

FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND MUSIC EDUCATION STATUS IN A NON-LINGUISTIC UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

O STATUS DO ENSINO DE LÍNGUA ESTRANGEIRA E MÚSICA EM UM SISTEMA UNIVERSITÁRIO NÃO LINGÜÍSTICO

ESTADO DE EDUCACIÓN EN LENGUA EXTRANJERA Y MÚSICA EN UN SISTEMA UNIVERSITARIO NO LINGÜÍSTICO

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ABSTRACT: This paper is aimed at providing theoretical grounding of “Foreign language” status as an academic discipline in the range of other subjects studied at a non-linguistic university. Research shows that high requirements are set to supplementary subjects, such as accompaniment and foreign language which have their individual status as well as semantic and dynamic characteristic features. Beneficial interaction of the soloist and accompanist plays a mutually enriching role giving an insight into the piece of music both for the musician and the audience. The humanitarian component introduced into the educational process through language studies complements and enriches the whole process and provides it with semantic fullness. Analysis of the dialectical parallels (principal subject – supplementary subject, principal voice – accompaniment) proved that each of their components has its own status.

KEYWORDS: Foreign language. Principal and supplementary subjects. Principal voice. Accompaniment.

RESUMO: Este artigo tem como objetivo fornecer embasamento teórico do status de “Língua Estrangeira” como disciplina acadêmica no leque de outras disciplinas estudadas em uma universidade não linguística. A pesquisa mostra que as altas exigências são impostas a disciplinas complementares, como acompanhamento e língua estrangeira, que têm seu status individual, além de características semânticas e dinâmicas. A interação benéfica do solista e do acompanhante desempenha um papel mutuamente enriquecedor, dando uma visão da peça musical tanto para o músico quanto para o público. O componente

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humanitário introduzido no processo educativo através dos estudos linguísticos complementa e enriquece todo o processo e confere-lhe plenitude semântica. A análise dos paralelos dialéticos (sujeito principal – sujeito suplementar, voz principal – acompanhamento) provou que cada um de seus componentes tem seu próprio status.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Língua estrangeira. Matérias principais e suplementares. Voz principal. Acompanhamento.*

RESUMEN: *Este documento tiene como objetivo proporcionar una base teórica del estatus de "lengua extranjera" como disciplina académica en el rango de otras materias estudiadas en una universidad no lingüística. Las investigaciones muestran que se imponen altas exigencias a las materias complementarias, como el acompañamiento y la lengua extranjera, que tienen su estatus individual así como rasgos característicos semánticos y dinámicos. La interacción beneficiosa del solista y el acompañante juega un papel mutuamente enriquecedor al dar una idea de la pieza musical tanto para el músico como para la audiencia. El componente humanitario introducido en el proceso educativo a través de los estudios de idiomas complementa y enriquece todo el proceso y lo dota de plenitud semántica. El análisis de los paralelos dialéticos (sujeto principal-sujeto suplementario, voz principal-acompañamiento) demostró que cada uno de sus componentes tiene su propio estatuto.*

PALABRAS CLAVE: *Lengua extranjera. Materias principales y complementarias. Voz principal. Acompañamiento.*

Introduction

In the last few decades, it appears absolutely necessary to study a foreign language and the role it plays in preparing specialists majoring in various subjects (both humanitarian and technical ones) has been very important. Due to globalization and integration processes a foreign language, basically English, has infiltrated in all spheres of life: science, technology, advertising, and communication. Plenty of evidence of this fact is found in scientific papers of foreign and Russian researchers (ABRUDAN; STURZA; SUPURAN, 2021; VOVSI-TILL'E, 2018; SUPRUNOV, 2017) to name a few. Most researchers and educators focus on the foreign language roles, functions, classroom, and extracurricular activities to improve practical and communication skills, which is of course, an essential and integral part of the education process. However, the issue of this academic discipline status, though tackled in many papers, remains unspecified and rather obscure. The same situation is with the status of a language teacher, who “works alone or as part of a small team in a comparatively isolated situation where his status may be uncertain and his organizational and resources requirements not apparent to others” (RAJGURU, 2017, p. 515). The purpose of this article is to determine

