Concreteness and complexity as necessary requirements to determine goals of teaching foreign language in non-linguistic university

The paper discusses the problems of the higher education system, and particularly the quality of the foreign language specialists training in Kazakhstan. The authors note that the ongoing changes in all spheres of society's life affect the current trends in the development of higher professional education, among which the leading principles in the sphere of foreign-language education can be named the continuity, interactivity and humanization. The realization of them is not researched properly. One of the possible reasons for this is the lack of specificity in setting goals and objectives for foreign language teaching at a university, which entails uneven disclosure of goals through the content of training. As a result, there is a discrepancy between the goals of foreign language teaching at a university to the general goals of higher professional education, as a consequence it might appear incomplete correlation of the content of instruction at the subject and general educational levels. In their study, the authors substantiate the need for a complete and specific presentation of the objectives of foreign language teaching in higher school programs for non-linguistic specialties and present the results of the analysis of typical foreign language programs in non-linguistic specialties. They also offer the author's vision of setting goals for teaching a foreign language, taking into account the principles of completeness and concreteness.

Keywords: teaching of foreign language, higher vocational education, continuity, integrative, humanization, non-linguistic specialties, communicative competence, speech activity, functional significance, didactic principles, competent specialists.

Occurring changes of all spheres society are caused by internal social – economic reasons and process of Kazakhstan integration into the world cultural and educational space that have a certain influence on up-dated trends in development of higher professional education, which among leading of foreign-language education sphere are continuity, interactivity and humanization.

Up-dated stage of development society presumes changes of requirements for quality of training specialists in Kazakhstan: Kazakhstan society needs specialists, who are capable to constant renewal and pick up its intellectual and cultural potential, orientation of world professional and educational space, and a creative upsurge in professional activity field.

Social order of higher professional education raises importance of discipline «Foreign Language», and determines need for serious linguistic training of university graduates, which is manifested in confidence knowledge of language as a medium of communication in general cultural and business space.

In modern conditions foreign-language communication becomes an essential component for specialist’s future professional activity, therefore role of «Foreign Language» discipline increases in non-linguistic faculties of higher education institution significantly. The state educational standard of higher professional education requires consideration of professional specifics in study of foreign language, its focus on implementation of tasks for graduates’ future professional activity.

Requirements of modern society and social order of higher professional education affected to importance studying foreign languages significantly and determined necessity of serious linguistic training of university graduates, who are manifested confident knowledge of language as a medium of communication in general cultural and business space [1; 60].

It is known that confident possession of a foreign language as a communication tool implies ability of formation to solve a wide range of communicative tasks to achieve goals of professional interaction, as well as a complex of intellectual, creative, evaluation skills and moral characteristics, which are necessary for further personal and professional growth and active participation in community’s life.

At the same time, as practice has shown that level of language training of university specialists doesn't provide development above assigned range of abilities to the fullest measure. There was an urgent need to take look newly at learning process and teaching a foreign language in general and particular.

Unfortunately, teaching a foreign language in non-linguistic specialties with considering students’ professional orientation is still unsatisfactory.
One of the possible reasons for this, it’s the lack of specifics in setting goals and objectives for teaching a foreign language at university, which entails uneven disclosure of goals through content of teaching.

As a result, there’s discrepancy goals of teaching a foreign language at university in general education, as a consequence, incomplete discrepancy of teaching content in subject and general educational levels.

All this points indicate imperfection of university curricula in a foreign language as competent specialists solve issues of implementation needs of society. Content of teaching a foreign language have to contribute realization of general goals at university education.

Higher education aims to provide a system of knowledge in a specific field, and form an individual on the basis of universal and national values, provide highly cultured, intelligent specialists of appropriate qualifications. Content of teaching consist set of education purpose, therefore, constructing content of academic subject, it is necessary to specify objectives of teaching for this subject.

