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Original article

Topical Issues of Methodology of Developing Mentor's Communication Competence Through Teaching Foreign Languages

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Abstract

Introduction. The authors highlight the main problems of the formation and development of the communication training of mentors within the multicultural specifics of the regional education spaces. The paper proposes an analysis of some aspects for improving the methodology of forming the readiness of an experienced teacher to transfer his/her experience for productive interaction with their colleagues. The purpose of the study is to substantiate the model for the formation of communication competence of mentors for teaching foreign languages within the multicultural specifics of the regional education spaces.

Materials and Methods. The methodology focuses on the framework of a lingua-didactic approach based on a historical approach, which assumes both the analysis of Scientific Scholarship, and pedagogical experience in terms of a search experiment on the formation of a mentor's readiness for socially significant and culturally creative communication to develop optimal conditions for the implementation of mentoring within the regional communicative educational spaces.

Results. The authors highlight the necessity and possibilities of mentoring in different spheres of professional activities, the significance of communicative competence and readiness of a mentor to share his/her experience with others, and to monitor the post-effects of professional knowledge and skills. The results of the survey will be of use for those who investigate the likely problem areas of current education.

Discussion and Conclusion. The results obtained contribute to the development of a mentoring for different areas of professional activity, because it is communicative readiness that facilitates the process of communication, exchange of experience and control of professional activities between a mentor and his mentee. The materials of the article will be useful to heads of educational organizations, representatives (employees) of institutions for advanced training and additional education of teachers.

Keywords: mentor, mentoring, competence, communicative readiness, methodical readiness, communication management

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Оригинальная статья

Актуальные аспекты методологии развития коммуникативной компетенции наставника в процессе преподавания иностранных языков

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Аннотация

Введение. Неотъемлемым показателем наставничества является готовность опытного педагога к передаче опыта. В этой связи особую значимость приобретают совершенствование коммуникативной подготовки наставников и формирование у них готовности к продуктивному взаимодействию с преемниками. Несмотря на многочисленность публикаций по этой проблематике, практически отсутствуют исследования по формированию коммуникативной готовности преподавателей иностранного языка к реализации взаимодействия с преемниками. Для успешной реализации наставничества в образовательной организации целесообразны организация и осуществление не только методического сопровождения, но и коммуникативного. Цель исследования – обоснование модели формирования коммуникативной готовности педагогов – наставников по обучению иностранным языкам с учетом поликультурной специфики региона.

Материалы и методы. Для изучения проблемы проанализирован практический опыт наставничества учителей и преподавателей иностранных языков г. Новосибирска и Новосибирской области; проведены оценка уровня психолого-педагогической готовности учителей к наставничеству в форме заполнения листа самообследования, тестирование уровня коммуникативной компетенции при помощи теста-опросника Б. А. Федоришина «Оценка коммуникативных и организаторских способностей» (КОС) и исследование ценностных ориентаций наставников и преемников по методике «Ценностные ориентации» М. Рокича.

Результаты исследования. По итогам исследования были выявлены основные тенденции в организации системы наставничества в сфере образования (американская «Спонсорское наставничество» и европейская «Развивающее наставничество» модели наставничества), важность передачи опыта молодым педагогам; формы и методы формирования коммуникативной готовности наставников для успешной реализации наставничества. Доказано, что сформированность коммуникативной составляющей наставника способствует эффективному сотрудничеству наставника и его воспитанников, помогает мобильно адаптироваться к быстро меняющимся условиям в профессиональной деятельности, мотивирует к поиску новых форм обучения, обеспечивает развитие критического и самостоятельного мышления.

Обсуждение и заключение. Полученные результаты вносят вклад в развитие системы наставничества для разных сфер профессиональной деятельности, поскольку именно коммуникативная готовность облегчает процессы общения, обмена опытом и контроля профессиональной деятельности между наставником и его



подопечным. Материалы статьи будут полезны руководителям образовательных организаций, представителям (сотрудникам) учреждений повышения квалификации и дополнительного образования педагогов.

