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## LPP PROPOSAL FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

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## LPP ПРЕДЛОЖЕНИЕ ДЛЯ СИСТЕМЫ ОБЩЕСТВЕННОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

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*Abstract.* The interest in learning foreign languages is increasing rapidly in Uzbekistan. The foreign language curriculum has undergone significant changes since 2012. However, several shortcomings that should be improved still exist in this sphere. This paper puts forward an LPP proposal to enhance the current teaching system of foreign languages in public education.

*Аннотация.* В Узбекистане стремительно растет интерес к изучению иностранных языков. С 2012 года программа обучения иностранным языкам претерпела значительные изменения. Однако в этой сфере все еще существует ряд недостатков, которые необходимо исправить. В этом документе выдвигается LPP предложение по улучшению существующей системы преподавания иностранных языков в государственном образовании.

*Keywords:* LPP proposal, foreign languages, contact hours, language curriculum, scheduling, consecutive hours.

*Ключевые слова:* LPP предложение, иностранные языки, контактные часы, языковая программа, расписание уроков, последовательные часы.

The interest for learning foreign languages, especially English language is increasing rapidly in Uzbekistan. More and more learners are taking extra courses in language centers, applying for foreign universities in Uzbekistan; parents are hiring personal tutors for their children from early childhood years, or giving their offspring to private schools which are becoming popular these days in the country. The number of nongovernmental schools has tripled since the Presidential Decree no. 3276 “On the further development of nongovernmental educational establishments” (2017). English is used as a medium of instruction in most of these educational settings. However, not all families can afford such kind of schools or personal tutors. For the children of most families the main source for learning the language is ordinary public schools which are totally free of charge and fully funded by the government. But learning foreign languages at public schools will not suffice for the present day requirements for English. This situation in public schools can be improved by making certain changes to the existing curriculum, so that learning quality English becomes accessible for everyone in the country.

The current paper outlines the LPP proposal which is grounded in the real problems EFL teachers and learners have been facing in the public school system of Uzbekistan.

**Context:** The chosen site School no. 271 is situated in Yunusobod, Tashkent. It is a government funded Uzbek school and teaches the students from the 1<sup>st</sup> till the 11<sup>th</sup> grade. The

classes are divided into two categories according to the grades: primary classes (1-4<sup>th</sup> grades) and secondary classes (5-11<sup>th</sup> grades). Now 988 students are being educated at the school, and 364 of them are primary class students and the rest are secondary class students. These numbers vary constantly as some students move to and new students come from other districts of the capital or regions of Uzbekistan. Along with the other school subjects, English is taught as a foreign language at the school. After the announcement of Presidential Decree № 1875 on “The measures of strengthening the system of learning foreign languages” (2012) a new foreign languages curriculum was developed. And from the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic year public schools started to teach foreign languages from the 1<sup>st</sup> grade. In the curriculum, the requirements are aligned with CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) standards, and there are special standard measures for every skill and aspect of the language: listening, speaking, reading, writing and grammar. According to these standards students should reach A1, A2 and B1 level at the end of 4<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades respectively (Foreign Language Curriculum, 2017). Therefore, the syllabus contains a huge number of materials to be covered in foreign language classes. But the question is: are these materials fully acquired by the students and do they (learners) reach desired level? It should be admitted that foreign language teaching has been improved significantly over the last decade. However, in creating the curriculum the needs of main stakeholders of the new language program: teachers and learners were not considered enough. As a result, an immense incompatibility has appeared between the reality and what was expected [2].

#### *Goals and objectives*

The central focus and the target language of this proposal is English. Now teaching English is based on CLT (communicative language teaching) approach in educational settings of Uzbekistan. But the implementation of this approach in English classes leaves much to be desired. As General English is taught in public schools improving all four main language skills: listening, reading, writing and speaking, grammar aspect, vocabulary enhancement are aimed at in the current proposal. It should be mentioned that grammar, vocabulary and all four language skills play important role and interrelated with each other in language learning, and one must not be devaluated over the another as long as the language course is about general language ability of the learner [3].

As mentioned above, the primary goal of this proposal is to improve the quality of teaching and learning process in English language classes by making realistic changes to the existing curriculum, namely to the number of contact hours and their scheduling for secondary class students. In order to achieve this goal, first the following objectives should be accomplished:

- identifying the real needs of the students and shortcomings in teaching English at the school;
- making changes to the current foreign language curriculum, namely to the contact hours for 5- 11<sup>th</sup> grades (4 academic hours instead of 3 hours for 5-11<sup>th</sup> graders);
- redesigning the foreign language syllabus according to ‘Theory+Practice’ approach (the first lesson for mostly theory, the second for meaningful use of the learnt material);
- scheduling the order of lessons: students have two two-consecutive-hour lessons in a week.

