**PRINCIPLES OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING**

Methods of foreign language teaching are based on the fundamental principles of didactics; among them, a conscious approach to language learning, activity, visualization, and others. However, in foreign language teaching, due to the specific features of the subject in which means and ends are equally essential, principles are used in a particular way.

**The principle of conscious approach** to language learning implies comprehension of a linguistic phenomenon of language material by the pupil usually through the medium of the native language, or the arrangement of the material in sentence patterns graded in difficulties with the emphasis on same elements which are singled out as “teaching points”. In all cases pupils understand both the form and the content of the material they are to learn, and they are aware of how they should treat the material while performing various exercises which aim at developing habits and skills in using it. Such an approach to language learning usually contrasts with “mechanical” learning through repetitive drill. A great research work has been carried out in Soviet psychology and methods, and it has been proved that conscious approach to learning a foreign language promotes the acquisition of the subject. V.A. Artemov, a prominent psychologist, puts forward a theory of the unity of the language rule and the speech activity (language behavior) in foreign language teaching.

Hewrites, «Язык по самой своей природе есть система правил; ‘система’ потому, что в ней все основано на противопоставлении, а, ‘правил’ потому, что язык есть орудие общения, а орудие без правил его употребления не есть орудие. Но правила языка не раскрыты наукой до конца и в наши дни, а люди подчиняются этим правилам в своей речи. Следовательно, у человека имеется возможности создавать посредством деятельности коры больших полушарий мозга программу, правила языка. Эта программа все время совершенствуется по закону обратной связи речевого действия с его правилом»

In teaching a foreign language therefore, it is more reasonable to help pupils in assimilating language rules which function in this language by introducing the rules, rather than to wait until the learners deduce these rules through speech activity. V.A. Artemov warns the teacher against putting this hard work on the learner’s shoulders. Hereiswhathewrites: «… не бояться языкового правила, не перекладывать труд его выработки на плечи бесконечно повторяющего и бессмысленно подражающего учащегося, а искать оптимальное сочетание языкового правила и речевого действия в процессе научения речи на иностраннм языке. … Объединение правила и действия в любом виде деятельности ведет к оптимально краткому времени работы и максимальной ее эффективности».

A conscious approach to foreign language teaching implies the use of the learner’s native language. Soviet Methods has devoted much attention to the problem of the mother tongue in teaching and learning a foreign language. If a man knows only his native language his concepts are directly associated with the expression of these concepts in this tongue. The associations which arise, extremely complicated in nature, are very lasting due to systematic speech practice. The acquisition of a foreign language means the transition to thinking in a second language. For this purpose, it is necessary to acquire the ability to establish direct associations between concepts and their means of expression in the second language. Indeed, when a pupil begins to learn a foreign language the words of this language are often associated with the words of the mother tongue first. However, thanks to constant practice the intermediate link — the native language — fades, and foreign language words come into the pupil’s consciousness directly in connection with the concepts they express. Mastery of the language means formulating one’s thoughts within the foreign language.

**In teaching a foreign language it is necessary to cope with the mother tongue of pupils**

This means that teaching a foreign language, for example, English to Russian, Chuvash, Bashkir, Arabic-speaking pupils should differ in the arrangement of language material and in the techniques of its presentation and retention. We cannot ignore pupils’ native tongue in teaching a foreign language when searching for the shortest and most sound ways to the desired end. Indeed, Russian-speaking pupils and Arabic speaking pupils have different troubles in learning English. The teacher either helps pupils to make a transfer, for instance, from Russian into English (little explanation, if any, and law exercises are needed in this case), or he gives pupils the necessary explanation and supplies them with exercises, which pupils perform within the target language, without stressing the difference by translation exercises; the latter work rather at comprehension than at forming new habits and skills.

In connection with the analysis of the principle of conscious teaching, it is necessary to dwell upon the forming of habits and skills in a foreign language. All language habits and skills are extremely complex in their nature and are closely connected with conscious activity of students. What are habits? Here are some definitions of habits.

“A habit may be regarded as an instance of learning in which a relatively simple response is made, automatically and fairly frequently, to a relatively simple kind of situation.”

