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THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL CONDITIONS OF THE COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH IN DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS

Khudayberdieva Makhliyo
Doctoral student of
Samarkand State Institute of Foreign Languages
khudayberdiyevamakhliyo@gmail.com
Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Abstract. This article examines the theoretical foundations and pedagogical conditions of applying the communicative approach to the development of communicative competence in prospective teachers. Based on an analysis of international and local scientific literature, the study clarifies the essence, structure, and components of communicative competence in teacher education, and substantiates the didactic possibilities of the communicative approach. The paper argues that communicative competence for future teachers is a professionally significant integrative quality that includes linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic, intercultural, and strategic components, as well as personal dispositions such as empathy, tolerance, and reflexivity. Special attention is given to the pedagogical conditions that ensure the effective implementation of the communicative approach in higher pedagogical education: creating a dialogic and learner-centered educational environment, using interactive and practice-oriented teaching methods, integrating digital communication tools, organizing reflective activities, and fostering a culture of professional communication in academic settings. The article proposes a conceptual model of developing communicative competence in prospective teachers on the basis of the communicative approach and identifies criteria and indicators for assessing its formation. The author concludes that the systematic and purposeful use of the communicative approach under scientifically grounded pedagogical conditions significantly enhances the quality of professional training of future teachers and their readiness for effective pedagogical interaction in modern educational contexts.

Keywords: communicative competence; communicative approach; prospective teachers; teacher education; pedagogical conditions; dialogic interaction; professional communication; interactive methods; reflective practice.

Introduction. In contemporary education systems, a teacher's professional success is increasingly determined not only by subject knowledge and methodological skills, but also by a high level of communicative competence. Teachers are expected to engage in diverse forms of interaction: with pupils, colleagues, school administration, parents, and the broader community, including through digital platforms. Under these conditions, the training of prospective teachers must be reoriented towards the systematic development of their communicative competence.

The communicative approach, originally developed in the field of foreign language teaching, has gradually evolved into a broader pedagogical paradigm that emphasizes communication as both the means and the goal of education. Applying this approach in teacher education allows for the purposeful formation of professionally relevant communicative qualities, skills, and strategies in future teachers.

The aim of this article is to theoretically substantiate the role of the communicative approach in developing communicative competence of prospective teachers and to identify the

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pedagogical conditions that ensure the effectiveness of this process in higher pedagogical education.

The concept of communicative competence emerged in linguistics and sociolinguistics (D. Hymes, M. Canale, M. Swain) as a reaction to the limitations of purely grammatical competence. In its classical interpretation, communicative competence includes:

- Linguistic competence – knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, phonetics, and discourse conventions;
- Sociolinguistic competence – the ability to use language appropriately in different social and cultural contexts;
- Discourse (textual) competence – the ability to produce coherent and cohesive oral and written texts;
- Strategic competence – the use of verbal and non-verbal strategies to overcome communication difficulties;
- Pragmatic competence – understanding and realization of communicative intentions, speech acts, and implicatures.

In the context of teacher education, communicative competence acquires a distinctly professional character. It becomes not only a general social skill, but also a core component of pedagogical competence, directly affecting the quality of instruction, classroom management, educational influence, and professional collaboration.

For prospective teachers, communicative competence is an integrative personal-professional quality that includes: cognitive component – knowledge of communication theory, pedagogical communication, age-related and individual characteristics of learners, and principles of effective interaction; operational (behavioral) component – skills of clear explanation, questioning, feedback provision, active listening, conflict resolution, and management of classroom interaction; emotional-volitional component – empathy, emotional self-regulation, tolerance, stress resistance, and flexibility in communication; value-motivational component – orientation towards dialogue, respect for the learner's personality, ethical norms of communication, and responsibility for pedagogical influence; reflective component – the ability to analyze, evaluate, and improve one's own communicative behavior.

Thus, communicative competence of prospective teachers is not limited to language correctness; it is deeply connected with their professional identity, pedagogical beliefs, and interpersonal style.

