

THE PROBLEM OF ACTIVATION OF STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE AND COGNITIVE ACTIVITY IN THE PROCESS OF WORKING WITH DICTIONARIES

Valentyna Kyryklytsia

Abstract

This paper mainly presents the subject of the importance of large-scale application of teaching technology with dictionaries as a sure means of students' knowledge and cognitive activity activation. The objective of our research is to monitor and evaluate new advances in educational technology; to monitor current research and promote integration of best practices for teaching with technology; to enhance teaching and improve foreign languages study through the use of dictionary technology.

***Keywords:** activation, knowledge and cognitive activity, dictionary activity, different types dictionaries, dictionary technology*

1 Introduction

The problem of activation of knowledge and cognitive activity is paid more and more attention by teachers and specialists in educational methods in recent years. At different stages of society development it had different theoretical argumentation and practical realization depending on conditions and tasks which society assigned education and also on science and technology level in general and pedagogical science in particular.

In modern conditions of future specialists' preparation in high school teachers try to activate students' knowledge and cognitive activity in order to give them as many opportunities for social and professional growth as possible. Everyone knows that a modern employer is interested in such a worker who can think critically and solve a problem independently, who has a wide vocabulary based on deep knowledge and can make use of it in practice.

2 Activation of knowledge and cognitive activity in scientific theory

In didactic researches there are different approaches to the notion “activation of knowledge and cognitive activity”. As a rule, authors mean effective use of methods, procedures and techniques which are known in traditional didactics as a way of stimulating students’ activity (Лозова, 1990:75). For this purpose such an organization of a cognitive process is necessary in which the object of knowledge would be included into the sphere of students’ activities and the dialectical interaction between them would arrange conditions for revealing the individuality’s activity. In Pedagogical dictionary activation of the educational process is determined as improvement of methods and organizational forms of students’ knowledge and cognitive activity which ensures active and independent theoretical and practical students’ actions in all spheres of educational process (Гончаренко, 1997:21).

In pedagogy the method of individual and group possibilities activation presented by the Russian pedagogue G. Kitaygorodskaya is well-known. This method regards a student as an active participant of the educational process who creatively masters knowledge and skills which are applied successfully in the further educational and life activity. According to G. Kitaygorodskaya’s theory method of activation provides intensive education in the course of which educational goals are achieved at the shortest period of time with the most possible amount of knowledge (Ніколаєва, 1999:302).

So activation is a process aimed at mobilization of students’ intellectual, mental-volitional efforts, development the ability to resolve difficulties, active independent work. Moreover, in modern conditions activation of knowledge and cognitive activity should be considered not only as a process of students’ activity, but also the result of their activity stimulating. Our pedagogical experience affirms that, firstly, the process of activation of knowledge and cognitive activity should be in progress systematically including all possible directions of students’ work. Secondly, the teacher should take into consideration all the possible factors on which the process of activation of students’ knowledge and cognitive activity is depended.

As language teaching practice shows, these factors are:

- 1) determination of the cognitive activity purpose which encourages the students to master new knowledge, skills and habits;
- 2) following the didactic principles of knowledge and cognitive activity activation which stimulate getting new knowledge connected with the students’ future professional activity, skills and habits of its creative use;

- 3) complex use of methods, means and forms of knowledge and cognitive activity activation which provides high results of educational process and favours the formation of active goal-seeking individuality who influences the further development of the society;
- 4) taking into consideration students' individual psychological and pedagogical special features in the course of their knowledge and cognitive activity organization which increases students' activity and leads to their creative independence;
- 5) introduction of different forms of knowledge and cognitive activity control which ensures effectiveness of knowledge formation, skills obtaining and habits of their practical application and also formation of their need for self-education.

It is ascertained that the main ways of activation of students' knowledge and cognitive activities should be directed to searching effective methods and techniques of achieving efficacy in learning, integrated means of teaching and use of innovative educational technology.

3 Educational technology application to foreign languages teaching

The subject we want to focus our attention on is related to the field of educational technology. Activation of students' knowledge and cognitive activity is closely connected with the innovative technologies which are reflected in a number of pedagogical techniques widely used in the educational process. Modern educational technologies are orientated towards making conditions for student's individuality self-perfection. Teacher's constant striving for educational process optimization causes necessity in new educational technologies and equipment. Innovative educational technologies are a present-day requirement which allows to create educated society.

