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## Bilingualism in the Context of the Native Language: Cultural and Historical Aspect of Development

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Original article



### Abstract

**Introduction.** In the modern world, the phenomenon of bilingualism is an equally perfect command of at least two languages, which is becoming the norm and usually develops into multilingualism (polylingualism). The multidimensionality of the phenomenon of bilingualism and the existence of different approaches to its study determine the variety of types distinguished. Therefore, one of the central issues in analysing bilingualism is its typology. In the study of the cultural-historical aspect of bilingualism, the analysis of language interaction and interference remains relevant.

**Materials and methods.** The study includes the application of descriptive and comparative-historical methods of scientific research, method of observation, scientific methods of analysis and synthesis of the obtained data, dialectical and hermeneutical methods.

**Results.** The size of sovereign States that have the right to declare their own language policy varies widely, as does the size of their population. The number of languages spoken in a state does not depend on its size or population. An intercultural approach helps to better understand language problems in countries where the only response to linguistic diversity has been a system of attitudes and ideas based on the principle of dominance or exclusion. This policy was justified by the alleged need to have a means of expression that met the requirements of the existing ideology or higher ranking languages and cultures, while believing that other languages and cultures were incapable of playing a role in the development of thought and the formation of knowledge. The multidimensionality of the phenomenon of bilingualism and the existence of different approaches to its study determine the diversity of the types distinguished and actualise the problem of interaction in the interethnic cultural environment.

**Discussion and conclusion.** The relevance of the problem of bilingualism goes beyond linguo-educational interests to the level of the most important socio-political and ethno-cultural problems. Taking into account the ethnic specificity of each language and culture in interethnic and intercultural communication is a necessary condition for the development of society.

**Keywords:** bilingualism, dialog of cultures, language, bilingualism, personality, consciousness, culture, ethnos, interethnic communication

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Научная статья

## Билингвизм в контексте родного языка: культурно-исторический аспект развития

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### Аннотация

**Введение.** В современном мире все большее значение приобретает явление двуязычия (билингвизм) – одинаково совершенное владение как минимум двумя языками, которое становится нормой и обычно перерастает в многоязычие

(полилингвизм). Многоаспектность явления двуязычия и существование различных подходов к его изучению определяют многообразие выделяемых типов. Поэтому одним из центральных вопросов анализа двуязычия является его типология. При исследовании культурно-исторического аспекта билингвизма актуальным остаётся и анализ взаимодействия языков, интерференция.

**Материалы и методы.** Исследование включает в себя применение описательного и сравнительно-исторического методов научного исследования, метод наблюдения, научные методы анализа и синтеза полученных данных, диалектический и герменевтический методы.

**Результаты исследования.** Размеры суверенных государств, обладающих правом провозглашать собственную языковую политику, весьма различны, как и численность их населения. Число языков, на которых говорят в том или ином государстве, ни от его размеров, ни от численности населения не зависит. Межкультурный подход помогает лучше понять языковые проблемы в странах, где единственным ответом на языковое разнообразие была система взглядов и идей, основанная на принципе доминирования или исключения. Такая политика оправдывалась якобы необходимостью иметь средства выражения мыслей, отвечающих требованиям существующей идеологии или языков и культур, занимающих более высокое место, считая при этом, что прочие языки и культуры не способны играть значимую роль в развитии мышления и формировании знания. Многоаспектность явления двуязычия и существование различных подходов к его изучению определяют многообразие выделяемых типов, актуализируют проблему взаимодействия в межнациональной культурной среде.

**Обсуждение и заключение.** Актуальность проблемы двуязычия выходит за рамки лингвообразовательных интересов на уровень важнейших социально-политических и этнокультурологических проблем. Учет этнической специфики каждого языка и культуры в межнациональной и межкультурной коммуникации является необходимым условием развития общества.

