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**WORKING ON COMPLEX SENTENCES DURING UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE  
CLASSES FOR PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES AS A COMPONENT OF THE  
PROCESS OF FORMING STUDENTS' PUNCTUATION COMPETENCE**

**O. A. Hordienko\***

*During Ukrainian language classes for professional purposes, the teacher's main attention is focused on the task of developing students' communicative competence, in particular, language and speech as its components. Modern innovative approaches are focused on the formation of practical skills and abilities in students, in particular, spelling. The article analyzes the problem of improving students' punctuation competence in practical classes for professional purposes in the process of working on complex sentences and proposes a set of exercises aimed at updating students' abilities to distinguish between simple and complex sentences and to correctly use punctuation marks in complex sentences. It is noted that in the process of language education of higher education students, more attention is paid to the formation of spelling skills and abilities in them, while the formation of students' punctuation competence may remain outside the teacher's attention. Thus, higher education seekers cannot always explain the choice of punctuation marks and justify their use, give an appropriate rule, explain the structure and determine the type of sentence, as well as the elements that complicate it, thereby justifying the use of punctuation marks due to the complexity of linguistic phenomena of syntax and insufficient attention to this aspect of work at school and higher education institutions. At the same time, when writing term and diploma papers, articles, creative works, higher education students try to use sentences of various meanings, including complex ones, but are not always sure which punctuation marks to use. The purpose of the article is to consider the main issues of working on complex sentences as a means of forming punctuation competence of higher education students in the process of conducting practical classes in the Ukrainian language for professional purposes, which is especially relevant for modern methods in the context of improving the language and speech competence of bachelors. The exercises for observing language phenomena, analyzing syntactic units, and improving students' skills in the correct use of complex sentences are described in detail. The results obtained are briefly summarized, and it is recommended to introduce analytical, constructive, and creative exercises into the educational process in Ukrainian language classes for professional purposes. Prospects for further research in the outlined area are also identified. The materials of the article can be used to improve the methods of teaching the Ukrainian language for professional purposes as a component of training future bachelors of various profiles.*

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**Keywords:** *Ukrainian language for professional purposes, higher education students, syntax, punctuation, punctuation marks, complex sentences, analytical, constructive and creative exercises.*

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## РОБОТА НАД СКЛАДНИМ РЕЧЕННЯМ НА ЗАНЯТТЯХ З УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЗА ПРОФЕСІЙНИМ СПРЯМУВАННЯМ ЯК СКЛАДОВА ПРОЦЕСУ ФОРМУВАННЯ ПУНКТУАЦІЙНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ СТУДЕНТІВ

**О. А. Гордієнко**

На заняттях з української мови за професійним спрямуванням основна увага викладача зосереджена на завданні розвитку комунікативної компетентності студентів, зокрема, мовної і мовленнєвої як її складових. Сучасні інноваційні підходи зорієнтовані на формування практичних умінь і навичок у здобувачів освіти, зокрема, правописних. У статті проаналізовано проблему вдосконалення пунктуаційної компетентності студентів на практичних заняттях з української мови за професійним спрямуванням у процесі роботи над складними реченнями, запропоновано комплекс вправ, спрямованих на актуалізацію умінь у студентів розрізняти прості і складні речення, правильно використовувати розділові знаки в складних реченнях. Зазначається, що у процесі мовної освіти здобувачів вищої освіти більше уваги звертається на формування в них орфографічних умінь і навичок, водночас поза увагою викладача може залишатися формування пунктуаційної компетентності студентів. Вони не завжди можуть пояснити вибір розділових знаків та обґрунтувати їх застосування, навести доречне правило, пояснити структуру та визначити тип речення, а також елементи, що його ускладнюють, тим самим обґрунтувати постановку розділових знаків. Причиною цього є складність мовних явищ синтаксису та недостатня увага до цього аспекту роботи в школі та закладі вищої освіти. Водночас під час написання курсових та дипломних робіт, статей, творчих робіт здобувачі вищої освіти намагаються використовувати різноманітні за значенням речення, в тому числі і складні, але не завжди впевнені, які розділові знаки використовувати. Мета статті – розглянути основні питання роботи над складними реченнями як засобу формування пунктуаційної компетентності здобувачів вищої освіти у процесі проведення практичних занять з української мови за професійним спрямуванням, що є особливо актуальним для сучасної методики у контексті вдосконалення мовно-мовленнєвої компетентності бакалаврів. Детально описано вправи для спостереження за мовними явищами, аналізу синтаксичних одиниць, вдосконалення умінь і навичок у студентів щодо правильного використання складних речень. Коротко узагальнено отримані результати, рекомендовано впроваджувати в освітній процес на заняттях з української мови за професійним спрямуванням вправи аналітичні, конструктивні та творчі. Також визначено перспективи подальших досліджень в окресленій площині. Матеріали статті можуть бути використані для вдосконалення методик навчання української мови за професійним спрямуванням як складової підготовки майбутніх бакалаврів різних профілів.

