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Social Conditionality of Multilinguism Education in Educational Establishments of the Country in the Modern Period

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ABSTRACT

The urgency of the examined issue is stipulated by inconsistency between social services commissioning to speak several foreign languages and inadequate implementation of these services in educational establishments of the country. The aim of the article is to justify the necessity to reconsider models of mastering the language and to alter professional training of future foreign language teachers within the teacher's activity in the present day situation. The leading approach to investigate this issue is a cognitive one, whose realization makes it possible to solve some up-to-date problems of methods of foreign language teaching, formation of multicultural linguistic personality, development and improvement of linguistic and conceptual worldview. The article studies interconnection between social and political conditions, leading to international and interpersonal affinity and interaction, and, therefore, to appearance of new targets in foreign language training practice. The material of the article can be used both for training foreign language teachers and for advanced training of the first and second foreign language teachers.

KEYWORDS
Multilinguism, globalization of education, information and communication technologies, levels of language proficiency.

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Introduction

Pedagogical Bases of the Research

Speaking more than one language is a demand of our present time. The necessity to know several foreign languages is caused by social and political requirements of our times, such as: increasing interstate integration, even in educational sphere, intensive migration flows. The consequences of integration processes are new targets in foreign language practice training. One of these

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targets is multilinguism which can be understood as knowledge of several languages.

The reflection of multilinguism tendency in the Russian education is introduction of the second foreign language in all types of educational establishments. However, teachers treat the second foreign language training in the same way as they do the first one, which inevitably leads to students losing interest to the second foreign language (FL2), and, as a result, insufficient expertise in the second foreign language. There is a big difference in the approaches to teaching the first and the second foreign languages and includes several factors, without which the process of the second foreign language teaching will be ineffective. The necessity to treat the first and the second foreign language teaching differently is explained by some theoretical psycholinguistic models of mastering the second and subsequent foreign languages.

It can be stated that social service to acquire specialists speaking several foreign languages is being only partially conducted. The secondary school traget to teach the second foreign language – forming foreign language communicative competence – is not implemented in full due to the reason that the system of training a teacher/ graduate to master methods of FL2 teaching is not formed.

Multilinguism in Foreign Language Teaching

Multilinguism is good command of two or more foreign languages, which fulfills the most important – communicative – function of those languages. Such understanding of bilingualism correlates with the psychological theory of attitude which takes actualization of attitude to speaking, listening, reading in the second language as a criterion of bilingualism. At the same time the person uses language systems with the communicative purpose, i.e. when his/ her conscience is directed to the subject matter of the utterance, and the form is only a means.

Multilinguism as a target of linguistic policy leads to reconsideration of some issues in training future foreign language teachers regarding their knowledge of methods of foreign language teaching taking into consideration their sequence. Considering sequence of the studied foreign language will provide a more efficient and intensive process of mastering non-mother tongues.

The Logic of Reasoning in the Article

The purpose of the multidimensional analysis of possibility and scientific validity to provide linguistic training of the foreign language teacher in the setting of multilinguism and development of new theoretical approaches adequately reflects demands of the modern educational paradigm, whose target- and content-related aspects are formed in categories of competent and cognitive approaches. This article justifies the necessity to reconsider models of mastering languages and to alter professional training of future foreign language teachers in the present-day activity of the teacher.

Status of the Problem

Polylingualism or multilinguism, being a multiple-aspect issue, is a subject matter of various sciences, such as: Psychology (Imedadze, 1986; Usov, 1986; Vereshchagin, 1969; Shirin, 2006), Linguistics (Scherba, 1958; Weinreich, 1999;

Hamers and Blanc, 2000; Ervin and Osgood, 1954; Rosenzweig, 1972), Psycholinguistics (Leontyev, 1970) and Sociology (Carlinski, 1990; Chernichkina, 2007). Each of the abovementioned knowledge defines bilingualism in its own way. At the present time studying the second foreign language is wide-spread, and teaching experience together with foreign language teaching experience in conditions of natural bilingualism is significantly generalized. In rather short time frames "major conceptual principles of methods of the second foreign language teaching have been developed and formulated. The key concepts in this sphere are the following: academic (school) didactic bilingualism/ trilingualism; insufficient language skills; triglossia/ trilingualism, consisting of the native language, the first and the second foreign languages" (Baryshnikov, 2004).

However, despite social demand for specialists with the right to teach several foreign languages equally, there are no complex system-oriented researches disclosing methodological, psychological, pedagogical and methodical concepts of how to teach basics of multilingualism at the linguistic university.

Hypothesis of the Research

Analysis of theoretical works regarding the analyzed issue revealed that the existing models and systems of foreign language teaching in specialized higher educational establishments do not take into consideration all the current social and political conditions, making future foreign language teachers demonstrate variation in their approach to teach the subject with regard to sequence of the studied language.

