STUDENTS' FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AS A SIGNIFICANT EDUCATIONAL COMPONENT OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF FUTURE SPECIALISTS IN THE ECONOMIC FIELD

Abstract. The article focuses on issues concerning the concept of students' foreign language communicative competence as it pertains to future specialists' professional intercultural linguistic activity in marketing, management, finance, banking activities, insurance, entrepreneurship, trade, and exchange activity, taking into account the curricula of bachelor's and master's programs of economic specialties in Ukrainian higher education institutions. Foreign language communication knowledge and skills have been identified as an important component of a professionally oriented block of disciplines, that determines the competencies of future professionals in foreign language professional-oriented communication and ensures graduates' orientation to the international labor market. It has been confirmed that developing professional communication ability would improve future experts' labor-market competitiveness as well as efficiency in carrying out professional activities, conducting negotiations, signing contracts, and drawing up international projects or procuring supplies.

As consequently, the authors of the article investigate the issue of foreign language communicative competence in the structure of professional and general competencies, arguing that the findings will contribute to a more effective approach for carrying out educational programs in the disciplines "Foreign Language for Specific (Professional) Purpose", "Business English". The results of the investigation revolved around the premise of foreign language communicative competence as a set of three competencies: linguistic, speech, and socio-cultural. The comprehensive investigation and its findings will have an impact on enhancing the effectiveness of teaching techniques and the learning process for future economic professionals so that students will possess the knowledge and abilities to conduct
business communication in a foreign language and be efficient in their professional activities.

Additionally, it is emphasized that to overcome this problem, additional educational tools should be used, in terms of methodology appropriate methods must be developed, work forms must be determined, and motivational educational conditions must be created that contribute to the formation of a positive attitude toward the learning process.

**Keywords:** competence, foreign language communicative competence, English for Specific (Professional) Purpose, Business English, professional and general competencies, curricula.

Нагачевська Олена Олександрівна кандидат філологічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», вул. Степана Бандери, 55, м. Львів, 79013, тел.: (096) 455-75-19. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5200-8085

Запотічна Марія Іванівна кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов, Національний університет «Львівська політехніка», вул. Степана Бандери, 55, м. Львів, 79013, тел.: (097) 416-67-15, https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9127-9240

ІНШОМОВНА КОМУНІКАТИВНА КОМПЕТЕНЦІЯ СТУДЕНТІВ ЯК ВАЖЛИВА ОСВІТНЯ СКЛАДОВА ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ПІДГОТОВКИ МАЙБУТНІХ ФАХІВЦІВ ЕКОНОМІЧНОГО ПРОФІЛЮ

Анотація. У статті розглядаються питання формування іншомовної комунікативної компетенції студентів в умовах професійної міжкультурної мовою, діяльності майбутніх фахівців у сферах маркетингу, менеджменту, фінансів, банківської діяльності, страхування, підприємництва, торгівлі та біржової діяльності з урахуванням навчальних планів бакалаврських та магістерських програм економічних спеціальностей у закладах вищої освіти України. Визначено, що іншомовні комунікативні знання та вміння є важливою складовою професійно орієнтованого блоку дисциплін, який формує в майбутніх фахівців уміння іншомовного професійно орієнтованого спілкування та забезпечує спрямованість пошуку працевлаштування випускників на міжнародний ринок праці. Доведено, що формування професійної комунікативної компетентності сприяє конкурентоспроможності майбутніх спеціалістів на ринку праці, а також ефективності у здійсненні професійної діяльності, у веденні переговорів, підписанні контрактів, оформленні міжнародних проектів чи закупівель.

Таким чином, автори статті досліджують питання іншомовної комунікативної компетенції в структурі професійної та загальної компетенцій,
стверджуючи, що отримані результати сприятимуть більш ефективному підходу до розроблення освітніх програм з дисциплін «Іноземна мова за професійним спрямуванням», «Ділова англійська мова». Результати дослідження грунтувалися на визначеній іншомовної комунікативної компетенції як комплексу, який складається з трьох компетенцій: лінгвістичної, мовленнєвої та соціокультурної. Комплексне дослідження та його результати вплинули на підвищення ефективності методики викладання та процесу навчання майбутніх фахівців у галузі економіки, сприятимуть якісному оволодінню студентами знаннями та вміннями вести ділове спілкування іноземною мовою та бути успішними у їхній професійній діяльності.

Крім того, наголошується, що для вирішення цієї проблеми необхідно використовувати додаткові освітні засоби, розробити відповідні методики, визначити форми роботи, створити мотиваційні умови, які сприятимуть формуванню позитивного ставлення до процесу навчання.

