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## Research Approach to Teaching Schoolchildren a Foreign Language

The article updates organizational and methodical peculiarities of schoolchildren's research work during foreign language learning. The authors justify the relevance of the research approach to forming schoolchildren's research skills as a universal way of learning the reality, gaining personal experience of learning, creativity development during lifelong education within contemporary information society. It is proved that the subject "Foreign language" offers significant potential for schoolchildren's research skills development. The main part of the article deals with the theoretical explanation of key aspects of schoolchildren's research activity, definition of the research approach, types of the research activity (academic and research); the terms "activity" and "research task". The authors give examples of academic work on creating projects at the English lessons. It is pointed out that a project creates conditions for independent search for knowledge, obtaining important for a growing person activity experience, self-monitoring skills, search activity formation, curiosity, and capability of independent thinking. The authors describe some research tasks used in school practice of German teaching. The tasks are illustrated by examples aimed at observation, drawing an analogy, analyzing, considering a phenomenon from different viewpoints, determining main and secondary points, generalizing, putting different questions, speaking on a given topic etc.

In conclusion it is noted that schoolchildren's creative independence and cognitive activity and their research activity stimulation become characteristics of contemporary educational situation. The authors emphasize the significance of research activity for development of schoolchildren.

**Keywords:** research approach; research activity; research skills; developing teaching; a foreign language lesson; organizational and methodical peculiarities.

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## Исследовательский подход к обучению иностранному языку школьников

В статье актуализируются организационно-методические особенности исследовательской работы школьников в процессе изучения иностранного языка. Обосновывается актуальность исследовательского подхода для формирования у школьников исследовательских умений как универсального способа освоения действительности, приобретения личностного опыта познания, развития творчества в аспекте непрерывного образования в контексте современного информационного общества. Показано, что предмет «Иностранный язык» обладает большим потенциалом для становления и развития исследовательских умений у обучающихся. В основной части статьи представлены теоретические пояснения по ключевым аспектам исследовательской деятельности обучающихся. Дается определение исследовательскому подходу, выделяются виды исследовательской деятельности (учебно-исследовательская и научно-исследовательская), дефинируются понятия «проектная деятельность» и «исследовательское задание». В статье приводятся примеры учебно-исследовательской работы обучающихся по созданию проектов на уроках иностранного языка. Подчеркивается, что проект создает условия для самостоятельного поиска знаний обучающимися, приобретения важного для подрастающего человека опыта деятельности, навыков самоконтроля, формирования поисковой активности, любознательности, способности самостоя-

тельно мыслить. Описаны отдельные исследовательские задания, применяемые в школьной практике обучения немецкому языку. Иллюстрируются примерами задания, направленные на наблюдение, проведение аналогии и анализа; рассмотрение явления с различных точек зрения; выявление главного и второстепенного; обобщение, постановку различных вопросов; построение высказывания на заданную тему и т. п.

В заключении отмечается, что развитие творческой самостоятельности и познавательной активности обучающихся, стимулирование их исследовательской деятельности становятся характерными признаками современной образовательной ситуации. Также резюмируется значимость исследовательской деятельности для развития школьников.

**Ключевые слова:** исследовательский подход; исследовательская деятельность; исследовательские умения; развивающее обучение; урок иностранного языка; организационно-методические особенности.

The current situation of the education market in Russia is characterized by new guidelines in specialists of different spheres training. Regardless of knowledge sphere there is a social demand for graduates with developed cognitive interest, critical thinking, creativity, imagination, team-building skills, and abilities to solve problem situations. Generally speaking, there is a tendency towards comprehensive and harmonious development of a person with a set of research skills. Obtaining research skills is particularly urgent in the context of information society "where unpredictability, instability and crisis of values are observed" [2, p. 437].

The significance of research activity at school, its role in educational process and development of learners has been stressed by many scientists. Psychological foundations of learners' academic activity organization were developed by A. N. Poddyakov [7]. A major contribution to solving practical and methodical problems was made by S. P. Baranov [1], A. V. Leontovic [5], A. I. Savenkov [8; 9], V. F. Feoktistova [13], M. Yu. Kharkina [14], N. V. Volynkina [17] etc. The scientists consider research skills from a viewpoint of activity approach.

