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Bilingualism as one of the ways to intensify the learning process of students of non-linguistic universities

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Abstract

Research in the field of linguistics, pedagogy and psychology has shown the direct impact of bilingualism on the lives of people who speak two languages. The article reports on the importance of using bilingualism in teaching students a foreign language. According to the type of second language acquisition, bilingualism is divided into artificial and natural. Having briefly considered the second type, the author dwells in detail on artificial or educational bilingualism, which, as a rule, is carried out in educational institutions and poses new questions and tasks to the participants of the educational process in the modern world. The author suggests using the bilingual method to speed up the educational process by the example of preparing students of the Krasnoyarsk state agrarian university for an internship in Germany. The author points out that bilingualism as a socio-cultural phenomenon contributes to the peoples' rapprochement, the peaceful solution of issues of coexistence, the formation of common tasks and goals in the process of integration, acts as a powerful factor in the linguistic development of modern society. The personality of the foreign language teacher plays a key role in this process, helping students to understand the importance of foreign language skills. Teaching a foreign language is an introduction to a foreign language culture, which contributes to a deeper knowledge of one's own culture and the upbringing of a cultured person. Knowledge of a foreign language at all times was considered a sign of scholarship, good breeding and education.

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Keywords

Non-linguistic university, artificial bilingualism, bilingual method, language, culture, consciousness.

Introduction

“You can never understand one language until you understand at least two” – Geoffrey Willans. Language shapes our vision of the world. Accordingly, the better we know the language, the more we know about the world around us. The more languages we know, the richer our world is.

Research in linguistics, pedagogy and psychology has shown the direct impact of bilingualism on the lives of bilingual people. What is bilingualism? The main problem in defining the concept of “bilingualism” is that it is difficult to establish at what stage bilingualism “begins”. Do we need to speak the language perfectly? Or is it enough to be able to understand and explain at a minimum level? Some scientists believe that only an individual who is fluent in both the first and second languages can be considered bilingual, i.e. who can speak equally well both languages. This point of view is shared, in particular, by the outstanding American linguist L. Bloomfield. He understands bilingualism in the following way: “In those cases when the perfect mastering of a foreign language is not accompanied by the loss of the native language, bilingualism appears, consisting in the same proficiency of two languages” [Bloomfield, 1968]. V.A. Avrorin has the same point of view: “bilingualism begins when mastering of one language is almost the same as the second one” [Avrorin, 1972].

Other scientists (J. Macnamara, A.A. Zalevskaya), on the contrary, believe that it is impossible to master any language (including the first one) perfectly, and therefore state that in order to call oneself bilingual, it is enough to be able to operate the language at a minimum level. J. Macnamara thinks that an individual can be called bilingual if he has (at least to some extent) skills in one of the four modalities in a second language: speaking, listening, writing or reading [Macnamara, 1969]. According to A.A. Zalevskaya, it is necessary to distinguish between knowledge of the language and proficiency in the language, because you can know grammar, vocabulary, but not be able to use it, and speaking the language, on the other hand, means having poor knowledge in the field of grammar or vocabulary, for example, but successfully carrying out speech activity [Zalevskaya, 1996]. Thus, language proficiency is not knowledge of the language, but the ability to use and implement this knowledge solving certain communication tasks.

The formation of artificial bilingualism

Bilingualism is divided into artificial and natural. In contrast to natural bilingualism, artificial bilingualism has no constant linguistic environment. In these conditions, it is necessary to artificially create situations that are as close as possible to the conditions of natural bilingualism [Muratova, 1982]. Artificial bilingualism usually takes place within educational institutions that offer a certain choice of languages to study. In a situation of natural bilingualism, knowledge of languages is acquired in a foreign language environment. Natural bilingualism is typical for bilingual families where parents speak different languages. Also, natural bilingualism includes mastering a language in families of refugees and migrants.

