

## **ENHANCING ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCE IN FUTURE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS VIA NATIVE LANGUAGE APPLICATION**

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**Statement of the scientific problem.** The globalization processes taking place in the world, innovations in modern education, the growth of intercultural communication in society, and the expansion of opportunities for professional growth are not all the factors that reflect the need for Ukrainians to master English as the most common means of international communication. The rapid development of technology and the growing integration of digital learning tools into the school curriculum emphasize the importance of English language proficiency. The introduction of English as a compulsory course in the primary school curriculum requires teachers to have not only a thorough knowledge of a foreign language, but also special methodological skills that allow them to effectively teach the language from the early school age. In the context of growing intercultural contacts, future primary school teachers must be prepared to teach children respect and understanding of cultural diversity, which requires English language skills. Studying English opens up wide opportunities for teachers to develop professionally, participate in international projects, exchange programs, and improve their skills abroad. Future educators must be able not only to communicate in English but also to teach it effectively from the primary school level, preparing students for active engagement in a globalized world.

Deepening the English language competence of future primary school teachers is based on a number of social, educational and professional factors that determine the need to introduce effective approaches to language training.

The relationship between mother tongue knowledge and English language learning in the context of teacher education plays a key role in shaping effective language education. This is due to the following factors: linguistic knowledge, cognitive processes, linguistic, cultural and motivational aspects, pedagogical strategies, etc.

The mother tongue is a carrier of cultural values and traditions, the foundation on which the ability to reflect on language and its structure is formed, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the grammatical, lexical and phonetic aspects of a foreign language. Understanding its linguistic and cultural specifics can contribute to a better understanding of the English language context, as students learn to analyze and compare cultural aspects through the lens of language. Knowledge of the mother tongue allows teachers to use it as a basis for teaching English.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Many Foreign educationalists have focused on studying English language competence, contributing to our understanding of language acquisition, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices. Their work spans several aspects of English language learning, including grammar, vocabulary, listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Stephen Krashen is known for his theories on second-language acquisition, Krashen's work on the input hypothesis and the affective filter hypothesis has had a significant impact on English language teaching methodologies [1]. His theories emphasize the importance of comprehensible input and a low-stress learning environment. Michael Long's work on the interaction hypothesis emphasizes the role of interaction in language acquisition. He argues that negotiation of meaning in conversational exchanges is crucial for language learning [2]. Diane Larsen-Freeman has explored the complexity of language learning. Her work on the dynamic systems theory approach to language development has highlighted the non-linear, evolving nature of language acquisition [3]. Paul Nation's work on learning and teaching vocabulary has been influential in English language teaching practices [4, 5]. David Nunan's research in language teaching focuses on the development of communicative and task-based language teaching methods. Merrill Swain is known for the output hypothesis, which posits that producing language (speaking or writing) contributes to language learning because it forces learners to process language at a deeper level [6]. Rod Ellis has contributed significantly to the understanding of how learners acquire a second language and the most effective teaching practices to support this process [7]. Rebecca Oxford has contributed to our understanding of language learning strategies and their role in successful language acquisition. Her work on strategy instruction has influenced language teaching practices [8]. Ellen Bialystok's research on bilingualism and cognitive processes has shed light on the cognitive benefits of learning a second language [9].

Researchers have explored how the first language influences second language acquisition. James Cummins has extensively explored the interdependence between the first language and the second language. His theory of Common Underlying Proficiency suggests that skills, knowledge, and cognitive abilities transfer from the first language to the second, supporting the development of both. Colin Baker advocates for the maintenance of the first language while learning a second language, highlighting the cognitive and cultural benefits of bilingualism [10]. Ofelia Garcia has contributed to our understanding of translanguaging, a pedagogical approach that encourages the use of the mother tongue and the second language fluidly in classroom settings [11].

Ukrainian researchers V. Barkasi, L. Biriuk, V. Bondar, O. Drohaitsev, O. Dubaseniuk, O. Lozovetska, A. Kapska, N. Nychkalo, O. Pekhota, and L. Sushchenko have extensively explored strategies for enhancing the professional competence of specialists in education.

The theoretical and methodological foundations of training for students specializing in Primary Education are comprehensively addressed in the scholarly contributions of P. Husak, L. Khoruzha, L. Khomych, A. Kolomiets, O. Komar, I. V. Pidhurska, O. Savchenko, I. Shaposhnikova, T., M. Vashulenko, among others. The subject of professional preparation for primary school teachers authorized to teach a foreign language has been thoroughly examined by scholars such as O. Bihych, O. Humankova, L. Kalinina, O. Mykhailova, V. Plakhotnyk, T. Polonska, V. Redko, S. Roman, N. Skliarenko. Liudmyla Husak devoted her research to the preparation of future teachers for associative learning of foreign languages by primary school students. The author has formulated new theoretical provisions, clarified the content of certain concepts that are important for science, practice, and improvement of primary school teacher training in the context of the introduction of associative learning for primary school students. In her dissertation research for the degree of Doctor of Pedagogical Sciences "Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Training Future Primary School Teachers to Use Interactive Technology", Olha Komar analyzed the main scientific ideas, theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of the problem of training future primary school teachers to use interactive technology. She investigated the current state of preparing future primary school teachers for the application of interactive technology within the existing system of their professional training; identified the principles, conditions, and stages of preparing future teachers for the use of interactive technology in primary schools; and developed a system of educational-methodological support for the training of future primary school teachers for the application of interactive technology in their independent professional activities. Lada Petryk has developed and substantiated the content and methodological support for preparing future primary school teachers to use media in foreign language lessons and has investigated the content, forms and methods of preparing future primary school teachers to teach foreign languages.

