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ADAPTATION PROBLEMS OF ETHNOLINGUISTIC MINORITIES FROM SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIETAL PERSPECTIVES

Problemy adaptacyjne mniejszości etnojęzycznych z perspektywy psychologicznej i społecznej

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Introduction

The main objective of the present paper is twofold: to focus on the notion of bilingualism (the immersion – submersion dichotomy will be particularly exposed) as well as adaptation problems experienced by ethnolinguistic minorities through a review of research that exists in the literature and which examines the issues in question from two perspectives, that is: social psychological and societal. On a technical note, I would like to add that this article is by no means intended to make a comprehensive and exhaustive description of the subject matter, but, merely, to signal it. As a matter of fact, considering irrefutable redundancy, it is difficult to cite the most important definitions of bilingualism that have been propagated so far or make a synthetic review of even the most vital research in the field highlighting major adaptation problems experienced by ethnolinguistic minorities.

1. Bilingualism: A Review of Terminology

The history of linguistic contacts, the basis of which lies in exploration and exploitation, and relations between people speaking different languages, marks the beginning of the history of bilingualism (C. Baker, S. P. Jones 1998) which, it is believed, dates back to the third century BC (C. Baker 2006 following: W. F. Mackey 1978)[1]. That said, bilingual education, in turn, is a twentieth century phenomenon (C. Baker 2006).[2] Different educational initiatives emerge in the second half of the previous century – initiatives propagating teaching content through language (LAC, ImE, programmes for SLEP) or programmes whose main objective is to teach LSP (EST, ESP, EOP or EAP, *inter alia*) (J. C. Richards, T. S. Rodgers 2001). Around the same time, the Council of Europe, through appropriate conventions, charters, recommendations and treaties, such as for instance: *The Council Directive 77/486/EEC on the Education of Children of Migrant Workers* of 1977, *The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages* of 1992, *The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and Explanatory Report* of 1995, *Recommendation no. R (98)6 of the Committee of Ministers* of 1998, *The Action Plan Promoting Language Learning and Linguistic Diversity* of 2004, *A New Framework Strategy for Multilingualism* of 2005, *The Treaty of Lisbon* of 2009 or *Council Resolution of 21 November 2008 on a European Strategy for Multilingualism*, makes strong efforts in order to promote historical, regional and minority languages in Europe.

The definitions of bilingualism, although plentiful (L. Bloomfield 1933, F. Grosjean 1982/ 1989, S. Döpke 1992, E. Bialystok 2001, T. K. Bhatia – W. C. Ritchie 2004, A. Lam 2006, I. Kurcz 2007, E. Peal – W. E. Lambert 2007, E. Lipińska – A. Seretny 2012, E. Lipińska 2013 – just to mention a few linguists), are quite convergent with many common key concepts shared. Indeed, regardless of who their authors are, what recommendations and/ or conclusions

[1] Cf. also E. G. Lewis (1977, 1981).
[2] See e.g., J. Bloemendal (2015) on the role of Latin in bilingual and multilingual Europe.

there emerge in the optics of each one of them or what language(s) individual researchers refer to, the definitions in question by and large focus on the speaker's knowledge of two languages (viz. native and second) acquired according to one's age and social status. It is enough, I reckon, to recall here the one developed by E. Lipińska and A. Seretny (2012) which I tend to follow, that is: mastering, to the very same extent, two languages by a given person as their native counterparts of same age and social status. It depends on the ability to use all skills in the mother tongue and second language, and on the frequent and free use of them in different situations and with different participants of the communicative act. It also involves a close contact with both cultures and a possibility of experiencing them.[3]

Bearing these points in mind, bilingualism must be distinguished from "knowledge of two languages", "diglossia", "multilingualism" or "plurilingualism" – the latter introduced by the Council of Europe to imply a change in the approach to linguistic education since the purpose of the plurilingual user is no longer to achieve the native user's perfection in any given language(s) but merely to develop their competence. And "proper" bilingualism is certainly not to be confused with notions such as "fossilisation", "semilingualism", "pseudobilingualism" or "double illiteracy" either. *Au fond*, bilingualism is as different from multilingualism, as biculturalism is from multiculturalism[4]. Having said that, however, as A. Petrasová (2013) points out:

> [t]here are several terms that are congruous and incongruous to multiculturalism. They include: cross-cultural, cultural awareness, cultural diversity, cultural pluralism, cultural sensitivity, diversity, globalization, intercultural, transcultural, international, pluralism, multiethnic and the list goes on. To confuse the issue further, multiculturalism is used in a variety of contexts. Multiculturalism can be an idea, concept, educational reform movement or a process for institution change.[5]

For the purposes of this publication, multiculturalism is perceived as a concept[6].

