Paper in Conference Proceedings
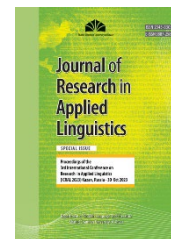
Multilingual Skills of English Speakers for Their Personality and Multicultural Development During School

Rezida Akhatovna Fakhrutdinova[1], Alina Almazovna Gayazova[2], Iskander Engelevich Yarmakeev[3], He Fang[4]

[1] Department of Tatar Studies and Cultural Studies, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia; *rfahrutdinova@list.ru*

[2] Department of Foreign Languages in Professional Communication, Kazan Innovative University, Kazan, Russia; *rkurochkin@ieml.ru*

[3] Department of Language and Intercultural Communication, Kazan Federal University, Kazan, Russia; *Iskander.Yarmakeev@kpfu.ru*

[4] Department of Chinese Language, Metropolitan Normal University, Haidian District, China; *mega.sppa@mail.ru*

Abstract

Students' diversity in terms of culture, race, ethnicity, religion, and language is continually growing in both Federation-wide and international educational institutions. This variety aids students in gaining the multilingual and multicultural abilities that are essential for successful global interaction. An education that incorporates at least three languages—native, regional, or national—is referred to as multilingual education. Up to 50% of children worldwide are currently receiving their education in bilingual and multilingual settings, according to the most recent data. One contemporary trend in higher education is the shift towards multimodal universities, which suggests that linguistic adaptability is a prerequisite for cultural development. During the pedagogical experiment, we came to the conclusion that students in our nation have not yet fully developed multicultural and multilingual skills, which are defined by the presence of knowledge about both their own and foreign cultures and a tolerant attitude toward representatives of a foreign culture. On the basis of this, we examined the technologies, forms, and multicultural personality development techniques used by students in the People's Republic of England in order to determine whether or not they could be incorporated into the national educational system.

Keywords: English Language; Multilingual Education; Student's Personality Development; Cultural Diversity.

1. Introduction

England is not an exception to the widespread phenomena of multiculturalism that is observed in many nations worldwide. The hallmark of multicultural education in England, a nation renowned for its exceptional ethnic, linguistic, and cultural diversity, is the enactment of numerous laws by the central government to advance the multicultural competencies of students from ethnic minority groups, in accordance with the policy framework (ethnic diversity within national unity). According to the way top-level stakeholders view England, maintaining stable ethnic relations and advancing socioeconomic development in the country depend on national unity and ethnic diversity. The idea of multicultural education is currently being used in mainland England and is protected by a number of laws and rules created by both the national and local governments. A "multinational country" is England. This statement considers national unity, the growth of ethnic minorities in relation to 56 ethnic groups, and demographic characteristics of England from a political standpoint.

In addition to laying the groundwork for future bilingual and trilingual education in ethnic minority areas, the national constitution defines the legal standing of ethnic minority groups in England. Foreigners and foreign cultures have had an impact on England's history and culture. Instead of assimilating foreign cultural influences, the nation chose to adapt them. Thanks to globalization, England has been able to quickly establish its own type of capitalism. The disparity between peer groups, minority groups, and rural and urban populations has, however, widened due to economic development. Like other major nations, interethnic unrest was occasionally experienced in England. The requirement for teaching national unity in schools and other educational institutions has resulted in issues with curriculum reform, including pedagogical content and teacher professional development.

2. Literature Review

In the US, one in five children comes from a home where someone speaks a language other than English (Census, 2013). Speaking a language other than English at home is linked to several risk factors, though. According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics in 2004, approximately thirty percent of children who speak English at home but are exposed to a different language do not finish high school. Numerous studies have demonstrated a clear correlation between children from homes where a language other than English is spoken and low socioeconomic status and low English proficiency (Hoff, 2006). According to recent research, speaking a language other than English at home can also be a risk factor on its own (Lonigan et al. 2013). Because low literacy is linked to higher rates of unemployment, incarceration, and mental illness, poor literacy outcomes among a sizable portion of the population represent a serious public health concern (Chevalier & Feinstein, 2007).

