THE ROLE OF BILINGUALISM IN COMPLETE MASTERY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE

This article explores the role of bilingualism for the complete mastery of a foreign language, which is basically, studied the verbal behaviour of the Azerbaijani-speaking migrants so-called “fourth wave”. It is well known that in many European countries, many people speak English or other languages.

In respect of the aspect of the topic of the article we have chosen, the following question is posed point-blank: for which reason does the acuteness and relevance of studying bilingualism arise? For several reasons. Firstly, it can be useful for people in the age of globalization and strengthening a dialogue between cultures. Secondly, in order to expand a single general educational, communication and information space. Thirdly, in economic interests, specifically to improve competitiveness in the national labour market. Fourthly, for the perfection of remote and integrative forms of teaching youth. Finally, let’s be obvious to the fact that in many European countries, apart from the state language, the vast majority of the local population is fluent in English and some other languages of the Romano-Germanic group. The fact repeatedly ascertained using a smoothly running system of social surveys in individual countries.

It has long been proven by many linguists that a person is fluent in two languages to a different extent; only for a native speaker in a professional respect there can be no decisive obstacles in mastering certain grammatical, lexical and syntactic norms and rules, since the two languages have widely different social aspects. They are associated with a number of features of national culture. (It is rather interesting to note in brackets that, as a rare exception, philologists cite the classic case of the writer V. Nabokov, who was fluent in Russian and English, without dividing them into native and foreign).

Recent studies by leading linguists show that the scope of speech errors among bilinguals is very wide. Firstly, it is difficult for them to comply with the norms of the second language, moreover, not so much everyday as literary. Secondly, the expected result of cross-language interference affects. These two main and some respective reasons are a serious problem for bilinguals.

Contemporary scientists believe that the factor of balanced communication becomes vitally important for the accelerated mastering of two languages. Obviously, these skills are laid in childhood, and attention to the two languages should be divided relatively evenly. However, this is the thesis in the classical language theory. In reality, a different rule applies that is one native language per person.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that the study of two or more languages, of course, leaves its mark on a certain region of the planet. Researchers have noticed that polyglotism (or multilingualism) is characteristic of people compactly living in the same territory. Moreover, surprising as it may seem, its length does not play a significant role. So, in relatively small European countries
(Switzerland) or the CIS countries (Moldova, Dagestan), as well as on the vast prairies of South America, the Indian tribes of New Guinea the several languages function. It is semiotic that Azerbaijan, being a part of the USSR until 1991, was a distinct multinational republic, and the inhabitants spoke several languages. And if in the first case the geographic area of the linguistic environment dominated, then in the second it was a tolerance as a quality of personality.

It is easy to conclude that the boundaries of multilingualism and the extent of the accelerated mastery of two languages in different countries are very flexible. It is characteristic that this linguistic law retains its force even to the extend that the families for objective reasons or any subjective reasons immigrate from one region to another.

So, in the difficult and unstable 1990s, a certain part of the Azerbaijani-speaking clergy emigrated to the leading Western European countries, typically to Germany, motivating their departure, on the one hand, by real economic difficulties in their republic, on the other, and no less important – due to social stabilization. These are those migrants who had an unstable economic situation in their home country; obtaining a permanent and well-paid job in these countries (especially for doctors who can get a good job and stay abroad); providing the future of children (a good school, and then a higher educational institution); getting an education in German or other universities, which are the best in the world; getting good health care; improvement of living conditions.

It was also noticed that in modern Germany the influence of the English language is very strong. Whether one likes it or not, the Azerbaijani immigrants, almost in whole collectives, are becoming bilingual. Therefore, there is not even such a thing in this country as “non-English monolingualism”, since there is no alternative to opposing the international language in general. And complete freedom of action in the choice of language, not so much in the philosophical or moral sense, but in the linguistic sense. Representatives of Azerbaijani immigration in Germany, bilingual speakers can speak freely in their chosen language; violent bias in any direction threatens the emergence and development of interference.

