

A Model for Developing Secondary Language Personality through Media Education

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Abstract

The paper offers a model for integrating media education with English language courses thus developing a secondary language personality. A significant part of the process of forming a secondary language personality is the combination of the language component, the speech component and the communicative component with media knowledge, media skills and media relations in order to result in the cognitive, operational and motivational components of the developed secondary language personality. An important part of the model would seem the inclusion of FLAC (Foreign Language Across the Curriculum) approach. Using media education, the English Language course includes topics and tasks drawing upon the syllabus of other disciplines. For the successful organization of the process of formation of a secondary language personality, it is necessary to take into account the complexity and diversity of the process and manage its development based on the principles of language studying as well as the specific principles reflecting the process of media education.

1. Introduction

Modern conditions of development of human society require people to have skills to work competently with foreign-language information, to search for, evaluate, create and send their own messages in professional and daily activities, exercise communication between people of different languages and cultures through the media. Our modern society needs media competent professionals who understand the principles of the media and are able to navigate through the foreign language information space. The aim of media education in the context of studying a foreign language is marked as a planned and formulated result of studying a foreign language and the language of the media, which means the formation of the media competence of a secondary language personality – an integrated and strategic personal trait consisting of a combination of special knowledge, skills and attitudes allowing the person to interact in the world information environment and carry out linguistic and intercultural communication at a media-based level.

Attending an English lesson in a typical Bulgarian school or college, you can often see students sitting passively at their desks trying to speak only when they are asked by the teacher. Due to the fact that most students do not have the ability to speak a foreign language outside the classroom walls, learning English becomes a memorization of grammatical forms and vocabulary exercises in translation from Bulgarian into English and vice versa. With the spread of new information technologies teachers are able to use a variety of media to enrich the language environment of the class.

The content of courses in a foreign language is open to information from the field of media education. Without media competence and new information technologies, students are not able to carry out authentic communication – an important condition for the formation of secondary language personality, oral and written practice, as well as receiving knowledge and skills for the analysis of foreign-language information. The communicative focus and common goals are to form the ability to express their own judgments based on that information, to interpret and compose messages through information technologies [1] the data can be easily integrated into the discipline, the goal of learning a foreign language and purpose of media education achieved effectively. The secondary language media competence of the individual becomes an integrated result of the practical course of a foreign language, the purpose and the result is the formation of a secondary language personality, and as for media education, the purpose and result of the latter is the formation of a media competent individual.

2. Aspects of second language personality in media education

Based on the need to form a secondary language personality in the context of media competence, the structure of the phenomenon under study consists of two main aspects:

1. a linguistic aspect involving knowledge of language means and rules of operating in accordance with the laws of the studied foreign language; realization of speech skills in

different foreign language situations; readiness to interact in the target language as a process of sending and receiving information at an intercultural level;

2. a media education aspect consisting of awareness of the language of the media, rules of their functioning in accordance with the laws of the target language; realization of speech skills in different media-occurring foreign language situations; readiness to immerse oneself in mediated interaction in the target language.

These aspects suggest the presence of language, speech and communicative competence, the main components of the secondary language of personality:

1. The language component. This component is based on the linguistic competence, knowledge of language tools and rules for operating in the language of the media in accordance with the laws of the studied foreign language (I know);
2. The speech component: verbal competence of the linguistic means demonstrated in a variety of situations (I Can);
3. The communicative component is responsible for the readiness and motivation for interpersonal and mediated communication, the implementation of the direct and indirect speech activity (I want).

In conditions of media-oriented society we speak of media-competent second language personality whose building components are enriched through media knowledge, media skills and media relations. As a result, the components of a media-competent secondary language personality become as shown in Figure 1: cognitive, operational and motivational.

The cognitive component comprises the language structural component of the secondary language personality plus media knowledge, i.e. language competence consisting of awareness of language means and the rules of their operation in language plus knowledge of the basic categories and concepts of media education, the media spectrum and distinctive features of different genres, the laws of media functions in society and the laws of perception and understanding of foreign language information.

The operational component is a result of the speech component of the second language personality plus media skills, i.e. speech competence, realization of language means in different interpersonal and media situations plus the skills to search for, collect foreign language information, create your own media product, send and receive media messages in the foreign language, the skills to modify foreign language information, mobility, associative thinking, the skill of personal interpretation, assessment, critical analysis, evaluation of the foreign language media text and the author's opinion.

The motivational component of the secondary language personality plus media relations comes down to the readiness and motivation for interpersonal and mediated interaction towards the realization of direct and indirect speech activity, in the readiness to organize media behavior relevant to the tasks of indirect interaction, which involves the process of conveying and receiving foreign language information and regulating the relations between its participants, in the need of self-improvement in the process of creating media products, in the awareness of the need to develop media competence.

