SOCIOLINGUISTIC APPROACH IN FORMATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE OF FUTURE OFFICERS

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Summary. English is the main working language of NATO. That is why all candidate countries for accession to the Alliance pay a lot of attention to language competence. English language proficiency is a prerequisite for a career in NATO military structures. Therefore, the military departments of most countries, including Ukraine, regulate the use of the language in the daily life of units and subunits due to the specifics of this communicative sphere. It needs, above all, clarity, unambiguity of concepts and terms, conciseness, unification and standardization.

Keywords: sociolinguistic approach, foreign language training, military higher education institutions (HEIs), professional activities, didactic tools.

Problem statement. The conditions for the formation of professional competence of military specialists require their timely interaction with others in a unified global environment. To ensure the functionality of all organizational structures and logistics and interoperability in the field of professional military activity, the Alliance has adopted a system of STANAG (standardization agreement), regulating the ways, procedures, terms and conditions for unification within the joint armed forces.

One such standard is STANAG 6001, an agreement from 1976 (its latest revision entitled "A Train P-5 - Levels of Speech Competence" - dated 19.05.2016) that defines levels of proficiency in working languages of the alliance and requirements to achieve them (NATO Standard, 2016). The purpose of the mentioned standard is to conduct unified operational and administrative activities and the use of logistics in such a way that the armed forces of one NATO member state are able to communicate at a professional level armed forces of other member states and use their logistical facilities. In addition, the STANAG 6001 agreement provides the basis for technical interoperability and interchangeability among a wide variety of communications, information, command and other systems important to military operations.

Ensuring linguistic understanding and, therefore, interoperability in the professional sphere is one of the main conditions for membership in the alliance. That is why the requirements of STANAG 6001 standard formed the basis of the Concept of foreign language training of Ukraine's Armed Forces personnel which
defines directions for learning foreign languages, ways and levels Ukrainian military personnel [6].

In this context, the integration of our nation's higher military education into a unified educational space acts as a condition of understanding in the main issues of professional activities to develop unified approaches to combat training, development of modern samples equipment, etc. This direction of development of modern military education has necessitated the use of new technologies, methods, forms and means of foreign language instruction.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Ukrainian and foreign researchers, such as Akopian T., Kovalova A., Kuzankina O., Nikolaeva S., Panasenko H., S. Ponomarova O., Tsymbal S.; Bier K., etc. are working on the creation of a didactic base for the study of foreign languages in the professional direction. The main goal of the study of foreign languages in the professional sphere is to develop the teaching base, are of the opinion that it is necessary to use in the educational process not only western manuals, but also their own developments.

This is primarily due to the fact that Western manuals do not sufficiently take into account the sociolinguistic approach in shaping the foreign language training of military personnel. And it can enrich linguo-didactic research on the practice of teaching foreign languages, because, According to Matsyuk H., today "sociolinguistic theory becomes a prerequisite for linguistic description as one of the tasks of modern linguistics" [5, p. 17].

Aim. Therefore, the purpose of our article is to highlight the specifics of using the sociolinguistic approach to deepen the communicative and professional orientation of didactic tools for learning foreign languages in military higher education institutions (HEIs) and to develop recommendations to improve the quality of foreign language competence formation among cadets.

Issues of interaction between language and society and the formation of didactic tools. It is known that the overall goal of teaching foreign languages occurs through the formation of communicative competence. It is understood as the creation of opportunities for speech interaction with representatives of other communities. The Council of Europe document "The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Teaching, Learning, Assessment" in paragraph 2.1.2. notes that communicative language competence includes three components: linguistic, sociolinguistic; and pragmatic competence (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment).

Let us recall that linguistic competence consists in the knowledge of the lexicon, phonetics, and grammar and other systemic components of language without taking into account the social characteristics of its variants and the functional (pragmatic) purpose of its specific application. In contrast, sociolinguistic competence reflects the sociocultural conditions of language use.