Ключевые слова: наставник, наставничество, компетенция, коммуникативная готовность, методическая готовность, управление коммуникациями

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Introduction

Mentoring as a type of professional activity is an important tool for helping young professionals in various fields to adapt to a new place of work. In the information field of mastering the profession, the mentor, as a guide, controls the process of adaptation and mastering professional experience, gives feedback and motivates, creates an atmosphere of employee engagement, in other words “inspires his ward” [1].

The introduction of mentoring programs in education is justified by two points: the implementation of the national project “Education”, within the framework of which by 2024 at least 70% of students and teaching staff of educational organizations should be involved in various forms of support and mentoring, as well as changes to the list of qualification categories of teaching staff, which include now two new ones – “teacher-methodologist” and “teacher-mentor”.

The relevance of mentoring to fulfill the tasks of professional growth of teachers is primarily due to the fact that the field of problems of teaching staff is very wide, covering issues of content and teaching methods; control and evaluation of the quality of education; the introduction of innovative pedagogical technologies; the organization of educational, cognitive and design research activities of students and many others. The decisive role in solving these problematic issues belongs to teachers-mentors, since many researchers claim that “modeling scenarios of pedagogical

activity reduces the feeling of insecurity of teachers and gives positive changes in teacher training” [2].

The study of theoretical sources and materials for diagnosing the mentor's functionality convinces that mentoring today is impossible without mastery of the communicative elements of the pedagogical component, such as mutual learning, building partnerships, friendly, trusting relationships, generalization and promotion of practical experience in organizing mentoring, etc. The formed communicative competence promotes effective cooperation between the mentor and his students, helps them to adapt to rapidly changing conditions in their professional activities, motivates them to search for new forms of learning, and ensures the development of critical and independent thinking [3].

There are also a number of publications emphasizing the importance of developing a mentor's motivational and value readiness [4]. The reasons for unwillingness to participate in the mentoring program are very different – from the elementary fear of carrying out a new type of activity to the lack of mastery of the ways and methods of carrying out this type of activity.

The revealed contradiction between the high professionalism of experienced employees in various fields of activity and their unwillingness to teach others, transfer experience, due to their low communicative readiness to perform pedagogical functions concurrently with their main professional activity determined the topic of this study.

The purpose of the study is to substantiate the model of formation of the communicative competence of teachers-mentors in teaching foreign languages, taking into account the multicultural specifics of the region.

The article presents the results of the semantic analysis of the term “mentor”, the analysis of the functional list of mentor’s activities, the structural components of the organization of the mentoring system; the methodology for diagnosing readiness for mentoring is presented; a model for the formation of the communicative readiness of a mentor teacher is proposed.

Literature Review

M. Merket in her article proves the idea that “all over the world, teacher education has undergone a transition to practical training, when more attention should be paid to practice in schools, the development of the institute of mentoring and increasing the role of school mentors. This policy is manifested in increased attention to the training of mentors, the purpose of which is to increase their competence” [5]. Along with this statement, the scientists emphasize the need to discuss mentoring in connection with giving mentors a certain independence.

Researches on mentoring issues were conducted within the framework of a linguistic approach (analysis and clarification of the meaning of the term “mentor”, its origin and synonymous series); a historical approach (the emergence and development of the institute of mentoring), as well as a methodology for building a system of mentoring as a professional activity.

Mentoring as a way of training a specialist has long been used in the field of education. The definitions proposed by various modern scientists [6; 7] are more focused on the formulations of explanatory dictionaries, in particular by V. Dahl, in which the concept of “mentor” is interpreted as “teacher or educator, leader”, mentoring as “title, position, mentor’s business”¹. A number of authors cite their additions, which boil down to listing the key functions of a mentor. The semantic

analysis of the concept also includes the analysis of meanings and the search for differences in the definitions of the concepts “mentor”, “tutor” [8].

From the point of view of the historical development of the term, it is revealed that the concept of “mentoring” is rooted in Greek mythology and comes from the name of Mentor (mentor of Telemachus, son of Odysseus). Undoubtedly, the responsibilities of the mentors of those times included others.

Mentoring in Russian pedagogy interested scientists in the middle of the 19th century, when K. D. Ushinsky established a direct dependence of the professional adaptation of a person on the level of pedagogical skill, experience and knowledge of the mentor. In his opinion, “The task of education is precisely to educate such a person who would enter the figure of society as an independent unit”, who would be ready for “independent life in society” [9].

