

MAIN TRENDS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN A NON-LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY: THEORETICAL ASPECT

E.V. Mikheev, mikheeva_rudn@mail.ru, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7220-8148>
Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Moscow, Russia

Abstract. The article discusses the issues of foreign language education in a non-language university. In the light of globalization, political and social situations worldwide, this topic becomes particularly relevant. The aim of the article is to analyze and describe the current trends in foreign language education in a non-language university, as well as to analyze the implementation of the author's course based on individually designed projects as part of teaching foreign language to students of economic specialties. The author identified and characterized the main trends in foreign language education: individualization, integration of culture component in education programs, computerization, and professionalization; described the methods and means of implementing these trends in the educational process in a non-language university; developed a course for teaching English to students of economic specialties taking into account modern trends in foreign language education; conducted experimental work to pilot the course with a group of economist students from The Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration. The author emphasizes the importance of professionalization and the special role of the English language in preparing future specialists for professional communication and exchange of experience at an international level. For this reason, the training process for future professionals should be relevant to their future professional activities, and foreign language proficiency in the professional field can increase the competitiveness of future specialists.

Keywords: foreign language education, non-language university, individualization, culturology, computerization, professionalization

For citation: Mikheev E.V. Main trends in foreign language teaching in a non-linguistic university: theoretical aspect. *Bulletin of the South Ural State University. Ser. Education. Educational Sciences.* 2024;16(3):61–67. DOI: 10.14529/ped240306

Научная статья
УДК 37.37.03
DOI: 10.14529/ped240306

ОСНОВНЫЕ ТЕНДЕНЦИИ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАННОМУ ЯЗЫКУ В НЕЯЗЫКОВОМ ВУЗЕ: ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЙ АСПЕКТ

Е.В. Михеев, mikheeva_rudn@mail.ru, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7220-8148>
Российский университет дружбы народов, Москва, Россия

Аннотация. Данная статья посвящена вопросам иноязычного образования в неязыковом вузе. В свете глобализации, политической и социальной обстановки во всем мире, данная тема приобретает особую актуальность. Целью статьи является анализ и описание современных тенденций в иноязычном языковом образовании в условиях неязыкового вуза, а также анализ апробации авторского курса на базе индивидуально разработанных проектов в рамках обучения иностранному языку студентов экономических специальностей. Автор выделил и содержательно охарактеризовал основные тенденции иноязычного образования в языковом вузе: индивидуализация, культурологизация, компьютеризация и профессионализация; описал методы и средства реализации данных тенденций в образовательном процессе в условиях неязыкового вуза; разработал курс по обучению английскому языку студентов экономических специальностей с учетом современных тенденций в иноязычном образовании; провел экспериментальную работу по апробации курса с группой студентов-экономистов из Российской академии народного хозяйства и государственной службы при Президенте Российской Федерации. Автор статьи подчёркивает важность профессионализации и особую роль английского

языка в подготовке будущих специалистов к профессиональному общению и обмену опытом на международном уровне. Для этого процесс обучения будущих профессионалов должен быть максимально приближенным к реальной профессиональной деятельности, а владение иностранным языком в профессиональной сфере может повысить конкурентоспособность будущих специалистов.

Ключевые слова: иноязычное образование, неязыковой вуз, индивидуализация, культурологизация, компьютеризация, профессионализация

Для цитирования: Mikheev E.V. Main trends in foreign language teaching in a non-linguistic university: theoretical aspect // Вестник ЮУрГУ. Серия «Образование. Педагогические науки». 2024. Т. 16, № 3. С. 61–67. DOI: 10.14529/ped240306

Introduction

Modern society is characterized by intensification of contacts at all levels: from everyday communication to professional and academic one. Thus, especially in the light of current political shift, the effectiveness of cross-cultural communication hardly could be overestimated. Due to historical reasons English is the main language of cross-cultural communication. It, in turn, led to developing and implementing new forms and methods of teaching English as the language of international communication and dialogue between representatives of different cultures. Analyzing current educational process of teaching English in a non-linguistic university the main trends are identified. They are individualization, culturalization, informatization and professionalization. In the paper these trends are thoroughly described and characterized. Moreover, considering these trends the individual projects for ESP training of students of economic majors were developed and introduced by the author.

