

## Methodical aspects of communicative skills formation of the students of non-philological specialties who learn foreign language

O. Ye. Smolinska,\* K. A. Dzyubynska

Lviv National University of Veterinary Medicine and Biotechnologies named after S. Z. Gzhytskyj, Lviv, Ukraine

\*Corresponding author. E-mail: smolinskao@gmail.com

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**Abstract.** The results of an experiment on improving the communicative skills of students of non-philological specialties (managers, marketing specialists, veterinary doctors) learning English in their professional direction, are exposed in this article. Great attention, except for communicative competencies, is paid to the issue of the effective communicative behavior formation. The methodical tools, the usage of which promotes the intensification of communicative position of students, motivates them to use speech experience and skills, reduces communication barriers, are shown and justified.

**Keywords:** *communicative competence, communication barriers, the students of non-philological specialties, higher educational institution, foreign language.*

### Introduction

Due to the powerful globalization processes, the problem of communication is gaining in weight. There is not the only one aspect of it: it is the correlation of cross-cultural and interpersonal communications, professional and organizational in different combinations.

Learning of foreign languages is becoming more concrete and practical in connection with the real need to communicate both on personal and professional level, it becomes one of the most important challenges for higher education institutions. The following thesis may seem a little strange, but nowadays the providing of conditions for mastering a profession and foreign language, especially English, is the task of the same level for the Ukrainian universities. In general, this thesis corresponds to the definition of foreign language communicative competence as "the possibility of a future specialist to operate in the mode of the secondary language personality in a variety of socially determined circumstances, readiness to implement intercultural interaction" [3, c. 183]. Also there are definitions taking into account experience and ability.

Concretizing the general problem of communicative competence as efficiency in communication, we consider it necessary to pay attention to the creation of special conditions for education of students of non-philological high schools in which the professional training is combined with the mastery of foreign language communicative competence. The content of these ways is in attracting new subjects of training and enhancing existing ones.

### Short summary of the article on the topic

The analysis of available sources [1–4] suggests that the study of the problem of communicative competence formation in the sphere of foreign languages – actually, actively discussed in professional-pedagogical, business and wide social circles.

The presence of philosophical, philological, psychological, pedagogical and other disciplinary aspects in this issue, stipulates its methodological complexity. As a methodological basis, we have selected the following positions: communicative philosophy (K. O. Apel, J. Habermas), communication theory (H. Lasswell, J. Ruesch, T. Kuhn), the dialogue of cultures (В. Библер), theory of psychology of communication (Г. Андреева, А. Леонтьев), interpersonal communication (А. Бодалёв, Б. Ло-

мов), psychological defense (Е. Доценко, Р. Грановская) language communication (Н. Голубь, А. Капская), competence communication (Л. Петровская, Ж. Курте), psychology of dialogue (Г. Балл, Л. Радзиховский), communication barriers (Б. Поршневу) and emotional barriers (Р. Шакуров).

**The purpose of the article** is the generalization of the research results of the effective influence of certain methodical tools on the formation of communicative students' skills of non-philological specialties who learn foreign language.

### Materials and methods

Tests for communicative abilities of L. Mikhelson, directional communication language tests (based on the English language) were used at the beginning and the end of the experiment. The interviews were also conducted at the end of the experiment, the questionnaire included the following: "Do you feel confident in foreign language communication? Do you think that learning English while studying professional disciplines is more effective? In your opinion, are the chances of a successful career increased in our times?"

The study was performed at the Lviv National University of Veterinary Medicine and Biotechnologies named after S.Z. Gzhytskyj. Focus group – third-year students of "Marketing", "Management", "Veterinary medicine" specialties. The total number of respondents – 100 people. The duration of the experiment – 3 months. Content – to implement a number of measures aimed at the combination of professional and language training.

### The results and their discussion

The solution of the issues of the foreign language communicative competence of students of non-philological specialties was carried out as a part of the overall problem of professional competence formation. There exist specific methodical as well as general pedagogical studies which didn't and still don't give the opportunity to define exactly the essence of the problem of communicative competence formation at the stage of higher education, as mainly only the separate aspects are considered. Most often, this aspect is expressed by the conventional division of teacher and student activity, firstly; the division of professional competence types in areas of training with a focus on its improvement in "man-man" professions, secondly; the limitation of decisions within lessons and extracurricular work,

envisaged by curriculum, thirdly.

