

**Popova N. O., Petrova O. B.** *English for law university students at the epoch of global cultural and professional...*



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## **ENGLISH FOR LAW UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AT THE EPOCH OF GLOBAL CULTURAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION**

*The article describes peculiarities of teaching English for specific purposes to the law university students under conditions of globalized English-medium communication. Specificity of legal-related activity, which is mostly connected with communication with people, accentuates importance of communicative professional competence and its component – English communicative professional competence. Communicative approach provides simulation of real activities, the skilled teacher should maintain classroom communication stimulating interlocutors to response, to act in the imposed professional situations promoting solution of the cognitive tasks associated with the law subject-matters.*

**Keywords:** English for specific purposes; competence approach; law university students; globalization.

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**Англійський мов для студентів юридического університета в епоху глобальної культурної і професіональної комунікації**

*Аналізується вплив сучасного статусу англійської мови як засобу глобальної комунікації на вивчення іноземної мови в неязыковых вузах, в частині студентами юридического університета. Підкреслюється значення для сучасного спеціаліста правової сфери володіння англійською мовою. Специфіка юридических спеціальностей передбачає спілкування, що визначає важливість комунікативної професіональної компетенції, особливо іноязычної професіональної компетенції. Майбутня спеціальність студента юридического університета визначає зміст навчання англійській мові для спеціальних цілей в рамках сучасного компетентного підходу.*

**Ключові слова:** англійський мов для спеціальних цілей; компетентний підхід; студенти юридического університета; глобалізація.

**Introduction.** Denomination ‘English as a global language, which emerged in the last decade of the 20th century, has become common nowadays, thus we may state global transformations in the world’s perception of English language in cultural and professional communication, in particular, in professional development, research and training. Impacts and issues of these transformations require their thorough description and analysis from the point of view of training English for non-native speakers. It is topical, in particular, to be studied in relation to the non-language university students, considering their future work prospects and reflected motivation in acquiring English as a foreign language within the scope of their career priorities and professional appropriateness. General tendencies should be specified below for such kind of trainees, in particular, for the law university students, as teaching them has to correlate with the globalized world reality and English as a foreign language methodology advances.

**Literature review and formulation of the problems.** Propagation of English as international communication medium, reaching the level of the world’s common language, was repeatedly emphasized and grounded, in particular, by scholars, researchers and other experts in English as a foreign language training. Thus, English in a changing world was characterized as a global language by D. Crystal, R.W. Bailey, D. Graddol, D. Block, D. Cameron, D. Nunan, C. Briguglio, etc. [1–6]. The British Council officials mentioned that: “English is spoken at a useful level by some 1.75 billion people worldwide – that’s one in every four.” [7, p. 2]. They forecast, as well, that by 2020, “two billion people will be using it – or learning to use it.” [7, p. 2]. Therefore, it is symptomatic in globalized world that “English is becoming a core criterion in determining employability” [7, p. 2].

General and specific problems of training the future specialists to communicate for specific purposes with English medium were studied by T. Dudley-Evans, M. J. St. John, T. Hutchinson, A. Waters, etc.[8; 9]. Modern higher education in Ukraine is undergoing renovation, and it touches renewal of trend, contents

and methods in English language training which is focused on the professional communication competence [10; 11]. These principles are considered in the practice of English for specific purposes (ESP) training in Ukraine. Obvious for contemporary linguists and methodologists, professional foreign language competence of the future lawyers has been impacted by radical transformation processes in sphere of international relations and social economic structures, increased cooperation within European economic and political globalization.

Impact of global cultural and professional communication on ESP teaching, in particular relating to the law university students, has not been characterized sufficiently yet. The novelty of the problem considered in the article is description in novel aspect the specific features inherent to the teaching English to the law students in Ukraine as reflection of the English global status.

**Purposes and objectives.** The purpose of the article is to analyze peculiarities of teaching English for specific purposes to non-language, in particular law students in Ukraine under conditions of the global status of the English language. The objectives of the article suppose specifying the global medium status attained by the English language, describing features and innovation approaches to the law ESP training.

**The main part.** As it was above mentioned, English for the law university students reflects present global cultural and professional communication. English-speaking world's population now embraces about a quarter of the Earth inhabitants, "rise of English as a global language current status and future potential of English as the international language of communication" [1, p.1] was structured by David Crystal within the outlined background, present status, and prospects for English language development [1].