Materials and methods

Considering the current trends in foreign language teaching a set of individual projects for students of economic majors was developed by the author. The author of the course while developing it strived to make it individual, professionally and culturally-oriented as well as computerized to the fullest. In other words, the author tried to implement the modern educational trends in ESP training to the maximum. The specifically developed on-line course and individual projects are considered to be a model of professional activity of a would be professional.

Later this online course consisting of sets of individual projects was examined in the Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration within the frameworks of ESP. All in all 25 university students took part in this experimental course. They were 1–3 year students with different levels of language proficiency. The students during the experimental

training did projects developed according to their individual plans for 1–3 semesters.

340 academic hours are given to the course of English in 1–4 years of studies at Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration the University. According to the teaching plan 50% of this time is devoted to General English, 50% of time is devoted to ESP (which is 170 academic hours).

The stages of developing individual projects for students:

First, before these individual projects were offered to students the level of students' professional communicative competence and their motivation in professional field were assessed by testing and answering the questionnaire. This helped to identify the content and the level of difficulty of project work that would be offered to students. Also students' opinions and desires were considered.

Second, the sets of individual projects were developed for each group of students.

The projects were designed in such a way that they would help students to acquire professional terminology in the field of economics, business and law, read and comprehend specific scientific and technical texts and messages from information systems, prepare business papers in electronic format, and organize Internet searching of the required information in English.

Third, the scale of assessment of this experimental training was developed.

It included the entry and output testing of the students involved in it.

The testing had 2 tasks. The first task for students was to translate a professional text from English into Russian. Task two for students was to translate a task on information system management from Russian into English. The students' translation work was assessed considering the following parameters: 1) a number of students who did all the tasks, 2) a percentage to which a task is done, 3) errors and mistakes in grammar

and vocabulary, 4) relevance of the translation to the original text.

Literature review

Now let's describe in detail these four trends: individualization, culturalization, informatization and professionalization.

Individualization of foreign language teaching in a non-linguistic university

The individualization of education process is the basic trend especially in the framework of terrestrial education. Students have the right not only to choose universities to study, but also the courses to study. They have the opportunity to study in several universities at the same time as well as to use opportunities offered by academic mobility.

Besides the term "individualization" the term "variability" also could be used. Academic Yu. Timkina marks that the concept of variable education is characterized by the transformation of theoretical base and practical ways of foreign language education implementation due to individualization and differentiation of educational process.

These changes are caused by necessity to satisfy students' personal and professional needs considering their level of language acquisition and personal psychological characteristics. Variable foreign language education is focused on forming a linguistic personality that is able to effectively communicate on cross-cultural level and aimed at giving students the choice of methods, technics and means of education from the spectrum of educational technologies [16, p. 259].

Variability of education is aimed at meeting students' individual needs and interests. This, in turn, helps to create friendly environment for students to fulfill students' potential to the fullest [5, p. 519].

Dr. A. Shilova considers the four levels of individualization in the framework of ESP training – linguistic, psychological, social, and professional [13, p. 168–169]. Such teaching methods as modular technology, discussion, role plays, and project work could foster individualization in teaching a foreign language in a university.

As Dr. E. Makovskaya points out that modular technology gives student's individual educational trajectory structure, organization and content [8, p. 256].

E. Nelyubina thinks that role play makes the process of learning practically – oriented as it involves mock real live activity and boosts communication. In other words, it is learning by acting. It includes play, learning and communi-

cation at the same time [10, p. 219]. N. Drozdova understands discussion as a talk between people in which two or more parties could take part. While talking, the parties may disagree with each other, convince each other or avoid a conflict. The aim of discussion is to tackle the issue from all possible sides with the help of reasoning and logic [2, p. 115]. One more important means of foreign language teaching individualization in a non-linguistic university is project work. E. Moiseeva defines project work as "a way to reach a didactic goal through thorough research of the problem that should end with a material result presented in this or that way. Project work is also viewed as a system of students' techniques and acts in their sequence to achieve the set goal or to solve a meaningful issue by creating an end product." [9, p. 216].

