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The Formation of a Professional Linguistic Personality of a Law Student in the Learning Environment of a Higher Educational Institution

Konstantin M. Levitana, Larisa G. Medvedevab

aUral State Law University of Ekaterinburg, 21, Komsomolskaya St., Ekaterinburg, 620137, Russia
bNational Research Tomsk State University, 36, Lenin Ave., Tomsk, 634050, Russia

Abstract

The authors of the article analyse the formation of a professional linguistic personality of a law student in the educational environment of a higher educational institution based on the polylingual principles, which are ensured by the educational subjects in the Russian and foreign languages in accordance with the current Federal State Educational Standards of Higher Professional Education (FSES). With due consideration of axiological, competency building and personality-activity-oriented approaches the lingua-methodological conception of developing professional linguistic personality of a law student is formed. The personality formation implies acquisition of professional language of law discourse that involves acquisition of the professional thesaurus and goal-oriented competencies.

1. Introduction

Anthropocentrism as one of the leading principles in modern social and humanitarian sciences is gaining more importance in linguistics, linguodidactics, and theory of language education in higher educational institutions. A

* Corresponding author. Tel.: (343)374-39-72
E-mail address: levi22992@yandex.ru
language (Russian or foreign), playing the role of a means of interaction between a personality and the environment and the role of an intermediary as well, performs the function of a conductor of professional knowledge in the formation of a specialist’s communicative competence. U.N. Karaulov and other scientists differentiate between three levels in the linguistic personality structure: verbal-semantic (lexicon), linguo-cognitive (thesaurus) and motivational (Karaulov, 2007). The formation of the professional linguistic personality depends greatly on the development of the above-mentioned structural components.

The professional linguistic personality of a specialist is formed in the conditions of educational and real professional communication through the lens of one’s individuality of professional discourse that depends on the goals and tasks of some professional activity (law activity, for example). The language of professional communication is a combination of phonetic, grammatical and lexical means of a national language that serves for verbal communication of a certain community that is characterized by the unity of professional-corporate activity of its individuals and that corresponds to the system of specialized terms. Professional communication correlates with the institutional discourse in many features and that makes it possible relate rather a large amount of real communication situations to some certain sphere. Therefore law discourse compiles law education, research activity in the sphere of law, law-enforcement, law-making, consulting, organizational and administrative activity.

The behavior in a certain communicative situation, organization and conditions of communication require from the linguistic personality the ability to choose specific linguistic means and communicative strategies that appear to be the main factors of successful communication in a certain sphere, even if the professional necessity makes the individuality of a linguistic personality step back. T.V. Gubayeva mentions that, for example, the judicial decision should be generally characterized by the unity and inner logic of development, provided by standard syntactic constructions (Gubayeva, 2004). Therefore the vocabulary of an enabling act should correspond to the rules of usage of law terms, the grammatical basis should comply with the rules of sentence making that, in their term, should correspond to the rules of formal logic. Any communicative act (oral or written) reflects the professional level and special features of the cultural development of a linguistic personality.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Definition of the professional linguistic personality

Following the axiological competency building and personality-activity-oriented approaches, the linguistic personality of a law student may be defined as a subject of communication and professional activity on the basis of acquiring the linguistic competencies and reaching a required level of the formal discourse, which enables a student to be a part of the socio-cultural environment of the law discourse and participate effectively in its development, reflecting critically on new information and on one’s verbal behavior. As the communicative practice shows the most typical problems of the communicative behavior of future lawyers are the penury of the lexicon, lack of text coherence and semantic compatibility, as well as mixing the registers.

2.2. Development of the professional linguistic personality in ESP university course

Not only the linguistic context of a word, but also its emotive and cognitive contexts should be considered as the object of research in the linguistic personality development of a law student. For example, during the lecture a teacher offered the students to answer the question, posed to the representative of the Investigation Committee, who had told about the industrial disaster in the Moscow Metro. The question was: “What does “industrial” mean?” The answer was given on the basis of the context and etymological analysis.

