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BILINGUALISM AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

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Abstract: The relationship between bilingualism and cultural identity has been a subject of increasing interest in various academic fields, including linguistics, anthropology, and psychology. This study explores how being bilingual affects the formation of cultural identity, particularly how individuals balance and integrate multiple cultural influences. Bilingualism is not merely a linguistic skill but a socio-cultural experience that influences one's self-perception, social interactions, and the way they relate to different cultural norms. The research highlights the dynamic nature of identity, especially for those who live in multicultural contexts, and examines how language plays a central role in negotiating belonging to multiple cultural groups. It also delves into how bilingual individuals may experience tensions between different cultural identities, and how they manage these complexities in their daily lives.
Keywords: Bilingualism, cultural identity, multiculturalism, self-perception, cultural integration, social identity, language and culture.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern world, many people find themselves involved in two, three or more cultures at the same time. This is facilitated by various situations – long foreign business trips, interethnic marriages, educational programs, immigration, as well as living in multicultural countries. Knowledge of several languages often becomes a guarantee of success not only in business relations, but also in personal life. In mixed marriages, especially in migrant families, parents strive to ensure that children speak two languages from an early age [1].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The number of teenagers and students who learn foreign languages in foreign schools and universities is growing all over the world. Thus, there are more and more bilingual and trilingual people of different ages, and multilingualism is becoming an important factor in social and intercultural mobility, contributing to the fact that the world is becoming increasingly intermingled. The process of mixing cultures is one of the results of economic and cultural globalization, the development trends of which remain quite stable. At the same time, the "local" in the modern world does not lose its significance. Moreover, "glocalization" – the increased significance of the "local" against the background of global processes – has become one of the central trends of cultural globalization [2].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this regard, the formation of new identities in a multicultural world, in a contradictory era of increasing mixing of peoples and cultures, on the one hand, and the desire to preserve ethnic and cultural identity, on the other, remains one of the most significant socio-psychological processes. In modern society, there is undoubtedly a great demand for such identities that are multiple in nature, unite layers of different cultures, and imply high multilingual and intercultural competence. The idea of a new type of identity has been embodied within the framework of modern scientific discourse on the unity of the global and the local in a new type of "glocal people" – those who live in two or three houses (i.e. countries), think "globally" and act "locally". It is this type of identity that is called global today. The new identity requires special qualities of human intelligence that allow one to take into account the cultural aspects of business and interpersonal interactions – the so-called cultural intelligence [3],which can be considered as a special form of social intelligence in a multicultural society.

The idea of a global identity is not new. Even Socrates declared: "I am not a Greek, I am not an Athenian, I am a citizen of the world!" Perhaps today this slogan would sound more relevant in a slightly paraphrased form: "I am a Greek, and an Athenian, and a man of the world!" H. Arrow and N. Sandberg consider three modern understandings of such an identity: 1) the identity of a "man of the world", who does not care where to live and with what people and culture to identify himself; 2) the identity of an employee of a transnational economic, religious, educational organization, included in other cultures "due to duty"; 3) a person's identity formed from the interweaving of different cultures due to a personal and therefore unique set of social and personal intercultural connections [6]. In the latest interpretation, "global identity" is viewed as a more individualized awareness of oneself among others, based on personal experience and life history [2]. In addition, global identity understood in this way implies the preservation of local ethnic identities ([3], etc.).

Therefore, in our opinion, it is more accurate to call this new type of identity a "glocal" identity, since it is not equivalent to cosmopolitanism. Glocal identity as one of the new types of ethnic identity in modern society is characterized by the fact that, on the one hand, it is a more personal formation compared to "collective" social or ethnic identity - the awareness and experience of one's belonging is based primarily on the construct of "I", and not "We" (group belonging), on the other hand, it is based on the acquisition of intercultural competence (primarily its cognitive and behavioral components), based on local and global experience and knowledge. A person with this qualitatively new type of identity must have special properties necessary for successful self-realization in a multicultural and multilingual environment.

