

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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Abstract: This article discusses the development of communicative competence in the instruction of foreign languages. Communicative competence is viewed as encompassing not just the grammatical aspects of the language, but also its social, pragmatic, and contextual dimensions.

Key words: teaching, foreign languages, communicative competence, communication, integrated skills.

Introduction. In the context of the evolving modern multicultural world, there is a reevaluation of the importance of “Foreign language” studies. The training in foreign languages involves preparing graduates with the abilities to effectively utilize a foreign language as a means of communication in intercultural dialogues. Given the conditions conducive to cultures converging and the current global situation, students who will eventually engage in international professional activities will have numerous interactions with native speakers of other languages. Consequently, the development of communicative competence takes on a special significance and relevance within the educational sphere.

Communicative competence, as a central objective in teaching a foreign language, should be interpreted as the ability to engage in interpersonal and intercultural communication in the target language with native speakers while adhering to established standards. The concept of communicative competence in language education aims to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and capabilities required to embrace the ethno-cultural norms of the language’s origin country, and effectively utilize the foreign language in situations involving intercultural comprehension and realization. The amalgamation of these attributes represents the students’ communicative competence.

Embracing a communicative approach in foreign language instruction fosters the development of proficiency in foreign language communication, thereby cultivating communicative competence – the capacity to utilize all forms of language expression, including reading, listening, speaking, and writing.

Communication in a foreign language involves more than just the exchange of information. It also encompasses managing relationships between partners, establishing various forms of interaction, and the ability to assess and analyze the communication situation, as well as subjectively evaluate one’s communication potential and make necessary decisions.

According to the state educational standard for foreign languages, communicative competence should include the following essential skills:

- Reading and comprehending simple, authentic texts (grasping the main content and fully understanding).
- Speaking briefly about oneself, and the surroundings, expressing opinions, and giving assessments.



· Verbal communication in standard situations within educational, work, cultural, and domestic spheres.

· The ability to write and convey basic information (e.g., composing a letter).

Foreign language communicative competence represents a specific level of proficiency in language, speech, and socio-cultural knowledge, skills, and abilities. This allows students to adapt their speech behavior based on the communication situation, including every day, educational, scientific, business, political, and socio-political contexts.

The structure of communicative competence in a foreign language encompasses several key competencies. Firstly, there is linguistic competence, which refers to an individual's ability to construct grammatically accurate forms and syntactic structures by the norms of a specific language. Linguistic competence comprises language and speech competencies, with language competence involving knowledge of the language system and the skills to use this knowledge, and speech competence involving the possession of norms of speech behavior across all types of speech activities. Educational competence also plays a significant role in the acquisition of language and speech competencies, representing the ability and preparedness to effectively engage in educational activities while learning a foreign language as an academic subject. The development of educational competence involves acquiring knowledge about rational methods of educational work, alternative approaches to educational tasks, self-diagnosis of one's level of organizational skills in educational activities, the ability to select learning methods based on individual characteristics, the formation of individual learning skills, and independent verification of the appropriateness of these choices.

Acquiring proficiency in foreign language communication requires specific learning skills, including the rational organization of memorizing language materials, independent activation of language materials, identification of interdisciplinary connections, and collaborative work during foreign language activities.

Additionally, the development of communication skills in a foreign language is dependent on sociocultural competence, which involves the ability to adapt verbal and non-verbal behavior to the norms of the relevant language-speaking societies. Sociocultural competence requires knowledge of the national mentality, and worldview, resolution of cultural barriers, and broadening one's understanding of different sociocultural communities.

Based on the preceding discussion, communicative competence can be construed as a prerequisite for establishing effective discourse within a social framework, and the objective of cultivating communicative competence can be understood as achieving successful communication. To attain this objective, a range of competencies are essential, including linguistic knowledge, speaking skills, as well as the language and cultural aspects of education.

It is important to emphasize that without an understanding of the grammatical structure of a foreign language, resolving communicative tasks is unattainable. Furthermore, mastery of the grammatical system is reliant on familiarity with vocabulary. Consequently, both grammatical and lexical competencies form the core of language competence, upon which speaking skills and abilities are constructed.

As global cultural and economic connections continue to expand, the significance of learning foreign languages is on the rise. Consequently, there is a growing demand for professionals proficient in foreign languages. Currently, educational development places great importance on a competence-based approach, emphasizing the cultivation of practical communication skills, as well as cultural, social, and informational competencies. Although extensively debated in scholarly and pedagogical literature, universities predominantly favor a



cognitive approach, necessitating students to memorize substantial amounts of information rather than focusing on the fundamental competencies essential for successful performance.

