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**JOURNALISTS' PROFESSIONALISM AS THE OBJECT OF
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING AT UNIVERSITIES**

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Abstract

The paper is dedicated to the issue of modelling foreign languages training of students of faculty of journalism with relation to current tendencies in modern journalism. Thus current educational standards as well as professional standards of journalists have become the important objects of the research. Modern society expects professionals able to use acquired competences not only within one country but within intercultural collaboration as well. Review of relevant situation in higher education from the standpoint of foreign language training is given. Authors determine the educational process not as a transfer of information from a teacher to a student but as a dialogue between them. Analysis of relevant research literature allowed to choose the most proper approaches: activity approach, competence-based approach and project method. The paper discusses practical advantages of each approach relating to foreign language training of students. To make the educational process more complete approaches which could contribute to formation of a competent professional in general, including development of such competences like analytical, system and communication, should be chosen. Thus a balanced and well-educated student will be able not only complete the professional tasks in the first years after graduation but also follow the changing trends in the future and always be in demand.

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Keywords: Higher education, foreign languages, activity approach, competence-based approach, project method.



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1. Introduction

In the modern world, the major aim of higher education is to train a true professional, a person who is able to demonstrate his professional competence, identify the problem and link his actions with the expected results. These requirements fully apply to graduates of the Faculty of Journalism. Taking into account the expansion of international relations of Russia, the increasing interest in the study of foreign languages, journalists must have skills of intercultural professional communication in order to adopt foreign experience in their field, to communicate with foreign colleagues. In this situation, the problem of using effective methods of teaching foreign languages at the University is extremely important. In the new educational paradigm, a student is an active subject of cognitive activity, that, with the help of new organizational forms of the educational process, is involved in a dialogue with a teacher.

In the new educational paradigm, the student is an active subject of cognitive activity, who engages in a dialogue with a teacher. A student today is an active, creative person who should not only have a certain amount of knowledge, but also be able to learn: to search and find the necessary information, use for this purpose various sources, including media sources (Titova, 2009). New methods of teaching English will help to gain this aim.

2. Problem Statement

After analysing a number of third generation Federal State Education Standards of Higher Education in various areas of training programs (both natural and human sciences), it was revealed that for a modern university graduate, the availability of a common cultural foreign language communicative competence is crucial. In the educational standard of the direction of training 42.03.02 “Journalism” of the bachelor’s level, teaching a foreign language is fixed by the following necessary competences:

1) the ability to interact verbally and in writing in mother tongue and other different languages in order to solve interpersonal and intercultural problems (GC-6);

2) the ability to effectively use a foreign language in connection with professional tasks (GPC-18) (Federal State Standard of Higher Education, 2014).

In order to form a graduate that is competitive and in demand in the labour market, it is necessary to clearly understand what is meant by the professional tasks of a journalist. The analysis of professional standards regulating the professional activities of journalists from the standpoint of applying the knowledge of foreign languages made it possible to single out the following labour activities:

searching and evaluation of informational occasions;

studying of the specifics and features of the topic covered;

formation of contacts required to create the material (on the instructions of the editorial board or on its own initiative);

Analysis of additional information to verify the accuracy of the information received.

Analysis of regulatory documents shows that now there is a tendency towards individualization, the intensity of teaching in higher education, and the offering of greater independence to students. As we know the profession of a journalist is constantly evolving. So, at the moment a new model of a journalist is being formed, capable of working in a convergent environment. This model is called the “universal journalist”,

which means a professional who is able to demonstrate competence in various types of professional activity by performing professional tasks in various areas of journalism, whose duties include the ability to create content, ranging from gathering information to releasing a product, also adapt it for different types and genres of media independently (Agrikova, 2018).

Currently, teaching foreign languages in higher education institutions should be organized in such a way as not only to give students a certain amount of knowledge, but to develop their abilities in foreign language means, to prepare them for intercultural communication. A university becomes not so much an educational institution as a school for the development of a student's personality. Teachers in the new conditions are looking for and putting into practice new methods of teaching a foreign language to solve the set tasks.

3. Research Questions

This paper discusses the following issues:

- 1) How can we simulate the professional activities of students of the Faculty of Journalism by means of teaching foreign languages?
- 2) How will modern methods of teaching a foreign language help to form the personality of a student journalist?

4. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to define the new trends in the process of teaching foreign languages to students, which can help to simulate a real professional activity

5. Research Methods

During the study several research methods were used. Data collection and data analysis allowed to reveal lack of unified strategy in teaching foreign languages to students of faculty of journalism in order to develop their professional skills. Data was collected both from research literature surrounding this issue and normative documents of higher education and professional standards in Russia. Observation over modern tendencies in journalism as well as analysis of current curriculum shows that skills under development are rather generalized than focused on relevant professional tasks.

6. Findings

One of the main goals of higher foreign language education is the formation of the ability to active creative activity of students at the faculty of journalism. These requirements correspond to the activity approach.

6.1. An activity approach

Foreign language becomes a means of intercultural communication, and the education itself from reproductive should be developed. Many leading researchers of the problems of teaching foreign languages

at universities (Galiakhmetova & Andreeva, 2016) highlight the following current trends in higher education:

1. to a deeper awareness of educational levels, that is, consideration of each of them as an organic part of the system of continuous education. This trend can ensure continuity not only between the school and the university, but also between the university and the future professional activities of students;
2. to the introduction of active methods and forms of education, involving elements of problems, scientific research, independent work;
3. to use active methods of learning: game, stimulating communication, organizing creative and independent activities of students;
4. to focus on the cognitive activity of the student, the interaction of the teacher and the student.

Teaching foreign languages has an active character, this type of communication is realized by means of speech activity, which is used to solve the problems of productive human activity in the conditions of "social interaction" of students. The parties of communication try to solve real and imaginary problems of joint activities. The activity essence of teaching foreign languages is realized through "activity" tasks, techniques and exercises (Kail & Timofeyeva, 2014).

The method of activity approach includes several principles: the principle of continuity, the principle of activity, integrity, the principle of psychological comfort, variability, the principle of creativity.

Let's consider these principles in more detail:

1. A student, acquiring knowledge himself, rather than getting it in finished form, understands the content of his training activities, actively participates in their improvement, and this promotes the active successful formation of his general cultural and activity skills and general educational skills (activity principle)

2. The result of the activity at each previous stage ensures the beginning of the next stage (the principle of continuity).

3. The activity method assumes the formation of a generalized system view of the world (society, nature, the socio-cultural world and the world of activity) (the principle of integrity).

4. The removal of all stress factors of the educational process is necessary to create a friendly atmosphere in the classroom, the development of dialogue forms of communication (the principle of psychological comfort).

5. The principle of variability. Since "variability" is a set of concepts such as modification, diversity, the presence of different points of view, individuality, we can confidently say that this principle makes it possible to develop students' variable thinking.

6. The principle of creativity develops, first of all, creativity in educational activities, contributes to the acquisition of their own experience of creative activity, forms the ability to independently find ways to solve non-standard problems, and this is a very important point in the activity approach (Shabarina, 2017).

It is not enough to have knowledge from textbooks and manuals. It is necessary to form and develop the learner's skills to apply the acquired knowledge in speech. The activity approach is aimed not only at the assimilation of knowledge, but also at the development of creative activity and the formation of skills and abilities. This approach eliminates the gap between theoretical knowledge and its application in

practice. The activity theory approach provides the opportunity to consider the development of abilities and skills with a new activity item.

The learning process in the framework of the activity approach is based on the model of communication. According to this model, training is maximum close to real communication. Since the discussed problems do not have, as a rule, an unambiguous solution, the teacher and students discussing them are equal as speech partners. Therefore, the main feature of this approach is communication, which includes a number of characteristics that allow the transition from the first social contacts to situations. Communication provides speech orientation of training, stimulation of speech-thinking activity, providing individualization, taking into account the functionality of speech, creating situational learning, compliance with the principle of novelty and unconventional organization of the educational process.

Situations can be real, conditional, imaginary, fabulous. During lessons students can express their attitude to the problem, agree or disagree with the teacher's opinion using various communication stereotype. The situation can be represented with the help of visual tools (situational pictures, magnetic board), which will depict different places and time, what makes it either static or dynamic.

This increases the efficiency of learning a foreign language, as along with the intelligence connected emotions. Personality-significant situation makes the role that students play on time or constantly (Davydenko, 2016).

Thus, we can see, this method is very important for creating a professional journalist, who should know all these principals of the activity method to be the best at his work. And English lessons will help to practice them.

6.2. A competence-based approach

The profession of a journalist implies the presence of many factors: knowledge of foreign languages, customs, traditions and special culture of foreign countries. An important component of success training of future specialists is a competence approach.

