



## **The steps Ukrainian science in the study and popularization the Ukrainian Sign language**



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The publication presents a preview of the results of the study and promotion the Ukrainian Sign language (USL). USL is studied of humanistic, social and cultural positions, a phenomenon of culture of the Deaf community of Ukraine: the object of study, means of teaching, means of communication and the object of linguistic study in terms of international standards. Data are given about the results of international cooperation, including an international project named after Leonardo da Vinci under the "Transfer of Innovation".

**Key words:** Ukrainian sign language, learning, promotion, international activity.

At the Institute of Special Pedagogy NAPS Ukraine launched its activity Sign Language laboratory (LSL), which marked the 10th anniversary on March 1 2016. The laboratory was set up with the support of Ukraine's largest NGO - Ukrainian Society of the Deaf, presented by the team of deaf and hearing scientists, native speakers of Ukrainian Sign Language, with significant practical experience in secondary special schools for deaf children and children with impaired hearing.

For the first time in the scientific heritage of the state is paid attention of scientific experts to focus on Ukrainian Sign Language (USL). USL is studied of humanistic, social and cultural positions, a phenomenon of culture of the Deaf

community of Ukraine: the object of study, means of teaching, means of communication and the object of linguistic study in terms of international standards.

In LSL, deployed scientific and research work on studying the national Sign Language known in Ukraine and abroad scholars - Natalia Adamyuk, Olena Drobot, <sup>1</sup>Natalia Zborows'ka, Anna Zamsha, Natalia Ivanyusheva, Svitlana Kulbida, Iryna Chepchyna, two of whom work on a voluntary basis.

About the professional growth of researchers demonstrates the development of conceptual positions and the status of national Sign Language - USL, grounding of principles of bilingual deaf education with active use of Ukrainian verbal and sign languages in secondary special schools for deaf children.

For the first time in the history of Ukrainian Surdo-Pedagogy is substantiated and proved feasibility to study USL native, second and foreign language. In particular in 2009 started implementation, on the basis of developed original program complexes, into invariant component model curriculums of general special schools for deaf children and children with impaired hearing and as well as preschools of compensatory type, the subject "Ukrainian sign language" as a mother tongue for the Deaf.

Initiated experimental study of USL linguistic features, based on structural linguistics in native speakers (kinetics, vocabulary, morphology, syntax), which is reflected in the manuals of USL and in a unique and significant national sign handbook "Ukrainian sign language", which the team still keeps running on.

For seven years had been issued an annual collection of scientific works "Sign Language & modernity" specialty classifier 13.00.03 - correctional pedagogy (7 issues), which covered the experience of learning and using USL in the educational process.

Kulbida S. (2017) THE STEPS UKRAINIAN SCIENCE IN THE STUDY AND POPULARIZATION THE UKRAINIAN SIGN LANGUAGE / Svetlana Kulbida / ISSUES OF UPBRINGING AND TEACHING IN THE CONTEXT OF MODERN CONDITIONS OF OBJECTIVE COMPLICATION OF THE PERSON'S SOCIAL ADAPTATION PROCESSES. – Peer-reviewed materials digest (collective monograph) published following the results of the CXXXVIII International Research and Practice Conference and I stage of the Championship in Psychology and Educational sciences (London, February 9 - February 15, 2017). - Correctional education (deaf-and-dumb pedagogy, Blindness and education, oligophrenopedagogics and logopaedics). - S. 26 – 28. [gisap.eu/ru/node/119449](http://gisap.eu/ru/node/119449)

A young science develops due to implementation of new educational technologies. Particularly become a tradition running education primary and secondary courses of studying sign language at the Training Center of CBUSD in Puscha Vodytsya city together with representatives of Central Board of the Ukrainian Society of the Deaf (CBUSD), Kyiv city Council of translators. Courses on learning USL at the Regional Institute of Postgraduate Pedagogical Education for local special schools for the deaf became traditional. Over the decade there increased primary sign communicative competence approximately 500 schoolmasters, secondary - beyond 100.

Among the most resonant events of LSL - three nationwide scientific colloquiums in Bila Tserkva city (2006), Puscha Vodytsya city (2010), Kryvyi Rig city (2012) and the International Scientific and Practical Conference etc..

An important achievement of scientific center is professional growth of deaf to PhD on specialty classifier 13.00.03 - correctional pedagogy, among them Natalia Adamyuk and Galyna Vorobel'.

Important for growth of scientific experts is also international cooperation. Scientists of LSL, together with representatives of CBUSD actively deploying international work, which mainly focuses on establishing cooperation with foreign schools studying national sign languages, civic organizations, foundations, on participation in international educational programs.

