INTRODUCTORY PHONETIC AND GRAMMAR COURSE OF RUSSIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE: STATUS, GOALS, CONTENTS

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Abstract

The purpose of the article is to introduce the course structure and contents, determine its status in the context of the psychological and linguocommunicative perspectives of teaching Russian as a foreign language.

The study combines theoretical and practical types of analysis. The paper integrates the academic data and explores scientific provisions on the role of the introductory phonetic and grammatical course within the Russian university based training of international students.

The author's pedagogical experience in teaching Russian as a foreign language to students who come to study at Moscow-based Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, are also taken into account.

The results of the analysis confirm the need to place an introductory phonetic and grammar course into a special stage of education from the point of view of psychology and language didactics. The results of the study have also made it possible to define the components of the student's competencies formed at the stage of this course, characterize the volume, content, aspects of training, the possibility of their individualization within the framework of this course.

The obtained data are of obvious applied relevance for the development of personally significant trajectories of international students' who study at Russian universities. The results can also be used for theoretical studies of conceptual approaches to defining the stages of teaching a language as a foreign language, the content and specifics of these stages.

Keywords: Language training, Russian as Foreign Language, Introductory Phonetic and Grammar Course.

1 INTRODUCTION

At present, 123 million people in the world identify their need to study Russian as a foreign language. Such conclusions were made on the basis of a study conducted by the Institute of the Russian Language (Moscow, Russia) by order of the Ministry of Communications and Mass Communications of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation. The demand for specialists who speak Russian to carry out interstate activities in the field of business, education and scientific and technical cooperation was subject to the study.

According to statistics, the number of foreign students who receive education at Russian universities increased by 20% from 2014 to 2017. By 2025, the number of foreign students in Russia is projected to grow to 710,000.

These figures explain the relevance to analyze the issues of improving the quality of teaching Russian as a foreign language (RFL). The respective process takes place in Russian universities along with teaching

foreign languages to Russian students. Therefore, this integration of foreign languages in Russian Higher Education can be seen as a driving tool for the international university academic excellence (Atabekova et al., 2016).

This article focuses to the issues of the introductory phonetic and grammatical course. The author of this paper has been engaged in teaching RFL for over 50 years. This period convincingly shows the need for an introductory phonetic and grammatical course. The existing RFL training standards and programs, the requirements for the language mastery at different levels of education and tests do not distinguish such a stage of training associated with the mentioned course. However, in practice, and in many textbooks there is a part that provides a starting base for learning RFL, which is quite difficult to master.

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The study combines theoretical and practical types of analysis. The paper integrates the academic data and explores scientific provisions on the role of the introductory phonetic and grammatical course within the Russian university based training of international students.

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2 COURSE PROFILE

Years of experience in teaching Russian as a Foreign Language (RFL) convincingly shows the need for an introductory phonetic-grammatical course (IPGC). The existing standards and programs for teaching RFL, the requirements for proficiency in it at different levels of education and tests do not distinguish such a stage of training as the introductory phonetic-grammatical course (Andryushina et al., 2015, Balykhina, 2010). It is about elementary or, in another terminology, A1 level, designed for 120 hours of study. However, in practice and in many textbooks there is a part that provides a starting base for mastering RFL, which is quite difficult to master. It is no coincidence that in Russian linguodidactics the need to highlight this stage of teaching RFL was justified (Shustikova, 2010a,b).

Its significance in mastering RFL and the complexity of organizing training during this period is assessed from different positions. Most often, linguodidactics investigates the issues of determining the volume of language material, its teaching and assimilation by foreigners, i.e. the formation of grammatical (in a broad sense) competence as the basis of communicative-speech competence.

The introductory phonetic-grammatical course should be allocated to a special stage of training from the point of view of psychology and psycholinguistics. The personal experience of each person who starts to learn a new language, as well as the teachers of foreign languages and RFL, testifies to the existence of a phenomenon that has received such names as the language barrier, the psychological barrier. The state of a person who does not understand the speech of the people around him, the inability to express his thoughts in order to be understood by them, can even cause a psychological shock (Rozanova, 2014).

Predicting this psychological state and the need to overcome it through a thoughtful organization of training is one of the important problems of teaching foreign languages.

The ease and speed of overcoming the language barrier largely depends on the age of the students. It is known that children begin to communicate easier and faster in a new language. Young people under the age of 20 usually acquire theoretical knowledge of a new language and multicultural communication skills faster. Often, the process of entering a new language is slowed down by students' concern for their image in the educational team, fear of discrepancy between educational results and their real social status. It is no coincidence that role-playing techniques are used in the practice of language courses.

A particular emphasis should be laid to the "psycholinguistic blockade" which is explained by the fact that the study of new language material was very fast, new difficulties were not presented in time, when the mind was not ready to assimilate them (Rozanova, 2014).

Phonetic skills are primary. If, wishing to quickly move to the "real course of grammar and speech development" the teacher shortens the time for the formation of auditory-pronunciation skills, his thoughtless decision will slow down the learning process - you will have to return to the setting of pronunciation. This has been proven by many years of practice in teaching RFL. The computer course allows you to realize the most important psychological and methodological position: a new language skill is formed on the basis and taking into account the previous one, previously formed. However, you should follow the rules to prevent forgetting,

loosening and destruction of the skill. Psychological experimental studies show the need for 15-25 repetitions of words to memorize them: in the first week - 7-fold repetition of the learned words (in different contexts); in the second week - 3 times; in the third week - at least 3-4 repetitions. The electronic course of the WFGK enables students in an independent mode during extracurricular time to constantly repeat the lessons learned with the obligatory control of memorization of words and expressions. Individual work with a computer course allows you to repeat the material 2-3 times during the day with breaks, which is more effective than a one-time lesson of equal time.