This enables to formulate the hypothesis to analyze the issue: analysis of the training activity of the future foreign language teacher will make it possible to consider all the aspects, relevant to create the system of multilingual training for future foreign language teachers.

Methodological Framework

The Main Target of Modern Foreign Language Teaching

The consequence of integration processes is appearance of new targets in foreign language teaching practice. One of these targets is multilingualism. The final target of foreign language teaching is speaking several foreign languages and ability to work in new environment.

Globalization of Education

Due to economic globalization, the idea of global education and foreign language teaching is becoming more up-to-date, as issues of international contacts are especially significant. Global education is expansion of possibilities to see the world, which lies beyond the borders of your own country, to understand how this country interacts with others and which place it takes in the universal community, and also to learn to look at things from the position of other nations (Majid, 2002).

Russia joining the Bologna process makes higher education more cost-effective in the eyes of the universal community, giving Russian higher educational establishments graduates an opportunity to compete in the European job market. This is especially important for pedagogical universities.

The Bologna declaration defined the strategy of higher education and formulated its main objectives:

- develop and approve the system of easily readable and comparable degrees to create conditions for job employment of European citizens and to increase international competitiveness of European higher education system;
- accept the system based on two cycles – undergraduate and graduate education (baccalaureate/ magistrate);
- introduce the loan system;
- encourage mobility of educational process participants by means of eliminating obstacles in order to provide free movement: give students an opportunity to get higher education and practical training; give teachers, researchers and management personnel an opportunity to accept results and to take into account time, spent on investigations, teaching and probation in Europe.

One of the main principles, enabling creation of the united area of European higher education is autonomy with responsibility, and the priority is the quality of education as a major condition of trust, relevance, mobility, compatibility and attractiveness in the united area of higher education.

Preservation of Language and Cultural Diversity

The concept of multilinguism and multiculturalism is becoming very popular with the researchers, which is supported by many works concerning this issue. Studying one foreign language, being, by all means, useful, does not always enable a student to overcome the existing stereotypes and prejudice. Teaching respect for other languages and cultures, for language and cultural diversity requires modifications in foreign language treatment at schools and universities. Studying several foreign languages cultivates the sense of belonging to a certain language and culture by means of learning about other languages and cultures, and develops the skill to study.

The language is an important tool for successful life of a modern person in poly-cultural and multilingual society, united by globalization issues. Today it is necessary to support language and cultural diversity in society legislatively, and also to develop multilingualism of an individual in order to let him/ her successfully participate in intercultural interaction with representatives of other linguistic ethnocultures and to overcome the current cultural and linguistic differentiations.

Preservation of language and cultural diversity is becoming more up-to-date in conditions of spiritual globalization and claim of international role of English. Evidently, English as a foreign language displaces other foreign languages. Undoubtedly, a modern person must know English, but due to the fact that language and cultural diversity is the key principle nowadays, it is equally important to master one or several more foreign languages. It is important for the state and society to create beneficial conditions for that. According to N.D. Galskova (2012), only orientation on multilinguism will enable intercultural education to realize its main predestination which may be defined in the following way: developing mutual understanding among nations – various culture and language bearers; providing access to variety of world politics and culture (broadly defined), also by means of new information technology.

During the last decades FL2 has become an obligatory subject at linguistic universities and at faculties of foreign languages at pedagogical universities. Increase of social demand for multilingual education has caused introduction of FL2 together with the first foreign language (FL1) into the teaching system in all kinds of secondary schools (schools with basic programme, special language schools, gymnasiums with various curriculum, colleges, lyceums) and in a number of non-language occupations.

Student's Autonomy in Educational Process

The issue of the student's autonomy in the educational process takes a special place in the Russian pedagogic theory, which is caused by democratization and humanization of society in general. Social processes in society demand the educational system to nourish a personality, aware of the social position, social freedom and responsibility, able to think and act independently, capable of autonomy and personal responsibility in the conditions of changing and dynamically developing society.

In the basis of the concept of society democratization, and, consequently, educational democratization, there is concept of a free, independent, self-reliant / autonomous personality, whose desire and ability is to make independent decisions and be responsible for them. Education, as you know, is part of the process of the personality's socialization. Therefore, as V.Ya. Nechaev (1992) states, "if we accept the model of society where autonomy and independence of the personality is acceptable…, first of all, it must be attributed to its culture genesis". So, development of the personality's autonomy in educational environment may be seen as one of the major tasks of the educational policy of society, which fully concerns language education.

