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UKRAINIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Abstract

In our time, education is gaining priority, which depends on the level of training of the young generation in the context of Ukraine's integration into the global informational, economic, and cultural space. This obliges us to take care of the Ukrainian language not only in Ukraine, but also throughout the world.

Learning the Ukrainian language as a foreign language belongs to the actual, practically necessary and important issues. Mastering the Ukrainian language by foreign citizens, Ukrainians abroad, migrants, refugees is an urgent need in Ukraine.

For this purpose, the following legal acts were approved in Ukraine:

- Instruction of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated October 11, 2011 No. 45840/1/1-11 regarding the resolution of issues raised at the Fifth World Forum of Ukrainians and the Ukrainian World Coordination Council regarding the support and development of Ukrainian schooling abroad (by order of the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sports of Ukraine dated June 1, 2012 No. 654 approved the Ministry's Action Plan for the support and development of Ukrainian schooling abroad for 2012-2015 (item 2);

- Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine of October 12, 2011 No. 1058 "On approval of the plan of measures for the implementation of the State Migration Policy Concept" (the Order of the Ministry of Education and Science, Youth and Sports of Ukraine of 04/28/2012 No. 526 approved the Plan of Measures for the Implementation of the State Migration Policy Concept migration policy (item 5);

- Decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated August 22, 2012 No. 605-r "On approval of the plan of measures for the integration of refugees and persons in need

of additional protection into Ukrainian society for the period until 2020" (order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated June 18, 2013 r. No. 794 approved the Plan of measures for the integration of refugees and persons in need of additional protection into Ukrainian society for the period until 2020 (clauses 7, 9).

These documents provide for the development of a procedure for determining the level of Ukrainian language proficiency of people applying for Ukrainian citizenship, learning the state language by Ukrainians abroad, migrants, refugees who need it, as well as the creation of educational programs at various levels, including for adults, on studying the Ukrainian language as a foreign language. The additional information about studying Ukrainian language as a foreign one can be found on the portal of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine: <https://mon.gov.ua/ua/news/usi-novivni-povidomlennya-2016-12-09-zaproshuemo-do-gromadskogo-obgovorennya>.

Key words: *Ukrainian language, educational standard, level requirements, guidebook, foreign citizen, war time.*

Introduction

To study Ukrainian at higher educational establishments as foreign language the working group developed the long-awaited General Education Standard in Ukraine, the Complex of programs for the gradual study of the Ukrainian language as a foreign language and was reviewed by the collegium of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine on May 29, 2014 (protocol No. 3/3-19): <https://mon.gov.ua/ua/tag/vishcha-osvita>.

Order No. 750 of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated June 24, 2014 "On the provision of educational literature of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine" approved the General Educational Standard for the Ukrainian language as a foreign language (levels: A1, A2; B 1, B 2; C1) and the Complex programs on Ukrainian as a foreign language, which are developed according to different levels of proficiency in European languages: A1 – Beginner level, A2 – Basic level; B1 – I intermediate level; B2

– II intermediate level; C1 – Professional level with the label “Recommended by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine” (MESU).

The scientific and methodological examination of the above-mentioned manuscripts was carried out at the Institute of Ukrainian Language of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Institute of Linguistics of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine named after O. Potebnia, the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine and other educational institutions.

The development of a theoretical and practical base for mastering the Ukrainian language as a foreign language requires new approaches, methods, and a special interpretation of linguistic phenomena. The general educational standards are the result of the complex and innovative work of the authors, who created the basis for learning Ukrainian language as a foreign language, which should meet the needs of foreigners, Ukrainians abroad, refugees, migrants in the social-humanitarian, educational, social-cultural, and country studies spheres of communication.

The proposed Standards and Programs for the Ukrainian language as a foreign language (general proficiency) contain a minimum of mandatory requirements for the purpose and content of teaching the Ukrainian language as a foreign language at the levels defined by the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>) and recommended by the resolution of the Council of the EU (*November, 2001*) to create national language competence assessment systems. They are a systematic, multi-component description of the goals of communicatively oriented language learning, which is based on a model of the speech behavior of a Ukrainian speaker in the field of daily communication as a reference point for a foreign language communicator.

The compilers of the General Educational Standards for the Ukrainian Language as a Foreign Language and the Complex of Programs in the preface formulated the goal and task at each level of general mastery of the Ukrainian language as a foreign language, taking into account the age, motivational, geographical, cultural, social, and linguistic

heterogeneity of the contingent of foreign communicators. The content is differentiated into two interrelated content lines: the first - communicative and speech, the second - linguistic.

