

THE ESP LECTURERS' SELF-DEVELOPMENT COMPETENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT

Marianna Kniazian, Olena Khromchenko

Odesa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Ukraine

E-Mail: ¹kniazian1970@gmail.com; E-Mail: ²hromic@ua.fm

Abstract. *The article is devoted to the problem of preparing of future ESP teachers in the context of higher education. Taking into account the necessity of solving the problem of acquiring not only purely theoretical and applied linguistic knowledge, but also knowledge from a certain professional area (for example, medicine, pharmacy, economics, law, engineering), the role of the formation of self-development competence as a means of expanding and deepening of vocational training gained at the university is presented. Self-development competence of the ESP teacher is the ability to evaluate one's professional achievements, to choose the ways of optimizing personal level of intelligence aimed at self-improvement, to practically embody personality changes, control efficiency, adjust the conditions for self-change. The crucial components of this process are: self-analysis of knowledge, skills and know-hows, that can ensure full inclusion of the individual into professional and pedagogical activity at its highest innovative-creative level; designing ways of their development; selection and realization of corresponding receptions in all spheres of vital functions of the ESP teacher as a carrier and creator of humanistic values in society; self-control and self-correction. Self-development competence provides individuals with a promising opportunity to resolve problems characterized by increasing complexity, gradually expand their professionally important knowledge, master new creative opportunities.*

Key words: *competency-based approach, self-development competence, ESP teacher, self-improvement, self-correction*

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced, globalized world, in which the need for international partnerships between enterprises, organizations, individuals, is becoming ever more relevant, proficiency in professional English is a priority factor for effectiveness of any individual's activity. The effectiveness of ESP training largely depends on professionalism, knowledge, and pedagogical skills of the teachers of higher educational institutions, both technical and humanistic. Comprehending such a problem of modern education as "How are ESP lecturers educated for this line of work and where?", we can make the assumption that one of the effective theoretical bases for the training of teachers of this type is a competency-based approach. In this regard, Anna Stefanowicz-Kocoł and Monika Pociask rightly insist that "we are on the way to the development of teaching / learning process in order to enable students to find their place in the demanding world of labor market and feel competent and respectful" (p. 263).

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It should be emphasized that recently, scientists have been paying special attention to the formation of such competencies of future specialists in various fields as communicative (Corrizzato & Goracci, 2013; Kubacheva, 2014; Veselinova, 2016; Vukićević-Đorđević, 2018), social (Stefanowicz-Kocoł & Pociask, 2017), cultural (Bakić-Mirić, 2013), intercultural (Stefanowicz-Kocoł & Đorđević, 2017), intercultural communicative (Janulevičiene & Rackevičiene, 2015), ICT competence (Dobrova, 2017) and others.

But if we are talking about the professional training of the ESP teacher, then it involves not only mastering the competencies mentioned above, but also the subject area of a certain profession (economics, engineering, medicine, pharmacy and so on). Danica Piršl and Nadežda Stojković pay special attention to the issue touched upon, emphasizing that "... future practitioners find themselves in a job position that requires knowledge of specialized discourse regarding teaching it" (2018: 79). Thus, the formation of the special professional knowledge of ESP teachers in the process of their preparation in the higher education system remains relevant today. Given that the training of ESP teachers is carried out at the philological faculties, their mastery of narrowly specialized knowledge in, for example, medicine, pharmacy, engineering, law, economics and so on, can be carried out mainly in the process of self-education. We theorize that the future ESP teachers need to build self-development competence that would provide them with the ability to expand their knowledge (primarily from a specific specialized professional field), as well as master components of other competencies.

2. METHODS

The objective of the article is to reveal the role of the competency-based approach as a theoretical foundation for the training of ESP teachers, to analyze the features of the competency of self-development of ESP teachers in the context of higher education, to reveal the methods of formation of this competency. To achieve this objective, such methods as analysis of theoretical sources, systematization, classification, generalization of scientists' positions (Aguilar, 2018; Bakić-Mirić, 2013; Corrizzato & Goracci, 2013; Dobrova, 2017; Janulevičiene & Rackevičiene, 2015; Kubacheva, 2014; Maiier, 2017; Nor Yazi Hj Khamis et al, 2014; Stefanowicz-Kocoł & Đorđević, 2017; Venkatraman & Prema, 2013; Veselinova, 2017) on the competencies that ESP teachers should gain, and first of all, on the self-development competence were made use of. ESP teacher training programs (Profil, 2017, 2018) for higher education institutions were also investigated. To diagnose the formation of this competence expert assessment and self-assessment (Fedorova, 2017) were exploited, as well as qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data obtained.

