

APPROACHES TO TEACHING AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY STUDENTS A  
FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

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**Abstract.** Currently, there are three methodical approaches in the methods of teaching a professional foreign language: 1) a foreign language for specific purposes, 2) teaching specialized disciplines in a foreign language, and 3) an integrated approach. Each of them is focused on achieving specific learning objectives. Content and language integrated learning has a significant professional and linguodidactic potential. Its distinguishing feature lies in the fact that within the framework of one integrated course, students simultaneously develop a professional foreign language communicative competence and professional competencies. The purpose of the research is to compare these three methodical approaches to learning and determine which of them are used in teaching students of agricultural universities. The study showed that at the moment the subject-thematic content of integrated courses has been developed for students of such areas of study as “Agrochemistry and Agrosoil Science”, “Gardening”, “Agroengineering” and “Technology of Production and Processing of Livestock Products”. The methodical dominant in the context of the implementation of integrated learning is the system of problematic foreign language professional tasks. Typologies of such tasks and professional cases were developed for students of the areas of study “Agroengineering” and “Technology of Production and Processing of Livestock Products”. As for students of other areas of training of an agricultural university, at the moment they are studying a foreign language for specific purposes.

**Keywords:** professional foreign language, foreign language for specific purposes, content and language integrated learning, agricultural university

Currently, three methodological approaches are used in teaching a foreign language for professional communication in non-linguistic universities, including agricultural universities: a foreign language for specific purposes (LSP – Language for Specific Purposes), teaching specialized disciplines in a foreign language (LMI – Language as a Medium of Instruction) and integrated approach (CLIL - Content and Language Integrated Learning). As V.V. rightly testifies in his works. Zavyalov, P.V. Sysoev, N.V. Popova, E.K. Vdovina, M.S. Kogan, each of the three methodological approaches is aimed at solving specific methodological problems and can be implemented in practice, taking into account a number of psychological, pedagogical and methodological conditions [1–3]. Many Russian scientists in their works compared these approaches and identified the conditions for their implementation [4–6]. Let us conduct a brief review of research on teaching a foreign language for professional communication among students at non-linguistic universities and consider which of these approaches is used when teaching in different areas of training at an agricultural university.

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES** According to N.V. Popova, M.S. Kogan, E.K. Vdovina, a foreign language for special purposes is the most common methodological approach to teaching students of non-linguistic universities professional communication in a foreign language. Scientists claim that it is used in about 90% of cases of teaching a foreign language for professional communication in our country [3]. The theoretical and methodological foundations of a foreign language for special purposes were originally developed by English scientists T. Hutchinson and A. Waters in the mid-1970s. At that time, the United States was developing as a world power, trade volumes between America, Europe and

Asia were gradually increasing, and international cooperation in the field of science, culture, and education was expanding. All these reasons served as the impetus for the development of a new methodological approach, the key objectives of which were to equip students with professional vocabulary, grammar and teach the use of some common speech phrases. At that time, this was the necessary minimum with which to begin learning foreign language professional communication. In parallel with the development of a foreign language for special purposes as an approach, there was a transition from audiolingual and grammar-translation methods of teaching a foreign language to a communicative method. The focus of the communicative teaching method is the formation of foreign language communicative competence - the ability to use the foreign language being studied for communication. Despite the fact that scientists have not come to a unified model of foreign language communicative competence, and representatives of different scientific methodological schools include different components in this model, it is undeniable that for full-fledged foreign language communication, students need to master both vocabulary, grammar and phonetics, and and develop types of speech activities (listening, speaking, reading and writing). In this regard, as communicative techniques developed, so did the development of a foreign language for special purposes as an approach. At the present stage, language teaching for special purposes includes teaching aspects of language and all types of speech activity to the full extent necessary for communication in the professional sphere. The subject content of training generally reflects the specifics of the professional field of knowledge and can vary to meet the needs of students. In this case, the purpose of training and the object of control is exclusively a foreign language for special purposes.

**TEACHING PROFILE DISCIPLINES IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE** Teaching specialized disciplines in a foreign language is another methodological approach to teaching foreign language professional communication to students. In accordance with this approach, classes in specialized disciplines are conducted in a foreign language. The goal of the training is for students to master professional competencies in the field of future professional activity. A foreign language is not a goal, but a means of mastering a specialty. Exercises and assignments for the development of types of foreign language speech activity and aspects of a foreign language are not provided within the training courses. This approach is widely used in contexts where Basic Vocational Education Program (VEP) students are native speakers of different languages and the specific language in which instruction takes place is the only common language. The basis for monitoring progress and mastering educational material is exclusively professional material. Of course, using this approach is possible if students have a foreign language proficiency at level B2 and above. Otherwise, they will not be able to take part in discussions of professional issues in a foreign language and will not be able to perform authentic professional tasks.

