

Hrynenko Dina

a Ph.D. student of the Institute of Pedagogy
of the National Academy of Pedagogical Sciences of Ukraine

THE IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON THE PROCESS OF TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN THE SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND

Annotation. The article covers the main tendencies of the development and the improvement of the process of teaching foreign languages in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in the period of globalization. The positive and the negative influence of the social changes on the effectiveness of the foreign languages education as well as the ways of the solution of the problems that were faced by the British lawmakers in the researched historical period were represented. The chronological framework of two stages of the development of the foreign languages education in U.K. was defined.

Keywords: globalization, British foreign languages education, secondary schools.

I. Introduction.

Being a phenomenon which laid in the evident cultural, economical, and political integration, globalization had a considerable impact on various spheres of the life of mankind in the second half of the XX century. Under the conditions of the constant social development as well as the rapprochement of different nations there is a need in the modernization of the education in general and the foreign languages education, in particularly; it is well-known that the latter must meet the current requirements under any circumstances. The European states including U.K. appeared to be the first countries which realized the urgency of the solution of the problem of the improvement of the foreign language education for the purpose of the acceleration of the globalization processes on their territories. At the same time, in the case of U.K., the impact of this phenomenon was obviously controversial: from one side, the period of the start of globalization processes was peculiar for the formation of the graduates' high level of the English language competence whereas, from the other side, learning foreign languages became minor because of the absence of pupils' motivation which appeared to be a dangerous threat for the development of the whole foreign languages education. The effective ways of this problem solution and the factors that made it possible are valuable for the modern science.

The issue of the globalization as a significant phenomenon of the world evolution was researched in the works of such Ukrainian and foreign scientists as D. Block, O. Volovych, A. Sbrueva, S. Sydorenko, J. Till, M. Trofymenko. The impact of globalization on education was studied by I. Bohdanova, K. Monkman, O. Pavlichenko, L. Parmenter, N. Stromquist. The peculiarities of the development of the foreign languages education in Great Britain in the period of the world globalization was investigated by R. Harris, D. Jones, V. Edwards, K. Leung, B. Rampton, and others. However, the abovementioned researches can not represent the integral process of the development and the improvement of teaching foreign languages at the secondary schools of the U.K.; that is the reason why this issue requires the further academic researches.

II. Problem statement.

The aim of the article is to determine and to represent the main peculiarities of teaching foreign languages in Great Britain in the abovementioned period as well as to find out the positive and the negative influence of globalization on the process of the formation of the schoolchildren's foreign language competence. In the research process, the analysis of the academic resources that cover its theme, in particularly, the psychological and pedagogical literature as well as the official documents including educational programs and standards was conducted. Besides, the comparative research method was used.

III. Results.

One of the key stages of the development of the foreign languages education of the U.K. became the period globalization, the process that lasts till now. Modern scientists define this term in different ways. For instance, N. Stromquist considers that it «is a phenomenon that comprises multiple and drastic changes in all areas of social life, particularly, economics, technology, and culture» [9, p. 1]. J. K. Gibson-Graham finds globalization as «a set of processes by which the world is rapidly being integrated into one economic space via increased international trade, the internationalization of production and financial markets, the internationalization of a commodity culture promoted by an increasingly networked global telecommunication systems» [9, p. 1]. However, in spite of the variety of definitions of the abovementioned term, all researchers agree that globalization became the main factor of the support and the promotion of the international links and became a reason for the actualization of a need in learning foreign languages as a means of intercultural communication. At this time, there is a new stage in the development of the world foreign language education. In the U.K., this process should be divided into two periods:

- the first period (the end of the XX-the beginning of the XXI century);
- the second period (the beginning of the XXI century – modernity).