A. S. Makarenko defined the following as the key characteristics of a mentor: “We need a synthesis of scientific knowledge, methodological skills and personal qualities of a teacher, skillful possession of pedagogical techniques and advanced pedagogical achievements”².

The issues of mentoring at the present stage are widely represented in the works of S. Y. Batyshev, A. V. Shcherbakov, A. V. Lapshova, A. G. Frolov, V. A. Slastenin, P. S. Kuznetsov, R. P. Kolosov, A. K. Markova, etc. The processes of adaptation of a young teacher are presented in the works of D. I. Loginov, N. M. Stukalenko, N. E. Tikhonova, B. A. Almukhambetov, O. V. Alexandrova, E. M. Avraamova, etc. From the analysis of literary sources and practical materials on the topic, it follows that mentoring has always been associated with professionalism, experience, intellectual potential and the level of personal qualities of the mentor [10].

In the research of foreign authors, five main techniques for the implementation of mentoring have been proposed, which bear the figurative names “accompaniment”, “sowing”, “catalyzation”, “display”, “harvesting” [11].

¹ [Dahl’s Explanatory Dictionary online]. (In Russ.) Available at: <https://slovardalja.net>.

² Makarenko A.S. [Selected Pedagogical Works]. In 2 vol. Vol. 1. Education of Children in the Family. Moscow: Pedagogy; 1977. (In Russ.)



Researches in the field of methodology of the organization of the mentoring institute contains a list of the qualification characteristics of a mentor, the principles of building a mentoring system; forms and methods of training mentors. There are studies carried out according to the aspect approach and considering individual components of the mentor's professional activity.

Materials and Methods

The diagnostics and assessment of the mentor's professional qualities were carried out in the works of scientists on the basis of the identified qualities and structural components. Many authors agree that a successful mentor should possess the following competencies: functional; communicative; methodological (A. Shelten)³; psychological and pedagogical (A. R. Masalimova) [12]. At the same time, communicative competence is considered as "the willingness and ability to understand others and generate their own programs of speech behavior adequately to the goals, spheres, situations of communication" [13].

The available component-by-component studies of the level of mentoring success include the study of psychological and pedagogical readiness for mentoring (A. V. Golovnev, E. V. Ignatieva, E. V. Sebedina), the level of formation of communicative competence (E. V. Charina), the analysis of value attitudes (N. E. Bulankina, O. V. Temnyatkina). The analysis of the obtained psychodiagnostic data showed insufficient motivational readiness to accept the role of a mentor: 75% of teachers are insufficiently motivated to perform mentoring functions, 100% of mentor teachers have expressed emotional stress and an increased risk of emotional burnout, 50% do not fully possess effective ways of building communication and constructive behaviors in conflicts. At the same time, the leadership qualities of teachers-mentors are quite pronounced (100%) [14].

The contradiction revealed in the course of the study between the high professionalism of experienced employees in various fields of activity and the low level of communicative readiness to carry out mentoring activities

allowed us to identify criteria and indicators for evaluating the success of mentoring, which we consider as willingness (agreement to do something, desire to contribute to something [15]):

- communicative readiness (knowledge of effective forms, methods, and techniques of communication, the ability to build communication productively and exchange information with colleagues);

- motivational and value readiness (a system of needs, ideals, attitudes, value orientations underlying the motivation of the mentor's activity);

- methodical readiness (the ability to find ways to solve complex problems independently, acquire new knowledge, abilities and skills independently).

To solve the problem of studying the communicative component, empirical research methods were used: observation and generalization of pedagogical mentoring experience, conversation, monitoring by means of psychodiagnostic techniques aimed at identifying components of communicative readiness for mentoring.

The study involved 34 foreign language teachers from Novosibirsk and the Novosibirsk Region.

All respondents were informed about the aim and methods of the research and confirmed their readiness of participation by means of signing information consent.

Results

The concept of a good specialist is not always identical to the concept of a good mentor. This phenomenon is due to the fact that high professionalism and expertise in the profession do not have a pedagogical orientation [16].

There are two mentoring models in the world (according to D. Clutterbuck): North American ("Sponsorship mentoring") and European ("Developmental mentoring").