Research skills being actions are developed only during active training activities. Already at an early stage a special attention should be paid to developing research and thinking skills of a learner. In the block of metasubject skills of Federal state educational standard of primary general education there are following skills are to be learnt by younger children:

- obtaining and setting a target and missions of training activities;
- search for efficient means of realizing them;
- learning some ways of solving problems;
- skills of planning, control and assessment of training activities;
- ability to cooperate, reflection, understanding reasons for success or failure, readiness to act in difficult situations;
- using some sign and symbol forms of information presentation and methods of searching, gathering, processing, analyzing, organizing, transmitting and interpreting information including digital information, learning different reading strategies;
- learning main logical actions [12].

At higher educational levels complication and improvement of obtained research skills with the prospect of turning into competencies are expected. If at primary school a child performs research operations under teacher's supervision at educational step change he/she does them more independently.

The subject "Foreign language" has a great potential for learners' research skills development. In the article we'd like to share the experience of the research approach application during foreign language learning in lesson and out of lesson time.

Research approach is defined as personal orientation approach to learning and upbringing that discover inner potential of the learner's personality and aims at capabilities development, development of his/her research culture, reflectory (creative) thinking, logical operations, development of ability to set a goal and plan, to solve a problem, to work in a team or individually, to communicate, full personal development.

The integrated research approach includes key ideas of system and activity, person orientation, problem, project, competency, communicative and cultural approaches.

There are research and academic activities. If the first one according to N. V. Ippolitova and N. S. Sterchova is a special kind of cognitive activity aimed at "obtaining objectively new scientific knowledge" the second one is aimed at teaching learners, developing their research skills [4, p. 44], in other words the main purpose of academic activity is an educational result.

The learners' ability to carry out academic work should be developed under conditions specially organized by a teacher. A creative teacher must create conditions which facilitate formation of learners' need in obtaining new knowledge during educational process.

When implementing the research approach the most important thing for a teacher is to find and apply in educational process the most efficient methods which ensure the possibility of learners' intellectual development and techniques aimed at research skills formation.

Learners' project activity has lately been very significant [3; 6; 10; 15–17]. Project activity is considered as a "learners' active creative activity which has got an exact purpose, a definite structure aimed at achieving a predictable result" [10, p. 70].

As our experience shows, in the practice of the German language teaching the most efficient work concerning research skills formation is a learners' project work, for example, "Modein Deutschland: gestern und heute"; "Deutschland: Symbole, Namen, Entdeckungen"; "Die Bedeutung des Schaffens I. Goethe und F. Schiller für die Entwicklung der russischen Literatur".

While working on projects learners as a rule first start realizing and formulating a problem according to basic information, then they make hypotheses, conceptualize, and organize an experiment. During the work they specify the basic hypotheses, research methods, formulate conclusions.

Understanding aims of their academic work, knowing how to achieve them, generalizing, using new information contribute to active research skills development.

As an example we'll describe a research project on the theme "Essen" worked out at the German lesson. The aim is learners' research skills development.

Tasks: 1. Find out what dishes are the most popular and the least popular among Germans? 2. What do your classmates require most? 3. Write down recipes of these popular dishes in German and illustrate them. Do you think the recipes are healthy? Why? 4. What hypotheses can you make? Do you think the hypotheses is true for all pupils of our school?

It is important to understand that project activity can be carried out both working in a team and individually under teacher's supervision which leads to individual, paired and group types of project. The aim of a teacher is to put a learner in a position of an explorer. The role of a teacher is of secondary and developing character since a learner plays a role not of an object but a subject of teaching. Projects develop learners' research activity, their curiosity, capability of independent thinking, contribute to learners' cognitive interest and personal development.

It should be noted that during a lesson it is necessary for a learner to seek for an opportunity to perform research assignments. A research assignment is defined as an object of thinking activity which represents in a dialectical unity the following elements: a subject, a condition, a demand for receiving a cognitive result during studying relations between known and unknown elements of the task. Such tasks are aimed at observation, drawing an analogy, analysis, studying a phenomenon from different viewpoints, identification of main and secondary points, generalizing, putting different questions, making up a monologue on the theme etc.

