

THEORY AND METHODOLOGY OF LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Janina Krejci
Mgr. Instructor
Simona Korycankova
Assoc. Prof. PhDr. Mgr., Ph.D.
Masaryk University
(Brno, Czech Republic)
e-mail: janina.krejci@ped.muni.cz
korycankova@ped.muni.cz

INSTRUCTION IN SPEECH ETIQUETTE AS A MEANS OF FORMATION OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE IN THE COURSE OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Abstract. The authors' goal is to describe the theoretical foundations of, and practical approaches to, the instilment of sociolinguistic competence by means of instruction in speech etiquette in a Russian-as-a-foreign-language lesson. The article reviews the latest research in the area of defining and forming communicative and sociolinguistic competence. The emphasis is made on instruction in the speech formulae of polite address using the full name, i.e., including the patronymic. A lesson plan on the subject “Rules of address. First name and patronymic” is suggested. A regular use of the formulae of address in communicative situations aids the development of the students' sociolinguistic competence in a Russian language lesson that aims to provide knowledge on the norms and correct use of such forms.

Keywords: *Sociolinguistic competence, instruction, speech etiquette, Russian as a foreign language*

Янина Крейчи
Магистр, преподаватель
Симона Корычанкова
Доктор филологических наук, ассоциированный профессор
Университет им. Масарика
(Брно, Чешская Республика)
e-mail: janina.krejci@ped.muni.cz
korycankova@ped.muni.cz

ОБУЧЕНИЕ РЕЧЕВОМУ ЭТИКЕТУ КАК СРЕДСТВО ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ СОЦИОЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКОЙ КОМПЕТЕНЦИИ ПРИ ИЗУЧЕНИИ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА

Аннотация. Авторы данной статьи ставят своей целью описание теоретических основ и практических подходов к внедрению социолингвистической компетенции посредством обучения речевому этикету на уроке русского языка как иностранного. В статье пред –

ставлен обзор актуальных исследований в области определения и формирования коммуникативной и социолингвистической компетенций. Акцент поставлен на дискуссии к проблематике обучения речевым формулам вежливого обращения к собеседнику с использованием полного имени и отчества. Приводится пример практической разработки урока по обучению теме: «Правила обращения. Имя и отчество». Регулярное использование формул обращения в коммуникативных ситуациях способствует развитию социолингвистической компетенции учеников на уроке русского языка, целью которого является приобретение знаний о нормах и правильном использовании таких форм.

Ключевые слова: социолингвистическая компетенция, обучение, речевой этикет, русский язык как иностранный

INTRODUCTION

The main goal of language education is the formation of an intercultural communicative competence. The main guideline for the language policy of the European education, *the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR 2001), emphasizes the role of intercultural education by means of the model of the so-called *general competences*, which include 1) *Declarative knowledge* (knowledge of the world; sociocultural knowledge, including the rules of etiquette; intercultural knowledge); 2) *Skills*; 3) *Existential competence*; 4) *Learning styles* (CEFR 2001). Alongside the general competences, the communicative language competence (*ibid.*) is separately emphasized; the latter comprises several components.

The term *communicative competence*, suggested by Hymes (1972), was further developed in the works of Canale and Swain (1980), Bachman (1982), J. van Ek (1986), M. Byram (1997) and others. Most communicative competence model authors emphasize the social context of language communication and name sociolinguistic competence as one of the components (J. Van Ek, 1986; L. F. Bachman, 1990; M. Celce-Murcia, Z. Dörnyei & S. Thurrell, 1995; M. Byram, 1997; T. Hedge, 2000 et al.)

THEORY. SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE

Jan van Ek (1986), whose framework exerted a significant influence on the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment* (CEFR, 2001), understands sociolinguistic competence as the awareness that the use of certain language forms is not universal, but conditioned by specific factors, such as the circumstances and goals of the communication, the relationship between the participants, and so on. This competence is based on the connection between the speech signals and their situation-derived meaning. M. Byram (1997) underlines the interconnection between this competence and the linguistic and discursive ones, and defines sociolinguistic competence as the ability to comprehend social meanings that are manifested in specific uses of language, its rules and conventions.

The sociolinguistic component of the intercultural communicative competence is isolated by G. V. Yelizarova (2005), who emphasizes the influence the knowledge of one's own culture's social factors, as well as those of the culture of the language being learned, exerts on the choice of linguistic means, and names as part of the sociolinguistic component „умение применить

названные знания в практике общения с целью достижения взаимопонимания на основе создания общего значения“¹ (Yelizarova 2005: 227-234).