**Ключові слова:** компетентність, компетенція, іншомовна комунікативна компетенція, англійська мова за професійним спрямуванням, ділова англійська мова, професійні та загальні компетенції, навчальні програми.

**Introduction.** Nowadays in Ukraine, we observe that the changes in the growth of international relations, as well as the most recent advances in technology, require the training of experts of diverse profiles who comprehend a foreign language at the level of professional communication.

Foreign language proficiency is currently one of the requirements for professional competence, and demands for people with such skills are expected to rise in future decades. Modern internal experts must be able to read and translate professional foreign literature and engage in commercial intercultural and interpersonal interactions. As a result, the function of a foreign language is becoming increasingly crucial as a means of developing a professional orientation, broadening interest in the future profession, and attempting to obtain knowledge from multiple sources. Mastering a foreign language allows one to become acquainted with the achievements of science and practice in the relevant field abroad and apply them in professional activities, carrying out professional activities, conducting negotiations, signing contracts, and drawing up international projects or procuring supplies. Undergraduates who obtain foreign language communicative skills might participate in international projects implemented in Ukraine, keep pursuing education in foreign countries, engage in scientific research, and work in international businesses, charitable foundations, and entities, all of which are getting more prevalent in Ukraine annually, and so forth.

At this point, the student's foreign language communicative competence (FLCC) has become the primary goal of foreign language learning by students of various fields of training at higher education institutions, alongside the use of a
foreign language as a means of intercultural communication and enrichment of professional training experience as the ultimate outcome.

Defining the problem and arguing for the relevance of its investigation.
One of the main objectives of national education reform is implementing a competence approach and acquiring professional foreign language communicative competence (PFLCC) in training professionals with higher education. Implementing this goal and associated assignments would be unattainable without multidisciplinary integration as well as the engagement of employers, who could establish explicit criteria for the final outcomes of education in collaboration with Universities.

Foreign language communicative competence (FLCC) permits greater interaction, professional communication, collaboration at various levels with specialists from different countries, and experience exchange, all of which contribute to professional and scientific self-development and self-realization in the context of globalization events throughout the world, and especially within the field of business.

We believe that the function of a foreign language as a means for acquiring future specialists' professional communication competence might be effectively utilized at higher education institutions through the institution's management of the entire educational process, curriculum material, and an identifiable professional emphasis, as well as the techniques for delivering this information, types of teacher contact, and student engagement in the educational process. At the same time, achieving a distant strategic goal - such as a specialist's advancement as a professional - is mediated by accomplishing close tactical goals, such as mastery of a foreign language.

Analysis of recent research and publications. One of the most contentious concepts in general and applied linguistics is "competence." The application of it in theoretical linguistic discourse is usually attributed to Noam Chomsky, an American scholar, who drew what is now regarded as a classic distinction between competence (the monolingual speaker-listener's knowledge of language) and performance (the actual use of language in real situations) in his highly influential book "Aspects of the Theory of Syntax." In 1968 Noam Chomsky proposed the concept of "competence" in his work "Language and Mind" [1]. Later, the term "competence" was embraced by the global scientific community and employed in the approach of teaching foreign languages. Many scientists (M. Canale [2], D. Hymns [11], M. Swain [6], J. Savignon [3], including Ukrainian scholars N. Bidyuk, L. Birkun, I.Kukhta, S. Kozak, L. Shcherba, and others) have focused their study on competence concerns, notably the establishment, and development of foreign language communicative competence (FLCC) in the process of teaching foreign languages.

The arrangement of professional education for students of economic specializations demands extensive knowledge of a foreign language (often English). Future financial analysts should be ready to engage in multilingual communication,
recognizing that a foreign language provides one of the keys to success and a tool for exhibiting and acquisition of individual traits of higher education learners, professionals in a specific field, and scientists, contributing to their mobility, imaginative thinking, novel professional and academic personal development.

As a result, it becomes essential to pay particular attention to both the efficiency and quality of mastering foreign languages.

An unambiguous explanation of foreign language communicative competence in the structure of professional and general competencies will contribute to an enhanced approach to carrying out the educational programs in the disciplines "Foreign Language for Specific (Professional) Purpose" and "Business English", which will influence the improvement of teaching techniques and learning process for future professionals in the economic field so that they might obtain knowledge and abilities to conduct business communication in a foreign language and to be effective in their professional activities.

According to the available scientific fund, the aspects of acquiring into consideration the theoretical foundations of the formation of professional foreign language communication competence of future specialists in the economic field, as well as their specificities, have not yet been adequately reflected in the scientific and methodological literature.

