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PLURILINGUALISM AND THE SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER EDUCATION

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Abstract. The article aims at clarifying the premises of modelling educational outcomes of second language (L2) teachers' preparation by defining two core aspects of their professional competence architecture. From the perspectives of the communicative competence approach and the plurilingual approach to language teaching, metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual mindset are presented as the L2 teacher's core characteristics determining the efficiency of his/her professional functioning and the appropriateness of using L2 in a variety of professional contexts. The specific type of metalinguistic reflection emerging in prospective L2 teachers (teacher metalinguistic awareness) is described as including (1) performance-driven language awareness acquired as the consequence of the gradual accumulation of language use experience; (2) critical metalinguistic awareness rooted in theoretical linguistic thinking; (3) metalingual knowledge; (4) awareness of language from learner's perspective. It is shown that professional plurilingual / pluricultural mindset provides the L2 teacher with a set of presuppositions, thought content and focus for mobilizing plurality of languages for effective communication and identifying resources for language teaching and professional communication by flexible adjusting integrated L1-L2 repertoire. An attitude of openness and worldviews curiosity, a focus on recognizing cultural diversity and a purposeful engagement of the interrelated repertoire of several languages in communication are described among the key elements of professional plurilingual / pluricultural mindset. It is concluded that an intensive promotion of awareness-raising activities aimed at enhancing teacher metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual / pluricultural mindset are supposed to contribute to prospective L2 teachers' acquiring professional autonomy and the sense of professional self.

Keywords: second language teacher education; emerging bilingualism; theoretical thinking; plurilingualism; communicative repertoire; professional mindset.

ПЛЮРИЛИНГВИЗМ И ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНАЯ ПОДГОТОВКА УЧИТЕЛЯ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА

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Аннотация. В статье рассматривается проблема моделирования образовательных результатов профессиональной подготовки студентов, обучающихся по направлениям иноязычного педагогического образования. В качестве объекта исследования выступает процесс формирования профессиональной коммуникативной компетентности будущих учителей иностранного языка. Предметом исследования являются металингвистическая осознанность и плюрилингвальный коммуникативный репертуар как предпосылки успешности профессиональной коммуникативной деятельности учителя иностранного языка. Исследование выполнено в рамках компетентностного подхода, представляющего языковую подготовку учителя иностранного языка с точки зрения сложной организации формирующихся интеллектуальных и психофизиологических качеств, знаний, умений, способностей и готовности к иноязычной коммуникации, совокупно обеспечивающих использование иностранного языка как средства профессиональной деятельности. Содержание металингвистической осознанности, формирующейся в процессе профессиональной подготовки, представлено в виде совокупности взаимодействующих аспектов, включающих (1) практическую языковую осознанность, которая определяется накоплением опыта употребления иностранного языка в качестве средства коммуникации; (2) критическую металингвистическую осознанность, укорененную в теоретическом лингвистическом мышлении; (3) знание метаязыка, необходимого для описания языка и речи и их использования как средства обучения; (4) осознание «языка со стороны ученика», то есть знание особенностей коммуникативного развития субъекта, изучающего иностранный язык, способность моделировать его / ее языковое сознание и контролировать дидактическое воздействие языкового содержания материалов и заданий. Профессиональный плюрилингвальный образ мышления учителя иностранного языка представлен как следствие постепенной профессионализации сознания студентов, получающих иноязычное педагогическое образование. В работе доказывается, что плюрилингвальный образ мышления позволяет учителю устанавливать приоритеты межкультурной коммуникации и выступать медиатором в процессе обучения, опираясь на весь коммуникативный репертуар взаимодействующих языков (родного и иностранного), который имеется в его / ее распоряжении. В заключение обосновывается необходимость включения в языковую

подготовку учителей иностранного языка специальных видов учебной деятельности, направленных на развитие металингвистической рефлексии и плюрилингвального образа мышления.

Ключевые слова: профессиональная подготовка учителя иностранного языка; учебный билингвизм; теоретическое мышление; плюрилингвизм; коммуникативный репертуар; профессиональный образ мышления.

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Introduction. The investigation agenda of foreign / second language (L2) teachers' education is characterized by interdependence among theory, research, and practice [Gregersen, MacIntyre 2017]. Presenting a more general framework of L2 teachers' education theory remains a necessary task in today's reality of rearranging educational programs to meet the requirements of dynamically transforming sociocultural demands. The prospective teachers' language preparation, their achieving highest levels of proficiency in L2 and acquiring professional communicative expertise are also re-conceptualized in accordance with the developing understanding of the complexity of actual language use in various modes of communication.

