

ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ФОРМУВАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ

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REFLECTIVE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND LEARNING OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

The article examines the main features of reflective learning and ways of implementing reflective pedagogy in foreign language teaching. The conclusion has been made about the connection between students' ability to reflect on the results of their learning and autonomy. Reflection is seen as a form of meta-cognition which enables students to evaluate, revise, plan and correct. Reflective foreign language learning skills of university students have been specified and the ways of their development and facilitation in higher education contexts have been discussed in the article. A scale for self-evaluation students' reflective skills has been suggested to help students analyze and evaluate their reflective abilities and assist teachers in assessing students' reflective skills. As the incorporation of reflective pedagogy in foreign language learning and teaching may face different problems, it is necessary to employ effective techniques, apply efficient activities which play a dual role by facilitating reflection in higher education and promoting students' foreign language proficiency. The article focuses on the reflective portfolio, which is a set of papers summarizing students' experiences, opinions and feelings, evaluates the skills developed. It has also been proved that composing the reflective portfolio can be a valuable tool for developing reflection as it is an explorative process and helps to focus on product rather than process when writing. Stages of working with portfolio self-assessment checklist have been specified in the article. As reflection should be an ongoing process, students are to be encouraged to assess themselves not only at macro level (at the beginning or at the end of a semester) with the help of descriptors, but also on the micro level (after doing some task or a set of tasks) by fulfilling reflective writing assignments.

Keywords: reflection, self evaluation, skills, reflective portfolio, self-evaluation checklist, reflective writing.

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РЕФЛЕКСІЯ У НАВЧАННІ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ СТУДЕНТІВ ВИЩИХ ЗАКЛАДІВ ОСВІТИ

Відзначено, що необхідність інтенсифікації процесу оволодіння іноземними мовами студентами ВНЗ зумовлює пошук ефективних методів і засобів, здатних сприяти формуванню рефлексивного освітнього середовища. Розглянуто рефлексивні уміння, необхідні студентам для ефективного оволодіння іноземними мовами; визначено засоби, які забезпечують рефлексивність процесу навчання та відповідно сприяють розвитку рефлексивних умінь студентів; охарактеризовано методіку їх використання. Проаналізовано трактування поняття «рефлексія» в сучасній науковій літературі і зроблено висновок, що здатність до рефлексії є необхідною умовою автономії особистості. Показано,

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що рефлексія – це форма метакогніції, яка уможливує пошук альтернативних рішень, аналіз ефективності власної діяльності, самоконтроль та самооцінку, а також забезпечує інтенсифікацію процесу вивчення іноземної мови. Конкретизовано рефлексивні вміння, необхідні студентам для успішної реалізації рефлексивної діяльності, проаналізовано шляхи їх формування і розвитку в умовах навчання у ВНЗ. Запропоновано шкалу самооцінювання студентами власних рефлексивних умінь, яка може використовуватись і викладачами для оцінювання рефлексивних умінь студентів. Показано, що у навчальному процесі необхідно використовувати ефективні засоби, які, з одного боку, сприяють розвитку рефлексії, а з іншого – допомагають розвивати мовленнєві навички та вміння. Зосереджено увагу на мовному портфелі, який є пакетом документів, що узагальнює досвід студентів, їхні погляди, а також уможливує оцінювання рівня сформованості в них іноземної комунікативної компетентності. Запропоновано етапи роботи з контрольними листами самооцінювання як компонентом мовного портфеля. Обґрунтовано доцільність і методику організації письмового аналізу результатів власного навчання, яка може бути частиною мовного портфеля і пропонуватись студентам на різних етапах (після виконання важливого завдання, в кінці семестру тощо).

Ключові слова: рефлексія, самооцінювання, вміння, мовний портфель, контрольні листи самооцінювання, письмовий аналіз результатів навчання.

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РЕФЛЕКСИЯ В ОБУЧЕНИИ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ СТУДЕНТОВ ВЫСШИХ УЧЕБНЫХ ЗАВЕДЕНИЙ

