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POPULARIZATION OF TEACHING IN ENGLISH IN UKRAINIAN UNIVERSITIES: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

ПОПУЛЯРИЗАЦІЯ ВИКЛАДАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ В УКРАЇНСЬКИХ УНІВЕРСИТЕТАХ: ПЕРЕВАГИ ТА НЕДОЛІКИ

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In modern variable world, universities are facing the challenge of globalization of education and science. Globalization is the environment in which education is internationalizing, and universities are the main participants in this process around the world.

One of the factors of the globalizing environment is the dominance of English as a common language of modern science and education. Leading universities around the world, with few exceptions, offer education in English. Even those nations for which English is not the language of communication are trying to attract more students or at least prevent their decline by expanding the range of educational services in English.

On Ukraine's path to globalization, English has been recognized as a key competence in the context of economic integration and globalization, a tool for international communication and a means of joining the European

educational, scientific and professional space. The importance of English for expanding educational and professional opportunities is recognized by Ukraine and reflected in a number of national strategies and initiatives [1, c. 79].

As part of the “English for Universities” project, a number of studies were conducted, based on the results of which the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, together with the British Council in Ukraine, in accordance with the “Conceptual foundations of state policy on the development of the English language in the field of higher education”, developed methodological recommendations for ensuring quality study, teaching and use of the English language in higher education institutions of Ukraine.

The development of the English language in higher education in Ukraine involves:

- Increasing the volume and level of teaching English as a foreign language, including English for Special Purposes (ESP);
- Teaching professional disciplines in English as part of the Ukrainian-language program (English as Medium of Instruction for Ukrainians – EMI-u);
- Providing a full educational program in English for foreign students (English as Medium of Instruction for Foreigners – EMI-f) [2].

The methodological recommendations were approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine from 25.07.2023, № 898 [3].

The document provides recommendations to the management of higher education institutions of Ukraine, teachers of English for professional purposes and English for academic purposes, teachers of professional disciplines in English, and other employees of higher education institutions.

We consider it is appropriate to pay attention to the similar experience of other European countries, whose educational systems see the role of English in becoming more international, competitive and equal to the “world level”. Also, the use of a common language of international communication for teaching and joint research contributes to the internationalization of universities.

English has become the language of science, not only in the natural sciences but also in the social sciences and humanities. English is recognized as the language of PhD thesis defense. Academic writing is also mostly done in English. In Europe, massive academic mobility programs such as Erasmus have contributed to the spread of English-language educational programs.

The widespread use of English is leading to generations of English speakers. In many countries, education leaders are calling for the expansion of English-language education to attract international students and create an international learning environment for local students. Whereas previously, English-language programs were mostly for master’s degrees, now English is increasingly being taught at the bachelor’s level. In many countries,

English language teaching has become one of the priority areas for the development of pre-school and school education.

But in addition to the undoubted advantages of intensifying the use of English in education, we should not forget about certain disadvantages of teaching in English. Despite the fact that many people encourage the presence of English as a tool for international communication, some still believe that the anglicization of education introduces dissonance into the educational space. Many researchers point to the danger of the hegemony of the English language, which leads to the homogenization of research topics and scientific interests around the world.

There is a fear of losing cultural capital, a threat to national languages, especially in the case of small countries. A problem in both English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries is the risk of losing the quality of education using English as the language of instruction due to insufficient proficiency of both students and teachers.

There is a perception that studying in a foreign language contributes to the emergence of intercultural competence of students or “cultural hybridization” in the university environment. However, studying in English does not always lead to this. Researchers say that English, as it is used in international education and research, will remain only a tool of communication and a means of acquiring knowledge, not a carrier of culture. Many researchers point out that teaching in English to local students widens the gap between the university and society and does not contribute to the readiness of graduates to work in their home country and in their native language.

From the above, it is obvious that a foreign language dimension is emerging among universities seeking internationalization. It seems that the role of foreign languages in general, and undoubtedly English in particular, is growing in the competency portrait of students, teachers and administrative staff. But we shouldn't forget that the language of the country where the learning takes place is no less important than the language of instruction. Researchers emphasize that as proficiency in the language of the country of study increases, so does student satisfaction with their education. It seems that the cultural attitude of the university should be aimed at forming a culture of multilingual, multicultural communication.

The learning process is not only the transfer of knowledge, but also a way to share the experience and certain life values of the teacher as a carrier of culture. Bringing the language of the taught discipline to international standards discolors its content and diminishes the authenticity of the country in which the student receives his education. Over time, the own educational traditions of Ukrainian universities will be lost, and as a result – their value in the educational market will fall.

Ukraine has had extensive experience in attracting foreign students to study at Ukrainian universities. Also, in many educational institutions, some programs were taught in English and before. However, the knowing of the language of the country of study, Ukrainian language, that contributed to the cultural and social adaptation and integration of foreigners. Being in the Ukrainian-speaking social space requires knowledge of the Ukrainian language at least at an elementary level. It is very difficult to be in a language vacuum and live a full life at the same time. Also, for Ukrainian students, studying with English in Ukraine contributes to alienation from their own culture and language.

Based on the above, we can say that the use of English in the Ukrainian educational environment should be within reason. That is why, Ukrainian universities should use English language in teaching for reasons of content, not because of volume, simply replacing Ukrainian with English. Also, more attention should be paid to the study of other languages, and first of all, the native language.

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