modern language patterns, conversational character of speech, awareness of various kinds of accents, cognitive speech, positive and friendly atmosphere. Some individual assignments for listening and speaking have to correspond needs and interests of learners.

One of the main principles of immersive education is a necessity to avoid time-consuming tasks that students can get in classes. The main purpose is to organize a learning process in a way to make it as effective

¹¹ Тимофеев В.А. Отличительные черты иммерсионного метода обучения иностранным языкам взрослых учащихся языковых курсов. *Молодой ученый*. 2018. № 1 (53). С. 387-390.

as possible. Therefore, to enhance a level of perception and knowledge students usually work in pairs, teams or small groups. It helps save time and give an instructor an excellent opportunity to monitor success of his learners for a short period of time.

What is also important is a role of a teacher in the process of immersive education. He/she becomes a moderator or a tutor who is not a source of information, but a person who is in charge of an effective organization of a learning process.

One of the key questions that deals with bilingual education is an issue of preserving indigenous languages. Educational programmes used in Canada and the USA prove, that a bilingual approach is a necessary tool to keep languages of national minorities, but only under such circumstances when pupils start school when they have mastered an official language and are on the point of complete losing a language of their ethnic group¹².

According to European conceptions of modern education, bilingualism is beneficial from many points of view. First of all, it is connected with economic prosperity of the community. The more foreign languages residents are aware of, the better results a society can obtain. Secondly, people develop a feeling of tolerance and respect to various cultures, traditions and customs.

Bilingual education in Europe includes such programmes which are focused on using a mother tongues of pupils. In modern system of education they have a right to choose between such languages as Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish.

Such educational programmes are multilingual and intercultural, because there are pupils who are representatives of different nationalities and languages. The main results of such a curriculum are the following:

- achievement of a high level of success and intellectual development of pupils;

- forming intercultural consciousness;

- multifunctional use of at least two languages (one language is a mother tongue and another is language of international communication of the European Union; for example, it can be French, English or German)¹³.

¹² Бондар О.І. Білінгвальна комунікативність як лінгво-екологічна проблема. Записки з українського мовознавства. 2003. № 12. С. 352-360.

¹³ Лотфі Гаруді Г. Двомовна модель сучасної шкільної освіти. *LANGUAGE: Codification. Competence. Communication*. 2020. № 1 (2). С. 93-106.

CONCLUSIONS

Bilingual programmes of education teach students skills of cross-cultural communication, promoting their social and cultural integration in European community. It provides students with necessary cognitive skills to master the second or the third languages. Bilingualism teaches to respect national minorities, ethnic differences, overcome stereotypes and prejudices.

Mastering a foreign language is impossible without a necessary level of preparation in the process of getting aware of a mother tongue. The role of the mother tongue is fundamental in forming a personality and taking first steps in direction to foreign languages. In spite of some drawbacks (such as expectations of quick results in mastering the second language by national minorities), successful experience of bilingual education in Europe, Canada and the USA proves that such educational programmes are at least worth attention and can be involved, for example, in Ukrainian learning surrounding.

SUMMARY

This article covers an issue of bilingual and multilingual patterns of education, which are widely used in different European countries, Canada and the USA. The notion of bilingualism and its main peculiarities are given from various perspectives. Types of bilingualism are distinguished and analyzed by means of the conception of neutral dialogue. Immersion is considered a significant element of multilingual curriculum. Key features of immersive education and its stages are defined.

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Information about the author:

Panasiuk Yuliia Viktorivna,

Candidate of Philosophical Sciences,

Senior Lecturer at the Chair of the English Language
and Methods of Teaching

Kryvyi Rih State Teachers' Training University

54, Naharina Ave., Kryvyi Rih, Dnipropetrovsk region, 50000, Ukraine