

COMPETENCE OF WOULD-BE SPECIALISTS OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS: URGENT PROBLEMS OF STUDYING LANGUAGE FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES

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ABSTRACT

The article presents the results of the knowledge of standard Lithuanian language and language for special purposes of the would-be specialists of physical education, sports and primary education. It discusses the problems of teaching and learning standard language and the language for special purposes. The research data are interpreted in the context of globalization. They encourage us to think over the urgent problems of using the national language while students continue their studies and make their careers in Europe. The article emphasizes the necessity of creating the learning environment corresponding to the needs and experience of learners. The research object is the studies of standard language and language for special purposes of would-be physical education and sports specialists. The research subject is the language competence of would-be physical education and sports specialists. The aim of the research is to reveal the urgent problems of studying standard language and the language for special purposes. The research results suggest that at the beginning of the course of the language for special purposes the teachers should evaluate the students' knowledge and skills of standard Lithuanian in order to create a learning environment corresponding to the needs of learners. Would-be specialists of physical education need methodical recommendations how to develop their pupils' spoken language in physical education lessons. The course of the fundamentals of such methods should be associated with teaching standard language and the language for special purposes in a higher school. In the course of standard language and the language for special purposes for physical education specialists and sports coaches it is necessary to clearly define the requirements of the systemic language course and the objectives of communicative language teaching. The most important thing is that specialty teachers should pay attention not only to the content of students' written work, but also to the use of professional terms and the inaccuracy of word building or style mistakes.

Keywords: language for special purposes, standard language, higher education.

INTRODUCTION

Modern labor market provides many alternatives for specialists of various branches. In this situation the commodity of the highest quality is the new information, knowledge and skills, and the most valuable thing is the human ability to use the knowledge effectively and reasonably in the constantly changing environment. Knowledge, skills and concepts, which are acquired in the formal, informal and spontaneous informal

process of learning, are not enough for a person to make a career in his / her professional and personal life. General education, as well as professional education, must help youngsters form the basic skills which provide possibilities for them to get involved in the professional life and be promoted. This attitude is consistent with the mission of education and science system, which asserts that it is very important to ensure the society development by educating

a well-rounded intelligent person, to cherish Lithuanian values and to train skilled specialists who could work in the rapidly changing labor market (*Lietuvos ateitis pasaulio kontekste*, 2003). Thus, there must be balance between traditions and innovations, academic quality and appropriateness of socio-economic education, consistency between the study programs and the freedom of choice for students because European institutions of higher education admit that their students need qualifications which would guarantee their effective subsequent studies and career possibilities all over Europe.

In this context it is not so important where and how the person studied. The most important thing is what he / she knows and is able to do. The problem is that in the future the national language can experience the decreasing need to be used. According to A. V. Kanauka (2002), there is a real danger for the Lithuanian language to become only the language of “local” use and be of inferior level, the same as the dialect of a village or a region. What encourages and will encourage preserving the correct use of the standard Lithuanian language? Actually the higher education systems of the European countries and the countries of the European Union are not being unified; they are intended to be harmonized up to a certain rational degree for the freedom of European students and other citizens, for the interests of employers and for the better quality of studies. Besides, nationality is being cherished in Europe, and the Lithuanian language is announced as an official language of EU, i. e. it has the same status as German, French, and English. Everybody can appeal to the institutions of European countries in Lithuanian. No doubt, Lithuanian will not be as popular as English, but it will survive and be used in the state documents, institutions, etc.

It should be noted that nowadays the standard native language is taught in secondary and higher schools, special TV and radio programs are run, and different publications appear in mass media. There is no lack of information. But can we say that all those means are effective? Is the language of young people correct enough and the future perspectives of it does not raise any doubts?

J. Šukys (2001) has stated that standard language in the narrow sense of meaning is the correctness of the language. So, teaching standard language means teaching students to use legitimate

words in their normative meanings, correct word combinations, sentences, to pronounce and to stress the words correctly.

