

Problems of Language Barriers in Globalization and Importance of Learning Foreign Languages

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Abstract

The most realistic index of measurement of international relations is the development of relations between peoples. For this reason it is necessary to know their culture, traditions, customs etc. It plays an important role in effectiveness of communication as well as teaching foreign languages. Ignoring them explains many failures in international contacts and pedagogical practice. Languages are the key to mutual understanding of people of other countries and cultures. Globalization process in which all of us are involved requires that students of non-linguistic specialties study foreign languages which will help them to find their path in their profession, will help to communicate and express their thoughts in a competent manner. For that we should review the result of learning a foreign language by students as well as increase the variety of methodical means in teaching.

Keywords: globalization, international languages, problems and aims.

Introduction.

Knowledge of languages acquires a decisive importance. Languages are the bridges which facilitates understanding of other people, countries and cultures. They belong to fundamental education of any citizen. Readiness to study foreign languages as well as ability to communicate with other people are the condition of mobility, as well as the key to mutual understanding, peaceful development in our interconnected world (Uve Tomas, 2000). Simple human communication will help to enhance relations between countries. Students of various nationalities quickly find common language of universities. People begin to understand that they can live in peace. All people need this.

Demand on people speaking foreign languages has significantly increased and internationalization of life more and more facilitates increase of need to study foreign languages. New discoveries were made in the language teaching area which gave an impetus to further specialization. Experts of various areas of knowledge such as: study of needs of students, independent study of language, using audio-visual means, speech actions, pragmalinguistics, using computer during study etc. facilitate language teaching.

The main aims of the students are:

- a) learn the language to tackle situations arising during contact with people speaking that language;
- b) obtain a certificate confirming success in studies for personal reasons (for example, for self-affirmation or for organizing an individual study process) and for objective reasons (for example, for submission during acceptance to job).

Using international languages becomes an important condition of success in politics, economics, trade,

tourism and other areas of state activities.

Internationalization and globalization of languages enhance the desire of learners not to connect the acquired language knowledge only to one specific country, and consider geographic peculiarities (options) of language where possible, not only during classes but also during obtaining the certificate if possible. This is true about German (in its German, Austrian and Swiss versions), French (in Swiss and Belgian versions), English (in American and English versions), Portuguese and Spanish (in their European and South-American versions). Thus, the concept of “target language” has significantly expanded.

The most realistic index of measurement of international relations is the development of relations between peoples. For this reason it is necessary to know their culture, traditions, customs etc. It plays an important role in effectiveness of communication as well as teaching foreign languages. Ignoring them explains many failures in international contacts and pedagogical practice. Languages are the key to mutual understanding of people of other countries and cultures. And as globalization means origination of a hybrid world culture and mixing of national traditions, the more important is development of art, artistic culture, embodying national traditions, features of national character in artistic images.

To communicate freely, people tend to learn as many languages as possible. Acquiring any foreign language does not represent insuperable difficulties and is achievable by representative of any nation in a comparatively short period.

Learning foreign languages should be included in the syllabus at all departments. For example, English is the teaching language at the International Black Sea University. But students can acquire other foreign languages too (Russian, Spanish, French), at least three languages according to their choice. Students who receive an objective grade at exams are entitled to obtain a certificate. Special program is designated for foreigners. English and Russian are international languages. They are considered rich languages. But it is impossible to firmly assert whether it is rich or poor because the language is as diverse as people. Our diversity enables us to easier understand each other and any language to penetrate into any other language.

Globalization... Globalization ... All misfortunes in economics are justified by globalization and all successes too – they say it is owing to it. So what is globalization?

Globalization implies enhancement of cooperation between nations and world-wide distribution of labour. In a word, globalization has become a permanent feature of our social, economic and cultural space. New forms of international cooperation have appeared. Globalization of higher education currently implies a reform of syllabi and curricula, cooperation in the scientific-research area via networks and associations, open and distant learning without limits and other kind of activities, apart from student and teaching mobility (Sadlak,1998). Presence of international students and scholars from various countries expands cultural horizons of students and the faculty of their country. Teaching of international students also influences the development of their countries and facilitates global economic and political stability. Any participant of international educational programs automatically and in most cases subconsciously develops the following abilities:

- ability to acknowledge the gaps in knowledge which are inevitable for the consciousness raised within the framework of one culture;
- intercultural communication skills;
- ability to acknowledge insufficiency of knowledge, i.e. the lack of knowledge which defines motivation for studies;
- knowledge of other cultures, studied from inside and many other. (Callan, 1998)

But the first of the serious problems on the way to globalization is a language barrier. Language barrier



does not create a problem only in case of cooperation between the countries using the same language. Globalization in education would not have been developed so well, if there was no English language. English has served as a universal language of communication all over the world for the last several decades. Until now English language has served many nations for maintenance and development of their contacts with foreign countries. And it does not seem that the situation will change in the future. Many countries open English language courses to attract foreign professors and teachers or international students.

But it should be considered that history demonstrates the possibility of a rather dynamic change of leadership of this or that language as a means of international communication. In the ancient world – Greek, then Latin in Europe and Arabic in Asia, French in the 19th century and finally, English in the 20th century. Despite the fact that Russian occupies the third place after Chinese and English by the number of speakers (500 million people) and it is taught at schools and universities of nearly 140 countries of the world, it should not be talked about its active dissemination in the world yet. The reasons for changes of languages as a means of international communication had been military-political factors mainly, and later technological factors. But the late 20th century is characterized not only by technological development but also by penetration of the Russian language into nearly all countries of the world. First, this is caused by opening of borders and a fast development of tourism in Russia. In the late 20th century in most countries of the world which were mainly visited by tourists from Russia, travel guides were published in Russian. Managers who spoke Russian appeared in banks and shops. This happens in most EU countries, in Turkey and Egypt, in tourist zones of many Asian countries. For example, a newspaper “Turkish News – Bosphorus” is issued in Turkey in Russian. The newspaper has been issued for 4 years already. It is designated for Russian-speaking readers of Turkey as well as for readers abroad, mainly in countries such as: Russia, Ukraine, Middle Asia and Kazakhstan. Its aim is to facilitate development of market and business relations between countries. A Russian school has been opened in Antalya for several years.

But as practice shows, the role of Russian language gradually weakens in the post-Soviet space. The role increases in the non-CIS countries and in the indigenous areas of Russian language spread the reverse process takes place.

We believe that Russian language is one of the most important world languages not only because it is spoken by millions of people but also because of the huge contribution of Russia to the world culture.

In the past, study of foreign languages was not especially stimulated behind the “iron curtain”. It was not a common thing to speak a foreign language fluently. Even university language programs for future teachers of a foreign language did not exclude a number of modern radio and TV programs. If a student was not specializing in languages it was required that he (or she) only showed that he/she had read a certain number of texts. A language learner could not buy a magazine or a newspaper or see a new movie in the language which he tried to learn. It may seem strange but under these very limited circumstances we have developed a very effective methodology of foreign language teaching.

Conclusion

The situation drastically changed in the late 1980s when the borders were opened and people began traveling and arranging business with foreign partners. Interest towards learning foreign languages hugely increased and now students know why they study them. Society has created a language and uses it as it can. Society influences the language and the language influences society, participating in the life and activities of people.

The globalization process where all of us are involved requires that students of non-linguistic specialties study foreign languages which will help them to find their way in the specialty, help communication and competent expression of their ideas. For that we should review the result of studying a foreign language by

students as well as increase the variety of means of teaching.

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