

## **Professionally-Oriented Foreign Language Teaching of Master's Degree Students**

**Natalia A. Sergeeva**

**Russian State Agrarian University – Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy**

**Natalia A. Yakovleva**

**Russian State Agrarian University – Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy**

**Nataliia V. Saienko**

**Kharkiv National Automobile and Highway University**

**Irina A. Tyutyunnik**

**Vyatka State University**

*The issue of professionally-oriented foreign language teaching is relevant for foreign language teachers and for future professionals whose work lies in the field of intercultural communication. Foreign language skills become one of the essential requirements for technical professionals. One can determine the efficiency of the educational process by the educational tools and materials. An urgent task is to develop the standards for foreign language teaching of master's degree students of engineering specialties. There are typical situations that arise in professional communication in the process of creating a teaching program. Professionals' requirements regarding speech are taken into account. The method of projects in teaching allows master's degree students to show independence in planning, organizing, controlling their activities, studying practical problems of modern age by means of a foreign language in the real information space. Designing the teaching program based on new educational standards imposes new requirements on assessing relevant competencies in master's degree students. Individual work as an integral element of the educational process contributes to the improvement of professional qualifications.*

*Keywords: professionally-oriented teaching, course program, method of projects, individual work*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with the government educational standard of higher education, the discipline “Foreign language in the field of professional communications” in a non-linguistic University is communicative-oriented and professionally oriented. Today, the professionalization of teaching is one of the higher education trends, which implies the possession of all components of communicative competence in implementing professional tasks. The ability to solve tasks in the context of foreign language communication increases the competitiveness of a professional in the current labor market (Zaitsev & Gnezdilova, 2018). The changes taking place in our society, accompanied by the development of new

technologies that ensure the processing of vast amounts of information and provide expanded opportunities for communication, put forward new requirements for professionals' training. Modern graduates are expected to be consciously ready to work in new conditions, considering changes in the modern labor market, including its international segments. The structure of readiness includes, first of all, professional competence, along with motivation and professionally critical personal qualities (Alipichev, 2007). The practical course of a foreign language in the Master's programs is to train a specialist who must possess such universal competences as the ability to apply modern communication technologies, including those in a foreign language, for academic and professional interaction; ability to analyze and take into account the diversity of cultures in the process of intercultural interaction (Sergeeva, Yakovleva, Kuleshov & Akimova, 2019).

The conceptual provisions of the language teaching of Master's Degree students are set out in the program of the discipline "Foreign language in the field of professional communications," developed by the Department of Foreign and Russian languages of the Russian State Agrarian University – Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy. This program considers pedagogical and methodological principles, such as (1) competency-based approach, (2) focus on professional activities, (3) integrativity, (4) modeling of quasi-professional activities, and (5) taking into account individual trajectories of professional development and the formation of learner autonomy. Teaching a foreign language involves teaching the ability to conduct a professional conversation, participate in scientific meetings, debates, write business letters, make reports at conferences, and communicate, considering cultural differences. This program is based on authentic materials that allow one to form skills and abilities to use language forms and means, depending on the purpose and communication situation.

The professional orientation provides for the implementation of intersubject relations, the need for careful selection of the content of educational materials that should correspond to students' professional interests and reflect the latest achievements of science and technology. The interdisciplinary education methodology provides such forms of educational activities as project tasks, role-playing, and business games, writing essays, and reports.

The purpose of studying a professionally-oriented foreign language course is to develop abilities of oral and written communication in a particular field of professional activity, as well as solving various professional tasks employing a foreign language, including the adequate translation of texts typical for individual spheres and situations of professional communication (Alipichev, Galushkin, Dronova & Panfilova, 2017). A professionally oriented approach involves the use of specially selected authentic texts that reflect the realities of professional communication. It allows teachers to provide a professional orientation of foreign language teaching, which involves reproducing real professional tasks in educational activities and teaching students how to solve them. The primary objectives of professionally-oriented foreign language training are:

- Formation of communicative skills in all types of speech activity (speaking, listening, reading, writing);
- Structuring and actualization of basic linguistic knowledge (grammatical forms, word formation, lexical units);
- Mastering professional vocabulary, including particular terminology in the field of production and commercial activities.

