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## **The conditions of forming students' foreign language professional-and-communicative competence as a main component of multilingual professional training in the Republic of Kazakhstan**

The paper presents the results of generalized personal and colleagues' professional teaching experience as well as of the conducted content analysis of the data on teaching foreign languages at higher educational establishments of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The authors put forward the problem of professional orientation of foreign language teaching for students of various non-linguistic majors and, therefore, revision of the content and methods of foreign language teaching. Thus, the main goal of teaching foreign language in any higher school is to develop the foreign language professional-and-communicative competence so that a student will be able to socialize and solve communication challenges in the context of intercultural professional communication. The achievement of the stated goal is seen by the authors in setting up certain conditions, which are possible to be created within multilingual educational programs. The article highlights the main trends in exposing contemporary problems of forming professional-and-communicative competence of future specialist in the process of foreign language teaching at universities and presents the achievements in this area of knowledge.

*Keywords:* foreign language professional-and-communicative competence, Kazakhstan's higher education system, multilingual education, non-linguistic majors, professional training, professionally oriented foreign language teaching.

### *Introduction*

At the present stage of Kazakhstan Republic's development, the problem of improving the quality of future specialists' professional training is regarded as one of the main objectives of its higher education policy. The country's educational paradigm is now aimed at competence development approach that involves the development of a person's ability to apply his knowledge and skills to solve specific practical problems. This has led to the necessity to modernize higher education in the country and develop a new model of a specialist with professional competency, which is understood as a complex integral composition including a wide range of components where each component presents a set of systematized knowledge, skills, personal qualities and ways of thinking.

The integral component of future specialists' professional competency is foreign language professional-and-communicative competence. The need to form this competence is arisen from the scientific-and-technological cooperation in the world as well as the expansion of Kazakhstan's international contacts in the field of education, industry and business. The increasing necessity for specialists with foreign language professional-and-communicative competence resulted in the fact that the academic subject of «Foreign Language» becomes one of the key subjects in the formation of personhood, professional knowledge and skills of future specialists. Possessing great educational potential, the subject of «Foreign Language» in higher educational institutions handles the problem of personality development and ensures the systematic replenishment of professional knowledge, the formation and development of professional communicative skills. Consequently, Kazakhstan's universities face the task of working out a strategy for improving the content, principles and methods of teaching foreign languages in universities to train such kind of specialists who will be able to carry out professional and business communication in conditions of increasingly globalizing production, economy and society. The working out of such a strategy involves the development of an integrated approach based on theoretical study and experimental verification of the foreign language education content, educational trajectories and learning technologies.

### *Problem Statement*

The practice of professional education in Kazakhstan's higher educational establishments shows that the training of students in universities is primarily aimed at the acquisition of professional knowledge, skills

and abilities. It turns out to be focused on developing highly specialized consciousness and thinking while the professional activity requires not only good professional knowledge but also communicative knowledge, skills and formed personal communicative qualities.

Therefore, teaching communication as a special and independent kind of professional activity is an important part of the process of forming and developing communication skills of future specialists in the course of their professional training. Speaking about the training of future professionals, we take into consideration those occupations whose future professional activity is not directly related to a foreign language unlike foreign language teachers, translators, interpreters, etc. A future specialist in engineering, natural sciences or humanities who has no relevant language proficiency comes across to serious difficulties during his or her communicative interaction. This makes the problem of the formation of students' professional-and-communicative competence be of a prime importance since the success of students' activity as future professionals largely depends on the level of the formation of this competence. In order to prevent these difficulties the formation and development of professional-and-communicative competence should be purposeful and specifically organized.

