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A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING WORLD VARIANTS OF ENGLISH

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Abstract: This article provides a brief analysis of the experience of teaching and learning world English variants, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the analyzed courses.

Аннотация: В данной статье превидёт краткий анализ опыта преподавания и изучения мировых вариантов английского языка, а также отмечены преимущества и недостатки анализируемых курсов.

Key words: World Englishes, variant, learners, lexicology, course

As we know, the most common variants of the English language, named after the countries in which they function, are British English, American English, Australian English. There are also other variants of English, in particular New Zealand, Canadian, South African, Indian, Singaporean. According to M. Berns [2;85], variants of English in three major regions (South America, Europe and the Middle East) are gradually gaining an independent status in terms of reaching a critical mass of English language learners and speakers, as the number of its real (as well as virtual) users is constantly growing. D. Crystal points to this phenomenon as an unavoidable linguistic reality that translators, intercultural communication specialists have to face in their practical work [3;222].

In this connection, familiarization of *linguistic* students with different variants of English in order to broaden their linguistic horizons and increase their competitiveness in the labor market becomes an urgent task. The increasing number of contacts with foreign partners communicating in English variants and insufficient level of linguistic profile graduates' understanding of their features become an obstacle to effective communicative interaction and lead to misunderstanding, communication failures and lack of effectiveness of communication at the intercultural level.

The peculiarities of English variants are considered during the learning of such disciplines as theoretical phonetics, lexicology, theoretical grammar, history of English, introduction to special philology. Some universities introduce courses aimed at acquainting students with global variants of English as part of the variative part of the general professional cycle. The purpose of this course is to develop the ability to analyze and interpret texts in accordance with the specifics of the studied English variant, as well as identify by ear the corresponding national variant, based on the features of its functioning in specific territories.

The curricula and training courses offered by foreign linguistic centers have no goal-oriented orientation. In terms of goal, they vary from familiarizing students with the theoretical findings of the world's English variants, to extremely practical advice and recommendations built on an intuitive basis and concerning effective intercultural communication with speakers of different English variants.

Universities around the world offer a variety of curricula, characterized by a theoretical focus and designed for undergraduate and graduate students of linguistics. As a rule, these courses usually include an

analysis of the historical, socio-cultural, etc. background. The courses include an analysis of the historical, socio-cultural, etc., background to the spread of English in the world and familiarize students with the characteristics of a particular variant.

A course called World Englishes, offered by the University of York, requires students to study multiple versions of the English language. The course also addresses the sociolinguistic and historical factors that stimulate the emergence of world varieties. It is important to note that the World Englishes course is designed for the professional training of linguists. The aim of the course is for language students to teach the historical processes of formation and development of English variants in the world, to acquire knowledge of phonological and grammatical aspects that differentiate variants, to critically comprehend the wide variation of sociolinguistic characteristics of English variants and the ability to present arguments for their political, sociolinguistic status as well as the ability to describe their linguistic characteristics [4].

M. Baik and R. Shim developed the World Englishes curriculum for about 30 hours, which includes English language options, presents Internet materials (news, radio programs and fragments of feature films). Considerable attention in this course is paid to the standard variant of English, as well as the variants included in the inner circle of countries according to the spread of English in the world [1;427-430]. The analysis of this course allows us to state that learning English variants is primarily focused on the development of listening skills to recognize English speech produced by representatives of different cultures: native English speakers and communicators for whom English is a foreign language. The use of listening as a basic type of speech activity in the analyzed course is associated with the focus on the study of phonetic features of the mastered variants. Also in the process of mastering the course students are invited to take part in project activities: they should prepare interviews with representatives of different circles of English (according to the terminology of B. Kachru) and subsequently analyze the features of this or that variant on the basis of available speech material [1;427-430].

It is obvious that this program is a valuable methodological development for the introduction to the world variants of English. The application of authentic speech material rather than just a theoretical description of the specific characteristics of each variant, the use of a large number of variants belonging to different circles of English functioning, active participation of students in mastering variants become essential factors in the formation of students' awareness in the spread of English in the world. In addition, the comparative and contrastive approach provides sufficient results. One cannot but notice that this course actually lacks theoretical information concerning specific grammatical and lexical means, typical for one or another variant. The methodological value of this course is reduced by the uniformity of listening and variant assignments, as well as a certain superficiality, which manifests itself in the fact that the average study of one variant takes a little more than an hour of training time

Thus, the analysis of the available experience of instruction in learning the world variants of English shows that language centers in many countries are developing methods and teaching materials for mastering the world variants of English for different categories of students and with different targets.

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