Future journalists, graduating from high school, must have a number of competencies. They can be divided into three blocks: analytical, system, communication

Analytical competence has the following components: information and knowledge management, analysis and synthesis of the obtained information. System competence largely determines not only professional, but also personal formation of the individual in the course of his life. The system unit is represented by such competencies as the ability to work and learn independently, as well as the application of knowledge in practice. These competencies allow future journalists to gain knowledge and apply them in practice after graduation. Communication competencies (knowledge of foreign languages) are very important and in demand in the professional activities of the journalist. It means work in a multicultural environment, interaction with experts from different fields and the ability to demonstrate a tolerant communicative behaviour (Shur, 2012).

For the formation of competencies, it is necessary to form the pedagogical process so that a student is aware of himself as an active subject. This is achieved with the help of methodological techniques used in teaching a foreign language:

- creation of social artificial or natural environment for the student;
- ensuring the application of knowledge in problem situations in practice;

- formation of the ability to reasonably defend their point of view, taking into account the acquired social experience;
- stimulating the student's activity to demonstrate the ability to compare social differences between representatives of foreign cultures;
- formation of self-management and self-organization skills;
- stimulation of cognitive activity;
- creating a field for active interpersonal communication (Tadtaeva, Zangieva, & Bigaeva, 2017)

The main task for English teachers in non-linguistic universities is to achieve such level of knowledge that is necessary for its use in practice in future professional activities. The subject "foreign language" integrates with the major disciplines, acts as a means of systematic replenishment of professional knowledge, actively uses various methods of training that form the necessary amount of skills of the future specialist.

So, competence-based method implies not only obtaining a certain amount of academic knowledge, but also practice-oriented application of the obtained knowledge in professionally oriented activities.

Knowledge of a foreign language gives the opportunity to use foreign sources of information, and without it the activity of a certified specialist is currently unthinkable. The ability to work with the original literature in the specialty includes obtaining information contained in the text, its critical understanding, generalization, analysis and evaluation of reliability. Foreign language competence shows the readiness of the student to really use the acquired knowledge in a professional environment (Misheneva, 2014).

Professionally-oriented training of specialists in a foreign language should provide not only a certain level of knowledge and skills of students in a foreign language, but also to form the ability to independently acquire knowledge on the subject, readiness to perform foreign language activities in the process of solving practical problems. The future specialist should strive for further self-education, possess new technologies, be able to make independent decisions, adapt to the social and future professional sphere.

6.3. Project method as mean of formation of professional identity

In methodical circles it was repeatedly noted that independent work will become successful and effective under the influence of strong motivating factors, such as, for example, preparation for further professional activity. An important role plays the factor of usefulness of self-performed work: using the result of the work of the student to active use in the training and directly in activities of the future specialist. And, of course, the guiding role of the teacher is very important who helps to reveal the potential of the student in creative and professional growth. In this context, there is a constant search for new approaches to the organization and planning of independent work in teaching foreign languages. And the growing volume of specialized literature in foreign languages, the possibility of obtaining the necessary information via the Internet increase the popularity of integration into the language learning process of a special form of communicative and cognitive activities such as project method (Ivanova, 2015).

However, the purpose of teaching foreign languages is not only professionally-oriented training in four interrelated types of speech activity in a foreign language, but also mastering a foreign language as a means of expressing one's thoughts by means of English. We should also take into account the modern principles of teaching adopted in different countries. The specialist should be ready for the dialogue of

cultures, for the knowledge and change of himself and the world and should also be able to integrate into the world cultural process, without losing his national identity.

Currently, there is an urgent need for a creative specialist who is able to rebuild himself and his activities depending on changing conditions. The main problem of modern education is to combine the process of mastering the solid foundations of modern science with the process of education of the intellect, the ability of self-education, the ability to correct, adjust new data. These requirements for the professional training of specialists led to the search for the most effective approaches and methods in teaching a foreign language (Chernykh, 2003).

A teacher needs to find ways to increase the cognitive activity of students, the development of their creative thinking and independence. The project method can help in this situation. While working on the project method, practical goals are implemented - students are trained in professional foreign language communication; educational goals expanding the horizons of students, increasing their general culture and culture of education, culture of thinking and communication; the willingness of students at the professional level to represent their country at international conferences, to establish scientific ties. The main task of teaching a foreign language at the University is to create conditions that stimulate independent search and creative activity of students, which requires the active use of innovative teaching methods.