Thus, we assert that the problems of upgrading the teaching of foreign languages in higher education establishments and bringing the education system as near to international standards as feasible have become increasingly urgent. The urgency of a distinct definition of the essence and structure of foreign language communicative competence is undeniable and determines the relevance of our research.

The objective of the paper is to explore the notions of “competence”, “communicative competence”, and “foreign language communicative competence” as well as to analyze the specifics of professional foreign language communicative competence as an important component of the future professional and business communication of students of economic specialties.

Results and Discussion. We conducted our research taking into account the modern trends in the reform of the higher education system, the introduction of a new regulatory framework, in particular the entry into force of the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" (2014) [5], the issuance of the letter of the Ministry of Education and Culture of Ukraine "Regarding the development of standards of higher education" (2016) [4], the development of the Standards of Higher Education of Ukraine for the specialty 072 Finance, banking and insurance (bachelor's level (2018) and master's level (2019)), Standards of higher education of Ukraine for specialty 073 - Management (bachelor's level (2018) and master's level (2019)), Standards of higher education of Ukraine for specialty 075 - Marketing (bachelor's level (2018) and master's level (2019)), Standards of higher education (first (bachelor's) level (2018) and second (master's) (2019)), specialty 076 "Entrepreneurship,
The importance of training future specialists in the fields of finance and marketing, management and entrepreneurial activity is growing, as well as the need to update the content of education [7].

The idea of "communicative competence" is frequently related to proficiency in learning other languages. Some scholars differentiate between the words "competency" and "competence," stating that competence is a set of interrelated traits of a person (knowledge, talents, skills, techniques of action). Competency in a certain field is the possession of competence by a person, which includes his personal attitude toward the subject of work. According to these definitions, competence should be considered as a set requirement, the quality of educational preparation of a non-language major student, and competence as his completely developed personality traits and basic activity experience [9].

Most researchers regard competency as both a personality characteristic and a set of communicative, constructive, and organizational skills, that is, they regard competence as the ability not only to possess knowledge but also to potentially apply it in new situations [7]. It should be emphasized that scientists approach terms like "competency" and "competence" from many perspectives.

Other researchers either do not distinguish between the ideas of "competency" and "competence," or define the term "competency" to be unsuitable. According to I.V. Rodygina, the use of these phrases is mostly explained by translation deficiencies. After all, "competence" is a notion that sprang from the Anglo-Saxon educational heritage and permeated national educational theory and practice [9].

In 1972 M. Swain and J. Savignon were strongly opposed to the idea of employing the concept of idealized, merely linguistic competence as a theoretical basis of language learning, teaching, and testing technique. They established a substitute to Chomsky's definition of competence in Hymes' communicative competence, which they considered to be a more comprehensive and practical definition of competence. Hymes (1972) [11] identified communicative competence as the capacity to apply grammatical competence in a range of communicative circumstances, thereby including the sociolinguistic paradigm in Chomsky's linguistic definition of competence [3].

We should note, that the notion of communicative competence was first introduced by Robin Campbell and Roger Wales (1970) [6]. They “distinguished two senses of the term ‘linguistic competence’, the ‘weaker’ and the ‘stronger’. They shall refer to these as competence-1 and competence-2” in their essay "The Study of Language Acquisition." [6]. However, it is unclear what they mean by this concept based on their explication. As a result, we agree with Cazden (1996) that Hymes was the founder of the concept of communicative competence since he stated it completely, clearly, and unambiguously [10].

Nevertheless, it is ambiguous what they're attempting to indicate by this concept based on their explication. As therefore, we concur with Cazden (1996) that Hymes was the founder of the concept of communicative competence since he defined it completely, concisely, and unambiguously.
Examining the writings of M. Canale (1983) and M. Swain, four components-competences might potentially be identified [2]:

- grammatical competence - the communicator's level of mastery of the grammatical code, including vocabulary, spelling rules and pronunciation, word formation, and sentence construction;
- sociolinguistic competence - the ability to appropriately use and understand grammatical forms in various sociolinguistic contexts to perform certain communicative functions (description, message, persuasion, information request, and so on);
- discursive competence, also known as expressive competence, is the capacity to connect distinct phrases into a cohesive message, or discourse, using multiple syntactic and semantic ways.
- strategic competence is the ability to employ verbal and nonverbal techniques when there is a risk of communication failure owing to an "insufficient level of competence of the communicator or an occurrence of side effects effects" [2, p. 10].

The structure of foreign language communicative competence, according to N. Bidyuk, is a set of learning goals in various types of speech activity (listening, speaking, reading, writing), knowledge (speech, linguistic, paralinguistic, linguistic ethnographic, moral and ethical), skills, abilities (language, speech, communication, gnostic, perceptual, paralinguistic, ethnolinguistic, organizational), and experience (communicative, methodical, technological) as a result of com [12, p. 160].