**INTEGRATED APPROACH** The integrated approach is one of the methodological approaches to teaching professional foreign language communication, which has significant linguodidactic potential, and which is becoming increasingly popular in Russia and abroad. The founder of this approach is considered to be D. Marsh, who outlined the goals of his approach. In the process of studying an integrated course, students master both a foreign language and a specialized discipline. An analysis of a number of works in recent years devoted to the use of integrated subject-language teaching in non-linguistic universities allows us to draw the following conclusions. Firstly, during the integrated course, students develop professional

foreign language communicative competence and a number of professional competencies. Secondly, as evidenced by the research of E.G. Krylova, P.V. Sysoeva and V.V. Zavyalov, one of the key elements of the integrated approach is integration. Moreover, integration occurs at different levels and in different planes. Integration can be at the personal level: intrapersonal and interpersonal. Intrapersonal integration is the readiness of students to carry out professional interaction in their native and foreign languages. Interpersonal integration is the readiness of students to jointly solve assigned professional tasks. Integration can also be implemented at the subject and interdisciplinary levels. Subject integration means the development of types of foreign language speech activity and the formation of aspects of a foreign language on professionally oriented material. Interdisciplinary integration means the use of knowledge and skills developed during the study of other specialized disciplines during an integrated course. Thirdly, as P.V. states in his works. Sysoev, the main points in the development of an integrated course are: the subject-thematic content of the course and teaching technology [2]. In terms of subject and thematic content, the integrated course can be of two types. The first one contains separate thematic modules, related to different specialized disciplines in terms of subject content. The second one represents one autonomous professional course or specialized discipline in its subject content. Detailed algorithms for developing two types of courses are presented in the work of P.V. Sysoev. With regard to educational technology, an integrated course should include foreign language communicative tasks that reflect the specifics of the future professional work of graduates of the chosen profile of study or area of training. In the methodological literature of recent years, works have appeared in which the authors developed and proposed for discussion systems and sets of foreign language tasks that reflect the specifics of the professional work of graduates of training profiles in engineering, law, management and service, areas of training agricultural universities. At the same time, it is of particular importance, as stated by E.K. Vdovina et al., acquires the development of critical thinking in students through asking questions. This will contribute to the predominance of authentic speech-oriented tasks. Fourthly, the implementation of an integrated approach is possible subject to a number of pedagogical conditions, to which V.V. Zavyalov considers the following: a) an integrated course can be taught by a teacher who has competence both in the relevant specialty and in the methodology of teaching a foreign language at a university; b) the subject-thematic content of the integrated course must correspond to the content of one specialized discipline or deepen the content of several specialized disciplines previously studied by students; c) the selection of the subject-thematic content of training should be based on the core specialization of students; d) to carry out integrated training, students must speak a foreign language at level B1-B2 and above; e) the basis of training is a system of problem-based foreign language tasks with a professional orientation [4, p. 63]. As research shows, the key aspects of developing an integrated course and corresponding educational materials are the subject-thematic content of training and teaching technology. Let's consider research on the implementation of an integrated approach at an agricultural university.

**Subject-Themic Content And Technology Of Teaching Integrated Courses In Agricultural Universities** Over the past few years, several studies have been conducted on the development of subject-thematic content of teaching integrated courses for students of agricultural universities. In particular, in his study K.V. Kapranchikova proposed the subject content of teaching a professional foreign language to students of two profiles "Agrochemistry