3. COMPETENCE APPROACH AS A THEORETICAL BASIS FOR THE STUDY OF THE PROBLEM

Speaking about the competency-based approach to ESP teachers' training, we emphasize that the concept of competence is revealed as the ability to successfully respond to individual and social needs, act and fulfill the assigned tasks. The analysis of theoretical data shows that scientists consider such problems of formation of the ESP teachers' competencies as their identification and validation (Venkatraman & Prema, 2013), integrating intercultural competence in the process of professional training of ESP teachers (Aguilar, 2018), developing a conceptual basis for determining system competencies of the future ESP teacher

(Nor Yazı Hj Khamis et al, 2014), the formation of their methodological competence (Maier, 2017), written communication skills (Mancho-Barés & Arnó-Macià, 2017), the mastery of which will facilitate effective teaching of ESP. Particular attention is paid to the formation of critical thinking (Piršl, Popovska, Stojković, 2017) and the development of critical thinking skills through self-evaluation (Janulevičienė & Kavaliauskienė, 2012).

The comparative analysis of the above scientific viewpoints indicates that the competencies of an ESP teacher, in general, are reflected by their most important components: gnostic, which involves the possession of a certain set of knowledge, actualized in a specific professional activity; information-projective, which is manifested in the ability to accumulate, process and implement knowledge necessary for a successful professional activity; procedural, containing the ability to practically implement one's plan, idea, project, implementation of copyright technologies for solving professional problems, complete self-embodiment in the product of one's labor; establishing positive social interaction in the team; personal, focused on the mastery of socially appropriate norms, values and motives.

Thus, the competencies of an ESP teacher include active social interaction of a person with other members of a multicultural society, positive communication with them, quick search for and processing of information, implementation of innovations, effective solution of problems of varying complexity and more. In addition, the analysis of scientific sources indicates the need for constant and complete development of all competencies acquired by students in the higher education system: "the process of educating has not finished for those young people who, while building up their professional know-how, also need to develop a set of soft skills necessary to put the expertise into practice" (p. 259) (Stefanowicz-Kocoł & Pociask, 2017), which especially enhances the role of self-development competence in the professional work of the ESP teacher.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

As a result of the study of the scientific viewpoints (Aguilar, M. 2018; Dobrova, T. E. 2017; Kubacheva, K. I. 2014; Stefanowicz-Kocoł A., Đorđević, D. 2017) the essence of the self-development competence of ESP teachers was clarified, those components that make up its structure were characterized, effective methods for the formation of this competence were determined.

4.1. ESP teacher self-competence

The concept of 'self-development' should be considered as an activity aimed at self-improvement of the ability of a future specialist to self-organize progressive changes in his or her inner world in order to achieve the highest levels of professionalism. Equally important is the person's desire for self-actualization as the maximum embodiment in life of the best potential that it possesses (Maslow, 1987). The humanistic ideal in the structure of values acts as a kind of guideline that guides and energizes the processes of self-improvement of the individual, ensures the stability of his or her professional movement forward. The dominant emotions in this case are joy from self-awareness of the level of results achieved, from approval and respect from competent persons (fellow teachers, scientists), pleasure from an effectively completed task, realized project, and implemented technology.

4.2. Essence of ESP teachers' Self-Competence

The competence of the ESP teacher's self-development is the ability to evaluate one's professional achievements, choose the means of optimizing personal opportunities for self-improvement, practically embody changes in one's personality, control one's own performance, and adjust the conditions for self-change. Thus, the necessary components of this process are: self-disclosure of knowledge, skills and know-hows for pedagogical activities for teaching ESP at its highest innovative-creative level; design of means and selection of tools for the development of the mentioned knowledge, skills and know-hows; the implementation of this toolkit in all spheres of life of an ESP teacher as a carrier and creator of humanistic values in society; self-control and self-correction.

To do this, an ESP teacher needs to have information on the following: what theoretical knowledge from the professional field, which is the subject of ESP, he or she should expand; what applied linguistic knowledge of the English language should be deepened; what practical experience of other ESP teachers should be studied by him or her for effective self-development; what tools of self-development are applicable under the specific conditions of professional activity; what methods of self-diagnosis (self-knowledge, self-understanding, self-observation, self-analysis, self-esteem, self-control, self-characterization) are appropriate to choose for effective self-assessment of knowledge, skills and personality traits that a teacher should develop in order to optimize their professional activity, make each lesson interesting and useful for effective professional development of their pupils and students.

