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Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future

**PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
TEACHER IN MULTIMEDIA EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT**

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Abstract

The role of the multimedia educational environment in the development of the professional competencies of a foreign language teacher is considered in the article. The views of researchers on the issues related to the requirements of the professional competencies that a foreign language teacher should have are presented. Such concepts as "professional competence", "multimedia", "multimedia educational environment" are analyzed. Particular attention is paid both to the potential of blended learning models in creating multimedia educational environment and teacher's role in multimedia interaction and creating real conditions for the professional competencies development of a foreign language teacher. The authors of the article emphasize that in the process of teaching a foreign language using information technology tools, students develop independence. However, the role of the teacher does not decrease, it is transformed. At the same time, the teacher must monitor the performance of students and channel their activities in the right direction. The results of inquiries of foreign language teachers are considered in the article and searches of perspective ways of the professional competence development of a foreign language teacher are undertaken. As a result of the research, the authors conclude that the multimedia educational environment sets certain requirements to the development of the teacher's professional culture, their professional competencies.

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1. Introduction

In connection with the rapid changes in the state, economic, educational and information-communicative areas of life in Russia, the issue of the evolution of the profession of a foreign language teacher, as well as making appropriate changes in the process of teachers' training and improving the teachers' qualifications is brewing up. One of the main tasks of the modern teacher of a foreign language is expressed in the formation and development of the student's personality, capable of independent thinking, ready for foreign-language communication in both real and virtual environment.

Today's student world picture is based on the flow of various of information that he receives with the help of new multimedia technologies. Therefore, a teacher who does not use additional information sources and technical capabilities of multimedia technologies will not be able to fulfil his professional tasks and functions successfully. The teacher of new formation is a person, combining professional competence and broad outlook; a person who possesses methodical skills; a personality, who has its own individual style, level of professional culture, creativity. The level of students' culture depends on the teacher's competence and culture, so does the level of culture in the society.

Teacher's qualification is made up of his professional competencies, presented in the occupational standards for teachers (the order of the Russian Federation Ministry of Labor and Social Protection No. 115 dated December 25, 2014). One of the creators of the occupational standards for teachers clarifies the essence of the concept "occupational standard": "By the professional standard we will understand the system of requirements to the qualities (competence) of the subject of activity, which in their integrity determine the possibility of occupying a particular position and determine success in activities" (The order of the Russian Federation Ministry of Labor and Social Protection No. 115, 2014). Thus, the standard becomes a benchmark, which indicates the need for qualitative changes in the process of preparing students - future teachers, if necessary, their retraining, as well as in the teachers' development.

The occupational standard for teachers together with constantly changing information environment stimulate teachers to increase their competence, including media competence, and give them opportunity for constant self-improvement and self-development.

2. Problem Statement

To understand the requirements of the standard, presented for teachers, and in particular to a foreign language teacher, we are going clarify the following concepts "qualification", "competence" and "competence".

Ozhegov's dictionary defines the word "qualification" as "degree of readiness" for some kind of work "or as a" level of being prepared (Shvedova, 1982). "Competence" is considered as a circle of issues in which someone is well informed (Shvedova, 1982). Therefore, in order to become a competent foreign language teacher, it is necessary to have a certain set of competences that lets operate effectively in the field of foreign language education and have a certain level of qualification.

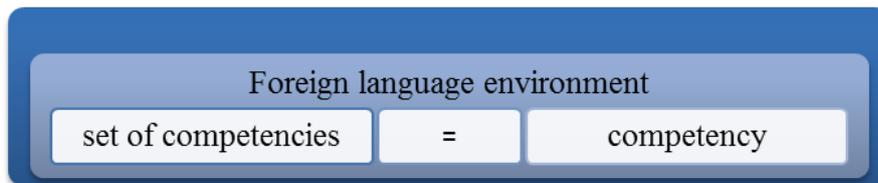


Figure 01. The connection between competences and teacher's competency

Under "professional competence of the teacher" we understand an integral characteristic that determines the ability to solve professional problems arising in real situations in professional activity, the use of knowledge of professional and life experience, values and inclinations.

The Council of Europe in 1996 identified five basic (key) competencies, which are necessary today for any specialists. In the context of professional advancement for foreign language teachers, they acquire special significance:

1) Political and social competencies related to the ability of assuming responsibility, participating in joint decision-making, participating in the development of democratic institutions.

2) Competences related to life in a multicultural society designed to discourage the emergence of xenophobia, the spread of intolerance and contribute to both understanding differences and the wish to live with people of other cultures, languages and religions.

3) Competences that determine the skills of oral and written communication, vital for work and public life to such an extent that those who do not own them are threatened with isolation from the society. This group of communication includes the possession of several languages, which is of increasing importance.

4) Competences related to the emergence of the information society. Possession of new technologies, understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, the ability to have critical attitude to the information and advertising broadcast through mass media and the Internet.

5) Competences that actualize the ability and desire to learning through life, not only professionally, but also in personal and public life.

As we can see, these competencies are very specific and relevant up to now, as they are derived from the experience of European countries in the process of assimilating foreigners into their own "foreign language" environment (Mutzart, 2013). And as we know, the experience of implementing these competencies has not always been successful, as it contradicted the understanding of European "tolerance".



Figure 02. Main tasks of a competent teacher

Analyzing various sources and opinions on the definition of competences important for foreign language teachers, we have faced a rather wide range of types of competences and their interpretation. To a greater or lesser extent, the authors have a common understanding of their competences, according to the practical experience and the use of different approaches, separate private competences are singled out.

It is remarkable that Bidenko (2005) highlighted the following types of key competencies multicultural, subject-activity and information competence. We share the author's point of view and together with him believe that they are indispensable indicators of the quality of the professional training of a foreign language teacher.

As for the criteria for assessing the professional competence of a Russian foreign language teacher, the "Proposals for the certification of teachers of a foreign language"(Safonova, 2004) are invited to assess the professional competence of a foreign language teacher for the basis of the following groups of competences:

- communicative competence,
- professional competence,
- general cultural competence.

Communicative competence consists of linguistic, speech and socio-cultural competences.

Professional competence includes: planning, organizational skills, skills in monitoring and evaluation, analytical, research and professional-communicative skills (Nikitenko, 2009).

General cultural competence is represented in various indicators of communicative and professional competencies: psychological, pedagogical, philological and personal characteristics (Fedotova, 2005).

By issuing graduates, foreign language teachers, for example, when interviewing while recruiting, qualifying the employee for compliance with the position taken, the fulfilment of these competences is taken into account.

3. Research Questions

Teachers of a foreign language not only train, develop and monitor the results of their students, but also continuously learn, develop and undergo control: they pass grades in categories, give open lessons, and participate in professional skills competitions.

In the conception about the development and modernization of national education, special attention is paid to the quality of Russian education and its compliance with the world standards. International exams for teachers of foreign languages such as Teaching Knowledge (Rodgers, 2001).

Test and others are popular. They are displayed in the "All-European competence in foreign language skills", an integral part of which is the multimedia language competence (Agafonova, 2017).

In the light of the new requirements to the standard and the society, studies of the so-called "media" or "media competence" of the teacher, in particular the teacher of foreign languages, become relevant.

By "multimedia language competence" the free possession of multimedia technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language is understood (authors').

An open, informational, multimedia-based educational environment should contribute to the formation of the need for change and self-change of its subjects, the teacher and the student.

By "multimedia educational environment" we mean the informational educational environment of interaction between subjects of the educational process and the world through open intellectual systems that are based on multimedia technology.

Accordingly, "multimedia training" is an opportunity to use the intellectual result of the techno-socio-cultural development of society (Tetin, 2016).

The term "media education" is interpreted as "a direction in linguistics, studying the laws of mass communication (print, television, radio, video, cinema, etc.)" (O'Neill, 2011). Its main tasks are:

- to prepare a new generation for life in the modern information society, for the perception of various information;
- to teach the learner to understand the information;
- to enable the student to learn the ways of communication on the basis of non-verbal forms of communication with the help of technical means (O'Dowd, 2015).

On-line multimedia are:

- 1) Internet resources for teachers of a foreign language (teft.net, learn-english-today.com, superteachertools.com)
- 2) Sites of virtual professional communities (pedsovet.org, rusedu.net, eun.org)
- 3) Courses of distance learning (courser.org, openedu.ru, 1 September.ru.)
- 4) Auxiliary training programs (Duolingo, LinguaLeo, Parrot Player)
- 5) Resources for foreign language students (FluentU, BBC Languages, MosaLingua)
- 6) Interactive games (Memrise, Busuu, English Media Lab)
- 7) Free communication in virtual foreign-language space (Conversation Exchange, The Polyglot Club, English, Baby!)

Off-line multimedia are:

- 1) Electronic forms of foreign language textbooks
- 2) Additional teaching aids on digital media
- 3) Electronic encyclopaedias, dictionaries, translators (Shchukin, 2010).

4. Purpose of the Study

A foreign language teacher needs to critically evaluate them and effectively integrate them into the process of teaching and upbringing

On the one hand, various multimedia technologies significantly expand the capabilities of teachers, optimize the learning of foreign languages and make it more exciting and cognitive (Lazareva, 2010; Popova, Almazova, Khalyapina, & Tret'jakova, 2017; Pogodin & Li, 2017; Almazova, Khalyapina, & Popova, 2017).

