

detection of the most distinctive features of language barrier, its levels and the reasons of its occurrence. Language barrier is understood as a situation in which a student possessing the necessary vocabulary and knowledge of grammar is not capable of producing and reproducing speech. The most commonly spread levels of language barrier are identified: high – students are afraid to express their thoughts in English; intermediate – students try to use only monosyllabic sentences; low – students try to interact, but still there is a limited number of sentences; language barrier disappearance – students can express their thoughts in English without any obstacles. Accordingly the article describes a range of guidelines which can help teachers to overcome the language barrier with their foreign students. Following them a teacher can significantly increase the efficiency of removing the language barrier among foreign students.

Key words: language barrier, English as a second language, foreign students, body language, lesson plan.

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MULTILEVEL APPROACH TO FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING.

The problem of individualization of students' education was a topic of theoretical research of many scholars. It was examined in the works of Kitaigorodskaja G. A., Goncharenko S. U., Butkin G. A., Nikolaieva T. M., Kondrashova L. V., Buriak V. K., Kamens M. W., Lewis A. C., Patterson K., Weishaar M. K.

Taking into consideration the diversity of the students' environment and the Ukrainian role onto the educational market more attention is paid to the multilevel teaching. Moreover, the standard of educational quality assurance that were approved in Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University gives the paramount importance to productive education that is based on the integration of the educational and research activities, as well as practice-oriented educational process. Multilevel teaching was thoroughly researched by Yanovytska O. V., Sydorenko N. Yu., Zubkova M. O., Tsuna A. Yu., Pashko L. F., Costa E., V Timmons, Gardner H., Gayfer M., Lazear D., Stiggins R. and many others. Mostly these scholars view the problem of multilevel teaching either in terms of school teaching or as the tool for group leveling. That is why the topicality of the current research lies in

necessity of introduction and application of diverse system of evaluation of the students' knowledge with different degrees of psychological and educational and language learning. The aim of this article is to study the conceptual fundamentals of multilevel approach to foreign language teaching in higher educational institutions. In order to meet this aim of our investigation, we are to address the following objectives: to analyse the definitions of the term 'multilevel foreign language teaching'; to study its benefits and challenges; to characterize the principles of multilevel foreign language teaching and students' grouping; to draw models of every language skill practice in terms of multilevel foreign language teaching.

According to Bell, Wrigley and Guth every class could be viewed as multilevel one, as every student in the group has varying levels of competence in listening, speaking, reading, and writing [1; 2].

Natalie Hess, on her turn, distinguishes not only difference 'in language aptitude, in language proficiency, and in general attitude toward language, as well as in learning styles' but also differences in 'gender, maturity, occupations, ethnicities, cultural and economic backgrounds, as well as personalities'. [3, p. 2]. Hess defines the multilevel classes as 'the kind of classes that have been roughly arranged according to ability, or simply classes that have been arranged by age-group with no thought to language ability. These are classes in which students vary considerably in their language and literacy skills and are in need of a great deal of personal attention and encouragement to make progress.' [3, p.2].

Here are some reasons that make the group of students who master English as a second language multilevel:

- **Educational background.** In every educational institution there are own educational strategies and requirements. The standard and knowledge level of the language oriented school varies from the science oriented one.

- **Comfort with the Roman alphabet.** Some students (Spanish, German, Turkmen and many others) may feel absolutely confident while dealing with the Roman alphabet as it is reflected in their native alphabet. However, Ukrainian, Chinese or Korean students must learn absolutely new alphabet characters when learning English.

- **Cultural peculiarities of the teacher's role.** It's not a secret that every country has its own educational traditions. There are some countries in which classes are mostly teacher oriented with weak students' participation. Obviously, students from such countries are not used to communicative classroom and they may not feel comfortable to ask questions, take part in the discussion, work in groups or manage peer- or self-assessment.

- **The student's personality.** An individual's personality is a unique and complex object. It plays a huge role in student's willingness to participate in activities, take risks using foreign language, and become part of the classroom community.

• **Goals of learning.** The student's goals to learn foreign language influences on his motivation and diligence. The more personal the goal is (to have a good and well-paid job, to continue education abroad), the more conscientious the student will be.

• **The student's learning style.** While planning a lesson, every teacher should keep in mind that there are three major learning styles. They are audio, visual and tactile. All the instructions and activities have to accommodate these different styles.

