

**THE ROLE OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH IN
TEACHING ENGLISH AT SCHOOL**

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The article examines the role of individualized approaches in English language education as a function of managing cognitive activities, freedom in choosing educational activities, and the ability to design personal educational trajectories. Social expectations demand the fullest development of a child's personal characteristics, testing their strengths in activities related to their intended occupation, exploring various ways to meet communication needs, and improving students' communicative skills. These requirements can be met if the educational process is highly individualized.

INTRODUCTION. The state mandatory education standard at all educational levels, as one of the conditions for implementing educational programs, has defined the individualization of the educational process through the development and implementation of individual educational plans for students, ensuring effective independent work with learning.

Today, much education, including foreign language education, is aimed at the average student. In practice, little emphasis is placed on the individual characteristics of each student, their material perception features, their level of development, their learning pace, their interests, and their motivation. This leads to weaker students lagging behind the class's

average pace, while stronger students lose interest in the subject and may even fall behind. Therefore, differentiated and individualized education for schoolchildren is a relevant topic.

In education, an individualized approach is one of the current issues in the methodology of teaching foreign languages in schools. This problem is not new. The topic has been sufficiently studied, but due to the complexity of applying these technologies in practice, it continues to attract teachers' attention. Many foreign, domestic, Russian, and Soviet researchers, such as A.G. Russkikh, A.A. Kirsanov, I.M. Cheredov, I.E. Unt, and others, have worked and continue to work on its development: a vast number of monographs, practical guides, articles, and dissertations have been written. From this arises the scientific problem: what needs to be done to differentiate and individualize, leading to positive learning outcomes?

The object of the research is the process of teaching schoolchildren in foreign language classes.

The subject of the study is the individualized approach to teaching schoolchildren in foreign language classes.

The main goal of our research is to identify the features of an individualized approach to teaching school-age children in foreign language classes.

To achieve this goal, the following tasks were set: to study the concept of an individualized approach to teaching a foreign language; to analyze the success of foreign language acquisition using an individualized approach; to consider the technology of implementing an individualized approach in teaching English; to analyze methods of individualizing learning.

In education, an individualized approach is one of the current issues in the methodology of teaching foreign languages in schools. This problem is not new. The term "individualized approach" is interpreted as a system of didactic tools for organizing the learning process in a foreign language, involving changes in the goal, form, process, and content of the lesson. The individualized approach to teaching a foreign language is analyzed as a complex pedagogical phenomenon that attributes the effectiveness of foreign language learning to the active role of the subject in the learning activity. The main conditions for implementing an individualized approach are differentiation, manifested in assessing the student's initial language preparation, developing self-employment skills, setting personally significant goals, and the ability to apply a systematic approach to mastering new knowledge [2, p. 24].

At first glance, this seemingly simple task causes significant difficulties for almost every second teacher working in schools. The main difficulty lies in the inability to find the ideal

combination of group, individual, and frontal work in foreign language teaching. Other difficulties are related to identifying the individual characteristics of the student's personality and organizing the teacher's activities on this basis, aimed at developing the intellectual abilities of any student. An undeniable fact is the varying degrees of student preparation. To correctly understand the reasons for uneven academic performance in a class, it is necessary to identify the causes of someone's delay and try to understand them. The reasons can be different: one missed classes due to illness, another did not understand the teacher's explanation in class, and a third was inattentive in class [1, p. 18].

Many methodologists and psychologists believe that differentiation in foreign language teaching is often based not on the individual characteristics of the student's personality, but only on the individual gaps in their knowledge. At the same time, it should be noted that the ability to learn a foreign language varies: some find it easy, while others struggle significantly. Studying students, their learning potential, their interests and inclinations, as well as analyzing the prospects for developing these capabilities, should serve as the starting point in the individualized approach to teaching English. However, implementing this in practice is not easy. The main difficulty lies in selecting and applying tasks of differentiated complexity. When performing tasks of the same complexity, capable and less capable students can achieve the same result only at different times. Knowing the individual characteristics of students allows for anticipating potential conflict situations in the lesson, such as when the student's self-assessment does not match the teacher's assessment of their response. In English language lessons, conditions exist that allow for developing students' individual learning abilities [3].