**Ключевые слова:** билингвизм, диалог культур, язык, двуязычие, личность, сознание, культура, этнос, межнациональное общение

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**Introduction.** The policy of bilingualism helps to eradicate the neglect of ethnic languages both on the part of their speakers and on the part of representatives of other ethnic groups, to overcome the negative stereotype ingrained in the minds of peoples in relation to ethno-cultural values, which are defined by “... forms of spiritual and practical mastering of the world, express the value attitude of man to reality” [1, pp. 9–12]. Bilingualism is becoming increasingly important as one of the important problems of states where different linguistic communities live on their territory, where they seek to create conditions in which bilingualism becomes an inevitable social phenomenon that determines “the need to consider ... the dispositions of social structures” [2]. Bilingualism as a norm becomes a mean of preventing cultural isolation, developing linguistic thinking and general intellectual level. There are different ways to learn several languages in different countries.

Language activities include at least two languages: on the one hand, the mother tongue, and on the other hand, the main language, the state language. But in addition to them, it is possible to master one or more languages, which is undoubtedly beneficial both for the individual, characterised by “...activities that imitate real reality...” [3, pp. 62–66] and, ultimately, for the whole society. Bilingualism, applied in different conditions of communication, is a product of existing social relations, it reflects the processes and results of interaction between peoples – speakers of languages. It is important that through bilingualism, ethnic languages are heard in full force [4]. Bilingualism as well as language in general has a certain degree of autonomy. This means that bilingualism is not only a product of society, but is itself able to influence social processes, is one of the factors influencing the fate of peoples. The regulating influence of bilingualism on relations between peoples consists not only in the fact that it is a means of establishing contacts, but also in the qualitative impact and convergence of worldviews, thinking, culture and consciousness related to “social consciousness ... of common cultural norms and values” [5].

In cases where, for one reason or another, bilingualism is accompanied by the loss of one of the languages, it can hinder the development of individuals and even serve as an occasion for interethnic conflicts. Bilingualism is part of the evolutionary ethnic process and is expressed in a significant change in such elements of ethnicity as language and culture, providing “... the cultivation of a positive attitude towards cultural differences” [6, pp. 7–10].

Bilingualism is the main mechanism of socio-economic, socio-political and ethno-cultural interaction between peoples. Social factors – economics, politics, culture – determine the most important aspect of language development, i. e. its interaction with speakers of other languages. Socialization is carried out with the help of languages, and in the

process of value learning of ethno-cultural experience there is the formation of a person at the frontier of cultures, which is understood as a person with ethno-linguistic-cultural competence.

The significance of the problem of bilingualism goes beyond linguo-educational interests to the level of the most important social, political, ethno-cultural problems. The works of domestic authors are devoted to the study of various aspects of bilingualism: E.V. Gafiyatova, N.V. Evdokimova, G.Z. Zakiryanov, E.A. Karpushkina, V.N. Goncharova, O.Y. Kolosova, O.A. Kolykhalova, E.V. Goverdovskaya, O.B. Istomina, E.B. Taskaeva and many others. Within the framework of the interdisciplinary approach of considering bilingualism, the analysis of its typology and interference remains relevant.

**Materials and methods.** The current state of the problem of bilingualism shows that the assimilation of a second language means the formation of new concepts as the increased ability of thinking to depth and breadth of coverage of reality. The formation of a new language system contributes to the development of a unified thinking code, deepening the possibilities of reflecting and reproducing the world around us. With full-fledged bilingualism, a unified linguistic ability is ultimately formed in terms of content, a set of concepts, categories, which, being differently expressed in different languages, become broader, more powerful, deeper, more systematized.

Bilingualism has a positive effect on the development of linguistic thinking and the general intellectual level of learners. The brains of bilinguals work more intensely. Nowadays, it is confidently said about the beneficial effect of bilingualism on the development of an individual's personality. In a polylingual society, knowledge of two or more languages contributes to the all-round development of the individual. Bilingualism is a powerful means of developing speech, thinking and all areas of personality. Together with the development of communicative properties in bilingualism there is a development of emotional-volitional sphere of personality.

