



POLYGLOT AGENDA OVER THE YEARS: DATA OF ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS SINCE 2013

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Abstract. *This paper is a review of organised discussions on polyglottery from 2013 to 2022. The starting point of the present study is the round table “Polyglottery and Education” that took place during the International Conference on Multilingual Proficiency: Language, Polyglossia and Polyglottery (New York, 2013). This event is notable for being the first academic discussion of polyglot issues, which brought together both established linguists and renowned polyglots. It also pre-signified the beginning of the modern period for polyglottery as a movement and a science, the latter being marked by the emergence of regular research publications on the subject. The main topics of the 2013 discussion are used as a reference point to compare with the agenda of subsequent polyglot round tables. The data for comparison is drawn from panel discussions held as part of the Polyglot Gatherings and Polyglot Conferences, on the one hand, and at academic symposiums, on the other, thus embracing both the first and third person perspectives (polyglots as the subject vs. the object of study). Presentation of data from the said events is followed by a conclusion about the dynamics of polyglot discussions over the years. The study shows that polyglottery has become a more frequent subject in scientific discourse. It also demonstrates that the topics addressed at the initial 2013 New York round table (such as defining a polyglot, efficient methods of language-learning, etc.) found their way into subsequent forums and are still relevant among polyglots today. At the same time, new issues have been added to the agenda (using internet platforms to learn languages, studying multiple languages simultaneously, raising multilingual children, etc.). This may reflect the stable and the changeable elements in the structure of interests in the polyglot community.*

Keywords: polyglot, polyglottery, multilingualism, language learning, round table discussion

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ТЕМАТИКА ПОЛИГЛОТИИ СКВОЗЬ ГОДА: ДАННЫЕ КРУГЛЫХ СТОЛОВ С 2013 Г.

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Аннотация. Данная работа представляет собой обзор круглых столов по вопросам полиглотики с 2013 по 2022 г. Отправной точкой статьи является круглый стол «Polyglottery and Education» («Полиглотия и образование»), прошедший в рамках международной конференции “Multilingual Proficiency: Language, Polyglossia and Polyglottery” («Многоязычные знания: язык, полиглоссия и полиглотия») в Нью-Йорке в 2013 году. Это событие имеет большое значение как первая научная дискуссия о полиглотии, в которой приняли участие как авторитетные лингвисты, так и широко известные полиглоты со всего мира. Кроме того, данный форум предвозвестил начало современного периода развития полиглотики как общественного движения и направления исследований, подтверждением чему служит появление регулярных научных публикаций на эту тему. Вопросы дискуссии 2013 года также являются основой для сравнения с проблематикой последующих круглых столов. Данными для сравнения служат материалы дискуссий, проведённых, с одной стороны, в рамках Съездов (Polyglot Gathering) и Конференций полиглотов (Polyglot Conference), в которых полиглоты являются субъектами процесса изучения языков, а с другой – в рамках научных конференций, где они предстают в качестве объекта исследований. Таким образом, даётся перспектива как от первого, так и от третьего лица. Вслед за представлением информации о вышеупомянутых событиях следует заключение относительно динамики дискуссий о полиглотии за прошедшие годы. Исследование показывает, что полиглотия стала более популярной темой в научном дискурсе. Помимо этого, отмечается, что проблематика нью-йоркского круглого стола 2013 года (определение полиглота, эффективные методики овладения языком и т.п.) получила продолжение на последующих форумах и сохраняет актуальность среди полиглотов до сих пор. В то же время программа дискуссий пополнилась и новыми темами (использование интернет-платформ для овладения языком, изучение нескольких языков одновременно, воспитание многоязычных детей и др.), что может отражать постоянные и изменчивые элементы в структуре интересов сообщества полиглотов.

Ключевые слова: полиглот, полиглотия, многоязычие, изучение иностранных языков, круглый стол

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Introduction

Currently, polyglottery is defined as consciously achieved individual multilingualism [13]. This definition allows us to indicate the difference between polyglottery and related concepts of polyglossia (the simultaneous use of different languages in certain regions) and multilingualism (knowledge of several languages acquired from the environment in childhood).

Grigory Kazakov defines polyglottery as the study of the knowledge of multiple languages. As its main questions, he singles out the following: the definition of a polyglot, the definition of language knowledge,

polyglots' learning methods, the most effective ways of learning a language, and ways to make positive changes in the field of teaching languages. In addition, the question of how many languages one can know in general and at what level is posed [8], [13].