Defining goals of teaching a foreign language, it is necessary to take into account how we will teach, what knowledge and skills students will possess. Functional varieties of language play a decisive role determining content of teaching foreign language in field of higher professional education. Mainly, teaching of a foreign language in a non-linguistic institution means mastery sublanguage of specialty.

In this regard, we presume that determining goals of education for count to take into account «principle of contextual correspondence» [2; 86], which learning language is consistent with social context dictated by learners communication needs. That is why compilers of programs should coordinate goals and content of teaching context of learners’ future professional activity, which will increase significantly with their motivation to learn a foreign language.

Thus, concretization objectives of teaching a foreign language imply:
1) Determination of functional significance in a foreign language as the basis for content of teaching;
2) Compiling a list of knowledge, competence and skills that need to be mastered at every stage of foreign-language teaching.

Many educators argue that concrete materials help students «think, reason, and solve problems». However, this unconditional endorsement includes a set of implicit assumptions about the concrete materials themselves, the context surrounding the use of concrete materials, and of the type of instruction (if any) that is necessary for students to learn from using concrete materials.

When choosing concrete materials for classroom use, the research and theory presented here suggest that simple, bland materials may assist students’ focus on deeper mathematical structures better than will «realistic» materials. Furthermore, bland materials may allow students the flexibility to assign new meanings to the materials as their concepts change. Materials that are designed in the image of real-world objects can be downright distracting to students and can draw their attention to superficial characteristics or irrelevant associations. For this reason, such materials may be especially problematic for students who have attention difficulties, such as those diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADD/ADHD). If realistic concrete materials are all that is available in a particular classroom, then the educator may need to provide students with supplementary instruction on how to think about the materials and how to decide which information is relevant versus irrelevant, as educators and tutors often do.

We are enjoined by the principle of concreteness to teach more by example than by precept. When we give explanations we should illustrate these by striking and vivid examples embodying the point of theory which is the subject of our explanation. One example is generally not enough; it is by furnishing several examples bearing on the same point that we cause the student to grasp that which is common to them all.

But this is not enough: the examples themselves may vary in concreteness; therefore we should select for our purpose those which demonstrate in the clearest possible way the point we are teaching, which tend to form the closest semantic associations. We should utilize as far as possible the actual environment of the subject.

These four manners are given here in what is generally their order of concreteness; it is interesting to note in this connection that translation is not nearly so ‘indirect’ or ‘no concrete’ as the extreme «direct method» have led us to suppose.

It is for the teacher to judge under what conditions each of these four manners of teaching meanings may be appropriately used.

Specification of learning objectives helps understand clearly what we try to teach, also check how far we’ve progressed in resolving set goals. On the contrary, blurred goals of learning don’t direct students’ minds to achieve expected results of teaching, moreover, they generate illusion of mastering all kinds of language and various forms of skills during time are allotted by program. Impossibility of realization such expectations lead to a loss of interest in learning and disbelief in their capabilities [3; 84].
Since the last third of the last century, especially after emergence of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, which is recognized as goal of teaching foreign languages (including English) for any purpose and in all types and kinds of educational institutions is development of learners’ foreign and speech communicative competence.

Promotion of a foreign and speech communicative competence as a learning goal gives too general formulation for this goal. There isn’t specific answer to rank questions: what kinds of speech activity should be taught in this or that case, what spheres can be developed communication after termination of a specific language course, what communicative roles have to be spoken graduates of a one or another university, who have received this or that specialty, using language, which they studied in their professional activities, etc.

In particular, all these aspects are necessary to specify purpose of teaching foreign-speech communicative competence in field of English-speaking business communication. Task of such concreteness is rational restriction of goal. If we have no limits, i.e. we just formulate goal as teaching of English-speaking communication skills in field of communication, specific tasks of teaching will become catchall practically, i.e. it isn’t really achievable. This is due to nature of English language, which is a peculiar language, so everything, which is available in English and in communication on it can relate to communication. If this is true (aforementioned work was proved validity of this statement), then when we teach business English, must be learned to everything that exist in the language. Such teaching is unrealistic for any course, therefore there is a need to limit goal.

