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**THE ROLE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN THE FORMATION OF PROFESSIONALLY-ORIENTED COMMUNICATION OF INTENDING BACHELORS OF LAW: MODERN CHALLENGES**

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The authors show the significance of forming the foreign language communicative competence while teaching bachelors of law at the Ukrainian higher educational institutions. The influence of this competence on the professionally-oriented communication within the multilingual paradigm is shown.

**Key words:** *self-assessment, multilingual communicative paradigm, Bachelor of Law, foreign language competence, professionally-oriented programme.*

**Problem statement.** The formation of a highly-qualified bachelor student is one of the priorities and, at the same time, a parameter of effectiveness of the Ukrainian higher school. Provided that the training is deep and fundamental during the entire term of study, such a graduate is capable to lead their own professional activities, assess them critically, plan and effectively implement self-learning and professional development. Of no lesser importance is the fact that the bachelor, more specifically, the bachelor of law, can opt for the second (Master's) and the third (Doctor of Philosophy) levels of higher education raising their professional competence.

The topicality of training such a professional is even further increased by a number of current challenges. More specifically, we talk about the European integration vector of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of state administration in the context of aspirations of Ukraine to regulate and synchronize the current normative legal acts with the European legal framework with the purpose of facilitating and improving legal issues, which the residents and non-residents of our country face. Secondly, the system of training modern students is currently influenced by the multicultural environment where such students (here we mean both the everyday communication and situations of professional and training practices), and later law professionals reside. The third factor is the need for self-improvement / professional development according to the demands of life-long education. All these criteria require a general language competence, which includes mastering the current norms of the Ukrainian spelling, improving the skills of fluent and accurate communication the national (Ukrainian) language, using the terminology in the professional activities. An integral element of language training is the foreign language communicative competence (the ability to communicate in a foreign language) in connection with the sociocultural competence that contribute to the integral

L<sub>2</sub> interactional competence / translingual competence for full involvement with the multicultural lingual environment of the modern time. The factors described above determine the topicality of this study.

**Analysis of the latest studies and publications.** Foreign language acquisition by non-native speakers (the perception mechanism, principles of interference with L<sub>1</sub>, code switching) belongs to the range of the most topical issues under consideration by the world community in the latest decade. Studying separate aspects of this question calls for in-depth analysis of related topics where we can single out the toolkit for mastering linguacultural competence, criteria for effective cross-cultural communication, principles of interpersonal interaction, solo / group work in bi/multilingual environment, etc. For instance, the acquisition of grammar structure as a pre-requisite for linguistic competence in the foreign language is studied by Rong Xiao (Rong, 2017, p. 41): he studies the role of deep structures in language transformation processes occurring in the process of using L<sub>2</sub> as a tool of communication and shows the benefits of using Chomsky's transformational generative grammar and Halliday's systemic functional grammar approaches in creating language teaching syllabi. The development of this competence through blended-learning training is the subject of academic papers by Ana Pinto-Llorente, M<sup>a</sup> Cruz Sanchez-Gomez, Francisco Jose García-Penalvo, Sonia Casillas-Martín (Pinto-Llorente et al., 2016).

Special attention is given to the social significance of intercultural communicative competence for foreign language students, the whole range of these issues is examined in the monograph by Klara Skogmyr Marian (Skogmyr, 2022). She describes the way in which students can develop their ability to accomplish social actions in L<sub>2</sub> using turn-taking practices (Skogmyr et al., 2018, p. 5).

Types of lingual units and linguistic means that constitute the intercultural competence and their general potential are characterized in the works by Maki Hirotani and Kiyomi Fujii (Hirotani et al., 2019), as well as Hongyin Tao, M. Rafael Salaberry, Meng Yeh and Alfred Rue Burch. Hongyin Tao, to be specific, researches the way in which authentic language data can be effectively used in L<sub>2</sub> teaching boosting interactional competence and engaging students in a communicatively relevant environment (Tao et al., 2018, p. 2).

