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Development of Students' Speech Communication on the Basis of a Conscious Attitude to the Study of a Foreign Language

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Abstract

One of the priorities of educational policy today is to improve the quality of the vocational education system associated with the training of competent and competitive specialists. This task has to be carried out in the course of systematic activity of university teachers since the discipline “Foreign language” is usually focused on the formation of a specialist who will have to work in a multicultural environment. In this regard, higher education needs effective teaching technologies that contribute to the process of intensifying university education, which is due to the integration of professional, linguistic and general cultural training of specialists. At the same time, the development of foreign language verbal communication should be a complex educational process, which, in addition to teaching students a foreign language, should also presuppose the formation of a high culture of interpersonal communication. The article investigated the following problems of the development of students' speech communication on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language: Components of foreign language speech communication; Functions of speech communication for the purposes of communication; Semiotic, Imitation and Social teaching models that are included in the content and forms of development of foreign language speech communication; Pedagogical potential of students' speech communication based on a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language; Indicators of the emerging foreign language competence; Indicators of a conscious attitude towards learning a foreign language in the framework of the development of speech communication.

Keywords: university students, foreign language, speech communication, conscious attitude, pedagogical technology, educational process, cognitive features, communicative culture.

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Introduction

According to the general provisions of the concept of education, any educational system, one way or another, will be aimed at the development of the individual's intellectual capabilities, which is a necessary condition for both receiving a fundamental education and the result of his training. Hence, one of the priorities of educational policy is to improve the quality of the vocational education system, which is related, based on current trends, to increase the effectiveness of the development of future specialists' foreign communication (Passov, 1989). This means that the content of professional education should be aimed at using all educational resources in the training of humanitarian specialists and expanding opportunities in their foreign language communication. Here we consider one of the factors for improving the quality of this process to be the use of an inductively conscious approach, which implies the presence of an organic combination of conscious thought processes and inductive components of teaching a foreign language, especially when students master speech skills and abilities. Indeed, knowledge of a foreign language is today an integral part of the professional training of a future specialist, taking into account the prerequisites for his future successful activity (Kondrateva & Valeev, 2015). However, often in the process of training a specialist, the aspect of a student's consciousness and preferences is not taken into account, which, in essence, contradicts the personality-oriented approach, which considers students as actors of educational activity, demonstrating their cognitive style of studying subjects. This represents a certain problem in teaching a foreign language when the preferences of students do not coincide with the methods of the teacher. This factor often slows down the process of mastering a foreign language by students. At the same time, it is the teacher who should direct the student's educational activities, for example, to the formation of speech skills and abilities to satisfy communicative needs in connection with obtaining a professional education (Astafurova, 1997). As an analysis of psychological and pedagogical literature has shown, in the framework of training specialists for the conditions of interethnic integration, the most promising is the competency-based education paradigm, focused on the full development of students' skills in verbal foreign language communication. Thus, the teacher's task is to teach students to think and reflect reality. A conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language should provide that students are aware of the meanings of linguistic phenomena and then, move on to ways of using them in various types of speech activity.

Hence, there is a need to develop such a teaching technology that takes into account the cognitive characteristics of students in the context of their conscious attitude to mastering a foreign language.

This determines the relevance of the research topic, which is explained by the need to intensify the educational process using an inductively conscious approach (including cognitive and professional aspects), as well as the conditionality of the high requirements for the level of knowledge of a foreign language as a means of professional foreign language communication.

The problem of the development of students' speech communication on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language requires an understanding of this process, taking into account the specifics of the subject "Foreign language". Here we consider the possibilities of providing conditions for the conscious attitude of students to the study of a foreign language as a necessary resource for a conscious understanding of the realities of a new language. This suggests the importance of the formation of consciousness in the development of linguistic phenomena, which is the manifestation of a high degree of independence and creativity by students in cognitive activity. To do this, the teacher must set non-standard tasks for students, the solution of which could be carried out based on their experience, associated with the correct choice of linguistic units and their use in the process of communication. Conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language in the course of the development of speech communication provides students with a sequence of the process of realizing the realities of the studied language with bringing their understanding to speech automatism, which is widely practiced in the communicative method of teaching a foreign language. At the same time, it is important to take into account the accompanying development of intercultural competence, which presupposes the presence of skills for carrying out activities in a multicultural space, the ability to act on the basis of value orientations in accordance with social requirements.

Purpose and objectives of the study

The purpose of this study is to consider the possibilities of developing students' speech communication on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language. The relevance of the topic of the article lies in finding educational resources to improve the language culture of students in the course of developing their culture of communication due to its special functionality and communicative orientation.

Literature review

As the analysis of scientific research has shown, foreign language speech activity is usually considered from the point of view of referring to the communicative teaching method, taking into account the reliance on a conscious attitude towards the study of a foreign language.

For example, when providing language communication in the course of teaching languages, researchers believe that it is necessary to radically increase the level of learning to communicate between people of different nationalities, for which it is important for students to develop speech skills in all types of speech activity; to form their skills and abilities to understand the thoughts of other people; to teach to master speech within a certain framework (Mil'rud & Maksimova, 2000; Sukhova, 2007; Susov, 1985). The issues of the formation of intercultural communication skills are important for us, which is associated, in particular, with such competencies as linguistic competence, which implies knowledge of the language system, the rules for the functioning of language units in speech and the ability to use this system to express our judgments orally and in writing, as well as sociolinguistic competence, which is based on knowledge of the ways of forming and formulating thoughts with the help of language, as well as the ability to use language in speech (Sadchikova, 2009; Ter-Minasova, 2000; Yelizarova, 2001). Certain attention was paid to the problem of the cultural self-determination of the individual when students need to perceive the multilingual context of the information and educational environment as a cultural text in order to expand the personal boundaries of their linguistic existence, to prove themselves as an active person, creatively adapted to a real multicultural environment and understanding the norms of behavior and etiquette when communicating with bearers of another culture (Bulankina, 2002; Ishkov, 2004; Shcherba, 2002). In the course of the study, we also studied the sections of the concepts of activity in teaching a foreign language, in which it is supposed to create certain conditions for the transformation of students from an object of study into an actor, an active participant in the educational process. In this regard, researchers believe that in the process of learning a foreign language, it is necessary to take into account such types of activity as intellectual, emotional, and speech (Abrosimova & Kondrateva, 2018; Khusainova & Valeev, 2018; Lyakhovitskiy, 1991). We also relied on research on the personal approach to learning, which, in the context of our problems, is characterized by a focus on the professional development of the individual; for students to find their place in a professional environment; to provide personality-oriented vocational training, taking into account the motives and value orientations, forms and methods of interaction that set the subject positioning of all participants in the educational process (Crumly, 2014; Sabirova, Latypov, Valeev, & Valeeva, 2018; Wright, 2011). We also considered the use of a conscious approach in teaching a foreign language, the peculiarities of the role of thinking and its connection with language, the relationship between the conscious and the unconscious, i.e. deeper insight into the structure of the language and the ability to apply it in practice (Kondrateva, Sabirova, & Plotnikova, 2018; Maklakova, Khovanskaya, Favictorovna, & Leona, 2019; Sagitova & Fahrutdinov, 2019; Sigacheva, 2018). We also used research data on various aspects of intellectual activity in the study of languages, in which it is proposed to create problem situations and the emergence of a motive for intellectual activity.

At the same time, according to the researchers, the educational activity of students should turn into a system of interrelated problems for them, acting as a chain of tasks with gradually increasing difficulties, which, ultimately, is aimed at stimulating the creative linguistic activity of young people (Khakimzianova, Ilyasova, & Ildarovich, 2019; Khaleeva, 1989; Khuziakmetov & Valeev, 2017).

Methodology

In order to prepare students for the conditions of interethnic integration, we turned to the communicative method of teaching English, since practical knowledge of a foreign language and communication with native speakers of the target language are put in the first place (Sternin, 2012). At the same time, it was investigated how a conscious attitude increases the productivity of speech practice and the formation of communication skills. In this regard, we investigated the level of development of students' foreign language competence, namely: How much their active vocabulary is expanded; How fluent they are in English; What grammatical mistakes they make in speech; How automatically they use the simplest foreign language clichés; How much they have increased the number of idioms and modern neologisms used in speech, and other questions.

