БІЛІМ БЕРУДЕ ИННОВАЦИЯ МЕН ДӘСТҮРЛЕР
ТРАДИЦИИ И ИННОВАЦИИ В ОБРАЗОВАНИИ
TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS IN EDUCATION

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Differentiating education in learning foreign language by students of other majors

This article aims at pointing out some criteria of differentiating education and relevant methods within the process of second language acquisition. The article begins with a context analysis in the frame of trilingual system, which has been implemented in the last decades in Kazakhstan. On the one hand, the article pays attention to modalities of differentiation considering content, the process and learning outcomes identifying criteria and its psychological dimensions. On the other hand, it suggests some methods for improving the learning process designed after an initial assessment. A broad range of theoretical generalizations is given and practical experience as a whole is summed up without reference to a certain level of language proficiency. Combining a theoretical frame with experimental data collected from English classes performed at two faculties in Karaganda State University the research is both theoretical and practical. Thinking of acquiring foreign languages as awareness rising, transfer of grammatical structures, vocabulary improvement and stylistic differentiation the suggested methods are possible paths for successful learning and teaching.

Keywords: differentiating education**,** foreign language, teaching methods, students of other majors than English, multi-level tasks, level, learning process.

Introduction and literature review

Language and differentiating education are two interconnected fields, which have been developed in a political and ideological space of Kazakh society where certain beliefs about language, cultures as well as teaching and learning are produced and reproduced in educational situations. These beliefs constitute an original language ideology implemented through educational programs meant to support the nation branding in an international context. The ideological and political facets of English in differentiating education and language teaching have been seldom scrutinized and debated in higher education system of Kazakhstan in the last 25 years of independence. However, little has changed toward a more just and equitable direction in policies and practices reflected in curricula, students' instruction, materials, and teachers' training. The problem of differentiating education has always been relevant for teaching English in the higher education systems due to different levels of school preparation that give various inputs in steering the level of knowledge. Moreover, approaching language learning as a 'trans disciplinary inquiry and social action' [1; 141] by engaging students in communicative contexts with the others may create 'opportunities for exposure to a foreign language' [2; 155] and slowly move from the main use of Kazakh and Russian as 'languages involved in defining a new state' [3; 309] to a wider embracement of English as a language of internationalization.

Target group description, methodology and discussion

The target group of this study was made of students from the Faculties of Pedagogy and Biology enrolled in the first year and having been studying English as a second language with a main focus on education and scientific terminologies. Thinking of acquiring a foreign language for specific purposes these students should be oriented to building and boosting their vocabulary, mastering the grammar and making the right stylistic selection of patterns. Consequently, they are not an exception, although to a significant degree their high linguistic motivation and prominent inclinations to learn languages have a positive effect on their psychological background. As the practice has shown, the majority of first-year students need a differentiating approach to language learning.

There are two groups of factors that determine the heterogeneity of the first-year students' knowledge as follows:

− *External* factors affecting the education system as a whole;

− *Internal* factors directly related to the system of foreign language education at school.

Among of external ones, we consider the socio-economic and political factors that contribute to the improvement of such processes as democratization, globalization, integration, and education's focus on humanities in modern societies. Thus, there is a tendency to the foundation of an educational approach to learning, which focuses on the students' personality, their interests, desires, opportunities, and also recognizes everyone's right to be an individual and to have his/her own and unique way of career development. In this regard, the main goal of higher education may become the development of individual personal characteristics of students through such a system of training that would satisfy the individuals' need of self-development through the unlocking of their creative potential [4].

As for internal, we single out factors caused by local problems. We call these factors socio-pedagogical and include here the activities of specialists who are directly involved in local educational policies. We also attribute the personal factors to the internal factors, including the activities of students and trainers, who directly implement the requirements of the program. This factor reduces the effectiveness of training for at least two reasons. On the one hand, this is due to the low motivation in learning English from students with a high level of language proficiency against the background of those fellows with a lower level. On the other hand, it seems impossible for those who lag behind to catch up with those having a higher level of English and being self-confident. In this context, many teachers are unwilling to introduce pedagogical innovations into the learning process.

