

The Structure of a Modern Textbook for the Students of the International Relations Department

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Abstract

This article deals with the problems of education process organizing within the University in the field of international relations study. The peculiarity of the line is that the perfect knowledge of the languages studied should be supported by a profound knowledge in the sphere of specialization. It means that the future graduates should understand political, economic and geopolitical affairs around the world and ought to be good enough to analyze the specific literature, to point out the principal ideas of the TV and Radio programmes, to use the obtained language skills solving the daily tasks at a workplace. Thus, here we see the necessity of all the aspects of language mastering as listening, reading, use of language skills and etcetera, along with training the students how to operate the knowledge they received within the education process. In order to achieve the goals supposed, it is preferable to use a set of vocabulary assessment tests and self-study cases, putting the learners in true to life situations, where they will have to cope with different difficulties natural for the international relations line.

Keywords: Political linguistics; Foreign languages; Modern education.



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1. Introduction

1.1. The Importance of the Problem

Education is important, as it is the foundation for further existence in the society, and it is specific, since there are no clear definitions of the content of this education. In a broad sense, we can cite a number of examples that can be interpreted as education. Education can also be called as a set of educational elements, for example, the child is taught how to hold a spoon, fork, how to behave at the table. Education includes the process of obtaining skills, for example, in shooting and driving a car, etc., education is also a process of learning languages, mathematical formulae. It turns out that everyone has their own education that cannot be identical to the same of the other person. This makes the definition of education very voluminous and requires a personality-oriented approach for each individual. Depending on this, the goals used by the teachers should vary. Sometimes they are more specific, and sometimes represent a kind of an ideal image, which is described by a number of tasks that the graduate should be able to solve in the course of his professional activities. In this case, teachers need to personify this ideal image with a list of all the skills and skills that a graduate of the Higher School should possess (Khisamova, 2016).

1.2. Status of the Problem

The specificity of modern education is also caused by changes in the structural design of higher education. To date, there has been a shift from traditional systems of training specialists to the preparation of bachelors and masters, where training is built in a slightly different way: a number of competences but not the individual goals and tasks are considered while choosing the frame of graduate assessing. This, in turn, changes the usual logic of the pedagogical design. Often students used to receive a large amount of knowledge and could use it independently to implement practical tasks, and whether or not to teach them how to deal with the skills obtained was the choice of each individual teacher (Khisamova and Moullagaliev, 2017). The new methods of education changed the vision of the problem. Now teachers need to give students not only pure knowledge, but also to teach them how to behave in order to achieve professional goals. At the same time, the learning process itself should be as close to reality as possible, and students should challenge all the difficulties associated with solving the tasks set and identify their weaknesses in order to find the material for further study. Thus, the very essence of a new approach to the educational process is emerging, which is directly related to the change of values in society. A modern student must accept the fact that getting an education is a merit not only of the teacher, but, first of all, of the students themselves. For a student to become a professional in the field, it is necessary to accept and understand the value of education and strive to do as much as possible to master the necessary competencies, where the key factor is the impossibility of transferring competences from one (a teacher) to another (a student). Here the main peculiarity of the education in its modern definition can be identified as the following: education is a set of competencies. This set is not anything

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tangible, meaningful. Therefore, it cannot be transferred from one generation to the other. It turns out that the principal participant in the acquisition and development of competencies is the student himself, and the teacher is just the curator of the process, the person who directs educational activity more than just trains. A teacher is rather a catalyst who sets the roles and creates problematic situations that students solve during role-playing games involving real professional situations (Khisamova, 2014).

1.3. The Research Hypothesis

In this research we would like to reveal the basic elements of the English language teaching process in Kazan Federal University for the International Relations line. Because of the fact that the department is very specific, we often have to prepare unique material to be discussed during the lessons. That is caused by a high level of requirement presupposed for the line by the Federal Educational Standard, where all the variety of competencies are listed. Today's discussion is set around the question of organizing the educational material for the students mastering the basics of international relations and regional studies (Villalobos, 2013).