Olessia Jouravlev, Zachary Mineroff, Idan Blank & Evelina Fedorenko offer the following definition of a polyglot: these are people who possess skills in at least five languages (including their mother tongue) and are at a high level of proficiency in at least one foreign language. Nevertheless, they noted the conventionality of this definition due to the lack of research on this topic in the past [7]. Grigory Kazakov characterises polyglots as people who speak several languages as a result of deliberate study [13].

Over the recent years, the amount of scientific research in the field of polyglottery has increased markedly. To date, some 40 academic articles have been published on this topic. It is stated that polyglottery has become a recognised field of research [ibid.]. Some of the evidence of this process are the academic round tables on polyglottery, such as those held at the International Symposium on Language Education, Polyglottery and Geolinguistics (Moscow, 2018), the 12th Congress of the International Society of Applied Psycholinguistics (online, 2021) and the 20th International Symposium on Psycholinguistics and Communication Theory (online, 2022).

Another source of information about polyglottery is the events organised directly by the polyglot movement. The most significant among them are the Polyglot Conference and the Polyglot Gathering. The Polyglot Conference was first organised in Budapest in 2013 and has since been held in Novi Sad (2014), New York (2015), Thessaloniki (2016), Reykjavik (2017), Ljubljana (2018), Fukuoka (2019) and online (2020–2021). Polyglot Gathering was first held in 2014 and took place in Berlin (2014–2016), Bratislava (2017–2019), Teresin (2022) and online (2020–2022). In addition to round tables at these forums, polyglots made many presentations, some of which served as research material for Anatoly Makarov's paper *Developing Oral Skills in Learning Foreign Languages and Cultures (by Reference to the Presentations of the Polyglot Gatherings 2017–2018)* [19].

New York 2013 round table data

The round table "Polyglottery and Education" at the International Conference *Multilingual Proficiency: Language, Polyglossia and Polyglottery* (New York, 2013) is the starting point of the present research [32]. The main topics of this discussion were the following:

- what it means to be a polyglot;
- what it means to know a language;
- how to determine the knowledge of a language;
- how polyglots learn languages;
- how to learn multiple languages more productively;
- problems in the field of teaching languages and how to solve them.

These topics formed the main agenda of polyglots' discussions for the next several years. Thus, special attention should be paid to the statements of this round table.

The source of the material for the analysis was the unpublished audio recording of this discussion from Grigory Kazakov's archive.

At the beginning of the round table Alex Rawlings refers to the talk of Alexander Arguelles [1], who characterises polyglots as people who can not only speak several languages, but also apply different approaches (compared to the traditional ones) to their study.

In the process of discussing the topic of how to determine the knowledge of a language, Timothy Doner draws attention to the fact that even learning multiple different languages at the same time is possible if the learning process takes place continuously and regularly, despite possible time constraints.

Leonard Ashley defines "knowledge" of a language as the ability to speak with native speakers and understand everything they say. Some participants in the discussion believe that knowledge of a language can be determined by a person's ability to operate in it in the academic field.

Alfred Friedlander believes that the process of learning a language without using what is already known is ineffective because of the striking difference in the assimilation of material between adults and

children. He believes that people should use previously developed skills in other languages in order to increase productivity. He came to this conclusion after witnessing an unsuccessful attempt to teach a foreign language without using any other. Leonard Ashley is of the opposite opinion, claiming that the key to learning a language is immersion. The need to use a new language for a person is important. In addition, he also notes the importance of the learning process bringing pleasure.

Alexander Arguelles says that the problem with most schools is that students get one certain language-learning method forced upon them. Polyglots, on the other hand, are free to choose their approach to learning languages, which allows different people to choose the most suitable methods for themselves.

Harri Ruohonen makes a point in favour of the immersion method, citing the example of his grandfather, who was a prisoner of war in the USSR where hunger forced him to learn Russian.

After this statement, Timothy Doner expresses the opinion that, despite the undeniable effectiveness of the immersion method and its use in popular programmes for the study of foreign languages, particularly *Rosetta Stone*, one cannot give up the opportunity to master the complexity of a language with the help of what you have already learnt. As an example, he cites the form of the dual number in Arabic, which can be problematic to comprehend without explanation in a known language.

Later, Leonard Ashley summarises his early statements by saying that when learning a language, the first thing to do is to pay attention to oral speech, not writing. According to him, grammar can be learnt by learning spoken language – you should not start with it. Continuing the topic, he notes that it is necessary to speak with native speakers (this will allow you to learn the grammatical component of the language) and pay attention to what kind of language the learner needs. As an example, he cites the different variations of American English that are used in the United States, depending on the economic and geographic location of the speakers.