#### *Inventory*

As a practicing EFL teacher I should mention that there is a serious gap between presented knowledge by EFL specialists who should strictly follow the curriculum and the knowledge acquired by the learners in public schools. This is possibly due to the excessive amount of material

to cover and the lack of opportunity to use this material in a meaningful way. Teachers should cover the new content, vocabulary and sometimes grammatical reference part but there is little time left for applying them in practice, to identify learners' weaknesses and work on those weaknesses in just 45-minute lesson. The lack of needed resources: proficient teachers, available space for collaborative work, enough IT technology (LCD projectors, computers, printers) also hinders the effectiveness of teaching and learning. The following table illustrates the existing gap between available and insufficient resources:

<i>Existing resources</i>	<i>Needed resources</i>
7 EFL teachers: two of them have B2 level certificates	10 EFL teachers with B2 or C1 level
Four English rooms: two of them with small space to make some groupings	Four English rooms: with enough space to organize group works to support communicative language teaching
Rooms have 18 seats each (the students are divided into two groups for English classes)	Rooms with 20 or 22 seats
Two LCD projectors, two computers, two whiteboards, two pairs of speakers	Four LCD projectors, four computers, four whiteboards, four pairs of speakers
No printers	Two printers for printing out supplementary material prepared by teachers
No Internet connection	Internet connection

The principal of the school № 271 is expected to seek subsidization from the government, particularly from the Ministry of Public Education for presenting new ideas for the improvement of public education. And also one third of the Director's Fund of the school will be used to provide the essential material and support for the implementation of the proposal. However, this is planned to cover the process's expenses for four years (Phases 1, 2 and three). As one of the main stakeholders of the process the parents of the students will also be involved in this stage and can contribute their share to the funding of the program. For further implementation of this proposal at macro level after the *Phase3*, the needed documents will be submitted to the Ministry of Public Education to be considered for approval by higher officials. If the proposal gets approval, then a number of required steps will be taken to obtain ongoing funding from the Central Bank of Uzbekistan to carry out the proposal at nationwide level [4].

#### *Recommendations*

As this proposal deals with language-in-education planning at micro level, the actors performance in this 'play' should be clearly defined. The main actors in this program are students and their parents, teachers themselves, school officials, the departments of public education in Yunusobod district and Tashkent city, the Ministry of Public Education (in macro level planning). Here, the main work will be done by the following actors: EFL teachers of the target school, the school officials, volunteer EFL teachers of other schools in Yunusobod district, officials of the Department of Public Education of Yunusobod district. In addition, parents and local public will contribute with their opinions and evaluation of the new program. And also students should not be forgotten as the main actors who will determine the success of the proposal by their results.

It should be mentioned that "language planning specialists need to understand that unexpected outcomes cannot be avoided, but rather that unexpected outcomes are a normal feature" of LPP processes [5]. Also possible repercussions should be highly considered beforehand as well as unexpected results.

To achieve primary goal in implementing this proposal the following are recommended:

- redesigning the curriculum and syllabus;
- financially supporting already employed teachers to participate in special training programs to achieve B2 or higher levels and develop their professional and language skills;
- hiring three proficient EFL teachers;
- planning the assessment procedures beforehand to provide learners with positive washback;
- developing supplementary materials to fill the gap in existing textbooks and to improve language skills of learners (listening, speaking, reading, writing);
- developing supplementary material to enhance students' language aspects: grammar, vocabulary capacity in order to prepare them for future entrance exams.

Evaluating students' performance during the process is vital to determine if the process is going on the right track or not. Several assessment procedures and tools are planned to be carried out to analyze learners' language development throughout the program. Both formal and informal assessment techniques will be employed to record their progress as formative assessment and to give appropriate constructive feedback. At the end of the program, CEFR exam for Level A1 and A2 students will be implemented as summative assessment and to present the results to the Ministry of Public Education for consideration to propose the changes at macro level.

#### *Timeline*

To succeed in making changes and get a desired result several years and a huge number of resources will be needed. For this reason, the implementation period of this particular proposal is divided into three phases at micro level:

*Phase 1* (March-June, 2019): Preparing questionnaires, implementing needs assessment among learners, and analyzing the findings; evaluating the current curriculum relying on the survey results.

*Phase 2* (2019 -2020): Making changes to the existing curriculum and syllabus, re-scheduling the English lessons;

*Phase 3* (2021-2022): Piloting the changes; presenting the results to local departments of Public Education System for macro level planning.

The actual aim of this proposal is enhancing language teaching and learning at a national level, but “for language planning to be effective, and to understand how those effects work, there is a need to examine activities at a local or micro level” (Siew Kheng & Baldauf, 2011). Therefore, the implementation of suggested changes at a micro level is targeted here as a beginning of macro level changes.

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