PROBLEMS AND PERSPECTIVES OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN HIGHER SCHOOL

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Abstract

Political, communication and technological transformations in society have involved a huge number of people both in direct and indirect communication. Since globalization enhances intercultural interaction, the study of languages and cultures in the world community becomes the most important part of research. An important linguistic effect of globalization is the selection of a number of languages that are most common in the world community. Today world practice demonstrates the steady prevalence of a small group of languages over all the others. These are the languages that are most often used in various types of communication. The bulk of business correspondence is conducted on them, most of the fiction and scientific literature has been translated into these languages, they are taught in schools and universities around the world. It should be noted that in the twenty-first century, knowledge of only one language is not enough both for economic, social and educational growth. Accordingly, the requirements for education in the field of a foreign language in higher school have changed. This problem concerns not only the education system of Russia, its regions, but also the educational practice of the entire world community, which indicates the relevance, scale and significance of this problem for modern civilization. It is fully manifested in high school and raises the issue of systemic changes in the professional training of future specialists in the field of professional education. It also determines the need to form the readiness of Russian federal and regional university graduates for life and professional activities in an open, democratic post-industrial society, where representatives of different races, nationalities and cultures coexist and interact with each other. Kazan Federal University is an example of our study.

The starting point for choosing this subject area is the following: today the main direction of the intellectual development of modern society lies not on the path of linguistic isolation of a particular country from the world around it, but, on the contrary, on the path of creating favorable conditions in it both for learning foreign languages and for stimulating intercultural communication. As it is known, Republic of Tatarstan is a multinational republic, in which international relations in the field of culture, politics, economics and tourism are noticeably expanding. This circumstance determines the need to study and improve the languages of intercultural communication. Thus, the Department of Theory and Practice of Translation and the Department of Theory and Practice of Teaching Foreign Languages are the structural units that set the following priority tasks:

- Improving the quality of training of future specialists within the framework of modern competitive educational programs (bachelor's and master's) and the variety of modern educational technologies;

- Preservation and development of the teaching staff's scientific potential, corresponding to the status of the graduating department;

- Implementation of measures to promote KFU in international subject ratings in such directions as "Linguistics", "Pedagogy";
- Ensuring the competitiveness of graduates in the market of translation services;
- Expanding the partnership with Russian and foreign educational organizations, which will ensure the involvement of the department in the all-Russian and international educational space.

As the long-term experience of these two departments shows, multilingual education has a great future and has a number of advantages in training competitive and qualified specialists in the global labor market.

Keywords: multilingual education, higher school, foreign language, intercultural communication, professional training.

1. INTRODUCTION

At present, in the context of political and economic globalization, it is necessary to expand educational and cultural ties between countries and peoples. The problems of multilingualism are becoming one of the most urgent in the field of education. Trends in the development of an intercultural society in the modern world have led to the emergence of "multicultural environment" phenomenon. This contributed to the awareness of the problems associated with the need to prepare a competitive multilingual personality. The study of several languages is an integral part of the development of international cooperation, technological progress, open educational opportunities and access to a large amount of information. Therefore, there is a growing need for the development of personal and intellectual qualities of modern people, one of which is multilingualism.

Domestic researchers dealing with issues of multilingual education and training are L.M. Malykh, A.V. Zhukova, T.I. Zelenina, S.N. Rybkina, L.P. Khabarova. Within the framework of the Russian communicative theory, one can emphasize works devoted to the problems of verbal communication of such authors as A.E. Voiskunsky, V.V. Bogdanov, O.L. Kamenskaya, E.F. Tarasov, O.Ya. Goykhman, T.M. Nadeina , G.G. Pochepstov, and works devoted to the relationship between language and human communicative behavior by T.G. Vinokur, I.P. Susov. In recent years, the problems of intercultural communication are deeply and comprehensively considered in the works of N.K. Ikonnikova, T.G. Grushevitskaya, V.D. Popkova, A.P. Sadokhin, O.A. Leontovich, I.A. Malkovskaya, S.G. Ter-Minasova.

The dynamic development of the labor market in the context of global and local processes creates more and more specific requirements for modern education. On the one hand, this stimulates the unity of the linguistic behavior of people who are members of society. On the other hand, globalization leads to cultural diversity, and linguistic behavior is defined as multilingualism.

The meaning of the term "multilingualism" is contained in the concept of "bilingualism", the simultaneous knowledge of two or more languages. Polylingualism is multilingualism, the use of several languages within a certain social community (primarily the state), the use by an individual (group of people) of several languages, each of which is chosen in accordance with a specific communicative situation.

