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TECHNIQUES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS WITHIN THE IN-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING SYSTEM

Abstract. One of the key problems of the modern multicultural environment is defined as a dialogue and cultural integration, which is a prerequisite for the formation of communicative competence of a person capable of conducting such a dialogue and integrating. The solution to this problem is first of all the responsibility of the education system. In particular, much attention is paid to the development of postgraduate pedagogical education, which aims to provide training and improvement of qualified competent professionals. However, certain differences exist in understanding and selection of content, forms and methods of advanced teacher training. The purpose of this study is to identify, substantiate and experimentally verify the efficiency of certain techniques of developing communicative competence in foreign language teachers within the in-service teacher training system. The article introduces the basics of accumulation of communicative experience by an individual. It justifies the opinion that this mechanism directly affects the development of the teacher's communicative competence and the choice of appropriate techniques for their postgraduate education. The article presents our own vision of the model for the development of the teacher's communicative competence in professional development courses, which involves several stages: diagnostic, informational and motivational, managerial, educational and practical, and summarising. The article also contains data on the experimental verification of this model at various stages of its

application in the process of foreign language teachers training at the In-Service Training Institute of Boris Grinchenko Kyiv University. The effectiveness of cooperative training of teachers was experimentally verified and proven in order to actively develop their communicative experience and further improve their communicative competence.

Keywords: postgraduate education, communicative competence, communicative experience, development model, technique, cooperative learning.

Statement of a Problem. Ukrainian education system is currently undergoing a complex process of fundamental transformation based on humanistic, democratic and human values-oriented approach. This process undoubtedly requires scientific-theoretical justification, as well as detailed experimental and practical verification of the proposed forms, methods and techniques in all branches of education, specifically in postgraduate education.

Research Analysis. Problems of improving the quality of teachers' professional development have been thoroughly defined and analyzed in numerous research and practical efforts devoted to various aspects of pedagogical activities: peculiarities and structure of educational interaction, personal characteristics of a teacher, development of a teacher's professional competence, pedagogical creativity and pedagogical skill, styles, methods and techniques of work with pedagogical staff, etc. These and other problems are described in the works of famous scientists: Bech, J. Dewey, D. Elkonin, P. Kapterev, I. Ziaziun, G. Kostiuk, N. Nychkalo, A. Makarenko, E. Meiman, I. Pestallotsi, V. Sukhomlynskyi, K. Ushinskii, etc. However, they still remain relevant and require further analysis and consideration. In particular, the researchers should focus on updating the process of improvement of the teachers' professional competence within the postgraduate education system. Currently, there is a lack of sound empirical evidence in favor of any of the types, methods, techniques and tools for adult education at the advanced training courses, techniques for the development and improvement of various components of the teachers' professional competence. The methods declared by the instructors of postgraduate institutions quite often fail to meet the expectations and needs of the teachers.

This is fully applied to the development of communicative competence of teachers in the process of their training at professional development courses. The analysis of pedagogical, linguodidactic, psychological and methodological literature convincingly proves current relevance of this problem. The communicative competence of a teacher as an important component of his professional competence is studied in various aspects.

Scientists investigate its place and significance in pedagogical interaction (O. Akulova, A. Bogush, I. Ziaziun, O. Lavrynenko, S. Sysoieva, L. Yurchuk etc.); the basics of pedagogical communication and the development of the teacher's



speech culture (I. Bekh, N. Babych, G. Vasianovych, L. Matsko, O. Ponomariv, V. Slastionin, etc.); improvement of the teacher's communication skills in the process of his professional development (N. Dyka, O. Glazova, L. Reshetniak, L. Skurativskyi, etc.). Despite the fact that the analysis of the mentioned problem is presented quite widely in scientific studies, there is a need to clarify certain aspects in the organization of teachers' professional improvement, taking into account modern approaches to the development of their communication skills based on andragogy, age psychology and linguodidactics.

