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ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS OF IMPROVING THE PROCESS OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO ECONOMICS STUDENTS

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The relevance of the article is substantiated by the development of international relations, globalization trends and active policy of the state aimed at implementing foreign experience in various spheres of public life, which actualizes the study of foreign language and makes it a tool for obtaining professional knowledge that meets market requirements.

Modern challenges of training highly-qualified and competitive specialists are characterized. The main focus is made on the analysis of current educational programs for Economics students of higher educational institutions. The program results of the foreign language study, basic general and professional competences, including mastering a foreign language and the ability to use it in everyday and professional communication, are identified.

A typical structural logical scheme of the educational and professional bachelor's programs for economic specialties, as well as interdisciplinary and conditional interdisciplinary links between educational components, is analyzed. It is recommended to organize the process of teaching foreign language in higher educational institutions based on the combination of the principles of traditional education and contemporary progressive education. Innovative methods of teaching foreign languages are considered, attention is paid to the necessity of implementation of active teaching methods, modern computer and information technologies that facilitate implementation of innovative teaching methods. Electronic platform Moodle is considered to be effective tool for organizing the work of students and teachers. Key objectives of a modern foreign language teacher, basic principles of traditional and contemporary education, core approaches to foreign language teaching in higher educational institutions are highlighted.

Key words: *foreign language communicative competence, educational program, professional competence, program results of learning a foreign language, principles of education, organization of the educational process, methodology of teaching a foreign language.*

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ОРГАНІЗАЦІЙНІ АСПЕКТИ УДОСКОНАЛЕННЯ ПРОЦЕСУ ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ ДЛЯ ЗДОБУВАЧІВ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ ЕКОНОМІЧНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЕЙ

Л. І. Довгань

Актуальність теми зумовлена розвитком міжнародних зв'язків, глобалізаційних тенденцій та активної політики держави щодо впровадження іноземного досвіду в різні сфери суспільного життя, що актуалізує вивчення іноземної мови та робить її інструментом отримання професійних знань, які відповідають вимогам ринку.

Охарактеризовано сучасні виклики щодо підготовки кваліфікованих та конкурентоспроможних фахівців. Основну увагу зосереджено на аналізі діючих освітніх програм здобувачів різних рівнів вищої освіти економічних спеціальностей. Визначено програмні результати вивчення іноземної мови, основні загальні та фахові компетенції, серед яких вагоме місце займає володіння іноземною мовою та здатність до спілкування нею на побутовому та професійному рівнях.

Проаналізовано типову структуро-логічну схему освітньо-професійних програм здобувачів освітнього ступеня "бакалавр" для економічних спеціальностей, міждисциплінарні та умовні міждисциплінарні зв'язки між освітніми компонентами. З метою удосконалення процесу викладання іноземної мови рекомендовано організувати освітній процес у закладах вищої освіти на основі комбінування традиційних та сучасних прогресивних технологій навчання. Визначено, що інтеграція в освітній процес інноваційних методик, сучасних комп'ютерних та інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій, сприяють підвищенню ефективності навчання іноземній мові та підвищують інтерес студентів. Електронну платформу Moodle визнано дієвим ресурсом для організації ефективної роботи як викладача, так і студента. Виокремлено ключові завдання сучасного викладача іноземної мови, основні принципи традиційної та сучасної освіти.

Ключові слова: іношомовна комунікативна компетентність, освітня програма, фахова компетенція, програмні результати вивчення іноземної мови, принципи освіти, організація навчального процесу, методика викладання іноземної мови.

Introduction of the issue. In current conditions of Ukraine's integration in the European community, higher education is considered to be a driving force for social transformations, and knowledge of a foreign language is defined as a key competence in terms of globalization, a means of international communication that enables to become a member of the European educational, scientific and professional space [4].

In the modern labour market, human resources management in numerous companies is targeted at employing specialists in Economics who have knowledge, skills and capabilities in their professional area, as well as good command of a foreign language and terminology that is being constantly kept up-to-date. It gives the

opportunity to develop partnership with foreign companies and get the latest information on market development trends.

Intensification of the international relations, globalization tendencies and active policy of the state on the implementation of foreign experience into various spheres of public life actualize learning of English as an international language of business. In the context of the term "modern specialist" good command of English is becoming an effective tool for obtaining professional knowledge that meets market requirements.

Current state of the issue. Modern problems of teaching foreign languages and formation of foreign language competence of Bachelor students in Economics have been studied by

numerous scholars, including T. A. Hannichenko, N. M. Havryliuk, L. S. Kasianova, A. M. Kotlovskyi, V. V. Lukianenko, A. A. Matiichak, E. V. Miroshnichenko, O. I. Ovchinnikova, O. O. Samokhval, L. O. Sikorska and others.