In recent years, the problem of bilingual and multilingual education has been increasingly discussed, effective ways of its implementation are being sought, the relevance and progressiveness of intensive learning technology is being confirmed. Thus, the knowledge of several languages not only facilitates the process of learning and communication, but also gives a certain freedom of language choice and speech behavior, which becomes a clear advantage for bilinguals and multilinguals, thereby increasing their social status. When learning a foreign language and mastering the subject content, multilingual education solves a whole range of psychological and pedagogical tasks that ensure the assimilation of the subject content of disciplines, familiarizing students with the values of world and national culture, understanding not only another person, but also his culture, and understanding the diversity around us.

So, at the Department of Theory and Practice of Translation and the Department of European Languages and Cultures (the Institute of International Relations), the following educational programs are conducted in the Direction 45.03.02 "Linguistics" - Bachelor's degree:
- Foreign language (English, Spanish, French).
- Practical course of the first foreign language (English, Spanish, French).
- Practical course of the second foreign language (French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese).
- Introduction to the theory of intercultural communication: general issues.
- Basics of linguistics.
- Theoretical phonetics (English, French, Spanish).
- Theoretical grammar (English, French, Spanish).
- Stylistics (French, Spanish).
- Practical course of translation of a second foreign language (French, Spanish, Italian, English, Portuguese).
- Practical work on consecutive translation (French, Spanish).
- Practical work on simultaneous translation (French, Spanish).
- Practical course of translation of the first foreign language (French, Spanish).
- Practical course of written translation of the first foreign language (French, Spanish).
- Basic course of the third foreign language (French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese).
- Practical course of the third foreign language (French, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese).
- Improvement of foreign language competence (third foreign language).

At the Department of Theory and Practice of Teaching Foreign Languages (the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication) the following educational programs are conducted:

- Foreign language (English) and second foreign language.
- Foreign language (French).
- Foreign language (German).
- Foreign languages in the field of professional communication.

When studying educational programs, it should be noted, that language competence opens up opportunities for studying academic disciplines in a multilingual mode and is realized at the level of mastering the subject content embedded in them. It also affects the totality of knowledge and skills in various aspects of a foreign language (listening, speaking, writing, etc.), as well as the ability of students to use them adequately in prepared and unprepared speech. Intercultural competence determines the ability of students to carry out social interaction in a multicultural society and represents the implementation of the ideas of multicultural education.

The development of multilingual education provides students with a wide range of access to information in a variety of fields, access to new information on demand, facilitates the introduction of continuing education and creates more opportunities to compete in European and global labor markets. Therefore, most linguists believe that multilingualism is the most important priority of modern society.

Multilingualism not only ensures mutual understanding, but also forms a tolerant attitude towards linguistic and cultural diversity. The development of multilingual learning programs involves relying on qualitatively new principles and patterns that should accompany the process of learning languages, and this can be seen as the second important difference between multilingual and bilingual learning. However, these differences are not enough to determine accurately whether multilingual learning is a separate, independent branch of the general theory of language learning. According to a number of researchers (for example, the German scientist G. Neuner), it is not a new method of teaching foreign languages, but only serves as a new approach that expands and profiles the existing system of communicative learning. At the same time, he notes that in multilingual education, the emphasis is not so much on the quantity and quality of the acquired languages, but on the development of social and communicative competencies, tolerance, including in relation to other people (Neuner, 2001).

2. METHODOLOGY

As for multilingual education, the goal of achieving competence close to the native speaker of the language being studied is not a priority. Instead, its goal (an educational goal in our understanding) is the formation of a multilingual personality of a student with a developed “multilingual language repertoire, including language knowledge, skills and abilities accumulated by students on the basis of all the languages being studied” (Smokotin, 2010, p. 76). So N.V. Baryshnikov clarifies that an approach, that can be called sequentially
simultaneous learning of languages in an educational institution, is possible and widely used in practice. In his opinion, multilingual education is not the study of languages separately, it is a system of co-study of the languages taught, first sequentially, and then simultaneously (Baryshnikov, 2013, p. 58).

This article discusses the experience of teachers of the Department of Theory and Practice of Translation, when teaching KFU students in the direction of "Linguistics", (profile: Translation and translation studies (foreign and second foreign languages) and also of teachers of the Department of Theory and Practice of Teaching Foreign Languages.

