

## DEVELOPING UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE AND COGNITIVE COMPETENCE IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM

*The study arises out of a need to create scientifically grounded methodology aimed at development of foreign language communicative and cognitive competence. This paper accentuates the importance of foreign language communicative and cognitive competence in foreign language acquisition. Admittedly, the integration of Ukraine into international scientific and educational space is impossible without improving the system of foreign language training in the system of higher education.*

*Successful foreign communicative and cognitive competence will be significantly complexified without a high-quality preparation of a student who is able to act as an active subject of the professional activity and who has high levels of communicative and cognitive competences. It should be noted that students must be fluent in a foreign language and must demonstrate high foreign language communicative and cognitive competences. The communicative competence defined as a significant component of the key competencies and the result of modern education includes linguistic, discourse, sociolinguistic and sociocultural competences as well as socio-personal interactive component correlated with cooperation and tolerance of the student.*

*The cognitive competence refers to the cognitive processes that comprise creative thinking, which includes various creative thinking styles, such as legislative, global, and local thinking styles; and critical thinking, which includes reasoning, making inferences, self-reflection, and coordination of multiple views. However, not all the students of different faculties and specializations reach this level. Hence, a special emphasis should be placed on a search for new approaches, methods and means of formation of foreign language communicative and cognitive competence. On this basis, it may be concluded that a high-quality foreign language training of specialists needs a thorough study, systematization and improvement.*

**Key words:** *communicative competence, cognitive competence, foreign language communication, professional education, foreign language acquisition.*

**Introduction.** One of the most crucial requirements for the foreign language proficiency in the institute of higher education is the presence of foreign language communicative and cognitive competence of future specialists. Therefore, the examination of communicative and cognitive competence acquires social and practical significance.

The main objective of communicative and cognitive teaching a foreign language is the communicative and cognitive competence as a developed ability to perform speech and mental activity while solving real and ideational problems via target language.

Communicative competence is defined as a certain level of language proficiency, speech and social-cultural set of knowledge, skills and abilities that enable to vary acceptably and appropriately their communicative behavior in a communicative way depending on the functional predictors of foreign language communication and creates the basis for the qualified information and creative activities in various fields [1, p. 46].

The fundamental idea of the cognitive competence is that the learning process should be aimed at acquiring (or rather inferring) knowledge, structuring and systematically arranging its units, storing and applying them while getting adapted to reality [2, p. 14].

However, the problem of formation of foreign language communicative and cognitive competence of students is not fully investigated. The analysis of the scientific research and the experience of practical activity in the field of foreign language training of students revealed the contradiction between the objective need for the formation of students' foreign language communicative and cognitive competence and the lack of the scientifically pedagogical bases and the complex of pedagogical conditions for its formation in the system of the high school education.

The distinguished contradiction helped to define the **research problem:** what are the forms, methods and pedagogical conditions of the formation of foreign language communicative and cognitive competence of students.

**Actual scientific researches and issues analysis.** Communicative and cognitive competence was studied by many scholars all over the world. Most researchers attribute the formation of communicative competence with the formation of professional competence of specialists (A. I. Kurpesheva, L. R. Mkheidze). Various aspects of developing communicative and cognitive competence of students were studied in recent years (O. I. Vovk, M. A. Gryaznova, V. V. Gromova, Y. A. Belyakova). Teaching foreign language was studied by I. L. Bim, G. A. Kitaygorodskaya, A. A. Leontyev, E. I. Passov, W. M. Rivers, et al.

**Urgency of the research.** The activity on the development of communicative and cognitive competence undergoes in the practice of professional education, it is sufficiently developed in the pedagogical theory. The researchers note its high potential for successful teaching result. However, the possibility of using different

proper teaching methods in the formation of foreign language communicative and cognitive competence of students remains less investigated. Thus, the lack of above-mentioned methods led to the choice of the research topic: "The formation of students' foreign language communicative and cognitive competence during the learning process of the English language".

**The target of the research** is the detailed analysis of foreign language communicative and cognitive competence. To achieve this objective the following **tasks** are to be fulfilled: to give the definition of 'competence', 'communicative competence', and 'cognitive competence'; to analyze the existing approaches to its classification, and to determine the place of foreign language communicative and cognitive competences in the modern system of higher education in Ukraine.

**Materials for analysis.** It should be noted that there are two fundamental approaches to studying foreign languages: communicative and cognitive.

The main issue of the communicative approach is that the process of language acquisition should be organized as a process of real communication in situational environment [3, p. 48]. When learners are involved in real communication, their natural strategies for language acquisition will be used, and this will enable them to learn and use the language.

Within this approach the main objective of language teaching is the communicative competence. The communicative competence defined as a significant component of the key competencies and the result of modern education includes linguistic, discourse, sociolinguistic and sociocultural competences as well as socio-personal interactive component correlated with cooperation and tolerance of the student. Communicative competence refers to a learner's ability to use the language to communicate successfully. Canale and Swain (1980) [7, p. 8] defined it as a composing competence in four areas: words and rules, appropriacy, cohesion and coherence and the use of communication strategies.

