EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION OF INDEPENDENT EDUCATION IN THE PROCESS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING IN NON-PHILOLOGICAL HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS (HEIS)

Ziyadulloyeva Mohidil Shovkat qizi

Associate teacher, English department

"TIIAME" National Research University.

ORCID 0009-0002-0879-5138

e-mail: mohidilziyodullayeva@gmail.com

Abstract. The development of independent education in foreign language teaching is crucial in non-philological Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), where students often have limited classroom time for language learning. This article explores the effective organization of independent education, focusing on its role in enhancing language proficiency among students in non-philological fields. We examine strategies for fostering self-regulated learning, the integration of technology, and methods for assessing the impact of independent study on students' language performance. Our findings indicate that a structured and well-supported approach to independent education can significantly improve language acquisition in these settings.

Key words: independent education, language proficiency, non-philological, self-regulated, communicate

Introduction

Foreign language proficiency is an increasingly essential skill in today's globalized world, not only for language specialists but also for students in non-philological fields, such as engineering, medicine, and economics. The ability to communicate in

a foreign language broadens career prospects, enhances access to academic resources, and facilitates international collaboration. However, in non-philological HEIs, the curriculum for foreign language education is often limited in terms of contact hours and resources, placing greater emphasis on students' independent study efforts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Independent education, or self-regulated learning, offers students the flexibility to acquire language skills outside the constraints of formal classroom settings. For students in non-philological HEIs, who often juggle demanding technical courses, this self-driven learning is vital to achieving language proficiency. However, the effectiveness of independent education depends on how it is organized and supported by educators. This study aims to investigate how independent education can be effectively implemented in the context of foreign language learning in non-philological HEIs, focusing on the role of technology, student motivation, and the evaluation of independent study outcomes.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data to assess the organization and effectiveness of independent education in foreign language teaching for non-philological students. The research was conducted at several non-philological HEIs across various disciplines, where students were surveyed about their experiences with independent language learning. Additionally, interviews were conducted with language instructors to gain insight into their approaches to supporting and guiding students' independent study.

The research was divided into three phases:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A questionnaire was distributed to 200 students in non-philological HEIs to gather data on their independent learning habits, use of digital resources, and self-perceived language proficiency.

Ten language instructors were interviewed to understand how they structure independent learning tasks, provide feedback, and incorporate technology into students' learning processes.

Language tests were administered to assess the correlation between students' independent learning efforts and their performance in language proficiency exams. These tests included reading comprehension, listening, and writing tasks.

Data analysis was performed using SPSS for quantitative survey data and thematic analysis for qualitative interview responses.

The survey revealed that while students recognize the importance of independent language learning, many struggle with managing their time and finding appropriate resources. Approximately 65% of students reported that they spent between 2-5 hours per week on independent language study, primarily using online tools such as language learning apps (e.g., Duolingo, Babbel) and video platforms (e.g., YouTube) for listening and speaking practice. However, only 40% of students felt confident in their ability to improve their language skills through self-study, highlighting a gap in self-efficacy.

Students reported several barriers to effective independent learning, including:

- Lack of structure: Many students expressed difficulty in setting clear goals and organizing their study time efficiently.
- Insufficient feedback: Without direct feedback from instructors, students often found it hard to assess their progress and correct errors.

- Motivational challenges: While intrinsic motivation played a role in some students' study habits, many struggled to maintain consistency without external deadlines or rewards.

The interviews with language instructors revealed a range of strategies used to support independent learning, but the effectiveness varied depending on the level of guidance provided. Common strategies included:

- Blended learning: Instructors integrated online resources, such as language platforms and digital textbooks, into their curricula, encouraging students to continue their learning independently outside class hours.
- Task-based learning: Teachers assigned specific tasks, such as watching videos or completing online exercises, with clear goals and deadlines to guide students' independent study.
- Peer feedback systems: In some institutions, students were encouraged to work in pairs or groups to provide feedback on each other's language output (e.g., in writing or speaking assignments).

Despite these efforts, instructors noted challenges in monitoring students' independent work due to the lack of real-time interaction and assessment tools for out-of-class learning. Additionally, instructors emphasized the need for more robust platforms to track students' progress and provide individualized feedback.

The language test results showed a positive correlation between the amount of independent study and language performance, particularly in listening and reading comprehension. Students who reported engaging in more than five hours of independent study per week scored, on average, 15% higher on comprehension tasks than those who studied less. However, there was less of a direct correlation between independent study time and performance in speaking and writing, suggesting that

these skills require more interactive and feedback-rich environments to develop effectively.

Additionally, students who followed a more structured study plan (e.g., those using instructor-assigned tasks or digital platforms with tracking features) demonstrated greater progress in vocabulary acquisition and grammar knowledge compared to students who engaged in unstructured or casual language practice.

The findings suggest that independent education is essential for foreign language learning in non-philological HEIs, but its effectiveness largely depends on how it is organized and supported. A key factor in successful independent learning is the provision of structure. While digital tools and online resources are readily available, students often struggle to utilize them effectively without clear guidance. Instructors can play a crucial role by offering task-based assignments, establishing peer feedback mechanisms, and integrating blended learning models that bridge the gap between classroom and independent study.

The limited improvement in speaking and writing skills highlights the need for more interactive approaches to independent learning. Technologies such as AI-powered language learning platforms that offer real-time feedback, as well as virtual language exchange programs, could enhance students' ability to practice productive language skills independently.

Additionally, motivational strategies need to be addressed. Students who lack the drive to consistently engage in independent learning require external incentives, such as gamified language apps, rewards systems, or progress tracking tools that provide visible markers of achievement. Instructors should also foster a learning environment that encourages self-reflection and goal setting, helping students build the self-efficacy needed for sustained independent learning.

CONCLUSION

The organization of independent education plays a critical role in the foreign language acquisition of students in non-philological HEIs. A well-structured approach that combines digital resources, task-based assignments, and peer feedback can significantly enhance language learning outcomes. However, attention must be paid to the development of productive skills, such as speaking and writing, through more interactive and feedback-rich methods.

To maximize the effectiveness of independent education, educators must provide clear guidance and support, leveraging technology to offer structure and track progress. Furthermore, addressing motivational challenges and fostering self-regulation among students will be essential for promoting sustainable and effective independent learning in the context of foreign language education.

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