The process of mastering language and culture (languages and cultures, to be exact) provides readiness of a personality for incessant linguistic education and self-education, with the purpose of intercultural interaction in various spheres of activity (Khaleeva, 1999).

Informatization of Modern Society

The modern era is often called 'network' period. A special role in development of globalizing tendencies belongs to new information and communication technologies, providing access to experience and knowledge in the world, extensive information heritage. 'Postindustrial community', according to Daniel Bell, is characterized by the fact that information (its discovery, processing, transfer, distribution, data management) is the main object of human activity here. The united world of consolidated information, 'planetary communicative space' is responsible for formation of mass communicative system. This system provides access to experience and knowledge in the world, possibility to find contacts in virtual space with various cultures and their representatives, etc. It significantly changes the life style of a present-day person, increases its speed and development rate of educational sphere (Galskova, 2012). These are the conditions where a new value system of information and knowledge is formed, which acquire an economic constituent, turning into a leading transformative power of society. Besides, value of 'education for life' is transformed into 'education during the whole life', and the concept 'knowledge' – into the concept 'competence'.

A significant motto of postindustrial system of intercultural education is not to teach a foreign language but by means of a foreign language to orientate in a new social-cultural context, in a large information flow, to be mobile and initiative when solving cognitive, educational, professional and personal problems (Galskova and Tareva, 2012). More important is that informatization of every-day, professional and educational spheres of a person's life place new demands: to be able to navigate in the information flow and to have a critical look at everything.

Informatization of modern society and closely connected with it informatization of education are characterized by improvement and mass expansion of information and telecommunication technologies. They are widely used to transfer information and provide interaction between a teacher and a student in a modern system of education. Due to this a teacher should have not only knowledge of information and telecommunication technologies but also be able to use them in professional activity.

It is important to inform future teachers that educational informatization enables to achieve two strategic targets. The first is to increase efficiency of all kinds of educational activity by means of using information and communication technologies. The second is to increase the training quality of specialists with new way of thinking, meeting demands of information society. With the help of methods and informatization means a future specialist must be able to find out what information resources are available, where they are, how to get access to them and how to use them to increase efficiency of professional activity (Lvova, 2009).

As education in modern environment is becoming more multilingual and multicultural, it is important to see prospects of studying a certain language and to treat language as an education tool, to coordinate the process of foreign language studies, not forgetting socialization and studying your own language and culture in the social surroundings.

Results

In modern environment there is still a tradition of combining special fields: bachelor's degree in education takes five years and includes two programmes, two foreign languages. The competences which this graduate must have include both programmes. However, they cannot be separately existing competences in this or that foreign language. Here we must speak about multilingual competence in mastering foreign languages and lingvo-didactic competence in teaching foreign languages.

So, demands of the present days require development of the system of multilingual training of foreign language teachers, applied for a range of majors.

The final target of foreign language training is language fluency in various types of oral activity, i.e. various levels of language proficiency.

Proficiency level is maturity of speech habits and skills of the user of the studied language (Schukin, 2003).

The system of language proficiency levels has undergone some changes in the process of its discussion. In order to have uniformity and to make the system

of maturity of speech habits and skills easily understandable for everybody, the letter symbols A, B and C are used for three major categories:

A – Basic user;

B – Independent user;

C – Proficiency user.

The abovementioned levels are subdivided into the following:

1) Basic user: A1 – Breakthrough, A2 – Way stage
2) Independent user: B1 – Threshold, B2 – Vantage
3) Proficiency user: C1 – Effective operational proficiency, C2 – Mastery

It must be noted that level borders are rather subjective and certain levels may be divided into sub-levels which, however, according to their parameters must not cross the borders of parameters, characterizing the level on the whole. Depending on the goals and conditions of education this division may be more ramified.

The language proficiency scale is widely spread due to the following:

1) Its applicability to all foreign languages;
2) Orientation on practical acquaintance with a language due to the activity approach it is based on;
3) Reflection of interests of various professional and age groups of students;

The benefit of this scale is not only description of the levels themselves, but also parameter development for their definition. These are the parameters:

a) communicative tasks, which students can solve by means of the studied language at every stage of education;
b) spheres, topics, communicative situations in terms of which these tasks are solved, i.e. the substantive side of communication was defined;
c) degree of linguistic and extra-linguistic correctness of the assigned communicative tasks.

Taking it into consideration, let us correlate the existing two-level system of linguistic training of students with the programme 'Pedagogical Education', majoring in 'Foreign Language', with the language proficiency levels in accordance with 'Common European Framework'.

In the table the educational phases and the expected foreign language proficiency levels (and the corresponding certificates in English, German, French and Spanish, accepted in the European Society), corresponding to the former ones, are given in bold (Lopareva, 2013).