The term "competence" is defined in the Council of Europe's Competence Framework for a Culture of Democracy as "specific psychological resources (attitudes, skills, knowledge, and understanding) that are mobilized and applied in order to respond effectively to emerging demands, challenges, and opportunities in democratic and intercultural situations" [13, p. 41].

For us, competence is a person's persistent preparedness as well as the ability to perform actions with awareness and accurate responses to the challenges of what to perform, how to accomplish it, and the reason to do it. The following five substantial variables impact the answers: a comprehensive understanding of the essence of the assignments and problems being solved; previous experience in this sector; the ability to choose resources and techniques for proceeding in accordance to the specific circumstances of the place and time; a sense of responsibility for the achieved results; the ability to learn from mistakes and make corrections in the process of achieving the goal.

So, we might describe foreign language competence as the ability and motivation of individuals who are not native speakers of a particular language to engage in effective foreign language communication, as well as a possession of a specific set of competencies and personality traits [3].

P. Strevens proposes and considers in his work four absolute and two variable characteristics that must be taken into account by teachers of the discipline of
English language for special purposes (e.g. finance, economics, management, and so on) in the framework of the development of foreign language communicative competence among students of economic specialties as an important component of future professional and business communication [14]. According to P. Strevens, the absolute indicators are that the discipline's course should be composed in such a way that it meets the demands and needs of students; secondly, its thematic content should correlate with the professional orientation of those who study; and thirdly, it should be focused on those types of speech and communication activities that will be needed in real work situations in the future, updating vocabulary, grammar, and semantics [14].

Variable characteristics relate to the development of individual skills in the process of teaching the English language course in a professional direction, especially writing and translating specifications, operating instructions, and so on; and also with the fact that direct teaching can be carried out employing any existing methodology [14, p. 9].

We concur with the findings of B.R. Cherniavsky's study "Formation of Foreign Language Competence of Future Economists in the Process of Integrated Learning" [15]. According to the scientist, "the formation of foreign language competence in future economists in the process of professional training becomes effective if: a model of the educational process is developed and implemented, which provides for phased foreign language training throughout the entire period of study; integration of the educational process's content at the level of its subjects, forms, and methods is ensured" [15, p. 34].

It should be mentioned that in today's information-driven world, the source of information and knowledge is not only the instructor, but also the computer, television, video, and even phones with apps. Students must learn to grasp knowledge, interpret it, and apply it in specific situations while also thinking, realizing the essence of things, and expressing an opinion. These tasks are aided by the use of interactive instructional approaches.

The Tuning Academy research must be considered when discussing the competencies of graduates of higher education institutions. The project “TUNING Educational Structures in Europe” began in 2000 to link the political objectives of the Bologna Process and, later, the Lisbon Strategy to the higher education sector. Tuning has evolved into a Process, a method for (re-)designing, producing, implementing, assessing, and improving the first, second, and third-cycle educational programs [16].

The development of these competencies is the purpose of all educational programs. They are developed in all academic fields and evaluated at different phases of the curriculum. As a result, competencies are classified as professional or subject-specific (relate entirely to a certain field of activity) or general (joint, multidisciplinary). Throughout the curriculum, the acquisition of competencies is comprehensive and cyclical.
General competencies (GC) in the Standards of higher education for economic specialties include: ability to communicate in a foreign language; skills in using information and communication technologies; ability to communicate with representatives of other professions of groups of different levels (with experts from other fields of knowledge/types of economic activity).

Special (professional or subject-specific) competencies (SK) include: understanding the peculiarities of the functioning of modern global and national financial systems and their structure; ability to communicate effectively.

We examined Educational (educational and professional) programs for the educational attainment of professionals in economic profile fields at the first (bachelor's) level of higher education comprise an outline of program learning outcomes (results) - PLO - and general and professional competencies (GC or PC) that students must acquire of higher economic education, with foreign language competence ranking highly. In this paper, we report the findings of a study conducted at Lviv Polytechnic National University.

We argue that disciplines such as "Foreign Language for Specific (Professional) Purpose " and "Business English" are included in the listing of educational components of educational and professional programmes (EPP) such as “Management”, "Entrepreneurship, Trade, and Exchange Activity", "Finance, Banking activities and Insurance" and "Marketing". The educational discipline "Foreign Language for Specific (Professional) Purpose" gets an important place in the implementation of the bachelor's educational programs and is thematically related to many educational courses, in particular, the Ukrainian Language for Professional Use [17].