Aims and Objectives. Given the magnitude of the problem, in our opinion, it is advisable to investigate in particular the development of communicative competence in the system of postgraduate education of teachers of various subjects. Therefore, the purpose of our article is to consider certain aspects of improving the communicative competence of foreign language teachers during their in-service training in professional development courses. In the process of research, we set the following objectives:

- to study teachers' attitude towards different communicative competence acquisition techniques in the postgraduate education environment;
- to identify the main advantages and disadvantages of different approaches to the development of communicative abilities and skills of foreign language teachers;
- to give proof and to verify experimentally the efficiency of specific techniques for developing the foreign language teachers' communicative competence at the professional development courses.

Statement of Basic Materials

The in-service system of professional development provides the qualitative changes in the teacher's professional development based on the competence approach. The term "**competence approach**" means that the advanced training is focused on the formation of the teacher's *core and subject-specific competencies*.

Looking into the professional competence of a foreign language teacher, we should mention the developed foreign language communicative competence - aspect which distinguishes this type of teachers. D. Hymes defined it as "the knowledge that enables an individual to communicate functionally, that is what the speakers need to know in order to succeed in communication in the foreign cultural environment" [8, c.272].

The analysis of scientific literature in the field of foreign language teaching methods proves that communicative competence is a complex multi-component and multi-level phenomenon. Basically, scientists consider the following types of competences as its part: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive, social, subject and professional. In particular, Yu. Fedorenko and N. Gez distinguish three levels: linguistic, language and professional. [6; 1] V. Safonova also distinguishes three levels, calling them linguistic, verbal and socio-cultural. [5, c.15] According to

linguists M. Canale and M. Swain, communicative competence is divided into grammar, sociolinguistic, discursive and strategic competences. [7, c. 9]. The main components of the "Foreign languages" educational field in the Ukrainian school are the main types of competences branched from the generic concept of "communicative competence", namely: speech, language and sociocultural competences, which in turn are also divided into different subtypes (lexical, phonetic, cultural linguistic, etc.) [3, c.24].

In modern society, communication is of increasing importance, it is one of the prerequisites for success in any professional activity. The enhanced role of the individual's communicative competence is the result of modern *multicultural environment, dialogue and integration of cultures*. The well-known researcher of this problem, John Mead (2009), drew attention to the fact that through dialogue and interaction, an individual is able to perceive not only the actions of other individuals, but also their intentions, developing and evaluating them from the point of view of his similar experience [2, c.112].

All objects, actions and intentions, to which we pay attention, become sort of symbols for us. And the most important symbols are words, because any communication and understanding between individuals takes place due to words. The dialogue principle of communication, which we understand in the broad sense (person-to-person, culture-to-culture, epoch-to-epoch dialogue), contributes to gradual overcoming of each communicator's egocentrism, recognition of dialogue partner's opinions, intentions and tolerant attitude towards them.

Modern research efforts (by O. Goikhman, Ye. Passov, V. Safonova,

J. Harmer, etc.) have substantiated the existence of a *communication experience accumulation mechanism* common for the whole humankind, which leads to the formation of the individual's communicative competence. This mechanism is based on individual cause-and-effect links between each communicative situation and its direct result. The communicative experience is acquired in the process of individual's perception and implementation of a variety of communication situations, in which such individual participates on a daily basis. In the process of communication, new communicative experience is transformed into a source experience, which is used in each subsequent communicative situation. This results in the continuous accumulation of communicative experience by the individual and formation of their communicative competence.

Improving communicative competence is important for every educated persona who wants to succeed in professional activities. For a teacher, this competence is a professionally significant personal quality, because it drastically affects the process of pedagogical communication. Communication is extremely important in the professional activity of a teacher and has the following functions: communicative (exchange of information); interactive (organization of interaction) and perceptual (the process of perceiving and forming the image of another person and establishing interaction).

