

## THE PROBLEM OF DEVELOPING FOREIGN-LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE AMONG ECONOMICS STUDENTS

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**Annotation.** *This article delves into the problems of developing foreign language communication proficiency among economics students. Through extensive analysis and empirical research, it uncovers the complexities of language proficiency, sociocultural awareness, and pragmatic skills in the context of economics education. The research provides ideas to inform strategies to enhance the global competence and career prospects of economics students in an interconnected world.*

**Keywords:** *communicative competence, modern approaches, language proficiency, economics students.*

**Problem statement.** The acquisition of foreign language communicative competence is a crucial objective in the contemporary educational paradigm, particularly in economics-related disciplines. Equipping economics students with the necessary linguistic and communicative skills to navigate the globalized landscape has generated a rich discourse within the global scholarly community. In this context, the article examines contemporary tactics that support the development of foreign language communication capability among economics students.

The problem of cultivating foreign language communicative competence among economics students has received a great deal of attention in the world of academic literature. Scholars and researchers have explored the complex interplay of linguistic proficiency, socio-cultural awareness, and pragmatic acumen, all of which are essential components in the arsenal of business professionals operating in the global arena. As economics students embark upon this dynamic and ever-evolving field, they encounter a nuanced interface between their native language and mastering a foreign one. This juncture presents a ripe opportunity for in-depth exploration.

This article aims to unravel the diverse facets of contemporary pedagogical methodologies, innovative strategies, and empirical findings that provide the foundation for the formation of foreign language communicative competence among economics students. It navigates the complex terrain of language acquisition, examining how

linguistic proficiency intersects with economic acumen. The main goal here is to present a thorough analysis of the current research, while also identifying the challenges in this field and offering innovative ideas and solutions that can reform educational frameworks, guide instructional design, and enhance teaching practices. By examining how linguistic proficiency is intertwined with economic expertise, this study aims to enhance the academic and career opportunities of economics students, equipping them to thrive as global citizens and proficient communicators in an ever more interconnected and interdependent world.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Many scholars have studied the problem of developing students' foreign language communicative competence. Thus, in their publication A. Matiychak et al. state that ensuring comprehensive training in reading, listening, writing, and speaking is crucial for developing the communicative competence of future professionals in the field of economics and aspiring business leaders. This encompasses a thorough understanding of both the broader professional domain and specialized areas, setting the stage for their success [3].

L. Usyk et al. consider that learning foreign languages on the basis of professional orientation contributes to the formation of the future specialist's skills to communicate, establish business contacts, study foreign sources, analyze modern scientific achievements, improve skills and present ideas to the professional community. Professional communication competence develops such professional qualities as independence, self-control, responsibility, creative thinking, and professionalism [8].

L. Sikorska considers the concept of "competence" in the context of professional activity; it is understood as an integrative formation of a personality, which is a combination of various human competencies; and characterizes the level of readiness of a person to work, as well as the nature and effectiveness of its implementation; it is formed in the course of mastering the activity appropriate for him or her. According to the researcher, foreign language competence plays a significant role in the professional development of modern specialists, in particular, future economists, marketers, managers, etc. [7]. The researcher argues that communicative competence implies the availability of social psychology knowledge, the ability to use it and to take it into account in specific activities. The main sources that feed communicative competence are life experience, art, general human erudition, and special scientific methods. Activation of the communication potential of participants in business interaction is associated with an adequate understanding and implementation of communication functions in practice.

In his work, M. Iaburov characterizes the foreign language competence of the future economist according to the requirements of state standards of higher economic education at various levels, primarily the ability to communicate in a foreign language as a tool for improving one's professional and personal level, to work in an international context, to value and respect diversity and multiculturalism, to be able to communicate fluently in a foreign language orally and in writing when discussing the results of research and innovation, to carry out public business and scientific communications [2].

Panteleeva and Maleyeva's study suggests that the main conditions for the formation

of foreign language communicative competence among students of non-language specialties are interrelated training in all types of speech activity, taking into account psychological characteristics; the dominant role of exercises (a system of exercises based on the phased organization of language communication in the educational process); organization of role-playing communication in foreign language teaching [4].

Vasilieva describes foreign language communicative competence as a person's ability to successfully communicate, conduct professional and further educational activities in a foreign language in accordance with the tasks of foreign language communication situations in various intercultural situations, taking into account the linguistic and social rules followed by native speakers [9].

Scholars stress the significant role of foreign language communicative competence in the education and career development of future professionals, particularly in economics and business leadership. This competence encompasses language proficiency, along with a deep understanding of professional domains and the ability to navigate diverse intercultural contexts.

