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THE IMPACT OF MULTILINGUALISM ON COMMUNICATIONAL, EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS OF SOCIAL GROUPS

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ABSTRACT

The article provides an overview of the latest foreign research on the influence of bilingualism on the socio-cognitive development of the individual. Experimental scientific research undertaken recently has not only destroyed the myth about the dangers of bilingual development of children, but also shown that it gives much more than just knowledge of two languages. Based on a comparative analysis, the advantages of children and adults who have been in a bilingual environment since birth are shown.

INTRODUCTION

Learning foreign languages is, without a doubt, a beneficial activity for the mind, expanding one's horizons and the boundaries of one's worldview, and growing up in a bilingual environment, being influenced by two languages from the first days of life, is generally a great success. Recent research on bilingualism has not only shattered ideas about its harm, but also shown that bilingual development of children gives much more than just knowledge of two languages. Along with such well-known differences of bilinguals as biculturalism, greater tolerance towards other cultures and an absolute superiority in competitiveness in the labor market, bilinguals have less known, but perhaps more important advantages, expressed in the way they think.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Early childhood bilingualism, being a natural process when a child sufficiently receives the necessary speech input (all incoming speech information) and is motivated to use two languages, differs significantly from the acquisition of a second language by an adult. Children learn languages more easily, they tend to "play" with words, they are not afraid to make mistakes; In addition, a system of sounds and words is just being formed in their memory, which is consolidated over time, complicating the acquisition of a second language. The experience of using two languages since childhood has a number of both linguistic and extralinguistic positive effects.

The phenomenon of bilingualism develops metacognitive, in particular metalinguistic, abilities of the child (Balkan, Cummins, Pinto, Taeschner, Titone). E. Bialystok, working with bilingual children competent in both languages, found that bilinguals have increased control

of linguistic processes, which is expressed in the ability to analyze cognitive and communicative components (Bialystok). Bilinguals have an intuitive sense of the structure and functioning of languages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Some abilities of bilingual children are associated with better, compared to their peers, executive control, which is responsible for attention, concentration, and suppression of irrelevant information. Bilinguals are easier than monolinguals to move from one task to another where selective attention and the ability to ignore interfering factors are required. This superiority continues into adulthood. The main factor linking bilingualism with executive control is due to the fact that in bilinguals both languages are constantly activated. In this regard, a mechanism of inhibition (suppression) develops, which makes it possible to differentiate these languages, limiting the interference of the unused language in the used one. Thus, the practice of inhibiting one language while using another affects any activity requiring attention and executive control, enhancing the ability to perform multiple cognitive tasks simultaneously or in rapid succession. Constant comparison of shades of meaning and various grammatical forms, concentration on one or another language, analysis of languages and elimination of interference between them strengthen the bilingual's attentional abilities.

The fact that the brains of children who grew up in mixed families and speak two languages from an early age are more flexible and fast, and have greater cognitive abilities, is confirmed by a study conducted by J. Meyler and A. M. Kovacs at the Higher International National School of Advanced Studies (Sissa) in Trieste and published in the journal Science [6]. It turned out that being raised in a bilingual family gives a child a cognitive advantage—more rapid development of executive functions, which are important not only for performing verbal tasks, but also for managing any activity.

The advantage of bilinguals is explained by their abilities in the selection and monitoring (current control) of stimuli: the ability to select only what is relevant in a given context. When languages are used alternately, they must activate one of them and suppress the other, according to the situation. For someone who grows up learning two languages at the same time, such transitions come naturally. These children develop more flexible language acquisition strategies from birth. The brain of a bilingual child is more plastic due to greater training, since it must distinguish between stimuli coming from different linguistic systems and prevent interference between them. Such children are able to more quickly control various linguistic stimuli even before they learn to speak, and, thanks to this, learn the fundamental properties of the languages of both parents, and therefore, easily manage various language systems.

Passive brain training during the first months of life allows bilingual children to put less effort into thinking and accumulating information, which affects the speed of learning. The above and other scientific studies refute doubts about the possibility of mixing languages and the later appearance of speech in bilinguals. "Even if a bilingual child had to learn twice as many words as his monolingual counterpart, he would not show any delay in the development of linguistic abilities. He will pronounce his first words in the same way as monolin-gwa children: the first word at about a year and the first 50 words at about eighteen months" [5].

L. A. Pettit and her colleagues from Dartmouth College, conducting a comparative experiment with monolingual and bilingual children who could read and write in both languages, assessed children's cognitive abilities using the Simon Task method (usually used to determine the level of attention in humans). The results of bilinguals were noticeably higher than those of monolinguals. “We thought that the former should not have an advantage because their language development could be slowed down due to confusion associated with the acquisition of two languages,” comments Petit, “but the study did not confirm this. On the contrary, the greater computational ability required to process two different linguistic systems increases children’s cognitive abilities” [6].