The requirements for the written language of students are always greater. The spoken language is not so strictly regulated; it is almost never under control. The requirements for the oral public speech are also very high, but students themselves should be interested in improving it. This aspect of standard language in the wide sense of meaning is emphasized in the textbook of the XIth form. Thus, the language of communication, i. e. communication competence is improved.

The school-leaver’s language should be correct enough (*Lietuvos bendrojo lavinimo mokyklų bendrosios programos ir bendrojo išsilavinimo standartai. XI—XII klasė*, 2002). The courses of standard Lithuanian and the languages for special purposes, which are taught in a higher school, should be as a second stage: in those courses the knowledge of the native language acquired in the secondary school should be systematized, the style perception and the individual style should be further developed, the language norms should be kept to, the knowledge of the language system should be referred to, and the special terms should be learnt.

The practical experience at the higher schools shows that some students do not know standard language nor have the general perception of the subject (Ryklienė, 1998; Alaunienė, Babickienė, 2002; Celiešienė, 2003). That is why in a higher school the students have to learn elementary things of the language instead of studying standard language and the language for the special purposes at a higher level.

The research object is the studies of standard language and language for special purposes of would-be physical education and sports specialists.

The research subject is the language competence of would-be physical education and sports specialists.

The aim of the research is to reveal the urgent problems of studying standard language and the language for special purposes.

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METHODS

The research took place in 2002—2003. The sample consisted of 586 students (259 males and 327 females) of Education Faculty at Šiauliai University (ŠU), and Sports Technologies and Tourism, Sports Education Faculties at the Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education (the LAPE). The choice of specialties was influenced by their prestige among schoolchildren. The research indicates that children feel best and most of all they like their primary school teacher, physical education teacher and sports educator, compared to other teachers (Tyson, 2002; Kristensen, 1999; Hendry, 1975). Besides, physical education teachers communicate with children in lessons and extra-curricular activities much more than teachers of other subjects. It should be noted that the language of sports coaches, sportsmen and sports workers could be defined as incorrect from the standpoint of standard language. As children quote their spoken language, they describe the course and results of competitions in the same way as the significant people to them, attention should be drawn to the language competence of would-be sports educators and physical education specialists.

The research participants got 30 incorrect sentences, and they had to correct them. The tasks of the test were taken from different sources: the students' written works were analyzed, their talking during classes, seminars and training sessions was listened to, and some sentences were taken from other teachers' edited speeches, press, and

literature on standard language and the language for special purposes. The tasks were classified according to the levels of the language (vocabulary, morphology, word-building and syntax mistakes). Vocabulary mistakes appeared in the sentences most of all (words and phrases that should not be used or used in a different meaning, incorrect translations). Besides, the sentences contained grammar mistakes: incorrect word combinations, inaccurate use of prefixes, suffixes, mistakes in the use of cases and prepositions. The research data were coded, the data matrix was made up, and the calculations were made using the SPSS 11.0 statistical program package.

RESULTS

The research revealed that the level of standard language of higher school students was different (Figure). For example, our research results showed that the language competence of the primary education specialists of Šiauliai University was higher than of the students (would-be physical education specialists and sports coaches) from the Lithuanian Academy of Physical Education. The indicated differences let us claim that in different higher schools the lecturers of standard language and professional studies have to correct the curricular content according to the possibilities of students. This attitude is consistent with the postulate of the theory of constructivism in modern didactics, which states that every learner constructs his / her own knowledge on the basis

