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HABELKO OLena,

Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences,
Associate Professor,
Volodymyr Vynnychenko Central Ukrainian
State University,
ORCID: 0000-0003-3769-3616
E-mail: lena_gabelko@i.ua

FEATURES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN VARIOUS-LEVEL GROUPS OF STUDENTS WITH NON-LINGUISTIC SPECIALIZATIONS AS PART OF THE TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE FORMATION OF SOFT SILLS

Today, the educational process is on the path of modernization, which is caused by the need to adapt to changes. The aspirations of Ukrainian society towards digitization and globalization determine the mastery of a foreign language as an integral part of the competencies that students of non-linguistic specialties develop regardless of their chosen profession. The modern method of teaching a foreign language in Ukraine is based on global trends and new educational standards. English is a symbol of learners' aspirations for quality in education and it plays an important role in the field of communication over the world.

As far as schools are concerned, we currently see different levels of foreign language proficiency, ranging from an advanced level of a foreign language to virtually no skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking a foreign language. What remains a question to be answered by further research are the reasons why students who went through more or less the same or very similar language programmes in their elementary and secondary schools demonstrate such great differences in their language competence when they reach the university.

There are several reasons why some school leavers can speak and write a foreign language almost fluently, know grammar and have good listening skills, while others have only a limited, basic

knowledge.

One of the reasons is the lack of motivation, because not all schoolchildren are motivated to learn a foreign language, they do not consider it necessary to exert enough effort and patience to learn a foreign language. Therefore, it is necessary that learning has a vital meaning for the student.

Therefore, institutions of higher education must meet modern educational requirements and create conditions for the formation of new competencies related to professional intercultural communication in a foreign language. Meanwhile, many non-linguistic universities are developing a new linguistic didactic concept based on the internationalization of education, the development of academic mobility of teachers and students, and other ideas of the Bologna process.

Currently, the issue of teaching a foreign language in non-linguistic specialties is more relevant, namely the teaching method in groups whose students have different levels of language knowledge. Although when forming groups, level tests are conducted in order to divide students into groups with a relatively equal level of knowledge, but considering that a foreign language is a non-major subject, the groups consist mostly of students with radically different levels of language knowledge.

However, subgrouping is often not possible due to routine scheduling problems, lack of classrooms, teachers, funding, or small group sizes. In such cases, the question of the fundamental possibility of effective learning in such conditions often arises, although recently in the academic professional environment there have been methodological developments regarding the use of the so-called multi-level learning technology, which involves mastering the material in one group at different levels (not below the basic level). However, the abilities, capabilities, and learning styles of students vary tremendously even within the same group. The reasons for this difference are not only the level of preliminary training, but also the individual and psychological characteristics of students. That is why it

is impossible to create a completely homogeneous group of students, to some extent all groups are of different levels.

According to the requirements of the current foreign language programs for non-linguistic higher education institutions, the main function of foreign language learning in higher education institutions is the formation of students' professional communicative competence. During the study of the course, students must master the English language at the B2 level, which involves communication in the professional sphere. The experience of teaching a foreign language in a professional direction convinces that one of the factors that complicates the preparation and conducting of practical classes in non-language higher education institutions is the different and, as a rule, low level of speech preparation. It is very difficult to develop sufficient oral-speech communicative competence of students in a non-linguistic institutions of higher education, especially since the level of mastery of language material of first-year students is, as a rule, very low.

Although the issue of methods of teaching a foreign language in groups of different levels, which could be successfully used in the process of learning a foreign language, is not yet sufficiently studied, this problem has been highlighted by both foreign and domestic scientists. In particular, J. Budden, S. S. Shank, N. Hess, L. R. Terrill, J. Bell, and C. A. Tomilson were engaged in the study of the process of teaching a foreign language in groups of different levels. The problem of organizing English classes in mixed groups of students of non-linguistic specialties has become the subject of many studies in the methodology of teaching foreign languages. Among modern domestic methodologists, we should mention Yu. V. Pavlovska, V. Yu. Kolisnyk, N. V. Lominska, K. M. Havrylenko, L. M. Nikityuk and others, who deeply study the disadvantages and advantages of heterogeneous groups, the difficulties of teaching and learning a foreign language in a professional direction, as well as the advantages of using the technology of a multi-level approach for teachers and the positive aspects of learning for students.

