

## Foreign Language Teaching Modeling for Students Majoring in Social Studies and Humanities

**Elmira I. Nazmieva**\*

Kazan Federal University, Russia

**Yelena A. Andreyeva**

Kazan Federal University, Russia

**Landysh N. Yuzmukhametova**

Kazan Federal University, Russia

### Abstract

The relevance of the research problem is due to the need of optimization of the processes of foreign language training at the higher professional school. In this regard, this article aims to develop theoretical and applied models of foreign language training of future professionals in social and humanitarian fields. The leading approaches to the study of this problem are the communicative, the personal activity and the competency approaches. The main methods of the study were the comparative analysis of Russian and foreign research works, modeling and forecasting of university students' foreign language training development, and also pedagogical experiment, the study and synthesis of innovative pedagogical experience, which helped to identify features of the content and process of effective foreign language training of students of Social Sciences and Humanities. The article suggests the possibility of modeling the foreign language training of future social and humanitarian field professionals in the conditions of modernization of higher professional education. As a result, the structure of the presented theoretical-applied model includes the motivational-need, the communicative-informative, the operational-procedural, and the result-evaluative components. The modeling process takes into account the main provisions of the foreign language communicative competence and its constituents (sub-components: linguistic, discourse, social, sociolinguistic, socio-cultural, and strategic) and the provisions of the document Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. The experimental confirmation of the effectiveness of the model has been presented. The model focuses on foreign language training of students in Social Sciences and Humanities, contributing to their readiness for intercultural communication in domestic and professional sphere. The article may be useful for higher education institutions when developing their own models for improving foreign language training.

**Keywords:** Learning; Teacher; Education; Teaching; School; Modeling.



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### 1. Introduction

At the present time a modern professional is characterized by knowledge of several foreign languages, and a foreign language becomes a tool of communication in a common information area. The activities of a modern University are characterized by increased international cooperation and a priority focus is the problem of the need to find ways of optimizing the process of foreign language training in professional education. The professional training development of a future specialist in the Russian Federation requires not only domestic experience rethinking, but also finding constructive mechanisms for foreign experience adaptation of preparing students for the realities of today's educational practices. The fragmentation of the application of educational technology and the under-development of selection and content structuring principles, which are aimed at the development of students' creative abilities in the national higher professional school, determine a fundamental need for studying, analyzing, and using the richest experience in this field in foreign countries.

The use of foreign educational technologies of language training in the national higher professional institutions will ensure: for a student – education opportunities in a convenient form, at a convenient time, taking into account the specific educational objectives, cognitive characteristics, knowledge and needs of each student; for a teacher – release time for tutoring; for the university and higher professional education in general – the ability to lead the professional training of future professionals in accordance with the modern requirements of the international labor market. The higher education system today dictates the need for a theoretical understanding and identifying the pedagogical conditions, which could provide effective foreign language training of future professionals in social and human sciences fields. Urgency of organizing socially oriented education is caused by multinational and multicultural society in almost every country nowadays. A successful learner in the modern society should be able to integrate knowledge from different sources, become educated and self-educated throughout life in order to be competitive in an increasingly globalized labor market. In order to optimize the process of foreign language training of bachelors in Social Sciences and Humanities in the conditions of modernization of higher education, the

development of a theoretical-applied model was carried out for facilitating foreign language training of future professionals in social and human sciences fields.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Research methods

During the research the following methods were used: theoretical (comparative analysis of Russian and foreign research works, modeling and forecasting of foreign language training development of university students); diagnostic (testing, method of tasks and assignments); empirical (study and synthesis of innovative pedagogical experience); experimental (ascertaining, forming, control experiments); methods of mathematical statistics and graphical representation of results, which made it possible to identify the features of the content and the process of effective foreign language training of students of Social Sciences and Humanities.

### 2.2. The experimental research base

The pilot survey was conducted at the Academy of Social Education, Kazan Innovative University named after Timiryasov, and Kazan (Volga region) Federal University in the Republic of Tatarstan, city of Kazan, Russia.

### 2.3. The stages of the research

The study of the problem was carried out in three stages: 1) the analysis of linguistic literature on the research problem, the analysis of the educational process in the areas of Social Sciences and Humanities were carried out; the problem, the purpose, and research methods were highlighted, a plan for experimental work was drawn up; 2) a theoretical-applied model of foreign language training of students of Social Sciences and Humanities was developed; a set of pedagogical conditions for foreign language training efficiency of students was identified and justified; the experimental work was carried out, the insights obtained during the experimental work were analyzed, tested and clarified; 3) the experimental work was completed, the theoretical and practical conclusions were refined, the obtained results were generalized and systematized.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. The Structure and Content of the Model

