



KAPITEL 5 / CHAPTER 5
OVERCOMING OBSTACLES ON THE WAY OF A FOREIGN-LANGUAGE PERSONALITY FORMATION: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND LANGUAGE-DIDACTIC PREREQUISITES

ЛІНГВОДИДАКТИЧНІ ТА ПСИХОЛОГІЧНІ УМОВИ ПОДОЛАННЯ ПЕРЕШКОД У ПРОЦЕСІ ФОРМУВАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ ОСОБИСТОСТІ

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Introduction

A large and growing body of literature has been published on methodology of a foreign language, didactic and linguistic aspects of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, particularly, on the methods of overcoming obstacles on the way of acquiring a foreign language personality, including research papers by B. Belyaev (1965), B. Benediktov (1974), M. Kochergan (2001, 2003), A. Leont'ev (1997), T. Triandafilindi (2019), N. Shaimerdinova (2019), N. Vasylenko (2008, 2019), A. Zalevskaya (1996, 2000), I. Zimnyaya (1991). So far, however, there has been little discussion on the language-didactic aspects of the above-mentioned issues.

In general, language didactics is described as a complex research field that is concerned with cultivating human language and speech capabilities, studying the mechanisms in which thinking processes, language and overall development of an individual are interconnected in foreign language acquisition, and, finally, incorporating those mechanisms into principles and strategies of teaching a language.

Taking into account the two approaches (the methodological approach and the psychological approach) to teaching any language as a foreign one (hereinafter – SL – second language), B. Benediktov, a Byelorussian psychologist, sets the learner as the focus of study. The author argues that merging psychology and methodology is a necessary condition in successful foreign language learning [3, 246].

Choosing optimal approaches and methods for the target audience is considered to be one of the most important factors in the system of learning intensification. With this in mind, **the aim of this study** will be to investigate specific difficulties that arise in the process of learning Ukrainian as a foreign language. The study of factors influencing both intercultural interaction and the process of learning Ukrainian as a foreign language itself is gaining particular importance nowadays. In particular, the stages of this study will be targeted at fulfilling the following research objectives: 1) to provide an overview of the principles underlying the process of SL teaching; 2) to describe methods to eliminate problems students encounter in mastering pronunciation; 3) to identify problems and offer ways to overcome most common cases of vocabulary misuse; 4) to study the nature of grammar mistakes and offer solutions.

Each of the stages (2) to (4) will proceed in three steps: 1) identifying the issues that students experience in mastering a language aspect (pronunciation, lexis or grammar); 2) defining the factors that cause these issues through comparing the systems of the students' native language and Ukrainian; 3) developing the strategy to overcome the issues and enhance the students' language experience.



In the context of new tasks arising in the field of teaching Ukrainian to a foreign audience, the problem of interference becomes topical. Since mastering the phonetic, lexical and grammatical base of the Ukrainian language and, expectedly, correct pronunciation and speech depend on the degree of interlingual phonetic, lexical and grammatical interference, the national orientation of Ukrainian language learning is needed to individualize and increase its efficiency, because each interaction of languages carries a specific individual character.

The observations of the educational process, supplemented with the analysis of phonetic, lexical and grammatical aspects of the speech produced by foreign students, revealed a significant number of mistakes and phonetic imperfections. The overall learning experience of the foreign students suggests that the majority of foreign students succeed in speaking relatively fast in comparison with other types of language skills. However, their speech, as a rule, contains a significant number of orthoepic, lexical and grammatical errors. We consider the following factors responsible for the difficulties that the students encounter while mastering various aspects of Ukrainian speech: 1) differences between the phonological systems of Ukrainian and the students' first language; 2) inconsistency of lexical and semantic variants of the meaning conveyed by a native word and its Ukrainian counterpart; 3) nonconformity between the meanings of grammatical units, means of expression of grammatical meanings and grammatical categories of the Ukrainian language and the grammatical phenomena inherent in the native language.

Research methodology

According to the defined problem and tasks, this study relies on a complex procedure that includes methods and stages described further. Theoretical methods include analysis of literary sources, generalization and systematization of the analysed literature, identification of the basic principles on which the study is based, substantiating conclusions. Empirical methods involve psychological and pedagogical observations, which serve to detect peculiarities of speech skills demonstrated by foreign students, and analysis of orthoepic, lexical and grammatical errors occurring in the speech produced by foreign students.

Methods of observation and analysis were employed to fulfil the first objective, that is, to classify the difficulties arising in the process of mastering Ukrainian as a second language. The second objective required methods of experiment, observation and analysis. The correction method enabled us to achieve the objective of identifying ways to overcome difficulties through developing a system of exercises and tasks.