«Навыки – это усвоенные и упрочившиеся путем упражнений способы действия»

**The principle of activity** in foreign language teaching, of utmost importance since learning a foreign language should result in mastering the target language which is possible provided the pupil is an active participant in the process; he is involved in language activities throughout the whole course of instruction.

In modern psychology activity is now generally considered to be a main characteristic of cognitive processes. Activityarises under certain conditions. According to the Sets Theory the learner should feel a need to learn the subject, and have necessary prerequisites created for the satisfaction of this need. The main sources of activity are motivation, desire, and interest.

InthisconnectionI.F. Komkovwrites: «…успешное обучение, обеспечивающее хорошее усвоение материала, формирует у учащихся активное, положительное отношение к изучаемым языкам. Отсюдалишнийразстановитсяочевиднойпервостепеннаярольметодовобучения»

The pupil willingly and actively learns the subject if he understands its social and personal “meaningfulness” (значимость).

A decisive condition of stimulating interest in language learning is the pupils’ understanding of its specific content, that is, they acquire a second language to be able to use it as a means of communication. For this purpose, from the very first step, the learners should see this; they should perform exercises of natural communicative character. They must feel that the language they study can be used as a means of intercourse, of getting information while hearing, speaking, and reading it. Therefore if the teacher wants to stimulate pupils’ interest in the subject he should make them use their knowledge for practical needs while talking, reading, doing various exercises of a communicative character which are creative by nature. Hence the methodological principle may be formulated as follows:

**In teaching a foreign language it is necessary to stimulate pupils’ activity by involving them in the act of communication in the target language either in its oral (hearing, speaking) or written (reading, writing) form.**

If pupils are not involved in the act of communication in the target language and remain on the level of performing drill exercises, they soon lose interest in the subjected become passive at the lessons. One needs a lot of practice in the use of the language to master it. Consequently the problem arises how to enlarge the real time available for each pupil during the class-period to make him an active participant of the lesson, of the work done during the lesson. It is pupils who should work, and not the teacher as is often the case.

d) work in pairs, when pupils sitting at the same desk have an opportunity to “talk” in the target language: reciting a dialogue they are to learn, doing an ask-and-answer exercise or making up a dialogue of their own;

e) individual work in programmed instruction, when each pupil can work with the programme he receives either through visual or auditory perception at his own pace.

**The principle of visualization** has always been very important for language learning since the gaining of knowledge begins either with sense perception or with what has been formerly perceived, that is, with previous experience. Visualization, as it is understood here, may be defined as specially organized demonstration of linguistic material and language behavior characteristic of the target language with the purpose of helping the pupil in understanding, assimilating, and Utilizing this in connection with the task set. Since pupils acquire a second language in artificial conditions and not in real life, as is the case when children assimilate their mother tongue, visualization should be extensively used in foreign language teaching. Through visual presentation of the material and the pupils’ observation of language behavior of native speakers they acquire the necessary habits and skills in spoken language, namely, in intonation, word usage, and grammar. Visualization allows the teacher to create natural conditions for pupils’ oral practice and “free conversation”. Visualization can be utilized in teaching various aspects of the language: phonology, vocabulary, and grammar, and in developing different language skills: hearing, speaking, reading, and writing.

Soviet psychologists distinguish various kinds of visualization. For instance, B.V. Belyaev suggests the following classification for visualization.

InthisconnectionV.A. Artemovwrites: «Для классификации существующих и вновь возникающих видов наглядности при обучении иностранным языкам существенны следующие различающие их признаки:

1) объектная – образная;

2) предметная – изобразительная;

3) перцептивная – мнемическая;

4) реальная – схематическая;

5) однорецепторная – многорецепторная;

6) чистая (синтетическая) – опосредованная (аналитическая);

7) комплексно-языковая – аспектно-языковая;

8) театрализованно-поступочная – кино-поступочная.