These worrying statistics imply that the future labor force will have worse literacy skills than the current labor force unless there is a noticeable improvement in the literacy skills of today's minority children (Murnane et al., 2012). Sadly, parents, educators, legislators, and pediatricians rely on a combination of tradition and gut feeling when evaluating this body of evidence: One response has been to prioritize the development of English over the home language, as mastery of the language is a crucial goal for immigrant children in the United States. Furthermore, some have misconstrued research showing bilingualism influences the rate at which each language is learned (Hoff & Place, 2012) as proof that bilingualism doesn't offer a suitable environment for the growth of English language proficiency. On the contrary, studies that have methodically investigated the early and simultaneous acquisition of a majority language and a home language have indicated a number of favorable linguistic, cognitive, and academic outcomes that could have a major influence on multilingual children as well as society. According to Oh and Fuligni (2010), there is a correlation between the development of home language and the quality of relationships within the family as well as measures of adolescents' psychosocial adjustment. Additionally, proficiency in one's native tongue is crucial because, in certain linguistic domains (like phonological awareness), mastery of one language facilitates mastery of another (Barac & Bialystok, 2012; Kroll & Dussias, 2017).

3. Methodology

We employed the following set of research techniques in our study: systematization and classification of the available materials; comparative analysis; study and generalization of pedagogical experience on the research problem; analysis of scientific, methodological, pedagogical, and psychological literature on the research problem in foreign publications. In order to determine the attitude of students in our nation toward racial and ethnic minorities, we carried out a pedagogical experiment at the ascertaining stage (students of the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of the Kazan Federal University and Kazan Innovative University). In the early stages of our work, we tested a variety of English-based intercultural interaction techniques as well as technologies of a multicultural space as part of the application of general pedagogical, methodological, and linguistic disciplines. Additionally, at the ascertaining stage, we will conduct a comparative analysis and final monitoring of the knowledge slice, both of which will validate our hypothesis.

4. Results

Our analysis's data enabled us to draw the conclusion that, while most respondents had a positive attitude toward members of other racial and ethnic groups, it is impossible to ignore the existence of those who have a negative attitude toward both their own and other peoples. We think that the curriculum's marginalization of information about racial and ethnic minorities contributes to students' intolerance. The issue with traditional teaching approaches is that they reduce students to a passive role of passively absorbing the knowledge that teachers impart, placing educators in the position of imparting knowledge to students didactically rather than interactively. A multicultural curriculum should balance the stark differences in students' backgrounds and interests, foster attitude change, and modify lessons to accommodate various points of view (Bing, 2008).

In a country like England, where there are many different racial and ethnic groups, multiculturalism is a concept that needs to be addressed. Even among members of the same homogenous or cultural group, multiculturalism is significant. The goal is to end the devaluation and stigmatization of all racial groups, social classes, and peoples (Zarate & Levy, 2011). Students' perceptions of their own superiority or inferiority must not be reinforced. According to Lin,

multiculturalism is a potentially useful process that advances England's development and integration into the global economy. Additionally, multiculturalism offers a foundation for eradicating political, social, economic, and educational disparities. In England, there are 56 minority groups, accounting for 115.4 million people, or 8.3% of the total population (2021). There are more members of minority groups who are marginally impoverished than there are members of the Han majority population. Cultural education and cultural sustainability are related. Minority children's potential in primary and secondary education is hindered by financial disadvantage.

Castro (2010) established the REF (Respect/Empathy/Fairness) model, which serves as the foundation for multicultural education, on the grounds that they think these three components are essential to realizing multiculturalism's objectives. When addressing each learning area, they suggested taking into account each of these objectives. The following are the objectives of the REF multicultural education model: 1) helping students develop their personalities as worthy individuals so they can contribute to teamwork and be inspired to keep working after errors; 2) accepting differences of opinion and realizing how these differences improve students' capacity to make decisions in a variety of contexts; and 3) comprehension of various points of view and the factors influencing the point of view; 4) the ability to understand one's own and other people's heritage without dehumanizing them; 5) encouraging human interdependence and global thinking; 6) acknowledging and accepting civic responsibilities in a multicultural society (Yarmakeev et al., 2018).

