

CONTINUITY IN TEACHING OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOLS

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Nowadays the language learning issue is especially acute, therefore in the context of educational system reforming, consolidated efforts are directed to determine the most perfect and qualitative way of foreign language teaching. To make language learning the most effective, in the educational system continuity must be facilitated and achieved. Continuity is manifested in the sequence and systematic arrangement of the educational material, through the connection and coordination of the stages of teaching and educational work, which is ensured in the transition in the narrow sense from one activity to another, and on a larger scale from one academic year to the next year, from one level to another. Ensuring of continuity in the teaching process is a prerequisite for comprehension of the learned material at a deeper level, reinforcement of the gained knowledge by newly received information, the new relationships disclosure, what gradually results in increasing the quality of knowledge, skills and abilities, improving the level of a foreign language mastery and broadening the total stock of the background knowledge.

The article investigates continuity, as one of the compulsory principles of foreign language teaching and learning in general education schools. The main focus is on the research concerning implementation of continuity principle during transition from primary to secondary school.

Analysis of the educational system has determined that the principle of continuity in foreign language teaching is often negated and unimplemented during transition from primary to secondary school. As a consequence, a significant quantity of problems is originated in the educational process. It causes the necessity to elaborate ways of solving problems and to implement them as a matter of actual practice.

Key words: *continuity in teaching, foreign language, transition, primary school, secondary school, general education school, principle of continuity, educational process.*

Introduction. Modern tendencies in the education and course of learning on globalization and broad-scale integration into the global space make demand for citizens of Ukraine to know foreign languages perfectly. Nowadays the language learning issue is especially acute, therefore in the context of educational system reforming, consolidated efforts are directed to determine the most perfect and qualitative way of foreign language teaching. To make language learning the most effective, permanency, consistency and coherence in the educational system must be facilitated and achieved.

Notwithstanding a large quantity of publications and scientific researches, which represent different aspects of continuity, some of points remain to be open, fragmentary examined and insufficiently explored. One of such aspects, which gets not enough attention and consideration on the part of methodologists and scientists is continuity in foreign language teaching during transition from primary school branch to the branch of secondary school and problems, which can arise during this period. This issue is urgent and topical, thus it must be thoroughly investigated and analyzed within the frames of modern education. Due to such a necessity **the relevance of the research**, conducted in this article, is rationalized.

The subject area of the research is peculiarities of foreign language teaching in general education schools. **The specific topic of the research** is continuity principle in foreign language teaching during transition from primary to secondary school.

The objective of the article is to examine and determine the current state of this principle, to discover problems, which are connected with implementation of continuity in foreign language teaching in transition from primary to secondary school and to develop solving problem ways.

According to the objective of the article **the following tasks** must be achieved: to determine the scientific understanding of the concept “continuity”; to examine stages on which the principle of continuity must be implemented; to analyze implementation of continuity in foreign language teaching during transition from primary to secondary school; to determine whether the principle of continuity is achieved and provided in the modern educational process; to distinguish problems, which concern implementation of continuity within the boundaries of the system “primary school–secondary school”; to work out appropriate solving problems ways.

To achieve abovementioned tasks the following **research methods** are used: scientific research, which helps to analyze continuity in foreign language teaching comprehensively on all of the educational stages and levels and to examine thoroughly investigated stages in the course of pedagogy practice; critical analysis of literature sources, which helps to consider different approaches to continuity as a scientific concept and to implementation of this principle in domestic and foreign educational systems.

The twenty-first century is marked with too rapid conditions of knowledge basis updating, development of technological innovations, set of a wide range intercultural connections and large-scale globalization. Due to the current situation the necessity of continual knowledge updating for educational establishments on different stages arises, in order to bring them into conformity with nowadays demands and requirements and to prepare new generations to future challenges properly. The prevailing tendency in Ukraine and abroad is the idea of educational systems reforming, along with providing of the main principle of permanency in education. Permanency is a fundamental rationale for effective functioning of educational systems, which is reflected in the concept of continuity.