the status of “Foreign language” as an academic discipline in the range of other subjects studied at a non-linguistic university. As soon as any research based on other studies in this area or relevant fields inevitably leads us into speculations about the role or practical importance of studying a foreign language, of great practical help in reaching our aim is turning to music studies, more specifically – to the theory of accompaniment. This will help us to fill the status of the discipline in question with individual characteristic features, determine its standing in higher education system and interaction range with principal subjects. Such a comparative paradigm was not randomly selected. It is predetermined by a lot of researchers’ and educators’ position with respect to principal and complementary subjects. As a result, the following apparent parallels arise: main subject (specialty) and complementary or supplementary one (foreign language) on the one hand, and main voice (melody) and accompaniment on the other hand. Besides, such parallelization singles out voids in the supplementary subject status, i.e.: principal subject (specialty) – be it electrical engineering, medicine, psychology, vocality – have clear-cut definite categorization; meanwhile, a supplementary or complementary subject is deprived of any character, definitiveness or focus. In this connection, reasonable questions might arise: “If it is not a *principal* subject, what kind of discipline is it and how should we treat it? Supplementary or facilitating – what does it supplement or facilitate?” etc.

Literature review of practical and pragmatic approaches

Language Education

This approach is determined by objective factors and is imposed upon the authors working within its frameworks by facts of reality. It is worth mentioning herewith, that this approach is by no means criticized or looked down upon, on the contrary – it has a lot of advantages and is considered natural reasonable reaction to the real conditions and an appropriate course of action. In many non-linguistic universities of our country, e.g., Lobachevsky State University, Nizhny Novgorod State Technical University n.a. Alexeev, though only on few faculties, a foreign language is studied two hours per week (that is one pair of classes per week). A similar or sometimes even poorer situation can be observed in some foreign universities, e.g.,

at the University of Oradea (Romania), Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology, the students have the opportunity to study English during the first two years of undergraduate studies (four semesters, one hour

per week in most cases). Otherwise, English is not used as a medium of communication in the lectures, seminars, laboratories or tutorials related to engineering subjects” (ABRUDAN; STURZA; SUPURAN, 2021, p. 101).

The same takes place in Ukraine “at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv ESP courses at all non-philological faculties are optional” (REBENKO, 2020, p. 202). The number of hours and the length of courses make it necessary to teach students first and foremost some practical skills, or put it simply “trade” or “occupation” without which further educational process is, of course, impossible.

The authors of this approach describe and specify various roles and purposes of teaching a foreign language from practical and sometimes purely pragmatic point of view. Our foreign counterparts are interested in “graduates who demonstrate not only technical knowledge but also at least basic knowledge of English” and emphasize “the importance of acquiring English language skills” (ABRUDAN; STURZA; SUPURAN, 2021, p. 99-100). The same with Russia’s educators who claim that “the main objective of studying foreign languages in a non-linguistic university is to acquire practical foreign language skills in order to understand publications and literature dealing with their specialty and be able to communicate in their professional sphere” (SUPRUNOV, 2017, p. 72), and that language studies “should be professionally-oriented which implies meeting cognitive and communicative needs of a specialist in the relative field”, as well as to “reach the level sufficient for practical use of a foreign language in future professional activity” (KUZNETSOVA, [n.d.]).

It is common knowledge, that learning is a two-way traffic and educators working within the frameworks of this approach have to admit that “students put little effort in learning English (outside the English class), despite the fact that they accept that English is important in their development as engineers”, as well as another fact which this article is focused on: “English, being a complementary, though compulsory discipline, is *not* perceived, in our opinion, as priority subject” (p. 100). Basing on this, some researchers express fear that it “might result in the lower status of teaching for non-philological students” (REBENKO, 2020, p. 202) and constant ESP teachers’ “identity struggles” (YAZAN; LINDAHL, 2020) as a necessity to build, or even “rebuild their professional identities” (TAO; GAO, 2018).

Music Education

An analogous understanding of the dialectic parallel can be observed in music education with respect to forming and self-expression of a soloist on the one hand and accompaniment – on the other hand. A great number of musicians and members of the audience consider the main voice to be the basic means of expressing the content, the main idea and the essence of a music piece. Theorists and educators underline the status of “the solo’s primacy” and “the content primacy” (LUBLINSKIY, 1972, p. 17, p. 54), while “the accompaniment gives you the basic foundation of music” (MAZUR, [n.d.]). Herein, it is worth mentioning a notional or even spatial identity of the perception of “*principal voice – accompaniment*” on the one hand, and “*principal subject – complementary subject*” on the other hand. Under the word “accompaniment”, rhythmic and harmonic support (or substructure) is implied as opposed in meaning to the melody; accompaniment is interpreted as something secondary, supplementary, deprived of any individual artistic-expressive role (which sometimes appears in special cases as something benevolent, though optional). From the point of view of geometrical configuration, “such rhythmic and harmonic support as a vertical line is often opposed to the horizontal line of the melody” (LUBLINSKIY, 1972, p. 18).

