

INTRODUCTION OF A NEW MECHANISM ON STRENGTHENING PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN UZBEKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Our country draw a special attention to strengthening learning and teaching foreign languages of our youth targeting at forming conditions and chance for fostering international collaboration and communication, widely and effectively using the advance achievements of the world civilization and the information sources as well as providing their integration into the world mutual society. The Professional knowledge and skills of specialists is the key of success in any field of life. In the Education system, it is closely connected with the quality of teachers' pedagogical competency. In this article discussed the early results of a new introduced mechanism on strengthening Professional knowledge and skills of foreign language teachers in the Public Education System of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: Professional competency, State Educational Standards, requirements, new curricula.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays in Uzbekistan the results of nation-wide reforms in the sphere of education basing on the laws as "On Education" and "National Program of Personnel Training" create an opportunity for our youth gaining qualitative education in the thousands of newly built modern schools, colleges, academic lyceums, sports, music, art schools and higher educational institutions. Created conditions in the field of education in our country serve for bringing up well-educated, modern intelligently thoughtful, intellectually and harmoniously developed generation, who get complete professional preparation. On December 10, 2012, the implementation of the Presidential Decree №1875 on "The measures of strengthening the system of learning foreign languages" creates the basis for reforming on teaching foreign languages in the education system of the country.

Until the adoption of the above-mentioned Presidential Decree foreign languages to be taught at the general secondary schools from the 5th grade. According to the Decree from 2013-2014 school year included 2 hours foreign languages classes in the school curricula of the general secondary schools, so that now at the Primary classes, actually from the 1st grade our children have 2 hours foreign language lessons every week.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In 2013 basing on the elaborated State Education Standards in learning foreign languages in the system of continuous (general secondary, secondary-specialized, professional, higher and post graduate) education the requirements for obtaining foreign languages to be indicated for gradulators of all stages of education. The same time new curricula on systematically teaching foreign languages starting from the first grade has approved. The requirements on defining the level of language learning competency of learners developed according to the measures of

International Standards of “Common European Framework of Reference for Languages-Learning, Teaching and Assessment” (CEFR).

Requirements for level of learners on foreign languages in the State Educational Standards of Continuous Education System (Table 1)

Stage of Education	Requirements to Graduates	CEFR Levels	Name of the Level
General secondary Education	Primary class (4 th grade) graduates	A1	Basic user initial level
	Graduates of 9 th grade	A2	Basic user level
	Graduates of 9 th grades in specialized schools majoring in learning foreign languages.	A2+	Basic user enhanced level
Secondary special, vocational education	Graduates of academic lyceums with non-language profile	B1	Independent user initial level
	Graduates of vocational colleges		
	Graduates of academic lyceums with language profile – second foreign language		
	Graduates of academic lyceums with language profile	B1+	Independent user enhanced level
Higher Education	Graduates of bachelor’s degree courses in non-language departments of HEIs.	B2	Independent user level
	Graduates of bachelor’s degree courses in language departments of HEIs - second foreign language		
	Graduates of master’s degree courses in non-language departments of HEIs	B2+	Independent enhanced user level
	Graduates of bachelor’s degree courses in language departments of HEIs	C1	Proficient initial user level
	Graduates of master’s degree courses in language departments of HEIs		

METHODOLOGY

Under the tasks specified in the Decree for the purpose of improving learning foreign languages and supporting learners and teachers created new generation of complex textbooks, which are included Student’s Book, Teacher’s Guide, multimedia resources and other additional materials. So, the 1st graders since 2013, 2nd graders since 2014 and 3rd graders since 2015 have been providing with the set of foreign language (English, German, French) such as Student’s Book, Work Book and multimedia resources, as well as Teacher’s Book for teachers. All foreign language classrooms have been equipped according to modern requirements. Teaching foreign languages in the 1st grade have been implementing through game-based form and directed to formulating speaking skills, from the second grade systematically formulating reading skills and acquiring communicative grammar.

Hence the main attention have been drawn to teaching foreign languages, especially English by introducing advanced foreign language teaching strategies and techniques using modern pedagogic and information-communication technologies. Aiming at improving and strengthening the quality of foreign language teaching further years in the Public Education system have defined the measures on widening parents’ involvement (collaborative pedagogy) in the process of foreign language teaching at Primary classes, providing additional learning materials and different literary resources.

RESULTS

One of the main directions specified above-mentioned Presidential Decree of the country is to strengthen and raise the quality of teaching foreign languages up the new stage through improving Professional knowledge and skills number of foreign language teachers, who work in the general secondary schools. In the Decree encouraging system of foreign language teachers to be indicated. According to this, granted to add up to 30% bonus for teachers' monthly wages, who made a significant contribution to teaching foreign languages. At present day, more than 25 thousand foreign language teachers are working in the 9698 general secondary schools in the Public Education system. 89,2% of these schools to be taught English, as well as 16,2% German and 11,1% French.