The communicative approach, rooted in communicative language teaching, is based on the idea that language and thinking develop through meaningful, purposeful interaction. Transferred to the broader field of pedagogy, it suggests that:

1. Learning is organized around authentic and meaningful communication.
2. Students are engaged in problem-solving, discussion, negotiation of meaning, and joint activities.
3. The teacher acts as a facilitator, moderator, and co-participant rather than a sole transmitter of knowledge.
4. The classroom becomes a communicative community where participants co-construct knowledge through interaction.

In teacher education, the communicative approach implies that prospective teachers should both experience and analyze communicative pedagogical practices, gradually internalizing them as part of their professional toolkit.

Principles of the communicative approach in training prospective teachers.

Key pedagogical principles of the communicative approach in teacher education include:

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Dialogicity – priority of dialogue over monologue; recognition of the other as an equal partner in communication;

Activity and participation – active involvement of students in communication-based learning tasks;

Contextuality – close connection between communication tasks and real or simulated professional situations.

Authenticity – use of realistic materials, cases, and scenarios reflecting genuine school life and professional interaction.

Integrativity – simultaneous development of language, thinking, professional knowledge, and interpersonal skills.

Reflexivity – constant reflection on communication experiences and their pedagogical implications.

These principles make the communicative approach particularly suitable for forming the complex, multidimensional communicative competence required of teachers.

Creating a dialogic and learner-centered educational environment. A fundamental condition for the successful implementation of the communicative approach is the creation of a dialogic, psychologically safe, and learner-centered environment in higher pedagogical institutions. This involves - encouraging open expression of opinions and constructive disagreement, minimizing fear of error and evaluation anxiety in communication, promoting respect, trust, and mutual support among students and between students and teachers, structuring classes in a way that maximizes student–student and student–teacher interaction.

Such an environment transforms prospective teachers from passive recipients of information into active subjects of professional communication, which directly contributes to the formation of their communicative competence.

Using interactive and practice-oriented teaching methods

The second key pedagogical condition is the systematic use of interactive, practice-oriented methods that simulate real communication in educational settings. These include:

- Role-plays and simulations of typical school situations (parent-teacher meetings, staff discussions, disciplinary conversations, conflict resolution with pupils);
- Case studies based on real or hypothetical problematic communicative situations in schools;
- Debates, panel discussions, and round tables on pedagogical, ethical, and social issues;
- Collaborative projects that require constant coordination, negotiation, and joint decision-making;
- Microteaching and peer teaching, where students plan and conduct short lessons, followed by feedback and reflection.

The effectiveness of these methods is enhanced when they are systematically integrated into teacher education curricula rather than used episodically.

Integrating digital communication tools

The contemporary educational environment demands that teachers be competent in digital communication. Therefore, a vital pedagogical condition is the integration of digital tools into the training of prospective teachers - use of learning management systems (LMS) and online forums for professional discussion, practice in conducting online lessons, webinars, and video conferences, development of skills for e-mail etiquette, messaging, and social media communication in educational contexts, familiarity with tools for collaborative work (shared documents, digital whiteboards, project management platforms).

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Digital communication tasks should be embedded as part of the communicative approach, not as purely technical exercises, thus extending the scope of communicative competence into virtual and blended learning environments.

Organizing reflective activities

A further essential condition is the systematic organization of reflection on communicative experiences. This may include:

1). Reflective journals in which students analyze significant communication episodes (successes, failures, conflicts);

2) Video analysis of microteaching sessions and classroom communication, with self- and peer-assessment;

3) Reflective seminars and supervision groups, focused on discussing professional communication styles and challenges;

4) Use of structured reflection frameworks (e.g., "What happened? – Why did it happen? – How could it be improved?")

Reflection enables prospective teachers to move from intuitive to conscious, theoretically informed management of their communicative behavior.

Institutional support and communication culture in the university

The communicative approach cannot be effective if it is applied only at the micro-level of individual courses. A supportive institutional communication culture is also required - promotion of ethical, transparent, and respectful communication among faculty, administration, and students, opportunities for students to participate in student self-government, professional communities, and academic events, policies that encourage feedback, dialogue, and participation in decision-making processes within the institution.

In such a context, prospective teachers do not only learn about communicative competence; they experience it daily as a norm of professional academic life.