• **Access to foreign language outside the classroom.** On one hand this point is rather simple and clear. With the internalization and informatization, today's world suggests the varying opportunities for the language usage, starting from the social networks and ending with the programmes and films that use the foreign language. On the other hand, these opportunities can be viewed as artificial, as the students are surrounded with their closed community, where everyone uses native language.

Moreover, according to Melinda Roberts, within one language level group the following sub-levels should be distinguished [4].

Below-level. As these students need extra time to complete activities, they may have low self-esteem, become frustrated and blame themselves for learning less rapidly than other students in class or their inability to learn more efficiently.

At-level. These students are doing well with their current level of instruction and are progressing as they should.

Above-level. These students may either have more language proficiency than the at-level students, or be able to acquire the new material more quickly than their classmates. These students may become frustrated because of absence of challenges; need to wait for the other students to understand the material.

It is also considered to be of a paramount importance for teacher to understand and take into consideration that students' abilities may vary within four language skills that are reading, writing, listening and speaking. Thus the student may be above-level reader, at-level writer but below-level listener and speaker.

Although teaching multilevel group is not that easy, Natalie Hess distinguishes the following benefits of it [3, p 2-4]:

• **We get a rich variety of human resources.** As a rule, the multilevel group has a great number of opinions, cultural backgrounds, world-views, values, experiences and styles of learning. This heterogeneity can be used as an advantage in creating interesting, varied, meaningful, and student-centered lessons. 'Students can learn as much by finding out about one another as they can from reading a text, and the immediate interest that such personal contact engenders creates a positive classroom climate that promotes genuine language learning' [3; p. 2].

• **The teacher is not the only pedagogue.** In multilevel language ability group there always are the students that acquire the knowledge more quickly

than the others. These students could take up the role of the teacher-assistants or peer-tutors. On one hand that would allow more able learners to improve their language skills by honing their ability to explain, to state clearly, and to give effective examples, while it provides the less able with considerable support. On the other hand such cooperative learning fosters positive mutual reliance and helps students to function as a complex society. It also helps student to develop strong relations with their peers and become partners in learning.

- **We are never bored.** As multilevel teaching is tightly connected with many simultaneous activities and processes working with such classes provide us with the best and most effective aspects of both our intellectual and emotional natures.

- **Professional development occurs naturally.** Teaching in multilevel group helps us to develop our technique, forces us to invent and develop new ways of organizing material. These are the classes that compel us to find better ways of setting up routine tasks. These are the classes that make us think, create, and grow as teachers.

Among the challenges that the teacher may face in teaching multilevel groups, N. Hess defines the following [3.p. 4 – 6]:

- **Lack of control:** the word ‘authority’ means different to different people, and it is obvious that in large classes teacher can easily loose it. On one hand, classroom management is an extremely vital issue but on the other hand it may not be homogenous in its nature. One of the successful ways of management increase is clear and logical organisation. Thus, for example, we zone the blackboard and have a definite place on it for instructions or home-work assignments.

- **Management problems.** Classroom management should be performed in a smooth and unnoticeable way. Multilevel classes tend to be more problematic in this point. As a way out of this situation routines (such as dictation every Monday, and/or conversation groups every Thursday) might be introduces. In order to overcome the lateness could be introduced the bonus system (extra points for being on time and with the proper material) or self-checking lists (where student put their names and the time at which they come to the class).

- **Huge amount of written work.** While passing the written assignment, student wishes to receive a feedback and to know what others think about his or her thoughts. However, in large classes the amount of written works is completely overwhelming. In order to reduce this point teacher could introduce the collaborative principle in checking the works. It is obvious that students need to be pre-taught and properly trained to peer-review, but this could as well help to reveal their editorial skills. As an extension, different forums or blogs might be introduces.

- **Difficulties with provision of individual learning styles** while working in multilevel classes teacher should pay double attention and do everything in power in order to fulfill the principles of ‘collaboration’ (having students working together toward common goals), ‘personalization’ (arranging

for the learners of activities that will allow them to express their own opinions and ideas), ‘individualization’(arranging activities that will allow students to work at their own pace), and that of ‘enlarging the circle’ (including as many students as possible in any activity).

• **Activating the quiet student is difficult.** In order to activate a great many of students in large classes teacher should keep in mind the principles of ‘open-endedness’, ‘interest’ and ‘variety’ that are considered to be fundamental to student engagement.

Among the challenges of multilevel foreign language teaching Julie Mathews-Aydinli and Regina Van Horne pay double attention to time-consuming, and essential elements of successful multilevel class that are lesson planning and classroom management. Teachers should design flexible challenging and logical activity that neither makes bored above-level students, nor does it frustrate the below-level students. These researchers also consider that the key role in planning should be given in grouping the students while performing activities [5].

