

DEVELOPING COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION ФОРМУВАННЯ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНЦІЇ У ВИЩІЙ ШКОЛІ

The article is devoted to one of the urgent issues of modern pedagogy – communicative competence and its formation in the process of teaching professional communication. The article reveals the essence of communicative competence and emphasises that it implies the ability to establish and maintain the necessary contacts with other people, a certain set of knowledge, skills and abilities that ensure effective communication. The component structure of communicative competence as a complex scientific concept is characterised. The objects of teaching and control of the development of verbal business communication skills at different levels of training in higher education, which is a necessary condition for successful professional activity in the field of international cooperation, are considered.

It is asserted that communicative competence will be successfully implemented only if it corresponds to the professional skills and abilities inherent in the qualification characteristics of specialists of a certain profile. The process of professional communication between partners in the field of intercultural cooperation is implemented in various forms. The article analyses such types of business communication as business conversation, business telephone conversation, negotiation and presentation: it offers definitions, establishes the goals and structure, describes the spheres, functions and phases of deployment of various types of business communication. The prerequisites for the effectiveness of the formation of communication skills and abilities are analysed.

It is emphasised that communicative competence is an important component of successful language communication, which is supported by language skills and language abilities and ensures readiness for language interaction and mutual understanding. In the context of the modern concept of professional education, which sets the task of developing students' communicative competence, the formation of business communication skills prepare future specialists to successfully explore the area of professional activity, interact with each other and solve professional problems, and as a result become professionals in their field.

Key words: *communication competence, professional communication, intercultural cooperation, negotiation, discussion, flexibility.*

Стаття присвячена одній з актуальних проблем сучасної педагогіки – комунікатив-

ній компетенції та її формуванню у процесі навчання професійного спілкування. Розкривається суть комунікативної компетенції та підкреслюється, що вона передбачає здатність встановлювати і підтримувати необхідні контакти з іншими людьми, певну сукупність знань, умінь і навичок, що забезпечують ефективне спілкування. Характеризується компонентний склад комунікативної компетенції як складного наукового поняття. Розглядаються об'єкти навчання та контролю сформованості умінь та навичок усного ділового спілкування на різних рівнях підготовки у вищій школі, що є необхідною умовою успішної професійної діяльності у сфері міжнародної співпраці.

Зазначається, що комунікативна компетенція буде успішно реалізована лише в тому разі, якщо вона відповідає професійним умінням і навичкам, закладеним у кваліфікаційних характеристиках фахівців певного профілю. Процес професійного спілкування між партнерами у сфері міжкультурного співробітництва реалізується у різних формах. У статті аналізуються такі види ділового спілкування, як ділова бесіда, ділова телефонна розмова, переговори і презентація: пропонуються дефініції, визначаються цілі та структура, описуються сфери, функції та фази розгортання різних видів ділового спілкування. При цьому підкреслюється, що основна відмінність між ними полягає в ступені складності обговорюваних учасниками питань. Проаналізовано передумови ефективності формування комунікативних умінь та навичок.

Обґрунтовано, що комунікативна компетенція є важливим компонентом успішного мовного спілкування, що підкріплюється мовними навичками і мовними вміннями та забезпечує готовність до мовної взаємодії та взаєморозуміння. У контексті сучасної концепції професійної освіти, що ставить перед вищою школою завдання по розвитку у студентів комунікативної компетенції, сформованість навичок професійно-ділового спілкування дає змогу майбутнім фахівцям успішно орієнтуватися у сфері професійної діяльності, взаємодіяти між собою та розв'язувати професійні проблеми, забезпечує можливість стати професіоналами у своїй справі.

Ключові слова: *комунікативна компетенція, професійна комунікація, міжкультурна співпраця, переговори, дискусія, гнучкість.*

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Problem statement. The concept of education modernisation sets a number of tasks, one of which is to develop the communicative competence of future specialists. Communicative competence is one of the basic categories of modern theory and practice of teaching in universities. Since the entire educational process is aimed at communicative goals, we must teach communication, that is, to develop students' communicative competence as an ability to successfully communicate. That is why today, when defining the main goal of teaching a certain contingent of students, we talk about

achieving a definite level of communicative competence.