and agro-soil science” and “Agroecology” of the training direction “Agrochemistry and agro-soil science” [6]. Moreover, one block of subject content is invariant, related to two profiles, and the second block is variable. Examples of topics in a variable block can be: “Chemical composition, soil colloids, absorption capacity”, “Agricultural use of soils”, “Qualitative assessment and protection of soils, soil cartography”, etc. [6, p. 52]. Another study devoted to the development of subject content for teaching students of an agricultural university during an integrated course was conducted by A.G. Solomatina [5]. The focus of the work was training students in two areas of training in “Gardening”: “Ornamental Horticulture and Landscape Design” and “Horticulture and Viticulture.” Unlike K.V. Kapranchikova, A.G. Solomatina proposed different subject content for the two profiles, without dividing it into invariant and variable components. This is due to more significant differences in the areas of professional activity of graduates of the “Gardiculture” training profile compared to “Agrochemistry and Agro-Soil Science”. Dissertation research by T.V. Baidikova is also devoted to the development of theoretical foundations and practical methods of integrated subject-language training for students in the field of training “Agroengineering”. The scientist developed the subject-thematic content for training students in four profiles: “Technological equipment for storage and processing of agricultural products”, “Technical systems in agribusiness”, “Technical service in the agro-industrial complex” and “Electrical equipment and electrical technologies in the agro-industrial complex”. The subject content of the integrated course in each profile reflects its specifics and contains exclusively topics related to the professional work of graduates. Examples of topics in the profile “Technical service in the agro-industrial complex” can be the following: “Technical condition of the machine and its changes during operation”, “Technical diagnostics of machines”, “Repair and maintenance base”, etc. Yu.V. Tokmakova in her work also turned to the development of the subject-thematic content of teaching an integrated course for students of an agricultural university. The subject of the study was the development of a methodology for teaching a professional foreign language to students in the field of training “Technology of production and processing of agricultural products” in three training profiles: “Examination of the quality and safety of agricultural products”, “Technology of production and processing of crop products” and “Technology of production and processing of livestock products” ”.

Taking into account the relationship between learning profiles, the scientist identified invariant and variable content of learning. Examples of topics within the profile “Technology of production and processing of livestock products” are the following: “Basic technological operations in milk processing”, “Composition and properties of raw meat”, “General scheme of cheese production”, etc. It should be noted that this is the end of the research devoted to the development of the subject-thematic content of teaching a professional foreign language within the framework of an integrated course. The second aspect to analyze is the development of teaching technology. A review of research on this issue showed that only for two areas of training, “Agroengineering” and “Technology of production and processing of agricultural products,” scientists have developed systems or complexes of professional foreign language tasks. In particular, P.V. Sysoev and T.V. Baidikov developed a typology of problematic foreign language professionally oriented tasks, including: a) tasks for mastering factual material; b) training tasks; c) productive tasks; d) professional projects and e) professional cases. The last type of tasks - professional cases - is the most difficult from the point of view of foreign language and professional training of students, however, it can be considered truly authentic,

since the cases are taken from real professional situations. The authors give the following case as an example: “The plant received new technological equipment for processing livestock products. Study the description of the operating rules for this new technological equipment for the processing and processing of milk, the production of butter, cottage cheese, cheese and ice cream. Select the optimal operating modes of this equipment for processing and processing each type of product. Give reasons for your actions” [21, p. 296]. In another work devoted to the development of a methodology for integrated training of students “Technology of production and processing of livestock products” of the training direction “Technology of production and processing of agricultural products” P.V. Sysoev and Yu.V. Tokmakov developed a set of integrated tasks aimed at the simultaneous development of professional foreign language communicative competence of students, as well as the formation of their professional competencies. Examples of such tasks include: Topic: “Sugar and sugary substances” Integrative task: “Working at a beet sugar factory, technologists identified defects in sugar. You need to identify the main causes of defects in granulated sugar and refined sugar. Properly organize the stages of sugar production and ensure long-term storage by creating the necessary temperature and air humidity”. Analysis of the above studies indicates that the subject content of training and teaching technology are focused on the internal specialization of students and reflect the characteristics of their future professional work. As scientists show, the development of subject-thematic content of teaching integrated courses and teaching technology is based on interdepartmental interaction. Through joint work with representatives of specialized departments, foreign language teachers develop integrated courses. **CONCLUSION** In the methodology of teaching professional foreign languages, three methodological approaches are distinguished: 1) a foreign language for special purposes, 2) teaching specialized disciplines in a foreign language and 3) an integrated approach. In agricultural universities, as in many other non-linguistic universities in the country, teaching a foreign language for special purposes dominates. The use of an integrated approach, which has significant linguodidactic potential, is the exception rather than the general rule. An analysis of scientific works shows that at the moment, subject-thematic content of integrated courses has been developed for students in such areas of training as “Agrochemistry and agro-soil science”, “Horticulture”, “Agroengineering” and “Technology of production and processing of livestock products”. The methodological dominant in the implementation of integrated training is the system of problematic foreign language professional tasks. Typologies of such tasks and professional cases have been developed for students in the areas of training “Agroengineering” and “Technology of production and processing of livestock products”.

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