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FEATURES OF FORMING THE LINGUISTIC CONSCIOUSNESS OF BILINGUALS

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Abstract: This article discusses the natural emergence or later artificial formation of a foreign language in a bilingual individual and the cognitive changes that occur in this process. It presents the views of linguists who have worked in this field, the challenges in forming bilingualism, the learner's associative thesaurus, and provides answers to the questions of whether bilingualism develops on the basis of one language or emerges from two languages.
Key words: Bilingualism, ontogenesis, experimental, linguistic consciousness, psycholinguistic, lexicographic, semantic field, consensus, identification, thesaurus, natural bilingualism, artificial bilingualism, competence, associative.

The term **"bilingualism"** is derived from Latin, where *"bi"* means *two* and *"lingua"* means *language*, thus referring to *"two-language"* or *"using two languages."* In other words, the concept of bilingualism refers to a person's ability to learn, understand, and use two languages in accordance with their linguistic competencies. The notion of bilingualism involves examining the cognitive and communicative environment in which people learn and acquire languages. Bilingualism means that an individual is able to use two languages or establish effective communication between them. This phenomenon may manifest in various forms: actively using two languages while learning multiple languages, acquiring several languages naturally during childhood, or learning an additional language artificially after mastering the native language.

Bilingualism can significantly contribute to the development of cultural awareness, broaden professional opportunities, and enhance intellectual flexibility. If we consider bilingualism as the process of mastering the linguocultural code of a foreign language, then any person learning a foreign language may be regarded as an **artificial bilingual**. If bilingualism is viewed as the *result* of this process, then it may be defined as the *ability to use two languages*.

A person who knows their native language along with one or more foreign languages is considered bilingual. Bilingual individuals typically know both the language of their own country and the language of another nation, allowing them to express thoughts and ideas, as well as apply acquired knowledge effectively in practice.

Modern issues of bilingualism are reflected in the diversity of topics related to its specific aspects, which in turn require attention to the ontogenesis of the linguistic personality. Today, scholars continue to study early speech ontogenesis and purposeful phenomena characteristic of certain developmental stages. For instance, Goldin and Sdobnova [6.10.2005] examine the child's associative thesaurus and engage in the conscious comparison of images. A. Fedchenko conducts experimental research on the emergence of word imagery in the linguistic consciousness of children raised in different cultures [7.2006]. Likewise, E. Myagkova examines the role and place of emotions in linguistic consciousness and the specific features of transmitting images of one's native culture in an acquired language [6.2000].

Within other approaches, the content of associations is analyzed based on the psycholinguistic or lexicographic meaning of the stimulus word. "Associative reactions to a stimulus word serve

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as a 'semantic field' organized around the stimulus center and are viewed as a set of knowledge enabling effective communication and interaction across different contexts. The associative field becomes not a text but a combination of the semantic, structural, and functional characteristics of the 'semantic field'" [5.2016].

One of the key questions in modern scientific research is whether bilinguals' languages constitute subsystems of a single system or exist as independent systems. "Arguments supporting the theory of independent systems include the fact that natural bilinguals choose a language depending on the situation, purpose, and interlocutor. In contrast, arguments favoring a single system for multiple languages suggest that even bilinguals with a high level of proficiency (particularly artificial bilinguals) cannot use both languages simultaneously at the same level" [1.1994].

Challenges in forming bilingualism are closely linked to the ontogenesis of linguistic ability—a complex and lengthy process during which the child not only imitates the language system of surrounding adults but continuously creates a unique system of their own, making the process even more intricate.

It has been concluded that the native language supports the acquisition of a foreign language: foreign vocabulary may form formal phonetic associations with native-language words. Often, these associations are insufficient for proper recognition or may even mislead the learner; however, they facilitate memorization. Furthermore, knowledge of a first foreign language can support the acquisition of a second foreign language, particularly at the initial learning stage. Thanks to knowledge of the native language, a person does not need to relearn conceptual frameworks for elements of the surrounding world; they simply need to learn new labels and adjust semantic networks. Numerous studies show that forming thoughts in the native language as an intermediary helps in acquiring new vocabulary while learning a second language.

Understanding the peculiarities of bilingual development in children requires studying the formation of their linguistic consciousness. In this process, the child not only acquires a language but also forms a conceptual image of the world. In addition to the influence of the social environment and education system, the unique psychological development of each child and their individual worldview play essential roles. This phenomenon can be studied using the traditional method of associative experiments, the results of which can be analyzed from different perspectives: age, gender, ethnic-cultural background, and others.

Thus, to identify changes in the imagery of artificial bilinguals' linguistic consciousness, E. Popkova conducted psycholinguistic research showing that the characteristics of artificial bilinguals' linguistic consciousness are reflected in the associative fields of words in the studied language. This is because "artificial bilinguals' knowledge of a foreign culture is formed within the framework of their native culture. Achieving native-like proficiency in a foreign language requires the same conditions under which a native language is learned. The linguistic consciousness of a highly proficient foreign-language speaker does not resemble that of a native speaker, since an artificial bilingual interprets foreign-language words through the reality of their native language" [9.2002].

The unconscious mind can process far more information than we can consciously manage. Therefore, the essence of working with newly acquired information lies in transferring it as quickly as possible to the level of unconscious competence—that is, transforming it into automatic skill.

Considering language-learning processes in adults and children, we observe that despite adults having broader learning strategies, certain similarities persist. One of these is the reliance on the native-language environment when acquiring foreign vocabulary. Accordingly, one of the

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questions that interests many scholars concerns differences in the organization of lexical knowledge between native speakers and second-language learners. These differences are found to be more quantitative than qualitative.

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