Analysis of recent research and publications. In scientific literature, there are many definitions of this pedagogical concept, and the structural analysis of communicative competence is carried out in different ways. Most often, communicative competence is defined as the ability to choose and implement speech behaviour programmes depending on a person's ability to comprehend different situations, i.e. his/her ability to assess the situation taking into account the topic, tasks, communicative attitudes that

arise in participants before and during communication [1, p. 137]. From the psychological point of view, communicative competence is the ability of a person to organise his/her speech activity in speaking, writing, reading and listening adequately to the situation of real communication [2, p. 78]. Describing the structure of communicative competence as a complex scientific concept, the authors distinguish a different number of its components and propose different terms for their nomination [3, p. 113]. For example, they distinguish such types of competences as linguistic, pragmatic, subject, strategic, socio-cultural, sociolinguistic, discourse, etc.

In our research, we proceed from the fact that communicative competence is a multifaceted concept that includes a number of components that are in some way related to the communication process.

The aim of the article is to consider the objects of communication competence formation in situations that reflect the specifics of future professional activities in the field of international cooperation.

Presenting the main research. We believe that communicative competence will be successfully implemented only if it corresponds to the professional skills laid down in the qualification characteristics of specialists of a certain profile. In relation to a specialist engaged in business communication in the field of international cooperation, the components of communicative competence can be specified in general didactic terms based on the study of various aspects of professional communication.

A specialist working in the field of international cooperation acts primarily as an organiser of this cooperation, ensuring the development of the activity of his or her enterprise. Accordingly, this specialist faces a number of tasks related to solving economic and managerial problems related to the entire range of business issues of his/her professional activity.

The modern business language that serves communication in this area of professional activity exists in a number of varieties, each of which meets the specific needs of communication in certain situations and has its own linguistic features. The process of professional communication between partners in the field of intercultural cooperation is realised through the organisation of direct and indirect contacts that have a specific language format. The development of various forms of joint work activities at the international level has led to the emergence of certain language formats that correspond to each specific type of business interaction. This interaction has contributed to the emergence of specific genres of verbal and written business communication, such as business conversation, telephone conversation, negotiation, presentation, business letter, e-mail, business documents (contract, agreement, protocol of intent, etc.). We will consider some genres of verbal business communication in more detail, namely:

business conversation, telephone conversation, negotiation and presentation.

Business conversation is a verbal contact between partners who have the necessary authority from their organisations to discuss certain issues. Business conversation is the most common form of communication, in which partners need to demonstrate skills that testify to their mastery of the culture of business communication. Such skills include the following: listening and hearing, establishing contact with the interlocutor, expressing one's thoughts clearly and convincingly, choosing the best psychological position in communication, etc. The main functions of a business conversation are: start of events within the framework of joint labour activity between partners; control and coordination of actions and events already taken; exchange of information between partners on a particular issue; maintaining business contacts at the level of established cooperation relations; searching, promotion and operational development of proposed ideas and plans; encouraging the movement of creative thought in a new direction.

In the process of developing a business conversation, certain phases can be distinguished. The first, or introductory, phase of a conversation is aimed at attracting attention to one's personality, establishing contact with the interlocutor, and arousing his/her interest in the topic of conversation. The second phase – informing – is the presentation of the essence of the problem by one of the partners. In the third phase, the partners offer different arguments aimed at substantiating the proposal. The next – the fourth phase usually assumes the partners' work on each other's objections in order to neutralise them as much as possible. The fifth phase involves reaching an agreement and fixing the decision. In the sixth and final phase of the conversation, the contact is terminated [4, p. 73].

The main difference between a telephone conversation and a business conversation between partners during their personal meeting is its brevity. According to experts, the optimal duration of a telephone conversation is four minutes. The outline of such a conversation is as follows: greetings; introduction of the partners to each other; explanation of the purpose of the conversation by the initiator of the call; discussion of options for solving the problem; summing up the results; expressing gratitude by the participants of the conversation; farewell.

Negotiation is an interaction of social entities or their representatives, which involves the coordination of interests and is aimed at neutralising a potential or resolving a real conflict. Negotiation is a process of bilateral exchange of information aimed at reaching an agreement between partners. In the course of negotiation, the participants of communication exchange information, jointly develop a common

approach to solving problems and agree on a certain set of responsibilities that satisfy the main interests of the parties directly involved in the problem situation. Negotiation can be aimed at both dispute resolution and non-conflict cooperation. In both cases, negotiation results in solutions that are acceptable to both parties: not always completely satisfactory to everyone, but at the same time the best in the situation.

According to experts, negotiations differ from each other, and their nature depends on the situation in which they are conducted. From this point of view, there are: negotiations conducted in conditions of conflict and negotiations conducted in conditions of cooperation.

The result of negotiation is a joint decision. From the point of view of the goals realised by the participants of a business contact, negotiation can be aimed at: implementation of existing agreements; regulation of relations between partners; redistribution of rights and obligations of the parties; establishing relations with a new partner. The process of negotiation consists of several stages: negotiation preparation; conducting negotiation; analysis of the results achieved; implementation of the agreements reached [5, p. 127].

