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DIDACTIC POTENTIAL OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR THE FORMATION OF SEPARATE COMPONENTS OF A PROFESSIONAL IMAGE¹

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Abstract. Traditionally, image is considered to be the result of interpersonal interaction and is conditioned by numerous components. Professional image as an integral part of professional competence and personality of a successful specialist in any field is the object of close attention and research for specialists from various fields. They all agree on its positive and even decisive importance for effective interaction with colleagues, positive perception from others, high productivity, self-confidence, etc. *Image* in general and *professional image* in particular became the object of comprehensive research in the 1990s. However, as the analysis of developments in this area shows, the problem of its effective building have not been developed in full yet. The article analyzes the concept of *image*, presents its retrospective analysis, origin, and development. The authors consider the relevance of building a positive professional image of a lawyer stipulated by objective socio-cultural processes. The results of a survey conducted to identify students' ideas about the components of a lawyer's image are also presented. Based on the analysis of psychological and pedagogical publications, the main components of the professional image of a lawyer are identified. Relevant conclusions are drawn about the lack of comprehensive models and technologies for its building up to date. The didactic potential of a foreign language for the building of individual components of a lawyer's professional image is revealed as well.

Keywords: professional image, lawyer, foreign language, professionally significant qualities of a lawyer, pedagogical technologies

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ДИДАКТИЧЕСКИЙ ПОТЕНЦИАЛ ИНОСТРАННОГО ЯЗЫКА ДЛЯ ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ ОТДЕЛЬНЫХ КОМПОНЕНТОВ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОГО ИМИДЖА

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Аннотация. Традиционно имидж рассматривается как результат межличностного взаимодействия и обусловлен многочисленными компонентами. Профессиональный имидж как неотъемлемая часть профессиональной компетентности и личности успешного специалиста любой сферы является объектом пристального внимания и исследования специалистов из разных областей. Все они едины во мнении о его положительном и даже решающем значении для эффективного взаимодействия с коллегами, позитивного восприятия со стороны окружающих, высокой производительности труда, уверенности в себе и т. д. Понятие *имидж* в целом и *профессиональный имидж* в частности стали объектом всестороннего исследования в 1990-е годы. Однако, как показывает анализ разработок в этой области, проблема формирования профессионального имиджа до сих пор остается не разработанной в полной мере. В статье анализируется понятие *имидж*, представлен его ретроспективный анализ, происхождение, становление и развитие. Авторы рассматривают актуальность формирования положительного профессионального имиджа юриста, что продиктовано объективными социокультурными процессами. Приведены результаты опроса, который проводился с целью выявления представлений студентов о составляющих имиджа юриста. На основе анализа психолого-педагогической литературы определены основные составляющие профессионального имиджа юриста и сделаны выводы об отсутствии всеобъемлющих моделей и технологий его формирования на сегодняшний день. Раскрывается дидактический потенциал иностранного языка для формирования отдельных компонентов профессионального имиджа юриста.

Ключевые слова: профессиональный имидж, юрист, иностранный язык, профессионально значимые качества юриста, педагогические технологии.

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Introduction

Labor market competition, social demand, client-centeredness and other social and cultural processes and trends set high requirements to specialists in all professional fields including both prospective and practicing lawyers. Professional competence, reputation and professional image of a lawyer come out on top. The professional's own idea of his image helps him demonstrate his best personal and business qualities, meet skill requirements and professional standards, satisfy his clients' demand, etc.

Studies show that about 30% of the respondents associate lawyer's image with a competent, honest, and principled person respecting laws, defending human rights, people's interests, etc. At the same time, about a quarter of the respondents associate lawyers with bribers, greedy, incompetent, ineffective, unscrupulous, dependent and corrupt people (Skabelina, 2012, p. 42).

Since the public's mind about the image of a modern lawyer remains rather contradictory today, the analysis of ways to make it positive or improve remains relevant today.