In accordance with the requirements for the initial level (A1) of mastery of the Ukrainian language, the appropriate standard presents linguistic, speech and communicative material, the mastery of which is sufficient to obtain a certificate. The standard of the basic level (A2) represents a set of language tools that will enable everyone who wants to meet certain communicative needs related to everyday life.

At the intermediate level (B1), (B2) theoretical knowledge and practical recommendations are presented, which will help foreign citizens, Ukrainians abroad, refugees, migrants to meet the basic communicative needs in communicating with native speakers in the social, every day and socio-cultural spheres.

The professional level (C1) involves mastering the highest level of communicative competence in all areas of communication, which can allow anyone who studies the Ukrainian language to conduct professional activities as a philologist, translator, editor, manager, journalist, etc., who works in a Ukrainian-speaking team. Communication situations at the professional level, as the authors note, are related to everyday, social-cultural and official-business spheres.

The users of the General Educational Standards can be methodologists, teachers, authors of scientific manuals, developers of educational programs and plans - all those who are professionally engaged in the theory and practice of teaching the Ukrainian language as a foreign language in Ukraine and abroad.

Literature Review. According to the principles and regulations of studying Ukrainian language for the foreign citizens a lot of university lecturers were involved in a very important work to create the practical guidebooks and provide quick and successful learning of spoken and professional Ukrainian at higher educational establishments of Ukraine.

The Ukrainian language studying for the foreigners has been practiced in the series of guidebooks/textbooks: Oleksandra Serbenska (1994). Ukrainian language as a foreign language: the methodical problems. *Lviv.*; Svitlana Lutsak, Anna Ilkiv, *et.al* (2019). Ukrainian language as a Foreign One for the English-speaking Medicine Students. In two books. Sociocultural Aspect. 504p. (+audio); Halyna Matsiuk (2017). Ukrainian language. Practical Course for the Foreigners. *Ternopil.* 195p.; Ukrainian (self-guide book). A Complete Course for Beginners by Olena Bekh and James Dingly (1998). *London*; Halyna Kosmakova-Bratushenko (2000). Ukrainian language for the Foreigners. *Odesa.* 112p., I. I. Valchenko, Ya. Prylutska (2011). Welcome! Tutorial of Ukrainian language for Foreign Students (in two parts). *Kharkiv National Academy of Municipal Economy. Kharkiv.* 304p., etc.

Mostly the text-books are devoted to practical studying of Ukrainian language by the students of different higher educational institutions (for the beginners to the level A2-B1).

The textbooks cover the topics of various fields of knowledge: from medicine and technology to economics and agriculture: R. Zhanhazynova, S. Kusiak (2019). Ukrainian Language for Foreigners. Part II. Morphology: Teaching and Methodical Manual for Individual Work of Foreign Students of the Preparatory Department of the Field of Knowledge “Health Care”. *Lviv: Lviv National Medical University Named After Danylo Halytskii.* 118 p.; T. Leshchenko. O. Shevchenko, H. Kozub. Let's Read in Ukrainian: A Guide for Foreign Students of the I-II Courses (Socio-Cultural aspect). Part I. *Ministry of Health of Ukraine. Higher State Educational Institution of Ukraine “Ukrainian Medical Dental Academy”.* *Poltava: IE M. Harazh.* 2018. 129 p.

Methods. The main two methods used in Ukrainian language studying for the foreigners are:

- *communicative method* (I. Zozulia, V.Bader, K.Bruner, O.Turkevych, H.Shelest, I. Suima): “The task of the teacher is to find ways to involve the student in communicative interaction, to find such ways and techniques to force a conversation” (Shelest, 2019, 54); “Education of numerous groups of foreign

students, different in terms of mental characteristics, religious beliefs, age and environment of upbringing, requires the search for such methods of education that would make it possible to fully realize the natural abilities of students and develop them. When a foreign student enters a foreign language environment, the first task he/she receives and which his/her teachers must successfully implement is the rapid acquisition of communicative skills of the language of this environment” (Suima, 2022, 129).

- joining of didactic and linguistics (*linguistic didactics*) (L.Bei, O.Trostynska, I.Kochan, N.Zahliupana, O.Turkevych): “We suggest using the term linguistic didactics to denote an integrative science that investigates the theory of language learning (native and foreign)” (Turkevych, 2013, 231-232).

The *interactive methods* are also widely used in modern Ukrainian language studying: “The introduction of innovative methods significantly improves the quality of the presentation of educational material and the efficiency of its assimilation by students, enriches the content of the educational process, increases motivation to study the Ukrainian language, and creates conditions for closer cooperation between teachers and students” (V.Korzhenko, M.Opanasiuk, 2011, 155).