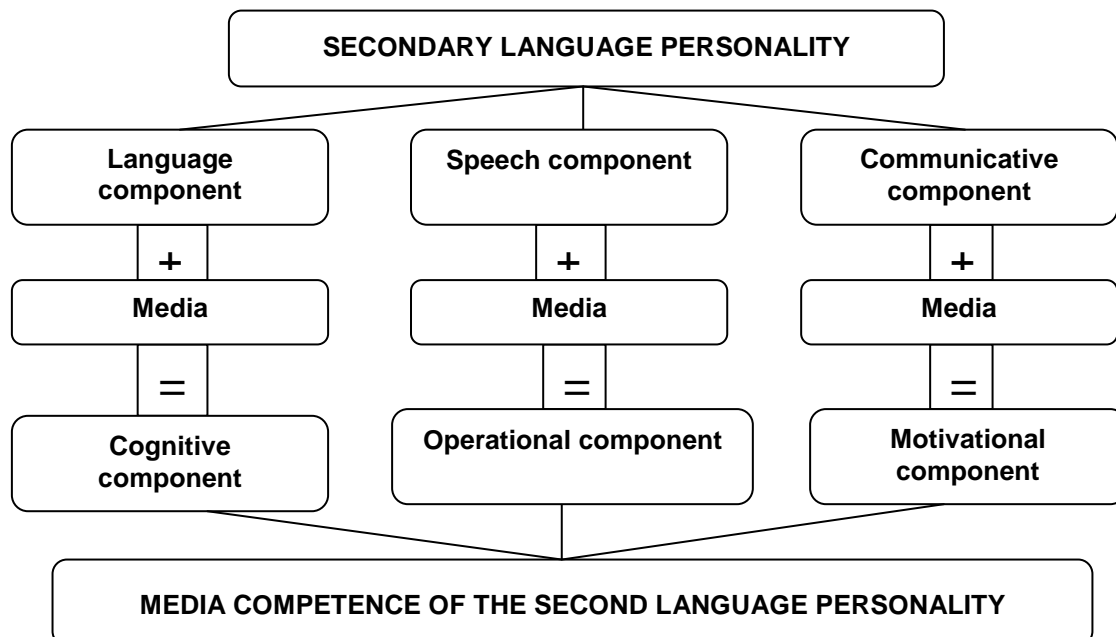




Figure 1. Logical links between the components of media competence of the second language personality

3. E-media and social networking in media education

The media at English lessons can serve as a means of training, contributing to the development of skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing (it has long been widely used in the methods of teaching foreign languages) as well as the basis for media-educated students. Media used in English language courses to study elements of various disciplines at universities can be used to achieve educational objectives of each of these disciplines. This will increase the motivation of students, encourage free communication on relevant topics which are an integral part of our life. "Most people who get their news from conventional media have been unaware of the wildly varied assortment of new cultures that have evolved in the world's computer networks over the past ten years. Most people who have not yet used these new media remain unaware of how profoundly the social, political, and scientific experiments under way today via computer networks could change all our lives in the near future" [7] As a result, media-based communication through social network services like Facebook, Twitter, and Myspace have the immense potential to be used for educational purposes as these have become part of the life of young people. Web 2.0 opens up wide possibilities for educational practice: the use of free electronic resources that can be used for educational purposes; independent creation of online content, the interpersonal interaction between the subjects of the educational process. The Internet is a powerful tool for creating a successful situation for all subjects of the educational process. With any type of lesson (the introduction of new material, consolidation, revision, control) clever use of social networking Web 2.0 services motivates students to be active, reveal their creative potential, carry out communication and cooperation.

4. A model for developing second language personality through media education

So the model for developing secondary language personality through media education as suggested by Hlizova [9] would consist of five interconnected blocks as shown in Figure 2.

The target block is a driving force for the process of forming the media competence of the secondary language personality because it influences the content of every other block. The aim allows to determine the content of methods, principles and means of media education. In this regard, defining the goals of media education is in fact the planned result embodied in some objective form.

The second block in the model is the content-project block, which is supposed to mean that a creation of a target complex program is required directed towards the formation of secondary language personality of the students. The English class lessons here are conducted in accordance with and adapted to the curriculum of the IT students of the University of Library Studies and Information Technologies. Practical exercises are offered, creative activities are implemented using a wide range of media, aimed at forming the secondary language media competence of individual students, etc.

The third component of the model is the unit of pedagogical conditions, aimed at identifying the nature of educational environment conducive to the effective formation of the secondary language personality media competence ensuring the successful operation of the structural-functional model under the terms of pedagogical means as a series of factors, circumstances, components, assumptions and measures promoting favorable conditions to the successful process of training and education.