The choice of methods, as we assume, will contribute to establishing the qualitative and quantitative parameters of the experimental data and their relationships. Each result will be achieved with a combination of several complementing methods. Thus, the reliability of the study results will be enhanced, and error probability due the impact of random unaccounted factors will be decreased.



5.1. Theoretical principles of second language learning.

Many methodologists have argued that the cognitive-communicative approach offers effective methods of SL teaching. The communicative component is focused on providing interactive, personally motivational communication for the learners, while the cognitive component ensures conscious assimilation of linguistic and cultural information by a foreign student. The cognitive aspect of mastering a foreign language is realised through the ability to reflect and perceive the world through the prism of the native speakers' national culture of the language being studied [13, 225]. Thus, anyone studying a language transforms into a person who thinks, reflects and actively processes information. Cognitive-communicative approach in SL study caters for the students' mental characteristics, their cognitive needs and promotes the ability to interact in real communication, which confirms that practical use of this approach is expedient. Researchers identify the following key principles of communicative-cognitive methodology: 1) SL training in the process of cognitive and communicative activity; 2) stimulating the learners' speech and mental activities; 3) reproducing authentic socialization conditions; 4) providing for individual cognitive styles and learning strategies; 5) expanding knowledge boundaries; 6) forming a linguistic personality; 7) building the world picture; 8) developing multiple intelligence; 9) providing contextuality of communicative-cognitive activity; 10) acquiring critical thinking; 11) building the ability to conceptually structure information [6, 164].

The process of teaching Ukrainian to foreign students is characterized by a complex structural organization. The major agents of this process are, firstly, the teacher's activities and, secondly, the learners' activities, which are targeted at building a foreign (second) language competence, skills, and abilities in the result of acquiring the contents of the language course. Penetrating into this complex process involves identifying significant objective connections between its constituents. Through clarifying the specific patterns of the SL learning process, the students should seize certain methodological principles, implementation of which is considered as a prerequisite for the proper functioning of the learning process itself.

It has commonly been assumed that directing a learning process should be determined by its aims. The main purpose of teaching foreign students is practical mastery of the target language as a means of learning. Therefore, *speech-oriented learning* should be considered the main principle of language study. This principle reflects the basic pattern of the process of learning Ukrainian as a foreign language in terms of its social orientation. Along with that, implementation of this process provides a positive attitude towards speech comprehension and reproduction. The process of speech communication is realised through four major skills (in other words, in four types of activities). Therefore, applying this principle results in acquiring automated skills by the learners, that enable them to answer questions, comprehend the contents of the message, read, and express their opinion both orally and in writing.

The principle of speech-oriented learning sustains natural connection with the principle of *integrated learning*, based on which the learning process generates



conditions for overall comprehensive development of major speech activity types in their integrity. The principle of integrated learning should be implemented through concentric study of various aspects of language material (phonetics, lexicology, grammar) in their organic unity, the purpose of which is building speaking skills and overall speech development. To achieve this goal, the training material should be selected and organized in a certain way. As a rule, in methodology the language material is considered from the point of view of possible difficulties emerging as a result of interlingual and intralingual interference in the process of SL assimilation. Interestingly, the general didactic principle of increasing difficulty while learning acquires a new dimension when applied to educating foreigners: an issue arises what part of learning should be considered simple and which one is complex, what is easy and what might be difficult.

The general didactic requirement of introducing the material step-by-step and the specific need to revisit and intensively rehearse the previously learned material in new relationships and situations involves the principle of *concentric learning*. In the process of learning a foreign language, concentric approach gains additional importance, especially in terms of organizing the learning material, since it promotes building speech skills in simple situations, and then their further practice in more complex positions, which corresponds to the goal of generalizing speech skills. Concentric learning is related to solving the question of sequencing the language material according to the difficulty of its acquisition. There exists an obvious connection between this principle and the principle called “from simple things to the complex ones”.

The principle of concentricity is also aimed at ensuring that language material is selected on the principle of *ability to learn* for each of the stages of learning. Practical application of this principle means simultaneous addressing and elimination of several interconnected learning difficulties, which will allow foreign speakers to perceive specific lexical and grammatical concepts. In addition, this principle provides assimilation of the selected material in both receptive and reproductive forms.

The principle of *systematic organization of the educational process* is found among the most important principles of teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language. As a rule, the students master major types of speech activities through completing exercises and tasks in the process of learning. Consequently, any exercise, although being aimed at a particular goal, can be justified only on condition if it functions in complex connections with accompanying exercises of a similar focus. What is more, neither a single exercise taken separately, nor a set of exercises can achieve both objectives of learning a foreign language, that is, to ensure assimilation of language material and to form adequate speaking behaviour. This determines the need to develop a united system of exercises aimed at achieving the practical learning objective at a certain stage through consistent implementation of intermediate tasks.