Project method presupposes maximum individualization of students' activity since it is based on students' autonomous work.

Culturalization of foreign language education in a non-linguistic university

As I. Shakin points out that globalization creates a need to bring up students who could think globally. Students need to understand that they belong not only to a certain country, but rather they are also citizens of the world. It means developing students' cultural competence as an important tool for professional and interstate cooperation [13, p. 1]. Forming students' intercultural competence could be done in four main ways: 1) studying the socio-cultural aspects of communication in a foreign country based on using authentic materials and communication trainings in the area of formal and informal communication; 2) socio – cultural disclosure of studied topics (it leads to lingo cultural, area cultural and cultural enrichment of students' communication); 3) making students aware of real and potential intercultural conflicts as well as means of solving or neutralizing them; 4) developing students' ability to perceive and to use adequately socio-cultural information for effective intercultural communication [17, p. 32]. Authentic video materials are the main way of foreign language education culturalization in a non-linguistic university. L. Likhomanova describes the following benefits of video materials; first, they include different modes of interaction. Second, usually video materials have some visual information about the place, people and the way they act in a given situation which might be determined by people's age, gender and psychological characteristics. Visualization conveys better not only

facts, but also the linguistic means used in a particular situation [7, p. 194]. Besides authentic video texts a teacher could offer authors' presentations that contain information about cultural events in a foreign country. For example, presentation about national holidays, songs and folklore, dances, sport, cinema, subcultures and media could be made and presented to students. Moreover, English and American web-sites could be used to introduce students to cultural peculiarities of these countries. So, using authentic materials rich in cultural and social information helps students understand that learning a foreign language is not just studying vocabulary and grammar, but also about discovering a different culture.

Computerization of foreign language education in a non-linguistic university

Applying modern ICT in a non-linguistic university is one of the current trends in foreign language education. S. Shilova points out that ICT makes methods, forms and tools of teaching more diverse. It, in turn, helps to make classes more visual, interesting and memorable [14, p. 163]. N. Esenina thinks that ICT has the following advantages: 1) non-stop interaction between all parties of educational process is organized and maintained due to ICT, 2) ICT boosts students' knowledge, communication and professionally interaction, 3) it grants psychological and pedagogical monitoring of students' achievements and their creative development of higher quality, and continuity of language education, 4) ICT makes language education individual and personalized, 5) ICT allows access to current and actual information in the Internet for creating teaching materials, 6) ICT models authentic environment that helps students socialize and communicate in a foreign language [3, pp. 82–83].

V. Kylagin and I. Robert offered the most detailed classification of ICT. It is based on 1) functional aspect of ICT, 2) a way of introducing information, 3) methodological application. In international practice ICT is known as E-Learning and could be classified into two groups – technologies of using computer software and Internet technologies [6, 11]. The following teaching methods are based on ICT: e-textbook, e-educational platform, Online Diary.

Professionalization of foreign language education in a non-linguistic university

Changes going in the framework of modern socio-cultural paradigm, deal with significant transformation of public mind including professional education of would be specialists. Thus,

P. Rostovtseva points out that foreign language education at a university level turns into professional – oriented communicative training that creates motivation and self-development of a would be professional. Professional communicative competence is becoming a must for a professional success of a specialist [12, p. 138].

L. Yarotshkaya marks that normally university students have a course of a foreign language on their first or second year of studies and it is very formal because students do not have any professional knowledge by this time. By the time students acquire any professional knowledge, the course of foreign language comes to an end [19]. O. Varnikova thinks that foreign languages develop and foster students' cognitive, emotional and behavioral professional skills. [Learning a foreign language: 1) expands their professional outlook, 2) helps to assess the value of a would be profession in a global prospective, 3) forms efficiently social and professional group identity, 4) creates motivation to study foreign language for professional purposes to become a competitive professional in the future [18, p. 9].

