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THE THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN NON-LINGUISTIC SPECIALTIES IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC, THE CZECH REPUBLIC AND POLAND

In the article the author researched the theoretical and methodological aspects of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties in higher educational institutions of the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland. It was described the modern approaches of foreign language teaching in institutions of higher education of countries that the author studies. Having analyzed the recent works of the Slovak, the Czech and the Polish scholars, we outlined the following main problems of teaching: 1) e-learning in ESP; 2) quality of foreign language teaching and learning; 3) CLIL methodology; 4) ESP methodology; 5) ESP teacher training, his/her professional development.

Taking into account the mentioned problems, we defined the peculiarities of theoretical and methodological aspects of foreign language teaching in higher educational institutions of the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland.

It was made a review and given a description of the scientific papers, which made a certain contribution to each of the problems of teaching. The perspectives of further research were mentioned.

The article is addressed to ESP teachers, scientists and researchers who are interested in the field of language education and comparative researches in higher education of such countries as the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland.

Key words: foreign language in non-linguistic specialties; the problem of teaching; higher education of the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland

Problem statement. Higher Education Language Policy of European Language Council may encompass some or all the following principal areas: the HEI institutional language or languages; the language(s) of administration and communication; language degree programmes (e.g. modern language degrees; translation and interpreting; teacher training); lan-

guages for non-language students; languages for mobility and employment; the language(s) of instruction and language support for lecturers not teaching through the medium of their own first languages; language support for researchers; language support for librarians, technicians and administrative staff; languages for the wider community [4]. In our article we give a detailed analysis of such area as languages for non-language students, in other words, those who study at non-linguistic specialties.

The actuality of studying the problems of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties in the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland is concerned with the increasing internationalisation of the labour market. Thus, the students, who have a sufficient level of foreign language (B2 according to the CEFR scale), have the opportunity to do an internship in prestige universities of the world as well as find employment at international companies or organizations. According to the data published by a Polish newspaper, employees have more advantages when working for foreign companies. The most important ones are of a financial nature and deal with better working conditions [1].

Analysis of recent researches and publications. The problem of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties in the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland is well studied. Recent studies on the problems of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties in the Slovak Republic was published by such scientists as S. Pokrivčáková, B. Menzlová, E. Farkašová, L. Hurajová, E. Kováčiková and R. Bielowsova. Among the scholars who devoted their works to the study of the problems of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties in the Czech Republic are J. Jašková, L. Kučírková and P. Zlatníček. In Poland the issues of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties were studied by J. Krajka, S. Magdalena, E. Lesiak-Bielawska and others. However, the comparative analysis regarding theoretical and methodological aspects of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties in the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland has not been carried so far.

The objective of the article – to define the peculiarities of justification of the theoretical and methodological aspects of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties in higher educational institutions of the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland.

The statement of basic materials. Foreign language is an obligatory subject for obtaining higher education almost in all HEIs of the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland. Due to this fact, this subject is paid much attention by language teachers who experiment with approaches to teaching it. Language for Specific Purposes (LSP) is the most widespread approach used by teachers in HEI. More often the English language is taught, so the approach began to be called English for Specific Purposes. The approach presupposes the language learning, which is based on learner's needs (personal and professional). A similar approach to the language teaching is considered to be English for Academic Purposes (EAP), which is based on academic learner's needs. The course with the use of EAP is offered to the students "to prepare them for delivering academic outcomes of various academic genres in English" [5, p.91]. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) is a popular and widespread approach to foreign language teaching in Europe at all levels of education, at higher particularly. The European Council recommends CLIL in many of its publications as an innovative method that can provide bilingual education. CLIL involves teaching subjects in dual-focused educational contexts through additional language (foreign or second) thus teaching both the subject and the language [4]. According to the scholar L. Hurajová, CLIL type approaches predominantly appear at MA level, often as degree programmes which are either fully delivered in a foreign/target language or contain extensive modules delivered in the target language. This approach to teaching is often used in the fields of law, business, economics, engineering, medicine and humanities [5, p. 92].