The principle of systematic organization of the educational process is realised through a system of exercises in which each component is placed according to its specific succession within the system. A cycle serves as the basic unit within the system of lessons, which is allocated for studying a certain portion of language



material. However, this principle can be beneficially implemented on condition that phonetic and lexical features of the students' native language are reckoned and involved into the learning process. Therefore, one of the most important principles for teaching pronunciation should be the principle of *resorting to the foreign students' native language*.

In view of the principles mentioned above, the methodology of teaching any lexical or grammatical topic should be based on the psycholinguistic features of assimilating the educational material by the foreign students. In addition, mastering SL, regardless of the learning stage, is accompanied by interaction between the native language and the one being studied. Recently, several well-known psycholinguists have displayed an increased interest to the problem of interaction between the native and the foreign language, namely, I. Zimnyaya [9], B. Belyaev [2], and others.

The principle of resorting to the native language in the process of teaching a foreign one has caused a considerable controversy among leading methodologists in the field of SL education. Nonetheless, the majority agree on positive results of applying this principle. Therefore, we see it relevant to formulate the key positions underlying this approach:

1. The peculiarities of the learners' native languages should be considered through comparing the phenomena of the SL with the facts of the native language during the process of studying SL, in the so-called open form.

2. The peculiarities of the native language in the study of SL are to be determined by the facts clarified in the process of comparative and typological research, thus preventing any potential negative interference.

Researchers devote considerable attention to improving the efficiency of teaching Ukrainian language by organizing a methodical system of teaching productive phonetics, perceiving and reproducing oral speech [4, 255]. It has been suggested that rationalization of the learning process is possible through implementing the principle of incorporating the students' native language, which is able to ensure sustainable language skills and abilities. Teaching listening to lectures, that is, to perceive spoken word by ear, is a key task of training foreigners at the initial stage of learning. Earlier, we have emphasized that success in listening skills, namely, receiving and comprehending information, depends on how well the speech hearing, aimed at the appropriate perception of the acoustic signal, is developed [4, 256].

While perceiving spoken foreign language, students often rely on the native language system, which causes negative interference. However, knowing the specifics of the students' native languages, along with the difficulties associated with it, the educator can prevent or avoid possible mistakes. Interference phenomena are often observed in conditions of close contact between related and unrelated languages. While analysing the peculiarities of teaching Russian to the Greek audience, T. Triandafilindi points to the fact that answer to the question "*What did you do yesterday?*" demands a verb denoting a continuous action in the past (*read, dance, walk, etc.*). However, Greek students often use an action or a fact verb denoting a single or non-continuous action that happened in the past [16, 321]. The latter illustrates the Slavic speakers' worldview, which in this example explicates



using an imperfect form of the verb, indicating a continuous action in the past. The author also noted that Greek and Russian languages (Ukrainian as well) demonstrate similarities in both alphabet and syntax. The affinity of the two languages is evidenced by thousands of lexical borrowings from Greek into Russian, as well as lexical calques and pseudo-Graecisms [16, 324]. The described kinship may have both positive and negative impact on teaching Ukrainian to Greek speakers.

In 2019, while studying the functional potential of the Kazakh and Russian languages in the Republic of Kazakhstan, N. Shaimerdinova reported on the communicative failures of interference nature under the conditions of Kazakh-Russian and Russian-Kazakh bilingualism. The author notes that those interference errors that occur under the influence of the native language are considered as communicative errors or difficulties of intercultural and lingual communication [17].

One study by S. Ter-Minasova (2004) examined verbal and non-verbal relationships in interethnic communication, finding that difficulties in interlingual communication could be both overt and covert [15, 61].

Linguistic research has provided several views on the interpretation of the term “interference”. In a broad sense, the term is used to study the problem of language contacts in the result of the interaction between different languages. In our study we prefer to apply the definition proposed by M. Kochergan stating that interference means interaction between language systems in bilingualism, which can be traced in deviations from the norm and the system of the second language under the influence of the native language [11].

Prior studies have noted the following indications of interference:

- deviations from the norm observed in oral speech in the second language (L2), emerging under the influence of the first language (L1);
- deviations that are characteristic of speech activity inherent in bilinguals (L2);
- the quality of interference and its frequency will be subject to the connections between the systems of contacting languages;
- interference occurs in the process of communication in the context of bilingualism [10, 101].