The role of media content and its pragmatic potential in foreign language acquisition are ascertained by Annika Lantz-Andersson (Lantz-Andersson, 2017). Skills of interpersonal competence as the foundation for productive foreign language studies are researched by Hyun-Sook Kang, Mark Barba Pacheco (Kang et al., 2020); their grammar level is described by Matthew Kanwit, Kimberly L. Geeslin (Kanwit et al., 2020). Specific features of communication in multi-lingual environment and code switching were the object of study by Tiffany Judy, Michael T. Putnam, Jason Rothman (Judy et al., 2018), also Li Zhou, Yiheng Xi, and Katja Lochtman (Li Zhou et al., 2020). At the same time, we need to state that the specificity of the influence of this foreign language competence on the formation of professionally-oriented training of professionals, more specifically, bachelors of law.

The **aim** of this article is to trace the influence of foreign language communicative competence on the formation of the professionally-oriented communication of students – intending bachelors of law, and to ascertain the role of this competence in the modern multilingual environment

**The main part.** The shifts in the system and structure of the Ukrainian higher school and its transformation under the influence of the European integration process have significantly empowered the role of the foreign language in training the both the bachelor

and master's students. Training bachelors students is especially worth highlighting as it creates a strong foundation for: a) the further theoretical and practical training on the second (Master's) and third (Doctor of Philosophy) levels of education at the Ukrainian institutions of higher education; b) active professional work (in the field of law); c) training or apprenticeship abroad in the foreign language environment. The significance of this phenomenon is currently magnified by several motivating factors. Mainly, we mean the range of general competences set in the educational and professional program of the bachelor's level. The integral linguasociocultural competence should be noted as the set of skills of effective communication with the representatives of other cultures and nations, which are different in their religion, national values, historical and cultural stereotypes, this communication being based on the fundamental principles of tolerance and mutual respect. Considering the today's conditions (multinational and multi-religious representation of the country in the European context; teaching foreigners at the Ukrainian universities; the potential for the development of green and cultural tourism, joint Ukrainian-European projects, etc.), strengthening and contributing to their active implementation should be the tasks of the related intercultural competence, the need for which seems to be obviously essential for training the future law professionals. The formation of this competence is based on the intending lawyers, state persons, barristers mastering the principles and strategies of zero-barrier communication in the professional sphere (the legal defense of the suspect in the courts of different types; solving the issues of economic and administrative sphere; work with criminal psychologists / social psychologists at shelters or support centers for victims of psychological, sexual abuse, slavery, prostitution, etc.; involving the Ukrainian law practitioners in the international boards for investigating war crimes, international criminal organizations, etc.). Highly qualified civic lawyers should be able to practice zero-conflict communication with the citizens in the framework of civic, marriage, economic spheres, for instance, solving the questions of personal property, real estate, inheritance of the country's residents. These competences are especially important for barrierless communication with the foreigners for tackling issues determining the stay of these people in Ukraine: naturalization, residence permit, marriage / divorce with the Ukrainian citizens, getting the property rights, embracing certain positions in the country, etc. These moments are critical for the professional work of the law practitioner as the ability to build rapport with the client is the foundation for the future success in the case.

Participation in the work of international boards, commissions, tribunals routinely includes cross-cultural communication where the special importance is given not only team work but also to objective evaluation of professional advice or experiences (regardless of personal tastes, preferences, or attitude) received from the representatives of other races / cultures / genders belonging to the work team or the study group involved in professional training and, consequently, resulting in intellectual and moral enrichment.

Of no lesser importance is the related pragmatic competence which provides the bachelor in law with the skill of setting the communicative aim (the super-task), explicitly / implicitly addressing it to the communicants during the interaction and in this way forming the public opinion, influencing the listeners during collective meetings (high jury, court, committee, etc.) with the aim of achieving certain communicative success. Mastering this competence creates "the communicative ID" of the law practitioner in the modern circumstances. Actually, Annika Lantz-Andersson presents a linguistic activity for students of EFL aimed at developing their socio-pragmatic competence: language play

in social media, more specifically in Facebook groups. She highlights the importance of including social media spaces in the repertoire of students, which can help them to adapt to various formats of real-life communication (Lantz-Andersson, 2017). All the above-mentioned competences lead to developing soft skills; they can be realized only on the basis of the language competence which provides a wide array of tools for professional development influencing the reputation and the relations with the community.

