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ФАКУЛЬТАТИВНІ ЗАНЯТТЯ ТА КУРСИ ЯК ОДИН ІЗ СПОСОБІВ ПОДОЛАННЯ ТРУДНОЩІВ У ВИКЛАДАННІ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ В ТЕХНІЧНИХ НАВЧАЛЬНИХ ЗАКЛАДАХ

ELECTIVE CLASSES AND OPTIONAL COURSES AS ONE OF THE WAY TO OVERCOME DIFFICULTIES IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN TECHNICAL EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Анотація. Стаття піднімає питання важливості запровадження факультативних занять та курсів з іноземної мови задля подолання труднощів викладання іноземної мови в технічних навчальних закладах. Наголошено на необхідності формування іншомовних комунікативних вмінь та навичок у майбутніх фахівців технічних спеціальностей. Зазначається, що факультативні заняття дають можливість підняти мотивацію студентів до вивчення іноземної мови. Доведено, що студентам технічних спеціальностей часто приходится мати справу з професійною іншомовною лексикою і документацією. Тому акцентовано увагу на необхідності оптимізації навчального процесу, пошуку ефективних шляхів подолання труднощів іншомовного навчання в сучасних умовах. Автор підкреслює, що факультативні заняття є суттєвим доповненням основного курсу іноземної мови в технічних навчальних закладах.

Ключові слова: факультативні заняття, факультативні курси, іноземна мова, технічні навчальні заклади, комунікативна компетентність.

Summary. The article is devoted to the issue of organizing optional foreign language classes and courses in technical educational establishments. The article raises the issue of the importance of introducing optional foreign language classes and courses to overcome the difficulties of teaching a foreign language in technical educational establishments. The need for formation of foreign language communication skills in future specialists of technical specialties is emphasized. It is noted that optional classes provide an opportunity to increase students' motivation to learn a foreign language. It is proved that students of technical specialties often have to deal with professional foreign language vocabulary and documentation. Therefore, attention is focused on the necessity to optimize the educational process, to find effective ways to overcome the difficulties of foreign language learning in modern conditions. The author emphasizes that elective classes and optional courses are an essential complement to the main course of a foreign language in technical educational institutions.

Key words: elective classes, optional courses, foreign language, technical educational establishments, communicative competence



Introduction of the issue. Modern realities, due to the processes of globalization, the creation of a single European educational and scientific space with common requirements and criteria open up many prospects for young people both in terms of expanding international relations and in gaining professional knowledge and experience in foreign and international companies. One of the most significant components of professional activity is the ability to communicate professionally in a foreign language, in connection with which the role of the discipline “Foreign Language” in technical educational establishments has increased. Its important function is to provide the graduate with the opportunity not only to rise to a different qualitative level of professional activity, which determines his competitiveness in the labor market, but also to promote subsequent professional and career growth.

Current state of the issue. Ukrainian researchers N. M. Dukhanina, N. O. Mykytenko, I. YE. Semenyshyn, P. P. Chernyk analyzed in detail the peculiarities of applying effective methods of forming foreign language professional competence.

The aim of the article is to show the necessity of creating and applying electives and optional courses in order to improve foreign language learning in technical educational establishments.

Results and discussion. At present, in the field of teaching foreign languages in technical educational establishments of Ukraine, there is a contradiction between the requirements for the level of future specialist knowledge and the reduction of hours devoted to learning a foreign language. A large number of hours in the discipline is devoted to independent work. Despite the fact that the applicant has some skills of independent work, he cannot always correctly distribute his forces, optimally plan time. Practice shows that very few students have intrinsic motivation, which means they are ready to transform learning activities into cognitive ones based on an internal need for knowledge. It is important to take into account the technical orientation of students in technical educational establishments. The “non-linguistic” mentality of the students, their psychological qualities (inability, “disinclination” to learn foreign languages) largely prevent (regardless of the will of the teacher) the development of sufficient language skills in students. Thus, in the first years of technical (non-linguistic) educational establishments only strictly controlled independent work turns out to be effective.

