DEVELOPING STUDENTS PROFESSIONALLY SIGNIFICANT SKILLS IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES AT NON-LINGUISTIC FACULTIES

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Abstract. *The article addresses some aspects of students' extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching at non-linguistic faculties. The topicality of our study consists in insufficient number of scientific works on extracurricular activities and insufficient application of students' extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching as a means of facilitating students' professionally significant communicative potential. The study focuses on the issues of students' communicative training through extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching at faculties of management. Hence the goal of our study is to provide theoretical justification and methodological development of the concept of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching as a means of facilitating communicative training. We have examined the essence and have presented a definition of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching. We have elaborated a concept and examined components and characteristics of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching. We have produced a model for extracurricular activities and identified its stages, algorithms and communicative training indicators. The conceptual framework of the study follows the model of professional competence approach. Research and experience data obtained in our experiential work make it possible to identify the significance of extracurricular activities in foreign languages for students' professional development in educational programs at faculties of management.*
Keywords: *non-linguistic faculties, professionally significant communicative skills, teaching English, extracurricular activities, practice-oriented development patterns, cooperative learning.*

Introduction

In contemporary higher educational programs methodologists are in search of new ways to improve the quality of students' training. The quality concept in educational programs at faculties of management is also aimed at communicative component development. Communicative training has been considered to be a significant component by many researchers in management (П. А. Бавина, И. П. Горбунова, А. Л. Денисова, А. Б. Зверинцев, Л. С. Зинкина, & А. Е. Павлова). We consider foreign language teaching based on various communicative activities as a means of solving the above mentioned problems. However, utilizing the foreign language teaching potential to the full

extent appears to be difficult due to the limited number of contact hours allocated to this subject at non-linguistic faculties. Yet as experience shows, foreign language teaching due to its communicative nature requires a significant amount of controlled classroom activities under the guidance of the teacher.

To solve the problem methodologists offer various measures for more effective use of currently available external and internal reserves including extracurricular educational programs (Т. А. Бурцева, Л. М. Ванюшкина, & В. И. Попова). In scientific literature we find some concepts of students extracurricular activities developed for pedagogical universities (Н. Н. Азизходжаева, Т. А. Бурцева, Т. С. Деркач, Т. Б. Жулий, Е. В. Мещерякова, В. И. Попова, & К. К. Саломатов). There is a number of works devoted to the ideas of intensifying the learning process, of facilitating cognitive aspects through students extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching at non-linguistic faculties (Е. А. Буренок, М. А. Иванова, Н. П. Иващенко, Е. В. Коробова, & А. Т. Попова). Yet students' communicative training issues through extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching still remain open for theoretical understanding and experimental research. A large number of scientists focus their research on the students communicative training yet they connect it utterly with regular classes at non-linguistic faculties (Л. В. Абдрахманова, П. А. Бавина, А. Е. Павлова, & Т. Н. Чепцова).

Hence the topicality of our study consists in:
- insufficient number of scientific works on extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching as a means of students professionally significant communicative training at non-linguistic faculties;
- insufficient application of students extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching as a means of facilitating students professionally significant communicative potential.

Hence the goal of our study is to provide theoretical justification and methodological development of the concept of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching as a means of facilitating professionally significant communicative training at non-linguistic faculties. The object of our study is the process of organizing students' extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching (FLT). The subject of our study is a pedagogical concept of students' extracurricular activities in FLT as a means of facilitating students' communicative training at non-linguistic faculties.

The tasks of our study consist in:
- examining components and characteristics of students extracurricular activities in FLT at non-linguistic faculties;
- modeling a concept of students extracurricular activities in FLT at non-linguistic faculties;

-    approbating the concept of extracurricular activities in FLT as a means of facilitating students communicative training at non-linguistic faculties.

In our practical work the issue is being studied for the needs of the educational process at faculties of management. The conceptual framework of this article follows a model of professional competence approach. We investigate, in particular, the impact of extracurricular activities in FLT on the development of students' professionally significant communicative skills. The subject of students' extracurricular activities in our research is a language club for students at faculties of management.