Distinguishing between experiential and awareness-raising practices in L2 teachers' professional preparation [Ellis 1986] has long been accepted as a fundamental principle. Such approach is based on the necessity to discuss the problem of providing teacher students with a solid foundation for their profession and presenting such foundation as comprising both (1) the conscious understanding of the principles underlying L2 teachers' professional functioning and (2) the abilities to appropriately implement the acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes into practice.

As far as language preparation is concerned, such approach may be used for integrating various aspects of language proficiency and describing the resulting use of L2 as a (1) meaning construction resource, (2) a tool of cognition and the world perception, (3) a tool of communication in a vast variety of contexts (including professional communication) and (4) a tool of teaching. Seen this way, awareness-raising practices of language preparation aim at enhancing different types of students' linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge, reflection on language and its use, critical metacognitive awareness of language and culture. Experiential practices involve the prospective teacher in actual L2 use and aim at enhancing his/her communicative competence in its multi-faceted complexity.

Acquiring the profession of the L2 teacher requires achieving the highest levels of L2 proficiency. Advanced-level L2 proficiency is known to reorganize the L2 user's conceptual system [Kecskes 2010] and provide the learner with new ways of perceiving, thinking and talking about reality through internalization of new conceptual knowledge [Lantolf 2006; Lantolf & Zhang 2017]. Despite being supported by the studies, the effect of advanced L2 competence upon personality transformations needs further investigation. Advanced language proficiency of L2 teacher students is to be discussed in the light of defining objectives of professional education and planning the desired educational outcomes.

Currently, the metalanguage for discussing the overall language proficiency and language learning outcomes is developing [CEFR 2018]. Modelling educational outcomes of L2 teachers' professional preparation is a key task of higher education theory and language pedagogy. The aim of this paper is to clarify the premises of modelling educational outcomes of L2 teachers' language preparation by defining two core aspects of L2 teachers' professional competence architecture. We state that critical metalinguistic awareness and professional plurilingual / pluricultural mindset should be seen as novel distinguishing features, which emerge in prospective L2 teachers in the course of their education and communicative development and underlie L2 teachers' professional functioning.

Methodology of the research. To achieve the aim of the research, we rely upon the communicative competence approach with its established procedure to present language proficiency as real-life language use, grounded in four modes of communication (production, reception, interaction, mediation) and three aspects of communication (linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic competences) intertwined in any language use [CEFR 2018; Taguchi 2018; Whyte 2019]. Within such framework, language use is described as the speaker's functioning in a communicative situation, in which his/her general competences (knowledge of the world, intercultural competence, professional experience, etc.) are supposed to be always combined with communicative language competences and strategies in order to achieve the aims of communication [CEFR 2018: 29].

In this study, we also make use of the multicompetence approach in SLA research, which foregrounds the unique status of the L2 user [Cook 2016; Chang 2019] and analyzes language learning as a two-way transfer resulting in the L2 user's acquiring a set of characteristics which drastically differ him/her from a monolingual language user [Cook 2016]. Thus, we follow the established pattern of emphasizing the unique nature of the L2 user's multicompetence and profile prospective L2 teachers' communicative development in terms of complex ecologies of L1-L2 inter-functioning.

Another methodological framework we rely upon is the plurilingualism perspective in language pedagogy [Lau, Viegen 2020; Kubota 2020] that shares an understanding of a synthesis of language and cultural resources used by the L2 user in communication and views his/her L1 and L2 resources as an integrated communicative repertoire.

From such perspectives, we address metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual mindset as the L2 teacher's core characteristics determining the appropriate use of L2 in a variety of professional contexts and the efficient professional functioning of the L2 teacher. Our study seeks to advance the concepts of metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual

mindset by conducting a focused review of the state of the art in language teachers' education research and providing an in-depth account of the most relevant theories of L2 learning, metacognition and plurilingualism framing the field.

Teacher Metalinguistic Awareness as the Emerging Capacity of Prospective L2 Teachers. SLA research shows that metalinguistic awareness is an emerging property of the L2 user's proficiency developed due to the interaction between the languages in the multilingual system [Jessner 2018].

