

## Culture-Studying Approach to the Formation of the Linguistic Knowledge of the Bilingual Students

Guzel M. Nurullina \*

*Kazan (Volga region) Federal University, Kremlyovskaya St, 18, Kazan, Russia, 420008*

---

### Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of one of the topical issues of modern linguistic and methodic science - formation of the linguistic knowledge of the bilingual students on the basis of cultural approach. According to the authors of the study, Russian as a worldview subject is intended to form a bilingual language personality, to ensure unity and interaction of language, culture and personality. The cultural approach implies organic unity of the foundations of the linguistics and mastery of communicative skills and skills, ensuring fluent knowledge of Russian literary language in different spheres and situations of communication. Considering the text-centric method as the main linguistic and methodic technique, the author of the article claims the role of the text in the formation of linguistic knowledge of the bilingual students. The given paper concludes that the interaction of the processes of formation of knowledge about language, acquisition of practical speech and language skills, understanding of the read or heard information is carried out on a textual basis. The practical significance of the study is that at the lessons of the Russian language, based on a cultural approach, it is important to work with educational and scientific texts, which serve as means of linguistic knowledge acquiring and are aimed at achieving meta-subject results of the bilingual students.

*Keywords:* lingual didactics, culture-studying approach, formation of the linguistic knowledge, linguistic personality, bilingual students, meta-subject results, understanding of the text.

© 2020 Guzel M. Nurullina

This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Published by Kazan federal university and peer-reviewed under responsibility of IFTE-2020 (VI International Forum on Teacher Education)

---

\* Corresponding author. E-mail: nurullinagz@mail.ru

## **Introduction**

The modern system of teaching the Russian language to the bilingual students is a relevant, socially caused problem of research in the theory and methodology of teaching the Russian language in the light of the general globalization caused by domestic political and foreign economic reasons. The processes of migration, the appearance of migrant children (bilinguals) in schools influenced the development of new theoretical foundations of the methodology of teaching the Russian language, which is aimed at the successful adaptation of the bilingual students in a foreign cultural environment, which justifies the content, importance and innovative practical technologies of pedagogical support of the bilingual students in the multicultural educational space (Garipova, 2019; Nikitenko et al., 2019; Nurullina et al., 2019a, 2019b; Shakirova, 2003; Yusupova, 2018).

The role of the Russian language as of the worldview subject is intended to form the bilingual language personality, to ensure unity and interaction of language, culture and personality. The educational subject "Russian Language" is aimed at the achieving the main goal of teaching bilingual students – their proficiency in the Russian language in all fields of its application; successful development of the linguistic knowledge of the students; development of meta-subject results; awareness of the Russian language as of means of inter-ethnic communication in daily life and professional activity, as of the indicator of the culture of the Russian people. According to the famous methodologist Litvinko (2015), the goal can be achieved, if the focus of the trainee is the language personality of the trainee, if three main components of the language personality are realized: 1) verbal-semantic, 2) cognitive, 3) pragmatic.

The famous scientist, the author of numerous works on bilingual training Elizaveta Alexandrovna Hamraeva believes that the world of the third millennium faces a global task - the creation of "a man of culture" (Nikitenko et al., 2019). We share this view with her in the point that in the upbringing and education of the bilingual personality - the person of the third millennium - it is important to understand the perspective of both languages: the language of socialization and the "language of emotional response" (the first, native language) (Nikitenko et al., 2019). The anthropocentric system of language education, concluded in the formula "language + culture," which implies a cultural approach in teaching a language, becomes the key to achieving the formation of the linguistic personality in teaching the Russian language.

## **Purpose and objectives of the study**

Purpose and objectives of the study is to analyze the importance of the cultural approach to the formation of the linguistic knowledge of the bilingual students. The cultural approach is intended to solve the following issues: perception of the education as of a cultural phenomenon; formation of the skills in the conditions of the bilingualism; updating of the meaning-forming, reflexive and other functions of the personality of a student; acquisition of the frame of reference of the bilingual students; penetration into the national and global culture; getting involved in the spiritual values stored in a language.

## **Literature review**

The cultural approach is based on the idea of "internal speech" by Vygotsky (2001), the position of "philosophical logic of culture" by Bibler (1991), the idea of Bakhtin (1986) of "culture as a dialogue." The aim of the study is also to study the main provisions of the cultural aspect of the Russian language teaching. According to the scientists, the study of a

language should take into account its most important functions: cognitive, communicative and cumulative (cultural). In determining the content and ways of implementing the cultural approach, two directions are reflected: teaching the Russian language in the context of the Russian culture and the dialogue of cultures.