The content of foreign language communicative competence of students of non-philological specialties was previously interpreted as a student-significant. Later, with the development of local professional and academic subcultures the division according to the group basis took place. The current stage unites these trends: interpersonal communication competencies largely determine the availability of opportunities for integration in the socio-professional group.

Modern trends negate the weight of socio-cultural barriers, as business and professional culture devalues national and cultural differences in business being the main integrating factor. This effect replaces multiculturalism concerning language ethnic indication with professional multiculturalism and language comes from the category of means of identification into the category of communication, which is characteristic of the era of postmodernism.

The problem of methodical provision of communicative competence formation is achieved by several ways. Firstly, due to the changes in the general methodological approaches (from grammatical to the functional-communicative). Secondly, through the change of learning tools, the arsenal of which was enriched at the

expense of expanding the sphere of language practice, overcoming geographical barriers. Thirdly, the content of educational materials was changed according to both the content of professional training, and the communication component, methodical device.

However, the problem of overcoming of communication barriers even within the same language is an urgent task for educators and psychologists who are trying to solve it, including and through psychoanalysis, gestalt therapy, art-technology, business theater and other means, which are loosely applicable to high school training. As for the foreign language acquisition in its professional aspect, the search for effective methods in Ukrainian universities, in fact, is just beginning.

*The results of the test research*

According to the results of the survey, all respondents were divided into 3 groups according to their communicative skills: with a dependent position (are characterized by diffident behavior, restriction of inner freedom), with an aggressive position (disposition to suppress partner in communication, restriction of his inner freedom), with a competent position (communication on the terms of equality, in fact, communicative competence). This test was conducted twice at the beginning and at the end of the experiment (Fig. 1).

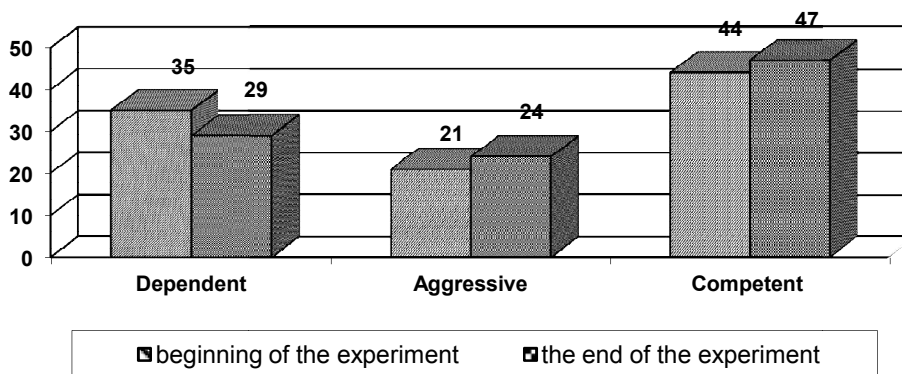


Fig. 1. Results of testing communication skills (by L. Mikhelson)

Speech tests included communicative priority skills, namely-listening, speaking, the results of which are given in Fig. 2.

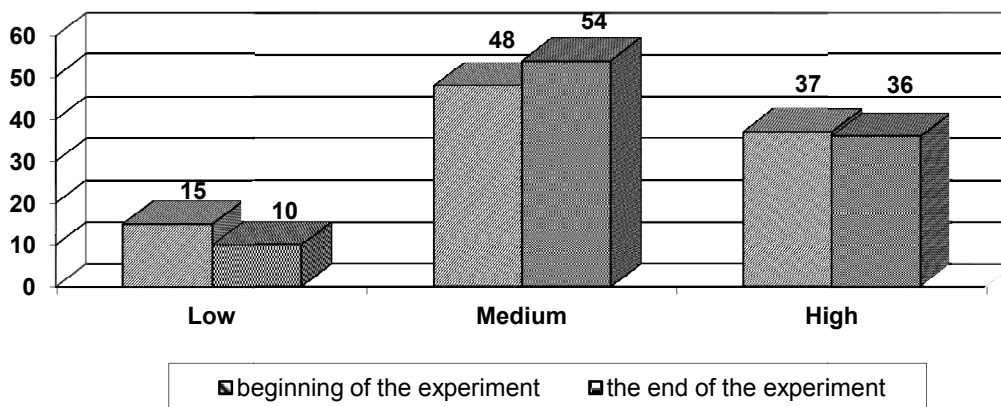


Fig.2. The results of speech tests (levels)