This also implies requirements for specific practical skills, without which self-development is not possible, namely: to identify problems that impede self-improvement, to adjust them; to study positive experience of their colleagues; use techniques of self-education, develop an individual model of self-development. The competence of self-development is related to solving problems associated with teaching ESP, and lay foundation for self-realization of one's creative pedagogical potential.

4.3. ESP teacher self-development competency building areas

The analysis of modern educational programs of training of masters of professional qualification "Lecturers of foreign languages and literature" (in particular, in Odessa I. I. Mechnikov National University) indicates that the formation of the competence of self-development of the ESP teachers in the context of higher education is carried out in the following areas: independent generalization and systematization of theoretical knowledge in the field of professionally oriented disciplines (taught in English or elements of which are included in an ESP course); conducting research in this area; analytical generalization of research results; conducting systematic monitoring of the implementation of stages of scientific research; expansion of applied linguistic knowledge and skills of the future ESP teachers in the main types of speech activity, for example: the ability to express thoughts logically, verbally and in writing, predict statements, take part in discussions, present arguments in a style that matches the context; competently and logically formulate statements in situations of scientific and professional communication; write a clear, consistent text in a certain style (first of all, reports, articles, reviews of professional works); deepening of methodological knowledge and skills of teaching ESP in higher educational institutions, namely analysis of modern innovative methods of teaching ESP, methods of developing thinking, attention, imagination of students and their willingness to engage in foreign language communication on professional topics; conducting scientific and methodological

work with the aim of introducing new information technologies for ESP training; preparing and conducting classes of various types; the organization of student research groups to solve scientific problems, the management of student research; partnership participation in the work of foreign research centers on linguodidactics, centers for the transfer of innovative methods of teaching foreign languages; dissemination of knowledge about modern teaching methods of ESP through independent preparation of papers to be submitted to both domestic and foreign journals; the formation of personal qualities that determine the progress of ESP teacher's self-development: perseverance in achieving the goal of professional and research activities; ability for creative interaction in a multinational team; tolerance; responsibility; independence; hard work; discipline; organization of their self-development activities: creating a strategy, program and selecting the best methods of self-development; diagnosing its effectiveness and making timely corrections in case of failures.

4.4. An empirical experiment to build ESP teachers' self-development competence

To find out the level of self-development competence formation among students - future ESP teachers, testing was carried out, which involved expert assessment and self-assessment by students of their level of formation of this competency, taking into account the main program results of training at the Department of Romance-Germanic Philology at Odessa I. I. Mechnikov National University, Ukraine.

4.4.1. Data collection

The proposed test contained questions that were grouped in the following way: methodological knowledge and skills to teach ESP in specialized higher educational institutions; knowledge and skills to develop tools for self-development; knowledge and skills to delineate the dynamics of their own self-development as ESP teachers; professionally oriented knowledge and skills. We have chosen a rating scale of 12 points (Palchevskiy, 2007), in which points from 1 to 3 reflect the lack of knowledge and skills, from 4 to 6 - a low level of formation of assessed knowledge and skills, from 7 to 9 - sufficient, from 10 to 12 - high. The expert assessment was attended by 29 students of the distance learning form of the Department of English Philology Odessa I. I. Mechnikov National University. For each student, 3 experts (teachers of the English language) and self-evaluating data were obtained. The average score was calculated, after which the indicator was figured (Table 1).

We would like to note that students who took part in testing have little experience in teaching ESP in various specialized universities.

The table shows that students received the highest score for knowledge and skills to determine self-development (average score - 10.9), while the ability to evaluate the achieved results of self-development has the highest score of all received (11.4). There is also a sufficient level of knowledge and skills to develop tools for self-development (average score - 9.9). We emphasize that the highest result was obtained for the formation of the ability to study the experience of self-development of their colleagues (10.4). Students do not cause difficulties and abilities to carry out self-education through familiarization with various information resources on professional topics (10.2).

Table 1 Generalized results of testing the self-development competence of students

Number	Knowledge and skills of self-development competence of the teacher of ESP	Average score
1.	Methodological knowledge and skills to teach ESP in specialized higher education institutions	9,7
1.1.	ability to expand scientific knowledge in the field of modern teaching methods of ESP	9,0
1.2.	the ability to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the material of textbooks on ESP	10,5
1.3.	ability to train highly qualified ESP students	9,1
1.4.	ability to provide education, upbringing and development of students by ESP in classroom and extracurricular activities	9,2
1.5.	ability to introduce new information technology training ESP	10,8
2.	Knowledge and skills to develop tools for self-development	9,9
2.1.	ability to develop a program of self-development	9,5
2.2.	ability to choose the best methods of self-education (self-induced suggestion, self-promotion, self-enforcement, self-commitment, self-belief)	9,6
2.3.	ability to carry out self-education through familiarization with various information resources on professional topics	10,2
2.4.	ability to study the experience of self-development of their colleagues, friends, communicate effectively on this topic and assimilate progressive experience	10,4
3.	Knowledge and skills to specify self-development:	10,9
3.1.	the ability to analyze their motives, goals and achievements in teaching ESP	11,2
3.2.	ability to evaluate the achieved results of self-development	11,4
3.3.	the ability to use various techniques for self-assessment of the professionalism	10,1
3.4.	ability to make changes to the program of self-development	10,8
4.	Professionally oriented knowledge and skills:	8,9
4.1.	ability to select, analyze, systematize basic theoretical knowledge in the field of professional discipline	9,5
4.2.	ability to apply the acquired knowledge in the process of teaching ESP	9,5
4.3.	ability to conduct research in this professional field	7,7

At the same time, methodological knowledge and skills to teach ESP in specialized higher educational institutions was rated rather low (average score - 9.7), due to the lack of wide experience in these universities. For example, the lowest score was received by students for their ability to expand scientific knowledge in the field of modern teaching methods ESP (9.0), which confirms the need for more active involvement of future ESP teachers in research activities in this direction. The lack of sufficient internships in technical universities also explains the low score for the formation of the ability to train ESP students with high qualifications (9.1).

The scores for the formation of professionally oriented knowledge and skills are also rather low (8.9): for example, the ability to conduct research in a certain professional

field depending on the university's specialization was evaluated on average by 7.7. The ability to select, analyze, systematize basic theoretical knowledge in the field of professional discipline, as well as the ability to apply this knowledge in practical pedagogical activity were rated at 9.5 points.

The data obtained confirm the need for the implementation of specially designed tasks to build the self-development competence of future ESP teachers.

4.4.2. Forming experiment

Based on the above-mentioned areas of formation of the competence of self-development of ESP teachers, we have elaborated a system of research tasks for future ESP teachers aimed at mastering components of this competence. This system of research assignments was implemented in the course of the discipline Methods of foreign language teaching in higher school. Here are examples of some tasks: biographical analytical essay (students analyze interesting facts about the biography of famous ESP teachers, their impact on the modern generation of teachers, on student's personality); essay 'Why I strive for professional self-growth' (undergraduates outline the priorities of their professional life which determine the direction of their continuous development); elaboration of the program "Self-guided improvement in life" (students determine the stages of self-development in accordance with their needs and goals within the short and long term, select the optimal techniques for its successful implementation); mutual assessment of students (students estimate the results of personal development of methodological and professional knowledge and skills, as well as knowledge and skills to analyze levels of self-growth). The above examples of research assignments allow orienting ESP teachers towards understanding goals of self-development, elaborating an appropriate program, selecting most effective tools, systematic self-assessment and self-correction.

5. CONCLUSION

Comprehending the problem of how to prepare teachers for effective professional activities in teaching ESP, we came to the conclusion that the competence-based approach as a theoretical basis for studying this problem is fundamentally important. At the same time, the need for the formation of the self-development competency, which thanks to the person's mastery of the tools of self-diagnostic, self-education and self-training, acquires the ability to constantly expand his or her professionally important knowledge, as well as methodological knowledge and skills, is of great importance. The competence of ESP teachers' self-development is the ability to evaluate one's professional achievements, choose the means of optimizing personal opportunities for self-improvement, practically embody changes in one's personality, control one's own effectiveness and adjust the conditions for self-change. We propose a system of research tasks aimed at achieving self-development competence by future ESP teachers. The prospects for the study of this problem are to study features of the formation of self-development competence of ESP teachers in accordance with certain professional fields (economics, engineering, medicine, and so on).

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