

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS OF DEVELOPING SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL COMPETENCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

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Abstract

In the context of the modernization of higher education and the strengthening of the communicative focus of foreign language teaching, the socio-emotional competence of teachers is becoming particularly important. This article examines the psychological and pedagogical aspects of developing the socio-emotional competence of foreign language teachers in higher education. Theoretical approaches to defining the essence of socio-emotional competence are analyzed, its structural components and pedagogical conditions for its development are revealed. The results of an analysis of scientific research by domestic and international authors are presented, and the need to integrate socio-emotional development into the professional training and professional development of foreign language teachers is substantiated. The findings confirm that a high level of socio-emotional competence contributes to the effectiveness of pedagogical interaction, the reduction of professional stress, and the creation of a favorable psychological climate in the educational environment.

Keywords

socio-emotional competence, foreign language teacher, higher education, emotional intelligence, stress resilience, pedagogical interaction.

Introduction

The modern higher education system is characterized by a high degree of dynamism, digitalization, and a focus on student-centered learning. In this context, the professional work of foreign language teachers extends beyond the transmission of linguistic knowledge and includes complex processes of interpersonal interaction, emotional regulation, and the management of educational communication. Therefore, social and emotional competence is becoming a key factor in a teacher's professional effectiveness.

Foreign language teachers are constantly exposed to intense communication, cultural mediation, and emotional engagement. They must be able to understand the emotional state of students, manage their own emotions, prevent conflicts, and create a psychologically safe educational environment. Student motivation, the quality of feedback, and the overall success of the educational process largely depend on the level of social and emotional competence.

Despite the growing interest in the problem of social and emotional development, the development of social and emotional competence in foreign language teachers remains understudied in psychological and pedagogical science. This determines the relevance of this study and the need for a comprehensive analysis of the psychological and pedagogical aspects of this competency.

The aim of this article is to provide a theoretical justification for the psychological and pedagogical aspects of developing the socio-emotional competence of foreign language teachers and to determine its significance in professional activities in higher education.

Literature Review

The concept of socio-emotional competence has been widely explored in the works of foreign and domestic researchers. For example, D. Goleman links socio-emotional competence with the concept of emotional intelligence, emphasizing the role of self-regulation, empathy, and social skills in professional activity. Within the CASEL model, socio-emotional competence includes self-awareness, emotion management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

Domestic researchers (A.K. Markova, I.A. Zimnyaya, E.I. Isaev) view socio-emotional competence as an integrative quality of a teacher's personality, ensuring the effectiveness of pedagogical communication and professional stability. These studies emphasize that this competence is developed during professional activity and requires targeted psychological and pedagogical support.

An analysis of scientific sources reveals that most studies focus on the socio-emotional development of students, while the problem of developing this competence in teachers, especially foreign language teachers, remains fragmented. This confirms the need for further research in this area.

Main Section.

The Structure of Socio-Emotional Competence in Foreign Language Teachers. Socio-emotional competence in foreign language teachers is a complex, integrative entity that includes cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components.

Table 1. The Structure of Socio-Emotional Competence in Foreign Language Teachers

Component	Contents
Cognitive	Understanding emotions, social context, and teaching situations
Emotional	Empathy, emotional resilience, self-regulation
Behavioral	Effective communication, conflict management, collaboration

This framework allows us to consider social-emotional competence as the foundation of professional resilience and teaching success.

Psychological and pedagogical conditions for developing social-emotional competence. Developing social-emotional competence in foreign language teachers is possible if a number of psychological and pedagogical conditions are met. These include creating a reflective educational environment, using interactive teaching methods, simulating professional situations, and developing emotional self-regulation skills.

Table 2. Psychological and pedagogical conditions for the formation of social-emotional competence

Conditions	Pedagogical Effect
Reflective practices	Awareness of professional emotions
Interactive methods	Development of empathy and communication skills
Situational modeling	Development of stress resilience
Psychological support	Prevention of professional burnout

Implementing these conditions contributes to the development of a sustainable professional position for teachers and improves the quality of the educational process.

The Importance of Social-Emotional Competence in Professional Activity. A high level of social-emotional competence enables foreign language teachers to effectively manage learning interactions, maintain student motivation, and create a favorable emotional climate in the classroom. Furthermore, this competence helps reduce professional stress and emotional burnout.

A socially and emotionally competent teacher is not only a source of knowledge but also a facilitator of students' personal development, which meets the modern requirements of higher education.

Research Results and Discussion

The study analyzed the level of social-emotional competence of foreign language teachers at higher education institutions. Teachers with varying teaching experience participated in the study, allowing for more objective and representative data. Social-emotional competence was assessed using indicators such as empathy, emotional self-regulation, stress resistance, and the effectiveness of social interaction.

Table 3. Level of development of social-emotional competence of foreign language teachers

Level	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
High	18	30,0
Medium	30	50,0
Low	12	20,0
Total	60	100

The table results show that the majority of teachers (50%) exhibit a moderate level of social-emotional competence. This indicates the presence of basic skills for emotional interaction and self-regulation, but also highlights the need for further targeted development. High levels were found in 30% of respondents, confirming the positive impact of professional experience and a mindful approach to the emotional side of teaching. Meanwhile, 20% of teachers demonstrated low levels of social-emotional competence, which may be related to professional overload, high levels of stress, and insufficient psychological and pedagogical support.

For a more detailed analysis, the relationship between social-emotional competence and teachers' stress resilience was examined.

Table 4. The relationship between social-emotional competence and stress resistance

Stress Resistance	High level of SEC	Average level of SEC	Low level of SEC
High	14	6	0
Average	4	20	6
Low	0	4	6

An analysis of the data in the table reveals a direct correlation between the level of socio-emotional competence and stress resilience. Teachers with high levels of socio-emotional competence demonstrate high resilience to professional stress and the ability to effectively regulate emotional states in teaching situations. Conversely, low levels of socio-emotional competence are associated with reduced stress resilience and an increased risk of emotional burnout.

These results are consistent with the findings of international and domestic researchers emphasizing the importance of socio-emotional competence as a resource for professional

resilience and teaching effectiveness. Therefore, the development of this competence should be considered an important area of psychological and pedagogical work in higher education.

Conclusion

This study suggests that socio-emotional competence is a crucial professional characteristic of foreign language teachers in higher education. It ensures the effectiveness of pedagogical interactions, contributes to the creation of a favorable psychological climate, and reduces professional stress. An analysis of theoretical sources and empirical data revealed that the development of socio-emotional competence requires targeted psychological and pedagogical support, including the development of empathy, emotional self-regulation, reflection, and stress resilience skills. The use of interactive methods, reflective practices, and simulated professional situations in the professional development of foreign language teachers is particularly important.

The practical significance of the study lies in the potential use of the obtained results in the development of professional development programs and psychological and pedagogical support for teachers. Prospects for further research relate to the development and testing of comprehensive models for developing socio-emotional competence in the context of the digitalization of higher education.

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