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**Ключові слова:** українська мова за професійним спрямуванням, здобувачі вищої освіти, синтаксис, пунктуація, розділові знаки, складні речення, аналітичні, конструктивні та творчі вправи.

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**Introduction of the issue.** One of the priority areas of restructuring language teaching technologies in a modern higher education institution is the mastery of various types of speech activity and the formation of professional language competence in higher education seekers since language is not only a subject of study, but also a tool of cognition, a means of intellectual development.

Analysis of scientific and methodological research has shown that in the theory and practice of teaching the Ukrainian language, extensive experience has been accumulated, which constitutes a reliable basis for work on the formation of the Ukrainian-speaking personality of a

future specialist. Teaching the Ukrainian language for professional purposes is mostly limited to improving the recipients' spelling skills and abilities, as well as the ability to compose business papers and edit texts. At the same time, little attention is paid to practical issues of developing punctuation competence, improving students' punctuation skills during the Ukrainian language classes, in particular, in complex sentences.

Punctuation is an important component of the spelling competence of future specialists.

If the spelling of a word can be checked on the Internet by entering it in the search of many online dictionaries, then the

punctuation mark cannot be checked in such a quick way; thus, you need to find and read the rule in a textbook or "Ukrainian Spelling", analyze similar examples, understand the syntactic structure, etc. [17].

Students experience difficulties when taking notes, summarizing scientific and educational texts, constructing their own written texts for public speeches, when writing term papers and diploma theses. Therefore, the practical aspect of the problem of forming Ukrainian-language communicative competence of students of higher education institutions who are obtaining a bachelor's degree improving punctuation skills in the process of working on a complex sentence, requires attention, which determined the choice of the topic of the article.

A pilot study of the level of formation of punctuation competence of higher education seekers, conducted among 1st year students at Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University during the 2024-2025 academic year, showed that only 15% of respondents demonstrated a high level of formation of punctuation competence; 60% of respondents showed an average level and 25% – low level of formation of corresponding skills. Higher education seekers may experience difficulties in selecting punctuation marks and explaining their use, determining sentence types, elements that complicate it. The reason for this is the complexity of language phenomena and insufficient attention to this aspect of work in school and higher education institutions [5: 82].

**Current state of the issue.** In domestic vocational education, a certain tradition of a comprehensive approach to the training of future specialists has developed, which is based on the humanization of the educational process.

The problems of forming the communicative competence of pupils and students on the basis of modern competence-based, text-centric, communicative-activity, personality-oriented, functional-stylistic approaches were addressed by such linguists as F. Batsevych, N. Babych, N. Zagnitko, etc. [1; 4]; in linguodidacts the above-mentioned

issue were studied by A. Aleksyuk, Z. Bakum, O. Bilyaev, E. Holoborodko, T. Donchenko, O. Zabolotska, O. Kucheruk, L. Mamchur, V. Melnychayko, S. Omelchuk, M. Pentyliuk, I. Popovych, T. Symonenko, N. Totska, etc. [2; 11].

The problem of studying a complex sentence was studied by both theorists and practical teachers is reviewed by S. Omelchuk, K. Plysko, V. Sergienko [9; 10; 14]. The syntax of a complex sentence and the methodology of its teaching in various aspects were studied by such famous scientists as P. Dudyk, A. Zagnitko, N. Ivanytska, S. Karaman, K. Shulzhuk and others [20].