Рассмотрены особенности и возможности использования рефлексивной педагогики в процессе обучения иностранным языкам в вузах. Проанализирована трактовка понятия «рефлексия» в современной научной литературе и сделан вывод, что способность к рефлексии является необходимым условием автономии личности. Отмечено, рефлексия рассматривается как форма метакогнициии, которая предполагает поиск альтернативных решений, анализ эффективности деятельности, самоконтроль и самооценивание, а следовательно обеспечивает интенсификацию процесса изучения иностранного языка. Конкретизированы рефлексивные умения, необходимые студентам для успешной реализации рефлексивной деятельности, а также проанализованы пути их формирования и развития в условиях обучения в вузе. Предложена шкала для самооценивания студентами собственных рефлексивных умений, которая может использоваться и преподавателями для оценивания рефлексивных умений студентов. Указано, что в учебном процессе необходимо использовать эффективные средства, которые, с одной стороны, способствуют развитию рефлексии, а с другой – помогают развивать речевые навыки и умения. Сконцентрировано внимание на языковом портфеле, который является пакетом документов, обобщающим опыт студентов, их точку зрения, а также делает возможной оценку уровня развития у них иноязычной коммуникативной компетентности. Предложены этапы работы с листами самооценки, которые являются компонентом языкового портфеля. Обоснована целесообразность и методика организации письменного анализа результатов собственного обучения, который может быть частью языкового портфеля и использоваться студентами на разных этапах (после выполнения объемного или трудного задания, в конце семестра и т. д.).

Ключевые слова: рефлексия, самооценка, умения, языковой портфель, контрольные листы самооценивания, письменный анализ результатов обучения.

Nowadays students are to be ready to adapt to a fast-moving and changing world. That is why they have to be able to respond quickly to innovations and new challenges to adapt to a new market. The task of the educators is to organize teaching to prepare students to changes. Learners should be taught and encouraged to think critically over the obtained results, and in this case they will be ready to analyse their achievements and mistakes and find ways to correct errors and improve the outcomes.

Reflection has been recognised as a constituent of effective learning, and it has become one of the central concerns of modern foreign language teaching. The aspects of the problem have been studied by Ukrainian (I. Bezhenar, N. Hupka-Makohin, Y. Fabrychna and others) and foreign

(A. M. Edstrom, Ch. Lockhart, J. C. Richards etc.) scholars. However, there are still questions that need to be analysed.

The **purpose** of the article is to analyse ways of implementing reflective pedagogy in foreign language learning and teaching.

Research suggests that systematic reflection helps not only understand one's behaviour better, but also promotes motivation and increases confidence and competence [8; 11].

There are different definitions of the term 'reflection'. It is considered to be a mental process that facilitates the transformation of experience into personal knowledge and creates the connection between the emotional and cognitive states [3]. J. Dewey, the originator of reflective learning, stated that reflecting practice helps people to learn more than from just experience. Thus reflection is goal-oriented and controlled by the learner [4, p. 17]. It involves self-assessment and may lead to goal revision as learners can set different targets thinking on their achievements and failures. J. Dewey considered reflection to be language-specific [4, p. 17], which is especially important for students whose major is a foreign language as they should be encouraged not only to reflect on the results of their language learning, but also to reflect using the foreign language (languages).

E. M. Boyd and A. W. Fales view reflective learning as "a process of internally examining and exploring an issue of concern, triggered by an experience, which creates and clarifies meaning in terms of self, and which results in a changed conceptual perspective" [3, p. 99]. J. Moon considers reflection to be a form of "mental processing with a purpose and/or an anticipated outcome that is applied to relatively complicated or unstructured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution" [7, p. 98]. According to M. Jones and M. Shelton reflection "brings into conscious awareness one's motivations, thoughts, beliefs...and expectations for the purpose of gaining insightful understanding as to their meaning, their connections to what is personally known, and in light of new experiences and information. Reflection makes possible the insights necessary to learn from experience and alter habitual behaviours" [6, p. 53].

All the definitions mentioned view reflection as a mental process which makes students concentrate on the analysis of their experience, motivation, purposes with the aim of understanding them better and results in change of behavior.

Reflection is closely related to self-evaluation and decision making. That is why there is connection between reflection and autonomy. Autonomous language learners can take responsibility for their own language learning as they are aware of the learning process, know their weaknesses and strengths, are able to define objectives, know effective methods and techniques, can evaluate the results and are well motivated to learn. In other words, reflection is an integral characteristic of an autonomous learner.

The key benefits of reflection are the following: 1) the development of knowledge and thought processes [13, p. 19]; 2) enhancing students' understanding of the learning process; 3) development of the ability to view problems or situations from different perspectives; 4) forming students' autonomy as reflection is a purposeful and conscious process aimed at improving the results; 5) using own mistakes to learn something new; 6) motivating students to look for effective ways to achieve one's target.

Thus, reflection can be seen as a form of meta-cognition which enables students to evaluate, revise, plan and correct. Students become better language learners when they think deliberately about the process of their own learning.