Recent research confirms that foreign language communicative competence is not simply a linguistic skill but a comprehensive formation of an individual's personality. It develops crucial professional qualities, such as independence, self-control, responsibility, creativity, and professionalism. Furthermore, it equips individuals with the necessary tools to communicate effectively, establish business relationships, analyze global sources of information, and present ideas within their professional communities.

The aforementioned scientific works are the fundamental scientific basis for diagnosing the foreign language competence of economics students in the process of learning a foreign language and acquiring the skills necessary for their future profession. However, a number of problems related to the formation of students' foreign language competence in the process of learning ESP remain unresolved, so there is a need to study them in detail.

The purpose of the article is to carry out a theoretical analysis and empirical study of foreign language communicative competence formation among economics students in the process of learning English for Specific Purposes.

At this stage of society's and education's development, personal competence is highly relevant. The term "competence" is used at the state level and in official documents, emphasizing the importance of forming and developing competencies to ensure the education system functions effectively.

The term "competence" originates from "competent", defined as the ability to perform tasks or make decisions according to one's knowledge and authority. Competence is evaluated based on one's ability to execute tasks with efficiency and high quality. It links knowledge to practical actions in various aspects of life and denotes the minimum experience and acquired qualities in a specific field [8].

A contemporary professional is formed as a result of independent learning and active acquisition of knowledge, focusing on self-control and self-development in all aspects. The academic proficiency of the learner, acquired during higher education,

which uncovers their potential and learning opportunities, plays a critical role in this process. Foreign language proficiency is a crucial component of academic competency for economics students. It empowers them to engage with a wide range of academic and research materials, conduct business correspondences, work efficiently with computers, access information on the Internet, and libraries of foreign universities, create presentations, communicate with colleagues from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and acquire new knowledge and skills. Knowledge of foreign languages is crucial in the development of professional skills for graduates in economic fields. Clear communication in multiple languages allows for a broader understanding of global economic trends and facilitates effective collaboration in an increasingly multicultural business landscape. Therefore, language proficiency is a necessary component of a well-rounded education in economics.

In the context of foreign languages, communicative competence signifies the comprehensive aptitude to use a foreign language effectively for communication. Interest in foreign language communicative competence arises from a shift in the language teaching and learning paradigm, where communicative goals take precedence over a static knowledge-based approach. This requires learners to have a lively command of the language rather than simply fulfilling a curriculum or complying with its requirements. Learning a foreign language can be a valuable tool in achieving both professional and personal goals. The use of a personal and active approach when teaching can help foster a positive attitude towards the learning process and ultimate results, minimizing the common perception of foreign language as a mere mandatory course within the curriculum.

However, the ultimate definition of communicative competence in a foreign language is still a topic of debate. The complexity of this concept's definition stems from various factors: intricate component composition, subjective nature, individualized character, and a wide range of implementations across domestic, professional, scientific, and technical spheres. The multidimensional nature of the communication process and the pursuit of different target purposes exacerbates the challenge. Moreover, the understanding of crucial terms such as "communication", and "competence" is controversial.

Foreign language communicative competence is a multicomponent notion that includes multidirectional competences to perform various speech and non-speech actions to achieve certain communication goals. Communicative competences are divided into those related to the knowledge of the surrounding world and personal value system and linguistic competences themselves, i.e. general and communicative speech competences.

In the Council of Europe "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" communicative speech competences include linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic competences. Linguistic competences are lexical, grammatical, semantic, phonological, orthographic, orthoepic competences. Sociolinguistic competence consists of linguistic markers of social relationships, rules of politeness, expressions of folk wisdom, register differences, dialect and accent. Pragmatic competence consists of

discourse competence, functional competence and speaking programming competence.

Competencies are the foundational element of learning, encompassing what should be taught and learned within an objective framework. Competency refers to a collection of knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired through training, as well as the capability to execute any activity based on such knowledge and skills. In the realm of foreign language acquisition, competency describes a level of language fluency, which is characterized by a set of interrelated competencies that include linguistic, discursive, speech, and communicative abilities. In contemporary literature, the list of competencies for foreign languages is expanded to include sociocultural, analytical, strategic, professional, social, and other skills. Nevertheless, without a projection of their future deployment, i.e. non-activity realization, they cannot all be encompassed.

We define foreign language communicative competence as a set of knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for realization of foreign language activity on perception and production of texts in a given situation of communication (context) in the language the user speaks and which is not his/her native language. It is necessary to take into account the main functions of communication, which are expressed not only in the exchange of information, but also in interaction and perception, as well as the subject-subject nature of communication. Taking into account the difference between the concepts of “competence” and “competency”, competencies are a part of the whole, forming its unity and constituting the activity side of foreign language use, and competence is a personal quality, including emotional and value attitude to the actions performed. Actually, foreign language proficiency can be competence as a separately considered personality property and competency as a part of general professional training of a future specialist. The components of competence are competencies that provide speech and non-speech activities of a language user, which are formed and developed in the university training.

