

FORMING THE STRATEGIC COMPETENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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The article deals with strategic competence, which is included in communicative competence and is important for foreign language teacher training. The aim of the article is to reveal the essence and meaning of the concept of strategic competence in a process of its formation in foreign language teachers.

It is stated that the strategy is a tool used by a language user to activate skills and abilities in communication. In the structure of communicative competence, strategic competence plays an important role along with discursive, verbal, socio-cultural and sociolinguistic competences.

The following types of verbal activities for mastering certain communicative strategies were identified: perception (receptive strategies), production (productive strategies), interaction (interactive strategies), mediation (intermediary strategies).

It is stated that strategic competence in foreign language acquisition includes educational and communicative strategies. It is emphasized that a teacher focuses his/her work on enriching students' communicative potential, enhancing their language competence, directing their efforts towards developing attainment strategies. The acquisition of achievement strategy competence is a productive way to raise a level of communicative competence.

It is important for preparing a foreign language teacher to know that at the present stage of development of the theory of communicative competence the notion of strategic competence develops in two directions: as communicative strategies and as educational strategies.

The identification of learning strategies as a separate direction of research highlights an importance of students' conscious attitude towards the learning process and their own learning activities. The teacher's goal-oriented development of learning strategies contributes to personal and active learning, increasing students' autonomy, and active thinking. Essential for successful formation of strategic competence is an ability to combine communicative and educational strategies to solve communicative tasks. Use of some strategies requires students not only intuition and mental competence, but also analysis and reflexion.

ФОРМУВАННЯ СТРАТЕГІЧНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНЦІЇ ВЧИТЕЛІВ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ

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Ключові слова: *стратегічна компетенція, комунікативна компетенція, вчителі, вивчення іноземних мов.*

У статті розглядається стратегічна компетенція, яка включена до складу комунікативної компетенції і є важливою для підготовки вчителя іноземної мови. Метою статті є розкриття сутності і змісту поняття стратегічної компетенції в процесі її формування в майбутніх учителів іноземної мови.

Наголошено, що стратегія є засобом, який застосовує користувач мови для активізації навичок та вмінь під час спілкування. У структурі комунікативної компетенції стратегічна компетенція відіграє важливу роль поряд із дискурсивною, мовною та мовленнєвою, соціокультурною та соціолінгвістичною компетенціями.

Виділено види мовленнєвої діяльності для оволодіння певними комунікативними стратегіями: сприймання (рецептивні стратегії), продукування (продуктивні стратегії), інтеракцію (інтерактивні стратегії), медіацію (посередницькі стратегії).

Зазначено, що стратегічна компетенція в оволодінні іноземною мовою включає навчальні та комунікативні стратегії. Наголошено, що викладач націлює свою роботу на збагачення комунікативного потенціалу студентів, розширення їхньої мовної компетенції, спрямовує їхні зусилля на розвиток стратегій досягнення. Оволодіння стратегічною компетенцією досягнення є продуктивним шляхом підвищення рівня комунікативної компетенції.

Важливим у підготовці майбутнього вчителя іноземної мови є знання про те, що на сучасному етапі розроблення теорії комунікативної компетенції поняття стратегічної компетенції розвивається у двох напрямках: як комунікативні стратегії та як навчальні стратегії.

Виділення навчальних стратегій в окремий напрям дослідження засвідчує важливість свідомого ставлення студентів до навчального процесу і своїх навчальних дій. Цілеспрямований розвиток викладачем навчальних стратегій сприяє особистісно-діяльнісному спрямуванню навчання, підвищенню рівня автономності студентів, активізації мислення. Суттєвим для успішного формування стратегічної компетенції є вмiле поєднання комунікативних і навчальних стратегій задля вирішення комунікативних задач. Використання деяких стратегій вимагає від студентів не лише інтуїції чи мовленнєвої компетенції, а й аналізу та рефлексії.