Methodology part

The following research methods have been applied in our study: scientific literature analysis, work experience analysis, pedagogical observation, diagnostics methods (questionnaires), experimental work, data analysis.

In the field of education research deals with people and the events examined in it are not simple. Hence numerous considerations here should be taken into account to select the strategy. Scientists offer some research strategies and each of them fits a different research purpose (Bendazzoli & Escalante, 1997). In our work we attempt to use a field study. A field study depicts the phenomenon in the natural environment where it takes place. Such kind of observations are common in educational institutions. The description of phenomena in such case will have a qualitative approach. Qualitative approaches at the same time tend to be more conceptual. Hence we attempt to study our issue from a more conceptual point of view. In qualitative approaches they define a problem but may not need special research instruments since data will probably be in the form of educational positions based on supporting evidence obtained from the experience of practical work (Bendazzoli & Escalante, 1997).

Extracurricular activities concept

The competence-based approach aims at developing students skills (И. А. Зимняя). Hence examining factors which facilitate the development of professionally significant communicative skills proves to be topical. We consider students extracurricular activities in FLT as one of such factors at non-linguistic faculties.

In our definition based on studies and work experience we consider students' extracurricular activities as a part of university educational process, as a set of elevating, practice oriented professionally significant events

implemented in students and teachers cooperation aimed at students' professional development in addition to regular classes and in connection with them.

The complexity of students' extracurricular activities and multiple connections with various areas outside the learning process make for a wider range of approaches applied. In our work maintaining the leading role of the competence-based approach we make use of various techniques, forms and procedures of the communicative approach. At that we identify communicativeness as an interdisciplinary phenomenon in professional education and within the framework of students' extracurricular activities in FLT we note the integration of the foreign language teaching communicative principle into the general methodology communicative principle.

The study of scientific concepts and work experience gained at faculties of management in the area of students extracurricular activities in FLT allowed to identify some aspects of the concept of extracurricular activities in FLT aimed at developing the professionally significant communicative component.

*Table 1 **Some components of the extracurricular activities concept***

Components	Description
Approaches	Competence based approach. Communicative approach.
Goal	Developing professionally significant communicative skills.
Content	Communicative activities focused on elaborating topics, handling tasks and solving problems.
Method	Cooperating arrangement group work.
Techniques	Elaborating communicative situations.
Forms	Students' language club.
Aids	Material and materialized devices.
Process	Procedures. Actions. Methods. Techniques. Forms. Aids.

The concept separate components are mutually subordinated and function through students' interaction.

Language clubs as students associations at faculties

In a number of papers we find cases of working with students' associations described as groups of students holding the same ideas and motivated to communicate in the foreign language, as clubs for conversation practice. Methodologists note that unlike academic groups clubs for conversation practice provide such an environment which is much closer to authentic communication (Dobson, 1992).

In some papers we find descriptions of students' language clubs comprising numerous sections such as translators', musicians' ones. In our practical work

we propose a students' association where communication in the English language is combined with research, artistic, musical, scenic components. In this way multiple interests and aptitudes of each club participant receive their implementation. Moreover when individual peculiarities and actions of the club participants are combined that can lead to new developments both in the club activities and in the club members themselves. The phenomenon is known as the group dynamics effect based on the synergy of many actions. Group dynamics is the key to successful group work. Strategies for group dynamics are elaborated in some studies (e.g. sharing responsibilities, supporting peers, involving low-performing members) (Christison, 1997).

The students' language club is a group of participants united by joint activities which embrace many aspects and situations. While choosing the contents of the club activities, the needs of the educational process and the students' interests and inclinations are taken into account. The club group activities, as a rule, result in mass format students' events (drama, contests, debates, festivals). And what is more the club having an orderly organization can coordinate students' extracurricular activities in FLT at a non-linguistic faculty as a whole. The club also influences positively the learning process in FLT facilitating students' motivation to learn the language. The language club creates for students an environment where they can employ the language communication skills and knowledge obtained at their classes earlier and then recycle them into new types and products in the club activities.