Competences and goals of teaching at a non-linguistic university have analogous spatial configuration: principal subjects and purposes (educational, developing, practical and pedagogic) hold a horizontal vector, while the accompanying subjects and purposes – a vertical one, playing the role of bearings, fulfilling “social order for the specialist” (VOVSI-TILL'E, 2018, p. 13), providing his qualification shaping.

This picture brings a philosophical dispute about the structure and its elements relations. As it is known, every structural element performs not only a functional role but also has its own meaning and mission. From a philosophical standpoint “a structure separated from its elements, cannot be logically interpreted, as only being connected to its elements the structure gains the right to exist, reflecting certain relations of material processes” (SVIDERSKY, 1962, p. 238). In other words, it would be extremely casual to try to understand (or create) only the form – or a horizontal line – separated from the meaning and content of its elements or vertical bearings.

As we can see, inadequate attention to the complementary component or lowering its status contradict the philosophical, educational, and pedagogical concepts making it necessary to consider the given problem from the point of view of a broader or holistic approach.

Materials and methods

The objective of this article is to accentuate the “supplementary” discipline status and standing in the university curriculum, and in a broader sense – its role and dynamics when preparing a future specialist in the system of higher education. Herewith, analysis methods such as observation and comparative methods have been selected; the article is structured basing on comparative analysis principle (principal and supplementary subjects – solo and accompaniment) which singles out semantic layers. Moreover, topical or alternating semantic layers’ rhythmical analysis was carried out to bring about educational process dynamics characteristics, which in the end determine the academic discipline status in semantic as well as temporal aspects. In order to reach a deeper understanding of the problem and bring about the necessary results the above methods were incorporated in holistic approach to music and language education respectively which is described further on.

Music education

Many music theorists, educators, and composers single out not only functional roles played by the accompaniment in creating, understanding, performing, or perceiving a piece of music but also attach a special status to it. Different representatives of different historical periods chronologically echo one another: from the composers’ point of view “orchestra (hand in hand with harmonization) should infuse a musical message with a certain meaning and flair – in a word, breathe character or life into it” (GLINKA, 1952, p. 350); educators and theorists point to the fact that “being closely connected with the meaning conveyed by the principal voice, accompaniment performs a different meaningful function” (LUBLINSKIY, 1972, p. 18); performers highlight mutual influence and interdependence of the principal voice and accompaniment “ if you listen to where the accompaniment leads you, it often will direct you to your pitch quite clearly” (MAZUR, [n.d.]). It becomes evident that accompaniment and the main voice are integral parts of one complete unit. Their interdependence is so great that the accompanist is able to confer modality to the leading voice and indicate or unmask shades of meaning of the musical piece, as well as the soloist in his/her turn instigates the accompanist to master his/her virtuosity. From this point, apart from enriching the meaning of the main voice, accompaniment gives the performer an insight into the music piece. In the end, the message conveyed by both the accompanist and the performer as a whole is perceived by the audience in its most clear, solid and harmonious form.

A widely held belief that good accompanists are born, not made and that this is a special kind of talent seems one-sided and poorly grounded. Surely, an accompanist needs to be gifted or talented, but the former statement is not methodologically based; it is methodology that provides a whole system of mastering the skill of accompaniment and realizing its full-value status, not only its supplementary or facilitating functions. Accompaniment of all kinds is meaningful, it is both the means and the goal of interpreting music, and artistic performance based on interpreting the content and the meaning of a music piece is “its ultimate substantiation without which the composer’s material cannot be fully realized as a natural esthetic phenomenon” (LUBLINSKIY, 1972, p. 51).

Language education

Foreign and Russian researchers belonging to any of the approaches to roles and goals of teaching foreign languages claim that the focus of language education (and education as a whole) exclusively on reproducing the material studied is insufficient for preparing a present-day specialist. First year students enter a university with a certain level of a foreign language and encountering the same general topics as they already studied at school “do not see any difference between school and university education” (SUPRUNOV, 2017, p. 72). As a result, a negligent attitude to the academic discipline in question is formed as having a lower status in the range of other disciplines and in practical terms students “disregard the concept of appropriacy and accuracy in using English” (ABRUDAN; STURZA; SUPURAN, 2021, p. 100). Despite being professionally oriented, further ESP (English for Specific Purposes) studies is usually unable to radically change the primarily established attitude (KANNO; STUART, 2011; WU; BADGER, 2009). Consequently, professionally-oriented approach to teaching the English language, which has become generally popular for the past several decades, needs updating. Currently it needs broadening and the knowledge-reproduction paradigm (in a broader sense – knowledge, skills and abilities) is being replaced with communication paradigm, its focus on seeking and acquiring new knowledge (VOVSI-TILL'E, 2018; TER-MINASOVA, 2000). It results in language education influencing the students’ intellectual, cognitive and expressive-emotional spheres. The activation of these spheres entails developing listening and verbal and motor functions, “verbal and cogitative activity, sets independent intellectual activity mechanisms in motion” (IVANOV, 2018; KHUSNULINA; ISLAMOVA, 2011).

