

BILINGUAL CHILDREN'S COMMUNICATION SKILLS: AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

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Abstract: For a bilingual child to acquire both languages at his or her very best, he or she has to be constantly exposed to them ever since his or her birth, i.e., he or she has to listen to them, in order to be able to subsequently use them totally spontaneously, through playful activities, in his or her quotidian life. Although it is the easiest way of language acquisition, one must not forget that the children are exposed to two completely different languages, so they have to gain proficiency how to discern them and use them in parallel, in various situations and with different people.

Most frequently, a society and its high technology exert a very profound influence on an overall individual's development, but an educator's and teacher's stimuli are extremely important in rendering support to the children to command both languages simultaneously. Nevertheless, a child has to be assisted in gradually acquiring his or her mother tongue, since its acquisition will be the best indicator when the optimal time would be for a child to start learning another language, to avoid a possible child's confusion.

Yet, for a child who has gotten a habit and sense of communicating in both languages, an "ideal time" to start exploring the avenues of his or her bilingualism is nonexistent, although it is usually consensually opined that it might be the preschool age, when the children become more open to social contacts. As this phase coincides with the child's copying of the behavior of others, it might indeed be the best time to deepen the child's knowledge of languages, especially when it comes to an expressive vocabulary.

Bilingual children comprehend the components of a language better than the monolingual children do, what makes them more successful in creativity tests. As many limits do not exist for them, their bilingualism provides them with numerous cultural, economic, and social advantages, opening a gate to a more prospective future of theirs. Thus, with the facilitated communication skills, they enjoy a higher capacity of their personal development and career advancement on the global market than their coevals do.

Keywords: bilingualism, children, communication skills, exposure, innovative approach

1. INTRODUCTION

An exposure to bilingualism motivates children's attention, targeted to the enhancement of his or her audioception and to the recognition of voices, being an exceptionally significant dexterity for a later shift toward the acquisition of yet another language [1, 2]. Generally, the children learn from various situations individually and might actually experience an exposure to bilingualism as an interesting novelty [3, 4]. It is quite normal for the children to initially deploy the elements of both languages, as is a periodical alternation of one language's predominance over the other, especially if they are subjected to two languages within a family.

Occasionally, the bilingual children have been known to rely to the so-called "code shift," i.e., they use the elements of both languages within a sentence; however, in a conversation with a monolingual interlocutor, they will be particularly cautious about which language they speak, selecting the lexis of a language spoken by the monolingual interlocutor himself or herself [5, 6]. Thus, one should not neglect a fact that a bilingual education implies much more than the observance of the unwritten rules concerning a language alternation disposition when communicating with a child.

Neurofunctionally and psycholinguistically [7, 8, 9], bilingualism, having been identified as a positive phenomenon for quite some time, brings with it a number of advantages, as it animates the human brain and formulates communication, pursuant to an assertion by the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein: "The limits of my language mean the limits of my world" [10]. Nonetheless, when a language we speak is upgraded by another language, the limits of our world become instantly expanded.

2. DISCUSSION

Presently, the advantages of bilingualism are categorized as the cognitive, communicative, and cultural ones [10, p. 176]. Cognitively, the disciplined bilinguals are said to celebrate more creatively than the monolinguals do, control their attention more improvedly and selectively [12], have a developed linguistic awareness and progress more rapidly in the advancement of metalinguistic concepts. What is more, linguistic awareness is being increased

by every new language a person acquires, thus accelerating a velocity by which a person is able to command any other language.

Bilingualism exerts an immense influence on a speaker's cognitive capacities, permitting a quick-thinking adjustment and control over the execution of certain assignments. It also renders the bilingual juveniles more empathic toward the others, for they regularly identify themselves with the speakers to understand them better. Thus, a bilingual child will develop his or her language awareness rather early, and the structures acquired will alleviate his or her access to a new language as well. Also, the bilingual children form the new world-opening acquaintances fairly effortlessly, what enables them to subsequently expand their knowledge. Their bilingualism facilitates them, *inter alia*, to explore a culture of their own by virtue of their maternal language, but they are concurrently capacitated to communicate with the people with whom they would never interact without their bilingual proficiency. In such a way, they have a possibility to experience the world through more than a single language [13, 14].