All this has stimulated the gradual process in the development and implementation of multilingual education in the education system of the Republic of Kazakhstan. According to the principles of the national project «Trinity of languages», multilingual education in conditions of Kazakhstan's system implies the acquisition of three languages during the process of training: the study of Kazakh as the state language, Russian — as the language of interethnic communication in the country and English — as the language of the successful integration into the global economy and international community. Each of the mentioned above languages is intended to solve certain objectives of the life activity of every Kazakhstan's citizen. Teaching these languages is not considered only as teaching a subject aimed at the formation of linguistic competence and personal development of students but also as the process of mastering the basic knowledge and skills for effective professional activity in each of the three languages. Moreover, in Kazakhstan's education policy the study of foreign languages (not only English) is one of the most important criteria for practical and professional life activity of a man in the modern multilingual and multicultural world.

In this regard, the process of teaching English takes on a new significance since this language proficiency is to allow future professionals to realize such aspects of their professional activity as the timely acquaintance with new technologies, discoveries and trends in science and technology, the establishment of professional contacts with foreign partners, and ensure the professional competency development. This in turn has led to the need for the new selection of the content of foreign language education, the determination of the trajectory and principles of training, the development of special methods (technologies), the working out of appropriate specialized textbooks, educational materials and other.

Thus, presently the system of higher education in the Republic of Kazakhstan has to develop a curriculum on the English language with teaching professional speech communication skills as its important component. This component is vital as while teaching communication skills of professional speech, the professional-and-communicative competence as a main component of students' foreign language training is formed. At the same time, the process of the formation of professional-and-communicative competence should include not only the learning of language knowledge, structural-and-componential composition of the target language and regularities governing the formation of a new language system, but also the acquisition and adoption of social norms of behavior, values and ability to implement them in their future careers.

In addition to an appropriate curriculum on the English language, the other necessary condition for the formation of professional-and-communicative competence is the personal motivation of students to master this competence. As the domestic educational practice shows, students do not always recognize the technological sides of professional communication and relevant communication skills as important tools and conditions of their effective professional activity in the future. The insufficient theoretical and practical level of professional-and-communicative training of future professionals, their poorly formed motivational attitude to professional communication as an important aspect of their professional activity as well as undeveloped professionally significant communicative skills and personality traits result in the fact that in the future a significant part of university graduates experience difficulties in their professional communicative activities.

#### *Methodology*

The effective organization of the English teaching process aimed at the formation of professional-and-communicative competence primarily requires the definition of this competence, which correspondingly includes the concepts of communicative and professional competences.

The analysis of scientific literature has shown that the concept of communicative competence can be interpreted from several viewpoints:

- psycholinguistic, which interprets communicative competence as speech activity ability of possessing basic techniques of the formation and formulation of a thought with the help of language means [1], formed mechanisms of perception and production of speech in a foreign language [2], the acquisition of the main types of speech activity [3];

- sociolinguistic, which links communicative competence with the extra-linguistic conditioning of speech activity, the acquisition of consistency patterns of speech norms functioning, i.e. concepts of language usage, registers of communication in accordance with ethno-cultural norms of speech behavior [4];

- linguistic, which studies the process of actualization and interaction of units, classes and categories of language system in speech, i.e. the transformation of elements of language system into elements of speech system [5].

Thus, on distinguishing these approaches, we see that communicative competence integrates the concept of «linguistic competence». It has to be noted that «the living process of linguistic units functioning is carried out in speech, but the rules and types of functioning of linguistic units relate to the system and the norm of a language and language system» [6]. Theoretical knowledge and its enhancement based on linguistic competence focus on the formation of communicative competence, i.e. the ability of using language means to solve communicative tasks in specific forms and various communicative situations.

Communicative competence supposes:

- 1) the possession of linguistic competence (the knowledge of system-and-functional features of a language);

- 2) the presence of formed skills to correlate language means with tasks and conditions of interaction between communicants from different cultures; it is an important factor in the formation of secondary linguistic identity.

Therefore, communicative competence and linguistic competence include communication skills. Furthermore, communicative competence assumes the knowledge of norms, values and patterns of verbal behavior which are common in the society of another culture and which an individual smoothly, naturally and easily implements in different communicative situations in a foreign language.