The *descriptive method* (L. Bereza, T.Vrublevska et.al) was used when studying Ukrainian for applied science (medicine): “Also during the research, the descriptive method was used as a way of step-by-step fixation of the experimental materials, the course of the experiment, the actual presentation of the conditions and results of the research, during the work the questionnaire method was also used to compare” (Bereza, 2021, 340).

1. KROK - 1 (in English - Step-1) is the First Guidebook in Ukraine that Complies with the General European Recommendations Regarding Language Education

According to the European Language Requirements (Standards) the first Ukrainian textbook was created by two authors Olena Palinska and Oksana Turkevych in Lviv, in

the Publishing House “Lvivska Politehnika”, where the second edition has been checked in 2014.

This practical textbook consists of two main books – the Student’s Book (for the practical classes), the Teacher’s Book (methodical recommendations for the teacher), and audio disk with every lesson recording, module control tasks, cards for interactive activity (with tasks and answers), mini-vocabulary for the students.

Basic principles. “KROK-1” is aimed at providing correct, simple and effective learning Ukrainian language as a foreign language in Ukrainian courses languages - both intensive and regular. Different situations and dialogues reflect the lively conversational element of modern Ukrainian language, stimulate listeners to master it norms of conversational style and communicative development skills The manual is intended for passing course in a small group with a teacher, it combines both elements of independent work and group work (this element prevails). Students during passing the course communicate with each other, which gives the opportunity to exchange experiences, opinions and information. The teacher's role is error correction, explanation of unclear material, but first of all - organization of work in the group in such a way that students had the opportunity to make the most of it class time for the development of communication skills.

Target audience. The textbook “KROK-1” was created with an orientation to a certain group of listeners: Age - 17+, adults and youth, but no limit for upper age, but the optimal age of listeners is 20-40 years old.

Level of knowledge of Ukrainian. Elementary / basic. Students who have elementary (primarily passive) knowledge of Ukrainian language, as well as other Slavic languages. They distinguish grammatical structures of the Ukrainian language, but cannot correctly use them in your speech; students have some passive vocabulary, but no can use it actively for expression of thoughts.

Nationality. All nationalities. Monolingual or multilingual groups. Students studying at in your country or abroad, including in Ukraine.

Motivation. The students with different motivations for studying the Ukrainian language - for work, tourism, as a hobby. The manual is not intended for professional study of the Ukrainian language by linguists.

Texts and conversation topics in “KROK-1” show a wide spectrum communicative topics intended for active forms of group work. Many types of tasks are dedicated mutual learning of students and interaction with the teacher.

Culture. Basic communication skills are unrelated by a specific national culture. But at the same time the manual provides elementary background knowledge about Ukraine.

Available time. The course is designed for students who have enough time to study the language in groups (classes can be held 1-3 times a week). By if necessary, the course can be adapted to intensive language study.

Components. “KROK-1” *The book for students contains:* material for study in a group; homework; grammatical addition; control exercises to test knowledge.

“KROK-1” *The teacher's book contains:* general introduction to the course, lesson notes for the teacher (pages from the study guide are shown and submitted a comment on them), keys to practical tasks, grammar supplement comments, keys to control tasks.

“KROK-1” *CD contains:* audio files (recordings of words, texts, dialogues, songs) and electronic versions methodological manual for the teacher, mini-dictionary to lessons, a grammar guide in PDF format, as well as electronic version of grammar cards that contain short grammar and vocabulary exercises for consolidation of acquired knowledge, as well as keys and comments to them (on reverse).

Number of academic hours. The duration of the basic course is approximately 40 classroom classes (two academic hours each). This one the amount can change (be reduced or increase) according to the needs of students. So, for an intensive course, it can be reduced number of classes up to 20 - 25, full study with low the basic level will involve an increase in classes to 60. Students can also choose conversation topics from self-study guide if not need to complete a comprehensive course, but in this one otherwise there will be no consistent assimilation of grammar.

Nowadays, KROK-1 is the only one complex guidebook that was used successfully according to the European Standards of language studying. It is easy to use for both – teachers and students. It should be used after the preparatory courses and before studying Professional/Business Ukrainian.

2. Ukrainian Language for The Foreigners Before the War and During the War Time

Higher education institutions of Ukraine before the war time were currently suffering from a significant decrease in the number of students. There are many factors for this: the demographic situation in the country, the advantage of foreign education over domestic education, the low level of school education for successfully passing the independent external evaluation, the advantages of special professional and technical education, etc.

Classroom hours for studying humanitarian disciplines (history of Ukraine, foreign language, philosophy, Ukrainian language, etc.) have also been significantly reduced.

Foreign students were the part of the contingent that enabled the implementation of educational plans and provides the professorial staff with the necessary training load.

