Multicultural Language Development of Preschool Children in Russia

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Abstract

Multicultural development assumes the acquirement knowledge of two-three languages. It is provided by synchronization and coordination of language content by means of transposition – positive transfer of native language knowledge to foreign, and interference on account of negative interaction of the second and the third languages to the native one. The basis for bilingualism, given there, is the base for positive influence on the formation of linguistic identity, the formation of personality with unique features. The study confirms that the main purpose of language development of children is to build their communicative competence, required for participation in a dialogue in a multicultural language area.

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Keywords: Multicultural language development; preschool children; synchronization; coordination; transposition; interference.

1. Introduction

Nowadays people mostly everywhere: in Russia, Western Europe, United States and Canada – understand the necessity of cognitive development of individual as one of the most actual, social, psychological and educational problem of the time. N.E. Veraksa lays special emphasis on formation of a creative personality who

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puts himself a question about the world. The recognition of himself is impossible without the purposeful development of cognitive processes (attention, memory, thinking), which form the basis of human intelligence. Pre-school education should influence on the child's intellect, and — that is most important — should keep up the personality, who requires an individual approach and individual programs. A lot of urgent problems arise out of it. The main one among them is productivity in any professional activity [1].

2. Method

Vallon insists on inability of child's independence since his birth and tendency to socialization: first – with the mother, and then - with other people [2]. The child develops only due to interaction with other people. The basic role A.Vallon gives to affective responses and speech as well as to motor acts [2, 3, 4, 5, 6]. The same position is shared by many Russian psychologists. For example, L.S. Vygotsky notes the important role of other people in the cognitive development of a child [7].

At different points of its evolution, multicultural language development of preschool children seems to take up different forms, group and individual works, or games, as the central object of attention, but always asking what does foreign language, taught in Russia, most typically is. The contemporary efforts have to tackle the previous methods in order to prove their effectiveness. A few years ago it seemed fairly clear that the prime object is teaching foreign language separately, without links with other languages, already known by children. Today, there are very strong signs that preschool teaching of foreign language, based on the knowledge of a native one, is becoming more effective.

3. Results and discussion

Dynamically developing processes of intercultural language communication inside and outside Russia are associated with bilingualism: Russian-Tatar, Russian-Bashkir, Russian-Chuvash, Russian-Mari, and three-languages, when young people, there parents, the public itself realizes the need in fluent knowledge of foreign language. And that forces to include to usual educational process additional services, like bilingual or trilingual game practice. This approach is wide-spread abroad: in the United States, Belgium, Poland, Switzerland and Japan, where great attention is paid to language training of preschool children. Unfortunately, Russia doesn’t follow their example. That’s why well-known all over the world Swiss and Belgian preschools with an active use of several languages, like English, French, German, Italian, serve as the example to the Russian ones. The policy to multilingualism and multiculturalism, proclaimed in Austria, Canada, is a part of national and cultural diversity [8].

However, the process of multicultural education and early childhood development, despite diverse practical methods of teaching languages in kindergartens of Russia and even foreign countries, is studied only partly. Psycholinguistic and linguo-didactic multicultural aspects of language development of children in kindergartens are just promoting.

In Tatarstan (part of Russia), where live mainly the Tatars and the Russians, the number of people who consider themselves the Russians, has decreased till 13 % over the last 20 years (1993-2013). There is a complete mess of strategies in teaching even native language. Moreover, they have already become the matter of state and non-state business in some educational institutions, including kindergartens. It has been forgotten, that the second language should be taught on the basis of the first language (mother language), rather than together with it. Unsynchronized and uncoordinated training often leads to weak knowledge of native language, to say nothing of foreign one. It reflects on intellect, mentality of children.

As it is shown in our previous researches, the amount of people who consider themselves the Tatars, increased for 27.5%. Still they speak and think in Russian. About 0.75% people, who consider themselves the Russians,
speak Tatar. The amount of those who wish to learn English has increased from 12.5% to 35.6%. Therefore, the Tatar language is taught successfully, trained together with Russian and English.