**The objective of our study** is to elucidate the correlation between native language proficiency and English language competence among higher education students specializing in Primary Education. Furthermore, this article aims to critically examine and organize contemporary methodological strategies for English language instruction that leverage knowledge of the native language.

**Presentation of the main research material.** For effective teaching of English, future primary school teachers need to develop a number of key competencies, namely [12]:

- linguistic competence, which implies a high level of English language proficiency, including grammar, vocabulary, phonetics and spelling;

- speech competence – improvement of communicative skills in the leading types of speech activities (listening, speaking, reading, writing); ability to design their speech activities, etc;

- methodological competence – knowledge of modern methods, techniques and technologies of teaching English; ability to adapt innovative methods to the age characteristics of students [13];

- communicative competence – mastery of speech skills and abilities necessary for communication, knowledge of the norms and rules of communication;

- cultural competence – a deep understanding of the culture of the English-speaking world to integrate cultural aspects into teaching; fostering respect for representatives of different nationalities and understanding of cultural diversity in the student environment.

The development of these competencies will allow future primary school teachers to effectively teach English, adapt the learning process to the needs of students, taking into account their individual characteristics, and instill in them an interest in learning English. This way, you can use your native language skills to improve the process of learning a foreign language, creating pedagogical bridges between languages and cultures. To develop future teachers' English language competence, we suggest using the following methods:

1. *Game methods.* Language games that incorporate elements of both languages can create additional motivation and interest in learning. It also helps students develop the ability to quickly switch between languages. The use of role-playing games that simulate real-life situations involving both languages helps students to feel the difference in the expression of emotions and in the use of language in different language contexts [14].

2. *The project method.* The organization of interlingual projects, where students have the opportunity to work on tasks that require the use of both their native and foreign languages, contributes not only to the improvement of language skills but also to the development of teamwork, creativity, and project management.

3. *Discussion method.* Organizing thematic discussions where students can express their opinions and arguments in both their native and foreign languages allows not only to enrich their vocabulary but also to improve their public speaking and argumentation skills.

4. *The portfolio method.* Encouraging students to create electronic portfolios where they can document their progress in learning English, including reflective notes, recordings of speeches, written work, etc. in both their native and English languages. This helps students better assess their development and identify areas for further improvement [15].

5. *Case method.* The development and analysis of cases that reflect real-life situations or problems, followed by a discussion of possible solutions, first in the native language and then in English. This helps not only to deepen language skills but also to develop analytical thinking [16].

In addition to these methods, creative tasks such as writing an essay, poem, tongue twister, riddle, puzzle, crossword puzzle in native and English, etc. contribute to the development of future teachers' English language competence. The use of these methods not only activates students' prior knowledge of their native language for more effective learning of English, but also contributes to the development of deeper skills of critical thinking, cross-cultural communication, and readiness for lifelong learning.

Considering the key aspects and methods of integrating interlingual strategies into the learning process involves various techniques. Contrastive analysis presupposes comparing grammatical structures, vocabulary, phonetics, and other linguistic features between the native and foreign languages, which helps learners identify similarities and differences, promoting a deeper understanding of language rules and helping avoid common mistakes [17]. Translation as an interlingual strategy is useful for developing lexical skills and enriching vocabulary, as translating between languages allows learners to practice navigating between language systems, increasing their linguistic flexibility. The integration of code-switching, or the use of two languages within a single communicative episode, can contribute to better learning by allowing learners to use their entire language resource for a deeper understanding of the content.

Analyzing and discussing cultural and linguistic aspects reflected in the vocabulary and phraseology of both languages not only enriches students' knowledge but also develops intercultural competence. The use of language games and exercises that incorporate elements of both languages creates additional motivation and interest in learning, aiding in the development of the ability to quickly switch between languages. Stimulating critical thinking and reflection on language use through comparative analysis and discussion allows learners to gain insights into not just linguistic but also cultural aspects of communication. Organizing interlingual projects where students work on tasks requiring both their native and foreign languages improves language skills and develops teamwork, creativity, and project management skills [18].

**Conclusions.** Thus, the relationship between the mother tongue and the acquisition of English by future primary school teachers plays a key role in the formation of effective language education. A positive experience of learning the mother tongue can significantly improve the level of foreign language learning. Encouraging interest and love for the language in general will stimulate the desire to expand students' linguistic horizons, and knowledge of the Ukrainian language should become the basis for a deeper understanding of the grammatical, lexical and phonetic aspects of a foreign language.

Further research into leveraging the mother tongue for learning English and other foreign languages holds the promise of revolutionizing language education. Investigating the integration of cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning to craft personalized bilingual learning resources could transform educational experiences. These technologies have the potential to develop intelligent systems tailored to each student's knowledge level and native language preferences. Expanding research into intercultural competence is another promising area. This involves examining how the mother tongue influences the development of intercultural

understanding and global awareness, focusing on fostering empathy, tolerance, and a broadened worldview through culturally responsive learning.

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