

## **Inculcation of Bilingual Personality in Context of Cultural Dialogue (As Exemplified by Tatarstan Schools)**

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**Abstract:** The article is devoted to issues of inculcation of bilingual bicultural personality in the system of school education in the Republic of Tatarstan where two state languages are taught in schools - Russian and Tatar. We performed questioning procedures which allow to identify ideas of students from different schools with different language - what they think about their own and foreign culture. Analysis of the results of interview has shown that principle of cultural dialogue is implemented in school where native Tatar language is taught with the same rate as Russian while in Russian schools the students tend to mono-culture. Performed by us analysis allows to conclude that dialogue of cultures in education system determines formation of bicultural potential of personality triggering genesis of bilingual world view.

**Key words:** Cultures dialogue • Bilingualism • Biculture • Bilinguality • Culturological model of literary studies

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Particularities of socio-cultural situation in Tatarstan are determined first of all by the system of bilingual education: Russian and Tatar languages are state languages. 99,7% of all schoolchildren study Tatar language. There is big number of schools, gymnasiums where education process is realized in native Tatar language, in the same time in such schools 100% knowledge of Russian and a foreign language is guaranteed to get schoolchildren acquainted with Russian and world culture. Such types of national education facilities in Tatarstan can be called the schools of cultural dialogue in which the conditions for inculcation of bilingual, bicultural and bilingual personality have been formed.

Cultural dialogue is becoming a foundation of education system in the schools with native (Tatar) language of teaching (so called. national schools) and this encourages formation of humanitarian culturological model of literature studies.

At language classes bilingual students can identify and follow dialogue links between Russian and native literatures (cultures) while each culture is self-sufficient and valuable on its own. Foundation for this assertion

was found in the works of mentality M. Bakhtin, V. Bibler, Yu. Lotma [1-3] which today have become a methodological framework for all humanitarian knowledge.

The issue of dialogue is one of the central moments in psychology of art. R. Arkheim, L. Vygotsky, Ya. Mukharzhovskiy, S. Rappoport, L. Bayanova [4-10] while studying the processes of creation of a piece of literature and its further perception found out its dialogue character which is presented by author's and recipient's mindsets for understanding, communication, dialogue.

Western linguistics and social psychology consider the development of multi-cultural conditions was in focus of inter-disciplinary studies since late 80s - early 90s: Harvey, J.H. Weber, A.L. Orbach, T.L. [11]; Lyengar, S. Kinder, D.R. [12]; Heath, L. Acklin, mentality, Wiley, K. [13]; Dicker-son, C.A. Thibodeau, R. Aronson, E. Miller, D. [14]; Slavin, R. [15]. These works were based on the thoughts of Schachter, S. [16]; Wolosin, R. Sherman, S. Cam, A. [17]; Schachter, S. Singer, J. [18].

There are different points of view on bilingualism: some psychologists deny its value, the others, on the contrary, believe that it is progressive phenomenon. gymnasium Gachev [19] considers the issue of bilingualism as dialogue between world views, visions of

the world and points out to ability of bilingualism to create stereoscopic vision and “3-D” thinking: bilinguals while living between two models of the world feel very strongly insufficiency and relativity of each vision - which is not understood by “smart” mono-lingual regardless of the language in which he thinks. Enriching integration of two different world views occurs in the consciousness of bilingual. This enables to raise the issue about formation of bimental personality in the context of dialogue of cultures.

Today mentality is most differently interpreted notion in modern science. Such notions are often used in analysis of socio-historic and political problems, issues of development of world civilization; in evaluation of national uniqueness of some culture and ethnic particularities of its people; internal world of a man, its mindset, his world vision.

The representatives of different humanitarian disciplines striving to define the notion of mentality in its own way agree that mentality is related to culture and is embodied in language. Language encloses national character and national idea and national ideals which in finished form can be presented in traditional symbols, images, myths and notions of this culture.

We shall rely on definition offered by V. Kolesov [20] and interpret national mentality as vision of the world and man which includes intellectual, volition and spiritual features of national character, nationally-biased thinking and national language.

Infusion of personality with mentality is supreme target of education. Mentality is highest level of culture: it represents deep foundations of world view, world vision and behaviour of a man. It is mentality which determines specific deeds of people, their attitude to different social existence.

Education not only forms mentality, it transforms it. In the process of dialogue of cultures they are being mutually enriched, “dialogue between mentalities” is realized (B. Gershunovsky [21]). Bimental personality is inculcated through dialogue of cultures. This is confirmed by modern psychological and inter-disciplinary studies (D. Berry, I. Purting, M. Segall, R. Dasen [22], Khabutdinova M.M. Bayanova L. [23])

The aim and tasks of this study. The aim of this study is to find out specific factors which facilitate formation of bimental personality in bi- and multicomponent cultural space. This aim determines our tasks: generalization and systematization of the material collected through described above questioning, analysis of correlation

between active bilinguality and successful learning of facts of 2 and more ethnic cultures, consideration of organic transition from bilingual and bicultural competence to bimental self-consciousness, particularities of which can be determined by ethnic, confessional and historical determinants.