2. Bilingualism: Immersion versus Submersion

Pioneering research on the development of bilingualism is begun by a French psychologist J. Ronjat, and later also W. Leopold; in both these cases it is carried out in the first half of the last century (in 1913 and from 1939 to 1949, respectively), followed by consequent works of W. Penfield and W. E. Lambert (eventually gathered and published by E. Peal and W. E. Lambert in 1962). Subsequent studies, many of which are case studies of idiosyncratic states or societies highlighting the recognition of history, politics or demography, post-war migration movements, postcolonial language policy, promotion of humanistic and egalitarian ideologies (A. Lam 2006) fundamentally confirm that bilingual children do not differ at all from their monolingual peers, except that they know two languages and not just one (W. Klein 1986).[7]

More than that, mixed contexts and reference points certainly bring to mind the most basic dichotomy associated with bilingualism, developed in order to account for the divergent findings of studies investigating immigrant/ minority children from those of majority children

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[3] E. Lipińska, A. Seretny, *Między językiem ojczystym a obcym. Nauczanie i uczenie się języka odziedziczonego na przykładzie chicagowskiej diaspory polonijnej*, Kraków 2012, pp. 27-28.
All translations from the Polish language are mine, M. Ł.

[4] Multiculturalism is an opposite ideological phenomenon from assimilation (D. M. Taylor 2007, S. Huntington 2007).

[5] Petrasová A., *Teaching with a Multicultural Perspective*, (in:) "Journal of Preschool and Elementary School Education" 2013, No 1, p. 80.

[6] For intercultural or cross-cultural communication and/ or intercultural language learning, see e.g., M. Byram (1997) or C. Kramsch (1998). For pluralism within unity, see A. Etzioni (1996).

[7] Interesting results emerge from K. Hakuta – R. M. Diaz' New Haven case study (1985) on Puerto Rican Spanish-English bilingual students.

in immersion programs, that is immersion (here: immersion in a new language for the child, i.e. the second language) and submersion ("dipping, sinking"; here: absorbing one's mother tongue by their second language) – or additive bilingualism and subtractive bilingualism, respectively. In the opinion of K. Hakuta et al. (1987), when it comes to the effects of bilingualism, the above distinction introduced by W. E. Lambert (1974) efficiently integrates a social psychological perspective. The two kinds of bilingualism are characterised by various intensity of positive and negative attitudes to one's own identity, as well as language culture of the foreign (target) community. In addition to that, the effects that each one of the above-mentioned types of bilingualism has on any individual are inextricably linked to the environment in which the individual in question is a current resident of. J. Cummins' idea of threshold hypothesis (1976, 1981, 1984) probes different types of social environment in which children acquire language which in turn results in different types of cognitive bilingualism affecting the child's cognitive development – ultimately resulting in different levels of proficiency in each of the two languages.

E. Lipińska and A. Seretny (2012) analyse terms such as "the mother tongue", "the first language", "the native language", "the primary language", "the ethnic language", "the national language", "the inherited language", "the output language", "the target language", "the foreign language" or "the second language". Moreover, they also point to the fact that when it comes to didactics, the dichotomy: the mother tongue (as a second language) versus foreign language breaks down, while "peculiarity of the heritage language causes its teaching to be a special case where aims of teaching language either as foreign or native, usually perceived as divergent, permeate and overlap"[8]. Indeed, according to them: "if the second language is an educational language, it then becomes the first functional language"[9]. Hence, in the case of Polish children and teenagers who attend English educational settings, English is their first functional language, Polish is their mother tongue as a second language, and French or Spanish – foreign languages. It should be emphasised that E. Lipińska and A. Seretny (2012) treat, in the Polish language context, "the mother tongue" (*język macierzysty*) as superior to "the native language" (*język ojczysty*) (in the sense: of one's own); it seems to stand in opposition to "the other", "not one's own".

