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SPECIFICS OF METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF TEACHING ENGLISH TO RESEARCH AND EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF INNOVATIVE DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE'S EDUCATIONAL AREA

The paper presents the advantages of efficient techniques of teaching foreign languages to research and education personnel, post-graduate students in higher educational establishments in Ukraine. Under the current conditions of innovative development and integration requirements in education, effective language training that contributes into further international cooperation is substantiated in the article. The available teaching methods and approaches to adult language acquisition have been analyzed in order to provide the most appropriate methodological principles and ways to organize the effective training taking into account psychological, social and linguistic peculiarities of target learners.

Key words: *language competence, psycholinguistic factors, language learning by adults, andragogy, language training, communicative-analytic method, social and communication skills, innovative development of education.*

Introduction. Current trends in the society connected with globalization and its implications in various spheres of life have led to crucial changes in the attitude to knowledge as a whole and education in particular. Acute problems of the educational sphere and relevant alterations in the requirements for highly qualified research and educational personnel at higher educational establishments raise a question of intensive foreign language training provided for post-graduates and faculty members to increase the level of their competence in the international scientific world.

Easy access to information and achievements of the world science due to cutting edge technologies give additional competitive advantages to those who have a sufficient level of foreign language competence which can be applied not only for getting information for further processing and analyzing in the learning and teaching process but also generating and sharing new ideas and scientific achievements on the professional level while participating in the international scientific conferences, symposiums, forums, seminars, etc.

International exchange programs and projects on collaboration between Ukrainian universities and foreign ones with the Ukrainian academic staff involved in the process of teaching the subjects, delivering lectures and running courses in English are getting more and more common since English has become an international language of communication in the scientific, business and technological sectors at the current stage of social development. Thus, fluency in the foreign language is one of the key factors for further academic career promotion, access to a wide range of opportunities and a must in the present conditions of the knowledge economy.

All the innovations in the educational area mentioned above are prerequisites of intensified interest in studying General English, Business English (BE) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP)

which leads to necessity of thorough research of methodological aspects which are crucial for defining the most effective and efficient approaches to achieving the set goals.

Literature review. The issues of peculiarities of teaching foreign languages to adults and specifics of acquiring and developing language skills have been researched by a number of scientists such as T. Hryhoryeva, K. Mahrlamova, A. Mitina, O. Tarnopolsky, S. Vershlovsky and others. The problems of professional training of the experts of economic direction have been studied in the papers of L. Dybkova, G. Kopyl, N. Samaruk, M. Avramenko, O. Litikova and others. Psycholinguistic, linguistic and methodological problems of second language acquisition have been discussed in the papers of such researchers as L. Bahman, I. Butnytsky, I. Zymnia, Z. Konnova, O. Kucherenko, O. Leontiev and L. Shevchuk.

In spite of all the scientific achievements in finding peculiarities and the most effective ways of teaching adults (andragogy) and language training of prospective experts, i. e. students, the issue of language training of experienced experts for their further professional activities is still relevant since it has a number of aspects which need thorough research due to its innovative character and urgency. This intersection of several directions and a number of additional requirements leads to understanding that this issue lacks theoretical and methodological foundations necessary for moving to a new level in development of the Ukrainian educational sector.

The **aim** of the article is to analyze peculiarities of teaching adults from the perspective of expert training, outline main benefits and constraints of second language acquisition in this exact group of learners, i. e. experts in particular scientific areas teaching subjects at higher educational establishments, and develop an effective structure and methods of foreign language training taking into consideration the existing approaches to teaching adults and young professionals with the view to diminishing the shortcomings and enhancing the strengths of the team as a whole and each learner in particular.

To achieve the set aim a number of methods have been used including critical (theoretical) analysis of pedagogical, psychological and methodological literature as well as scientific observation, testing, methodological experiment, analysis and synthesis.

Findings. Effectiveness of foreign language learning depends on various factors including age peculiarities and individual abilities of students, relevance of the chosen teaching method and techniques, efficiency of the team, the level of internal motivation and conducive psychological climate etc. Combination of the most optimal factors leads to high progress and proficiency in the language but certain pedagogical and psychological aspects have to be taken into consideration.

Learning a language by a child is a natural process which does not cause any difficulties if there is a foreign language environment for full immersion (it is true only for speaking and listening). However, a foreign language can become a barrier on the way to desirable career growth or achievement of the goal in the adulthood since mastering a foreign language (second language acquisition) is not natural for adults and they need to make a lot of efforts to demonstrate positive results or at least be satisfied with the level of the language competence.

