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PROFESSIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE IN THE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT: ESSENCE, FUNCTIONS, FEATURES IN THE CONTEXT OF MEDIA EDUCATION

The article deals with the problem of foreign language communicative competence structure and formation in the sphere of professional education. The authors of the article trace back the origin of the stated phenomena and follow the process of its development until modern state. The multicultural and international approach to the studying of communicative competence formation in the context of media education gives the possibility to realize general tendencies and principles of its amplification, to maintain its holistic study. The research shows that the essence of the «competence» concept, its characteristic features, specific peculiarities remain at an intuitive level of understanding.

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Профессиональная иноязычная компетенция в академической среде: сущность, функции, особенности в контексте медиаобразования

Статья посвящена проблеме иноязычного образования в условиях развития цифрового медиaprостранства, основными характеристиками которого являются глобализация, информатизация, технологизация, межкультурная коммуникация. В статье рассматривается проблема формирования иноязычной коммуникативной компетенции в сфере профессионального образования. Авторы статьи прослеживают происхождение данных явлений и процесс их развития до сегодняшних дней. Мультикультурный и международный подход к изучению коммуникативной компетентности дает возможность осознать общие тенденции и принципы ее повышения в рамках комплексного изучения. Анализ зарубежного опыта изучения иноязычной коммуникативной компетенции позволяет сопоставить самостоятельные подходы, которые применяются в США и европейских странах. Тщательный анализ структуры коммуникативной компетенции обеспечивает выбор эффективных способов ее формирования. В статье рассматриваются подходы, направленные на решение проблемы в соответствии с предметом и областью применения конкретной научной области: педагогики, лингвистики, психологии и философии. В связи с концептуальным обзором современных подходов к преподаванию иностранных языков в высшем образовании, предполагающих полную интеграцию языковой и профессиональной подготовки, авторы проводят тщательный ретроспективный анализ про-

блемы компетенции профессионального общения на иностранном языке в системе высшего образования. Исследование показало, что сущность понятия «компетенция», его характерные черты, специфические особенности остаются на интуитивном уровне понимания. Многие вопросы, касающиеся терминологии концепции коммуникативной компетентности, остаются открытыми. Многообразие взаимодействующих языков и культур, текстов и текстовых форматов, циркулирующих в глобальном информационном пространстве, определяют особенности формирования профессиональной иноязычной компетентности в контексте медиакомпетентности. Информационное пространство человека значительно расширяется в тот период, когда он начинает осваивать иностранный язык. Известно, что процесс освоения медиа на изучаемом языке гораздо более противоречив и имеет свою специфику в сравнении с родным языком. В связи с этим представляется актуальным рассмотреть проблемы формирования профессиональной иноязычной компетентности в контексте медиакомпетентности, ее сущность, функции и специфику.

Foreign language communication competence has a long history of research. There are numerous models that operate in different educational systems. It is widely recognized that the category of «communicative competence» is a multidisciplinary phenomenon that reflects the achievements of various linguistic, pedagogical, psychological, philosophical and other scientific areas. Studying and analysing the experience of domestic and foreign higher education is a necessary condition for further improvement of foreign language competence formation process of a specialist. The higher education system in the developed countries is quite mobile and flexible. It responds promptly to changes, which take place in the economy, science, and culture. Leading industrialized countries have been holding the palm of the world for many years in developing the theoretical and practical aspects of language / foreign language education. That is why the issue of studying the world experience in terms of this educational phenomenon becomes relevant.

The study of this article problem is up-to date, first of all, due to existing sharp contradiction between the requirements to the level of proficiency of future foreign language specialists, which grows from year to year, and their actual, as a rule, low level of practical skills in using a foreign language in everyday professional environment.

A considerable amount of both domestic and foreign studies is devoted to the problem of teaching a foreign language in higher education. In particular, aspects such as: the importance of language training in shaping students' professional orientation (O. Artemyev, V. Bidenko, O. Leontovich, R. Millrud, etc.); methods of teaching a foreign language for specific purposes and formation of a foreign language professionally oriented communicative competence in professional communication (A. Andrienko, E. Bibikova, N. Galskova, A. Mirolubov, O. Tarnopolsky, V. Tenishchevsky, I. Chirva and others); methods of teaching a foreign language

to specialists of different expertise areas (G. Savchenko, L. Kotliarova, E. Miroschnichenko, L. Maniakina); creation of electronic initial support for teaching a foreign language for specific purpose (A. S. Drach, T. O. Pakhomova, G. Saprykin) and others are well covered.