English has been grown into the global language which serves the purposes of international communication throughout the world. This status was gained by the English language as a result of its successful spreading throughout the world and entering any sphere of human functioning, and appropriateness as a medium for multivariate activities: "As a result, second language acquisition and foreign language teaching have progressed to the forefront of linguistics, providing a critical framework in understanding how language is acquired or learned and its pedagogical implications" [12, p.1].

Thus, global perspective predicted for ESP came true nowadays, and English must be admitted as a valuable component of the modern life, as international contacts grow considerably in the globalizing society favored by this communication medium.

The world progress tendencies towards globalization influence significantly on the selection of academic contents for the foreign language training in the higher education institutions of non-linguistic profile (law, medicine, sciences, technical branches, etc.) in Ukraine. Nowadays we can observe how the contents of the modern language education in non-linguistic universities is being focused on achievement the level which corresponds the globalized life world's requirements.

Priority to study exactly English is determined by the reality which gives everyday evidence proving that the English language becomes more and more important influential powerful tool of international exchange of information, global human communication, especially professional, research, scientific [1; 4] .

Thus, the choice of English as a university program subject 'Foreign language' and 'Foreign language for specific purposes' is grounded logically.

Current methodology considers that the choice of foreign language to learn is motivated by multiple reasons. Thus, the research carried among language learners by the UK Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies University of Southampton identified more than 700 rationales for language learning, including "themes such as ...communication; ... employability; ... equal opportunities; globalization", etc. [13, p. 2].

In higher education, we suppose that the students' principal goal orientation may connect them with prospective English ability which is seen necessary for their career. It may dominate and motivate non-language students to master English, expecting hope to realise their ambitions in professional development. Thus, learning ESP may serve as additional motivating factor which plays a vital role in language achievements that results in carrying on further education, gaining vantages to reach higher positions for promotion, etc. As it is known, the Council of Europe called to encourage educational institutions to provide opportunities for students of higher and further education to continue learning language, as appropriate to their special fields of work.

Experts in foreign language teaching in non-language universities [9–11; 14–15] consider that professionally oriented training of the future specialists is not limited by learning special vocabulary. Variable ESP characteristics defined by T. Dudley-Evans and M.J. St. John include correlation with the special profile disciplines, the use of professional activity situations [8]. Specificity of such training suggests integration of English and profile subjects, that means 'Content and Language Integrated Learning' (CLIL). It was stated also, that due to the current situation in Europe, the need for communication is seen as a central issue [16]. CLIL aims at preparing students for effective communication in real-life professional situations that form the basis of the foreign language training. Students can acquire foreign language as integrated with professional subjects, improve overall and specific language competence to get additional knowledge in their specialty and form professionally significant individual qualities while learning English [16].

The ESP objectives concerning training course for the future lawyers include ability to solve professional communication tasks which suppose English-medium special information search, independent self-improvement and updating professional level, etc. As a component of general professional competence, the foreign language professional competence increases its value under conditions of global professional communication, and is projected to be used for solving professional tasks in the law area. Meanwhile, new knowledge could be acquired most successfully in situations simulating real activities. Better understanding, memorizing and mastering integrative skills provide the graduates with the approach to the required level of

competence, preparedness for successful professional activity including independent language proficiency.

Professional and academic links of higher educational establishments, participation in international community, such as European University Association, etc., sharing international academic, research activities depict the urgent need for professionals to acquire English as a medium of international professional communication. In the area of education, English chosen as a foreign language for a subject of non-language university syllabus is also determined by the above mentioned rationale – indicators of internationalisation/globalization of universities, international research communications, cooperation in diverse partnership programs, students' mobility, updating education level from Bachelor to Master and higher, etc. Increased requirements for the English proficiency in professional communication is determined in the legal-related sphere by the emerged need to be in close communication with international police organizations and other aspects of international professional cooperation. International law is also of importance, as legal cases settled in international courts, and English dominates as a language of the international courts legal proceedings. Thus, the changed objective reality shifts the priorities in organization of the professional training provided for the future lawyers in the university. Quality education and international perspectives explain special requirements for skilled experts with professional foreign language competence.

As it was mentioned by D. Nunan, effect of English as a global language on education policy and practice envisages providing higher education with teaching staff being able to teach ESP of the university profile and according to the communicative methodology [5]. Within the modern teaching English methodology, the key approaches suppose professionally oriented communicative competence concept. It means teaching not general English, but profile English for specific purposes, in relation to the law students – ESP for Law.