### **Methodology**

The cultural approach in teaching the Russian language to the bilingual students is intended to determine the most important teaching methods and techniques:

- *text-centric method* (text is the object of language and speech; text is a repository of information, treasure trove of culture of the Russian people);
- *method of conversation* (heuristic, reproducing, reporting and generalizing), involving dialogue between the teacher and the students. The conversation activates the mental work of the students, supports attention and interest, and develops speech.
- *method of solving cognitive communicative and extralinguistic problems*. The types of cognitive tasks are educational and cognitive (the teacher proposes the task and solves it himself, showing the students the way and the course of its solution); training and cognitive (pupils solve tasks similar to the shown); search and cognitive (pupils independently solve tasks).

### **Results**

The compulsory component of the linguistic knowledge of the bilingual students should be the perceptions of a language as of a multidimensional and multifunctional phenomenon, which are based on a system of knowledge about language (it is a slender system consisting of different levels; an evolving, historically driven phenomenon; means of communication, a form of transmission of pragmatic and expressive information), which translate language into the worldview plane, make it an aesthetic and moral value for any language. The interaction between the processes of the formation of knowledge about language, of gaining practical speech and language skills and of awareness of language as a phenomenon of culture is carried out on the textual basis. At the Russian language lessons it is important to carry out work with educational and scientific linguistic texts, which serve as means of mastering the meta-language of linguistics. The ability to understand the theoretical concepts is the main component of the literacy of a modern man, and the bilingual students should be able to demonstrate it both in oral and written speech.

Bilingual students most often face the problem of understanding the content of speech, the sense of the text. The famous Russian psychologist academician Zinchenko (2002) states that "there is a gap between the text and its understanding. Many learning systems contribute to the formation of the students' illusion of full understanding" (Zinchenko, 2002). Of course, it is important for the teacher to seek from the students the skills of full understanding of the educational and scientific text. And the understanding of the text should be complex: students should have a skill of understanding separate words (the student knows the lexical meaning of a word), phrases and sentences (the student knows the grammar of the Russian language), supraphrasal unities (the student can group sentences expressing a complete thought) and understanding the whole text.

Thus, in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade at the Russian language lessons, students should master such important meta-subject skill as the use of various methods of mastering the content of the text, that is, techniques of informational conversion of the text. The Russian language textbook for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade (Ladyzhenskaya et al., 2012) writing the syllabuses of different types. Great attention is paid to the processing of skills of conscious reading and of understanding of educational and scientific texts. Carrying out various work with educational and scientific texts, students learn all kinds of reading (skimming, searching, exploratory, researching) and listening (selective, exploratory, detailed), what certainly has a great practical value of a meta-subject nature.

Bilingual students face the problem of understanding the educational and scientific text, which serves as means of mastering the meta-language of linguistics (in particular, the terminology apparatus). The ability to understand theoretical concepts is the main component of the literacy of modern man. However, difficulties may occur in teaching Russian (non-native) language to bilingual students, as they may experience an interfering influence of their native language when explaining a new linguistic theme. In the native language of students, due to belonging to another group of languages (for example, Tatar, Bashkir, Turkmen belong to the agglutinative type of languages, and Russian - to fleective), some grammatical categories may differ or even be absent at all. Bilingual students (Tatars, for example), may experience difficulties in studying the category of gender of the nouns, which is not inherent for the grammatical system of the Tatar language.

Since students have already got acquainted with the category of the gender in primary school, in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade the topic "Gender of nouns " begins with an oral survey - students have to answer the questions: "How many genders do the nouns have in Russian?", "Prove that the nouns do not change in gender". It may be difficult for the bilingual students to understand the text about the definition of the gender of the indeclinable nouns (frau, maestro, kangaroo, penalty, etc.). One of the techniques of working with a linguistic text is a conversation aimed at understanding the structure of the linguistic text, at the logic of the material presentation: How many parts can be distinguished in the text and why? What is the role of each part? What signs of the studied phenomenon are named in the text? Which sentence plays the role of the conclusion?