In revealing the essence of the concept of *differentiating education* we have to point out the process of teaching students a foreign language, namely a system of instruction, during which the individual psychological characteristics of each student are taken into account, and in which each student is provided with a real opportunity to act as a subject of instruction. In this case, the role of the students as subjects of learning is expressed in their involvement in the implementation of the choice of one educational path and the awareness of their responsibility for the course of the learning and cognitive process.

Differentiating education is mostly based on the concepts of developing learning previously theorized by some scholars who believe that the development of the student is carried out on the basis of training and in the process of activity and relies on the 'zone of proximal development'. The author describes the process of tightening mental development after training in the field of learning a foreign language also seen as «cultural pull-up». This zone is determined by the content of such tasks that a person can solve a problem only with the help of another people like peers and teachers after gaining the experience of joint activities. Through a mechanism of imitation followed by individual actions the learner becomes capable of independently solving similar problems.

Differentiating education to students' learning foreign languages should follow some sequences of teacher's actions, which may include:

− studying of the psychological and psychophysical characteristics of students through observation and testing. Such individual characteristics as the type of thinking, perception channel, temperament, level of understanding, motivation, value orientations, world perception can be grounds for differentiation;

− intentionally organizing the students into micro-groups for certain reasons;

− presenting information and organizing work within the lesson by taking into account the identified bases of differentiation.

One of the important conditions for the effective organization of work is the proper, thoughtful staffing of groups. When recruiting groups, it is necessary to take into account two different aspects: the stu-

dents' level of academic success and the nature of interpersonal relations. Students can be combined into groups either by homogeneity (homogeneous groups) or by heterogeneity (heterogeneous groups) set for academic success. Homogeneous groups can consist either of only strong or only of medium and even weak students (although a group consisting only of weak students does not justify itself). Homogenous groups as permanent units in the case of differentiating learning, as a rule, do not justify themselves in practice, because the students' awareness of which class they belong to leads to snobbery among strong students and a feeling of inferiority in the weak; middle and weak students are left without the developing influence of strong students. However, such a division is indispensable if an effective presentation of any material or a more difficult role-playing performance is required.

The solution of learning and educational tasks is carried out in a heterogeneous group, where more favorable conditions are created for interaction and cooperation. A strong student who is a leader conducts the rest, the weaker and helps in raising the general level of the class and turn the entire work into a more interesting one. But it is possible that the leader will substitute the entire group, reducing the participation of others in the collective execution of the task to a minimum. Therefore, when recruiting groups, it is important to take into account the nature of students' interpersonal relations. Psychologists claim that the group should be selected students, between which formed the relationship of goodwill. Only in this case a psychological atmosphere of mutual understanding and mutual assistance arises in the group, anxiety and fear are removed. An important feature of such groups is their mobility, of course, teacher's action.

In practice, it must be remembered that an individual approach is necessary not only to those students who have difficulties in learning the material, but also to students with a high level of development of abilities so that they do not stop at what has been achieved and they have an incentive to further progress. In most cases, the teacher focuses and efforts towards weak students, because they don't know so much.

In order to achieve the desired result, the teacher needs to have appropriate methods in the learning process, accumulated system of diverse tasks for any situation, differentiate each student not only by his actual achievements in learning, but also on the basis of knowledge of the process of his study, to continuously monitor success (or failure, which also occurs).

For the successful implementation of all these tasks, the identity of the teacher himself is, of course, decisive. We must be tactful psychologists, have a quick reaction to instant tactical changes, have erudition in various fields to get on the same wavelength with students, and, most importantly, strive to be knowledgeable methodologists who apply adequate methods, both learning and control. Teachers should improve themselves through the constant exchange of useful experience with their colleagues, which may include classes' attendance, plenary sessions, study of the works of recognized methodologists and work with their textbooks.

