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THE ROLE OF LEGAL IDIOMS IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO FOREIGN LAW STUDENTS

The optimization of teaching English as a second language (EASL) is possible providing the national specific character of the audience. This problem is described in details in modern educational literature, but it is not given sufficient attention to the issue of foreign law students' mastering the most common English legal idioms. To understand the semantics of legal phraseological units, to learn the situation of its use for foreign students is difficult and may cause interference errors due to cultural differences.

Thus, the current requirements to training EASL on the one hand, and insufficient development of a methodical system of foreign students'

mastering legal idioms using audio-visual aids on the other hand, testify to the relevance of the research.

Despite the existence of a large number of studies dealing with learning English phraseology by foreigners and the use of visual aids in the process of teaching, a number of questions still remain open. Currently, while teaching English legal idioms to foreign law students, the tools and methods that are able to create appropriate organizational and methodological conditions for the formation of a foreign language speech competence, are required.

There are a lot of manuals for teaching English as a second language. They are intended for training speaking skills and performing a necessary didactic function in teaching the aspect under analysis at the certain stage of education. But at the advanced level both the teacher and the students begin to comprehend some kind of artificiality, which is a distinctive feature of some educational textbooks.

Here are the basic criteria for determining the appropriateness of using video in the process of teaching English as a foreign language:

1) Episodes for viewing are to have language material, selected according to the educational purposes and program. If the matter is about the development of a communicative competence, such language material is supposed to be up to the contemporary criteria, standards and usefulness.

2) Content of audio-visual aids should be thematically interesting and have individual significance, oriented at learners' needs. It means that we should take into account a number of factors (such as audience profile, age characteristics, native language of learners, thesaurus as well as the level of proficiency in the target language i.e. the level of linguistic and strategic competences) in selecting visual aids. For example, foreign law students actually take a professional interest in screen versions of literary works, biographic movies of famous writers, poets, linguists as well as viewing episodes for learning lexical, grammatical and linguocultural information.

3) Visual aids in addition to the linguistic material should contain paralinguistic, culture-oriented and linguocultural information. The plot of a viewing episode should be known to foreign students. So if the episode has been taken from an unknown film, the teacher has to give a brief comment on what is going on the screen.

4) Training visual aids for learning are characterized by high audiovisual correlation, therefore the visuals contribute to giving a more precise definition and mastering the text. It means that a «language» viewing episode must contain visual images, which simplify and increase the perception of audio series. Situational context must uncover the motivation and goal statements to promote understanding the semantics of lexical units.

5) According to the experts one should also consider the duration of a viewing episode. In the best case training visual aids should represent separate viewing episodes lasting up to three minutes. It provides the introduction and illustration of linguistic and paralinguistic information contained in the video.

As the result of methodical interpretation of visual aids the exercises are developed considering specific goals in mind, linguistic and culture-oriented peculiarities of the film and its thematic range. The exercises are directed at removing language difficulties, understanding the content of the episode for viewing, disclosure and discussion of the film, explanation of the realities of other cultures [1]. These tasks can be divided into three groups: pre-viewing activities, first viewing activities and comprehension activities. However, one should not perceive this classification as a mechanical one, because it takes into account not only the time for doing an exercise, but also the type, form and nature of the task defined and limited by this time.

The use of audio-visual aids in teaching English legal idioms by foreigners gives an opportunity to implement fully and consistently one of the principles of didactics – visibility [2]. It helps to facilitate the understanding of language units under study, to use analytical skills of students as much as possible, to mobilize their internal resources, to increase the interest to the lessons. Visual image serves as support that allows submitting any lexical-grammatical material. In such way it is facilitated the comprehension of foreign language speech and the construction of the statements, as the picture in the frame recreates the situation of communication and the student tries to «see», «to read» situational cues and use them as if a prepared or unprepared statement. In video texts – fragments of feature films, used for teaching English phraseology to law students, there is no possibility to change anything. Therefore the teacher's word is of particular importance. This word should include basic speech guidelines – rhetorical questions, indicatory sentences, titles, selected and formulated by the teacher in advance on the basis of a viewing episode, and enter into the script of the lesson using visual aids [3].

In the proposed linguomethodical system of teaching English phraseology, where the main goal is mastering the necessary number of the most popular legal idioms and phrases by foreign law students using visual aids, we can use a combination of methods: audiovisual, communicative, deliberately-practical, deliberately-comparative. Their integration allows us to learn the meaning of a phraseological unit and its linguistic characteristics (stylistic identity, grammar features, and syntactic combinability) as well as to acquaint with the situation of use, learn to «hear» and to use idioms in speech.

The system of exercises for teaching English phraseology to foreign law students have been described according to the principles, formulated on the basis of didactic peculiarities of teaching English as a foreign language: the principle of scientific and systematic training; availability and consistency; visibility, consciousness and activity of students in training; the strength of knowledge, the connection of theory with practice.

The submission of idioms to foreign students has specific features arising from the general specifics of teaching English as a foreign language. There are two stages for mastering legal phraseological units: 1) the disclosure of a lexical unit's meaning and the definition of the situation of its use; 2) further consolidation using exercises, assignments, texts. The best way of idioms presentation as well as any other lexical units is that one, where all or most of the methods are used. Each of them covers a particular aspect of the meaning. However, full presentation cannot be achieved at the first representation of a new phraseological unit; it is accomplished in the process of continuous work, which includes both the stage of representation and consolidation.

If we consider different types of assignments as a set of exercises, which are necessary for proper mastering the language, exercises on the formation of knowledge about the language system and its dynamics should be defined as the preparatory ones and exercises on the formation of abilities and skills as the main ones. In preparatory exercises students' attention is primarily focused on a language form and the construction of statements that are practiced at elementary linguistic units. In the basic exercises the main focus is on conscious understanding of speech.

The proposed system of training phraseology promotes not only the awareness and understanding of the figurative meaning of idioms, but also facilitates the perception of a phraseological unit, develops skills and abilities of the correct use of legal idioms in speech constructing self-statements with them.

To sum up, it can be concluded that teaching foreign law students English legal idioms using audio-visual aids involves the equipment of methodological apparatus of the pedagogical system in question, the didactic interpretation of authentic viewing episodes as well as the programming of certain training actions, aimed at mastering English phraseological units by the learners, the development of necessary speaking skills, the formation of a foreign language competence. For all that we should consider not only the native language of a foreign student, but the specifics of national culture, educational traditions, which aim to increase the effectiveness of linguoeducational process.

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