Today's professionals are expected to possess not only knowledge of a foreign language but also the capacity to apply it effectively in both daily and professional communication. This, however, is unachievable without an understanding of social norms, spiritual values, and traditions of other cultures.

The concept of modernizing Russian education signifies new societal demands for shaping an individual's life outlook. It entails a shift in evaluating educational outcomes from "preparedness," "training," and "education" to "competence" and "proficiency" of students.

The concept of "competence" has historically been prevalent in the psychological and pedagogical literature, with a recent surge in interest likely attributed to the swiftly evolving societal dynamics. Today, competence is recognized as an independently developed capability resulting from cognitive activity and educational practice, rooted in the student's acquired knowledge, intellectual and life experiences, values, and inclinations. This concept bridges the gap between knowledge and the practical activities of individuals and encompasses a wide array of personal qualities, including cognitive, operational, technological, motivational, ethical, social, and behavioral components. In the context of teaching a foreign language, competence represents a collection of knowledge, skills, and abilities that are cultivated throughout the learning process. Consequently, language serves as a reflection of culture, encapsulating not only the surrounding world but also the mindset, national character, lifestyle, traditions, and worldview of an individual. An objective of teaching a foreign language is to foster foreign language communicative competence, thereby emphasizing the primary goal of language instruction as the cultivation of communicative competence, which involves the capability and willingness to engage in foreign language interpersonal and intercultural communication with native speakers. This proficiency encompasses the knowledge, skills, and abilities essential for understanding a foreign-language counterpart in dialogue and for articulating a speech model that aligns with the communication's objectives, domains, and situations.

Methods. To attain communicative competence in teaching a foreign language, one must possess knowledge of fundamental linguistic concepts such as styles, types, and methods of connecting sentences within a text, as well as the skills and capabilities for text analysis and effective communication. This encompasses proficiency in speech communication concerning diverse educational contexts and situations, considering the audience and objectives. Therefore, the integrated objective of teaching a foreign language should be to understand communicative competence as the ability to engage in interpersonal and intercultural communication with native speakers within the framework defined by the standard. The concept of communicative competence in foreign language instruction involves equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to embrace the ethnocultural values of the language's country of origin and to effectively apply the foreign language in intercultural understanding and learning scenarios. The amalgamation of these knowledge, skills, and abilities forms the communicative competence of the students. Employing a communicative approach in foreign language instruction contributes to the development of the capability to communicate in a foreign language, thereby acquiring communicative competence, which encompasses proficiency in all forms of speech activity including reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Communication in a foreign language involves not only the transmission and reception of information, but also the management of relationships between participants, the



establishment of various types of interaction, the capacity to evaluate and analyze communication situations, subjectively assess one's communication potential, and make necessary decisions. The primary element of communicative competence, namely speech (communicative) skills, is developed based on language skills, linguistic knowledge, and cultural insight. As per the state educational standard for foreign languages, communicative competence should comprise the essential skills of understanding simple authentic texts (including grasping the main content and achieving full comprehension), expressing oneself verbally by providing a brief personal narrative, articulating an opinion, and giving evaluations, verbally engaging in standard educational, professional, cultural, and everyday situations, and the ability to write and convey basic information through writing.

Results and discussion. Foreign language communicative competence refers to proficiency in a language, speech, and socio-cultural knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable students to adapt their speech behavior to various communication situations, including everyday, educational, scientific, business, political, and socio-political contexts. This competence encompasses linguistic competence, which involves the correct construction of grammatical forms and syntactic structures according to language norms, as well as language and speech competence. Educational competence plays a key role in acquiring language and speech competencies, optimizing independent language study, and fostering a high-quality mastery of foreign language communication.

Mastering foreign language communication also requires specific learning skills, such as organizing memorization, activating language material, tracing inter-subject relationships, and working in pairs to implement language activities. Additionally, sociocultural competence is critical for developing communication skills, as it involves building verbal and non-verbal behavior by the norms of the language being studied and understanding the national mentality and worldview.

In essence, communicative competence is essential for shaping speech situations within a social context, to accomplish effective communicative acts. To achieve this, communicative competencies encompass language knowledge, speech skills, and the linguistic and cultural aspects of education. Notably, linguistic competence plays a central role, as it ensures the construction of grammatically correct forms and the understanding of speech segments in line with the norms of a foreign language. The mastery of grammatical structures is dependent on familiarity with the vocabulary, which serves as the foundation for speech skills and abilities.

Today, practical mastery of a foreign language is of great interest to individuals and states, as it provides access to the global market and exposure to world culture. As a result, communicative competence has become a priority goal.

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