The model is considered from the standpoint of communicative, personal-activity and competence approaches. The applied part of the model is represented by four components of the foreign language training content of future professionals: the motivational-need component that focuses on creating a positive motivational sphere of personality. Three building blocks of this component are allocated: situational (extrinsic motivation), integrative (mixed motivation) and instrumental (intrinsic motivation); the situational block is determined by how we train, how we use material, and et cetera; the integrative block is determined by the desire of the individual to integrate into a foreign culture; the instrumental block indicates the desire of the individual to learn the language for the sake of professional career; communicative-informative component, through the development of which the content of general foreign language training of students is seen; the following building blocks are defined as constituents of this component: linguistic, social, strategic, discourse, sociolinguistic, and socio-cultural. The linguistic block is a complex of linguistic and communicative nature knowledge. The social block includes the ability and desire to interact with the educational process participants and the native speakers of the studied language. The strategic block causes the use of verbal and non-verbal communicative strategies. The discourse block is responsible for the knowledge of organizing linguistic material into a coherent text. The sociolinguistic block is the knowledge of language norms used in a specific language community in a variety of situations. The socio-cultural building block is aimed at expanding the knowledge and interests of the students, involves authenticity of teaching materials; operational-procedural component consists of five building blocks: planning, professional, organizational-technological, interpersonal communications, and control. The planning block is in compliance with the following conditions: 1) awareness of the foreign language knowledge level, abilities and skills of each student at the initial stage of foreign language training; 2) a clear understanding of the level to which a trainee has to rise as a result of foreign language education process implementation; 3) a choice of effective forms, methods, means, and pedagogical management technologies for the foreign language education process. The professional building block contributes to expanding and deepening students' knowledge about their future profession, and makes it necessary to organize the linguistic material on the basis of interdisciplinary interaction. The organizational-technological block means the achievement of real progress towards the planned results via the applied educational technologies of foreign language training of students. The block of interpersonal communications means that the teacher and students regard each other as speech partners, it is provided through all the other building blocks in the course of their implementation, or, conversely, through this block all the other building blocks of foreign language training are implemented. The control block provides feedback in the training process; the result-evaluative component consists of six sub-levels of foreign language skills on the basis of the European self-assessment scale of communicative abilities. These model components in interaction reveal the organization of the foreign language training process of students of Social Sciences and Humanities. The result of the functioning of this model is a certain level of language competence of the student (Figure 1).

**Figure -1.** Theoretical-applied model of foreign language training of students of Social Sciences and Humanities in the conditions of education modernization.

Social mandate in the field of professional education based on the adoption and dissemination of foreign experience in the professional and language training in Russia in the context of international labor market			
The goal is foreign language training of students of Social Sciences and Humanities to ensure their readiness for intercultural communication in domestic and professional sphere. The objectives: development of positive motives and readiness for language training; development of abilities to foreign language speech activity; formation of professionally significant foreign language competences of the learners; development of abilities to foreign language professional self-education and self-improvement.			
<b>Approaches</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIVE PERSONAL ACTIVITY COMPETENCE</b>		
Principles of foreign language training organization	OF SYSTEMATIZATION, HUMANIZATION, PROFESSIONAL ORIENTATION, INTELLECT AND SPEECH ACTIVITY, FUNCTIONALITY, SCIENTIFICITY, SITUATION, INDIVIDUALIZATION.		
Requirements for language training of students	is based on the concept of the polylogue of cultures; involves the formation of a professional who will be capable of socialization; represents the integration of methods of teaching a foreign language in combination with theoretical and practical training, research-focused and student-oriented components of the activity; directs students to self-realization; reflects a pronounced communicative and professional orientation; is of authentic nature; stimulates subjective position of students; contributes to the internationalization of knowledge and the formation of transcultural skills; promotes the need for continuous self-education and self-evaluation.		
Humanities and Social Sciences' potential	development of speech culture; orientation to social and cultural norms; individualization of the educational process; priority of educational and developmental aspects of learning; selection of the training content based on the students' communicative needs; a large role of interdisciplinary relations in the content selection; the focus of the students' training on the development of their capacity for intercultural communication; extensive use of original courses in educational and methodical work; student-centered learning based on the personality-activity approach; application of information technologies in the educational process as a factor that realizes the principles of individualization and differentiation.		
Foreign experience adaptation principles	of affinity, survival, balance, development, receptivity, readiness for adaptation.		
FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING CONTENT COMPONENTS OF FUTURE PROFESSIONALS IN SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES	Motivational-need	Situational block	Educational technologies: Cooperative learning, Project Method, Linguistic Portfolio, Credit-modular rating educational technology, The Technology of organizing student individual educational trajectories. Forms: practical classes (workshops), work with a package of modules, lecture-discussion, lecture-consultation, group work, pair work, independent work, and language excursions. Methods: essay writing, testing, brainstorming, simulation and role-playing games, case studies (analysis of specific situations), communicative tasks.
		Integrative block	
		Instrumental block	
	Communicative-informative	Linguistic block	
		Social block	
		Strategic block	
		Discourse block	
		Sociolinguistic block	
	Operational-procedural	Socio-cultural block	
		Planning block	
		Professional block	
		Organizational-technological block	
		Block of interpersonal communications	
	Result-evaluative	Control block	
		Survival level	
		Prethreshold level	
Threshold level			
Threshold advanced level			
Proficiency level			

