

FEATURES AND CURRENT COMMON ISSUES OF STUDYING FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: this article considers the peculiarities and topical issues of teaching foreign languages in higher education. The main method of research is the analysis of modern pedagogical practices based on the observations of the authors and their personal experiences of teaching foreign languages at the University. The authors consider in detail the role of teaching a foreign language in high school, as the most relevant methodological and organizational aspects of the process. Modern requirements suggest to the level of professional training of the future specialist in terms of foreign language proficiency not only the ability to understand written and oral speech, writing and speaking, but also the ability to act effectively in the conditions of foreign language communication. And which implies a significantly higher level of language and speech training. But the practice of teaching foreign languages to students shows that there are a number of different levels of problems that affect both the organization of the learning process, and its content, and the end result. And the latter was the reason for writing of this article, the purpose of which is to identify existing problems in this area, and that will further indicate the ways.

Keywords: foreign language, higher education, features and issues of learning the language, levels, multilingual education, methods.

ОСОБЕННОСТИ И АКТУАЛЬНЫЕ ПРОБЛЕМЫ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАННЫМ ЯЗЫКАМ В ВЫСШЕМ УЧЕБНОМ ЗАВЕДЕНИИ

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Аннотация: данная статья рассматривает особенности и вопросы обучения иностранным языкам в системе высшего образования. Основным методом исследования является анализ современных педагогических практик на основе наблюдений авторов и их личные опыты преподавания языков в университете. Авторы подробно рассматривают роль обучения иностранному языку в вузе в современных условиях, а также наиболее актуальные методические и организационные аспекты данного процесса. Современные требования к уровню профессиональной подготовки специалиста в части владения иностранным языком предполагают не только умения понимать письменную и устную речь, писать и говорить, но и также умение эффективно действовать в условиях иноязычного общения, что подразумевает значительно более высокий уровень языковой, речевой подготовки. Но практика обучения студентов иностранным языкам показывает, что существует ряд разноуровневых проблем, которые влияют и на организацию процесса обучения, и на его содержание, и на конечный результат, что и стало причиной написания данной статьи, цель которой по возможности выявить существующие в этой области вопросы, и в дальнейшем укажет пути их решения.

Ключевые слова: иностранный язык, особенности и вопросы обучения, уровни изучения языка, полиязычное образование, методы.

The introduction of foreign languages in higher education system means that the education is becoming multilingual. It can be argued that the inclusion of main foreign languages into the curriculum in the higher education institutions has become a real step on the path to multicultural education, to the formation of the multilingual identity. Native language, first and second foreign languages form a unique linguistic phenomenon of a polyglot. Since studying any language is inextricably linked with the culture, history and traditions of the country of the target language, it is legitimate to talk about teaching of several foreign languages at the University as phenomenon of multilingual and multicultural training.

1. Statement of the issue. The need for knowledge of a foreign language for a specialist with higher education is important especially now, when the topical issue is the training of a specialist capable of establishing relations with foreign enterprises and entrepreneurs using a variety of forms of oral and written communication. So, mastering foreign languages by future professionals is especially relevant. And in the article we are going to stress common issues of studying foreign languages facing higher education system in general and particularly in our teaching practice.

The purpose of the foreign language course in the system of training of University students is practical language skills as a means of communication in the professional sphere, which includes reading literature in the specialty; translation in the specialty and a wide range of socially significant problems; participation in oral communication within the themes and situations of a general nature determined by state standards; practical implementation of language knowledge, skills and abilities in the conditions of foreign language communication in the oral (monologue, dialogue, discussion) and written speech (abstract, messages, private letter, business letter, biography, etc.).

The main conditions that affect the achievement of goals, that is the quality of foreign language proficiency are qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the students; the number of classroom hours devoted to the discipline; the quality of teacher training and etc. The goals of teaching a foreign language are determined, on the one hand, in accordance with the requirements for the level of training of graduates with higher education, on the other hand based on the requirements for the level of training of secondary school graduates. The practice of teaching demonstrates that the average first-year student, a graduate of the secondary school yesterday, shows the level of language proficiency is very far from the requirements. An average first-year student cannot have a conversation in English. His/her vocabulary is poor, and the available words he/she can not correctly use in a conversation. They usually try to use easy constructions not avoiding neither grammatical nor phonetic, no communicative errors. The greatest difficulty of our students, as experience shows, is the choice of the verb and its use in the desired time tense form.