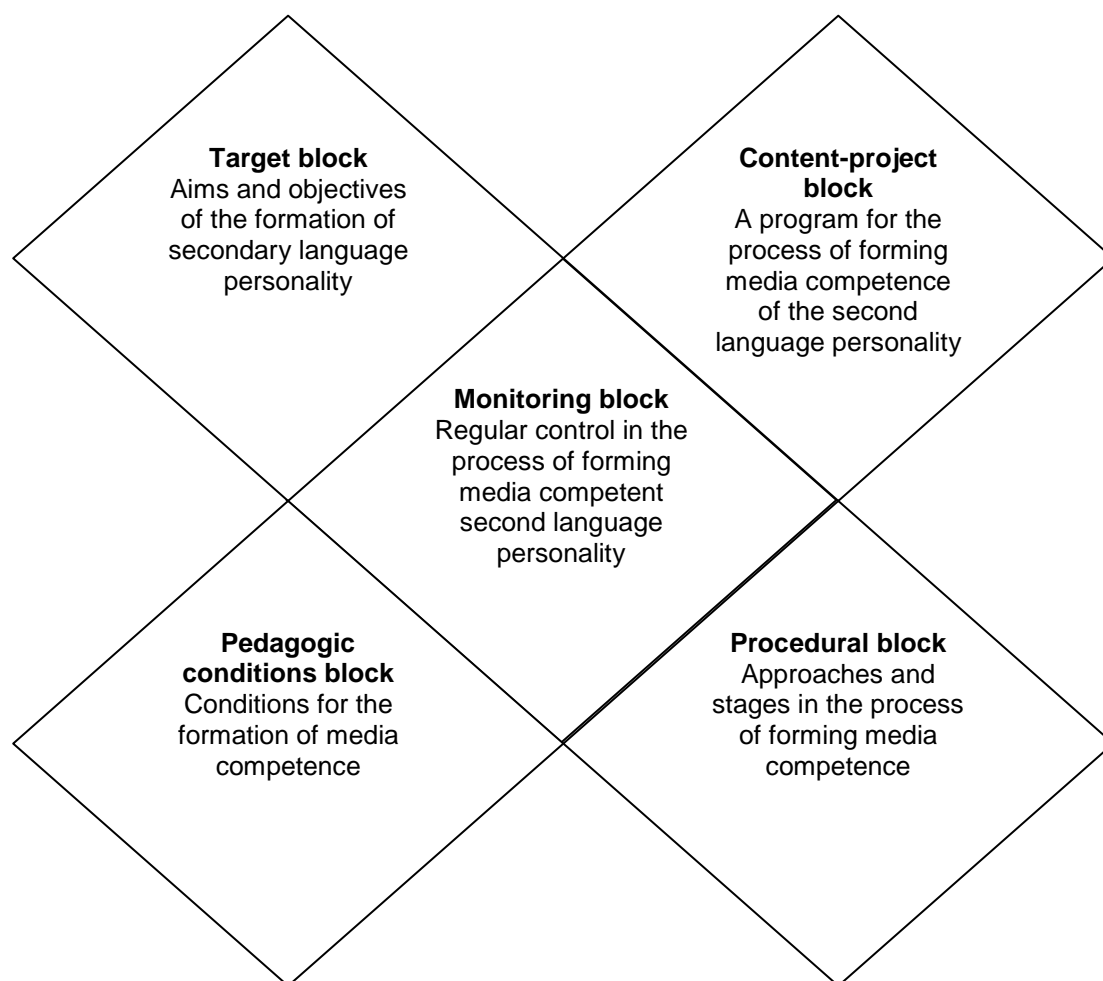


Figure 2. Structural and functional model for the formation of secondary language personality through media education

Next is the procedural block, which reveals the characteristics of meaningful and practical interaction between the student and the teacher in the process of implementing a comprehensive program targeted at developing media competence of the second language personality based on student-centered and system-activity approaches, certain principles and selected stages. For the organization of a successful process of formation of the secondary language media competence of the individual student the complexity, the versatility of the process and course guidance must be taken into account.

The monitoring block ensures regular monitoring of the process of formation of the secondary language personality media competence; it promotes the student's learning self-control, self-awareness, self-consciousness and encourages professional and personal self-development. To achieve this goal different methods of diagnosing the level of formation of the secondary language media competence of the individual student are required such as conversation, observation, English-language tests and questionnaires, surveys, discussion, presentation of creative works, essays, analysis of media products, web-quests and web-portfolio, etc.

5. Conclusion

Learning a foreign language nowadays is impossible without media competence. Therefore, the formation of a secondary language personality is impossible without authentic communication and speech activity, implemented through modern social networking devices and carrying out intercultural interaction. The suggested model includes the media educational aspect in the formation of a secondary language personality without contradicting the linguistic aspect; on the contrary – it enlarges its scope by the inclusion of the person in mediated communication in a mediated

environment. The study is part of PhD research to define a model for development and management of foreign language competence in a blended-learning environment.

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