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THE PROBLEM OF INTEGRATION OF THE SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

Political and economic changes in the country and the development of international relations have a major direct influence on the contemporary education system and see and induce the necessity for some reformations in teaching foreign languages. Being one of the development directions in this sphere, the cross-cultural tendency is considered to be top-priority based on policulturalism and language pluralism. The article reflects the problems concerning the introduction of the second foreign language, faces a number of obstacles, such as the contradictory outlook on substantive and technological aspects of the issue, the shortage of educational resources and educational programmes on the new course, the inevitable increase of the learning load in school students followed by the reduction of students' motivation and academic achievements etc. The problems connected with the introduction of the second foreign language teaching in schools are likely to be solved with applying the contrastive approach to foreign language teaching. One of the fundamental principles of the contrastive approach is the matching principle based on finding analogies in simultaneous learning foreign languages because these languages belong to the same language group (for instance, German and English) thereby having a more profound effect on each other than on the native tongue. It should be mentioned that the use of modern information and communication technologies stimulates the development of motivation, provides a comprehensive approach to the formation of important competencies – compensatory and language, and as a result allows achieving higher quality indicators of training.

Keywords: Contrastive approach, information and communication technologies, principle of intercultural orientation, second foreign language

1. Introduction

Political and economic changes in the country and the development of international relations have a major direct influence on the contemporary education system and see and induce the necessity for some reformations in teaching foreign languages. Being one of the development directions in this sphere, the cross-cultural tendency is considered to be top-priority based on policulturalism and language pluralism.

2. Problem Statement

The issues of integration of the second foreign language as a compulsory course in secondary school have existed for a long time. Bim (1997) provided the scientific background of the second foreign language learning, Shepilova (2003) conducted further studies of this issue, and other scientists also contributed to the research studies. According to Bim (1997), the second foreign language learning can be facilitated in various ways, either as a part of a compulsory course or as an elective course. Meisner highlights that the second foreign language learning widens social cultural horizons to a more extent compared to the first language learning (Meisner, 2003). If we refer to article 9.3 of FSES № 413 dated 17.05.2012 with current updates dated 27.06.2017, we can notice that the Foreign Language section comprises such course learning outcomes of school subjects as a foreign language and the second foreign language at a survival level indicating '… cultivating a friendly tolerant attitude to the values of foreign cultures, expressing optimism and a prominent personal attitude to the view of life, to the development of national identity' based on meeting peers from foreign countries and learning their life styles and habits and based on learning world literature patterns of various genres, taking into account the level of foreign language competency; expanding and classifying a knowledge of languages, expanding linguistic horizons and vocabulary and further understanding general speech culture. Thus, polylingual education performs a vital role.

3. Research Questions

The introduction of the second foreign language faces a number of obstacles subject to:

1) no detailed and careful studies into the individual personal aspect in the school student (for example, when creating the individual polilingual sphere of concepts or individual polilingual thesaurus);

2) no clear strategic direction in modeling and programming the process of the establishment of personal polilingual speaking surrounding;

3) the contradictory outlook on substantive and technological aspects of the issue;

4) some shortage of professional personnel;

5) the shortage of educational resources and educational programmes on the new course;

6) the inevitable increase of the learning load in school students followed by the reduction of students' motivation and academic achievements (Markova & Narcosiev, 2019, p. 15).

Some difficulties connected with the regulatory framework also occur. The standard of general education, established by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, is assumed to teach the French, German, Spanish or Chinese languages to the secondary school students as the second

foreign language. But the standard does not take into account the fact that the English language as the first foreign language is not taught in all schools.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this work is to find ways and means to intensify the process of learning a second foreign language based on the principles of the contrastive approach.

5. Research Methods

Growing popularity of learning the second foreign language has been reflected in numerous practice-oriented and scientific and methodological research papers written by Hufeisen and Marx (2011); Neuner (2009) and Raupach (1991).

Russian methodological science has gained considerable experience of this issue, namely: Galskova (2000) and Khaleeva (1995) studied the second linguistic identity; Passov (1985), Polyakova (2001) studied individual peculiarities of personality in cross-cultural communication. Zimnyaya (1991) considered psychological foundations of communicative competence. Baryshnikov (2003) and Galskova (2000) proposed methodological principles of teaching the second foreign language. Passov (1985) and other researchers studied the way that learning foreign languages influences the formation and development of the creative personality in the polylingual and policultural environment.

The problems connected with the introduction of the second foreign language teaching in schools are likely to be solved with applying the contrastive approach to foreign language teaching. The approach is becoming urgent and relevant because one of the basic factors affecting the efficiency of the second foreign language teaching process in secondary school is taking into account the three-language cooperation, namely: the mother tongue, the first and second foreign languages.

Domestic scientific research and practical studies into the fundamental principles of learning several foreign languages based on the first foreign language (Baryshnikov, 2003; Bim, 1997; Molchanova, 2009) capture and keep a particular scrupulous attention.

6. Findings

One of the fundamental principles of the contrastive approach is the matching principle based on finding analogies in simultaneous learning foreign languages because these languages belong to the same language group (for instance, German and English) thereby having a more profound effect on each other than on the native tongue.