This restriction is achievable at a support on two basic positions. The first position, which gives possibility to limit goal, connected with professional orientation in teaching non-native language of those learners. First of all, who study it for using in their future professional and labor work. Professional orientation as main reference point in teaching language for such students has long been recognized universally in both domestic and foreign methods. As a result, building teaching on basis of professional orientation, student has a so-called specialized bilingualism, i.e. kind of communicative competence allows you to communicate mainly on matters of professional interest.

It is known that programs of foreign language for universities with non-linguistic specialties of main goal are practical language skills. As it is known, in psychology goal is understood as a conscious image of future outcome action. This gives base to formulate goal in the context of teaching foreign language as planned result of teaching deliberately and language and culture of learning.

In foreign language programs for universities of non-linguistic specialties have main goal, which is practical language skills.

Analysis of standard programs has shown that, unfortunately, purpose of teaching foreign language at university is clarified superficially and often leads ability to read general and professional literature in order to extract necessary information, communicate on general and professional themes, formalize business documentation in foreign language, also conduct correspondence of personal and business nature, be able to design and present scientific materials at international conferences.

In this regard, it should be noted that higher education programs approved by the State Educational Establishment of the Kazakhstan Republic don’t clarify educational purpose, which are identified in some programs as increase of level by students’ general erudition, there aren’t educational and developmental goals.

Realization of educational purpose assumes students’ formation of correct view about language as public phenomenon, which provides development of logic thinking. Major volume of original specialized literature as well as variety of regional geography contribute expansion of professional horizons of students and elaboration their skills to assess presented information of literature really.

Actually, achievement of educational goals in foreign language as an academic subject has enormous potential. Different aspects of students’ education are active life position; respect culture, historical and spiritual values, science achievements of other peoples; general culture of interpersonal communication; cognitive activity; ambition for self-education; aesthetic perception; artistic taste; conscious attitude for mastering foreign language as medium of communication, knowledge and self-improvement.

Achievement of developmental goals means harmonious development of student’s personality, which includes: development of intellectual activity, intellectual initiative, creative abilities of student's personality, development of thinking, development of skills to think logically and critically, development and improvement of all types of memory, attention, imagination, speech communicative opportunities, development of cognitive abilities (see Table).
The correlation between learning goals, skills and their functional significance

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<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Skills</th>
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<td>Educational</td>
<td>1) ability to realize written and oral communication in a foreign language; 2) ability to understand content of general and professional texts in a foreign language; 3) ability to realize self-educational activities (ability to work with literature, compile a bibliography, design and submit scientific and professional information, etc.); 4) ability to apply regional and linguistic-cultural knowledge in oral and written communication</td>
<td>1) establishment and development of personal and business contacts, planning of mutual actions; 2) search for necessary information of a general and professional nature 3) formalize and provide scientific and professional information; participate in the international conferences. 4) conducting cross-cultural dialogue in personal and business contacts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional</td>
<td>1) ability to manage emotions, reconstruct verbal and nonverbal behavior according to developed communicative situation; 2) ability to vindicate believes; 3) ability to perceive foreign culture; tolerance.</td>
<td>1) impact on thoughts, feelings, behavior of interlocutor for achievement of the greatest understanding, creation of a favorable background communication; 2) ability to independent judgments; ability to make right moral choice; 3) exchange cultural experience, outreach own culture and respect to foreigner.</td>
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All these goals are determined by professional communication and cognitive needs of specialist with particular profile. In accordance with these goals, a full-fledged professional speech activity in a foreign language assumes possession of certain linguistic material with skills and abilities to operate this material in process of speaking, writing, listening and reading.

As defined by didactics, development of curriculum requires an integrated approach to objectives of learning, which «... requires the introduction of all aspects as components of goal «equal rights». ... «Equal rights» doesn’t mean uniform distribution of time for all aspects, but means their equality only in terms of significance for formation of students personality» [4; 300].