S. A. Ziyayeva (2016) remarks that sociolinguistic competence is viewed in most authors' models from two angles: 1) as an autonomous component of the communicative competence, along with the linguistic and practical competences. Sociolinguistic competence as a component of the communicative competence is understood as the knowledge and skill of using and transmuting language forms to suit the circumstances of the communication, communicative goals, subject and location, social roles of the participants, etc.; 2) as a component of the sociocultural competence, which is a component of the communicative competence. Viewed from this angle, the sociolinguistic competence is defined as the speech specifics of representatives of different generations, genders, social groups and dialects.

APPROACHES AND METHODS

The approach to defining sociolinguistic competence as a distinct component of the communicative competence is based on understanding it as „способности языковой личности организовывать свое речевое поведение адекватно ситуациям общения с учетом коммуникативной цели, намерения, социальных статусов, ролей коммуникантов и обстановки общения в соответствии с социолингвистической нормой и установками конкретного национально-лингвокультурного сообщества“² (Dagbayeva & Ovchinnikova 2012).

The definition of the sociolinguistic competence as a sub-competence of the sociocultural competence is explained by proponents of the second approach in the following manner: „Социолингвистическая компетенция заключается в знании социокультурных правил языка и дискурса. Этот вид компетенции требует понимания социального контекста, в котором используется язык, а именно понимание роли каждого из собеседников, информации, которой они обмениваются, функции их взаимодействия. Только на основании такого контекста можно судить о соответствии, уместности и точности отдельного высказывания“³ (Panaiti, 2009, 36).

We share the viewpoint of the first approach (Dagbayeva & Ovchinnikova 2012) and view sociolinguistic competence as the sum of knowledge and skills needed for an effective use of language in a social context, manifested in the use of linguistic markers of social relations, expressions of folk wisdom, the choice of an appropriate mode of communication, particularly, the rules of politeness (Azimov & Shchukin 2009). Politeness is usually understood as the ability to interact with another person in a tactful and respectful manner, the readiness to compromise and listen to other points of view. Politeness allows the interlocutors to feel comfortable in each other's company and to avoid tension in the course of communication.

¹ “the ability to apply said knowledge in conversational practice with the aim of reaching mutual understanding based on a created common meaning”

² “the ability of a linguistic personality to structure its speech behavior to suit the communicative situation, taking into account the communicative goal, intent, social statuses and roles of the participants, and the circumstances of the interaction in accordance with the sociolinguistic norm and the standards of the given national linguocultural community”

³ “Sociolinguistic competence is the knowledge of the sociocultural rules of the language and discourse. This competence necessitates an understanding of the social context of language use, specifically, an understanding of the role of each of the participants, the information being exchanged, the function of the interaction. How accurate and appropriate a given utterance is, can only be determined in such a context”

One of the best-known contemporary theories of politeness is the *Brown-Levinson politeness theory* (Brown & Levinson, 2014), based on the concept of *face* suggested by E. Goffman (1967), who defined face as a positive public self-image that every individual aspires to, and emphasized the importance of preserving one's own face, as well as the interlocutor's (Goffman, 1967).

According to the main precepts of the Brown-Levinson theory, the purpose of politeness is the preservation of the social faces (public images) of the interlocutors (Brown & Levinson, 2014). The essence of polite behavior is the preservation of the interlocutors' faces by means of mitigating the effects of *face-threatening acts*, which are a natural part of communication. The authors of the theory distinguish between *negative* and *positive* politeness and suggest certain strategies for its successful application. According to Brown and Levinson, polite speech behavior is a balance between expressing like-mindedness and maintaining a certain distance, which is realized by the use of appropriate verbal means of communication, one of which is the speech etiquette, the „социально заданные и национально-специфичные правила речевого поведения, реализующиеся в системе устойчивых формул и выражений, принятых в предписываемых обществом ситуациях вежливого контакта с собеседником“⁴ (Azimov & Shchukin, 2009). Such situations are: addressing and drawing the interlocutor's attention, greeting, acquaintance, farewell, apology, gratitude, etc. Each of the situations is serviced by a number of formulae and expressions that form synonymic rows (for example, gratitude: „Спасибо“; „Благодарю Вас“; „Очень Вам благодарен“, etc.)

THEORETICAL CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The linguistic markers of social relations vary in different languages and cultures, depending on the following factors: relative status, closeness of relation, register of discourse, etc. (CEFR, 2001). What is meant here are the following categories: choice of greeting (Привет! Добрый день!); choice of farewell (Пока! До свидания!); form of address – archaic (Ваше Благородие!), official (Александр Сергеевич!), informal (Саша!), familiar (Дорогой!), disdainful (Глупец!); conventions for turn taking; choice and use of expletives (О, боже! Черт!).