Thus, we can witness the transfer and interference processes, namely: 'the process of conflict interaction of speech mechanisms based on objective differences appearing in the speech as abnormalities of one foreign language under the negative influence of the other' (Kiseleva, 1989, p. 36). The native language or the first foreign one may have a positive effect on learning the second foreign language only if the level of the first foreign language proficiency is high. In such a case the transfer effect on the acquisition of the second foreign language will be much more significant (Khaleeva, 1995, p. 53).

Consequently, it is necessary to take into account these contrary regularities which will constantly occur in the three language-contacting environment, and it provides the matching principle.

The matching principle is meant to be the base of the learning activity of the school student and the teacher, whereas the last one performs the correction – motivation activity preventing further differentiation of the linguistic phenomena being learnt. At the same time to intensify the process of the second foreign language learning the conscientious mental activity of the school student must be given a high status. The conscientious mental activity, while comparing and matching the linguistic phenomena of the learnt languages, develops and masters metasubject skills and universal actions of the school student, and then results in the principle of the cognitive focus in education.

However, one of the fundamental general methodological principles is the communicative principle. At the initial stage, to learn a foreign language the school student is offered a practical language of real communication oriented towards simulated situations and events. Thus, being at a more conscientious level, school students will be able to acquire speech patterns and communication models provided that they have gained enough learning and language experience. Proceeding from the above, one of the fundamental principles of teaching the second foreign language is communicative and cognitive (Bim, 1997, p. 97).

"Sciences and cultures are not kept separately in different brain areas, together they make up a communicative competence and develop the knowledge of a foreign language, and the experience of its usage, while all the languages interact with each other" (Hufeisen & Marx, 2011, p. 63). Taking into account the above-mentioned facts, we must note that the basis of teaching a second foreign language should be represented by the principle of intercultural orientation. Comparison of interactive cultures, self-awareness through the languages learnt can be a motivating factor, impacting the intensiveness of learning a second foreign language.

One more factor stimulating the learners' cognitive activity at the lessons of a second foreign language can be the choice of modern teaching methods, first of all information and communication technologies (ICT).

Contemporary sources (Polat, 2000) widely consider the usage of information and communication technologies, making a wide variety of digital technologies, which can serve as a means of information transfer, processing, analysis and distribution, providing services in PC software, computer equipment maintenance, the Internet access. Technological development leads to considerable changes in employees' working practice. Educational model of new generation, basing on computer educational means is aimed not only at transfer of ready skills and knowledge to the students, but also at their self-education (Markova & Narcosiev, 2019). Information and communication technologies provide a possibility of organizing self-sufficient students' work in learning a second foreign language. Using information and communication technologies is helpful in both studying separate topics as well as in making self-assessment of the acquired knowledge (Table 01).

Table 1. Information and communication technologies as a means of information transfer, processing, analysis and distribution

Means	Methods of usage	Resources
Digital textbooks and manuals demonstrated with the help of a computer and overhead projector	Learning new vocabulary in the game	World Wide Web; City Net
	Texts translation	PROMTXT AbbyLingvo
Electronic reference books and encyclopedias	Searching new information, communication	InternetExplorer, MozillaFirefox Internet Chart Rooms Britishcouncil for Kids/Teens электронная почта, ICQ, Skype
Educational resources of the Internet	Plunging into a foreign culture	• http://english.mn.ru/english/ — Moscownews website, • http://www.whitehouse.gov/ —the official website of the White House • http://www.bbc.co.uk/home/today/index.shtml —BBC page, • The Washington Post —http://www.washingtonpost.com/, • CNN World News — http://cnn.com/WORLD. • MEDIA LINK (http://www.mediainfo.com/emedia/) • THE WASHINGTON POST —http://www.washingtonpost.com/, • CNN World News — http://cnn.com/world, • ABC News — http://www.abcnews.go.com/index.html, • BBC World Service —http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice, • The Washington Times —http://www.washtimes.com/, • The New York Times —http://www.nytimes.com/ • BBC — http://www.bbc.co.uk.
DVD and CD with pictures	Working with audio data, texts and images	Microsoft Media Player, WinAmp, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Office Publisher, Microsoft Excel, ACDSee, PhotoShop, CorelDraw
Audio and video equipment	Working with audio data, texts and images	Microsoft Media Player, WinAmp, Microsoft PowerPoint, Microsoft Office Publisher, Microsoft Excel, ACDSee, PhotoShop, CorelDraw
Multimedia presentations of language data and research results	Keeping data	Flash-discs

In the conditions of a limited number of hours allocated for the study of a second foreign language, the relevance of independent work of students increases significantly.

Opportunities for learning a second foreign language using modern information and communication technologies allow one to control and evaluate foreign language knowledge (lexical, grammatical); receptive types of foreign language activities (reading, listening); certain types of productive speech activity in the context of problem-project /creative tasks.

7. Conclusion

All of the above allows us to conclude that the theoretical and practical significance of this article is to justify and describe the problem of introducing a second foreign language as a compulsory subject in secondary schools and to find the most effective ways and means to solve this problem within the limited number of hours allocated to this subject by the school curriculum.

It should be mentioned that the use of modern information and communication technologies stimulates the development of motivation, provides a comprehensive approach to the formation of important competencies – compensatory and language, and as a result allows achieving higher quality indicators of training.

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