As A.N. Leontyev highlighted, the substantive work progress of a person begets the inner drive of an individual consciousness (Leontyev, 1983). That is why the linguistic consciousness can develop in close connection with the cognitive and emotive ones in the process of constant verbal activity in the Russian and foreign languages when interacting with the surrounding world. It is also important to take into consideration that only the authentic text can become the means of reflecting the linguistic picture of the world (Gural, 2008; Gural & Smokotin, 2014).

Here the foreign language is reasonably considered to be not only the means of professional activity, interaction between people and ability to participate in the transcultural communication, but also the means of understanding
one’s social identity, development of one’s own verbal intellect in order to understand the surrounding reality, including different ways of its conceptualization. Compare: Rus.: страх “fear” → страхование “insurance”; Eng.: sure → insurance; Ger.: sicher → Versicherung.

Some of the practical steps of developing the professional linguistic personality in a higher educational institution can be summarized in the following way:

1) collaboration of the teachers of all subjects aiming at finding and correcting the mistakes made by the students in their oral and written speech in Russian;
2) elaboration of the system of tasks for class and independent work of students in the scope of different subjects in order to provide a synergetic effect in forming their linguistic competence;
3) incorporating some special programmes of bilingual (polylingual) education, including elaboration and publishing of terminological dictionaries (English-Russian and Russian-English Law Dictionary, 2014).

2.3. Criteria for the law students’ professional linguistic personality development

In defining the criteria for the development of professionally related linguistic skills when teaching an ESP course to law students at the university level we designed our research on the basis of the structure of individual intelligence proposed by Kholodnaya (2002). It covers the features of its structural organization as well as the conditions for personal intellectual growth. Having analysed these concepts we made a conclusion that the general tool of such analysis is the assessment of formation and operating a conceptual framework on the basis of the system of the following indicators presented in Table 1.

| Criteria                                      | Indicators                                                                 |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Formation of the conceptual level of personality | • new concept assimilation;                                                 |
|                                               | • allocation of distinctive private and general signs of the corresponding concept; |
|                                               | • accumulation and differentiation of experience of operating by entered concept; |
|                                               | • expansion of foreshortenings of concept comprehension due to inclusion of different options of its interpretation; |
|                                               | • expansion of foreshortenings of concept comprehension at the expense of increase in number varying signs on importance degree; |
|                                               | • expansion of the foreshortenings of concept comprehension due to the strengthening of interconceptual communications; |
|                                               | • consideration of the foreshortenings of concept comprehension due to use of alternative contexts of its analysis. |
| Application of concepts                       | • application of the acquired concept of a familiar (stereotypic) situation; |
|                                               | • application of the acquired concept of various (non-standard) situations; |
|                                               | • application of the acquired concept of conditions of independent forming of separate aspects of its contents; |
|                                               | • degree of generalization of new concepts.                                |

3. Conclusion

The formation of the professional linguistic personality of a law student in the educational environment of a higher educational institution on the polylingual basis implies acquisition of some certain competencies by the students, that are: literate oral and written speech in the Russian and foreign languages, the ability to translate adequately the legal texts, the ability to participate in the intercultural dialogue, critical reflection on the newly acquired information, the ability to manifest oneself verbally in the socio-cultural environment of a law discourse, following the standards of speech (logical structure, justification, maintenance of linguistic and speech norms and communication ethics). The assessment of the formation level of the professional linguistic personality of the future lawyers in the educational environment of higher professional education should be based on the criteria, developed in this research.

In order to achieve qualitative results it is important to use the pedagogic potential of the educational process to
the full extent: cognitive, communicative, instructional, cultural, organizational and administrative. The subjective experience of students in understanding the role of a language as a symbol of culture and realizing the axiological nature of verbal communication, actualization of personal and professional demands in the educational process for developing the reasons for learning the Russian and foreign languages, using interactive technologies for more effective development of the goal-oriented competencies of the future lawyers are the necessary methodological conditions for successful implementation of the suggested lingua-methodological conception. Legal clinics and studying at the faculty of additional education with a specialization in translation and interpretation in the sphere of professional communication also play a great role in the formation of the linguistic personality of a professional lawyer.

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