It ensures the observance of social norms of communication (rules of speech behavior, norms of communication between representatives of different generations, classes, social groups, etc.) and has It has a significant impact on the success of mutual understanding between representatives of different cultures.

Pragmatic competence implies the choice of language means in accordance with specific speech tasks, which are significantly influenced by social interaction and cultural environment.
The listed competences allow performing speech activities in different areas of communication, among which from the practical point of view foreign language learning can be distinguished the following: social, personal, educational and professional.

Since the foreign language communicative competence of a graduate of a military university is as a graduate of a military university is an integral part of his/her overall professional competence, errors/deficiencies of a sociocultural nature in general and sociolinguistic in particular can significantly damage his/her future professional activities. Considering the above, the ultimate of a foreign language course in a professional military area involves real communication with native speakers; obtaining professionally valuable or practically useful information from foreign sources; practical professional activities of a military man in a foreign language; his social orientation in the modern intercultural space as a professionally competent, educated and cultured individual. In other words, the main of foreign language instruction in a nonspeaking military university is to form cadets' communicative competence enabling practical language use in professional and everyday life spheres.

The communicative oriented approach as we understand it implies the use of a variety of tasks and exercises, not exclusively communicative ones. Furthermore, it does not object to partial use of other techniques and approaches, defined by the term Principled Eclecticism, its authors defined for themselves as basic [2].

The sociolinguistic approach allows us to embody the professional direction of the textbook, without limiting it to a foreign language manual for "special purposes" and without reducing it to the so-called profile textbook, which is often used in non-verbal HEIs after a general foreign language course and which focuses mainly on reading and translation of specialty texts.

For the practical purposes of textbook conclusions, a methodological definition of the notion of "professional direction" proved to be necessary. Analysis of the works of domestic and foreign researchers reveals a lack of unity in the interpretation of its content, which has led to the emergence of numerous variations, in particular profile oriented learning, specialty language, professional communication language, professional communication, special purpose language and others [3; 4; 7; 8; 11; 13].

Taking the sociolinguistic approach as the basis, we join the opinion of those experts who believe that professionally oriented should be understood as teaching based on consideration of the needs of foreign language learners due to the characteristics of the future profession or specialty [10, pp. 233-236], and that the professional foreign language field consists of three interrelated components: language proficiency, communicative skills, and professional content.

In this context, the essence of professionally oriented teaching of a foreign language consists in its integration with special disciplines in order to obtain additional professional knowledge and form professionally significant personal qualities. Foreign language is a means of increasing professional competence, personal and professional development and is a necessary condition for successful professional activity of a specialist. Herein lies the main target difference of professionally directed training from language training for general educational goals.
and socialization. In terms of content, the difference between the two in the principle of selection of material for active learning, which for professionally directed learning is determined by the professional relevance to a particular specialty.

As a rule, the volume of such material is somewhat less than that of the educational course. This often gives rise to the identification of vocationally oriented foreign language teaching with the Language for Special Purposes (LSP) course. These two approaches have much in common, but they are not at all identical, as is often claimed in the methodological literature [12, p.260-262].

There is still considerable debate in academic circles over the definition of languages for special purposes. Linguistic researchers consider LSP as part of the general literary language as one of its functional styles, or as part of a nationwide language as an autonomous subsystem, or as a fragment of the national language, which is created on the basis of the national language and therefore is an integral part of it.

Finally, the definition of LSP by contrasting it with Language for General Purposes (LGP), which dominated the last century, has given way to a new definition of LSP as a set of specialized language tools used in oral and written texts, which are characterized by a higher degree of internationalization, the transmission of specialized knowledge with the most economical means of expression thanks to automation and codification, and serve the needs of highly organized and optimized professional communication, the basic unit of which is a term [9, p.118].

It is through this interpretation of the concept of "languages for special purposes" can explain the fact that most of the developed textbooks of the so-called profile teaching of a foreign language provide for their use in the senior courses of educational institutions, that is, when the required level of general communicative competence is considered to be already achieved. As mentioned above, the methodology of such textbooks usually focuses on reading and translating texts in the specialty.

