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THE PECULIARITIES OF STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGES EDUCATION QUALITY IMPROVING IN POLISH TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES

Abstract. The paper highlights the experience of Polish technical universities in students' foreign languages training quality improvement by different methods and approaches application. The models of studies and varieties of courses of foreign languages training that are used in modern educational environment of Poland are exposed. It is found out on the basis of analysis, that in the process of students' foreign languages training the Polish tutors use combination of methods and approaches, that correlate the participants of educational process with the character of inter-person cooperation. Taking into account the modern approaches to the educational environment functioning, it is important to mark the features of foreign languages technologies planning in Polish vocational education, which include also the introduction of students differentiation due to the level of foreign language mastering, realization of material understanding verifications, permanent exchange by experience between teachers and scientists that work on introduction of new technologies both in Polish and foreign higher educational establishment, the initiation of research and extra-mural student's work. It is grounded that aspiration of the Polish teachers to optimize the process of foreign languages training stipulated the improvement of students' foreign languages training quality. The process of foreign languages studies in the technical universities of Poland takes place with the use of different models and varieties of courses of students' learning activity organization. In modern terms the efficiency of forms of studies is mostly estimated from the point of assistance to students' active work at lectures, their way of thinking and imagination development, their responsibility for the studies and collaboration in a group. The practical value of research consists in possibility of positive Polish experience application in domestic higher educational establishments.

Keywords: students' foreign languages education; quality of students' foreign languages education; model of studies; methods of foreign languages teaching; technical universities of Poland.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Polish researchers distinguish seven major standards the achievement of which provides high quality of studies: 1) politics of quality assurance; 2) controls, estimation and periodic updating of on-line tutorials; 3) students' evaluation; 4) scientific and tutors staff quality assurance; 5) didactics student support and assistance for the students in science; 6) the informative systems application; 7) information about higher educational establishment distribution (a publication in mass-media).

The technical universities of Poland worked out “Principles of the system of educational quality assurance functioning in technical universities” in 2015 with their further updating in 2017. The basic tasks of this system are as follows:

- 1) forming the positions in relation to providing of the proper quality of education in the academic environment of university, and also construction of education quality’s culture by organization of the actions in relation to quality of studies providing and improvement, and control of these actions in the university;
- 2) permanent control of quality of studies in the university;
- 3) creations of procedures of periodic and systematic evaluation of studies level quality at the university – with agreement and at participation of representatives of all departments of the university;
- 4) permanent public access to on-line tutorials of all levels and forms of studies providing, that is given by the university (*Zasady Funkcjonowania Uczelnianego Systemu Zapewniania Jakości Kształcenia w Politechnikach*, 2016).

The purpose of the article is to ground the experience of students’ foreign languages education quality improvement in technical universities of Poland.

2. METHODS

The research paradigm was interpretive, which placed emphasis on the analysis of sources as well as research materials with the next synthesis of its results in the integral system of approaches to the quality improvement of students’ foreign languages education in the technical universities of Poland.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The system of foreign languages studies quality assurance in the technical universities of Poland is integrally constrained and consonant with the system of quality of studies assurance in the university and is based on four programs: the program of educational process perfection; the program of students’ support; the program of scientific and tutors staff providing, evaluation and improvement as well as administration of foreign languages department; the program of foreign languages department’s activity advertisement in the academic environment (Macukow, 2015, p. 12–16).

For the correct functioning of the system of foreign languages studies quality assurance the guidance of foreign languages department are responsible for as well as Council of researches that, at least once during the academic year dedicates one of its meetings to the questions of quality of studies improvement. Formation, introduction and control of the system functioning is in responsibility of Commission in matters of quality, its subcommittees, groups or working collectives that are called to implementation of set tasks, as well as administration of foreign languages department (secretariat, student base, news-department, technical department, library). In the process of some system tasks realization there is collaboration with student and professors’ self-government, and also department in employment. The direct control of lectures quality assurance is conducted by the commission of separate language collectives. The commission on evaluation is also responsible for the quality of educational process that operates within the framework of periodic workers’ evaluation. The procedures of educational process quality providing in the department of foreign languages are based on the ratified academic positions. For the proper internal functioning of the system of foreign languages studies quality providing, as well as its systematic measuring the corresponding projected “instruments” are required. The procedures of acquisition and maintenance of quality’s standards as well as the facilities of the systematic qualities’ measuring that are used within the framework of the internal system are presented in the separate programs (Saryusz-Wolski, 2014, p. 43–49).

The process of foreign languages studies in the technical universities of Poland takes place with the use of different models and varieties of courses of students’ learning activity organization. In modern terms the efficiency of forms of studies is mostly estimated from the point of assistance to students’ active work at lectures, their way of thinking and imagination development, their responsibility for the studies and collaboration in a group.

The perspective direction in foreign languages’ education is the application of blended learning, the combination in a different proportion of remote and traditional mural or extra-mural studies, taking into account the possibilities of educational establishment, students, teachers, presence of powerful flow lines, and also the cost of access to the Internet, etc.

