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Innovative Tools for the Prevention of Psycho-Pedagogical Problems, for Bilinguals Aged 0 – 14 in the "Triangle of Mutual Safety Integration"

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Abstract

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Experts in different fields (linguists, psychologists, economists, etc.) are unanimous to the fact that the new philosophy to the study of man in science is bilingualism, multilingualism, and language. The ideas of A.V. Humboldt is one of the popular stands in this area, it says that "studying of language opens an analogy between the person and the world in general, and between each nation which is definitely expressing itself in the language".

There is already a large body of literature related to the peculiarities of working with bilingual students; in this article we have limited ourselves merely to some technologies and tools involved in this work. Consideration of the specific of a bilingual child's mentality – a person belonging to two different cultural worlds – is undoubtedly the corner stone of this study.

We present a series of innovative developments in our laboratory aimed at psycho-pedagogical support of natural bilinguals, the development of linguistic and extra-linguistic components of inter-cultural communicative competence, and the creation and updating of individual educational routine of bilinguals from preschool age to the age of 14. The practical value of these materials is that the possibility of its usage, lies not only in teachers' and methodologists' practice, but also in other research activities.

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Keywords: Bilingualism and multilingualism, ethno cultural education; the triangle of mutual safety integration; intercultural communicative competence, game technology; the preschool child's calendar portfolio; self-actualization.

1. Introduction

The topic relevance is motivated by the key challenges of the 21st century – multilingualism in the context of globalization, combining the ethnic groups' desire to self-preservation; new requirements for



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modern language identity.

The study aims at developing a new approach based on competency analysis of bilingual and multilingual personalities of the 21st century, and having a systematic individual character of educational activities, using innovative technologies and tools at the cross curricula level. Bilingualism / multilingualism problems are related to language, ethno-cultural, and individual development; they require an emphasis on comprehensive education and training of multilingual inter-cultural personalities as symbols of peace, preserving the identity of two or more nations.

The study is based on the works of domestic and foreign linguists, methodologists, teachers, and psychologists (W. Humboldt, L. Vygotsky, A. Maslow, P. Torrence and others).

The successful mastery of inter-cultural communicative competence is possible only in the implementation of specially designed inter-cultural oriented technologies in several successive phases: diagnostic, conceptual, designing, formative and reflective.

1. The practice-oriented analysis of tools and technologies available today for use with bilingual and multilingual audiences (training materials, tests); are not preventive and comprehensive diagnostic in nature, and they did not implement an individual approach considering specific ontogeny and particular ethnic-linguistic-cultural combination.

2. Analysis of the environment of bilingual and multilingual resident areas, allowed for the formulation of the key challenges of the 21st century:

- a) globalization - mobility, multiculturalism, and multilingualism;
- b) increase in the currents of information flows - the need for their analysis and interpretation, and the demand for ethnic-linguistic-cultural competence in the media;
- c) interactivity - the need for networking, inter-cultural consortia.

3. Competence analysis of 21st century bilingual and multilingual individualities.

All these factors are implemented as a “triangle of mutual safety integration”. This is the principle of continuous and coordinated interaction of all subjects in their life-long educational systems: family, system of regular and additional education, and society. Natural nonviolent integration of bilingual and multilingual personalities in societies is possible only if each side of the triangle observes a balance in the ontological development of children and adolescent.

Linguistic and media competencies (personal, social, and cross-cultural competencies) perform instrumental roles such as, the signaling of the comfort and discomfort for bilingual and multilingual communication situations, and self-presentation of possibilities in each language of the involved ethnic culture. As a result of measuring the knowledge baggage, it is possible to motivate and support transition to skills, then to competencies in communicating with representatives of different societies, and interacting with various ethnic cultures. (climbing up the self-actualization ladders).

The multi-functional educational resources “Fairy tale collections” developing Russian ethnic culture foundations - “Road-Map-Bilingualism”, is an electronic diagnostic questionnaire for parents and teachers. It contains “The preschool child's calendar portfolio” with children’s development charts; comprehensive diagnostic tests to discover bilingualism and its balance level for children considering

both ethnic-linguistic cultures; set of games “Children of the World” – in their entirety form, and an integrated tool for the bilingual psychological and pedagogical support – from initial diagnosis of bilingual development to inter-cultural formation and integration in the multicultural space.

2. Methodology

We chose technologies, which are based on:

1. The practice-oriented analysis of tools and technologies available today for use with bilingual and multilingual audiences (training materials, tests); are not preventive and comprehensive diagnostic in nature, and they did not implement an individual approach considering specific ontogeny and particular ethnic-linguistic-cultural combination.

2. Analysis of the environment of bilingual and multilingual resident areas, allowed for the formulation of the key challenges of the 21st century:

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3. Competence analysis of 21st century bilingual and multilingual individualities.

