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**Lytvynenko Olha Oleksandrivna,**  
candidate of Philological Sciences, A.P. of National University of Pharmacy,  
Kharkiv, Ukraine

**VOCATIVE CASE AS THE METHOD OF FORMING THE  
GRAMMAR COMPETENCE AT THE INITIAL STAGE OF LEARNING  
UKRAINIAN AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

Teaching Ukrainian as a foreign language has come to a great importance in modern educational system. The aim of the research is to concentrate main attention on grammar competence forming. Applying the combined methods and approaches while studying grammatical aspects of Ukrainian is of great importance [1: 3]. The research task consists in the revealing the basic problems arising for the foreign students, especially those, who have never studied any of Slavic languages before, while learning Ukrainian language. At this point, learning Ukrainian as a foreign language in a multilingual group seem to be more progressive than that of a group of students speaking the same language: when a foreign language becomes a common method of communication, the students feel more motivated to study. Again, if they can use the adopted language skills in everyday life, not just in class (shopping, outdoor activities etc.) it helps developing speaking skills much faster and the grammar knowledge becomes more solid. Though, in Russian-speaking regions of Ukraine (Kharkiv, Dnipro, Odesa) certain problems in communication arise because of local population sometimes refuses speak Ukrainian to the foreigners, thus demotivating the students. To help overcome such problems the teachers can arrange

excursions for the students to the places of national Ukrainian heritage, encouraging the students to speak Ukrainian with the native speakers and learn the Ukrainian culture with respect to their national traditions [3].

At the initial stage of learning the amount of vocabulary and special courtesy phrases is necessary, which is adopted without any special attention to more complicated grammar categories, such as genders, cases etc. Yet, it is useful to introduce the importance of inflexional language structure at the very beginning. Here the teacher should be careful with the assignments: simple exercises might seem too boring to the students, while the complicated ones could be too stressful [2: 37]. We suggest that students learn the vocative case along with the genders (masculine and feminine) at the very first lesson, while studying the phrases of greetings and asking the names. First, we practice the phrases “Як Вас звати? – Мене звати... – Дуже приємно. А Вас?” Then, draw students’ attention to the fact that the girls’ names are likely to end with *-a*, while boys’ names end with a consonant. Now it’s a good moment to explain that the forms of vocative cases have the ending *-o* for the ladies’ names and *-e* for the gentlemen’s, and practice the phrases “Добрий день, Муно! – Як справи, Мохаммеде?” using the round-class role-play activity. It is not just the first step on the way to adopt the paradigm of cases in Ukrainian, but it also has a very positive stress-relieving and ice-breaking effect among the students who can now feel more motivated to learn and speak Ukrainian as a means of communication in a new for them both language and cultural environment.

The results of the research can be used while practical training and tutorial for both in-class study and self-study. Thus, it is only complex approach that provides the successful forming of language competence for the foreign students.

### **Sources**

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