As an example we'll describe some research assignments used in practice of giving the German lessons.

Assignment 1: listen to question sentences in German and pay attention to intonation of Wh-questions and other types of questions (audio-observation).

Assignment 2: read and analyze a text in German, find words of English origin (analyses).

Assignment 3: choose sentences from Card 1 and Card 2 (comparison).

| Card 1. Russisch           | Card 2. Deutsch                         |
|----------------------------|---|
| Солнце светит ярко.        | Im Winter schneit es.                   |
| Погода плохая.             | Die Sonne scheint hell.                 |
| Небо серое.                | Das Wetter ist schlecht.                |
| Зимой идет снег.           | Der Himmel ist grau.                    |
| Весна — теплое время года. | Der Frühling ist eine warme Jahreszeit. |

Task 4: identify a root in the following single-root words: *aufkaufen, Einkauf, Käufer, verkaufen, Verkäufer*.

Task 5: write a word generalizing the following words (generalization):

1) November, Dezember, Januar \_\_\_\_\_

2) grün, rot, blau \_\_\_\_\_

3) Suppe, Brei, Käse, Brot \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment 6: continue the vocabulary (Lebensmittel): *Brot, Nudeln, Reis, Fleisch...; Milchprodukte: Käse, Joghurt...; Obst: Apfel, Birne...*

Assignment 7: interview your classmates about the necessity to study a foreign language (interviewing).

Assignment 8: find in the text the opposites to the following words: *Leben — (Tod), Krieg — (Frieden), tapfer — (feige), groß — (klein), gesund — (krank)* (a search method).

Assignment 9: read aloud the chain of words, find the odd word and explain your choice: *Winter, Brot, Sommer, Frühling*.

Assignment 10: divide the following words into three categories *die Nase, der Elefant, der Mund, der Fuß, der Fox, der Winter, der Bein, der Sommer, der Herbst* (classification).

Assignment 11: read the text, divide it into logical parts, determine and write down key words, emphasize the main idea of the text (elements of the problem method).

Assignment 12: make up a plan of the text retelling; retell the text on the basis of the scheme:

*Der Autor entfaltet (zeigt) vor dem Leser...*

*Der Autor beschreibt...*

*Der Autor nimmt Stellung zum Gegenstand...*

*Der Autor beleuchtet viele Probleme...*

*Im vorliegenden Fragment spielt die Handlung in... (Ort der Handlung), an... (und Zeit der Handlung).*

*Im Mittelpunkt der Schilderung steht... (der Hauptheld des Werkes, die Szene).*

*Die Szene zeigt...*

Assignment 13: choose words of a foreign origin used in Russian from the text: *Computer, Job, Tenor, Fussball, Jeans, Vetter, elegant, Tante, Kusine*.

Assignment 14: divide the following words into elements: *Rucksack, Halstuch, Butterbrot, Kapellmeister, Kurort*.

Assignment 15: choose words with the double consonant: *turnen, springen, malen, süß, die Tür, die Klasse, die Turnhalle, groß, klein*.

Assignment 16: give equivalents to German proverbs: *Man schmiedet das Eisen, solange es heiß ist; Appetit kommt beim Essen*.

While performing the research assignments learners can use the helping cards which assist to make a decision. A helping card is a card with a question, scheme or drawing prepared in advance. The card narrows down the decision but gives no direct answer.

The practice of research assignments lessons shows that research activity at the lesson is efficient enough since it creates conditions for learners' independent search for knowledge. Schoolchildren obtain an experience of research activity; learn self-control skills which make them self-confident.

In conclusion it should be noted that learners' creative independence and cognitive activity development, stimulation of their research activity characterize the contemporary educational situation. Application of the research approach at a foreign language lesson allows us to consider it as an important feature of developing education. Learners' research activity gives a great positive experience in learners' development. This is an experience of communication, creativity, ability to solve problems working in a team. In school research activity there is no scientific exploration but it doesn't mean that a learner and a teacher explore nothing new. Learners "are on the way to well-known scientific ideas, they learn the truth not as a ready result but as a result of their own observations" [11, p. 30].

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