Effective intercultural communication requires knowledge of nationally marked forms of communication, speech and behavior templates, the skill of matching linguistic means to specific situations and norms of speech behavior followed by native speakers. This is why we emphasize the sociolinguistic component of the communicative competence, which implies the ability to choose the linguistic form and method of expression suitable to the circumstances, goals and intents of the communication, social and functional roles of the interlocutors (Galskova, Gez, 2006). Sociolinguistic competence includes the knowledge and skills necessary for an effective use of language in a social context, which is why sociocultural knowledge as part of declarative knowledge in the domain of general competence is to be emphasized in language education.

We understand the formation of sociolinguistic competence in the case of instruction in speech etiquette as a process of interaction between the teacher and students in the course of the instruction, and the study of linguistic formulae and expressions of politeness in Russian language lessons, which leads to the adoption of said formulae and expressions by the students and, consequently, to their ability to correctly use them in corresponding communicative situations.

⁴ “socially defined and nation-specific rules of speech behavior that are manifested as a system of established formulae and expressions expected in socially prescribed situations of polite communication”

Instruction in speech etiquette is to accompany the entire course of teaching Russian as a foreign language, starting with the very first lesson, which creates a natural communicative situation where the students receive the knowledge and begin forming the skill of using appropriate speech forms of etiquette. The formulae of greeting, rules of address (вы or ты), use of first name and patronymic, formulae of farewell, etc., can be among the first rules of speech etiquette. Individual phrases are learned by means of imitation, as well as the transcription of their pronunciation on the blackboard using the characters of the students' native language.

PRACTICE

A lesson on the subject “Rules of address. First name and patronymic” will serve as an example. The lesson's linguistic goal is to instill the skill and habit of using the formulae of greeting, as well as to study the structure of the full name and introduce the patronymic as a sociocultural specific. The lesson introduces the students to the Russian rules of address. The students learn, in the very first lesson that the Russian language distinguishes between a *ты* and *вы* address. Analogies in the students' native language should be pointed out, if present. The teacher asks, “*Whom do you address as «ты»?*” The students answer, “*Friends, family members, adults that we know who have suggested such a form of address*”. The teacher then asks, “*Whom do you address as «вы»?*” The students answer, “*Teachers, doctors, shop assistants, coaches, adult strangers...*” The teacher says that analogous forms of address are used in the same situations in the Russian-speaking society. Some languages do not allow for this type of analogy; in such cases, the students need to be explained when they are to address an adult as *вы*. One way to do this is a language game, for example, in the form of questions on sheets of paper (“*Should a doctor be addressed as «вы»?*” - the students answer yes/no, with the teacher or the students explaining why). Should they not have mastered spelling yet, drawings can be substituted (a doctor, a shop assistant, a girl, a dog). After this part has been successfully completed, the teacher needs to go on to explain that a Russian full name consists of three parts (first name, patronymic, family name), the use of the patronymic being a sociocultural specific of the Russian-speaking society. It must be mentioned that the full name in other languages can have a larger number of components owing to, for example, two first names or a double family name; however, those are specifics of a different kind. The teacher emphasizes that the patronymic is part of the clan name that is derived from the father's.

Depending on the group's level, time constraints, etc., the lesson may include a more detailed linguocultural commentary explaining the subject of ancestor worship (fathers, grand- and great-grandfathers) and the attendant rituals and traditions. The teacher reads out examples of Russian names (like Дмитрий Иванович Белов, Ольга Ивановна Белова) written on the blackboard beforehand. Attention is drawn to the postfixes of the male and female patronymics, highlighted in blue on the blackboard: -ович and -овна. The teacher then demonstrates other examples of first names and patronymics and reads them out loud: Александр Сергеевич Пушкин and Наталья Николаевна Гончарова (the significance of the names may be mentioned). The teacher draws attention to the other possible postfixes of the male and female patronymics, which are highlighted in blue: -евич and -евна. It is explained that the examples of patronymics demonstrated (ending in -ович and -евич with men and -овна and -евна with women) are the most common in the Russian language. The teacher then demonstrates a drawing (or slide, depending on the available technology) showing the figures of a father, daughter

and son, each labelled with their names: the father – Иван Петрович Белов, the daughter – Ольга Ивановна Белова, the son – Дмитрий Иванович Белов. The children's patronymics consist of two parts: the father's name (Иван) and the male or female postfix (-ович and -овна). The father's name may be highlighted in red, the postfixes (-ович and -овна) in blue for emphasis. The teacher asks individual students to read the names of the father, daughter and son out loud, then it is done by all the students together. The teacher points out the correct pronunciation. Depending on the lesson's goal and the level of the students, the rules of patronymic formation in the Russian language may be explained (like deriving the patronymic from the father's name Иван: ИВАН+ОВИЧ=ИВАНОВИЧ; ИВАН+ОВНА=ИВАНОВНА; from the father's name Сергей: СЕРГЕЙ – Й + ЕВИЧ = СЕРГЕЕВИЧ; НИКОЛАЙ – Й + ЕВНА = НИКОЛАЕВНА).