The ethnocultural specificity of bilingualism requires the inclusion of mentality. The interaction of the speech structures of the two linguistic systems is woven into the context of the interaction of the two ethno-cultural and mental programmes, the expression of which they act. Languages necessarily enter into interaction, which is a consequence of the phenomenon of transfer – a complex phenomenon of the human psyche, the hidden mechanisms of which allow not only to use in thought and motor activity the knowledge, skills and abilities available to him, but also to transfer them to newly acquired ones. Two different spiritual worlds enter into interaction, which is expressed in the peculiarities of psychological mechanisms – identification, expectation, empathy, reflection, the full functioning of which in a bilingual system is impossible without the inclusion of ethno-cultural components of interaction. The study is based on an interdisciplinary approach and is conducted with reliance on descriptive and comparative-historical methods of scientific research, the method of observation, as well as scientific methods of analysis and synthesis of the data obtained. Dialectical and hermeneutic methods are applied, which allow systematic and comprehensive study of these phenomena and processes.

**Results.** The central issue in analyzing bilingualism is its typology. The multidimensionality of the phenomenon of bilingualism and the existence of different approaches to its study determine the variety of types distinguished. There are known linguistic, psychological and sociological typologies of bilingualism based on various qualitative and quantitative criteria.

According to the scope of bilingualism or its correlation with a certain social collective, there are: individual bilingualism; group bilingualism; mass bilingualism; complex bilingualism; partial or full bilingualism. Group bilingualism presupposes bilingualism of separate groups of population formed by age, social or professional characteristics, for example, young people, intellectuals, collective farmers. A social group may include a family. Mass bilingualism is related to the bilingualism of the main part of the population; that is the most characteristic type of bilingualism. Bilingualism of some segments of the population is also considered partial, and that characteristic of the whole population is considered complete or total, providing for mutual and full functional mastery of each other's languages [7].

According to the number of actions performed on the basis of a given speech skill, productive and active bilingualism are distinguished. These terms share the same understanding of bilingualism, which provides the communicative function of language, i. e. achieving mutual understanding between speaker and listener. Language development in conditions of active bilingualism has its own, objective regularities. Reproductive and receptive types of bilingualism correlate with passive bilingualism and denote the ability to perceive the content of an utterance without the ability to construct a meaningful utterance. According to the presence of a special purpose subdivide targeted bilingualism, which is addressed to speakers of different languages. There is also categorical bilingualism, or academic, designed to work with literature on specialty, it includes technical or practical bilingualism, that is, the acquisition of language through learning lexical and grammatical rules and phonetic laws. In contrast to purposeful bilingualism, there is non-purposeful bilingualism, which does not have a specifically defined purpose. This is everyday and social, or functional, bilingualism, which represents the coexistence of two languages within one speech collective using these languages in their respective communicative spheres. Everyday bilingualism is characterized

as the additive, or alternating, use of whole phrases and expressions of both primary and secondary languages within a single sentence, that is, it is the mixing of elements of both languages. It is noted that a consequence of everyday bilingualism is interference, understood as modification of the model of the secondary language or transfer of the model of word combination and sentence structure from the native language to the secondary language. Functional, or social, bilingualism is the coexistence of two languages within one speech collective, using these languages in their corresponding communicative spheres. In functional bilingualism, there is a mutual influence of languages with a predominant orientation from the second language to the mother tongue. The criterion of the presence or absence of a special purpose should not be confused with the criterion of the mode of acquisition of bilingualism, which implies the presence or absence of a purposeful influence in the acquisition of a second language. Accordingly, a distinction is made between artificial and natural bilingualism. In natural bilingualism, the acquisition of the second language occurs in the same way as the first language. Both languages can be learnt simultaneously or with time intervals. The main motive for language acquisition lies in the sphere of communication. Artificial bilingualism is related to organised learning. An example of artificial bilingualism is the acquisition of a foreign language, driven by a variety of motives ranging from a narrowly practical goal to its use as a means of communication.

The analysis of any language interaction involves the consideration of interference, as it is believed that there is no bilingualism without interference, acting as a result, process and mechanism of language interaction. Interference is the overlap between two language systems. This definition is considered to be generally accepted.

Interference is a cultural and historical product reflecting both universal laws of thinking and specific features of reproduction in each language, it is rooted in the ethno-cultural specificity of interacting languages, manifested in a peculiar dissection and reproduction of reality in each of them. As a result, interference appears as something more than the interaction of linguistic forms and patterns, and includes an ethno-cultural component organically included in the linguistic structure. Interference in the process of language interaction is the result of interaction between two ways of reflecting the world with a complex of specific attributes peculiar to each of them: a peculiar ethnic mentality, stereotype, internal form of words, subjective attitudes, experiences, which they express. Interference reflects both the universal laws of thought and the specific features of reproduction in each language.

Interference can cover all levels of language: phonetics, grammar, vocabulary, word formation. Vocabulary is the most mobile and open to interference, phonetics and morphology are more stable. Grammar, as the least material and most formal part of language, is least susceptible to change. Morphology and syntax are most intimately connected with the peculiarities of ethnic thinking, which makes them a low-permeability system of language. The penetration of morphology and syntax indicates the beginning of destructive processes in language and, with it, in thinking.

Currently, the phenomenon of interference is considered from psychological and linguodidactic points of view. In psychology, interference refers to a certain type of interaction between skills and abilities when performing actions. The reasons for this phenomenon lie in the hidden mechanism of transference, which allows a person to use in his thinking activity what he knows, that is, what he is able to do under completely new or relatively new circumstances. However, if the interaction of native and non-native languages inhibits the acquisition of the latter, it generates interference. The linguodidactic interpretation of interference is formulated as a violation of an existing norm in the language.

In everyday speech, interference is given space and quickly becomes a habit. Overcoming interference involves intense internal activity to develop language consciousness. New concepts are formed and the internal form of new words is comprehended, as a result of which a new way of cognition and reflection of the world is learnt. A new ethno-cultural experience is being formed. In all cases, reducing and overcoming ethnoculturally conditioned interference involves the need to form two interacting cultures, resulting in interlinguistic and intercultural mobility.

**Discussion and conclusion.** The analysis of existing typologies of bilingualism and their criteria shows that the same criteria can be repeated in the types of bilingualism distinguished on different grounds. The study of language interaction involves the consideration of interference. We understand interference as a cultural-historical product rooted in the ethno-cultural specificity of interacting languages. A crucial role in solving the problem of interference in the process of language interaction is played by dialogue carried out within the framework of bilingualism. Controlled and controlled dialogue first of all determines the normative reciprocal influence of languages. Where there is a strong and vibrant literary tradition, vigilance against interference is instilled.

The personality successfully manifests itself in those activities that most of all correspond to its ethnic worldview, cannot do without communication, dialogue (dialogue of cultures). Relevant here are also religious ideas, which emphasising the influence of theological ideas on the philosopher, note the influence of Orthodoxy on the formation and design of Russian culture [8]. The starting point is the understanding of bilingualism as a complex phenomenon which, depending on the circumstances, can be a fruitful cooperation of languages, psychologies, cultures. The peculiarity of bilingualism as the junction of two elements of language, two cultures, two images of the world give birth to the energy

of creativity and awakens the consciousness and language of the people to high tension, to the full deployment of their capabilities [9]. The clash of lifestyles and material and spiritual cultures, which takes place not just in life, but at the level of consciousness and comprehension of life, is expressed most acutely at the junction of languages. Language acts as a peculiar instrument of the process of cultural dialogue, which implies the interaction of cultures and mutual understanding between them. The dialogue of cultures presupposes not just acquaintance with ethno-culture, but the formation of a personality at the boundary of cultures, able to see the foreign through their own and vice versa, which in turn is associated with the formation of the ability to compare [10]. The learning of two languages turns into a dialogue of worldviews and world systems, which develops stereoscopic vision, volumetric thinking, allowing to form a more adequate ethnic picture of the world through ethnic consciousness [11; 12]. As a result, a new culture is emerging.

One of the main priorities is the development of a full-fledged, functional national-Russian bilingualism, providing for the mastery by all permanent residents of the region of both their native language and a second language, which should become the norm, a means of overcoming cultural isolation, developing linguistic thinking and the general intellectual level of the younger generation.

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