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**SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS' PROJECT ACTIVITY AS A CORE FACTOR
BY DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILLS**

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Abstract

The article offers the work description of the higher education teachers in accordance with their educational strategy for teaching English to students of higher education institutions, who previously had school experience in studying other foreign languages – German or French. The relevance of the proposed work is expressed in the application of the project method on the basis of information technology, that promotes the development of oral communication skills in the most effective way, taking into account the individual characteristics of the student and allows in the future, on the basis of the proposed algorithm of independent work, to conduct a free conversation in a foreign language. The purpose of the article is to show the advantages of intensive teaching methods, involving the use of information technologies, project methodology, creative approach of the teacher, independent activity of students. The described innovative methodology convincingly demonstrates the students' progress of the oral foreign language speech development from the level of "0" to the level of "B1" during one academic year.

Keywords

Intensive training – Project work – Information technologies – Motivation – Prepared speech

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Introduction

An important feature of modern language training in higher education is its innovativeness, which implies the development of new language professional and cultural experience among students on the basis of creative and critical thinking, abilities for educational and cognitive activity, as well as problematic, dialogue-role modeling in the learning process. In modern conditions an intensive method of teaching foreign languages is of particular importance, which provides a significant improvement in the quality of education, compared to traditional methods¹.

Currently, the basis for organizing the process of teaching foreign languages should be a complex methodology that stimulates the project activities of students, the effectiveness of which largely depends on the information technology (IT), used during the training. Correctly organized project activities contribute to the successful formation of the foreign language oral skills². The project activity, which involves the wide use of Internet resources, as well as graphic files, multimedia presentations, video presentations, prepared by the students themselves, helps them to quickly move to a higher level of foreign language communication³.

The organization of project learning activities is a complex task, as one of the objective conditions, ensuring its effectiveness, is the interactive nature of the used audiovisual tools⁴. Subjective, but not less essential, the independence and motivation of first-year students, being the condition for successful project activity⁵.

¹ G. A. Kitaigorodskaya, *The method of intensive foreign languages teaching* (Moscow: Vishaya Shkhola, 1986); E. N. Solovova, *Methods of teaching foreign languages: Basic course. Textbook for students of pedagogical universities and teachers* (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2002); M. A. Petrenko & G. M. Chopsieva, "Innovative methods of teaching a foreign language", *World of Science and Innovation*, Vol: 6 num 2 (2) (2015): 55-61; J. L. Walker "Opinions of University Students about Language Teaching". *Foreign Language Annals*, num 7 (1973): 102-105; S. Krashen, *Principles and Practices in Second Language Acquisition* (Oxford: Pergamon Press Inc, 1982) y C. Doughty & E. Varela, *Communicative focus on form*. In C. Doughty & J. Williams (Eds.), *Focus on form in classroom second language acquisition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

² T. M. Martynova "Use of project assignments in English lessons". *Foreign languages in school*, num 4 (1999): 19-21; M. Davis & D. Owned, *Help with Your Project* (London: Arnold, 1997); D. Friend-Booth, *Project Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); T. Hutchinson, *Introduction to Project Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Whittington, Campbell, Collis et al., 2000 y Kh. Sabry & L. Baldwin, "Web-based learning interaction and learning styles", *British Journal of Educational Technology*, Vol: 34 num 4 (2003): 443-454.

³ E. I. Goroshko, "Psycholinguistics of Internet communications", *Questions of psycholinguistics*, num 7 (2008): 5-12; E. S. Polat, "The method of projects in English lessons", *Foreign languages in school*, Vol: 2: 17-19 num 3 (2000): 23-24 y S. Nowson, *The Language of Weblogs: A study of genre and individual differences*. PhD Thesis (Unpublished manuscript), University of Edinburgh; Institute for Communicating and Collaborative Systems; School of Informatics. 2006. Retrieved from: <https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/1842/1113/thesis.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

⁴ S. Ainsworth, "The functions of multiple representations", *Computers and Education*, num 33 (1999): 131-152; W. O. Galitz, *The Essential Guide to User Interface Design. An Introduction to GUI Design Principles and Techniques*. John Wiley y M. Bergman, "Multimethod Research and Mixed Methods Research: Old Wine in New Bottles?", *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, Vol: 1 num 1 (2007).