The practice of teaching often reveals insufficient knowledge of foreign language discussion skills of students of engineering specialties. A new approach to foreign language teaching provides education on the generalization and systematization of material, modernization of the teaching program, introduction of modern information technologies in teaching. These factors improve the quality of the educational process.

### **The Relevance of the Research**

A modern professional should have high professional qualifications and be able to solve professional problems involving the use of a foreign language. Consequently, the formation of foreign-language professional and business communication skills in oral and written form becomes particularly relevant (Tyurina, 2011).

The subject of the study is the foreign language teaching of Master's Degree students of engineering specialties in the Russian State Agrarian University – Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy. A foreign language is one of the components of professional education, contributing to the expansion of educational horizons, providing knowledge about scientific achievements in the students' professional fields (Verbitsky, 2018).

### **The research goal**

The research goal is to consider the features of professionally oriented teaching of a foreign language to Master's Degree students in a technical university and ways to improve its effectiveness on the example of one of the types of individual work in the process of mastering the discipline "Foreign language in the field of professional communications."

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The research methods include the following: (1) theoretical analysis of the literature on the issue, in particular, software and methodological documentation (Alipichev, Sergeeva & Yakovleva, 2019); (2) study and generalization of recent experience, including partner departments in Russia and the CIS countries; (3) observation; (4) analysis of the work of Master's Degree students; (5) questionnairing of Master's Degree students in order to identify their attitude to the method of projects; (6) statistical data processing followed by the construction of a circle chart.

The study of foreign language department teachers' work experience, the survey of students of technical universities indicates that most graduates do not associate their future profession with the practical application of a foreign language. On the other hand, insufficient language training and a limited number of hours affect the level of motivation to study the discipline "Foreign language in the field of professional communications." In this regard, it is necessary to look differently at the process of teaching a foreign language in a non-linguistic university (Butina & Korablina, 2019).

## **RESULTS**

Preparation of students of non-linguistic (branch) universities for professional foreign language communication is carried out in two stages: at the first stage, it is aimed at solving general education problems – the actualization of knowledge in the field of communicative grammar, forming productive and receptive speech skills in everyday communication situations, as well as forming skills to solve typical communicative problems in situations involving the use of a foreign language when traveling abroad. The second stage (learning a language for particular purposes) involves forming professional foreign language communication skills. The program for communication in a foreign language in a non-linguistic (branch) university should meet the requirements for future professionals' foreign language activities. These requirements are specified in the course of the analysis of regulatory documentation (FSES HE (Federal State Education Standards for Higher Education)) and the development of the Department of programs and evaluation materials of the discipline. To optimize the content of language training at the "advanced" professional orientation stage, it is necessary, first of all, to determine the goals and objectives of such training. As the experience of the Department of foreign and Russian languages of the Russian State Agrarian University – Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy, as well as repeatedly conducted surveys of graduates and already working in the production of students in the Master's program, the priority direction of foreign language teaching can be considered training to work with professionally-oriented authentic texts. This work usually consists of the following interrelated aspects:

- Analysis of specific vocabulary in the situation of professional communication;
- Selection and systematization of specific foreign language terminology for Master's Degree student of engineering universities; systematization of the terminological minimum;
- Training in various types of reading professionally-oriented authentic texts;

- Writing reports, abstracts, essays, analytical reviews based on the analysis of the content of professionally oriented authentic texts;
- Presentation of the results of working with texts in the context of solving specific scientific, professional, or communicative tasks (in the form of a PowerPoint presentation or a voice-over video).

Each of the teaching aspects involves its own set of methods and techniques (Yakovleva, 2017). Table 1 presents typical teaching methods and techniques for training aspects.