While highlighting the fundamental principles of differentiating education, we can define and enumerate the following features of personality to be considered in the field:

Acceptance of a personality comprises attitude to a student as to a unique personality, which has its own interests, abilities, desires and possibilities;

Focusing on the student's strengths implies to teach students to believe in themselves and their potential for personal growth;

Creating a situation of success for everyone means taking into account the zone of proximal development of each student;

Activity-based approach defines learning as a joint activity of a teacher and students, based on the principles of cooperation;

Reliance on students' existing knowledge involves experience and feelings.

The unity of the educational group suggests the construction of the educational process, in which all students are involved in the activities equally. Personalized significant tasks and attitudes require management of the process of learning a foreign language and it is based on information about students; their interests, desires, opportunities, learning objectives, language skills and others.

It is a known fact in linguistic studies that the awareness of one language presumes the settlement of some goals: to find common points between mother tongue and foreign language [5; 333;], to rise the effective character of communication, to create common lexis, to promote and to understand the characteristics of languages as a 'part of the life with all its domains: affective, social, power, cognitive and performance' [6; 12]. In other words, fostering cognition, facilitating transfer and code switching, using the language for social interaction, performing a role in dialogue and using the power of the language for conceptualizing meaning, expressing emotions and persuading people are key-actions in second language acquisi-

tion. It also involves the domain of affective achievements, cognitive and social frames or 'scenes' [7; 381]. In fact, language teaching is that activity which presumes the concepts, vocabulary and grammatical 'interiorization' [8; 124], not only as the pure cognitive act, but rather an affective and cognitive one in the same measure.

Different levels of tasks include taking into account the level of students' language training.

Differentiation in the process of learning a foreign language can be viewed from three different perspectives:

Differentiation of content includes the knowledge, skills, abilities that a student must have in the learning process. Differentiation of content requires prior testing of students to determine their level of learning. This information allows the teacher to plan and organize the learning process depending on the cognitive needs, opportunities and interests of the trainees. The main thing in the management of the learning process is the establishment of criteria for the final learning outcome. When using the methods of dividing a group into subgroups (permanent or mobile) or just separate individuals, depending on one parameter or another, it is necessary to formulate requirements for mastering the theoretical and practical material of each subgroup. The requirements are the volume of the material being studied, as well as the skills that students should master at the end of the course. In determining the effectiveness of differentiating learning, the criteria are, on the one hand, the students' academic performance on a subject depending on the goal they set, and, on the other, which is very important, the individual's satisfaction with the educational process. And this means an increase in motivation for the future. Performance testing can be determined using direct (questioning, interviewing, conversations) and indirect (observing students' activities during the training session, assessing their cognitive activity, students' desire to perform tasks and other methods). Initial assessment test based on holistic evaluation of grammar and vocabulary through creative writing exercises, multiple items questions and statistical methods have helped us in establishing the starting points of the process and with defining specific tracks of differentiating development by mapping in each learning and teaching units the appropriate volume of lexis, the difficulty of functional grammar and the complexity of stylistic choices. Thinking in terms of successful development paths choosing the right pieces of knowledge to be learned equals in many ways the creation of a puzzle and the involvement of the motivated actors, namely the students and a teacher/professor in performing a learning and teaching act, in which all the competences (comprehension, listening, speaking, writing) and all the language parts (phonetics, collocations, grammar, lexis, pragmatics, style, idioms, metaphors) should be kept together.. In fact, the language awareness has been underlined in numerous studies over time as a modality to conceptualize meaning and to represent realities in cognitive frames. It is a known fact in linguistic studies that the awareness of one language presumes the settlement of some goals: to find common points between mother tongue and foreign language, to rise the effective character of communication, to create common lexis, to promote and to understand the characteristics of languages as a 'part of the life with all its domains: affective, social, power, cognitive and performance'. In other words, fostering cognition, facilitating transfer and code switching, using the language for social interaction, performing a role in dialogue and using the power of the language for conceptualizing meaning, expressing emotions and persuading people are key-actions in second language acquisition. It also involves the domain of affective achievements, cognitive and social frames or 'scenes'. In fact, language teaching is that activity which presumes the concepts, vocabulary and grammatical 'interiorization', not only as the pure cognitive act, but rather an affective and cognitive one in the same measure [9].