It is worth noting that, in case of inactive bilingualism, communication problems and interference errors may arise, which is caused by typological features of the native language [17, 215]. Another important finding was that interference becomes less apprehensible, although more sustained in case of contact between related languages, whereas in case of contact between unrelated languages, interference may be more noticeable, although less sustained [14]. To illustrate the author’s point, we can observe the consequences of Russian-Ukrainian language contacts: *кидатися в очі* (*catch the eye*), a calque from Russian *бросаться в глаза*, is often used instead of *впадати у вічі*, which would be correct in Ukrainian; *приймати участь* (*participate*), whereas the correct expression *брати участь* should be used; *оточуюче середовище* (*environment*) – *довкілля* etc.

Today, the principle of rational use of the native language has abated some of its controversies as compared with the 1950s and is recognised by the vast majority of domestic and foreign language methodologists. Research approaches to peculiarities of learning a foreign language have acquired pedagogical orientation, i.e., they are



aimed at finding strategies to improve the SL learning efficiency.

5.2. Overcoming phonetic difficulties in the process of teaching ukrainian as a foreign language

It is a widely held view that comparative linguistic analysis is one of the leading methods in psycholinguistics, since dissimilarities in language phenomena, identified by a comparative study, enable the teachers, as well as the learners, to anticipate difficulties in the process of sl study. In a recent study of the phonetic issues experienced by arabic-speaking students, the arabic phonetic system was found to significantly affect the process of building their speaking skills in ukrainian. observations made on the educational process with arab students, who are widely represented in higher educational institutions of ukraine, revealed that arabic-speaking students master the main types of speech activity relatively quickly. However, serious phonetic errors in oral speech, especially in terms of perceiving and reproducing phonemes of the ukrainian language are also clearly manifested. As it has been highlighted in previous publications, difficulties in mastering the sound aspect of ukrainian speech are due to significant dissimilarities in ukrainian and arabic phonological systems [4, 2]. The same publication identified the linguistic base for teaching ukrainian phonetics, psycholinguistic background of perceiving and reproducing phonemes which constitute the speech flow of the ukrainian language, pedagogical foundation of teaching ukrainian as a foreign language.

The experience of teaching Ukrainian pronunciation to foreigners proves that both teachers' and students' efforts are most often directed at developing pronunciation skills, whereas sufficient attention is hardly ever paid to developing sound perception, namely, to recognising the word's sound "shell" or discerning sounds in the speech flow. As a result, after 10 months spent at the preparatory department, the students, even though having acquired basic skills of the main types of speech activity, are sometimes unable to correctly identify the phonemic structure of individual Ukrainian words.

In order to identify phonetic disorders that foreign students may encounter while perceiving Ukrainian phonemes, and to determine their auditory skills level, an experimental study with a group of foreign students was conducted (30 students from Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine who have graduated from the preparatory department). The experiment involved young men aged 18 to 26 years. The study included two stages: perception of Ukrainian phonemes was measured at the first stage, while the second stage focused on studying phonetic reproduction.

In the first stage, the students were supposed to discern words or syllables by listening and subsequently reproduce them in writing. The set of words and syllables pronounced included all consonants and vowels inherent in the Ukrainian language in various positional combinations. However, spelling a foreign word correctly may not so much indicate correct perception; instead, it may indicate that the student knows the word and possesses sufficient lexical and grammatical skills. Considering the above fact, the students listened to quasi-homonyms – words that differ in a single phoneme; thus, their phonetic realisation poses certain difficulties for foreigners (*cad-*



зад, бік-нік, дим-тум, нін-біб, мул-мол). The hypothesis was that in this case, the spelling will accurately reflect the perception since it relies solely on phonetic information.

Along with one-syllable and two-syllable quasi-homonyms, syllables with different vowels were presented (на-ня, но-ньо, ну-ню, ла-ля, ло-льо, лу-лю). The material numbered 280 phonemes in normative transcription.

The students, who participated in the experiment, wrote down those words and syllables that were being pronounced in Ukrainian. While analysing and processing the obtained results, correct graphic representation of the words and syllables that the students tried to reproduce was considered the major parameter. Consonants were analysed in conjunction with vowels. Vowels were considered in combination with both palatalised and non-palatalised consonants only in stressed syllables (лох-льоx, сад-сядь, лий-лій, лук-люк).

In this study, identification of phonemes was considered appropriate when it constituted 85%. The choice of such rate was based on the data from experimental studies which have discovered that accurate recognition of speech sounds, depending on their phonemic features, ranges within 75-100% even for a native speaker.