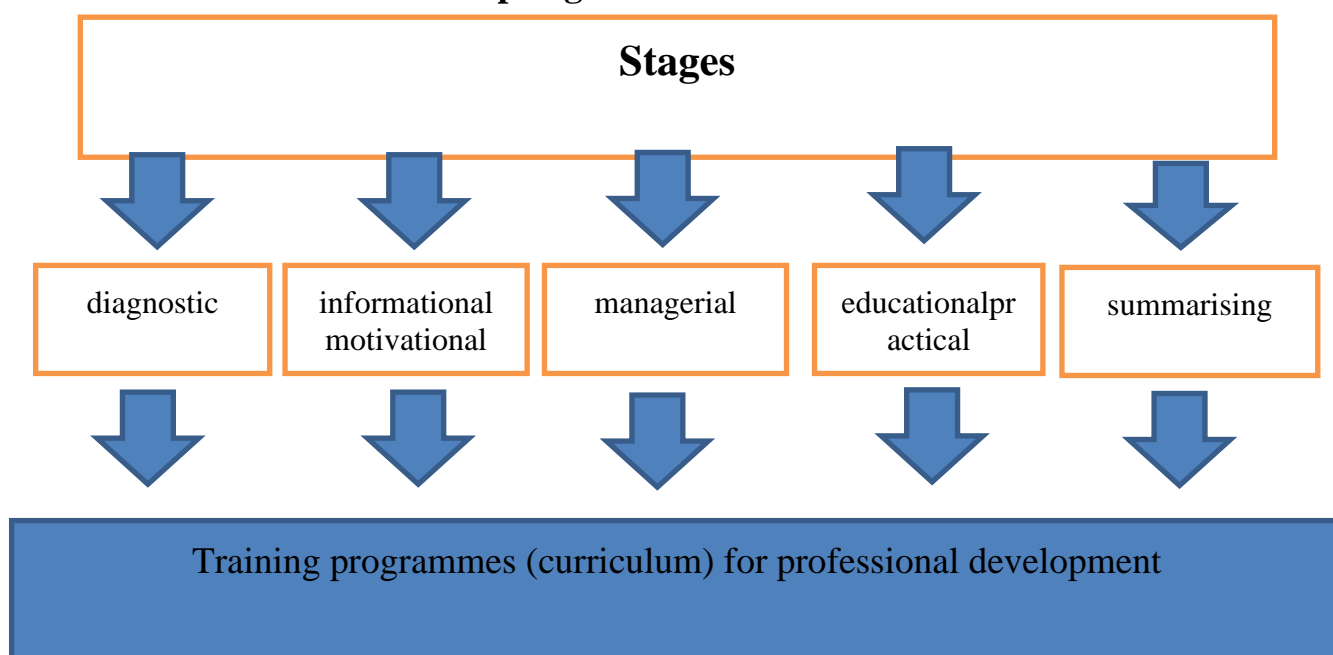


The developed communicative competence of the teacher is shown through the following skills:

- implementation of verbal and non-verbal information exchange;
- diagnostics of own personal qualities and interlocutor's ones;
- development of strategies, tactics and techniques of interaction with a student;
- organisation of teamwork to achieve the goal of the educational process;
- identification of oneself with the interlocutor and development of empathy.

The development of a teacher's communicative competence is one of the priority tasks of modern postgraduate pedagogical education. We offer our own vision of a model for the development of the communicative competence of a foreign language teacher in the postgraduate education system. It is a complete, quite dynamic system that covers several stages: diagnostic, informational and motivational, managerial, educational and practical, and summarising.

A model for improving the teacher's communicative competence in postgraduate education



At the first stage of diagnosis, the methods of initial express diagnostics (preliminary testing, questionnaires, etc.) should be used to find out the current level of the teacher's communicative competence development.

The purpose of the informational and motivational stage is eliciting the teacher's problem areas, which should result in teacher's motivation for their professional development and the eliciting difficulties in the communication process.

The managerial stage involves working out the curriculum and content modules for teachers training, taking into account their individual needs and requests in pedagogical communication.

At the educational stage, teachers take active part in practical, educational, training, research and other activities which involve the development and improvement of communication skills and abilities.

The summarizing stage includes a repeated diagnosis of the teacher's communicative competence levels and a comparative analysis of the indicators and, in accordance with them, suggests instructional guidelines for further self-improvement of the teacher in his practical activities.