The main monologue genre of verbal business communication is the presentation, which can be described as an important tool for communication of specialists. Presentation as a type of communication activity is a complete monologue dedicated to a particular topic. It is a form of public speech and, accordingly, it has all the qualities of such speech, namely: clarity and simplicity, logical structure, emotionality and belief. In the process of preparing for the presentation, it is important to consider the following points in terms of problem statement: defining the goals, analysis of the audience and the situation, selection and limitation of the subject of the speech, collection of material; selection of arguments and necessary statements, speaking practice in front of an audience.

The topics of presentations in business communication can be quite different. For example, representative-level events such as exhibitions, fairs, demonstrations, sightseeing tours, etc. require presentations of goods, services or production processes, as well as presentations of the activities of a firm, company or even a city or region.

Structurally, the presentation consists of the following parts: introduction, including the topic of speaking and the plan for its disclosure; presentation of the main ideas of the topic, supported by appropriate argumentation; conclusion with a brief summary of the views expressed.

The considered genres of verbal business communication should become the objects of teaching students at different stages of their training. The

dynamics of the development of the relevant speaking skills is achieved by adding new, more complex areas and situations at each subsequent stage, in which the possibility of realising verbal contacts is ensured by the consistent complication and increase of the variety of speech skills from stage to stage.

Thus, at the initial stage of study a student should learn to conduct business conversations and telephone conversations. Accordingly, students should develop the skills necessary to implement such communicative intentions as informing, encouraging, refusing, agreeing, and deviating from decision-making. These intentions are realised during a business conversation on the phone in the following situations: when discussing the time and place of the meeting of the parties; when agreeing on the agenda of the meeting; when informing the parties of their intentions and plans; when identifying the parties' positions on the subject of discussion.

At the bachelor's level, a specialist must have the communication competence necessary to fulfil the tasks of professional communication. This means that a bachelor's graduate should be proficient in such genres as business conversation, telephone conversation, presentation, and simple negotiations. At the same time, during the course of their studies, students should develop the skills necessary to implement more complex communicative intentions: encouraging a partner to take certain actions, informing him/her about a project, introducing a product or service, expressing a complaint, etc. [6, p. 184].

Upon completion of the next stage of university training, a bachelor should: know the structure of the presentation, correctly use the speech etiquette formulas adopted for the presentation; be able to work with graphs, diagrams and other visual aids used in business communication, especially in presentations; be able to plan a future speech contact, realising the above communicative intentions during a business conversation or simple negotiations.

A master's degree holder should be fluent in such genres of business communication as presentations and negotiations of various types, implementing complex communication intentions in them, such as: formulate the purpose of negotiation, develop a strategy and tactics of the negotiation process, and draw up its plan; argue the proposals, convince the opponent; respond to the objections from a business partner, provide evidence in favour of a particular thesis; correctly ask the opponent questions aimed at clarifying his/her position and clearly answer his/her possible questions; implement a wide range of communication intentions in business negotiations and presentations [7, p. 54].

Practice shows that the work we have done in teaching the above genres of verbal business communication contributes to the

development of the communicative competence of future specialists in order to successfully implement professional tasks. Communicative competence involves linguistic competence, knowledge of language, the ability to correlate linguistic means with the tasks and conditions of communication, understanding of the relationship between communicators, the ability to organise communication taking into account social norms of behaviour and communicative expediency. The development of communication skills is considered to be the most important component of a person's communication culture. They include, first of all, the following: the ability to establish contacts in a given situation with necessary partners; the ability to create a situation of cooperation with specific people; the ability to find topics for conversation in different cases; the ability to choose adequate ways of interaction in business communication for group cooperation.

It should be noted that competence is not limited to knowledge or skills alone. Competence is the sphere of relations that exist between knowledge and action in practice. A communicator is always an active person whose activities are related to the activities of other people.

Conclusion. The results of our research allow us to draw the following conclusions: – The development of communicative competence is an urgent pedagogical problem, the solution of which is important both for each individual and for society as a whole. University graduates with a high level of communicative culture feel confident in society and are capable of highly effective professional activity.

– The objects of communicative competence development we have considered play a crucial role for successful communication and solving professional tasks in the course of business interaction.

– Due to the dynamic development of society, the forms and content of real communication are changing, which in turn requires further study of the structure of communicative competence, as well as the development of objects of learning and control of verbal business communication skills building at different levels of training in universities.

Thus, based on all the above, we should emphasise once again the expediency of professionally and communicatively oriented training in higher education.

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