Undoubtedly, crucial for such course point should be kept in mind - realization of a very complicated task to build the law ESP course correlating with the needs, lacks and wants of the students. The key challenges concern not only ESP course, but also teaching English to specific groups of learners, as well. Generally, it depends on who the learner is. As it is known, some factors have significant value for the person to succeed in ESP acquisition. These are: his motivation, age, aptitude, cognitive style, learning strategies, personality type and some else. [17]. ESP course for law students is aimed at attainment the proficient level of English in their special field of study required for their future career, supplying therefore certain motivation in ESP studies. It should meet the requirement of the 'specific learners' participation in communicative events' (T. Hutchinson, A. Waters) [9]. Future lawyers are intended to participate in discussions, consulting, conferences, talks, etc. with foreign specialists in their field. It supposes that the law graduate must be equitable with good conversational English, be able to network and make important contacts at sessions and seminars, attending international conferences and publishing in foreign journals.

Professional aspect is one of the ways towards motivating non-language, in particular law students, to study English. Sociolinguistic surveys confirm that significant share of the law university students understand the requirement to realize foreign language skills in practical professional activity, that is based on multiple possibilities in modern society to participate in joint international projects, legal firms, cooperation with foreign colleagues, etc.

Up-to-date revised education is based on the professional competence approach. Due to the global impact of current advances in teaching English as a foreign language, and especially ESP, the concept for the modern law education in Ukraine, as it includes acquiring ESP competence, was worked out.

One of the principal tasks of juridical education is to achieve adequate results in training of the experts in legal sciences, capable to function effectively nowadays, under conditions of globalized cultural and professional communication. Thus, the principal task for professional education provided in the law university is to arrange preconditions which stimulate independent search and creative activity of the students, provide them reasons to obtain English medium professional information, communicate in professional area via foreign language. Foreign language training strategy is aimed at attainment the professional readiness of the law university graduates for effective, adequate English medium professional communication.

As it was above mentioned, teaching ESP for the law students is provided within the communication competence teaching approach (H.G. Widowson, D.H. Hymes). Real communication, mostly professional, is simulated within communicative approach methodology. Factors influencing the results of communicative approach to the foreign language teaching in non-language universities include obeying these principles in organising the study, sequencing application of this approach during all course of training [10].

As it was entitled in one of this year's issue [14], synergistic approach to English for Specific Purposes considering Language Learning Technologies is of great value under the specified conditions.

It is proved that disposition, competence and professional erudition of the teacher, engagement with law-related subject scope, interaction in authentic professional situations play great, sometimes determining role as for getting results by communicative methods applied in the English classroom. As it is known, communicative method supposes simulation of communication process in the classroom that makes training similar to real communication [18]. The law ESP teacher, realising didactic intentions, imposes obligatory initial sets and behavior rulls which are obeyed conventionally in the classroom ('everybody is working', 'everybody is engaged', 'who's the best?', 'who's the quickest?', etc.) in the academic group that correlates positively with the progress in ESP. The most popular teaching strategies are English role-playing, round tables, debates, project activity, case analysis, work with legal documents, even simulation scientific conferences in the field issues, etc., that are provided in the scope of the law subject-matters[10, 11]. Appropriate inno-



vation technologies are used in the classroom: 'brain-ring', 'microphone', 'unfinished sentence', 'initiative reply', etc.

It is necessary to emphasize great importance for the skilled ESP teacher to maintain classroom communication with such questions which stimulate interlocutor to response, act in the imposed professional situations promoting solution of the cognitive tasks associated with the law subject-matters while mastering foreign language conduct specific for the lawyer.

Various professional activity patterns are effective in the process of ESP learning which simulate contents and conditions of the future work, e.g. conversations of a customs officer checking the entrants; immigration officer and a citizen checking out at the airport; or criminal investigator interrogating the witness of the accident, etc.

For the law students it is possible to develop a research project by the group of students, conversate to solve the professional task, to get information, fill in routine documents according to the given passport data, write record of the questioning of the witnesses, attendance records, incident reports, minutes from meetings etc.

Globalization influences the ESP Teacher Education, Professional Development and Teacher Training, because the teacher must be qualified in communication class-work craft within the law ESP course to manage appropriate level of simplification of the language considering the mean level of the academic group and individual levels of the students as well, as real groups are multilevel and show diverse English and ESP proficiency.

Individualization is one of the core principles in communicative approach; it motivates the university students to study ESP. It was mentioned that communication is always individual, subjective, personal [8; 10; 11; 18]. Individualized learning is connected with 'learner-centred approach' and encouragement the students within the training by showing their best abilities and necessities, expecting results of their studies ('the whole person approach').