L. Hurajová has depicted the approaches of EGP, EAP, ESP and CLIL in the form of a pyramid that is called English Tertiary Education Pyramid.

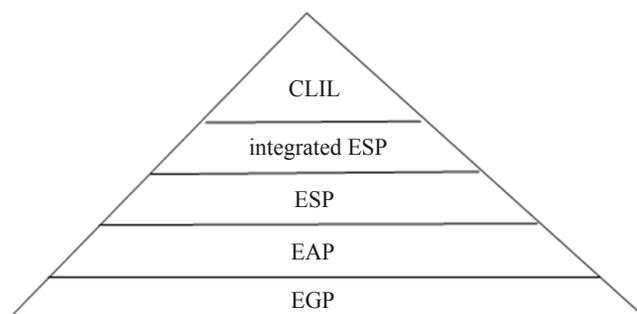


Figure 1. English Tertiary Education Pyramid by L. Hurajová

Regarding the pyramid, the scholar highlights that the knowledge of English for General Purposes (EGP) is fundamental for the students who want to study at institution of higher education. Taking this into consideration, the students with insufficient level of EGP (lower than B1 according to CEFR scale) should be offered some additional courses to get the required level of general English. Those students whose level of English meets B1 criteria can apply for EAP courses that can be included into study programmes as compulsory or optional courses. ESP courses should be also a part of study programmes, which, according to L. Hurajová, aims at enhancing specific vocabulary of students and focusing on language skills progress in target language [5, p.91]. Except ESP in her pyramid there is an integrated ESP that is opposed to the traditional language-focused ESP. In integrated ESP learning the focus is shifted from learning the language to learning simultaneously both professional content matter and the language for professional communication. Dual types of educational approaches such as integrated ESP and CLIL, according to the author, should be taught by non-language subject teachers with active support of teachers of English as a foreign language to ensure the dualism of such education [5, pp. 90-91].

In addition to the above-mentioned approaches, L. Hurajová outlines the approach of English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), which focuses on teaching subject matters in English. This approach she would put on the top of the ETE Pyramid, but it has not been adopted by most of the HEIs in Slovakia yet. The main requirement for applying this approach to practice is students' good command of English at least at B2 level better C1 level, which is an obstacle to the implementation of EMI approach in most HEIs. The mentioned approach also requires subject teachers' preparedness from linguistic aspect [5, p. 92].

Thus, the implementation of EMI approach in tertiary education involves a solid knowledge of English both of students and lecturers. Currently, this approach is used in the universities of the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland mainly to attract foreign students to study there.

Having analyzed the recent works of the scholars from the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland, who studied theoretical and methodological aspects of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties in HEIs, we outlined the following main problems:

- 1) e-learning in ESP;
- 2) quality of foreign language teaching and learning;
- 3) CLIL methodology;
- 4) ESP methodology;
- 5) ESP teacher training, his/her professional development.

The Czech scholar L. Kučirková made her contribution to the problem of e-learning in ESP. She studied ESP with regard to the use of e-learning. Her dissertation dealt with experimental research of effectiveness of e-learning method of Business English in comparison to face-to-face instruction. The supplementary objective was to find out students' opinion on e-learning depending on the frequencies of their responses and on their qualitative signs. The findings of the research proved the hypothesis that there are no statistically significant differences between the results of the students taught through the methods of e-learning and through the face-to-face instruction. According to the author, this conclusion confirms the functionality and effectiveness of e-learning and justifies the continuation of this method of teaching/ learning and work on its improvement [10].