Our main assumptions were as follows:

- 1) Creation of an ethnic-linguistic-culturally balanced bilingual and multilingual personalities as symbols of peace

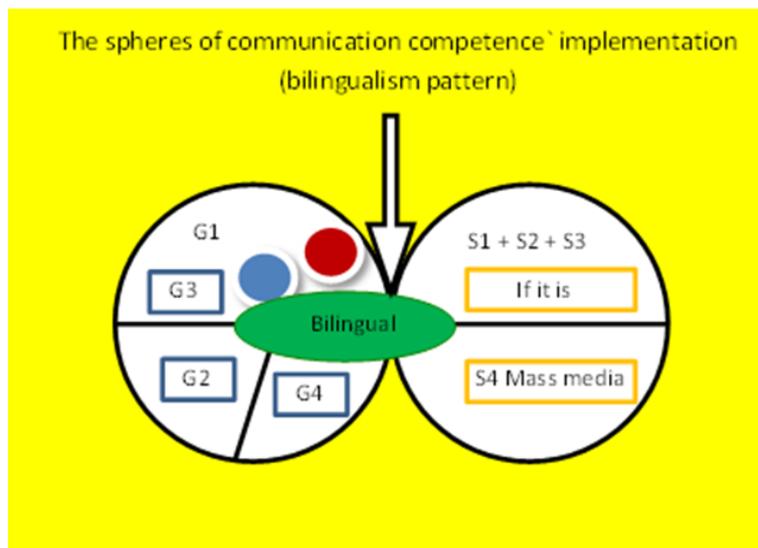


Fig. 1. The spheres of communication competence implementation

OR

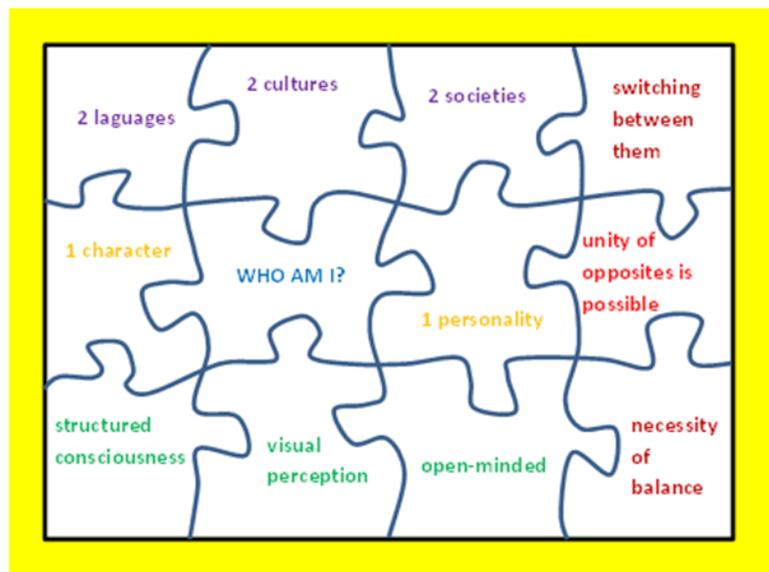


Fig. 2. Bilingual personality

It becomes possible to implement under the influence of the following factors:

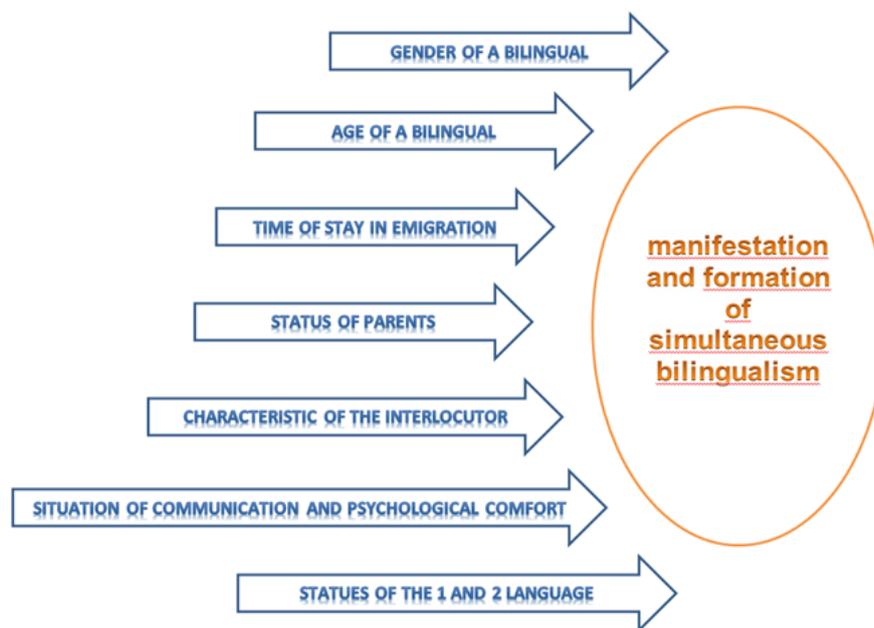


Fig. 3.The factors of bilingualism formation

2) All these factors are implemented as a “triangle mutual safety integration”. Natural non violent integration of bi-linguists and multi-linguists in societies carrying each language and culture is possible only if each side of the triangle observes a balance in the ontological development of children and adolescent.