The outline of unresolved issues brought up in the article. Despite a considerable interest of scientists in the problem specified, the issues of organizing foreign language learning by the students of economic specialties in higher educational institutions in order to form general and professional competences determined by the standard of higher education, require more attention.

Aim of research is to examine the peculiarities of organizing the process of learning foreign languages in higher educational institutions, to determine its position in a typical structural-logical scheme of the educational program for obtaining Bachelor's degree in Economics and to develop recommendations for improving the process of teaching foreign languages to students of economic specialties in higher educational institutions.

Results and discussion. Globalization and European integration processes are changing the requirements for the professional competencies of specialists who are expected to speak a foreign language at a professional level. According to N. Havryliuk, higher education is greatly influenced by transformations in the modern society and its main task is to train highly-qualified and competitive specialists who can quickly respond to rapid changes in working conditions [2: 63].

The current economic situation in Ukraine is dynamic, diverse and uncertain, and therefore there is an objective need to ensure the performance of business entities. Modern labor market requires highly skilled economists, whose professional competence depends on the adequate

decision-making, terms of implementation of available economic programs, plans and, hence, the efficiency of economic activity [5].

As argued by L. O. Sikorska, "modernization of Ukraine's contemporary higher economic education is aimed at finding the ways of meeting a social demand for training competent economists, specialists that meet European standards and can perform creative work, as well as they are capable of professional self-development, carrying out work in both domestic and international economies". Thus, the author emphasizes that among the general and professional competences of future specialists in Economics, an important position is held by their ability to establish business contacts with foreign partners and skilled professional activity in a foreign language environment [7: 256].

It should be emphasized that the process of learning a foreign language has to cover information relating to both general professional area and specific aspects through the comprehensive development of reading, listening, writing and speaking skills, which creates favorable preconditions for the formation of the communicative competence of economists and future businessmen [6: 56].

Nowadays, domestic higher educational institutions are introducing an educational program, which includes the courses, the task of which is to provide a balanced professional training of future specialists in the field of economic activity and learning foreign languages. According to L. S. Kasianova and O. I. Ovchinnikova, "in the educational standard of many prestigious universities, professional foreign language is treated as a priority in education, as there is no doubt about the expediency of expanding and deepening of foreign language proficiency of economists" [3: 74].

The competency approach in higher education implies that mastering of

academic courses by higher education students of different levels and specialties will form a complex comprising of three main components: integral, general and professional competences. Acquisition of all competences specified in the educational program in all courses by the applicants, enables us to claim that the program results of training are achieved.

The results of analysis of the educational programs of different levels of higher education in economic specialties indicate that in the vast majority of cases general and professional competences include knowledge of a foreign language and ability to use it for everyday and professional communication. The program results of training stipulate

that implementation of the educational program by the applicants will involve application of the skills of business foreign language communication; skills of written and oral professional foreign language communication and proper use of professional foreign language terminology; knowledge of foreign language vocabulary and grammar, which ensure professional communication and enables to obtain necessary professional information from foreign sources.

In the educational and professional programs for training Bachelors in Economics, English is usually taught within the educational components "Foreign Language for Professional Communication" and "Foreign Language of the Specialty" (Fig. 1).