Language clubs: activities and techniques

To work with the club group we make use of cooperative learning techniques developed by some scientists (Christison, 1997), in our case students events' method based on the cooperative techniques.

According to Paul Nation's research there are several types of group work in foreign language teaching. In our case we apply the method of the cooperating arrangement when the group members have equal access to the materials and the information and cooperate to do the tasks. The cooperating arrangement type is considered to be the most common for group work. Its distinctive feature is that all the students have equal access to each other's view of the materials and the information. This is because the purpose for the students is to share their understanding of the materials involved and of the solutions to the tasks. The authors also offer a range of tasks suitable for cooperative arrangement groups. In our work we select the following: solving problems and producing materials (Nation, 1997). Problem solving and task handling is likely to engage the students' cognitive machinery in an active participatory way.

According to M. N. Christison there may be several steps in developing cooperative skills:
1)   students see some value in group work;
2)   students are aware of the skills necessary for successful cooperation (getting information, responding to questions, etc);
3)   students practice the skills in regular interactions with the peers;
4)   students process the skills they have practiced (Christison, 1997).

According to D. W. Johnson and R. T. Johnson there can be several levels of cooperative skills: forming (organizing the group and establishing behavioral norms); functioning (completing tasks and maintaining good relationships); formulating (understanding the materials deeper); fermenting (exploring different ways of looking at the materials and challenging each other's ideas). (Johnson & Johnson, 1975). In the context of extracurricular activities the language club participants united by joint assignments and responsibilities get a new experience of cooperation which contributes to the development of their skills.

Motivation to cooperate in our case is enhanced by the interest of the task proposed for the participants. Product focused activities are based on outcomes or products. Output and feedback are the means by which the participants become aware of their level of success. It is in this way that each participant's resolution towards progress gets stronger.

Practice-oriented development patterns as didactic structures

In some papers we find descriptions of certain didactic structures, activities schemes, which are created periodically as patterns of some infrastructure, within which the activities of students can be organized (Ellis & Johnson, 1996). The context of activities within such a specific didactic design is usually produced by the students themselves.

Thus extracurricular activities of students in our work in each separate case are given concrete expression within a logical structure (scheme), i.e. a pedagogical design which we define each time as a practice-oriented development pattern. Activities within it are aimed at achieving specific goals, have their time limit, consist of a variety of interrelated actions. Holding mass format multi-component students' events in the English language within the above mentioned practice-oriented development pattern can be considered, in our opinion, a manifestation of the above - mentioned concepts.

Developing and implementing students' events within a practice-oriented development pattern in our case may go through several stages.

Table 2 **Some stages in the practice-oriented development pattern**

Stage	Activities
Diagnostics and motivation	Establishing the initial condition. Analyzing it for the forthcoming activities. Motivating and organizing. Discussing themes and motivating for their development. Submitting hypotheses. Identifying options.
Preparation and organization	Designating the final product. Forecasting actions. Forming teams. Working out joint activities policy. Formulating tasks and methods. Modelling participants interaction. Discussing information sources and materials.
Development	Individual research and exchanging ideas. Submitting and integrating activities products. Selecting forms and types of implementation. Developing the scenario and modes of working with it. Allocating actions and roles. Mastering language materials and speech behaviour.
Implementation	Advertising campaign. Dress rehearsal. Adjustments and amendments. Feedback ensuring. Concluding the event presentation.
Subsequent activities phase	Analyzing the experience and the data from external examination. Discussing the idea of a new deed.

The table shows that in the organized space and time of practice-oriented development pattern the participants construct their activities around the common cause. At that the participants' predisposition to particular types of activities is taken into account and they can try to perform in various lines of activities. Some authors, for example, distinguish various roles here such as compilers, coordinators, evaluators, implementers (Шафранкова, 2005). The artistic component is also of great importance here as it can facilitate the development of speech and thought process. Activities within the practice-oriented development pattern can contain various components each possessing particular properties. Combined together they may lead the participants to a new level in their skills' development.