The results of analysing foreigners' perception of phonemic composition of a Ukrainian word suggest that their auditory identification of Ukrainian vowels and consonants cannot be considered sufficient in many cases. Correct phonemic identification of consonants constituted 80.7%; as for vowels, the rate reached 75% only, which indicates an insufficient level of auditory skills development among the students after their graduation from the Preparatory Department.

The overall perceiving the phonemic structure of Ukrainian words is heterogeneous for different groups of consonants. Discerning labials demonstrated 84% and 73% correct identification.

While listening to labial occlusives, the students had issues with recognising differential features of *palatalised* and *non-palatalised* phonemes, *voiced* and *voiceless* consonants, *occlusive* and *constrictive* consonants. The students experienced difficulties in differentiating palatalised and non-palatalised phonemes, hence, they often failed to differentiate words *бий-бій, нил-ніл, вие-віе, вир-вір*. 75% and 70.15% of the students identified palatalisation correctly. As for non-palatalised sounds, the recognition reached fairly high rates – just over 90%. Correctly realised palatalisation in [п'] and [б'] in combinations “*palatalised consonant + vowel*” (*ni-bi*) did not exceed the rate of 70%, whereas in combinations “*vowel + palatalised consonant + vowel (oni-obi)*”, palatalised consonants were mistaken for the non-palatalised ones.

Insignificant difficulties were found in recognising the differential feature of occlusiveness-constrictiveness – 2% and 2.5%.

In the second stage of the experiment, the subjects reproduced Ukrainian phonemes. Realisation of the Ukrainian phonemic system involved all possible phonetic positions of Ukrainian phonemes and was conducted on the material of a coherent text in spontaneous speech (descriptive and everyday-life monologues). Monological utterances averaged 330-340 words per person. In total, the experimental Ukrainian-language material contained almost 10,000 words. The



volume of the analysed material constituted more than 70 thousand phonemes of the Ukrainian language in the normative transcription.

The study involved the same group of 30 students that participated in the first stage of the experiment. The experimental material was recorded. The obtained audio recordings were analysed according to the procedure of the traditional phonetic analysis.

The auditory analysis of the Ukrainian speech produced by non-native speakers enabled us to identify errors in realising Ukrainian phonemes within a word, which can be characterized by varying degrees of distortion. The recorded violations varied both in quality and quantity. Their quantity even exceeded those numbers that we had anticipated prior to the experiment by comparing phonetic systems of the students' native and Ukrainian languages. Thus, in real-life speech, phonetic interference generates more complex patterns in terms of deviating from the normative realisation of Ukrainian phonemes.

The experiment indicates that difficulties while comprehending and phonetic violations while reproducing Ukrainian consonant sounds by foreign students are due to the influence of the native tongue in the first place. However, native tongue phonetic peculiarities were far from being the only factor causing auditory difficulties. Russian (in bilingual environment) and the second language studied at home (French or English) are factors to be considered as well.

It should be noted that the nature of errors in the process of determining vowel and consonant phonemes does not indicate accidental confusion. Beyond any doubt, such errors illustrate interference effects, hence these mistakes align with the model of linguistic prediction of disorders.

A comparative analysis of the phonetic systems in ukrainian and arabic leads us to the conclusion that absence of arabic equivalents of ukrainian consonants causes distortions of the differential features of ukrainian consonant phonemes, while violations of certain types will be especially pronounced in the arabs' pronunciation. For example, while pronouncing ukrainian labials, the arabic pharyngealized closed consonant sound [b'] will replace two ukrainian consonants [б], [п], as well as their variants, palatalised [б'] and [п']. Arabic pharyngealized voiceless fricative [f'] will replace the ukrainian non-palatalised sounds [в], [ф] and their palatalised variants [в'], [ф']. Pronunciation of the ukrainian occlusive consonants [д], [т] and [д'], [т'] will be influenced by the sounds [d] and [t], available in arabic; ukrainian constrictive consonants [з], [ц] will be influenced by arabic sounds [z], [s] and [z], [s] [4, 13]. A linguistic prognosis, derived from a comparative analysis of linguistic phenomena inherent in the students' native language and ukrainian (as a foreign language), will contribute to developing a methodological typology of mastering relevant ukrainian language skills.

It has been established that at the articulatory level, the difference between voiced and voiceless consonants is conditioned by the measure of vocal cords being involved. however, it is impossible to fully realise and control the way our vocal cords operate. Therefore, building the skill of differentiating between voiced and voiceless consonants should rely on similar aspect in pronunciation of arabic consonants (forelingual noise consonants). This positive experience will facilitate



students' distinguishing consonants within the phonological opposition of “voiced consonant – voiceless consonant”. The initial stage of building the skill of correct pronunciation of voiced and voiceless consonants should focus on introducing and practicing correct articulation of voiceless occlusive labial phoneme [п] and voiced occlusive labio-dental [в]. In addition, at the initial stages it would be recommended to include converting partially voiced consonants, that may appear in the arab students' speech, into proper voice or voiceless consonants.