The system interrelation «language - speech - speech activity» in the theory of communication determines such communicative qualities of foreign speech as correctness, clarity, richness, diversity, etc. In such a case, Markova emphasized that the interrelation «speech - thinking» (A.N. Leontyev) allows a man to understand speech characteristics such as accuracy and consistency, while the qualities of expression and figurativeness are associated with the interrelation «speech-consciousness» (A.N. Leontyev, A.A. Leontyev). At the same time, the interrelation «speech - person/speech addressee» makes speech comprehensible and active.

The acquisition of knowledge, skills of professional-and-verbal behavior and norms in various situations of professional communication as well as the gradual movement from artificial speech to natural one in different types of professional speech activity in a foreign language occurs gradually in the course of mastering professional foreign language. This all leads to the formation of communicative competence.

Basing on the analysis of the study of the phenomena «communicative competence» (I.A. Zimnyaya, D.I. Izarenkov, A.A. Leontyev, et al.) and «professional competence» (A.A. Bodalev, I.F. Issaev, A.K. Markova, et al.), we define professional-and-communicative competence (PCC) as a complex professional and personal language resource of students which ensures the realization of communication in a particular speech situation while observing modern language/speech norms and allows to adjust communicative behavior in the field of professional communication depending on a situation. Foreign language professional-and-communicative competence is the result of communicative teaching a foreign language when students acquire a set of interrelated theoretical knowledge, practical skills and skills of professional speech communication.

According to Makar [7], foreign language can be not only the subject of mastering, but also a means of developing professional-and-communicative competence. This involves the expansion of the concept of professional orientation of foreign language teaching, which includes another component - professionally oriented focus of the content of educational material. Professionally oriented training provides professional focus not only on educational content, but also on activities, including methods and techniques that develop the professional skills.

Professional orientation of activities:

- requires integration of the subject of foreign language with the majors;
- sets the problem of teaching future professionals based on interdisciplinary connections to apply foreign language as a means of regular replenishment of their professional knowledge, as well as means of developing professional skills;
- involves the use of teaching methods and modes capable of developing necessary professional skills of the future specialist.

Considering foreign language as means of developing professional orientation of the future specialist, Roshchina [8] notes that the study of professionally oriented language material establishes two-way communication between the desire of students to acquire professional knowledge and success of language learning.

Teaching a foreign language in order to develop successfully professional-and-communicative competence requires a new approach to the selection of content. Galskova [9] states that the content of foreign language teaching should include then:

- a scope of communicative activities, themes and situations, speech acts and speech material, taking into account the professional orientation of students;
- linguistic material (phonetic, lexical, grammatical, orthographic), its presentation rules and skills of operating them;
- a set of special (verbal) skills that characterize the level of practical mastery of a foreign language as a means of communication, including in situations of professional and business communication, joint production and research;
- a system of knowledge of national and cultural characteristics and realities of the foreign language country.

#### *Objectives of the Study*

The purpose of teaching foreign language for students of non-linguistic majors is to achieve the level sufficient for its practical use in the future professional activity. Professionally oriented foreign language teaching provides professional focus not only on the educational content, but also the activities of developing professional skills. Today's graduate is expected not only to be able to read and translate professional texts, but also use foreign language in various fields of communication.

Thus, the objectives of the study were to:

- summarize first-hand and faculty members' professional experience in teaching foreign language;
- cover the main tendencies in exposing pressing issues of teaching foreign language in universities of Kazakhstan and the achievements in the given field.

#### *Results and Discussion*

For the last few years, Kazakhstan's system of higher education has been working at solving a problem of teaching future specialists professional communication skills in a foreign language. Therefore, the number of credits for foreign language learning in state education standards was increased, thus allowing students to learn a language during the basic course of foreign language amounting to 6 credits on the first year of studies and the course of professionally-oriented foreign language amounting to 2 credits on the second or third year of studies. The goal and the content of professionally oriented foreign language defined by the Concept of the Development of Kazakhstan Republic's Foreign Language Education assume teaching of professional communication skills within the framework of a certain specialty with the use of a foreign language for specific purposes (LSP). The students' acquisition of professional-and-communicative skills implies the purposeful study and acquisition of definitions and terms of the future professional activity filed in a foreign language, the expansion of information base of authentic texts, the mastering of learning strategies, abilities to interpret, conduct a discussion, give reasons, and solve typical professional tasks. The achievement of the designated above objectives is impossible without modeling professional-and-contextual situations connected with the future professional work of students as much as possible.

