

# Educational dialogue as the means of improving the dialogical communication skills of non-philological students while teaching foreign languages

## Diálogo educativo como un medio para mejorar las habilidades de comunicación de los estudiantes no filológicos mientras aprenden idiomas extranjeros

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#### ABSTRACT:

The paper substantiates the relevance of foreign language communicative training of students of non-philological majors who are able to use the English language actively in their future professional activities. The emphasis is on educational dialogue as the means helping improve the dialogical communication skills. The paper has analyzed the legal and regulatory support of Ukrainian education in the context of the problem. The ideas of such concepts as "dialogical communication" and "educational dialogue" have been specified on the basis of analysis of scientific sources. The effective model of forming readiness of non-philological students to a successful foreign language dialogical communication while using educational dialogue has been developed which content involves the key positions of the developed technique.

**Keywords:** dialogical communication, educational dialogue, means, model.

#### RESUMEN:

El artículo confirma la relevancia de la capacitación en comunicación en idiomas extranjeras para estudiantes de especialidades que no son filológicas que pueden utilizar activamente el inglés en su actividad profesional adicional. Se enfatiza el diálogo instructivo como un medio para promover las habilidades de comunicación. Se analiza el soporte legal normativo de la educación ucraniana en el contexto del problema planteado en el artículo. Basado en el análisis de la literatura científica, se establece la esencia de los conceptos de "comunicación de diálogo", "diálogo educativo". Un modelo efectivo para formar la preparación de los estudiantes que no son filólogos para una comunicación de diálogo exitosa en un idioma extranjero utilizando el diálogo educativo para el cual se desarrollan las posiciones claves de la metodología creada.

**Palabras clave:** comunicación de diálogo, diálogo educativo, remedio, modelo.

## 1. Introduction

Modern governmental reforms of higher education are caused by European integration moods in Ukraine while being connected with the idea of the importance of modernization of professional training in future specialists in accordance with European standards reflected by the Law of Ukraine

"On Higher Education" (2014), Higher Education Standards of Ukraine (2018), National Qualification Frameworks in the EU countries (Desiatov, 2008) etc.

In 2018-2019, Ukraine has developed new higher education standards [Higher Education Standards], basing on a competence-based approach, and taking into consideration the requirements for specialists training represented in the project of the European Commission "Educational structures harmonization in Europe" (TUNING).

Among the general competencies, the skill to communicate in foreign languages is among the most important ones. Moreover, taking into account the social order requirements, arising from the modern society tendency to intensify interpersonal, interethnic and international contacts, the problem of increasing the level of foreign language proficiency among students of various majors as the important means of professional communication of future specialists becomes particularly relevant for education. Improving the quality of foreign language communicative training of students is positioned as the single-source prerequisite to ensure the competitiveness of the national graduates in the world labour markets. Therefore, the task of a modern higher institution is to train not only competent specialists for a certain industry but also language personalities capable of implementing effective professional activities as well as a foreign language communication with foreign partners (the Concept of Language Education in Ukraine, 2010).

Internationally, any professional activity involves a partner interaction implemented mainly in the form of a dialogical communication helping act, solve problems, convince, make decisions as well as create a favourable business environment, form a positive microclimate in the team, and establish efficient relationships with clients and partners (Chorniy, 2010).

In the professional field, a dialogical communication is understood as the ability to participate effectively in communication as well as to define its objectives and tasks; to have a high level of professional and communicative competence making it possible to arrive at the best solutions while discussing the problems; to carry proper point in matters of principle; to be able to feel the partner's personality, mood and character; to conduct interview, negotiation, discussion; to use communicative strategies and tactics; to listen and ask questions; to use etiquette means for achieving a communicative objective; and to comply with language rules (Chernenko, 2004).

Recently, , the problem of *educational dialogue* (ED) has been raised in the field of cooperation pedagogy being thought as a multiaspect and multifunctional means of education, development and teaching in the higher school practice. It is considered as: a form of communication between the didactic process participants in educational situation (Ball, 1999); a way of teaching organization (Widdoson, 1979); an optimal means of education and development, formation of new knowledge, improvement of personal qualities of students, certain skills and abilities (Kramarenko, 2011); specially organized subjects interaction in training process (Abramkina, 2003); and a method of working with learning material content (Pleshkova, 2008).

The educational dialogue objective is purposeful searching for a new knowledge, i.e. guideline for further independent work (Kramarenko, 2011). That explains the special attention to ED considered as the effective learning means as well as a way for intensive work with the subject content owing to its ability to go beyond mastering the actual knowledge and creative application.

