

UPGRADING THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR STUDENTS OF NON-LINGUISTIC SPECIALTIES

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Abstract. The paper deals with the problem of upgrading a new effective educational programme of foreign language learning for the students of non-linguistic faculties. The consideration of competence-based and student-centered approaches is realized in some aspects of the development of students' individual features, their use in the process of learning organization, devising control and final tests. A method of professionally oriented projects was the basis for the compilation of a curriculum in the programme. It was considered as the most effective technique for the formation of non-linguistic students' foreign language communicative competence.

Keywords: new educational programme; competence-based approach; project-based activity.

The strategy of upgrading the Russian educational system, with Russia becoming a member of the Bologna process is aimed at a considerable renewal of activity in higher educational establishments. This suggests a change in the requirements placed on higher education to create conditions for the development of student/s mobility, their professional realization and demand imposed in the labour market. This especially refers to students' studies in foreign educational institutions, mastering MA and MS programmes in the leading establishments of the European countries, as this takes place, the role of foreign language education in a higher educational institution is dramatically rising and one can speak about the necessity of forming the foreign language communicative competence of a graduate of any course of training as a necessary condition of his professional self-realization.

On the whole, receiving a good quality higher education is a necessary condition of a professional institution's alumni. Hence it follows that upgrading higher education is one of the major goals of the modern educational paradigm with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of learning and rising competition of specialists in the world market. Baidenko considers that "since knowledge nowadays is accepted as a basis of economic growth, social development, national competitive ability, higher education and scientific research head the political agenda. If higher education occupies a significant place in the economy, its effectiveness, quality and status are becoming a vitally important index of competitive ability at the international level.

As higher education is in the focus of political attention, it acquires a new valuable expression" [1: 24-25].

The level of orientation of educational programmes to the labour market is a key index of the effectiveness of higher education. It is realized by means of systematized interaction and employers, and formalized in the form of criteria and requirements imposed on the competences of graduates from the point of view of their current practical suitability for a professional activity [2, 3]. Foreign language communicative competence is considered to be one of the basic competences especially in the field of the English language knowledge as the language of global communication in different spheres of culture and science.

In the requirements placed upon the results of mastering the main BA and BS educational programmes for non-linguistic faculties of any educational sphere one can find the following competence - a graduate demonstrates his ability to communicate and the skills of foreign language business communication. This is directly associated with the aims of a foreign language learning of the students of non-linguistic faculties and directed toward foreign language communicative skills formation, mastering the professional foreign language thesaurus, teaching processing information, forming analytical skills and presenting the results of the activity with authentic texts and skills of realizing professional foreign language communication.

Within the framework of higher professional education one more uniting goal - that of the development of students' individual features which are of great importance to future specialists must be sought. Higher professional education is not simply limited to filling future specialists with information but suggests the development of the individual, professional outlook and mentality of a graduate, his or her motivation to be engaged in a professional activity and the ability to acquire new knowledge independently [4]. Because of these, the tasks specifying the goals of learning in a foreign language programme can be expressed in the following way [5, 6]:

1) forming appropriate competences in all kinds of speech activity (reading, listening, speaking, writing) which are the basis of a foreign language communicative competence;

2) forming a professional competence of students by means of a foreign language modeling a professionally oriented content of learning;

3) forming skills of a foreign language professional as well as business communication with the help of learning a foreign language professional discourse;

4) forming competences facilitating the development of the ability to mastering a foreign language on one's own way;

5) forming a positive relationship to learn a foreign language at the expense of practical application of knowledge and skills acquired.

As the centre of modern linguistics is the learner himself, the development of his spiritual strength, abilities, rising requirements, upbringing his

moral principles, Passov and the authors of the authors of this article will determine the process of foreign language learning as foreign language education with a high potential because it originally comprises four aspects: cognitive (learning a foreign culture and a language as its component), developing (developing various abilities and speech mechanisms), instructive (upbringing and moral qualities of the individual), academic (mastering foreign language communicative competence) [7: 14]. The new learning approach being discussed involves orientation of the educational process not so much toward the objective world but to the development of the communication world, associations and interrelations in educational systems. In this instance, one can speak about the differentiation and individualization of foreign language education. This leads to an understanding of this process as “a specific interaction of the subjects of an educational process with the foreign language culture translated in the process of learning a foreign language which is specifically organized under the conditions of an educational establishment” [Ibid: 51]. It is possible to perform such an interaction by means of foreign language discourse characterized by motivation, authenticity and significance, and is “a special spiritual, a power field of knowledge in the light of professional communication realization which is regarded as the basic condition of foreign language education [8: 25].