What role do language and linguistic competence play in the awareness of an individual's belonging to a particular nation? How does bilingualism influence the formation of new identities and the cultural intelligence of an individual? What is the vector of identity formation today when mastering a new picture of the world through language - ethnic identity, bicultural identity or a new construct of modernity - global, or more precisely, glocal identity? And finally, what is global or glocal identity - a truly new type of identity, characteristic of a certain group of our contemporaries, formed under the influence of the social context and life situations, or a kind of phantom constructed by intellectuals and ideologists in favor of globalization?

The questions posed are widely studied from an interdisciplinary perspective at the intersection of humanitarian disciplines such as linguistics, psychology, ethnology, anthropology, cultural studies, political science, philosophy, as well as a number of interdisciplinary areas such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, linguacultural studies, etc. Domestic authors pay great attention to the problem of the connection between language and identity [5], but this problem is especially actively studied in modern European and North American scientific research. It is in these geographical areas that such studies have developed most intensively, firstly, because of the urgent practical need to solve numerous problems of adaptation, acculturation and integration caused by the huge flows of migrants who began to arrive in Western countries since the Second World War, and secondly, because of the emergence of new problems arising in connection with the growing degree of multiculturalism of societies. Analyzing a number of the most famous Western studies in the field of studying the relationship between language and identity, we hope to obtain some answers to the questions posed above and to understand what changes occur with the identity of a person who finds himself at a very busy crossroads of different cultures.

Modern research into the problems of the mutual influence of language and identity has its roots in the history of the development of scientific views on the relationship between language and the psyche with such a complex phenomenon as culture. This problem was first clearly expressed in the works of German scientists. Back in the middle of the 19th century, German philosophers and linguists M. Lazarus and G. Steinthal proposed the concept of "the psychology of peoples" and

considered language as an important part of the "national spirit". Their ideas were further developed in the works of W. von Humboldt, the founder of linguistics as a science, and W. Wundt, the founder of experimental psychology and the psychology of peoples. The German philosopher, linguist and statesman W. von Humboldt, directly linking language with culture, viewed it as an expression of the individual worldview of a nation and as an active, continuous creative process that influences the spiritual development of the people [6]. W. Wundt understood language as a dynamic process and as one of the forms of manifestation of the “collective will” and “national spirit”. It was language, “containing the general form of ideas living in the spirit of the people and the laws of their connection”, in addition to myths and customs, that was one of the main objects of his psychology of peoples [4].

The romantic paradigm is usually contrasted with the structuralist approach, within the framework of which the use of language was considered as the creation of models of certain constructions from discrete fixed lexical units (F. de Saussure, R.O. Jacobson), and language itself was defined as a denotative formation with a fixed subject meaning of the word. The structuralist paradigm underlay attempts to make language an independent object of research, for example, through the study of its grammatical structure.

The romantic linguistic paradigm became especially popular in the second half of the last century among those researchers who sought to study the functions of language and tried to integrate language into the socio-cultural context. It is no coincidence that it became especially popular among representatives of the methodology of social constructivism. The founder of phenomenological sociology and one of the founders of social constructivism, A. Schutz, relying on it, considered language not simply as a scheme of interpretation and expression, consisting of linguistic symbols presented in dictionaries and syntactic rules listed in an ideal grammar, but as a connotative formation. In his opinion, every word or expression of any language has many secondary associations shared only by members of a given community: the periphery, connecting the past with the present, dependence on the social context and specific situations, idioms, technical terms, jargon, dialect words, as well as all elements of the intellectual and spiritual life of the group (primarily literature) [4].

CONCLUSION

The formation of identity under the influence of multilingualism can also be viewed as a conscious formation of meta-knowledge and meta-skills, allowing one to preserve one's own cultural values and at the same time acquire a special vision of the world that goes beyond externally imposed restrictions and pre-written scenarios. CQ, with all its apparent internal conformism (to please globalization), can, in fact, be a serious response to it (a move away from universalization). A person armed with knowledge, motivated for intercultural interaction, possessing a high level of cultural tolerance and therefore able to successfully live in different cultural environments, has the opportunity not only to act as a mediator between them, but also to understand his native culture at a new level.

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