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## **К ВОПРОСУ МУЛЬТИЛИНГВАЛЬНОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ В НЕЯЗЫКОВОМ ВУЗЕ**

Статья посвящена практическим вопросам осуществления мультилингвального подхода к преподаванию иностранного языка в техническом вузе. В последнее десятилетие наблюдается повышенный интерес к проблемам организации мультилингвального образования в высшей школе. Насущные проблемы изучения и преподавания третьего иностранного языка стали предметом исследования многих специалистов. В статье обсуждаются вопросы продвижения мультилингвальных идей в неязыковом вузе. Автор обобщает опыт работы кафедры иностранных языков по созданию специального курса и практического пособия, основанного на сравнении двух языков, для изучения английского языка после немецкого.

**Ключевые слова:** мультилингвальный подход, второй иностранный язык, родной язык, пособие сравнительного типа.

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## **ON THE QUESTION OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION AT A NON- LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY**

The article is devoted to the practical issues of multilingual approach to foreign language teaching at a technical university. The last decade has witnessed a rapid increase in multilingualism in higher education. The vital problems of learning and teaching the third foreign language have become the research subject of many specialists. The article discusses educational aspects of promoting multilingualism at a non-linguistic university. The author sums up the experience of working out a special course for studying a third foreign language and creating a practical by the foreign language department staff of a comparative manual for teaching English after German.

**Keywords:** multilingual approach, second foreign language, mother language, comparative manual.

The contemporary level of the development of international relations in the field of science, education and economics has created a need of a new approach to the professional training of specialist regarding their foreign language proficiency. The point in question is not only the growth of requirements for the quality of communicative and professional competencies of university graduates. Overwhelming interest in English as a recognized international language of business and academic mobility has been superseded by a new agenda. These days quality in foreign language acquisition is strongly associated with provision and support of diversity and multilingualism at societal and individual levels [1]. The focus is on professional and academic skills, necessary for mastering the second and the third foreign languages, the development tool of which can be a foreign language taught in a non-linguistic university. «Language, and, consequently, language education, acts as an important tool for successful human life in a multicultural and multilingual community of people» [2]. The issues of multilingual educational environment and its formation are increasingly becoming the topic of research articles, seminars and scientific conferences.

The emergence of this new agenda immediately revealed the complexity of the problems of multilingual training and the need for coordinated integrated approach to their solution.

It is obvious that multilingual educational environment in universities will not arise by itself unless certain concerted efforts are to be made to form it [3]. Multilingual teaching in the world methodological science is assumed to be conducted in the conditions of a unified system of foreign language teaching based on linguistic, cognitive and pragmatic experience acquired by learners earlier, i.e. in the study of previous foreign languages as well as a native one. Implementing multilingual principles in learning and teaching requires the creation of coordinated curricula where the study of the mother tongue is the basis for the acquisition of any

foreign language. Thus, a single system of learning is shaped with the native language being a starting point in the formation of the general language competence of the individual. The study of the subsequent foreign languages is meant to enlarge and make more profound this competence, giving it a new quality and new properties [4].

Today multilingual learners are taught according to courses and textbooks intended for teaching the first foreign language. With this in mind, there arises a very important issue of creating textbooks and manuals of comparative type enabling the teacher to rely strongly on the students' previous linguistic and cognitive experience. This will allow the teacher to work effectively on a systematic basis contributing to the economization of the educational process.

Over the past decades, our national researchers have developed fundamental principles of teaching two or more foreign languages based on the knowledge of the previously learned languages. (I.L. Bim, N.V. Baryshnikov, I.I. Kitrosskaya, L.V. Molchanova).

The purpose of this article is to substantiate the choice of general methodological principles and approaches to teaching a second foreign language in a non-linguistic university and share the experience of working out a special training course» English after German: theory and practice of English as a second foreign language».

In 2012, the Department of Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communications of the Ural State University of Railway Transport (USURT) developed and has been practicing since then the technology of a multilevel approach to the organization of foreign language teaching. The aim of the project was to change the situation in the teaching of a foreign language at technical faculties by increasing the internal motivation of students and leveling out the differences in language proficiency of graduates of various schools. Further improvement of the quality of foreign language education at the university is associated with the development of a multilingual approach to the learning process.

The principle of continuity is crucial in the language teaching policy. That means that the language acquisition should be smooth and uninterrupted from childhood to the labor market. The language the former school graduate studied at school is to be same that he or she is going to learn at university. It is only natural for a German learner to be ready and willing to master English as the most in-demand language in the world. Just as justified is the desire of English learners to acquire the fundamentals of German or French, the languages of the countries in which they may want to continue their education.

The academic program at non-linguistic university with the exception of several specialties at the Economics Faculty does not stipulate the creation of «Starter» groups for foreign language learners.

Every year, 30-50 young people from China, Korea come to the USURT to study the Russian language and become students of the preparatory faculty of the Department of International Relations, a structure that coordinates the international activities of the university. The languages of communication of foreign students with Russian teachers and other students of the university are English, Russian and Chinese. An increased interest in learning Chinese and Japanese is also observed among teachers. What resources does the university have for realizing the ambitious goals of the multilingual approach to the organization of the educational process? As was mentioned above, the study of a second foreign language is mandatory for a number of economic specialties. As for technical specialties, here the answer to the increased interest in the study of a second foreign language is the organization of additional courses for beginners at the Department of International Relations [5]. At different times, both university teachers and foreign specialists were invited to teach English, French, German and Spanish to the USURT students. It should be noted, however, that these were mainly courses for those who continued to learn their first foreign language. Filling the niches «English for German (French) learners» and «German (French) for English learners», as well as developing an introductory course

in Chinese (Japanese), would be a timely response to the challenges of a society where multilingualism and polyculture have become objective realities.

