

**BILINGUAL COMMUNICATION CULTURE****Marina Grinyova,**

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**Abstract.** *The present paper deals with the notions of “bilingualism”, “culture” and “bilingual communication” which reveal the essence of “bilingual communication culture” and its conceptual subsystems. The content analysis of “communication culture” and “international communication culture” makes it possible to posit the bilingual communication culture as related to them but still a self-contained notion. Its structure is shown as a complex system of knowledge, world view and conduct components. Their development makes bilingual communication constructive and leads to reaching mutual understanding in cross-cultural interaction between the representatives of different nations and cultures. Focusing on the nature and structure of the bilingual communication culture, the further extensive researches have to be carried out into the ways of increasing its level and the efficiency of the bilingual communication with the representatives of other nations correspondingly.*

**Key words:** *Bilingualism, Bilingual, Communication Culture, International Communication Culture, Bilingual Communication Culture.*

**1. Introduction**

The study of the bilingual communication culture has taken on an unexpected topicality through the youth's incapability of making constructive bilingual contacts with the representatives of different nations and cultures. The problem is caused by a lack of the complex approach to treating a foreign language as the main means of establishing bilingual communication and the bilingual communication culture as a way of its optimisation. There are some contradictions which add a new urgency to the problem under consideration: the contradiction between the social demand for the specialists capable of productive bilingual communication and the conventional system of their education; specialists' actual language level and low level of their bilingual communication culture, a lack of which makes interpersonal and vocational bilingual communication less efficient.

The concepts which make it possible to establish the essence of the bilingual communication culture and single out its subsystems are “bilingualism”, “culture” and “bilingual communication”. It should be mentioned in this connection that bilingualism has been studied chiefly from a linguistic perspective. Though Y. Desheriev, P. Duff, D. Kreech, S. May, A. Shirin, E. Vereschagin, G. Vishnevska, Y. Zhluktenko and other researchers go further and make a thorough analysis of its cultural, sociological, sociocultural, psychological and pedagogical aspects.

The nature of bilingualism being still versatile, its definitions are often contradictory and mutually exclusive, it leads to different interpretations of this phenomenon. Obviously, in the information multicultural society bilingualism has to be treated as an alternate use of either ethnically related (e.g. Ukrainian – Russian) or ethnically different languages: native and foreign ones (e.g. Ukrainian – English). It should be stressed that of all the foreign languages, English is sure to be the most requisite, its being one of the most wide-spread languages of the international communication and the official language of EU, NATO, U.N.O. The tendency to use the English language in bilingual communication has consequently gained currency in Ukraine.

In present paper bilingualism is defined as the alternate use of ethnically different languages (Ukrainian and English) at the level sufficient to acquire special knowledge and socially interact in some spheres of communication. It consequently leads to the formation of the personality capable of using two ethnically different languages. In this respect the scientists tend to operate

several terms, all used to denote a person who is able to practise two languages in communication: “a bilingual” (E. Vereschagin), “a bilingual personality” (E. Sleptsova), “a bicultural personality” (I. Bryiksina), “a sociocultural bilingual personality” (K. Rahimzhanov) as well as “a bilingual cultural personality” (L. Panasyuk). Focusing on different aspects of the personality development, these terms have been used to denote a person, speaking two languages well enough to have both interpersonal and vocational bilingual communication. The distinctive feature of all the bilinguals is their participation in a cross-cultural interaction within which two different cultures interrelate (the national one and the culture of the language used in bilingual communication).

Though the issue of bilingualism has dominated some discussions on the issue of bilingual communication, the latter has been referred to by linguists, psychologists and educators who are inclined to modify the original term [12]. V. Safonova studies “bilingual intercultural communication” whereas I. Bryiksina considers “communication at bilingual/bicultural level”. Irrespective of the application field meant, these terms concern the same bilingual communication and are used to denote the information interchange allowing for the interlocutors’ language peculiarities. As a result, the information obtained and given is properly interpreted and applied for a particular purpose of communication.

Similarly, we treat “bilingual communication” as a complex trait of a bilingual; a system of communication skills required for a productive interpersonal and vocational communication; a versatile process of making international contacts and information interchange between the bilinguals, who can speak both the native and foreign languages and know the nature of bilingual communication.