Corresponding to the state policy of Ukraine, which is oriented on European Area and standards, the system of public education, must be reformed with successive transition on a whole new level. Current legislative documents, which include «Law on education», the program «Education» and «The national policy for development of education in the XXI century», claim that one of the fundamental principles of teaching and learning is providing of content continuity and coordination of the educative activity on the different stages and grades [1; 2].

In «Ukrainian pedagogy dictionary» S. Honcharenko defines continuity in teaching as «coherence and consistency of educational material arrangement, connection and conformity of stages and grades of educational and teaching process» [3, p. 227]. Continuity must be provided both during transition from one lesson to another, and from one academic year to another. Representation of the concept in a wide sense stipulates that continuity must be achieved in transition between consequential educational stages.

Continuity is considered by scientists as a psychological category. V. Kolesnykova writes that «consequence and consistency in teaching and learning must be characterized with realization and comprehension of completed educational courses on a newer, higher level, with emphasizing of acquired knowledge by new material, with emergence of new connections, such that the quality of expertise, knowledge and skills is upgraded and improved» [4, p. 45].

Outstanding domestic pedagogues V. Sukhomlynsky and K. Ushinsky devoted a special attention to the principle of continuity in their work. They supported the idea, which claims that with no exceptions every sphere and stage of education and training must be guided by this principle, which can be implemented via corresponding, appropriate situational conditions and circumstances.

Russian scientist and doctor of education Yu. Kustov in his scientific researches gives consideration to the continuity principle as a category of didactic, «which depicts consistent patterns of structure of educational material content and combination of educational methods referred to overcome contradictions, which have linear discrete character of educational process and reflects ways of such patterns realization according to objectives of education, development of intellectual capacities of youth and cultivation of personality» [5, p. 68]. The same point of view has and suggests for consideration in her works a scientist and a member of Ukrainian National Academy of Education O Savchenko.

At the present day in the prevailing number of countries the fundamental feature of daily and business life is multilingualism. Due to the abovementioned, language proficiency becomes not a fashion statement, but an overriding necessity and a key core competence, which must be formed in advance in modern specialists. To prepare seasoned professionals, who have knowledge of language, active and qualitative educational process must begin as early as studying at primary school, during which foundations must be laid and with transition to next stages, knowledge and skills must be improved and increased.

This point of view is confirmed by the expert on psychology and pedagogy Markova A. The scientist emphasizes that «primary school age is a period of learning motivation establishment, on which destiny and assignment of education predominantly depends for the whole school age» [6, p. 34].

Continuity in foreign language teaching during transition from primary to secondary school must be examined thoroughly. A smart organization of continuity on this stage has a special meaning, because the particular character of educational process has as its main objective transition to more serious, essential teaching forms, methods and media [7].

To deduce, whether continuity in transition from primary to secondary school is implemented, it is required to become acquainted with results, which must be achieved by pupils in the course of educational process. After substantive results analyzing and figuring out whether they are accomplished, the conclusion can be drawn about the degree of adherence to the principle of continuity.

After graduation from primary school pupils learning a foreign language must achieve such results:

- to get elementary, basic skills of oral and written communication with native speakers on the basis of their capabilities and needs;
- to master rules of verbal and nonverbal behavior;
- to acquire knowledge about elementary linguistic notions, which are necessary to master foreign language on the primary level of verbal and nonverbal communication;
- to expand linguistic horizon and to learn to behave friendly and tolerate people who speak other languages;
- to accumulate information about life of their equals in age from other countries and to become acquainted with childlore and examples of childhood foreign literature [8].

To put it in other words, in passing from primary to secondary school, pupils must already have a concrete, obligatory store of knowledge, background and skills, which must be subsequently solidified, enhanced and completed with new information. In transition to secondary school stage, in accordance with substantive results during first and second years of studying pupils must:

- improve their level of foreign language knowledge and communicative competence;
- form friendly and tolerant attitude towards items of foreign culture values, traditions and mindset;
- understand and be able to express their own point of view with regard to perception of world and cultivate national identity;
- expand and systematize all current knowledge about language;
- become more intelligent and erudite, broad linguistic horizon and vocabulary for the purpose of further assimilation of general speech culture;

- grasp fundamentals for formation of interest and motivation for learning, improving of foreign language level proficiency.

