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### **Working with text as a way of forming the communicative culture of the future translator (on the example of the discipline “Ancient languages and cultures”)**

*Key words: communicative culture, old Slavic language, text, linguistic and cultural analysis, interdisciplinary approach.*

*The article reveals the basic techniques of linguistic and cultural analysis of the text; shows its importance for the formation of the communicative competence of the future translator; justifies the need to refer to the texts in the old Slavic language; discloses the experience of the selection of fragments for analysis.*

**УДК 811.111: 811.161.1:378.147**

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### **Native language use in a foreign language teaching**

*Key words: mother tongue, cross-linguistic similarities language transfer, positive language transfer, linguistic situation.*

*Abstract*

*A revival of interest to using a mother tongue in the English classroom is stipulated by necessity to improve language accuracy, fluency and clarity.*

*This paper aims at examining students' perceptions of the use of mother tongue and translation in various linguistic situations. The activities that help raise learners' awareness of the language use are described.*

*The findings demonstrate that all learners need a support of mother tongue in English classes, but the amount of the native language needed depends on students' proficiency in English.*

Since learning a foreign language is considered as a very complex process, there has been a growing body of research investigating errors committed by EFL (English as a Foreign Language) learners. It is obvious that the difference between the two languages (a foreign language and a native language) makes the learner face a great difficulty in learning and

applying foreign language rules. Mother tongue interference (also known as language transfer) refers to speakers or writers applying knowledge from their native language to a second or foreign language.

Learning a new language is not a simple task to accomplish easily because when we learn a new language, many interesting horizons of knowledge arise. The first language interference is one of them. It is commonly believed that the first language (L 1) has an effect on the second language (L 2) or foreign language especially when it comes to writing which is considered to be the most difficult skill to master. In recent years, there has been increasing interest in studies related to writing because such skill is very important in academic studies and outside academic institutions. Having students to produce an organized, neat and error-free piece of writing has always been the lifelong dream and the ambition of all EFL teachers because they are the ones who suffer from such a problem, which is the mother tongue interference, and the most important part of their task is to teach their students how to think and to use a foreign language as its native users do. The influence of the native language is clearly shown in the written form which is the basic technique, a foreign language teacher uses in testing the proficiency of his/her students.

Mother tongue or native language is the language which the person acquires in early years and which normally becomes her/his natural instrument of thought and communication. An online article, entitled „Mother Tongue“, defines mother tongue (first language, native language or vernacular) as the language a person learns first and correspondingly the person is called a native speaker of the language. The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines mother tongue as one's native language; the language learned by children and passed from one generation to the next; it is received by birth or from ancestors.

So, first language (L 1), mother tongue and native language can be used as synonymous. On the other hand, Ashworth states that the second language is a language acquired by a person in addition to her mother tongue. A similar definition of second language is given by the American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language mentioned above as the language you learn and adopt.

It is necessary to discriminate between the teaching of translation as a vocational skill and the use of the mother tongue in the teaching situation as an aid to language learning. The need for some translation in language learning is usually supported by non-native teachers. Native teachers of English argue that foreign language learning needs as much exposure to the L2 as possible during precious classroom time, and any usage of the L1 or translation is a waste of time.

Translation is sometimes referred to as the fifth language skill alongside the other four basic skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. 'Translation holds a special importance at an intermediate and advanced level: in the advanced or final stage of language teaching, translation from L1 to L2 and L2 to L1 is recognized as the fifth skill and the most important social skill since it promotes communication and understanding between strangers' [Ross 8,61].

Mother tongue has potentially both positive and negative consequences: it may serve social and cognitive functions. It is claimed that students working in groups do not have to speak English all the time. Use of mother tongue relates to learner identity. Negative impact of mother tongue use is that too much reliance on the L1 may undermine the interaction in English.

However even being good at comprehending authentic reading or listening materials, the majority keeps mentally translating from L2 into L1 and vice versa. This fact makes teachers of foreign languages aware of the importance of translation in language classrooms.