2. Methodological Framework

Education in the modern world is a key factor of the successful and harmonious development of an individual. At the same time the level of education comes as the main indicator of the economic and political strength and stability of the country. That is the highly educated population that ensures the progressive continuity of domestic and foreign policy. Thus, we understand that education is one of the crucial elements for each individual person, this is the so-called filter that helps us perceive the environment in an undistorted form, sort out the excess and assimilate only the vital and useful information. If we turn to Ushakov's dictionary, we will see that education is understood as the process of mastering knowledge, teaching, and enlightenment. In a broader sense, education can be considered as the final product of the process of education and training, as well as the formation of the mind, character and physical abilities of an individual. It is at this stage that we fully understand the importance and specific features of this phenomenon (Karabatyrova *et al.*, 2018).

3. Results

The book prepared consists of 6 units, which are named by the names of the countries considered: The Russian Federation, China, The USA, The UK, France and Germany. Each unit is constructed in a unique way. But at the same time it contains all the aspects of the language study: reading, listening, use of language and writing. It also includes speaking and self-study reference, where the students are to prepare reports and presentations based on the material of the units. At the end of the book there is some attached material organized in the form of an appendix. The very beginning of the units is provided with the introductory series of exercises given before the reading task. Each Unit starts with the pictures of the symbolics of the country under discussion that are the Flag and Coat of Arms and the photo of the Head of the country. The images are followed by a set of tasks where students are supposed to highlight the questions about the meaning of the colours of the flag and the symbols described in the Coat of Arms. This is done in order to check the students' background knowledge and to fulfill the breaches. The other questions suggested deal with the President or Prime Minister of the country and are aimed at disclosing and forming learners' discourse ability. Two quotes of the heads of the government are given at the beginning of the unit one of which is deliberately complicated by omitting key words. It is organized so to encourage students to compose monologues and dialogues. Teachers can productively use the tasks organizing talk shows and round tables, writing discursive essays writing or preparing reports.

Every unit of the book includes several texts indicated to improve different types of reading skills such as skimming, scanning and detailed reading. Reading, being the basic element of any activity, takes the most consistent part of the book. It is also provided with a wide variety of exercises which can be logically divided into pre text and post text types. Pre text activities are aimed at increasing students' abilities to see the coherence and structural integrity of the extracts suggested. The tasks are based on filling in the gaps, where the whole sentences or passages are omitted; on matching the sentences with the extracts given, following the logic of the text; on marking the statement with True/False/Not given tags according to the provided information; on changing the words, given in the brackets to make the form appropriate to the gap; on multiple choice tests and etcetera. Each exercise is designed the unique way to improve one particular ability of reading. For example, the tasks, which presuppose answering the questions and matching the statements with the passages serve for skimming abilities improve; filling in the gaps, basically, helps to master scanning; and True/False/Not given exercises together with multiple choice tests disclose the mastery of detailed reading. Activity connected with changing word form facilitates the students' use of language ability. Students read interesting and relevant authentic texts from BBC, Guardian and CNN and other political sources. They develop their reading skills through a variety of tasks, such as matching headings a text, ordering items, completing summaries and private information exchange. They also practice useful political lexis from the texts (Stanulevich, 2012).

The texts provide a context for the language work and discussion in every unit. The language work develops students' awareness of common problem areas of advanced level. Last but not least is that all the texts, being authentic and up to date, reveal biographic, political information as well as their previous experience and diplomatic affairs about the leaders of the countries, their political views and their role in the world arena. These texts also disclose some private aspects of their lives and their personal preferences.

