

The Linguacognitive Base of Bilinguals

Mariia Lapteva

Astrakhan State University
Astrakhan, Russia

Elena Zhelezniakova*

The Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia
Saint-Petersburg, Russia

Abstract-The following article describes the formation of linguacognitive level of linguistic personality as a necessary requirement of the second language acquisition. The formation of the linguacognitive base of the secondary linguistic personality is considered on the example of comparison of cultural attitudes in native and second languages. The materials of the comparison indicate that the use of language as an instrument of explication of the mental formations provides insight into the cognitive base of linguistic identity that should be the basis of a new methodological approach, called ethnocognitive.

Keywords-linguacognitive base, secondary linguistic personality, cultural attitudes, ethnocognitive approach

I. INTRODUCTION

In the Russian society, which is traditionally multinational, there are certainly more than one functional languages operating the spheres of everyday communication, they are Russian and native languages. In particular this remark concerns the children of migrants, who learn both languages simultaneously, while at the same time the process of their acquaintance with the "foreign" material and mental culture and its components, such as traditions, customs, rituals, archetypes, cultural concepts, etc., is going on. Therefore, bilingual children should theoretically be able to conduct intercultural dialogue, because they have the necessary linguacultural tools. However, practice shows another thing: if at the "external" level a child of migrants passes the period of adaptation to a foreign language culture quite successfully, at the level of mentality the basic components of the native culture are unchanged, although they are the determinants of the motivational and pragmatic component in the structure of the linguistic personality, with difficulty conceiving "other" cultural patterns.

In this case, we can say that two processes are inseparable – the formation of the linguistic personality and the formation of the secondary linguistic personality.

Using these terms, we are relying primarily on the traditional for modern cognitive and linguacultural thought concept of linguistic personality and secondary linguistic personality, which was formulated by Yu. N. Karaulov [1] and was developed, in particular, in the linguo-didactic aspect in the work of I.I. Khaleeva [2].

Note that the features of the secondary linguistic personality has a personality who is able to "get" into the "spirit" of the second language, into the "flesh of the culture" of people with whom the intercultural communication should

be carried out. This personality is ready for foreign language communication with people of other cultures at the intercultural level.

II. THE LINGUOCOGNITIVE LEVEL OF LINGUISTIC PERSONALITY

Among three levels of linguistic personality the linguocognitive (thesaurus) level plays an important role in language acquisition. The basic units of this level are the ideas, concepts, which are forming a relatively ordered world picture of linguistic personality. This world picture reflects the hierarchy of values of this culture and exists in two forms – cognitive and linguistic. Thus, the cognition *children* is fixed in the Russian language lexemes *новорождённый, чадо, дитя, младенец, детвора, ребенок, мальчик, девочка, сын, дочь, потомки, наследники, детишки, ребята, ребяташки, малыши, малышня, мелкота, etc.*, each of which reflects a certain cognitive features in the Russian representation of children and should be learned by those who are on the way of learning the Russian language as a non-native (second).

However, having mastered the language at the verbal-semantic level, bilingual has not yet been formed as a secondary linguistic personality. To do this, he needs access to the cognitive base, i.e. "a certain way structured set of obligatory knowledge of a linguacultural community, which have all speakers of the language" [3]. Knowledge of language, knowledge about language and knowledge of the world are information that is encoded and stored as a cognitive structure. For example, for representatives of "other" cultures mental formation *bath-house* is not as important as for Russian. In this regard, for an adequate understanding of the expression *steam does not ache* the bilingual should know the Russian tradition to bathe, splashing water on hot stones to generate steam and lashing himself with birch twigs. The representatives of the Russian culture see in this procedure only a beneficial effect for the body, so they use the term when they want to emphasize that too warm clothes or strong heat will not cause inconvenience or discomfort. It should be clarified that in this particular case in the process of intercultural dialogue the ideas about the bath and about the Hammam or Finnish sauna can meet on the mental border.

III. THE LINGUOCOGNITIVE BASE OF BILINGUALS AS A RESULT OF THE INTERACTION OF COGNITIVE BASES IN THE PROCESS OF LEARNING THE NATIVE AND SECOND LANGUAGES

Suppose that in the process of learning a second language there is an expansion of the cognitive base of the linguistic personality, which is enriched as a result of the interaction of cultures. In other words, the cognitive base, which is formed in the process of cognizing of native culture, is built upon by the cognitive base, which is assimilated in parallel with the study of language. Of course, as a result of the process of overlay of two cognitive bases, a common zone is formed, where cultural universals, the basic categories of any culture (*homeland, love, soul, mother, freedom, truth*, etc.) are located, and the zone, due to which there will be a complication of the cognitive base of the linguistic personality, learning a foreign language.

We will take for comparison the cultural attitudes which form, along with ideologems, ideas, stereotypes and other mental units, a naive world picture of a native speaker. By the *cultural attitudes* we mean, following N. N. Boldyrev, a set of knowledge about behavior in a situation of communication, defined by cultural tradition" [4]. In particular, behavioral models are dictated by paremias as one of the most "cultural-including" units of language. And when we compare the paremiological foundations of the languages we can find as similar examples of verbalization of the results of human expressions as a member of the collective, and many examples of differences in the standards of behavior.