To facilitate continuity it is necessary to take psychological peculiarities of pupils of different age brackets into consideration. An exact age of a child must be synchronized with the content of educational process, methods, forms and media of material presentation. Thus unique, but interdependent educational programs must be elaborated for every grade of primary and secondary school. They must take account of psychological, mental, emotional and personal peculiar qualities of certain age brackets [9].

The point to note is that successfulness of transition from primary to secondary school directly depends on considering of psychophysical and individual features of pupils. «As psychologists note, in early teens (from 10–11 to 15 years) a period of the most intensive development of mentality and brainwork begins. Along with this, children in the age from 10 to 15 retain in the thinking structure components of eye-mindedness, what is characteristic for primary school-aged children» [10, p. 224].

The synchronization of two crises is distinctive feature of this special age bracket. The first crisis can be called educational, because it is connected with the harsh change in external lifestyle patterns. The second one is age crisis combined with internal changes, what results in demolition of well-presented, conventional system of connections with other people and with necessity to build on its place a new form of a daily living activity [11].

Having analyzed substantive results, we can claim that with transition from primary to secondary school they are achieved and implemented only fragmentary, what confirms indeterminate, inaccurate adherence to the principle of continuity. Modern educational programs, which are adopted for using and applied in domestic educational institutions, do not always coincide with standards set by official documents and often don't take cognizance of abovementioned age peculiarities, practical significance and expedience of modern level of pedagogy practice and theory development. Unfortunately, the research shows that the principle of continuity in foreign language teaching is not implemented comprehensively and fully-functionally, inasmuch as research and methodological fundamentals of continuity and its implementation as a matter of actual practice between stages under investigation in particular and in the whole educational system in general are characterized by specific discrepancies and problems.

Therefore, the need emerges to specify problems, which surface in consequence of non-adherence to the principle of continuity in transition from primary to secondary school. After determination of problems it is necessary to discover ways in which they can be solved and a foreign language teaching process can be improved, in addition to that transitional phase between stages under investigation must be simplified and expedited, the most comfortable conditions for pupils for a transitional period must be created.

Having analyzed and explored modern educational system, we have detected, that problems, which surface as a result of deficiency or non-implementation of continuity, concern negating of such aspects: methodological, pedagogical, psychological and organizational.

Continuity is not actualized and implemented on the pedagogical level, as on a large scale teaching staff is changed; in particular foreign language teachers are also different for primary and secondary schools. Secondary school teachers and high school teachers, who work with newcomers, fifth-graders don't devote proper, sufficient attention to the fact of difference existence between pupils of 10–12 years and older students. Quite often teachers forget about the necessity to adjust fifth-graders to a new, adult system of learning and communicating. As a result, inflated requirements to children are set, what leads to degradation of the level of academic and educational achievements and to reducing of motivation.

The continuity principle is defied on the methodological level, as schoolbooks for children of the fourth and the fifth grades have a vast quantity of differences. After transition to secondary school, fifth-graders face with requirements of intellectual toil and sharpened wit, appliance of unknown abilities for reflective thinking and generalizing. Fifth-grade

textbooks have larger quantity of new lexical material and grammatical themes, what also can cause difficulties in perception. Specifically in the course of this educational year at first time pupils start to gain knowledge about phenomena, which are absent in their mother-tongue completely or which are not studied in the frames of other subjects. Some hardships can be observed in use of new speech activity aspects, such as aural comprehension of foreign speech, critical reading and written speech.

We can designate problems, which are caused by violation of the continuity principle on the previous stages, such as: gaps in knowledge, which must be assimilated during studying at the primary school; insufficient formedness of general educational and special skills and abilities. Inadequate formedness of mental activities and efforts, deficient speech development and lack of exercising of memory and attention also have a negative impact on the educational process.

Problems, caused by non-application of the continuity principle, are accompanied with psychological and personal peculiarities of pupils of the age period from 10 to 12 years, in particular with: lack of inner motivation for study, unwillingness to make themselves to learn hourly, changes in surroundings and means of interconnection with it, evolvement of character, personal development, establishment of volitional and organizational competencies, changes in emotional sphere and appearance.