A conceptual model for developing communicative competence of prospective teachers

On the basis of the above, a conceptual model for developing communicative competence of prospective teachers through the communicative approach can be outlined, including the following components: 1).target component – formation of a high level of professional communicative competence as a key outcome of teacher education, understood as a central objective of the overall system of professional training; 2) content component – integration of knowledge about communication, pedagogical interaction, and discourse with professional and subject-matter training, ensuring the unity of theoretical, methodological, and practical content; 3) process (technological) component – systematic use of communicative, interactive, and reflective teaching methods, including the purposeful incorporation of digital technologies, in order to organize learning as a process of active and meaningful communication. 4). environmental component – creation of a dialogic, learner-centered, and communication-rich educational environment that supports openness, cooperation, and partnership-based interaction among all participants of the educational process. 5). evaluation component – definition of clear criteria, indicators, and diagnostic tools for determining the level of communicative competence and monitoring its development over time.

Criteria and Indicators of Communicative Competence Development

To assess the effectiveness of the communicative approach, it is necessary to define a set of criteria and indicators of communicative competence. They may include.

Cognitive criterion – the extent of knowledge of communication theories, strategies, and norms, reflected in the understanding of key concepts, regularities, and principles of pedagogical communication (assessed through tests, essays, and oral examinations).

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Operational criterion – the demonstration of effective communicative skills in simulated and real pedagogical situations, including the ability to organize interaction, maintain dialogue, prevent and resolve conflicts (evaluated by observations, video analysis, and performance in role-plays and microteaching).

Emotional and personal criterion – the level of development of empathy, tolerance, emotional self-regulation, and interpersonal sensitivity, which determine the humanistic orientation and ethical character of the teacher's communicative behavior (measured through self-report scales, expert assessment, and peer feedback).

Reflective criterion – the ability to critically analyze one's own communicative behavior, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and formulate goals and strategies for self-improvement (assessed by means of reflective journals, portfolios, and structured interviews).

On the basis of these criteria, levels of communicative competence (low, medium, high) can be characterized and used for systematic monitoring, correction, and improvement of teacher education programs.

The analysis shows that the communicative approach is not confined to a set of separate methods or techniques; it represents a holistic pedagogical orientation in which communication functions as the central mechanism of teaching and learning. When it is systematically implemented in teacher education, this approach creates conditions for narrowing the gap between theoretical knowledge of communication and its practical application in pedagogical activity, for the development of both general social communication skills and professionally specific communication strategies, and for the formation of personal qualities that are essential for teacher–student interaction, such as respect, openness, and responsibility. It also contributes to preparing prospective teachers for the realities of modern education, which is often characterized by multicultural student populations and the extensive use of digital communication technologies.

At the same time, the implementation of the communicative approach encounters a number of challenges. These include insufficient methodological training of university teachers in the field of communicative pedagogy, limited time resources within existing curricula, the lack or fragmentation of reliable diagnostic tools for assessing communicative competence, and, in some institutions, the dominance of a traditional, lecture-centered academic culture that constrains dialogic and interactive forms of learning. Overcoming these barriers requires institutional commitment, targeted professional development of academic staff, and continuous improvement of educational programs on the basis of empirical research and evidence-based practices.

Conclusion. The communicative approach provides a theoretically grounded and practically effective basis for developing the communicative competence of prospective teachers. Communicative competence, considered as an integrative professional quality, encompasses linguistic, sociocultural, strategic, emotional, value-based, and reflective components that are crucial for successful pedagogical activity and for the establishment of constructive educational interaction.

The effectiveness of communicative competence development depends on a complex of interrelated pedagogical conditions, including the creation of a dialogic and learner-centered educational environment, the systematic use of interactive and practice-oriented teaching methods, the integration of digital communication tools into the learning process, the organization of various forms of reflective activity, and the shaping of an institutional culture of higher pedagogical education that is rich in constructive and ethically grounded communication.

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Further research may focus on the empirical testing and refinement of the proposed conceptual model, the development and validation of diagnostic instruments for measuring different components of communicative competence, and comparative studies of diverse strategies for implementing the communicative approach in teacher education across different cultural, institutional, and disciplinary contexts.

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