A number of researchers including the American neurolinguist Eric Lenneberg connect these changes in perception of a foreign language with alterations in the brain processes, their maturity and define puberty as a borderline after which an ability to perceive a foreign language in a natural way, similarly to the mother tongue, constantly decreases [3]. At the same time, according to this theory, the chances to master a foreign language to reach the level of a native-speaker and get rid of a native accent approach zero except for some unique cases which can be considered as exceptions. At this stage the language ability can be considered as a talent or gift and, consequently, be compared with music or artistic gift [2]. However, it is not reasonable to take age as the only crucial factor in mastering a second language since cognitive, linguistic, and social factors are also essential to the second language acquisition [1].

Taking into account the peculiarities of second language acquisition by adults it is possible to make a list of the factors which are the keys to success in BE or ESP learning by adults. They include striving for getting language proficiency and persistence; aptitude for languages and presence of the basic level of linguistic competence in General English (not lower than pre-intermediate) since the higher the starting level is, the higher progress can be expected; ear for music and aptitude for sound imitation which are important for minimizing the accent;

psychological comfort of the team and compatibility of the team and their tutor; constant interest in language learning and self-development; teaching resources which are appropriate for this particular team and their needs etc.

Research and educational personnel attending the foreign language courses has a number of strengths which need to be considered to achieve better performance including:

- a high level of internal motivation and ambitions;
- rich teaching experience;
- a high level of intelligence, logical mindset and professionalism in the particular academic area;

– a systematic approach to retrieving and processing information;
– a high level of responsibility, persistence and working capacity;
– a certain entry level of foreign language competence which is as a rule pre-intermediate or above (as a result of preparation for the PhD exam in a foreign language);
– well-developed memory and analytical skills.

Despite all the strengths inherent in the academic staff there are a number of constraints which can hinder the educational process due to their destructive character which is particularly tangible at the initial stage. They are the following:

- high requirements to themselves and self-criticism, proneness to perfectionism;
- constant linguistic comparative analysis which implies constant endeavours to perceive a foreign language through the lenses of the native one and find grammar and lexical analogs which leads to mere translation of mother tongue constructions losing language identity;
- fear of making mistakes due to inherent perfectionism which hinders communication;
- variation of the level of language competence of different skills since reading skills are typically better developed than speaking, writing and listening ones;
- deep and extensive knowledge of the professional areas which results in applying scientific approaches to communication tasks and irrelevant academic discussions because of a lack of entry data in these tasks and lack of the given information in the case studies for making economically grounded decisions and solving the problem;
- pressure of authority of some learners in case of team heterogeneity which leads to certain difficulties in group and pair work, role plays, case studies etc.

Comparing two basic approaches to teaching foreign languages for adults, namely audio-lingual and natural, there should be noted outweighing advantages of the latter which creates environment for second language acquisition similar to children's perception using business reality, role plays and case studies which immerse the students in the natural language environment hindering the use of the mother tongue in the educational process. Applying the native language is justified as long as it is used for explaining grammar rules and practising translation for getting extensive vocabulary.

The communicative-analytic method of teaching English to adults developed by O. Tarnopolsky [4] seems to be perfectly matching the specific requirements of research and educational personnel studying English since they are willing to acquire communication skills but feel necessity of practicing language forms and focusing on grammar to achieve their learning goals. Moreover, this method takes into consideration the adult learners' needs, requirements and attitudes to teaching and learning English, ensures gradual evolutionary transition from analytical to communicative learning activities and from more traditional communicative learning activities to experiential ones which need modeling extra-linguistic activities and more complex communication tasks as well as provides cultural orientation in the learners' studies since the cultural component is extremely important in the course. It is also worth applying components of various pedagogical systems that allow the learners to overcome psychological and cultural barriers in the situations associated with foreign business communication and facilitate building up foreign language competence of the experts. There should be mentioned intensive methods of teaching, the project method, module organization of the teaching process, immersion as well as communication-oriented and personality-centered approaches.

Foreign language training for academic staff has a set of goals which need to be achieved including increase of foreign language competence as well as certain cognitive and psychological

tasks since an ultimate aim is to prepare them for delivering lectures and seminars based on the developed teaching resources which supposes search and analysis of information, participation in international conferences and making presentations, correspondence with students and researchers from foreign countries via the Internet etc. Therefore, the issue of creating the environment conducive for foreign communication and close to real life business and academic situations connected with the professional activity, intercultural communication and sociolinguistic specifics arises. It leads to the question of effective organization of the teaching process under the conditions of innovative processes in the educational sphere to be up-to-date with the latest developments and modern approaches applied in the area.

Taking into consideration the set tasks, deadlines and specifics of the learners it is possible to conclude that the Business English course is the most appropriate to achieve the goal since it covers various professional (business and academic) topics laying foundations for further individual research, embracing basic vocabulary and grammar, improving all language skills (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and necessary social and communication skills (negotiating, making presentations and phone calls, socializing, participating in meetings, writing business correspondence, dealing with problems, describing statistics etc.)

