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ON THE CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND SPECIAL DISCIPLINES IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Introduction of English as one of obligatory languages side by side with Kazakh and Russian into an educational program of schools and universities is a very complex undertaking not only from an educational point of view, but from cultural and social point of view as well. There is certain resistance and misunderstanding on the part of different individuals.

Realization of the project on introduction of English as the medium of instruction for four subjects: biology, chemistry, informatics and physics will not happen in one day and it will not end. There must be a thorough preparatory work which includes various stages like developing textbooks in mainstream subjects, improving English language proficiency of teachers as well as of school children and university students. All that work demands significant financial investments.

Key words: linguistic competence, assessment, multilingual education, content and language integrated learning.

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Жоғары оқу жүйесінде шетел тілін арнайы пәндермен байланыстыра оқыту

Мектеп және жоғары оқу орындар жүйесінде үштілді білім беру жоба аясында Ағылшын тілі пәнін қазақ тілі мен орыс тілдерімен қатар оқыту оңай дүние емес екені туралы қоғам қайраткерлері өз пікірлерін ортаға салды. Себебі бұл білім беру тұрғысынан да және мәдени әлеуметтік тұрғылардан да күрделі, қиыншылық тудыратын мәселе. Қоғамда түсіністікпен қарамайтын және қарсылық білдіретін тұлғалар басым.

Бұл жоба бойынша биологияны, химияны, информатиканы, физиканы ағылшын тілінде оқыту үшін үлкен дайындық жұмыстарды талап етеді. Ең алдымен жобаны іске асыру мақсатында бұл пәндер бойынша ағылшын тілінде оқулықтар дайындалуы тиіс, екінші, осы пәндерді ағылшын тілінде дәріс беретін оқытушыларың – ағылшын тілі біліктілігін көтеру, үшінші, сонымен қатар мектеп оқушыларының және университет студенттерінің де тіл біліктілігін артыру жұмыстары қолға алынуы қажет. Бұл бағдарламаның іске асыру мәселесі көп факторларға байланысты.

Түйін сөздер: лингвистикалық құзыреттілік, бағалау, көптілді білім беру, шетел тілін арнайы пәндермен байланыстыра оқыту.

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Об интегрированном обучении иностранному языку и специальным дисциплинам в университетском образовании

Введение английского языка как обязательного в рамках трёхязычия наряду с казахским и русским языками в систему школьного и университетского образования является сложным предприятием не только с точки зрения образования, но и с точки зрения культурного и социального аспектов. В обществе не все люди относятся с пониманием к данному вопросу, и даже существует определенное сопротивление со стороны некоторых профессионалов.

Реализация проекта по обучению биологии, химии, информатики, физики на английском языке потребует большой подготовительной работы; это, прежде всего, создание учебников по этим предметам на английском языке, повышение уровня языковой компетенции преподавателей-предметников, а также учеников школ и студентов вузов. Успешная реализация этой программы зависит от многих факторов.

Ключевые слова: лингвистическая компетенция, оценка, полиязычное образование, предметно-языковое интегрированное обучение.

For the first time the idea to introduce English as the medium instruction was proposed by President of the country N. Nazarbayev in 2004. Later this idea was proclaimed in 2007 in the Message to the people of Kazakhstan «New Kazakhstan in the New World» in which the Head of state proposed to begin a phased implementation of the cultural project «Triunity of Languages»[1].

In his annual address N.A. Nazarbayev constantly stresses the importance of learning English, which will open new opportunities for the younger generation of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The expansion of international integration, the active introduction of new information technologies, the emergence of a multipolar, multicultural and multilingual world have made the English language proficiency a key factor in enhancing national competitiveness. English proficiency provides access to information in various subject areas, as 80% of all the world's information is stored in English. Thus, all three languages (Kazakh, Russian, English) play an important role in the present and future life of Kazakhstani society.