⁵ G. I. Kukolevskaya, *Traditional and new methods of motivating students of vocational schools for learning: Methodical recommendations*. All-Union scientific and methodical center of professional training of youth (Moscow: Vishaya Shkhola, 1980); D. B. Lyubig, *Linguistic games* (St. Petersburg: Bukovsky Publishing House, 1998); S Carroll & S. Merrill, "Explicit and Implicit Negative Feedback: An Empirical Study of the Learning of Linguistic Generalizations", *Studies in Second Language*

In this connection, the use of such educational material in the project work, on the one hand, stimulates the independence of students, on the other hand, motivates them to situational and context-conditioned formatting of foreign speech, explicable in the mode of monological or dialogical statement⁶.

The proposed study in the field of intensive training of the first-year students in the higher educational institution includes the participation description and analysis of the students' involvement in the project activities, which in turn helps to form a reflexive approach for mastering the discipline "English language" through the activation of individual components:

- axiological (motivation and values);
- cognitive (development of intellectual and cognitive abilities);
- vocational education (mastering the professional knowledge system);
- technological (use of Internet technologies);
- communicative (communicative skills);
- regulatory (reflection and self-regulation as the basis of critical thinking)⁷

Research Methodology

The strategy for organizing the project activity of students, described in this article, is of an authorial character and is based on theoretical and practical experience of Russian researchers⁸ and foreign ones⁹.

Acquisition, Vol:15 num 3 (1993): 357-386; P. M. Lightbown & N. Spada, *How Languages are Learned* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) y N. Iwashita, "Negative feedback and positive evidence in task-based interaction". *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, num 25 (2003): 1-36.

⁶ I. L. Bim, *Methodology of teaching foreign languages as a science and problems of a school textbook (Experience of system-structural description)* (Moscow: Russian language, 1977); G. V. Rogova; F. M. Rabinovich & T. E. Sakharova, *The method of teaching foreign languages in high school* (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1991); C. Fries, *Teaching and learning English as a foreign language* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1945) y P. Jordens, "Rules, grammatical intuitions, and strategies in foreign language learning". *Interlanguage Studies Bulletin*, num 2 (1977): 5-76.

⁷ I.A. Agapov, *We learn to think productively*. Library of the "Bulletin of Education" (Moscow: Pro-Press, 2001); E. Bono, *Serious creative thinking* (Minsk: OOO Popurri, 2005); S. I., Zaire-Bek, *Development of critical thinking in the lesson* (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2004); R. Lakoff, *Psychoanalytic Discourse and Ordinary Conversation. Variation in the Form and Use of Language: A Sociolinguistics Reader* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 1983) y D. Goleman, *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* (New York: Random House, 2007).

⁸ E. S. Polat, "The method of projects in English lessons". *Foreign languages in school*, Vol: 2: 17-19 num 3 (2000): 23-24; I. A. Agapov, *We learn to think productively*. Library of the "Bulletin of Education" (Moscow: Pro-Press, 2001); I. V. Robert, *Modern information technologies in education; didactic problems; prospects of use* (Moscow: Institute of Education Administration of the Russian Academy of Education, 2010).

⁹ Kh. Sabry & L. Baldwin, "Web-based learning interaction and learning styles", *British Journal of Educational Technology*, Vol: 34 num 4 (2003): 443-454; S. Herring, "Slouching toward the ordinary: Current trends in Computer-mediated communication". *New Media and Society*, vol: 6(1) (2004): 26-36; S. Nowson, *The Language of Weblogs: A study of genre and individual differences*. PhD Thesis (Unpublished manuscript), University of Edinburgh; Institute for Communicating and Collaborative Systems; School of Informatics. 2006. Retrieved from: <https://www.era.lib.ed.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/1842/1113/thesis.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> Y L. Pauwels, "Websites as visual and multimodal expressions: Opportunities and issues of online hybrid media research". *Media, Culture & Society*, Vol: 27 num 4 (2005): 604-613.

The novelty of the proposed methodology is the integrated application of systemic and integrative approaches to the formation of the foreign language oral skills. The system approach provides simultaneous development of all types of speech activity using interactive forms of learning at different levels of communication between the teacher and student (formal / informal). The integrative approach allows the teacher, on the one hand, to organize project activities of students on the basis of their own methodological recommendations, and on the other hand, to create conditions that encourage learners to manifest their independence and a broader and more effective use of network technologies (web-based technologies) in the course of work on the educational project¹⁰.

The proposed methodology also takes into account the principle of variability, which is the individualization and differentiation of education, taking into account the characteristics of each student and the training group as a whole. The variability of the work organization on the project allows students to participate in the choice of the content for training and ways of its development, thereby increasing the level of their self-organization and motivation.

The strategy of the project organization work, aimed at solving the communicative task, is implemented in the conditions of the modular system of education in the higher education institution and involves detailed planning of the assignment stages with the indication of terms and resources, as well as the integration of various interactive technologies (LMS, flashcards, web-quest, web-sites, slide-shows, video-presentations). A wide range of the mentioned technologies does not overload the educational process due to methodically based use. Students are offered various forms of work aimed at developing and improving various forms of communication: monological speech, dialogical speech, free discussion based on a certain result of the project work. This method of training allows to enhance the skills and abilities of the learner in their totality, and the widespread use of ICT increases the motivational and technological component of the learning process.

Involvement of students in the project activity allows, thus, to consolidate and develop the skills of independent work, while the use of multimedia technologies provides unlimited possibilities for organizing independent project activities, the purpose of which is to achieve the highest level of the formation of oral foreign language skills in a relatively short time.

Results

Every year students enter National Research University Higher School of Economics, Nizhny Novgorod, facing the need to study foreign language “from scratch” in higher education institution conditions, because this language was not taught to them at school. Such students are united in a group of intensive language training, which is formed and exists only in the first year. Then students go to ordinary training groups, so the goal of the teachers of a foreign language in the first year is the formation and development of sustainable oral speech skills, which is possible only through intensive teaching methods. Such group receives a conditional numerical-letter designation “A1”, although students enter this group with “zero level”. The A1 level mastering by students must proceed during 4 months of training: from September to December of the semester and at the end of the academic year: during the exam session, where students already must have the B1+ level, which is stipulated by the Educational program, that takes into account the requirements of

¹⁰ R. A. Ivanova; A. V. Ivanov & M.S. Lyashenko, “A New Training Workshop for Students’ IELTS Exam Mastering”, *Journal of Language & Education*, Issue 2 num 3 (2017): 45–57.

the Federal State Standard of Higher Education. This kind of practice, like the organization of English intensive training groups for students, has already been in the Nizhny Novgorod Higher School of Economics for 10 years, and the results of the training testify the high educational potential of the foreign language teaching strategy "from scratch".

A specific feature of the methodology used in teaching a foreign language from scratch is that in a short time, through the involvement of students in broad educational project activities, using multimedia tools, it is possible to form stable communication skills of both prepared and unprepared foreign language speech, which allows most students to reach the B1+ level (Intermediate / Intermediate +). The main advantage of this method is the activation of all the students' personal reserves in the process of group training in a foreign language at a communicatively sufficient level in a given time frame.

This method is characterized by the involvement of students in educational project activities through situational and thematically organized communication, the use of role games, the use of computer technologies, the ability to search for necessary information on the Internet, the interrelated nature of learning all kinds of speech activity with the leading role of listening and speaking. As the author's experience shows, the project activity motivates the students not only to study the basics of the English language, but also contributes to the formation of an intelligent and competent person in the speech issue. The results of the training prove the effectiveness of the applied training method and confirm the positive dynamics that are revealed, while assessing the level of the skills' formation to learn a foreign spoken speech at all stages of studying English from scratch.

Through project activity at workshops students should learn how to speak logically and consistently in accordance with the communicative task, to make oral presentations on the topic, to convey the main content of the read (listened) material in their own words.

Special technology is applied for project activity, consisting of the 3 phases:

1. Brainstorming, when the student thinks over the topic and prepares the project with multimedia support (call phase).
2. Producing the monological speech based on the project with the introduced technology (implementation phase).
3. Spontaneous discussion of the reviewed project and student's ability to "defend" the project (phase of group discussion).

The 3 phases of project activity can be performed in several stages.

Stage of Training the Prepared Monological Speech

To start with the first topical unit, the teacher arranges the formation of skills and abilities of the prepared and unprepared monological speech. First of all, this practice should begin with topical vocabulary and grammar constructions, and then the teacher shows a small sample project, while English learners answer teacher's questions about the project. In this way students' phonetics, grammar, vocabulary skills and ability to hold intelligent question-and-answer conversation on the basis of the studied material are activated. When all the recommendations, hints and prompts are given, the students prepare their own projects connected with the topic of the lesson.