Extracurricular activities at faculties and management operations

In contemporary methodological studies it is considered that competencies are formed and developed within some activities. In our practical work we consider activities as a mechanism which triggers both functioning of the practice-oriented development pattern and also developing professionally significant skills of its participants.

Within educational programs at management faculties students should be trained in many types of activities: project and technology, organization and supervision which require many important skills such as orientating oneself in

activities and resources, constructing the activities' space, functioning as a subject of activities (Ильясов, 2004).

Table 3 shows a correlation between components within a practice-oriented development pattern and components within management areas as described in management studies (Чепцова, 2005).

Table 3 ***Some activities in a practice-oriented development pattern and in management areas***

Practice-oriented development pattern	Management areas
Establishing the initial condition. Analyzing it for the forthcoming activities. Motivating and organizing. Discussing themes and motivating for their development. Submitting hypotheses. Identifying options.	Research and diagnostics of problems. Forecasting. Planning. Generating ideas. Decision making.
Designating the final product. Forecasting actions. Forming teams. Working out joint activities policy. Formulating tasks and methods. Modelling participants interaction. Discussing information sources and materials.	Setting goals. Organizing resources. Organizing horizontal and vertical structures. Establishing teams. Delegating responsibilities. Adjusting issues of external and internal environment.
Individual research and exchanging ideas. Submitting and integrating activities products. Selecting forms and types of implementation. Developing the scenario and modes of working with it. Allocating actions and roles. Mastering language materials and speech behaviour.	Consulting. Elaborating methods. Ensuring teams' interaction. Establishing creative environment. Managing conflicts. Managing innovations.
Advertising campaign. Dress rehearsal. Adjustments and amendments. Feedback ensuring. Concluding the event presentation.	Coordinating activities in the external environment. Positioning the organization. Project implementing. Control.
Analyzing the experience and the data from external examination. Discussing the idea of a new deed.	Certification. Assessing staff and organization activities.

Thus the practice-oriented development pattern serves in each case in our practical work as a didactic structure and contributes to elaborating activities which appear to be similar to those from management areas.

Communicative activities were described as the content component in foreign language teaching as early as the 1970s. (Л. В. Щерба). Contemporary researchers also identify communicative activities as the content component in foreign language teaching (Johnson, 1990)**.**

Table 4 **The first stage of activities in the practice-oriented development pattern and its communicative components**
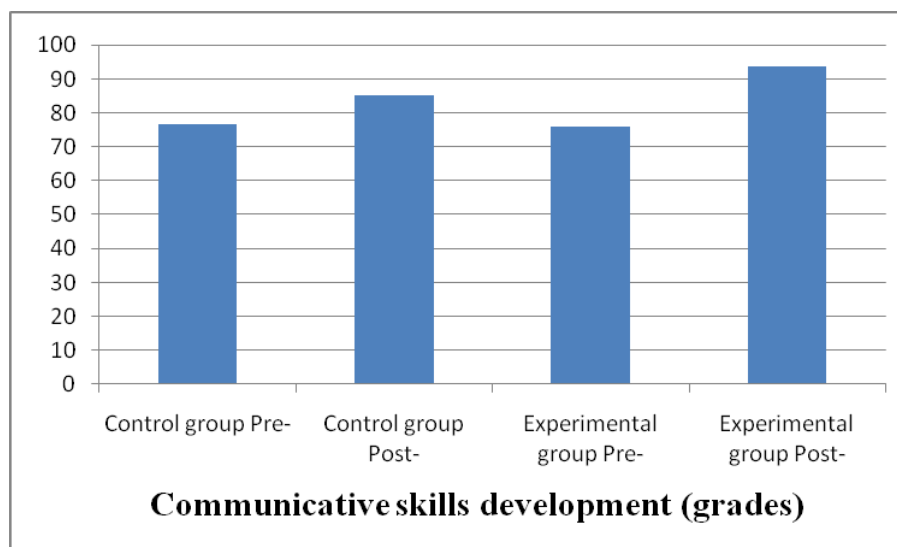
Stage description	Establishing the initial condition. Analyzing it for the forthcoming activities. Motivating and organizing. Discussing themes and motivating for their development. Submitting hypotheses. Identifying options.	
Activities	Setting goals. Generating ideas. Designing models. Making decisions.	
Communicative tasks	Identifying topics. Expanding contexts. Substantiating ideas. Defining ways for implementation.	
Techniques	Brainstorming. Guided discussion. Problem solving.	
Some applied communicative skills	Monologue	Giving an account of findings. Specifying. Commenting. Reasoning.
	Dialogue	Entering the conversation. Asking and answering questions. Interviewing. Agreeing and disagreeing. Suggesting.