Intrinsically, ED is as close as possible to the real communication process; thus, educators use it actively in combination with other methods, means and forms of educational process in the foreign language teaching of non-philological students for the formation and development of personal qualities of student, their basic and professional competencies, and communication skills to use language as the communication means for future professional activities.

In the context of the above mentioned, consider the educational dialogue as the effective means of improving the dialogical communication skills of non-philological students while learning foreign languages.

The paper objective is to substantiate the technique of improving the dialogical communication skills of non-philological students while mastering foreign languages, using educational dialogue as the important means for successful communication.

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## 2. Methodology

Theoretical analysis of domestic and foreign research shows the terminological uncertainty of the "dialogical communication" concept. To characterize the phenomenon, scientists and researchers used such terms as "Dialogical speech"(Chorniy, 2010),"dialogical communication" (Palykhata, 2002),"dialogue" (Pleshkova, 2008),"dialogical communication process" (Ball, 1999), and "professional dialogical communication" (Pesniaieva, 2004).

There are many interpretations of the "dialogical communication" and "dialogical speech" concepts; nevertheless, the majority of scholars agree it is a process of speech interaction where direct statement exchange between two or more people occurs. Thus, Ye. Palykhata uses the "dialogical

communication" and "dialogical speech" concepts as synonyms since they are the communicative act in which the listener's and speaker's roles reversal take place; that is, statements exchange is involved (Palykhata, 2002).

The "dialogical speech" and "dialogical communication" categories will be considered as synonyms too since each phenomenon involves the process of information transfer between two or more communicants to inform, explain, persuade etc.

Despite the fact that the problem of a dialogical communication studying has been initiated by the scholars, resulted in a number of many definitions as well as grammatical, linguistic, psychological, and syntactic characteristics of the phenomenon, there is no available effective technique to improve the dialogical communication skills while teaching foreign languages students of non-philological specialties with the use of an educational dialogue.

The technique development is based upon the assumption that the formation of successful foreign-language dialogical communication skills in non-philological students will be effective through the involvement of the certain scientific and methodological approaches (i.e. competence-based, personality-oriented, communicative and cognitive, professionally oriented, communicative and activity-based) and provision of following conditions:

- development of motivation of a future specialist to learn a dialogical communication using foreign language means;
- integration of various activity types: educational and verbal, communicative and professional;
- simulation of real professional and communicative situations in the educational process;
- development of a professionally oriented system of exercises and tasks to ensure a comprehensive and gradual formation of future specialist readiness for dialogical communication in professional activities with a combination of traditional and innovative teaching methods; and
- organization of a favourable educational environment for the development of language personality of the future specialist.

Analysis of scientific sources has become the basis for the development of a technique to form the foreign language readiness of non-philological students to successful dialogical communication, reflected in the model, involving the three interrelated stages: *motivational and semantic; verbal and communicative; and creative and activity –based* (Figure 1).