Introduction of the issue. Today strategic competence is considered as one of the components of interpersonal communication and is included in the communicative competence which provides the possibility for intercultural communication. The growing relevance of strategic support for the process of teaching foreign language communication leads to a special development of strategic competence in the content of foreign language teacher training.

The analysis of the status of studying the problem of forming the concept of strategic competence of a future foreign language teacher allows us to assert that it is not sufficient in the methodological literature at least due to the fact that a large number of scholars in the field of languages have recently begun to get acquainted with the structure of parameters and categories, which characterize the current common European approach to the process of learning, teaching and assessing the language and detail the requirements for the ability to use the language in the context of intercultural communicative competence and the knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for this.

The notion of strategic competence has been dealt with by foreign scientists such as L. Bachman, M. Canale, A. Cohen, G. Gordon, L. Mariani, R. Oxford and others. Among the domestic researchers we should mention O. Vanivska, O. Zadorozhna, T. Oliinyk, I. Potiuk, and others who focused on studying the problem of strategic competence. However, these problems still need to be solved, because we still have to specify the structure and content, define the goals, and the stages and means of mastering such strategies.

Aim of research. Considering the relevance of the problem stated above and the lack of its study our study aims at revealing the essence and content of the notion of strategic competence in the context of modern methodological developments in the field of communicative competence for this notion to be used more actively in its formation by future foreign language teachers.

Results and discussion. Competence – a formation by students a complex interdependent qualities of personality, possession of knowledge, skills and abilities, and even ways of action, which are necessary for quality productive activities in relation to a certain set of subjects and processes.

The essence of the notion of ‘competence’ in the process of teaching foreign languages lies in the ability to perform certain, mainly language-based activities in a foreign language.

The competence structure for foreign language teaching includes: a set of knowledge, skills and abilities required to carry out a specific activity; the personality traits required to carry out a specific activity; the ability of an individual to cope with

different tasks, i. e. the possession of ways to solve problems, the experience and ability to achieve a goal in a particular activity [1, p. 7].

Strategy is the means a language learner uses to mobilize and balance his or her resources and to activate his or her skills, in order to confront the specific communicative situation and successfully resolve a communicative task in the most efficient and often economical and accessible way according to their own goal.

The process of introducing a teacher to the meaning of strategic competence in the composition of communicative competences should begin with an analysis of the current understanding of the methodological essence of the concept of “strategy”. The notion is viewed, in particular, as “an organised, goal-oriented and directed line of behaviour chosen by an individual to perform the task he/she sets himself/herself, or with which he/she faces” [3, p. 10]. Strategy as a way of activity is one of the key understandings in the activity-oriented approach to language learning, because it is the one that links the task, the way in which a language user learns and understands a given situation, and the competencies he or she uses to perform that task. In other words, strategies act “as a link between the resources of the learner (competences) and what he/she can do with them (types of communicative activities)” [3, p. 25].

It should be emphasized that the notion of strategic competence has become a part of communicative competence since the very beginning of the development of this methodological category. M. Canale writes about three components of communicative competence: grammatical, social-linguistic, discursive and strategic [8].

L. Bachman considers strategic competence along with language competence and psychophysiological mechanisms of ensuring communicative activity [7]. However, as Sam Rich points out, among all types of competence, strategic competence has for some time been in a role of Cinderella in eyes of Western linguists compared to literacy and social competence. It refers mainly to verbal and non-verbal communicative strategies aimed at compensating communicative failures through inability or lack of competence [8].

Strategic competence is one of six components of communicative competence already together with linguistic, social, discursive, socio-cultural and social competences. The analysis of current research suggests that the focus of the educational process on forming communicative competences in foreign language teaching and including strategic competences into its structure is not exclusively a European trend but rather a characteristic of the generally accepted approach to language teaching in the world. The National Capital Language Resource Center (Washington, DC), for example, points

out that language teaching in the United States of America is based on the idea of building competence to use the language for communicative purposes and considers communicative competence as a set of three components: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive and strategic competences.

