

# Selection of Foreign Language Teaching Content in Russian Master of Laws (LLM) Graduate Programs<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract

Master's degree was integrated into the system of Russian Higher Education several decades ago, however, teaching foreign languages at this level still needs further analysis including the postgraduate law students training. The article investigates the principal components of foreign language teaching in Master of laws Graduate Programs (considering the case of the English language) on the bases of various methods: the analysis of related regulatory and standard-setting documents, linguistic analysis of legal texts; content analysis of textbooks and other resources; methods of analysis and synthesis, classification and descriptive methods, theoretical analysis of methodological and applied research literature. As a result of the study the basic teaching content components were revealed, including linguistic and speech material; professional, linguistic, intercultural knowledge; the corresponding reproductive and productive skills. The findings reflect the factors of content-setting of LLM graduate programs concerning graduates' professional activity (law making, law enforcement, expert, consulting, organizational, managerial, research and pedagogical issues), professional duties; purposes and teaching duration; requirements as for the training output by federal educational standards.

**Keywords:** Foreign Language Teaching; Master of Laws Programs; Teaching Content Components.

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## **1. Introduction**

### ***1.1. Problem Statement***

An in-depth knowledge of foreign languages in the modern world is becoming a prerequisite for the development of professionals. Mastering foreign languages requires language acquisition skills including inter alia independent learning skills as well as their further application in real-life professional situations. This is especially significant for graduates in the humanities, as a good command of foreign languages at the level of professional communication, language reflection and language intuition enables them to achieve results in the chosen area and enhance their professional skills. This serious and daunting task logically requires a revision of educational practices, creation of differentiated language teaching systems depending on the level of education, which inevitably raises the questions of reviewing teaching foreign languages at university, its methodological basis, methods and forms, control and assessment, as well as content of teaching.

Higher Education (HE) reforms in Russia related to the multi-level structure transition to Bologna standards, having generated a lot of debate, did not lead to the development of uniform concept of masters' language training at non-linguistic (humanitarian) faculties which follows from investigating academic papers, official documents, analysis of the educational process, etc. Postgraduates are guided into specific professional areas, as well as into methodology and methods of information processing and research. However, various aspects of foreign language teaching at master's level still cause controversy and debate. Our practice of foreign languages teaching at law faculties confirms that it is fraught with multiple difficulties related to the variety of training fields and directions, jurisdictions and aspects of law under study, the complexity of legalese and culture specific notions. All these issues definitely demand further analysis and research in light of setting the corresponding content of teaching.

### ***1.2. Purpose of Study***

The article seeks to analyze the problems and special features of foreign language teaching at Master's level in Russian higher school, to identify the factors determining the selection of foreign language teaching content and, finally, to identify the content structure and describe its components in a generalized way applicable to Master of laws (LLM) programs of Russian state universities.

Researchers reveal factors that still have an impact on content selection claiming that current situation in a non-linguistic university does not meet nowadays demands due to some reasons. As for Shiryaeva (2016), such factors reflect the incomplete correspondence of foreign language class goals and the content of modern

concept of master programs, insufficient development/lack of relevant content mastering aids and assessment system. Chiknaverova (2017) notes that difficulties arising in the foreign language classroom are primarily caused by:

- insufficient standardization of requirements for bachelor and master training in similar professional areas of different universities, especially those concerning the structure and the content of foreign language professional communicative competence, control and measuring system,
- discrepancy of the objectives and the content of a foreign language teaching in Master's level,
- insufficient specification of the competencies formed at Master's level, their incomplete compliance to those that are formed in foreign language classrooms.

Master students are mostly Russian and foreign universities' undergraduates specialized in various professional areas, from wide range of humanitarian areas to technical ones. As for referring to the teaching of these students it is by all means a difficult task, since educational program requirements to the students' language proficiency at different universities largely differ from those identified at universities where they are enrolled. Such differences include forms of education, assessment and control etc. This situation creates additional hurdles in setting and adjusting the content of foreign language teaching in master's programs, including LLM Graduate Programs.

There are different approaches to the content setting of foreign language learning. Some experts analyzing the cases of practical language application point out the relevance of interviewing employers, supervisors and professors of corresponding departments in order to fix the skills, abilities, personal qualities, behavioral and communication strategies serving as the bases for carrying out professional and scientific foreign language activities at the appropriate level (Prismotrova, 2016; Nelyubina & S.R Abzalova, 2012). Others practice surveys and interviews of masters to find out applicable and significant foreign language topics, texts and situations (Krutskaya & Nurtdinova, 2014; Prismotrova, 2016). Many teachers following the method of content analysis identify common types of special educational texts as well as relevant situations supporting and developing speech acts. Needs of target audience are also of paramount importance, along with the study of the Federal State Educational Standard of Higher Education (FSSESHE) and academic communities' requirements to the level of students' language proficiency. At the same time, we find it significant and necessary to investigate and single out the factors determining appropriate content-setting in accordance with the objectives of educational

programs, including Master of laws (LLM) Graduate program, teacher's and administrators' experience.