The effectiveness of executive abilities in self-regulation and motivation is facilitated by intensive development of both cognitive and emotional levels. Between two and four years of age, there is a significant increase in synaptic connections in the prefrontal cortex of the frontal lobes. At this phase of development, the intersecting processes of increasing working memory, consolidating inhibitory control, planning and social behavior are activated. Neural density does not decline until age seven, during which period of maximum brain plasticity higher cognitive processes are especially susceptible to the influence of experience and learning. In adolescence, the growth of their activity stops and by about 20 years of age it undergoes remodulation (restructuring) with the programmed destruction of unused connections (“pruning”) (Gopnik). Personal experience determines which connections will be strengthened and which ones will be eliminated: those that were used more will be preserved. In this regard, important factors contributing to the development of executive functions include the quality of communication between parents and children at an early age, the behavior of the parents themselves, and the speech input received by the child.

According to the results of a study published in the PNAS journal of the US National Academy of Sciences, the left part of the insula of the cerebral hemispheres (insula), where phonological working (or short-term) memory is located, is involved in learning a foreign language - PWM (phonological working memory). The brains of balanced and unbalanced (knowing one language better) bilinguals worked differently during a linguistic experiment on listening and memorizing words. In the former, when using the method of functional magnetic resonance (FMR), activity was noticed in the zone of phonological working memory; in the latter, this zone was less active and was replaced by the work of other areas. The data from this study support the assumption that short-term memory is more efficient in bilinguals.

Bilinguals also have the advantage of learning early on that there are points of view other than their own. This cognitive decentering, known in psychology as “The Theory of Mind,” is usually achieved by bilinguals a year earlier than monolinguals and is associated with the constant practice of assessing the linguistic competence of the interlocutor necessary to make a choice. language according to the type of person with whom the bilingual enters into conversation (knowledge of language A, knowledge of language B, knowledge of languages A and B). The age of 4 years is recognized as the moment of the beginning of the formation of a mental model, when children begin to understand the task of incorrect opinions. A typical example is the classic “Sally-Ann” task for understanding false beliefs and other similar tasks. For example, a child is shown an object that looks like a stone, but in reality it is a sponge. After he is told what it really is, he is asked what another child might

think when he saw this object for the first time: is it a stone or a sponge. Monolinguals usually answer correctly (stone) at about 4 years of age, bilinguals - already at 3 years of age. Constant translation requires constant mental actions, focusing the child's attention on the conceptual attributes (features) of objects or situations, and not on the objects or situations themselves. This contributes to the process of decentration. Sandra Ben-Zeev identifies four main mechanisms that underlie this process and solve the problem at the structural level of language in a bilingual context:

1) increased ability for linguistic analysis, which is a stimulus in individual thinking and comes from the positive effects of language interference;

2) greater sensitivity to response signals from the surface linguistic structure or from the verbal situational context. This increased sensitivity determines a more general understanding of the use of language in communication, eliminating anxiety, confusion and embarrassment for the speaker. To switch from one language to another, a bilingual needs to change the behavior associated with this language, i.e., paying attention to the small details of each situation, respond accordingly;

3) generalization of structural differences between languages. A bilingual child becomes aware of his linguistic codes as internally connected systems earlier than his monolingual peers, since he is more attentive not only to the differences between his two languages, but also to linguistic constants and variables in general;

4) neutralization of intralingual structures. To resolve the linguistic difficulties that arise when speaking two structurally different codes, a bilingual person neutralizes the structures of one of the two languages at the point of conflict.

Bilinguals are better at recognizing deception, falsehood (Siegal, 2010), and intentions disguised by irony. To understand an ironic statement, one must go through its literal meaning. This requires knowledge of the “psychic” other, so as not to confuse irony with lies or mistakes and to understand the actual communicative intentions of the speaker. It should be emphasized that the understanding of irony affects not only first-order recursive thinking, but also higher order: “I think that you think that I think.”

Bilingualism stimulates creativity, understood as the ability to activate and simultaneously develop complex and cross-category concepts; promotes the development of divergent thinking - a process that allows you to consider many possible solutions to the same problem and thus develop creative ideas.

CONCLUSION

Learning a second language expands the mental boundaries of the child, who, from a cultural and linguistic point of view, will be more prepared to enter life: he will sooner understand that there is not only his home and his country, not only his world, but also others. countries with different languages and traditions will be richer internally and less prone to prejudice. The world we live in is complex, and whoever can understand and master this complexity will be one step ahead.

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