However, none of the abovementioned approaches has fully solved the task of creating a coherent system of foreign language teaching at a higher educational institution so far. The absence of such a system is related to the specificity of foreign language teaching in higher education compared to other types of educational institutions.

In connection with the conceptual review of modern approaches to teaching foreign languages in higher education, which imply full integration of language and vocational training, there is a need for a thorough retrospective analysis of the competence problem of professional communication in a foreign language in the higher education system, which is the purpose of this article.

Many scholars study the question of the competence concept connection with the related concepts of «competency», «ability», «qualification», «literacy», «proficiency», «professionalism», «culture», «technology», which function in the same context with the concept of competence. «Language ability» can be considered as a dynamic mechanism that is constantly developing and complexifying and belongs to the language awareness of the individual. It is a system of potential linguistic representations [1], a device aimed at carrying out certain processes that have certain capabilities (and restrictions imposed on them) that are determined by the material substrate — the brain. Linguistic ability consists of several components — phonetic, lexical, grammatical and semantic ones.

Thus, the concept of «competence / competency» introduction into scientific circulation aroused particular interest of researchers of different fields of knowledge in this phenomenon, which led to a large number of different approaches formation to its study, contributed to the creation of appropriate typologies. At present, we can observe a considerable interest in the formation of foreign language communicative professional competence both abroad and in national pedagogical science.

It should be noted, that the analysis of foreign experience of studying foreign language communicative competence makes it possible to establish the existence of independent approaches that are implemented in the USA and European countries. Thus, the American model is focused primarily on the willingness and ability of university graduates to apply the results of foreign language education in practice. In this case, the competence is considered to be authentic, practically oriented to the formation of skills, abilities, personal achievements in self-development based on the

actualization of situations, as close as possible to the requirements of professional activity.

The American tradition of competences research is based on behaviour. American researchers study «people-in-work», and the concept of «competency» is deciphered through the individual characteristics inherent in behaviour: personal characteristics, motives, values, habits, self-concept, knowledge, skills. In fact, competencies in this approach are certain «repositories» filled with a variety of content.

Today we can say that the American approach to the study of competencies is simultaneously developing in two directions. The first area is focused on the study of individually presented competencies. This area can be called psychological, as it is based on the work of psychologists. The second area is related to the systematic approach, which involves the view of the student as a particular subject of learning, while also bearing the characteristics of integrity and structure.

The European approach to the formation of students' competencies (in particular, in France and Germany) is related to the accentuation of two main areas: personal and collective, related to the assessment of linguistic behaviour, the formation of behavioural characteristics. In this regard, communication in a foreign language is considered as one of the universal signs of readiness for professional activity.

Besides the American tradition, there are other approaches, which are fundamentally different in terms of both tasks and content. The most developed non-USA perspective on competence issues is the British approach, which is largely related to the development of the national education system. The UK Department for Education has taken into account a specific competence model. It is different from the basic American models and not just a set of competences, but also tries to determine their relationship. The result is a special «tetrahedron of competences», which includes: cognitive competences (knowledge and understanding based on formal learning and experience), functional competences (abilities, specific skills that a person can demonstrate in his field), personal competences (understanding how to deal with specific situations, motivation to improve performance), ethical competences (values, points of view, on the basis of which decisions are made and actions taken), meta-competences (ability to respond to criticism positively, to cope with difficult situations). In the frames of this approach, some traces of the American model can be found, but there are differences. In particular, the British model is more clearly structured and provides equal opportunities for the development of each competence cluster.

In general, one can say that a distinctive feature of the British approach is the fact that competences are seen as requirements for a specialist for professional tasks. It is based on professional standards containing a set of roles for each profession.

These roles are divided into competences for which behavioural indicators are defined. It is believed that British models are more functional. They contain two clusters of competences — behavioural and functional (technical). The latter are more often specified as computer and Internet use (according to The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development — CIPD). Among the most commonly stated competences for different professions are: communication skills, people management skills, focus on outcomes, problem solving. An important aspect that fundamentally differentiates the British approach from the American one is that for British researchers, the starting point for the competency issues exploration is social problems. Such British interpretation of competences is fundamentally opposed to American models that are built from the standpoint of efficiency.