A very significant modality of language comprehension including at the same time history of language and word formation process is, in our opinion, etymology. Extensive research in second language acquisition has reported the importance of understanding vocabulary and syntactic knowledge in learning a new language as mechanisms of ensuring discourse coherence and cohesion. The definition of etymology varies from country to country but some exceptions can be found as lines of continuity. According to some researchers, etymology only consists of indicating the language the word comes from or showing its oldest form, root and meaning. In view of the others, etymology is the representation of the smallest units and the derivational affixes that make up the word. In its most widely known sense, etymology is the work of making such explanations credible in the context of phrases, idioms, metaphors and has acquired a great importance in defining national identities through language evolution. In this comprehensive approach, etymology has become a multidisciplinary science benefiting from data of tangential fields of research like anthropology, ethnic studies, geography, toponymy and history. It has therefore occupied a significant place in second language acquisition. Consequently, to build up knowledge at proficiency level by bring-

ing information on cultures' evolution and improving the ability of professional usage of language, may become an interesting approach to learning and teaching a new language while designing 'etymological charts' [10; 10], which follow the evolution of lexical items from the origin to languages they have been circulating, as well as the stylistic distribution of the terms at colloquial, popular or academic levels.

Asserting that being a proficient user of a language means not only mastering the grammar as an invisible force that makes the speaker able to generate an endless number of enounces and control their correctness, but also comprehending and appropriately using a rich stock of words in their semantic matrix spanning from roots to collocations and phrases and expressing at least three categories of meaning, namely basic, secondary and abstract metaphorical.

Differentiation of the learning process means giving the teacher the opportunity for each student to choose different ways of mastering the content. Selection can be done in two modalities:

The first method implies that students perform various tasks depending on their level of training, needs and interests. Here we are talking about *multi-level tasks*. These are tasks that ensure the mental absorption of material by each student based on his subjective experience. It should be noted that such a choice is advisable at the final stage; the students themselves make their choice, and therefore become subjects of learning and share with the teacher responsibility for the learning process. When developing multi-level tasks, the classification of B. Bloom's training goals, which describes six levels of thinking (knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, evaluation, synthesis) or the logic of learning new content, which includes five stages (learning and distinction; memorization; understanding; building skills; transfer).

The second path is for students to perform the same tasks at various levels so called open-ended tasks that have been actively used in teaching practice in recent decades. Open tasks are those that do not and cannot have known solutions or answers. Such tasks are fundamentally different from traditional questions, tests, exercises, in which there are «correct» answers with which the results obtained by students are compared. Open assignments suggest only possible directions of language development and stimulate students' creativity. The result obtained by the students is always unique and reflects the degree of their creative self-expression, and not the correctly guessed or expected result. Examples of such tasks are the creation of a project, writing a review, making a booklet, a newspaper, writing the end of story, ranking objects by necessity, predicting content by title, image, and others. The main advantages of using the same tasks are the maximum involvement of students of various levels of training in the educational process, enhancing the ability of everyone to work on the task in their own subject and the capacity to choose how to perform the task (individually, in pairs, in small groups).

Differentiation of learning outcomes means a variety of levels of complexity of the products of cognitive activity that students create in order to show mastery in the learning content. For example, for students of different levels, the teacher can change the requirements for the assignment: reduce for students of the first (basic) level and increase for students of the third (advanced) level. Each teacher has a set of tasks for different groups of students, but the most effective and motivating method is to give students the opportunity to choose the product of their educational and cognitive activities. Students are systematically invited to be creative and speculate in writing on topics such as the differences in the psychology of men and women, the problems of megalopolises, how they see their future ideal home, etc. However, it should be remembered that such tasks should always include a number of preparatory exercises with samples in the form of lexical-grammatical and stylistic constructions, similar descriptions and recommendations for constructing an essay or compositions. Only in this case, the students will each time grow in terms of language abilities of performance.