In general, the trend of overall increase in the quality of communication skills and the level of language skills is

seen, although it is impossible to make an unambiguous conclusion in the context of a particular student and the

progress of his individual communicative competence. Moreover, the tests, in no way, reflect the aspect of professionalism.

The results of the interview are the following: the first question – 89 % of respondents answered affirmatively, the second question – 97 %, the third question – 43 %.

We believe that this ratio demonstrates the presence of communication barriers which weren't overcome. However, the applied methodological techniques have proven to be effective in didactic aspects.

## 2. Methodological techniques of improving communicative competence of students

During the trial period the following steps were taken to develop the communicative competence of students: firstly, once a month lectures on professionally-oriented disciplines had been taught in English for one week (the students were given the texts); secondly, together with the main chairs (concerning speciality) the guidelines for the implementation of certain practical and laboratory work were prepared; thirdly, as the level of English of non-philologist students, lecturers teaching specialty disciplines and English were hard-comparable, special consultations were organized. The form of consultations – the group (teachers and students – separately), the methodical organization – teaching speech patterns, the most commonly used during next lectures, recommendations and so on. The need to separate the subjects of training due to the difference in the aims and values, because regardless of the occurring changes, objectives of these activities have not been combined yet. Even if we assume a perfect thought, existing since the days of Soviet pedagogy, in which the teacher is attached to the values of cooperation partner (in our case – a student), there is still not equal positions due to uncertainty of moment of communication initiatives. In

principle, the initiator of the communication should take up the values of the interlocutor; it is meant that this is – a teacher, so the student is again in the situation of the object. In addition, the student newspaper «Gaudemus», which is linguistically oriented, has been published for three years at the University. Even a glimpse at the problem suggests that its solution – is far beyond the capacities of individual teacher-student interactions within the prescribed curriculum. It is more a question of philosophical and pedagogical character, associated with the particular organization of life of higher education institution.

## Conclusions

The main issue, which had to be answered, was the question of the nature of inhibition causes in the formation of communicative competence of students of non-philological specialties. Judging by the results, in this case, a subjective-individual factor is quite influential. Its subjective part – is primarily psychological causes of communication barriers, individual – differences in identifying subjectivity between teachers and students, based on the results of testing communicative skills. In general, the future representatives of professions "man-man" feel more comfortable in foreign language learning while the future doctors of veterinary medicine ("man-nature") spend the effort on overcoming barriers and as a consequence – achieve lower results at large cost.

The reduction of individual indicators of communicative abilities and verbal tests is the result of awareness of communication barriers, that is, the first step to overcoming them later, provided continuing education.

The results of the experiment indicate that this methodological experience deserves a sequel, because it unites three levels of activity at the same time: students, teachers, higher education institution.

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**Методические аспекты формирования коммуникативных навыков студентов нефилологических специальностей, изучающих иностранный язык**

**О. Е. Смолнская, К. А. Дзюбинская**

**Аннотация.** В статье изложены результаты эксперимента по совершенствованию коммуникативных навыков студентов нефилологических специальностей (менеджеров, маркетологов, врачей ветеринарной медицины), изучающих английский язык по профессии. Особое внимание, кроме речевых компетентностей, уделено проблеме формирования эффективного типа коммуникативного поведения. Обоснованы и предложены к использованию методические средства, применение которых способствует активизации коммуникативной позиции студентов, мотивирует к использованию речевых умений и навыков, ослабляет коммуникативные барьеры.

**Ключевые слова:** коммуникативная компетентность, коммуникативные барьеры, студенты нефилологических специальностей, высшее учебное заведение, иностранный язык.