A survey was conducted to identify the students' ideas about a lawyer's professional image. 120 Law Faculty students of Ulyanovsk State University were asked to list ten components or qualities that can characterize the lawyer's professional image in their opinion. The analysis of responses made it possible to categorize the components of the lawyer's professional image proposed by the respondents into the following main groups:

1) personal qualities:

- leadership skills and volitional powers (goal commitment, self-confidence, determination, independence, etc.);
- business proficiency (diligence, adaptability, stress tolerance, impartiality, etc.);
- emotional skills (emotional stability, self-control, calmness, positive attitude to work, etc.);
- soft skills (decency, politeness, punctuality, commitment, consciousness, trustworthiness, fairness, honesty, tact, delicacy, tolerance, law-obedience, etc.);

2) professional qualities:

- analytical (flexible and logical thinking, productive memory, pragmatism, etc.);
- communicative (oratory skills, diplomacy, well-bred speech, eloquence, ability to establish contacts, clear articulation, etc.);

3) components of personal appearance (formal style, neat appearance, presentability, etc.);

4) knowledge in the field of current legislation, fundamentals of psychology, ethics of communication, professional ethics, legal literacy, etc.;

5) individual components: reputation, experience, broad outlook, erudition, intuition, charisma, business connections, customer base and referenceability, etc.

The survey results indicate that the students' ideas about the lawyer's professional image are insufficiently clear. The respondents mainly focused on personal and professionally significant qualities of lawyers. However, most researchers do not lay the main emphasis on them when analyzing the components of a lawyer's professional image. In addition, some respondents have included rather controversial components of a lawyer's image in this list. Among them: appearance, mannerism, acting skills, kindness, etc.

However, the overwhelming majority of respondents (76%) included the communicative component and its corresponding qualities in the list realizing their key role in the daily practice of a lawyer and consequently directly and indirectly affecting his professional image as a whole.

Methods

The methodological basis of the study is represented by the studies of Anderson, Headrick (1996), Daicoff (1997), Ladah (2019), Zacharias (2006) — about current views on a lawyer's professional image; V. D. Bragina, D. V. Demina, V. V. Ermolova, V. V. Ovsyannikova, L. N. Rozhina, L. B. Schneider, etc. — on the influence of professional image on a prospective specialist; Yu. V. Andreeva (2006), A. A. Biryukova (2004), M. G. Elagin (2005), E. V. Emelyanova (2004), O. A. Pikuleva (2014), L. M. Semenova (2009), etc. — about the role of professional image in the activities of specialists, etc.

The concept of *image* became the subject of close study for Russian researchers not so long ago — in the 1990s, and, as the analysis of the publications shows, the problem of building a professional image has not been fully worked out to this day. Image is the result of interpersonal interaction and is determined by social, psychological, communicative, organizational and many other patterns, the combination of which makes it possible to study the image of individual professions (Pevnaya, 2011, p. 39). Professional image also implies the integration of personal, professional, social and external characteristics (Shiman, 2015, p. 9).

The image can be formed both directly (based on impressions, observations, communication, interaction, etc.) and indirectly. The following main components of the professional image are generally distinguished:

- verbal (related to individual characteristics of the accuracy of information transmission and vocabulary use as well as the correctness of the construction of phrases, etc.);
- paraverbal (represented by the manner of individual speech: voice timbre, speech tempo and rhythm, etc.);
- non-verbal (gestures, facial expressions, poses, etc.);
- personal appearance (clothes, hairstyle, constitution, etc.);

- materialized (for example, business documentation);
- environmental (workplace, office, car, etc.).

Nowadays, building of a lawyer's professional image, relevant models and technologies remain, in our opinion, insufficiently developed. While studying psychological and pedagogical publications, the main components of the professional image of a lawyer were identified and analyzed. However, some of them, of course, cannot be built by means of pedagogical technologies. Foreign language as a means of building and developing a number of components of a lawyer's professional image were also subject to analysis. Let's take a closer look at some relevant points.

Results

Building a verbal image is becoming one of the most important issues for a lawyer. Since the legal profession involves regular interaction with people at different levels, public speaking, negotiations, etc., it is the verbal image that is mostly responsible for the success of communication.