Students may start the learning process with different levels or having no skills (if it is a new foreign language for them) in the studied language.

The relevant linguistic, methodical and multilingual training will enable graduates of the programme 'Pedagogical Education', majoring in 'Foreign Language' not only to teach two (or more) foreign languages but also to treat teaching with regard to educational requirements. The system of acquired competences will allow students to continue studying both familiar and new foreign languages and also to teach their students similar strategies.

Table 1. Correlation of foreign language proficiency scale with the expected stage of education at linguistic universities

Broad divisions by languages: Russian, English, German, French, Spanish	Sub-levels by languages: Russian, English, German, French, Spanish	Expected phase of mastering	
A	A1	A 1	Intensive basic
Basic User	Breakthrough / Beginner Einstieg		phonetic course
	Niveau Introductif ou Découverte		
Elementare	Acceso		
Sprachverwendung	A2	A 2	1 term
Débutants	Waystage / Elementary		Bachelor
Usuario básico	Grundlagen		
	Niveau Intermédiaire ou de Survie		
	Plataforma		
B	B1	B 1.1	2 term
Independent User	Threshold / Intermediate		Bachelor
	Mittelmaß	B 1.2	3 term
Selbstständige	B1 - Niveau Seuil		Bachelor
Sprachverwendung	Umbral	**B 1.3**	**4 term**
			Bachelor
intermédiaires ou	B2	B 2.1	5 term
indépendant	Vantage / Upper intermediate		Bachelor
Usuario	gutes Mittelmaß	B 2.2	6 term
independiente	B2 -		Bachelor
	Niveau Avancé ou Indépendant'	**B 2.3**	**7 term**
	Avanzado		**Bachelor**
		B 2+	8 term
			Bachelor
C	C1	C 1.1	1 term Master
Proficient User	Effective Operational Proficiency /	C1.2	2 term Master
	Advanced	**C 1.3**	**3 term Master**
Kompetente	fortgeschrittene Kenntnisse	C 1+	4 term Master
Sprachverwendung	Niveau Autonome		
	Dominio operativo eficaz		
les utilisateurs	C2	C 2	Further
avancés	Mastery / Proficiency		enhancememnt
	exzellente Kenntnisse		
Usuario competente	Niveau Maîtrise		
	Maestría		

Discussions

During the research the following were used:

- provisions of the following approaches to foreign language teaching: competence-based (Zimnyaya, 2004; Milrud and Karamnov, 2012), communicative and cognitive (Khaleeva, 1999; Shamov, 2006; Schepilova, 2005);

- investigations in didactics of multilinguism (Meißner, 2005; Baryshnikov, 2004);

- investigations in methods of the second foreign language teaching (Schepilova, 2005; Baryshnikov, 2004; Bim, 2001);

- investigations in bilingualism (Weinreich, 1999; Hamers and Blanc, 2000; Ervin and Osgood, 1954);

However, in the previous investigations a number of issues were not discussed but they are frequent in theoretical and practical education of foreign languages at linguistic universities, the most significant of them are the following:

- due to transfer to the two-level educational system some qualitative changes occurred in the training programme of future foreign language teachers: the minor 'Second foreign language' was transferred to a programme equally corresponding the major and requires equal proficiency of both foreign languages;
- teaching foreign languages to students of linguistic universities does not fully consider modern tendencies of the world community in its drive to multilinguism and social services to have specialists with the right to teach several foreign languages equally, able both to study other foreign languages independently and to improve the level of proficiency and also to develop these skills in their students;
- there is no system of multilingual training in linguistic universities, using results of modern research in the sphere of linguistic, psychological, sociolinguistic and didactic bases of multilinguism, university pedagogics and methods of foreign language teaching at university.

The university objective in foreign language teachers' training is to teach graduates to master several foreign languages with equal proficiency by themselves, to use the acquired knowledge for independent learning of other foreign languages, to teach in various educational establishments with regard to educational requirements (if it is the first or second foreign language), to teach students relevant strategies in mastering foreign languages.

Conclusion

Summarizing the overall activity of the foreign language teacher, it must be noted that academic mobility, supporting intercultural dialogue, requires a range of competences, thus increasing the role of autonomy, independence and review in the educational process.

The future foreign language teacher is a multilingual and multicultural personality, able and ready for intercultural communication, independent usage of foreign language browsers, development and implementation of resource books in a foreign language, including multimedia, into the educational process (Mosina, 2014). The graduate must consider the sequence of the taught language in order to optimize and intensify the educational process. Such activity is a significant element of linguistic and methodical university training.

Recommendations

The practical implication of the research is explained by possibility to make use of the results in the practical educational process at universities when teaching foreign languages to students majoring in linguistics.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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