There were many students from the following countries who studied at Sumy National Agrarian University: Afghanistan, Ghana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Eswatini (Swaziland), China, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, etc. To study the disciplines, they used two languages - Ukrainian (studied on the preparatory course in the amount of 720 hours and in the second and third courses, 180 and 120 hours, respectively) and English (the official language for students from African countries; preparatory courses in English for students from other countries states).

This approach is justified by the resolution of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine on opportunities for foreign students to receive education and defend diploma theses in two languages (since 2019, the study of the russian language by foreign students has been stopped).

The study of the Ukrainian language by foreign students is not only an academic necessity, but also largely determines the further socialization of the student in Ukrainian society. Each educational institution has specially developed complexes for studying the Ukrainian language as a foreign language, which groups of authors have been working on for several years.

According to the program requirements, at the initial stage, foreign students attended Ukrainian language classes at the preparatory department, and after passing the exam, they continued their studies at the faculty of their choice.

However, the before-the-war realities in addition to the global pandemic and state policy regarding the financing of higher education institutions led to the fact that universities were forced to go to the breach. A foreign student could be enrolled, at his request, immediately in the first/second year of the corresponding faculty, without going through the preparatory department. It led to the fact that in one group of first and second years there could be students with three different levels of language preparation: zero, A1 and B1. There were the students who have already graduated from Ukrainian educational institutions (colleges), but the language of studying was English.

Thus, when preparing a practical lesson on the Ukrainian language, the lecturer had to take into account the real level of training of each foreign student.

The war in Ukraine has changed the life not only for the Ukrainian citizens, but also the people all around the world. The first days were incredibly awful and the disaster was so huge that nobody (nor lecturer not students) could even think about the process of studying. It is clearly that many foreign students gave up studying in Ukraine after the 24th of February, 2022. But, in spite of our grief, a lot of foreigners desired to continue online studying at Sumy National Agrarian University.

There are some peculiarities of the process organization: foreign students are living in the countries of Europe (Hungary, France, the Great Britain, etc.), and also in India, China, Africa that causes the problem of internet connection and differences in time zones.

Besides, the number of students in the groups decreased significantly, the redundancy level among the university lecturers is very high.

The usual lessons are sometimes interrupted by the air alarm.

Thus, there were some reasons for the foreigners to continue education in Ukraine:

- not all regions are under attack, relatively safe;
- the studying is online;
- advance payment and close Bachelor's or Master's Degrees.

Online studying in Ukraine still allows the foreigners to master their grammar and vocabulary skills:

- the students from China, who are studying food technologies at our university got knowledge about the phonetic system of language, trained some specific sounds; they also learn some necessary phrases of business etiquette; try to model communicative situations, etc.;
- students of the Veterinary Faculty continued to study Business Ukrainian: different types of business letters, application forms and business calls; learned some necessary business phrases about different activities;
- the foreign students of the second course improved their vocabulary on topics "Ukrainian Traditions", "Natural Recourses of Ukraine", "Studying at University", "My Future Profession", etc.

Thus, the process of studying continues, but the lecturers and the students face with some problems:

- psychological pressure of war;
- unstable internet connection;
- different time zones;
- often air alarms and blackouts;
- decrease in motivation to study Ukrainian languages;
- fear of staying to study in Ukraine;

- today Ukraine is in a state of war, so it cannot be a bridge for foreigners to the European space;
- the number of academic hours for studying Ukrainian is absolutely low (two hours a week/two weeks).

Conclusions

The problem of successful studying of Ukrainian language for the foreigners have been already decided by the government of Ukraine (different decrees and orders protecting Ukrainian language as a state language of Ukraine; the rules and regulations to the educational establishments of Ukraine to enroll the foreign citizens to study in Ukraine).

Many teaching staffs (teachers, lecturers, Associate Professors, Professors of Ukrainian language) all around Ukraine are ready to provide Ukrainian language studying on the European level, creating new guidebooks, textbooks, additional manuals, etc.

After preparatory courses the number of academic hours for Ukrainian language studying has been decreased significantly (from 772 to 60/30 per semester).

Nevertheless, every year new textbooks for Ukrainian language studying (for foreign students of different specialty) appear in the educational space of Ukraine (L. Nazarevych, T. Dehtiareva, O. Turkevych, etc.). It opens the new way to study and prepare the foreigners to study and work in Ukraine.

The first guidebook KROK-1 is the best complex nowadays to improve the knowledge of Ukrainian language by the foreigners, but for every teacher/lecturer it can't be the only one: teaching is a creative work, including a lot of varieties (the basic level of the group, the motivation of the students, the ability of the university, etc.).

Moreover, in the condition of war in Ukraine, studying Ukrainian is harder objectively.

Thus, the process of Ukrainian language studying for the foreign students is in its way of developing and progressing.

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