

# A typical professional task as a means of forming foreign language communicative potential of a marine specialist

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**Annotation.** The article deals with the problem of the foreign language communicative potential of marine specialists in a multicultural environment. It highlights the necessity of communicative potential formation when solving typical professional tasks and describes features and dynamics of its development at a maritime university. The experimental analysis involved a sample of 107 graduate cadets of the engineering department of Admiral Ushakov Maritime State University using the following diagnostic tools: questionnaires, tests, lingua-psychological trainings, business games. The analysis of the data shows that the foreign language communicative potential depends on the development of emotional and volitional stability skills and readiness to solve typical professional tasks.

## 1 Introduction

The study of the foreign language communicative potential (FLCP) of a specialist is relevant in the context of comprehensive changes in the political, economic and social areas. The problems of foreign language communication in a multicultural environment are especially acute for marine specialists, who have to work in multicultural mixed crews. Many studies indicate the presence of high stress on board in the case of a low level of FLCP development in seafarers [1, 2]. Difficulties in foreign language communication and psychological barriers are typical of young professionals, which indicates the need to find resources to enhance the ability to overcome them through the professional training.

The mechanisms of origin and manifestation of psychological barriers associated with communication, the conditions for their overcoming and compensation were studied by Russian (M.K. Kabardov, E.A. Golubeva, Yu.M. Zhukov, A.A. Leontiev and others) and foreign authors [3, 4, 5, 6]. These barriers are due to the low level of development of the communicative potential and FLCP, which includes a set of interrelated qualities.

Among the most important personal manifestations of the FLCP are the need for communication and its situational predetermination; the level of development of communicative skills and knowledge of the rules of communication with other specialists using professional vocabulary; emotional reaction to a partner of a different nationality; confidence and degree of satisfaction with communication. The FLCP is characterized by a high level of emotional and volitional stability and an ability

to build constructive interactions in a multicultural environment.

## 2 Materials and Methods

The purpose of the study was to explore the influence of the conditions for solving a typical professional task of a marine specialist aimed to develop communicative potential in the professional foreign language training at a maritime university.

The objectives of the study were to investigate the dynamics of development of the FLCP in solving typical professional tasks in mastering a foreign language in the conditions of combining foreign language and quasi-professional activities in the educational process of a maritime university.

The scientific novelty consists in substantiating the need to develop a FLCP by mastering the methods for solving typical professional tasks in a multicultural environment in order to reduce/overcome personal, cognitive, motivational, linguistic, psychophysiological, social and other barriers.

The practical significance of the work is the possibility to plan the FLCP components and use research materials in teaching several disciplines in English: "Business English," "Foreign Language," "Introductory Intensive Course of a Maritime Foreign Language," "Leadership and organization of teamwork," "Conventional aspects," "Simulator training of shift mechanics."

In the psychological and pedagogical literature, the terms' communicative ability, readiness, ability, skill, intelligence are used to characterize the communicative

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potential. The ambiguity of these terms is emphasized by many authors [7, 8, 9, 10]. Leontiev refers the ability to enter the process of communication, predict the behavior of interlocutors and possible situations of communication, correlate the methods of verbal and non-verbal communication to information and communication skills. Regulatory and communicative abilities include the coordination of actions, thoughts, goals with the interests of the interlocutor; application of own experience in solving joint problems; evaluation of the results of joint communication. The affective-communicative segment consists of empathic listening, evaluation of emotional behavior, etc. [7]. Asmolov defines the ability to communicate as a set of actions, knowledge, and skills [8], while Sidorenko believes that communication skills are a set of techniques and methods of perception and transmission of information [9]. According to Rumyantseva, communication skills underlie personal development [10]. Thus, the communicative potential includes qualities that allow the subject to communicate; communicative skills and experience determine the success of joint activities.

The foreign language communicative potential is a feature of capabilities that determine the type of foreign language communication. The FLCP of a marine specialist is a dynamic, developing, and enriching system of qualities formed in the conditions of joint foreign language activities that acts as a combination of internal reserves of the individual and external conditions of foreign language communication.

A participant in communication in a multicultural environment with a sufficient level of FLCP can predict an outcome of the situation - an expected result of solving a specific professional task through foreign language communication - and is ready for non-standard solutions dictated by non-standard reasons from the point of view of his native culture. This willingness to communicate reduces the level of uncertainty. Anxiety, agitation, fussiness are personal reactions that occur during the period of expectation of negative consequences. When solving collective labor problems, language barriers can affect the efficiency of activities.

### 3 Results and Discussion

We conducted a survey that involved 107 cadets of the ship mechanics department of the State Medical University named after Admiral F.F. Ushakov. They survey revealed a high level of anxiety, which caused embarrassment - 62.7%, tension - 71.9% and anxiety about what was happening - 57.2%. Reducing anxiety increases the communicative potential of the individual in multicultural activities.