Observing the practices of prospective teachers' language training we can state that metalinguistic awareness is developed in L2 teacher students twofold. Firstly, being L2 learners in the higher education system, students are exposed to both communicative language teaching and explicit language instruction and tend to operationalize knowledge about language as part of their extensive practical use of L2. We consider metalinguistic awareness emerging in L2 learners under such impacts to be performance driven, i.e. arising as the consequence of learners' L2 proficiency development and gradual accumulation of language use experience. Understood in a broader sense, such performance-driven language awareness may be presented as a continuum of capacities embracing knowledge about language, skills of reflection on language and its use, abilities to consciously monitor and control strategies of language use, which are gained in the course of practical language preparation. In this broad sense the term "language awareness" is often used to highlight the aspect of conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning and language use [Jessner 2018].

Secondly, due to the specialized use of language as an object and a means of professionalization, prospective L2 teachers not only develop in themselves a higher degree of cross-linguistic awareness leading to metalinguistic transfer across L1 and L2 (more on the notion of metalinguistic transfer see in [James 1996]), but also become sensitive to recognizing any human language as a complex functional system with the elaborate architecture. This plane of student's metalinguistic awareness may result from systematic scientific education in linguistics, intercultural communication theory, and language pedagogy. Students construct new schemata and new ways of understanding the world through the prism of theoretical linguistic thinking. According to V. V. Davydov, theoretical thinking is the quality of thinking characterized by the motivation and ability to reveal the essence of the phenomenon, establish the essential relationships of the whole object and its genetically original form; it occurs when there arises the necessity for constructing and assimilating a generalized method for dealing with broad classes of problems [Davydov 1999]. Theoretical thinking is opposed to empirical thinking, which involves pattern recognition of perceived objects and building hierarchical classifications [Davydov 1999]. Theoretical linguistic thinking is metacognitive in its nature, it is based on metalinguistic abstraction, analysis, generalization, and scientific concepts formation. Prospective L2 teachers are trained to understand language multidimensionally as a cultural phenomenon and as a means of cognition and communication; they gain a broad abstract knowledge about the structure of human language and general principles of language functioning.

The question to what extent learners can benefit communicatively in L1 and L2 from acquiring explicit metalinguistic awareness stays debatable. Nevertheless, the research shows that the enhancement of metalinguistic awareness has positive effects on language users in cognitive, affective and social dimensions [Roehr-Brackin 2018]. Among cognitive effects K. Roehr-Brackin names developing awareness of language functions, patterns in language, contrasts between languages [Roehr-Brackin 2018]. The affective domain refers to forming attitudes and aesthetic response to language [Roehr-Brackin 2018]. The social domain refers to an improved understanding of language and an appreciation of cultural variety [Roehr-Brackin 2018].

If we model the desired educational outcome of L2 teacher students' language preparation, the acquired metalinguistic awareness is to be critical and rooted in higher-order linguistic thinking. Critical metalinguistic awareness based on metalinguistic abstraction, analysis and generalization provides a solid ground for L2 teachers' implementing linguistically responsive practices in language teaching. The knowledge about language and critical awareness of language complexity and linguistic diversity are more than the basis for professional communicative functioning of L2 teachers. Such metalinguistic awareness allows prospective L2 teachers to focus on both the subject-matter content (the organization of language systems, language functions, modes of communication etc.) and the identity transforming impacts of language learning (the role of language in the world's conceptualization and in the identity construction, meaning of language as a social practice, etc.).

Another domain of L2 teacher students' awareness development is their acquisition of metalingual knowledge defined by R. Ellis as "knowledge of the technical terminology needed to describe language" [Ellis 1994: 714]. We suppose that the domain of L2 teachers' metalingual knowledge can be seen in a broader perspective. Firstly, it obviously includes the knowledge of metalanguage for describing language and the knowledge about "classroom language", i.e. knowing how to use L2 for instruction. Besides, metalingual knowledge includes the teacher's reflections on the ways of maximizing L2 exposure in the classroom and abilities to control L2 use as a means of teaching.