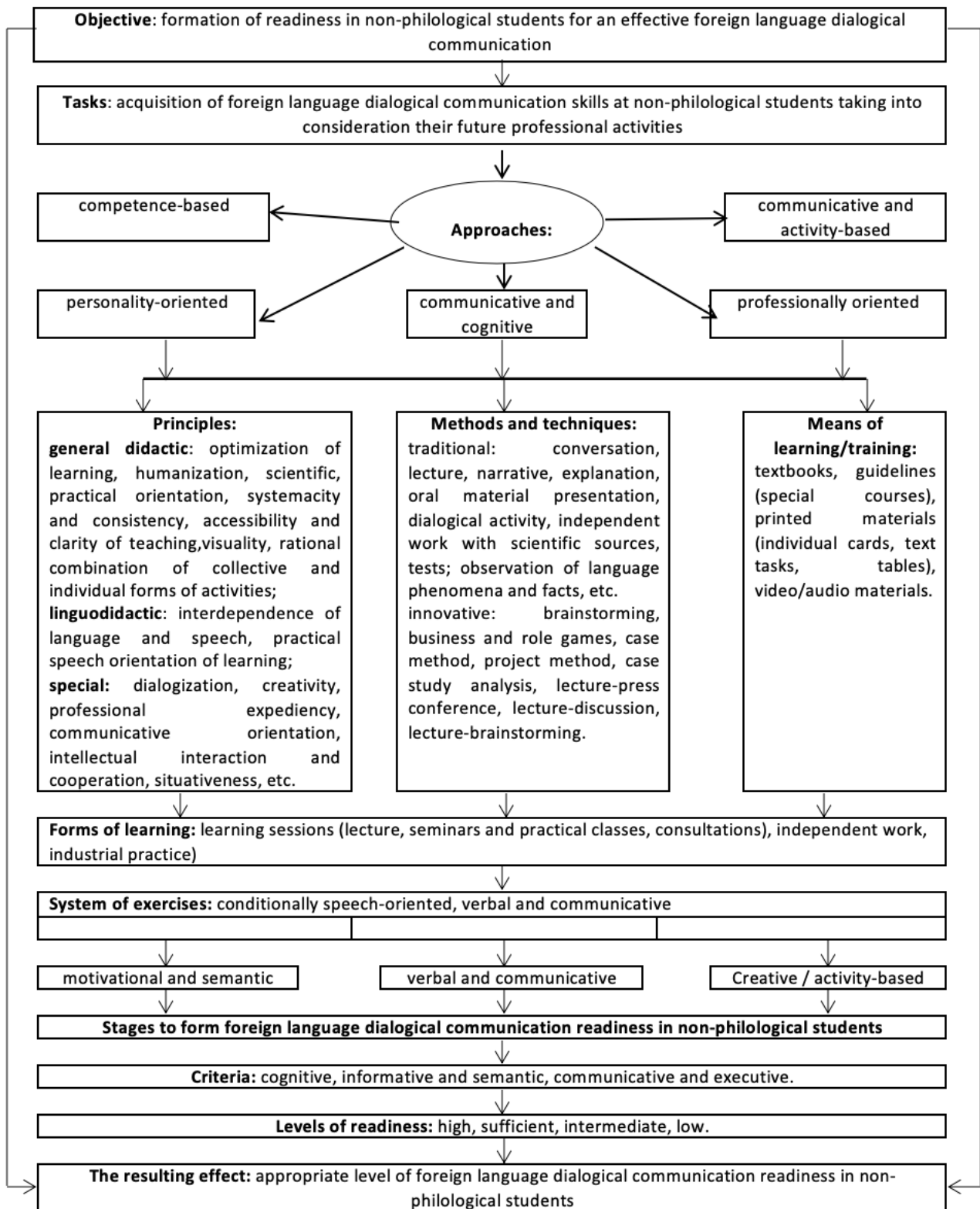
ED is important when the technique of forming skills in the the non-philological students for a successful dialogical communication in a foreign language. Scholars consider ED as a specially organized dialogical interaction determining the subjectivity of teacher's and student` positions; activating and implementing personal functions of the dialogue subjects (Kramarenko, 2011); as a situation solved in the form of dialogical interaction by students searching for and discovering the general method of coping with the training task (Serikov, 2000); as the means of effective development of verbal skills for their implementation in the context of communicative situations (Ball, 1999); a way of implementing a problem-based learning (Pesniaieva, 2004); and as a component of personality-oriented, dialogical, problem-based, and developmental types of learning (Abramkina, 2003).

Relying upon the above mentioned, it is possible to say that the process of a foreign language teaching with the use of dialogical learning means in higher educational institutions, aimed at the formation of students` speech competence, is characterised by the following: communicative orientation; problem-solving didactic material; situation-based learning activities; and active learning forms. Thus, the educational dialogue is considered as an effective didactic means for obtaining, forming, and developing of subjective communicative and verbal skills through activating and implementing the intellectual and creative potential of the participants of dialogic interaction in "teacher – student (students)" or "student – student (students)" formats, aimed at the solving problematic educational and communicative situations in foreign language classes.

The characteristics stipulate the basic initial positions as for the organization of a dialogic interaction to improve the dialogical communication skills in non-philological students while learning foreign languages.

### **Figura 1**

Model to form readiness of non-philological students for an effective foreign language dialogical communication



1. The educational dialogue as the means to improve the mentioned skills is implemented as a part of a pedagogical cooperation (in particular, in the process of active dialogic problem-based learning) involving stimulation of cognitive and search activities of the dialogic interaction subjects through the activation of their internal intellectual resource as well as creative potential for forming communicative and verbal skills in students required for the implementation of foreign language communication in their future professional activities.

2. The educational dialogue implementation during foreign language classes is related directly to the practical implementation of "subject-subjective" educational paradigm, in the context of which the educational process is considered as a dialogic interaction of all subjects (equal partners) and their meanings resulting in subjective knowledge – personally valuable intellectual resource.