The discipline “A Foreign Language for Specific Purpose” is studied concurrently with professional and practical training disciplines to increase the professional level of knowledge, ensuring the creation of students' social, personal, and instrumental abilities and skills. The discipline's purpose is to form students' foreign language communicative competence within the spheres and topics outlined in the curriculum for students of the economic profile, which involves in-depth and professionally oriented mastering of a professional foreign language to meet the needs of professional communication; preparing students for effective oral and written communication in their academic and professional activities; and students' attainment of a level of practical knowledge of a foreign language that will allow them to use the latter as a means of constantly deepening their professional knowledge and ensure students' educational and cognitive activity, as well as enable each individual to function adequately in the European professional environment and beyond. It is worth 7 ECTS credits, or 210 hours (20 hours for lectures, 100 hours for practical sessions, and 90 hours for independent study). The types of educational activities involve lectures, practical classes, and independent work. The discipline involves training through 1) interactive lectures using presentations and materials presented on the Office365 platform; 2) practical classes using interactive...
technologies; 3) combined classes (reports, messages that turn into an extended conversation or discussion, round tables) [17].

The list of competencies to which the study of the discipline is directed contains program learning outcomes, namely:

PLO 02: to apply the acquired knowledge to identify, set and solve tasks in various practical situations in business, trade and stock exchange activities.

PLO 03: to have written and oral professional communication skills in national and foreign languages.

PLO 06: to be able to work in a team, have interpersonal skills that allow you to achieve professional goals.

PLO 08: to demonstrate the ability to act socially responsibly on the basis of ethical, cultural, scientific values and achievements of society.

PLO 17: to be able to solve professional tasks related to the organization of business, trade and exchange structures and solve problems in crisis situations, taking into account external and internal influences [17].

It is necessary to emphasize the competencies that must be mastered by a student of higher education in the economic field are:

1) General competencies:
   GC 02 – the ability to apply acquired knowledge in practical situations;
   GC 04 – the ability to communicate in a foreign language;
   GC 07 – the ability to work in a team.

2) Special or professional competencies:
   PC 03– the ability to carry out activities in the interaction of subjects of market relations;
   PC 09 – the ability to organize foreign economic activity of business, trade and exchange structures [17].

Consequently, we recognize that foreign language communicative competence is one of the crucial elements of the prospective specialist's professional competence in the area of business and ensures high quality in his future professional endeavors. Higher education institutions have to perform in accordance with the tasks outlined in the Orders of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine and Recommendations on Language Education [4, 5, 18], which impose requirements for the provision of quality educational services and the organization of a quality educational process in the preparation of highly qualified specialists in the field of economics, who must possess a high or sufficient level of proficiency in a foreign language, without obstacles in order to solve professional tasks; to have a wide terminological vocabulary of professional vocabulary and to have formed communicative abilities and practical skills for the implementation of business oral and written communication in a foreign language [4, 5, 18].

Conclusions and Perspectives. The theoretical examination of the research on the subject gives evidence for asserting that foreign language communication is a collection of information, abilities, and skills that enable you to utilize a foreign
language successfully in both professional and self-education and personal development activities. It is only conceivable if the subjects of foreign language communication are fluent in the language. As an outcome, foreign language communicative competence is defined as an integrative development of personality alongside a complicated framework that operates as an interaction and interpenetration of linguistic, sociocultural, and communicative competencies, the level of which formation enables the future specialist to effectively carry out a foreign language, and thus interlinguistic, intercultural, and interpersonal communication.

This imposes higher requirements on language teachers (particularly for foreign language teachers of the courses "Foreign language for a specific purpose," "Business English," and "English for academic purposes") because the main goal is to ensure certain competencies, the level of formation of which allows the future specialist to effectively carry out a foreign language, and consequently, interlingual, intercultural, and interpersonal communication are all possible. It is possible to claim that foreign language communicative competence is a subset of professional competence, which is defined as the willingness and capacity to master objective, scientific information in professional communication.

Given the results of our research, we recommend significantly modifying the content of the program of disciplines "English for Specific (Professional) Purpose", and “Business English” in order to increase the number of study hours for students in institutions of higher education. Such essential innovations are required because the educational disciplines should be substantially closely integrated with blocks of basic and professionally focused courses in order to create students' foreign language professional competence. A new challenge emerges as well: the use of interactive ways of teaching a foreign language. The research on this topic is promising. To summarize what has been discussed, acquiring a foreign language of professional communication in higher non-linguistic (e.g. economic) education institutions is intended to prepare students for successful communication in their professional setting. The development of a didactic model of its formation among students of higher educational institutions, while taking into account the potential of information and educational technologies, might be a promising field of scientific study on foreign language professional competence.

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