

ISMGE 2020**II International Scientific and Practical Conference "Individual and Society in the
Modern Geopolitical Environment"****PROFESSIONALLY ORIENTED CASES IN FOREIGN
LANGUAGE TRAINING**

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Abstract

The article is devoted to foreign language training in higher education which is aimed at students training to use a foreign language in future professional activity. According to modern pedagogical and methodological researches, the ability to speak a foreign language is considered as the fashioning of foreign language communicative competence, an integrative quality of personality having a number of components. Foreign language teaching assumes the deliberate training of communicative competence components. It is noted that the Case method allows including a set of many tasks focused on foreign language acquisition. It involves students in solving of quasiprofessional communicative cases. The variative approach, which is the basis of professionally oriented cases in foreign language communicative competence components fashioning, allows individualizing educational process, considering the level of foreign language proficiency, the level of higher education, cognitive needs of the student by establishing minimum and maximum content in foreign language training. There is an example of the course English for the Safety Engineering based on professionally oriented cases in the article. Moreover, contextual communicative situations and examples of tasks are given. The content of an individual case and the assessment of its solution are described. It is noted that such a case possesses a clear and understandable structure for students to achieve planned results. The practice of using professionally oriented cases in foreign language training gives the possibility to individualize educational process, increasing motivation to learn a foreign language for professional purposes and as a result, the level of students' communicative competence increases.

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Keywords: Communicative competence, foreign language training, higher education, motivation, professional activity, quasiprofessional communicative problems.

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1. Introduction

Globalization and internationalization of science and technology largely determine requirements for modern specialists training. Proficiency in English, as the language of international communication, is today an integral part of bachelors' and masters' professional competence in any branch in the economy. Foreign language proficiency level should allow participating in cross-cultural interaction with colleagues in solving professional problems, to obtain information from foreign sources, to improve skills throughout life (Gitman et al., 2017).

2. Problem Statement

At the current stage of foreign language teaching methodology, foreign language proficiency is considered as the formation of foreign language communicative competence in professional activity. Respectively a foreign language is a tool of professional life-long learning and development. Foreign language communicative competence is an integrative quality which is provided with readiness and ability to carry out communication in the foreign language environment (Khlybova, 2017; Leushina, 2018). It should be noted that this competence includes some subcompetences. Researchers identify various subcompetences, determining their significance and impact on communication effectiveness. Subcompetences are shown below in accordance with different communicative activities:

- linguistic subcompetence, including the terminological vocabulary of the professional sphere and functionally determined grammatical constructions,
- sociocultural subcompetence, ensuring the mastering national and cultural specificities of a country, forecasting and avoiding sociocultural interference,
- discursive competence as the ability to choose and apply appropriate communication tactics,
- strategic competence allowing to compensate insufficiency of knowledge and abilities,
- pragmatical subcompetence as the ability to generate foreign-language statements according to communication purposes.

Respectively, professionals' foreign language training is aimed at the formation and development of subcompetences in foreign language communicative competence.

Teaching a foreign language in Russian universities is compulsory in undergraduate and postgraduate studies, and optional in master's programs, while most curricula of master's programs include foreign language training. Features of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic higher schools consist of:

1. multilevelness - a vertical step in the higher education system: bachelor's, specialist / master's, postgraduate;
2. level difference of foreign language students – a current level of foreign language proficiency in a student's group can vary significantly, since the group may include graduates of language schools or classes with level B2 of the European Common Language Proficiency Scale, graduates of non-lingual secondary schools with level A2, as well as graduates of secondary vocational educational institutions who have studied English as a second foreign language for

several years, and beginners to learn English as a second foreign language. Multilevelness and the level difference in foreign language training affect the educational process organization.

3. Research Questions

Achieving an objective in foreign language training is realized through classroom work organization in the form of subcompetencies activation in foreign language interaction. Independent work in the development of subcompetencies is organized taking into account the level of foreign language proficiency of a student, his interests and preferences in the ways of mastering a foreign language. Professional aiming of foreign language training is achieved by lingua-informational context (Bezukladnikov et al., 2019), authentic and adapted materials, as well as by means of intercultural communication in solving problems of professional activity that future graduates will face in their profession (Galustyan, 2016; Lozovskaya, 2015; Tareva et al., 2018).

