



THE CONCEPTS OF "FOREIGN LANGUAGE", "LANGUAGE TEACHING", "MASTERING A LANGUAGE"

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What is a "foreign language"? We often use this concept, but, we rarely think about its content. However, in order to build a modern process of teaching a foreign language correctly, it is necessary to know that there is a foreign language and what should be understood in learning a language / mastering a language / instructing a language.

The function of the trainer is to make available further sources of relevant data. So, foreign and "second" languages can easily "move" into each other under appropriate circumstances. With all the differences between them, this gives grounds not to absolutize the latter. It would be more correct, since it is a question of finding the best way to improve the system of learning a foreign language, to search for differences between them in the plane of "managed" and / or "unmanageable" mastery of the language. The controlled process of mastering a language is connected with such concepts as teaching a language and learning a language that is, instructing a language. Instructing a foreign language is organized process, in the course of which as a result of the interaction of the learner and the instructor, reproduction and assimilation of a certain experience are carried out in accordance with the given goal. In our case we are talking about a verbal foreign language experience, which the teacher has in one or another degree and the learner, who does not fully or partially possess.



It is obvious that the learning process is a two-way process that includes in its unity the teaching activity of the teacher and the learning activity of the learner, aimed at mastering the language. There are significant differences between the concepts of "learning the language" and "mastering the language".

Consequently, the concept of "learning the language" is broader than the concept of "mastery of the language." The process of mastering the language can be considered as an "unintentional", not directly managed by the assimilation of foreign language content. Of course, it is possible to learn the mother tongue, which the child already owns practically (which, in fact, happens when a small child comes to school). There are also learning elements in direct contact with the native speaker, (for example, in the course of prompting an adult child with adequate linguistic and speech tools or correcting mistakes). Depending on the conditions under which the language is studied, at what age it is becoming familiar and what are the goals set, different types of language proficiency are distinguished:

- mastering the first (native) language - monolingualism;
- mastering simultaneously two languages from the very beginning of the development of speech (bilingualism) or mastering several languages - multilingualism;
- mastering the second language (bilingualism) along with the first (native), while the process of mastering occurs when the first (native) is already fully or partially formed;
- mastering a foreign language (in different conditions of its study: in a natural language environment and outside it).

1. Language is used in situations of everyday communication in various spheres of life of the society. Consequently, a person who is trying to learn a new language usually has plenty of time for language practice, while the social need for this language is extremely high: knowledge of the language can provide a person with of full value stay and residence in the country where this language is the only (or primary) mean of communication.

2. In the process of direct communication with the native speaker, the person who masters this language uses, as a rule, all means of communication available in his arsenal, including non-linguistic ones. Getting into a new language environment, he suddenly becomes convinced that he has at his disposition a sufficient arsenal of non linguistic means for expressing intentions, and at first his speech activity is minimal: he more often uses non verbal means, gradually acquiring a minimum of linguistic experience. In the process of communication, the focus is primarily on the content (of the subject of communication), and not on the comprehension of the linguistic form and the system of the language. The linguistic aspect remains, as it were, on the periphery of the interests of the communicating people, since the interaction is important in the communication, not the language correctness. This circumstance has at least two consequences: a) the communicant is interested in the communicative effect, and not in the formal-correct formulation of his speech, therefore he evaluates certain language means differently than in the educational process; b) the "metacommunicative" component of communication develops poorly, that is, a person does not comprehend the language, its forms and rules, as distinct from the situation when these rules should be studied.

3. The mastery of the language in direct contact with the native speaker is carried out in a situation of immersion (sometimes without time limitations) of a person into natural language environment. This, certainly, has a positive effect on the process of mastering the language as a mean of communication. In these conditions, a creative competence is formed for the new language learner, which makes it possible to use language tools in different contexts spontaneously and at the productive level, and which provides communicative activity in the target language.

4. Mastering the language in a natural language environment, a person uses, as a rule, only those language tools that he has and that can represent different language styles. At the same time, there is always a temptation to learn how to "optimally" use the minimum of language experience, that is, to develop a specific strategy for using them to the detriment of subsequent self-improvement in the acquired activity. It is known that a child in a bilingual environment naturally becomes bilingual, whereas an adult person in this situation needs more specially organized classes, that is, in a controlled mastery of a foreign language.

5. Regardless of whether the process of mastering foreign language by a second language in the natural conditions of its existence carries a spontaneous or controlled character, its effectiveness depends significantly on a person's readiness to integrate into a new socio-cultural environment, which may be different. It is determined by a number of factors, including age: the older the person, the more difficult it is for him to adapt to the new environment.

However, if we talk about the fundamental differences between the processes of mastering / studying a foreign language (second language) in the country of the target language and beyond its limits, then they should be sought first of all in the field of the functions that this language performs in society.

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