

Секция «Методика преподавания иностранных языков и лингводидактика: Актуальные проблемы методики преподавания иностранных языков»

Language Teacher Classroom Management Competencies: Evaluation and Recommendations

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Nowadays more and more people are learning foreign languages. That is why the quality of language teacher education is on the agenda. Various educational organisations have been developing different frameworks of English language teacher competencies, e.g. the Cambridge English Teaching Framework (Cambridge English Language Assessment 2014), where the competencies are described and classified. On the basis of such frameworks exams and special courses for teachers are designed. However, after thorough comparison of the syllabus of one of such courses, CELTA (Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults), which is aimed at novice teachers (Cambridge English Language Assessment 2015, p.2) with the Cambridge Framework (Cambridge English Language Assessment 2014), the conclusion was drawn that not all areas of competencies are evaluated by the means of tasks included in the course (Melezhnikova 2018, p.113). To be more precise, for the area “Managing language learning” (Cambridge English Language Assessment, 2014) there are no specific tasks (except for teaching practice) to evaluate and build teachers’ knowledge.

There is no universal definition of ‘classroom management’ because, as Tony Wright mentions in his book (2005, p. 424), there is no much research on this topic. However, the authors who deal with this concept in their works usually understand by it organisation of the learning process, psychological climate in the classroom and learning environment in general. This is how Jim Scrivener defines ‘classroom management’ in his practical guide for language teachers ‘Classroom Management Techniques’ (2013, p. 1): “Your classroom management is the way that you manage students’ learning by organising and controlling what happens in your classroom. . .”. So, the teacher acts like an organiser or manager of the classroom work. For the purposes of our research ‘classroom management’ will be defined as a set of particular skills of a teacher to organise and maintain a constructive learning environment.

It can be argued that classroom management is understandable at the level of common sense and there is no need to gain theoretical knowledge in this field. In the majority of courses for language teachers not enough attention is paid to developing their competence in this area.

The main aim of this study is to investigate the need of including the section “Classroom management” into the curriculum of trainee teachers of English. As it was mentioned above the topic of classroom management is underestimated in the literature on language learning (Wright 2005, p. 424) because ‘managing classrooms is normally something we do rather than analyse’ (Wright 2005, p. 8). However, in teaching practice classroom management is of paramount importance, and the whole learning process depends on its effectiveness. In the book ‘Classroom Dynamics’ by Jill Hadfield (2000) the author showed the teachers’ need for gaining knowledge in the field of classroom management by describing the results of the questionnaire for language teachers. It revealed that their major concern about language teaching is not presenting the material in an interesting way as the author had expected, but the problems connected to the organisation of the learning process, i.e. classroom management. So, teachers felt lack of

competence in this field and wanted to improve their knowledge because, as they saw it, it would really enhance the quality of their teaching.

In order to identify if classroom management is a topic that teachers need to learn about during their professional training or it is a set of skills acquired only through teaching practice mixed-method research will be employed. First, a background questionnaire on the teaching experience and the level of awareness of classroom management of the respondents (the background questionnaire is the same for all groups of the participants) and a test on the knowledge of classroom management techniques will be given to three groups of participants: second year students who have not attended any teacher training courses; fourth year students of the department of foreign languages who are majoring in teaching and novice teachers of the department of foreign languages. It is expected to see that the more knowledge of classroom management a participant has, the better he/she is at solving problems in the test. Then, an experiment will be carried out in which the same group of fourth year students will be tested on their classroom management knowledge before and after special lectures on this topic in order to find out if the lectures help to solve classroom management problems better.

It is planned to prove that theoretical knowledge about classroom management can benefit performance in solving practically oriented tasks. It is anticipated that students without knowledge about classroom management will not be able to complete the test successfully while the participants whose awareness in the field is high will show good results. It is also expected that test results will be higher in the same group of participants after special lectures on the topic.

The results of the research can be used to decide if including the topic “Classroom management” into the courses for trainee teachers is worth doing.

Источники и литература

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