Methodological Aspects of the First Foreign Language Course for Bachelors of History and Archaeology

Abstract. The present study aims at methodological grounding of the specific types of foreign language competences for non-philology faculty students enrolled in the First Foreign Language (English) course taught within the first (Bachelor) level of the academic professional program 0.32 History and Archaeology. The suggested methodological and conceptual basis outlined in the research has a concrete practical application to address university language teachers in non-philology faculties, curricula designers, professionals, researchers or practitioners in the field of foreign language teaching. The author’s e-learning educational and methodological complex based on principles of competency-based foreign language methodology is practically presented in the study as an experience of teacher-student(s) cooperation in learning foreign language aimed at improving cognitive competences through brainstorming, intellectual communication and research skills development. An overall history study is essentially focused on the concept of historical thinking, specifying such cognitive skills as significance, primary source evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspective-taking, the ethical dimension as key research matters of academic history discourse. The fundamental meaning-making aspects of historical accounts theoretically and empirically substantiate that history and historical knowledge are always culturally predetermined, dynamic and open to contestation and discussion. Within the conceptual-methodological model, the issue is open to a broad scientific analysis in terms of cognitive competences in professional history and archaeology settings as well as in the field of competency-based foreign language learning deploying spoken and written discourse for special purposes. Pragmatic competence encompasses discursive strategies
of organizing and structuring the general and professional or specialised discourse in terms of its coherence, cohesion, thematic organization, logical reasoning, as well as functional action-oriented knowledge via general or professional-oriented communicative functions performing. From the foreign language studying perspective multimodality approach has clearly envisaged as progressive constituent for further research under the competency-based foreign language learning methodology to apply in non-linguistic specialties.

**Keywords:** competency-based education, foreign language teaching, historical thinking, methodological approach, multimodality.

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**Introduction**

At the current stage of education development, the competency-based approach to foreign language teaching is one of the leading methodological ways to curricula, aimed at effective optimization of the educational process. Within the activity-oriented approach to foreign language studies the student’s integration to the modern socio-cultural environment essentially involves practical application of the acquired theoretical knowledge in professional settings while passive “object of the study” student’s position is categorically rejected. Therefore, the development of cognitive, axiological, linguistic and communicative competences of students in foreign language acquisition are methodologically actualized in the recent studies as a collaborative activity-oriented learning experience through brainstorming, intellectual collaboration and research skills development in the process of foreign language study.

Competence is generally regarded as a holistic complex of integrated skills, knowledge, appropriate attitudes and experiences for the successful performance in life settings. Given the complexity of the requirements for the methodology of teaching a foreign language, a dual-focused approach that promotes integrated teaching of content and foreign language is grounded as the most successful by educationalists (Banegas, & Beamud, 2022, p. 151-156). This method allows students’ involvement into the language environment as much as possible, providing training based on the content for professional use as an effective instructional methodology in generating multiple opportunities to apply
The multifaceted study of the contemporary European educational space draws attention to the profession-oriented teaching of a foreign language, which implies that the students gain not only special knowledge, but the necessary skills and abilities, which they can apply in their future professional activities and therefore, withstand the professional competition in the labor market (Pop, & Mazilescu, 2012, p. 4200).

The implementation of a system activity approach, which is aimed at independent, active acquisition of knowledge is seen among the premises of effective communicative competence formation in foreign language (Biletska et al., 2021, p. 244). Consequently, any foreign language educational program is to be considered to provide tools for both general and professional communication, as well as to enable adaptation of intercultural communication-related principles by language users (Pop et al., 2012, p. 4200).

An important aspect of the person-centered methodology of teaching a foreign language consists in taking into account such listener’s personality factors as the age, the level of prior language learning, and general education to ensure the effectiveness of both basic and in-depth study of a foreign language to develop the students’ skills to self-organization, rise up their own motivation in the learning process, lay the basis for constant improvement and lifelong self-education (Uztosun, 2021, p. 425).

Modern competency-based educational programs implement personalized or adaptive learning strategies. E-learning educational and methodical complex is intended to recognize the skills improvement issue directing the students to module tasks that will give them the guide and assistant support before moving on to other content. In this way personalization of learning is defined via valid and reliable assessments that are critical components of cognitive-behavioral education models. However, valid assessments in a competency-based foreign language learning framework go beyond simply measuring students’ knowledge; they must also ensure students can apply their knowledge in a variety of complex real-life professional situations.