**TABLE 1**  
**BASIC TEACHING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES FOR TRAINING ASPECTS**

Training aspect	Teaching methods and techniques
Analysis of a particular vocabulary	Working out the rules for reading transcription Analysis of the meaning of polysemous words in a particular context Practical application of the primary methods of word formation
Systematization of the terminological minimum	Familiarity with the guidelines of creating dictionary entries Search for words and phrases in various dictionaries and databases (including electronic resources) Compilation of a minimum terminology dictionary for a specific problem or text
Mastering the techniques of various types of reading	Reading for specific information: selecting keywords in a foreign language with a subsequent search for several texts on a specific problem. Revision reading: search in the proposed text for information relevant to a particular study and problem, confirmation, or refutation of a specific statement. Critical reading: search for specific words and terminological phrases presented in the native language, in a specific foreign-language text, search for a detailed answer to a question, search for a given grammatical construction and justification of the method of its translation in this context.
The creation of “secondary” texts	Creating a structured text plan Annotating foreign-language sources Preparation of a thematic analytical review on a given problem Abstract translation of the text with the selection of relevant information
Presentation of research results	Presentation of research on a specific problem in the form of a presentation report (voiced-over video) Presentation at the official meeting on equal terms following the communicative task and the received role (inventor-innovator, opponent, environmentalist, investor, etc.)

This list of methods and techniques of foreign language teaching is quite variable. The teacher can select any set of techniques based on the level of training of students, their abilities, and taking into account the pragmatic and communicative demands. The basis for the selection and methodological organization of the material should be considered the creation of typical situations in professional and research activities, while it is important to take into account their subject-thematic content.

A competency-based approach to teaching foreign languages encourages students to engage in active educational activities. According to E. S. Polat, the leading component of the foreign language teaching

program is not the basics of science, but the methods of activity-training in various speech activity types: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Therefore, it is necessary to provide the learner with practice in the form of speech activity they are currently mastering (Polat & Bukharkina, 2007).

The individual work of Master's Degree students occupies more than 50% of the time occupies, so it should be organized in such a way as to promote more effective development of independent work with foreign language material and autonomous learning of the discipline "Foreign language in the field of professional communications." In current conditions, it is necessary to teach professionals with project thinking. Management of individual work involves the extensive use of project technologies focused on real practical results. The method of projects develops the creative potential of a person, promotes independent thinking. The application of the project methodology in the educational process develops the ability to apply the acquired knowledge in practice, the ability to solve tasks and make an innovative product. The work on projects reflects the communicative and personality-oriented approaches (Yakovleva, 2019).

The project aims to develop skills in the field of searching, analyzing, and processing the information and presents the results of analytical work in the form of an analytical review and presentation.

The project tasks are the formation of independent search skills for information on a given problem, presentation of the results of information search, the formation of public speaking skills, and protection of one's point of view.

Work on the project includes the following stages:

- Search – a selection of the research topic and project issues (setting the research goals and objectives, putting forward a hypothesis, discussing research methods);
- Analytics – a coordination of the general line of project development, preparation of a work plan, analysis of information, task adjustments;
- Practice – a manifestation of project final results;
- Presentation – preparation of a conference report or a video for online viewing (Rozova, 2012).

Experience of the Department of foreign and Russian languages of the Russian State Agrarian University – Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy depicts that future professionals in the field of mechanization, electrification, and automation of agricultural production are most interested in the following areas of issue:

- Current issues of agricultural policy in Russia and abroad;
- Modern developments in the field of agricultural machinery construction;
- Prospects for the use of alternative energy sources;
- The digital economy of agriculture.