Certain aspects of the problem of speech development of future specialists were considered by such linguodidacts as Z. Bakum, O. Goroshkina, L. Palamar, M. Pentylyuk, O. Semenog, L. Shiyanyuk and others. [19]. The problems of punctuation competence of students were paid attention to by N. Kovalchuk, O. Mezhev, I. Savchenko, L. Segin, V. Sydorenko, L. Stoyan [6; 7; 12; 13; 15; 16].

Thus, the mentioned problem and its related issues remain in the focus of attention of scientists and have important practical significance. After all, future bachelors who prepare scientific projects, articles, term papers and bachelor's theses must correctly use complex sentences in the process of developing their own style of expression [8].

**Aim of the research** is to consider the main issues of working on complex sentences as a means of forming punctuation competence of higher education seekers in the process of conducting practical classes in the Ukrainian language for professional purposes, which is especially relevant for modern methodology in the context of improving the linguistic and speech competence of bachelors.

**Results and discussion.** Studying a complex sentence is a crucial stage in the process of formation of punctuation skills in higher education students, which makes it possible to generalize knowledge from all other sections of linguistics, repeat and deepen them. Students also

get the opportunity to improve their communicative skills, because a complex sentence concentrates the entire complex of language tools necessary for expressing thought.

To organize the study of the new on the basis of what has been learned is the main goal of Ukrainian language classes for professional purposes. Achieving this goal is based on the use of students' skills and experience to learn the new. "To tie to the new, already firmly learned" K. Ushynskyi pointed out, "everything new that is learned is a pedagogical rule on which the success of learning mainly depends"[18: 391-392].

In implementing the process of merging the new with the already learned, the method of comparison can be used. Thus, comparison is the basis of learning: we learn everything by looking for common features of objects or phenomena and their differences.

Part of a Ukrainian language lesson for professional purposes can be devoted to considering punctuation in a complex sentence, when students work on improving punctuation skills and abilities.

The first stage in working on a complex sentence can be the "conceptual stage", that is, the stage of actualization of a grammatical concept. Everything new is a natural continuation of the previous one, therefore its conscious perception is possible only if they know the previously studied material. The teacher, preparing students to perceive the new, must determine:

1) What do students know about this topic or in connection with this topic.

2) What should students remember, what should be shown to them in a new aspect.

3) What is new compared to what has been studied, students should learn.

4) What is the main, essential thing in the new material; what is difficult and what is easy.

5) What material will be selected for comparison.

6) The path from analysis to generalization of the results of observations.

7) Formulation of conclusions to which the teacher will lead students.

8) The degree of independence of students in working on the new, problem questions.

Students already possess certain level of knowledge about morphology, spelling, and syntax. To clarify and consciously update knowledge about a complex sentence, its structure, semantic and grammatical features, connective and unconjugated, complex and compound sentences, the teacher suggests that students analyze texts from which we identify groups of sentences, since mechanical, isolated assimilation of any language unit inhibits associative thinking, does not develop creative abilities; the text is of great importance as a means of cognition of language phenomena, a condition for intellectual growth and development of speech skills [3].

Thus, the teacher suggests comparing two groups of sentences and saying what, in their opinion, is the difference between the excerpts presented in the first and second columns of the table. Such an analysis of language phenomena contributes to the development of students' skills of systemic analysis and mastery of the norms of the Ukrainian literary language.

**Complex and simple sentences**

<b>Complex sentences</b>	<b>Simple sentences</b>
<p>1. Писанка Житомирського Полісся не була пишно орнаментована, але в ній простежується вплив мотивів поліських вишиванок: "у колосок", "у соняхи", "у дубовий лист", "у кривульку". Наші пращури вірили, що писанка має магічну силу, яка захищає людину від усього злого.</p>	<p>1. Писанка Житомирського Полісся не була пишно орнаментована. В ній простежується вплив мотивів поліських вишиванок: "у колосок", "у соняхи", "у дубовий лист", "у кривульку". Наші пращури вірили. Писанка має магічну силу. Вона захищає людину від усього злого.</p>
<p>2. Приміщення, де зберігали збіжжя, мало назву клітень або житні. Ці давньоруські терміни зустрічаємо в назвах Клітня, Клітчин, Клітище, Житинці, які є сучасними топонімами.</p>	<p>2. Приміщення мали назву клітень або житні. Там зберігали збіжжя. Ці давньоруські терміни зустрічаємо в назвах Клітня, Клітчин, Клітище, Житинці. Вони є сучасними топонімами.</p>