Alex Rawlings returns to the issue of introducing polyglottery into the system of foreign language teaching. He says that languages should not be taught in the same way as scientific disciplines. Citing Finland as an example, Rawlings also draws attention to school graduates in countries where programmes in English are broadcasted with subtitles instead of dubbing, so they have additional motivation to learn the language. This argument reinforces his statement that language-learning is more than time in class. In contrast to Finland, he notes that in English-speaking countries, students learn foreign languages only in order to pass exams.

Timothy Doner shares his experience in language learning: he supports the languages he learns in classes by listening to the radio, watching films and television. In his opinion, this approach allows languages to come alive, whilst learning languages for the sake of passing a test is not enough.

Leonard Ashley says that, from his point of view, people who already have successful experience in learning languages should teach them. Hikaru Kitabayashi emphasises that the sphere of teaching foreign languages is already quite well developed, and the main problem lies in the insufficiently studied methods of learning languages independently. At the same time, he criticises the communicative approach in teaching foreign languages and the idea that the native speaker is always right. Another remark of his is that learning a language with a teacher who does not know the language of the students is extremely ineffective.

Summarising the results of the round table, Grigory Kazakov speaks of the need for greater immersion in foreign languages in everyday life and of the transition from the language-teaching paradigm to the language-learning one, in which the teacher turns into a consultant whose goal is to involve students in learning a language.

Polyglot Conference and Polyglot Gathering data

Due to the fact that information about round tables within the framework of the Polyglot Conferences 2013–2014 is not publicly available, the first analysed discussion is “**How Hyperpolyglots Learn Languages**” from the 2014 Polyglot Gathering in Berlin [5]. This round table was devoted to hyperpolyglots: participants talk about their experience in learning languages and their motivation.

The first in this discussion is the question of the motivation to learn languages. María de Vera says that her decision to learn a language is based on emotions, i.e. she started learning French because of the way it sounds.

Cesco Reale speaks in a similar vein, mentioning his friends as a reason for learning Spanish. He also explains that his study of Esperanto was motivated by his interest in mathematics, and that the desire to study Greek came from a previous experience of learning Ancient Greek.

One of the main organisers of the Polyglot Conferences, Richard Simcott, notes that his interest in learning foreign languages goes back to his childhood, when he first wanted to communicate with peers who spoke foreign languages. His current life abroad obliges him to constantly communicate in foreign languages, which serves as his primary motivation. He says that the main driving force for him is the reaction of people to his knowledge of their language, which is perceived as a demonstration of respect for the local culture. Friends are mentioned again as a reason to learn a language.

André Liss talks about the desire to see the world and how the study of languages seemed to him as a promising direction in his career. At the end of his answer to the question about the motivation for learning languages, he notes that for him each new language is a new motivation in itself.

The next question touches upon the approaches polyglots take when learning a new language. María de Vera reports that she begins the process of learning languages by listening to the radio in it, trying to master the sound of the language. Her next step is to listen to songs available in multiple languages and try to reproduce what she heard. After that, she begins to study the grammar of the language, because, according to her, she needs to know the structure of the language in order to continue studying it.

Cesco Reale says that his main method of learning a new language is tandem, i.e. communicating with native speakers in exchange for conversing with them in the language they are interested in. He talks about focusing first on the phonetics of the language before embarking on the above method.

Niels Iversen begins by searching for language content on YouTube and Wikipedia. He also notes the need for a large dictionary that contains information about grammar. His method does not allow him to learn a language without a good dictionary. In addition, he talks about the importance of planning the entire process. He needs a textbook for beginners, from which he takes an easy-to-follow text. Next, he needs to hear the language, for which he uses videos on YouTube. After that, he begins to study the list of the most used words in the language, trying to learn about 10,000 words in order to make it “fun to read”.

Richard Simcott begins by analysing the available language material, in particular songs and videos to obtain the information about phonetics. In the case of songs, Simcott tries to sing along, and then attempts to sing the song himself. His next step is to research the available language courses and find the most interesting ones. Then he goes through the lessons in the traditional format, rewriting all the dialogues and all the text material of the textbook afterwards. According to him, it helps with memorising the language. He also begins to speak the language from the first day of learning in order to get a reaction, which for him reflects the essence of languages and gives additional motivation. Communication also helps with learning slang. He concludes that language learning is based on memorisation and repetition. Another note is that language learning must be adapted to suit your own mood and capabilities. As an example, he cites how singing songs in foreign languages helps him to feel better.

André Liss reiterates the use of songs and wordlists. According to him, knowing even 500 words in the language (something that can be found in pop music) is enough to begin with.

When the question about the time polyglots spend on learning a language is asked, María de Vera talks about five to six hours of language lessons a day, and Niels Iversen says he spends around four to five hours. André Liss says that he would focus on the aspect of the culture of the people speaking the language that interests him, and give it the maximum possible attention. He notes that you cannot learn to speak correctly if you do not speak incorrectly before that. Speaking in the target language is the main way to fix this.

