DEVELOPMENT OF PHONETIC CULTURE WHILE LEARNING RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE:

WHAT ARE NECESSARY CONDITIONS AT THE AGE OF DIGITAL COMMUNICATION?

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine and describe the conditions that ensure the formation of a phonetic culture of a non-native speaker.

The research considers theory and practice of phonetic culture formation in the field of Russian as a foreign language.

The research material includes academic sources on research issues, empirical data on the practice of teaching foreign students at RUDN University, which is one of the leading international scientific and applied centres for teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The research methodology is based on a qualitative paradigm, combines a comparative expert analysis of the research materials indicated above and the author's 50-year old experience in teaching Russian to foreigners.

The papers provide the comprehensive definition of the phonetic culture as part of a student's linguistic competence within the communication process.

The research relevance relates to the role of oral communication in modern society, the potential of ICT tools in training the phonetic culture of a foreigner.

Keywords: language, linguistics, Russian as a foreign language, phonetic culture of a foreigner

1 INTRODUCTION

Modern communication includes various formats, including written and spoken language, gesture communication, non-verbal communication through graphics, photo, video, sound, etc. Meanwhile, scholars agree that oral speech is still one of the key tools for global communication, including the use of technological resources of the digital society (Hişmanoğlu, 2019, Yang, 2018). In this process, mastery of oral speech abilities plays an essential role (Georgountzou, Tsantila, 2017).

Among them, in turn, the formation of the phonetic culture of the speaker and the addressee has been considered as essential for the last half a century (Pennington, Richards, 1986). It takes place due to the understanding of the sound system as part of national culture (Rizzini, 2018), the discourse-oriented approach dominance in language studies (Johns-Lewis, 2018) and foreign language teaching, and specifics of social varieties of language sound system (Baghana et al 2019). The respective skills for non-

native speakers are of particular importance. The above determines the relevance of the present research.

Phonetics is a branch of linguistics that studies the sound structure of a language. Accordingly, the author sets forth the definition of the phonetic culture of speech is a complex of communicative skills in terms of speakers' mastery of the sound system of the language in which he/she communicates.

The theoretical background of the study stands on understanding the foreigner's phonetic culture as the normative use of interconnected heterogeneous language means (sound, accent rhythmic, intonation, lexical and grammatical), the mastery of which ones ensures the implementation of the communicative tasks of interpersonal, scientific and professional communication participants in a multicultural language and educational environment (Yates,2017). The above conceptions rest on the understanding of language interdisciplinary nature (Polak, et al 2018).

The purpose of this study is to determine and describe the conditions that ensure the formation of a phonetic culture of a non-native speaker.

The subject of the research is the theory and practice of phonetic culture formation in the field of Russian as a foreign language.

The research material includes academic, educational sources on research issues, empirical data on the practice of teaching foreign students at RUDN University, which is one of the leading international scientific and applied centres for teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The research methodology is based on a qualitative paradigm, combines a comparative expert analysis of the research materials indicated above.

2 CONDITIONS THAT ENSURE THE FORMATION OF A PHONETIC CULTURE OF A NON-NATIVE SPEAKER

The starting point of the research relates to the analysis of modern sounding Russian speech. The above analysis lays grounds for researchers to identify the characteristic features that determine its specificity from the standpoint of teaching a foreign sound speech features. At this stage a researcher can use various digital tools for speech processing. They can help to analyse a large amount of data that represents contextual use of the Russian sound system in different domains. Corpus-based studies can hardly be underestimated at this stage (Liberman, 2019)

The respective data can be further assorted at the bulk of examples that demonstrate the background rules of pronunciation and intonation and further sub groups of data that refer to particular contexts that depend on the speakers' features, their social status in communicative contexts.

Further the analysis of phonetic deviations in the in the course of oral communication among international students in Russian takes place. The background data without the specific application to any language has been mentioned in previous studies (Roettger, & Baer-Henney, 2019). This analysis allows the researchers to identify the zones of the most probable violations leading to a communicative failures and dissonance. The respective data leads to the specification and description of the zones where most communicative errors take place due to breaks of set norms regarding Russian intonation and pronunciation

The comprehensive description of phonological and phonetic violations that make speakers of certain languages is the next step, which creates the grounds for researchers to create a system of training Russian sounding speech system features that is oriented toward a particular foreign language. Earlier similar studies have been conducted with regard to other languages (Erickson, et al 2018).

The above empirical stages while being consistently tested in the course of teaching the Russian norms of sounding speech lay ground for the identification of a foreigner's phonological competence as one of the components of linguistic competence.