The quality and efficiency of teaching professionally oriented foreign language depend on the accurate formulation of the goals of the given subject, social and professional orientation of speech activity. At the same time, the specificity of a specialty should be considered: the work on special texts, the studying of specific professional themes for the development of oral speech skills, the studying of terminology on corresponding specialty, the working out of text books by teachers for the activation of grammatical and lexical materials as well as general and professional competences of students. The selection of the subject content is

aimed at promoting the versatile and complete formation of a student personality, his/her training for the future professional work. Professionally oriented foreign language teaching provides the formation of students' ability to communicate in particular professional, business, scientific spheres and situations with taking into account features of professional competences.

Thus, according to the Concept of the Development of Kazakhstan Republic's Foreign Language Education the studying of professionally-oriented foreign language can be structurally and meaningfully presented in the form of the following formula: level B2 + LSP (language for the specific purposes), that corresponds to the international standard level of foreign language proficiency.

When doing the subject of «Professionally-oriented foreign language», students study the language material including specific lexicon and grammar peculiar to official, business and scientific styles of speech, master the genres of oral and written communications used in professional sphere, themes and situations of professional-and-business communication, thereby raising the level of their foreign language communicative competence in professional sphere.

However, it does not obviously seem possible to develop students' foreign language professional-and-communicative competence within the framework of one subject and with such a small number of credits (2 credits). Hence, it was necessary to search for additional possibilities and solutions of the given problem. Like many other higher educational institutions of the country, Karaganda State University has also faced the given problem. The university's way to solve the problem led to working out of its own curriculum on a foreign language, in particular on the English language, covering both courses of language studying: the basic and professionally oriented ones.

The offered curriculum on the English language includes the following statements:

1. As it has been mentioned above, foreign language teaching of students in Kazakhstan Republic's higher educational establishments is carried out within the framework of two compulsory subjects «Foreign language» and «Professionally-oriented foreign language». Each of these subjects has its own definite goals and objectives. According to standard curricula of these subjects, the goal of «Foreign language» subject is the development of linguistic, sociocultural and discursive competences whereas the goal of «Professionally-oriented foreign language» subject is the development of students' skills of speech activity in a foreign language in their field of study. In our case, the whole university course of foreign (English) language has a professionally-oriented approach; therefore its objectives are defined by communicative and informative requirements of specialists of a corresponding area.

2. The basic content components of the English language course are:

– the spheres of communicative activity covering household, social, sociocultural, educational and professional spheres of communication, and also themes and situations of foreign speech activity within the specific professional spheres of communication activity;

– communication means (lexical units, grammatical forms and constructions, speech patterns and formulas, socioculturally marked linguistic units and speech clichés, scientific lexicon and professional terminology);

– texts of various character in content, genre, style, containing sociocultural, linguocultural and professional knowledge;

– skills to understand and use the whole variety of language material in oral and written speech forms in different situations, including situations of professional communication;

– skills and abilities of foreign oral and written communication in accordance with the activity fields of a future specialist.

3. From the methodological viewpoint, it is advisable to develop all speech activity skills in the interrelated way, teach linguistic phenomena in the unity of their form, meaning and functional significance based on spiral progression principle, use authentic texts and provide authenticity in students' educational and speech work.

4. The language material is considered as the realization method of a definite type of speech activity and uses functional-and-communicative approach when selected.

Therefore, the goal of the English language course for students of non-linguistic majors is the development of common competence and the formation of the professional-and-communicative competence, i.e. the ability to realize the communication in English in terms of intercultural professional communication.

