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## SOME ASPECTS OF LEARNING OF THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE AS A FOREIGN ONE BY FRENCH-SPEAKING STUDENTS

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The article examines the methodology of teaching the Ukrainian language as a foreign one on the example of foreign students studying at Ivan Boberskyi Lviv State University of Physical Culture. The task of any higher education institution that educates foreign students is primarily to provide thorough theoretical and practical training in the chosen field of studies, to teach them to make decisions related to professional activity independently, and, therefore, to create new values on their own and to adopt cultural and language education of the country in which they are studying. Learning Ukrainian as a foreign language can be a difficult task. The language with rich history and culture, unique grammar and vocabulary can be difficult to master. Textbooks ensure the implementation of the main functions of the Ukrainian language. The principles of compiling textbooks for foreigners depend on many factors. One of them is the selection of educational material, which depends on the contingent of those who study, the nature of their future professional activity (arts and humanities or natural sciences), the needs of students and the level of their motivation and initial language knowledge. Despite the progress made in the field of the Ukrainian language as a foreign one teaching, both abroad and in Ukraine, there are still a number of unsolved problems. Having considered the current state of this issue and having practical experience of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, the article outlines the main results and difficulties that both the teacher and the student may face (on the example of foreign French-speaking students studying at Ivan Boberskyi Lviv State University of Physical Culture). It is noted that there is no universal method of learning Ukrainian as a foreign language, it will be optimal to use different approaches, taking into account the needs and capabilities of students. Ways to improve approaches to teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language and prospects for further research are proposed.

*Key words:* Ukrainian language as a foreign language, methodology, textbook, innovative technologies, language teaching.

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**Introduction.** Since the beginning of the full-scale invasion, the level of interest in the Ukrainian language has increased significantly – as a sign of solidarity with the people of Ukraine, more than a million people around the world have started to learn it [14]. According to the data of the Ukrainian State Center of International Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, the number of foreign citizens obtaining higher education in Ukraine has been consistently high over the last decade [13]. Therefore, the improvement of Ukrainian language textbooks for foreigners, which would become the

main guide in solving difficult methodological tasks of the teacher, is still relevant today. Textbooks can ensure the implementation of the main functions of the Ukrainian language. The principles of compiling textbooks for foreign citizens depend on many factors. One of them is the selection of educational material, which depends on the contingent of those who study, the nature of their future professional activity (arts and humanities or natural sciences), the needs of students. By latter we mean not only the knowledge, but also the types of language skills acquired (reading, speaking, listening, writing) [2; 9]. The expediency of compiling a textbook also depends on the needs of time. The main thing is that the Ukrainian language training course is based on a specific minimum of grammatical phenomena that will serve the base for the development of all four types of language skills. Under such conditions, the person who learns the language becomes an active participant, not a passive observer. That is why the most popular textbooks of the Ukrainian language are those whose authors are supporters of the communicative approach to language learning [5]. It is important to note that all selected language phenomena are considered in the context of speech activity, which for every foreign student is the basis of self-development and independent learning. Therefore, language and speech concepts are formed as elements of a complete set, and not separately. This is due to the fact that the main task of the teacher is to prepare a student to use language tools appropriately in various areas and not only during the language lessons, but also outside the lecture room.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Ukrainian language has been taught to foreign students in Ukraine since 1922. This led to the birth of a new field of language teaching “Ukrainian as a foreign language”. The basis for the majority of the textbooks lies in the following: 1. Description of Ukrainian language for foreigners considering the students’ native language features. 2. Word lists minimum for different contingents, which are impossible without psychological and sociolinguistic researches. 3. Introductory parts about Ukrainian culture and realia necessary for communication. 4. Deployment of the most modern methods of foreign students training [9; 10; 11].

The purpose of textbooks is to: a) provide conditions for mastering the Ukrainian language for the future specialty; b) practical mastery of all types of language skills for studying at a higher educational institution; c) development of communication skills to a level that will ensure communication of foreigners at daily basis as well as at educational and professional levels; d) getting to know the necessary country studies material (e.g., about the Ukrainian state, history, culture, traditions, customs).

The first textbook for English-speaking students was created by Y. Zhluktenko, N. Totska, and T. Molodid. The selection of material there was based on the principle of a conscious comparative method of teaching foreign languages, where the main place was given to translation. Since 1966, for a long time, textbooks created by the group of authors H. Makarova, L. Palamar, and N. Prysiashnyuk have been published under different names, namely: “*Talk to us in Ukrainian*”, “*Ukrainian language*”.