However, all these techniques may not motivate students, and then it will be more difficult for a bilingual student to study a new topic. Thus, interest, being a motivating technique of learning, contributes to a better understanding of the material. The text about indeclinable nouns presented in the textbook can be introduced after the pupils have read some linguistic fairy tale. For example:

*Once there lived a family of indeclinable nouns. These nouns: **coat, subway, coffee, cinema** – couldn't be declined... And one day the coat decided to go to the subway, have breakfast in the cafe and watch a movie. On the way back, it bought an **eskimo** and then played **dominoes** with its neighbors. It went to the **atelier** and ordered another coat so he could have someone to play the **piano** with.*

*And so they lived and declined in no way.*

Pavlova & Gunina (2012) consider: «Linguistic fairy tale is a "mental screen", a condition of influence on a child, means of creative adaptation and generalization of theoretical material at the Russian language lessons, of development of his observation, fantasy, visual memory, of increase of the level of motivation in studying the linguistic material itself».

Linguistic miniature helps to form an abstract type of thinking in children, to organize work in the lesson so that each student could relate fabulous material to the theoretical material of the textbook.

It is important for the teacher to work in detail with the content of the text, explaining to the bilingual student the meaning of the words presented in the text. The ignorance of the meaning of the word, the incorrect attribution of words to the animate or inanimate nouns can cause the greater complexity of the definition of the gender in indeclinable nouns. In this case, the teacher can apply *the method of solving cognitive communicative and extra linguistic problems*. The teacher formulates the problem (task), solves it, and explains to the students the way of solving it. Thus, the teacher can prepare a list of the most frequently used foreign-language words - indeclinable nouns, can explain the meaning of these words, and give examples of using the word in context. Certainly, it is important for the teacher to remember about words-exceptions the gender of which is determined by the generic meaning of words: the words of a masculine gender – sirocco (wind in the desert), suluguni (cheese sort), penalty (penalty kick), tornado (wind), Hindi (language), Swahili (the people and language), brie (cheese sort), Pashto (language), argot (slang), aloe (flower), Capri (island), Tbilisi (city); *words of the feminine gender* - Avenue (street), Matsoni (clabber), madrasah (Muslim school), kohlrabi (cabbage), salami (sausage), Mississippi (river); Some indeclinable (inanimate) nouns have fluctuations in gender: coffee – masculine and neuter, bolero (dance) –neuter and feminine, mango (fruit) - masculine and neuter.

At the Russian language lessons, when studying the category of gender, it is important for a teacher to teach bilingual children to distinguish animate nouns of the masculine and feminine gender depending on which sex the word belongs to. Therefore, children can be offered the following task.

**Read the text. Define the gender of nouns - names of animals and fish. Which animal and fish names can be classified as male, which as female? What metaphors can be used in your own language? Whom do they characterize?**

*A number of nouns with the meaning "animal", "bird", "fish" or "insect" are often used in a figurative meaning as an appraisive characteristic of a person ("animal metaphors").*

*A person similar to an animal, an insect, can be called: a ram, a crow, a mosquito, a fox, a fly, a monkey, an eagle, a spider, a seal; to a fish - a shark, a whale, a crucian, a pike, etc. For example: "Oh, he's just a mouse and nothing more!" (O. Kazartsev).*

Tasks of such kind, involving bilingual students to recall the linguistic phenomena of their native language will also interest them and increase motivation to study the category of the gender. In tasks of this type there is a cultural approach, which implies that the methodological system presented in the textbook is aimed at mastering the native language as the main means of socialization of a person, as well as means of introduction to the spiritual wealth of Russian culture and literature, to the cultural and historical experience of the mankind.

Thus, the teacher according to the text presented above can draw up a table of "animal metaphors." (Orel, 2013).

<b>Animal, bird, fish</b>	<b>Appraisive characteristic of a person (“animal metaphors”)</b>
Ram	A stubborn person
Crow	A scatterbrained person
Fox	A tricky person
Fly	A sleeping person
Monkey	A cheerful, playful person
Eagle	A mightiness and power of a person
Spider	A greedy person
Seal	A lazy, slow person
Whale	A cosmogonic symbol, in Christian mythology the embodiment of something colossal in nature and the ancient symbol of revival
Crusian	A stupid person looking at the world through "pink glasses", a chatter, an idealist
Pike	The symbolism of fish is associated with its voracity and promiscuity in food

The teacher should have a conversation about the use of words - names of animals, birds, and fish – used as metaphors when characterizing people. The teacher, in a conversation with the bilingual students, asks how the above-mentioned words are translated into their native language and what hidden comparisons these words have in their native language.