Throughout the daily interpersonal communication, the lawyer is in need of obtaining relevant information, establishing confidential relations between communicants. The most effective form of communication is a dialogue which is actually based on the ability to put questions. It's necessary to understand what types of questions there exist, to be capable of putting them correctly, in English as well.

There are closed questions which require a short or single-word answer, often *yes* or *no*: *Can you comment on the episode?* In English they correspond to General questions which begin with auxiliary verbs: *Has the plaintiff brought the suit against the defendant?* Obviously, this type of questions is nonproductive in opening up relations.

Tag questions imply short answers: *You don't have a permanent source of income, do you? — Yes, I do.*

Questions to the subject are also rather short: *What consists of representatives from federal entities in the Russian Federation? — The State Duma.*

To open up relations one should use open-ended questions which require a complete answer enabling a person to collect information about topics he/she may not have considered: *What prompted you to get into the driving seat?* Special/Wh-questions in English can also be prompting.: *What is the Prime Minister generally responsible for in the Russian Federation?* Such questions encourage full, meaningful answers based on the respondents' knowledge and perception.

Alternative questions by their nature presuppose an alternative which creates a thought-provoking situation making a person take decisions: *Does criminal or civil law regulate the apprehension? Did he withdraw money on Friday or on Saturday?*

However, in the framework of legal proceedings, this type of issue is sometimes subject to certain restrictions in order to avoid hindering the addressee's expressed free will.

Questions with a preamble can impel a person to a certain action or take a necessary decision and therefore such questions are crucial in communication: *The use of force may be justified for the purposes of self-defense, protection of other persons, protection of property, law enforcement. Are you sure of the legitimacy of your actions?* Consider one more example: *All the documents were sent to you a week ago. Have you managed to analyze them?*

Questions with a preamble may exert influence on the interlocutor and that's why such questions are also of limited use in legal matters. In the course of profession-related education students are asked to come up with various dialogues within the curriculum. It helps to develop practical skills of putting all types of questions due to different purposes.

In fact, there are so called "I-statements" which represent a way of verbal expression of emotions in tense situations. "I-statements" involve awareness of the person's own responsibility for making decisions and in this case they are opposed to "You-statements" which imply negative assessment of someone's actions or words. To develop effective cooperation, we suggest doing the following exercise:

1. *Paraphrase the following evaluative "You-statements" into neutral "I-statements".*

1) *You make me angry!* — Possible answer: *When this happens, I feel anxious and embarrassed!*

2) *You aren't listening to me!* — Possible answer: *I feel more satisfied when I get some feedback during the conversation.*

3) *You look slovenly!* — Possible answer: *I appreciate neatness in everything.*

2. *Paraphrase the following critical and aggressive statements using proper techniques for responding to critics and aggressive behavior.*

1) *You have fulfilled the task below standards as usual!* (Possible answer: *Where have I made mistakes in particular?* — clarifying the details);

2) *There are a lot of contradictory facts in your report!* (Possible answer: *You are right! It makes me really anxious.* — agreeing to criticism);

3) *I don't like the way you have fulfilled the task!* (Possible answer: *I believe my performance is not so bad. But as far as I understood you disagree with me and I would like to find out the reasons of this negative assessment.* — discussing a controversial point) and so on.

As practice shows, the image of the lawyer can be perceived negatively which is due to some individual features of his character and nerves. However, there is a number of techniques to offset the flaws and show off better qualities.

Let's take a situation when a lawyer could not cope with an outburst of emotions. In this case the task can be formulated as follows: *Imagine a situation when*

you failed to control your emotions during the court session. Provide your own ideas to deal with the problem.

To justify himself a person should apologize for his behavior proving to everyone that he is a responsible and sincere man. He may say the following: *I can't help but take everything to heart; I can't stay calm when facing injustice.*

When getting acquainted with the peculiarities of business correspondence in general and legal correspondence in particular one should pay attention to standard opening clichés like: *This is to inform you that ... ; With reference to the session on March 28, 2019, ...; We find it necessary to remind you that ... ;* as well as closing clichés like: *In case of any questions, do not hesitate to contact us; Attached please find all the documents mentioned above; Thank you beforehand for your cooperation, etc.*

In the course of practical studies, the students are offered to analyze, translate and write letters based on a range of topics within their specialty.