Hence within a practice-oriented development pattern in dynamically changing situations in limited periods of time the participants carry out communicative activities similar to those in management areas and thus may improve their professionally significant communicative skills.

The experiential work in our study (September 2015 – September 2017) included developing and approbating the students' extracurricular activities concept at faculties of management. Data analysis obtained from the students questioning demonstrated more positive dynamics in developing students' communicative skills in experimental groups as compared to the control groups.

Table 5 **Questioning based assessment of development level of students' communicative skills in control and experimental groups.**

Control group (grades)		Experimental group (grades)		Dynamics from pre-experiment to post-experiment questioning (grades)		Dynamics from pre-experiment to post-experiment questioning (%)	
Pre-	Post-	Pre-	Post-	CG	EG	CG	EG
76,6	85,25	75,85	93,5	8,65	17,65	111,29	123,27

Figure 1. **Dynamics in developing students professionally significant communicative skills within the practice oriented pattern activities**

Conclusion

Developing and implementing students' extracurricular activities in FLT is demanding and require creativity but rewarding at the same time because of the real-life applications. Real-world applications and use is what most students are interested in. In extracurricular activities students feel like real partners in a cooperative enterprise. The participants are engaged in solving problems or completing tasks that involve them in interacting with each other and in social contexts.

That kind of occupation also requires some evaluation of the participants' progress. It can be assessed either by reviewing the results the participants have obtained or by examining feedback that will demonstrate them whether they have achieved the targets. When students feel they are contributing to the group progress and these contributions are recognized by the group they can be more likely to feel successful academically.

On the other hand, structured techniques of extracurricular activities may have effects on the participants' skills development including professionally significant communicative ones. In a unified group of the club students begin to think about group targets as their individual ones and the responsibility for the progress lies within the group and on its members. Students are asked to do things that they will be asked to do in their future professional activities, e.g. to take charge and responsibility for their actions. Hence in this way they may be better prepared to meet their future professional obligations.

The issues under study in this article need considerably more development. Nevertheless, we hope that their description in its present form may help in

some possible applications. For example, it may prove to be helpful in providing a framework for developing models of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching at non-linguistic faculties.

Summary

Communicative training has been considered to be a significant component by many researchers in management. We consider foreign language teaching based on various communicative activities as a means of developing communicative component in educational programs at faculties of management. However, utilizing the foreign language teaching potential to the full extent appears to be difficult due to the limited number of contact hours allocated to this subject at non-linguistic faculties.

The goal of our study is to provide theoretical justification and methodological development of the concept of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching as a means of facilitating professionally significant communicative training.

The following research methods have been applied in our study: scientific literature analysis, work experience analysis, pedagogical observation, diagnostics methods (questionnaires), experimental work, data analysis.

We have examined the essence and have presented a definition of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching. We have elaborated a concept and examined components and characteristics of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching. We have produced a model for extracurricular activities and identified its stages, algorithms and communicative training indicators.

It has been shown that the concept of students' extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching should be based on the students' cooperation and professionally significant communicative activities.

The professionally significant communicative component has been identified as the key component in the students' extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching.

Experimental data obtained confirm positive dynamics in developing the students' communicative skills within the framework of extracurricular activities in foreign language teaching at non-linguistic faculties.

The prospects of practical application of the study can be connected with a possibility of expanding the boundaries of the educational process through the use of students' extracurricular activities concept in foreign language teaching at non-linguistic faculties.

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