The author of the present paper argues that the foreigner's phonological competence is formed as a unity of three levels (sound, accent rhythmic and intonation ones) and comprises a number of its development constituent features.

Students systematically master the basic characteristics of the phonetic system of the Russian language (in sound, accent rhythmic and intonation levels); phonological competence is realized in practical auditory-pronunciation skills at the above levels.

The auditory-pronunciation skills are developed first in standard, status-neutral, direct speech acts of real communication situations: locative (act of utterance), illocutionary (which gives focus to the locative act),

perlocutive (possible "consequences" of the utterance, reaction to the speech action) , then - in variable, status-marked and context dependent indirect speech and discursive acts.

The phonological competence is developed in accordance with its communicative-pragmatic parameters.

The system of the formation of the competence in the sounding aspect of Russian speech bears a level character: sound, syllable, word, phrase (syntagma), sentence (phrase), text / discourse.

Auditory and pronunciation skills in the field of sound, accent-rhythmic and intonation speech design are formed sequentially on the same lexical and grammatical material; lexical and grammatical material is communicatively valuable and relevant for the student in terms of his/her study goals.

Text, discourse - educational and authentic ones- implement the communicative needs and intentions of a foreign student at all stages and levels of the formation of his/her Russian phonetic culture.

The training system for the phenomenon under study includes a set of tasks: from staging and drilling exercises, sequentially, to the communicative assignments. Scholars consistently focus on the ICT potential for drilling exercises (Sun, et al 2018). However, we consider, the ICT can be used at further stages. It has been proved with regard to other languages training through cloud-based technology use (Atabekova, 2015).

Russian phonetic culture – in its linguodidactic understanding - should, in our opinion, be associated with the correctness of a foreign speaker's speech, its purity, accuracy, expressiveness, relevance. This can be achieved by the implementation of a number of patterns and the following teaching principles in the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

They include the task to form articulative-perceptual base of a foreign speaker and further move to real communicative tasks that simulate the characteristic features of the sound of speech in the language being studied in real communication or aimed at reproducing or modifying them. At this stage ICT can also be used, earlier practice refers to a number of areas (Thompson, 2017). We consider that it is timely to consider ICT use for training oral academic communication.

Normativity in the design of sounding Russian speech, mastering of orthoepic norms, teaching speech etiquette are mandatory parameters when selecting material for the general system of tasks that develop the Russian phonetic culture of a foreigner.

Phonological competence as a component of the linguistic (and therefore communicative) competence of foreign students is created on the basis of interactive forms of work that take into account the characteristic features of Russian speech behaviour in interpersonal, educational, professional, etc. interaction.

Therefore, the issues of foreigners' phonetic culture formation within university training should be part of the language audit within university quality assurance management. The role of language in the mentioned activities has been specified recently (Atabekova, 2017).

Complexity, cyclicality (as mechanisms of the educational process) , and systemic approach to work on the formation of Russian phonetic culture is achieved by the use of modern ICT. Scholars agree that they can be used at different stages of learning different languages (Bliss, et al 2018).

The system for determining the level of training in Russian phonetic culture is based on both traditional and modern test forms of control, while the entire learning process is focused on the active development of students' self-control skills. Moreover, teacher of a language for foreigners should be taught the relevant data (Yan, 2017). Besides, the development of phonetic culture is considered critical for peoples who communicate in a foreign language in general, for those who work within specialized domains and engage in language service provision (Atabekova 2018). Moreover, to our mind, the development of phonetic culture of a foreign student is a kind of mandatory aspect for an international university to enhance its academic excellence. Language issues with regard to this goal have been considered earlier (Atabekova, 2016).

3 CONCLUSION

The research findings have led to the identification of conditions that are necessary for foreigner's phonetic culture formation.

These conditions cover the study and representation of specifics of Russian sound and intonation system through the lenses of non-native speakers.

Further the conditions under study imply the identification of zones of probable communicative phonetic errors, the creation of a pronunciation training system in accordance with modern standards of Russian

sound and pronunciation system.

Next, the specification of stages of multi-level phonological competence system development (this system is viewed as part of a foreign language communicative competence) in the direction from sound to discourse, is required.

The research makes it possible to specify each condition in terms of its specificity, components, and instruments for the formation of the phonetic culture with regard to Russian as a foreign language in general, and with respect to oral communication through digital tools, in particular.

The relevance of the research findings refers to the advance of Russian as part of multilingual communication environment; the inclusion of Russian in the list of repertoire of AI- based digital speech to speech systems.

The practical importance of the data shows concrete stages for teachers and trainers of Russian as a Foreign language to follow with regard to the development of the phonetic culture of foreign students.

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