When teaching a foreign language to law students it is necessary to draw their attention to Latin borrowings which are often used in legal documents, both in Russian and in English: *bona fide(s)* — in good faith; *corpus delicti* — the real proof that a crime has been committed; *de facto* — taken as a matter of fact, even though the legal status may not be certain ; *inter alia* — among, in addition to other things; and others.

To study these lexical units there is some vocabulary practice including matching exercises as in the example: *Match the meanings on the left with the Latin words and expressions on the right.*

In addition, students may be required either to make up sentences of their own to illustrate these expressions or to find some examples in the source material, e.g.: *She demands possession of the house and custody of the children inter alia.*

Besides, legal documents such as contracts and formal letters often contain reference words, which are not common in other types of correspondence. Such words are mostly related to time reference (*heretofore*), location (*hereinafter*), result (*hereby*) in the framework of the document.

To drill such vocabulary, it's useful to do substitution exercises: *Complete sentences with appropriate words from the box. To help you, each sentence is followed by an explanation in italics of the function of the missing word.*

Could you explain why the interest rate is quoted as 17 % on the final page of the agreement you sent us, but as 15 %. (listed or mentioned earlier in a document). Answer: thereinbefore.

In order to form and develop the non-verbal component of the professional image, the following practical tasks can be offered:

Use nonverbal means to express openness, communicability and readiness for cooperation. As a rule, people demonstrate trust, consent, goodwill and psychological comfort by open posture, with palms up, arms and legs stretched. (Shiman, 2015, p. 30);

- *demonstrate lack of respect and attention towards your interlocutor* (rolling one's eyes, sighing heavily, looking aside, throwing the body back);
- *express your disagreement with the opponent*. Indeed, disagreement, distrust, criticism and opposition are expressed by closed posture, with arms folded (the so-called "Napoleonic posture", or both hands rested on the chin (Shiman, 2015, pp. 29–30);
- *show undiminishing interest*. Your partner can manifest interest by focusing his eyes on you or "rounding" them, mirroring his behavior, gestures, body and hands position and so on.

The paraverbal element consists of speech peculiarities — its tempo, rhythm and other characteristics. Therefore, it seems useful for students to practise in a language lab, listening to audio recording of their speeches, correcting phonetic and intonation errors. Such work contributes to shaping and developing skills of auditory self-control, listening comprehension, speaking which are indispensable for a lawyer.

Correct pronunciation is no less important for a lawyer. It should conform to phonetic standards of a native or foreign language. Tongue twisters prove useful for a clear articulation, e.g. *The thirty-three thieves thought that they thrilled the throne throughout Thursday; There those thousand thinkers were thinking how did the other three thieves go through*. One can also practice the pronunciation of separate words and phrases: *pirates' private property, circumstances and consequences, etc.*

Conclusion

Thus, our research made it possible to identify and analyze the elements of the professional image of a lawyer and to organize practical activities in order to shape it effectively.

A complex of exercises aimed at making up dialogues, putting questions of different types, substituting and transforming, doing business and legal correspondence proved effective in shaping and further developing verbal image of a lawyer.

In shaping the paraverbal element of a lawyer's image it's worth considering the language lab which opens up opportunities for listening comprehension, phonetic correctness and so on.

Various practices and techniques can help shape the nonverbal element of the lawyer's image, develop nonverbal skills and abilities (postures, gestures, facial expression).

It should be taken into account that shaping some of the elements of a lawyer's professional image is beyond the scope of pedagogical studies in general and foreign language studies in particular. Nevertheless, it's worth saying that they are valuable for shaping some elements of a lawyer's image. The points under discussion were analyzed in earlier works of the authors (Uskova, 2016; Uskova, Kovardakova, 2016; Uskova, Krashennnikova, 2018; Uskova, Krashennnikova, 2016).

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