For example, the cultural attitude on thoughtful execution of work, without hurrying is represented in Chinese by a proverb *In every case it is necessary to think three times* which is equivalent to the Russian steady expression *Measure seven times – cut off once*. Note: in the Russian language, this setting is transmitted more difficult, metaphorically, than in Chinese, but in both unrelated languages and cultures the quantitative measure is chosen to objectify the need for long-term preparation for work: "three times" in Chinese and "seven" in Russian. Compare also: *Every day you go - do not be afraid of hundreds of thousands of lis, all the time you work - do not be afraid of hundreds of thousands of cases* (Chin.) and *Patience and labour will grind everything* (Rus.).

However, inconsistencies are found in the analysis of such proverbial expressions, as *If you want to do the job - sharpen tools first* (Chin.) and *With a prayer on the lips, with work in the hands* (Rus.). Objectified in Chinese meanings indicate that a person should prepare for work on their own. The cultural meaning of the proverbial expression *With a prayer on the lips, with work in the hands* is revealed, if we remember that, from olden times starting to perform any work, a Russian man addressed to the Saint, praying and asking for help. For example, in the masterpiece of N. S. Leskov "Tale about the Cockeyed Lefthander and the Steel Flea" masters received the task from General Platov and began with the pilgrimage to the icon of St. Nicholas

(Chapter 7 of the tale). In this case, the heroes are acting in accordance with the cultural attitude that had already been laid in "Domostroi": «... кто может правильно молитву сказать, тот, благословясь у старшего и молитву Иисусову проговоря да перекрестясь, молвит: «Господи, благослови, отче!» — с тем и начать всякое дело, ибо ему Божья милость сопутствует...»".

It is worth, of course, to take into account that cultural attitudes are different in different time sections and change when moving from one cultural model to another. At the same time, there are universal categories that make up the core of the cognitive base of native speakers, members of a linguacultural community, which are required for understanding and assimilation. In our opinion, in the practice of teaching Russian as a non-native language these universal categories should be considered first, because they are the basic components of cognitive consciousness of not only primary but also secondary linguistic personality, they are constants of culture, mastered in the language study at first. These include cognitions *homeland, love, faith, home, happiness, peace* and many others.

For the aims of teaching the second language, it becomes appropriate to operate with the term "linguacognitive base", which means "images, concepts, in mental form representing information about the cultural meaning of objects, their importance, about the value attitude to them of the subject of activity, i.e. cultural and mental knowledge about the world" [5]. Ideas that are stored in linguacognitive base, are represented, primarily, in words but also in other culturally marked linguistic units, among which, no doubt, idioms, paremias, aphorisms, various kinds of steady expressions, periphrases, etc. take a special place. For example, the phraseological representation of the concept "Humor" indicate its brightly expressed national specificities: *Mephistophelean smile, Mephistophelean laughter, sardonic laughter, a sarcastic smile; the smile of augurs, American humor, British humour*. There are no phraseologisms that would reflect a positive attitude to the funny things or characterize this area positively in the Russian language. This state of Affairs is explained by the role of smile and laughter noted in Russian communicative behavior by I. A. Stermin: "... the Russian person does not see communicative sense in a smile, perceiving it as a reflective, symptomatic signal of mood-well-being in material terms" [6]. In this regard, we can say that for bilingual linguistic personality the familiarity of such phraseologisms will certainly be associated with changes in the cognitive base.

IV. CONCLUSION

Adhering to the idea that the conceptual and linguistic world pictures "are linked as primary and secondary, as a mental phenomenon and its verbal externalation" [7], we suppose that cognitive base and linguocognitive base are associated in the same way. And there is one way to get into the cognitive base of the linguistic personality – to use language as a means of explication of mental formations.

Thus, the socio-behavioral context is connected with speech, which stimulates changes in the cognitive base of bilingual personality, mastering new models of behavior, both social and communicative.

The development of a secondary linguistic personality at the second level gives impetus to the transition to the third level – motivational (pragmatic), the units of which are focused on pragmatics and are manifested, according to Yu. Karaulov, "in the communicative and activity needs of the personality" [1].

In conclusion, we emphasize that the classical teaching methodology has never claimed to reflect the specifics of everyday human thinking adequately. The ethnocognitive alternative approach can be directed on familiarity with the linguistic categories through the prism of the language consciousness and on the demonstration of the language resources which are used to express different meanings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research was financially supported by the Russian Foundation for Basic Research (The scientific project №19-013-00213 "The ethnocognitive approach to teaching children Russian as a foreign language and as a non-native language").

REFERENCES

- [1] Yu. N. Karaulov, Russian language and linguistic personality [M]. Moscow: Nauka, 1987.
- [2] I. I. Khaleeva, Fundamentals of teaching theory of perception of foreign-language speech (training of translators): Abstract of the diss. of doct. of Pedagog. Moscow: High School, 1990.
- [3] V. V. Krasnykh, Virtual reality or real virtuality [M]. Moscow: Dialog-MGU, 1998.
- [4] N. N. Boldyrev, The cognitive semantics [M]. Tambov: Publishing house of Tambov University, 2001.
- [5] A. Zh. Dosanova, The formation of a secondary cognitive base as the basis of learning a second language [J]. The issues of cognitive linguistics, 2013, 1: 132–139.
- [6] I. A. Sternin, Models of communicative behavior description [M]. Voronezh: Garant, 2000.
- [7] Z. D. Popova, I. A. Sternin, Language and national picture of the world [M]. Voronezh: Publishing house of Voronezh University, 2002.