3. The educational dialogue implementation in the process of foreign language learning of non-philological students requires considering the features of active dialogic problem-based learning as well as the specifics of organizing their foreign language learning which predetermines a specification of the appropriate organizational and didactic basics covering the necessary conditions; certain

approaches; and principles, effective methods, techniques, as well as organizational forms. These components are the tools for maximum realization of the educational dialogue didactic potential.

Consider in more detail the specific features of educational dialogue organization at the foreign language classes in the context of improving the dialogical communication skills in non-philological students.

The analysis of scientific papers concerning the communicative aspect of learning (Bakum, Goroshkina, Khotskina, 2015) has helped study the problem in terms of dialogic teaching of foreign languages, and identify communication as its leading characteristic. *The communicative orientation* of a foreign language lesson in the form of educational dialogue increases its closeness to real communication; it needs an open atmosphere of cooperation and active participation of subjects of such a dialogical interaction. The idea of communicative-oriented learning of foreign languages by means of educational dialogue is to transfer students not only the knowledge about the language as a system but to arm them with the appropriate competencies required for effective communication in the real communicative situations.

The studies of various aspects of problem-based learning make it possible to confirm that a foreign language class, organized by means of educational dialogue, is characterized by a high problematic level. The analysis of scientific sources, studying the problematics in the context of educational dialogue (Abramkina, 2003; Pesniaieva, 2004), allow studying the didactic potential of problem-based tasks solved in the educational dialogue form. The problem identification helps activate cognitive activity of students, and increase their motivation level; develop the ability to think independently and creatively, and apply knowledge in practice; moreover, it ensures the development of the appropriate types of verbal activity forwarding the main function of foreign language learning in a technical higher educational institution – that is the formation of professional dialogical communication skills in the students.

The problem-based learning of foreign language communication is implemented through creating communicative situations, which give situational tone to the process of learning foreign languages using educational dialogue means.

*The situation-oriented foreign language classes*, organized on dialogic basics, help students understand actual social and professional conditions, under which a foreign language communication can occur.

The situational nature of dialogic learning is considered by many scholars as the effective means of speech stimulation (Abramkina, 2003; Ball, 1999; Pleshkova, 2008) since discussion of problems in terms of educational situation contributes to foreign language communication during which certain speech qualities (i.e. flexibility, the ability of involving in new situations, and functioning on new speech material) can be implemented. In addition, the situation is considered as the necessary condition for expanding lexical range of the students: the language units, used out of situation, do not remain in the memory because they are not significant for the student; the student knows them, but can not use them properly in the context.

Implementation process of the educational dialogue as the effective means to form foreign language communicative speech skills during foreign language classes is characterized by using *active learning methods* and forms aimed at performing certain search tasks, discussing various problems, proving proper viewpoint in the context of constant cooperation and interaction between all participants of the learning process.

Interactivity of the process of foreign language teaching using educational dialogue stipulates the priority of the active methods and forms of educational activity which ensure a productive class interaction, and help carry out of communicative and cognitive tasks by means of foreign language communication: business games, didactic communicative, professionally oriented situations and discussions, problem-solving tasks etc.

Such active methods contribute to the improved productivity (i.e. scope of the performed work) and effectiveness of learning activity of students (i.e. learning, acquiring and mastering knowledge, skill development); creating a positive motivation; forming educational and cognitive skills; developing skills to a productive team cooperation and interaction; building partnerships etc.

The detailed consideration of specific features of the educational dialogue as the means of an active educational activity implementing based upon the pedagogy of cooperation allowed planning the organization of dialogical learning during foreign language classes to improve the dialogical communication in non-philological students.

315 students from the State Higher Educational Institution "National Mining University", Kryvyi Rih National University, State Higher Educational Institution "Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University" participated in the experimental study. 108 hours were planned according to the current educational program: 18 hours of lectures, 54 hours of practical classes, and 36 hours of self-study). To carry out the formative procedure, the experimental groups, involving 165 students, and control

groups, involving 150 students, have been identified. It has been taken into consideration that at the beginning of the formative experiment the level of readiness of non-philological students for a successful foreign language dialogical communication was approximately similar which provided almost equal conditions for the formation of the dialogical communication skills at the second (formative) stage as well as ensured objectivity of the study results at the third (control) stage of the study.

At the control stage of the study, the effectiveness of the developed methodology of forming the readiness of non-philological students for a successful dialogical communication in a foreign language has been checked. To determine the formation level of their readiness for a foreign-language dialog communication, final tests have been carried out.

