

S.B.Yakhina, L.T.Zhumakanova

*Ye.A.Buketov Karaganda State University
(E-mail: saule_yakhina@mai.ru)*

Organization of independent work of students in teaching a foreign language at a non-lingual higher educational institution

The paper focuses on organizing students' independent work in teaching a foreign language. The authors suggest effective ways of mastering the language material that mobilize all types of memory. The researchers emphasize the need to study the words separately or in context, paying special attention to the work on the study of word combinations, different aspects of the meaning of words. The article presents a developed system of exercises aimed at mastering vocabulary and expands students' vocabulary. The authors give recommendations on keeping personal dictionaries for memorizing and learning the words by students.

Key words: education, teaching, foreign languages, professional competence, methods of teaching, instructional techniques, teacher, student, independent work, vocabulary.

According to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On Education», the main purpose of education is not simply to instill students with a body of knowledge and skills, but to form the ability to access, analyze and use the information effectively based on their personal, social and professional competence; as well as to form the ability to think and solve problems independently and the ability to live and work efficiently in a rapidly changing world [1].

In this regard, when learning a foreign language much attention should be paid to independent work. Independent work in the study of a foreign language is seen as an active learner's intellectual activity, during which he/she produces his own style of intellectual activity, develops ways of thinking, improves the ability to analyze and organize the studied material while reading and writing skills are formed. The knowledge gained independently by overcoming certain objective difficulties is learned better than that imparted from a teacher. During the independent work each student is in direct contact with the material under study, concentrates his/her attention on it, mobilizing all reserves of intellectual, emotional and volitional nature. This work is individualized. A student uses a source of information according to his/her own needs and abilities. This greatly increases responsibility and, as a consequence, his/her progress.

Many years experience of teaching students a foreign language proves that we are interested in the problem of enriching the vocabulary of students in the mode of independent work. It is a constant concern of a teacher in the system of measures aimed at promoting intercultural communicative competence as the goal of learning a foreign language. Experience shows that the academic progress of students in a foreign language depends not only on their careful orientation to learning, good performance of homework, their will to overcome difficulties, but mainly on how their teacher is able to accustom students to the daily hard independent work on the study of a foreign language, how proper are the instructional techniques that students use in the process of self-guided work.

The teacher should ensure that a student is interested in working on vocabulary and realizes that the learning words should not be mechanical, that every word has to be understood, correctly spoken, read and written. Only after a word receives a clear sense, auditory and graphic image in the mind of a student, he/she should start working on memorizing it, otherwise, one can remember a wrong word, and to relearn a previously learned material would be quite difficult.

To memorize vocabulary active participation of all types of memory is important. They are: visual memory, which is trained by reading and spelling; aural memory that develops in the perception of a foreign language at hearing and in the process of speech; motor memory, which is associated with the work of the organs of speech and the act of writing words, and finally, the logical memory by which a complete and comprehensive understanding and thorough thinking of the acquired material go on [2].

Theoretical knowledge and experimental data convincingly demonstrate that a student in real communication with native speakers is not concerned with dictionaries or other reference materials, but with grammatical structures and lexical units laid down in his mind by a teacher in the course of training.

The more units a student reproduces, the more tracks from the actual words are recorded in his semantic memory. According to A.A. Leontiev, not the words themselves, but the complexes of their traits are stored

in the memory of a man [3]. Therefore, the task of a teacher is to teach students the most efficient ways of working on mastering the vocabulary that mobilize all kinds of memory. During the generation of the statement communicative and cognitive structures, conscious and unconscious elements, logical and associative components are combined. Mental component takes the form of actual lexical units.

The proper use of the studied vocabulary in the speech is provided by:

- a) previously formed lexical skills;
- b) previously digested rules on the use and formation of words, imprinted in the memory of students;
- c) the ability to use words in different types and forms of speech and writing [4].