For the Ukrainian graduate, their proficiency in a foreign language opens multiple opportunities in the multilingual teams of the world job market. The work in the Ukrainian professional environment requires processing considerable text arrays (legislative framework, court decisions, precedents, the history of the legal code implementation, etc.), while a fully-formed foreign language competence allows the bachelor in law to meet the international standards.

Within the framework of the educational and professional program of training the bachelor in law, the foreign language competence is formed by both the general humanitarian subjects and the language cycle of disciplines. The courses of the first block which constitute the general foundation – the social relations (realizing pragmatic, intercultural, and linguasociocultural competences) are “Language, Culture, Society”, “Cultural Studies”, “Philosophy”. The main aim of studying those is to understand the multidimensional nature of the human knowledge about the world, to ascertain the structure and organizational principles of the human society, to outline the strategies of communication and the influence of communication laws on the individual and the community.

The content core of the foreign language communicative competence for bachelors of law is the system of academic courses of the linguistic cycle which include: “Practice of Oral and Written Speech (English / German)”, “Rhetoric Practicum in Foreign Language Communication”. The educational context in the former is mostly aimed at developing the oral communication skills by means of modern topical communicative topics which include: a) self-presentation (Content Module “Place I Live in”, topics *City and countryside; Meet Kyiv; My home town*); b) discussing the stages of personal development, personal values and positions in the society, self-identification (Content Module “Personality”, topics *Self-image and self-identification; Teens’ rebellion. Life strategy and values; Alma-mater. Life challenges*); c) presenting the personal career expectations (Content Module “Jobs and Professions, topics *Career prospects, preferences and vocation in life; Developing a career. Professional skills at work (Hard and soft skills); Job application; Workplace. Working environment; Careers of the 21<sup>st</sup> c. Challenging job*, etc.); d) the analysis of the cultural heritage of the home country and its significance in the European space (Content Module “Nation and Culture”, topics *Protected places and reservations; Cultural heritage of Ukraine; Peoples and nationalities; National character and stereotype; Etiquette via nation. Traditions; National cuisine and recipes; National clothes vs. worldwide brands; Cross-cultural interaction*); e) describing civic responsibility and influencing the public consciousness (Content Module “Vessels and Vehicles. Pollution”, topics *Public transport system in the UK, the USA, and Ukraine; Drivers vs pedestrians: traffic rules; Witnessing the accident; Vulnerable pedestrians*); f) ascertaining the impact of global tourism; nature protection; international communication; road safety (Content Module “Tourism”, topics *Country’s gateway: airport business; Immigration and customs control; Stars and crowns: checking in and out; Event tourism. Shopping; Green tourism; Wildlife protection*); g) public health, defense of patients’ rights (Content Module “Be Healthy”, topics *Diseases: prevention. Medicine; Body injuries and remedy; Hospitals: departments; Medical equipment and instruments. First aid kit*), etc.

The course “Rhetoric Practicum in Foreign Language Communication” aims at developing the oratory potential of the student, teaching them to present reports in front of the audience, to plan the report’s layout, to work with sources, to create presentations of various types, to answer questions – using a foreign language as means of communication. It is also worth mentioning that digital tools are of great importance today. Ana Pinto-Llorente (Pinto-Llorente et al., 2016, p. 2) uses, in particular, surveys to shed some light on the usage of asynchronous technological tools in improving the language competence while teaching University-level English subjects. The author states the importance of developing the student digital competence as the foundation for building the language proficiency (Pinto-Llorente 2016, p. 11).

We also need to highlight such a significant part of the educational and professional program of bachelor’s training as scientific work as a report at student scientific / scientific and practical conferences, disputes, colloquiums, publishing an academic paper require processing the scientific (academic) discourse in a foreign language. Reza Khany turns their attention to formal communication situations, mainly academic writing, and studies the pragmatic and discourse markers and their constructive role in EAP teaching (Khany et al., 2019). That is why studying the disciplines “Foreign Language Academic Discourse” or “Academic Writing” contributes to teaching to write formal documents in a foreign language for participation in grants or exchange programs at the European universities. Thus, Hyun-Sook Kang and Mark Barba Pacheco examine developing the understanding of semiotic resources by students participating in academic exchange programs and the development of translingual and transcultural competences by means of immersing in the multilingual environment. The authors describe the positive effect of this practice for the students’ self-confidence and language fluency (Kang, 2020, p. 13). The course “Business Ukrainian / Foreign Language” helps to deal with those documents in an accurate and efficient way.