Studies carried out in England demonstrate the benefits that student teachers receive when they incorporate elements of multicultural education into their lessons (Banks & McGhee Banks, 2012). Curriculum content that integrates learners' cultural awareness, engages them in learning, enables them to bring and use what they know to the classroom, and promotes their sense of personal emancipation. Students benefit from a curriculum that expands their cultural and social knowledge, especially when teachers have high expectations for their academic performance. Furthermore, studies indicate that curricula that address students' concerns regarding misconceptions about various groups or examine the mechanisms of discrimination and strategies for coping with it can lessen bias against individuals who differ from the instructors (Banks, 2014).

Worldwide, English is the language with the greatest number of native speakers. It is thought that acquiring a new language can help learners experience a wider perspective on the world and expose them to a variety of cultural perspectives. Similar to this, learning English exposes non-native English speakers to the unique customs and culture of the English language. In the meantime, a learner's cultural perspective may accelerate their acquisition of language proficiency and non-linguistic knowledge. A sufficient number of Confucius Institutes have been established worldwide in recent years to offer English language learners a platform. In fact, a great deal of language learners have committed themselves to learning the English language throughout the world, motivated by the rising social awareness of the language. According to Brown, it is important to measure and investigate the cognitive and affective proximity as well as the cultural distance between various cultures. Furthermore, studying the cultures of those who speak foreign languages and drawing connections between them and the native cultures of the learners from the perspectives of humanity, social issues, literature, etc., become imperative in such an environment.

Contextual considerations ought to be prioritized when teaching English anywhere in the world, to some extent. Thus, it is important to fully understand and take advantage of English culture, learners' unique cultural backgrounds, and the cultural context in which they are immersed. Furthermore, a more conscious comprehension of the language and behavioral patterns of the various cultures is needed. In this world, not everyone is "just like me." In actuality, there are genuine distinctions between groups and cultures in a multitude of areas. Sometimes, though, these various factors are interdependent. It's comparable to Tang's theory that language is culture and culture is language. Put another way, because language learners must adopt a broader perspective in order to perceive reality, language cannot be completely isolated from the culture in which it is deeply embedded. Pupils who are least inclined toward cross-cultural communication are typically those who seek to increase their cultural sensitivity and awareness.

5. Discussion

The issues of ethno-cultural education and younger generation upbringing became more real as educational migration processes were strengthened. Unfortunately, the teaching staff's current level of relevant competence is insufficient for productive interactions with students, which has an impact on the standard of upbringing and education. To be able to teach in a multicultural setting, educators must be willing to adapt their perspectives on life, education, their

students, and their parents. Many educators fail to eliminate the prevailing biases in their communities or cultures. Boundless culture is characterized by the propensity to prioritize one's own culture, ethnicity, or religion over those of others, the incapacity to absorb and integrate the concepts of other cultures (thereby broadening and deepening one's perspective), and the incapacity to recognize sociocentricity.

In order to foster cultural awareness in language learning environments, it is important to remember that language is acquired alongside the customs and behaviors of the social group that adheres to distinct cultural norms. As a result, language instructors cannot avoid sharing their impressions of various cultures, which have a therapeutic value in assisting language learners as they progress through the acculturation stages of language learning. More importantly, students may be able to move through the stages of cultural learning more quickly and effectively with the help of perceptive and insightful teachers, which will raise their chances of succeeding in language learning. When compared to English, English has progressively gained international attention in the new century. Due to the growing number of Confucius Institutes around the world, many English language learners from other languages are studying the language in multilingual and multicultural environments. In Kazan, there are the Confucius Institutes, though.