For foreign language teachers in our country the problem of implementing a communicative approach in teaching foreign language is relevant. The focus of the professional training of future foreign language teachers on the organization of personal and activity-oriented communication with foreign language students has increased through a necessity of forming students' intercultural communicative competence which is declared to be the main practical goal of foreign language teaching. In the structure of communicative competence, strategic competence plays an important role along with discursive, linguistic and verbal, socio-cultural and sociolinguistic competences.

In this connection, at a higher education institution in a process of learning by future teachers of methodology of foreign language teaching they should be introduced more deeper to the types of strategic competence used in foreign language teaching. Communicative strategies are deemed as a way of performing communicative tasks. Progress in language learning "becomes more evident in a learner's ability to perform communicative activities and operate communicative strategies in a straightforward manner" [3, p. 57]. The aim of a teacher is to help students to master certain communicative strategies that would allow them to successfully perform different types of communicative activities: reception (receptive strategies), production (productive strategies), interaction (interactive strategies), mediation (mediation strategies).

Educational strategies include memorizing strategies, cognitive strategies, compensatory strategies, metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, social strategies.

Strategic competence in foreign language acquisition is the ability to develop various short- or long-term plans for the use of verbal and non-verbal means to overcome difficulties in communicating and learning/learning the language, which is meant to act whenever there is a need to find solutions to real or perceived problems in communicative or educational activities, both at a conscious and at a subconscious level.

Strategic competence in foreign language acquisition includes the following learning and communication strategies:

- Learning strategies include memorizing strategies, cognitive strategies, compensatory strategies, metacognitive strategies, ineffective strategies, social strategies;

- Communicative strategies include basic (semantic, cognitive) and complementary strategies;
- Communicative activities are divided into the following stages: planning, execution, control and correction, which are carried out with the help of certain strategies depending on the type of speech activity (receptive or productive).

Compensatory teaching strategy competence is an ability to get out of a situation where there is a lack of language means for receiving and transmitting foreign language information, an ability to express themselves in the absence of verbal means, including an ability to use words with similar meanings, periphrasis, etc.; it is a set of special skills and abilities that allow you to achieve comprehension, get out of a difficult situation and that characterize the level of practical proficiency in foreign language as a means of communication.

Compensatory teaching strategic competence includes:

- knowledge of language structural elements (grammatical, lexical, phonetic) necessary for communication in the foreign language being studied and skills to use them in oral and written communication situations;

- the knowledge and use of a range of language formulas required when communicating in a foreign language;

- the ability to exercise a verbal intention to establish contact and mutual understanding between different partners;

- knowledge of the national and cultural specificities of language and speech phenomena;

- knowledge of verbal means of compensation in situations of communicative violence in the process of other people's communication;

- knowledge of non-verbal elements of communicative behaviour of the representatives of other cultures that are studied, which are used to fill the lacunas of linguistic, pragmatic and socio-cultural nature;

- the skills and abilities to use verbal/non-verbal means of compensation for the purpose of overcoming the communicative challenges.

Communicative strategies include basic (semantic, cognitive) and auxiliary strategies. Communicative activities are divided into stages: planning, execution, control and correction, which are carried out with the help of certain strategies depending on the type of speech activity (receptive or productive).

In the context of the modern approach to the language education, teachers should bear in mind that the choice of strategy depends on both the type of communicative speech activity and the stages of any activity: planning, execution, result evaluation, correction. The numerous types of communicative strategies can be systematized and presented in this way:

Planning phase:

Productive strategies (oral and written monologic speech):

- activation of internal resources with possible clear advance preparation;
- taking into account the specificity of the audience in the choice of style, discourse structure, formulations;
- preparation of auxiliary aids;
- expanding the task if necessary;
- refinement of the communicative intention.

Receptive strategies (listening, reading):

- activation of linguistic and general cultural knowledge;
- probable pre-determination of the organizational structure and the content of the information;

Interactive strategies (oral and written dialogue communication):

- activation of possible variants for the development of communicative interaction “Identification of gaps in points of view and available information between speakers”;
- planning their actions.