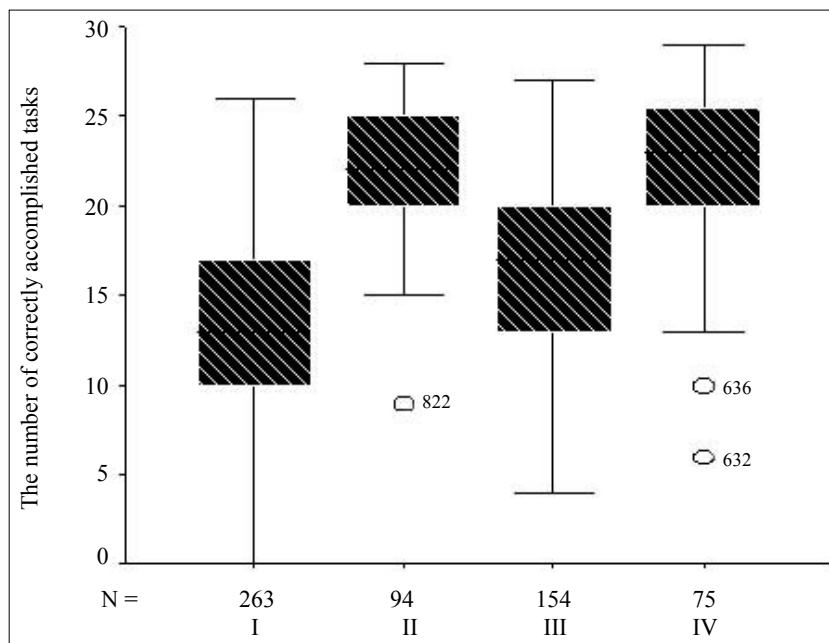


Figure. Manifestation of students' competence in standard language and the language for special purposes

Note. The groups of research participants:
 I — physical education specialists, sports educators (the first year);
 II — primary education specialists (the first year);
 III — physical education specialists, sports educators (the fourth year);
 IV — primary education specialists (the fourth year).

of personal experience, and the teacher creates different learning environment (Steffe, Gale, 1995; Mezirow, 1996). Besides, different levels of standard language could be noticed in various groups of students. In the groups of would-be primary education specialists there was no statistically significant difference between the means of the test results, but there was a difference in the standard deviation of the test results. This statement is illustrated in the Figure. In Group IV we can see a greater dispersion of correctly accomplished tasks than in Group II. How can we explain such a result? The modulus of standard language in the study programs of would-be primary education specialists is in Term Eight. At the time of our research the students had not taken this course. We think that the first year students, just after their state school-leaving examination of the native language, were more homogenous from the standpoint of standard language than the fourth year students. On the one hand, the study process provides important knowledge, values, skills and competences, on the other hand, the process does not include additional standard language knowledge and does not improve the language ability, and the competence of the language for special purposes is not purposefully formed, either. We can state hypothetically that the modulus of standard language and the languages for special purposes would qualify the manifestation of would-be primary education specialists' language.

Summing up the data of the standard language and professional ability test, a scale of the knowledge of the language for special purposes was made up. The knowledge level of standard language and the language for special purposes is reflected by the number of correctly performed tasks (Kardelienė, Balčiūnas, 2002). Comparing the results of the first year students from ŠU and the LAPE we can see that the manifestation of the knowledge of the language for special purposes of would-be primary education specialists is more exact than of the would-be sports coaches and physical education specialists (Table).

On average the would-be physical education

specialists and sports educators accomplished 13.3 test tasks correctly, primary education specialists — 21.8 tasks (t-test, $p < 0.001$). The research results indicated that both the first year students from ŠU and the LAPE *did not know how to correct loan words, how to change loan translations; did not distinguish mistakes in meanings of words and phrases; made word-building mistakes, and they used cases improperly*. Those were the typical standard language mistakes, which are generally emphasized in language practice suggestions and in various publications for people of different specialties (Paulauskienė, 2001).

DISCUSSION

In this research we did not aim to compare the language knowledge levels of different higher school students. In our opinion, the more important fact is that the comparison of the sample groups once again stressed the same problems:

- Typical mistakes are repeated.
- Language abilities improve slower than language education teachers would like them to improve.

Those facts confirmed the importance of teaching language subjects (standard language and the language for special purposes among them) in a higher school.

The research results showed that the language knowledge of students was getting better. So we can discuss the usefulness of the courses of standard language and the language for special purposes. The continued research results of 154 fourth year students from the LAPE, the Faculty of Sports Technologies and Tourism, and Sports Education, after they completed the language culture course, are shown in the Table.

