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**ДЕЯКІ АСПЕКТИ ПРОВЕДЕННЯ МУЛЬТИЛІНГВАЛЬНОГО
 ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ
 НЕКОТОРЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ ПРОВЕДЕНИЯ МУЛЬТИЛИНГВАЛЬНОГО
 ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ
 SOME ASPECTS OF DOING MULTILINGUAL RESEARCH**

Розглянуто деякі аспекти проведення мультилінгвального дослідження. Представлено короткий огляд особливостей мультилінгвізму як суспільного явища, а також основні точки зору на визначення поняття *мультилінгвізм* як міждисциплінарної галузі. Виявлено, що мультилінгвізм, з одного боку, є здібністю певного суспільства або групи людей розмовляти більше, ніж однією мовою, та застосовувати цю здібність у своєму повсякденному житті; з іншого боку, це поняття використовують при описі одночасного та мирного співіснування різних лінгвістичних суспільств на певній географічній або геополітичній території. Описано базові кроки проведення мультилінгвального дослідження, які включають в себе визначення предмета дослідження, постановку завдань та вибір доречних методів. Описано три основні підходи: лінгвістичний, психолінгвістичний і соціолінгвістичний. *Лінгвістичний підхід* концентрується на визначенні питань, пов'язаних з процесом засвоєння мови, її знання та застосування. *Психолінгвісти* менше зацікавлені в описі та поясненні структур мультилінгвального мовлення, але вони намагаються визначити природу та особливості когнітивних процесів, які залучені до процесу сприйняття та відтворення мультилінгвального мовлення. *Соціолінгвісти* аналізують мультилінгвальні дані, зосереджуючись при цьому на особистості мовця. Було підсумовано, що успіх дослідження залежить від того, наскільки питання дослідження пов'язані з теоретичними засадами, методами та фактичним матеріалом.

Ключові слова: мультилінгвізм, мультилінгвальне дослідження, лінгвістичний підхід, психолінгвістичний підхід, соціолінгвістичний підхід.

Рассмотрено некоторые аспекты проведения мультилингвального исследования. Представлен короткий обзор особенностей мультилингвизма как общественно-го явления, а также основные точки зрения на определение понятия *мультилингвизм* как междисциплинарной области. Определено, что мультилингвизм, с одной стороны, является способностью определённого общества или группы людей общаться больше, чем на одном языке, и использовать эту способность в повседневной жизни; с другой стороны, данное понятие используют для описания одновременного и мирного сосуществования различных лингвистических сообществ на определённой географической или геополитической территории. Описаны базовые шаги проведения мультилингвального исследования, которые включают в себя определение предмета исследования, постановку заданий и выбор соответствующих методов. Очерчены три основных подхода: лингвистический, психолингвистический и социолингвистический. *Лингвистический подход* концентрируется на определении понятий, связанных с процессом усвоения языка, его знания и использования. *Психолингвисты* мень-

ше интересуются описанием и объяснением структур мультилингвальной речи, но они пытаются определить природу и особенности когнитивных процессов, которые принимают участие в процессе восприятия и воспроизведения мультилингвальной речи. *Социолингвисты* анализируют мультилингвальные данные, сосредоточиваясь при этом на личности говорящего. Подведён итог, что успех исследования зависит от того, насколько вопросы исследования связаны с теоретическими основами, методами и фактическим материалом.

Ключевые слова: мультилингвизм, мультилингвальное исследование, лингвистический подход, психолингвистический подход, социолингвистический подход.

The article deals with some aspects of doing a multilingual research. A short overview of multilingualism as a societal phenomenon has been presented, and the main points of view on defining the notion *multilingualism* as an interdisciplinary branch have been shown. It has been found out that, on the one hand, multilingualism is an ability of a particular community or group of people to speak more than one language and to use this ability in their everyday lives; and on the other hand this notion is applied when describing a simultaneous and peaceful coexistence of different linguistic communities on one specific geographical or geopolitical territory. Basic steps of conducting a multilingual research consisting in defining the subject of the investigation, stating the objectives and choosing the appropriate methods have been described. Three main research perspectives in multilingual data analysis have been highlighted: linguistic, psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic. The *linguistic perspective* concentrates on the questions connected with language acquisition, knowledge and use. *Psycholinguists* are less concerned with describing and explaining structures of multilingual speech, but try to define the nature and peculiarities of the cognitive processes involved in receiving and producing multilingual speech. *Sociolinguists* analyse multilingual data concentrating on the identity and identification of the speaker. It has been concluded that the consistency of a research project refers to how well the research questions are linked to the theoretical framework, the methods, and what gets counted as data or evidence.