Starting from the school year 2019, the secondary schools of the country, namely the 9th and 10th form pupils will study sciences (chemistry, biology, physics and informatics) through the medium of English.

A good proficiency in English will open the young people big opportunities in different spheres of their life in the future. English now has become an international language and place a critical role in many areas of international communication. In 1997, Graddol listed 12 domains:

- Working language of international organizations and conferences
- Scientific publications
- International banking, economic affairs, and trade
- Advertising for global brands
- Audio-visual cultural products
- International tourism
- Tertiary education
- International safety
- International law

- Relay language in interpretation and translation

- Technology transfer

- Internet communication[2].

It's the language of diplomacy and the official language of the European Union, the United Nations, NATO and the European Free Trade Association, not to mention many Commonwealth countries. English is also the language of science. With English proficiency the young people will be able to seek new knowledge from scientific books and papers by themselves and benefit their profession, as 95% of articles are written in English and around half of them are from English speaking countries. In this situation English language education has to respond to these different contexts and different uses of English.

Introduction of English as one of obligatory languages side by side with Kazakh and Russian into an educational program of schools and universities is a very complex undertaking not only from an educational point of view, but from cultural and social point of view as well. There is certain resistance and misunderstanding on the part of different individuals.

The idea to begin instruction of the English language at earlier school ages, namely inclusion into study programs of the first form of elementary schools, hasn't been unanimously welcomed by many on the basis that children should be thoroughly taught their native language first. One more reason of discrepancy of opinion is that teachers of English in different regions of the country, especially in rural schools, may or may not have good command of English and lack methodical skills, so that they may be unable to provide effective language instruction to their learners. However at the initiative of the Ministry of education and science the subject «English language» has been included into the elementary school study program as the initial step in realization of the trilingual educational model project, on the assumption that children learn languages easily. Now it is too early to make any conclusions about the outcome, time will show.

It is a common truth that any innovation, even any change is never accepted unanimously by the community. People have different attitudes and different views toward innovations. Here we consider it to the point to give the definition of what innovation is and what is the difference between innovation and the change. According to Stoller innovation 'results' from deliberate efforts that are perceived as new, that are intended to bring about improvements [3].

Innovation is a highly complex process. Introduction of any innovation and the outcomes of this process depend upon the contexts, in this case English language education, and the extent to which it is appropriately adapted. An essential aspect of change is creating opportunities for the development of those who are involved in it. Change becomes sustainable when participants fully understand its importance and necessity, and they modify the patterns of their behavior and belief so as to get the best outcome [4].

Realization of the project on introduction of English as the medium of instruction for four subjects biology, chemistry, informatics and physics will not happen in one day and it will not end. There must be a thorough preparatory work which includes various stages like developing textbooks in mainstream subjects, improving English language proficiency of teachers as well as of school children and university students. All that work demands significant financial investments.

The Ministry of education of the Republic of Kazakhstan has developed a program to help improve the English proficiency of science and informatics teachers of universities. The program includes one month courses of English, full immersion into a learning process, after which there is an internet-based instruction.

It should be noted that Kazakh and Russian departments have extensive experience and a long tradition in providing the educational process. Instruction of Kazakh and Russian languages, in our opinion, does not pose many difficulties both for teachers and students, as the teaching process is well equipped with teaching and learning aids, electronic textbooks and, of course, there is highly competent and experienced teaching staff. Moreover these languages are taught and learned in natural language settings.

It is not the case with the English language instruction, where the quality of instruction totally depends on the level of the science teachers' competence in the English language as

well as the motivation of students. It is clear that low expertise of science teachers' English competence can be a serious obstacle to providing quality education on their subjects to students. Practice shows that to carry out a full training in the English language level of competence of teachers should not be lower than the Intermediate level according to the Common European Framework. The teacher should possess all communicative (reading, speaking, writing, listening) and language (lexical, grammatical, syntactical) competencies. Besides, science teachers should have good translation skills and good fluency in English.