Unlike pure e-learning, blended learning presupposes a combination of online-learning with face-to-face learning. The Polish scientist E. Lesiak-Bielawska investigated the impact of blended learning on teaching English for Vocational Purposes (EVP) through the experiment followed the procedure presented below: 1) the pre-test to collect data on the subjects' pre-treatment knowledge of technical terminology; 2) the presentation of technical terminology in class strengthened by selected consolidation exercises; 3) the subjects' performance of a series of interactive exercises embedded on the Moodle platform; 4) the post-test to collect data on the post-treatment knowledge of technical terminology; 5) the post-test survey to collect qualitative data pertaining to the subjects' assessment of the teaching procedure and its usefulness for the mastery of technical terminology; 6) employing the Wilcoxon signed-rank test to compare the pre-test and post-test scores of the subjects participating in the experiment; 7) analyzing the subjects' opinions on the teaching procedure employed. The results of the experiment indicate considerable progress made by the students. Following the application of the blended learning teaching formula, the group tended to be far more homogenous than at the pre-treatment phase [11].

The Slovak scholar R. Bielousova studied the concept of blended learning by developing materials for ESP online course. In her article she presents the way how authentic and highly technical texts on advanced machining processes that are being studied and researched at the Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies were selected, adapted and integrated in the form of online course into the existing Moodle platform of the Technical University of Košice [2].

Although the problem of quality of foreign language teaching and learning is raised by many scholars, the fundamental study of the issues of quality assessment is not the subject of the most of them. However, we want to note the work of P. Zlatníček, who, in his dissertation "Quality investigation in foreign language instruction: the development and application of an instrument for assessing the occurrence of selected quality components and characteristics" carried out the research of quality of foreign language instruction with respect to the following components and characteristics: motivation, supportive classroom climate, time management, goal orientation and teachers' performance. The mentioned components of the assessment instrument were used in the framework of the analysis of video-records from instruction of 7 randomly selected teachers from South Moravia. Based on the data, obtained by the assessment of these video-records of 7 teachers the following issues were determined: the ranking of teachers in relation to the quality of their teaching; the average proportion of selected components and characteristics and values of their indicators, which used the arithmetic mean values for all teachers; the comparison of the average proportion of selected components and characteristics and values in teaching of one selected teacher and of the average proportion of selected components and characteristics and values of all teachers; the comparison of self-reflection and the actual state of teaching of individual teachers [18]. Despite the fact that the proposed assessment instrument by P. Zlatníček was used for teachers of the German language in secondary school environment, we believe it to be applicable in the sphere of higher education since the problem of quality assessment of foreign language instruction in higher school is poorly developed.

The Slovak researcher S. Pokrivčáková notes that the concept of CLIL covers all forms of teaching academic, artistic, technical and vocational subjects through the teaching of a foreign language which is not the mother tongue for most learners [14]. Having analyzed works dedicated to CLIL methodology, we came to the conclusion that the most studied is one that is related to primary and secondary school. So, S. Pokrivčáková, B. Menzlová, E. Farkašová characterize the conditions for effective application of CLIL methodology in basic school of the Slovak Republic [15]; J. Krajka, Z.P. Mozejko, A. Gadowska study CLIL instruction in online interactive multimedia in Polish secondary school [8]; Z. Vašíček investigates the piano playing with foreign language communication (English or German) [17]; M. Šulista presents the results of CLIL implementation in mathematics lessons at primary and secondary levels of Czech school [16].

Among the authors who studied CLIL implementation at tertiary level we should mention the Polish scientist A. Olek. She shares her experience of working as a lecturer of mathematics, using CLIL at the International Faculty of Engineering of Lodz University of Technology [13]. The Slovak scientist L. Hurajová in her work describes the use of CLIL method in the Slovak HEIs, noting that some institutions have developed CLIL practices whereby specific LSP/LAP courses are offered as preessional modules to students before they enroll in their subject studies [5, p.93].

A certain contribution to the problem of ESP methodology is made by the Polish scholar, E. Leśniak-Bielawska, who in her book “Teaching and Researching in ESP” attempts to give an overview of theoretical foundations in the field as well as empirical research conducted in the area of needs assessment, genre analysis, corpus linguistics, syllabus development, and materials design [12].