Uncoordinated teaching to three languages affects the knowledge of all of them. It happens when learning Russian (organized even in a form of game), children learn the names of objects, then learning English, they deal with verbs of motion, and at last, learning native language (Tatar, Chuvash, Mari), they study the adjectives. Here transposition of linguistic phenomena and interference - negative impact of one language to another - is not taken into account. The educational technology has not been developed either. As a result, there is a mixture of languages meanings, so children can’t speak properly at all. They fear to be mistaken.

Schematically the technology of formation of imaginations and concepts in different languages we have presented in this way (table 1).

Table 1. Technology of formation of imaginations and concepts in two- and the polylingual environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of Technology</th>
<th>The purpose</th>
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<td>Subject component, informative, moral-ethical components, world outlook component, speech (two- and polylingual).</td>
<td>Formation of two- and polylingual person, who is able to understand concept in two-three languages and to use them it is correctly in training and playing activity; possessing the values connected with application of laws and rules of the Russian grammar with understanding of practical applicability of the theory, its informative importance, verification; with explanatory potential of knowledge; with reasons of simplicity, internal perfection of the organisation of knowledge; with the valuable moments in knowledge development; with objectivity and rationality.</td>
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| Didactic conditions | Motivation of new imaginations and concepts; semantization of the concepts which students don’t have in a native language; differentiation non-translated and translated ways semantization of concepts (on the basis of methods of revealing of interphrase links); actualization in problem-communicative situations of special knowledge and values; use in speech work of receptions of formation of the communicative kernel stimulating creative, research activity of students; realization of receptions of integration of the maintenance of the language and in detail directed character, and also the receptions, allowing to combine individual and group modes of study; semantization (explanation) of concepts; a support on the principles of personal-developing training considering the multilingual environment of dialogue. |

| The content | The propaedeutic (psychological and language) training of students for formation of representations and concepts in different languages; level organisation of the content of language formation; integration of a speech material with the content classes; stage-by-stage complication of the content of training; diagnostics of level of possession of representations and concepts in different languages. |

| Principles | The principle of the personally-focused training; the principle of authenticity connected with criterion of ethnocultural value and providing expansion of intercultural communications of students; a principle of bilinguism and polylinguism (supporting on the knowledge received in a native language); a principle speech thinking activity. |

| Methods | The traditional methods; methods of problem-developing training; methods of intensive training; research (design) methods |

| Work forms | The individual; a pair, a microgroup; a group; a frontal; a mass |

| Means of realisation | The combination of reproductive, productively-creative and creative kinds of activity; individually -research work of students |

| Criteria of the | The formation of: speech skills (to describe, tell, ask, answer); abilities to apply laws and
The researches, we have made in several regions of Russia: Tatarstan, Chuvash and Udmurt Republics, - reveal lingvo-didactic particularities in trilingual approach, as well as the difficulties, typical for children [9]. In that number, if we mean teaching Russian, Tatar, English, there are conditions of synchronization and integration of common turns of speech, as well as typical speech errors. Among linguistic particularities of three languages should be mentioned the level of word order, the category of gender. Therefore special exercises should be suggested to overcome the negative influence of one language to another. They should be based on accounting principles of transposition for integrated mapping of linguistic phenomena.

4. Conclusion

In the research we tried to link the multicultural language development of preschool children with the cognitive development of the child, their typical difficulties. For proper technology of multi-cultural children's language development it is effective to identify the structural and substantive components of the trilingual method, to develop a system of exercises and games, to synchronize teaching and game material [10].

The children with multi-linguistic training in kindergarten are more successful at school, more sociable, tolerant, cheerful, than those, who haven’t been trained. We are confirmed that the multicultural language skills are formed during the preschool years [11]. The basis for bilingualism, given there, is the base for positive influence on the formation of linguistic identity, the formation of personality with unique features. The study confirms that the main purpose of language development of children is to build their communicative competence, required for participation in a dialogue in a multicultural language area [11].

References