As the practice shows, it is unlikely to achieve the goal of the English language course stated in the curriculum while studying the compulsory subjects «Foreign language» and «Professionally oriented foreign language» primarily because of the school leavers' low starting level of language knowledge and skills. To

achieve the stated goal of the English language course at non-linguistic faculties (B2+LSP), the studying of the English language is suggested to be carried out by a certain education trajectory, i.e. not only on account of the compulsory module of a specialty curriculum but also at the expense of the university elective component of a curriculum (additional credits of elective modules or additional types of training).

This statement has defined the functioning of two educational trajectories in the teaching process of Karaganda State University, the so-called «common» educational trajectory which assumes the teaching of the English language within the framework of two compulsory subjects «Foreign language» and «Professionally oriented foreign language» and the trajectory based on the program of multilingual education which implies the teaching of English both on account of the compulsory module of a specialty curriculum and the university elective component of a curriculum.

Thus, according to the program of multilingual education the teaching of the English language in the university is carried out during the first three years of studies within the following subjects of the curriculum:

1) subject «Foreign Language» of the compulsory module of the curriculum totally amounting to 6 credits and the subject «Basic Course of the English language (levels A2-B1)» of the curriculum elective module with 6 credits in the first and second semesters of the study in the university (12 credits in the first year of study);

2) subject «Basic course of the English language (levels B1-B2)» of the elective module of the curriculum amounting to 3 credits in the third and fourth semesters respectively (6 credits in the second year of study);

3) subject «Professionally-oriented foreign language» of the compulsory module of the curriculum with 2 credits in the fifth semester of the study (2 credits in the third year of study).

The problem of developing the system of professional language teaching for future specialists at non-linguistic faculties is characterized by many aspects. The characteristic feature of professionally oriented foreign language is that it acts as the means and the goal of teaching, i.e. the study of professionally-oriented language material has to be directed both to the usage of special professional knowledge and successful language acquisition by students.

In the university there are also additional courses for faculties to improve students' knowledge of English for their future professional activity, for example, «The Theory and Practice of Translation of English scientific literature», «Business English», «English for academic purposes», «English for professional purposes», «English for students of Chemistry Faculty», etc. at the third and fourth years of the studies provided on account of additional credits of elective modules. Faculties are recommended to include these courses in the curriculum of multilingual educational programs and as our experience shows the inclusion of these disciplines is being widely practiced in many non-linguistic majors of the university.

The study of Kazakh, Russian and English languages does not speak about getting multilingual education. Multilingual education in Kazakhstan also includes the teaching of basic and major subjects in these languages in accordance with the principle of double-entry knowledge, which assumes a parallel learning and mastery of languages through the study of language subjects and through a language of instruction of major subjects.

The study of major subjects in English is another important factor in the formation of professional-and-communicative competence of students enrolled in the multilingual educational program. According to «Regulations on the organization of multilingual education in higher educational institutions» developed by Gagolina, Zhetpisbayeva, Akbayeva & Shaikhyzada [10] the third and fourth years of the university study provide teaching of 3-4 basic or major subjects in English. This facilitates not only the improvement of students' foreign language knowledge and skills in their major but also skills of professional communication.

### *Conclusions*

Summarizing aforesaid, we can tell that multilingual education in Kazakhstan focuses on successful professional self-realization of students as future professionals in the world community. First, it is provided with the content of foreign language education in the framework of multilingual educational programs and principles of teaching the English language, among which the principle of professional orientation of teaching (with account of students' major) is basic. The given principle implies the consideration of the future major and professional interests of students at the English language lessons. The content of professionally oriented teaching of a foreign language for students of non-linguistic faculties should be based on studying objects of the foreign professional reality. At the same time, the process of teaching professionally oriented foreign language should be structured in line with the formations of professional-and-communicative compe-

tence. In turn, the received experience on teaching students the English language in accordance with the special education trajectory within multilingual educational programs allows us to single out the following conditions of the formation of professional-and-communicative competence:

– The determination of the trajectory of foreign language teaching which will contribute to the achievement of the set goal of the foreign language course that assumes mastering professional-and-communicative competence. The given trajectory should include all stages of foreign language teaching with corresponding language subjects and major subjects taught in a foreign language, and levels of foreign language proficiency according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

– The working out of the new content of the curriculum on a foreign language which has to be professionally-oriented throughout the whole period of teaching students a language and is determined by communicative and cognitive requirements of specialists of a corresponding professional area.