Why do students use the mother tongue in class? As we see it, a principal cause of the L1 use is required by the activity, if students are linguistically incapable of activating

vocabulary for a chosen task. Another reason is that translation is a natural thing to do in language learning, and code-switching between languages is regarded as naturally developmental. The amount of L1 use by particular students may well have to do with differing learner styles and abilities.

Evidence from research into the crucial issue of the L1 use in classrooms around the world was analyzed by G. Mattioli. Analyzed literature offers evidence that L1 is a valuable tool for socio-cognitive processes in language learning. Another reason for L1 use in the classroom relates to the fostering of a positive affective environment. C. W. Schweers [9, 6] encourages teachers to insert the native language into lessons to influence the classroom dynamic, provide a sense of security and validate the learners' experiences.

The real usefulness of translation in English classes lies in exploiting it in order to compare grammar, vocabulary, word order and other language points in English and the student's mother tongue. If students are aware of the differences, language interference (transfer) and intervention from their own language are likely to be reduced.

It is known that linguistic awareness can be either conscious or unconscious. Cross-linguistic similarities and differences can produce positive transfer or negative transfer such as underproduction, overproduction, production errors, and misinterpretation. It should be emphasized that transfer is not always caused by the influence of native language.

Now it is generally accepted that language transfer or cross-linguistic influence, does occur, but is a far more complex phenomenon than hitherto believed. Transfer can be positive and facilitative, where the two languages are identical, or negative, when there are significant differences between two languages. Transfer may occur at all levels: phonology, syntax, lexis, and pragmatics. Raising learners' consciousness can be valuable: teachers can explicitly point out differences between L1 and L2. For this purpose translation may be useful, because it can be interactive, learner-centered, promotes learners' autonomy, and uses authentic materials. With the English learners, we have used a number of activities that are beneficial for their linguistic development. Post reading activities give students the opportunity to review, summarize, and react to a reading material through discussions in small or large groups. After having read a text as a homework assignment, students were encouraged to generate various comprehension exercises, such as multiple choice questions, true or false statements, general questions on the contents of the text. Learners' designed exercises were scrutinized in pairs or small groups. The activities of writing different types of summaries, e.g. restatement, descriptive summary or opinion essays, have also proved beneficial by allowing teachers to pin-point errors stemming from the mother tongue. However, checking written work increases teacher's load significantly and might be considered as a disadvantage. The most beneficial activity has been back-translation class activity. Selected texts for re-translation should not be too long or too linguistically complex, or too distant from the knowledge of the student. Students in pairs translated different short passages from L2 into L1. Then pairs exchanged their translations, and different pairs translated the peers' passages back into L2. Finally the double translations L2 into L1 into L2 were examined and compared with the original texts. The ultimate analysis of re-translated texts by students and teacher's feedback allow to raise learners' awareness of vocabulary, grammar, style, and language transfer.

Numerous studies indicated that both negative and positive transfer between the L1 and L2 was important for development of the interlanguage, the complex system of the learners' L2. Many teachers recognize that the L1 in the classroom is a positive representation of the interlanguage. The data on the interlanguage and language transfer show that it is highly probable that L2 learners will always think most often in their L1, even at the advanced level. Moreover, translation in the L2 classroom offers a way to highlight similarities and differences between L1 and L2 forms. The translation is useful for L2 acquisition because,

firstly, it uses authentic materials, secondly, it is interactive, thirdly, it is learner-centered, and finally it promotes learner autonomy.

Regarding the use of the L1 in the L2 classroom, it is important to find out how students themselves feel about it. Research into this issue found that a high percentage (88.7%) of the participants felt that mother tongue should be used in their English classes. Moreover, if learners of a second language are encouraged to ignore their native language, they might well feel their identity threatened. The formal study into the use of native language in our settings has shown that majority of 110 respondents felt that a native language should be used in the classroom, particularly to explain difficult concepts (90%), introduce new material (57%), define new vocabulary (74%), explain the link between English and mother tongue. It is noteworthy that in teaching / learning English there has been a long-felt dissatisfaction, mainly on the students' part, about excluding or minimal use of translation in mastering complex issues. Learners constantly wanted to check the exact meanings of the occurring terms in their native language by consulting bilingual dictionaries or asking for teacher's explanations.

