

LANGUAGE CAMPS AS A WAY OF CO-OPERATION IN THE SYSTEM "SCHOOL- UNIVERSITY"

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Abstract

The role of English in the modern world is obvious. It is the most important communication tool at the international level. All spheres of our life activities to some extent require knowledge of the English language. Therefore, learning English becomes more and more popular every year. At school, however, English remains only a school subject. Students just get marks for it. Learning the language is limited to memorizing words, grammar rules etc. Leaving school students cannot use English in its main function - communication.

Unlike school, much in the camp is a product of the joint activities of the counselors and children. The camp is a special environment: there is an environment of a foreign language. This means that most of the children, even those who were not fond of the language at school, will receive new motivation to learn it. The positive attitude to English developed in the camp will influence learning the language at school. Memorizing at the camp goes faster as all the channels of memorizing are involved: a kinesthetic channel, imaginative thinking, emotions and experiences.

The camp is a useful time passing in vacation time. One of the main things is that without thinking about the assessment of the answer children get rid of the fear of speaking the language. Participating in interesting events stimulates children to using English as a means of communication. Volunteers are the students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages , which provides the participants of the program with the opportunity to speak English the whole day.

Keywords: language camp, communication, co-operation, motivation, environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Mari State University is one of the prestigious and successful multi-discipline classical universities of the Volga Federal Region and Russia on the whole. In April of 2017 the University was granted the status of the main university of the Mari El Republic. It is the scientific, educational and cultural center of the Mari El Republic; it plays an important role in the socio-economic, political and cultural development of the region and the country on the whole. The significance and the place of the university in the scientific and educational space of the region and the system of Russian higher education are determined by the following

factors: its achievements in the field of training highly qualified specialists, scientific researches conducted here are of great importance, wide international relations with many countries of the world, and the recognized role in the social life of the country and the region.

Modern university should apply various technologies and forms of educational and scientific activities, focus on the best domestic and foreign models and examples, provide people with the opportunity for education throughout life by means of flexible (modular) ways of gaining new competencies (Zaburdaeva & Serebryakova & Kazantseva & Kolyago & Ivanova 2015).

In the context of the development of continuous teacher training, much attention is paid to strengthening the contacts of the university and its faculties (including the foreign language faculty) with educational institutions, to developing different forms of vocational guidance work, and to involving school students in project activities related to the fields of science developed at the University.

Positioning the University at the educational market presupposes creating the image of a competitive University. One of the objectives of the University is to draw gifted and creative children and teenagers to participation in seasonal/summer schools and camps.

2. OPINION AND DISCUSSION

Every University is interested in attracting students who are not just capable of studying but students with a vocation in the definite field. To form an integral educational process in the system of continuous education "School – University" Mari State University organizes specialized summer schools on the basis of the country camp to ensure the interaction of secondary and higher schools in the subjects which are included in the programs of school Olympiads and project contests. Therefore, the departments and the Institutes of the University have organized summer schools in accordance with the field of science they are specialized in. Many experienced teachers of the departments and the Institutes of the University are involved in teaching in the camp summer schools. They have experience in career guidance activities, in teaching optional courses at school, and who are interested in the quality of schoolchildren's knowledge and responsible for the results of their work. This kind of training makes it quite possible for young people with different levels of school preparation to enter the university. In order to help school students realize their inclinations and abilities, to reduce the number of mistakes made by them and their parents in the process of choosing a career, many educational institutions organize summer schools specialized in different school subjects including native and foreign languages. Cooperation within the "School-University" system as a way of developing an educational space is caused by the desire to unite various forms of work with applicants. The main organization principle of the "School - University" system is a learner-centered approach aimed at the development of the personality as a whole and the formation of their competences as the condition for the successful social and professional adaptation, and at giving psychological help to the person who wants to get professional training at a high level. The educational process is regulated by the curriculum and programs. According to the schedule, school students have pairs of lessons, which makes it possible to use university forms of teaching (lectures, practical classes, and seminar) and in this way to help prospective students to get used to the forms of studying at the university. When school-leavers come to the University, they will have some experience in learning in new circumstances. There is no contradiction between the new status of young people and their preliminary preparation for training in new conditions (Likhanova 2010).

As for the faculty of foreign languages it has organized a language summer camp. Specialized language camps on the basis of the university country camp help to solve a number of problems. Firstly, they provide useful activities in the vacation time. Secondly, they give an opportunity to continue learning the language even in summer. The most important thing is that without thinking about the grade for the answer the program participants overcome their fear of speaking a foreign language. Participation in interesting events stimulates children to using English as the means of communication. Undergraduate students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages participate in the program as volunteers which provide the opportunity of communicating in a foreign language the whole day including various activities (sports, cultural events). Working in language camps is a good experience for undergraduate students as well. Practice is the most important part in the process of teacher training, which is necessary for forming prospective teachers' professional competencies, their gaining experience in teaching, developing the traits of their character which are essential for working as teachers (Andreeva & Glizerina & Kolomiets & Kurochkina & Maltseva & Shestakova 2015).

Unlike ordinary classical schools, most of the camp activities are the product of the joint creative work of the teachers, counselors and children. The camp is a special environment: children hear and speak English (or other foreign languages) all the time, all the games are in English or connected with it. It means that most of the children, including those who were not interested in the language at school, are encouraged to learn it.

The positive attitude to English which is developed in the camp will help school students at school. From the point of view of remembering the new things (words, speech patterns, rules, and so on), language camps provide an opportunity effectively to involve all channels of memorizing: the kinesthetic channel of information processing, imaginative thinking, emotions and experiences.