As an example of such cooperation is participation of LSL team of experts in the international Polish-Ukrainian project “I have a deaf child” under the program of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation “Changes in the region” (RITA) (since August 2015, Przemysl, Poland). The task of the last is to promote and study the national sign language parents of deaf children, including the implanted ones.

Since Ukraine ratified UN Assembly Convention "On the rights of disabled" (2009) has been done a lot in the protection and support of lingual rights of the Deaf Ukrainians. In particular, due to activity of LSL at the Institute of Special Pedagogy

NAPS Ukraine the status of Ukrainian Sign Language (USL), as we have noted, got the right to be studied in schools for deaf and with reduced hearing children and also on scientific research at the academic level; during short term has been collected and documented arsenal of USL language units, which provided an opportunity to participate in the first international electronic USL documenting along with other national sign languages of the world “Spread the sign” (Spreadthesign) and with dignity represent Ukraine.

This international project n/a Leonardo da Vinci under the scope of program "Transfer of Innovation" supports European Commission in the person of Swedish branch of the international education and training. It is a tool for self-education and is accessible to both deaf and hearing around the world as it functions free of charge.

The initial goal of the project is to improve the skills of foreign sign language by persons going abroad. To work on the project were enrolled the most popular for visiting countries: USA, Austria, Brazil, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, etc..

The website [Spreadthesign.com](http://Spreadthesign.com) proposes international dictionaries of sign languages such as: Swedish, English (BSL), American, English version (ASL), German, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Icelandic, Latvian, Polish, Czech, Japanese, and Turkish.

Thanks to the collaboration of team members it helps thousands of people instantly find a sign that they are looking for. The website is also available for smartphones called "Spread signs" [11].

Ukrainian team started in 2013 and introduced in video mode for more than 10 thousand sign units, that made it ahead of the other teams and put into the top ten countries that became leaders in the international project Spread signs.

Updating content of personality oriented competency education by developing and implementing innovative approaches, technologies aimed at the full development

of compensatory abilities of deaf children – is equally important activity aspect of LSL at the Institute of Special Pedagogy NAPS Ukraine nowadays.

Over 10 years, experience gained after a meeting of UNESCO in 1951, the world began to increase the role of minority languages in developing educational strategies with active learning using national sign language - USL, in particular the development of school curriculum incorporating its use as a native language. In discussing this issue is defined by a series of arguments that justify the appropriateness of using the language of the deaf as linguistic minority in the education of the Deaf [4].

The basis of innovative processes in education forms two important issues of pedagogy – problem of study, synthesis, dissemination of best pedagogical practices and problem of the introduction of psycho-pedagogy in practice. The result of innovative processes is the use of theoretical and practical innovations, as well as those that are formed on the edge theory and practice [5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10]. The teacher may be the author, researcher, user and promoter of new educational technologies, theories, concepts.

In the context of the above, it is appropriate to note the researches done by Natalia Adamyuk, Galyna Vorobel', Olena Drobot, Anna Camsha, Svitlana Kulbida, and Lyubov Lopatko, which successfully have been performed and defended within the Institute of Special Pedagogy NAPS Ukraine.

*Natalia Adamyuk. The Characteristics of Learning the Ukrainian Sign Language Vocabulary by Deaf Students in Primary School. Kyiv, 2012.*

The dissertation research is devoted to the topical issue of exploring the process of how deaf students in primary school learn the Ukrainian Sign Language (USL) vocabulary.

An original complex USL program has been developed to be used in teaching deaf and hard-of-hearing students in preparatory classes and Grades 1-12 of

specialized comprehensive schools. Based upon this program, the school subject “Ukrainian Sign Language” was introduced.

A fundamentally new conceptual and methodology approach has been developed regarding the problem of mastering the Ukrainian Sign Language by deaf students. This approach is regarded as the basic level of forming a linguistic personality in primary school; a linguistic and didactic model of learning the USL lexical units was theoretically described and experimentally introduced. Within a pedagogical experiment, the levels of understanding a sign as a lexical unit among deaf junior students have been tested; the dependency of the level of knowledge and ability to use the USL by primary school deaf students upon the level of sign-lingual communicative competence among sign language teachers has been identified.

*Galyna Vorobel. Organizationally-pedagogical principles of activity of educational establishment – "school kindergarten" for children with violations of hearing. Kyiv, 2012.*

In dissertation are examined organizationally-pedagogical bases of innovative educational activity of establishment of new type-school complex for children with violations of hearing in Khmelnytsk. Dissertation is sanctified to the research of process of activity of establishments of different types of surdopedagogical profile in the system of the special education.

