

### **Challenges of the second foreign language**

When the students come to our English classes in 10 minutes after their German lesson we need a 'powerful tool' to make a shift from one foreign language to another. Our experience in teaching English as a second foreign language (SFL) for the students whose first foreign language (FFL) is German has shown that in this case we face additional challenges. Such challenges contribute to the use of not only the students' native language in the classroom but mostly the use of the first foreign language. Sometimes these hurdles block the use of English completely.

We tried to immerse our students into English by means of posters as warming-up. Using posters at the beginning of class serves us as a wake up call for students telling them that it is time to switch to English from Ukrainian (their native language) and German (FFL). For posters we usually take the mounted photographs or pictures with captions as cues to prompt students' participation. Thus, the main purpose of the posters in our case is to encourage students in learning SFL and provide controlled practice in a given English structures or concepts.

As a rule, poster foster students' oral practice. Even before the goal of the lesson is presented they easily use several common English language structures and vocabulary. Posters have the following benefits: they encourage authentic communication, increase self-confidence, help minimize incorrect language and improve pronunciation, etc.

Comparing to textbooks posters are more inviting as they visually stimulate learners and grant students more autonomy in class and also bring students close to real life situations. This technique helps us even benefit from challenges of teaching English as SFL and improve the level of teaching English in general.