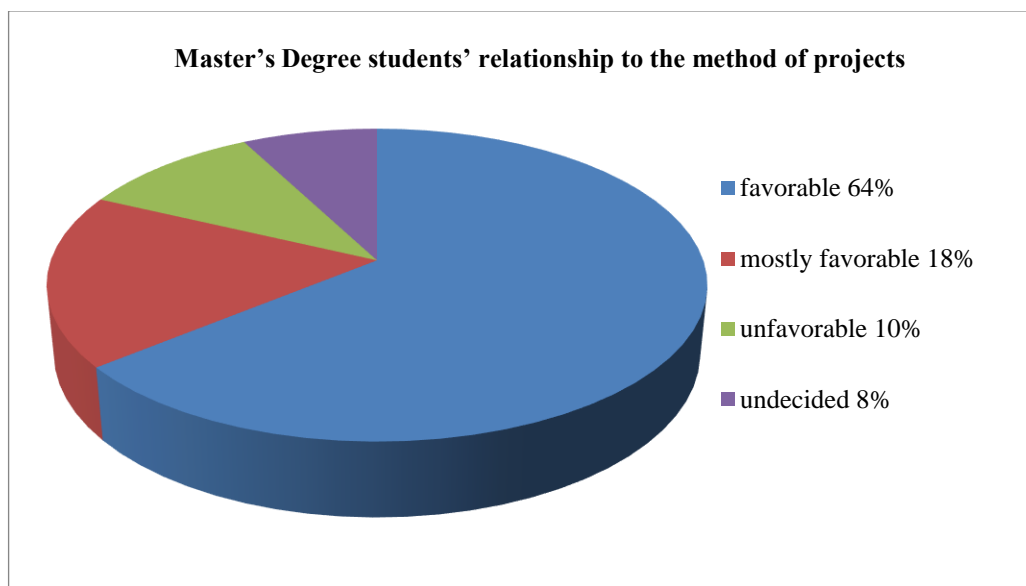
We should emphasize that teacher develops and controls this type of individual work at the appropriate stages. The teacher's task is to create an educational environment where students can solve problems independently, develop their ideas, look for possible ways to solve problems, and defend their views and points of view while correctly formulating their statements.

In the course of the project, there are several tasks to solve:

- Optimization of the learning process;
- Increasing interest in learning foreign languages through the development of self-motivation;
- Formation of skills in the field of assessment and analysis of relevant (problematic) information.

During the practical part of the study, we asked Master's Degree students to evaluate the work on their colleagues' projects. The experiment involved students of three groups (39 people) of the 2019–2020 academic year of the Institute of Engineering and energy named after V. P. Goryachkin based on the Russian State Agrarian University – Moscow Timiryazev Agricultural Academy. Based on the results of the survey, we determined their attitude to this type of work. According to the survey, the results of which are presented in Figure 1, the number of students who demonstrated a positive attitude to project work is significantly higher than students with a negative attitude, which also indicates a deeper awareness of the role of individual work in the formation of professionally applicative skills.

**FIGURE 1**  
**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION DIAGRAM OF THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE**  
**METHOD OF PROJECTS**



## DISCUSSION

The issue of control and work quality assessment remains an urgent issue. The search for verification forms and result evaluation obtained in mastering a foreign language professional, communicative competence is evident, and (6) limited scale from the top. The disadvantages of the four-point traditional assessment system include: (1) subjectivity of the assessment, (2) low differentiating ability, (3) focus on fixing shortcomings, (4) low information content of the assessment, (5) lack of defined rules for the conclusion of final assessments, and (6) limited scale from the top. With the change in the education system in accordance with the international standards of the new generation, improved or completely new ways of controlling the quality of education are required. In this regard, most universities switched to the point-rating system to evaluate students' knowledge (Sergeeva et al., 2019).

The point-rating system of assessment allows one to evaluate the results of Master's Degree students' activities more accurately and comprehensively. We developed technological maps for rating the individual project work of Master's Degree students.

**TABLE 2**  
**TECHNOLOGICAL MAP OF PROJECT PREPARATION ASSESSMENT**

1	The relevance of the provided information	10
2	An oral monologue statement quality	30
3	Foreign language writing quality	20
4	Competence in the field of the subject under consideration	10
5	Ability to debate and answer questions	15
6	The correctness of the presentation	5
7	Compliance with the established regulations	5
8	Compliance with deadlines	5
Total		100

Conducting project protection promotes (1) a conscious creative approach to work, (2) understanding the practical significance of the performed work, (3) self-esteem increase, (4) self-development, and (5) self-actualization of the individual. We agree with the position (Kulamikhina, Birova, Alipichev, Vasbieva & Kalugina, 2018) that by developing good critical thinking skills, Master's Degree students would improve language skills significantly together with their social abilities.

## CONCLUSION

Education in the Master's program should be focused on the formation of students' practical skills in the preparation of their own informed decisions and the formation of their responsibility for the results of education. By performing educational tasks, Master's Degree students acquire professionally relevant and applicative knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are very important for future successful professional activity. The joint work of foreign language teachers with specialized departments of the University contributes to developing interest and motivation for practical mastery of a foreign language. Modeling situations of professional communication is one of the most effective methods of teaching a foreign language.