Thus, in the course of L2 teachers' education the integration of several domains of metalinguistic awareness leads to the emergence of the specific type of metalinguistic capacity peculiar to L2 teaching professionals – "teacher metalinguistic awareness". Although the concept of teacher metalinguistic awareness (also termed as "teacher language awareness") is discussed in SLA and language pedagogy [Andrews 2003; Andrews 2008; Otwinowska 2017], it needs further study. S. Andrews highlights the following characteristics of teacher language awareness: (1) the closeness of relationship between knowledge about language (subject-matter knowledge) and knowledge of language (language proficiency) [Andrews 2003: 85-86]; (2) the involvement of an extra cognitive dimension of reflections upon both knowledge of subject matter and language proficiency, which provides a basis for the tasks of planning and teaching:

“this is what distinguishes the knowledge base of the teacher from that of the learner” [Andrews 2003: 86]; (3) the presence of “an awareness of language from the learner’s perspective, an awareness of the learner’s developing interlanguage, and an awareness of the extent to which the language content of materials/lessons poses difficulties for students” [Andrews 2003: 86]. We find the latter feature extremely important for understanding the nature of teacher metalinguistic awareness because it actualizes the intersubjectivity of L2 teaching–learning process and foregrounds the role of the teacher as a mediator in educational communication.

To conclude, the specific type of teacher metalinguistic awareness embraces such domains as (1) performance-driven language awareness (knowledge about language and communication, skills of reflection on language, abilities to consciously control strategies of language use) acquired as the consequence of the gradual accumulation of language use experience; (2) critical metalinguistic awareness rooted in theoretical linguistic thinking employing metalinguistic abstraction, analysis, generalization, and scientific concepts formation; (3) metalingual knowledge, i.e. knowledge of the metalanguage needed to describe language, knowing how to use L2 for instruction, reflections on the ways of maximizing L2 exposure in the classroom, abilities to control L2 use as a means of teaching; (4) awareness of language from learner’s perspective, i.e. knowledge about the learner’s communicative development and abilities to monitor and control the impact of the language content of teaching materials and tasks.

The Developing Understanding of Intercultural Communication and the Concept of Professional Plurilingual / Pluricultural Mindset of L2 Teachers. B. L. Leaver and B. Shekhtman state that at the superior level of language proficiency higher-order thinking, such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation are essential to students’ learning [Leaver & Shekhtman 2004]. In L2 teachers’ education advanced-level *L2 learning* is supposed to be implemented in the advanced-level *L2 study* embracing the analysis and critical evaluation of both the L2 “big culture” of history, literature, art, music, traditions, values, and the L2 “little culture” of sociocultural conventions, codes, assumptions, artefacts. As a result of such education and systematic focus on the relationships between two (or several) language cultures, L2 teacher students are expected to have acquired the expertise in intercultural communication. In a broader sense, the core components of such expertise are known to be attitudes (valuing cultural diversity and pluralism, etc.), knowledge and understanding (communicative awareness, knowledge of beliefs, etc.) skills (linguistic, sociolinguistic and discourse skills, skills in mediating intercultural exchanges, etc.), and actions (interacting and communicating appropriately with people who have different cultural affiliations, etc.) [Developing Intercultural Competence through Education 2014: 19-21]. The obvious impact of the intercultural reconceptualization of L2 teaching in the higher education system in Russia and a shift to intercultural dialogue orientation in academic programs is that the advanced L2 proficiency of prospective teachers is formed and maintained as related to their intercultural awareness and expertise.

Nowadays the understanding of intercultural communication is developing. It is getting more complex and accommodating itself to the increasing diversity of our societies. For example, the “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages” (CEFR) broadens the perspective of language education in a number of ways by introducing the notions of mediation and plurilingual / pluricultural competences [CEFR 2018]. The CEFR highlights the following: “In the reality of today’s increasingly diverse societies, the construction of meaning may take place across languages and draw upon user / learners’ plurilingual and pluricultural repertoires” [CEFR 2018: 27].

Plurilingualism is the theoretical perspective that promotes “a composite view of language resources” [Lau, Viegen 2020: 11] of the L2 user and highlights “synthesis of language and culture resources and competence rather than just the idea of many or multiple” [Lau, Viegen 2020: 12]. Plurilingual / pluricultural competence is described as the ability to call flexibly upon an inter-related, uneven, plurilinguistic repertoire, upon the integrated knowledge of a number of languages used by an individual for meaning construction and communication [CEFR 2018]. Thus, proficiency in two languages is not conceptualized separately for L1 and L2 competences developed in language learning but is described as an integrated functional system of L1-L2 repertoire. Plurilingual repertoire of the language user is known to depend on his/her personal trajectories of L2 learning and involve a range of general and communicative competences [CEFR 2018].