To reflect effectively it is necessary to form and develop students' reflective skills:

- to analyse individual needs and goals of learning a foreign language;
- determine individual level of language proficiency;
- set individual goals;
- determine difficulties of learning a foreign language;
- analyse individual techniques and strategies;
- assess the result and its correspondence to the determined target;
- analyse the relevance of the strategies used to the purpose and the result;
- determine the reasons for failure;
- look at the problem from different perspectives, refocus the experience;
- make a comparative analysis of the ways of solution;

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- think over alternative strategies;
- analyze external influences, implications of the experience in the context of future applications.

The incorporation of reflective pedagogy in foreign language learning and teaching may face different problems. Firstly, reflection may seem too abstract for students and therefore become distorted [5, p. 94]. Secondly, it can be reduced to a checklist of behaviours and thus trivialized [9]. Thirdly, reflective skills are difficult to measure so it may be problematic both for teachers and the students to assess their reflective abilities. Fourthly, students may not be motivated enough to be engaged in active reflective process.

To develop the above-mentioned reflective skills and avoid the possible problems it is necessary to employ effective techniques, apply tangible activities which play a dual role by facilitating reflection in higher education and promoting students' foreign language proficiency. Besides, it is vital for students' further development and effective life-long learning to be taught and encouraged to analyse their learning and its results. Thus, teachers should guide students with their reflection. It can not happen at a stroke. It is a continuous process during which step-by-step students are taught to reflect and make it work and thus develop increasingly sophisticated reflection. Besides, teachers must be reflective practitioners themselves as it is impossible to teach your students something not being able to do it yourself or just not practicing it yourself. So progressive teachers reflect not only on their classroom practice, but also on their level of language and subject knowledge and skills. They should be ready to set their own aims and attain them reflecting on the efficacy of the process. Moreover, if students realize that the teacher is also actively engaged in reflection they will be more encouraged to think over their learning. Finally, students should realize the importance of reflection and be aware of the reflective skills they have to develop to be effective reflective learners and practitioners and succeed in their learning.

The current literature has documented a number of investigations on using portfolio as a mediation tool for promoting students' autonomy and reflection. However, the reflective activities based on the portfolio are still understudied and underestimated in university setting.

In the article we will focus on working with self-evaluation checklist and reflective portfolio writing which can significantly promote learners' reflective skills.

Reflective portfolio is a set of papers that summarises students' experiences, opinions and feelings, evaluates the skills developed. It usually consists of three parts: the first part – *Language Passport* contains a profile of language skills in relation to the Common European Framework, a resume of language learning and intercultural experiences, a record of certificates and diplomas; the second part – *Language biography* – is usually the self-assessment checklist which may help the student to assess general language skills; the third part – *Dossier* – which contains the certificates, results of the projects etc.

The fragment of the self-evaluation checklist to evaluate writing skills (level C1) developed by the author of the article on the basis of several sources [1; 10] is given below.

<i>C1 – Effective Operational Proficiency</i>	<i>date</i>			<i>date</i>			<i>date</i>		
Writing									
I can express myself fluently and accurately in writing on a wide range of personal, academic or professional topics, varying my vocabulary and style according to the context, demonstrating grammar correctness.									
I can take detailed notes during a lecture on a familiar topic in my field of my academic and professional interest, recording the information so accurately and so closely to the original that they are also useful to other people...									

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To make the process of reflection more effective the following stages of working with portfolio self-assessment checklist may be applied:

- 1) getting students acquainted with the portfolio and the opportunities it provides;
- 2) teaching learners to work with the self-evaluation checklist by encouraging them to assess their language skills;
- 3) comparing the results of self-assessment with teacher assessment, discussing them with the teacher;
- 4) encouraging students to determine which skills a certain task can develop;
- 5) stimulating students to set their individual goals with the help of descriptors and on the basis of self-assessment results;
- 6) determining the ways to attain the targets;
- 7) iterative self-assessment and teacher assessment (in 2 or three months) with the help of descriptors, comparative analysis of the results, considering the relevance of the strategies used, in case of failure determining the reasons, discussing alternative strategies;
- 8) comparing the results of assessment with the test grades.

Students should be encouraged to assess themselves not only at macrolevel (at the beginning or at the end of a semester) with the help of descriptors, but also on the microlevel (after fulfilling some task or a set of tasks). In other words, reflection should be an ongoing process.

With this purpose a reflective writing can be applied after students have fulfilled some important task.

The following questions may stimulate students to think over the results and be focused on in reflective writing:

Are you satisfied with the results? Why?

Can you compare your performance / product / results with those of other students?

Is there anything you would like to improve? How would you do it?

Did you experience any difficulties? If yes, why and what should be done?

What techniques / strategies / sources did you use? Were they effective? What other strategies or sources could be used?

Did you realize the aim of the task? Did it correlate with your individual aim?

What skills are necessary to fulfill the task?

How can you use the experience gained in future?