New complex technologies - reliability and safety systems, automatic recognition, stabilization - cause dynamic changes in the labor process and an increase in the number of stressful situations. Therefore, the high level of development of the FLCP is of paramount importance for the success of professional activities in multicultural communication situations. The readiness

for self-regulation of personal attitude in intense professional activities, including those associated with communication in a foreign language, the achievement of goals in overcoming obstacles indicates an adequate level of development of the FLCP. This is expressed in the ability to control feelings, volitional and emotional impulses, i.e. to act in a rational way, especially in non-standard situations.

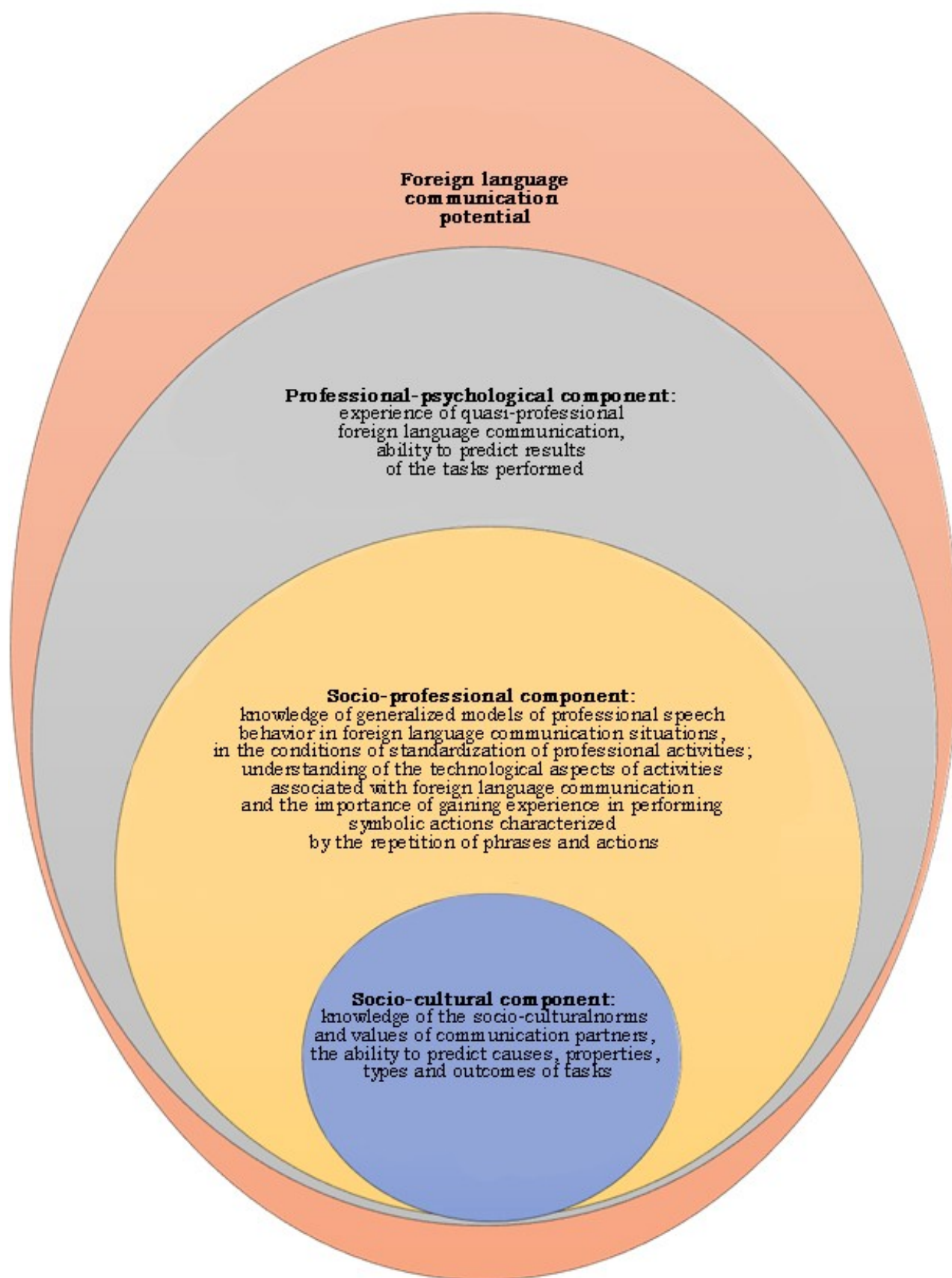
The FLCP components to be formed in the educational process are shown in Fig. 1.

Figure 1 shows that the socio-cultural component of the FLCP of a marine specialist is characterized by knowledge of the socio-cultural norms and values of communication partners, the ability to predict causes, properties, types, and outcomes of tasks. The socio-professional component includes knowledge of generalized models of professional speech behavior in foreign language communication situations, in the conditions of standardization of professional activities; understanding of the technological aspects of activities associated with foreign language communication and the importance of gaining experience in performing symbolic actions characterized by the repetition of phrases and actions. The professional-psychological component is based on the experience of quasi-professional foreign language communication when mastering the technology of professional activity.