**Methods of the Study:** Interview by means of questionnaire developed by us in order to find out what students think about their own and other cultures. Respondents were students of 11th grade of Tatar gymnasium #2 and #37 with Russian ethno-cultural component. In Tatar gymnasium all disciplines are taught in national language. Even children in first grades study Russian and Tatar languages, Russian and Tatar literature. In gymnasium #37 all subjects are taught in Russian, Tatar language is taught as one of other disciplines (Tatar literature is being taught since 2003). In Tatar gymnasium almost every child is Tatar by nationality (of from mixed Tatar-Russian families), 58% of schoolchildren in gymnasium #37 are from Russian families, 48% - the Tatars and children from mixed families.

**Results of the Study:** Interview showed that graduates from Tatar gymnasium are bilinguals: they freely speak both Tatar and Russian language. 97% of the graduates of Tatar gymnasium speak, read and write freely in native language, 96% - Russian language. Bilingualism is a tool of inter-ethnic interaction, one of the manifestations of bicultural position - ability of individual to institutionalize its activity in 2 and more ways [24].

The question about definition of favourite fairy-tale from childhood to some extent disclose the particularities of mentality. 84% of Tatar school students named Russian folk fairy-tales: Kolobok, Woolf and 7 goat kids, Frog-Princess etc. They also know and love the fairy-tales of its people: Tanbatyr, Step-daughter, Kamy-Batyr and others. 64% of Tatar-speaking children read when they have free time the poems of Russian poets, 52% listen to Russian music. They mentioned not only Tatar poets and composers in the questionnaire but Russian as well. It is obvious that both cultures - Tatar and Russian are equally dear to students of Tatar gymnasium Understanding of facts from 2 cultures by students of Tatar schools broadens their mentality, perception of Russian and Tatar literature (culture) and impacts on emotional and in rational levels (soul and mind).

Table 1: Data obtained from the questioning, %

Questions	Tatar gymnasium No 2	Gymnasium No 37 with Russian ethno-cultural component
1 Can you name your favourite Russian fairy-tale?	84%	93%
2 Can you name your favourite Tatar fairy-tale?	93%	65%
3 When I want to please myself with reading poetry I take:		
- poems by Russian poets;	64%	90%
- Tatar poems;	20%	0%
- Russian and Tatar poems;	7%	0%
- did not answer.	9%	10%
4 Leaving home I take with me the pieces of		
- Russian music;	52%	79%
- Tatar music;	16%	4%
- Russian and Tatar music;	24%	17%
- did not answer.	9%	10%
5 Level of Russian language:		
- speak, read and write fluently;	97%	20%
- understand but not speak;	1%	2%
- speak with difficulties.	0%	18%
- speak and read freely but can not write;	2%	5%
- can not speak.	0%	55%
6 Level of Russian language:		
- speak, read and write fluently;	96%	87%
- understand but not speak;	1%	0%
- speak with difficulties.	3%	13%

The results of interview in Russian school #37 demonstrate the other picture - not bilingual but monocultural. In Russian gymnasium there are no conditions for realization of principle of dialogue between cultures.

### CONCLUSION

Dialogue of cultures in Tatar school is realized through the system of parallel study of Russian and Tatar language, Russian and Tatar literature: formation of bicultural, bilingual, bicultural personality able to understand not only native culture but the other (Russian) culture as its own. Use of dialogue of cultures in the system of literary studies in Tatar school is condition for keeping and strengthening of inter-ethnic relations and resurrection of national culture.

Recently some authors argue that education content in the Republic of Tatarstan must be realized not only on 2-language but on "bicultural basis" as well [25].

This point of view corresponds to the results of our study. Ethnic identity of personality is important component of its self-consciousness. In this respect our study confirms V. Kolesov's opinion that national mentality does not know class divisions, it is a tool of national self-consciousness [18]. Mentality determines consciousness and thinking of every man. But side by

side with common for all language-speakers features mentalities of separate individuals have their own insignificant particularities (differences) determined by age, profession, social status etc.

Mentality of any nation is formed under the influence of conditions of its life. Favourable climate, fruitful soil, beneficial trade and military situation determine the status of a nation in the world and corresponding self-consciousness and self-feeling, ambitions, estimates, behaviour. Religion also plays important part in formation of national mentality because it is not only a cult and belief but a form of consciousness as well. Generally speaking, our study dealing with the issue of bilingualism has made some contribution into multi-cultural problem investigated in humanitarian studies.

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