The mission of our university the University of Foreign Languages and Professional Career is to give 'Conscious upbringing and high-quality education'. According to the mission statement, the university seeks to provide students with a safe, healthy and qualitative learning environment which trains future specialists speaking multiple languages first. The Department of Foreign Languages contains faculties of 'Foreign language: two foreign languages' and 'Translation studies'. Apart from the language faculty, there are other faculties of Humanities, Economics and Technology. The students get knowledge in their special subjects; develop special skills and study professionally-oriented foreign language. There are also special groups where all subjects are taught in English. Objectively, English is the most common among the foreign languages studied at schools and higher institutions. In most cases, English is taught as a first foreign language, the students of language faculty can also choose one of the European or Oriental languages (German, French, Korean, Arabic, Turkish, and Chinese) as a second foreign language. So, they study two foreign languages (along with Kazakh and Russian) and Turkish additionally. The university trains future competitive specialists with knowledge of at least two or three foreign languages. That is the distinguishing feature of the University. We may say our students initially live and are brought up in the families where at least one foreign language is spoken. Obviously, that is the influence of language environment they live. They can speak their native language, fluent in Kazakh or Russian. Russian is known as a kind of difficult language to study, but we and our younger generation are fluent in it. Our students may also speak the languages of the countries they live or neighbour (Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Turkmen, Georgian, or Tajik), languages of different communities (German, Korean, Turkish, Uyghurs, Tatars, Dungan) and others. If we consider the language review in the country in general, we can see the following:

Language policy in Kazakhstan. Kazakhstan is a multiethnic and dynamic state with its historical and cultural heritage. Today one of the priorities in the Republic of Kazakhstan is the development of language policy. Studying languages we can achieve great things: national unity, the preservation of linguistic diversity, raising to a whole new level of integration of Kazakhstan into the world community, and strengthen the competitiveness that is so necessary for our state in the period of economic and social modernization. The leader of the state N. Nazarbayev pays special attention to this issue, developing a unique project called "Trinity of languages" aimed at the study of the people of Kazakhstan of the Kazakh, Russian and English languages [1]. Active learning of English started taking place only after independence. A new period of our country's history coincided with the final emergence of English as the main international. Kazakhstan integrates into the world community and the problem of learning English for communication with the outside world is particularly relevant and exciting for many people today. And the policy of "Trinity of languages" is also associated with the need to learn English. Again in recent of the Nation Address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for January 10, 2018 under the programme 'New opportunities under the fourth industrial revolution' in seventh task 'Human capital is the basis of modernisation' he again emphasized that a new methodology for the Kazakh language at Russian- language schools has been developed and is being implemented. Knowledge of the Russian language remains important. Since 2016, in updated curricula, Russian is taught in Kazakh-language schools

already from the first grade. The transition to teaching certain natural science disciplines in English in the tenth and eleventh grades will start in 2019. As a result, all our graduates will master three languages at the level necessary for life and work in the country and in the global world [2].

2. The analysis of recent research and publications. The research of foreign language is a subject of a special kind. It differs from most other subjects taught in higher education in several ways. Language learning is not the assimilation of language knowledge, but the creation of students' systematic understanding of a foreign language: the formation of their practical skills of oral (speaking), written speech, listening and understanding (listening), finally reading, the ability to successfully apply these skills to express their thoughts, understanding the content and meaning by ear or by eye - in general to solve what, in methodology and psychology, is called communicative tasks [3].

The experience of the work allowed us the authors to come to conclusion about the importance of a special program of mastering the foreign language by students especially in those groups where the language is taught during the entire period of study at the University. Independent work of the student is introduced already in the first year and for the purpose and in the amount the time costs are not fully justified, especially at the first stage of training, when the role of the teacher in the process of mastering the language is very large. In the initial period of study outside the University students work through the material, using educational and reference literature, which requires a lot of time. From experience, it should be noted that a student must spend on this type of work outside University at least as much time as is allotted for classroom-based language lessons per week, as in addition to weekly sessions for students are planned tasks for the month and semester. There are also other non-language special disciplines also with their requirements and everyone needs time to catch up. Due to lack of time or improper use of it leads to complication of the situation and lack of progress in the study. Independent work should include educational research work of students, which contributes to the improvement of the level of professional training of students. Tasks with elements of the study students begin to perform in the classroom, and continue into the after hours.