Thus, a prospective L2 teacher is supposed to make the best use of the advanced-level knowledge of both L1 and L2 (and other languages) by building on his / her own plurilingual repertoire and relying on the whole linguistic resource he / she possesses to communicate effectively. A successful learning outcome of L2 teacher student may be presented in the form of an individual plurilingual proficiency profile, which reflects his / her competences across languages in different modes of communication (a sample of such profile is presented in [CEFR 2018: 40]).

As far as the general educational outcome is concerned, we state that enhancing students’ metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual competence combined with profound L2 training leads to the formation of second language identity and professional plurilingual/pluricultural mindset in prospective L2 teachers. We regard language as a tool for identity construction and consequently, conceptualize gaining the advanced-level L2 proficiency as a driving force for the complex identity changes in L2 users. Though more research on the effect of language learning on identity construction is needed, several studies show that language expertise and pluricultural competence influence L2 users’ self-identification both in sociocultural and professional domains [Polonyova 2018].

We see the concept of plurilingual / pluricultural mindset as the framework of reference for discussing the problems of L2 teachers’ professionalization and L2 teachers’ understanding their professional attitudes, roles, and responsibilities. According to S. Schein, mindset is a complex psychological construct underpinning personally distinguishable values, beliefs, and attitudes [Schein 2015]. In Mindset Theory of Action Phases (MAP) various types

of mindsets are described as configurations of cognitive procedures that define critical tasks contexts and contribute to goal setting and goal striving [Keller, Bieleke, Gollwitzer 2019].

We define plurilingual / pluricultural mindset as a psychological construct system embracing a set of presuppositions, thought content and focus, which underlie successful communicative functioning of a language user, who mediates between languages and cultures and whose meaning-construction capacity relies on two (or more) interrelated languages. The key elements of this system are (1) an attitude of openness and worldviews curiosity; (2) a focus on recognizing cultural diversity and knowing how to deal with language otherness; (3) a greater awareness of what is general and what is specific in communicative functioning of languages; (4) a purposeful engagement of the interrelated repertoire of several languages in communication. Plurilingual / pluricultural mindset embraces the diversity of worldviews profiled by languages and languacultures, which is foundational for developing multiperspectivity.

Professional plurilingual / pluricultural mindset is, on the one hand, the consequence of a gradual communicative and intercultural development of a prospective L2 teacher and, on the other hand, the emergent outcome of gradual professionalization, i.e. preparation of students to professional activities of the L2 teacher and formation of professional interests and intentions. Professional plurilingual / pluricultural mindset determines the teacher student's sense of professional belonging and shapes his / her confidence in mediating languages and facilitating communication in class and out of class. Namely, professional plurilingual / pluricultural mindset allows (1) setting overall teaching goals and definite communicative tasks from the perspective of mobilizing plurality of languages for effective educational communication and intercultural dialogue; (2) identifying resources for language teaching and professional communication by flexible adaptation and adjusting integrated L1-L2 repertoire to definite communicative situations; (3) evaluating teaching and communicative outcomes in terms of the appropriateness of the exploited plurilingual means and strategies.

To sum up, education of prospective L2 teachers is aimed at turning them into professional linguistic and cultural mediators, who are capable of initiating L2 learners into the world of a new culture and new meaning construction resources. Professional plurilingual / pluricultural mindset is the cornerstone of taking control of professional functioning across languages and cultures.

Conclusion. Modelling educational outcomes of the L2 teachers' professional preparation requires defining the factors which enable them to teach effectively. Professional competence of the L2 teacher has an extraordinarily complex architecture of sub-competences manifesting themselves in an intricate network of interrelations between professionally important psychophysiological qualities, attitudes, values, knowledge bases, vocational actions, skills and groups of readiness. We see teacher metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual mindset as the core basic elements underlying the L2 teacher's professional competence. L2 teacher's professionalism is defined by the extent to which he / she is aware of language as an object and a means of professionalization and is able to construct his / her professional self-understanding through this awareness.

Teacher educators and providers of teacher training programs are to take into account the necessity of including awareness-raising activities in the L2 teacher education curricula. Exposing students to plurilingualism and intensive promotion of activities aimed at enhancing their metalinguistic awareness and plurilingual mindset are bound to contribute to prospective L2 teachers' acquiring professional autonomy and the sense of professional self.

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