

DEVELOPING POLYLINGUAL COMPETENCE IN UZBEK LEARNERS

Abstract. The article examines the methodology for developing polylingual competence among secondary school learners in Uzbekistan within the context of the interaction between the Uzbek, Russian, and English languages. The author justifies the necessity of shifting from isolated language instruction to an integrative approach based on contrastive analysis and activity-based practice. Particular attention is given to the principle of functional dominance, which fosters the development of interdisciplinary skills and enhances the academic competitiveness of graduates in the era of globalization. The research results confirm that utilizing the polylingual resource as a unified cognitive base effectively minimizes interlingual interference and deepens the understanding of subject-matter content.

Keywords: polylingual competence, methodology, interference, contrastive analysis, Uzbek, Russian, English language.

РАЗВИТИЕ ПОЛИЛИНГВАЛЬНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ У УЗБЕКСКИХ УЧАЩИХСЯ

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается методология формирования полилингвальной компетенции у учащихся общеобразовательных школ Узбекистана в контексте взаимодействия узбекского, русского и английского языков. Автор обосновывает необходимость перехода от изолированного преподавания языковых дисциплин к интегративному подходу, основанному на контрастивном анализе и деятельностной практике. Особое внимание уделяется принципу функциональной доминанты, способствующему развитию междисциплинарных навыков и повышению академической конкурентоспособности выпускников в условиях глобализации. Результаты исследования подтверждают, что использование полилингвального ресурса как единой когнитивной базы позволяет минимизировать интерференцию и углубить понимание предметного содержания.

Ключевые слова: полилингвальная компетенция, методология, интерференция, контрастивный анализ, узбекский, русский, английский язык.

Introduction. In modern Uzbekistan, proficiency in three languages the native (Uzbek), the second language or lingua franca (Russian), and the foreign language of global communication (English) is a demand for social and professional adaptation. Multilingual competence means familiarity with two or more languages based on how those languages are used in different contexts. As García and Wei (cited in Vallejo, 2018) note, "polylingual competence should not be viewed as the sum of independent language systems, but as a single dynamic space where the learner flexibly uses all available linguistic resources to construct meaning." The relevance of this study is driven by the contradiction between the need for a polylingual individual and the persistent practice of teaching language disciplines in isolation, which hinders the formation of a holistic worldview in students.

Methods The methodological framework includes several methods. The first is the contrastive-comparative method used for analyzing the systems of Russian, English, and Uzbek to identify typical interference barriers. The second method is activity-based, designed for creating polylingual learning tasks that require the simultaneous application of knowledge from all three language systems. The third is an integrative model for utilizing cognitive linguistics tools. As Cenoz and Gorter (2022) state, "integrating multiple languages within a single learning unit

134 promotes students' meta-linguistic awareness, allowing them to consciously manage the process of knowledge transfer between grammatical systems."

Results The implementation of the integrative model achieves several outcomes, such as cognitive flexibility, which showed increased speed in switching between language codes when solving interdisciplinary tasks. To illustrate this with a practical sample: in a geography lesson focused on "Climate Zones of Central Asia," students are tasked with analyzing a text in Russian (the analytical base), researching specific data points in English (the global terminology source), and synthesizing the final report in Uzbek (the conceptual foundation). A student with developed cognitive flexibility will not translate the text word-for-word; instead, they will instantly recognize the specialized meteorological terminology in English, correlate it with the Russian academic description, and efficiently formulate a coherent explanation in Uzbek. This process eliminates the "translation lag" and allows the student to focus entirely on the geographical content rather than the linguistic barrier. This approach demonstrates that the learner is no longer struggling with the form of the languages, but is instead using all three as a fluid, singular resource to solve the interdisciplinary task at hand. Another outcome is lexical-grammatical precision, established through the reduction of negative interference by explicitly comparing word forms (phonetics and spelling) alongside meaning and context. To illustrate this with a practical sample such as consider the word "address." In English, it functions as both a noun and a verb with specific phonetic stress patterns. A student prone to negative interference might incorrectly apply Russian or Uzbek sentence structures, leading to a misuse of the word in a formal context. Through our integrative methodology, the student explicitly compares the English "address" (a place of residence or a formal speech) with the Russian "адрес" and the Uzbek "manzil." By analyzing that the English verb form requires a direct object whereas the Russian/Uzbek counterparts may involve different prepositional governing, the student avoids the common "calque" error. This explicit comparison mapping phonetic structure, semantic nuance, and syntactic usage ensures that the student uses the term with precision rather than relying on a direct, often inaccurate, translation. This methodical approach prevents "false friends" of translators from obstructing communication, allowing the student to maintain high linguistic accuracy while moving between languages. Lastly, there is deepened subject knowledge. As Cummins (2021) indicates, "translanguaging pedagogy does not merely develop communication skills but also contributes to deepening subject-matter knowledge, making the learning process more profound and meaningful." To illustrate this let's take practical sample to consider a history lesson covering the "Industrial Revolution." A student might read a primary source in Russian regarding economic shifts, consult an English database for specific technological diagrams, and then synthesize their findings in Uzbek to present a case study on regional impact. By engaging with these diverse resources, the student is not merely repeating definitions; they are navigating complex historical concepts through multiple intellectual lenses. The process of connecting the Russian analysis, the English technical evidence, and the Uzbek synthesis forces the student to process the information at a higher level of abstraction, leading to a much stronger grasp of the historical subject matter than if they had relied on a single language source. This demonstrates that language is not just a subject to be studied, but a bridge that allows the learner to access and internalize complex knowledge from the global academic community.

Discussion Results confirm that developing polylingual competence is impossible without conscious work to eliminate interlingual interference. The primary challenge lies in developing materials that require not just translation, but the conceptual rethinking of information based on the specifics of each language. Further development deals with the methodology for developing plurilingual competence which requires the integration of digital environments that allow for the modeling of real-life polylingual communication. As emphasized by Weng and Ataei (2024), the success of a polylingual program depends not only on the methodology but also on the teacher's professional readiness to act as a facilitator rather than a transmitter of knowledge, which is particularly relevant for the post-Soviet educational space.

Conclusion In summary, the transition toward an integrative methodology for developing polylingual competence represents a necessary evolution in the system of teaching foreign

languages in Uzbekistan. By moving away from the paradigm of isolated language instruction and embracing a model that uses the synergy between Uzbek, Russian, and English, educators can effectively mitigate the challenges of interlingual interference while promoting higher levels of cognitive and linguistic flexibility. This research concludes that success relies on a holistic approach: treating languages as an interconnected web rather than isolated segments. We do not just memorize how a word is spelled or pronounced; we look at its structure, focus on its actual definition, and learn how to use it in real life. Ultimately, the methodology proposed herein not only enhances the students' capacity for complex communication but also strengthens their academic competitiveness. As experts continue to refine these strategies, the shift toward a facilitator-based role, supported by reliable digital environments and contrastive analytical tools, will remain the foundation for developing the next generation of polyglot, critical thinkers in Uzbekistan.

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