Answering the question about the study of words, Richard Simcott advises learners to start by paying attention to international words and words that are similar to those used in languages known to you. He quotes a Spanish proverb that “it is better to be wrong once than to doubt and say nothing”. Niels Iversen notes that learning wordlists only works for those who like the process. Cesco Reale declares that he does

not use any methods of memorising words, despite knowing about them. The etymology of words helps him.

The last question of the round table is whether polyglots use their native language to study a foreign language. Niels Iversen replies that not many people speak his native Danish, so he and the rest of the Danes have no choice but to use other already known foreign languages to learn new ones. María de Vera claims that she studied most of the languages she now knows in English. Richard Simcott says that he uses not only his native English, but also French (in particular, for the Assimil textbooks).

In general, the motivation of most polyglots is based on the emotional perception of different languages and the desire to interact with native speakers of the language and culture. In particular, the polyglots' method of learning foreign languages begins with an acquaintance with the phonetics of the language, specifically with songs, to which they pay special attention. Only after becoming familiar with pronunciation, polyglots begin to read textbooks, talk with native speakers and study wordlists. Polyglots devote about five hours a day to learning a language and talk about the opportunity to select aspects of the culture of native speakers to increase productivity. It is also important not to be afraid to try to speak the language even at the beginner's level. One of the strategies for building one's foreign language vocabulary is to search for familiar and international words. The language in which polyglots learn new languages depends on the language in which the textbooks they are interested in are available.

The next round table took place at the Polyglot Conference 2015 in New York under the title **"State of the Industry"** [33]. It was devoted to the commercial field of foreign language learning. Teach Yourself, Routledge, Hippocrene Books and Assimil gave presentations and answered questions from the public.

Sarah Cole talks about the many ways of learning languages nowadays, in addition to textbooks (language-coaching, online courses, university programmes, social platforms, Skype, YouTube, mobile applications, etc.). Language learners want to personalise the learning process and make it more fun in order to stay motivated. Samantha Vale Noya notes that interactive websites created as attachments to the Routledge textbooks are very popular among language learners. Another polyglot present at the round table says that what matters for polyglots is not how exciting a language course is, but how effective the proposed method of learning is. He notes that the Assimil textbooks are the most popular among polyglots, in particular due to the methodology used. Sarah Cole also highlights the importance of the language-learning methodology. She adds that listening courses (such as Pimsleur and Michel Thomas) allow people to start speaking a foreign language from the very beginning. Priti Chitnis Gress says that different methods of learning foreign languages are suitable for different people. Continuing the topic, Samantha Vale Noya notes that the same could be said about languages: different learning methods may be suitable for different languages.

The next round table, **"Polyglots at Work"** at the Polyglot Conference 2015 [28], deals with the employment of polyglots and their professional careers, without properly addressing the topic of foreign language-learning techniques. Therefore, it does not provide much information relevant for the present study. It was attended by polyglots Laurence Bouvard, Stefanie Trice Gill and Richard Simcott.

The round table **"Polyglots and Academia"** was held at the Polyglot Conference 2017 in Reykjavik [27]. Its main topics were the lack of official recognition of polyglots' achievements, language skills, jobs for polyglots, neurolinguistics, approaches to learning foreign languages, and other issues.

Linguist Rob Painter, answering the question about the approach to the grammar of a foreign language, says that the study of Ancient Greek and its grammatical structure can be extremely useful for the subsequent study of other foreign languages.

When asked about the best method for learning languages, neuroscientist Thomas Bak replies that there is no single answer, and an individual approach should be used. Concerning his personal approach, he reports that he prefers to first look at several texts in a foreign language without any preparation, study some grammar rules and ask native speakers about the correctness of his assumptions about it.

Rob Painter's methodology involves comparing the language he is currently studying with languages from the same language family. He notes that over time, he began to prefer learning language rules to the immersion method.

Johan Vandewalle says that first of all he looks for a textbook of the language, which he then tries to finish as soon as possible. As an example of his pacing, he says that he tries to take seven Assimil lessons a day instead of one suggested by the authors. Thus, it takes 10 days to study the entire manual. After that, he starts listening to programmes in the language he is studying. He says that the more material he listens to, the clearer the material becomes. At the end of his monologue, he again stresses the importance of listening to programmes in the target language.

Alexander Arguelles's approach is starting either by analysing the text he has chosen, or by listening to the audio material, trying to find out which elements of the language are immediately clear to him. He then proceeds to study the Assimil at a fast pace, going through the lessons repeatedly. According to him, taking an Assimil course in a week gives important general information about the language, which then allows one to delve into the language.