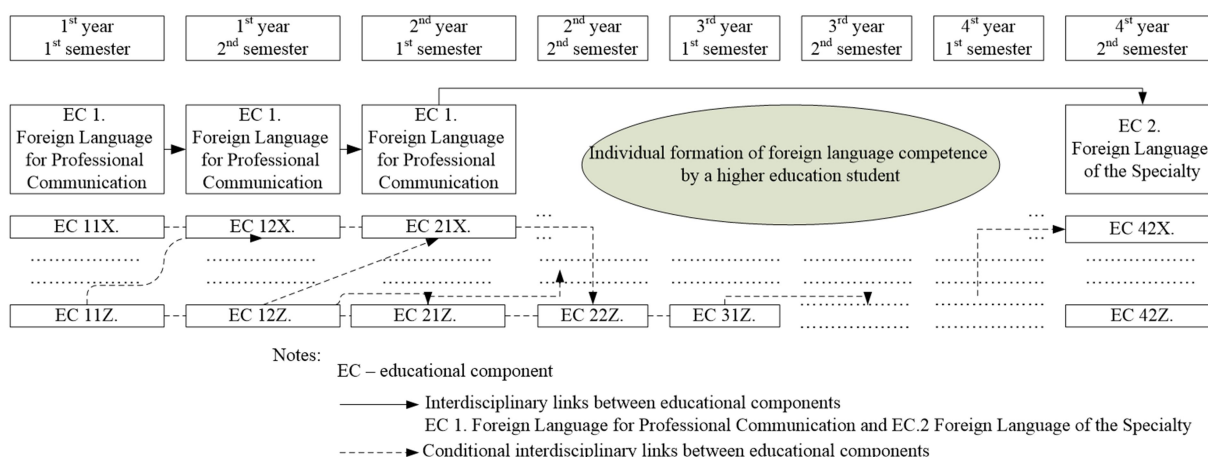


Fig. 1. Typical structural logical scheme of the educational and professional programs for training Bachelors in Economics

Source: developed by the author

In the typical case, "Foreign Language for Professional Communication" is taught during the two semesters of the 1st first academic year and the 1st semester of the 2nd academic year, "Foreign Language of Specialty" is taught in the 2nd semester of the 4th academic year. Thus, during four semesters, the students are actually self-responsible for the formation of individual foreign language

communicative competence, which, from our point of view, is a debatable approach. Not excluding the potential of self-motivation of foreign language learners, we have some doubts about the achievement of program learning results in the context of such approach to the organization of the educational process.

Only a few years ago, foreign language was studied during the first

four semesters, and the recent inclusion in the programs of such component as foreign language of the specialty has become a modern trend, probably, as a response to the compulsory Single Entrance Exam (SEE) when entering the magistracy.

In our opinion, in such circumstances, it is advisable to introduce optional course of "Foreign Language for Professional Communication" and linguistic studies for third and fourth year students, which will allow the students to update the acquired language competencies, will motivate them to apply to individual learning, ensure gaining of new skills, which is of great relevance considering the necessity the take SEE, which requires language proficiency level B2.

The issues of the validity of forming interdisciplinary links between educational components are also of great concern. Linking of the educational components of professional and humanitarian courses with each other is widely spread in the structural logical schemes of the educational and professional programs of Bachelor students in Economics, but interdisciplinary links with a foreign language are rare. According to figure 1, only educational components 1 and 2 are interconnected. The courses of a foreign language profile are usually interrelated and logically extended, but in our opinion, they should not be considered in isolation from other educational components, which occurs both when planning educational programs and subsequently organizing the educational process.

This is due to the fact that the simultaneous combination of the knowledge of English with the knowledge of Economics ensures

bilateral educational process, better implementation of interdisciplinary links and more effective achievement of program results of training. On the one hand, educators have the opportunity to use background knowledge to develop different types of language activities in English, to apply their own experience and erudition. On the other hand, knowledge about the culture gained in English classes can be used to study specific and humanitarian courses.

In our opinion, it is appropriate to introduce the practice of teaching professional courses in a foreign language, which is practiced by some higher educational institutions. However, the effectiveness of this process can be ensured if students are fluent in foreign language vocabulary. Unfortunately, as the practice shows, the level of foreign language proficiency and formation of professional glossary does not allow a wide range of students to perceive lectures effectively, since there are still many universities where only students of the first year study a foreign language, which proves the urgency of profound professional foreign language learning and the need to reorganize the educational process.

Formation of the student's linguistic, sociolinguistic, sociocultural, discussion and strategic competencies requires changes in the approaches to the educational process, since availability of highly qualified foreign language teachers only is not enough to ensure effective academic process [1].

Organization of the educational process and teaching of a foreign language in higher educational institutions may be based on the principles of traditional education, contemporary progressive education, or their combination (Fig. 2).