O. Byrykina defined 7 major strategic directions of students' professionalization: 1) a foreign language as a means of acquiring professional knowledge and skills including academic mobility and educational and industrial practice; 2) a foreign language as a means of professional development that implies academic research work and professional mobility; 3) a foreign language as a guarantee of successful future employment not only in domestic companies, but in foreign ones as well; 4) a foreign language as a means of professional and career growth in particular while working with international partners; 5) methodology of acquiring profession through acquiring a foreign language; 6) educational and methodological support including professional texts, dialogues, role-plays, and research work; 7) the quality of educational process is assessed by control of language acquisition, formed competences and mastery of profession [1, pp. 66–67]. T. Korzh describes the most important parameters of professionalization. They are 1) principles for implementation of professionally – oriented education (for example, principle of professionally-focused and interdisciplinary integration of educational process); 2) principle of teaching materials selection (namely, principle of authenticity, contextual learning, modeling and framing of knowledge); 3) principles of organization of professionally-oriented foreign language education (for example, principle of modular organization

of educational content and principle of organizing student – teacher interaction) [4, pp. 39–40].

Results

The major trends in foreign language education in non-linguistic university, namely, individualization, culturalization, computerization and professionalization were identified and described alongside with practical methods of their implementation.

The results of experimental ESP training of a group of 25 students at Russian Academy of National Economy and Public Administration the University are presented in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1
The results of outer and inner testing
of the experimental group of students

Criteria	Entry testing	Output testing
A number of students who did all the tasks	60.2%	100%
A percentage to which a task is done	75.1%	100%
Errors and mistakes in grammar and vocabulary	35.3%	15.5%
Relevance of the translation to the original text	60.7%	90.2%

So, the experimental ESP language training with a help of individual projects proved to be effective.

Now let's analyze to which extend the current trends in foreign language teaching are implemented in this course (Table 2).

Table 2
Implementation of modern trends
in teaching foreign languages

Trend	Percentage of realization
Individualization	100%
Computerization	50%
Professionalization	100%
Culturalization	50%

The thing that this training was developed individually for the given groups of students with the consideration of their professional interests and culture, as well as had an online support made it efficient. It is also noticed that individualization and professionalization play the key role in ESP training, then to motivate the students even more the cultural component and using of ICT should be consider

Discussion

Reflecting on the results, it's noteworthy that these trends cover and influence the whole educational process of foreign language education in a non-linguistic university. The results presented by the author are specified for ESP training of students of economic majors.

Furthermore, it would be intriguing to approach these trends not only from the perspective of foreign language education in the context of a non-linguistic university, but a linguistic one as well.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it's important to highlight that the overarching goal of this paper, which is to analyze the current educational trends in foreign language education, particularly in the context of a non – linguistic university, has been successfully achieved. The current trends in foreign language education in a non- linguistic university have been identified and described alongside with methods of implementation for each educational trend. The results of experimental course of ESP for would be economists are given and analyzed. As a practical application of this theoretical research, an on-line course could be developed to impart all the current educational trends within the process of teaching foreign languages in a non-linguistic university. So, the goals of the research, namely, to characterize the main trends in foreign language education in a non-linguistic university and to describe and analyze the experimental course of ESP for economic majors are successfully achieved.

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Information about the author

Evgeny V. Mikheev, PhD student, Department of Theory and Practice of Foreign Languages, Institute of Foreign Languages of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Moscow, Russia.

Информация об авторе

Михеев Евгений Валерьевич, аспирант кафедры теории и практики иностранных языков, Институт иностранных языков, Российский университет дружбы народов, Москва, Россия.

The article was submitted 09.07.2024

Статья поступила в редакцию 09.07.2024