A number of exercises may be used to affirm the new knowledge. For example, the students alter the answers shown on the blackboard (slide, flipchart) to the question in a situation of acquaintance: «Как вас зовут?» – «Меня зовут Александр Сергеевич» (– «Меня зовут Наталья Николаевна»). The teacher then demonstrates on the blackboard examples of greeting and address using the first name and patronymic: – «Добрый день, Наталья Николаевна!» – «Здравствуйте, Александр Сергеевич!» The teacher explains that this is the manner in which Russians introduce themselves in situations of official communication, in particular, students addressing a teacher in school. All teachers in Russian schools have to be addressed using the first name and patronymic. As an example, the teacher may write down his or her own name and patronymic and tell the students that that is how Russian students would address them.

LESSON ASSESSMENT AND PRACTICAL RESULTS

The communicative situation of address comes up often in the course of communication, which is why we consider it important to include the lesson “Rules of address. First name and patronymic” in the process of Russian language education. The lesson familiarizes the students with the sociocultural specifics of address, mainly, during official communication. The lesson also underlines the similarity/difference between the Russian and students' cultures, which manifest, in particular, in the *вы* and *ты* forms of address present in both languages.

The lesson represents the first stage of the formation of sociolinguistic competence in the official form of address in the Russian language – the formation of sociolinguistic knowledge on the use of the patronymic in situations of full name address. The curriculum assumes that the students are already familiar with the grammatical aspect of address using the first name in the nominative case (Сергей! Вера!), which they are usually introduced to in the first Russian lesson (“Greeting, introduction, farewell”). Examples of visual aids to be used in the lesson are a computer, interactive board, flipchart, or other media containing examples of full Russian names including a first name, patronymic and family name; examples of patronymic formation; examples of address using the first name and patronymic serving the purposes of quick memorization and automation.

The lesson introduces the sociocultural phenomenon of patronymic for the first time, which is why only the most common varieties of patronymic are reviewed. A positive atmosphere and the students' active engagement in the tasks assigned by the teacher have been observed during the lesson. Of particular interest to the students is the homework: to write down

their own patronymics and the full names (first name, patronymic, family name) of their family members.

CONCLUSION

In order to build sociolinguistic competence in the process of learning a foreign language, a student has to develop the skill of choosing and using linguistic forms and means suitable to the goals and circumstances of the communication, the social roles of the participants. Speech etiquette is what allows one to establish the right manner of contact with another person in accordance with the existing norms of communication; therefore, the formulae and expressions of speech etiquette are a necessary part of a Russian-as-a-foreign-language curriculum. A certain amount of knowledge on the ways and traditions of native speakers must also be acquired, since every nation's speech etiquette makes certain demands of the members of its culture, and has its own specifics. Speech etiquette allows one to establish contact in accordance with the existing norms of communication. The linguistic material pertaining to the formulae of speech etiquette is to be selected based on its thematic significance, frequency of the lexical items and appropriateness to situations of everyday spoken communication, the age of the students and their level of mastery of the foreign language.

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Information about the author: Simona Korycankova - Professor PhDr. Mgr., Ph.D. Department of Russian Language and Literature, Head of Department of Russian Language and Literature, Faculty of Education, Masaryk University (Czech Republic).

e-mail: korycankova@ped.muni.cz

Сведения об авторе: Симона Корицанкова - доктор филологических наук, профессор, университет им. Масарика, заведующий кафедрой русского языка и литературы - Педагогический факультет (Чешская Республика)

e-mail: korycankova@ped.muni.cz

Information about the author: Janina Krejci – Mgr. Instructor, Department of Russian Language and Literature, Faculty of Education, Masaryk University (Czech Republic).

e-mail: janina.krejci@ped.muni.cz

Сведения об авторе: Янина Крейчи - магистр, преподаватель, кафедра русского языка и литературы, Педагогический факультет, Университет им. Масарика (Чешская Республика).

e-mail: janina.krejci@ped.muni.cz

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