But now to the main question, in additive bilingualism (or enrichment bilingualism) there is no threat of loss of the first language since the child's attitude both towards his/ her own language and culture (of the dominant ethnolinguistic group) as well as foreign (target but minority) language and culture is positive. It can also be found in situations where the maintenance of the first language of children belonging to some ethnolinguistic minority (societally subordinate as it may be) is promoted at school for additive bilingualism exists when the society values both languages and perceives acquisition of another language as a positive aspect of the child's development. As it has already been mentioned throughout the course of the present paper, works on additive bilingualism are initiated in the 1960s by W. Penfield and W. E. Lambert who linguistically test English-speaking children living in Montreal. The initial results, as we are all aware, are rather poor compared to the results achieved by their monolingual peers; it is only eventually that the children begin to achieve comparable results. The implications then prove positive effect of bilingual education on the child's native language, intelligence, and cognitive functioning (E. Peal – W. E. Lambert 1962).

Let me now move on to the concept of subtractive bilingualism (or replacive bilingualism) which in turn means absorbing one's mother tongue by their second language, which, consequently, leads to loss of their mother tongue: this can happen in circumstances

[8] E. Lipińska, A. Seretny, *Między językiem ojczystym a obcym. Nauczanie i uczenie się języka odziedziczonego na przykładzie chicagowskiej diaspory polonijnej*, Kraków 2012, p. 89.
[9] *Ibidem*, p. 26.

when a child, coming from an ethnic minority whose native language is of low social prestige[10], and who learns national curriculum school subjects along with native peers, is negatively predisposed to his/ her own language and culture favouring both foreign (host and majority) language and culture (W. E. Lambert 1974). This can occur where the two systems are in competition or even conflict. In this subtractive situation, as duly noticed by J. Cummins (1984), it is likely that children become less proficient in each of the two languages than monoglot native speakers would be otherwise.

At this point it is of central relevance to highlight that the typology of bilingualism is far richer than that. As a matter of fact, bearing in mind the effusion of mixed contexts and reference points taken in the literature of the subject, one can yet distinguish between the following kinds of bilingualism (I am mentioning them in alphabetical order): balanced (perfect) bilingualism, complementary bilingualism, complete (full) bilingualism, compound bilingualism, consecutive (successive) bilingualism, coordinate bilingualism, dormant bilingualism, functional bilingualism, individual bilingualism, natural bilingualism, productive bilingualism, real bilingualism, receptive bilingualism, simultaneous bilingualism, societal bilingualism, subordinate bilingualism, subtractive bilingualism or transitional bilingualism (T. K. Bhatia – W. C. Ritchie 2004, E. Bialystok 2001, S. Döpke 1992, F. Grosjean 1982, A. Lam 2006, E. Lipińska – A. Seretny 2012 , I. Kurcz 2007, E. Peal – W. E. Lambert 2007)[11].

3. Ethnic Diversity as a Social Complexity

The present publication has begun with a brief introduction to bilingualism. Let me turn attention now to the second subject matter: adaptation problems of ethnolinguistic minorities. An ethnic minority is a social group or a category of a given population that stands out within a larger society, and which is related to common race, language, nationality or culture; ethnicity, according to *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, is identical with language, culture and traditions, too (*Ethnic group* 2016).[12] Ethnic diversity, understood as one of the forms of social complexity, can be manifested by forced, induced or volitional acculturation, which can in turn result in assimilation, integration (inclusion), marginalisation and separation (isolation) with reference to the host society (J. W. Berry 1997).[13] S. Bochner (1982) makes an attempt to classify individuals in terms of their psychological responses to the host country. He (1982) posits namely that there are four main ways in which people tend to behave when they encounter a new culture; he calls them:

1. passing (viz. rejecting the culture of origin and embracing the new culture),
2. chauvinism (viz. rejecting the current culture and exaggerating the individual's own culture),
3. marginal (viz. hovering between the two cultures, the individual is not certain of who he/she is),
4. mediating (viz. the individual synthesizes and integrates both cultures).