Is the task useful for language learners / you personally?

However, it is not necessary or effective to reflect in the written form over each task. It may be done in writing several times to teach students how to analyse the process and results. It is much more important to motivate students to reflective writing on the macrolevel (while analyzing the results at the end of a semester or academic year). In such a case they may be suggested a set of questions to focus on among others:

What is your motivation?

Have you achieved the targets set?

What is the level of your language proficiency?

What external influences did you experience in your learning?

What do you like to improve? How will you do it?

What are your strengths and weaknesses as a language user / a learner?

What techniques / strategies do you use? Are they effective? What other techniques / strategies would you like to try to use?

What will be your further goals?

What skills are you planning to improve / develop?

Reflective writing, which can be a part of a reflective portfolio, does not only demonstrate students' reflective thinking skills, but also shows their writing abilities. In this case teachers can evaluate both writing and reflective skills. As for the latter, the following scale (table 1) may help students analyse and evaluate their reflective abilities and assist teachers in assessing students' reflective skills (1 – strongly agree, 2 – agree, 3 – neither nor 4 – disagree 5 – strongly disagree).

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Table 1

<i>Scale for self-evaluation reflective skills</i>						
№	Skills	Score				
		1	2	3	4	
1.	I can analyse individual needs and goals of learning a foreign language					
2.	I can determine individual level of language proficiency					
3.	I can set individual goals					
4.	I can determine difficulties of learning a foreign language					
5.	I can analyse individual techniques and strategies					
6.	I can assess the result and its correspondence to the determined target					
7.	I can analyse the relevance of the strategies used to the purpose and the result					
8.	I can determine the reasons for failure					
9.	I can look at the problem from different perspectives					
10.	I can refocus the experience					
11.	I can make a comparative analysis of the ways of solution in terms of their effectiveness					
12.	I can think over alternative strategies					
13.	I can analyse external influences					
14.	I can outline the possible application of the experience					

However, certain difficulties may arise with such activities: 1) “students can probably be reflective in their work and have a reflective thinking process, but might not be able to formulate this in a short written essay” [12, p. 6]; 2) “some students may also have a resistance towards writing this kind of assignment regardless of their levels of reflection” or language proficiency; 3) students may write what teachers expect them to write neglecting the process and the purpose of reflection; 4) they may write not what they think or feel, but what the teacher wants to read and see.

The first difficulty can be overcome gradually with the increase of students language proficiency. As for the other three, much depends on students’ motivation and understanding the importance of reflective practice. Besides, other reflective activities should be encouraged, for example, selection of contents of the portfolio which demonstrate both the achievements and progress and presentation of the materials in the classroom, their analysis together with the teacher and other students either in groups or in the class. As for the teachers, evaluation of reflective skills can be based not only on the reflective portfolio writing and the results of self-evaluation scale, but also on observation of students performance.

The use of the suggested techniques and tools among 22 future EFL teachers, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University, during a semester, resulted in the increase of students awareness of reflective skills which are necessary for effective language learning (90 % of respondents mentioned it in a questionnaire), development of reflective skills (86 %). Besides, 68 % of students stated that the use of reflective tools promoted their language proficiency. However, further investigations are needed to analyse whether the development of reflective skills has a significant influence on language proficiency.

Thus, reflective portfolio writing can be a valuable tool for developing reflection as it is an explorative process and helps to focus on product rather than process when writing. Reflective portfolio assessment (with the help of self-evaluation checklist) can also be an alternative assessment technique which contributes to the objective evaluation of students’ achievement by incorporating self-evaluation, portfolio peer reviews, group analysis.

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Further research should focus on studying other effective tools which can develop students' reflective skills.

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КОМУНІКАТИВНО ОРІЄНТОВАНИЙ ПІДХІД ДО НАВЧАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ У НЕМОВНИХ ВИЩИХ НАВЧАЛЬНИХ ЗАКЛАДАХ

Розглянуто процес реалізації комунікативно орієнтованого підходу до навчання іноземних мов студентів немовних спеціальностей, що полягає у моделюванні основних закономірностей іноземної мовленнєвої комунікації з урахуванням їх професійних потреб. Проаналізовано головні умови комунікативної організації заняття з іноземної мови: мовленнєва спрямованість навчального процесу, функціональність і ситуативність навчання, новизна навчального матеріалу, врахування індивідуальних рис кожного студента. Акцентовано увагу на тому, що комунікативно орієнтований підхід у навчанні іноземної мови сприяє максимальному «зануренню» студента у мовленнєву діяльність, в якій практично відсутня рідна мова. Показано, що комунікативно орієнтований підхід до навчання іноземної мови