The experiment involved 18 1st-year students of The Institute of Fundamental Medicine and Biology and 20 1st-year students of The Institute of Computational Mathematics and Information Technology of Kazan (Volga region) Federal University.

We believe that one of the criteria for students' successful mastery of a foreign language is their transition from real awareness of the linguistic phenomenon to unconscious control over their knowledge, thereby striving to achieve a level close to the level of proficiency of a native speaker. In this regard, during the experiment, the attitude of students to their cognitive activity was studied in the direction from their understanding of the system of the studied language to speech automatisms. At the same time, it was understood that, in addition to actually mastering a foreign language, the student should also develop a culture of interpersonal communication, including the skills of organizing activities in a multicultural space in accordance with social requirements (Geikhman, 2002). Proceeding from this, to create a situation of speech orientation of training, students were constantly involved in the communication process, for which exercises were used that maximally provoke students to communicate with each other (Shubin, 1972).

During the experiment, students' abilities were analyzed based on the following communication functions: contact function (willingness to establish contact to transfer information); information function (the ability to transmit information in a timely manner in response to a message); understanding function (understanding the meaning of a message in order to achieve mutual understanding); emotional function (exchange of emotions for the organization of productive communication); regulatory function (the process of interconnection and interaction of communication participants); function of influence (change of personal and semantic formations of participants in the communication).

In the course of the analysis of theoretical research and practical activities in the aspect of the problem under study, it was revealed that the development of students' speech communication based on a conscious attitude to learning a foreign language can be successfully implemented if the following conditions are met: if the pedagogical potential of students' speech communication increases based on a conscious attitude to learning a foreign language; if the modeling of the development of a foreign language speech communication is provided based on a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language; if the language material studied by students will be used by them in the process of speech practice; if the professional orientation of the subject in linguistic communication is enhanced during classes.

Based on this research hypothesis, the following tasks were set: 1) to analyze the development of students' communication skills in a foreign language on the basis of a conscious attitude to this process; 2) to consider the possibilities of independent activity of students and their creative approach to organizing their own speech in a foreign language; 3) to reveal the degree of foreign language training of students in the framework of the organization of foreign language communication; to determine the stages of the formation of students' ability to structure their speech in the form of mental actions for programming speech utterance; 5) to provide the modeling of the pedagogical technology for the development of foreign language communication skills of students.

The research was carried out within the framework of training students of the major "Foreign language". The study was carried out in two stages. At the first stage (September 2019), the analysis of the ideas formed by students according to the following criteria was carried out: students' ideas about the functions of verbal communication; pragmatic possibilities of using the techniques of speech activity in order to consolidate them at the conscious level; possibilities of increasing motivation to organize meaningful foreign language speech activity; using professional speech patterns in the process of role behavior; opportunities for conscious assimilation of speech clichés, and others.

Further, at the first stage, the following was carried out: the state of this problem in the educational practice of the university was investigated; the empirical material was collected; the attitude of students to the possibilities of using the studied language material in the process of speech practice was studied.

The following empirical methods were used as tools to test students' mastery of a foreign language: ascertaining and formative pedagogical experiment, observation, written and oral questioning, testing, analysis of the results of educational and extracurricular activities of students, analysis of students' self-assessment of the level of development of their conscious attitude to learning English.

At the second stage (May 2020), methods were developed for studying the pedagogical potential of the development of speech communication of students on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language; an experimental test of the implementation of the possibilities of a conscious approach in the development of foreign language speech communication of students was carried out, and on this basis, the formation of their ability to express their point of view in a foreign language on significant issues, registration of research results were carried out.