At the end of the discussion, Thomas Bak recommends applying knowledge about already known languages when learning new ones.

Concluding panel discussions also took place at the Polyglot Conferences 2018–2019 in Ljubljana and Fukuoka, respectively, but their recordings and transcripts are not publicly available [10], [12]. The same should be said about the round table “How to Improve Language Education (Not Only) in the EU? Challenges, Problems, Solutions” at the Polyglot Gathering 2018 in Bratislava [29].

As part of the Polyglot Gathering 2020 Online, two round tables were held: “**Raising Multilingual Children**” [30], which dealt exclusively with teaching children foreign languages from an early age (the participants were Richard Simcott, Tetsu Jung and Martin Lelarge), and “**Multilingual Learning**” [21], during which polyglots who simultaneously study several foreign languages shared their experiences. The latter round table will be analysed in more detail.

At the beginning of the discussion, Lina Vasquez says that due to limited free time, it is necessary to incorporate the study of foreign languages into one's work and personal life, and to allocate separate time for learning the languages that are currently at the initial level. She suggests defining goals in learning particular languages before moving on to the process itself and subsequently allocating time for study in accordance with the tasks set.

Stefano Suigo recommends the simultaneous study of three foreign languages only if the level of one of the studied languages is already noticeably higher than the others (besides, it is desirable that the languages should differ significantly from each other). He also notes the importance of prioritising among them, suggesting that more attention should be paid to the more difficult languages.

Elisa Polese says that the danger of mixing languages can be neutralised by focusing on the peculiarities of the languages being studied. As an example, she notes that Italian words mostly end in a vowel, which reduces the risk of confusion with other languages, in particular with Spanish. She also draws attention to the possibility of using the knowledge of other languages when learning new ones.

When asked about the most effective methods of learning a language, Lina Vasquez replies that for her, the most effective way of learning is interacting with other people, creating videos and teaching other people foreign languages. Stefano Suigo says that he tries to stay consistent when he starts learning a new language. He highlights the importance of having fun with the learning process, so he avoids methods that he does not like and supports the incorporation of language learning into one's hobbies. In particular, he says that he loves to watch videos about space, and therefore does it in Romanian, a foreign language to him. He also uses the opportunity to communicate with other people in a foreign language directly as a way to improve his skills.

Elisa Polese notes the benefits of learning languages from the same families: part of the passive vocabulary is transferred from one language to another without unnecessary effort. The advantage of learning languages from different families, in her opinion, is that the risk of confusion in languages is reduced to naught. She summarises that learning multiple languages helps in any case, as language-learning skills always keep developing.

At the end of the round table, Polese talks about the methods of learning foreign languages. The factors that remain consistent for her, regardless of the language being studied and her level in it, are input and

the desire to constantly practise and focus on certain aspects. The inconsistent ones are the end goal, the enjoyment of the process, and the reason for learning the language.

Summing up, among the main methods of learning a foreign language, according to the statements of the participants in this round table, one can single out the combination of personal interests with the study of the language, planning, the use of knowledge about other languages and communication with people in the target language.

When it comes to the main principles of learning languages, the data of the considered round tables can be summarised in the following points:

- the presence of motivation to learn the language (rational and/or irrational);
- preference to work on oral speech and phonetics (in particular, in songs and communication with native speakers) at the initial stage, followed by the transition to the study of the grammatical component of the language;
- use of knowledge about previously studied languages for learning new ones;
- daily activities (in many cases, intensive ones);
- using an individualised approach;
- focus on getting positive emotions from the process of learning a foreign language (including its integration into everyday life);
- setting specific goals.

Academic round table data

After the 2013 New York round table discussion, scientific interest in polyglottery increased. This trend is demonstrated by the round tables at the International Symposium on Language Education, Polyglottery and Geolinguistics (Moscow, 2018), the 19th and 20th International Symposiums on Psycholinguistics and Communication Theory (Moscow, 2019, and online, 2022), the 12th Congress of the International Society of Applied Psycholinguistics (online, 2021), and the 1st and 2nd International Seminars on Linguistics & Polyglot Studies (online, 2021–2022).

The first of these discussions is the round table which ended the **International Symposium on Language Education, Polyglottery and Geolinguistics** (Moscow, 2018). Based on its results, the participants concluded that “the quality of general foreign language education is for the most part unsatisfactory given the correlation between the resources invested and the results achieved” [9], [20]. It was also noted that polyglottery is a promising field of research and needs to be introduced into language education. In the final memorandum, the symposium recommended the following [ibid.]:

- developing and integrating propedeutical courses on the methodology of language acquisition in curricula;
- extensive usage of audio and video materials, encouraging students to study literature in a foreign language and combining a foreign language with hobbies;
- greater emphasis on the benefits of foreign language-learning and students’ motivation on the part of the teachers;
- use of previous research in the field of language acquisition as a basis.