– The realization of the principle of double-entry of knowledge, which assumes the studying of major subjects in a foreign language, in other words, the students' language acquisition, is provided both through studying of language subjects and a language of instruction of major subjects.

– The personal motivation of students to master professional-and-communicative competence which is understood as the students' comprehension of professional-and-communicative competence as an important condition and means of their effective professional work in the future.

Thus, the provision of the above stated conditions will promote the effective process of the formation of students' professional-and-communicative competence that is an integral component of their professional competence as future specialists.

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### **Қазақстан Республикасындағы көптілді білім беру жағдайындағы студенттерді кәсіби дайындау негізгі компонент ретінде шеттілді кәсіби-сөйлеу құзыреттілікті қалыптастыру**

Мақалада әріптестердің жеке және кәсіби педагогикалық тәжірибелерін жинақтау, сондай-ақ Қазақстан Республикасының жоғарғы оқу орындарында шет тілдерін оқыту бойынша мәліметтерді мазмұндық талдау нәтижелері берілген. Авторлар әртүрлі тілдік емес мамандықтағы студенттердің шет тілін оқытудың кәсіби бағдарын және тиісінше шет тілін оқытудың мазмұны мен әдістерін қайта қарау мәселесін алға тартты. Осылайша, кез келген жоо-да шет тілін оқытудың негізгі мақсаты студентке мәдениетаралық кәсіби қарым-қатынас мән мәтінінде қарым-қатынастық міндеттерді шешуге және әлеуметтенуге мүмкіндік беретін өзге тілді кәсіби қарым-қатынастық құзыреттілікті дамыту болып табылады. Қойылған мақсатқа қолжеткізу үшін авторлар көптілді білім беру

бағдарламалары шеңберінде құруға болатын белгілі бір жағдайларды жасауды көздеді. Мақалада жоода шет тілін оқыту үрдісінде қазіргі заманғы мәселелерін шешудегі негізгі процестер болашақ маманның кәсіби қарым-қатынастық құзыреттілігін қалыптастыру бойынша заңдылықтары және білімнің осы саласындағы жетістіктері көрсетілген.

*Кілт сөздер:* шеттілді кәсіби қарым-қатынастық құзыреттілік, қазақстандық жоғарғы білім беру жүйесі, көптілді білім беру, тілдік емес мамандықтар, кәсіби дайындық, шет тілдерін кәсіби бағдарлы оқыту.

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## Формирование иноязычной профессионально-коммуникативной компетенции как основного компонента профессиональной подготовки студентов в условиях полиязычного образования в Республике Казахстан

В статье представлен обобщенный личный опыт авторов и опыт коллег в преподавании профессионально-ориентированного иностранного языка, а также результаты проведенного анализа содержания обучения иностранным языкам в вузе. Авторами выдвигается проблема профессиональной ориентации иноязычного образования студентов неязыковых специальностей, которая требует пересмотра содержания и методов обучения иностранным языкам. Вследствие этого главной целью обучения иностранному языку в высшей школе является развитие иноязычной профессионально-коммуникативной компетенции, которая в дальнейшем позволит студентам осуществлять коммуникацию в сфере межкультурного профессионального общения. Достижение поставленной цели видится авторами в обеспечении определенных условий, которые возможно создать в рамках программ полиязычного образования. Статья также затрагивает основные тенденции в решении сегодняшних проблем по формированию профессионально-коммуникативной компетенции будущих специалистов в процессе обучения иностранным языкам в вузе и представляет имеющиеся результаты в данной области.

*Ключевые слова:* иноязычная профессионально-коммуникативная компетенция, система высшего образования Республики Казахстан, полиязычное образование, неязыковые специальности, профессиональная подготовка, профессионально-ориентированное обучение иностранному языку.

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