After analyzing a wide range of foreign Business English textbooks and considering the need for objective assessment with the help of unbiased examiners because of impossibility of applying the conventional system of grades for a number of reasons (subordination issues, professional ethics, etc.) it is possible to define the books aimed at preparing for taking the BEC exams as the core ones with the use of vocabulary and grammar builders as additional teaching resources. These books meet all the requirements of research and educational personnel and cover necessary levels of language competence from pre-intermediate to advanced.

Heterogeneity of the entry level of the learners' language competence requires an innovative approach to the organization and structure of the classes because the traditional single-level approach does not seem to be effective. The studied topic has to cover the pre-intermediate level at the first stage gradually moving on to the intermediate or upper-intermediate level when applicable and end up revising the extended vocabulary and grammar in a case-study or role play. This system looks like an inverted pyramid relevant for each topic. Such an approach enables the learners to develop, actualize and improve the skills simultaneously so it meets the needs of each team member and as a result the whole team can achieve the common level (intermediate or upper-intermediate) at the end of one year's course.

Particular attention has to be paid to applying the language in the practical situations to solve the relevant issues which go beyond business environment and get closer to academic surrounding like socializing at the scientific conference and delivering mini-lectures with further discussions where one learner acts as a lecturer and the others act as students. On the one hand, such an activity develops the skills to ask questions at the professional level as well as answer them applying useful phrases, discuss, give examples, ask rhetorical questions, i. e. immerse in the natural academic environment to notice any pitfalls in the teaching process. On the other hand, it gives an opportunity to assess the skills of other learners, see the strong and weak points and give advice on how to improve the presentation.

It is also efficient and effective to use various case-studies which are based on real business situations since they improve all the language skills and need comprehensive analysis of the problem. At the end of each topic a case-study enables every learner to demonstrate the acquired skills and apply professional knowledge using English as a tool to communicate their own ideas which is an ultimate aim of every course participant.

As to the issue of assessment and testing, alternative ways instead of the conventional grade system remove misunderstanding and unhealthy competition between the learners. Since assessment is a crucial constituent of the educational process which enhances motivation it is worth applying the following methods: praise of the tutor and other learners; regular tests in compliance with the BEC exam with the emphasis on the progress of each learner and the team; self-assessment of home assignments; focus on the acquired skills and successes of the team as a whole and every learner in particular etc.

Conclusions. Optimal organization of the teaching process based on the foreign educational resources taking into consideration specifics of assessment and testing of the specified category of

learners including impossibility of using the conventional system of grades due to its educational constraints, professional ethics and a system of subordination can result in high progress and constant intensification of motivation. Since international projects with Ukrainian research and educational personnel who actively participate in them are getting increasingly common in the process of innovative development of the educational sphere this direction involves intensive learning English as a language of international communication and requires particular attention to creating and pursuing specific teaching strategies and cost-effective approaches which need further methodological development.

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У статті розглядається доцільність ефективного навчання іноземної мови науково-педагогічних працівників, а також аспірантів та здобувачів у вищих навчальних закладах України. В умовах інноваційного розвитку та інтеграційних вимог на освітньому просторі обґруntовується необхідність іншомовної підготовки фахівців для успішної міжнародної співпраці. У роботі проаналізовано існуючі підходи та методи навчання іноземної мови дорослих, що дало змогу розробити необхідні методологічні засади та оптимальні способи для організації процесу підготовки з урахуванням психологічних, соціальних та лінгвістичних особливостей даної категорії слухачів.

Ключові слова: мовна та мовленнєва компетенція, психолінгвістичні фактори, освіта дорослих, андрографіка, мовна підготовка фахівців, комунікативно-аналітичний метод, соціально-комунікативні вміння, інноваційний розвиток освітнього простору.

В статье рассматривается целесообразность эффективного обучения иностранному языку научно-педагогических работников, в том числе и будущих (аспирантов, соискателей) в высших учебных заведениях Украины. В условиях инновационного развития и требований к интеграции в сфере образования данное исследование представляет обоснование необходимости языковой подготовки для успешного международного сотрудничества. В работе проанализированы подходы и методы обучения иностранному языку взрослых, которые позволяют разработать методические принципы и оптимальные способы организации процесса обучения с учетом психологических, социальных и лингвистических особенностей обучаемых.

Ключевые слова: языковая и речевая компетенция, психолингвистические факторы, образование взрослых, андрографика, языковая подготовка специалистов, коммуникативно-аналитический метод, социально-коммуникативные умения, инновационное развитие образовательной сферы.

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