Например, диафильмы содержат наглядность: объектную, изобразительную, перцептивную, реальную (схематическую), однорецепторную (зрительную), синтетическую (аналитическую) и аспектную – и вовсе не содержат наглядности поступочной»

The extensive use of audio-visual aids and audio-visual materials the teacher of a foreign language has at his disposal nowadays, together with the use of carefully selected and graded linguistic material, create favorable conditions for teaching pupils to understand the foreign language when it is spoken and to speak it themselves. This is the first step when dealing with beginners. Hence the methodological principle may be formulated as follows:

**In teaching a foreign language at schools it is necessary to follow the oral approach as it is the one that allows the pupil to deal with the language in its primary function — as a means of communication.**

In teaching foreign languages other didactic principles such as the principles of systematic teaching, of consecutiveness, of accessibility, of durability, are used. (See “Methods of Teaching English in Secondary Schools” by I.E. Anitchkov, V.N. Saakyants. M. — L., 1966, p. 47—55.)

**The foreign language syllabus** is the main document which lays down the aims and the content of teaching foreign languages in schools. A school, like any other educational institution, has a curriculum which states the subjects to be studied, the number of hours (periods) allotted to the study of each subject, the sequence in which the subjects are introduced.

We have different types of schools which differ in curricula. The main three are the ten-year school, the specialized school or the school with a number of subjects taught in the foreign language, and the evening school.

In the ten-year school the foreign language is taught for six years. Pupils begin to study it in the 5th form and finish in the 10th form. The number of hours allotted to the study of the subject is 560 of the essential course and, in addition, about 200of the optional course in the senior stage (see the syllabus).

In the specialized school pupils learn foreign language lore nine years beginning in the 2nd form and completing the course in the 10th form. The total number of hours allotted to a foreign language is 1500 (see the syllabus).

In the evening school a foreign language is an optional subject and as such it should be taught for three years (in the 9th, l0th and 11th forms). The number of hours allotted to the study of a foreign language is 315 (see the syllabus). Consequently, in the curriculum one can find where (in what forms) a foreign language is studied, how many periods a week and the total number of hours that are allotted to its study. The aims and the content of the teaching as well as the method of instruction are stated by the syllabus.

The syllabus, therefore, is a state document which lays down the aims of teaching, the extent of the knowledge, habits and skills pupils must acquire the sequence of topics which constitute the academic content of the subject. The syllabus is an essential document for every teacher, and he is responsible for the fulfillment of its requirements. The teacher cannot make alterations in the syllabus. The syllabus is uniform for all the teachers working in schools of the given type.

The syllabus includes:

l. The explanatory note. Here the teacher will find the aims of foreign language teaching in school. He will also find some suggestions as to the approach to teaching oral language, reading, and writing, vocabulary, and grammar. Besides, in the explanatory note he will find some indications about pupils’ independent work, homework, i.e., what a home task must consist of and how much time it should take to be done; how to keep a record of pupils’ progress in a foreign language and, finally, how to carry on extra-curricular work in a foreign language at school.

2. These labs itself. The teacher will find the requirements for the command of knowledge in English (German, French), i.e., pupils’ habits and skills in hearing, speaking, reading, and writing; topics for every form (5, 6, etc.) for speaking and reading, the amount of class periods for every form.

Reading. The pupil must be able:

— to read aloud correctly and understand both familiar and new texts based upon the language material already assimilated;

— to divide the text he has read into sense units; to find the answers to the questions in the text.

Writing. The pupil must be able:

— to write questions and answers (within the language material and topic already covered);

— to write dictations (within the material assimilated).

Approximate topics for speaking and reading:

1. School. Coming to school. The description of a classroom. School things. At the foreign language lesson. To be on duty. Going home from school. After classes.

2. At home. A room. My house. My family. Playing in the yard.

3. A town and a village. The description of a street.

4. Physical culture and sports. Winter and summer sports.

The requirements concerning pupils’ knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, phonology, rules of reading and spelling.

In the syllabus, therefore, the teacher will find all the instructions concerning the knowledge he must impart to his pupils, the habits and skills he must develop, etc.

The textbook for every form should correspond to the syllabus. When the programme requirements are changed, textbooks should undergo all necessary changes as well.