Students will conclude that the difference lies in the design of sentences: in the first passage there are complex sentences, and in the second – simple ones. A complex sentence, unlike a simple one, makes it possible to show that all the events described by the author are closely interconnected, form a single whole. There is no such close connection between individual simple sentences as in a complex one. The connection between the parts of a complex sentence is emphasized by intonation, conjunctions (connecting words).

Next, we approach the formulation of the definition: a complex sentence is a sentence that consists of two or more simple sentences (parts). A complex sentence is a single whole in semantic, grammatical and intonational relations.

Having determined the essential features of a complex sentence, the teacher gives the students the following task: to find out by observing the text what role the conjunctions play.

1. Черешня біла зацвіла, і ясніше стало в світі. 2. Заснув на пахучому сіні, і волошки наснилися сині (Maria Pavlenko).

2. Коли черешня біла зацвіла, ясніше стало в світі. Як заснув на пахучому сіні, то волошки наснилися сині.

3. Черешня біла зацвіла – ясніше стало в світі. 2. Заснув на пахучому сіні

– волошки наснилися сині (Maria Pavlenko).

4. З країв південних на Полісся весна вже птахів посила, і гуси гелгають із висі, веслюють помахом крила (M. Klymenko).

Reading and analyzing the first complex sentence leads students to the following conclusion: its two parts are used as independent elements, since they are homogeneous, equal; this is a complex sentence, thus a comma is placed between its parts. A clear reading of the second complex sentence shows that its first part is not complete, therefore it needs to be continued. The conclusion is made that this is a complex sentence, because its parts are combined in such a way that one part depends on the other. Unlike the first two complex sentences, the third is formed without conjunctions, therefore it is unconjunctive. In them, punctuation marks act as markers of syntactic meanings, therefore changing the punctuation mark determines a different nature of semantic (logical) relations.

Thus, students actualize the concept of a simple and complex sentence, as well as the connective and unconjunctive formations within the complex sentences, with ordinal and subordinating conjunction, main and subordinate (dependent) clauses. Knowledge of syntax is indispensable here, and therefore the

teacher must help students actualize the syntactic competencies acquired in the school course of the Ukrainian language by selecting appropriate didactic material - namely, texts of different styles with all types of simple and complex sentences. Their expressive intonation and syntactic and punctuation analysis will contribute to the proper assimilation of punctuation norms. Knowledge of syntax is closely related to the consolidation and strengthening of conscious punctuation literacy, therefore, students improve their skills and abilities to correctly place punctuation marks [1: 45]. To improve punctuation skills and abilities, it is necessary to perform a significant number of training exercises that are carried out in a certain system, in compliance with certain didactic requirements. The exercises are divided into three groups: 1) analytical; 2) constructive; 3) creative.

The purpose of the first type of exercise is to train students in independently recognizing a linguistic phenomenon among others, as well as to develop ability to identify its essential features.

**Exercise example.** Write out simple and complex sentences separately, underline grammatical clauses. Read the sentences given with correct intonation and explain punctuation marks. Such exercises can be offered to students to perform in small groups.

1. Тріщи не тріщи, а вже минули Водохрещі. 2. На Великдень перший раз кує зозуля. 3. Від весняного Миколи до літа двадцять приморозків. 4. З країв південних на Полісся весна вже птахів посила, і гуси гелготять із висі, веслюють помахом крила (М. Клутенко). 5. За Різдом наступало друге свято, що його називали в народі днем святого Василя, або старий Новий рік. 6. О горе тим рукам, що звикли у неволі носити кайдани ржаві і важкі (Lesia Ukrainka). 7. Вже червоніють помідори і ходить осінь по траві (М. Rylskyi).

