

KEY ISSUES ON DEVELOPING SPEECH COMPETENCE OF ACADEMIC LYCEUM STUDENTS

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Abstract: This article examines the development of phonetic, linguistic, and speech competences among academic lyceum students in Uzbekistan in the context of foreign language education. It discusses the relationship between knowledge, skills, and abilities in mastering oral and written communication, focusing on the role of motivation, linguistic barriers, and methodological approaches in the learning process. Special attention is paid to the teaching of pronunciation and speech competence, the integration of cognitive and activity-based components, and the challenges faced by academic lyceums in preparing students for professional and communicative tasks. The analysis reveals gaps in methodology and highlights the importance of adopting communicative and competency-based approaches to ensure effective language learning outcomes.

Keywords: communicative competence, speech skills, phonetic competence, academic lyceum, English language education, methodology

Introduction

The development of communicative competence is one of the central goals of English language teaching at academic lyceums in Uzbekistan. Communicative competence is understood as the learner's ability to engage in both oral and written communication by combining linguistic knowledge with the skills and abilities necessary to apply language in meaningful contexts [2]. In the context of lyceum education, communicative competence is not simply the mastery of grammar and vocabulary, but also the ability to use these resources effectively in speech, writing, reading, and listening. It is closely linked with learners' cognitive development, motivation, and socio-cultural participation.

Uzbekistan's ongoing educational reforms and modernization policies emphasize the need for a competency-based approach in teaching foreign languages. Academic lyceums, as institutions bridging secondary and higher education, bear the responsibility of preparing students to use English not only as a subject of study but also as a tool for academic, professional, and intercultural communication. However, despite the growing demand for communicative competence, methodological and organizational challenges remain in the system. This article seeks to analyze the essence of phonetic and speech competence, examine the relationship between knowledge, skills, and abilities, and highlight the pedagogical issues in developing students' communicative competence at the lyceum level.

Phonetic Competence as the Basis of Communication

In English language teaching, phonetic (pronunciation) competence is developed in connection with lexical and grammatical material. It is well established in methodology that the teaching minimum for pronunciation differs from that of vocabulary or grammar. While lexical and grammatical material is divided into active and passive minimums, pronunciation must be taught with an overlapping approach, where active and passive elements are mastered simultaneously. Active pronunciation minimum allows a degree of approximation and focuses

on limited phonetic material, while the passive minimum requires more accuracy and includes the recognition of different phonemic variants of English [1].

Phonetic competence manifests itself in both speaking and listening comprehension, forming a component of complex speech ability. It is not merely a technical skill but a fundamental prerequisite for communicative success. Without a sufficient phonetic base, learners struggle with intelligibility and comprehension, which undermines their confidence and participation in classroom discourse. Therefore, phonetic competence is regarded as an indispensable element of speech competence and overall communicative ability.

Speech Competence and Its Components

Speech competence can be defined as the mature expression of acquired knowledge, reflected in the ability to think independently, express ideas clearly and fluently in English, use literary language appropriately, and produce written texts with orthographic and stylistic accuracy. It encompasses both oral and written forms of communication and consists of speaking (monologue, dialogue, polylogue), listening, reading, and writing competences [4].

In academic lyceum education, speech competence is closely connected to communicative goals, where learners are expected to engage in real information exchange. Students not only acquire linguistic forms but also assume communicative roles, acting as interlocutors who participate in conversations, discussions, and professional exchanges [9]. Thus, speech competence integrates psychophysiological mechanisms of perception and production, making it a dynamic interaction between motivation, linguistic resources, and communicative intention.

Motivation in Speech Activity

Like any human activity, speech activity consists of motivational, directive, and executive stages. The motivational component arises from needs and goals, which may be internal (students' cognitive-communicative needs) or external (teachers' encouragement and instructional strategies). Internal motivation is particularly important, as it drives students to engage actively in communicative tasks. At the same time, external motivation—through supportive feedback, engaging materials, and relevant tasks—stimulates learners to overcome barriers and strengthens their willingness to communicate [5].

The executive phase of speech activity manifests in the practical skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Thought is considered the content of speech activity, language is the means of expression, and speech is the process through which ideas are formed and communicated. Thus, the acquisition of speech competence involves the interplay of cognitive processes and linguistic practice.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities in Speech Development

The development of speech competence requires the integration of **knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA)**. Knowledge refers to the theoretical understanding of linguistic rules and structures, including vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. However, knowledge alone is insufficient unless it is applied in practice. Skills are formed when learners apply their knowledge in repeated activities, gradually automating certain operations. Abilities, in turn, represent the creative application of knowledge and skills in new contexts, allowing learners to perform tasks independently and flexibly [7].

In the methodology of teaching English, knowledge is acquired in the form of rules and examples, skills are reinforced through exercises and drills, and abilities are developed when

learners apply language in authentic communication. For instance, a learner may know the rules of tense formation, but without repeated practice (skill) and communicative use (ability), this knowledge remains theoretical. Thus, communicative competence develops when knowledge transforms into skill and eventually into ability through consistent practice and application.

Challenges in Teaching Communicative Competence at Academic Lyceums

Despite the emphasis on communicative competence in state educational standards, several challenges persist in the lyceum system. First, the content of foreign language teaching and its methodological organization have not been fully aligned with modern communicative approaches. In many cases, insufficient attention is given to teaching the different types of speech activity (listening, speaking, reading, writing) as interconnected components of competence. Second, while positive experience has been accumulated in language teaching, the professional and field-oriented aspects of foreign language education remain underdeveloped. The demands of international and local labor markets require students to acquire subject-specific terminology and professional communicative skills, but these aspects are often overlooked.

Third, theoretical and methodological research in the area of teaching English at lyceums remains insufficient. Many teachers continue to rely on traditional methods that prioritize knowledge transmission rather than communicative practice, which limits students' readiness for real-life communication. Fourth, foreign language teaching in lyceums often focuses on the accumulation of knowledge rather than the balanced development of knowledge, skills, and abilities. As a result, students may graduate with theoretical understanding but without the ability to use language effectively in authentic contexts.

Conclusion

The development of communicative competence in academic lyceum students is a multidimensional process that requires attention to phonetic, lexical, and grammatical competences as well as to the integration of speech activities such as speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Motivation, both internal and external, plays a key role in stimulating students to engage in communicative tasks. Furthermore, the transformation of knowledge into skills and abilities is essential for sustainable speech development.

At present, methodological challenges remain in the lyceum system, particularly regarding the alignment of content, teaching methods, and communicative goals. Addressing these issues requires the adoption of competency-based and communicative approaches that emphasize authentic use of language, professional orientation, and reflective learning. Only by ensuring the systematic integration of knowledge, skills, and abilities into communicative practice can academic lyceum students achieve the level of competence required for higher education and professional success.

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