The individuality of a learner comprises three aspects - individual, subjective and personality-based properties [7]. Individual properties are the specific natural properties of a person: temperament, inborn qualities, and organic requirements. As Rubinshtein states, any ability of a person is a synthesis of inborn and acquired properties in the process of individual development [9]. It is important to take into consideration the subjective properties of learners to master foreign language communication because each learner has his / her own methods of mastering knowledge, realizing self-control, getting ability to organize independent work, working skills with various supports and regimes, etc. [7: 151]. The key role of student-centered individualization is confirmed from the point of view of various sciences (philosophy, psychology, etc.). It is evident that a person perceives and acquires those things that are of primary importance in the context of personal and professional self-realization [9]. The specific nature of a subjective individualization to master a foreign language speaking process lies in the fact that it must provide a simultaneous application of instructional materials which are various in a form (availability and absence of supports) taking into account the original techniques of a student’s academic activity ultimately leading to similar results and wherever possible at equal periods of time. Consideration of a student’s individuality must be reflected in the regulations of a new educational programme taking into account various forms of conducting classes, the kinds of individual work and doing tests.

The competence-based approach adopted in the paradigm of modern education provides a set of competences oriented toward value and worth

constituents of any kind of activity. The classification of the competences divided into the general, cultural and professional ones is well-known. Cultural competences are not connected with the actual sphere of professional activity but they are necessary for realization in various situations. As far as the professional competence of non-linguistic students is concerned, it is regarded as a qualitative characteristic of a specialist's individuality and includes a combination of scientific and theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the sphere of professional communication realization on the basis of professional knowledge, the experience to attain professional interaction, and tolerant motivation of professional communication. In addition, in modern conditions, under the influence of social, political and cultural factors on the system of foreign language education there appears an objective necessity to develop the most modern methodological technologies and methods of activity which contribute to the maximum actualization of the individual and intellectual potential of learners. These facts arouse a predictable scientific interest in the principles of cognitive science and the development of a cognitive approach to form foreign language communicative competence [10].

Thus, to determine the notion of general cultural and professional competences for the students of non-linguistic faculties, the significance of foreign language communicative competence is emphasized and it is regarded as an integral part of the competences mentioned above. Moreover, it contributes to the formation of skills to realize foreign language professional communication. The formation of foreign language communicative competence of learners should be considered as a harmonious development of the individual, his ability and willingness to take part in a foreign language communication on the basis of cooperation, mutual respect, tolerance to the cultural differences and overcoming cultural barriers.

In the process of foreign language communicative competence formation the sphere of communication has got a special topicality. Guided by the idea of Khaleeva, we distinguish four possible macrospheres of communication which determine the practical application of a foreign language [11: 91]:

- productive sphere implying proficiency of a specialized professional speech;
- everyday life relationships sphere supposing the proficiency of everyday life skills in use;
- cultural studies communication field for which it is necessary to be proficient in artistic, literary and other types of speech;
- social and political sphere of communication (social activity) in which the skills of public speech are revealed.

It should be mentioned, however, that the selection of the autonomous spheres of social communication does not suggest their isolation from each other. They possess mutual transitions and interrelationships; they can complement each other and intertwine into a common tissue of communication.

Professional communication can occur only between partners who possess a common volume of knowledge. These factors, however, are not sufficient enough to realize communication successfully. Evdokimova emphasizes that a modern professional activity requires in specialists demanded by a world community the development of not only skills which are connected with specialists' professional activity, but also skills to think globally and critically and possess both communicative and cognitive competences for the recognition of background knowledge and imagination of the partners in professional communication [12: 13].

Thus, the formation of a foreign language communicative competence of the non-linguistic students should be directed to reducing an intercultural distance among the representatives of different societies by means of forming competences which would help a future specialist to realize professional communication in the conditions of cultural interaction and it can be done in the process of foreign language discourse teaching. Therefore, formation of foreign language communicative competence of the non-linguistic students should be represented as a universal development of the individual, his ability and willingness to take part in professional communication on the basis of certain rules and requirements imposed on such a way of communication using the principles of collaboration, mutual respect, skills to analyze and represent scientific hypotheses and defend the results of the investigation. In this case emphasis is placed upon English language learning as a language of global communication which makes it possible to realize professional communication with colleagues from different countries. On the whole, we can speak about a possibility of much more complete professional self-realization of specialists of different trends of training who can freely perform intercultural communication leading to a considerable increase of graduates' level of competitiveness.