Evaluation criteria of foreign language training	Motivational	Indicators: 1. Active interest in foreign languages and foreign countries, consisting in the desire and need to learn foreign languages. Awareness of the importance of a foreign language in academic and professional mobility. Increase of motivation for educational activity.
	Communicative	2. Development of linguistic, socio-cultural and sociolinguistic competences. Free expression and interaction of communicants. Development of plurilingual and communicative competences.
	Operational	3. Ability to adapt speech activity to changing social conditions. Productivity in interpersonal and professional communication. Cooperation in acquiring the knowledge. Development of creative potential. Independence and capacity for self-assessment development.
	Resultative	4. Development of self-educational abilities to learn a foreign language throughout life. Development of intercultural competence. Formation of lingua-professional competence. Growth of academic mobility. Increasing competitiveness on the labor market.
Result: increased level of foreign language training of Social Sciences and Humanities students		

### 3.2. Stages of the model implementation

The implementation of this model involves the following stages of the preparatory work: definition of the initial level of Social Sciences and Humanities students' foreign language competence, using test methods and statistical processing of research results; development and implementation of scientific and methodological support, contributing to the successful functioning of the theoretical-applied model of foreign language training of Social Sciences and Humanities students; determining the level and identifying the dynamics of students' foreign language acquisition (Nurbekova *et al.*, 2018).

#### 3.2.1. The ascertaining stage

The identification of the initial level of the students' foreign language competence has been carried out according to the developed components of the foreign language training content. The methodology for diagnosing the university students' motivation for language training, to identify the development of the motivational-need component, allowed us to determine that the most important for students are external or situational motives, while internal or instrumental motives – are less typical for them. But particularly noteworthy are integrative or mixed motives, being less pronounced among the students.

Scheme-2. Components of motivation in foreign language learning of the first-year students

Motives	Academy of Social Education (69 students)	Kazan Innovative University (61 students)	Kazan Federal University (65 students)
1. Situational motives (external)	4.4	4.5	4.6
2. Integrative motives (mixed)	2.3	2.4	2.3
3. Instrumental motives (internal)	2.4	2.5	2.3

The communicative-informative component of the language training content presupposes the mastery of a set of general speech skills, including reading, listening, speaking and writing. According to the survey, as well as the testing assignments in English, we obtained the following data on the development of general speech skills in foreign language acquisition of the university students in percentage terms: reading – the high scores were demonstrated by 78% of the students, listening – 56%, speaking – 62%, and writing – 70%. The most pronounced turned out to be the linguistic, discourse and social constituents of this component, while the strategic, socio-cultural and sociolinguistic were not enough pronounced, based on the results of the diagnostics.

Scheme-3. The constituents of the foreign language training communicative-informative component of the Social Sciences and Humanities students

The component constituents	ASE (69)	KIU (61)	KFU (65)
1. Linguistic	4.4	4.5	4.6
2. Discourse	4.2	4.1	4.3
3. Strategic	2.9	3	2.8
4. Social	3.6	3.5	3.7
5. Socio-cultural	3.1	3	3.2
6. Sociolinguistic	2.5	2.7	2.6

The operational-procedural component of foreign language training of university students, which characterized the skills of foreign language speech activity of future professionals of social and humanitarian field, was tested in the practical analysis of language tasks that contained professional and business context associated with the future activity of the students. Based on their answers, we can conclude that only a small percentage of students possess the

following abilities and skills: 1) to organize their participation in group activities for project preparation in a foreign language; 2) to independently find the best solutions for their foreign language training organization; 3) carry out intra-subject and inter-subject communications in preparation of oral presentations and written works in a foreign language; 4) to make summaries of texts and abstracts to scientific articles, course and graduation works; 5) to compile a portfolio of their achievements in a foreign language; 6) including nobody had to exchange information on professional and business topics with representatives of other countries, and et cetera.

We divided the students in three levels of foreign language competence, taking into account the European system of levels of foreign language proficiency: low (A2-B1), medium (B1-B2), and high (B2-C1). Almost half of all the students (49% (ASE), 48.5% (KIU) and 52% (KFU)) were at the low level of competence, at the medium level there was a large proportion (44% (ASE), 43.5% (KIU) and 40.5% (KFU)), and at the high level there were less than 10 percent from each group (7 % (ASE), 8 % (KIU), and 7.5 % (KFU)). The total number of students was 195 people (Awadallah and Saad, 2018).