Another possible variant of exercises: write down the following sentences, placing punctuation marks, justifying your choice.

1. Мова то серце народу гине мова гине народ (Іван Огієнко). 2. Не лише в людей немає страху щовесни в Народицькі краї повертають нерозумні птахиластівки, бусли і солов'ї (М. Нукопчук). 3. Задумливий поліський краєвид он марить чарами прадавними болото (V. Shlinchak). 4. Пролягли тумани білі рушниками затужила пісня у душі моїй (I. Redchyts). 5. Побережіть красу вона у всьому в природі, в поведінці, у словах (V. Kryshchenko).

The next stage is the performance of exercises of a constructive nature. These exercises are associated with various transformations, restructuring syntactic units, in particular, tasks for editing texts with syntactic and punctuation errors. Students perform such exercises with interest in pairs.

**Exercise example.** Make complex sentences using the given simple ones using the reference (Polissia folk proverbs):

1. У страху очі великі... 2. Очі їли б... 3. Ворог до мене з рогами... 4. Живе кіт і собака... 5. Близько видати... 6. Літа йдуть... 7. Кінь не боїться біжі...

Довідка. Руки роблять. Душа не приймає. Я до нього – з пирогами. У них житка (життя) не однака. Далеко дибати. Роки стоять. Хоче з'їжі.

**Alternative exercise example.** Replace the given complex sentences with different types of connections with unconjunctions, replace them by placing the appropriate punctuation marks, explaining their use. Read the original and constructed sentences in pairs, using the correct intonation patterns. Did you feel the difference? What is it?

1. Ще порипує сніг ще скриплять ясени та зі стріх капотить на відлигу (V. Hraboskyi). 2. Ліс схожий на малюка, що росте й могутніше, коли поруч із ним добра людина, але він хиріє й немічніє, якщо підступає до нього щось несите й заздрісне (М. Kyrylchuk). 3. Зорі тремтіли зовсім поряд, і їх можна було дістати рукою, а коли з-за хмарки вигулькнув місяць, берези засвітились біло-біло, розвиднілось, як удень (М. Prylutskyi).

The final stage of the systemic work on complex syntactic constructions is the

use of corresponding structures by students in their own oral and written speech. This is a task to create their own statements on socio-cultural and professional topics, in particular reports, public speeches, essays, business papers with the correct arrangement and explanation of punctuation marks. Such exercises are called creative, because they teach higher education seekers to freely use language material. Their purpose is to develop students' language culture, activate what has been learned, develop stylistic and punctuation skills. For example, you can offer students the chance to write an essay using one of the given beginnings and then organize a competition for the best creative work.

1. *Не зберігся до наших днів будинок, у якому народився Іван Огієнко, не збереглася і Воскресенська церква, де батьки охрестили наймолодшого з чотирьох дітей, та збереглася людська пам'ять про нашого видатного земляка.*

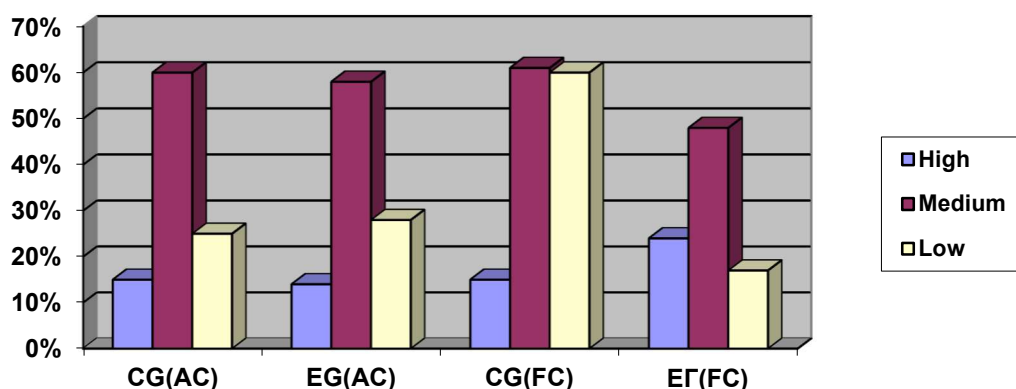
2. *Ніде в світі нема стільки вишиваних рушників, як в Україні.*