Choice of methods for subcompetencies formation in foreign language competence, satisfying the needs of the subjects of the educational process, ensuring efficiency in a short time (1.5 semesters in the bachelor's program, 1 semester in the master's program, 2 semesters in the graduate school), focused on organizing independent work, remains the focus of attention of teachers and researchers. One of such methods is the case study method, which is widely used in different universities during professional training. The case study method, which has been developed for 40 years and still has different interpretations among researchers, is generally regarded as "the study of an instance in action" and realized as hypothesis is given, and the case is selected as an instance or the case is given, within which issues are indicated, discovered or studied so that understanding of the case is possible (Bassey, 1999), is an empirical method of the world cognition causal relationships (Gerring, 2004). Bent Flyvbjerg claims in his research, "well-chosen case studies can help the student achieve competence", as their learning processes correspond to the ways of analytical and communicative abilities formation (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Zainal, 2007).

4. Purpose of the Study

When teaching a foreign language, the case study method allows to arrange research creative activity (Stepanova, 2018), to create conditions for communication. During the communication "socially valuable qualities of the personality" are formed (Ariyan & Klyueva, 2017), the foreign-language context which is characterized by cross-cultural orientation affects the ability of students to analyze, compare features of cultures, to respect different views, traditions, cultural representations (Bezukladnikov et al., 2019; Obdalova, 2018). In professionally oriented foreign language training cases acquaint with a context of professional communication, tasks and ways of the decision. Nevertheless, based on the purpose of foreign language training, aiming at the subcompetencies formation, cases do not always realize their potential. Attitude toward solving a quasi-professional problem in a foreign language does not orient the focus of training on subcompetencies formation to one degree or another. The research goal is the development and justification of cases aimed at subcompetencies formation of foreign language competence in students independent work on the basis of future professional activity.

5. Research Methods

It is expedient to lay variative approach to the educational process in the basis of case study method application in foreign language teaching. Variability as the choice of an attractive option implements several main trends of modern education: individualizes educational process by choosing the option that meets the needs of a student (reference level of foreign language proficiency, cognitive interests), focuses on independent language and educational activities, since development is possible in independent work, provides an opportunity for creative expression in the process of mastering the option and viewing educational results (Timkina, 2016).

When working on a case, the following options arise:

- in a particular case, the focus of attention may be directed to formation of a certain subcompetence, that is, a number of subcompetences formed may vary;
- number of steps in case solving can be limited, on the one hand, by minimum necessary set, ensuring the development of foreign language communicative competence at a minimum level, to a maximum level, focused on the redundancy of information, on the other hand;
- openness of a case provides the further independent study of a topic in the situation of communication, expansion and deepening of acquired knowledge and skills, i.e. implementation of individual educational trajectory;
- choice of ways to solve a case;
- creative presentation of results.

Design is carried out on the basis of detailing quasi-professional situations in communication and presentation of educational exercises in various speech activity types (reading, listening, speaking, writing), aimed at individual subcompetences development, in form of interrelated puzzles that make up the whole picture (Sysoev et al., 2019). While one part of a puzzle is a frame of case solution and must be performed, the other part is variative. The variative part of a puzzle is aimed at filling the gaps in the volume of a case with the content important for a particular student. Determining the obligatory and variative parts of a case decision is based on the identification of minimum necessary component for foreign-language communication implementation within the topic and maximum component that provides choice. Choosing a particular variant as an act of decision-making determines educational skills activation: independent information search, analysis, self-assessment and reflection of the educational process.

6. Findings

The communicative situation is projected on the basis of the analysis of the Federal State Educational Standards requirements, professional standards, educational disciplines, previous and related foreign language training. As an example, we present revealed areas of professional communication in the training of the Engineering Faculty students in Technosphere Safety specialism as a part of English for the Safety Engineering course, which is 3 credits: Safety Management System, Occupational Accident, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, Risk Management, Fire Safety, First Aid. Each

communicative situation is detailed in different specific cases, solved in the process of discussing given topics:

- Safety Management System – Industrial Hazards, Hazard Analysis, Safety Management System, Safety Culture, Key elements of an effective safety culture, “WHAT-IF” Hazard Analysis;
- Occupational Accident – What is an Occupational Accident? How should an employer react in the event of an occupational accident? Investigation of an occupational accident, Accident prevention tips for the workplace, How to reduce workplace accidents with employees;
- Occupational Safety And Health Administration – Occupational safety and health administration in the USA, Worker Protection, Personal Protective Equipment, Worker Protection in the UK, Duties, General Safety Rules;
- Risk Management – Understanding Hazards and Risks, What is Risk Management? Benefits to Managing Risk, Emergencies, Safety Measures, What Is Emergency Management;
- Fire Safety – Fire Safety, Fire Triangle, Physicochemical Fundamentals of Combustion, Classification of Fuels, Types of Fire Extinguishers, How to Use a Fire Extinguisher, Fire is Everyone's Fight, 12 Ways to Prevent a Workplace Fire, Emergency Telephone Number;
- First Aid – Why is First Aid so Important? Aims, First Aid Injuries, First Aid Kit.