It is commonly asserted that such phenomena as “culture” and “communication” are inseparably connected: the culture is regarded as a background to the social communication, thereby contributing to the conditions that must exist in order for its ways and means to be established and applied. In this regard it leads both to improving the present cultural contexts and developing the new ones. Accordingly, being interrelated, the core notions of “culture” and “communication” give grounds for using a modified term “bilingual communication culture” the nature of which needs thorough consideration.

## 2. Materials and methods

It should be admitted that the references on the problem do not give any agreed definition of the bilingual communication culture except for the notions of “communication culture” and “international communication culture” related to it. This fact indicates the deficiency of the previous researches and insufficient scientific development of the bilingual communication culture. We have to apply some theoretical methods for arriving at a detailed description of the bilingual communication culture: content analysis, comparative analysis, systematization and generalization.

Although the key notions of “bilingualism”, “bilingual communication”, “communication culture” and “international communication culture” are considered as related ones, the complex study of the scientific theoretical and methodological materials on them shows their discrete and unsystematic character that makes these notions subject to scientific review. However, one important criterion to note is that the communication culture and the international communication culture can hardly be posited as self-sufficient universals as far as efficient bilingual communication is concerned. Actually, the formation of the communication culture aims at providing a person with the ways and perspectives to have a more productive communication without regard for any contextual peculiarities of speaking two different languages. Meanwhile, the international communication culture seems to be ambiguous and consequently does not solve the problem raised either as it does not cover the bilingual aspect of communication. The international communication culture merely concentrates on various ways of having cross-cultural communication and interaction, which do not always presuppose a person’s ability to use two ethnically different languages (the native and foreign ones) [3; 11].

The revealed discrepancy proves the lack of the laconic and precise term having both bilingual and cultural issues of the original notion of “communication”. The bilingual communication culture is sure to be such a composite term, the essence of which lies not only in learning the native and foreign languages but also in forming the ability to interact within two

different cultures. In complex, these two aspects serve as a framework for the development of the bilingual communication culture accordingly.

The highlighted correlation of the bilingual communication culture with the communication culture and the international communication culture determines their further detailed analysis, so that the nature and the content of the bilingual communication culture can be revealed and introduced into its definition. In most instances, when the term “communication culture” is used, it denotes a complex personal trait that contains a cluster of moral values and corresponding personal qualities, communication skills and ways of communication fit for any situation of socio-cultural interaction [7]. In the context of education the communication culture refers to the socio-pedagogical phenomenon, consisting of complementary elements (personal and sociocultural aims, knowledge, communication skills etc.), directly determined by the internal factors (gift, education, experience etc.) and the external ones (sociocultural values of the society, national traditions, customs etc.).

In an expansion of international contacts, the communication culture and the international communication culture cannot be treated apart as they both are based on the national and cultural traditions of at least two countries cooperating in the fields of policy, law, trade etc. The researchers interpret the international communication culture in two ways: as a set of sociocultural patterns to keep to in communication with the foreigners; as a requisite integral quality for a productive communication with the people of other nationalities [4; 6].

Thus, the bilingual communication culture is considered as a modification of the original terms “communication culture” and “international communication culture” on the basis that the contacts with the foreigners are usually made by means of two different languages (the native and foreign ones). Though this term is not introduced into the conceptual framework, we feel that it provides a very useful distinction when we are considering its two correlative elements: bilingual communication and communication culture. The former presupposes the information interchange by means of the native and foreign languages. The latter reflects the peculiarities of the bilingual’s moral and national values and ensures mutual understanding between those who speak two ethnically different languages.

There are four basic approaches singled out to reveal the essence of the notion under consideration: cultural, sociocultural, axiological, personal and activity ones. According to the cultural approach to the study of the bilingual communication culture, we regard it as a phenomenon that lies in the exchange of the material and moral values which represent two different nations’ lifestyles, modes of behaviour and worldviews.

It is determined by I. Zimnyaya and V. Safonova that the sociocultural approach shows the connection of language and culture learning. In view of the national and foreign cultures being important for bilingualism, it is necessary to focus on the sociocultural aspect of the bilingual communication culture as well. It not only requires proficiency in the native and foreign languages spoken, but also a wide knowledge of sociocultural norms, patterns of behaviour and models of communication, applied to practice. These are the aspects that make the bilingual communication more efficient and constructive.