Natalie Hess distinguishes eleven principles of working in multilevel classes [3, p. 6 – 15]. They are:

1. Scarlett O’Hara. It is rather understandable that the teaching work is never easy. The difficulties are doubled in teaching multilevel groups. Of course teachers will always know that their work is important and the feeling of people’s and society welfare contribution will never leave them. On other hand filmed teaching stories tell us that within a year any novice becomes the best teacher in the world. After couple of unsuccessful teaching months ‘our hero teacher changes his/her tactics/attitude/technique/strategy and presto he/she becomes the most wonderful and beloved teacher in the world’ [3, p. 7]. Unfortunately it has no connection to life and real teachers are accompanied by the challenges through their entire career. As teachers of multilevel groups are more vulnerable and are more subjected to trials and pitfalls it is important to understand that they are not alone in their problem. Moreover, ‘we must learn to shrug off such irritants, or at least do as Scarlett O’Hara did – think about them tomorrow’ [3, p. 8]. Even in the case when the lesson was unsuccessful the next lesson must be started with a smile and readiness to the new good lesson.

2. Variety. Although variety is important in all teaching, it is particularly relevant in multilevel classes because every student has his own style of learning and attention span. Varieties of tasks can accommodate different levels in class. For example while learning new vocabulary different groups of students can consult dictionaries for definitions, find the contextual examples of words from the text and make own sentences with the new vocabulary. Moreover, this principle presupposes the change in the course of the lesson; teacher should present the smooth switch from silent to pair reading, from front to group discussion. This will help to provoke interest and activate the quiet student and to maintain control.

3. Pace. The feeling of pace is rather important and is unique as each class has different demands for pacing. Correct pacing means that the activity is performed in a tempo and momentum suitable to it. This principle is particularly important in the multilevel class because ‘without correct pacing, we can lose control and make our students either bored or frustrated’ [3, p. 9]. As a rule, drills are performed in more briskly pace than discussions or reflections.

4. Interest. In order to bring students’ interest teacher should keep in mind the following aspects of topics, they should: arouse student curiosity; tap into meaningful existential questions; touch students’ lives. On the other hand, ‘to create real student interest requires the creation of game-like activities with clear goals and motivating that guide students through involving tasks into thoughtful and insightful use of language’ [3, p. 10]

5. Collaboration. Collaboration means working together and cooperating. It helps students to participate more; on one hand we work over language improvement, though on the other hand students are taught to be good negotiators, risk takers, self-monitors and self-evaluators. Moreover, collaboration is of a great help in multilevel classes. Students should know that it is important not only to guide the others but to listen to them.

6. Individualization. Individualizing helps to keep everyone challenged, interested, and occupied with tasks that are of adequate level. It presupposes the students’ work over the activities that arouse their interest. Moreover, individualization takes into consideration students’ working pace and working style.

7. Personalization. This principle presupposes arrangement for the kinds of activities that will allow students to express their own opinions and ideas. In turns of multilevel classes it is extremely important to give the opportunity to every student to share opinions, relate own future plans, explore on important issues, take stands on controversial topics, and apply special knowledge to current concerns.

8. Choice and open-endedness. To the contrast of close-ended tasks, where, for example, students need to fill the gap with one specific word, open-ended exercises allow students the possibility of choosing. These tasks do not restrict them with only one correct variant; as more success oriented they make students work with language.

9. Setting up routines. By term ‘routine’ could be understood such procedures as attendance check, test dates notification or strategy with the help of which students move from pair to group work. Establishing routines considered to smooth the classroom management though the most valuable in this principle is the factor of teacher’s flexibility. Teacher should be ready to change the system onto more successful one.

10. Enlarging the circle. In multilevel classes is extremely important that as many students as possible are involved. The fact that some students do not participate helps teacher to make two possible conclusions: these students either the passive listeners or the daydreamers. The main point with the help of

which the circle is enlarged is the students' interest and student-oriented lessons. Moreover, teacher could just give students time for thinking and wait till more hands are raised.

11. Question the kind of questioning we use. During parts of teacher-fronted lessons, the priority is given to questions. In multilevel class it is important to ask the kinds of questions that arouse interest and create maximum student involvement. Thus, *Why-questions*, *Could someone explain to me how-questions*, *questions initiated by students* and *questions to which the teacher doesn't know the answer* are considered to be more successful. On the contrary, *yes/no*, *factual*, *multiple*, *elliptical*, *leading* and *guessing* questions do not tend to provoke discussion.

While working with multilevel classes Gareth Rees offers to pay attention to the students' grouping. Teacher should keep in mind students' general relationships and level abilities.

In **pair work** teacher can pair strong student with strong student, weak with weak, or strong with weak. Moreover, the teacher should keep in mind that in a very controlled activity the combination of strong and weak student is preferable and on the contrary in less controlled and freer activity the strong with strong student is more beneficial.

Teacher could organize the **group work** in mixed levels or similar levels groups. The number of students in the group is also extremely important. The principle 'the less – the better' works perfectly; in the smaller groups the below-level student will feel more able to contribute. Dividing groups according to their levels enables teacher to give a different level or number of tasks to each group.

Another grouping strategy is the **whole class** or **mingle activity** that 'involves students talking or interacting with many different members of the class in a short period of time in order to achieve a task' [6]. This type of activity presupposes that any one student will work with students at different levels - experiencing stronger and weaker levels of communication. The benefits of mingle activity are not just limited to opportunities to above-level students and support to below-levels but expands to profound ground to follow-up discussions. The classical example is a '*Find someone who...*' activity.

Melinda Roberts also supports the Gareth Rees's ideas of different learning levels grouping, though she insists in the critical point of grouping for below-level and above-level students. Moreover, she insists in cross-ability teamwork grouping, otherwise it would be difficult for below-level teams to ever win.

Julie Mathews-Aydinli and Regina Van Horne point out the following factors that teachers need to take into consideration when grouping learners in pairs or small groups [5]:

Level of literacy and education in the native language. Students with beneficial native language literacy skills can learn to transfer their knowledge to learning foreign language literacy. It is considered, that these

students may progress faster than students without that foundation in the first language.

Age. Students aging 16-18 are socially and cognitively different from other older students. Adolescents need more structure, guidance, and support to stay motivated as well as unique concerns that they might have (such as issues of physical health or hearing and visual acuity).

Culture. Cross-cultural communication is extremely beneficial in foreign language classroom, although teacher should be aware of the dynamics rooted in ethnic conflicts among various groups, social status tensions, and gender oppression.

While working with multilevel classroom the core text could be easily adopted in order to create level different types of activities.

Leveling speaking or conversation.

While practicing a story-telling activity all students may be given a different level plan. The below-level students' may be given a plan and asked to fill it with the information of their own:

Story plan:

- *Setting the scene: This happened to me when I was...*
- *The main events: I decided to ...because...*
- *What happened in the end: In the end... /eventually...*

The at-level students may be given extended version of the plan:

Story plan:

- *Setting the scene: This happened to me when I was... I was ...-ing when...*
- *The main events: I decided to ...because... So then I...*
- *What happened in the end: In the end... /eventually... I felt...*

The above-level students may be limited to definite number of words/phrases or asked to give extra information about the story, answering reflexive questions: *would you do something different if it was possible? what were your mistakes / benefits?*

Leveling writing activities.

The main principle of writing is that it should be meaningful and useful in the students' foreign language speaking world. Thus the task could be considered as successful if they offer students to practice writing an informal / formal e-mail, report, a CV or a postcard. However, at any level writing should start with the model that might be different in the amount of words but not the amount of instructions. Moreover, while working over the writing task the mistakes of above-level and at-level students might be marked, letting them the chance to correct them on their own. The below-level students' drafts should be checked and this work could be performed by the above-level student.

Leveling listening activities.

Listening activities are always difficult for students at all levels. However, leveling the task could help to avoid students' frustration. Thus teacher could offer the below-level-students the multiple choice set, while at-

level and above-level students could have the open gaps set. Moreover, the above-level students could be offered to answer the additional questions (*Why...? Why not...? What was the speaker's attitude? What would you do?*), while the below-level students could be either given time for discussion before giving the feedback to the whole class or simply given the tape script.

Leveling reading activities.

The classical example of any leveled reading task is the jigsaw reading, where students are given different parts of the text and after reading they present it to the other students. As an extension, the above-levels students might be asked to make the definitions of the new vocabulary, write the part of the text in different tenses, make questions to the text or write their personal opinion /summary of the text. Difficult vocabulary might be pre-taught to the below-level students, the special attention should be given to pictures and titles that help to set the scene before reading.

In conclusion we should say that multilevel foreign language teaching intensifies, fosters and optimizes educational process. It has its benefits and challenges; the last could be easily overcome with the creative usage of the core text. Fruitful for further research could be the detailed analysis of implementation of the multilevel foreign language teaching in terms of large classes.