The next round table under study was held at the 19th International Symposium on Psycholinguistics and Communication Theory and was entitled “Psycholinguistic Study of the Phenomenon of Polyglottery”. Alan Bigulov, Grigory Kazakov, Stepan Kulakov, Anatoly Makarov, Dina Nikulicheva and Magnus Larsson were its participants.

Alan Bigulov presented the paper “10 Languages in 1,000 Days project and an experiment of creating an individualised speech course”, devoted to the systematic study of foreign languages. His approach focuses on five-hour daily foreign language classes. Bigulov says that in the course of his project, he decided to build a personal linguaphone course based on the assimilation of relevant language material. As the reasons for using this approach, he notes the irrelevance of most topics in textbooks and language courses and the lack of individual approach to students on the part of foreign language tutors. The speaker singles out the book by Dina Nikulicheva *Govorim, Chitaem, Pishem: Lingvisticheskie i Psikhologicheskie Strategii*

Poliglотов (2013) as the basis for his course. He composes dialogues, which he then plans to give for translation to specialists, in order to integrate them into his linguaphone course later [2].

Grigory Kazakov's study "How much input is needed to learn a language: data of children's speech, corpus linguistics and polyglottery" touches on the topic of how much information in a foreign language needs to be obtained in order to achieve a certain level of proficiency in it. As one of the sources of his research, he uses Rick Dearman's presentation at the Polyglot Gathering 2017, in which the amount of viewed video material required for certain levels of language was studied. Thus, it was reported that the B1 level (in the Common European Framework of Reference) is reached after watching 150 hours of video. The higher the level, the more viewing time is required to move to it from the previous one. Based on the material presented, Kazakov concludes that in order to achieve the threshold level of language proficiency (B1–B2), an input of approximately 1 million words is required [11].

Anatoly Makarov in the presentation "Approaches to the development of oral speech skills according to the data of the Polyglot Gathering 2018" touches upon polyglots' language-learning methods as presented at the said Gathering. Based on the results of his analysis, he concludes that most polyglots focus their attention on speaking, considering this to be the starting point for learning foreign languages. This is manifested in listening to songs, watching TV series, working with podcasts, etc. Makarov also notes the principle of positive emotions, which is based on the pleasantness of the experience, and a systematic approach [18].

Dina Nikulicheva's paper "Speech monitoring and modelling resourceful states in language-learning" examines a conscious transition to the resourceful state in the course of learning a language by reference to the case study with the polyglot Alexander Arguelles, whose process of learning Hebrew served as the basis for research. It was noted that the transition to the state of resourcefulness occurred when Arguelles began to orally translate texts from Hebrew, which was not interrupted even by a temporary deterioration in his physical condition [22].

The final paper of the round table was Magnus Larsson's work "Achieving high levels of fluency in foreign languages through different methods: two examples from a first person perspective". Since the speaker had different tasks in terms of achieving the desired level of proficiency in foreign languages, he used different methods. He only had a year to study Russian for the purpose of military translation into Swedish and vice versa, and three years to learn to speak Chinese fluently. However, approximately the same amount of time was spent on each of the languages (2,200 hours). The Russian language was studied according to the system with structured exercises related directly to oral and written translation and constant repetition of a limited amount of highly specialised spoken and audio material. The method of learning Chinese consisted in mastering a large number of different texts and audio materials. It was concluded that the method used to study Russian is more demanding for the student [17].

The following academic round table on polyglottery, "**Psycholinguistic Study of Polyglottery and Its Application for Language-Learning**", was held at the 12th Congress of the International Society of Applied Psycholinguistics in 2021. The participants were Dina Nikulicheva, Grigory Kazakov, Elisa Polese and Stepan Kulakov.

Dina Nikulicheva in her presentation "Waves of intensity in language learning: some preliminary results of monitoring Alan Bigulov's 10 Languages in 1,000 Days project" tells about the progress of the polyglot in learning foreign languages in a limited amount of time. Among other things, she mentioned Bigulov's conclusion that focusing on one foreign language is a more effective method than intensive study of several ones at the same time [24].

Elisa Polese, who presented her paper "Interactive multilingual lessons: a polyglot's perspective", had the opposite opinion. She pointed to the connection between the need for effective teaching methods and psychology: people who study foreign languages tend to stop the learning process due to dissatisfaction with the results. She talked about the critical importance of choosing the appropriate methodology for learning a foreign language and the fact that learning several languages at the same time increases motivation, as it makes it possible to switch between the languages that you need to learn and the ones you want to learn. Polese also noted that correct linguistic and psycholinguistic techniques are important because

of the potential risk of language-mixing. Her methodology is focused on the formation of the following abilities in students:

- understanding and using the basic laws of the studied languages;
- focusing on differences between languages;
- switching between languages.