In 1988–1999, three parts of the new edition of the textbook “*Speak Ukrainian with us*” were published, which expanded the subject of lessons, included communicative tasks and exercises aimed at the development of foreign students’ speaking skills. Among other textbooks worth mentioning are “*Krok*” series by O. Palinska and O. Turkevych, and “*Ukrainian language for beginners*” by Z. Terlak and O. Serbenska. The publication of new textbooks continues nowadays, almost every university, where there is a significant number of foreign students, has developed its own textbook for studying Ukrainian as a

foreign language [9]. Therefore, we can claim that the process of developing and implementing such educational and methodological works has its own history and a certain tradition.

**The purpose** of our research is to show the process of mastering the Ukrainian language on the example of foreign students who have entered Ivan Boberskyi Lviv State University of Physical Culture. Among **the tasks**, we consider demonstrating the difficulties faced by the students and the teacher in their work, the results of learning within the prescribed educational hours, and outlining possible options for improving the methodology of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language.

**Main material of the article.** The task of any higher educational institution that educates foreign students is primarily to provide thorough theoretical and practical training in the chosen profession, to teach them make decisions related to their professional activity independently, and, therefore, to create new values and take over the cultural and linguistic education of Ukraine. In recent years, the number of foreign students at our university has increased, mostly from the countries of the African continent.

We analyze the success rate and stages of mastering the Ukrainian language on the example of students who have enrolled for tourism and are representatives of Guinea, whose native languages are French (the intermediary language here) and Mandingo. Briefly about the methodological support and duration of teaching: textbooks recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine are used, namely: at the first stage (approximately 1-14 weeks) “*Ukrainian language for foreign students*” [6], which contains a vocabulary of  $\approx 1,500$  words and phrases; and at the second stage (approximately 14-20 weeks) “*Welcome*” [1], where the lexical list comprises  $\approx 2200$  words and phrases. The total number of teaching hours is 131, the intensity of lessons is 3-4 times a week.

During the first 14 weeks of training, the following lexical topics have been studied (according to the textbook): *Getting to know each other, Me and my family, Breakfast/lunch/dinner, Studying, Clothes, My working day, Illness, My profession, Travel, In the library, My room, Hobbies, Ukraine*. According to the students’ self-observation, they know well and actively use about 300 words. That is, 1 out of 5 words presented in the textbook is learned and actively used. It should be noted that we have come across the words that are basically unnecessary or superfluous at the initial stage of language learning (e.g. *art-prom* (art industry), *derzhprom* (state industry), *yenot* (raccoon), *atom* (atom), etc.).

The following grammar topics have been studied: *Noun* (gender, plural formation, declension); *Pronoun* (personal and possessive); *Adjective* (gender, degrees of comparison); *Numeral*; *Verb* (present, past and future tense of the most common verbs: *maty / to have, buty / to be, chytaty / to read, robyty / to do, vchyty / to learn, ity / go, yisty / to eat*, etc.). In mastering grammar, we have observed the greatest difficulties with the declension of nouns, forming the future tense of verbs (students prefer the form *I will + the indefinite form of the verb*; regarding the verb type category (perfect/imperfect), it was difficult for students to understand this topic, because even the analogy with the intermediary language (French) did not help to explain the essence of the phenomenon. Below are other observed difficulties faced by the students:

Pronunciation of letters and letter combinations when learning the alphabet - observed in the first week of studies	Letters – <i>z (g), c (ye/ie), i (yi), ū (y), u (ts), ч (ch), u (sh), u (sch)</i> [e.g., the sound « <i>c / ye</i> » часто вимовляють як « <i>я / іуа</i> »]. Letter combinations – <i>dz / dz, dz / dzh</i> у словах – <i>bdzhilka / бджілка</i> (bee), <i>dzvonyk / дзвоник</i> (bell), <i>gudzhyk / гудзик</i> (button). Pronunciation of Ukrainian letters is confused: for example, <i>c (s)</i> as <i>κ (k), p (r)</i> as <i>n (p)</i> or <i>ð (d)</i> , <i>ж (zh)</i> as <i>u (sh)</i> like in “ <i>Ya yiDu</i> ” (I go) they tend to say “ <i>Ya yishu</i> ”, “ <i>yisha</i> ” (food) instead of a clear „ <i>yiZHa</i> ”.
Pronunciation and writing of homonyms, as well as heteronyms, also words that are almost the same in spelling and pronunciation - throughout the entire period of study	For example, “ <i>vidpovidalniy</i> ” / <i>responsible</i> – “ <i>vidpovidaty</i> ” / <i>respond</i> , “ <i>pratsiuvaty</i> ” / <i>work</i> – “ <i>prasuvaty</i> ” / <i>iron</i> , “ <i>pity</i> ” / <i>to go (away)</i> – “ <i>pyty</i> ” / <i>drink</i> , “ <i>maty</i> ” [noun, “mother”] – “ <i>maty</i> ” [verb, “to have”], <i>brAty</i> [noun, plural, “brothers”] – <i>bratY</i> [verb, “to take”], etc.
Noun	It is found difficult to remember the rules about the formation of the plural of nouns (except adding the ending - <i>u</i> ), as well as the very notion of noun cases.
Adjective	Agreement of an adjective with a noun; color names Formation of degrees of comparison of adjectives.
Numerals and notation of date and time, telling the time	1. Cardinal numerals [from 1 to 100] were relatively well mastered only on ≈ week 17-18. Sometimes, in order to name a composite numeral, the students tend to use two simple numerals separately (for example, instead of <i>p'yatdesiat-chotyry</i> / fifty-four – <i>p'yat chotyry</i> / five four). There have been minor difficulties with the formation of ordinal numerals. 2. Date - the day is usually put first. 3. It is difficult to remember certain months. 4. Telling the time - in the case of, for example, “ <i>visimnadtsiata hodyna (shosta vechora)</i> ” (6:00 pm) there is no confusion, while the phrase “ <i>za dvadtsiat sioma</i> ” ( <i>twenty to seven</i> ) seems too complicated.
Pronoun	Possessive pronouns for the first person singular are well mastered. It is more difficult with other forms, in particular, with the declension of personal pronouns – <i>ya / I, meni, mene / me</i> , etc.
Difficulties in communicating and understanding the people around	Individual words and phrases are pronounced indistinctly, can be «distorted» – <i>zupynTka</i> instead of <i>zupynka</i> (bus stop), <i>vykladaTOR</i> instead of <i>vyklDACH</i> (teacher), <i>chato</i> instead of <i>chasto</i> (often), <i>chasyya</i> instead of <i>schastia</i> (happiness); some of the people they communicate with use jargonisms and Russianisms that are unknown to them.
Translation	At the initial stages, difficulties were recorded when translating simple sentences – <i>tut ya mayu brata</i> “I have a brother here”; <i>tam moyi knyzhky</i> “my books are there”; <i>u mene try sestry</i> “I have three sisters”; <i>Ali veselo</i> “Ali is having fun” - they do not distinguish verbs, do not fully understand the meaning of the sentence.

Based on the results of this 20-week training, we can single out, in our opinion, the following most effective teaching methods: using the students' native language to explain the topic; transliteration of all Ukrainian words, phrases and sentences in Latin; writing down explanations and examples in a notebook; using the Internet to illustrate concepts that are incomprehensible to students due to cultural differences (e.g., at the end of the textbook “*Ukrainian language for foreign students*” there are small texts: *Ukraine, State symbols of Ukraine, Kyiv, Easter, Borscht and varenyky (Beetroot soup and dumplings), Vyshyvanky*

(*Embroidered Shirts*), *Rushnyk (Embroidered Towel)*, *Cossacks*, and when reading them the Internet turned out to be simply irreplaceable for a better understanding of these realia); use of dialogical speech, both based on dialogues from the textbooks and in communication with the teacher. Therefore, the communication-oriented approach, which consisted in the involvement of both classical and modern methods of language teaching, turned out to be the most effective.

**Results and discussion.** Summarizing the obtained facts, we can single out the following aspects among the learning outcomes:

1. Acquisition of  $\approx 1/5$  of the material covered.

2. We cannot abandon the use of French for explaining the material and turn to the use of Ukrainian exclusively. It is difficult to estimate the exact percentage ratio of the use of Ukrainian and French, but it is  $\approx 60 \approx 70 \approx 80\%$  of French and  $\approx 20 \approx 30\%$  of Ukrainian accordingly. Of course, when there is, for example, a question after the text *Scho dyvyvsia Maksym?* ("What did Maxim watch?"), and the text tells that Maxim watched football, the student will certainly answer the question, but the question like *Chym ty tsikavyvsia v dytynstvi?* ("What were you interested in as a child?") might cause difficulties. In the 20th week of studying, after reading the text «*My Friend*» (circa 1 page long) students could understand and answer 21 out of 22 postreading questions.

3. During certain lectures, students understood  $\approx 80\%$  of what the lecturer was talking about. These were the lectures on international tourism, i.e. a discipline within their specialty specialty.

4. The first attempts of conscious construction of sentences and the use of vocabulary were observed on the 10th week: simple sentences, expressing one's own thoughts, what is needed and speaking on general topics, using one's own vocabulary.

5. Students could recite a few sentences about themselves, their family and the purpose of their visit in the 4th week.

6. First attempts of rewriting small texts to train writing skills were in the 16th week. The most typical mistakes are writing the Ukrainian letter "u" like the Latin *n*; omitting an apostrophe and a soft sign "ь"; preference for writing letters in printed manner.

To improve the methods of teaching the Ukrainian language to foreign students, one should use level textbooks (from A1 to C2) that correspond to the Recommendations of the Council of Europe, because after finishing work with the beginner level, a logical question arises - what educational materials to use next? Given that standardized requirements for levels of Ukrainian language proficiency have already been developed [6], we expect an increase in the number of relevant series of level textbooks, similar to series for learning English. It would be useful to learn about the experience of learning Ukrainian as a foreign language on the basis of such textbooks, in particular in the form of methodological seminars or webinars.