The non-philological students of both control and experimental groups (CG and EG) have been proposed to perform the tasks similar to those used at the summative stage. The general data of Tables one, two, and three have been formed on the basis of determining the levels of each individual indicator.

### 3. Results

#### Analyze the obtained results

First, the quantitative and qualitative changes in the formation levels of students' awareness with the basics of a dialog communication according to *cognitive criterion* have been found out. Control test has shown that EG students have acquired relevant knowledge: different types of professional dialogues; dialogical unities; dialogue remarks, and their structure according to business communication situations; the ability to distinguish between dialogical unities and their components; the skills of addressing properly to the interlocutors, using forms of speech etiquette in stimulating dialogical replicas; observing the speech culture standards; and avoiding the use of dialectics. CG students had no such knowledge and skills.

Table 1 demonstrates comparative characteristic of the levels of awareness with dialogical communication basics according to a cognitive criterion at a summative stage, and a control stage.

**Table 1**  
Levels of awareness of non-philological students with dialogical communication basics according to a cognitive criterion shown at a summative stage, and a control stage (in terms of percentage points)

Stage	Groups	Levels			
		High	Sufficient	Intermediate	Low
Summative	EG	4.7	21.7	42.2	31.4
	CG	4.2	20.2	43.4	32.2
Control	EG	13.6	42.9	34.8	8.7
	CG	9.5	33.8	38.6	18.1

As Table 1 explains, in terms of cognitive criterion, the level of awareness of non-philological students with the dialogical communication basics increased significantly in the experimental group. Thus, 13.6 % of the students have achieved a high level (before training, the high level was 4.7%); 42.9% of the students have shown a sufficient level (which was 21.7% before the experiment), and 34.8% of the students have remained at the intermediate level (it was 42.2%). According to the Table data, only 8.7% of the students had a low level (it was 31.4% before learning).

As for the control group, minor positive changes were observed at the control stage. 9.5% of the students have achieved a high level (which was 4.2%), a sufficient level -33.8% (20.2% - before the experiment). The majority of the respondents have demonstrated an intermediate level (38.6%) and a low level (18.1%) (43.4% and 32.2% before training respectively).

Significant positive changes have been identified in the experimental group according to *informative and semantic criterion*. The non-philological students adhered to the speech standards of a dialogical communication in professional situations (conversation, telephone conversation, discussion etc.); performed correctly the tasks for the selection of literary correspondences; and their speech became more standardized. The skills to form and use correctly speech etiquette forms, to apply etiquette expressions (greeting, farewell/parting, invitation, wishing, apology, objection; appealing to interlocutors in accordance with their social status and age) were developed in EG students. Table 2

shows the comparative results of students' progress at the summative and control stages according to the informative and semantic criterion.

**Table 2**  
Levels of compliance with speech standards of business etiquette communication according to informative and semantic criterion shown by non-philological students at a summative stage, and a control stage (in terms of percentage points)

Stage	Groups	Levels			
		High	Sufficient	Intermediate	Low
Summative	EG	4.1	17.5	37.9	40.5
	CG	3.2	20.6	37.8	38.4
Control	EG	15.8	45.1	33.5	5.6
	EG	6.4	36.5	46.8	10.3

The Table data indicate that the percentage of students in the experimental group who mastered a dialogic communication technique and business communication standards has increased significantly. The high level has been demonstrated by 15.8% of the respondents (it was 4.1% before experimental learning). The number of respondents with the sufficient level has also increased from 17.5% to 45.1%. 33.5% of the students have remained at the intermediate level (37.9% before experimental learning). The low level has been shown by 5.6% of the respondents (it was 40.5%).

As for the students of control group, the high level has been achieved by 6.4% of the students (it was 4.8% before experimental learning), sufficient-36.5% (before learning -20.6 %), intermediate-46.8% (before learning -37.8%); low – 10.3% (before learning – 38.4%).

Positive changes have also been observed in the EG according to *communicative and executive criterion*. The future specialists have learned to classify and use communication strategies and tactics to achieve the objective of communication; overcome easily sabotage of their communicative opponents, and failures during the dialogue. The significant progress of students has been identified as for the use of non-verbal communication means (i.e. gestures, facial expressions, pantomime). It should be noted that the students have been particularly interested in gestures of foreigners, that shown their interest to inter-linguistic and intercultural specifics of work.

Table 3 demonstrates the comparative results of the formed levels of dialogical communication skills according to communicative and executive criterion at a summative stage, and a control stage.