The work of these two departments is aimed at the implementation of a number of urgent tasks for the preservation of linguistic diversity, in the solution of which multilingual education plays an important role, namely:

- Modern society should become a unified, but multinational, multicultural and multilingual whole ("unity in diversity");
- It is important to know different languages, including less common ones, and not just compulsory English;
- Language learning is a way to preserve linguistic diversity, cultures and peoples;
- The study of languages should be carried out throughout a person's life, etc. (Protasova, 2004, p. 13).

It should be noted that the desire to achieve communicative competence close to that of a native speaker of the target language really becomes a difficult and not entirely realistic task in the course of a second (third) foreign language. Pilot studies conducted among natural bilingual students studying two or more foreign languages in a higher educational institution show what difficulties students face.

The main research methods are such methods as testing, questionnaires, pedagogical observations, interviews, trainings, which contributed to increasing the motivation of the study participants to study the second and third foreign languages (optional).

The practical significance of the study is the development of such programs as "Program of training in intercultural communications", "Training program for the development and improvement of foreign languages for different levels of training students in intercultural communication". These manuals were tested in KFU at the Department of Theory and Practice of Translation and at the Department of European languages and cultures. Methodological developments can be used in specialized educational institutions, at various levels of education. The validity and reliability of the research were ensured by the structure and organization of the pedagogical experiment adequate to the tasks of the work. Qualitative indicators of changes in the language practice of students were assessed based on the results of the current interview and testing, which are held at the end of the academic year.

3. RESULTS

The foregoing allows us to conclude that multilingual education solves at least three urgent tasks. On the one hand, it is aimed at meeting the needs of people in learning several languages for quite pragmatic purposes, since the multilingualism of modern person is the key to his professional and personal success in a globalized world. On the other hand, it contributes to the formation of a new type of multilingual learner (multilingual student personality), which is distinguished by a number of qualities necessary for the successful realization of his or her human potential in a multilingual multicultural society. In addition, multilingual education solves the most important task of preserving linguistic and cultural diversity through the development of multilingualism of the planet's inhabitants.

Let's try to correlate the designated tasks of multilingual education with the traditionally identified three main tasks of any educational system - "practical, providing general education and educational" (Schukin, 2006, p. 184). In our opinion, the educational goal of multilingual education is aimed at the formation of a multilingual personality of the student, able to function effectively in a modern multicultural educational and social space. The practical goal is aimed at the assimilation of co-studied languages and cultures by students at the level of international standards and their mastery of multilingual communicative competence (the term of M.A. Bodoni (Bodoni, 2013, p. 132)), which prepares students for real communicative activity by means of several foreign languages. The general educational goal of multilingual education is related to the important fact that, regardless of the specifics of a particular region of the world and the diversity of approaches to the process of mastering several languages and cultures by students, multilingual education has an important common reason for its appearance: it arose as a reaction of the progressive public to the globalization of the economic, cultural and educational space. Its most important general educational goal is the preservation of the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world, for which teachers develop experimental methods for co-
learning languages, create author's multilingual training programs for the development of children and adults. The very fact of turning to three or more languages in an educational institution and using integrative approaches in their study raises the question of how multilingual learning fits into the traditional system of teaching foreign languages and how to relate to multilingual learning from the point of view of general didactics of foreign languages. Specialists in the field of language policy and language education, as a rule, emphasize that multilingual education is a broader concept than bilingual education (for example, teaching one's native language and one foreign language) (Popova, Anisimova and Bezrodnykh, 2015, p. 15). The first obvious difference concerns the number of languages being studied. As already noted, multilingual education involves the introduction of three or more languages into the educational process.

Thus, we can safely say that multilingual education is a new scientific and methodological direction in the system of language education, which solves the urgent problems of modern multi-ethnic states and contributes to the further development of the general theory and practice of language education through:

a) The introduction of system integration in the process of co-learning languages and cultures, developing methods for parallel / simultaneous teaching (co-learning) of several languages, at least three;

b) Revision and deepening of the function and role of the native language and culture in the process of learning foreign languages;

c) Formation of a new type of student (at all levels of the educational process - from preschool to postgraduate), who is distinguished by a high ability for metathinking, i.e. "the ability to think about his thought system and manage it" (Kasavin, 2009, p. 491);

d) Creating conditions for preserving the linguistic and cultural diversity of the world (region of residence).

Summing up all of the above, we can conclude that multilingual education has a great future and has a number of advantages. But all this can be achieved only if it is properly designed in accordance with the language goals, the conditions of the educational environment, the geopolitical factor, etc.

**REFERENCE LIST**