Prior to training articulation of [п] sound, we would recommend performing articulation exercises without involving vocal cords. For example, students are offered to inhale, hold their breath, and then force the air out of their lungs trying at the same time to bring into motion a piece of paper, which they are supposed to hold in front of their lips. To this end, it is necessary to teach students to focus solely on the work of the lips in the process of vigorous closing and opening the mouth. The exercise described above demonstrates the method that can help the students to make phoneme [п] voiceless and enables foreigners to realise the degree of tension required to pronounce the phoneme correctly.

At the next stage, we can offer the students to pronounce vowel [а], opening their lips arduously, which should result in producing syllable *na*. The correct articulation, once acquired, should be fixed by pronouncing [п] in combination with a different vowel within a syllable and in the initial position in a word followed by a stressed vowel (*нара, нил, нух, неро, поле*). The least favorable position, that is, intervocalic and followed by an unstressed vowel, should be avoided at the initial stages of practicing the phoneme.

To consolidate the acquired articulation of phoneme [п] with consonants, we would suggest combinations with sonorants, since they contribute to vocalization of voiceless sounds. At the following stages the students may proceed to practicing articulation in varied phonetic positions in words and phrases.

While working on phoneme [б], students should pay attention to a lower degree of lip tension as compared to that required to pronounce phoneme [п]. The following training exercise illustrates the difference in lip tension: students are invited to pronounce [п] and [б] sequentially with a sheet of paper in front of their lips and note that the paper is disturbed by the airflow produced while [п] sound is pronounced, whereas it remains motionless for pronouncing [б]. In the process of forming and correcting articulation of voiced [б], it is recommended to choose vowel surrounding and combinations with sonorants. Differentiation between [п] and [б] is most successfully achieved in similar phonetic positions, for example, with employing quasi-homonyms (*нуб-був, нух-бух, нуй-буй, пани-бани, перу-беру, пони-бони*).

Transforming voiceless phoneme [ф] or partially voiced [ѣ] into fully voiced phoneme [в] should be practiced in the intervocalic position of the consonant between vowel [а], first in unstressed, and later in stressed syllables. The next stage can include practicing articulation of the initial consonants in the same sequence: first unstressed, then stressed syllables (*áva-avá-móva-водá*). It is advisable to practice articulation of voiced consonants in fast-paced speech, thus reducing the articulative tension.

According to our observations, it is most expedient to articulate palatalised



consonants in the intervocalic position between two [i] vowels. Thus, the learners are offered the following sequence of learning activities: first, they should adjust the speech organs into position so as to pronounce [i], then articulate the consonant and finally return to [i], controlling the position of the tongue at all times. The acquired speech organs position should be fixed in combination with other vowels (*я, ю, є*). Particular attention and training should be paid to articulating palatalised consonants in the final position in a word. pronouncing the consonant phoneme with the sound [i] in this position and gradually reducing the length of the sound will lead to the desired result. Choosing a favorable position for the phoneme that is being trained plays an important role in developing the skill of distinguishing between palatalised and non-palatalised consonants.

An established fact is that influence of palatalisation at the articulatory level is reflected, to some extent, in the manner in which palatalised consonants are formed, which may distort their pronunciation when forelingual constrictives [т'] and [д'] resemble affricates. This phenomenon often causes mingling occlusives and affricates when teaching palatalised forelingual occlusives to arab students. Therefore, introducing and forming palatalised [т'], [д'] should start with presenting a standard reference model of these phonemes to the learners, which at the stage of articulation and formation of phonemic hearing will prevent confusing these consonants with affricates. In addition, palatalisation has a moderate effect on the process of producing consonant phoneme [п'], which, quite contrary to its non-palatalised counterpart, is constrictive.

Training articulation of ukrainian backlingual consonants should start with methods of direct articulation control in order to activate the back of the tongue. The expected result of practicing articulation positions for backlingual occlusives [г], [к], [г] is a more advanced, as compared to arabic sounds, position of the tongue, which is supposed to prevent pronouncing uvular phonemes to displace ukrainian backlingual consonants. To avoid pronouncing glottals instead of backlingual consonants it is recommended to perform articulation exercises that involve drawing the back of the tongue close to the soft palate before adding the voice component. The exercise described above will help the students to stabilize, as well as to memorize the articulation for the sounds being studied. The fixed articulation position should be voiced at the next stage of practice.