In the framework of the problem of ESP methodology the Slovak scientist E. Kováčiková considers project-based education to be one of the effective methods of teaching and learning English for Specific Purposes at higher level of education due to its active approach to learning and the autonomy of students. The project-based education comprises the use of such progressive didactic methods as: problem solving methods, cooperative education and discussions. In her research she states that the project work with integrated topics in ESP can provide the development of four main language skills. When preparing a project, students work with different sources and thus develop reading skills. By designing the paper, they practice their writing skills and via presenting their projects they speak, discuss and give arguments on their topics, so they develop speaking skills. At the discussion point they listen to the questions and adequately reply to them, thus listening and comprehension are being developed. Moreover, she highlights the fact that thanks to project work at ESP classes teachers can develop the communicative competence of students as well as interconnect and make use of the knowledge gained within the content of other professional subjects [7].

In the Czech Republic as well as in the Slovak Republic and Poland teachers of foreign language in non-linguistic specialties have a rather difficult period during their first years of teaching. The reason for this is when studying at university, they were trained to teach EGP in general education schools rather than teach ESP in institutions of higher education.

The Polish scientists J. Krajka and M. Sowa states that “the implementation of LSP teacher training courses into the modern philology curriculum is not easy due to strict limitations of the teacher qualifications scheme as specified in regulations of the Ministry of National Education” [9, p.75]. However, some higher educational institutions offer the course “Teaching methods of foreign language for specific purposes” for the third and fourth level of accreditation. So, in Maria Curie-Skłodowska University of Lublin a 30-contact hour course of ESP teaching is suggested to students. It includes the following integrated components: teaching adults, LSP and digital authoring in a single course.

J. Jašková, J. Krajka, M. Sowa and others describe ESP teacher training and his/her professional development.

J. Jašková in her work studies pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) of ESP novice teacher, which consists of the following individual components: a) the conceptions of purposes for teaching subject matter (educational objectives within the area of ESP, educational objectives outside the area of ESP, pedagogical objectives); b) the curricular knowledge (syllabus for teaching ESP, materials for teaching ESP, professional content of ESP); c) the knowledge of instructional strategies (ways of motivating students, organizational forms of teaching; strategies to cope with the professional content); d) the knowledge of students’ understanding (students’ effective approaches to learning, students’ learning styles and strategies; students’ acquired knowledge and skills). On the basis of the mentioned components she investigated subjective perceptions of ESP novice teachers of PCK by means of quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. The quantitative results of this research show that statistically significant changes between the beginning and the end of the period have been found in two PCK components – the conceptions of purposes for teaching subject matter and the knowledge of instructional strategies. The rest of the individual components – the curricular knowledge and the knowledge of students’ understanding – have not shown any statistically significant changes. However, in terms of descriptive analysis many changes have been noticed in all PCK components. According to J. Jašková this could indicate the teachers’ professional growth during the first three years of their career [6].

J. Krajka and M. Sowa in the article “Teacher Autonomy in Languages for Specific Purposes – Reflections on LSP Teacher Development Process” study the specific nature of LSP teacher training and the importance of task-based methodology that leads to teacher autonomy. In the paper the authors provide two cases of LSP teacher training implemented at Romance philology of Catholic University of Lublin and Applied Linguistics of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University in Lublin. The scientists pay much attention to the programming of LSP course and propose certain stages of its programming, noting the corresponding actions at each step. They highlight that “a clearly task-based nature of the planning stage, in which the

teacher accomplishes particular actions step by-step and on his/ her own, gives the possibility to reveal and assess his/ her level of autonomy” [9, p. 68]. The authors of the article make a separate emphasis on the use of free online authoring tool for creating digital materials by student teachers. During the period of one semester the students of Maria Curie-Skłodowska University are guided through the process of ESP digital materials development as follows: 1) choose a specialism; 2) conduct a needs analysis, generalize results, present findings to the class; 3) draw up a needs-based syllabus; 4) find coursebooks, evaluate materials in reference to diagnosed needs; 5) receive basic training in Moodle authoring: add resources, create collaborative activities and quizzes, manage the course, add students, give feedback; 6) receive basic training in external (Computer-Assisted Language Learning, CALL) applications; 7) author the course, conduct peer evaluation, give in-class presentations. It is important to mention that in order to accomplish the mentioned procedure, the class is divided into 2–3 person groups free to choose their own specialism to research [9].

