

FORMATION OF THE DISCURSIVE COMPETENCE OF LAW STUDENTS IN TEACHING WRITING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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ABSTRACT

The article deals with the issue of formation discourse competence of law students in teaching writing in foreign languages. Discourse competence is very useful for the students of law, especially in improving their ability in constructing texts both spoken and written. As the future specialists of law, the students need a qualification, skill, or ability to deal with the different texts, and documents. As we know discourse competence is knowledge of text and can be viewed as cohesion and coherence, and it also refers to pragmatic knowledge. In this article the author analyzed the researches and views of scientists-researchers based on developing students' discourse competence in writing.

Keywords: Communication, sociocultural mobility, discourse, discourse competence, foreign language, communicative competence, text, cohesion, coherence, logic, writing.

INTRODUCTION, LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

Today, communication in foreign language acquires particular importance due to the growth in the volume and rate of information exchange, trends in assessing the level of proficiency. In this regard, in order to ensure the sociocultural mobility of university graduates, writing in foreign language communication should occupy an important place in the educational process.

Discursive competence is an integral component of communicative competence. It represents the ability to build and understand logical, coherent and holistic statements in different functional styles, the ability to choose language tools depending on the type of statement. The ability to organize language material in a holistic and related text (discourse) is the main skill of discursive competence. Discourse is speech behavior that has extra linguistic parameters (communicative goals of communication participants, knowledge of the conditions of communication, time, and the interlocutor) and linguistic characteristics inherent in the text. Also, discourse competence the ability to use appropriate Strategies in the construction and interpretation of texts. It refers to selection sequencing, and arrangement of words, structures, and utterances to achieve a unified spoken message. This is where the top-down communicative intent and socio-cultural knowledge intersect with the lexical and grammatical resources to express messages and attitudes and to create coherent texts.

Discursive competence combines:

- genre competence - the ability to interpret and create texts of different genres in communicative situations;
- text competence - the ability to create and interpret texts based on knowledge of which texts are relevant in various contexts;
- social competence - the ability to use language with participation in social interaction.

Discursive competence implies knowledge of more complex factors beyond the text, and based on not only knowledge of the language. It means the quality of the use of language

skills and abilities in speech activity, the correctness of writing and speaking in a foreign language, the consistency of statements.

The formation of discursive competence contributes to the implementation of a number of training tasks:

- ensures systematic, logical and orderly formation of speech skills;
- forms the motivation for communication in a foreign language in the learning process;

Communicative competence is a set of mutually dependent competencies. D. Hymes¹ singled out grammatical, sociolinguistic, strategic, and discursive competencies in the structure of communicative competence. However, the components of communicative competence can be defined differently. The most mentioned in the methodological literature are the following competencies that make up the optimal set of components of communicative competence: linguistic, sociolinguistic, sociocultural, social, strategic and discursive. All other terminologically parts of communicative competence distinguished in the literature.

Currently, according to most scholars, formation of discursive competence is one of the most important components of foreign language teaching. This methodology determines the prominence of the social essence of a language.

Discursive competence is studied by many researchers, as M. Swain, M. Canale, S. Moirand, N. P. Golovina, I. F. Ukhvanova-Shmygova, L. P. Kaplich, and O. I. Kucherenko, quite widely.

Discursive competence is not only the creation of complete and coherent texts, but also knowledge of different types of discourse and their construction rules, the ability to interpret them in accordance with the communicative situation and produce these discourses taking into account the extra-linguistic features of the communication situation, the roles of the communication participants and the ways of communication of communicants within a single procession.

Discursive competence, based on the definition of E.V. Shuman is a student's ability to understand and create logical and coherent speech statements presented orally or in writing².

Accordingly, the discursive side of communicative competence means the quality of the use of language skills in speech activity, correctness and correctness of speaking and writing in a foreign language, consistency and informational richness of statements, which also means respect and understanding of a foreign culture.