Keywords: multilingualism, multilingual research, linguistic perspective, psycholinguistic perspective, sociolinguistic perspective.

The idea of multilingualism and multilingual education has been attracting researchers' attention for quite a long time. The European Union is striving to implement a multilingual component as a part of its general policy into all the spheres of social life.

Multilingualism as a societal phenomenon contains a great number of aspects and notions in its multifacet structure. Some of the ideas have already been described in our previous papers [1; 3; 4]. What should be pointed out within the framework of the present research is the two key principles stored in the notion *multilingualism*.

On the one hand, multilingualism is an ability of a particular community or group of people to speak more than one language and to use this ability in their everyday lives [2; 6]. Besides, multilingualism is one of the competences that a modern specialist should possess in order to be successful in his career. This idea has been a central one in the European policy since the very beginning of the European Union existence. However, the first official guidelines on multilingualism were highlighted by the European Commission only in 2005.

On the other hand, the term «multilingualism» is applied when describing a simultaneous and peaceful coexistence of different linguistic communities on one specific geographical or geopolitical territory [2; 6]. Moreover, multilingualism is guaranteed in the official documents of the EU that are adopted by decision-making authorities and translated into and issued in eleven languages. However, the level of awareness of

multilingualism varies considerably. It is guaranteed at the highest level of political representation. In meetings held at the highest level of the European Council, simultaneous interpretation is provided and all the documents are translated into eleven languages. This is also the case in plenary sessions of the European Parliament [10, с. 101–102].

Researchers studying the phenomenon of multilingualism state that for many people it is a fact of life and not a problem, because contacts between people speaking different languages has been a common phenomenon since ancient times. Increased international travel and modern information and communication technologies provide even more opportunities for people of different tongues to get to know each other. Even if one was born and brought up as a monolingual, the opportunity to learn other languages is no longer a luxury for the elite.

Nevertheless, some regard multilingualism as an issue of concern, and raise questions such as: Can learning more than one language at a time affect children's intellectual development? Do bilingual and multilingual children present special educational needs? Does multilingualism lead to social disorder between communities? [11, с. 3].

Some linguists [10; 11] state that these are legitimate questions, the answers to which depend on one's experience, knowledge of the phenomenon, and point of view. They are also worthwhile research questions that need to be addressed scientifically. Findings from scientific research on multilingualism can provide strong evidence for answering these questions.

However, in order to answer these and some other questions successfully, correctly and precisely, a thorough research should be conducted, and it requires some special theoretical basis, appropriate methodology and a well-chosen factual material for the research.

The **aim** of the present paper is to provide a brief overview of the basic perspectives for conducting a multilingual research and studying multilingual data.

M. Moyer thinks that research methods for investigating multilingualism need not be different from the methods applied in related disciplines, because multilingualism is an interdisciplinary subject. It goes without saying that the choice of methods is central to a study and is dependent on theoretical ideas concerning the phenomena we are asking questions about: «A good research practice – no matter what the approach – requires a clear understanding of whether one's research fits into the overall picture of explaining multilingualism; it also involves an ability to critically analyze a research design and to understand the purpose and underlying assumptions that go with selecting a particular topic» [8, с. 18].

Apart from this, reflexivity is an essential element of the research process, because it allows us to assess the issue and choose the most appropriate methods and tools in order to answer the main questions of our research.

Besides, when carrying out any linguistic research, one has to follow several basic steps:

- to define the *subject of investigation* and to formulate the questions one wants to answer. As for the multilingual research, the subject usually consists in either the comparison of language systems or of texts in more than one language;

- to state the *objectives* of the research that, as a rule, concentrate on the detection of *commonality* or description of *contrast*;

- to choose the appropriate methods which are usually subdivided into two main groups: *qualitative* and *quantitative*.

