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Polylinguism and multiculturalism in the communication and educational space

Abstract

The problems of the relationship between language and society attract the attention of researchers from different countries representing various scientific areas: philosophy, history, biology, linguistics, theology, pedagogy, psychology, etc. This study actualizes the sociological approach to the study of the social determinants of the formation of polylingualism as a means of professional communication.

According to the sociological results, about 70% of the world's population, to one degree or another, speaks two or more languages, which imposes additional obligations on workers providing international professional communications (Beacco, 2002).

Modern multilingual interaction should not be one-sidedly understood only as a borrowing of professional foreign language terminology. It includes the social background of the linguistic material: traditions, mimic and pantomimic codes, the national picture of the world – and becomes the most important factor in professionalization.

Methods of systemic and functional analysis, comparison. generalization and collection of empirical data (expert interviews, content analysis).

Keywords: social processes, multilingual, polylingualism, education quality assurance, challenges of modernity.

Introduction

Polylinguism in the narrow sense “means more or less fluency in two or more foreign languages; polylinguism in the broadest sense of the word is a relative knowledge of foreign languages, the ability to use them in one way or another in certain spheres of communication” (Filin, 1962, 3–12).

Recognition of the multidimensionality and interconnectedness of various aspects of polylinguism leads to the idea that polylinguism as a social phenomenon does not lend itself to an unambiguous definition. Hence the existence of different interpretations of the concept.

The origins of the term “polylingualism” in the term “bilingualism” (from Latin *bis* – twice, *lingua* – language) – bilingualism, simultaneous possession of two or more (polylingualism) languages (<http://strany.clow.ru/information>). However, in this definition, polylinguism is qualified as an integral part of bilingualism, although, in our opinion, on the contrary, bilingualism is a part of polylinguism. In our opinion, these two concepts should be distinguished.

According to sociological data, there are more polylinguals in the world than monolinguals. About 70% of the world’s population, to one degree or another, speaks two or more languages. Since the modern society under the influence of globalization processes becomes polylingual, there is a social need for the development of polylinguism according to the scheme: “monolingualism – bilingualism – polylingualism” (Alekseeva and others, 2009).

In our opinion, polylinguism is a social phenomenon that presupposes the ability of subjects to use different languages as a means of communication (Lipai, 2021).

For the study of interlingual communication, the concept of “interindividual interaction” by J. Mead is applicable: the subject’s perception of the surrounding social reality is conditioned by his communicative experience and the ability to perceive the world and himself in accordance with the vision of the meaning of symbols by other subjects (Abramova, 2019). From the standpoint of symbolic interactionism, the social process of multilingualization can be interpreted as the process of developing and changing social meanings, as well as the constant definition and redefinition of interaction situations by its participants.

Polylinguism in the sociolinguistic aspect involves the use by a person or a social group of two or more languages to achieve mutual understanding in a multilingual (or at least bilingual) environment.

Polylinguism plays a noticeable role in social processes caused by the desire of various social groups through linguistic factors to influence the conditions prevailing in society in order to satisfy certain interests.

Polylinguism manifests itself at all levels of modern social processes:

- 1) global level;

- 2) the level of large social groups;
- 3) the level of institutions and organizations;
- 4) the level of interpersonal relations (Shtompka, 1986).

When considering polylingualism within the framework of social constructivism, it can be noted that polylingualism plays a role in the constitution of the professional community and its representatives, in the entire totality of social processes.

The term “multiculturalism” was first used by the Swiss in 1957. Switzerland is a state, which speaks four languages and profess different religions, and in order to characterize their country the Swiss introduced the term “multiculturalism”. [eight]. Multiculturalism is a phenomenon that has come a long way of formation, the term has changed its meaning, and, instead of the presence of different languages or religions in the country, began to characterize a multicultural state that accepts migrants and respects other cultures.

The relationship between culture and migration is also important (Babich, Rodionova, 2009; Volkova, Lipai 2019). However, ethnocultural minorities sometimes face various forms of social stigma and contribute to conflict. And intercultural dialogue presupposes the ability to see oneself through the eyes of others.

For the study of polylingualism and multiculturalism in the communication and educational space, the opinion of S.G. Ter-Minasova, that language does not exist outside of culture as “a socially inherited set of practical skills and ideas that characterize our way of life. If we consider a language from the point of view of its structure, functioning and methods of mastering it (both native and foreign languages), then the sociocultural layer, or a component of culture, turns out to be a part of the language or the background of its real life” (Ter-Minasova, 2008). Language is a meaningful component of culture, which largely determines a person’s perception of social reality, his behavior. A person is not only present in the world along with other people, but constitutes a cultural and social world around him.

One of the key competencies in the updated educational system should be the multilingual competence, which provides for the orientation of students in the variety of intercultural communicative situations of social and professional reality and the development of skills to adequately act in changing circumstances (Kharisov, 2003).

Communicative competence is manifested in the ability to establish and maintain contacts necessary for professional activity, organize and manage interpersonal space in the process of communication.

Multiculturalism within the framework of the integrative model is not a manifestation of tolerance for the “other”, but the formation of respect for him and development through the mutual enrichment of cultures, including

through the formation of a positive attitude towards multilingualism as a socio-cultural phenomenon (Lipai, 2009).

The main task of modern education is to train a specialist who is ready to interact in the multilingual world, capable of interlingual professional dialogue, and possessing a sufficient level of tolerance for cultures embodied in languages. [13]. Polylinguism in education can be understood as an instrument of “intellectual and moral integration” (Leonov, 2009).

We conducted a study whose goal is to reveal the role of polylingualism in the dynamics of modern managers.

According to the interviewees: “Requirements for specialists are growing, the specifics of professional services are changing in connection with serious, global changes in social policy. Polylinguism has become an integral part of many professions, including managers. A manager who wants to make his professional activity successful must certainly be fluent in foreign languages. “It is promising to study foreign languages now, and this is naturally taken into account in the professional growth of a manager, and in many companies, knowledge of foreign languages also affects the salaries of managers.”

Our interview confirmed the increased interest of students in literature in foreign languages: “The interest of young people in foreign languages has naturally grown, not only individuals are interested in foreign literature, but also the heads of schools, lyceums, colleges, universities, which order literature in bulk. Orders for literature on economic, banking, management, and legal terminology also increased, which indicates the need for professional activity in the study of foreign languages.” Interviews of respondents demonstrate an increased interest of educational institutions in professional foreign language literature.

One of the experts emphasizes the fact that “first of all, the teacher must be multilingual literate, be able to interest students, prepare the student qualitatively, teach not only grammar, phonetics, but also give a linguistic and cultural overview. The combination of all factors will increase the interest and the multilingual level of the future manager.”

According to P. Bourdieu, the school has a monopoly on the mass production of producers-consumers, in other words, on the reproduction of the market, on which the social value of linguistic competence depends, its ability to act as linguistic capital (Ter-Minasova, 2000). The motives of studying languages by student managers have changed. The main task at the moment is teaching the language as a real and full-fledged professional means of communication. In the professional environment of managers, a mixture of languages and cultures has occurred, which has reached an unprecedented scale, and as never before, the problem of multilingual education of the individual, fostering tolerance, awakening interest and respect, overcoming feelings of irritation from redundancy, insufficiency or dissimilarity of other cultures has arisen (Durkheim, 1991).

The majority of students at universities believe that international student exchange increases the level of language training of future managers.

Conclusion

The problem of polylingualism in education, according to the authors, is of interest in several aspects:

- as an environment in which the mastery of the next second foreign language takes place, consistently introduced into the learning process, and in terms of the learning time, functioning simultaneously with the native and first foreign languages;
- as a factor that makes it easier or more difficult to master the speech skills of the third language, studied on the basis of the first and second;
- as an experience, the problem of which is to identify the linguistic possibilities of its use in the context of multilingual communication;
- as a situation, for the solution of which it is necessary to clearly define the organizational forms and methods of teaching a foreign language in a multilingual student audience.

The process of globalization, on the one hand, stimulates the uniformity of the linguistic behavior of people as members of the world society; on the other hand, globalization leads to cultural diversity, which is realized in linguistic behavior as polylinguism.

Polylinguism plays a significant role in social processes caused by the desire of various social groups through linguistic factors to influence the conditions prevailing in society in order to satisfy certain interests, challenges of modernity. (Lipai, Zhogol-Labzeeva, 2020).

As a result of changes in social and other spheres of life of society, views on multilingual education are changing. Polylinguism today is presented as a factor in increasing the capabilities of a person as a worker. There are more opportunities for managers with multilingual education to apply their knowledge, effectively use material, financial and information resources. High-quality multilingual training is becoming increasingly important in the personal development of a manager and in assessing professional maturity. Multilingual skills as factors of competitiveness can play a decisive role in the employment and career of a modern manager.

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Wielojęzyczność i wielokulturowość w przestrzeni komunikacyjnej i edukacyjnej

Streszczenie

Problemy relacji między językiem a społeczeństwem przyciągają uwagę badaczy reprezentujących różne dziedziny nauki: filozofię, historię, biologię, językoznawstwo, teologię, pedagogikę, psychologię itp. Niniejsze opracowanie aktualizuje socjologiczne podejście do badania uwarunkowania powstawania wielojęzyczności jako środka komunikacji zawodowej.

Wyniki badań socjologicznych pokazują, że około 70% ludności świata, w takim czy innym stopniu, posługuje się dwoma lub więcej językami, co nakłada dodatkowe obowiązki na pracowników zapewniających międzynarodową komunikację zawodową.

Współczesna interakcja wielojęzyczna nie powinna być jednostronnie rozumiana jedynie jako zapożyczenie fachowej terminologii języków obcych. Obejmuje społeczne tło materiału językowego: tradycje, kody mimiczne i pantomimiczne, narodowy obraz świata – i staje się najważniejszym czynnikiem profesjonalizacji.

Metody: metody analizy systemowej i funkcjonalnej, porównanie, generalizacja i zbieranie danych empirycznych (wywiady eksperckie, analiza treści).

Słowa kluczowe: procesy społeczne, wielojęzyczność, zapewnianie jakości edukacji, wyzwania nowoczesności.