



INCREASING LANGUAGE LITERACY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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Abstract: Currently, high demands are placed on the level of linguistic literacy of university students. But not all first-year students meet the demands put forward by higher education: language skills and speech skills are not sufficiently developed, which is a serious omission of general education institutions. The article presents a fragment of an experimental study in which a communicative-activity approach was introduced, aimed at increasing the language literacy of students. Experimental learning includes three stages: the ascertaining stage, at which the literacy level of the students participating in the experiment was diagnosed, the teaching stage, aimed at developing the appropriate skills, and the control or analytical stage, which is the result of the experimental learning.

Key words: Language literacy, language resources, society, linguistic personality, reading literacy, functional literacy, experimental learning.

The concept of “linguistic literacy” is interpreted differently in the methodology. If we adhere to the point of view that linguistic literacy is functional literacy, that is, limited to providing a communicative function, this is a rather narrow understanding of the term. However, there is an opinion of other scientists who criticize this thesis. Researchers argue that language is not just a means of communication, but also a tool for the development and improvement of personality, an indicator of the culture and education of entire nations.

Functional literacy is defined as a sign of a linguistic personality, which presupposes possession of “a system of extralinguistic knowledge about the rules of communication in integration with linguistic knowledge and speech skills, as well as the ability and readiness for their integrated use in the practice of multi-genre communication in order for the user to effectively implement his social and professional functions”.

Reading, communicative, information literacy (without the formation of which there is no possibility of correctly and fruitfully organizing the educational process) is based on linguistic literacy. Based on this, it can be argued that students’ knowledge and skills in spelling, punctuation, phraseology and other areas of the language are components of linguistic literacy.

Here it is worth noting the special role of schools in the formation of language competence among students. In the absence of spelling, punctuation, and orthoepic standards, it is impossible to talk about the formation of linguistic literacy. And if students receive the required amount of language knowledge while still at school, the task of university teachers is greatly simplified: the educational process is not slowed down, there is no need to make changes to the curriculum, and accordingly, the system of working with students does not need to be adjusted. Of course, the university must teach students how to use language resources in the field of their future profession, as well as in society, which determines the relevance of this study.



The purpose of this article: to investigate the level of linguistic literacy of first-year students before and after experimental training. The objectives of the study are as follows: to identify the level of development of language competence of first-year students; through the use of a communicative-activity approach as a methodological basis, to increase the language literacy of students.

The scientific novelty of the research lies in the implementation of a communicative-activity approach in Russian language classes in the process of conducting experimental training aimed at improving the language literacy of students.

In the process of developing the language literacy of university students, an important role is given to the disciplines of the humanities, in particular the discipline “Russian language”. The main goal of teaching this discipline is to obtain students a certain amount of theoretical knowledge. In addition, in Russian language classes, students are taught to independently search, analyze and evaluate the educational information received. All this involves the development of a creative approach to language learning, helps to instill in students a caring attitude towards language, and teaches them responsibility for their speech activity. That is, the goal of the “Russian Language” discipline is to form a linguistic personality who can freely and easily use the possibilities of oral and written speech in their professional activities. However, using only traditional teaching methods in the classroom makes the learning process monotonous and uninteresting. Consequently, there is a need to look for new methods of working with students, in the process of applying which the quality of education can be brought to a new level.

There is an assumption that the use of a communicative activity approach as a methodological basis (in which the educational process is implemented through active communication between students and teachers) will make it possible to more effectively develop students’ language literacy. This approach is focused on updating the “work - dialogue” model: communication, games that activate the communicative capabilities of students. The form of discussion is dominant in the proposed model. A discussion aimed at finding a solution to a given problem develops logical thinking in students, teaches them to conduct a dialogue, systematize the knowledge gained, and correctly select language tools.

To prove the hypothesis put forward, an experimental study was conducted among 1st year students of the Faculty of Pedagogy in classes in the discipline “Russian Language”. The experiment consisted of three stages. 24 students were involved in the experimental learning.

At the first, ascertaining stage, a diagnosis of students’ knowledge was carried out: the participants in the experiment wrote a dictation and composed short texts on a free topic.

The diagnostics revealed that most of the participants in the experiment were proficient in spelling. Meanwhile, the insufficient level of language literacy of students negatively affects the formation of students’ conceptual apparatus and reduces their cognitive interest in the content of the discipline.

The next stage is formative, or educational. The purpose of this stage is the practical application of the communicative-activity approach as a method of effectively increasing the language competence of students.

At this stage, students completed the following tasks:

- 1) make simple sentences, place punctuation marks, highlight words with unverifiable vowels at the root, explain spelling;
- 2) compose a speech statement;
- 3) break the text into parts;

- 4) choose synonyms for the given words;
- 5) choose homonyms for the given words;
- 6) highlight words with direct meaning;
- 7) highlight words with a figurative meaning;
- 8) determine the stylistic coloring of the following words: mess, trivial, prisoner, eyes, lips, chat.

During discussions organized in classes, students learned to correctly and clearly formulate their opinion, prove it, and defend it. In addition, students were given the opportunity to correct shortcomings in their answers themselves, evaluate their own work and the work of other participants in the experiment. This, to a certain extent, gave students the opportunity to relax, not be afraid to make mistakes, and be self-confident. Thus, the leaders of the experiment managed to create a situation of success in the classroom, which is very important for obtaining a positive result of any action.

The next stage - control - was aimed at identifying the presence or absence of positive dynamics after the implementation of the above method. At this stage of the study, the experiment participants performed the following tasks:

- 1) find lexical errors in fragments from business papers, determine their nature;
- 2) find in the text cases of erroneous use of abbreviated spellings;
- 3) find errors made by the author of the application;
- 4) edit the text of the document;
- 5) explain the placement of punctuation marks;
- 6) find polysemantic words in the text and determine their meaning;
- 7) answer the question in such a way that the answer is a fragment of an official document:
 - What material is the coat made of?
 - Is it legal to do business in the subway?
 - Is it possible to get a copy of documents without presenting a passport?
- 8) choose synonyms for the given words;
- 9) choose antonyms for the given words;
- 10) make a speech statement.

So, the results of the first stage of the experiment showed that the majority of students, as noted above, only speak spelling. Composing a speech utterance causes them some difficulties.

The last stage of the experiment made it possible to identify an increase in the level of language literacy of students during the period of experimental training.

Thus, in the process of comparative analysis of the results of the first and last stages of the study, we can conclude that with regular implementation of exercises and tasks, and the organization of training sessions based on the communicative-activity approach, there is a positive trend in the development and formation of language literacy students. This means that the hypothesis put forward at the beginning of the study has been proven experimentally.

The results obtained during the study can be used in practical classes in the Russian language.



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