According to the compilers of the English in the military HEIs this approach is not quite acceptable exactly in terms of sociolinguistic provisions.

After all, not only the language itself, but also the nature of communication has its own specifics for each particular profession. This obliges us to broaden the scope of the concept of professional communication, which, in addition to terminology, must include a number of other linguistic, speech, country and professional aspects. The profile study of lexical and terminological features characteristic of the professional context of language use that future officers are likely to encounter in real situations of communication, is certainly a priority.

At the same time, we consider it necessary to take into account that the knowledge of professional vocabulary cannot compensate for the lack of those knowledge and skills that enable communication, and for them lack of professional communicative competence cannot be formed.

Examples of textbooks on "English for Special Purposes" include Campaign and Command English, widely used in Ukraine for teaching English in the military HEIs [1]. The practice of using these textbooks suggests that, despite their clear organization and professional military orientation they are insufficient to ensure the professional communicative competence of a graduate of the military university
regulated by the existing departmental documents on language (Order #267 of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, June 1, 2009) [6].

The aforementioned “Steps in English” course packs are designed to eliminate this disadvantage for the military HEIs. In the textbooks of these the aforementioned approaches to forming foreign language professional competence by creating an appropriate system of selection and presentation of didactic material to the user and controlling the level of acquired skills.

As for the content of the textbooks of both sets, the authors followed such principles of structuring the material that allow for a gradual Deployment of the professional component. At the initial stage the main component is a general household component with elements of professional, at the middle stage of training there is an expansion of general topics of sociocultural, household, sociopolitical spheres of communication at the expense of specific professionally oriented topics, while at the professional component dominates at the final stage of learning, with inclusions of general sociopolitical content. The essence of these developed sets of textbooks is:

- to provide the whole language learning process;
- to structure clarity and consistency;
- to provide flexibility and creativity (since the completeness and order of the modules is determined by objectives of the course, which are based on the level of foreign language competence of each study group and their professional needs);
- to systematize the students' knowledge;
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- to systematize the students' knowledge;
- To ensure a gradual increase in the complexity and military profile,
- i.e., systematic formation of professional-communicative competencies;
- implement an interdisciplinary approach, meaning the connection between foreign language instruction and the professional disciplines taught in the military HEIs.

The result of the training is a real communicative activity carried out by the students due to their acquiring the ability to implement the relevant communication competencies. The result of the training is a real communicative activity which is carried out by the students as a result of them acquiring the skills to implement the relevant communicative intentions.

Conclusions

In the process of creating English training kits for cadets of military HEIs their authors proceeded from the basis that one of the most important requirements of foreign language teaching in a non-language university is the competence approach, understood as orientation of teaching to form professional communicative competence in the competence approach is understood as a focus of training to form professional communicative competence, namely: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competence.

Linguistic competence ensures the possession of communicative skills of all types of speech activities within the limits defined by the current foreign language program in the military HEIs.

Sociolinguistic competence allows you to use language in accordance with the situation of communication. The components of sociolinguistic competence allow identify linguistic signs of social relations, norms of behavior, peculiarities of registers.
of speech, social conditions and stereotypes, especially numerous in the professional military sphere. Formation of pragmatic competence is aimed at acquiring the ability to choose effective strategies for solving communicative tasks.

Consequently, the formation of professional communicative competence involves the active interaction of all participants in the educational process. There is a mutually useful general exchange of information, acquiring the skills of communicative interaction to solve professional tasks. This goal can be achieved with a clear and well thought out system of organization management of the learning process, the central link of which should be a unified foreign language textbook for the professional military direction.

The results of the testing of these kits allow us to assert that their use is effective in forming foreign language competence in accordance with the requirements of the NATO language standard STANAG 6001. Therefore, they can claim to be unified national teaching aids for learning foreign languages for professional purposes in the system of language training of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

References: