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TRANSLATION AS AN IMPORTANT TOOL FOR LEARNING

Teaching languages, studying rules and structures is not only a linguistic tool that should be interesting for the one who knows it. A person who owns a linguistic tool must also be able to consider it in a certain context and, accordingly, preserve the culture where it is used. This is due to the constant influence of language and culture on each other. Language is a certain tool through which a people express itself, and culture supports this tool. Therefore, it is considered necessary to include an intercultural component in the process of teaching a foreign language.

It is worth noting that the justification for the need to include an intercultural component in the process of teaching English has not been the subject of separate studies by Ukrainian scientists. The issue of acculturation is considered in the works of W.R. Acton, J. Walker de Felix. The principles of foreign language teaching, the cultural factor in teaching English, and the relationship between language and culture are described in detail in the works of H. Douglas Brown.

In *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy*, H. Douglas Brown emphasizes on page 65 (often referencing the 2nd edition) the critical role of culture in language acquisition, noting that learners' success in adapting to a new cultural milieu significantly impacts their overall success in learning the new language, and vice versa¹.

Language and culture are inseparable; teaching a language inherently involves teaching the customs, values, and ways of thinking of its speakers.

Cultural Adaptation: The ability to navigate a new cultural context affects language acquisition.

1 Brown, H. D. (2001). *Teaching by Principles; an Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (2nd ed.). New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc.

Affective Factors: This principle falls under the broader category of affective principles, which address the emotional and psychological aspects of language learning, such as self-confidence and cultural, or «language ego,» development.

Brown's work generally advocates for a «post-method» era, where teachers use a set of informed principles - cognitive, affective, and linguistic - to tailor instruction rather than relying on a single, rigid method.

It is universally acknowledged that a student's native language is a significant factor when it comes to learning a foreign language. Usually, the first would be of a thing called 'language interference' (when a person's first language influences their use of a foreign language, which leads to errors in pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and spelling). However, according to H. Douglas Brown, it's only part of the reality. He believes that facilitating effects of first language are, although less observable, yet powerful in the process².

Another common belief is that thinking directly language in second helps to minimise those interference errors and thus, the direct method is considered to be more effective and is more popular nowadays than the grammar-translation one. However, an occasional translation of a word or a phrase can be helpful for learners. First and foremost, despite the fact that there are some convincing arguments in favour of English-only classrooms, it is highly probable that our students will use both first and second language during the lessons anyway: to communicate with each other, to ask for help, or even to translate what they are learning in their heads. This code-switching is fundamental to a person's identity, worldview, and ability to communicate. Among reasons why students opt for their first language are:

- I need to use my own language because I can't say what I want in English;
- I don't want to make a mistake in front of others;
- the teacher may correct me if I speak English.

Teachers would stick to using English for most of the class time, there are a few reasons for them to be willing to temporarily switch into first language. For example, in order to reduce anxiety, especially for low-level learners. If students know they can ask or get clarification in their first language, they're likely to feel more comfortable and more confident, which results in a better learning environment and a much better chance of progress and success. In addition,

2 Brown, H. Douglas (2007). *Principals of Language Learning and Teaching*, 5th ed. New York: Pearson Education, Inc. p.65

using translation for words and phrases is likely to be much faster and sometimes more efficient than getting students to understand by trying to explain it in English). Finally, you may want to include translation not only with lower levels: for instance, it might be insightful for your more advanced students to compare what your first language does and what English does similarly or differently, and seeing those differences may help you not to make the mistakes that you'd make by direct translation (e.g. word order or false friends).

What are the drawbacks of using first language classrooms? The main concern is that it decreases the time students hear first language. And if teachers constantly provide translations or explanations in students' mother tongue, they reduce the necessary input for language acquisition, making the second language classroom less effective.

Using the first language is counterproductive when the goal is to promote communicative speaking tasks. Students miss out on both fluency practice and error correction. Apart from that, over-relying on first language can prevent students from noticing the subtle differences, metaphorical language, idiomatic expressions, and cultural nuances of English as a second language. Simple translation often fails to capture these details.

Nº there are some of the arguments against using first language are regarded as misconceptions:

1. The native language hinders the acquisition of English. The first language is a resource, not a barrier: Native language is the foundation of a student's cognitive and linguistic world and using it strategically - not constantly - can aid acquisition by quickly clarifying complex grammar, abstract concepts, or cultural nuances that would take much longer to explain in the second language.
2. Students will become dependent on native language. Relying on first language becomes a problem when its use is unquestioned or happens during communicative tasks designed for second practice. A careful approach, where the teacher controls when and how first language is used, prevents over-use. For example, native can be used for initial task setting or quick comprehension checks, but second must be compulsory for the main production activity. In this case, native acts as a temporary scaffold or bridge to understanding and allows students to quickly return their focus to the second.