This transitional phase in the life of every pupil can be called a critical point, as peculiarities of primary school age have a strong impact on the educational process. Among them we can distinguish the next range of specialties: the main activity is communication with equals in age, assimilation of new forms of behavior and building of mature contacts with people, who surround the child, formation of self-evaluation and self-esteem, building of character, fundamental development of logical thinking, capabilities for mental reasoning and self-examination. During transition from primary to secondary school the sharp change of educational systems, non-coherence of teaching programs, educational forms, disciplinary requirements and communicational styles is observed.

Therefore a large quantity of problems exists in the modern, domestic educational system and especially in transition from primary to secondary school. The main reason, which causes problems, is violation of continuity principle aspects in foreign language teaching, such as: methodological, psychological, pedagogical and organizational aspects.

Problems, which arise on this transitional stage, must be immediately solved, as they exclude successful studying on the next educational stages, impede broadening of knowledge and acquiring of high level of foreign language proficiency. Thereby the necessity to discover solving problems ways arises.

To resolve the abovementioned problems, extensive work must be conducted which will engage and join efforts of government, educational establishments, pedagogical workers, psychologists, parents and children. To improve the situation in general and to implement the continuity principle comprehensively in transition from primary to secondary school, we suggest applying as a matter of actual practice of the following range of actions, which is described hereafter.

It is necessary to adhere to the conditions of personality-centered education, what means that forms and types of differential training and teaching must be applied. This is especially important for primary school and first grades of secondary school. Considering solving of problems with the help of differential teaching, implementation of multi-level training programs can be suggested, when on every level a pupil can be highly evaluated according to the invested efforts.

To solve modern problems of continuity the coherence and consistency of foreign language education on structural and content levels must be achieved. On the general state level of educational planning there mustn't be any reductions and decreases of planned teaching periods, what can improve and raise the quality of education on all stages.

From the methodological point of view the concerted strategy of teaching must be implemented, which ensure exact formulation of educational tasks and achievements of objectives at the end of every stage in such a way that it can gradually lead pupils to the next

stage. Such type of interconnection between stages of educational system is achieved with the help of cross-cutting programs and simultaneous usage of textbooks, which consistently guide pupils from primary to secondary school age, and afterwards bring them and help to adjust to studying in high school and higher educational establishments. According to this solving problem way reference books and school books, which are built on the one author's concept are admitted to be the most effective and forward-looking.

In terms of pedagogical aspect, to implement continuity it is necessary to provide close cooperation between primary and secondary school teachers, their collaborated work with child psychologists, who will thoroughly explain all the peculiarities of age periods. To achieve high level of continuity in foreign language teaching, primary school teachers must be familiar with programs, objectives and methods, which are used in next grades. This will help them to consider aspects of next educational stages in the course of teaching, to be more long-sighted and to prepare small pupils for transition to secondary school.

Along the same line, foreign language teachers, who work in secondary school, must be familiar with educational programs of primary school, what will give them an opportunity to take account of a generated knowledge base and to make on its ground more seamless transition to adult teaching system, communication and cooperation.

One more way to solve problems is obligatory considering of psychological peculiarities, which are significant for a concrete age period; practicing of a compulsory preparation for assimilation of a new educational competencies range; ensuring of the appropriate requirements system, which is set for the knowledge base, moral qualities and behavior of a child; implementation of means of motivation and encouragement to cognitive work.

This range of problem solving ways, their gradual implementation in the educational process will give an opportunity to achieve the continuity principle in transition from primary to secondary school, to develop all positive features in pupils, which were inserted during previous stages of studying and education, to provide systematicity of knowledge and consistency of educational content, forms and methods; to improve moral qualities and personality of every pupil in general.

Conclusions. In the course of conducted research we have found out that the continuity principle in the modern educational system is partially implemented and characterized with the range of problems. Such problems were distinguished: non-coherence of schoolbooks for different grades; dissimilarity of content, methods and means of teaching and education, which are implemented in primary and secondary schools; discontinuity of educational and disciplinary requirements; inefficiency of pedagogical workers of secondary school to take into account peculiarities of pupils of the age period from 10 to 12 years, what come along with inflated requirements; negligence of psychological and personal peculiarities of children of this age period; lack of attention to the continuity principle on the previous stages.