The suggested model was experimentally tested in the process of foreign language teachers training at the In-Service Training Institute of Boris Grinchenko Kyiv University at the Department of Language and Literary Education.

During the first stage of the study, appropriate surveys were conducted to reveal the foreign language teachers' attitude to the use of various techniques for communicative competence development in the process of their training at the in-service teacher training courses. The analysis of the survey showed the following results:

- 18.3% of teachers prefer the frontal and individual types of work;
- 5.4% - do not object to take part in group forms of work, but do not consider them to be most effective for their professional growth;
- 20.1 - believe that group work can be useful, but they do not see their further active use in their own teaching activities, because of the excessive number of students at the classes, the imperfection of domestic textbooks, etc .;
- 6.1% - believe that this is an effective form of work in the process of communicative competence development, but do not possess the method of its implementation themselves;
- 8.6% - are indifferent to what kinds of work will be used with them;
- 5.3% - have negative attitude to group forms of work during their training at the in-service teacher training courses;
- 36,2% - fully support the use of group forms of education, considering them to be most effective for the communicative competence development.

The analysis of the results showed that over 50% of teachers master the methods and techniques of their own self-development creatively. They are characterized by increased professional and creative activity, the desire to maximize the disclosure of their potential. Another group of teachers - 30% need methodological support from instructors at the in-service teacher training courses on the application of group techniques for the communicative competence development. In particular, they need to be taught how to use these techniques, demonstrate their effectiveness and outline the ways of their application in their



own practice. Course instructors should pay special attention to the last group of teachers – about 20%, who have a low motivation. These teachers understate their self-esteem, they are not convinced of their own strength, the possibility of qualitative changes in professional self-development. They feel uncertain and uncomfortable in groups, and difficult to react to any changes. Teachers of this group need careful attitude from the teachers of the Institute, constant psychological support, reasonable careful selection of forms and methods of work, gradual involvement in activities, etc.

In the process of experiment, special attention was paid to the problem of selecting effective techniques and teaching methods which would activate the development of communicative competence of foreign language teachers. It was proven that the best way is to introduce the interactive principle of communication, which will activate the mechanism of accumulation of the teacher's communicative experience and further improvement of their communicative competence.

We consider group techniques, involving active communication to gain communicative experience, to be the best way to develop the foreign language teachers' communicative competence within the postgraduate education system.

Scientists T. Vasylieva, V. Dyachenko, V. Zagviazynskyi, O. Pometun, H. Liimets, I. Unt paid considerable attention to the study of cooperative learning basics, they distinguished it as a separate independent form, noting that group activities provide the maximum verbal intensity for the participants of communication, which is undoubtedly crucial for developing their communicative experience and their communicative competence [4, c.31].

Based on the scientific literature analysis, we determined the following advantages of foreign language teachers' communicative competence formed during group work:

- ability to perceive and generate foreign language texts in accordance with the communicative task, which includes the communicative situation and communicative intentions;
- knowledge of the language system and how it functions in the foreign language communication;
- knowledge of the socio-cultural development features of a country of the learnt language, and ability to bring their speech behavior in line with such features.

The aim of educational and practical stage was to find out group techniques which contribute most efficiently to the development of communicative competence of teachers, we have studied the results of this development involving the use of various group techniques. Having analyzed the results, we obtained the following data:

Table 1

**Comparative diagnosis of different group techniques efficiency
in the formation of communicative competence**

No.	Type of group technique	Teachers of the English language				Teachers of the German language				Teachers of the French language			
		number of teachers		ACSAR		number of teachers		ACSAR		number of teachers		ACSAR	
		qty.	%	qty.	%	qty.	%	qty.	%	qty.	%	qty.	%
1.	Creative projects	30	100	19,0	63,3	28	100	17,4	61,5	25	100	11,8	40,5
2.	Teaching situations modeling	30	100	6,0	20,0	28	100	8,6	21,6	25	100	5,0	20,0
3.	Situational method	30	100	5,2	17,1	28	100	5,0	17,8	25	100	6,0	20,4
4.	Brainstorming	30	100	18,0	60,0	28	100	16,0	57,1	25	100	15,0	60,0
5.	Discussions	30	100	19,2	16,5	28	100	21,0	70,5	25	100	22,0	84,0
6.	Role games	30	100	21,0	70,0	28	100	25,0	89,2	25	100	18,1	70,2
7.	Lectures	30	100	4,1	12,1	28	100	3,5	10,3	25	100	5,2	20,1
8.	Group discussions	30	100	6,0	20,0	28	100	6,0	20,1	25	100	6,0	20,4
9.	Reciprocal learning	30	100	7,3	23,2	28	100	8,0	21,5	25	100	9,2	36,3
10.	Audio and visual methods	30	100	3,0	10,0	28	100	3,5	10,3	25	100	4,0	10,5
11.	Self-teaching	30	100	3,5	12,0	28	100	4,0	14,2	25	100	3,0	10,0
12.	Organized progress model	30	100	5,7	19,0	28	100	5,0	17,8	25	100	5,5	20,3
13.	Error correction model	30	100	7,6	25,0	28	100	6,0	20,1	25	100	7,0	20,8
14.	Teaching practice	30	100	21,5	70,5	28	100	23,0	80,6	25	100	15,2	60,1
15.	Tests	30	100	15,0	16,6	28	100	3,5	10,3	25	100	6,3	20,6
16.	Questionnaires	30	100	15,0	16,6	28	100	2,8	10,0	25	100	4,5	10,8

To calculate the average communicative skills acquisition rate (**ACSAR**), we have developed the following formula:

where **m1**, **m2**, **m3** – indicators for specific types of group techniques, and **C** – number of communication skills acquired.

According to the data presented in *Table 1*, teachers of different foreign languages (English, German and French) showed approximately the same percentage of communication skills and abilities acquisition within the scope of each proposed group technique. In English teachers the highest rate of communication skills acquisition was recorded during their participation in teaching practice (70.5%), while the lowest was in the audiovisual method (10%). German teachers have shown the best communicative competence in the role games



(89.2%), and the lowest in the survey (10%). For teachers of French the most effective technique was discussion (84%), the lowest result was recorded for the self-learning (10%).

According to the study and the Table of results, the top five most efficient group techniques (by the average rate) included the discussions, role playing, teaching practice, brainstorming and creative projects (from 79% to 53.5%). The lowest averages are attributed to self-teaching, lectures and audio-visual methods (from 14% to 10%). Approximately the same average (18.5% - 20.9%) was recorded for situational method, teaching situations modeling, error correction model and group discussions.

At summarising stage, after active use of the cooperative types of training, the teachers were asked the following questions:

- How do you assess the impact of group types of work on the development of your communicative competence?
- Can you list the advantages or disadvantages of suggested techniques?
- What are the main problems associated with the use of group techniques in the process of communicative competence development?

Assessing the impact of various techniques on the acquisition of communicative competence, the foreign language teachers ranked them as following in terms of importance:

- 82% emphasized that the group techniques specifically enable them to actively deepen their knowledge and combine it with practical application, while feeling satisfied by the learning activities;
- 74% noted the efficiency of group activities in the development of communicative competence;
- 68% pointed out that the group techniques help them reduce insecurity and fear of making a mistake, being incompetent, etc.
- 62% emphasized that the group techniques are efficient as they give the opportunity to receive assistance from colleagues and make you feel an equal participant in the educational process;
- 59% expressed confidence that the group techniques help strengthen cooperation efforts, solve problems, manage time, develop teamwork skills and research abilities.

Conclusions. Summarizing the above, we can draw the following conclusions:

- the basis of reforming the domestic system of in-service teacher training is implementation of a competence approach, which primarily involves the development of all components of a teacher's professional competence;
- developed communicative competence is an important component of the professional competence of a foreign language teacher;

- in the teacher training system, it is necessary to build a model of the development of a teacher's communicative competence methodically and competently, and to select effective techniques for managing the development of a teacher's communicative competence;

- effective techniques for development of teachers' communicative abilities and skills in both course and inter-course periods are those that involve an active process of communication with the accumulation of communicative experience.

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