According to C. D. Cao, L. T. Phan and T. T. Nguyen (2022), competency-based
education as set on predetermined competencies emphasizes outcomes in real-world performance, thus is seen as a framework for the teaching and assessment of learning processes on the base of the development of skills which must be demonstrated, quantifiable, and applicable in a variety of contexts to be considered as an alternative to traditional methods of assessment in education, because competency-based learning is advocated as a “viable option” which means far more than just learning outcomes (p. 268).

Recent studies ground the concept of competency as a pillar of curriculum development being a driving force behind the actual change in the educational sphere. It is widely defined as the development of complex skills that allow students to act in various activity fields. Thus, the need of achieving knowledge in action, the result of a cognitive base that can be put into practice and used to explain the ongoing real-life context is demonstrably substantiated by scholars.

According to the analysis done by C. D. Cao, L. T. Phan and T. T. Nguyen (2022), the six key components of the competency-based academic programs are widely discussed:

1) development of explicit learning outcomes with respect to the required skills and proficiencies;
2) flexibility in time for skill mastery;
3) a variety of instructional methods to facilitate learning;
4) criterion-referenced testing to validate the intended outcomes;
5) certification based on the demonstrated learning outcomes;
6) adaptable content to ensure the best possible learner guidance (p. 268).

Thus, the authors indicate that under competency-based approach knowledge assessment for students turns into a positive and empowering learning experience that results in evidence that it is timely, relevant, and useful differentiated support that is tailored to meet personal learning requirements. Learning outcomes (knowledge, skills, and dispositions) are explicit, transparent, measurable, and transferable when they are rigorous and common expectations. Multiple-choice and true/false tests are among the most common types of assessments. Nevertheless, the researches have explicitly demonstrated in the survey that higher-order competencies are to be assessed through
demonstrations, case studies, simulations, portfolios, and project assignments (Cao, Phan, & Nguyen, 2022, p. 270-273).

The purpose of the present article is at methodological grounding of the specific types of foreign language competences for non-philology faculty students enrolled in the First Foreign Language (English) course taught within the first (bachelor) level of the academic professional program 0.32 History and Archaeology. Furthermore, the suggested methodological and conceptual basis outlined in the research has a concrete practical application to address university language teachers in non-philology faculties, curricula designers, professionals, researchers or practitioners in the field of foreign language teaching.

The methodology

Due to theoretical and empirical analysis of the methodological provisions of competency-based learning the following optimizing criteria were systematized:

1) personality-oriented, involving psychological and competency-based readiness of the participants of the educational process to turn traditional lecturer-instructor model into collaborative facilitator interaction, improving the quality of the student’s reflection, motivation sphere, cognitive development, foreign language communicative competence, team cohesion dynamics;

2) content-operational, that is a system-activity based methodological complex for the project development and implementation, case study, research planning, time management, organization and peer-to peer assessment, progress monitoring, evaluation and self-reflection;

3) formative-diagnostic comprising project presentation, implementation, sharing, and assessment as well as self-reflection and evaluation.

The author’s views on the competency-based learning as effectively optimizing cognitive, axiological, linguistic and communicative activities of students are introduced and methodically substantiated in the e-learning educational and methodical complex of the discipline “First Foreign Language (English)” for the first- and second-year students of
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Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, specialty 032 History and Archeology. Therefore, the competency-based foreign language methodology is practically exemplified in the research as a collaborative teacher-student(s) foreign language learning experience to reinforce cognitive competences of brainstorming, intellectual communication and research skills for non-linguistic specialty bachelors via formative virtual higher educational environment, its development and implementation.

Results
The emerging results have been introduced and discussed at the 5th Kyiv and Bialystok International Conference in Theoretical and Applied Linguistics held in Kyiv, Borys Grinchenlo Kyiv University, December, 2-3, 2022 (Shkarban, 2022).