Language courses are divided into: traditional language lectures, lectures with informative new technologies application, additional lectures, and also lectures, controlled from distance through the Internet. The Polish scholar Świerk (2015) distinguishes three basic components to the model of foreign languages studies that is used in modern educational environment:

- face-to-face education – is a traditional format of the lecture – a tutor and a student;

- self-study learning – envisages independent students' work; a search of materials by means of resource map, local and global networks;

- online collaborative learning – the cooperative work of students and tutors in the form of on-line mode, for example, by means of Internet-conferences, Skype etc (Świerk, 2015, p. 44–48).

The courses, presented within the framework of institution of higher education or inter-universities projects that are usually financed by European funds, prevail at higher educational establishments of Poland. There are three variants of projects:

- courses, worked out by the command of language experts, methodists of studies (rarely by the methodists of the controlled from distance studies), tutors of information technologies, technicians, sometimes also by psychologists. They are formed for a few months, then a pilotage course is presented, after which students fill questionnaires where they give the estimation to the course; the tutors mark suffered errors that remove at once and the course is entered in the educational process of the university;

- courses, created in tandems, academic teachers that teach language courses in corresponding university enter in the complement of that. A co-ordinator that chooses a leading textbook used on traditional lectures and comes forward as basis for creation of accessible exercises on the educational platform, looks after the whole project. Educational materials in an electronic form after realization of their corresponding evaluation is obligatory part of every language course in the universities of Poland;

- the university orders digital didactics materials from a language expert that is also a tutor of information technologies. These materials are adjusted to the textbooks of corresponding courses, levels of foreign languages mastering, and also personal students' interests. They come forward as an additional source of language exercises, which teachers interpret as optional part of the course, for example, intended for persons, who are absent on the lectures; these materials rarely fold the integral part of the course (Świerk, 2015, p. 379–386).

In addition Polish universities propose the language courses, worked out by teachers that not only began work in a virtual environment, but also create own didactics electronic materials and carry out the selection of educational text-books. Polish scholar Lubina (2014) names them methodical experiments. On her opinion, these courses determine the direction of methodology of distance studies development. However such courses fold the small percent of electronic language suggestion of the university, whereas the creation of digital didactics materials as well as realization of the courses in distance format is a labour intensive process and requires the considerable engaging of many new competences of the tutor, in particular technical and informative (Lubina, 2014, p. 245–250). Traditional language studies also have been broadened due to electronic courses of language publishing houses. They are presented as a manual for self-tuition, which is controlled by the lecturer that conducts traditional courses in corresponding university. Such materials are maladjusted to the groups' necessities and also unrelated with traditional part of students' foreign languages' training course (Świerk, 2015, p. 364–370).

For implementation of such didactics requirements and correct organization of students' educational-cognitive activity in the process of foreign languages studies at Polish university the following methods of education are widely used: informative-receptive (that envisages the perception of educational material and its mastering); reproductive (representation of the studied information); the method of theoretical and practical study of the language (that is based on implementation of training exercises).

During 2016–2017 among higher educational establishments of Poland a study was undertaken the aim of which envisaged the evaluation of foreign complementary studies quality with the use of the distance constituent. Electronic courses, systems of tutors and students work with these technologies, standards and guidelines, which concerned the qualities providing of the distance studies that were adjusted to the studies of foreign languages were subject of evaluation. In the process of research the further evaluation of didactics electronic materials by authors, teachers and co-ordinators of electronic courses also investigated. On the second stage of the research the analysis of courses quality was conducted by questioning of the students by means of questionnaire.

The research results showed that higher educational establishments of Poland provided a technical infrastructure, organizational and technical support of language courses, accompanied by the use of methods and technique of distance studies. Tutors that carry out the studies of foreign languages must be acquainted with the virtual environment of studies and the newest facilities of work with students on basic electronic educational platforms. Tutors that develop multimedia and interactive educational materials, regularly have qualification improvement by participating in webinars, Internet-courses and conferences. The research educed that digital didactics materials are much better adjusted to the necessities of students and labour-market, than textbooks that are used on traditional lectures. Their advantage is authenticity, interactivity and multimedia characteristics. They function by means of educational platforms (for example, Moodle, Edux) in form of modules and lessons on implementation of which a student has a set time.

The communication between the participants of the course, the tutor and the university takes place in set time, presented to the student before the course. The students regularly get the reverse pointing on the work processing and ground of the language errors, as well as methods and ways of their removal are offered (Bednarek, & Lubina, 2013, p. 221).

All Polish universities guarantee access to the information, related to principles of work on electronic courses organization, principles and methods of getting credit, methods and facilities of the work. At every higher school there is a worker who carries out the administration of the platform and is responsible for technical support of the distance studies. However, sometimes professional technical support failing for tutors that carry out the distance studies authors of digital didactics materials, which result in their excessive burden and attention focuses on the aspects of technical courses.

Control and evaluation of results of distance part of studies is carried out by means of computer, peer evaluation and also by a tutor. Students get the individualized help adjusted to their styles of study. An alternative evaluation is more often used, whereas it is more authentic, dynamic and more engaging for students (Świerk, 2015, p. 185).