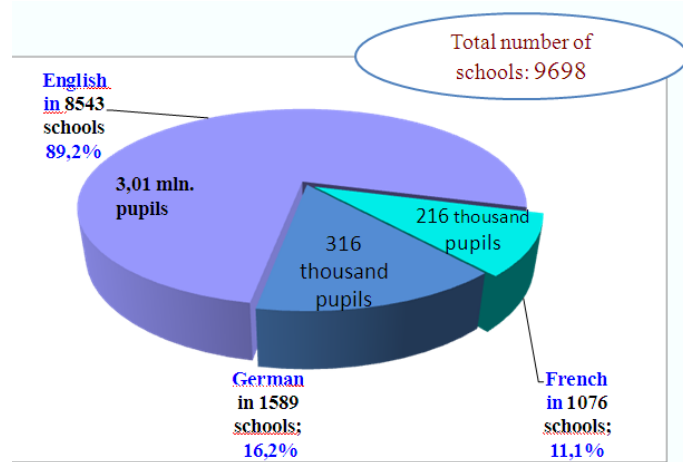


Figure 1. The status of teaching foreign language in the 1-9 classes of schools

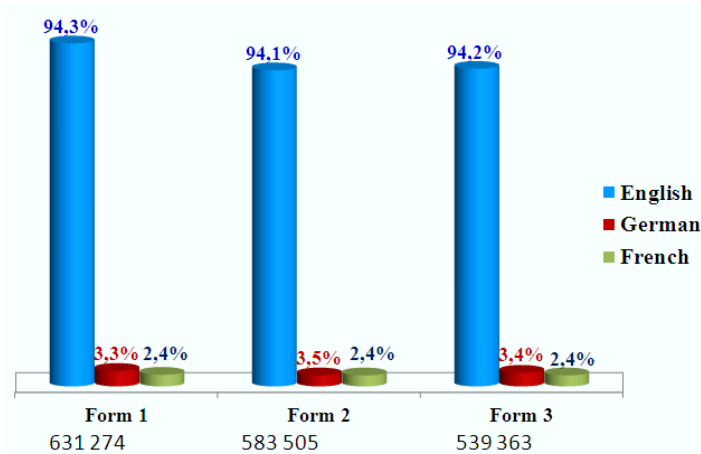


Figure 2. The status of teaching foreign language in the 1-, 2-, 3 classes of schools

The Professional competency of foreign language teachers is very important for providing the quality of teaching basing on created new Education Standards, curriculum, syllabus and textbooks. Operated Teachers Professional Development system targeted to upgrade all subject teachers, including foreign language teachers' Professional knowledge and skills at least once in every 5 years by the government account. Conferring to this all foreign language teachers to be involved to the Professional Development courses during 5 years systematically and upgrade their professional competency within a month basing on the 144 hours syllabus. That is every year 20% of all teachers to be involved to the Professional Development.

The necessity of delivering the new foreign language teaching approaches, reforms the same time and creating opportunities for the rest of all teachers on using advanced experience of skilful teacher specialists and in this way increasing the quality of teaching foreign languages in the nation level required to create and introduce new mechanism of Professional Development of foreign language teachers.

DISCUSSION

Due to this established target schools in all districts (cities) secondary schools of the republic and in the base of these schools implemented the activities by weekly courses (once every week) on introducing new mechanism, which is provided ongoing Professional Development of teachers. Such type of mechanism on fostering Professional skills and Pedagogical Competency of foreign language teachers focused on completely new approach to Professional Development of Personnel, that is, without interposing their work, they can update professional knowledge and skills with the help of special trained teacher-trainers by attending constant operating courses.

Constant base learning courses operate in the base of each target schools established every districts (cities) of the republic. Nowadays there are 637 target schools in the country. Foreign language teachers, work in the general secondary schools upgrade their professional competency by attending the practical sessions delivered once every week- actually, methodological day specified once for each week, basing on the approved syllabus by the Ministry of Public Education. The main purpose of these professional development courses are to enlarge the range of skilled teachers, who can teach foreign languages according to up to date demands, use the created opportunities by the government effectively through improving practical teaching skills of foreign language teachers, especially teaching skills in Primary classes. Increasing the number of skilled teachers, who teach competitively, undoubtedly impact to growth quality and quantity of teaching foreign languages at secondary schools.

Organization such type of courses create the following chance for foreign language teachers as to:

- upgrade their professional skills not far from their living place and without interrupting their work;
- practical use of gained new knowledge directly in their lessons;
- find feasible solutions for the problems, faced during the teaching process collaboratively with mentor-teachers and co-colleagues;
- participate in the examination on getting bonus for their monthly wages, if they consider themselves ready for the testing.

For introducing such type of Teachers Professional Development Mechanism specific preparation activities have been done. The curriculum, syllabus, session materials, methodological guide, handouts, audio and video resources for these courses have been developed by the professor-teachers of the Central In-Service and Retraining Institute under the Ministry of Public Education with the cooperation the specialists of the Uzbekistan State World language university and other specialized educational institutions.

The quality and quantity of the Professional Development courses, delivered in two stages (1st stage- January-June, 2nd stage – September-December) mostly depend on the skills of trainer-teachers, who are responsible to conduct practical sessions of these courses. Owing to this, special preparation to be taken into consideration before starting each stage of this course.

Trainer-training targeted course, conducted at the Central Institute began the early stage of such preparation. More than 800 trainer-teachers, who prepared basing on 36 hours syllabus, get the right to deliver lessons at the Professional Development courses in the regions. The effective mechanism of Continuous Professional Development of more than 20 thousand foreign language teachers within a year in their regions to be established with the help of the trainers, who developed their mentoring skills in this trainings. Constant methodological assistance have been providing for trainer-teachers by the Central Institute.

CONCLUSIONS

The activities implemented on improving Professional Competency of foreign language teachers are yielding its positive results. Within a year the amount of teachers, who got the certificate approved their Professional proficiency and received additional bonus for their monthly wages increased up to 45%. The same time the results of Olympiads on foreign languages and monitoring of pupils knowledge proficiency, conducted every year in nation level specified reasonable growth of teaching foreign languages at schools of the country. Basing on the gained achievements of strengthening foreign language teachers Professional Proficiency recommendations on introducing this mechanism to all other subject teachers' Professional Development system to be developed.

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