Conclusion

We emphasized that differentiating education is a special type of learning that is as close as possible to the cognitive needs of students and their individual characteristics, as it makes the students active participants in their cognitive activity, and also it ensures that each student learns the content of education at the level that is available to him at the moment, which allows teachers to see in perspective tasks formulation for the entire period of learning a foreign language.

In relation with second language acquisition, we formulated some criteria of differentiation in learning English and noticed some inputs and pedagogical outputs of the process. Based on theoretical grounds and field work observation, the article suggests some strategies of using differentiating education for designing individual, group and successful learning paths.

A gradual approach to differentiating education and second language acquisition may lead groups of students to reaching performance in mastering English as a part of three language program that is being implemented in Kazakhstan and become a model of learning and teaching success.

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М.Т. Отыншиева, Ғ.Б. Саржанова, Н. Станчу

Тілдік емес мамандық студенттеріне шетел тілін дифференциалды оқыту

Мақаланың мақсаты — Қазақстанда соңғы онжылдықта енгізілген үштілді жүйе шеңберіндегі контексті талдаудан бастап, екінші тілді меңгеру процесінде дифференциалды оқытудың кейбір критерийлері мен тиісті әдістерін көрсету болып табылады. Бір жағынан, мақалада дифференциалды оқытудың мазмұны, процесі және оқу нәтижелері ескеріле отырып, оның тиімді әдістеріне назар аударылды, сондай-ақ оның психологиялық өлшемдері анықталды. Екінші жағынан, ол бастапқы бағалаудан кейін жасалған оқу процесін жетілдірудің бірнеше әдістерін ұсынады. Жалпы теорияның кең көлемі мен тілді меңгерудің белгілі бір деңгейіне байланыстырмай тәжірибе жинақтау беріледі. Қарағанды мемлекеттік университетінің екі факультетінде өткізілген ағылшын тілі сабақтарында жинақталған теориялық негізді тәжірибелік мәліметтермен ұштастыра отырып, зерттеу теориялық және практикалық сипатқа ие болды. Шетел тілдерін меңгеруді ұғыну — бұл ақпаратты арттыру, грамматикалық құрылымдарды беру, лексиканы жетілдіру және стилистикалық дифференциация ұсынылған әдістерді оқыту мен үйренудің табысты жолдары болып табылады.

Кілт сөздер: дифференциалды оқыту, шетел тілі, оқыту әдістері, тілдік мамандықтан басқа әртүрлі мамандық студенттері, көп деңгейлі тапсырмалар, деңгей, оқу процесі.

М.Т. Отыншиева, Г.Б. Саржанова, Н. Станчу

Дифференцированное обучение в изучении иностранного языка студентами неязыковых специальностей

Цель статьи — представить некоторые критерии и соответствующие методы дифференцированного обучения в процессе изучения второго языка, исходя из контекстного анализа в рамках трехъязычной системы, введенной в Казахстане в последнее десятилетие. С одной стороны, статья сфокусирована на ее эффективных методах, учитывающих содержание, процесс и результаты дифференцированного обучения, а также его психологические аспекты. С другой – предлагает ряд способов улучшить процесс обучения после первоначальной оценки. Общая теория обширна, и опыт приобретается без привязки к определенному уровню владения языком. Исследование приобрело теоретическую и

практическую значимость, сочетая теоретические основы с практическими данными, собранными на занятиях по английскому языку, проведенными на двух факультетах Карагандинского государственного университета. Понимание овладения иностранных языков является успешным способом изучения и обучения методам, которые увеличивают информацию, обеспечивают грамматические структуры, улучшают словарный запас и предлагают стилистическую дифференциацию.

Ключевые слова: дифференцированное обучение, иностранный язык, методика преподавания, студенты разных специальностей, кроме языкового, многоуровневые задания, уровень, учебный процесс.