These cases consist of a specific set of selected tasks aimed at enhancing the acquired knowledge in the process of quasi-professional activity by working out individual components of foreign language communicative competence. Following tasks are aimed at linguistic subcompetence formation in a case: semantization of concepts by correlation with their definitions, introduction of professional terminology units by way of presenting their definition, semantization of synonyms, antonyms, phraseological units introduction in context, appropriate words and phrases substitution in gaps in a text, examples consideration in the use of words in the corpus of professionally oriented texts, and more. Formation of sociocultural subcompetence is achieved by completing tasks to compare the realities of professional activity in Russia and abroad, by studying the acts governing activities, the history of the industry, and employee attitudes towards professional activities. Discursive subcompetence develops by transforming sentences, texts (reduction, expansion due to new words, complication by constructing subordinate clauses, etc.), building your own text in order to achieve a certain communicative task, reinforcing the function of communication by identifying arguments for and against, comparisons, justifications, etc.. Strategic subcompetence is formed by tasks aimed at understanding the common meaning while ignoring unfamiliar words (adverbial modifier of time, place, interjection, prepositions), emphasizing and understanding the structural components of the text, predicting the content of the title, keyword, abstract, illustration, etc.. Pragmatic subcompetence formation is solved by retelling, preparing a monologue / dialogue, writing an essay according to the communication purposes. Result of solving a professionally oriented case is formed foreign language communicative competence in a certain area of foreign language activity, which is subjected to measurement, for example, participation in a discussion, conversations, presentation of scientific research results or a report on a given topic, extraction of information from a foreign language oral or written source and transmission of its content, etc.

An example of a professionally oriented case is a set of tasks within a communication situation “What is an Occupational Accident?”

Task 1. Find the definition of the term Occupational accident: An unfortunate incident that happens unexpectedly and unintentionally, typically resulting in damage or injury; An event that happens by chance or that is without apparent or deliberate cause; Accident that occurs in the course of a person's employment and is caused by the hazards that are inherent in, or are related to, it.

Task 2. What is an occupational accident? Give a short answer.

Task 3. Find and write the classification of occupational accidents. Compare the classifications that exist in Russia and the United States. What are the similarities and differences?

The task is variative and may be shortened to presenting of classification or expanded by correlating severity with definition and examples.

Task 4. Read this statement “A job must be safe or it cannot be called a good job. OSHA strives to make sure that every worker in the nation goes home unharmed at the end of the workday, the most important right of all”. Do you agree or disagree with this statement, explain your opinion? Expand the abbreviation OSHA, name the same organization in Russia.

This task is variative and may be excluded from a case or expanded.

Task 5. Read the text about an accident, find arguments that the accident occurred at the workplace. Determine the severity rate of the accident, justify your opinion.

Case solution is to perform the last task, which has a general meaning. Presentation of results and assessment of the case solution is carried out in a team work by mutual evaluation of students according to the criteria: accident nature determining correctness; report completeness – the definition presence, severity rate determination, justification; communicative task achievement; report structure (introduction, main content, conclusion); report clarity achieved by verbal and non-verbal means. Each student or lecturer sets points according to the criteria mentioned above, then the average value is determined.

Analysis of using this case practice shows students' interest in solving it, and therefore the presence of motivation for its solution, accessibility and feasibility for students with different foreign language proficiency levels, optimal time costs, the self-confidence of students, that is, the educational task achievement.

7. Conclusion

Foreign language teaching at a higher school is associated with many factors, such as different levels of foreign language proficiency by students, motivation availability, higher education level, clarity and understandability by students of actions taken, awareness, involvement in independent work, and more. The well-behaved method of solving cases in higher education should be applied in foreign language training aimed at students' foreign language communicative competence formation in the field of future professional foreign language activities. Use of professionally oriented cases based on variative approach allows lecturers to individualize educational process by setting necessary minimum that meets the educational and professional standards requirements, and maximum content that meets cognitive needs and interests of a particular student. Educational process purposefulness involves foreign language communicative competence formation and certainly, all this competence components, the inclusion of

tasks aimed at individual subcompetencies formation in the case study, allows for the formation of skills phase-gate, pay attention to various communication aspects, and organize step-by-step work on the case. Using cases experience in teaching English to students in Technosphere Safety specialism shows the success in the educational process, which consists in mastering students foreign language knowledge and skills and increasing foreign language communicative competence formation level in the field of future professional activity.

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