As we can see, there is no statistically significant difference between the means of test results of the first and the fourth year primary education specialists. It should be noted that there is a greater dispersion of the number of correctly performed tasks in the groups of the fourth year students compared to the first year students. We

Research participants	n	M (SE)
Physical education specialists, sports educators, I st year	263	13.3 (5.3) x
Primary education specialists, I st year	94	21.8 (3.4) x
Physical education specialists, sports educators, IV th year	154	16.5 (4.6) xx
Primary education specialists, IV th year	75	22.1 (4.7) xx

Table. Comparison of students' knowledge of standard language and the language for special purposes

Note. SE — standard error; x — difference reliability ($p < 0.001$) between the groups of the first year; xx — difference reliability ($p < 0.001$) between the groups of the fourth year.

think that the result was influenced not only by the homogeneity of the groups of the first year students, but also by the interference of the native language knowledge and skills. On the one hand, the professional terms and concepts enrich the learner's vocabulary; on the other hand, the learner forgets the knowledge and skills from the secondary school. Besides, the research results can be interpreted on the basis of the observations of other higher school teachers (Dobrovolskis, Kabacaitė, 1999; Girdenis, 2001; Piročkinas, 2002), and the appeal of the Lithuanian Language Society about the situation of the Lithuanian language in schools in the process of reforms (2002). Scientists and teachers emphasize that the educational environment of a higher school improves the intellect and the language for special purposes of a would-be specialist. On the other hand, if we try to evaluate the impact of the academic environment, we will see that the native language as a society value receives least respect. In other words, professional trend is characteristic of the studies. The research performed in technical universities has confirmed that. The respondents emphasized the importance of teaching the language for special purposes, but they were not able to appreciate the humanitarian purpose of languages (Celiešienė, 2003). It should be noted that, as our research showed, standard language and the language for special purposes as a means of specialization form better language skills of would-be specialists. As the data in the table indicated, there was a statistically significant difference between the first and the fourth year students of the LAPE: the fourth year students accomplished the tasks better because they were tested when they were taking the course of standard language and the language for special purposes.

Though the research results showed that the fourth year students knew the main norms of the Lithuanian literary language and knew how to use them, and their language improved, there are areas that should attract the attention of language educators:

- Comparative quantity with adverbs in the superlative degree is not expressed correctly.
 - The gender forms of participles in the active voice are not used correctly.
 - The word indicating a side action of the same person is used incorrectly.
 - The word meanings are not distinguished.
- The theoretical and practical course of

standard language and the language for special purposes helps students form correct language knowledge and skills. It is important that after the course the would-be specialists understood that language development was a personal matter of their prestige. Language educators should create conditions for specialists to improve their language competence as a component of their professional competence after graduation. It helps convey important information clearer, more exactly and logically, and avoid ambiguities and inaccuracies. In mass media we read that we are happy to see nice young people, but we cannot understand what they say (Pečiulis, 2003).

On the other hand, the development of schoolchildren's communication skills is not only the obligation of teachers of the Lithuanian language. The schoolchildren's language would obviously improve, if teachers of all subjects paid attention to both, how the child knew history, mathematics or other subject, and how he / she was able to express himself / herself. On the other hand, the teachers' certification showed that teachers' language not always corresponded to the literary language norms, either.

CONCLUSIONS

1. At the beginning of the course of the language for special purposes the teachers should evaluate the students' knowledge and skills of standard Lithuanian in order to create a learning environment corresponding to the needs of learners.
2. Would-be specialists of physical education need methodical recommendations how to develop their pupils' spoken language in physical education lessons. The course of the fundamentals of such methods should be associated with teaching standard language and the language for special purposes in a higher school.
3. In the course of standard language and the language special purposes for physical education specialists and sports coaches it is necessary to clearly define the requirements of the systemic language course and the objectives of communicative language teaching. The most important thing is that specialty teachers should pay attention not only to the content of students' written work, but also to the use of professional terms and the inaccuracy of word building or style mistakes.