6. Conclusion

Every country in the world works to reduce intra-state conflict, hostility, and rivalry between various ethnic groups. Every nation works to preserve the idea that all of its citizens, regardless of race, ethnicity, language, or religious affiliation, share the same human values, needs, hopes, and fears. Ending segregated programs, appreciating diversity, and emphasizing the inclusion of all cultures in the core curriculum are all parts of multiculturalism In an increasingly globalized world, it is critical to concentrate on teaching all citizens how to be culturally resilient. Banks & McGhee Banks (2012) offered a number of recommendations to help instructors adopt a different perspective on the learning process: the formation of multicultural philosophy;2) the advancement of more democratic viewpoints and values;3) the examination of events and circumstances from the perspectives of various ethnic groups;4) the endeavor to comprehend the intricate and multifaceted character of ethnicity in a multinational society;5) the examination of the stages of ethnicity and their curriculum relevance; and6) the acquisition of the ability to act at ever-higher levels of ethnicity.
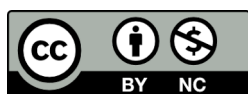
Acknowledgements

References

Banks, J. A., & McGhee Banks, C. A. (2012). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives* (8th ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. - 152 c.

Banks. J. (2014). *An Introduction to Multicultural Education*. Pearson, – 180 c.

Barac, R., & Bialystok, E. (2012). Bilingual effects oncognitive and linguistic development: Role of language, cultural background, and education. *Child Development, 83*, 413–422.

Bing, W. (2008). Cultural Resilience: An Ethnographic Case Study of a Mongolian High School in China. In Z. Beckerman and E. Kopelowitz (eds.), *Cultural Education and Cultural Resilience: Minorities, Diaspora, Indigenous Peoples, and Ethno-Religious Groups in Multicultural Societies*. New York: Routledge, 86-101.

Castro, A. J. (2010). *Challenges in Teaching for Critical Multicultural Citizenship: Student Teaching in an Accountability-Driven Context.* Action in Teacher Education, 109 p.

Census, B. (2013). *American community survey reports*. Retrieved November 14, 2015, from https://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/acs-22.pdf.

Chevalier, A. C., & Feinstein, L. (2007, June). *Sheepskin or Prozac: The causal effect of education on mental health*. UCD Geary Institute Discussion Paper Series. Dublin: University College Dublin.

Hoff, E. (2006). How social contexts support and shape language development. *Developmental Review*, *26*, 55–88.

Hoff, E., & Place, S. (2012). Bilingual language learners. In S. Odom, E. Pungello, & N. Gardner-Neblett (Eds.), *Infants, toddlers, and families in poverty: Research implications for early child care* (pp. 101–123). New York: The Guilford Press.

Kroll, F., & Dussias, E. (2017). The Benefits of Multilingualism to the Personal and Professional Development of Residents of the US. Foreign Language Annals. *American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages*, 50(2), 248–259. DOI: 10.1111/flan.12271.

Lin, J. (2008). Minority Education and Cultural Resilience in China: Challenges in an Era of Economic Reform and Globalization. In Z. Beckerman and E. Kopelowitz (eds*.), Cultural Education - Cultural Resilience: Minorities, Diaspora, Indigenous Peoples, and Ethno-Religious Groups in Multicultural Societies*. New York: Routledge, p. 69-84.

Lonigan, C., Farver, J., Nakamoto, J., & Eppe, S. (2013). Developmental trajectories of preschool early literacy skills: A comparison of language minority and Monolingual-English children. *Developmental Psychology, 49,* 1943–1957.

Murnane, R., Sawhill, I., & Snow, C. (2012). Literacy challenges for the twenty-first century: Introducing the issue. *The Future of Children*, 22, 3–15.

Oh, J. S., & Fuligni, A. J. (2010). The role of heritage language development in the ethnic identity and family relationships of adolescents from immigrant backgrounds. *Social Development, 19*, 202–220.

Yarmakeev, I. E., Akhmadullina, R. M., & Valiakhmetova, N. R. (2018). The potential of pedagogical disciplines for the formation of ethno-cultural competence of students - future teachers. *Astra Salvensis*, *6*, 275-285.

Zarate, G., & Levy, D. (2011). Kramsch, K., *Handbook of multilingualism and multiculturalism.* Editions des archives contemporaines, p. 118.