The teacher should teach students to work on the vocabulary simultaneously in two directions: to teach isolated words and to work on vocabulary in context. Memorizing of isolated words is known to be difficult. It is of great importance in the study of a foreign language, because one cannot be limited by understanding the word in this particular context without knowing the basic meanings of the particular word as an independent lexical unit. The necessity of mastering both isolated words and study them in context should be demonstrated to students with a particular material of adequate complexity.

The English word *hand*, which means a part of human body, in a particular context will always have only one meaning; for example, in the sentence: Mrs Bennet put her hands over her ears to shut out the noise. In this case *hand* indicates a body part. But in the sentence: Everything depends on how the company plays its hand — the word *hand* means benefits. In the following example the word *hand* means help: Can you give me a hand (= help me) with these books?

Using such examples the teacher demonstrates to students that the assimilation of a word only in the sense of a particular context is not sufficient and may lead to misunderstanding of the same word in a different context. If the teacher can show the students the life of words, develop their «feeling» of the language, and then the independent work on vocabulary becomes a keen interest for them.

The experience shows that words grouped by a theme line are easier to remember and learned much better than words not associated with a topical vocabulary. Therefore it is necessary to teach students to memorize words mostly in their thematic association. For this purpose it is necessary to teach students to make their own personal dictionary and arrange the words in them by particular topics, i.e. grouping together all the words related to the topic under study. But since not all of the words «fit» certain topics, then for narrative texts it is more convenient to keep itemized dictionaries, which should include all the words that are to be learned when studying that section of the training manual. For memorizing and repeating isolated words from their own personal dictionary students should be encouraged to open the desired page of the dictionary and then, alternately open and close the left or right column and accordingly learn and repeat the words.

The following work on vocabulary is effective as well. It is writing all the familiar words on the topic under study from memory, followed by using their dictionaries to check whether all the words on this topic are fully mastered.

In order to ensure that students can successfully use the vocabulary acquired during teaching, it is necessary to require them to learn nouns in the singular, regular verbs — in the infinitive form, and irregular verbs — in three main forms (to take, took, taken). Adjectives should be remembered in the positive degree and pay special attention to the degree of comparison of those having special forms (bad-worse-the worst). For example, students are encouraged to write phrases, consisting of an adjective and a noun that they associate with the proposed concepts and situations, such as:

1. A scary story: strange noises, a dark night, a terrible scream...
2. A birthday party: delicious food, a decorated room, loud music, funny surprises...
3. A successful visit, a short queue, inexpensive tickets, comfortable seats, modest neighbours, an interesting film...

Students can create a short story or a conversation in dialogue form using the suggested phrases.

For independent work to consolidate vocabulary and to develop oral communication skills a system of oral and written exercises is recommended, the efficiency of which is confirmed in practice.

According to the authors, special exercises aimed at formation of particular practical strategies and skills are necessary for the organization of independent work of non-language specialties students. The following are the most effective types of tasks for independent training, speech practice and implementation of self control within the technology of self-guided/autonomous learning FL:

- 1) teaching and training tasks — these methods of independent work on language mean:
 - repetition/memorization of isolated words, bilingual correspondences, semantic and other groupings of words, et al.;

- semantic, logical, associative maps;
 - different types of grouping of lexical units by logical-semantic task, functional characteristics, as keywords, et al.;
 - translation into the native language;
 - use of lexical units in the context;
 - paraphrase, selection of equivalent substitutions in the context;
 - reproduction/retelling of the text using or adding studied lexical units to the text;
 - creating a text using key words/phrases;
 - addition/expansion/reduction/modification/adaptation of the text using the studied lexical units;
 - compilation of the bank of lexical units such as «personal vocabulary», «magic words», et al.;
- 2) assimilation of resource training skills:
- a) keeping records of working notes and other educational information (storing):
- drawing up vocabulary, grammar, reference cards;
 - keeping vocabularies, glossaries for organizing lexical units on various topics;
 - keeping vocabulary comments, glossaries to a text, including language and linguistic and cultural units [5].

Fostering students' interest in independent work on vocabulary, it is necessary to provide understanding that words, as building material for the language can express a complete thought only by means of grammar, which together with the basic vocabulary of language make its foundation, the essence of its specificity. It follows that when working on vocabulary, students must correctly use the rules of changing words and regulations of combining the words in a sentence.

The independent work of students on mastering vocabulary includes not only methodically elaborated system of different exercises and techniques of memorizing words, but also the proper organization of self-guided work. An important part of preparing students to work independently is the formation of their general educational skills: the ability to understand learning material, in particular, to distinguish the principle point; to perform the work in a certain sequence; to work with a book, reference books, modern multimedia facilities; to make the plan and outline of one's statements; to carry out self-help and mutual control, etc. These skills are formed at a system organization of independent work, when one kind of independent activity prepares students to another one.

Particular attention should be paid to the management of the educational process in the organization of independent work of students. The use of pair and group types of independent work varies forms of educational activity, increases their efficiency, and promotes activity, independence, persistence. So, while working on the formation of skills on the topic «New Sports» students are offered a task (using cards for pair work): ask your companion, whether he is interested in modern sports, or reads articles about modern sports and well-known athletes, whether he watches sports telecasts, reports, or protects the honor of the club or university at sporting events. The correct answer is checked by the key (the interviewer is the one who has it). The key has two or more possible answers to each question. The management of independent work can be effective only when a differentiated approach to students with different levels of education is implemented. The simplest case of such an approach is the use of additional supports for students with weak language skills.

Based on the above stated, it should be concluded that the independent work on a foreign language should be organized in such a way that not only contributes to the mastering of this course by the students, but also prepares them for further independent study it after graduation: laying the foundation for reading unadapted texts on specialty with which they will have to deal with in their professional activities. In the course of this work the students form certain automatisms: language guess, analysis and synthesis of texts, search activity, work with the dictionary, etc. Students should gain understanding of different types of dictionaries (monolingual, bilingual, special, terminological) and phrasebooks.

The most important conditions for maintaining the interest of students to work independently in the study of a foreign language are real-time records management and evaluation of the results by the teacher, his/her stress on the importance of this work to address current and future challenges of education.

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С.Б.Яхина, Л.Т.Жұмақанова

Тілдік емес жоо студенттерінің шетел тілін оқыту барысындағы өздік жұмыстарын ұйымдастыру

Мақалада шетел тілін меңгеру барысында студенттердің өздік жұмысын ұйымдастыру мәселелері қарастырылды. Жадының барлық түрлерін жұмылдыруына ықпал ететін тілдік материалды меңгеру үшін тиімді жолдары ұсынылды. Авторлар сөздерді дара түрінде немесе контексте оқуға қажеттілігін атап өтіп, сөз тіркестерін оқу жұмысына және сөздер мағынасының әр түрлі аспектілеріне ерекше көңіл бөлді. Лексиканы меңгеруіне және студенттердің сөздік қорын кеңейтуіне бағытталған жаттығуларының дамыған жүйесі ұсынылған. Студенттер сөздерді ұғып оқу үшін авторлар жеке сөздіктерді жазу туралы ұсыныстар берді.

С.Б.Яхина, Л.Т.Жұмақанова

Организация самостоятельной деятельности студентов при обучении иностранному языку в неязыковом вузе

Авторы предлагают эффективные способы овладения языковым материалом, которые мобилизуют все типы памяти, подчеркивают необходимость изучения слов отдельно или в контексте, уделяют особое внимание работе по изучению словосочетаний, различных аспектов значения слов. В статье представлена разработанная система упражнений, направленных на усвоение лексики и расширение лексического запаса обучаемых. Даны рекомендации по ведению личных словарей для запоминания и усвоения слов учащимися.

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