By analysing the development of the competences theory in France, it can be found out that at present it is impossible to speak of any form of approach that would clearly identify the French position in matters of competence. At the same time, one can speak of a certain peculiarity of French models.

French models represent something in-between American and British, as they use analogues of behavioural and functional competences. It is generally accepted, that the structure of French models always includes three elements: knowledge, experience and behavioural characteristics. German studies are even more complex than French ones. This is explained by the practice of using qualification standards. In Germany, they are based on a list of key knowledge related to the history of the craft communities' development.

The German educational model includes three clusters of competences: vocational or subject, personal and social. These competences are based on methodological competences (ability to extrapolate skills, problem solving, creativity) and educational competences (ability to learn, to develop learning skills). German models are slowly evolving and tend to standardize.

The national experience of research in the area of competence testifies a wide variety of thoughts. Actually, the research works, presented mainly by a selection of candidate and doctoral theses in pedagogy and psychology, form a compromise position (if it is determined through the opposition «American model — British model»). Researchers, as a rule, consider the competences to be a convenient taxonomy that allows combining heterogeneous characteristics, which are evaluated by different but well-established psychological methods. This approach allows you to break the boundary between the characteristics of a person as an individual and the subject of activity, to combine psychological and social characteristics.

Thus, the most developed of non-American views on the problem of competencies is the British approach, generally related to the development of the education

system. It is based on professional standards that contain a set of roles for each professional position. These roles are divided into competences for which behavioural indicators are defined. For the British approach, it is important that a person can demonstrate specific skills in practice, he / she is able to do what is required by the standards, this approach compiles educational programs.

A distinctive feature of the British approach is the fact that competences are seen as requirements for the employee on the part of tasks, besides, for British researchers the starting point in the study of competence problems is the need to ensure socially responsible activities. German studies are even more complex than French ones. The German educational model includes three clusters of competences: vocational or subject, personal and social.

Today, bilingual training is the most popular tendency in the countries of America and Europe. Studies of language and vocational education in the United States, Germany, and Canada are used by specialists from other countries. For example, Austrian researchers have developed and implemented four models of bilingual education (identificational, integrational, monocultural and multicultural) into the educational process. The achievement of foreign language education in the given sphere is also remarkable in the higher technical educational institutions of Great Britain, where significant structural and substantive transformations in the country's education system in order to form a European-wide educational space have taken place in recent years.

Currently, different approaches to the study of competences: cultural-speech, linguistic, psycholinguistic, linguistic-cognitive, linguistic — oratorical and others exist. Thus, the cultural-speech approach puts the task of forming a speech culture of the linguistic personality. Within this approach, theories of linguistic culture [2] are developed, and the description of linguistic personality types in accordance with any level is made. Within the framework of the linguistic-didactic approach, the concept of competence is developed in relation to the theory and practice of teaching native and foreign languages [3]. The psycholinguistic approach addresses the problems of ontogeny: the formation of a child's language / speech ability, his/her speech thinking [4], linguocognitive approach in the study of language / meta-language awareness of native speakers [5] is associated with this approach. Sociolinguistic approach considers the problem of competence of linguistic personality formation in the process of his/her socialization [6]. Within the framework of the linguistic-oratorical approach [7], the competence of the native speaker is explored from the standpoint of rhetorical text formation, classified according to the stages of the rhetorical canon.

This list is far from final. New approaches to the study of the problem of foreign language competence in professional activity continue to emerge.

According to Z. N. Korneva, due to the socio-cultural concept of teaching foreign languages, deviations from the absolutization of the communicative approach and the formation of communicative competence of future specialists in pure form have been recently observed [8]. The purpose of teaching a foreign language is the need to develop an intercultural, professionally oriented foreign language communication competence. Along with this point of view, there are other, one might say, alternative ones. According to them, at the present stage not only the competent approach prevails, but the general «competence» of education takes place, so, the priority of this area is indisputable. However, it must be too early to draw conclusions of this the problem discussion. We can say that the essence of the «competence» concept, its differentia specifica (characteristic features, specific peculiarities) still remains at an intuitive level of understanding.

The above mentioned analysis allows us to state that the definition of the essence, functions, and features of professional foreign language competence formation in the context of media education creates a theoretical basis for solving such up-to-date practical problems as: adapting media to the educational space in order to organize communication in a multilingual and multicultural environment; the development of foreign language communicative competence and media competence in foreign language classes; changing requirements for the «professiogram» of a foreign language teacher.

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