Since they enjoy a language communication facilitated with a wider range of people than the monolinguals do, the bilinguals are also better interconnected within a family and frequently serve as a link between various cultures and social groups. Using two languages, they select a language appropriate to the situation they are in and are usually more patient listeners than the language speakers are, demonstrating their responsiveness toward a speaker and prioritizing the speaker's needs.

The bilingual children are also more open to other cultures and participate in a such a bilingual cultural community quite actively. While so doing, their knowledge of both languages also foreshadows numerous economic benefits in the future.

Still, to be empowered to communicate appropriately and competently, the bilingual children have to primarily be equipped by a learning ability relying on a general knowledge and capabilities ingrained in them by their parents, and the very schooling process prepares them for the acquisition of the different and new faculties afterward. According to Jelaska [p. 21], the linguistic communicational acumens are therefore comprised of many bilingual, linguistic, and user-oriented subaptitudes.

A linguistic aptitude pertains to the knowledge of different aspects of a language, irrespective of social values. It implies a degree and quality of knowledge, e.g., an approach to knowledge, cognitive organization, and punctuality of an expression. Various approaches to the knowledge depend on social circumstances, a modality in which an individual has acquired certain knowledge, and on a manner he or she utilizes them. A society has a great impact on an individual when it comes to a language, pronunciation, and a method of his or her linguistic deployment. Consequently, a sociolinguistic aptitude is crucial in an interaction among the speakers of various cultures. It entails a command of dialectal and pronuncional variants, proverbs, and social relations' linguistic norms. Apparently, the juvenile bilinguals are more receptive to diverse cultures and are actually usually a linkage between them.

On the other hand, a pragmatic user-oriented aptitude rather implies a functional application of a language, i.e., versatile linguistic acts and roles. Intermittently, however, bilingualism may even produce certain difficulties in data retrieval, language understanding, and its utilization, and the juvenile bilinguals may experience some problems deciphering what has been said by a speaker of a language and may not use the language adequately. A key role in that respect is therefore played by the parents, who might direct the children to understand and properly use a language by virtue of a right innovative approach.

The purpose of a language should be its comprehension, to subsequently apply it in a communication accurately, and its acquisition, as a capability to converse in real situations. Hence, a notion of a communicational attainment is related to the learning of a language, as we are all the eyewitnesses to a fact that there is a major difference between a language acquired through a fundamental school-based education and a linguistic know-how necessary for an effective in-depth communication concerning multiple aspects. As a result, to use the very best of a language, it is absolutely essential to apply all the communicational and grammatical skills, sporadically relying to a sign-based linguistic system as well.

Finally, the issue of bilingualism is currently entertained especially in the areas with the existent ethnic or national minorities. Commonly, instead of learning both languages as their majors, the juvenile bilinguals mandatorily learn a language of a host country, while their arterial language is learned as an elective course. According to Jelaska [p. 135], an early bilingualism is obtained up to the 12th year of age, although the children are acquainted with a language of their ambience even prior to their parturitions, so a child hears a mother's voice and reacts to it still in his or her mother's womb. In line with the research, the infants progressively develop an inclination to certain voice, most frequently to a maternal one, since it is the mother who talks to the unborn children.

In regard to a bilingual education, the first three years of a child's life play a formative role, for that is a period when a child acquires languages. It is a known fact that a child cannot speak up unless they hear at least one language. So, a proper development of a speech is possible only in an interaction between a child and other people, primarily the parents, being the first persons with whom a child enters into a world of communication.

Though the children approach the domain of speech acquisition individually, a support provided by their environment is vital for them to master a language better and more rapidly. Again, a child's parents are the key players herein, as they are the first persons that familiarize a child with his or her bilingualism and teach him or her how to differentiate and discern two separate languages and apply them in their quotidian conversations. Anthropologically, Feltrin [p. 6] mentions a fundamental term of the so-called "code mixture," a process in which the characteristics of two supposedly separate languages are used in a single expression, denoting a parallel usage of linguistic elements from two different idioms. At the outset, the children pronounce the words in different languages in a single sentence, but they gradually learn a difference.