Pharyngal arabic sounds, which may interfere at this stage, can be corrected by raising the back of the tongue in the moment of sound formation. for correction, the learners need to pronounce the occlusive consonant with the constrictives with the overtone [к^x], that is, to create a complete obstruction as if for [к], and then shift the tongue to a lower position, reducing the obstruction time to zero. thus, the students can achieve correct pronunciation of a constrictive consonant instead of an occlusive consonant.

The methods used allowed us to diagnose speech defects displayed by arabic-speaking students and choose the right correction strategy for each individual case.

The proposed exercises can be taken as a basis and used in the lessons aimed at recognising, differentiating and memorizing ukrainian phonemes. Example exercises may be as follows:



- 1) reproducing syllables with oppositional sounds;
- 2) recognising a phoneme among other sounds, syllables, and words;
- 3) repeating paronyms;
- 4) recognising words with phonemes that possess similar acoustic and articulatory features;
- 5) defining a common phoneme in different words.

So far this paper has focused on the ways in which the learners' native language may assist in teaching them correct pronunciation and techniques to employ the learners' native language. The following section will discuss methods of incorporating the data from the students' first language into teaching language units of the lexical level.

5.3. Techniques to overcome obstacles related to lexical and grammatical differences

Psychological substantiation of resorting to the students' native language acquires special significance for semantization of new vocabulary since acquiring a new language occurs through learning words that express certain concepts, thus contributing to the human mental activity. A comparative analysis of the lexical phenomena in the FL and the SL leads to a positive result in the process of learning "another language". Thus, it is believed that one of the most important psychological principles of language learning is the principle of connection between language and thinking.

B. Belyaev, a well-known psychologist and methodologist, insists on the direct connection of the native language and thinking, noting that students, apart from learning a foreign language, should be taught to think in SL [2]. The researcher introduced the term 'teaching method of conscious practice', which defines that awareness of meaning of the language forms is acquired during the lessons, whereas SL practice is determined as the decisive factor. The linguistic concept of the method relies on L. Shcherba's ideas. Four learning objectives have been identified: practical, general, educational, and developmental; the objects of study are defined as language, speech, and language activity. The principles of conscious approach and practical orientation are set as a priority factor, while another important factor is resorting to the learners' first language in the process of mastering a foreign language. In view of the above, some researchers define the approach as conscious comparative method [1, 283].

The basic methodological provisions for the conscious practice teaching method are determined as follows:

- assimilating various types of language activities should be carried out in interconnection with each other;
- sequencing training from acquiring knowledge to building speaking skills and abilities;
- incorporating linguistic facts gradually, depending on their use in real life communication;
- presenting the language facts relies on the principle of increasing complexity;



- the course content should be divided into active and passive;
- learning the language course content should be differentiated and implemented through performing specifically designed language and speech exercises;

- resorting to the learners' FL.

Assimilating vocabulary of a foreign language means, first of all, assimilating word meanings. A word typically refers to more than one specific object, rather to a number of objects, thus, any word contains a certain covert generalization, being a mental act expressed through speech.

Therefore, it can be argued that a word has a dual synthetic nature, since a word represents a phenomenon of speech and a mental phenomenon derived from reflection of reality. The process of learning a foreign word equals to forming a set of word meanings in the student's mind, some of which may either completely or partially coincide with the lexical and semantic variants of the corresponding native word or have no corresponding word in the native language. For instance, in the process of learning the Ukrainian language, it is typical for a French-speaking student to say «Я не знаю добре говорити українською мовою» (*I do not know to speak Ukrainian well*). The nature of the described speech error lies in the fact that the French verb *savoir* means “to know” and “can”, that is, its semantics in French is broader than in Ukrainian, which causes numerous errors at the lexical-semantic level: «Я не знаю готувати борщ» (*I do not know to cook borsch*) etc. The observations described above suggest that this inconsistency is due to either presence or absence of corresponding semantic components in the complex meanings of the words being compared.

Success in mastering a new language depends both on conscious learning of the new vocabulary and grammar, therefore, it is desirable to build a clear algorithm for understanding the grammatical structure of the native language, that, as noted by O. Leontiev, can be later transposed into SL (Leontiev, 1997). It is worth mentioning that such transpositions of the first language knowledge may cause a negative effect, in case of significant differences between FL and SL. In most cases, a person, while communicating in a foreign language, uses grammar involuntarily, without formulating grammar rules in the process of communication, although it is grammar that contributes to expressing the opinion or comprehending utterances formulated by the interlocutor.