Results

Considering accompaniment of the principal voice and “Foreign language” as supplementary academic disciplines highlights an individual semantic status of the “supplementary component” and sets high requirements to its meaningfulness. As soon as the purpose of the paper is to provide theoretical grounding to the “supplementary component” status, practical guidelines are beyond the scope of our research, opening discussion area for further methodology disputes and providing each educator with individual creativity opportunities to select materials, teaching methods and modes. However, depriving theory of any practical application would mean to “stop halfway” and devalue the significance of this paper. Therefore, a shortlist of practical achievements is provided grounding the academic discipline status and welcoming further individual creative initiatives of educators working in these fields.

As for performance art, studying, and interpreting a music piece should go together with the accompaniment from the very first steps. When performers see a piece of music first time, “musicians’ eyes zero in on their own line, whether that’s a vocal solo, clarinet solo, bagpipe solo, or choral octavo” (MAZUR, [n.d.]). In order to rise above the “zero” level, a performer should hear and perceive the music piece as a whole, together with the accompaniment. Aural memory is only a preliminary step, processing the score is an integral practical part of interpreting music. However, to achieve the necessary effect interaction between the soloist and the accompanist is vital which is sometimes hard to put into practice as needed. Ideally a music teacher (no matter – an instrumentalist or a vocalist) should be capable to perform the role of an accompanist as well, which in its turn, places high requirements on a music teacher as a musician, performer and multi-instrumentalist all in one.

Nowadays, high requirements are also imposed on foreign language teachers. Within a relatively short course and small number of hours they have to teach practical skills as well as convey the meaning of the subject as an integral part of its status. Teaching practical skills is up to the tutor as there is a great variety of course-books and textbooks to meet all possible needs and demands (HARMER, 1991). The meaningful element is incorporated by infusing a humanitarian component into educating future specialists majoring in a wide range of subjects. Ultimately, educators and theorists consider professionalism to be a set of humanistic attitudes, behaviors, and critical thinking skills (HANNA; FINS, 2006; PENNINGTON, 2015). Most students are not fully aware how critical in their future practice empathy is – “the ability to understand other people’s feelings and problems” (LONGMAN

DICTIONARY OF CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH, 2001). It is also necessary “to develop empathic abilities and emotional intelligence in medical students with a focus on intuitive, rational and emotional channels of empathy” (VETLUZHSKAYA *et al.*, 2019, p. 404). In this respect, to humanize medical education at the Institute of Biology and Biomedicine of Lobachevsky University a pilot elective course «Medicine in Literature» has been designed as part of classroom activities. This includes literary works about medicine and books by Russian classical doctors-writers, so “the study of literature has become a generally accepted aspect of medical education” (GANYUSHKINA; MUKHINA, 2021, p. 81).

In order to involve students in extracurricular educational and creative activities Department of English for Humanities at Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod conducts an annual “Spring Breeze” festival where students of all faculties and specialties enact small plays in English. Taking part in the festival gives students opportunities to fulfil their creative potential as they can show their actors’ and foreign language skills linking them with common humanitarian or even “humanizing” denominator. Annual “Musical and poetic contest” also contributes to this, where students are welcome to present poems and songs in a foreign language. One more component of education is an online initiative called “Dreaming Albion” – a social media project creating the virtual English language environment for students and staff of Lobachevsky University of Nizhny Novgorod.

The above shortlist includes only a few initiatives or events and is open for further creative suggestions building up the status of the “secondary discipline”.

Articulation, rhythm, tempo, agogics, dynamics in music education

The same as an idea is practically realized by articulate speech, music acquires real existential content by playing or performing it. Compared to other art forms, music is more dependent on physical characteristics of acoustics and time, as well as on physiology – a vocalist’s or a wind-instrument player’s necessity to breathe in at intervals. Temporal relations of the value of sounds and their sequence (i.e., rhythm) form not only spherical but also material basis of a music piece. Rhythm can be considered the ancestor of music because primitive people had only rhythm (deliberate rhythmical tapping with sticks, rocks or other objects), thereafter primitive melodies originating on its basis. Cultivating sense of rhythm in a performer underlies music education followed by forming means of expression which are physically and genetically connected to the rhythm, such as articulation and tempo, being the basis of performance dynamics.