Writing is a complex communicative activity. It helps to communicate in the written form with the help of graphical symbols. Writing is a type of speech activity as “a communicative skill to encode, store and send messages with the help of written symbols”.³

¹ Hymes, D. (1971). “Competence and Performance in Linguistic Theory”. In R. Huxley and E. Ingram (eds.) *Language Acquisition: Models and Methods*. London: Academic Press.

² Shuman, E.V. Opportunities and prospects of intercultural communication in German at school [Electronic resource] / E.V. Schumann // *International scientific and practical (electronic) journal INTER-CULTUR @ L-NET*. - Vol. №5. - Access mode: http://vfhglu.wladimir.ru/Rus/NetMag/v6/v6_ar17.htm, appeal date: 05/15/2015.

³ Milrud R.P. *English Teaching Methodology*. -M.: Drofa, 2007. -P.182.

Writing involves content, organization, style, syntax, mechanics, grammar and spelling. It was pointed out that “If we limit our feedback to pointing out or correcting errors, our pupils will concentrate on producing error-free writing, neglecting the interest or even the meaning of the content. The equation teaching writing – error elimination is counterproductive”⁴. Writing techniques and activities can be characterized as controlled (for providing the content and form), guided (as free but a form is given) and free. (Controlled writing proposes using the following activities: coping, gap-filling, re-ordering words, substituting, correcting the facts and dictation.

A number of issues have laid emphasis on the role and importance of writing discourse strategies in gaining success in writing competence. These strategies are learner's cognitive factors that guide learners to use their FL linguistic, grammatical and contextual knowledge in the process of writing. The first strategy is planning that aids in choosing method and material (linguistic structure, concept and content) for the given writing task. After planning, learners revise their prior knowledge related to the present written discourse perspective then they organize sentences at discourse level. Organizational strategy shows how to plan explicitly. Other writing strategies such as: evaluation, transcription and translation help in maintaining foreign language discourse production; and are based on writer's cognitive capacity and his/her contextual and cultural knowledge of the task. When the student faces any problem in second language writing task, he/she takes the help of translation. His/her knowledge (linguistic and conceptual), behavior and ability correspond to his writing in FL.

Thus, writing discourse strategies play an important role in achieving written discourse competence. At present, teachers and researchers are giving more attention to the study of discourse in their classrooms and in their research. The question arises whether there is a need to give more time to the teaching of discourse to ESL learners.

In addition to the professional training provided by the non-philological faculties, the requirements for English language learning are explained by the processes of globalization and socio-economic integration.

Factors determining the professional skills of a modern specialist in law, in addition to his / her professional skills, are dependent on the psychological, pedagogical and didactic factors that contribute to the formation of written language competence in foreign languages.

Organization of the communication process on the basis of communicative and professional orientation is helpful not only in teaching English to the law students, but also gives the opportunity of developing the knowledge of the specialist from foreign sources in the preparation of the modern specialists based on European standards for CEFR requirements.

Different approaches to writing technique and written research require theoretically profound study and the necessity of special methods and exercises to develop their skills in practice, including the development of writing strategies and exercises, and their practical application.

The theory of step-by-step formulation of speech skills allows graduates of non-philological faculties to gradually formulate written English language competence.

⁴ Balan R., Cehan A. & et.al. In-service Distance Training Course for Teachers of English. - Romania: Polirom, 2003. - P. 201.

Summing up, it should be said that the development of discursive competence is of particular importance in the preparation of future lawyers. Students with a developed level of discursive competence know that grammatical, phonological, pragmatic and lexical correctness of speech influence communication. When communicating with native speakers, such students use strategies and resources at their need. Discursive competence contributes to the development of skills necessary for information and communication activities, and also forms the ability to carry out information and semantic analysis of the text necessary for the perception of oral and written speech. Formation of discursive competence in teaching writing improves students' writing skills and makes learning process more interesting, creating additional motivation for learning a foreign language.

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