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BŪSIMŪJŲ KŪNO KULTŪROS IR SPORTO SPECIALISTŲ KOMPETENCIJA: SPECIALYBĖS KALBOS STUDIJŲ AKTUALIJOS

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SANTRAUKA

Šiuolaikinė darbo rinka įvairių sričių specialistams suteikia daug alternatyvų. Pagrindinis išsilavinimas, po jo einantis profesinis mokymas ir lavinimas turėtų suteikti svarbiausius įgūdžius, padedančius siekti karjeros profesiniame ir asmeniniame gyvenime. Įstojus į Europos Sąjungą, darosi vis svarbiau ne tai, kur ir kaip asmuo studijavo, bet ką jis moka, geba, žino. Problema — gimtosios (mūsų atveju, lietuvių) kalbos mažėjantis vartojimo poreikis šiuolaikinės visuomenės raidoje. Kadangi Europos Sąjungos nuostata — puoselėti tautiškumą, tai nacionalinės kalbos vartojimas priklauso nuo ja kalbančiųjų požiūrio į savo gimtąją kalbą.

Bendrojo lavinimo mokyklos absolvento kalba turėtų būti pakankamai taisyklinga, o aukštojoje mokykloje dėstomas kalbos kultūros ir specialybės kalbos kursas privalėtų tapti antrąja pakopa. Aukštųjų mokyklų praktika rodo, kad dalis studentų nežino kalbos kultūros terminų, neturi bendros dalyko sampratos.

Straipsnyje pristatomas tyrimas. Tirti kūno kultūros specialistų ir sporto pedagogų kalbiniai gebėjimai. Siekta atskleisti kalbos kultūros ir specialybės kalbos, kaip socialinio kultūrinio reiškinio, studijų aktualijas. Aptariami tyrimo, atlikto 2002—2003 metais, rezultatai. Apklausti Šiaulių universiteto ir Lietuvos kūno kultūros akademijos 586 studentai. Mokslininkų tyrimai rodo, kad sporto šakų trenerių, sportininkų ir sporto darbuotojų pasakymai dažnai esti netaisyklingi kalbos kultūros ir specialybės kalbos aspektu. Tiriamieji turėjo ištaisyti jiems pateiktus netaisyklingus sakinius. Šie sakiniai klasifikuoti pagal kalbos lygmenis, o jų turinį lėmė tiriamųjų būsimosios profesinės veiklos ypatumai. Tyrimo rezultatai parodė, kad į aukštąsias mokyklas įstojusių jaunuolių kalbos kultūros lygis yra nevienodas. Be to, studentai daro tipišką gimtosios kalbos kultūros klaidas, todėl straipsnyje akcentuojama kalbinių dalykų dėstymo svarba aukštosiose mokyklose. Atkreipiamas dėmesys į tai, kad specialybės kalbos studijų pradžioje dėstytojai turėtų tirti studentų kalbos kultūros mokėjimus ir gebėjimus, kad galėtų sukurti studijuojančiųjų patirtį bei poreikius atitinkančią studijų aplinką.

Be to, būsimiesiems kūno kultūros specialistams būtinos metodinės rekomendacijos, padedančios ugdyti mokinių kalbą per kūno kultūros pamokas. Tokios metodikos pagrindų kursą reikėtų sieti su kalbos kultūros ir specialybės kalbos dėstymu aukštojoje mokykloje.

Kita vertus, būsimiesiems kūno kultūros specialistams ir sporto šakos treneriams skirtoje kalbos kultūros bei specialybės kalbos studijų dalyko programoje reikėtų aiškiai apibrėžti sisteminio kalbos dalyko reikalavimus, komunikacinės kalbos didaktikos uždavinius.

Svarbiausia, tyrimas parodė, kad specialybės dėstytojai turėtų atkreipti dėmesį ne tik į studentų rašomųjų darbų turinį, bet ir į specialybės terminų vartojimo bei jų darybos netikslumus, stiliaus klaidas.

Raktažodžiai: specialybės kalba, kalbos kultūra, aukštasis išsilavinimas.

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