Students' linguistic abilities can be expressed not only in the speed, ease, and power of assimilating educational material but also in the preferred and most effective forms of learning activities performed by students. Thus, students with a low level of foreign language learning prefer reproductive tasks, such as correcting previously learned text; an intermediate level of learning allows students to combine acquired knowledge with elements of self-expression; sufficient learning ability is expressed in students' readiness to perform tasks requiring independence; in the case of a high level of foreign language learning, students oppose reproductive forms of work and prefer creative independence. Differentiated learning, in turn, involves such forms of organization where any student works at their skill level, overcoming a real but tangible difficulty. Thus, individualized learning considers the level of students' preparation and their potential capabilities. Consequently, a series of exercises should include special tasks aimed at developing

students' psychological and individual characteristics. Differentiated learning is mainly based on selecting individual tasks depending on students' preparation and the level of formation of speech skills and abilities. There are many forms of differentiated learning. These include tasks of varying complexity, a different number of repetitions for performing the same task, using various options for similar tasks, performing exercises on individual cards, providing different assistance to students when performing the same task, different lengths of pauses for performing tasks, different types of keys, supports, and reading texts of varying difficulty [5, p. 44].

It is evident that the most challenging questions facing the teacher in individualized foreign language teaching are how to distinguish the student's characteristics and determine the initial level of development from which they are starting. It is necessary to integrate this into the organization of the learning process, and what areas of work with specific children will be most significant [7, p. 112].

As is known, a foreign language is objectively a public value. And students are convinced of this value. However, subjectively, for most of them, a foreign language is a potential value, not a real one. Students poorly understand, almost do not see and feel what the process of mastering a foreign language provides (or can provide).

Teaching in such "anti-motivational" conditions is ineffective and even unethical. This contradiction deprives the educational process of its main essence—the student's personal orientation towards the goal, which alone can allow them to answer the question "why learn?" After all, personal meaning is the "relation of motive to goal" (A.N. Leontiev). But if the goal is set by someone else and no motivation arises for various reasons, there is no meaning. In such conditions, instead of a student-subject of learning activities, a student-object, who "undergoes learning," arises [4, p. 12].

It is essential to clearly understand what each student as an individual will gain if the teacher and methodology are at their best:

The student will feel that the entire system of work on their personality is so focused and structured that their immediate activities, worldview, experience, extracurricular and educational interests and inclinations, and feelings are not ignored but are considered when organizing communication in the lessons. Essentially, the content of communicative foreign language lessons is built not on "having an academic topic," studying prepared texts, but on discussing current life issues. In this case, students are given the opportunity to discuss their actions and deeds, current events in their lives, the life of the country and city. They learn to express their attitude to what is happening, defend and justify their opinions. The

communication technologies offered by teachers have special means for considering and applying all aspects of the student's individuality, which they can inevitably see and feel [6, p. 85].

The student will feel that all communication is not only person-oriented but also based on respect for them. Since the problems themselves do not have unequivocal solutions, the participants in their discussion—students and the teacher—are equal speech partners: the student's opinion is respected as much as the teacher's opinion. Freedom to express this opinion, respect for it, free choice of position, and the absence of imposition positively affect the overall psychological climate and the comfort of any person, then the development of democratic relations as a value.

Studying students' personal characteristics at different stages of learning in connection with the individual characteristics inherent in mastering a foreign language [9, p. 74].

Based on the goal of the individual aspect (to develop what plays the most significant role in the processes of cognition, learning, and education) and the essence of the process of human development, it is logical to consider that the object of development should be skills that enable the proper functioning of the transforming, emotional-evaluative, and cognitive spheres of student activity. These are abilities that can develop based on existing human inclinations and can only develop through activity. A.A. Leontiev provides an interpretation of language abilities as follows. He believes that language abilities are often understood as differences in personality traits related to communication. A child may face difficulties not in mastering the language itself or in producing foreign speech, but in the socio-psychological relationships with the caregiver, other children, or the school teacher. The child might be willing to speak, but a "psychological barrier" hinders them. This is a very common occurrence in pedagogical practice, but similar difficulties can be overcome with the goodwill of an adult [8, p.23].