Therefore, for the purpose of making communication easier for the representatives of different nationalities, in the end of the XX century, there is a request for a unique,

universal language. Such language is considered to be English which displaces French, German, and Russian and plays a role of a language of politics and international relationships. Besides, English is found out as an official language of leading airlines; moreover, it is actively used during television and radio broadcasts. Each educated European studies it as the second, the third, or the fourth foreign language and uses the acquired knowledge in practice during the official or private journeys [10, p. 55]. Such change in the function of English in the life of the society leads to the popularization of this language in the whole world and a certain decline of the foreign languages education in the English-speaking countries, in particularly, in Great Britain. In spite of the fact that in its language policy, Council of Europe put a special emphasis on the significance of intercultural communication, the preservation of the lingual diversity and has adopted the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages [2, p. 80], the problem of pupils' motivation which considerably slowed down the process of the foreign language education development in the U.K. remained urgent.

Motivation of learning that or another subject is known to be dependent on both the external and the internal factors. The main external factor comprises the successful pass of exams whereas the internal factor includes the opportunity to achieve one's personal aims by means of the acquired knowledge [5, p. 121]. In the case of British schools, pupils' motivation was based on the external component only which was not enough whereas the internal one was usually absent. The matters were compounded by the professional orientation of the school education in U.K., as well, as the majority of schoolchildren did not find it necessary to choose the profession that required the lingual awareness. All abovementioned factors caused not only a low level of children's academic achievements but also the reduction of the number of pupils who desired to learn that or another language. In accordance with the statistics in 2000-2007, the amount of those ones who wanted to learn French decreased from 54,0 to 28,7%, and the quantity of students who wished to study German reduced from 22,0 to 11,5%. The only language which did not lose its popularity was Spanish; the number of those who wanted to learn it increased at 2,2% [8, p. 3]. The specialists explain such tendencies by the fact that, firstly, Spain is still considered to be a quite attractive tourism place and, secondly, 86% of population who is Spanish-speaking live in South America; therefore, Spanish is not found as an European language» [1, p. 78].

At the same time, it is worth notifying a certain positive influence of the globalization processes on the British foreign languages education. Market expansion as well as the foundation of such world brands as Microsoft, Nike, Mc. Donalds, and others stimulated migration that led to the increase of the number of the native speakers of such languages as French, Arabic, Spanish, Greek, Portuguese, Russian, Turkish, Hindi, Urdu, etc. [6, p. 27]. Therefore, in the U.K., various mass media means appear in Chinese, Polish, Italian, and Arabic. Besides, the national minorities have a considerable impact on the religious and cultural life of the country including the art development. Such tendencies not only made it topical for the representatives of the national minorities to study English as a foreign language but also managed to support the process of learning other foreign languages

by British schoolchildren. At this time, not only Gaelic, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh but also the languages of the ethnic minorities which appeared on the territory of Great Britain not so long ago remain to be currently important.

Besides, for the purpose of the support of the foreign language education in the secondary schools of U.K., the Council of Europe as well as the British government took a range of measures. For instance, the Council of Europe obliged to promote the cooperation between the educational institutions of Great Britain and other countries, to adopt the common criteria of the assessment of foreign language awareness for all states, to support pupils, teachers, developers of programs as well as the educational institutions managers in order to coordinate their work [4, p. 5-6].

In its turn, the government of the U.K. defined the new ways of the improvement of foreign languages teaching area; they were the following:

- «providing an opportunity to get a foreign languages diploma as an alternative for the school leaving certificate (GCSE)» [1, p. 79];

- reorientation of the teaching goals;

- improvement of the academic resources;

- increase of the duration of the process of teaching foreign languages;

- individualization of teaching [3, p. 21];

- the solution of the problem of the teachers' qualifications.

Besides, the Department of Education put a special emphasis on the guarantee of practicability of the knowledge that was acquired by pupils in the process of studying a foreign language. Therefore, in the official criteria for the content of the subject «Foreign Language» at school, it is noted that the foreign language education «should encourage learners to derive enjoyment and benefit from language learning ... by following a broad, coherent, satisfying and worthwhile course of study. Learners should recognize that their linguistic knowledge, understanding and skills will help them to take their place in a multilingual global society and also provide them with a suitable basis for further study and practical use of the language» [7, p. 3]

An important stimulus for the improvement of the British foreign language education became some external factors, namely, the quite high level of the parents' language awareness, their travels abroad as well as the necessity of the practical use of foreign language by the children of school age [3, p. 21].