3. *Щоб краще зрозуміти велич історичної ролі Тараса Шевченка, потрібно пригадати, які трагічні часи своєї історії переживала в середині XIX сторіччя Україна, її національна культура та мова.*

4. *Когось тривоги підитовхують до того, щоб зробити життя стабільнішим і комфортнішим, інші можуть потрапити в пекло розпачу та безнадійності.*

Thus, we can conclude that the above-mentioned toolkit stimulates positive results and provides meaningful impact on the development of language-communicative and punctuation competence of students. Comparison of groups where special exercises for working on punctuation in complex

sentences were actively implemented and where standard educational programmes were used indicates their effectiveness. The level of development of punctuation skills, general speech culture and knowledge in students of groups in which these types of exercises were implemented is higher than in those groups where classes were held traditionally. After completing the set of exercises, higher education seekers feel more confident in the selection of punctuation marks, are able to explain their use, are better oriented in determining the types of sentences and elements that complicate them. 90 first-year students of non-philological specialties took part in the formative experiment. Control (CG) and experimental groups (EG) were selected according to the results of the ascertaining cut (AC), students of both groups had approximately the same level of development of punctuation competence. In the CG, classes were organized according to the working curriculum of the course "Ukrainian Language for Professional Purposes", recommended for non-philological specialties of the Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, in the EG – using a set of special exercises based on a program with appropriate methodological support. To check the effectiveness of the developed set of exercises and the level of development of punctuation competence of future bachelors, an ascertainment (AC) and a final cut (FC) were conducted. The criteria for effectiveness and the levels of development of punctuation competence of students were developed. Indicators of the levels of development of the specified competence of CG and EG students after training on the experimental set of exercises are presented in Figure 1.



**Fig. 1. Levels of development of punctuation competence of EG and CG students, revealed during the ascertaining and forming stages of the experiment (assertive cut (AC) and final cut (FC))**

(Diagram legend: CG – control group, EG – experimental group, AC – assertive cut, FC – final cut).

As can be seen from the diagram, 15% of the CG and 35% of the EG were identified as individuals with a high level of punctuation competence, 60% and 58% of the students had an average level of formation of punctuation competence, and 25% of the CG and 12% of the EG had a low level of formation of punctuation competence. Thus, the data of the formative experiment showed that the level of punctuation competence of students in the experimental groups significantly improved, while it remained almost unchanged for students in the control groups. The students demonstrated perfect command of the punctuation norms of the literary language, were able to justify the choice of punctuation marks, determine the type of sentence, and correctly construct syntactic constructions. Thus, the results obtained of the experiment demonstrated the effectiveness of the proposed set of exercises for the development of punctuation competence of higher education applicants.

**Conclusions and research perspectives.** Summarizing the above, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The work on complex syntactic constructions has the goal of directing students to use the corresponding language units in their own speech;
2. Special exercises, which are based

on the techniques of observation of language material and comparison of language units, help to make learning more effective, consistent and systematic;

3. The data of the formative experiment showed that the level of development of punctuation competence of students in the experimental groups significantly improved, while it almost did not change in students in the control groups. Students in the experimental groups demonstrated perfect mastery of the punctuation norms of the literary language, were able to justify the choice of punctuation marks, determine the type of sentence, and correctly build syntactic constructions;

4. The results obtained of the experiment showed the effectiveness of the proposed set of exercises for the development of punctuation competence of higher education seekers.

The conducted study does not exhaust all aspects of the problem. Further research is required to investigate the problem of preparing students to conduct punctuation analysis of sentences in order to improve punctuation skills, and may also cover a wider range of modern approaches to the formation of competencies of higher education students who are able to solve complex professional tasks using linguistic communication; determining the place of linguistic and speech competencies as a result of professional training of future specialists. Successful resolution of the

above issues will allow building a more advanced system of studying the main issues of syntax and punctuation in Ukrainian language classes for

professional purposes, which will be an important step in ensuring the quality of higher education.

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