When it comes to the students of non-linguistic universities, it is necessary to designate the foreign language as a non-core subject, which is, however, interdisciplinary in nature, included in the disciplines of compulsory study for future specialists of all specialties and focused on both personal and professional qualities of the future specialist.

The Council of Europe has actively worked to provide stakeholders in language education with effective recommendations through the Common European Framework of Reference for Language Education. This framework emphasizes an activity-based approach to language learning. The essence of this approach is that language users are first and foremost members of society, performing specific tasks in specific contexts, environments, and fields of activity. The various speech activities are integral components of a broader social framework which provides them with complete meaning [1]. Speech activity is a crucial aspect of the broader social interaction and communication skills of a language user. It involves the use of both general and specialized communicative speech competencies.

Therefore, narrowing the definition of foreign language communicative competence to professional foreign language communicative competence, it is important to emphasize that professional foreign language communicative competence belongs to the

sphere of professional readiness and implies the ability to use a foreign language in the sphere of professional communication. This is particularly vital for students graduating with a degree in economics. According to the researchers, foreign language competence plays an important role in the professional development of modern specialists, especially future economists, marketers, managers, etc.

The methodological basis for teaching a foreign language to future economists involves employing communicative and activity-oriented approaches, along with modern information and communication technologies and interactive teaching methods.

The primary challenge in creating communicative situations for future economists is the use of professional vocabulary rather than everyday vocabulary, which is mostly used by economists in professional conversations. The areas in which economic vocabulary finds application comprise finance, macro- and microeconomics, marketing, management, accounting, project management, among others.

The specificity of economic disciplines aims to demonstrate the behavior, modifications, and adaptations of various subjects under different market conditions, as well as the subsequent changes in inherent characteristics of any reacting objects. Effective training in such disciplines cannot be achieved by using traditional methods of work like lectures and seminars, so economic education is characterized by specific teaching methods based on interactive methodology: business games, brainstorming, case method, round tables, group discussions, etc.

In order to develop the foreign language competence of future economists, L. Sikorska proposes a special program based on the situational theory [7]. According to the proposed situational-integrative approach, there is a transition from performing single professionally oriented speech and thinking tasks to direct professional activity. The requirements for this activity are the main ones for creating the contextual principle of completing and deploying learning quasi-professional situations. Thus, the more diverse the problems that serve as the content basis of the situation, the greater the requirements for the knowledge, skills, and abilities of economic students who have to solve the task. Therefore, the complexity of speech and mental activity is constantly growing, which stimulates students to further work on their own speech competence and expands the scope of social competence.

In the context of solving professional tasks, students learn the material more effectively, as such tasks create conditions for the formation of internal motivation. The learning process already acquires personality-oriented content, as it involves the formation of one's strategy for a particular situation, the use of a creative approach to solving a problem, which ensures the creation of a positive emotional mood in students, and satisfaction as a result of mastering the elements of professional work.

In their Business English course, A. Matychak and her colleagues emphasize developing students' self-confidence in order to become successful in their future professional activities. All four types of speaking activities are practiced in specific practical situations, such as job applications and resume preparation, participation in job interviews, writing business letters, and reviewing the work of different departments in



companies [3].

S. Radetska proves that the use of modern information technologies in the process of teaching future economists to read in English creates high individualization of reading training (variation in the mode of working with text applications, which is as close as possible to the sphere of interests and desires of each student; regulatory individualization due to the flexibility of educational materials, their volume, the choice of the exercises, determining the optimal degree of teacher intervention in the educational work of students [5].

I. Romanov considers the case method to be one of the most effective teaching methods, the advantage of which is the possibility of optimal combination of theory and practice, which is important for the formation of foreign language communicative competence of future economists. The application of the case method in a learning situation allows us to speak of it as a new technology, which can solve the problems of a personality-oriented approach to learning [6].

It is noteworthy that a number of Ukrainian researchers, analyzing various aspects of the formation of foreign language competence of economics students and its varieties, propose to improve its level in the process of educational activity.

**Conclusions.** The analysis reveals that the foreign language competence of future economists is a set of knowledge, skills, and abilities that enable them to use a foreign language successfully both in their professional activities and for self-education and personal development. Moreover, it ensures a certain level of cultural proficiency in both written and oral communication and non-verbal behavior. As the world becomes increasingly interconnected, it is crucial to integrate comprehensive foreign language education into curricula that emphasize practical language skills in professional settings. This will equip future economists, marketers, managers, and other professionals to excel in the global landscape, promote diversity, and engage in effective cross-cultural communication. In essence, foreign language communicative competence is emerging as a cornerstone for success in a rapidly evolving globalized society, shaping not only the way we communicate but also the way we approach our professional endeavors.

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