



“DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE IN FRENCH AMONG NON-PHILOLOGICAL STUDENTS”

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ABSTRACT

In recent decades, foreign language education has become one of the most important components of higher education systems worldwide. The rapid development of international cooperation in economics, science, culture, medicine, and technology requires specialists who are capable of communicating effectively in foreign languages. Among the major international languages, French occupies an important place due to its historical, cultural, political, and economic significance. French is spoken on several continents and is considered one of the official languages of many international organizations, including the United Nations, UNESCO, and the European Union.

In recent decades, foreign language education has become one of the most important components of higher education systems worldwide. The rapid development of international cooperation in economics, science, culture, medicine, and technology requires specialists who are capable of communicating effectively in foreign languages. Among the major international languages, French occupies an important place due to its historical, cultural, political, and economic significance. French is spoken on several continents and is considered one of the official languages of many international organizations, including the United Nations, UNESCO, and the European Union.

For students of non-philological specialties, learning French is not only an academic subject but also a practical tool for future professional communication. Engineers, economists, pharmacists, medical workers, tourism specialists, and IT professionals increasingly need foreign language skills to participate in international conferences, exchange programs, scientific research, and business communication. Therefore, developing communicative competence has become the primary objective of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic higher educational institutions.

Despite the growing importance of foreign languages, many non-philological students experience difficulties in learning French. Limited vocabulary, fear of making mistakes, low motivation, insufficient speaking practice, and traditional teaching approaches often reduce students' communicative abilities. Consequently, educators must adopt innovative methodologies and technologies that encourage active participation and real communication.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze methods and strategies for developing communicative competence in French among non-philological students and to identify effective pedagogical practices that improve language acquisition and communication skills.

The concept of communicative competence was first introduced by linguist Dell Hymes, who argued that language learning should involve not only grammatical accuracy but also the ability to use language appropriately in social situations. Later researchers expanded this concept and identified several components of communicative competence.

Grammatical competence includes knowledge of vocabulary, pronunciation, sentence structure, and grammar rules. Sociolinguistic competence refers to the ability to use language according to social and cultural norms. Discourse competence involves connecting ideas logically in spoken and written communication. Strategic competence helps learners overcome communication difficulties through paraphrasing, gestures, or clarification strategies.

In foreign language education, communicative competence serves as the central goal of instruction. Students should learn how to interact naturally rather than memorize isolated grammar rules. This approach creates opportunities for meaningful communication and encourages learners to use the target language actively.

Non-philological students encounter numerous obstacles while learning French. One major challenge is limited instructional time. In many universities, foreign language classes are conducted only a few hours per week, which restricts opportunities for practice and interaction.

Another difficulty is psychological barriers. Many students feel anxious when speaking French because they fear making grammatical or pronunciation mistakes. This fear reduces participation and negatively affects confidence. In addition, students may consider French difficult due to complex pronunciation, verb conjugation, and grammatical structures.

Traditional teaching methods focused mainly on grammar exercises and translation may further limit communicative development. Although grammar knowledge is important, excessive emphasis on memorization often prevents students from developing spontaneous speaking abilities. Consequently, educators should create communicative environments where students actively use French in realistic situations.

Another challenge involves insufficient exposure to authentic language materials. Students who rely only on textbooks may struggle to understand native speakers or real-life communication contexts. Authentic videos, podcasts, interviews, and online resources are essential for improving listening comprehension and cultural awareness.

Modern foreign language pedagogy offers numerous strategies for improving communicative competence among non-philological students. One of the most effective approaches is Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). This method emphasizes interaction, practical communication, and learner participation. Students engage in pair work, discussions, interviews, role plays, and problem-solving activities that simulate real-life communication.

Role-playing activities are particularly useful because they help students practice language in professional and social contexts. For example, students may simulate conversations in airports, pharmacies, hospitals, hotels, or business meetings. Such tasks increase confidence and improve fluency.

Project-based learning also contributes significantly to communicative competence. Students can prepare presentations, research projects, or group reports in French. These activities encourage collaboration, creativity, and independent learning while integrating speaking, writing, reading, and listening skills.

Digital technologies have transformed foreign language education. Multimedia tools, online platforms, mobile applications, and interactive resources provide students with additional opportunities for language practice. Applications such as Duolingo, Quizlet, Babbel, and language exchange platforms allow learners to improve vocabulary, pronunciation, and listening skills independently.

Video materials and French films are valuable resources for enhancing listening comprehension and cultural understanding. Watching authentic content exposes students to natural pronunciation, intonation, and conversational expressions. Teachers may organize discussions or comprehension tasks after viewing activities to encourage active communication.

Interactive classroom activities also play an essential role in communicative development. Debates, discussions, brainstorming sessions, and games create a dynamic learning environment and motivate students to express their opinions in French. These methods reduce anxiety and promote spontaneous communication.

Another important factor is the integration of professional vocabulary related to students' specialties. Non-philological students become more motivated when language learning is connected to their future professions. Medical students, for instance, may study terminology related to healthcare communication, while engineering students can focus on technical vocabulary and international project discussions.

Developing communicative competence in French among non-philological students is an essential objective of modern higher education. In today's globalized world, foreign language proficiency significantly enhances professional opportunities, intercultural communication, and academic mobility. French remains one of the most influential international languages, making its study highly valuable for students of various specialties.

Non-philological students often face challenges including limited classroom hours, low motivation, psychological barriers, and insufficient communicative practice. Traditional teaching methods centered mainly on grammar and translation may not adequately develop speaking and interaction skills. Therefore, innovative learner-centered methodologies are necessary.

Communicative Language Teaching, role-playing activities, project-based learning, digital technologies, and authentic materials significantly improve communicative competence. These methods create interactive learning environments that encourage active participation, critical thinking, collaboration, and practical language use. The integration of professional vocabulary and career-oriented communication tasks further increases students' motivation and relevance of learning.

Teachers play a decisive role in organizing communicative activities, supporting learners emotionally, and fostering positive classroom interaction. Their ability to combine modern technologies with effective pedagogical strategies directly influences students' communicative success.

In conclusion, the development of communicative competence in French among non-philological students requires a comprehensive and innovative approach. By integrating communicative methodologies, digital resources, intercultural education, and professional orientation, higher educational institutions can prepare students for successful participation in international academic and professional environments.

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