Linguistic and media competencies (personal, social, and cross-cultural competencies) perform instrumental roles such as, the signaling of the comfort and discomfort for bilingual and multilingual

communication situations, and self-presentation of possibilities in each language of the involved ethnic culture.

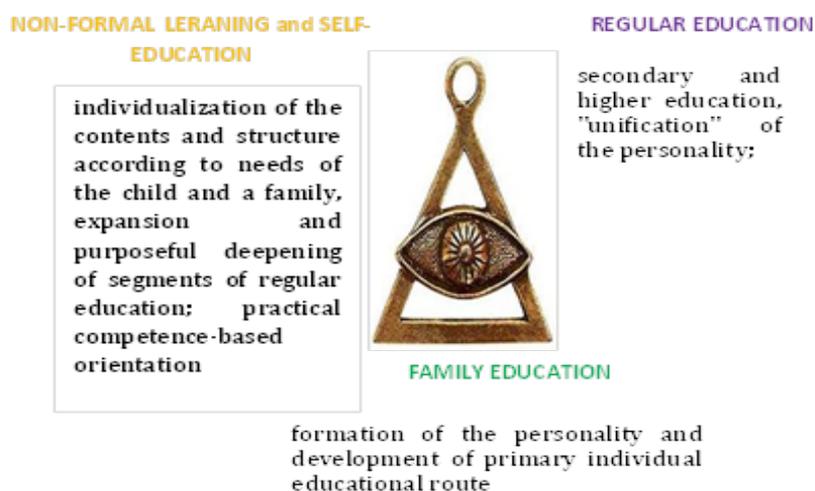


Fig. 4. The triangle of mutual safety integration

In quite a difficult situation, when a bi-linguist did not have an opportunity to learn their own native language; whether a Russian-speaking child lives in Europe or in a national Republic, for example, in Tatarstan [4, 79] – with the help of various (often – gaming) technologies we try to organize the educational process so that students will preserve their interest in ethno-cultural languages, so as to create opportunities for the, to penetrate into the spiritual world of their nations. With this, the ability of learning languages independently (to improve and measure their competencies, comparing them with the needs of communication) is an important component of the students' self-competence which will promote his/her self-motivation.

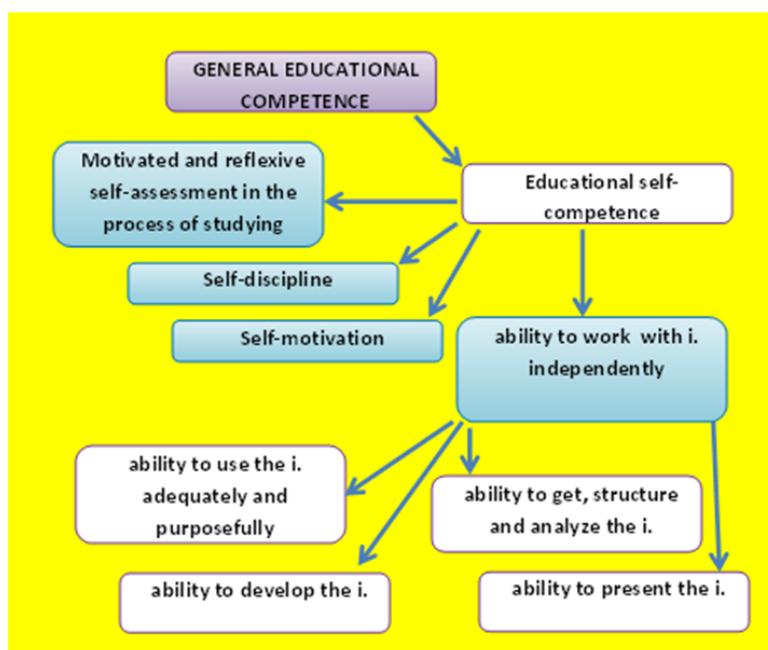


Fig. 5. The spheres of communication competence implementation

3. Main conclusions

Thus, our task is: firstly, to measure the students' original knowledge, secondly, to motivate and guide the transition of knowledge into skills, and afterwards use these skills in the process of communication with representatives of various societies and ethnic-lingual-cultures (transition of skills into competences).