The innovative orientation of public educational policy is described in sphere of special education on the basis of child centrism, deepening of humanistic, sociocultural and personality oriented tendencies, appearance of new types of establishments.

A domestic normatively-legal base is investigated, terminology of modern type of establishments for hard of hearing. The structural model of innovative educational activity is worked out on the basis of reasonable, conceptual, organizational, methodical, educational, resource, administrative, accompanying, and partnership components. Described features of their forming.

Organization and maintenance are developed, features of forming a model of innovative educational activity of an establishment on the example of school-complex of Khmelnytsk in the process of becoming to development of establishment.

Factors, criteria, indexes of model components, are described, efficiency of organizationally-pedagogical terms are experimentally tested on the basis of the pedagogical monitoring, result of state attestation of the establishment. The features of effective activity of establishment are indicated in every component of the model, that assist to development of establishment of new type, producing a positive image of it.

*Olena Drobot. Formation of the communication skills of deaf preschool children in the conditions of bilingualism. Kyiv, 2017.*

The thesis is devoted to the problem of studying of the communication skills of deaf preschool children of different ages in a bilingual education (sign and verbal) in terms of special pre-school institution of compensatory type in Ukraine.

The use of psycho-lingual, socio-cultural approach for the study, development of communication of deaf children enabled to analyze the steps, tools, forms, content, structure, communication mechanisms and the specific characteristics of deaf preschool children with families of hearing and deaf parents.

It was determined that in domestic literature there is no data about comprehensive research of the status of the formation of the communication skills system "child-child", "child-mentor" and the appropriate elaborations of developmental and educational nature, built on taken into account the development of forms of speech in ontogenesis and differentiated psychological mechanisms that are in the basis of developed and undeveloped speech. However, it is noted that in the foreign literature there are some scattered data relating to deaf preschool children in the issue of convenient and affordable mastering of the elements of sign speech in the early stages of communication development "child-parent".

At the present stage of surdopedagogical sciences within the socio-cultural trend as opposed to biological and medical are developed new approaches to prevention and efficiency of communication skills development based on actual data about psycho-lingual structure of communicative activity, content, form, means, standard indicators (M. Lisina, I. Eesyenina & etc.).

Taking into account the existing state of the detection methods of formation of communication skills in terms of bilingualism is developed a special diagnostic method, based on the mode, which helped identify the features of communication of deaf preschool children (3-4 years; 4-5 years; 5-6 years) and hearing peers.

Among tested children were found systematic deviations in their second language structures formation, psychological mechanisms, operations that ensure mastering of basic concepts from lexical and grammatical part of speech (persistent breach of mastering of lexical meaning, not sufficient formation of generalization of the concept of different values, the violation of the transfer of the learned data from the first language to another, etc.

Based on the identified violations (except indicated, we add the following: the shortcomings of language and speech environment in the family of hearing parents, kindergarten; insufficient knowledge by mentors (parents, surdopedagogos, educators) by the first contacting language – sign language, the absence in training programs of effective aspects of work on the various communication form skills), developed and put into practice in four regions the education program-complex of bilingual education at pre-school institutions of compensatory type for deaf children. The gradual, systematic work of specialists of developmental and compensatory methods of education, during the mentioned years of formative stage of the experiment, showed positive growth rates of formation of communication skills not only in the system "child-child" but also in the "child-mentor" system.

*Svitlana Kulbida. The Theoretical and Methodology Principles of Using the Sign Language in the Process of Teaching the Deaf. Kyiv, 2010.*



This monographic research focuses on the issue of the formation and development of sign language as a phenomenon in the context of a social and cultural approach.

The research offers the results of the implemented theoretical, methodology, historical, and empirical analysis of the past and contemporary approaches and theoretic models concerning the stated issue within comparative aspects. The phenomenon of deafness is explained under the technocratic and humanistic approaches. A theoretical model of the formation and development of a deaf child personality has been elaborated, for which the main categories were defined, taking into consideration their interconnection and mutual influence.

An original system of organizational and content-based models was developed, which aims at creating sign language communicative competence and developing a deaf child personality. It has been proved that the Ukrainian Sign Language is an open language system of interconnected elements (kinetic, lexical, grammar, etc.) of various nature.

The theoretical principles of learning a sign language as a curriculum subject have been substantiated, as well as the principles of its use as a tool of teaching the deaf within bilingual environment. The functioning of the term “Sign Language” was traced, as it testifies to the nature of changes in the society regarding the revision of the terms and concepts of contemporary science.

I want to believe, that the scientific enthusiasm of small team will run! Achievements will multiply! Team will grow professionally & acquire prestige.

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