As soon as performance is a psychophysical process, it is bound to cause deviations from the rhythm and meter. This is described by the term *agogics* – “tiny changes or deviations introduced in the tempo in the course of artistic performance” (RIMAN, 1901). Actually, these accelerations or retardations “at a relatively close distance compensate each other” (BAZHANOV, 2019, p. 131), not causing any drastic change or getting out of the general tempo. Agogics is an integral part of the rhythm, and the ability to agogically interpret a music piece is characteristic of high-level performance skill.

All the above means of expression are equally balanced by both the soloist and the accompanist. The accompaniment-listening skill is a great friend of the soloist; the accompanist’s talent means not just synchronically following the principal voice with absolute mathematical precision, but the ability to forecast his/her intentions and thoughts and interpret the part depending on these expectations. Such double-edged intention and interconnection of the principal voice and the accompaniment perform mutual enrichment function, moreover intonational-melodic expressiveness of subordinate voices more completely and sufficiently reflects a personality, “makes the image of the second personality even brighter” (LUBLINSKIY, 1972).

Articulation, rhythm, tempo, agogics, dynamics in language education

It is common knowledge, that foreign language studies imply developing communication skills, in particular listening and verbal and motor functions. The ability to correctly articulate sounds, dynamically arrange the speech, keep pace and make pauses are not only characteristic of a speaker’s high competence but also determine the following interconnection and interdependence: the better a person can speak, the better he/she can catch spoken speech, which is characteristic of communicative competence as a whole (IVANOV, 2018). This paper having more a theoretical focus – methods and practical guidelines of forming verbal or pronunciation skills are left unattended as they are beyond the concept of the article. Meanwhile, they are worth mentioning in the context of this paragraph as being logically parallel to psychophysical processes of performing music which is the basis of our research.

The focus here is more on drawing an analogy between means of expression used when performing music and characterizing dynamics and interpretation of a music piece on the one hand; and, on the other hand – topical rhythm and meter of principal and

supplementary subjects characterizing dynamics of educational process from the point of view of language studies.

In many non-linguistic universities (both in Russia and abroad) foreign language education follows the same principle: at the initial stage basic skills are formed and general topics irrelevant to specialization or only peripherally connected with it are studied; at a later stage, language studies directly take part in forming students' professional competence, special vocabulary and topics are studied. Specialization stage is of special interest here. Principal subject and "Foreign language" topical intercorrelation contribute to mutual enrichment of professional, competence-based, cognitive and intellectual integral parts of the educational process. Special subject teachers' interaction with language teachers helps to complementarily interpret their "parts" in a mutually beneficial way, the same as it happens between the soloist and the accompanist. It all results in harmonization of the educational process as a whole. Incoherence of their actions, formalist approach, on the contrary lead to discordance, students' loss of motivation and all the process participants' underperformance (KRYLOV, 1811).

Principal subjects and foreign language teachers' sense of rhythm attaches topical ensemble synchronism and dynamics to the educational process. As evidenced in practice, the ability to deviate from the general tempo of presenting topics allows one to anticipate certain topics and themes in specialty and foreign language courses, take them over or synchronize them. It often happens when a teacher gets the following reaction from the group: "We have already discussed or studied that in ... (principal subject)", or: "We have already been told about that in "English". This is the proof of evidence that topical tempo variations can perform the function of consolidation of material studied, deepen understanding of difficult matters by presenting "old knowledge" in a "new form" enriched with special characteristic features; or help to deal with complex issues in a more efficient way by synchronizing them in principal subject and complementary subject courses. All this infuses the educational process with internal pulsation, making it more rhythmical, harmonic and dynamic.

Conclusion

The analysis of the parallels *principal voice – accompaniment* and *principal subject – complementary subject* shows that it is unfair to discriminate them as *having lower – higher status, more important – less important*. On the contrary, it proves their dialectical unity. Such theorization opens discussion area for further methodological and practical suggestions and

disputes in the fields concerned. On the one hand, accompaniment acquires individual high status as enriching, not only complementing the principal voice, as an integral part of the process of conveying the content and the message of music, having the same means of expression as the principal voice, conferring modality to the performance and giving insight into the piece of music. On the other hand, an individual high status of a supplementary subject – “*Foreign language*” – is determined, characterized by its own semantic fullness and setting the tempo, rhythm and dynamics of the whole educational process. Your relationship with your accompaniment is something which transforms you from a good singer or player into an artist; relationship of your specialty and foreign language mastery is something which transforms you from a good specialist into an intelligent professional.

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