



FORMATION OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF STUDENTS IN NON-LINGUISTIC HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Kuchkarova Mukhabbat Yigitalievna¹

¹A teacher of "Teaching languages"
Department, "Management in production"
faculty, Ferghana Polytechnic
Institute, Uzbekistan, Ferghana

ABSTRACT

The article under discussion reveals the formation of communicative competence of students in non-linguistic higher educational institutions. The role and aspects of learning English in a technical university based on the concept of competence approach and in the context of multi-disciplinary education had been analysed. The author considers some methodological principles and peculiarities of teaching a foreign language in a technical university, based on the criteria of professional competence development.

KEY WORDS: *speech activity, academic mobility, competence approach, project method, "case study" technology, "debate" method, grammar and translation method.*

INTRODUCTION

In the conditions of market relations, market of educational services the possession of communicative competences in many respects determines the degree of competitiveness of specialists, the success of the state in international competition. One of the most important components of the competitive personality model is knowledge of a foreign language, which allows a professional to successfully navigate the flow of information, establish business and intercultural contacts, relationships. In this regard, the need of society, business communities and students themselves to master a foreign language as the most important means of business and intercultural communication becomes particularly relevant.

For this reason, it is necessary not only to expand the range of knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for students to use a foreign language as a means of foreign professional communication to establish first contacts, conduct business correspondence and telephone conversations, participate in meetings and negotiations, international conferences, but also to form communicative key competencies that ensure the competitiveness of a professional.

For many years, specialists have been ensuring that graduates' knowledge of a foreign language is communicatively sufficient. However, it has become obvious that over the years the established conceptual approaches, teaching methods,

ways of mastering foreign languages by students do not meet modern requirements. A transition to a different paradigm of mastering foreign languages and forming readiness for intercultural communication is required. Such a transition is based on the following conceptual provisions: development of special measures for the development of the need-motivating sphere of personality, aimed at awareness of the need to master the skills of intercultural communication, the transition to technologies built on the basis of communicative competencies; organization of training in the context of future professional activity; development of teaching methods based on functional and pragmatic approach.

At the same time, such an aspect of the problem as the formation of communicative competences in the process of teaching foreign language to students of non-linguistic specialties has not received sufficient attention and scientific development. One of the consequences of the insufficient scientific development of the problem of forming communicative competences is a number of contradictions, inconsistencies: between the need of professional communities in competitive specialists with sufficient skills and abilities of business and intercultural communication, interaction, and the degree of readiness of graduates for qualified professional communication and interaction; between the achievement of the highest level of professional competence in the field of communication and interaction; between the requirements for



intensification and activation of students' educational activity and traditional methods of teaching foreign language to students of non-linguistic specialties; between the potential of the studied content for the development of the specialist's personality and the nature of teachers' use of the opportunities of the foreign language culture for the education of students; between the requirements of the state standards for the level of communicative competence of students and the level of methodological support of the process of teaching students a foreign language.

The emergence of the concept of "competence-based approach" in European higher education has led to a reassessment of the methodology of teaching, including foreign language teaching. The main goals and objectives of the new methodological approach in education were defined by the Commission "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment" (CEFR, 2001).

One of the principles of a competency-based approach in teaching foreign language in a technical university is to "formulate learning objectives based on the end result, i.e., the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and/or competencies to be learned by students and then applied in practice after the academic period" [1].

In this regard, in my opinion, the process of teaching a foreign language in a non-philological higher education institution, including engineering specialties, should be structured according to and in accordance with the specialized educational programs. Within the framework of the bachelor's degree in engineering specialties, foreign language teaching lasts 3 years. Technology "competence-based approach" implies the planning of educational material, focusing on three stages of education depending on the objectives: general training, basics of phonetics, grammar, conversational practice; specialized training - skills of selection, scanning, reading texts in the specialty, annotation, preparation of messages in the specialty; socio-professional training - advanced level of language knowledge, which includes the ability to listen and understand the lectures in a foreign language, to participate in seminars and discussions in the field of engineering.

- At the first stage of linguistic training, the main task is to develop general communication skills, i.e. general competence (oral and comprehension skills).
- The second stage of specialized training includes initiation into specialized communication: mastering professional vocabulary units and structures of technical discourse, pragmatic understanding of texts, annotating and discussing the read.
- The third stage - the stage of socio-professional training - implies further improvement and development of the acquired skills, namely, the development of

oral and written discourse skills, set by the proposed circumstances. This is the sociolinguistic competence in the field of the language training; full knowledge of it will allow students to be involved in the process of academic mobility, as well as make it possible for future specialists to participate in international projects and scientific activities.