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Сюзяєва А. О. Різноманітний підхід до навчання іноземним мовам

Різноманітність студентської спільноти та студент центрований підхід у системі вищої освіти робить різноманітний підхід до навчання іноземним мовам предметом обговорення та спору. Через те, що в

основною проблема різнорівневого навчання іноземним мовам досліджувалася у рамках середньої освіти чи яз засіб для групування студентів, питання впровадження цього підходу у систему вишівського викладання іноземних мов залишається відкритим. У статті досліджуються концептуальні засади різнорівневого підходу до викладання іноземних мов на теренах вищих навчальних закладів. Характеризується термін різнорівневе навчання; досліджуються причини, які призводять до виділення різних рівнів володіння іноземною мовою в межах однієї академічної групи. Також характеризуються підрівні володіння навичками, які можуть бути виділені у межах одного мовного рівня. Аналізуються основні переваги та недоліки у роботі з групою студентів, які відрізняються за рівнем володіння іноземною мовою; характеризуються одинадцять принципів роботи з групою, яка поєднує студентів з різним рівнем мовних знань та вмінь. Особлива увага приділяється принципам, за якими слід розгрупувати студентів під час роботи на практичному занятті з іноземної мови. В якості прикладу різнорівневого підходу до навчання іноземним мовам, наводиться адаптація навчального матеріалу за чотирма видами мовленнєвої діяльності: говоріння, аудіюванням письмо та читання.

Ключові слова: різнорівневе навчання іноземним мовам, розподіл студентів на групи, підхід, принцип, мовленнєві навички.

Сюзяева А. А. Разноуровневый подход в обучении иностранным языкам

Разнообразие студенческого сообщества и студентоцентрированный подход в системе высшего образования делает разноуровневый подход в обучении предметом споров и обсуждений. Так как проблема разноуровневого обучения иностранным языкам рассматривалась в основном либо в рамках среднего образования, либо как средство разделения учащихся на подгруппы, возник вопрос внедрения данного подхода в систему вузовского обучения иностранным языкам. В статье исследуются концептуальные основы разноуровневого подхода в обучении иностранным языкам на базе высших учебных заведений. Характеризуется термин разноуровневое обучение; исследуются причины, на основе которых выделяются разные уровни владения иностранным языком в рамках одной академической группы. Также характеризуются подуровни владения навыками в рамках одного языкового уровня. Анализируются основные преимущества и недостатки преподавания иностранного языка в разноуровневой группе студентов, характеризуются одинадцать принципов работы в группе с разным уровнем владения иностранным языком. Особое внимание уделяется принципам, при помощи которых производится распределение студентов на малые группы. В качестве примера разноуровневого подхода к обучению иностранным языкам приводится пример адаптации учебного

матеріала по чотирьом мовним навичкам: мовленню, аудіюванню, письму і читанню.

Ключевые слова: різнорівневе навчання іноземним мовою, розподіл студентів на групи, підхід, принцип, мовні навички.

Siuziaieva A. O. Multilevel approach to foreign language teaching

The diversity of students' environment and the student centered approach to higher education set the multilevel teaching at the point of interest. As the problem of multilevel foreign language teaching is mostly view in terms of secondary school teaching or as the tool for leveling the groups of students, the question of its application to the system of the higher education still remains open. The article deals with the conceptual fundamentals of multilevel approach to foreign language teaching in higher educational institutions. Thus, the term multilevel language class is defined; the reasons that make the group of students who master foreign language multilevel are stated. Moreover, the sub-levels that could be distinguished within one language level group were characterized. After the analysis of the main benefits and challenges of multilevel foreign language teaching, eleven principles of working in multilevel classes are thoroughly studied. Special attention is paid to the principles of students' grouping. As an example of multilevel foreign language teaching application author tries to introduce a model of core text modeling according to four basic knowledge skills that are speaking, listening, writing and reading. In conclusion should be stated that outstanding characteristics of multilevel foreign language teaching that are productivity, integration of the educational and research activities, co-education, practice-orientation and appeal to students' interests help to increase students' performance, curiosity, cognitive independence and persistence.

Key words: multilevel foreign language teaching, students grouping, principle, approach, language skill practice.

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OUTLINE OF MODERN STUDENTS' LITERACIES AND SKILLS

Nowadays we are witnessing some changes in the relationships between the youth generation and the technology. These are the sudden changes that present themselves to 21st century students, the "digital natives", as Prensky M. [1] referred to them, who make such fluent and natural uses of