3. The first language is only useful for beginners. The first language is only useful for beginners.
4. Complexity can increase with level; while beginners use native for basic translation, advanced learners need native for complex academic, cultural, or literary content, for example, in tasks with highlighting connotation between the two languages or when working with text about cultural concepts and complex philosophical ideas that are difficult to paraphrase fully in the second. Furthermore, translation tasks can be a highly effective way to test an advanced student's deep knowledge of grammar and lexical precision. Or it can serve as a creative task like poetry translation.

As for the most obvious advantages of native language use, it can assist with introducing new vocabulary, clarification and explanation, and individual support. But it is crucial to single out the following benefits:

- native for learning management and efficiency (to discuss planning, self-evaluation and learner training as well as clarify the rules, which saves time and effort compared to struggling through these complex discussions in the second). Additionally, first language helps teachers discuss sensitive or personal matters that affect a student's learning or well-being without confusion or misinterpretation;
- facilitates language processing and review grammar, checking for a deeper level of understanding);
- use first language encourages students to notice differences between their native and the target language, and translation activities (summarising a longer text or translating short texts) help highlight language issues more effectively, especially when students work on them in teams.

Studies show that the use of the native language helps to understand the task before they begin working in English. You say a problematic item in English, then the equivalent in the native, and finally repeat it in English. Underline the correct answers. When a word or expression has been used this way a few times, it should be understood without 'sandwiching' next time. You may also explain an activity in English and then nominate a student to repeat the instructions in the first language. To save time or in case of emergency: when, during the lesson, a student is experiencing a technical issue, or there's a word that you can't demonstrate or explain efficiently, you may try using first language. Also, you can opt for a native language to stop a student's dangerous be-

haviour. To encourage reflection: use the native to help students reflect on their learning process, especially in the early stages, where discussing learning strategies in English might be difficult.

Researchers show that students, ‘inspired’ by a teacher’s occasional translation, keep on using first language instead of practicing second. Here are a few practical strategies teachers can use to manage and redirect students back to using English:

1. Talk to them about the issues: Teachers should openly discuss with students the balance between using English and first.
2. Try responding to English use only, or ask students to repeat their question using English. Frequent, repeated requests will gradually change their behaviour (but make sure their level allows them to do so or that they know how to ask about an unknown word/phrase).
3. Create an English environment: surround students with the sound of English by using lots of listening material, put English-language posters on the walls, have clearly defined sections of the lesson where English is the required language, allowing a bit of first language at other times.
4. Discuss purpose: why English is important for the activity, lesson, or course, and agree on how it will be done and react positively to every effort at using English.
5. Focus on fluency: spend time on fluency work without correction to show that communication is the priority, rather than 100% accuracy (use DEC instead of correcting on the spot) and create a number of pair and small group activities that require English use (it will allow students to perform without the pressure of making a mistake in front of the whole class).

“Mastering a foreign language involves making mistakes and errors, hence feedback and error correction is an integral part of any foreign language classroom”³. Giving feedback and correcting errors is a crucial aspect of teaching and learning, especially in an English language classroom. Providing meaningful and constructive feedback can help students make improvements, increase their motivation, and boost their confidence. At the same time, giving ineffective or harmful feedback can cause students to become discouraged or demotivated. “It is important, therefore, to make sure that the feedback we give

3 Bakan, H. The Importance of Error Correction in Foreign Language Learning. Patchwork Student Journal. 2020. Issue № 4. P. 7–26.

is appropriate to the students concerned and to the activity they are involved in, and that we recognise feedback as a crucial part of learning process”⁴. There are several techniques that can be used to correct errors effectively in the classroom. However, teachers should keep in mind that giving feedback and correcting errors can be the most delicate aspects of foreign language teaching. Hence, it is vital for teachers to establish a set of principles that will help them decide on types of errors and situations that require corrective feedback as well as techniques that can be used⁵.

According to the results of the presented study, the most priority for students are: use of first language should be strategic and limited; to create opportunities for students to use English as much as possible; to reduce reliance on first language and encourage students to use second language for communication; to think of the language proficiency and needs of individual students/groups.

The challenge for teachers of English, as with any other foreign language, is to find a balance in determining the amount of use of the first language in the study of the second.

DOI: 10.51587/9798-9917-51971-2026-025-41-46

4 Harmer, J. The practice of English language teaching. 4th edition. Pearson Longman, 2011.

5 Scrivener, J. (2011) Learning Teaching. The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching. Macmillan Education, Oxford.