METHODOLOGY

The most relevant technologies that meet the above tasks in the process of teaching a foreign language in a higher technical institutions are the following:

Method of Projects. This method, based on the "competence-based approach" in the teaching of spoken and professional language, implies motivation, interest and independence of students. Here the idea of developing, creative learning is embodied. The method of projects in a foreign language teaching is used at all stages of education, according to the method of "competence-based approach": there will be different proposed project topics depending on the readiness of students. The introduction of this method not only ensures conversation practice, but also reveals the students' individuality; they learn to offer solutions and take responsibility. Students work as a team, together with their teacher, not only looking for extraordinary solutions, but also analyzing every step of their learning, identifying shortcomings and mistakes, looking for the reasons for difficulties and finding ways to correct them. By correctly directing the discussion, prompting the necessary vocabulary, and refraining from correcting grammatical errors during the discussion, the teacher can bring students not only to a new level of language proficiency, but also to a new vision of the problem itself.

Case Study Technology. This method is a method for analyzing a specific learning and business situation in a foreign language, also based on the "competence-based approach". In this method of teaching students, instead of answering specific questions on the texts, it is necessary to understand properly the proposed situation. This method ensures the development of independence and initiative, removes barriers in the use of a foreign language. The development and teaching of the method of analysis of a specific educational and business situation is mainly used at the third stage of training using the "based approach" technology. This method is a difficult task for a teacher who requires high professionalism in the practice of mastery of foreign language, pedagogical skills and broad erudition.

Technology "Debates". This technology can be used in the second and third stages of training using the "competence-based approach". It can be a lesson aimed at repeating and actualizing the module passed; organizing students' independent work in



selection of material; and also a form of students' certification and testing. The didactic functions of using the "Debates" technology are connected with the tasks of the content plan - mastering the vocabulary of the studied topic and its use, as well as knowledge of the subject and ability to argue in a foreign language. Using this technology, a foreign language teacher can achieve the following results: the ability to express their point of view in a foreign language, to defend it, the ability to ask questions, the ability to critically reflect on the oral statement, the ability to work in a team.

However, in spite of the fact that more attention is paid to oral education when teaching engineering students, one of the most important skills of future specialists is reading and adequate perception of texts in the specialty, which implies the use of classical grammar and translation method of teaching a foreign language. Even with good speaking skills and an extensive vocabulary, but without knowledge of the grammatical features of written speech, it will be almost impossible to understand and translate a technical text.

Learning and mastering a foreign language requires an understanding of its grammatical system and correct use of lexical and grammatical constructions. In teaching a foreign language, it is inevitable to compare the grammatical systems of native and studied languages: "...the grammatical system of a foreign language cannot be independently built up by students next to the grammatical system of the native language - they necessarily come into contact. Well-known success of the direct method is due to the fact that this correlation still occurs." [3].

When teaching a foreign language in a technical university, the specifics of the students' specialized training should also be taken into account. Students study on the principle of progressive information processing, so they are well aware of the standard language programs, which include questions on learning, work with the dictionary, vocabulary analysis, etc. They are willing to do grammar, they first need to explain the rule, then offer a way to complete the task. They need diagrams, models, tables [2].

When working with lexical units, students of technical universities try to analyze them, memorize lists of lexemes by heart, and use bilingual dictionaries to check the exact meaning of the term.

Such students need help in developing fluency in speaking. Emphasis should also be placed on listening assignments and on developing fluency in reading.

Engineering students are best at writing assignments as well as at learning activities that allow them to analyze and draw independent conclusions, both individually and in groups.

Although they tend to be more accurate in using the lexemes and applying the rules than humanitarian students, engineering students tend to

be slower in completing written assignments because they need more time to think about and carefully complete assignments.

Technical students usually have a tendency to self-control and good long-term memory, so the teacher should correct errors immediately after a response. However, technical students find it more difficult to "talk" and are hampered by excessive control over their own speech. Thus, in productive speech activities, they usually use prelearned phrases and texts that they may include in their own oral statements without prior thought. Communicative tasks that promote memorization of whole blocks and phrases make it possible to spontaneously use the language of a specialty in speech without mechanical memorization, thus helping to get rid of too rigid self-control over their own speech.

Reading of texts in the specialty should be based on translation, which should be considered as the main means of developing understanding. Non-translation comprehension is the final stage of learning how to understand a foreign language text, which is further achieved through independent work by students. Translation is a necessary way to find an equivalent. Therefore, explicit or implicit translation into the native language is always present.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be noted that the best results in teaching engineering students foreign languages can be obtained with the integrated use of communicative methods and grammar and translation method. During training the sequence of methodical steps offered by the teacher assumes transition from mastering language means to formation students' speech skills and development of speech skills, both receptive, and productive.

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