The importance of grammar for mastery of Ukrainian as a foreign language is vital. Still, we have observed that, for example, Turkmen-speaking students experience serious difficulties in the process of learning Ukrainian, the background for which lies in the distinctive features of the morphological structure of Ukrainian and Turkmen languages. Ukrainian belongs to the group of synthetic fusional languages, in which the relationships between words are expressed through word forms. The word forms convey both lexical and grammatical meaning, case semantics in particular, where case forms reproduce grammatical relations between words. Such languages are characterized by coinciding grammatical forms conveyed by different flections (*великий, молодий* – *adjective, masculine gender, singular*; *синій, осінній* – *adjective, masculine gender, singular*); identical case inflections (*Це клас. Я іду в*



клас).

The Turkmen language is referred to agglutinative languages, where grammatical forms and word formation are realised by adjoining affixes to the root or the word base. Ukrainian noun possesses the category of gender. It should be noted that gender of nouns denoting personal names and some animals is determined by the object's being referred to a particular gender. However, gender for other nouns is indicated by certain inflections and suffixes.

Contrary to Ukrainian, the Turkmen language does not possess the grammatical category of gender. To define biological gender, words *gyz* (a girl) and *oglan* (a boy) are used. It is important to emphasize that the degree of interference in the process of learning a foreign language depends on the level of proficiency in the first language; nonetheless, it seems possible to eliminate the effects of interference by comparative analysis of interlingual phenomena, for example, while error correction.

In *Introduction to Linguistics*, M. Kochergan offers the following definition of fusion languages: “Unlike agglutinative languages, where affixes express one meaning, are standard and are mechanically attached to words, in inflectional languages flections convey multiple meanings (for example, in the word *стола* inflection *-а* conveys three meanings: masculine gender, singular number, and genitive case). The inflections are non-standard (genitive case can be expressed with a different ending – *вод-и, земл-і, стол-ів, сімей*), are adjoined to the base that can normally not function without a flection (*земля, чорний, звемо*), and organically merges with the base, forming a single alloy, which results in various transformations at the junction of morphemes (*рука, руці; робити – роблю; киянин – кияни*). The formal term of Latin origin to denote interpenetration of contacting morphemes, which results in blurring boundaries between them, is *fusion*. Hence, another term for inflectional languages is fusion languages” [11].

At the initial stage of learning any foreign language, the learners grasp its basic grammatical phenomena. Thus, while learning Ukrainian, the students become acquainted with the structural model of the sentence, selecting the necessary forms to comply with the rules of Ukrainian grammar. We would like to highlight that this process occurs automatically, thus building up the speech skills base. At the time of speaking, the speaker's attention is focused solely on the contents of the utterance. It would be further possible to compare adequate and inadequate elements and structures of the native language and Ukrainian as a foreign language.

The findings on the comparative study of Ukrainian and Turkmen, that we have discussed above, support psycholinguistic theory of indispensable interaction between the first and the second learner's languages. As explained earlier, such interaction demonstrates a two-faceted character: on the one hand, it can lead to deviations from the norm (interference) in the process of acquiring SL (Ukrainian in our case); on the other hand, it may create favourable conditions for learning a new language (transposition).



Conclusions

The purpose of the current study was to determine how the phenomenon of interference is manifested at phonological, lexical and grammatical language levels.

These findings enhance our understanding of several aspects of the Ukrainian language that contribute to building the learners' linguistic competence: developing the ability to apply relevant knowledge to express opinions for building productive and effective communication, along with the ability to apply the acquired language skills in real life communicative situations. Vocabulary and morphology serve as an important source of building speaking skills in the process of learning a foreign language, as well as orthoepy, which is a principal component for forming correct listening and pronunciation skills, which are basic for mastering all types of speech activities.

The psycholinguistic analysis of the language learning process indicate that negative effects of interference can be eliminated by employing comparative analysis of interlingual phenomena. Given the high probability of interference that may hinder teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language, it seems important to isolate students from the influence of the native language to avoid negative knowledge transposition; instead, it would be desirable to seek for the methods to incorporate positive native language transposition in order to fix stable language associations in the learners' experiences.

Relevant linguistic phenomena of FL and SL, when assimilated by the students, contribute significantly to further effective use of respective elements or structures in speech. Regarding dissimilar phenomena of native and foreign language, the students should recognise them as contrasting.

The present study provides additional evidence with respect to interlingual interference, which, quite contrary to the widely held view, may be constructive rather than destructive, if applied correctly. It was also shown that the degree of interference in learning a foreign language depends on the level of proficiency in the native language.

Further research should therefore concentrate on investigating the target audience and search for optimal approaches and methods, which could act as enhancing factors within the system of learning intensification.