The final evaluation of all constituents of the process of students' foreign languages training takes place at the end of each term and at the end of the year. With the aim of distance constituent of educational process improvement the students are offered questionnaires, where they must mark the advantages and the lacks of multimedia and interactive educational materials. The changes recommended by them are inculcated with the further updating of such courses for the next five years.

The methods of work are also the subject of evaluation. They include: methods of studies, their adequacy in relation to the aims, work environment, whether it is friendly for students, or supports individual and collective studies, encourages to active and systematic participation in an educational process.

The research participants underlined the influence of multimedia didactics resources selection on efficiency and attractiveness for the use of electronic courses on lectures. The shortage of direct, interpersonal substantial contact with a tutor and participants of the course causes the search of various methods of knowledge transmission and initiates to the search of new technique of education (Bednarek, Lubina, 2013, p. 135). The offered electronic forms of courses of students' foreign languages training are based on the differentiated methods and forms of studies with the use of Web 2.0 and mobile technologies.

Undertaken study showed that further direction of distance constituent of foreign languages courses quality improvement is a close collaboration between the authors of courses, technicians and consultants in matters of platform. A tutor is the specialist of pedagogical use of means of the Internet who must concentrate thereon, that can do better, and other tasks are exported to the experts from corresponding sphere.

Thus, a model of forms of studies integration as the combined form is an integral educational process that provides part of educational activity for the student to be conducted in auditorium, and part is given for distance form with the independent types of works prevailing. It is important to define a tutor, what types of student's activity need to be applied in auditorium, and what types can be carried in independent distance form.

So, an auditorium form envisages the students' acquaintance with new material from the most difficult problems that need direct participation of the tutor. In auditorium the discussions and work in groups are conducted, so those types of activity, that requires a direct contact on different levels (with a tutor, between students). The distance part of course provides: study of educational material by means of interactive manual with a hypertext that uses all means of influence on a reader, that is only possible technically in the system – from especially literary (choice of corresponding strategy and stylistics) through publishing (types, make-up, illustrations) and to the most compound computer (sound, animation, reference to other materials; implementation of practical tasks and exercises that assist mastering of material); collective implementation of tasks of creative character (projects); consultations with a tutor; realization of the educational and intermediate control testing; independent searching, research activity with Internet-resources and other.

The model of auditorium and distance forms of studies integration gives an opportunity to study in a group with a tutor and additionally at home in comfortable time for the student, he sets optimal speed and intensity of process of studies; the development of student's self-organisation and self-discipline, the forming of inter-personal communications, ability to work in a command that is a necessity for the professional formation of a specialist is accelerated. This model requires the high level of tutor's competence, both in traditional and in the newest methods of studies, as well as presence for the students of sufficient skills of informative and communication technologies of work in distance education.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

It is educed that for students' foreign languages educational process intensification the widest

possibilities are given by the combined studies. However the methodology of electronic educational and methodical complexes of discipline development, determination of directions of tutors' professional training needs a further study in relation to planning of the combined departmental teaching. The introduction of information technologies of distance studies will assist a receipt qualitatively of new educational product. Considerable expansion of educational informative media, increase of students' and tutors' possibility to communication with the colleagues of other universities, the access to the world informative resources – all these will assist to increase students' motivation to the studies, strengthen their creative self-realization, capture the work skills with telecommunications, as necessary terms of life in informative society.

In the context of the problem under study, the scope of further research envisages exploring the experience of Ukrainian educators in the sphere of innovations in foreign languages educational process.

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Я. О. Мозгова, Н. В. Шверун, Л. О. Загоруйко. Особливості покращення іншомовної підготовки студентів у технічних університетах Польщі. У статті представлено досвід польських технічних університетів у покращенні якості іншомовної підготовки студентів із використанням різних методів та підходів. Розкрито моделі навчання та різновиди курсів навчання іноземних мов, які використовуються в сучасному освітньому середовищі Польщі. На основі аналізу з'ясовано, що для навчання студентів іноземних мов польські викладачі використовують комбінацію методів та підходів до навчання, які корелюють з характером міжособистісної взаємодії учасників освітнього процесу. Враховуючи сучасні підходи до функціонування освітнього середовища, наголошено на особливостях проектування технологій навчання іноземних мов у професійній освіті Польщі, до яких відносять і впровадження диференціації студентів за рівнем володіння іноземною мовою, проведення перевірок засвоєння матеріалу, постійний обмін досвідом між викладачами та науковцями, які працюють над впровадженням нових технологій як у польських, так і зарубіжних закладах вищої освіти, ініціювання науково-дослідної та позааудиторної роботи студентів. Обґрунтовано, що прагнення польських викладачів оптимізувати процес навчання іноземних мов зумовило покращення якості іншомовної підготовки студентів. Практичне значення дослідження полягає у можливості використання позитивного польського досвіду у вітчизняних закладах вищої освіти.

Ключові слова: іншомовна підготовка студентів; якість іншомовної підготовки студентів; моделі навчання; методи навчання іноземних мов; технічні університети Польщі.

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