One of the most convincing arguments of efficiency of project- method is the research of psychologists who claim that human memory is about 90% of what he carries himself. Performing project tasks, students are included in the relationship with the production. Training by the method of projects allows: -to increase the motivation to learn a foreign language on the basis of professional training, -to use and deepen the knowledge and skills acquired in the process of learning a foreign language, -to show a critical attitude and a realistic assessment of your own knowledge of a foreign language.

The project method is a learning technology based on the modeling of social interaction in a small group during the educational process. The term "project" means an independent activity planned and conducted in a foreign language, such as the publication of a newspaper or magazine, writing articles, organizing exhibitions, concerts. Work on the project allows to increase the level of activity and independence in solving educational problems in a foreign language. The implementation of the project method allows to create the ability to apply the experience gained in the learning process. It acquires more extensive knowledge about the subject of research and interaction with other members of group; shows the level of foreign language proficiency; creates a strong language base for students; teaches students to take personal responsibility for the success of learning. This method forms independent thinking and helps students to remember the necessary information, reproduce the acquired knowledge, and actively use them in practice (Bolsunovskaya, Mironova, & Iskorkina, 2015).

The theoretical foundations of the organization of project activities of students-economists were the research of scientists such as J. Dewey, V. H. Kilpatrick, V. V. Guzeev, E. S. Polat, I. D. Chechel, etc., which allowed to identify the main methodological principles that have conceptual significance for its implementation: the principle of consciousness, which provides for the support of the background knowledge system, providing a confident command of a foreign language; the principle of accessibility is manifested in the study of issues and problems important for the student at this stage of training; the principle of communication; the principle of systematic relevance, the principle of independence also plays

a very important role, given the fact that the project is a work independently planned and implemented by students, in which speech communication is woven into the intellectual and emotional context of other activities (financial, economic).

The realization of project method is realised independently or in a group of students, so as we see the principle of independence is one of the fundamental (Matvienko, Stuchinskaya, & Kobeleva, 2012). The fulfillment of project assignments goes beyond the lessons and requires independent work, but it justifies itself because:

1. Classes are not limited to the acquisition of certain knowledge and skills, and include practical activities of students;
2. Creative work is carried out in the framework of a given topic, independently extracted the necessary information;
3. Various forms of organization of educational activities are implemented;
4. The entire educational process is focused on the student, taking into account his abilities, interests, life experience;
5. Strengthen individual and collective responsibility for the work within the project.

There are the following stages of successful project implementation. They constitute a practical guide for the sequencing of project activities for teachers who want to implement projects in their classrooms. Stage 1: Speculation, Stage 2: Designing the project activities, Stage 3: Conducting the project activities, Stage 4: Evaluation (Fragoulis, 2009).

It should be noted that the project method of teaching has many advantages. First, it can significantly increase the level of motivation of students, as in this case they can choose a really interesting topic. Secondly, the project activity contributes to the development of creative thinking, as the project participants are given only a task, the ways of its solution are determined by the participants themselves. Third, the project method teaches students to work in a team. When teaching a foreign language, the project method gives students the opportunity to use professional vocabulary in the realization of the project on the profile of their training, as well as provides additional speech practice in the presentation of the project.

At the same time, it is fair to note that the project method has some disadvantages. Traditionally, these include significant time and energy costs, subjective assessment of creative work, as well as the complexity of implementation with low technological equipment of the institution.

7. Conclusion

Each approach above has certain advantages in teaching foreign languages. An activity approach allows teachers to build active students who are able to use acquired skills and knowledge and who stay in a dialogue with a teacher rather than receive information passively. A competence-based approach correlates to the current educational standards perfectly and allows to build not only a professional but also a competent person able to interact in the context of both interpersonal and intercultural communication. Finally, a project method stimulates students to search for information, to build his or her own attitude and to present it in a comprehensible and a constructive way which is the key of a journalistic work. The best solution however would be to apply them in a combination rather than separate.

Summing up, we can say that modern approaches to foreign-language higher education have great personal development potential, imply flexibility in setting goals, while taking into account the interests and individual characteristics of students. These approaches are aimed at the balanced development of an individual, able to independently find a way out of problematic situations, to apply his or her knowledge in practice. All this is reflected in the normative documents on education.

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