On the other hand, it is very difficult for the teacher, using modern multimedia technologies, to keep his active, guiding role.

5. Research Methods

On-line poll in the social network of Facebook for teachers of Azov, the Rostov region (53 people) on the readiness of the teacher to work with students in multimedia educational environment showed that among teachers there are concerns about the reducing their role as a teacher in the educational process, as well as about additional load in connection with the preparation of the content of training (52.8% of the number of respondents). A certain group of teachers was singled out, which experienced a possible lack of educational, methodological, communication and multimedia competencies (33.9% of the number of respondents). However, some of the teachers emphasize the emergence of new opportunities and the lack of the need for more work in preparing the lesson (13.2% of the number of respondents).

6. Findings

As it is clear from the results of the on-line survey, the majority of the respondents are still not sure about the formation of their media competence, although they realize its importance in the modern educational process. A small part of foreign language teachers who participated in the on-line survey confirmed the successful use of multimedia technologies in the educational environment and, as a result, their professional multimedia competence.

One of the effective ways of forming the multimedia language competence of teachers of a foreign language is the use of blended learning technologies. "Blended learning" is understood as a method that includes forms of remote (online) and classroom communication, with the optimal combination of strengths and advantages of each of them (Volt, 2017).

Researchers of the problems of blended learning (Andreeva, Rozhdestvenskaya, & Yarmakhov, 2016) singled out its common features such as personal interaction between a teacher and a student and self-education (self-development) of the subjects of the pedagogical process.

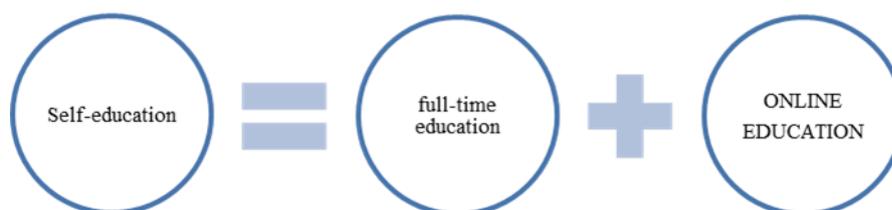


Figure 03. Components of blended learning

The experience of foreign language teachers in Aksay in the Rostov region allows them to use both off-line multimedia (electronic forms of textbooks as simulators for independent studies and ongoing monitoring of educational activities, work with electronic dictionaries and encyclopaedias as reference support in teaching foreign language), and online multimedia (sites uchi.ru and Edmodo with interactive tasks, services WhatsApp and Messenger for discussions and pedagogical support of students).

The role of the teacher in blended teaching, indeed, is transformed. He becomes a tutor, organizer, supporting the child in the educational process, which stimulates his independence. This is an integral descriptor of the multimedia language competence of a qualified teacher.

Taking the experience of the Aksay colleagues the teachers of Azov, they identified four aspects of the development of the professional competence of the foreign language teacher:

- professional skills,
- communication skills,
- skills of multimedia technologies,
- personal qualities.

The category "professional skills" implies - knowledge of the subject, the ability to teach the subject, the ability to choose the right means of control (Owston, Wideman, Murphy, & Lupshenyuk, 2008).

"Communicative skills" include the ability to create a favourable atmosphere for communication, the ability to resolve conflicts, the ability to organize and monitor effective communication.

"Multimedia skills" are displayed in mastering multimedia technologies by the teacher and as a technical tool, and as a didactic means of teaching students (Green, 2013). In this case, the integration of multimedia technologies into the educational process of the school takes place.

To the personal qualities were attributed - love and respect for children, patience, wish to help.

It should be noted that the use of multimedia technology in the educational process significantly increases the motivation of students and contributes to the activation of the educational process, and ultimately, the achievement of the goals of modern foreign-language teaching - the formation of a fully developed student personality, ready and able to communicate in real and virtual environment.

According to the results of the second survey of foreign language teachers who mastered the program of the "Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology" training courses in the Coursera educational space, and after exchanging experience with the colleagues from Aksay on using the technology of blended learning in a multimedia environment, the teachers noticed feel freer in professional work, more confident in the multimedia educational environment, the real growth of their social status among students. Teachers and students were in the same multimedia space and were perceived as professionals who can help the student build their individual educational path, lead them to a new knowledge and competence.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, we come to the following statements: Each teacher has the opportunity to build his own framework of educational environment. And it can be multimedia educational environment, consisting of on-line and off-line multimedia means. Multimedia approach in teaching is open, innovative, based on multimedia technologies. Multimedia training only enriches the educational content, but also makes it interactive, represents training as innovative pedagogical activity, enables self-education and self-development of the subjects of the educational process, increases the level of competence of foreign language teachers. An excellent example of this approach is the use of mixed learning technologies.

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