A U.S. model of mentoring focuses on the mentor's authority and power to help a mentee (in exchange for the mentee's respect and loyalty), whereas a European-view of mentoring centers on developing the mentee to become self-reliant and seek out mutual sources of guidance [8].

³ Shelten A. [Introduction to Professional Pedagogy: A Textbook]. Yekaterinburg; 1996. (In Russ.)

Among the most common mentoring models implemented in the education system, depending on the conditions of the program implementation, the “teacher – teacher” mentoring model is presented, which involves the interaction of a young specialist (with work experience from 0 to 3 years) or a new teacher (when changing jobs) with an experienced and well-resourced teacher who provides comprehensive support to the first one.

The methodology of this research reflecting on the results of the formation of communication readiness of all the participants for modeling socially significant and culture-creation communication activity makes the outmost of the optimal conditions for the existence of participants in the regional communication and education environment and lifelong learning for educators [17].

Four target face-to-face sessions of the Search Experiment were held for approbation and experimental survey within the framework of additional professional programs for foreign language mentors; the information materials are distributed for the usage by educators to increase the Knowledge Content and Technology within the mentoring spaces in regional municipalities.

As part of the advanced training courses (in 2020–2023), the Department of international languages at the Institute provides the implementation of effective techniques for the formation of communicative skill-set; thirty-four mentors have successfully completed a two-year professional retraining activities on the novices in terms of current methodology of international languages and world cultures, having received a diploma to teach international languages in a secondary school [18].

Programming for this survey and its methodological design cover three main stages covering actual issues:

1) The Department took part in a regional project to prepare 3rd-year students of the Teacher Training University for their activities at school; mentors participated in strategic and design sessions, in the Interactive Ministry, and in the annual Professional Teacher Olympiads (Novosibirsk Destination).

2) The Institute prepared updated methodological recommendations for publication in professional journals to expand the boundaries

of communication interaction of methodological experience of municipalities with the participation of mentors.

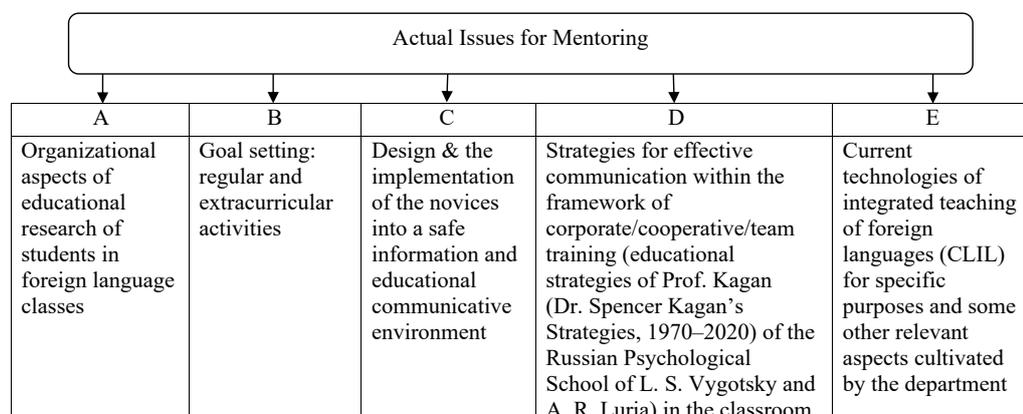
3) The Department reflects the organizational aspects for the student research within Foreign Language Projects.

They are the goal setting of novices in the aspect of mentoring; the projective activities for the information environment; the education strategies for team training in the lens of Dr. Spencer Kagan’s strategies based on the culture-historical theory of L. S. Vygotsky and A. R. Lurja, the Russian psychological school in the classroom, and modern technologies of integrated teaching of foreign languages (CLIL) for specific purposes.

This presentation of the constructive interaction within the search experiment as the three-fold model portrays the main findings of this study. The foreign language teachers associations have become of paramount importance for the In-Service Institutions for training and retraining educators at the Humanities Departments, in particular, for the self-development of a personality within the communicative spaces of mentoring movement. The model portraying three frames which include the educational humanities novices.

