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JOURNAL	International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science
p-ISSN	2544-9338
e-ISSN	2544-9435
PUBLISHER	RS Global Sp. z O.O., Poland

ARTICLE TITLE	CREATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ATMOSPHERE IN TEACHING ENGLISH
AUTHOR(S)	Elena A. Veliyeva
ARTICLE INFO	Elena A. Veliyeva. (2021) Creation of Foreign Language Atmosphere in Teaching English. International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science. 1(29). doi: 10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30032021/7368
DOI	https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30032021/7368
RECEIVED	10 December 2020
ACCEPTED	17 January 2021
PUBLISHED	22 January 2021

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CREATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ATMOSPHERE IN TEACHING ENGLISH

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30032021/7368

ARTICLE INFO

Received 10 December 2020

Accepted 17 January 2021

Published 22 January 2021

KEYWORDS

foreign language socialization, innovative development, assessment system, natural environment, universal didactic factor, organizational clarity, to influence.

ABSTRACT

During practical study it was offered a new model of the English language education for students, that was tested in current conditions of traditionally common at Azerbaijan national universities. The need to create this model is due to the dissatisfaction of the professional community with the results of such training. This paper consists of two parts. The first part briefly analyzes a number of interacting extralinguistic factors that differently influence the process of learning English by the students in the classrooms, in small training groups, under the guidance of the teacher according to standard methods. The second part of this paper is a description of the foreign language environment model in the single educational atmosphere of a technical university. The task set by the developers of this model is not only to reduce the negative and strengthen the positive influence of the external factors complex, but also to stimulate students for study of English through foreign-language socialization in academic and professionally oriented discourse. The principles of a model organization of the single foreign language atmosphere, a system of uniform control and assessment of English language proficiency are presented in this paper. Preliminary results obtained during the testing of this model were analyzed. The main advantages of the training organization through this model, which allows to increase motivation for students to learn English have been considered during the research.

Citation: Elena A. Veliyeva. (2021) Creation of Foreign Language Atmosphere in Teaching English. *International Journal of Innovative Technologies in Social Science*. 1(29). doi: 10.31435/rsglobal_ijitss/30032021/7368

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The task of the education system is to achieve a high standard of quality in the content and technologies of higher education in order to form a training level that meets the interests of innovative development in Azerbaijan society. It is impossible to imagine a modern graduate without free knowledge of English in the field of professional and academic communication, which not only guarantees wide access to the world information and scientific and technical resources, but also allows to find like-minded people in different parts of the world, to implement their ideas and projects. What prevents the achievement of these goals in mass higher education? There is a reasonable doubt about the possibility of quality teaching English to the students of technical specialties in the context of artificial bilingualism, which is common in Azerbaijan educational institutions: foreign language is studied outside the natural language environment under the guidance and supervision of local teachers in specially created educational conditions in small academic groups - small social groups of closed type. Practice shows that the development and application of new methods of teaching foreign languages do not have a tangible effect. It seems that approaches to the language education of technical students should be fundamentally changed.

The purpose of this study is to identify a complex of extralinguistic factors that have a different impact on the process of learning a foreign language in the educational audience, as well as to evaluate the preliminary results of testing the model of a single foreign language environment and an alternative assessment system at a technical university. This model is one way to increase not only the indicators of the English language proficiency, but also the level of foreign-language socialization of students in English-language discourse - academic and professionally oriented.

Let's consider the implementation of the inherently universal didactic factor in higher education. There are three main approaches to the organization of foreign language education common in Azerbaijan universities. The first, so-called traditional, is based on the combination of the lecture method of presentation and a student's independent work with a textbook and is supplemented by the use of technical means of training. In domestic studies, traditional learning is referred to as subject-object technologies, in which the teacher (subject) has an impact and the student (object) is exposed to it. In addition to the advantages (systematic nature, logically structured delivery of educational material, organizational clarity), the traditional classroom form of education has serious disadvantages, namely, template construction of classes, monotony, passivity of students, absence of individual approach. Many foreign and domestic experts recognize that the results of traditional foreign language instruction do not meet the needs of modern students. Therefore, increasing attention is paid to another approach to the organization of the educational process - a person-oriented one, in which the emphasis is transferred from the teacher to the student and to individualized learning. The implementation of this approach is complicated by the fact that the underlying model of communicative competence was developed by speakers of the language for the same speakers of the language. And it is quite difficult for the teacher to explain correctly norms of language and culture which are typical for English-speaking countries. Moreover, the personality-centered emphasis on the practical learning of a foreign language for the purpose of communication does not ensure that all components of the language are equal. In order to overcome the shortcomings of both the traditional and the personal approach to foreign language instruction, didactics is increasingly resorting to combining their elements. Thus, the third approach to foreign language teaching arises, which is considered the most promising not only abroad, but also in Azerbaijan.