It was defined, that such problems need to be solved immediately, as they impede successful studying on the further educational stages, make it impossible to enlarge the range of knowledge and to master foreign languages on a high level.

To solve the problems, caused by insufficient and partial implementation of continuity, in the article it was suggested to apply such range of ways: to adhere to the conditions of personally-centered education; to ensure coherence and consistency of foreign language education in terms of structure and content; to maintain the one educational strategy, what can guarantee the exact formulation and achievement of objectives on every educational stage and between them; to implement and promote close cooperation between primary and secondary school teachers, their collaborated work with child psychologists; to take into account psychological peculiarities, which are essential for children of age period from 10 to 12 years; implementation of means of educational motivation and encouragement of pupils for cognitive work.

Thus, providing and implementation of continuity in teaching is an obligatory condition for acquiring of modern high-quality and professional education. The most important point, according to the nowadays situation, is continuity in foreign language teaching on the stages of primary and secondary school, which lay foundations for all further stages of educational

system. Analysis of the modern system of education and teaching shows that the continuity principle on the stages under research is defied and neglected, what leads to appearance of a wide range of problems in terms of organization, pedagogy, content and methodology.

Despite seriousness and dimensions of problems, they can be quite easily and promptly solved, if joined efforts of governmental entities, auxiliary educational staff, psychologists, parents and children are expended. Solving problem ways, suggested by this article can be implemented as a matter of actual practice to introduce sufficient changes and to improve teaching and educational process not only on the level of general education schools, but also on other levels of Ukrainian educational system.

НАСТУПНІСТЬ У ВИКЛАДАННІ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ В ЗАГАЛЬНООСВІТНІЙ ШКОЛІ

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Сучасні освітні тенденції та спрямування навчання на глобалізацію та масштабну інтеграцію в світовий простір, вимагають від громадян України досконалого знання іноземних мов. Сьогодні питання про вивчення мови стоїть надзвичайно гостро, тому в ході реформування освітньої системи, загальні зусилля спрямовані на пошук найбільш досконалого та якісного способу викладання іноземної мови. Задля того, щоб процес вивчення мови був найбільш ефективним та якісним, в освітньому процесі повинна бути забезпечена цілісність, неперервність та наступність.

Наступність виявляється в послідовності й системності розташування навчального матеріалу, зв'язку та узгодженості ступенів та етапів навчально-виховної роботи, яка забезпечується при переході в вузькому сенсі від одного заняття до іншого, та в більших масштабах від одного року навчання до наступного, від однієї ланки до іншої. Саме забезпечення наступності у викладанні є обов'язковою умовою для осмислення вивченого на глибшому рівні, підкріплення отриманих знань новими, розкриття нових зв'язків, завдяки чому поступово підвищується якість знань, вмінь та навичок, вдосконалюється рівень володіння іноземною мовою та розширюється загальний запас фонових знань.

У статті розглядається наступність як один із обов'язкових принципів викладання та навчання іноземної мови в загальноосвітній школі. Особливу увагу приділено дослідженню забезпечення принципу наступності при переході з ланки «початкова школа» до ланки «середня школа».

Аналіз сучасної освітньої системи виявив, що принцип наступності в викладанні іноземної мови часто нівелюється та не дотримується при переході з початкової до середньої школи. Внаслідок цього виникає значна кількість проблем у навчальному процесі, які потребують нагальної розробки шляхів вирішення та їх впровадження на практиці.

Дотримання принципу наступності у викладанні іноземної мови при переході з початкової до середньої школи – це одне з найважливіших питань у сучасній українській педагогіці та методиці викладання іноземних мов, так як саме цей етап відзначається значною кількістю особливостей, які необхідно враховувати задля успішного забезпечення неперервності, системності та послідовності загального навчального процесу.

Ключові слова: наступність у викладанні, іноземна мова, перехід, початкова школа, середня школа, загальноосвітня школа, принцип наступності, освітній процес.

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