Improving the social and economic situation, of course, in some way stabilizes the lives of immigrants. Meanwhile, it must be noted that they find themselves in a foreign language environment, and the knowledge of the state language in Europe is as immutable a law as that of any civilized country. Thus, the situation of bilingualism becomes natural. Moreover, if in an ordinary home environment immigrants can freely use their native (Azerbaijani) language, then in all other cases they are obliged to use exclusively German. It is the language of communication in new workplaces, as well as the primary means of realizing professional skills and opportunities.

This implies, in our opinion, two important linguistic problems. The first is overcoming (complete or partial) speech errors. Unfortunately, the inquiries shows research on the diversity and multiplicity of speech errors of bilingualists. On the one hand, the correctness of speech is violated, the norms of the second language are not observed. On the other hand, errors resulting from interference are detected. Among the latter, grammatical ones are the most frequent. A lot of mistakes are made, for example, in oral monologue and dialogical speech in different situations in communication.

The second is identifying patterns in the use of borrowings in the speech of Azerbaijani immigrants, as well as the reasons for expanding the emotive space of the text. Additionally, national linguists are also interested in the mechanism of speaking (listening) in a foreign language, the internal elements of this process and the strategy for selecting the most acceptable lexical means for perception with
naturally restrictive economy of language components. We can only add that the specificity of this process still remains insufficiently studied in the Azerbaijani philological science.

At the Martin Luther University in Halle an der Zale, within the framework of doctoral work under my leadership, a study of the Azerbaijani speech of Azerbaijani-speaking migrants living in Halle (Saxony-Anhalt) was carried out. The materials of this study consist of records read by two well-known teachers, Germanists in the laboratory of the Martin Luther University, as well as at the University of Foreign Languages in Azerbaijan, in Baku city, by natural, prepared oral speech with a total duration of about 30 hours. The material for the recording was the first part of the first chapter of the novel “Ali and Nino”. After recording the voices, the materials were given for experimental phonetic analysis to the laboratory.

At the very beginning of our article, we have mentioned two essential points:

1). The social sphere of the mechanism of learning languages, the imprint of mentality and the individual originality of culture form a different degree of their mastery;

2). In most cases, the age qualification is not the main sign of learning a non-native second language, since this issue closely intersects with psycholinguistics. This refers to the elements of the motor memory of a second language learner, his individual abilities, and finally, the IQ.

For this reason, in bilingualism, scholars do not write about strict criteria for mastering two languages at the standard level. Moreover, in this matter, there is almost always a reasonable disposition. The essence of balanced bilingualism is that teaching the second language (we are not talking about intensity in our case, since it is beyond the scope of this article) does not constitute any competition for the native one. The maternal, figuratively speaking, is static, and the other is dynamic. Therefore, the studied language in modern bilinguals is considered dominant. Scientists also argue that priority remains with the second language, even if the ratio is uneven.

For instance, in some cases, the unfavorable conditions of somebody’s social environment of communication contributes to the partial degradation of one language. Some lexemes simply fall out of everyday use. The phenomenon of “language death”, the so-called attrition, arises. Obviously, this negatively affects bilingualism, as it slows down the learning of a second language. (It is curious that some Russian postmodern writers compare this phenomenon with the “death of the author” in contemporary works of this direction). But there is also the opposite effect, when under favorable social conditions, on the contrary, most of the words or phrases that are hard for audio perception are still preserved in the vocabulary of immigrants. The language is reviving, lexemes are preserved, and sometimes they undergo a certain modernization. Moreover, this rule is applicable to all people in different communication situations.

The development of a foreign language in the course of schooling would repeat the path of language development done a long time ago in completely different conditions. It is common knowledge that even from school, students, due to their tenacious childhood memory, as a rule, learn foreign languages better, but this process, which is directly based on test tasks, has not been studied enough.

References:

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