3. Unsolved aspects of the problem. Despite the fact that there are a number of scientific papers and studies on the topic of 'problems of teaching foreign languages in higher education system' in one or another scientific context, obviously, there are still a number of unsolved issues. It should be noted that the implementation of the general principles also has certain features in the organization of the process of teaching a foreign language. To implement the principle of communication with life is possible mainly indirectly, through the use of modern audio and video subjects, but in this case the student plays a passive role of the viewer or listener. Updating of knowledge, skills and communication skills in a foreign language is possible mainly if there is a native speaker or language teacher-volunteer in the territory of language learning country. The greatest problem is updating the skills of spontaneous speech. Native speakers are invited by contract, but due to financial conditions or other problems they can't stay and work for long term, we often feel their shortage in advanced level groups, especially native English speakers.

4. Purpose of the article. The scope of our study was to analyze the main peculiarities and kind of problems in studying foreign languages in higher education system. The main research method is to analyze current pedagogical practices based on our observations and personal experience of teaching foreign languages at the University. And consider in detail the role of foreign language studying at the University in modern conditions and the most topical methodological and organizational aspects of the process.

Expediency of learning foreign languages of all majors. Referring to the expediency of learning a foreign language we teachers know the main task and responsibility is to motivate the students to be interested in learning languages. The knowledge of English and other foreign languages opens doors in a big global world with its extraordinary flow of information and innovation. Mastery of the foreign languages gives the opportunity to study abroad in the best universities of the world, as well as to gain practical experience in developed countries of the world. Knowledge of English is a requirement for business communication and doing business anywhere in the world. Explaining the feasibility of learning foreign languages the students are also told that a specialist, who is competent in his/her profession and can speak several languages, will be a competitive specialist both within the country and abroad. They indeed understand and realize what modern professional qualities for future competitive specialists are demanded on today's labor market. One of the most important components of training future competitive specialists is their educational and professional self-efficiency. It is aimed at development of professional competence, creativity, leading to further self-improvement, directs a spiritual activity at achieving effective results in their professional activities. Our university as a one of the educational institutions makes contribution into the education system and creates learning environment that can influence the formation of personal and professional qualities of students.

A different language is a different view of life. Knowledge of foreign languages also makes a person more rich and multifaceted inner world of man. But even if the person does not communicate with the representatives of the country the language of which he owns, anyway, due to his knowledge, he discovers a different culture, thus expanding his view of the world. Owning multiple languages, a person can get information about the same things through a larger number of sources. It is possible to compare different, sometimes even opposite points of

view on the same things and thus to form his own independent opinion on a more solid basis. In addition foreign languages enable a student to get pleasure from reading books and essays in the original, as well as to understand foreign films and songs without translation. And finally, it gives the opportunity to communicate with other cultures without help of an interpreter, which is especially important in time of rapid development of telecommunication technologies. 'Our society's role model should be a citizen of Kazakhstan who knows his or her history, language, culture but who is also modern, fluent in foreign languages and has progressive and global worldview' [2] - said the Head of the country in his recent Address of the Nation of Kazakhstan.

5. The main research part. Features and common issues of studying foreign languages at the university. In modern higher educational institutions English is as a first foreign language is included in all curricular programmes, technical and humanitarian directions. Learning foreign languages may not be so easy but interesting and useful for most learners. And our language teaching practice shows some types of language learners: those who strive to learn the languages, but mastering them poorly or learners who quickly capture and fluent despite the interference of languages that can easily learn languages. In our opinion, to study foreign languages professionally the first thing you need to have linguistic abilities especially for those students who want to become future professional linguists, translators and teachers of languages. In our teaching practice, in class we may often have students from different regions who have chosen a profession associated with the foreign languages and will be having difficulties in studying them next, citing various factors of the language barrier but they could have succeeded in another profession or could express themselves perfectly and confident in getting professional skills in other direction. And during the language studying process the kind of students can face specific difficulties. There is a certain difficulty in the development of rules for transcription and phonetics. The words are written and read in different ways, therefore, we require an important constant practice and perseverance, which is often lacking among modern students. Special attention should be paid to pronunciation. There are special difficulties with remembering verbs and understanding different kind of English tense forms (past, present, future) especially for beginners or those who studied other languages, and most students confuse them.