Post text exercises are shaped for revision of the vocabulary that can be traced within the provided material. For the first step here goes the list of all the phrases that can be found in the preceding passage and which can be useful for the students of the faculty of international relations and regional studies. No translation is provided and a teacher should organize the discussion that will lead the learners to better understanding of the lexis and finding out the definitions and synonymic expressions of the vocabulary. Listing identical words and word combinations which are close in the meaning to those used in the texts helps to widen student's active and passive vocabulary on the issues of international relations and politics. In order to acquire the necessary vocabulary, students have to complete a set of different exercises. They vary from multiple choice tasks to filling in the gaps, from substituting exercises to matching the synonymic expressions. All the types of exercises altogether result in better understanding of the usage of word patterns and collocations within the authentic reading materials. A wide range of lexical material gives learners the opportunity to formulate full and disclosing answers to political, economic and international questions (George, 1971).

Apparently, any study of the material should contain some listening activity. That is also true for this project. After each text and the tests enclosed we can find listening material and video podcasts organized in a way to memorize the lexis of the lesson and to formulate the whole vision of the country, its leader's policy and the problems the country faces in the modern world arena. Listening material is taken from different site's news lines with the American and British versions of the language. The original material being not adapted to an average student helps the learner to submerge in a natural life situation when the speech can be full of informal variations of grammar and sentence structure, can contain some special lexis to be understood in the context only. That happens because the speakers in talk shows and radio programmes are usually ordinary people and they may be linguistically illiterate and have to speak as anyone does within the country they live in. Thus, such material doesn't just provide us with the necessary language but it should be also mastered by the students. At the same time, it should challenge student's difficulties in hearing and understanding the theme. They have to analyze the peculiarities of speech, their manners of organizing dialogues and monologues, learners are supposed to catch the idiomatic expressions and set phrases used by the speakers. The video podcast presents the students the culture of building conversation with the interviewers, gives them the glimpse of the foreign culture presenting the way they behave, the clothes they wear and ethics they demonstrate. There is a variety of stimulating activities, such as listening to short extracts, watching videos, expressing personal preferences and answering questions. The authentic watching videos are based on interviews with ordinary people, business people, politicians and experts in their fields. Students develop linguistic skills for specific information, ordering facts, note-taking and correcting summaries. At the end of the book there are all the tape scripts of the listening material, given in order to allow the students to clarify the episodes they failed to catch in the process of listening to the tracks or watching the material (Ostrikova *et al.*, 2018).

4. Discussions

The main task of higher education that is aimed at developing autonomous learning – to be able to use the knowledge obtained during the lessons in real life situations. That can be reached with the help of self-study cases provided after each unit. Doing the task, students are supposed to prepare speech or presentation about the ambassadors' life, about the political situation in the country connected with the domestic and outer policies of those in power. One more way of practicing disposed after each unit is series of quick tests. They cover the unit and check the learners' mastering the language. There is also a full format test which includes listening, reading and vocabulary tasks from the whole book. It also comes as one of the last basic elements of the book before the set of tape scripts. It is deliberately given at the end of the book in order to give the students a chance to see the original script in case they would not be able to understand the speeches provided (Mullagaliev *et al.*, 2017).

5. Conclusion

To sum up, all the knowledge gained from the units can supply students with the additional information, which is given in the Appendix. There learners can find the templates where there are some quick facts referring to the Units of the book. It can be used as material for swift memorizing the key elements of the facts. The fields of activity of students that include the international political, economic, scientific, technical, informational, political, legal and cultural space of the world, as well as diplomacy and foreign policy activities of the Russian Federation and international relations of Russian regions presuppose very difficult and sophisticated educational situations. It is also complicated with a wide range of tasks dictating working conditions for future graduates, numerous competences are put forward, which are necessary for mastering in the educational process. This suggests that the training process should not only touch on the issues of international and economic policies, but also should include deep study of foreign languages that students must master at the level of an advanced user and use the language for solving professional problems. This fact expands the field of activity, both for the students themselves and for lecturers, requires careful study and provides interdisciplinary approach, as well as the unification of the subjects studied for the preparation of a fully-oriented, competent and competitive professional. Using self-prepared and particularly specialized books, one of which we analyzed today, can be very productive in the educational process organized in a University. Firstly, it covers almost all the information the students need, secondly, it teaches them how to operate their language skills in true to life situations and finally, presupposes the training of all the competencies exercised in the Federal Standard.

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