Frame one introduces the achievements and findings, novice ones within the expansion of the boundaries of intellectual potential of educators [19] as mentors within the mentoring movement to realize methodological support for each teacher focused on varied open events of humanitarian – character – competitions, publications – to be implemented and disseminated into wide practice (Figure).

Frame two presents some of the novices of the development regional spaces for updating the Knowledge Content of the Research Programs for specific purposes of mentoring. Actual issues cover the concepts of how to increase the dissemination of advanced pedagogical experience via providing effects of continuous professional potential of a teacher (horizontal training, network form, distance learning techniques and e-learning). The following concept becomes the mainstream for the development of meaningful technological effectiveness of optional pedagogical training programs in the format of strategic and tactic workshops, face-to-face design sessions.



F i g u r e. Actual Issues for Mentoring
 Source: Compiled by the authors.

The program for mentoring developed in according with the Axiology in recurrent professionalization are to cultivate communicative-activity and integrative approach to training within a competence-based model of learning novices in terms of Knowledge Content and Linguadidactics.

The Research Programs are to determine the Knowledge Content and Technology/Didactics in accord with a) humanism, b) dominant values as patriotism, national and language identity, social communication,

responsibility, respect for human rights and freedom, family values; d) protection and development of regional cultural traditions and socio-cultural features of languages (Table 1).

Frame three focuses on the novices in the lens of technology architectonics.

Firstly, it reflects the findings of mentoring within the principles as historicity, external and internal integration of humanitarian and natural science knowledge content in the lens of the ecosystem culture and development space for mentoring (Table 2).

T a b l e 1. Intellectual Architecture of continuous pedagogic education for mentors

Specifics of the educational process	Criteria
Activation to widen and to expand the intellectual potential of man (educator/mentor)	Novice thinking and thoughts for activation educators/students via critical thinking
Architecture of the intrigue focused on the difference of semantic (dialogue-oriented) lines of the concepts	Usage of surprise in the communication process
Reflection on goal-setting and the architecture of the program	Students are able to discuss: A set of goals, activities, and results
Refreshing information of the eventual spaces	Specifics of the language within text/s
Novice language material in terms of the authenticity of communication events	Support on axiology: Speaking and reading focused on authenticity of life of the language within the speech activity Reflection on man's speech patterns within current realia
Novices of the communicative environment	Polylogue of versions and vision of life via different viewpoints based on hypotheses, verification, clarification, etc.
Communication and speech patterns in the lens of a modern lesson	Creation and interpretation of novice design, schemes, models, nominations in the lens of their own comprehension
Novel results of self-identification in the lens of interaction within the boundaries of the eventual practices for mentoring	Motivation for sharing their novices and their viewpoints on the novel effects in the lens of dialogue/polylogue educational paradigm

Source: Hereinafter in the article all tables are compiled by the authors.

Table 2. Novices of professional discourse principles in the lens of the personal activity paradigm of mentoring spaces movement

Psychology and Pedagogy Novices	Lingua Didactic Novices	Methodical Novices
Development of the student’s personality and independence as quality	Focus on linguistic and cultural development of a student	Focus on the culture development of the student
Value-semantic nature of learning based on the productive educational activity of the student as mentor	Intercultural orientation of foreign language education	Focus on interrelated development of speech communication skills-set
Problematic value-semantic nature of training	Support on specifics of professional discourse of a mentor	Focus on interrelated teaching of language means and communicative skills
Continuity of education and its interdisciplinary nature	Support on Interrelated survey of language and culture, and culture of professional communication	Focus on conscious learning of language and culture
Reliance on students’ productive academic activity	Support on Authenticity of discourse/dialogue	Focus on reliance on students’ experience in the professional discourse of a mentor

The professional goals for mentoring cover the mentor community culture, its positive motivation; its focus on innovative community speech and interaction via information support, novices of communication and problems of the Teamship in the lens of the self-identity of a partner. The authors’ Communicative Model proposes the following problem field and area for this research [20]:

1. To depict and show problems.
2. To describe the goals of activities.
3. To define the target values.
4. To analyze programs and to make solutions focused on the models of strategies, tactics and activities valued by all the involved in the group development process of structuring a concept of communication policy.