The term referring to intrapersonal psychological processes as well as to interpersonal social functions is “ethnic identification”, also called “(cultural) identity” (E. Lipińska 2013).

[10] The society may not value the minority's language either, and any upward mobility may be possible only when the majority language is acquired.

[11] See M. Łączek (2018) for further clarification on that.

[12] See E. B. Ryan and H. Giles (1982) for their variants of assessing prestige of the mother (dominant) language and the second (minority) language. H. Giles et al. (1977) point to the fact that greater cultural differences are advantageous to language maintenance, while cultural proximity facilitates assimilation and makes it more difficult for immigrants to retain their heritage language.

[13] Switzerland, Belgium, and Canada are countries where a certain form of pluralism has been developed, understood as a combination of tolerance, interdependence, and separatism.

According to R. Laskowski (2009), worse educated emigrants[14] (here: of Polish origin) can experience "the cultural inferiority complex" resulting in their abandoning (or limiting) interaction in the Polish language at home and choosing the language of the country of settlement instead (here: Swedish)[15]; he (2009) calls this type of behaviour "the forward-escape strategy". R. Laskowski (2009) also makes a distinction between "acculturation" which he perceives as acquisition and acceptance of the language, system of values and social norms of the country of settlement, and "inculturation" (that is primary socialisation) which he understands as the child's acquisition of the system of values and fundamental norms of social behaviour taking place within the family. A linguistic class division termed "cultural division of labour" (M. Hechter 1978) can occur when language groups are differentially distributed in terms of social class with speakers of lesser spoken language groups located at the lower end of the social scale. Indeed, according to a study carried out among the children of mixed Swedish-Finnish couples (separately for children with a Swedish mother and for those with a Swedish father) in the bilingual city of Vasa in north-western Finland from the 1980s, the children of Swedish mothers are more often or much more often officially registered with Swedish nationality than the children of Swedish fathers; the children of Swedish mothers also more frequently attend schools with Swedish as the language of teaching (R. Laskowski 2009).

In the case of adults (parents) leaving their homeland, the term "emigrant generation" is used, whereas in the case of children – constituting a group of forced emigrants (here: born in Poland and/ or in the country of settlement) – "the first Polonia generation" (E. Lipińska – A. Seretny 2012). With regard to the latter, *videlicet* children who are bilingual due to relocation (especially forced relocation), despite acquired proficiency, a sense of repugnance for language used by the new society may appear (E. Bialystok 2001).[16] In addition to that, referring to the results of studies conducted in Australia[17], E. Lipińska and A. Seretny (2012) find that when both parents are Polish or of Polish origin, the Polish language is preserved by emigrant generation at the level of 73.3%, the first Polonia generation at the level of 39.3%, and the second Polonia generation at the level of 13.6%. As per mixed marriages, these figures are: 13.6%, 7.5% and 0.8%, respectively. That an important role in language learning with respect to language(s) is played by one's attitude or linguistic preference is demonstrated by A. Rabiej (2008) who, in her study, addresses younger pupils (aged 8-12) at American Polonia schools – in general, they recognise the value of knowing two languages, including the ethnic one. E. Lipińska and A. Seretny (2012), to give another source of evidence on the issue under discussion, address the results of the questionnaires conducted among older students (from Year 9 to Year 11) from several schools in the Chicago area. The surveys in question focus on sociological, psychological, and linguistic issues – those analysed by the authoresses concentrate on: ethnic identification, the level of knowledge of Polish and English (self-assessment), attitude to English and Polish, language of communication with parents and siblings, attitude towards Polish school, and future plans.

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[14] E. Lipińska (2013) following P. Boski (2009) uses the term "(e/ im)migration" which is a combination of two different perspectives, i.e.: emigration and immigration of the same, but superior, phenomenon of migration.