Mediation strategies (oral and written translation, referencing, translation):

- forward organizing and maximizing resources;
- selection of references;
- preparation of thematic vocabulary (glossary);
- taking into account the needs of speakers;
- establishment of the volume unit of the interpreted material.

Implementation phase:

Productive strategies (oral and written monologic speech):

- use of avoidance strategies and compensatory strategies: simplification, approximation, paraphrasing, descriptive formulation, assimilation of native language to foreign language, etc;
- use of traditional clichés;
- experimenting with linguistic units in which one is not quite sure.

Receptive strategies (listening, reading):

- identification of received linguistic and extralinguistic information;
- deriving a general concept from the linguistic and extralinguistic information;
- hypothesis building on the communicative intent of the context.

Interactive strategies (oral and written dialogue):

- transferring the word to another participant in the interaction;
- interpersonal cooperation to maintain communicative cooperation;
- achieving mutual understanding;
- appealing to a co-speaker for support.

Mediation strategies (oral and written translation, referencing, recounting):

– one-step processing of the volume of information received and directing attention to the next;

- recording possible variations, eq;
- elimination of gaps.

An assessment of the results:

Productive strategies (oral and written monologic speech):

– monitoring the success of verbal expression through facial expressions, gestures and listening actions, etc

Receptive strategies (listening, reading):

- hypothesis verification.

Interactive strategies (listening and writing dialogue):

- monitoring the relevance of the interaction to the original intention;
- monitoring of the effectiveness and success of the collaboration.

Mediation strategies (oral and written translation, referencing, translation):

- verification of the meaningful consistency of the original version and the interpretation;
- checking the appropriateness of the language used.

Correction stage:

Productive strategies (oral and written monologic speech):

- self-Correction.

Receptive strategies (listening, reading):

– returning to the initial phase with a purpose to revise the hypotheses. Interactive strategies (listening and writing dialogue):

- giving or taking notes on a meaningful or linguistic level;
- reconciliation of misunderstandings;
- renewing the conversation.

Mediation strategies (oral and written translation, referencing, transcription):

- clarification with the use of dictionaries, thesauri;
- consultations with experts, sources.

It is believed that the possession of strategic competence allows to overcome in a greater extend socio-cultural difficulties than cognitive or psycholinguistic ones. However, recent research proves that sufficiently developed strategic competence allows a person to cope with problems that are not cognitively or psychologically available in the process of unprepared speech, when the possibility to use ready solutions is extremely limited. For example, in a case of a disadvantage (of a linguistic or sociocultural nature) while solving the communicative task at hand, we can use strategic strains that characterize two modes of human behavior. One of them is to avoid a disadvantage, to avoid a risk by changing the purpose of one's speech, applying it to one's abilities

and competences (reductive strategic tension). Another one is to try to solve the disadvantage without changing one's communicative goal, but by expanding one's communicative resources (strategic mode of attainment).

As L. Mariani [11] notes, reductive strategies can be applied both at the level of the content of a message (elimination of a certain topic, retraction of a message, change of meaning) or at the level of social behaviour (e. g., failure to observe the rules of politeness).

If the educator focuses on enriching the students' communicative potential and enhancing their verbal competence, he or she must direct their efforts towards developing the achievement strategies. Achievement strategies are manifested at the level of the word, speech, discourse. At the level of the word/sentence the following can be: borrowing from another language (including a native one); the assimilation of a native word into another language through the use of other morphemes or the transfer of the intonation pattern of the speech from one language to another without the necessary structural changes, as well as the usage of so-called "false friends of the translator". The use of such strategies by students must be understood and evaluated by the teacher as a reflection of the students' acquisition of foreign language skills. It is more suitable to teach them to use strategies such as "generalization", "rephrasing", "selection of synonyms/antonyms", "restructuring".