The main unit of training was a typical professional task in the foreign language communication situation and ways to solve the task promptly. The foreign language component of the communicative professional potential was developed with the help of combined operator activities, the technology of which was regulated through foreign language communication. The FL material develops the professional and psychological component of the FLCP based on the experience of independent design of future professional activities in foreign language communication situations; the ability to determine trends and possible options for the development of stressful and critical situations in solving tasks.

The typical professional task as the main unit of the FLCP makes it possible to simulate interactions and technological conditions in the "man - technology - man" chain. In a multicultural environment, the contexts of a typical task (environment, frames, processes) in which technological operations occur become more complicated.

This educational process is focused both on the development of non-verbal, language and speech skills of the marine specialist and on the development of the ability to solve technological problems. For this reason, the main means of educational activity are focused on modeling the conditions for solving typical professional tasks through innovative forms of education, which include linguo-psychological training, analysis of specific situations and solution of situational problems, working out technological problems on the simulator, information technology.



**Fig. 1.** Components of foreign language communicative potential.

In developing the socio-professional component of the FLCP, we used computer technologies, including role-playing games based on the IMO Standard Marine Colloquial Phrases, case studies, linguo-psychological

trainings aimed at mastering and practicing knowledge of the algorithms of professional speech behavior in foreign language communication situations. As a result, lexical learning units of information were assimilated at

the level of professional meanings [11, 12, 13].

Linguo-psychological situations “Rescue operation at sea,” “Watch training of ship mechanics,” “Fire in the engine room,” and other analyses of authentic situations (“Dilemma and decision,” “First aid,” “Ship alarms,” “Welding,” “System Failure,” “Blackout”) provide an opportunity to master various roles, depending on the type of activity, which allows you to understand the motives of the interlocutor, develop skills for predicting his actions which reduces the level communication anxiety.

The presence of original materials of checklists containing the algorithms for keeping a watch in English and reports on accidents on ships of the merchant fleet served as the basis for the formation of stereotypes of the professional behavior of a ship mechanic in foreign language communication situations. These algorithms, developed considering the experience of maritime practice, formed the basis of the foreign language speech activity of students.

The analysis of production situations, the use of variable technologies and computer programs are aimed at mastering methods for solving typical professional

problems and communicative algorithms, on the basis of which their technological aspects are implemented [14].

The leading role in the formation of FLCP was assigned to business games on the Transas 5000 simulator, which made it possible to recreate the psychological context in a foreign language environment through emergency situations in the combined operator activity.

## 4 Conclusion

The level of FLCP development was identified through an expert assessment by members of the state examination committee during the state exam in English (the sample was 107 people) conducted in the form of a business game on the simulator. The graduates showed a high level of proficiency in the algorithms for solving typical professional tasks in the foreign language communication situations: 83 cadets received good and excellent, which is 77.6% of the total number of students.

Figure 2 shows the dynamics of stress factors reduction for the FLCP in the educational process.

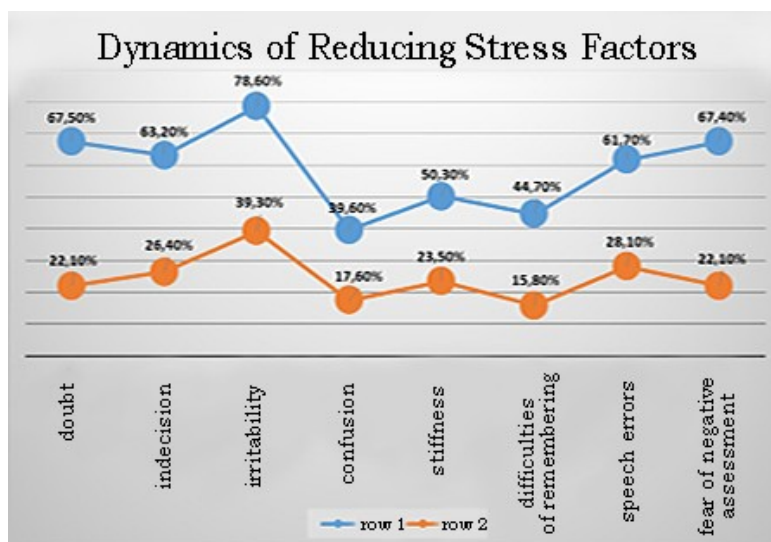


Fig. 2. Dynamics of reducing stress factors of foreign language communicative potential in the educational process.

According to the self-assessment data, “doubts about achieving the result” decreased from 67.5% to 22.1%, “indecision” decreased from 63.2% to 26.4%; “irritability” – from 78.6% to 39.3%; “confusion – from 39.6% to 17.6%; “stiffness” – from 50.3% to 23.5%; “experienced difficulties with remembering the sequence of the technological action” – from 44.7% to 15.8%; “poor vocabulary, fear of speech errors” – from 61.7% to 28.1%, “fear of a negative assessment” – from 67.4% to 22.1%. 74.1% of the respondents lacked anxiety.

The cadets sought to communicate, made prompt decisions on the implementation of technological operations associated with foreign language communication. The above indicators indicate a decrease in anxiety and uncertainty, which indicates that the FLCP has become stable, and the cadets are ready to fulfill the tasks assigned.

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