**Scheme-4.** General level of foreign language competence of Social Sciences and Humanities students in ASE, KIU, and KFU at the ascertaining stage of the experiment

Level	ASE	KIU	KFU
Low	49	48.5	52
Medium	44	43.5	40.5
High	7	8	7.5

The ascertaining experiment allowed identifying a number of disadvantages of foreign language training of students, which were to be eliminated during the forming stage of the experiment by introduction of foreign educational technologies in the experimental group. The initial level of the students' foreign language competence was determined. Within the framework of Common European framework of reference for languages students' knowledge corresponded, on average, to levels A1-A2 (i.e., from the survival to the pre-threshold intermediate levels). Communication skills were the least formed. For students, it is difficult to build a coherent statement on a given situation, to produce a paraphrase of text information. They face difficulties in understanding oral speech in the English language. Thus, the study of the initial state of language competence showed a low level of language skills, limited to translations of adapted texts. We found that the results of the initial testing of students' level of competence in Social Sciences and Humanities do not have significant differences. On this basis, we formed two test groups – experimental (102 persons) and control (93 people). We confirmed the equivalence of the experimental and control groups according to the specified criteria and their indicators. The ascertaining phase of the experiment showed that, according to the obtained results, the level of foreign language competence of students in Social Sciences and Humanities is clearly insufficient (Villalobos, 2003).

### 3.2.2. The Forming Stage

At the forming stage of the experiment, the potential of foreign language training of students in Social Sciences and Humanities was realized in the process of studying humanitarian disciplines, namely: of cultural and educational character; development of the ability to improvise and be creative; diversification of the forms of organizing the educational process; dynamism, consisting in a fast and adequate response to the changes in society; individualization of the educational process; selection and structuring the content with interdisciplinary relations in accordance with the interests of students, based on authentic materials for the dialogue of cultures, narrative and communicative modes of speech. Foreign experience in language training of future professionals in Social Sciences and Humanities was identified and adapted in the Russian professional school, given its characteristics and traditions, a theoretical and applied model of foreign language training of students of Social Sciences and Humanities was developed and implemented in the conditions of the education modernization. A gradual way of introducing foreign educational technologies of language training of future professionals in Social Sciences and Humanities is presented on the basis of the principles of adaptation and the conditions for their use.

### 3.2.3. The Control Stage

When implementing the theoretical-applied model, we observed a positive dynamics of the levels of foreign language learning of Social Sciences and Humanities students in the universities (%) in the experimental groups at the control stage of the experiment:

**Scheme-5.** Dynamics of foreign language competence levels of Social Sciences and Humanities students at the control stage of the experiment

Level	Experimental groups, %		Control groups, %	
	Before	After	Before	After
Low	49	9	51	34
Medium	43	69	42	54
High	8	22	7	12

The experimental work ascertained the increase of the foreign language competence level of Social Sciences and Humanities students in the higher institutions, which generally confirms the effectiveness of the theoretical-applied model of foreign language training of future professionals in the socio-humanitarian field, developed and

implemented in the educational process in the conditions of higher education modernization (Fakhrutdinova and Kondrateva, 2016).

#### 4. Summary

In the modern scientific and pedagogical literature there is sufficient research on the various aspects of foreign language training in higher education. Of great importance for a deep understanding of the research problem was a study of the works on actual problems of foreign language training and multiculturalism (Andreeva *et al.*, 2017a; Andrewes, 2005; Barenfanger and Tschirner, 2008; Bax, 2003; Bialystok and Kellerman, 1987; Byram, 2015; Cohen and Aphek, 1981; Fakhrutdinova and Kondrateva, 2016); humanity self-education training of students (Kadyrova and Valeev, 2016; Sagitova, 2015); interactive educational technologies of foreign languages training (Andreeva *et al.*, 2017b). In pedagogical work with future professionals in Social Sciences and Humanities, we tried to creatively use the foreign experience of training, relying on the educational technologies that are also applied in other related humanitarian fields abroad, along with foreign language training. The versatility of the educational technologies, involving interdisciplinary connections, is the key to the development and formation of general professional and general cultural competences of students. Teaching a foreign language with the use of project technology, for example, we relied on the integration of knowledge gained from learning other Social Sciences and Humanities. Each educational technology can have both advantages and disadvantages, but the disadvantages of all the educational technologies are leveled due to their integration into the learning process. The specifics and benefits of Social Sciences and Humanities students in the process of foreign language training is that they have more developed verbal abilities, they are more willing to speak, which promotes the learning of languages.

#### 5. Conclusion

Improvement of foreign language training of Social Sciences and Humanities students is considered possible on the basis of the theoretical-applied model, consisting of the motivational-need, communicative-informative, operational-procedural, and result-evaluative components. The materials of this article may be useful for teachers of higher educational institutions to develop their own models for improving the foreign language training of students.

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