It is worth mentioning that students present an oral 2-3-minute message based on a mini-presentation with a multimedia slide show support. They pronounce prepared texts based on the active vocabulary and known grammar constructions. Such an oral and media presentation on the thematic project allows students to activate their narrative skills, perfect lexical and grammatical material, learn to answer teacher's and groupmates' questions. The number of phrases is not less than 10-12 at the very beginning, and at an advanced step the number of sentences should be about 18-20, correctly formed in terms of language rules.

Stage of Training the Unprepared Monological Speech

At a more advanced stage, beginning from 4-5 units, depending on the general level of students' training, at the English lesson the expert from the number of students is appointed. She or he makes the detailed message containing the analysis of the listened presentation by certain criteria and estimates students' activity, giving them an assessment. This presentation is a kind of public unprepared speech, while an expert tries to analyze the project itself and makes the final conclusion about participation of each student in the project activity in general. For many students this oral speech is the first attempt to express their own point of view in English, and the teacher's objective is to assess a student-expert too. From the authors' experience, on the one hand, this type of group work with newcomers is the most complicated, because these students don't possess efficient skills for discussion and assessment in the mother language, but over some lessons most students like to be experts, and, moreover, some learners enjoy such an activity and offer themselves to broaden the types of work. For example, they bring their own videos, which are more amazing and include more challenging points for youngsters. They revise their own slideshows and even take photos and videos from their everyday life and propose these projects for free discussion. On the other hand, it shouldn't be denied, that they have extremely little experience in speaking English, and to engage all the students into the project activity is a great issue for a teacher, therefore, the topics for speaking and further discussion must be clear, understandable and available for freshmen.

The assessment of student's project activity by the other student is considered as a probation period for the following stage in the group's project activity – to discuss the projects with no preliminary revision.

For this aim the teacher shows a topical project and inspires students to express their opinion. Using the studied phrases and word collocations from the unit, they practice their unprepared speech, mastering all the other skills – listening, vocabulary, grammar and speaking.

Newcomers must be very smart and responsible to arrange such a project activity, because the multimedia project itself must correspond to all the requirements, including the image and target of the slideshow.

Formation and Development of Foreign Language Speech Skills in the Dialogue Mode

Students should be able to talk using questions, exclamations, requests, orders, invitations, response remarks in the form of consent or refusal, clarification of information, in order to exchange views in connection with the heard or read content. The volume of replicas for each communication participant is not less than 6-8 replicas, correctly formed in terms of language rules.

Stage of Training the Prepared Dialogue Speech

Students prepare a multimedia project focusing on the topic in the video or mini-presentation in the dialogue mode. In the format of questioning / answering conversation they debate the happenings, demonstrating their abilities to critical thinking and realizing the current situation.

Such training work requires a preliminary preparation to the oral dialogical statement, and at the beginning it would better to offer this mode to more successful students.

Stage of Training the Unprepared Dialogue Speech

A prepared multimedia project based on the proposed topic assists to arrange the teamwork activity in the group, and in 15-20 minutes the students have to speak and discuss the given task in the mode of unprepared foreign speech. These objectives for project activity are challenging enough, but very efficient for development of speaking skills.

During the classroom work, the first phase (evocation) of the project activity is envisaged, led by a teacher (teacher-led) or a student (students), if such a task is given (student-led). In this phase, there is an exchange of views, the establishment of the project content understanding, the definition of priority topics for discussion and division, if necessary, into mini-groups or pairs for further work. The second phase (realization of meaning) is an individual autonomous work of students, who are debating the target and objectives of the project. The third phase is a cross-talk in the conditions as close as possible to the real.

Stage of Free Discussion

In the last module, when students have a fairly wide range of skills and abilities, they are involved into free discussion after watching the project, presented in the form of the media product. The involvement of students into joint work is a core component of the project activity. Students' work is based on the following provisions:

- students organize themselves in groups and sub-groups to view the project ("watching together entertains"), as joint watching creates a friendly atmosphere for further discussion;
- students identify priority topics for discussion;
- learners begin to interact better in situations where their opinion does not coincide with that of fellow students.

In the course of communication, the students share situational roles of speakers, significantly affecting the nature of communication, among them:

- a leader, who wants to talk and control this project;
- a mediator, who monitors the overall course of the conversation, balancing the interests of different people;
- "a naughty child", violating any restrictions, acting with independent judgment;
- "a flexible person", ready to adapt to different situations, etc.¹¹

¹¹ M. J. Oleshkov, Modeling the Process of Communication (Nizhny Tagil: Ural State Pedagogical University, 2006).