Consequently, knowledge and skills are written in programs of higher professional education isn’t enough to form specialist and especially personality. Complex implementation of all goals can be implemented only with clear formulation of skills, which should have each goal, also determining functional significance of each skill reflects functions of language in society life. Functional significance of skills contributes more complete disclosure functions of academic subject and its role in education system. Representation of skills and their functional significance corresponds to didactic requirement, which is shown to formulation of goals: content, dismemberment, and grouping [5; 50].

Considering need of complex approach is selected contents of university programs, in table we tried to present correlation of learning objectives, skills acquired by students in process of teaching foreign language at university and functional significance of these skills [6; 101].

Since one of the didactic principles constructing content of education is principle accordance to composition its elements in goal of education, it is necessary that these goals and content of education will be correlated with each other in programs and textbooks and reflected requirements of government education standard. Nowadays, lack of correlation between elements within educational and methodological complex (EMC) reduces significantly their effectiveness of teaching. Today, in non-linguistic universities educational
and methodical complex has a narrow pragmatic direction far from declared, for example, in document «General European Possession in Knowledge of Foreign Language» requirements that would contribute to development of all necessary skills for implementation of intercultural communication in professional environment.

Analysis of modern foreign language programs for students of non-linguistic specialties has revealed inconsistency their content solving problems of preparation competent specialists in field of intercultural communication. Programs don’t reply requirements of government education standard in the field of higher professional education, there is error between goals and content of programs with objectives and content of higher education.

For solving this problem can be offered complex approach to the construction of curricula can be proposed, one of the characteristics is correlation of goals in all components of EMC in foreign language. Discrepancy between objectives of program standards and teaching books don’t allow us substantiate content of teaching programs logically, which are presented for teaching specialists by requirements. At such statement of question educational discipline doesn’t carry out its function of expert’s preparation with set characteristics.

Experience of teaching foreign languages shows, if even goals of textbooks and teaching books are adapted goals and objectives of curriculum, factual material isn’t sufficient to realize goals of higher education. This is forced teachers to use additional materials to achieve goal.

Thus, observance of requirements to concreteness and complexity setting goals in foreign language teaching provides an exhaustive establishment of goals teaching foreign language at university and determines place of this academic discipline in system of higher professional education. Concrete and complex presentation of goals don’t only optimize learning process, but also imply expansion of content teaching foreign language, which is important for training of competent specialists.

References

Конкретность и комплексность как необходимые требования к определению целей обучения иностранному языку в неязыковом вузе

Статья посвящена рассмотрению проблем системы высшего образования, а именно изучению вопросов качества подготовки специалистов иностранных языков в Казахстане. Авторами отмечено, что происходящие изменения во всех сферах жизни общества влияют на современные тенденции развития высшего профессионального образования, среди которых ведущими в сфере иноязычного образования являются принципы непрерывности, интерактивности и гуманизации, реализация которых не всегда наблюдается. Отмечено, что одной из возможных причин этого является отсутствие конкретики в постановке целей и задач обучения иностранному языку в вузе, что может косвенно неравномерное раскрытие целей через содержание обучения. В результате наблюдается несоответствие целей обучения иностранному языку в вузе общим целям высшего профессионального образования; как следствие — неполная соотнесенность содержания обучения на предметном и общекомпетентном уровнях. В своем исследовании авторы обосновали необходимость полного и конкретного представления целей обучения иностранному языку в программах высшей школы для неязыковых специальностей и представили результаты анализа типичных программ по иностранному языку на неязыковых специальностях. Также ими предложено авторское видение постановки целей обучения иностранному языку с учетом принципов полноты и комплексности.

Ключевые слова: обучение иностранному языку, высшее профессиональное образование, непрерывность, интерактивность, гуманизация, неязыковые специальности, коммуникативная компетенция, речевая деятельность, функциональная значимость, дидактические принципы, компетентные специалисты.

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