As it has been mentioned above, multilingualism is an interdisciplinary issue of concern. The analysis of theoretical and methodological literature allows us to highlight

three main research perspectives in multilingual data analysis: *linguistic*, *psycholinguistic* and *sociolinguistic*.

As for the *linguistic perspective*, the research carried out within its framework concentrates on the questions connected with language acquisition, knowledge and use. The key objective here is to define the nature of multilingual knowledge and to find out, how grammar and vocabulary systems of several languages interact in a person's mind.

A number of linguists have carried out their investigations from this perspective [5; 9]. Having studied their works, we may state that such kind of research is an empirical one. The researcher gathers some data that he gets in the process of communication with multilingual people. After that he analyzes the peculiarities of their speech, pays attention to the use of grammar, vocabulary and sentence structure.

Another point that should be highlighted here is the process of multilingual acquisition. The linguist looks for the similarities and differences between multilingual and monolingual acquisition and tries to discover whether the languages a multilingual person is acquiring develop in the same way and at the same speed, or the languages a multilingual person is acquiring do not influence and interact with each other [5; 9].

The linguists consider that there is one more area in which multilingual people clearly differ from monolingual people, namely, *code mixing* – the act of mixing elements from different languages in the same utterance. While these studies provide further evidence for the separate-development argument, they also suggest that there are both quantitative and qualitative differences between multilingual and monolingual acquisition [11, c. 8].

Psycholinguists working on multilingualism are interested in essentially the same three key issues – *multilingual knowledge*, *multilingual acquisition* and *multilingual use*. However, the research methodologies differ from the ones applied within the framework of linguistic perspective. Psycholinguistic research tends to use experimental and laboratory methods to investigate multilingual behavior [11, c. 9]. It means that they create some unnatural conditions of communication in order to trigger multilingual speech.

It should be pointed out that psycholinguists are less concerned with describing and explaining structures of multilingual speech, but try to define the nature and peculiarities of the cognitive processes involved in receiving and producing multilingual speech.

The *sociolinguistic perspective* differs from the linguistic and psycholinguistic perspectives in terms of both its research methodologies and its basic concerns. Sociolinguists see multilingualism as a socially constructed phenomenon and the bilingual or multilingual person as a social actor. It is also important to mention that for a multilingual speaker, language choice is not only an effective means of communication but also an act of identity [7].

Li Wei [11, c. 13] states that «every time we say something in one language when we might just as easily have said it in another, we are reconnecting with people, situations, and power configurations from our history of past interactions and imprinting on that history our attitudes towards the people and languages concerned; through language choice, we maintain and change ethnic group boundaries and personal relationships, and construct and define «self» and «other» within a broader political economy and historical context».

So, the issue of language use that linguists and psycholinguists are concerned with becomes an issue of identity and identification for the sociolinguist.

It is necessary to emphasize that the process of data collection should be carefully planned, no matter what research perspective is chosen. A key consideration in this ac-

tivity is the selection of the participants and the data sources – documents, settings, or different contexts. Moreover, the process of answering a question in a systematic and rigorous way requires that certain conventions be followed, with the aim of reaching an answer or obtaining results that are generalizable, reliable, and valid. These three measures relate to the quality of an investigation. They should be explicitly dealt with at the beginning of the research enterprise, because they could influence decisions taken during the research process [8, с. 29].

The consistency of a research project refers to how well the research questions are linked to the theoretical framework, the methods, and what gets counted as data or evidence. The theory, the method, and the data are not disconnected choices; rather, they are related to the topic and the research questions established from the start of a project. It is for this reason that familiarity with the research traditions in multilingualism is of key importance.

Thus, the research perspectives described above allow the researcher to analyse the multifacet phenomenon of multilingualism from different perspectives. In order to choose an appropriate methodology, one has to formulate the initial question clearly. This branch of interest has a lot of aspects to be discovered: linguistic, psycholinguistic, sociolinguistic etc. That is why the perspectives of the future research are too much promising.

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