This kind of business role play requires much knowledge and various skills, however, students prefer taking part in this role play, as it helps them to do the best in mastering their language skills.

At the end of the workshop, for developing skills and abilities, students are invited to act as interpreters. The project is shown in English, then the sound is muted, and the students have to organize their dialogue / polylogue, based on the slideshow / video / movie. To complicate the objective, the most prepared students are offered a task for translation. When showing the presentation, they translate the actors' speech from the mother tongue into English and vice –versa, in accordance with the distribution of roles in the project. With the development of communication skills, students are included in the discussion: they learn to express their opinion about what they saw or listened to in the mode of unprepared speech, which, for sure, seriously affect the formation of their speaking skills. This method includes arranging a discussion among learners on the basis of the presented project.

To summarize the mentioned above, the following ways of involving students in collaborative work prove the following:

1. Students initially perform a multimedia project (individually or jointly). As a result of work, first, they prepare a slide show or video, which serves as a support for the creation of an oral report.
2. Students present their oral reports, that involve other students into the cross-talk.
3. As a result of the comprehensively studied topic, students prepare a project for targeted discussion in the format of free discussion.
4. The students produce an oral report in which they characterize the project prepared by another student and expose the assessment.

Experience proves that the assessment of an expert student often turns into the subject of discussion in the group, as students do not always agree with the assessment made by the expert. Students expend topics, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of students' participation in project activities in general, as well as give their recommendations to increase or decrease the expert assessment.

Discussion

One of the most important factors, contributing to the study of the English language in conditions of intensive training, is the creation of an innovative model, using computer technologies, serving the basis for the formation and development of communicative skills for both prepared and unprepared oral speech in the mode of monologue and dialogue in the context of everyday communication. The introduction of knowledge-based technologies into the educational process promotes the development of competencies in various fields of human knowledge, including the formation and improvement of skills and abilities for foreign language speaking¹².

The project activity, in the course of which such features, peculiar for living speech, imagined by the students, as spontaneity, unexpectedness and novelty, appear to be an extremely productive way for organizing the independent work of students.

¹² S Carroll & S. Merrill, "Explicit and Implicit Negative Feedback: An Empirical Study of the Learning of Linguistic Generalizations", *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, Vol: 15 num 3 (1993): 357-386.

The communicative activity of students, participating in the project work, using innovative Internet technologies, is wholly aimed at achieving the required level of the foreign language communication skills.

The process of forming foreign communicative skills should be based on the principle of progressive movement from simple to complex, since "... not easy, but accessible material is more interesting; an increased difficulty leads to uncertainty of students in their abilities and indifference to the subject"¹³. Therefore, the common feature for all types of classes with elements of the project method, based on information technology, is the project activity, that allows teachers to set communicative tasks at each specific stage of studying with a given level of complexity, motivating students not only to generate monological and dialogical statements, but to make a system analysis of linguistic facts. This training strategy has been used by authors for a number of years and has proved to be highly effective in preparing freshmen students entering the university on the basis of EGE results in German, French, Spanish.

It should be noted, that many published works that cover various aspects of higher education in foreign languages, mainly focus on teaching students who already have school experience in studying the English language course¹⁴. Scientific research on the use of Internet technologies in teaching foreign languages, as a rule, focuses on the results' analysis of their long-term use throughout the course of language studying¹⁵ and do not take into account the specifics of using ICT in conditions when the learning process is limited by a shortened time frame and is characterized by the setting of specific learning tasks.

The difference between the proposed strategy and the widely used one is in the training of students in a short time. By involving students in a diverse and thematically broad educational project activity, using multimedia tools, it is possible to form stable communication skills of both prepared and unprepared foreign language speech without support on language knowledge and speech skills, received in the course of schooling, which allows the majority of students to reach the level of B1+ (Intermediate+) in one year. The main advantage of the applied method is the activation of all the student's personal qualities, which, first of all, include its readiness for independent language activity, the ability to self-organize, the desire to solve communicative tasks of increasing complexity, both individually and in group, learning communication in a foreign language on communicatively sufficient level in a rigid time frame.