Based on the control results in the experimental group, it should be noted that almost 79% of students have the skills of acceptable speech behavior corresponding to the situations and tasks of foreign-language professional communication. In comparison, in the control group, this indicator is 64%.

It should be noted that due to the insufficient number of training hours allocated to the discipline "Foreign language in the field of professional communications," the problem of individualization of foreign language teaching becomes particularly relevant, solutions to which have yet to be found, including in the field of using distance learning resources.

One of the essential qualities of a highly qualified professional is foreign language skills. Foreign language skills should serve not only as a means of obtaining information but also as a means of making contacts with foreign colleagues to organize joint activities, discuss projects, and hold conferences. A foreign language as a learning tool helps to develop communication models for each specific specialty. One can complete the education with an organized scientific project with the participation of the head department. It makes sense to expand the range of educational activities and use all the possibilities of virtual learning tools at the stage of development of distance learning.

## REFERENCES

- Alipichev, A.Y. (2007) *Structuring the teaching standards for translators in the field of professional communication* (Dissertation of the Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences). Moscow, Russia: Institute of Engineering and Energy Named After V. P. Goryachkin.
- Alipichev, A.Y., Galushkin, A.A., Dronova, S.Y., & Panfilova, E. A. (2017). Towards successful implementation of CLIL courses in Russian universities. *XLinguae*, 10(4), 345–356.
- Alipichev, A.Y., Sergeeva, N.A., & Yakovleva, N.A. (2019). *Program of the discipline B1. O. 03 "Foreign language in the field of professional communications" (English, German, French) for the preparation of masters*. Moscow, Russia: Institute of Engineering and Energy named after V. P. Goryachkin.
- Butina, Y.V., & Korablin, M.V. (2019). Formation of professional competence in the process of teaching a foreign language. *Sovremennye Naukoemkie Tekhnologii*, 7, 146–150.
- Kulamikhina, I.V., Birova, J., Alipichev, A.Y., Vasbieva, D.G., KalG., & Kalugina, O.A. (2018). Developing communication and critical thinking through creative writing in English and French language: Analysis of classroom management strategies. *Communications – Scientific Letters of the University of Zilina*, 20(1A), 115–130.
- Polat, E.S., & Bukharkina, M.Y. (2007). *Modern pedagogical information technologies in the education system*. Moscow, Russia: Akademiya.

- Rozova, E.O. (2012). Use of a design technique at training to a foreign language. *Lingua Mobilis*, 1(34), 162–166.
- Sergeeva, N., Yakovleva, N., Kuleshov, A., & Akimova, I. (2019). Point-rating system as one of the incentives of master students' independent work. *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, 331, 630–636.
- Tyurina, S.Y. (2011). Key goals and content area of foreign language teaching for technical students of master of engineering degree program. *Fundamental Research*, 12(1), 63–67.
- Verbitsky, A.A. (2018). Foreign language education in the context of the profession. *Bulletin of the Moscow State Linguistic University*, 2(796), 126–141.
- Yakovleva, N.A. (2017). Optimization of the teaching program for professionally oriented foreign language training of master's degree students of non-linguistic universities. In T.P. Leontiev (Ed.), *Proceedings from International Scientific and Practical Conference: Modern Language Education in the Context of International Integration Processes: State and Prospects* (pp. 101–103). Minsk, Belarus: Minsk State Linguistic University.
- Yakovleva, N.A. (2019). Organization of individual work of master's degree students in foreign language disciplines in a non-linguistic university. In S.P. Firsov (Ed.). *Proceedings from The First Open All-Russian Forum of Teachers of Foreign Languages* (pp. 75–83). Yoshkar-Ola, Russia: Volga State University of Technology.
- Zaitsev, A.A., & Gnezdilova, E.V. (2018). Features of using modern IT-technologies in foreign languages teaching at universities. In S. Shaposhnikov (Ed.), *Proceedings from (IT&QM&IS 2018) The IEEE International Conference: "Quality Management, Transport and Information Security, Information Technologies"* (pp. 752–754). St. Petersburg, Russia: Saint Petersburg Electrotechnical University "LETI."