**Table 3**  
Formation levels of dialogical communication skills according to communicative and executive criterion shown by non-philological students at a summative stage and a control stage (in terms of percentage points)

Stage	Groups	Levels			
		High	Sufficient	Intermediate	Low
Summative	EG	3	19	41.6	36.4
	CG	6.1	18.5	38.3	37.1
Control	EG	17.5	39.7	35.3	7.5
	CG	11.2	38.6	40.8	9.4

The control stage results indicate that 17.5% of the respondents, who were members of the experimental group, have demonstrated the high level of dialogical communication skills (to compare with 3% before the experimental learning). The number of students with a sufficient level has also increased from 19% to 39.7%. 35.3% of EG students have remained at the intermediate level (41.6% before experimental learning). The number of low-level students has decreased significantly: from 36.4% to 7.5%.

The control group has demonstrated minor changes. Thus, the high level of the respondents has increased from 6.1% to 11.2%; and the sufficient one - from 18.5% to 38.6%. The intermediate level

was 38.3%, after the experiment it has increased to 40.8%. As for the low level, the data have changed as follows: it has decreased from 37.1% to 9.4%.

Consider the general quantitative results of formation levels of readiness for a foreign language dialogical communication at the control stage according to cognitive, information, and semantic, communicative and executive criteria shown by non-philological students (Table 4).

**Table 4**  
General formation levels in non-philological students readiness  
for foreign language dialogical communication  
(in terms of percentage points)

Level	Groups	Criteria (χ)			X
		K1	K2	K3	
High	ЕГ	13.6	15.8	17.5	15.6
	КГ	9.5	6.4	11.2	9.0
Sufficient	ЕГ	42.9	45.1	39.7	42.6
	КГ	33.8	36.5	38.6	36.3
Intermediate	ЕГ	34.8	33.5	35.3	34.5
	КГ	38.6	46.8	40.8	42.1
Low	ЕГ	8.7	5.6	7.5	7.3
	КГ	18.1	10.3	9.4	12.6

Abbreviations:

K1-cognitive criterion;

K2- informative and semantic criterion;

K3- communicative and executive;

χ – arithmetic mean value.

Table 5 shows the comparative data on general levels of readiness in non-philological students for a foreign language dialogical communication in the context of their professional activities.

**Table 5**  
Comparative data on levels of readiness in non-philological students  
for a foreign language dialogical communication  
(in terms of percentage points)

Groups	Level							
	High		Sufficient		Intermediate		Low	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
EG	3.9	15.6	19.4	42.6	40.6	34.5	36.1	7.3
CG	4.5	9	19.8	36.3	39.8	42.1	35.9	12.6

According to the Table data, the students of the experimental group have shown significant positive changes in the formation of readiness for a dialog communication in their professional activities.

Thus, the level of readiness for a dialog communication in the non-philological students has significantly increase in the experimental group: the number of the students with a high level has increased from 3.9% to 15.6%; and - from 19.4% to 42.6% in the context of those having a sufficient level.

34.5% of the respondents have remained at the intermediate level (it was 40.6% before the experimental learning). 7.3% of the students have shown a low level (36.1%- before experimental learning).

As for the control group, 9% of the respondents have achieved a high level (it was 4.5% at a summative stage: 36.3% have achieved a sufficient level (which was 19.8% before the experimental



learning). The majority of the students have shown intermediate and low levels which have changed as follows: the intermediate one has increased from 39.8% to 42.1%; and the low one has decreased from 35.9% to 12.6%.

Thus, the study results have confirmed the effectiveness of the proposed technique aimed at the formation of readiness in non-philological students for a foreign language dialogical communication.

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## 4. Conclusions

The effectiveness of the developed methodology provided the organization of three-stage learning; each of them involved implementing a system of special tasks developed on the principles of cooperational pedagogy, aimed at the formation of readiness in non-philological students for a dialogical communication in their professional activities. The objective of stage one (motivational and semantic) was to create a positive students' motivation for studying a dialogical communication as a necessary condition for the effectiveness of future professional activities, to make the students master theoretical and practical basis of dialogical interaction. Stage two (speech and communication) was aimed at organizing individual, group and collective creative activities of students to master practical dialogical communication skills. Stage three (creative and activity-based) formed skills of dialogical communication in professional activities.

The carried-out study has not covered all aspects of the problem. Some issues require further development: practical implementation of learning, organized on the basis of cooperation pedagogy; dialogical presentation and didactic material studying with the use of active methods, dialogic learning means, developing a communicative competence in the process of a foreign language training of future specialists.

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