A new educational competency-based paradigm is at the bases of modern European educational curricula. L. Holubnycha, T. Shchokina, N. Soroka and T. Besarab (2022) state that competencies stand for a coordinated language to describe academic professional profiles and higher educational levels, thus qualifications become transparent and comparable in “maintaining a single educational, vocational qualification, cultural and value space” due to the orientation of the curricula standards to the results of education (p. 60). Pedagogically viewed, competency-based education substantivates the transfer from the teacher centrist knowledge to the student-centered action-oriented educational process (Дидактичні та методичні засади компетентісно орієнтованого навчання іноземних мов, 2020, p. 21). In terms of methodology the specific objectives of any academic professional program are defined in terms of competences to be acquired by the graduate students (CEFRL, 2001).

Within the Educational and Professional Program 032.00.02 History and Archeology of the first (bachelor) level of higher education in the specialty 032 History and Archeology an obligatory discipline “First Foreign Language (English)” covers 12 credits ensuring the formation of the following general (GC) and professional competencies (PC) specifying program learning outcomes (PLO): GC 5 The ability to communicate in foreign language; PC 9 The ability to work with historical texts and documents, comment and annotate them according to certain criteria, present and discuss the results of scientific
research; PC 10 The ability to demonstrate professional communication skills using scientific terms accepted in the professional environment; PLO 5 The ability to work with written, material, ethnographic, oral, archival and other historical sources; PLO 12 The ability to carry out communication on professional issues with representatives of scientific, public, religious and national-cultural organizations and communities (Освітньо-професійна програма 032.00.02 Історія та археологія першого (бакалаврського) рівня за галузю знань 03 Гуманітарні науки спеціальністю 032 «Історія та археологія» (нова редакція), 2022).

The e-learning educational and methodical complex of the discipline “First Foreign Language (English)” consists of 8 credit Modules for the first-year discipline study: Personality and Surrounding; Family Traditions; Modern Personality Needs; Travelling and Tourism; Health and Lifestyle; The Arts; Communication and Mass Media; The History of Language and 4 credit Modules for the second year: A Human in Society; Personal and Professional Success, Travelling around the World, Using the Media, Innovations and People. Workshop tasks are necessarily history-focused on the development of the specific competencies like the ability to formulate the subject, object, actuality, novelty of a specific historical study; comprehensively consider the research problem using relevant sources and scientific literature; argue the importance of the historical perspective in the process of source analysis, to integrate the achievements of other humanitarian sciences to solve the current problems of history and archaeology; explain the importance of cultural heritage for the development of humanity as a whole and ethnicities in particular. From the foreign language study perspective communicative competence is concerned with the mastery of a foreign language code, that is seen in grammatical competence as the ability to recognize phonological, morphological, lexical and syntactic structures of a foreign language to produce sounds, words, sentences and texts, in sociolinguistic as the ability to understand the social context of communication, as well as in discursive and strategic competencies. Therefore, the formal 10 point assessment of any task submitted by a student can be generally based on the relevance, coherence, grammar and vocabulary assessment criteria grading the overall ability to
interpret, isolate and reproduce the lexical grammatical structure of the text, evaluate discursive coherence, the consistency and validity of its argumentative structure, highlighting productive ideas, mastering genre structuring, content comparison, demonstrating professional communication skills using scientific terms accepted in the professional environment.

Nonetheless, a common objective in history educational research is essentially focused on historical thinking to specify the cognitive competencies: significance, primary source evidence, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspective-taking, the ethical dimension (Seixas, 2017, p. 598-601) as closely connected to academic history research that pays attention to the existential and fundamental meaning-making aspects of historical accounts and appreciates how history and historical knowledge are always culturally contingent and therefore, dynamic and open to contestation and discussion (Thorp, & Persson, 2020, p. 899).

According to the conceptual-methodological model, this category can be broadly described in terms of cognitive competences in professional settings as well as functional (action-oriented) involving both spoken and written special purpose discourse. The basic concept of the activity approach is the task, defined as the performance of actions by one or more doers who use their competencies in a strategic sequence to achieve a certain result. The foreign language learner’s level is determined on the base of the quantity and quality of the completed tasks. In most cases, the activity approach to foreign language teaching is considered in combination with a number of problem-based learning components: personal-activity, problem-activity, and communicative-activity approaches (Biletska et al., 2021, p. 247).