Still, it is worth mentioning that developing the foreign language communicative competence, in particular of the bachelor of law, is impossible without delving deep into the professional terminology both in L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub> as the professional work requires processing professionally-oriented texts with the fluent usage of the special layer of the lexical fund of the language. At this stage, the course “Ukrainian for Professional Purposes” can help the learner. In this academic discipline, the students learn about the history of translation studies in their professional sphere, characterize the specificity of bilingual dictionaries of professional terminology, master the methodology of accurate and adequate bi/multilingual translation of professionally-oriented texts. In the domain of the foreign language, this role is taken by an equally important course “Foreign Language for Professional Purposes”.

Another integral part of foreign language training of the intending bachelor of law is the academic discipline “CLIL in the Context of Educational Technologies” which provides a thorough mechanism of combining the knowledge of a foreign language with the professional sphere. Mastering this course allows the graduates to practice teaching in the sphere of law using a foreign language, participate in professional internships abroad or professional training with full immersion in the sphere under study.

**Conclusions and Prospects for Further Study.** The foreign language communicative competence is an integral element of training the modern bachelor of law opening a considerable number of possibilities for this graduate and boosting their competitiveness in the world job market. Successful acquisition of a foreign language both on basic communicative and professional levels enables the graduate’s integration in the multicultural team of professionals opening more career prospects.

In the further academic papers, we intend to analyze the specific nature of training bachelors of law at the universities of Europe and the United States of America and to compare the level of expected competences.

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**РОЛЬ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ У ФОРМУВАННІ ПРОФЕСІЙНО-ЗОРІЄНТОВАНОЇ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ МАЙБУТНІХ БАКАЛАВРІВ ПРАВА: ВИКЛИКИ СЬОГОДЕННЯ**

У статті окреслено роль іншомовної комунікативної компетентності у підготовці сучасного бакалавра з права. Уточнено, що впровадження дисциплін іншомовної підготовки посилює мотивацію здобувача освіти до опанування курсів із фахової підготовки, тим самим употужнюючи його конкурентоздатність на міжнародному ринку праці. Схарактеризовано, що формування комунікативної компетентності передбачає на сучасному етапі реформування системи вищої освіти України тісний взаємозв'язок з іншими компетентностями гуманітарного спрямування: лінгвосоціокультурною, прагматичною та міжкультурною, – комплексне оперування якими забезпечує безперешкодну взаємодію з представниками інших культур та етносів у багатомовному освітньому й професійному середовищі.

Вагомою також є роль іноземної мови під час роботи фахівця з права в межах України, оскільки передбачає надання фахових консультацій чи юридичний супровід іноземців у межах правового поля українського законодавства. На європейському чи світовому зрізі йдеться про участь у міжнародних комісіях, місіях спостереження за дотриманням прав українських громадян за кордоном тощо. В академічному навчальному й науковому середовищі з галузі права знання з іноземної мови та вміння провадити фахову комунікацію стануть у нагоді під час оформлення результатів наукової діяльності (тези, стаття, монографія, посібник), а також для підготовки власної доповіді-виступу перед науковою спільнотою.

Окреслено, що усталення такої компетентності потрібне насамперед для фахової повсякденної комунікації (термінологічний апарат, лексикографічні джерела, опрацювання текстових масивів), підвищення кваліфікації чи стажування за кордоном.

З'ясовано, що вдосконалення цієї компетентності в межах освітньо-професійної програми залежить як від курсів загальної мовної підготовки, так і дисциплін, що мають справу з власне іноземною мовою (практика мовлення, академічний дискурс та ін.).

**Ключові слова:** самооцінювання, багатомовна комунікативна парадигма, бакалавр із права, іншомовна комунікативна компетентність, освітньо-професійна програма

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