Teacher's clear reasoning before setting the tasks with communication situations helps to move forward in achievement of the professional foreign language competence by the future graduates.

Legal discourse specificity should be mentioned. Lexical priority is a principal instructional condition, because the students all over again memorize English words, collocations, speech formulas. The global communication makes the so-called 'International English' intended for using English as a lingua franca more preferable. The law universities train the experts in different legal specialties (related to legal science, civil law, enforcement activities, public law, international law, economic law, intellectual property, criminal law, etc.). Various types of legal discourse have specificity that should be considered at analysis of specific learner's needs, lacks and wants. ESP materials are based on current authentic texts selected to meet the specific needs of law students studying English for their narrow law-related area.

From the point of view of the verbal communication and ESP training it is very important that legal officers function in direct connection with communication with people, their behavior, different social circumstances, etc.

Traditionally a lot of attention is paid to the legal terminology, especially of the student's subspecialty. Terminology is a component of adequate and effective communication in English professional sphere that determines focus on learning vocabulary which is very important in teaching conversation. Communicative approach results in meaningful communication which supposes the development of skills to use terms in professional situations and to communicate in accordance with form, genre, style within the scope of functional topics (specific for investigator, customs/immigration officer, passport official, lawyer, etc.).

**Discussion of research results.** Thus, as it was described, professional communicative competence which is important in the legal activity has been updated due to the global communication and enhanced foreign language professional competence (ESP skills) value as it is seen a component of the lawyer's professional role. English in modern world serves professional and personal development. Legal English for specific purposes proficiency became a component of the professional competence of experts in legal sciences that proves its importance in higher legal education.

English professional communicative competence of the law university students meets the directions of the modern society development. Integration of Ukraine into the European Higher Education Area emphasizes global value of attainment English proficiency for the law university students. Teacher must use factors of positive influence on efficiency communicative training, develop intention, motivate students to use English practically, especially for the professional purposes.

**Conclusions.** Thus, teaching English for specific purposes to non-language, in particular the law university students in Ukraine in being impacted by the globalized reality which is forming English as a cultural and professional communication medium. Specific for the legal officers activity, which is mostly connected with communication with people, accentuates importance of communicative professional competence and as its component – English communicative professional competence. Value of capacity of English medium professional communication has been growing up to date. The study has implications for the education of the law university students. In-service professional development of the law ESP teachers helps to be aware of the legal ESP features that provides adequate organization of classwork to allow the students to learn English professional communication while it. Specificity of the legal sciences determines scope of skills necessary for the law students to realize the objectives of the university ESP course.

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**Англійська мова для студентів юридичного університету в епоху глобальної культурної та професійної комунікації**

*Розглянуто вплив сучасного статусу англійської мови на особливості викладання іноземної мови в немовних вищих навчальних закладах, зокрема студентам юридичних університетів.*

*У сучасному світі англійська мова стала глобальним засобом міжкультурної та професійної комунікації, що визначає значущість для сучасного фахівця-юриста володіння англійською мовою. Зазначено, що специфіка роботи спеціалістів юридичного профілю пов'язана зі спілкуванням, що визначає важливість комунікативної професійної компетенції, у тому числі – іншомовної.*

*Роль англійської мови як засобу професійної комунікації нині зростає, що мотивує студентів юридичного університету вивчати англійську мову для продовження навчання за партнерськими програмами обміну, магістерськими програмами, а також щоб відповідати вимогам до сучасного правника та конкурентоспроможності і кар'єрного зростання в професійній сфері. Специфіка отримуваної юридичної спеціальності визначає зміст навчання англійської мови, яке здійснюється в межах сучасного компетентнісного підходу і враховує методологічні та дидактичні рекомендації з викладання англійської мови для спеціальних потреб юридичного профілю. Відзначена важливість навчання на автентичному матеріалі, який враховує специфіку фаху, комунікативну спрямованість на професійне спілкування, застосування інноваційних технологій.*

*Надзвичайно важливим в епоху глобалізації культурної та фахової комунікації є професійний розвиток викладачів англійської мови для спеціальних потреб – компетентність щодо сучасної комунікативної методики викладання професійно орієнтованої іноземної мови, організації навчання та застосування інноваційних технологій.*

**Ключові слова:** англійська мова для спеціальних потреб; компетентнісний підхід; студенти юридичного університету; глобалізація.

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