Thus, the objectives of the proposed program for language camp are the following:

- to develop students' communication skills;
- to improve and develop the students' knowledge gained in the course of English at school;
- to encourage students to improve their knowledge, to work independently at their English;
- to train students for taking the State Examination in English.

Language camps are aimed at:

- helping students overcome the so-called "language barrier", which is the most important thing in learning the language. As soon as we stop being afraid to speak a foreign language, we begin to actively use it for communicating, and while communicating we improve our knowledge and skills day by day;
- developing students' skills both in oral (speaking and listening) and written (reading and writing) forms of communication;
- developing students' personality;
- widening students' horizons through getting acquainted with customs and traditions of the English-speaking countries;
- organizing summer vacations which combine physical and cognitive activities.

When selecting content of educational material and the ways of teaching, the following principles are taken into account:

- communicative approach to teaching the language, requiring to teach the speech patterns and phrases used by native speakers;
- conformity with the requirements of the state secondary school programs in English;
- teaching how to use the language in various everyday situations;
- educational materials are selected in accordance with the age characteristics of the learners

As a part of the program, children and teens work at research projects that can be further developed. Project creators will be invited to report at the conference to be held at Mari State University in the fall of 2017.

Some of the project themes which can be offered:

- Abbreviation in e-mails and on-line games.
- Abbreviation in English computer slang.
- English and Russian proverbs: similarities and differences.
- English signs on the clothing as an extralinguistic factor affecting the culture of adolescents.
- English and Russian - are they so different?
- English borrowings in modern Russian.
- Children's rights in Russia and Great Britain.

To implement the objectives and the aims of this program the following forms of classes are supposed to be used: lectures based on interactive technologies, practical classes on the definite theme, communicative battles, role plays, discussions, mini-performances, students' independent work, tutorials, project defense. Individual, pair and group forms of work are used in class. Various tasks help to develop listening and writing skills. Emphasis is placed on the selection of basic teaching aids of this program (printed handouts, audio and video recordings, etc.). Besides, well-organized independent work plays an important role in the language camp, which includes working on the project on a given topic, fulfillment of individual or group creative independent tasks (mini-plays, role plays, etc.).

The content component of the program includes modules and sections developed in accordance with the need for school students' academic adaptation to the new environment and peculiarities of training in modern university:

1. Culture-oriented Linguistics.
2. Communicative grammar.
3. The basis of the argumentation theory.
4. Creative reading.
5. Creative writing.
6. Listening.
7. Oral Practice.
8. Defense of projects.

An intensive program in the conditions of the language environment is realized within 10 days and covers the following topics:

Day 1. Acquaintance. Learning to establish contact with strangers.
Practice: Vocabulary of everyday use. Communicative grammar. Listening. Role games.

Day 2. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do".
Lecture: Traditions and customs of the British and the Americans.
Practice: Communicative grammar. Listening. Role game "Guide".

Day 3. Truth is born in the dispute.
Practice: Argumentative discourse. Arguments and counterarguments. Communicative fight.

Day 4. Cultural heritage.
Lecture: Cultural heritage of Great Britain.
Practice: Creative reading. Development of creative thinking skills.

Day 5. Creative writing.
Practice: Basis of writing (written speech). The requirements for writing in the State Examination format. Communicative grammar (asking questions).

Day 6. Our whole life is theater.
Practice: Performances in English. English songs. Poems. Writing an essay: expressing impressions.

Day 7. Great people.
Lecture: Great people of Great Britain.
Practice: Listening. Development of the monologue skill: mini presentation "We were born on the same day".

8. Eternal debaters.
Practice: Communicative fight. Creative reading. Listening.

Day 9. It's a small world.
Practice: A Party with foreign students. Development of skills in monologue speech. Preparing mini-presentations about Russia (in English).

Day 10. Projects defense.

The expected results of realizing the program of the language camp are:

- improvement of communication skills that are necessary for communicating with foreigners in English;
- development of cognitive interests, creative abilities of gaining knowledge, analyzing and evaluating the information in the process of project activities;
- expanded relationship with various educational institutions;
- increased number of applicants to become of the Faculty of Foreign Languages.

At the end of the program the students are supposed :

to know the phrases of everyday use; the rules of communication in accordance with national and cultural characteristics of the interlocutor;

to be able to use the vocabulary of everyday use, adequately to respond to what was heard, to understand foreign language speech, to give arguments, to express their ideas in written form.

to master the basic skills of communication in different communicative situations.

3. CONCLUSION

The interaction between Mari State University and educational institutions of the Republic of Mari El is caused, first of all, by the desire of students and their parents to have a guarantee of continuing education. For school teachers, school authorities and university professors, this interaction is mainly the way of maintaining the high level of education and the way of showing the need of gaining knowledge during the whole life. The analysis of the interaction between the school and the university allowed drawing the conclusions:

- Specialized summer schools and camps are very important in the development of the system of education.
- Interaction of secondary and higher educational institutions contributes to school students' social adaptation, it has proved to be effective as it takes students' motivation into account.
- The system of continuous education within the framework of the "School-University" interaction is beneficial for both sides.

Foreign language teaching should not be limited to a particular type of educational institution (school, private linguistic school, university), but should be implemented through "School-University" cooperation, which allows to provide the required quality of applicants' training (Zaburdaeva 2013; Zaburdaeva 2014; Kazantseva & Zaburdaeva & Kolyago 2015).

The positioning of the university at the educational market implies creating the image of a competitive university. The main goal of the University is further development, and its priority is the needs of the society.

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