



METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING COMPENSATORY COMPETENCE IN STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS OF TEACHING GERMAN AS A SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE

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Annotation: *This article discusses the development of compensatory competence in students while learning German as a second foreign language. It focuses on the importance of helping learners overcome language difficulties by using various communication strategies. The study highlights the role of teaching methods and classroom activities in supporting students to express their ideas despite limited language knowledge. The article concludes that developing compensatory competence improves students' confidence and effectiveness in communication.*

Key words: *Compensatory competence, German as a second foreign language, language learning strategies, communicative competence, multilingual education, teaching methodology, classroom interaction, language skills development.*

In the context of modern multilingual education, the role of a second foreign language has become increasingly significant. Teaching German as a second foreign language presents specific challenges, as students already possess experience in learning at least one other foreign language, most commonly English. This prior knowledge can both facilitate and hinder the learning process. On the one hand, students benefit from developed language learning strategies; on the other hand, they may experience interference, limited vocabulary, or gaps in grammatical knowledge. In such situations, the development of compensatory competence becomes especially important. Compensatory competence is generally understood as the ability to overcome communication difficulties by using available linguistic and non-linguistic resources. According to Michael Canale and Merrill Swain¹,

communicative competence includes strategic components that allow learners to maintain communication even when their language knowledge is incomplete idea is further supported by Stephen Krashen², who emphasizes that meaningful communication plays a key role in language acquisition, even if learners make errors or lack certain structures.

In the process of learning German as a second foreign language, students frequently encounter situations where they cannot express their thoughts directly due to limited vocabulary or unfamiliar grammar. In such cases, compensatory strategies become essential. These strategies may include paraphrasing, using synonyms, code-switching, asking for clarification, or relying on gestures and facial expressions. As noted by Rebecca Oxford³, effective language learners actively use strategies to compensate for gaps in their knowledge and to ensure successful communication.

From a methodological perspective, the development of compensatory competence should be integrated into classroom activities. Teachers play a crucial role in creating an environment where students feel comfortable experimenting with language and making mistakes. Communicative tasks such as role-plays, discussions, and problem-solving activities are particularly effective in this regard. These activities simulate real-life situations and encourage students to use all available resources to convey meaning. According to Jack C. Richards⁴, communicative language teaching focuses on fluency and interaction, which naturally promotes the use of compensatory strategies.

Another important factor is the influence of previously learned languages.

Students often transfer knowledge from their first foreign language (usually English) when learning German. While this transfer can be helpful, it may also lead to errors or misunderstandings. Therefore, teachers should guide students in using their existing knowledge consciously and effectively. Raising awareness of

similarities and differences between languages can support the development of flexible communication skills.

In addition, the use of authentic materials and real-life communication scenarios significantly contributes to the formation of compensatory competence. When students are exposed to natural language input, they learn to cope with incomplete understanding and to infer meaning from context. This process strengthens their ability to adapt to unpredictable communication situations.

Conclusion.

In summary, the acquisition of German as a second foreign language is a complex, multidimensional process that transcends the mere memorization of syntax and lexicon. As this analysis has demonstrated, the presence of a prior linguistic foundation—most notably English—acts as a double-edged sword, offering both a strategic bridge and a source of cognitive interference. In this intricate educational landscape, compensatory competence emerges not merely as a survival mechanism for beginners, but as a vital pillar of communicative fluency and learner autonomy.

The integration of compensatory strategies—such as circumlocution, code-switching, and non-linguistic signaling—allows students to bypass the "affective filter" and engage in meaningful interaction despite their linguistic

limitations. By fostering an environment that prioritizes communicative intent over formal perfection, educators empower learners to view gaps in their knowledge not as failures, but as opportunities for creative problem-solving. This shift in perspective is essential in modern multilingual pedagogy, where the goal is to develop flexible, resilient communicators capable of navigating real-world unpredictability.

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