The learning and assimilation of any foreign language takes place through the process of comparing it with the native language. When studying the second foreign language, the student also turns to the experience of mastering the first foreign language. In science, the psycholinguistic phenomenon of the interaction of these languages is investigated - positive transfer and interference (as negative transfer). Comparative analysis of interacting languages and analysis of student errors provide a basis for the selection and organization of educational material, taking into account the possible positive transfer and interference in teaching RFL.

In a linguistic-oriented computer course, it is possible to give students in their native language not only information about the phonetic system of the Russian Language, but also to offer them an effective system of exercises that takes into account both the possibilities of positive transference and interference in the formation of an articulatory-perceptual base. So, for example, representing the system of Russian vowels, they call sounds whose pronunciation is similar to the sounds of the students' native language.

One of the effective methods of relying on the native and / or intermediate language is the students' search for positions or words where the sound is pronounced, similar to Russian. By involving students in a comparative analysis of sound, the teacher helps to find an articulatory position, form a pronunciation standard and then self-control skills.

A linguistic computer course provides an opportunity for individual work in case of pronunciation difficulties. The student in his native language receives information about the position of the organs of articulation and their movement, a visual diagram of articulation and oscillographic indicators. By adjusting to the exemplary sound and imitating the pronunciation of the speaker, the student achieves the correct pronunciation of the sounds that make him difficult. Particularly necessary is individual phonetic training at the initial stage of training for older students - residents and graduate students. Taking into account psychological factors contributes to the comfort of learning, academic and social adaptation of students.

The use of positive transference and prevention of interference should be taken into account in the process of mastering the skills of sound-letter correspondence by a foreigner.

The course under study has digital support which is traditionally considered a must for language and culture mediation skills training as it fosters the address towards cultural and societal needs (Atabekova, 2017).

In the accompanying computer course, the following vocabulary checking exercises are effective. It is very important to include elements of "finding solutions" in the task. So, for example, from an arbitrarily mixed set of pictures depicting objects whose names are already known to students, it is necessary to collect groups of words included in the thematic groups known to them.

In accordance with the principle of centrism in teaching, these thematic groups are replenished as new sounds are mastered. For example, we will show how the theme "city" is expanding: Moscow, house, bank + car, bus, park, cafe, circus + museum, shop, theater, university, restaurant, buffet + taxi, etc.

The use of an intermediate language or the first foreign language allows you to quickly expand the lexical field of learning with the help of positive transfer. The student understands that in Russian there are many words familiar to him/her by sound.

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In the introductory course under study the basic grammatical topics are presented. The concept of a part of speech is introduced: "Parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verb, adverb, preposition and conjunctions." The categories of gender, number and case are presented systematically: "Gender of nouns, possessive pronouns and adjectives, ordinal numbers", "Singular and plural nouns", "Cases of nouns: nominative, prepositional, accusative, genitive." The topics related to the verb are assimilated: "The verb infinitive. Two conjugations. Conjugation of the verb in the present and past tense. Imperative". In the area of

syntax, the following topics are automated: "Word, phrase and sentence", "Declaration, interrogative and exclamation sentences", "Affirmative and negative sentences", "Simple and complex sentences", "Complex sentences with conjunctions" if ", " when " and "because".

During the period of work within the introductory phonetic-grammatical course, along with the use of a computer course, a lot of work is carried out to form the linguistic and cultural competence of a foreigner, which is a component of the structure of communicative-speech competence. The formation of the socio-cultural component of the communicative-speech competence begins with the first lessons of the course and continues at the subsequent stages of teaching RFL.

Work in this area has its own characteristics within the course under study. The acquaintance of a foreigner with the country of the target language begins at the level of everyday and educational-academic communication. The RFL textbook and the computer course contain maps of the world and Russia. They contain photographs of Red Square, the Kremlin, Moscow State University, RUDN University, bridges and a monument to Peter the Great in St. Petersburg. Starting to learn Russian, a foreigner must know the names of A.S. Pushkin and M. Gorky, whose works have been translated into many languages of the world. This linguistic and regional information is presented in the course and the accompanying computer course.

It should be noted that the course contents and components allow the student to learn Russian in the non-formal settings, which also contribute to the learning environment internationalization at home (Atabekova, 2016).

3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The task of the course under study is to lay the foundations of the communicative and verbal competence. As already emphasized, it is based on knowledge of the grammatical system and the ability to use it in the process of perception and generation of speech, in speech communication.

Grammatical competence has a level structure: the level of sound (sound, accent-rhythmic and intonation components), lexical, morphological, syntactic and word-formation. During the above mentioned course, the features of the Russian articulatory-perceptual base are formed.

The phonological competence of a foreigner is created in the mode of individual work. The integrated - audible and visual - presentation of language material in a computer course activates the work of auditory and speech motor analyzers.

The possibility of multiple repetition, identifying points of violation in their own pronunciation form pronunciation standards for the foreign speaker. This stage is essential for the development of self-control skills that ensure the correctness of foreign language speech. When starting to teach a new language and learn it, one should remember about the three most important pedagogical principles: moving from simple to complex; from less voluminous material to more voluminous and about the time required to develop a skill.

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