The famous Ukrainian pedagogue W. Bondar determines technologies in pedagogics as a totality of knowledge and ways of optimal selection of contents and methods of a certain activity which ensures purposeful motion from an objective to a result (Бондар, 2005:254). The main characteristics of the modern educational technologies are system connection of students' active independent work (individual study activity) and active methods of teaching (whole-class and group work) which should be applied during all the course of a subject study which is a part of a social experience (Козаков, 2003:57).

Teacher's ability to use different educational technologies gives a possibility to organize students' knowledge and cognitive activity creatively choosing in certain conditions such a teaching technology which guarantees knowledge learning, skills and habits formation at minimum efforts and time expenses. "The basis of each technology is formed by such components of knowledge activity as objective setting, objective performing and objective achieving. Its effectiveness depends on their interaction, interpenetration, interdependence into the structure of operating educational technologies" (Бондар, 2005:37).

Creating innovative educational activities is impossible without the use of new technology. It is very useful for us, teachers of foreign languages, to apply new technology into practice of language teaching. The teaching of foreign languages is in a constant state of flux, with new theories, practices and materials erupting all over the world on an almost daily basis. We are interested in the potential of educational technology at a global level and how useful it is for educators preparing to take leading roles in educational establishments, non-governmental organizations, cultural institutions, businesses and other organizations poised to use technology for educational purposes. We are going to evaluate the new educational activities through application of the newest methods of technology in education that connect learners to current knowledge and issues.

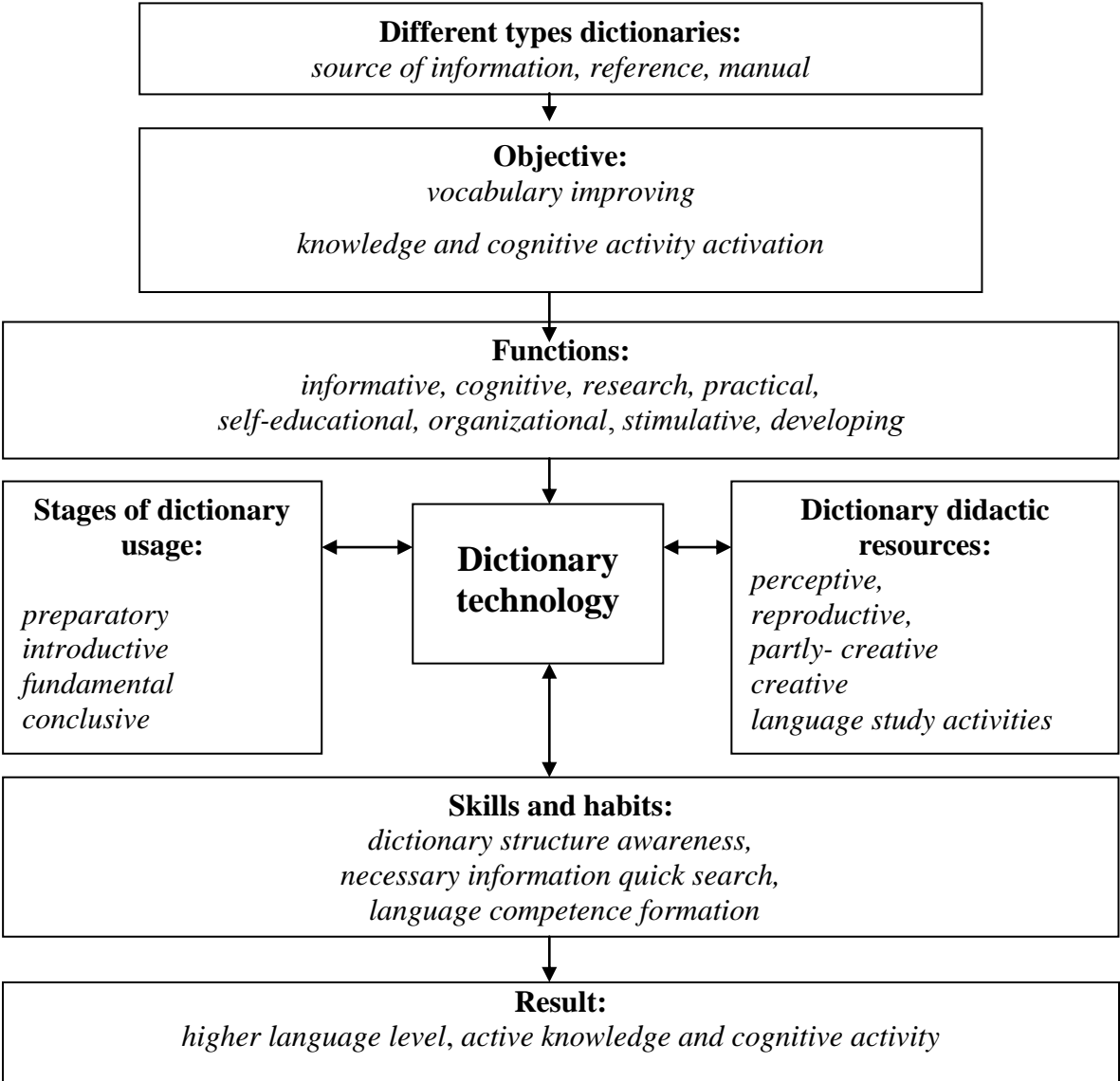
4 Dictionary technology in foreign languages teaching

