Cognitive preconditions of psychological readiness of students for learning foreign languages

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The need to improve and reform the education system in accordance to international standards is relevant for Ukraine's entry into the world community. Intensification of international relations of Ukraine has become an impulse for the training of qualified specialists who are able to communicate in a foreign language with their partners. This is confirmed by educational and professional programs and requires new forms and approaches in the teaching method of foreign languages.

Recently, the tendency to use different approaches for the training of professional-oriented foreign language communication is noted in the practice of teaching foreign languages in higher education institutions. The approach is defined as a complex of paradigmatic, syntagmatic and pragmatic structures and mechanisms in cognition or practice, which is characterized by competing strategies and programs. There are behavioral, innovative, intuitive conscious, conscious, individual, thematic activity, pragmatic and communicative-cognitive approaches.

We consider that using communicative-cognitive approach in teaching foreign languages is the most appropriate one because it provides an intensification of the educational process, which is important in the context of reducing the classroom hours and increasing the volumes of independent work for students. This approach is aimed at developing the main types of speech activity - reading, writing, listening and speaking - in conditions that model situations of real professional communication use of a foreign language, and stimulate speech and mental activity of students. Communicative-cognitive approach also involves solving practical problems which are expedient in professional activities, which involve the interests and needs of students reflecting the "the system of relationships of communicators".

The combination of communicative and cognitive approaches contributes to the formation of students' linguistic concepts, knowledge, which is understood as the type of mental representation of perceived and processed of verbal and nonverbal information.

The process of communion is communication in oral or written form, the cognitive essence of which is the exchange of information, its storage and evaluation. Communicative competence is considered to be formed if a “future specialist uses a foreign language independently receiving and expanding his or her knowledge and experience".
The cognitive function expresses the preparation for oral speeches and the formation of written text, creative activity, etc. It speaks itself as an important means of getting to know the world. It is not so much manifested in the communication, but there is its consequence.

The problem of the cognitive approach in learning a foreign language is studied a lot by scholars. Modern modifications of the communicative approach for the teaching of foreign languages have received the most consistent theoretical justification in the linguodidactic communicative-cognitive paradigm. At present, further theoretical development and practical implementation of the cognitive-communicative approach about the teaching a foreign language are taking place in the models of teaching different kinds of speech activity: reading, listening, written speech, oral speech. In the process of formation there is also a system of partial methodological principles of the communicative approach, as well as interpretation within the framework of the approach of general and linguo-didactic principles.

The interest to cognitive-communicative learning of foreign languages is increasing. The problem of teaching foreign languages is not seen as the study of the linguistic knowledge but the translation or passing the knowledge about the world. Observing the cognitive aspect of mastering a foreign language, O. Leontiev emphasizes that by learning a foreign language, we at the same time learn a peculiar image of the nation, this or that vision of the world through the prism of national culture, one of the most important components of which is the language. According to O. Leontiev the main task of mastering a foreign language in the cognitive aspect is to learn how to be oriented in the speech as the native speaker does.

“Cognitive” (lat. cognitio – means knowledge, cognition) approach is formally associated with the published the program work by W. Nicer in 1967, “Cognitive Psychology”. In his work W. Nicer suggested to conduct an analysis of mental activity with the help of experimental methods of psychology and physiology, in order to justify the need to take into account the specifics of mental processes for improving the efficiency of human intellectual work.

It is also worth to note that the cognitive approach to learning is based not only on cognitive psychology, it is also based on the principle of consciousness in teaching and on the theory of socioconstructivism, according to which the student is an active participant in the learning process, and not the subject of the teaching activity of the teacher.

The cognitive readiness of students to communicate in a foreign language characterizes the degree of readiness of a person to communicate in a foreign language, that is their experience (a set of knowledge, skills and abilities) in a foreign language.

Cognitive readiness for communication in a foreign language should be evaluated according to knowledge: grammatical structures, vocabulary, rules of
syntax of a language, language forms used in communication in one language or another. An important requisite for learning a foreign language is the ability to study it.

The success from learning a foreign language in cognitive function contributes to the formation of a linguistic sense: the satisfaction of the cognitive motives in the study of a foreign language forms a stable motivation for its permanent work; the use of a foreign language for obtaining certain information (reading magazines and newspapers in the language of the original, explanatory dictionaries, and so on) makes a language irreplaceable in the student's cognitive activity, at the same time, the foreign language itself strengthens the general cognitive activity of senior pupils, and, consequently, increases the motivation of studying a foreign language.

Consequently, we can conclude that mental development and the level of the acquired knowledge are important, although it is not the only condition that determines the productiveness of educational activities and allocates them in the bone of cognitive factors of psychological readiness of students to learning foreign languages. At the same time, intellectual development and the level of the acquired knowledge can guarantee the high results of the acquisition of a foreign language, together with a constructive attitude to studying foreign languages, optimal level of motivation, etc. To summarize, we can say that the cognitive conditions of psychological readiness to acquirement foreign languages is the psychophysiological condition of language proficiency, which is ensured by the physical substrate of speech activity by the brain and speech abilities as individual features of a person, linguistic and encyclopedic knowledge, as well as skills.