Artificial, or educational, bilingualism, understood in a broad sense as the co-learning of several foreign languages along with the native one, poses new questions and tasks for the participants of the educational process in the modern world.

The learning process, during which the formation of artificial bilingualism takes place, is carried out in stages. American scientists Stephen Krashen and Tracy Terrell offered a natural approach to mastering a foreign language, within which the main stages of the process of studying a second language were identified: pre-speech, early speech, speech, the stage of pre-fluent level of language and the stage of advanced fluent level of language.

The pre-speech stage or period of silence can last up to 6 months. During this stage, students can answer simple questions with monosyllables “yes” or “no” or react non-verbally by gesturing, nodding their heads, pointing to something. This stage is characterized by the development of basic speech understanding skills and passive vocabulary (those words that the student can understand) up to 500 words. Not all students go through this period; some begin to speak earlier.

During the early speech stage, students begin to understand the main content of the texts. They usually speak using short phrases of one or two words. Students are able to memorize phrases, although they may make some mistakes. Passive vocabulary increases to 1000 words. This stage, depending on the intensity of the classes, covers from six months to a year.

During the speech stage, students can communicate using simple questions and phrases, often making grammar and phonetic mistakes. Here we can observe the phenomenon of interference with the native language. The vocabulary increases to 3000 words.

The stage of pre-fluent level of language can last for one year after the appearance of coherent speech and involves such level of language that allows you to express your opinion, discuss something and start thinking in a second language.

The stage of advanced fluent level of language assumes fluency with a minimum of grammar mistakes and the ability to think clearly in a second language. The level of understanding the foreign speech at this stage is practically not inferior to the native speaker. It can take from 5 to 10 years to reach an advanced fluent level of a foreign language, close to that of a native speaker [Krashen, Terrell, 1983]. However, non-linguistic universities give no opportunities to go through all these stages, therefore, all training usually takes place in 3 stages: early speech, speech and pre-fluent level of language. Bilingualism is used to speed up the learning process.

The bilingual method of teaching a foreign language

E.M. Vereshchagin, according to the level of the language knowledge, classifies the types of bilingualism as follows: 1) receptive bilingualism (exists only at the level of perception, understanding of information during oral and written communication); 2) reproductive bilingualism (at the level of reproduction of what has been heard or read, for example, the study of a foreign language based on audio materials); 3) productive / creative bilingualism (creation of oral and written texts) [Vereshchagin, 1969].

The bilingual method of teaching a foreign language, the founder of which is considered C.J. Dodson, can be called one of the most effective in teaching methods. Considering the name, the bilingual method uses two languages. There are four main methodological principles in teaching a foreign language: “Choice”, “Consistency”, “Visibility” and “Repetition”, which are present in the bilingual teaching method. According to C.J. Dodson, a good method is to encourage people to think in a foreign language. According to the scientist, the new method should include the following distinctive features [Dodson, 1998]:

- it should be simple;
- there should be a balance between oral and written speech, correctness and fluency, constant repetition of the passed and studied material;
- the method should give the teacher the opportunity to interact between him and the student;
- the method should be flexible enough and consider the ability of students to master a foreign language.

The main goals and tasks of the bilingual method can be distinguished:

- teaching of written speech fluency and correctness;

-foreign language preparation of students to achieve true bilingualism [Yardi, 2009].

The bilingual method of teaching a foreign language is a special method that is focused on the formation of simple linguistic situations, using the equivalents of the native language for foreign words.

When teaching students of non-linguistic universities, it is necessary to consider the small number of hours allocated for this discipline. Accordingly, it is necessary to study the required material in a short period of time. And in this case, the bilingual method helps, thanks to which we can present this material using our native language. But if this method is fully used, students will not be able to master the language properly. Therefore, the bilingual method is used, as a rule, when explaining grammatical material, since it allows us to quickly and easily present the necessary information. In other cases, namely: when studying vocabulary, mastering oral and written speech, the monolingual method is used. Using the bilingual method, we have the opportunity not only to report information in our native language, but also to compare some linguistic phenomena.

It is important to note that the bilingual method can include not only the native language, but also another foreign language. So, preparing students of the Krasnoyarsk State Agrarian University for an internship in Germany, we use the bilingual method as a faster method of mastering the German language, since most of those leaving speak English. Thanks to this method, it is possible to teach students the basics of the German language in a short period, which helps them to stay in a foreign country without any problems. This method is also successful because both languages German and English belong to the Romano-Germanic group, therefore, they have similar words and constructions. The use of the bilingual method in conjunction with the comparative method makes it possible to intensify the educational process and, therefore, speed up learning, since it can be used to semantize whole groups of words, many phrases and grammatical structures. Sometimes we can use the bilingual method to show not only similarities, but also differences. It is known that these languages have different forms of grammar tenses, accordingly, when presenting new material, it is necessary to focus on this. The bilingual method contributes not only to mastering a new foreign language, but also to repetition of the language studied before.

By teaching a foreign language, we not only acquaint students with linguistic constructions, but also with the culture and consciousness of the speakers of this language. The bilingual method helps to carry out a comparative analysis of two cultures.

Bilingualism in modern society

The widespread use of bilingualism in modern society is due to ethnic and political factors, as well as geographic mobility. In the period of globalization, social and financial prerequisites play a significant role, when knowledge of two or more languages is an important requirement for studying, practice and doing work in a foreign country. At present, when the mixing of nations, languages and cultures has reached a scale, and the problem of fostering tolerance for foreign cultures, awakening interest and respect for them has become acute, bilingualism in intercultural communication is gaining importance. The processes of internationalization, the opening of borders, the rapid development of science and technology contribute to the development of languages [Mkrtycheva, Miltseva, 2017].

Bilingualism as a socio-cultural phenomenon contributes to the peoples' rapprochement, the peaceful solution of issues of coexistence, the formation of common tasks and goals in the process of integration. In this context, bilingualism is a powerful factor in the linguistic development of modern society, which makes it possible for a person to realize his place and his culture in the dialogue of cultures and civilizations in the process of cooperation with other people.

Conclusions

The personality of the foreign language teacher plays a key role in this process, helping students to understand the importance of foreign language skills. Teaching a foreign language is an introduction to a foreign language culture, which contributes to a deeper knowledge of one's own culture and the upbringing of a cultured person. Knowledge of a foreign language at all times was considered a sign of scholarship, good breeding and education. We are talking about constant self-improvement, self-education, cultural development, the desire to keep up with the times. The function of the teacher is not only teaching, but also upbringing, since it motivates students to autonomy and is an incentive to imitate. This is especially important for students of non-linguistic universities, because knowledge of one or more languages helps to increase the professionalism and, as a result, to become a more demanded specialist in future.

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Билингвизм как один из способов интенсификации процесса обучения студентов неязыковых вузов

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Аннотация

Исследования в области лингвистики, педагогики и психологии показали непосредственное влияние билингвизма на жизнь людей, говорящих на двух языках. В статье сообщается о важности использования билингвизма в обучении студентов иностранному

языку. По типу усвоения второго языка билингвизм делится на искусственный и естественный. Рассмотрев вкратце второй тип, автор подробно останавливается на искусственном или учебном билингвизме, который, как правило, осуществляется в рамках образовательных учреждений и ставит новые вопросы и задачи перед участниками образовательного процесса в современном мире. Автор предлагает использование билингвального метода для ускорения учебного процесса на примере подготовки студентов Красноярского государственного аграрного университета для прохождения стажировки в Германии. Автор указывает на то, что билингвизм как социокультурное явление способствует сближению народов, мирному решению вопросов сосуществования, формированию общих задач и целей в процессе интеграции, выступает мощным фактором языкового развития современного общества.

Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

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Ключевые слова

Неязыковой вуз, искусственный билингвизм, билингвальный метод, язык, культура, сознание.

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