Results

Organizing in the course of experimental work the cognitive activity of students in the direction of the development of their foreign language speech communication on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language, we tried to carry out certain transformations. The study has shown that it is possible to assess the effectiveness of ensuring a conscious attitude to learning a foreign language in the course of the development of students' speech communication only with the help of diagnostic procedures. In this regard, we used operational diagnostics in the form of a survey and questioning of students, as well as the tests. At the same time, the diagnostic stage in the course of the experiment was of particular importance as it helped to identify students' current level of proficiency in the corresponding language and communicative competencies. At the same time, we proceeded from the assumption that a university graduate should also have a stable professional orientation in the course of organizing foreign language speech communication. Therefore, at the diagnostic stage, students' understanding of the importance of a conscious attitude to the ability to carry out foreign language communication was formed; their range of using speech clichés was expanded, as well as motivation for self-presentation of their linguistic potential was increased.

In this regard, we focused on the formation of the following necessary skills and abilities among students: a conscious attitude to mastering the vocabulary of a foreign language; striving for the conscious assimilation of speech clichés; the ability to use the studied language material in the course of speech practice; the use of techniques of speech activity in order to consolidate them at a conscious level; assimilation of the meaning of linguistic units along with their functions in speech; the ability to derive the general from the particular within the framework of the use of rules in speech patterns; the ability to use professional speech patterns in the course of role behavior; the ability to express a point of view in a foreign language on significant issues; increasing motivation to organize meaningful foreign language speech activity; strengthening the professional orientation of the subject in language communication. Thus, during the development of foreign language communication of university students, the following opportunities were achieved: a combination of the flexibility of the educational process and high productivity; the convenience of dialogue and obtaining the maximum amount of information; the development of logical and figurative thinking, intuition and sense of language; free access to information and increasing the level of its understanding.

Testing in future specialists of the degree of conscious attitude to learning a foreign language in the framework of the development of speech communication was carried out in the 2019-2020 academic year: initially – in September 2019, for the second time – in May 2020 in one experimental and one control groups. The experimental group consisted of 18 1st-year students of The Institute of Fundamental Medicine and Biology; the control group consisted of 20 1st-year students of The Institute of Computational Mathematics and Information Technology of Kazan (Volga region) Federal University. Diagnostic results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Development of students' speech communication on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language. ("Plus" – an increase in indicators in % for the period of September 2019 – May 2020)

Indicators of a conscious attitude towards learning a foreign language in the framework of the development of speech communication	The control group	The experimental group
A conscious attitude to mastering the vocabulary of a foreign language	+ 11 %	+ 65 %
Striving for conscious assimilation of speech clichés	+ 15 %	+ 80 %
The ability to use the studied language material in the course of speech practice	+ 3 %	+ 25 %

The use of techniques of speech activity in order to consolidate them at a conscious level	+ 2 %	+ 40 %
Assimilation of the meaning of linguistic units along with their functions in speech	+ 2 %	+ 20 %
The ability to derive the general from the particular within the framework of the use of rules in speech patterns	+ 2 %	+ 60 %
The ability to use professional speech patterns in the course of role behavior	+ 10 %	+ 70 %
The ability to express a point of view in a foreign language on significant issues	+ 2 %	+30 %
Increasing motivation to organize meaningful foreign language speech activity	+ 8 %	+ 75 %
Strengthening the professional focus of topics in language communication	+5 %	+ 50 %

Compared with the results of the control group, the experimental group showed steady growth in all factors. Thus, according to the results of diagnostics, it was revealed that the dynamics of the development of speech communication among students on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language, who took part in the experiment, exceeds the similar dynamics of the control group. This rather convincingly testifies to the effectiveness of the transformations of the educational process carried out by us in the course of experimental work in the conditions of the university, taking into account the modeling of the pedagogical technology of the development of speech communication when teaching English based on a conscious attitude to its study. The dynamics of indicators of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language in the framework of the development of verbal communication indicates that most of them have increased motivation for the conscious assimilation of speech clichés in accordance with the communicative intention, as well as the ability to use professional speech patterns in the course of role behavior. At the same time, the number of students with a narrow range of professional orientation of the subject in linguistic communication and poor practical experience in increasing their own motivation to organize meaningful foreign language speech activity has decreased. All of the above allows us to assert that the study carried out confirmed the main provisions of the hypothesis. Considering the most important aspects of the development of speech communication of university students on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language, we mean, first of all, the phenomenon of autonomous speech culture associated with their future professional activities.