¹³ G. I. Kukolevskaya, Traditional and new methods of motivating students of vocational schools for learning: Methodical recommendations. All-Union scientific and methodical center of professional training of youth (Moscow: Vishaya Shkhola, 1980)

¹⁴ S. Krashen, Principles and Practices in Second Language Acquisition (Oxford: Pergamon Press Inc, 1982); G. V. Rogova; F.M. Rabinovich & T.E. Sakharova, The method of teaching foreign languages in high school (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 1991) y E. N. Solovova, Methods of teaching foreign languages: Basic course. Textbook for students of pedagogical universities and teachers (Moscow: Prosveshchenie, 2002).

¹⁵ I. V. Robert, Modern information technologies in education; didactic problems; prospects of use (Moscow: Institute of Education Administration of the Russian Academy of Education, 2010); M. H. Long; S. Inagaki & L. Ortega, "The Role of Implicit Negative Feedback in SLA: Models and Recasts in Japanese and Spanish". The Modern Language Journal, Vol: 82, num 3 (Special Issue: The Role of Input and Interaction in Second Language Acquisition) (1998): 357-371; P. M. Lightbown & N. Spada, How Languages are Learned (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) y S. Hase & A. Ellis, Problems with on-line learning are systemic not technical. In J. Stephenson. Teaching and Learning Online: Pedagogies for New Technologies (London: Kogan Page, 2000).

Conclusion

Participation in the project work is an independent creative activity that ends with the creation of a fully communicative and linguistically correct speech message. Free speech in a foreign language based on your own multimedia product is considered as a practical result of using an intensive method of teaching a foreign language from scratch, aimed at developing beginners to get the English language communicative skills in the format of a prepared monologue and dialogue, as well as listening. In the future, such project activities help to form and develop students' skills of unprepared oral speech, as students are invited to discuss the project in a discussion mode and freely express their point of view of what they saw or heard. The author's experience with all evidence shows that the proposed innovative learning model on the basis of the project provides students with a unique opportunity to master the language skills, including all aspects of language use: phonetics, grammar, vocabulary. Teaching to students the phonetic, grammatical and lexical aspects of the foreign language, acquaintance with the specifics of word formation and word compatibility, active mastering of the most common vocabulary and phraseology does not take place in the form of memorizing a set of rules and exceptions, but in the process of working on coherent, finished in a semantic sense speech works.

At the end of the course in the group of "Intensive English language" all students are offered a questionnaire for determining the level of student involvement in project activities, using ICT and self-assessment of the students' success, when studying the discipline "English language". An objective assessment of this strategy can be considered successful in the majority of students passing the internal English exam in the first year, the results of which reflect the real achievements of students in the past academic period. The study of a foreign language at a university and its free use in practical activities can and should contribute to the creative development of a future specialist. Using the newest pedagogical technologies, modeling possible role business situations, expanding the thematic lexis, combining these skills with skills of work in the web environment, the teacher promotes the formation of the student's other communicative skills. The indicator of the formation of these skills is the ability of the student to carry out a full-fledged communication in a foreign language in the chosen professional sphere, independently solve communication problems of any complexity, the ability to self-organize and apply the accumulated experience, while studying other disciplines and mastering new professional competencies. In general, the acquired skills during the studying, using the proposed methodology, will undoubtedly expand the possibilities of future specialist for employment. It seems that the process of forming communicative skills corresponding to the level of "B1+" of the first-year students with a "0" level, meeting all the criteria of the European language portfolio, applied to this level, will be effective if the following conditions are realized during training:

- the active role of the teacher in the implementation of project activities at the initial stage, using a wide inventory of information and communication technologies;
- the relevance and richness of the educational material;
- fascination of pedagogical actions;
- cooperation of the teacher with students in the educational process;
- involvement of each student in the work;
- encouraging in any form the personal success of students;
- creation of a friendly psychological climate during the studying;
- selection of the most appropriate and economically linguistic ways of performing the task at each stage of studying;
- automation of students' project activities;

- application of various interactive forms with students in the course of studying (individual, pair, group);
- maintaining constant feedback between the students, on the one hand, and the teacher and other students, on the other;
- systematic control over the results of project activities;
- making expert judgments based on reasoned opinion.

Considering the above mentioned, it can be concluded, that the process of training a specialist with developed foreign language communicative skills in the conditions of “digital era” requires the solution of a number of organizational and methodological issues, each one should be the object of further research in the field of theory and practice of teaching a foreign language at university.

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