The results of research on methods of teaching a foreign

language in groups of different levels were reflected in the scientific works of S. E. Pokrovskaya, who dealt with the problem of teaching a foreign language in secondary school, in particular, the differentiation of the educational process. I. M. Osmolovskiy and A. V. Perevoznyi also dealt with this issue. Yu. V. Pavlovskaya also studied the problem of methods of teaching English in groups of different levels. She focused her attention on ways of organizing the educational process in groups of different levels, focused on revealing individual knowledge, abilities and skills of students. A. V. Biloshitskiy, A. V. Dushin, D. I. Shmatkov, and others considered a multi-level approach to higher education.

The concept of "mixed-ability, heterogeneous, multilevel group" appeared in Great Britain in the 60s and initially had nothing to do with teaching English. This term was used to refer to groups where children studied regardless of their ability level, and was used mainly as an opposite concept to the "flow education" common at that time.

The problem of teaching English to groups of different levels became acutely relevant in the 1990s in the USA, and mainly concerned the teaching of immigrants in large groups that differ not only in terms of language proficiency, but also in terms of nationality, age and even literacy. In a general sense, the term "multilevel group" is used to denote any group in which students differ from each other in terms of knowledge and learning needs. It can be said that each group is multi-level, since students not only begin their studies with different levels of formation of speaking competences, but also learn and improve all kinds of speaking skills at different rates [1].

Work in a multi-level group, as in any other, should a priori begin with determining the student's existing level in all types of speech activity, as well as getting to know the personality of each student: his interests, needs and aspirations. Special entry tests attached to all modern standard textbooks or posted on the Internet are usually used to diagnose the initial level of mastery of the language being studied. However, a more effective way of assessing individual characteristics, skills, and needs is to write an essay-letter to the teacher (if possible, in a foreign language), in which students share

information about themselves, their family, their travels, preferences, language learning experiences, and achievements. Such an essay not only shows the level of language proficiency and the problems to be worked on, but also introduces the teacher to the student's personality in order to establish closer contact with him. Placement tests can provide us with valuable information, but they cannot create homogeneous classes. For one thing, even two learners who – on paper at least – are 'at the same level' will inevitably have different learning strengths and noticeable preferences for certain aspects of learning the language. Does the perennially silent student who excels in writing really have the same language-learning needs as a brilliantly communicative speaker whose written assignments are full of inaccuracies? Of course not. The fact of the matter is, as Scrivener [5] points out: 'Every learner has an individual range of levels. Every class is a mixed-level class.' [3, p.59].

When planning an English class for multi-level groups, it is necessary to take into account that the class should meet the needs of all students and correspond to their knowledge levels and learning styles. In such conditions, teaching according to a single plan focused on the average level of knowledge becomes ineffective and requires improvement. D. Budden defines two ways of modifying the lesson depending on the needs of different level groups [2].

The first method includes the selection and adaptation of different materials for medium, weak and strong students to work in separate microgroups of the corresponding levels. This method is effective and implements the principle of internal differentiation of learning, but its main disadvantages are that lesson planning requires a lot of time and effort on the part of the teacher; the process of providing students with materials of the appropriate level is complicated; several groups of students of different levels work simultaneously and independently of each other with different materials, which complicates, and sometimes makes it impossible for the teacher to fully participate in the lesson. In addition, students who receive materials designed for a lower level of language proficiency may feel depressed by the knowledge that their group is weaker, and

this has a negative impact on motivation to learn. Another way of organizing the lesson is to work according to a single plan and common materials, focused on the average level of language proficiency, in which leveled tasks are created for each type of activity. Differentiated tasks not only correspond to a certain level of the student, but also are oriented to different needs, interests and learning styles of students, and provide an opportunity to create classes with different approaches to the city, process and learning result.

According to Laptinova Y., when planning a practical lesson in a group of different levels, the teacher should first of all take into account the difficulties that he/she may face. Some of the problems that disorganize the educational process:

1) minimum learning potential. The student group consists of people with different individual psychological qualities, who have a different level of speech preparation, different inclinations to learn languages, and attend practical classes in the classroom unsystematically. Under such conditions, the teacher focuses on the average level, "strong students" are not interested, and "weak" students find it difficult to study. As a result, both "strong" and "weak" do not achieve adequate success due to low motivation.