[15] As he (2009) accurately puts it: the immigrant children must live in two different cultural and linguistic environments: the microcosm of the family and the surrounding macrocosm of the society (here: Swedish). To take a different example, M. Byram (2008) speaks of three levels of socialisation, *videlicet*: primary socialisation, schooling, tertiary socialization, while U. Bronfenbrenner (1977) identifies four systems (the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, and the macrosystem), and each contains rules, norms, and roles that shape development.

[16] In England and Wales, pupils/ students who are members of ethnic minorities remain until the age of 16 (that is the year of their completion of compulsory education) under supervision of special educational needs departments or English as an additional language departments.

[17] For adaptation issues in a new environment (on the example of Poles residing in Australia), see E. Lipińska (2013).

4. Adaptation Problems of Ethnolinguistic Minorities from Social Psychological and Societal Perspectives: A Review of Research

In 1978 J. Schumann comes up with the idea of "acculturation hypothesis", according to which the amount of language available to those (e/ im)migrants learning the second language in natural environments is reduced due to social and psychological distance. Ch. Bratt Paulston (1980) shortly after analyses the societal conditions (i.e., the role of different types of interethnic contact that are likely to lead to group bilingualism) and the role that language plays in the maintenance of boundaries among ethnic groups – her study (1980) stresses the role of power and of the possibilities available to ethnic minorities to become integrated into the dominant group. Equally vital at this stage is how the contact gets originated at all: whether the minority group is an indigenous or an immigrant group (dominant groups are likely to maintain their mother tongue, whereas indigenous peoples are more likely than immigrants to resist a rapid shift in mother tongue) (S. Lieberson et al. 1975, Ch. Paulston 1980).

At the individual level, R. C. Gardner (1983), from the perspective of social psychological variables, and after finding a clear link to those cognitive ones, accounts for the findings of his studies through a socioeducational model.[18] He (1983) emphasizes four elements involved in second-language acquisition, namely:

1. the social milieu of learning,
2. individual difference variables (attitudes, motivation, and language aptitude),
3. the contexts for language acquisition,
4. outcomes.

R. C. Gardner (1983) further hypothesizes that the cultural beliefs developed in a particular social environment influence the development of attitude variables that include integrativeness (referring to positive affect toward the other language community) and attitudes toward the learning situation (referring to the individual's evaluative feelings about the learning context); both these types of attitudes, in turn, influence the individual's motivation.[19] Another hypothesis of the model is that motivation and language aptitude interact with the context of language acquisition (formal or informal) to influence the development of language proficiency and the outcomes of second-language acquisition: in formal acquisition contexts both aptitude and motivation are important, whereas in informal contexts motivation prevails (R. C. Gardner 1983).

L. Beebe and H. Giles (1984) in their "communication accommodation theory" put forward socio-cultural distance between members of the same (minority) community and representatives of the host society, according to which those who are not native speakers, but remain positive towards the majority group, subconsciously stick to linguistic forms used by native interlocutors, and those who wish to manifest their own identity and negative attitude towards the language of the host society tend to favour interlanguage forms.

Around the same time H. Giles et al. (1977) propose an "intergroup theory of second-language acquisition" that accounts for the development of proficiency in the dominant language by members of ethnolinguistic minorities based on social psychological concepts (derived from "ethnolinguistic identity theory") that in turn focuses on the conditions under which individuals perceive language as an important aspect of their social identity (P. Ball et al. 1984, H. Giles – P. Johnson 1981), and from "social identity theory" according to which

[18] Cf., among other things, socioeducational model of second language acquisition in R. Gardner – W. E. Lambert (1959) or R. Gardner et al. (1976). Also, in 1979 R. C. Gardner finds that there are higher correlations between language achievement and both motivation and language aptitude in monolingual than in bilingual communities.