From the linguistic perspective, pragmatic knowledge encompasses discursive knowledge, that is revealed in organizing and structuring the general and professional or specialised discourse in terms of its coherence, cohesion, thematic organization, logical reasoning, as well as functional knowledge, exercising general or specialised communicative functions. The history educational attempt is seen in achievement of the
historical thinking competencies called the disciplinary or procedural aspects of history; thus, historical knowledge should primarily be understood as related to “the disciplinary skills necessary for critically scrutinizing historical sources and construct narratives from these” (Thorp, & Persson, 2020, p. 892). Figure 1 specifies the task of historical explanation which requires practical application of the historical thinking skills, that is sourcing, critical correlation of historical source presented with the patterns of historical reading and source evaluation framework relied upon under the communicative-activity approach in foreign language.

Figure 1: Historical reading skills. Sourcing

Contemporary studies in multimodality assume that any analysis nowadays can no
longer be restricted to the use of language, if it aims at interpreting the text or communicative event perspective. Social semiotics focusses on unveiling ideologies, social values, power roles, and identities their embodiment in texts to reveal the ways how individuals actively maintain, reinforce, contest and challenge them through their sign-making choices. Interdisciplinary work is increasingly sought for in social semiotic multimodal research. Its perspective can offer other social sciences a fine-grained empirically-based methodology for the analysis of social meanings in multimodal texts; at the same time, it can draw from other social sciences broader frames for the interpretations of larger social dynamics underlying the production of these meanings or deriving from their interpretation (Carr, Loucks, & Blöschl, 2018, p. 35).

Figure 2 actualizes a complex multimodal approach to foreign language practice based on interdisciplinary sign-makers analysis. From the foreign language teaching standpoint, a wide range of modal options gives possibility to synthesize listening and comprehension, reading and text analysis, written discourse structuring, speaking and debate communication skills in a holistic formative complex aimed at the development of the student’s productive skills. Multimodal approach overall seeks to find common labels that can describe meaning produced in all registers to treat all modal operators in a unifying and coherent account.
Figure 2 Multimodal approach to speaking and debate

Content visualization infographic tools (Figure 3) are effective means to realize maximum functionality of the educational material processing at the stages of perception, understanding, generalization and systematization due to content density, associativity and accessibility of infographic resources in foreign language learning. Figure 3 exemplifies the students’ final projects on the mass media influence framework.
**Figure 3: Content visualization infographic tools**

**Figure 4** represents the tasks set on the basic in any foreign language lexical topic “Family” promoting the use of motivational strategies outside the established framework. Scientific research on the history of family foundation involves testing the effectiveness of the pre-established set of the learner’s knowledge discursive competences (the principles of messages organization, structuring and arrangement), functional competences (performing certain communicative functions), project design competence. On the other hand, analytical and critical thinking skills are essential in the defining, describing, generalizing, arguing and debating the outcome.
The key issue here is the view that students present in their historical narratives defining the historical events sequencing in the timeline, grounding their significance, continuity and change, cause and consequence, historical perspective-taking, the social and ethical dimension. Infographic timeline on the history of family foundation is seen as a result of the cognitive competences application through the research collaboration across different subject area fields. Linguistic competence skills are considerably improved via «mediation competences» (Pop, & Mazilescu, 2012, p. 4203) comprising identification and interpretation of topics, terminology, discourse structures, graphical and visual elements correspondence, retrieving, selecting, processing relevant information on the given topic, deploying search engines for data base, summarising text on paragraphs, extraction and paraphrasing, establishing translation equivalences, etc.

R. Thorp and A. Persson (2020) claim that a central idea here is “the quest for scientifically valid and verifiable accounts” and to train students into “becoming apt at applying an already stipulated method and specific way of thinking onto historical accounts” to evaluate the offered new product according to the established standards (p. 894). Therefore, the academic history education supposes effective application of the discipline methodology for assessing historical narrative validity.

An independent systematic review of a historical phenomenon, event or process, its
critical analysis through qualitative assessment of preconditions, development trends, cause-consequence effects, socio-ethical dimensions imply forming basic professional competences of the academic research in history and archaeology. The timeline visualization method represented as a student’s task answer in *Figure 5* reveals an applicable way to synthesize the content within multimodal operators at the project presentation stage.