The organization of foreign language courses based on the previously obtained linguistic experience is a creative process that requires both theoretical understanding and practical solution of a number of problems. Currently, the USURT Department of Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communications is actively involved in creating educational and methodological manuals for teaching students a second foreign language based on a previously studied foreign language. The first step on the way of practical implementation of multilingual ideas was the development and publication of the manual «Theory and Practice of the English language as the second foreign language» [6].

The training manual contains theoretical and practical material for teaching English as a second foreign language. The manual is based on cross-language comparison and is intended for starters – former learners of German. The ten lessons and five additional texts focused on the development of reading and speaking skills constitute the practical part of the manual. The theoretical part contains information on the basic phonetics and grammar of English and German,

This manual should serve as a bridge to further learning a second foreign language with the help of an authentic textbook. It is known that most Starter and Beginner level courses are designed for a multilingual audience, where the use of the native language of any ethnic group would be politically incorrect and practically impossible. The training is conducted against the background of contacting three languages: the one studied earlier, a target and a native language. The learners' mother tongue retains its role in commentaries on comparative English-German grammar, which are structured as tables, in exercise assignments and back translation tasks. An important aspect of training is a detailed acquaintance of students with the reading rules of the English language. Mastering this course will allow learners to move smoothly to a more profound study of a new foreign language and take advantage of the authentic course.

Most experts agree that learning the second foreign language (L3) takes place in the specific conditions of interaction of three languages: the studied one (L3), the studied earlier (L2) and the native one (L1), which leads to the emergence of such linguistic phenomena as interference and transference. Interference is understood as «the process of conflict interaction of speech mechanisms, due to objective differences, which appear in speech as deviations from the laws of one language under the negative influence of the other» [7]. The transfer implies a positive influence of the native or other foreign language on the target language [8]. The higher the level of L2, the more significant the effect of transfer on the mastered material of L3. The authors of the practical manual make a point of elevating these two opposite laws to the rank of the principle.

According to the concept of I.L. Bim, one of the basic principles of learning L3 is a communicative-cognitive principle [9]. When teaching a second foreign language, the communicative principle is preserved as a general methodological principle. From the very first steps, students are offered a functional language focused on modeling situations of real communication, while the accumulated linguistic and educational experience allows learners to assimilate speech patterns and communication models on a more conscious level. Actually, this is a communicative-cognitive principle, since the learning process activates the cognitive potential of students and their ability to compare language phenomena, find and analyze similarities and differences of languages. The use of the communicative-cognitive principle in combination with the comparative (contrastive) approach contributes to the most effective and conscious mastery of the new language.

English and German ideally belong to a typologically related language family. The presence of such general grammatical concepts and terms as the definite and indefinite articles, the link-verb *be* and *sein*, the forms of the *Present* and *Präsens* allows transporting the acquired linguistic and learning experience into the development of new skills and abilities. German learners are familiar with the ways of fighting the Russian inertia caused by the absence of the link verbs in their native

language. This positive experience is constantly taken into account by the teacher in explaining and consolidating grammatical material concerning the functions of the verb to be.

When organizing the educational process, it is also necessary to adhere to the principle of differentiation of training, which involves making allowances for the students' level of knowledge of L2 and practically an individual approach to learning. By N.V. Baryshnikov's account, in teaching L3 «one should move forward with an individual speed, adequate to the speed of absorbing the material mastered by students» [10]. On the other hand, reliance on L2 allows the teacher to put into action the principle of intensification and economy. German learners have already accumulated certain amount of linguistic skills, habit patterns and self-sufficiency in L2 and they are likely to avail of the acquired experience in the study of L3, thus significantly reducing the time of the initial stage of learning the target language. The fact that students who have studied German are familiar with the Latin alphabet makes it possible to use extra time for a corrective-phonetic section. After a brief review of sounds and letters and a general revision (with the help of the tables) of the rules for reading vowels and consonants, the teacher proceeds to practical phonetics, where special attention is paid to explaining the articulation of sounds that are absent in German: interdental unvoiced consonant [θ] and voiced consonant [ð], substitution of which by Russian sounds [c], [s] and [ʒ], [z] is the result of interference from the L1 and L2.

In the process of L3 acquisition, the proportion of self-guided work of students as a type of learning activity increases dramatically. When planning a practical lesson, the teacher decides which aspects of the material are mastered by the students themselves. Both English and German learners know international and visually recognizable words, so there is no need to include these words into the mandatory list of the lesson. The teacher practices their pronunciation in phonetic exercises, checking the understanding of the meaning of words in tasks using «language guessing» and back translation.

According to the authors, there is one more important principle that can be the basis for multilingual learning: the principle of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is one of the key concepts of the social-cognitive theory of learning by Albert Bandura, implying a person's belief in his abilities and the expectation of a good result from his own actions [11]. Setting an ambitious goal such as the study of a new foreign language contributes greatly to the mobilization of the student's life potential, demonstrates his desire to use his existing experience and readiness to acquire new knowledge. Maintaining the student's psychological attitude and creating a favorable environment for the development of high self-efficacy become the primary tasks of the teacher.

In conclusion, it is worth noting that multilingualism in educational sphere is to be viewed broadly – it does not only imply the knowledge of a mother tongue and good mastery of English. In order for language education to be classified as multilingual more than two languages must be used as languages of learning. At present, both humanitarian and technical universities can provide linguistic diversity for their students.

In the absence of authentic specialized educational complexes in the market for teaching a second foreign language and an increased demand for multilingual methodological material, the appearance of comparative teaching aids can fill the existing gap and largely facilitate the solution of practical and educational goals of multilingual education.

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