Profound analysis of scientific pedagogical sources made it possible to formulate the notion of foreign language teaching technology with the use of different types dictionaries. The content of such a technology includes students' ability to do knowledge and cognitive activity based on innovative progressive educational technologies at professional level through practical dictionary skills and habits operating, analysis and use of received information.

The problem of dictionary usage as a means of activation of students' knowledge and cognitive activity requires its investigation as a single complete system different components of which are dialectically interacted. For convenience of such an approach we introduce a new notion "dictionary technology" which refers to the unity of lexical material content, ways of its explanation by means of all dictionary components with determined teacher's and student's activity. Dictionary technology in didactics – by analogy with production processes – is all the cycle of language material studying by means of different types dictionaries.

Especially important is the fact that dictionary technology in combination with innovative educational technologies becomes an effective means of foreign language competence formation, providing students with deep knowledge and practical skills in the course of foreign languages mastering. It is clear that educational technology of teaching foreign languages with the help of dictionaries is a complex process that should be implemented in the educational reality of high school. Only on the basis of dictionary educational technology which is presented in the diagram 1 it is possible to activate students' knowledge and cognitive activity in the course of foreign languages learning.

Diagram1: Dictionary educational technology



The diagram describes the nature of dictionary technology which includes usage of different types dictionaries at different levels of studying. Consequently, dictionary educational technology usage helps to get impartial assessment of foreign knowledge deepness and system, to find reasons of activity faults and to make on this basis such a pedagogical decision which ensures students' knowledge and cognitive activity activation. We think that dictionary educational technology which includes multi-media computer technology element should become an integral part of foreign languages learning in high school.

Training our students in dictionary use we want to achieve three goals: 1) to remove the fear that students may have when faced with the mass of information a dictionary contains; 2) to train students to understand that information; 3) to make a dictionary a normal and convenient part of language study and practice.

We completely agree with the British methodologist Jeremy Harmer who affirms that if we want students to use dictionaries it will probably not be sufficient just to recommend a dictionary and tell them how useful it is. He stresses that teachers should put dictionary training into lesson sequences so that students will see how to use dictionaries and what the benefits of such use are (Harmer, 2004:171).

Many years of foreign language teaching experience and research results convincingly prove that in spite of teaching methodology and preparation level students still have difficulties in using a dictionary. One reason of these difficulties is connected with lack of dictionary structure knowledge. The level of these difficulties is revealed through certain didactic conditions which are a link between a dictionary structure and students' knowledge and cognitive activity in the course of its usage.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion we would like to say that most of our students are prospective students. Wide use of dictionaries by the students is necessary for acquiring the foreign language competence which will favour their successful professional training. The acquired skill of using a dictionary will be very supportive in their future professional field. Time spent on dictionary training activities will not be wasted for because giving students a key to a dictionary we are giving them one of the most useful tools they are likely to be able to use.

The application of the suggested dictionary technology into practice of foreign language teaching are being conducted at the chair of foreign languages of Lesya Ukrainka Eastern European National University. The results have demonstrated a significant superiority in the foreign language teaching when dictionaries of different types are used.

We try to do all our best to fulfil the main task of high school which is to educate independent, creative, and well prepared for jobs students. To achieve this goal we should join a community of educational innovators who will be poised to reinvent education for the needs and opportunities of the 21st century.

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Contact

Mgr. Valentyna Kyrykulytsia
Lesya Ukrainka East European National University
Prospect Widrodzennia 47 / 64
43024 Lutsk
Ukraine
Tel: +380678596527
e-mail: valentyna@lt.ukrtel.net