Bulat Okudzhava said in one of his poems, "To understand each other is a sacred science", and today this approach to communication becomes a vital necessity in everyday life, in the sphere of science and education, in real space as well as in the virtual one". In an intention to listen and to understand another person, the personal, social and cross-cultural competences become leading components. In other words, the motivation for a balanced bilingual and multilingual personality of the 21st century Maslow's pyramid (fig.6) is as follows:

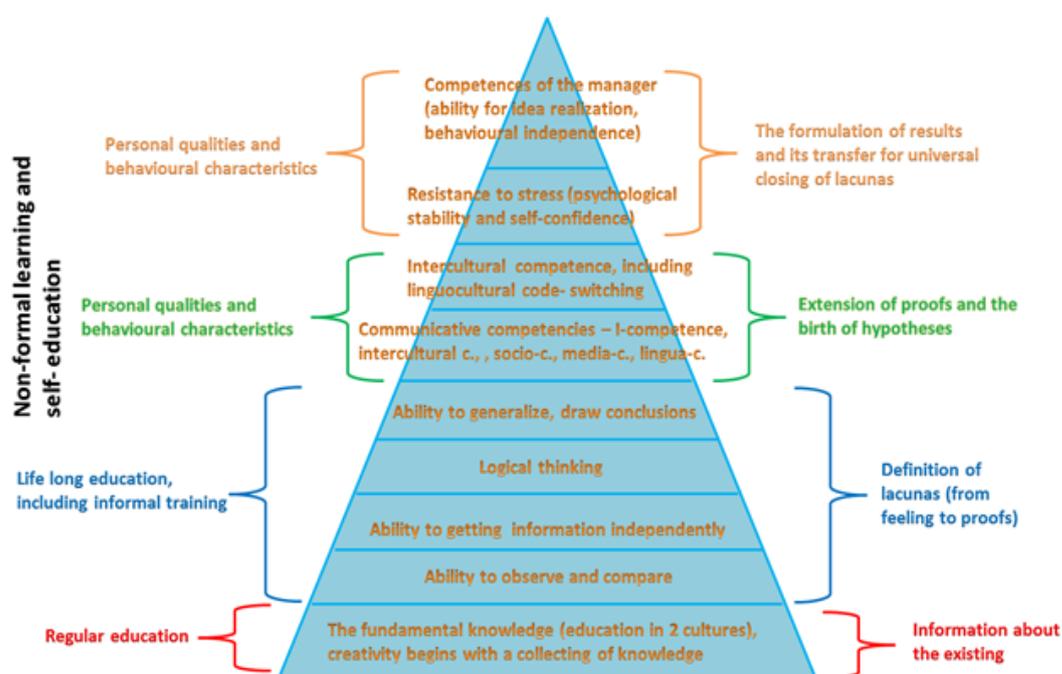


Fig. 6. The Maslow's pyramid fo bilingual personality

All these and several others problems can be solved by 4 products of our international network laboratory "Innovative technologies in multicultural education". These are the results of interdisciplinary projects related to diagnosing, support and development of balanced bilingualism and inter-cultural competence in children aged 0-14.

As we have underlined, to achieve the goals we sought to use the most effective tools and educational technologies. As a result, our products are: module interactive didactic materials ("Speech palette: propaedeutic with logaoedic dominance", "Fairy tales collection" developing Russian ethnic culture foundations, interactive the "The preschool child's calendar portfolio" with children's development charts, "Complex diagnostic tests for bilinguals" with consideration of onto-genesis and ethnic-lingual-cultural combination (from age to level) and «Road-Map-Bilingual» in 21 languages – both for regular psychological and pedagogical support of a child and his/her family, and for research activities. The products of our laboratory are unique, as they are preventive and diagnostic in nature,

and they implement an individual approach considering onto-genesis and ethnic-lingual-cultural combination. They present a complex tool of preventive psycho-pedagogical support of a bi linguist – from the initial diagnosing of bilingualism to formation of inter-cultural interaction and integration into multicultural environment. In addition, these materials are being actively used not only when working with bilingual and multilingual children, but also in pre-diagnostic exercising of foreign students, particularly Turkmens, Uzbeks, Kyrgyz, studying Russian as a foreign language, as well as conducting interviews with migrants taking certification exams. Countries of implementing these technologies are: Russia, including the Russian President grant (1,500 preschoolers of Bashkortostan and Udmurtia); Spain with the creation of the Spanish ethno-linguistic part, Czech Republic, Germany, Austria, Lebanon, Estonia, Latvia, Egypt, Korea, Slovenia, Kazakhstan, Poland, Croatia, Ireland, Turkey, Canada, Bulgaria, Australia, Greece.

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