Within the scope of the axiological approach the bilingual communication culture can be treated as a set of moral and human cultural values, which manifest themselves in tolerance as a dominant value and a quality typical of the bilinguals. Essentially, the distinguishing features of the tolerance are: the ability to acknowledge the peculiarities of other culture; the ability to display a positive attitude towards other nations and stand uncommon cultural influences, which may be exerted in the process of bilingual communication.

According to the personal approach, the core notion can be defined as an integral set of personal traits caused by the moral and human values. In the context of discussing the international communication culture, the researchers often refer to the personal qualities which indicate it [3; 6; 7]. They include sociability, empathy, national openness, versatility, self-acceptance, self-criticism, tact, mutual understanding, humanity, mutual respect and tolerance. Similarly, the bilingual communication culture may include the same set of personal traits with the addition of communication control and self-identification within two cultures. The former denotes the bilingual’s ability to take control of his emotional reactions and a bilingual communication act,

namely the ability to resolve a conflict constructively and reach a compromise. The latter indicates the bilingual's awareness of being involved into the native and foreign cultures, he comes into contact with, because of bilingual communication.

The bilingual communication culture can also be considered on the basis of the activity approach that makes it possible to define this notion: as a versatile process of making international contacts and information interchange between the bilinguals; as an activity characteristic that causes a productive bilingual communication with the representatives of other cultures and positive experience gained due to the interaction with them.

Thus, the definition of the bilingual communication culture correlates with the content of "communication culture" and "international communication culture" as the key notions, which determine the core of the problem raised. So, the bilingual communication culture can be described: as an integral part of a bilingual personality, based on special linguistic and sociocultural knowledge, corresponding skills and moral values, most notably tolerance; as an activity characteristic of a person, which causes positive experience in the constructive bilingual interaction with the representatives of other cultures.

### 3. Results

Ergo the bilingual communication culture turns out to be a complex notion used to denote: an integral part of a bilingual personality and a personal quality, based on tolerance towards foreign language speakers and their culture; a set of special linguistic and sociocultural knowledge and corresponding skills increasing the efficiency of the bilingual communication with the representatives of other cultures.

The data about the structures of the communication culture and the international communication culture having been analysed, it leads to further specification of the main components of the bilingual communication culture. As all the approaches, adopted by the researchers who study the constituents of the notions mentioned, correlate and therefore can co-exist, we find it reasonable to synthesize them in the structure of the bilingual communication culture.

Hence, it can be represented as an integral system of three interrelated components. The first of them contains bilingualism and special knowledge about: the cultures and moral values typical of any nation; the peculiarities of national and foreign cultures and the ways of resolving conflicts. This knowledge determines the internalization of the constructive patterns of interpersonal and vocational bilingual communication and favours the bilingual's self-identification within two cultures. It is the component that causes gaining a positive experience even in the emotionally strained situations of bilingual communication.

This set of knowledge forms the basis of a world view component of the structure, which contains humanistic convictions and mutual tolerance as one of the dominant moral values. The fact that the humanistic convictions manifest themselves in a bilingual's activity makes us single out a conduct component in the structure of the bilingual communication culture. Being connected with the special knowledge acquired and the tolerant humanistic convictions in the system of the world view, it favours the formation of corresponding communication skills for the bilingual to gain a positive experience in the bilingual communication. Specifically speaking, these skills mean the bilingual's ability to use the knowledge about the moral values and peculiarities of national and foreign cultures as well as the ability to practise the effective non-conflict ways of bilingual communication and interaction according to a communication purpose.

The structure of the bilingual communication culture thereby can be represented as a complex system of three interrelated components (knowledge, world view and conduct) and their constituents, based on learning humanistic values, tolerance for the peculiarities of different cultures, reaching a compromise and mutual understanding with the representatives of other nations in the process of bilingual communication.

### 4. Conclusions

It all comes down to one simple and important fact that, despite the fact that it is a modified term, the bilingual communication culture turns out to be a self-contained notion which

has to be studied in detail. The issues of bilingualism, the communication culture and the international communication culture can be applied to some new approaches to the further extensive researches into the bilingual communication culture. The way we see it, criteria, indicators and levels of the bilingual communication culture are the crux of the scientific matter. It is also reasonable to identify pedagogical frameworks, increasing the efficiency of bilingual communication and a level of the bilingual communication culture correspondingly. The objects, main components, ways, means and methods of the frameworks have to be specified and implemented in the process of education.

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