Thus, A.A. Leontiev considers that language abilities consist of many components, most often non-specific. Therefore, it is necessary and possible to develop the corresponding skills on various educational materials. Thus, teaching communication skills in the native language removes the "psychological barrier". There is a real need to form and organize an individual approach, which is inextricably linked with identifying the strengths and weaknesses of a particular student, patiently overcoming various difficulties with them, relying on all that is progressive and strong in this personality. Currently, there are quite a few different ways to organize individual foreign language learning. Today, it is very important to consistently apply those methods of organizing education that allow activating

any student's cognitive activity, productive and creative mastery of skills and knowledge, creating a positive emotional background, initiating independent work, and active communication [10, p.185].

One of the pressing issues in the methodology of teaching foreign languages in schools is the individual approach. This problem is not new. The concept of "individual approach" is interpreted as a system of didactic means for organizing the educational process in a foreign language. Thus, individualization of learning takes into account both the level of students' preparation and their potential capabilities. Consequently, a series of exercises should include special tasks aimed at developing both the psychological and individual characteristics of students. It is desirable for the student to feel that the entire system of work is oriented toward their personality and structured in such a way that the student's immediate activities, worldview, experience, interests, extracurricular and educational aptitudes, and feelings are not ignored, and that communication in the lesson takes these into account. Thus, the student will feel that all communication is not only personality-oriented but also based on respect for them [12, p.6].

Since problems do not have straightforward solutions, participants in their discussion – students and the teacher – are equal as speaking partners: the student's opinion is respected just as much as the teacher's opinion. Thus, the ability to learn a language in the educational process develops and enables a person to more independently and effectively overcome difficulties arising during learning, know how to address and resolve them, and successfully apply existing opportunities. The ability to learn in language studies includes: learning skills; general phonetic skills and abilities; heuristic skills; considering the mechanisms of language and the communicative process. This detailed understanding of the ability to learn foreign languages provides an opportunity to develop and determine means to solve complex and pressing issues in the formation of students' language skills.

Means of individualizing education can include group and individual assignments, the selection and distribution of language situations, and communicative tasks. But without considering the personal qualities of the student, as well as their mental aspects, individualization of lessons is impossible.

The principles of individual and differentiated approaches are interconnected and aimed at optimizing the educational process. Both principles influence all components of the foreign language learning system, from the objective to the control of learning. Individual characteristics of students include: interest, motivation, overall development, degree of self-confidence, cultural features, abilities, level of training, language skills, learning ability,

intellectual capabilities, work capacity, attitude toward the subject, mechanisms, business language, diligence.

Therefore, in the context of developing the state educational standard of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the teacher must think about structuring the lesson so that there is an opportunity to interact with any student.

During the work, it is necessary to consider the characteristics of students when selecting and using various methods and techniques of teaching, and when assigning homework. It is possible to combine frontal work with the class and individual work with individual students. Teaching methods should be varied, depending on the individual characteristics of the student. Each teacher seeks their own techniques and methods to achieve the goal. The main goal of differentiation and individualization is the further development and preservation of the child's individuality, educating a person who represents a unique, inimitable personality.

The individual approach to teaching is one of the pressing issues in the methodology of teaching foreign languages. This problem is not new, but perhaps the full diversity of its aspects and its significance in solving the tasks of improving the educational process have not yet been fully revealed. The term "individual approach" is interpreted as a system of didactic means for organizing the educational process in a foreign language, which includes changes in the content, goals, form, and course of the lesson. The individual approach is analyzed as a complex pedagogical phenomenon that determines the effectiveness of foreign language teaching and plays an active role as the subject of educational activity.

The conditions for the successful implementation of the individual approach include differentiation, which manifests in considering students' initial language preparation, setting personally significant goals for students, developing rational and sustainable self-study skills, and the ability to implement a systematic approach to acquiring knowledge.

Thus, in studying English, it is essential to consider the individual perceptual characteristics of students. For this, it is necessary to develop a set of exercises based on the types of student perception. However, since there are no pure types of perception, in some cases, exercises for auditory learners can be supplemented with written texts, and for visual learners with listening activities, or by combining them, i.e., varying the exercises.

The implementation of an individual approach in teaching a foreign language requires great skill from the teacher. He or she must consider the real conditions within the group and the abilities of each student, without in any way compromising the dignity and interests of any of them.

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