The latter covers goals /programs/ structure/architecture of projects, and leads to

tactical decisions and solutions, and feedback (Table 3).

As for last but not least this message covers the concept of the target communication locus focused in this research on the key values reflected below (Table 4).

Value One reflects the feedback to realia in the lens of communication politics of a particular public school: problems to be discovered and defined. The analysis is focused on thinking models – educational strategies and tactics – for the architecture of the target public school communication to stimulate the development process of both a school and its participants in accord with their particular problem locus – their values/goals, dominant objectives of communication politics/programming, target participants planning. All the details are taken into account in the development process.

Table 3. Target settings for communications management

Target settings for communications management						
Educators do their best to create their innovative thinking and area in terms of critical thinking	Educators do their best to propose the area of surprise communication and comprehension	Educators do their best to propose the area of reflexivity on humanitarian practices	Educators do their best to support speech realia for restructuring	Educators do their best to stimulate intense dialogue on intellectual boundaries for the contribution to the prevention of conflicts in the teamship	Educators do their best to create a joint project for the identification of communication and management problems of the group of educators	Educators do their best to create the field to share students’ questions for the reduction of counteraction to changes

Table 4. Communication Problem Area

Architectonics for Communication Problem Area			
Goal setting problem field	Stimulus in the lens of the goal setting problem achievement	Content of the goal setting problem distribution into varied groups of mentors	Design for programming and post-effect solution



Value Two supports the idea of positive motivation of a personality in terms of his/her self-realization in the community of cooperation, in the teamship, and the objectives of the target group practices to be defined. The effective development and promotion needs regular meetings of the participants for joint designs, to create the whole communicative environment for self-identity of partners of the project. *Value Three* proposes the effective communicative devices for creation of the security eventual environment in the lens of individual trajectory planning within the target programming for the teamship dominant values. Thus, the school of mentors constructs the concept as the basis for the architecture of communication politics of a school. The thinking models are mentioned in Table 3. Members of the target group choose the strategy and tactics both in accord with the whole group and his/her choice to solve a particular problem locus. The main factors and conditions for effective regulation and implementation of the Model under consideration are the following. The leader should give a chance for the problem locus to be solved by the teamship in the lens of time period, information and stimulus feedback for each participant of the target joint project initiated in the education environment for the development process. So, we have to bear in mind the fact that this Model as a functional one should take into consideration the conceptual ideas of a particular organization and its daily routine [20].

Discussion and Conclusion

The relevance of mentoring in education is explained by the need for real communication between all participants in this process in order to transfer experience and acquire teaching skills. Employees who are unprepared for this type of activity do not fully understand effective ways of building communication and constructive forms of behavior in conflicts; communicative elements of the pedagogical component, such as mutual learning, building partnerships, friendships, and trusting relationships, which emphasizes the importance of forming a communicative readiness to carry out mentoring activities,

assuming knowledge of effective forms, methods, and techniques of communication, the ability to build communication productively, and exchange information with colleagues.

Modeling scenarios of pedagogical activity plays a crucial role in solving the problematic aspects of the organization of mentoring. The model of formation of the communicative readiness of teachers-mentors for teaching foreign languages, taking into account the multicultural specifics of the region, involves setting goals, objectives, defining the principles of the organization of training, choosing forms, methods and means of forming a certain quality (in our study, readiness).

To form communicative readiness and improve the professional competence of mentoring teachers, topical aspects of mentoring were highlighted; directions of incessant pedagogical education of mentors were identified; innovative principles of professional discourse within mentoring were formulated through the prism of a personal-activity paradigm; target settings of communication management were outlined; problematic communication gaps within mentoring were identified.

In conclusion, the authors of this research paper should note that the way out in this process is the periodic professionalization of teachers, whose professional qualities and communication skills – a set of teacher-mentor – should be improved and formed in the process of professional training and current teaching activities.

Generalization and promotion of practical experience in the organization of mentoring promotes effective cooperation between the mentor and his students, helps to adapt to rapidly changing conditions in professional activity, motivates to search for new forms of learning, ensures the development of critical and independent thinking.

Further research on the problems of mentoring is seen in the study of the motivational and value attitudes of mentors and the development of forms and methods for increasing the value attitudes of mentors.

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