Conclusions and perspectives of further research. Summing up the abovementioned in the article, we came to the conclusion that the most widespread approach to foreign language teaching in non-linguistic specialties both in the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland is LSP. Having studied the works of the scholars, we outlined the following main problems: 1) e-learning in ESP; 2) quality of foreign language teaching and learning; 3) CLIL methodology; 4) ESP methodology; 5) ESP teacher training, his/ her professional development. Taking into account the mentioned problems, we defined the following peculiarities of theoretical and methodological aspects of foreign language teaching in higher educational institutions of the Slovak Republic, the Czech Republic and Poland: 1) the use of blended and electronic (distance) learning for foreign language instruction; 2) quality measurement of foreign language instruction; 3) gradual implementation of CLIL at the university level; 4) extension of the issues concerning ESP methodology; 5) controversial nature of professional training of foreign language teacher for teaching in non-linguistic specialties in higher educational institutions. The perspective of further research is the investigation of the state of foreign language teaching in the researched countries.

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ТЕОРЕТИКО-МЕТОДОЛОГІЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ НА НЕМОВНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЯХ У ВИЩИХ НАВЧАЛЬНИХ ЗАКЛАДАХ СЛОВАЧЧИНИ, ЧЕХІЇ, ПОЛЬЩІ

У статті авторкою досліджено теоретико-методологічні аспекти викладання іноземної мови на немовних спеціальностях у вищих навчальних закладах Словаччини, Чехії, Польщі. Зокрема, описано сучасні підходи викладання іноземної мови у закладах вищої освіти цих країн. За результатами аналізу наукових праць словацьких, чеських і польських вчених були виокремлені такі основні проблеми викладання як: 1) електронне навчання в ESP; 2) якість викладання та вивчення іноземної мови; 3) методологія CLIL; 4) методологія ESP; 5) підготовка вчителя ESP та його професійний розвиток. З огляду на ці проблеми, було визначено та обґрунтовано особливості викладання іноземної мови у вищих навчальних закладах Словаччини, Чехії, Польщі. Проаналізовано наукові праці, у яких розглядалися зазначені проблеми, та окреслено перспективи подальших досліджень.

Ключові слова: іноземна мова на немовних спеціальностях; проблема викладання; вища освіта Словаччини, Чехії, Польщі

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ТЕОРЕТИКО-МЕТОДОЛОГИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ ПРЕПОДАВАНИЯ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА НА НЕЯЗЫКОВЫХ СПЕЦИАЛЬНОСТЯХ В ВЫСШИХ УЧЕБНЫХ ЗАВЕДЕНИЯХ СЛОВАКИИ, ЧЕХИИ, ПОЛЬШИ

В статье автором исследованы теоретико-методологические аспекты преподавания иностранного языка на неязыковых специальностях в высших учебных заведениях Словакии, Чехии, Польши. В частности, описаны современные подходы преподавания иностранного языка в учреждениях высшего образования этих стран. По результатам анализа научных трудов словацких, чешских и польских ученых были выявлены основные проблемы преподавания: 1) электронное обучение в ESP; 2) качество преподавания и изучения иностранного языка; 3) методология CLIL; 4) методология ESP; 5) подготовка учителя ESP и его профессиональное развитие. Учитывая эти проблемы, были определены и обоснованы особенности преподавания иностранного языка в высших учебных заведениях Словакии, Чехии, Польши. Проанализированы научные работы, в которых описаны указанные проблемы, и намечены перспективы дальнейших исследований.

Ключевые слова: иностранный язык на неязыковых специальностях; проблема преподавания; высшее образование Словакии, Чехии, Польши