*Figure 5: The timeline visualization method*

Problem-based teaching of a foreign language gives the students the possibility to learn how to apply practically previously acquired knowledge, skills and abilities, master the experience of creative activity, skills to self-organization, self-reflection and self-assessment, level up own motivation in the foreign language learning process.

The timeline visualization technique allows to simultaneously develop skills and abilities in the types of cognitive, communicative and creative competences: stimulates independent work on the practical application of the acquired knowledge; involves obtaining a professionally significant final product, which preparation, design and presentation requires forming communicative skills and abilities in the foreign language speech activity.

**Conclusions and suggestions for further research**
Multimodality task organizing principle is clearly envisaged perspective lead in the competency-based foreign language teaching methodology.

The students’ practical attempts of academic history discourse prove empirical claim-evidence hypothesizing that the model of historical thinking should be approached as a theoretical operationalization of the history-focused study of the foreign language that greatly contributes to the widening of students’ potential experiences and perceptions.

The e-learning educational and methodological complex is grounded in the present article as an informational educational resource used for the study of the systematically structured material of the discipline aimed at presenting, providing ongoing control, intermediate and final assessment, managing the students’ cognitive competences development in the process of implementing academic work program of the discipline. At the same time, the main goal of the e-learning educational and methodological complex design is seen to provide students with a set of educational methodologically systematized tasks for an independent individual study of the academic discipline.

The intensification of the educational process under the conditions of mixed learning increases the importance of the virtual multimedia environment in the process of knowledge acquisition due to the visualization of the content density of foreign language learning, which contributes to the enrichment of students’ competence skills in comprehensive mastery of abstract scientific concepts and categories.

The objective of further research is in a concrete practical development and implementation of the methodological premises outlined to the university foreign language curricula design in non-philology faculties.

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Методичні аспекти дисципліни «Перша іноземна мова»
для бакалаврів за спеціальністю «Історія та археологія»

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Анотація. Метою дослідження є методологічне обґрунтування специфічних видів іншомовної комунікативної компетентності студентів нефілологічного факультету, що вивчають дисципліну «Перша іноземна мова (англійська)» за освітньою програмою першого (бакалаврського) рівня спеціальності 0.32 Історія та археологія. Запропонована методологічна та концептуальна основа, викладена в дослідженні, спрямована на конкретне практичне застосування викладачами іноземних мов університетів на нефілологічних факультетах, розробниками навчальних програм, професіоналами, дослідниками чи практиками у галузі викладання іноземних мов. Авторська методологія, заснована на дидактичних і методичних засадах компетентнісно-орієнтованого навчання іноземних мов, практично представлена в розвідці як досвід викладачько-студентської співпраці, цілеспрямованого зміцнення когнітивних компетентностей засобами мозкового штурму, інтелектуального спілкування та розвитку дослідницьких навичок через розробку й упровадження формувального електронного навчально-методичного комплексу з дисципліни. Загальні історичні дослідження передусім зосереджені на концепції історичного мислення, що предметно специфікує такі ключові дослідницькі питання академічного історичного дискурсу, як історичне значення, першоджерельні свідчення, безперервність і зміна, причина і наслідок, історична перспектива, етнічний вимір. Фундаментальні смислотворчі аспекти історичних розвідок теоретично та емпірично обґрунтовують культурну зумовленість історичних знань, динамізм і відкритість для полеміки. У рамках концептуально-методологічної моделі це питання викликає значний науковий інтерес як з огляду дослідження професійних когнітивних компетентностей з історії та археології, так і щодо компетентнісно-орієнтованого навчання іноземних мов, усного й письмового дискурсу для спеціальних цілей. Прагматична компетенція охоплює дискурсивні стратегії організації і структурування загального й професійного або спеціалізованого дискурсу з точки зору його когерентності, когезії, тематичної організації, обґрунтованості, а також функціонально діяльнісно-набуті знання через реалізацію загальнокомунікативних або професійно-комунікативних компетентностей. З точки зору вивчення іноземних мов мультимодальний підхід чітко окреслюється як перспективна для подальших досліджень, складова
Ключові слова: компетентнісно-орієнтоване навчання, навчання іноземних мов, історичне мислення, методичний підхід, мультимодальність.

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