We believe that one of the possibilities of solving the problem of finding ways to increase studentse cognitive interest in learning Ukrainian as a foreign language is the use of the already mentioned innovative technologies in education. The application of such approaches as interactive teaching methods and the use of technical devices and applications (computer and multimedia, Internet) for knowledge control, storage and use of educational materials, allows teachers to introduce and improve their skills and methods, increase educational process efficiency and the level of students' language acquisition [3 : 8-9].

Nowadays computer-assisted teaching is used both in the independent work of students and in group learning. When creating tools for teaching and testing (that is, special software, methods and approaches used in computer-based learning) technologies are taken into account, as well as the experience of using the Internet, in particular, for

educational purposes. Teaching and testing tools allow teachers to generate test tasks from a database according to criteria specified by the course developer; use different types of test tasks (one-choice exercises, multiple-choice exercises, filling the gaps exercises); include pictures, animations, audio and video files; use contextual help in learning mode; issuing test results statistical data at the end of the test (in a controllable way), which are recorded in the results database; specifying the time for the test. It enables the students to monitor knowledge acquisition (on-line), and provides teachers with the ability to access and edit databases with questions; defining of task selection criteria; viewing the database of registration forms; administration of these databases, etc. This approach has been updated due to the pandemic and other global factors that affect the teaching methods of students. Another promising method is the corpus-based approach, which is at the initial stage of its development for the Ukrainian language [2; 5], moreover there are already podcasts for listening for different levels of language proficiency with a decrease in the share of the intermediary language (English), which is a phenomenon that indicates progress in improving methods and approaches in mastering the Ukrainian language [10]. Therefore, we can say that the combination of classical (textbooks) and progressive methods (corpora, podcasts, interactive developments) is the most up-to-date approach in the globalized world.

**Conclusions.** Summing up, we would like to outline the problems that need to be solved:

- 1) differentiation of foreign students of every faculty by categories depending on their specialty, level of language knowledge; 2) development of «Practical Ukrainian language» course programs for each category of students; 3) adaptation of the programs of «Ukrainian language», «Business Ukrainian language», «Ukrainian language for Special Purposes» courses to the communicative needs and language capabilities of foreign students; 4) creation of separate textbooks for foreign students on the named courses, taking into account the characteristics of each category; 5) determination and arrangement of the amount of study time for studying a particular Ukrainian language course (lecture and practical lessons hours, controllable independent studying); 6) development of interactive learning methods, in particular for self-testing of knowledge and skills; 7) unification of approaches to compiling textbooks; 8) wider communication, acquaintance and exchange of experience in using the textbooks among practicing teachers.

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## ДЕЯКІ АСПЕКТИ ВИВЧЕННЯ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ІНОЗЕМНОЇ ФРАНКОМОВНИМИ СТУДЕНТАМИ

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У статті розглянуто методику викладання української мови як іноземної на прикладі студентів-іноземців, які навчаються у Львівському державному університеті фізичної культури. Завдання будь-якого закладу вищої освіти, який навчає іноземних студентів, першочергово дати ґрунтовну теоретичну й практичну підготовку з обраного фаху, навчити самостійно приймати рішення, які пов'язані з професійною діяльністю, а отже, створювати власними силами нові цінності та переймати культурну й мовну освіту тієї країни, в якій вони навчаються. Вивчення української мови як іноземної може виявитися непростим завданням. Мова з багатою історією та культурою, унікальною граматикою та словниковим запасом – усе це може бути важко опанувати. Підручники забезпечують здійснення основних функцій української мови. Принципи укладання підручників для іноземних громадян залежать від багатьох чинників. Одним із них є добір навчального матеріалу, що залежить від контингенту тих, хто вчиться, профілю (гуманітарного чи природничого) їхньої майбутньої професійної діяльності, потреб студентів, рівня їх мотивованості та початкових знань. Попри напрацювання в царині лінгводидактики української мови як іноземної як закордоном, так і на теренах України все ж залишається низка невирішених завдань. Розглянувши сучасний стан цього питання та маючи практичний досвід викладання української мови як іноземної, у статті окреслено основні результати та труднощі, з якими може стикнутися як викладач, так і студент (на прикладі іноземних франкомовних студентів, які навчаються у Львівському державному університеті фізичної культури). Зазначено, що єдиного ідеального методу вивчення української мови як іноземної не існує, оптимальним буде задіювання різних підходів, враховуючи потреби та можливості студентів. Запропоновано шляхи вдосконалення підходів до методики викладання української мови як іноземної та перспективи подальших розвідок.

*Ключові слова:* українська мова як іноземна, методика, посібник, інноваційні технології, лінгводидактика.

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