This means a communicative culture that has the specifics of typical situations, has its own set of genre forms and has a specific speech implementation. In this regard, the construction of foreign language speech communication was well structured and organized according to uniform rules. And in this case, taking into account the conscious attitude of students to the study of a foreign language helped the teacher to create productive models of educational professional communication that would meet the real needs of students and would contribute to the optimization of the educational process. However, this does not exhaust all the issues related to the study of the problem of the effective development of students' speech communication on the basis of a conscious attitude to the study of a foreign language. It seems to us that the following issues require special research: development of students' ability to self-actualize their linguistic potential in the process of studying specialized disciplines; solving the problem of pedagogical support of students in increasing their level of foreign language communication; ensuring maximum opportunities for extracurricular work (for example, in the field of research) of students in order to develop their potential for organizing any type of foreign language communication; expanding the range of digital communication in a foreign language.

Discussion

In the course of the study, the problem was revealed that when organizing communication in a foreign language, students do not always clearly orient themselves in various communication situations based on social experience in the field of interpersonal interaction. In this regard, the authors recommend, when teaching students a foreign language, to bring to their understanding the need to take into account the following components of foreign language speech communication: linguistic component (availability of grammatical and lexical knowledge and skills), sociolinguistic component (knowledge of socio-cultural conditions in the course of language use), and pragmatic component (understanding the content of the interlocutor's message). In this regard, the analysis of the experiment showed the following: with the active assimilation of speech clichés by students, they assimilated the meanings of linguistic units and their functions in speech; with the increase in motivation to carry out communicative activities, they strengthened their conscious attitude to mastering the vocabulary of a foreign language; with the constant use of new information on the topic in specific communication situations, they learned to express their point of view in a foreign language on significant issues; when expressing a reasoned point of view on professionally significant issues, they strengthened the professional orientation of topics in linguistic communication; when using appropriate communication tactics, they turned to professional speech patterns in the process of role behavior; when mastering social-role behavior in situations of multicultural communication, they increased motivation to organize meaningful foreign language speech activity.

These results are generally consistent with various provisions on the strategy of effective perception of a foreign language, with the foundations of the theory of teaching understanding of a foreign language, with the formation of the skills of independent learning of a foreign language, which are considered in the works of Abrosimova G.A., Kondrateva I.G. (Abrosimova & Kondrateva, 2018), Khaleeva I.I. (Khaleeva, 1989), Fahrutdinov B.I., Sagitova R.R. (Sagitova & Fahrutdinov, 2019) and other authors.

Thus, an important position of the conscious attitude of students to the study of a foreign language in the framework of the development of verbal communication can be considered as their conscious perception of linguistic phenomena and their speech functioning when organizing foreign language communication. This, in particular, is also associated with the provision that language, speech, and speech activity are conditioned by the possession of communication methods not only in an interpersonal but also in an intercultural context.

Conclusion

Taking into account the use of the conscious attitude of students to the study of a foreign language, the development of their speech foreign language activity contributes to the formation of their motivation to achieve their competitiveness in a constantly expanding multicultural space. For this, it is necessary that the cognitive activity of young people is personally meaningful for them and focused on the qualitative development of language and communicative competencies. This is rather productively promoted by the approach we are considering, when organizing the educational process, language and regional material penetrate the student's consciousness. On this basis, in the development of foreign language communication of students from the point of view of their conscious attitude to this process, its communicative aspect is brought to the fore, which can be represented in the form of the following algorithm: teaching a foreign language in all its aspects → teaching language competencies → teaching a foreign language speech activity → teaching foreign language communication → formation of communicative competence → involving students in socio-cultural activities based on productive communicative behavior. As a result, students develop the skills of organizing communication in a foreign language considering cultural awareness on the basis of compliance with certain norms of linguistic and non-linguistic behavior necessary for adequate communication in a foreign language. At the same time, as practice shows, the effectiveness of the result of the development of speech foreign language communication directly depends on the scope of study of its essence and its individual components. With this approach to teaching, students' independent activity and their creative approach to organizing their own speech in a foreign language are activated.

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Competing interests

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