[19] F. Genesee (1984) makes an attempt to expand R. C. Gardner's (1983) model to bilingual, cross-cultural contexts by including intergroup factors in the model, examining the role of the second-language learner's perceptions of motivational support by the target language group.

language can eventually become a salient dimension for comparison and a source of either favourable or unfavourable social identity (H. Tajfel 1978, H. Tajfel – J. C. Turner 1986). Indeed, when individuals experience a negative ethnic identity, they may respond with various intergroup strategies such as individual mobility, social creativity and social competition to recover a positive sense of their social self (P. Ball et al. 1984, H. Tajfel – J. C. Turner, 1986). P. Ball et al. (1984) define five conditions under which people attempt to distinguish themselves from outgroups based on language; these are:

1. when, as members of a group, they identify language as an important dimension of the group's identity,
2. when they regard their group's relative status as changeable and attribute the cause of their relative social status to advantages taken unfairly by the outgroup,
3. when they perceive their ingroup's ethnolinguistic vitality to be high,
4. when they perceive intergroup boundaries to be firm,
5. when they identify with few other social groups and/or with ones that offer only unfavorable

social comparisons[20].

The reverse of these conditions may result in attempts to become assimilated into the outgroup and to attrition of the ingroup language alike. Finally, P. Ball et al. (1984) use these propositions to construct a model which predicts in what circumstances members of a subordinate group acquire native-like proficiency in the dominant language by distinguishing between subgroups of the language minority to whom the above propositions do and do not apply.

Last but not least, P. Lightbown and N. Spada (1993) indicate that members of the minority group represent different attitudes and follow different motivations when learning the language of the majority than representatives of the majority group acquiring the language of the minority. Bilinguals can more strongly affirm their sense of ethnic identity in one language than in the other, too – as indicated by the studies conducted by Ervin, Guttfreund, Bond (in J. F. Hamers – M. H. A. Blanc 2000).[21] Language attitudes can, therefore, be multi-dimensional alike[22]: attitudes can be cognitive (viz. beliefs about the languages), affective (viz. feelings towards languages) or behavioural (viz. inclination towards certain language behaviour).

5. Conclusions

A fundamentalist argument against bilingual education was that languages are linked to cultures, and therefore, a person can only belong to one culture. Recent research, however, shows that this is not the case provided that both cultures are equally valued in the social context of the student (which is certainly not the case when it comes to subtractive bilingualism). The school, therefore, can and should play a significant role in the processes of acculturation and/ or integration of those children who come from various ethnolinguistic backgrounds.

An important factor that has an influence on the child's socialisation and cognitive development is the proportion of immigrant children alike – per class or school; Swedish-based studies show a very strong negative effect of a high percentage of immigrant children in a

[20] P. Ball, H. Giles, J. Byrne, P. Berechree, *Situational Constraints on the Evaluative Significance of Speech Accommodation: Some Australian Data*, (in:) "International Journal of the Sociology of Language" 1984, No 46.
[21] Language can influence social order as well by serving as a symbol of group identification and societal status (see J. Gumperz 1982).
[22] See, for example, H. Giles, M. Hewstone, P. Ball, *Language Attitudes in Multilingual Settings: Prologue with Priorities* (in:) "Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development", 1983, No 4.

school on the children's achievements (R. Laskowski 2009). In addition to that, in a multilingual and multicultural community of students, there are numerous problems, not only linguistic, but also educational – that is ones which are associated with the transfer to the school environment of various behaviours inherent in the culture of a given nation or ethnic group (P. Ó Riagáin – G. Lüdi 2003, M. Kotarba 2011).

The implications drawn from all the studies referred to above are significant. And so are the results of research on the relation between bilingualism and cognitive development conducted, among others, by S. E. Duncan and E. A. De Avila (1979), B. Bain and A. Yu (1980), K. Hakuta and R. M. Diaz (1985), R. M. Diaz (1985) or K. Hakuta, B. M. Ferdman and R. M. Diaz (1987) – the work of the latter is, in particular, based on cognitive, socio-psychological and social bilingualism. The study by M. Paradis (2000, 2004) in turn demonstrates that the brain of a monolingual person is no different from the brain of a bilingual person, and that potential differences are only a consequence of the degree to which the brain is used. Numerous studies are also devoted to metalinguistic awareness of learners which is more developed in the case of bilingual children – see e.g., A. Ianco-Worrall (1972), S. Ben-Zeev (1977), J. Cummins (1978). Bilingualism can be probed from an ethnographic (e.g., J. J. Gumperz 1982) or a sociological (e.g., J. A. Fishman 1971) perspective alike. They all contribute to the development of the field.[23]

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