

DOI 10.11603/m.2414-5998.2023.3.14278  
УДК 378.147:81'243]-057.875(430)

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## **SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO STUDENTS IN GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES**

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### **ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ТЕОРІЇ ТА ПРАКТИКИ ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ СТУДЕНТАМ У НІМЕЦЬКОМОВНИХ КРАЇНАХ**

**Abstract.** This research article delves into the intricacies of teaching foreign languages to students in German-speaking countries (based on a German model), uncovering the distinctive features that shape both theoretical frameworks and practical implementations. The globalized world necessitates effective language education, and within German-speaking nations, language learning holds a pivotal role due to their commitment to multilingualism and intercultural communication. This study examines the multifaceted approach to language education, which considers linguistic, cultural, and cognitive aspects. It explores the integration of diverse theoretical foundations, such as communicative language teaching and intercultural competence, to tailor teaching methodologies. Cultural context and technological advancements, including digital tools and experiential learning, contribute to fostering language skills and intercultural understanding. Furthermore, this article highlights future research prospects, including the exploration of pedagogical strategies, assessment methods, technology integration, teacher training, and the socio-cultural dynamics influencing language education. Ultimately, this investigation provides insights into how language education in German-speaking countries adapts to the demands of a globally connected society.

**Key words:** foreign language education; German-speaking countries; theoretical foundations; pedagogical strategies; intercultural competence; technology integration; experiential learning; language proficiency; socio-cultural dynamics.

**Анотація.** У статті глибоко досліджено особливості викладання іноземних мов студентам у німецькомовних країнах (на прикладі Німеччини), розкриваючи характерні особливості, що формують як теоретичні засади, так і практичні реалізації. Глобалізований світ вимагає ефективної мовної освіти, а в німецькомовних країнах вивчення мови відіграє важливу роль завдяки їхньому зобов'язанню до багатомовності та міжкультурної комунікації. У цьому дослідженні розглянуто багатогранний підхід до мовної освіти, який враховує лінгвістичні, культурні та когнітивні аспекти. Досліджено інтеграцію різноманітних теоретичних засад, таких, як комунікативне викладання мов та міжкультурна компетентність, для налаштування методологій викладання. Культурний контекст і технологічні досягнення, включаючи цифрові інструменти та експериментальне навчання, сприяють розвитку мовних навичок та міжкультурному розумінню. Крім того, у статті відображено перспективи майбутніх досліджень, включаючи вивчення педагогічних стратегій, методів оцінювання, інтеграції технологій, підготовки вчителів та соціокультурних динамік, які впливають на мовну освіту. В кінцевому підсумку це дослідження надає уявлення про те, як мовна освіта в німецькомовних країнах адаптується до вимог світового співтовариства в умовах глобалізації.

**Ключові слова:** іноземномовна освіта; німецькомовні країни; теоретичні основи; педагогічні стратегії; міжкультурна компетентність; інтеграція технологій; експериментальне навчання; володіння мовою; соціокультурна динаміка.

**Introduction.** The teaching of foreign languages in the context of German-speaking countries represents a dynamic and evolving field of study, marked by a rich interplay of theory and practice. As globalization continues to foster interconnectedness among nations, the acquisition of foreign language skills becomes an essential tool for effective communication, cultural

exchange, and academic and professional advancement. Within the German-speaking countries, which include Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and parts of Belgium and Luxembourg, the educational landscape has been influenced by a commitment to multilingualism and a recognition of the pivotal role that language learning plays in fostering international collaboration.

This article delves into the specific features that characterize both the theoretical underpinnings and

the practical strategies employed in teaching foreign languages to students in German-speaking countries. By examining the unique sociocultural and linguistic contexts of these nations, we aim to shed light on the diverse approaches and methodologies used to enhance students' language proficiency and intercultural competence.

The intricate relationship between theory and practice in language education is particularly noteworthy in this context. Theoretical frameworks provide educators with insights into language acquisition processes, cognitive mechanisms, and pedagogical methodologies. These theories serve as the foundation upon which effective teaching strategies are built, taking into account the linguistic diversity within German-speaking countries and the diverse needs of language learners [4, p. 93].

Furthermore, this article explores how educational policies, technological advancements, and socio-political considerations impact the design and implementation of language curricula. The integration of digital tools, the rise of experiential learning opportunities, and the recognition of the significance of intercultural communication all contribute to shaping the dynamic landscape of foreign language education in German-speaking countries.

In order to comprehensively understand the nuances of foreign language teaching in this context, we will examine case studies, best practices, and empirical evidence that showcase the successes and challenges of language instruction (based on a German model). By critically analyzing the pedagogical strategies employed, this article aims to provide educators, researchers, and policymakers with valuable insights into the ways in which foreign language education is evolving to meet the demands of an increasingly interconnected world.

In the subsequent sections, we will delve into the specific characteristics of the theoretical foundations and practical implementations of teaching foreign languages to students in German-speaking countries (based on a German model). Through this exploration, we seek to contribute to the broader discourse on language education by highlighting the innovations and approaches that hold promise for enhancing language acquisition and intercultural competence in a multilingual and globalized landscape.

We would like to build, scientifically approve and test a relevant didactic model that may consist of preparation, practice and assessment-and-control stages based on a German model. The study will be expanded on the analysis of the didactic approaches

of the communicative, methodic (pedagogical content) and cultural competences development of effective foreign languages teaching in Germany.

**The aim** – to theoretically substantiate the didactic conditions of teaching foreign languages to students and experimentally test their effectiveness. One of the hypotheses is that multimedia technologies may be one of the effective tools and our objective is to investigate it as well.

**Theoretical framework.** Historical aspects of the development of foreign language education in Germany in the context of European educational trends were considered by German scientists of both the past (F. Paulsen) and the present K.-R. Bausch, H. Christ, K. Vogel, K. Schröder. The dynamics of changes in language policy can be traced to the documents of the European Commission, the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Education and Culture of Germany. This issue is the subject of lively discussion of scientists in the field of education, among whom should be named R. Arnold, H.-J. Krumm, B. Hufeisen. Considering the significance of foreign language education as part of multicultural education, the concepts of “foreign language” and “language” education need special consideration and specification. In the context of Germany, due to the multicultural nature of society, both concepts are used in relation to the German language, although it remains the only state language. Multicultural education for this country has been one of the most discussed problems in scientific circles for more than a decade. Among the authors of fundamental research in this field, W. Wintersteiner, M. Krüger-Potratz, and U. Zeuner should be mentioned. Bilingual education became the subject of research in the works of German researchers, in particular M. Wildhage and E. Otten (development of the theoretical foundations of the introduction of bilingual education and CLIL in the practice of school education in Germany). In German pedagogical literature, language diversification is the subject of research by such scientists as H. Barkowski, F.-J. Meißner and others. A significant contribution was also made by B. Hufeisen regarding the development of didactic principles for teaching foreign languages after English. Problems of the content of language learning and curricular aspects of their study in Germany were primarily dealt with by H.-J. Krumm [4, 9, 12].

Available publications of the Ukrainian scientists also represent general issues of teaching staff training in Germany (G. Badakh, S. Bobrakov, I. Piankovska), features of early foreign language learning at the modern stage (M. Parkhomchuk), postgraduate

teacher education in Germany (A. Turchyn ) and European countries (V. Vakulenko, S. Synenko). Researchers O. Kuznetsova, L. Pukhovska, N. Sydorhuk, M. Tadeeva, N. Chernihivska, V. Pasynok, studying, understanding and comparing the university education system of Ukraine and leading European countries, the state of humanitarian and pedagogical education, analyzed foreign language courses in higher education, educational programmes and partly the organization of training for students of language departments. Ukrainian researchers R. Hryshkova, T. Kovalova, H. Levchenko, O. Lokshina, I. Lopushynskyi, N. Pelagesha, O. Slonivska did not ignore the problem of changes in priorities in the language policy of the EU and Germany, as well as the issue of influence among others multiculturalism on educational processes (S. Drozhzhina, I. Loschenova, O. Slonivska and others). Bilingual education became the subject of research in the works of T. Bodnarchuk, N. Duda, and A. Shirin, who proposed a typology of bilingual education, presented data on the structure of linguistic education, and considered modern approaches to teaching foreign languages and the experience of their study in schools in European countries, and in particular in Germany. S. Amelina, N. Borysko, M. Gavrish, G. Levchenko, N. Petraschuk (German language) participated in the practical development of the curricular principles of teaching foreign languages in Ukraine; H. Bakayeva, V. Leshchenko, S. Nikolayeva (English language) [1].

Each of the researchers has his own view on the problem, but there is no unequivocal answer to the question of the essence of foreign language education as a component of multiculturalism, although all scientists recognize that it is foreign language education that is key in the conditions of multiculturalism of the European community and in the conditions of European integration processes and globalization.

An emphasis should be put on the historical and contemporary formation and development of the state system of foreign language education in Germany.

The socio-political component of foreign language education in the European space influenced the following points: the stages of EU language policy in the context of European integration; the issue of language policy as an educational policy in the conditions of multiculturalism of the European community; the linguistic policy principles of foreign language teaching in Germany against the background of integration processes. Implementation of the conceptual principles of multilingualism in Germany is decided at the federal and regional level, at the level of theory and practice of

foreign language education. The issue of diversification of the language offer is controversial in Germany. In the vast majority of schools, English is offered as the first language. Agreeing with the fact that English must be in everyone's language repertoire, scientists, primarily the authors of multilingual didactics, believe that it should be offered as a second foreign language, used as a basis for learning other languages, and focus on receptive acquisition at the initial stage. In Germany, special attention is paid to the language learning of migrant children. Schools offer the study of mother tongue and German as a second language. Taking into account the specifics of such study and training, scientists and practitioners of foreign language education are developing and implementing systematic measures to improve the situation in this area, both at the level of school foreign language education and at the level of professional training of teachers and their respective specialization [1].

A significant interest is raised by materials related to the organization of foreign language learning at various levels of the foreign language education system, which is represented by solving the following tasks: to get acquainted with the practice of foreign language learning in German schools; to study the aspects of learning foreign languages in the system of higher education and adult education in Germany; to substantiate the didactic foundations of training foreign language teachers and improving their qualifications. Germany was one of the first to respond to the challenges that arose in connection with the new socio-political conditions, against the background of European integration, migration and shifting priorities in the study of foreign languages. This affected the foreign language offer, primarily regarding the appearance of "German as a second language" and "language of origin" disciplines in school curricula. Ancient languages, traditional for the school education system, are gradually losing their positions. Against the background of the total dominance of English as the language of international communication, other foreign languages are offered in schools, those with world status, as well as languages of neighbors and languages of economically developed countries. Taking into account the requirements of the Council of Europe regarding the preservation of linguistic diversity, the implementation of the concept of multilingualism and the expansion of the language offer, Germany is trying to create optimal conditions for learning foreign languages (native + two foreign languages) by both citizens of German origin and foreigners, involving not only its own resources, but also diplomatic missions [2, p. 178].

The analysis of the conceptual foundations of multilingualism and their implementation in foreign language education in Germany, involves examining various factors that contribute to the understanding of language learning, linguistic diversity, and the strategies employed to teach foreign languages. Germany, as a multilingual country and a major player in the European Union, has its own unique approach to foreign language education, influenced by both historical and contemporary factors [7, p. 6].

Conceptual foundations of multilingualism in Germany are linguistic diversity, European language framework, cultural understanding, bilingualism in education, Language policy [6, 8].

Germany is home to a wide range of languages due to historical immigration patterns, including Turkish, Arabic, Russian, and Polish, among others. This linguistic diversity has led to the recognition of multilingualism as a valuable asset. The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is widely used in Germany and serves as a basis for language teaching and assessment. It defines proficiency levels (A1 to C2) and guides curriculum development, ensuring a standardized approach to language education across Europe. Germany acknowledges the importance of understanding other cultures through language. This perspective promotes intercultural competence and enhances communication in a globalized world. Some regions in Germany implement bilingual education, where subjects are taught in both German and another language, such as English or French. This approach aims to develop students' language skills while also facilitating content learning. Germany's language policy emphasizes the importance of learning foreign languages, with English being a prominent language due to its international relevance. This policy is driven by the need for a globally competitive workforce and improved diplomatic and economic relations [11, p. 268].

Implementation in foreign language education depends on such factors as early start, language immersion, curriculum integration, technology integration; teacher training, assessment and certification, experiential learning.

Foreign language education often begins in primary school, with English being the most commonly taught language. Starting early is believed to enhance language acquisition and proficiency. Language immersion programs provide students with intensive exposure to the target language. These programs may involve study abroad experiences or language camps, enabling

students to engage with the language in authentic contexts. Language instruction is often integrated into other subjects, allowing students to learn content while simultaneously developing language skills. This approach emphasizes the practical application of language in real-world scenarios. Digital tools and resources are commonly used to supplement language education. Online platforms, language learning apps, and interactive media enhance engagement and provide additional practice opportunities. Language educators undergo training to ensure they are equipped with the latest teaching methodologies and approaches. This includes understanding the psychological and cognitive aspects of language learning. The CEFR-aligned proficiency levels guide assessment and certification. Standardized tests such as TestDaF (for German as a foreign language) and various Cambridge English exams are widely recognized and utilized. Cultural exchange programs, study abroad opportunities, and international projects allow students to apply their language skills in real-life situations, fostering a deeper understanding of language and culture [5].

Therefore, the conceptual foundations of multilingualism in Germany highlight the value of linguistic diversity and cultural understanding. The implementation of these foundations in foreign language education involves early exposure, immersion, curriculum integration, technology use, and teacher training. These efforts are guided by language policies that prioritize global competitiveness and intercultural communication [3, 10].

Over the last decade, there have been noticeable shifts in the direction of reforming the system of foreign language education in Ukraine. However, a number of unsolved problems in the field of foreign language education remain i.e. the disparity in the foreign language offer of Ukrainian schools, the low level of foreign language knowledge of the majority of the country's citizens, the insufficient level of training of foreign language teachers, especially methodical (methodology of the second language, familiarity with modern methods, primarily with the principles of multilingualism and specifics of work in its conditions), low level of provision of educational materials, especially multimedia ones. In our opinion, the implementation of a relevant didactic German model will improve the process of reforming the system of foreign language education in Ukraine.

**Conclusions and Prospects for Research.** Therefore, the exploration of the specific features of theory and practice in teaching foreign languages to students

in German-speaking countries underscores the intricate interplay between pedagogical approaches, linguistic diversity, and socio-cultural factors. This study has illuminated several key insights: multidimensional approach; theoretical foundations; cultural context; technological advancements; experiential learning; integrative curriculum. The teaching of foreign languages in German-speaking countries is characterized by a multidimensional approach that considers linguistic, cultural, and cognitive aspects. This approach acknowledges the complex interrelationships between language acquisition, cultural understanding, and cognitive development. The integration of diverse theoretical frameworks, such as communicative language teaching, intercultural competence, and cognitive linguistics, contributes to the development of effective teaching methodologies. These foundations enable educators to tailor their strategies to the diverse needs of language learners. The recognition of the cultural context in language education fosters deeper engagement and appreciation for the target language. Intercultural communication skills are emphasized to facilitate meaningful interactions across linguistic and cultural boundaries. The incorporation of digital tools and technology enhances language learning by providing interactive and immersive experiences. Virtual language labs, online resources, and language learning applications offer innovative avenues for practicing language skills. Study abroad programs, cultural exchanges, and real-world language use opportunities offer students firsthand experiences in applying their language skills in authentic settings. These experiences

contribute to a holistic understanding of language and culture. The integration of language instruction into various disciplines promotes content-based language learning, enriching students' vocabulary and language usage within specific contexts.

Continued research into the most effective pedagogical strategies for fostering language proficiency and intercultural competence in German-speaking countries will contribute to refining language education approaches. Exploring innovative assessment methods that align with the complexities of language learning and intercultural skills will provide insights into accurately measuring language competencies. Investigating the optimal integration of technology, virtual reality, and AI in language education can enhance the interactive and engaging aspects of language learning. Research into comprehensive teacher training programs that incorporate the latest theories, methodologies, and technological advancements will ensure educators are equipped to deliver impactful language education. Further understanding the influence of socio-cultural dynamics on language learning and teaching will enable educators to create more culturally sensitive and relevant language curricula.

In conclusion, the field of teaching foreign languages to students in German-speaking countries is marked by a dynamic interplay between theoretical foundations and practical strategies. By embracing the intricacies of linguistic diversity and cultural richness, educators and researchers have the opportunity to continually refine language education, equipping students with the skills they need to thrive in an interconnected world.

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Received 26.09.2023.  
Recommended 03.10.2023.

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