As mentioned by Barron-Hauwaert [p. 121], it is worth alerting the parents and other family members hopeful of the immediate bilingualism results that an arterial language is quite likely not to be heard in a child's prelinguistic phase, a period characterized by various voicing when coughing, crying, giggling, hiccupping, sifting, sneezing and yawning, whereas an insufficient effort invested in a childcare and various activities with a child may even produce a child's passivity. On the contrary, it is critical for the parents at this instance to work with a child to prevent the child's abandonment of a language. As a consequence, a lack of parental engagement concerning a child's early bilingualism may subsequently effectuate the child's passive interest in both languages, but some parents frequently err that a child will perfectly command a vocabulary of both languages once it starts speaking.

Quite the opposite, the family, especially the parents, have to be active, communicate with a child, and motivate him or her to acquire the speech of both languages, and the parents, as stated by Arnberg [p. 89], should never neglect a fact that they are the "protolinguists" of a language their child has just commenced to acquire, so, as such, they may offer the child a lot by virtue of their emotional bond. They are the incipient "language experts" who amend and expand their sentences and initially developmentally and educatively form their children's personalities, which is the most successful early learning method, indeed.

3. CONCLUSION

As language is a part of all the aspects of a child's existence, expression of his or her emotions and necessities, and a method to be interconnected with the others, it is worth noting that a speech, in its full complexity, may enrich a child's life and empower him or her for a broad spectrum of activities, but it may also unfortunately devastate a child's life if one fails to initially realize that a right way of learning and using the words is imperative to correctly develop an emotional and social aspect as well.

To be able to develop and stimulate a child's speech, the parents have to be familiarized with the four milestone phases of speech development, i.e., a prelinguistic phase, cooing phase (i.e., the so-called "physiological cry"), reduplicated babbling phase and a linguistic phase.

While a cooing phase, characteristic of the infants all around the world as an undifferentiated monolingual system decipherable only by a child himself or herself, is a period in which the sounds resembling the consonants are predominant, as a child's vocalization preparing him or her for a real speech, in a reduplicated babbling phase the infant begins to produce the more versatile monosyllabic sounds, being a consonant-and-vowel combination. Ultimately, a linguistic phase, in which a child begins to pay attention to the things preoccupying his or her parents and other familiar persons, beginning to develop his or her memory, denotes a commencement of a meaningful usage of speech related not only to an improvement of the child's verbalized behavior but also to his or her nonverbal one, too.

Since a child's understanding of a language is initialized as early as in his or her mother's uterus, when he or she hears his or her mother's voice, these are simultaneously the child's first encounters with a speech, as well as his or her first encounters with his or her later bilingualism. Thus, according to Arnberg [p. 110], both parents, essential for a further development of a child's life, should communicate adequately, coordinately, and supplementally, treating their child as a person whose opinion is appreciated and whose sentiments are respected from the very onset, so that the child may acquire and embrace his or her bilingualism quite naturally.

The children's sounds are subsequently expanded to various voice sequences, serving, in combination with the exclamations, a basic purpose of attracting attention. A selective smile, being a personalization of a child's communicational system, is manifested in the sixth month of the child's life, as the child's reaction to the close persons.

Subsequently, it is a high time that some parents reject illusions and stop harboring prejudices concerning the time when their children would be ready to embrace their bilingualism, as a child principally develops his or her conversational skills through the verbal interactions with the parents, although he or she fails to fully comprehend certain words or phrases he or she might hear.

One should also bear in mind that a language possesses a capacity to express an infinite number of ideas, and a bilingual child has to learn how to promptly decide which words to select in both languages. Thus, learning and mastering two versatile languages might be considerably difficult and might be differentiated in the developmental stages.

Additionally, to acquire two languages and to be able to discern them and switch from one language to the other might be ever so difficult, but it is definitely not an unaccomplishable task, especially when it comes to the children growing up in the bilingual environments. Nonetheless, an innovative bilingual education then implies significantly more than respecting the unwritten rules related to a schedule of language alternations when communicating with a child.

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