We can also conclude that student-centered and competence-based approaches to build up the educational process for non-linguistic students are the necessary condition to develop an effective programme of foreign language teaching as they fill the educational process with conceptual and student-centered contents, facilitate the development of socially important competences, realize the communicative goal of learning, reveal the creative potential of students, form the skills of their independent work, cultivate tolerance in the communication process. The process of foreign language teaching during the realization of a new programme is presented in table.

Cognition, development, upbringing, learning are aspects of foreign language education. They state the goals and tasks of a new educational programme which can be formulated in the following way:

- to form the skills of the English language oral communication in the social, political, economic, cultural and everyday life interest spheres;

- to teach the rules of a foreign language speech, correctness and adequacy of scientific and technical literature translation;
- to develop the skills of oral English speech comprehension by means of a direct and indirect communication;
- to form a groundwork for a socio-cultural communication to realize an effective intercultural interaction aimed at the cultural values of a foreign language medium;
- to teach the rules of activity with information authentic sources having both professional and general cultural orientation (abstracts, summaries of the published materials in press, scientific articles; searching for information in a huge stream of specialized literature in English);
- to develop the skills of self-education in the sphere of a foreign language learning emphasizing the cognitive sphere of knowledge.

Model of creating a new educational programme with due regard for modern approaches in teaching

Foreign language education	
Aspect: cognition, development, upbringing, learning	
Student-centered approach - contextual content - individuality - creative potential - independent solution of problems	Competence-based approach - socially important competences - professional competences - communicative orientation - tolerance, intercultural interaction
The personality - individual features - subjective features - personality-based features	
Educational programme	

In the process of student-centered and competence-based approaches realization in foreign language teaching of the educational programme is oriented to both professional and general cultural requirements which are socially important for the individual. So we can talk about the individualization of a process of foreign language education, mobility and an adaptive possibility of an educational process based on its realization with the aim of the most complete satisfaction of the requirements of an educational activity subject. Psychological and pedagogical conditions of a new educational programme creation for non-linguistic students are regarded to be oriented toward the individual development of learners (individual subjective and personal features) on the basis of modern methods of education which contribute to the enhancement of motivation to a foreign language learning as to a means of foreign language professional communication using professional discourse.

Classroom and independent work in this programme for the students of natural science trends learning is based on project work (short-term group

and individual projects) which leads to presenting the research work results and findings, their discussion, exchange of information and opinions. Such forms as writing summaries, essays and glossaries are also used. The choice of the project method as a major one to be used in projecting classes is explained by the fact that the methodological principles of a project activity realization significantly affect the formation of such competences of learners as the ability to pose and solve the problems (the problem principle realization), the skills of solving the problems working in a team (the principle of cooperation realization), and they also increase the motivation of students to the education because the professionally interesting materials are used (the principles of integratedness and personal interest realization), develop the skills of independent work with the authentic materials of professional trend, presenting the research work results, a cognitive approach to the communication realization (the principles of complex motivation and creative self-actualization realization), and also they contribute to the formation of foreign language communicative competence as the basis for foreign language professional communication.

Thus, the use of professionally oriented projects method promotes the socialization of learners, formation of the communicative skills in the area of professional communication, mastering the system of terms, the determined sphere of a specialization, development of independent work organization skills, realization of the learners' creative potential, awareness of foreign language learning necessity for the realization of professional communication on the basis of the competences formed. In addition, the project technique makes it possible to stimulate thinking and cognitive abilities of students, endows the learning with a cognitive character, brings it closer to the situations of real-life professional communication, contributes in full measure to the realization of competence-based and student-centered approaches which are responsible for the creation of a new educational programme in foreign language teaching for non-linguistic students.

The professional competences in the English language learning for the future non-linguistic specialist comprise the following aspects of foreign language professional discourse:

- proficiency in a professionally oriented conceptual system and skills to realize professional communication with regard to the peculiarities of the professional, intellectual and social spheres of partners in communication;
- skills to communicate in a foreign language adequately to the scheme of communication and realization of the factual need for communicants.

Thus, building up a foreign language teaching process for the non-linguistic students with regard to the competence-based and student-centered approaches must bring foreign language education closer to real-life situations of professional communication, and thus contribute to the effective formation of foreign language communicative competence. The develop-

ment of a new foreign language educational programme in relation to all the aforementioned statements will improve the efficiency of education and in full measure realize the goal of the professional competences formation as well as a foreign language communicative competence which allow graduates to participate and implement foreign language professional communication at the level which will provide a possibility to compete on the labour market in the modern situation of intensive international communication.

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