At the discourse level, students may have problems in initiating/completing speech, supporting discourse, expressing feelings and attitudes, controlling interactions, explaining situations and intentions, etc. Achievement strategies, which should be formulated by students to successfully solve these problems, include, first of all, cooperation strategies, which are socially oriented in nature: asking for help, role sharing, consensus building, mutual understanding and so on.

All in all, it can be concluded that the acquisition of strategic competence is a productive way to raise the level of communicative competence as it brings those who learn a foreign language closer to the real situation in which foreign language speakers meet. A classic example is the co-existence of the words "thing" and "stuff" in English to denote a myriad of words whose names do not come off negatively in the course of speech. With the limited language resources available to beginners in foreign language teaching, the ability to use communicative strategies gives them the opportunity to improve their communicative competence.

In this context, an important question for the training of future foreign language teachers is whether it is sufficient to form students' strategic competence in reaching it by simply creating situations in which

such a strategy would manifest itself spontaneously, or whether it is worth purposefully organizing practical exercises in its use in the classroom. Unfortunately, there is still no experimental evidence of this or that path among current research and practice. We can only assume that the relevance of this problem in the theoretical training of the future teacher will encourage him/her to straightforward investigations, or even experiments in this direction in his/her practical work.

It is important for the professional preparation of the future foreign language teacher to know that at the present stage of development of the theory of communicative competence the notion of strategic competence develops in two directions: as communicative strategies and as educational strategies. While communication strategies are aimed at solving communication problems in a targeted way, educational strategies are the means of mastering the foreign language as a whole. Therefore, researchers often consider educational strategies as a broader concept or argue that the use of communicative strategies facilitates the development of educative strategies.

In the first studies of educative strategies, it was argued that they are ways of behaving and thinking that influence learners' processing of information [12, p. 315]. Among several literary classifications of these strategies, Oxford's classification, which distinguishes two groups: direct and indirect learning strategies, is worth mentioning. Direct educational strategies include:

- memorization strategies (creation of associative links, reliance on visual and audio images, repetition, use of physical actions, retrieval of necessary information in the memory);
- cognitive strategies (practice, reception and elaboration, analysis, design, etc.);
- compensatory strategies (use of guesswork, overcoming difficulties in oral and written language).

Indirect educational strategies include:

- metacognitive strategies (defining the goal of learning, organisation and planning of the learning process, self-evaluation);
- emotional strategies (lowering anxiety level, increasing own motivation, and control of emotions)
- social strategies (empathy, co-operation, disclosure, etc.).

The identification of educative strategies as a separate research focus emphasizes the importance of students' conscious attitude to the educational process and their learning activities. The teacher's purposeful development of teaching strategies for future teachers of foreign languages contributes to the personal and active conjugation of learning, raising the level of students' autonomy, and the activation of their thinking.

Essential for successful formation of students' strategic competence is the ability of the teacher to combine communicative and educational strategies to solve communicative tasks. This is what the program envisages, which interprets strategic competence as:

a) "the ability to choose effective strategies for carrying out communicative tasks", i. e. it stresses the activity of a learner of the language as a communicator in fulfilling his or her communicative intentions;

b) "the ability to independently acquire and use knowledge, plan the educational process, and evaluate their knowledge" [10], i. e. it underlines the importance of the ability to learn.

Conclusions and prospects for further development in this direction. Some strategies require not only intuition and language competence but also analysis

and reflection, such as metacognitive learning strategies. So, one of the tasks of the teacher – to direct the students' attention to the use of diverse strategies and the need for conscientious attitude to the organization of their own speech activity. The training of future foreign language teachers should include specific topics related to the formation of language and language competence, organization of the educational process, recommendations for situations in which the use of attainment strategies, direct and indirect educational strategies would be appropriate.

The general outline of the problem of forming strategic competence in this article demonstrates the importance of including this problem in the content of the current professional training of the future foreign language teacher and opens up a wide field for research and practical implementation.

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