The difficulty of learning a foreign language in groups with different levels of training. The main problems of the educational process at the University associated with the complication and haste of the curriculum. Individual approach in the University is not expected and the level of preparation of all students especially in languages can be or usually is different. And one of the most relevant and difficult situations for the foreign language teacher is a group which includes students of mixed levels or mixed linguistic abilities [6]. Many educational institutions may be due to financial reasons find it useful to put as many students as they can in each class and often you may find students who most definitely belong to another level. And mixed level groups may include students from beginners to intermediate or even advanced levels. These differences can be seen at the level of receptive and productive skills, pronunciation and accent, size of vocabulary, grammar knowledge, fluency, etc. Due to mentioned differences learners react to the teaching materials and teaching methods individually. And of course here the very thing good teaching classroom management skills are required in different language level classroom. At the beginning of academic year we usually try to use the following approaches first: test them orally and in written forms; clear up language level of the group or target the level of the majority of the students in the class; and keeping the general level at the lessons we use activities and tasks aimed at it. Set up extra work or difficult tasks for high level early finishers and easy assignments for low level learners [7].

In order to fulfill the curriculum, students have to seek the assistance of outside experts. Of a backlog to catch up with the curriculum and get good grades, it is easier to order the execution of the work (abstract, essay, technical vocabulary. This will free up the time needed to prepare a defense of the work performed. Of course, outside help cannot substitute independent studying of the language. However, it is important to understand that a full study of grammar and peculiarities of phonetics of any foreign language will take a long time. Students are forced to allocate their efforts and resources, while at the same time to monitor the academic progress in other scientific subjects. Therefore, the main difficulty for the modern student in learning foreign language is the lack of time and energy on work.

The next peculiarity is the difference in the programs. For technical specialities is characterized by the study specific terms in the English language, as well as the jobs associated with translation of technical documentation. Humanities majors are characterized by the study writing English essay, diverse work, reading and discussing art, literature in the original language.

How to teach English at the University, when the school was in a different foreign language? Sometimes freshmen are faced with the problem of studying the new language, since in school they studied, for example, German, French or Chinese. Feel the lag of the student no one wants, but to start from scratch learning a new language is always difficult. In our teaching practice, we may often have learners who studied not English but another language. Of course the learners are taught from elementary level and they are given special approach in teaching the language. They are advised additionally to get self-study books and take up the language courses, in order to catch up the curriculum on a subject and their coursemates.

Individual tuition with a tutor. We suggest low level students to study the target language with a tutor. Their success of learning English depends not only on the abilities and inclinations of the student but plays an important role and influence of the teacher. It is possible to interest the students and motivate them in-depth study of it. Tutoring with a private teacher will allow them to learn a foreign language more meaningful and at their own pace, get answers to their questions, practice their speaking skills.

Methodological and organizational peculiarities of teaching foreign language in higher education system. As practice shows, English as a first foreign language is taught in the first course, along with learning other languages. Linguistic training in language faculties extends almost over the entire period of study at the University. For students of non-linguistic profile the study of two or three foreign languages at once from the first year is overload, which can result in antipathy to them. Senior students are more focused on professional activities, many already have experience of employment, understand the peculiarities of the labour market and aware of the importance of language skills for a successful career.

The teaching of foreign languages at the University has the following features.

- 1) Training is conducted from scratch;
- 2) Training is conducted based on the curriculum;
- 3) Training may be relied not only on Kazakh, Russian and English languages;
- 4) Teaching second, third foreign languages represents the recesses of linguistic preparation of students, which is beneficial in particular to expand their horizons;
- 5) Teaching English as a first foreign language is no detailed analysis of the alphabet, allowing you to speed up the process of learning the language at the initial stage. It depends on the level in the group;
- 6) The foreign language training of specialists of linguistic profile is practical.

In the modern world it is very important not just to have certain linguistic knowledge, but also be able to apply them correctly in different situations intercultural communication for solving specific communicative tasks. At the initial stage, to increase the motivation of students we should pay more attention to the so-called functional language that is the set of phrases as separate language units, which are necessary in the most common speech situations [5].

Independent study and practice spoken language. Students who are seriously planning to connect their life with foreign language, pay great attention to independent learning in English. Today there are great possibilities to study the language with new technologies and using innovative methods. They can use different kind of **on line learning**. They are trying to make useful contacts with native speakers for regular conversation practice. Will be useful language holidays for example, a trip in summer time to America or any other English speaking countries to work and simultaneously study and get practice. Only successful and educated person understands the importance of learning English and pays a lot of attention. By learning how to teach English you can become much more efficient and successful.

There are several methods of teaching English to students who are learning the language for the first time or continue, each with its own unique pros and cons. Depending on the teaching situation, setting, and resources available, any of these English teaching methods could be right for us and the students. Each of methods has certain features, one possess greater popularity and highly sought, other – less. In modern world English uses enormous popularity, moreover, this language is the language of international communication and known in the whole world. To date there are enormous great number of methodologies for teaching of English. In addition, the new are regularly developed, therefore now every teacher can choose for himself optimally suitable methodology of work [4]. Presently, at teaching of foreign language classic methods are mostly used in higher educational establishments. Namely: a direct method; a grammar-translation method of educating; audiovisual and audio-lingual methods; a communicative method and many others.