Native language use in the classroom can cause students to think that words and structures in English have a L1 correspondence, which does not always exist. Therefore, raising students' consciousness of the non-parallel nature of language is likely to allow learners to think comparatively. The important question is how to reach a balance of the L1 use in learning. It is suggested that four factors should be considered, namely, the students' previous experience, the students' level, the stage of the course, and the stage of the individual lesson.

Taking into account what has been mentioned, it is essential to update the research into the use of mother tongue and utility of translation. The results of teachers' voting on the use of mother tongue in the English classroom are presented on the BBC Teaching English website. There were 641 respondents in this research. The findings reveal the following: 21% of respondents use only English, 58% of respondents sometimes use mother tongue, 8% – frequently, 7% – most of the time, 6% – about half the time.

There is an opinion that 'rigidly eliminating or limiting the native language does not appear to guarantee better acquisition, nor does it foster the humanistic approach that recognizes learners' identities'.

Translation as a teaching tool needs to take into account a number of different aspects, such as grammar, syntax, collocation and connotation. Uncritical use of translation may give learners insufficient, confusing or even inaccurate information about target language.

Based on all mentioned above the following conclusions have been drawn. First, all the learners customarily rely on their mother tongue in learning English. Second, the amount of the native language that students need depends on their proficiency and linguistic situations. Third, the statistical processing of the research findings showed that the data are significant in spite of the small sample of recipients. Finally, the students' autonomously generated reading comprehension exercises, summary writing and back-translation activities help raise learners' awareness of differences between English and the mother tongue and facilitate linguistic development. As far as my own experience is concerned, mother tongue is used in the classroom in the following situations rather judiciously:

1. Giving instructions: While doing the tasks like group work, pair work, project work and the like, the students must know how to do the tasks. A teacher can explain the details in the above situations in the mother tongue so as to enable the students to do the tasks correctly without any confusion.

2. Explaining abstract nouns like integrity: It is very difficult to teach the meaning of abstract nouns as it is rather vague. For example, It is very difficult to define or explain what integrity is. So I use mother tongue equivalent in the similar context. The use of mother

tongue helps the students to get away from the hurdle of incomprehension or miss-comprehension.

3. Teaching grammar: while teaching grammar, sometimes, the explanations may judiciously be given in student's mother tongue.

4. Teaching the low proficiency learners. The use of mother tongue becomes inevitable when all other efforts fail to make the low proficient learners comprehend the teaching item.

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УДК81'242:81'243'373

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#### Опора на родной язык при изучении фразеологии иностранного языка

*Ключевые слова: родной язык, иностранный язык, фразеология, методика, обучение.*

*В статье рассматриваются основные возможности использования родного языка иностранных студентов при изучении русского языка как иностранного в процессе освоения фразеологии; кратко характеризуется сравнительно-сопоставительный метод изучения русских фразеологизмов; описываются принципы использования опоры на родной язык при изучении фразеологических единиц русского языка зарубежными учащимися.*

Одной из особенностей современной методики преподавания РКИ является «освоение доминирующих культурных ценностей, определяемых в языке и осваиваемых с помощью русского языка» [3, 10]. Происходящий сегодня процесс коммуникации между представителями различных наций предполагает взаимопроникновение культур и установление диалога в межкультурной коммуникации. При этом обучение РКИ достигает наибольшей эффективности, если его методическая и содержательная части реализуются с учетом этнокультурных и коммуникативно-познавательных особенностей иностранных учащихся.

Для оптимальной организации учебного процесса в современных условиях, необходимо скорректировать его информативное содержание, в том числе отобрать и струк-