According to her presentation, the listed areas allow students to understand the differences between languages, which increases the efficiency of the learning process [26].

The 1st International Seminar on Linguistics & Polyglot Studies was organised by the editorial board of the journal *Linguistics & Polyglot Studies* in late 2021. Its participants were Tatiana Ivushkina, Grigory Kazakov, Dina Nikulicheva, Minoru Ohtsuki, Seán Ó Riain, Nastasia Britsyna, and others.

Tatiana Ivushkina in her paper “The making of the MGIMO linguistics journal: from philology to polyglot studies” tells the story of the aforementioned journal. She also mentions the topics that the journal is focused on and the importance of polyglottery as a field of research [6].

Grigory Kazakov summarises the contents of the 2021 special issue of the journal, which the seminar was devoted to. The featured papers are discussed in detail as well as the structure of the volume and its place in research literature on polyglottery [14].

Dina Nikulicheva’s paper touches upon the psycholinguistic analysis of her joint experiment with Alan Bigulov, “10 Languages in 1,000 Days”, which serves as the basis for the book she is writing, the seminar itself and the recently published monograph *Russian Psycholinguistics: Results and Prospects (1966–2021)*. Nikulicheva stresses the value of this work, explains its structure and highlights the role of polyglottery in it, as it is covered in section 1.5 “Directions of modern Russian psycholinguistics as a consequence of the expansion of the subject area of research” of the book [23].

Seán Ó Riain, the recently appointed Multilingualism Officer in the Irish Diplomatic service, addresses the role of multilingualism in the EU and, specifically, in Ireland. He explains how Brexit affected the dominant role of English, as the EU started attempts to implement multilingual policies. He talks about the methods that are being used to achieve that goal. Two of them are the EU supporting the usage of Esperanto, and Ireland creating a new position in its Foreign Ministry. Moreover, Ó Riain mentions the features Esperanto shares with languages such as French and Russian [25].

Besides, in the course of the discussion, Nastasia Britsyna shared her thoughts about the diverse and inclusive nature of multilingualism suggesting more student engagement in language classes and pointing out the importance of metaphors in language studies [4].

The 2nd International Seminar on Linguistics & Polyglot Studies (online, 2022) covered such topics as learning ancient languages, monitoring progress in a foreign language, defining a polyglot, and others [15]. Among the participants were Dina Nikulicheva, Yan Aleshkevich-Suslov, Karina Stupina, Alisa Virolainen, Nikolai Kovalenko, and Dmitry Komarov. Alexander Arguelles, Hikaru Kitabayashi, and Aita Bishowkarma prepared greeting addresses.

Hikaru Kitabayashi’s greeting focuses on the power of language, specifically in relation to the latest world events. He points out how mistreating languages can become a cause for a major conflict and comes to the conclusion that geolinguistics and polyglot studies should be essential academic disciplines [16].

Aita Bishowkarma addressed the topic of the linguistic diversity in Nepal and the geolinguistics movement in this country. He notes that the languages of Nepal belong to four different language families, and that the development of geolinguistics in this part of the world is centred around organising both live and online conferences since 2019 [3].

The round table “**Research on Polyglottery: Theoretical Analysis and Practice**” was part of the 20th International Symposium on Psycholinguistics and Communication Theory (Moscow, 2022) and included papers by Yan Aleshkevich-Suslov, Veronika Bigulati, Alan Bigulov, Nastasia Britsyna, Yulia Drik, Tatiana Ivushkina, Grigory Kazakov, Dina Nikulicheva, and a joint paper by Alisa Virolainen, Nikolai Kovalenko & Dmitry Komarov [31, p. 186–196].

Yan Aleshkevich-Suslov’s presentation “Self-observation of a polyglot via electronic spreadsheets: time factor” is an attempt to determine the correlation between the amount of time put into studying languages and the progress made in the process. He considers time as one of the few objective parameters that can

be used to acquire statistical data in the field of linguistic research and comes to the conclusion that, in the case of Germanic languages, it is apparent that being competent in two languages speeds up the process of learning another one.

Veronika Bigulati's topic is hyperintensive language learning using online platforms. Such Internet platforms allow people to pick a professional tutor based on their personal needs and preferences. She points out the effectiveness of this method by providing the example of Dina Nikulicheva's successful experience of hyperintensively learning Spanish with the help of the online platform Baselang and polyglot Alan Bigulov.

