SCAFFOLDING IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS OF TERTIARY EDUCATION

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The term "scaffolding" was first used in 1976 by David Wood and Jerome Bruner. After analysing the process of problem solving in pairs, consisting of an expert and a novice, the authors described scaffolding as a process by which an expert motivates a novice to solve more complex problems. In this sense, an analogy can be drawn between scaffolding and such pedagogical support that allows the child to function at a higher level, the level of his zone of proximal development (ZPD). "Scaffolding is a process that enables a learner to solve a problem, complete a task, or achieve goals that are beyond their individual endeavours of capabilities." [1]

"Scaffolding" is a metaphor describing a special type of instruction process that takes place in situations of interaction between the teacher and students in solving educational problems. "Fading help" from the teacher at the beginning of the training can be frequent and meaningful, and by the end of the course it is significantly reduced or absent altogether.

Basic principles of scaffolding are as follows:
- ✓ the problem does not change, but the level of support for the student's actions to solve it varies;
- ✓ the support level changes from maximum to minimum until it ends completely;
- ✓ the invariable nature of the task is especially important for those tasks in which their simplification, in essence, changes the very nature of the knowledge that the learner should master.

As the learner acquires new actions or new information, responsibility for completing the task shifts from the adult to a distributed form and then to the child himself. All types of support are temporary and gradually decrease as the student becomes more independent.

Scaffolding is also referred to as a method of instructing learner who encounters difficulties in work or learning – this is a learning strategy or, as R. Zhao and M. Orey [2] believe, this is a special type of instructing process that takes place in situations of interaction between a teacher and learner to solve problems.

The specific strategies used in the scaffolding process, the educator can vary depending on the nature of the task and the characteristics of the learner, for example, in one case, simulate the correct action, and in the other, indicate a missing step in its implementation.

There are three stages of scaffolding:

1) contingency or dependence;

2) "fading aid";

3) transfer of responsibility [2].

At the first stage of scaffolding, the teacher selects the educational material of the lesson in accordance with its tasks and capabilities, determined by the level of training of students (level of competence), assists students in completing assignments, serves as a source of information, organizes students' independent work using clear instructions and recommendations, and controls results.

Gradually, the help from the teacher becomes "fading", the teacher transfers part of his functions to the student, simultaneously increasing the responsibility of the student. The teacher observes and if necessary helps with advice, reminds, consults, together with the students discusses and corrects the results of their activities. Power of "fading" depends on the level of training of students and the level of their competence.

Fading is related to the third characteristic of scaffolding – the transfer of responsibility. Through "fading away," responsibility for the task is gradually transferred to the student. The third stage of scaffolding assumes that the teacher does not give advice, but only structures and inspires the search for an independent solution. The stage of transferring responsibility assumes a high level of mutual understanding [2].

The authors deduce two basic rules: to help a beginner in performing tasks that he cannot yet cope with; and also allow the learner to perform such a volume or such a number of tasks that he can already cope with independently. It is believed that the main indicator of scaffolding is "fading aid" from the side of the teacher, i.e. a decrease in the degree of intensity of assistance until the moment when the student becomes completely independent and autonomous, and by the end of the training it is significantly reduced or absent altogether.

Typically, scaffolding techniques are such as activating existing knowledge, prompting students about the best strategy for completing an assignment, using the "thinking out loud" tactic, speaking or vocalizing the process of thinking about an assignment after completing it, questions, collaboration, modelling, stress reduction techniques, practical assistance, etc.

At the same time, our practice with the groups of bachelors and masters of power engineering at the Faculty of Power Engineering and Electromechanics in Vinnytsia National Technical University shows that the scaffolding strategy is more appropriate in the system of higher education, especially for undergraduates and graduate students, and it is difficult to apply it in the adaptation system due to the insufficient competence of both young specialists and sometimes the teachers themselves.

With all the diverse learners in our classrooms, there is a strong need for teachers to learn and experiment with new scaffolding strategies. Scaffolding a lesson may, in fact, mean that it takes longer to teach, but the end product is of far greater quality and the experience much more rewarding for all involved.

So as we see, within the framework of modern changes and the introduction of a new educational standard, when the lesson becomes focused on the student's personality, the use of scaffolding technology helps students to achieve the goals and objectives set for them in the lesson.

References

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