Consequently, there is a start of a new stage in the development of British foreign language education which was predetermined by the increase of the level of pupils' motivation. These changes promoted the improvement of the academic achievements, as well. In accordance with the research which was conducted in 2011, pupils' realization of the educational process benefit had a positive impact on three kinds of skills (reading, listening, and writing) [3, p. 20]. However, in spite of the positive shifts in teaching foreign languages at the secondary schools of Great Britain, at the international level, this country shows one of the lowest results because of the extended period of the poor development of the British foreign languages education and the inadequate

attention that was paid to it. As a result, the total mark for the foreign language competence in five languages which are the most popular for learning in the European countries was the lowest among the pupils of U.K., Poland, and Sweden. On the other hand, the level of awareness in the French language demonstrated by British and Portuguese schoolchildren was higher than the one shown by Spanish pupils. The academic results in German achieved by British children were at the same level as the ones of Polish pupils but were considered to be quite low.

For Ukraine, such positive and negative aspects of the British expertise is of special significance as currently our country is making everything possible in order to improve foreign languages teaching at comprehensive secondary institutions. The requirement for such measures was predetermined by the desire of Ukrainians to raise the standard of school teaching in accordance with the European standards as well as the motivation of schoolchildren and their parents to be competitive at the labour market. Similarly to the U.K., Ukrainian government decided to update the education content. A special attention was paid to the sociocultural aspect of foreign language education as well as the reorientation of its purpose that comprises the formation of the pupils' ability to communicate with the native speakers and to be a successful participant in the dialogue of cultures. In order to achieve this purpose Ukrainian foreign language teachers are encouraged to use the communicative and cognitive as well the personality-oriented and the activity-based approaches which are considered to be the most effective ones in education practice.

IV. Conclusions.

The globalization processes had quite an ambiguous influence on the development of the British foreign language education. From one side, they caused the maximum concentration on the languages of national minorities; from the other side, they led to the absence of the schoolchildren's motivation; therefore, it was the reason for the decrease of the level of the pupils' academic achievements. Taking into consideration the complex state which was peculiar for the foreign languages competence of the graduates in the process of its formation, the effective means that were aimed at the solution of the current problems were taken. In spite of the fact that the foreign languages education in the U.K. cannot be considered to be ideal, the positive experience of this country in the area of the improvement of teaching foreign languages can provide a perfect example to follow for the states which are in a fair way to it.

References

1. Balatska N. The Tendencies of the Development of Education in Great Britain and the U.S.A. (on the Basis of the English Press of 2006-2007) // *Ridna shkola* – 2008. – №5. – P. 78-80

2. Bärenfänger Olaf. Language Educational Policy and Language Learning Quality Management / Olaf Bärenfänger, Erwin Tschirnen // *Foreign Language Annals*. – 2008. – №1. – P. 79-99
3. Burge Bethan. European Survey on Language Competences: Language Proficiency in England / Bethan Burge, Ager Robert, Cook Rose, Cunningham Rachel, and others. – Department of Education, 2013. – 246 p.
4. Council of Europe. Relating Language Examinations in the Common European Framework of References for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEF). – 2003. – Strasbourg, France.
5. Dörnyei Zoltán. Motivation in Second and Foreign Language Learning / Zoltán Dörnyei // *Language Teaching*. – 1998. – №3. – P. 117-135
6. Edwards Viv. Globalization and Multilingualism: the Case of the UK / Viv Edwards // *Intercultural Communication Studies*. – 2011. – №1. – P. 27-35
7. GCSE Subject Criteria for Modern Foreign Languages. – Ofqual. – September, 2011
8. Paton Graeme. Fewer than Half of Pupils Take a Language GCSE / Graeme Paton // *The Daily Telegraph*. – 2007. – №7. – P. 3
9. Stromquist Nelly P. Globalization and Education: Integration and Contestation across Cultures / Nelly P. Stromquist, Monkman Karen. – Plymouth: R&L Education, 2014. – 362 p.
10. Wiarda Howard J. Globalization: Universal Trends, Regional Implications / Howard J. Wiarda. – Lebanon: North-eastern University Press, 2007. – 286 p.