The integration of language and content in foreign language teaching is very important now, although it has created some challenges for teachers of English because few English language teachers are experts in both academic content and language. Teaching English by studying academic content is difficult. When English is taught through academic content it requires that teachers either develop subject matter expertise in the content area or collaborate with the content area teachers.

Teaching the mainstream subjects through medium of English can have successful outcome when there is a fruitful cooperation between teachers of English and content area teachers.

By taking a decision to conduct a subject in a foreign language, the mainstream teacher shoulders the responsibility for the quality of the knowledge the students obtain on the discipline. And this means that mainstream teachers should have not only a good command of the language, but also knowledge of the elements of the methodology of teaching foreign languages. These skills can be generated through targeted cooperation with qualified specialists in foreign languages.

The teaching of special subjects in English also assumes that students also should have the English competence not lower than Intermediate level. Low language competence of students can also be an obstacle to providing high-quality knowledge. In the process of studying subjects in English, students, along with the acquisition of knowledge on specialty, acquire speech and language skills in English. They widen their every day as well as specific vocabulary, grammatical and syntactical features that are typical for the texts on their specialty, improve communication skills.

Both for teachers and students, it is crucial to steadily improve their English language competence. And the university should offer them the

opportunity to improve their language competence by establishing language learning courses.

It has become a tradition with the teachers of Foreign Language Department to carry out substantial work on the analysis and assessment of linguistic competence of teachers and students of al-Farabi Kazakh National University. On the assignment of the Department for Academic Studies teachers of Foreign Languages Department participated in the monitoring of lectures and seminars of science teachers with the purpose to determine the correspondence of their proficiency level to deliver lectures in English.

With the aim to improve the English language competence of the university community the language center «iLC» was created. The activity of «iLC» is many-fold: the organization of language courses for teachers and students, assistance in translation of articles and other materials to the English / Kazakh / Russian languages, development of syllabus for the discipline «Professionally-oriented foreign language», preparation and holding conferences, giving consultations and etc.

As we have mentioned above, Ministry of Education and Science has already started the implementation of the project «Triunity of Languages» in the part of improving English competence of subject teachers of Kazakhstani universities. The Ministry financially supported the trips of subject teachers to the central leading universities. Al-Farabi University hosted 400 biology and physics teachers. The teaching program included the following elements:

- One-month intensive interactive course
- Self-instructional study pack (with teacher monitoring)
- One-month internet-based learning
- Final examination

To implement the program the teachers of Foreign Languages Department developed the syllabi, prepared textbooks, teaching aids and materials for independent work. Obviously one month of training is not enough to master a foreign

language. However, it was noted that these courses gave subject teachers an opportunity to immerse in the language learning and served as a stimulus for further self-study and improvement of language skills.

These courses have identified a number of issues that need to be addressed in the near future, namely:

- Helping the subject teachers to prepare for international exams.

- Cooperation with the subject teachers in designing textbooks in English on the subject disciplines.

- Organization of language courses for teachers, students and graduate students with the use of such advanced technologies as blended learning, e-learning, the use of the Internet resources.

- Observation of the subject teachers' lectures and seminars with the purpose of monitoring their language proficiency.

The program provides training in two areas:

- learning practical English that involves strengthening and further development of all 4 speech skills – speaking, listening, reading comprehension and writing;

- training of professionally-oriented English language, including the development of professionally-oriented communicative competence on the basis of application of such teaching methods and technologies, as project work, case study, round tables, conferences, presentation of reports, mini-lessons.

Introducing change into any sphere is always a complicated undertaking and involves changes in beliefs or attitudes. Education in three languages is a complex process. Implementation of this nation-wide project will take time and effort, and we shouldn't expect to see results overnight. The success of it strongly depends on where the teachers are at the beginning of the program, and it depends on the degree of their motivation, responsibility, industry, zeal, energy and etc. Since education is a two-way process students too should have the same qualities.

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