The next components of the methodological system-selection and organization are educational material-resources. They are presented in the form of textbooks, manuals, guidelines, audio and video materials, computer software, etc. As the result of a review of some existing English textbooks for students, they are all created under the specific conditions of a particular University, and these conditions vary from University to University, from region to region. Therefore, textbooks are also different.

Textbooks for learning English at the University

Teachers from different Universities use different methods and programs for learning English. In our opinion, each course of teaching a foreign language should be started with using of textbooks in different levels of the original edition such as Cambridge, Oxford, Pearson press. Also in the library you can find benefits from a lot of domestic authors. ‘Basics of English’ by Zhanabayeva, ‘Practical course of English’ by Baikadamova, a very useful collection of grammar exercises under the authorship of J. B. Golitsynsky, ‘English Grammar’ by Drozdova and of course, the most practical English course textbooks by U. B. Arakin and many others.

Grammar is a very important component of learning English. In the library you can pick up a good ‘Practical grammar course’ by E. E. Izrailevich, K. N. Kachalova. The tutorial covers almost all the topics of morphology, punctuation and syntax. ‘English Grammar in Use’ the best text-book on grammar which contains three levels: Elementary (easy), Intermediate (middle) by Raymond Murphy and Advanced (advanced) by

Martin Hewings. Study of topics presented in books, will allow to systemize knowledge and to understand all the intricacies of the grammar system of English.

Tutorials to work on pronunciation. One should pay attention to such an important topic as phonetics. The basics of proper pronunciation must be laid already at the beginning of training, so it's important to pick a good phonetics course and give it a reasonable amount of time. 'English pronunciation in use' (J. Marks, M. Hancock, M.Hewings) is a book for independent work on pronunciation. The material is presented in great detail, accompanied by exercises and audio recordings on the disks. There are several levels. 'Practical phonetics course' by A. Sokolova is also theoretically and practically useful textbook in English. **Textbooks for vocabulary** 'Vocabulary in Use' by McCarthy is a series of several textbooks for different levels. 'English Vocabulary in Use' by Stuart Redman vocabulary reference and practice for Pre-intermediate and Intermediate levels with interesting exercises to practice the covered material.

New English File (C. Oxenden, C. Latham-Koenig) is one of the best series, includes levels from Beginner to Advanced. The material is presented clearly and structured. Each lesson presents a specific grammar topic, followed by exercises to consolidate, as well as small thematic dictionary, living dialogues illustrating everyday life situations. **Books to learn spoken English** in addition to special textbooks that help to consolidate knowledge and develop language skills. One can choose the best adapted literature in the original language (e.g. William Shakespeare, Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Oscar Wilde, S. W. Maughm and Agatha Christie). **Professionally-oriented foreign language** is usually conducted to students of non-linguistic departments with special textbooks like 'Tourizm', 'Economics', 'Management', 'Business Basics'. The kit usually includes a workbook, textbook and CD. Students also acquire the skills of foreign language proficiency to work in the office or communicating with colleagues from other countries, after passing the training courses of **Business English**. One of the best series in this direction can be called Market Leader (S. Kent and, D. Falvey, D.Cotton) and 'Business Basics' by David Grant and Robert McLarty and others. **Self-study resources**, books to learn English on your own, help to make the first steps and acquire basic knowledge. These useful tutorials and many other educational publishing are used in our teaching practice and can be recommended the foreign language teachers also to apply them to the lessons and independent work of students.

Conclusion. In the modern world it is very important not just to have certain linguistic knowledge, but also be able to apply them correctly in different situations intercultural communication for solving specific communicative tasks. According to the academic curriculum and taking into account all the above, the evaluation and impact goals and our personal pedagogical experiments based on our observations, we tried to consider peculiarities and common issues of studying foreign languages in higher education system and particularly at our University. In our opinion, studying languages in all educational system had and still have its common issues. As the proverb says 'Practice makes perfect'. To solve them, we try to find answers through our teaching practice and experience for years. A student who understands a foreign language at the level should have a good base school language and speech training. And he/she should have concept speech strategies and speech etiquette; should have a sufficiently developed logical thinking and possess knowledge about culture of the target language country—all these, to the extent necessary.

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