In addition to the didactic factor, the effectiveness of foreign language education is influenced by the conditions and national specifics of language learning. Traditionally, students of non-language directions in national universities are taught English by the teachers of universal inter-faculties of foreign languages. In case of a technical higher school, the variation in the duration of foreign language courses in different areas of training ranges from some definite credit units, and students are not expected to achieve a single result in foreign language even within one university. Classes in each study group are generally conducted by the same teacher, students communicate in the language studied only with him/her and members of their group. At the same time there is the teaching on the aspects (for example: vocabulary, grammar, writing, listening, speaking), and the teachers' approach to the content of the course in English does not always seem justified.

A paradoxical situation has arisen: in one faculty and even in the same course, students from different groups are subject to different requirements at the examination or at the competition, as there are no planned results in foreign language for the system of higher education, as well as a single state final examination conducted by external experts. The teacher of the inter-faculty department not only organizes the training process on his/her own, but also checks the results of his/her activities. At inter-faculty departments there work mostly teachers of mature age, who do not have scientific degrees and scientific titles. Without questioning the competence of experienced teachers, it is necessary to recognize that they are often distinguished by an established conservative view not only of the subject, but also of the ways of training. They avoid using innovative technologies, prefer the traditional way of organizing classes. Many teachers of the language are psychologically not ready to fundamentally change approaches to control and assessment of the results of education of their students.

The effect of the sociolinguistic factor reflecting the impact of the social environment on the language and speech behavior of students and teachers manifests itself in a very specific way in the context of auditing bilingualism. The positive impact was revealed in two experimental groups: good teacher pronunciation contributed to a decrease in the degree of foreign emphasis in students. Negative influence was observed in different degrees in all groups: errors caused by incorrect training or incorrect implementations present in the teacher's speech was recorded in the pronunciation of students. In one group, where the impact of the teacher's pronunciation (the most inexperienced of those participating in the experiment) on the emphasis of his/her students was minimal, the neutral influence of the foreign emphasis of the English teacher on the pronunciation of students was noted, i.e. the weak degree of the teacher's emphasis did not affect the foreign emphasis of his/her trainees. It turned out that the degree of emphasis of students from different groups varies depending on the degree of foreign emphasis of the group teacher and on the methodology of teaching. When using the same technique, the main factor affecting the expression of emphasis in students is the foreign accent of the teacher. In a situation where the teacher is not a language authority for students, a certain level of foreign emphasis is formed within a separate educational group, independent of the teacher's pronunciation.

This study concluded that when technical students learn English outside the natural language environment under the guidance of a non-language teacher, it is he/she who is likely to become a language authority for his/hers students, with the degree of foreign emphasis among students varying, but usually depending on the degree of its manifestation among the teachers. Training in groups contributes to the creation of linguistic, cultural and psychological barriers among their members when communicating with language speakers. Together with the previously described shortcomings of the mass foreign language training system of non-linguistic students themselves, these barriers negatively affect the foreign language socialization of non-linguistic students and significantly reduce the performance of foreign language learning in classroom settings.

Next, an alternative model of foreign language learning outside the natural language environment is described, designed to correct the influence of extralinguistic factors on the process of foreign language learning. The education development program envisages the creation of structural and technological innovations in higher education, as well as the development and dissemination of new educational technologies and forms of educational process organization. One such form could be the proposed Model of a Single Foreign Language Space (EIP), whose mission is to encourage students to communicate more harmoniously in simulated situations of academic and professionally oriented communication in English with variable elements of communication when students do not know in advance who will be their communication partner and who will appreciate the outcome. In creating this model, we assumed that changing the sociolinguistic learning situation itself would facilitate the foreign-language socialization in increasing motivation to learn English and the need to speak it in a single foreign-language environment at a technical university. Creation of foreign-language space in the training of non-linguist students is very important. A combination of subjective analysis methods (student interviewing, content analysis of the obtained data) and objective analysis (expert analysis of errors at three levels of speech) are used to assess the effectiveness of the proposed model. The theoretical and methodological base of the developed model of EIP was: sociolinguistic research of Academic English was chosen as the main content of the training, as scientific activity brings together all students, regardless of the direction of training. Evaluation of the effectiveness of the EIP gives students the opportunity to communicate with representatives of other spheres of activity, then the second mandatory component of the content of education became General English and English for special purposes (General English, Business English, Technical English, etc.) In order to implement the EIP model more effectively, teachers of the department have developed a series of teaching manuals on the organization of independent work of students, which in Azerbaijan provide detailed instructions on the execution of tasks and algorithms of student actions, e.g. manuals "How to write an informal letter in English," "How to write a formal letter in English," "How to write a business letter in English," "How to write a good annotation to a scientific article," "Preparation of intermediate and final presentations of scientific research result, "How to make a report in a foreign language." The model of a single foreign language space consists of two structural blocks - professionally oriented:

1. Single Foreign Language Space Professionally Oriented in Academic Goal Discourse,
2. Foreign Language Socialization in Professional Communication of Foreign Language Socialization,
3. Ability to communicate orally and in writing in foreign languages to solve problems of interpersonal and intercultural interactivity,
4. Knowledge of communication skills in a professional environment,
5. Ability to properly express thoughts in oral and written speech,
- 6 Ability for critical analysis,
7. Summarizing and systematizing information, setting professional objectives and choosing the best ways and methods to achieve them.

Creation of foreign-language atmosphere in the training of non-linguistic and academic students, each of which combines individual and group forms of work by increasing complexity. In the professionally oriented unit, pedagogical technology "competition" is widely used, on the basis of which a system of professionally oriented competitions of individual and collective projects is built. Such a system gives the students of different years of training the opportunity to practice speaking in English in front of an unfamiliar audience, allows not only to assess the level of English proficiency in other groups, but also to compare it with their own. During such discussions, students train stress resistance, self-control and self-esteem skills, ability to make decisions quickly and respond to unexpected circumstances - qualities directly related to the success of socialization, including foreign language. The task of creating an effective all-Azerbaijan independent system of assessment of the quality of education

and educational results is also one of the priorities in the Education Development Program. An alternative system of unified control and external assessment of the results of English language mastery is a mandatory element of the proposed EIP model. This system makes fundamental changes to the situation of conditional "communicative comfort," which is usually formed in a training group with a permanent composition of members and one teacher who controls the process of training and its results. Such conditions often deprive many students of the need to learn the language strongly, because "like" one permanent teacher, having clarified his typical requirements, does not make much work. It is a collection of student's works, recording achievements in various aspects of the language. The structure of the portfolio varies between courses and depends on the level of language training. Thus, the portfolio of postgraduate students consists of information about itself (curriculum vitae), English-language application for a grant, annotations to a scientific article, translation of the article into English, presentation of a scientific report. The portfolio in Unibook (e-register) is an admission to the exam. The teacher carries out traditional forms of control at the end of the semester and provides information about the results received to the examiners from among the most qualified specialists of the division. At the Presentation Festival students from different groups present their own educational professionally-oriented work in a foreign language. Work on this presentation is under way throughout the semester. In addition, students design a portfolio with accompanying documentation, which includes a list of participants and a description of their functions, a script, a text of roles, a description of work stages. The subject matter of presentation should correspond to the sphere of professional communication and the requirements of the standard in the direction of training students. The examination in the format of an interdisciplinary conference allows to assess the degree of preparation of the student for English-language scientific communication. In his/her report, the student informs the audience and the examiner about the preliminary or final results of the study. Students are required to demonstrate ownership of the presentation structure. Much attention is paid to the formation of public speaking skills: gestures, eye contact with the audience, pace of speech, absence of unjustified pauses, etc. As admission to the examination, an individual portfolio is used, including, the annotation of the report, the full text of the speech, its transcription (written reproduction of words and texts taking into account their pronunciation) and intonation. An objective error analysis method was used to independently evaluate the effectiveness of the alternative learning model. External experts were invited to assess language and speech errors in the reports of the students participating in the experiment. The informants were a group of 28 students, including some 7 students who speak English at the lower-middle (Pre-Intermediate) level and only a few 7 were Advanced students who have been trained traditionally, as well as Pre-Intermediate students and Advanced students who have been trained under the EIP model. They comprised two control groups (T1 with low proficiency, T2 with high proficiency) and two pilot groups (L1 and L2), respectively. The distribution of the students into control and experimental groups, depending on the level of language proficiency, was based on the results of preliminary standard testing. These groups were taught by the same teacher. Five-minute's audio recordings of a completed academic or professionally oriented message, self-prepared and recorded by a student in Digital Storm format, were used as material for the analysis. Only those phonetic, intonational, lexical, grammatical and structural errors that prevented communication were considered, namely:

- violation of the phonemic composition of the word;
- incorrect use of times, violation of word order, errors in word usage;
- inconsistent with the norms of English-language academic discourse the structure of speech.

Conclusions. The creation of foreign-language atmosphere in the training of technical students is very important and all foreign language teachers must try to urge the suitable space in the classrooms to achieve the better final results.

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