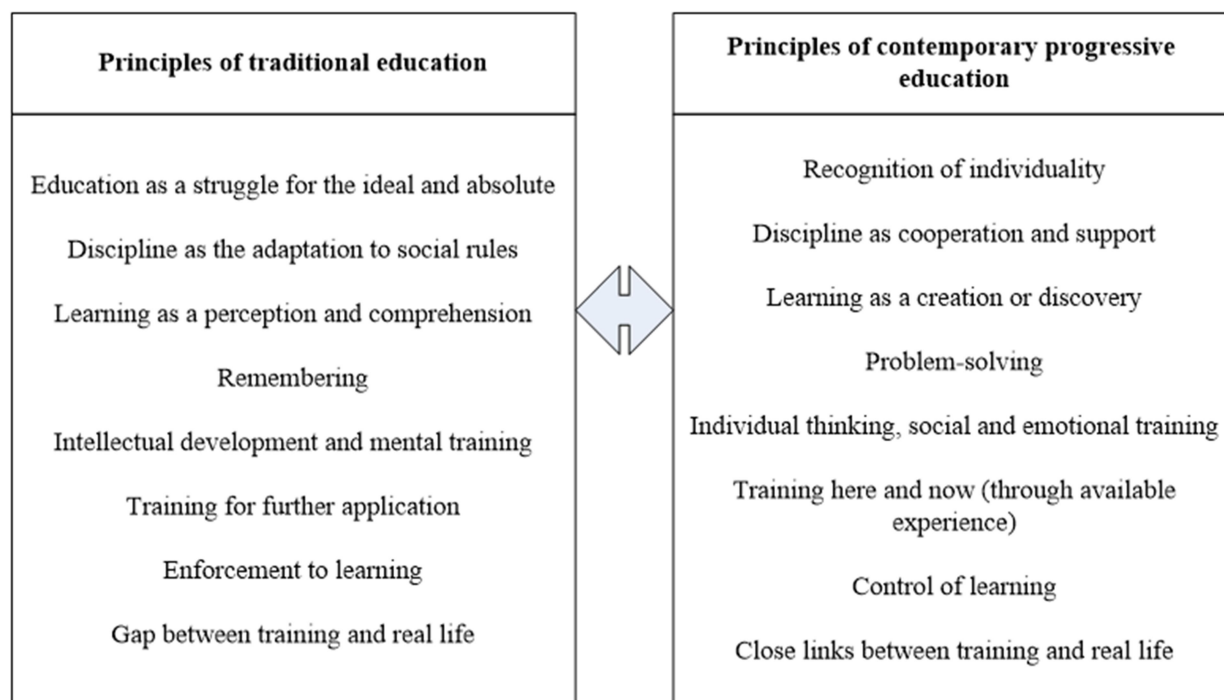


Fig. 2. Basic principles of the traditional and contemporary progressive education
Source: formed by the author according to [8]

In our opinion, a modern foreign language teacher should be guided in his/her professional activity by the principles of contemporary progressive education, should apply modern innovative approaches and possess both traditional and up-to-date teaching practices.

We consider that distance learning technologies should hold an important position among the traditional forms, including full-time and part-time study. Implementation of distance learning, in particular through the use of the Moodle online resource, makes it possible to maximize the advancement of the learning process, increase its efficiency, and what is most valuable, cause a great interest of students. In turn, the teacher has the opportunity to present the syllabus of the academic course, tutorials, tasks for the individual work of students, tests for self-control, presentations, video and audio materials, which is especially relevant when learning a foreign language.

Moodle can become an integral part of the educational process when learning a foreign language. Provided it is properly integrated into the educational process, it will help to optimize traditional teaching methods and their outcomes. In turn, the potential of cyberspace for educational purposes and the considerable interest of students encourage teachers to change and update teaching methods.

The task of the modern foreign language teacher is also to intensify the cognitive activity of students, to provide conditions for the practical activity of each student, to choose the methods that will let them show their creativity. Therefore, the organization of the educational process should be carried out using methods that stimulate high external and internal activity of students, i.e. "active teaching methods", in particular, didactic business games, problem solving, extra-curricular activities (competitions, Olympiads, quizzes, etc.).

Regardless of the commitment to some approaches and methods, higher education teachers are constantly searching for new technologies to improve the effectiveness of both teaching and learning. The problems of pedagogical innovations continue to attract the attention of modern scholars who research, develop and implement innovative practices in the educational process.

Conclusions and research perspectives. In terms of pedagogical transformations initiated by the government that involves updating of the educational programs, improvement of the general and professional competences, the issue of learning a foreign language as a means of gaining professional knowledge in accordance with current challenges is of great urgency.

Reorganization of the educational process should take into account the requirements for the graduate of a higher educational institution. Considering a high level of foreign language proficiency that is expected to be acquired by a bachelor and the need to take SEE, it is advisable to teach foreign languages throughout the whole period of academic study.

It is recommended to organize the process of teaching a foreign language in higher educational institutions based on the combination of the principles of traditional and contemporary progressive education, active implementation of distance learning through the electronic Moodle system. Introduction of modern principles and innovative methods of teaching foreign languages, modern computer, information and communication technologies will enable to optimize the process of forming foreign language competence and achieve program results of training.

Perspectives of further research include gaining of foreign experience in organizing the educational process of teaching English to future economists

at the leading European higher educational institutions and implementing a distance course of foreign language learning in the context of globalization and intercultural communication.

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