### **Discussions**

Speaking about the thinking of the bilingual children, many scholars believe that the level of abstract thinking of a bilingual child is much higher than that of most of his monolingual peers. In order to develop the cognitive sphere of a

bilingual student fully, a variety of work with the texts at the Russian language lessons is assumed. According to Nikitenko et al. (2019), "the study of two languages in childhood gives a person a "metalinguistic understanding" (the ability to recognize, analyze and use different patterns of language)... Bilingual children are distinguished by the unique linguistic intuition".

Working with the educational and scientific text, teaching schoolchildren to determine the gender of indeclinable nouns, the teacher builds a system of questions and tasks to the text, guides the students on the conscious mastery of educational material: helps to understand the goals of studying a specific topic, trains the ability to extract the necessary information from the text, activates analytical abilities. The tasks propose various forms of work with the theoretical material of the paragraph, which contribute to its successful learning: analysis of the content of the text, highlighting keywords of the text, composing a plan, thesis or syllabus on the basis of the read text, independent selection of the examples illustrating the main theoretical points of the text.

### **Conclusion**

The formation of the linguistic knowledge of the bilingual students is based on the cultural approach to the language education, which is nowadays approved in lingual didactics, which implies the organic unity of the foundations of the linguistics and mastery of communicative skills, which ensures the fluency in the Russian literary language in different spheres and situations of communication, forms the basis of teaching the Russian language. The meta-subject importance of teaching the Russian language to bilingual students lies in the application of different methods and techniques of informational processing of educational and scientific texts. The teacher builds methodological work in such way that he forms the language sense and the language guess of the students and activates their mental activities aimed at solving communicative tasks.

### **Acknowledgements**

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

### **References**

- Bakhtin, M. M. (1986). *The Dialogical Imagination*. M. Holquist (Ed.).
- Bibler, V. S. (1991). *Ot naukouchenija k logike kul'tury* [From epistemology to the logic of culture]. Moscow: Politicheskaja literatura.
- Garipova, A. N. (2019). Intercultural communication and cultural-linguistic pragmatics. In N. V. Kormilina, N. Yu. Shugaeva (Eds.), *Questions of Philology and Translation Studies: directions and trends of modern research: proceedings of the XVI International Scientific and Practical Conference* (pp. 138-142). Cheboksary: ChSPU.

- Ladyzhenskaya, T. A., Baranov, M. T., Trostentsova, L. A., Grigoryan, L. T., Kulibaba, I. I., & Ladyzhenskaya, N. V. (2012). *Russian language. Grade 5: a textbook for general education organizations* (Vol. 2). Moscow: Prosveshchenie.
- Litvinko, F. M. (2015). *Methods of teaching the Russian language at school: textbook*. Minsk: Higher School.
- Nikitenko, Z. N., Hamraeva, E. A., & Berdichevsky, A. L. (2019). *Methods of teaching the Russian language to bilingual children: Toolkit for teachers*. Moscow: Bilingva.
- Nurullina, G. M., Latfullina, L. G., & Usmanova, L. A. (2019a). Development of Speech Culture of Non-Philologist Students in the Course of Examining the Category of Gender in Russian Language. *International Journal of Innovative Technology and Exploring Engineering (IJITEE)*, 9(1), 5151-5154.
- Nurullina, G. M., Latfullina, L. G., & Usmanova, L. A. (2019b). The valuable potential of the history of learning Turcism in Russian language. *Journal of research in applied linguistics*, 10, 424-431.
- Orel, V. E. (2013). *Culture, symbols and wildlife*. Kharkov: Humanitarian Center.
- Pavlova, T. I., & Gunina, L. N. (2012). *The practice of the formation of linguistic knowledge in grades 5-8. Composition-reasoning on the final certification in the Russian language in grade 9 (C2): a training manual*. Rostov on Don: Legion.
- Shakirova, L. Z. (2003). *Methods of teaching the Russian language (based on the material of national schools)*. Saint Petersburg: Education.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (2001). *Lektsii po pedagogii* [Lectures on pedagogy]. Izhevsk: Izdatel'kii dom Udmurtskii universitet.
- Yusupova, Z. F. (2018). Developing subject competence among student teachers: outcomes of pedagogical practice in Russia. In R. Valeeva (Ed.), *4th International forum on teacher education (IFTE 2018): proceedings* (Vol. 45, pp. 404-411).
- Zinchenko, V. P. (2002). *Psychological foundations of pedagogy*. Moscow: Gardariki.