Alan Bigulov touches upon the topic of hyperintensive language learning as well by sharing his personal experience of studying five Romance languages simultaneously. Hyperintensive language learning is described as having multi-hour oral language practice sessions every day over a limited time span. The author highlights the effectiveness of the method for the purpose of rapid language learning and notes that he considers learning languages from the same language group beneficial for reaching the goal.

Nastasia Britsyna focuses her attention on metaphorisation and the value of metaphors for languages. Specifically, she points out how research in the field of polyglottery can be conducted in that direction and that metaphors are often the only linguistic device available to express something. Her work also deals with the concepts of inclusion and diversity and their linguistic counterparts (for example, linguistic diversity suggests switching focus from dominant languages to smaller ones).

The paper "The image of a polyglot through the eyes of MGIMO students" by Alisa Virolainen, Nikolai Kovalenko & Dmitry Komarov describes a sociological study aimed at determining the perception of the word *polyglot* by people experienced with foreign languages but not to the extent of necessarily being linguists or polyglots: MGIMO students.

Yulia Drik further explores the topic of hyperintensive language learning. She compares that method with the traditional one, which she defines as "two or three lessons per week with one tutor following his study plan". Analysing both methods, she concludes that hyperintensive language learning helps achieve more progress in oral speech in shorter time but overall is best used in combination with the traditional method.

Tatiana Ivushkina introduces the journal *Linguistics & Polyglot Studies* as a new space for academic discussions on polyglottery. She talks about its history, unique features (publication of papers in 10 languages), main topics (specifically those of the 2021 special issue), and plans for the future.

Grigory Kazakov addresses the topic of machine learning in its relation to polyglottery. He points out how machine translation currently relies on statistical models via parallel texts instead of being based on a set of rules. Similarly, Kazakov explains how vital input is in the human language-learning process. His conclusion is that the development of artificial intelligence depends on the ability of the machines to model complex aspects of human language experience.

Dina Nikulicheva's paper is devoted to the most discussed topic of the round table: hyperintensive language learning. She briefly explains the method (daily conversations with at least six different native speakers, a break in the middle of the course, and the student being in charge of the whole process) and tells about her own experience of applying it to studying Spanish. According to Nikulicheva, the said method is effective enough to allow the student to engage in conversations on the seventh day of learning the language.

Summarising the results of academic round tables, the following main language-learning methods can be distinguished:

- using an individualised approach;
- focusing on spoken language;
- daily lessons;
- focusing on getting positive emotions from the process of learning a foreign language.

Results

1. Polyglottery is now a recognised social phenomenon, which is becoming an increasingly relevant area of scientific research, which is demonstrated by the academic round tables on this topic analysed in this paper.

2. The participants of the first round table on polyglottery in 2013 set the main agenda for all further discussions of this kind. The following aspects can be noted:

- according to the participants, polyglots are people who use non-traditional approaches to learning languages;
- there is no unanimous position on the most effective way to start learning a language; some are convinced of the need for complete immersion in the language, while others talk about the benefits of using already known languages as a basis for learning a new one; there is also a position of combining both methods;
- foreign languages should not be taught in the same way as scientific disciplines;
- the use of audio material is necessary in order for the learning process to be effective;
- transition from the bias towards language teaching to independent language-learning is necessary.

3. According to the data gathered from the said round tables, the preference of polyglots to start learning a foreign language with its oral component and apply the already existing knowledge of other languages can be noted. Language learning should be individualised and take place on a daily basis. Specific goals and motivation are needed and contribute to another important principle, the principle of positive emotions. Benefits of the experience already gained in learning languages are also brought to attention.

4. The main principles of learning a foreign language, as formulated at the analysed discussions, are using an individualised approach, prioritising oral speech, daily practice and positive emotions from the learning process.

5. After comparing different types of round tables on polyglottery, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- polyglots' main ideas about the principles of learning foreign languages have remained stable over the recent years;
- polyglottery is acquiring a more significant scientific status, which is demonstrated by the growing number of academic round tables in this field;
- the topic of defining the concept of polyglottery has become less discussed after the first round table in 2013;
- benefits of the individual approach to language-learning, audio and video materials, everyday practice, goal-setting, and motivation are mentioned consistently.

Thus, the undertaken study demonstrates that the topics addressed at the initial 2013 New York round table (determining the knowledge of a language, effective ways of learning languages, etc.) were also discussed at the subsequent forums and have remained relevant among polyglots until today, while new issues (raising multilingual children, language-learning industry, hyperintensive language-learning, etc.) have also been added to the agenda, which may reflect the dynamics of interests in the actively developing polyglot community.

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