Unfortunately, not all students have the necessary knowledge in the field of a foreign language because secondary school does not always contribute to the achievement of the required level of language skills and speech skills formation. Having not reached the required level of a foreign language knowledge by the time of admission for one reason or another, students already in the first year face serious difficulties. They have to deal with professional vocabulary (the language of their specialty), which represents a completely new layer that

requires serious reflection. Education in technical educational establishments is associated with the students’ work with specialized text materials of various volumes, in which vocabulary and grammatical constructions are represented in a significant amount. The situation is also complicated by the fact that at the initial stage, students do not have sufficient knowledge in the professional field in the Ukrainian language, while at the same time, the discipline “Foreign language”, and then “Foreign Language for Specific Purpose” in most educational establishments is studied in all courses. There are certain difficulties associated with the understanding and translation of professional texts. The number of hours allocated within the framework of the program for the study of a foreign language in technical educational establishments is insufficient for such a category of students to independently overcome all difficulties and reach the required level of language competence. All this can lead not only to a lag in the educational process, but also to a loss of interest in the subject being studied, and, consequently, to a loss of motivation, which negatively affects the professional training of a future specialist.

The current situation poses tasks for teachers related to the scientific search for an effective approach to teaching foreign languages in modern conditions, the use of backup methods to optimize the educational process. Foreign language teachers are looking for different ways to optimize the learning process. According to the researcher N. M. Dukhanina, the technology of blended learning is important today, based on the integration of e-learning into classroom learning activities, which leads to a new format of the educational process. In her opinion, the main advantages of blended learning are: openness and flexibility of the educational process, greater student independence from the place and time of classes [1, p. 40].

In our opinion, a significant reserve for the formation of professional communicative competence of a specialist is the system of special courses and elective classes (electives), which complements the main course of a foreign language at the first level of education. The word “facultas” in Latin means “possible, optional, given to choice”. Elective classes significantly expand the possibilities of language teaching and make the language teaching system itself more flexible, taking into account the different student levels of language training. P. Chernykh P. and S. Pasichnyk. believe that “the most important thing in terms of activating the entire educational process during elective classes is to maximize the use of opportunities inherent in practical classes, since such sources of information as the Internet, correspondence in a foreign language, magazines, and newspapers are of great importance for the development of communication skills” [3, p. 94]. Researcher O. Prykhodko asserts that for the successful conduct of electives, the material should be properly selected, professionally oriented, and linguistically accessible. Then it will

help to avoid monotony in the organization of the educational process and will be one of the key components of successful elective classes [2, p. 161].

In order to meet the needs of future technical specialists in deep knowledge of a foreign language, several faculties of Vinnytsia Technical Applied College decided to create a number of electives and optional courses. Electives were offered in all courses and faculties, which made it possible to significantly reduce the gap in knowledge and gradually achieve the desired result. At this stage, three types of elective courses can be distinguished:

- for in-depth study of the language;
- for students with a very low level of foreign language competencies;
- to study a second foreign language.

The subject of the discipline is teaching various types of speech activities, which are interrelated, namely: teaching translation skills, improving reading, speaking, listening and writing skills.

During classes with students, it is proposed to use various types of work: lectures, conversations, consultations, project activities, analytical work with educational, scientific, popular science literature and reference books, newspaper and statistical materials, etc.

Expected results:

- understanding and communication of information;
- description of the problem in writing;
- discussion and support of the conversation;
- translation of specialized literature;
- understanding the content of newspaper or magazine articles;
- correct application of grammar rules;
- the ability to summarize the content of what you have read.

Programming, professionally-oriented foreign language courses proved to be in demand among the students of the Computer Engineering Department, studying English in depth. Such electives and special courses contribute both to improving the skills of working with educational, methodological,

reference and scientific literature and to achieving the main goal of the “Foreign language” discipline — mastering a foreign language as a means of intercultural, interpersonal and professional communication. In order to ensure the success of elective classes their programs were built with the needs, opportunities and expectations of students in mind. In the process of teaching extracurricular activities and special courses teachers use both traditional and innovative methods. The multimedia lab is equipped with a remote projection system for PowerPoint presentations, Internet resources for broadcasting foreign TV channels and educational films in English in the classroom. The media library provides access to electronic editions of specialized books, newspapers and magazines, encyclopedias and reference books. Thus, extracurricular activities help to make up for the reduction in classroom hours. They help to form a higher level of intercultural communicative professionally oriented competence, which ultimately creates skills for successful professional activity, thereby opening up great opportunities for the realization of professional ambitions of a specialist.

Conclusions. Summarizing the above facts, we can conclude that the contradictions between the demand for qualified specialists with intercultural communicative competence and the limited budget of educational time for their training bring to the fore the task of creating a system to optimize the educational process. Elective classes and optional courses, being an essential addition to the main course of foreign language, represent only one element of the system, which would contribute to maintaining the quality of professional education, creating a competitive product in the market of educational services.

Research perspectives. Further research is needed on the issue of methods of conducting elective classes in technical educational establishments, diversification of methodological tools and techniques, and creation of an electronic support base of methodological material.

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