The European Common Framework of Reference for Languages Communicative Competence singles out four major groups of communicative competence [6, p. 4]:

– *linguistic competence*: knowledge of pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar as well as graphics and spelling. The learner has a linguistic competence if he has an idea about the system of the language and can use it in practice. In Noam Chomsky's theory, linguistic competence defines the ability of an individual to understand and produce with the help of linguistic means and rules an indefinite number of sentences which are grammatically correct. In order to develop linguistic competence the following means should be used: charts, diagrams, handouts, illustrations which help to maximally individualize and promote the process of development of skills and abilities of all kinds of speech activity and also help the learners to memorize language and speech units; audio and video materials; computer programs and the Internet;

– *sociolinguistic competence*: it is the ability of understanding and producing different utterances in different contexts of use where different factors play an important role, such as the relationship between participants, their situation, etc. To effectively develop the sociocultural competence such an educational medium as immersion into the virtual space – the Internet – should be used, besides, audio and video materials containing cross-cultural information that are also employed in the learning process;

– *pragmatic competence*: it makes reference to the ability of acting efficiently in a language taking into account grammatical forms and meaning to complete a text (spoken or written) in different communicative events. It includes student's mastery of texts, discursive genres, and community speech interpretation. To develop pragmatic competence the following means should be used: English textbooks, audio and video materials computer programs and the Internet;

– *strategic competence*: it has to do with the individual's effective use of language by means of his capacity for using verbal and non-verbal resources to fix errors that can be produced when communicating due to different events that may limit the communicative process. The strategic component means the ability to balance the lack of linguistic knowledge, as well as the lack of foreign language speech and social experience, in the process of communication. A variety of audio and video materials should be used to develop the strategic competence.

There is no doubt that these four components of communicative competence should be respected in teaching a foreign language – and they usually are by modern teaching methods employed in second language teaching. Usually most of the above are best learned if the language learner immerses into the culture of a country where the target language is spoken.

The requirements for professional communicative competence of foreign language include such speech quality and speech behavior as correctness, accuracy, clarity, expressiveness, richness of the language; logic, argumentation, evidence of given conditions, the ability to defend own point of view in a dispute; the ability to listen to the communication partner, tact, care; the ability to build a strategy of speech behavior in different situations [4, p. 125].

However, practicing the received material is incomplete without employing the cognitive aspect.

The fundamental idea of the cognitive approach is that the learning process should be aimed at acquiring knowledge, structuring and systematically arranging its units, storing and applying them while getting adapted to reality [2, p. 14]. The ultimatum of cognitive language teaching is the cognitive competence.

According to Piaget [5], cognitive competence constitutes the cyclical processes of assimilation and accommodation, which indicates that people can manipulate their personal experiences as well as organize and adapt their thoughts to guide their behavior. Similarly, Fry [5] pointed out that cognitive competence comprises three interwoven and interdependent components: cognitive structures, cognitive processes, and overt behaviors. Among them, "cognitive processes," such as metacognition, cognitive styles of self-regulation, and cognitive

skills of thinking, reasoning, analyzing problems, and information processing, can affect one's "behaviors" like task performance, problem solving, and decision making, as well as "cognitive structures," such as self-schemas and goal orientation. It further points out that people can make a difference in their cognitive development and capability by manipulating their mental processes and cognitive styles via using appropriate thinking skills. It is also argued that cognitive competence is more than an ability to manipulate and strategize information, but an ability to internalize, self-regulate, and transfer these cognitive skills to construct knowledge and make sense of the surroundings [7, p. 10].

Cognitive skills development in students involves the progressive building of learning skills, such as attention, memory and thinking. These crucial skills enable students to process sensory information and eventually learn to evaluate, analyze, remember, make comparisons and understand cause and effect. Although some cognitive skill development is related to a student's genetic makeup, most cognitive skills are learned. That means thinking and learning skills can be improved with practice and proper training.

Thus, the main objective of communicative and cognitive teaching a foreign language is the communicative and cognitive competence as a developed ability to perform speech and mental activity while solving real and ideational problems via target language [8, p. 3].

**Conclusions.** Having analyzed all the above-mentioned facts, we come to the conclusion that both communicative and cognitive competences must be developed in order to learn foreign languages effectively. Students must be fluent in a foreign language and must demonstrate high foreign language communicative and cognitive competence. It should be mentioned, that nowadays not all the students of different faculties and specializations reach this level. Consequently, the role of communicative and cognitive competences should be explored and clarified which outlines the perspectives for further research.

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### ФОРМУВАННЯ КОМУНІКАТИВНО-КОГНІТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ У СТУДЕНТІВ ПІД ЧАС ВИВЧЕННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

*У статті пропонується створення науково обгрунтованої методики формування іншомовної комунікативно-когнітивної компетентності студентів. Виявляється значення комунікативно-когнітивної компетентності в процесі оволодіння іноземною мовою. Зазначається, що інтеграція України в міжнародний науковий та освітній простір неможлива без удосконалення системи іншомовної підготовки фахівців у вищих навчальних закладах, що, в свою чергу, потребує її ретельного вивчення, систематизації та вдосконалення.*

**Ключові слова:** комунікативна компетентність, когнітивна компетентність, фахова підготовка, оволодіння іноземною мовою.

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### ФОРМИРОВАНИЕ КОМУНІКАТИВНО-КОГНІТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ У СТУДЕНТОВ В ПРОЦЕСЕ ОВЛАДЕННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКИМ ЯЗЫКОМ

*В статье предлагается создание научно обоснованной методики формирования иноязычной коммуникативно-когнитивной компетентности студентов. Определяется значение коммуникативно-когнитивной компетентности в процессе овладения иностранным языком. Отмечается, что интеграция Украины в международное научное и образовательное пространство невозможна без совершенствования системы иноязычной подготовки специалистов в высших учебных заведениях, что, в свою очередь, требует ее детального изучения, систематизации и совершенствования.*

**Ключевые слова:** коммуникативная компетентность, когнитивная компетентность, профессиональная подготовка, овладение иностранным языком.

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