2) lack of educational material. Textbooks, as a rule, are designed for a specific language level and do not offer much flexibility or variability, they do not provide additional exercises that would allow the teacher to implement a differentiated approach. As a result, the teacher must adapt the materials himself to make them more convenient to the appropriate levels;

3) lack of classroom hours. Higher education institutions provide for strict time limits, which do not allow the student to progress in studying the educational material at a speed that corresponds to his individual abilities. Obtaining real results of multi-level group work takes more time than under the conditions of its homogeneous composition. The number of hours for studying a non-professional discipline is reduced, harming the skills of graduates;

4) difficulties with the professional profile of training. When teaching a vocationally oriented foreign language, the teacher may feel unprepared to deal with the professional errors made by the student. The teacher is usually not an expert in the field he/she is supposed to cover. There are also linguistic, methodological and didactic difficulties associated with the peculiarity of translating a text that is not always understandable for the teacher through specific terminology [4, p.82].

All these difficulties create challenges for the modern teacher and require a lot of preparation for working in groups of different levels.

We will give an example of an integrated class that was held for students of the specialty 081. Law. Topic: Law and Lawyers. To conduct the class, a methodical guide was used for the subject Foreign language (for special purposes) for bachelors in the field of training 01403. Secondary education (History) 081. Law. 0.52 Political science, author Olena Habelko.

During the lesson, students were offered various interactive tasks: brainstorming, discussion, simulation of situations related to the work of a lawyer. In the course of working with students on the text, we commented on the text, highlighting the professional vocabulary (Bar Association, Prosecutor's Office, notary, defense lawyer, regulating social relations, tax inspection, customs officers); everyday phrases used in a professional context (fulfil, participation); identified grammatical features: the present continuous to indicate a permanent situation (The Union of Lawyers in Ukraine carries out lawmaking, the Ukrainian Bar Association unites lawyers from all spheres), the use of modal verbs to identify the duties of a modern specialist (they can work as advocates, judges, notaries...., graduates of different law schools can work at the Bar.....,).

On the basis of the text "Legal profession in Ukraine", we developed multi-level tasks for the development of speaking, writing and grammar skills.

Speaking:

- Level A 1 (list the main duties of a modern lawyer);

- Level A 2 (highlight the role of a lawyer in Ukraine);
- Level B 1 (hold a discussion aimed at identifying the pros and cons of the work of a lawyer);
- Level B 2 (to solve a case on a legal situation).

Writing:

- Level A 1 (create a list of different job options after graduating from law school);
- Level A 2 (describe the main characteristics and competencies that a modern lawyer should have);
- Level B 1 (describe the importance of the work of a lawyer in modern conditions);
- Level B 2 (draw up a strategy for a lawyer using the example of a specific organization).

Grammar: comment on the use of the present continuous in the light of the expression of modern trends in the work of a lawyer. After reading the text, discussing it and completing a series of exercises at level A 2 (corresponding to the level of students), a reflection was carried out, during which we found out that the students had mastered the new material quite well. The subject-language integrated learning showed good results during the testing and found a lively response from the students, which helped to strengthen their motivation to study not only the professional sphere, but also a foreign language.

The role of teacher is to identify and find out the effective strategies and to implement an active, interesting and interact process of learning for the students with different levels of ability. Teachers must have healthy and congenial relationship with them. The teacher must teach, motivate and recreate minds in order that students are capable to facing challenges and overcome the difficult problems.

Despite the fact that large classes of mixed-level students and limited class time make individually tailored teaching impossible, it is nevertheless possible to adapt some methods and materials that should provoke students' individual involvement and motivation by making alterations which take into account their different levels. Arousing and maintaining student interest is crucial, so the specific tasks should trigger student initiative, promote collaboration and provide the

experience of success, which can be attained by game-like activities, open-ended questions, visual materials. All that helps students achieve better personal results and enjoy the process of learning at the same time. In order to maintain the unity of a multi-level group and save the teacher's time, it is recommended to work within the same topic at different depths. Thus, the teacher should develop tasks of varying complexity, adapt tasks from the textbook according to the levels of students, or give a different amount of tasks in the classroom and for homework. It also seems promising to use the potential of students for mutual learning and control. Assessment in a multi-level group should, according to the authors, be not only differentiated and motivating, but also capable of objectively reflecting the achieved level of language proficiency according to generally accepted world standards. In this regard, it would be advisable to indicate this level in educational documents. The potential result of applying a multi-level approach in the context of teaching a foreign language in higher education should be an increase in the level of each student in a psychologically comfortable and creatively close-knit academic environment.

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