## 2. Literature Review

Prior to our research on content of teaching foreign languages to LLM students, we focused on the concept of teaching content in general. It should be noted that for the purpose of this study we relied on Russian methodologists as the theory behind concept of teaching content is significantly different from that of Anglo-Saxon and other Western European researchers. These differences are partly due to Russian experts' isolation before the collapse of the Soviet Union. After the 1990-s significant changes can be traced in the approaches applied to foreign language teaching in general and content of teaching in particular. To make these approaches and changes clearer below we provide a short historical overview of the basic concepts and approaches and draw parallels with the research of Western counterparts when necessary.

As for works relevant to our study we should primarily mention contributions of Alekseeva (2007), Bim (1977 & 1988), Chiknaverova (2017), Gal'skova & Solovova (1991), Lysakova & Samarskaya (2014), Khaleeva (1989), Krutskaya & Nurtdinova (2014), Lapidus (1986), Min'yar-Beloruhev (1990), Prismotrova (2016), Shchukin (1981), Shiryayeva (2016), Skalkin (2002). Their findings sufficiently overlap with their counterparts in the Western countries such as D. Brington, D. Coyle, T. Dudley-Evans, J. Harmer and others.

Originally, the content was supposed to contain three layers, the first of which includes sounds, morphemes, words, word combinations, sentences; the second layer embraces frequent phrases, and the third one includes coherent texts and topics. Acquisition of this material at different levels is possible due to ad-hoc exercises (Bim, 1977). Content components also include not only knowledge mentioned above but skills and even the whole process of their development. Later this researcher claimed that the overall objective of such training is communication, based on objectives of education and development (Bim, 1988).

After periods of either focusing on the analysis of a foreign language rather than its practical usage, there were periods of emphasizing its practical application. In the 1970-1980-s investigators turned to studying foreign languages as a means that provides for complex development of the students' personality. This period is still referred to as pre-communicative. However, in some works features of communicative approach can already be traced (Skalkin, 1981). Skalkin (1981) already identified spheres of communication, enumerated social and communicative roles for each sphere of communication, typical and frequent situations of

communication etc. The expert came up with operational approach to selection of teaching content using an inductive and communicative method; and also coined the notions of communicative, speech and language environment and claimed that selection of teaching material at communicative and speech levels shall precede its selection at language level. Correspondingly, later in the middle of the 1980-s other researchers (Lapidus, 1986; Minyar-Beloruchev, 1990; Khaleeva 1989) started to include linguo-cultural and cross-cultural knowledge and the ways of its selection.

By the 1990-s the concept of teaching content was further specified and researchers considered the possibilities of students' development as personalities even after their graduation on the basis of knowledge and skills they acquired while learning a foreign language.

Most researchers point out that the overall system of education governed by the social demands predetermines the major components of educational process which in their turn dictate selection of teaching materials, forms used to introduce this material, methods and ways of teaching. According to others, teaching content is all that students are to learn for achieving a level of mastery that will comply with requirements of a particular university (Lapidus, 1986). Another expert (Alekseeva, 2007) claim that training will be effective if the content, structure and organization of a training course correspond to students' actual needs and their future profession.

In this respect at a particular stage of research Russian methodologists turned to the approach of content and language integrated learning, actively developed by numerous countries in the world proclaiming that every professional sphere is supposed to have its own course of foreign language designed in accordance with objects of this or that expert field (Alekseeva, 2007; Brinton, 1989; Coyle, 2007).

Further on researchers turned to the principles of teaching content according to which it should rely on internationally recognized standards of foreign language assessment (primarily those stipulated by the European Framework of Language Teaching); at the same time they are to comply with the federal standards designed for particular qualifications; contain clear objects and requirements as for the learning outcome; be based on professional and learning skills; include professional, academic, language and other content; rely on students previous experience, as well as students needs and others.

Effectiveness of training is to be measured by means of foreign language communicative competence. Thus, the whole process is seen as teaching, learning and developing the corresponding competences. And in more detail it looks like this: «language – knowledge – language competence», «language – skills – speech

competence», «speech activity – skills – communicative competence» and «culture – cross-cultural communication – sociocultural competence» (Schukin, 2002).

In the middle of the 2000-s based on the previous research numerous experts suggested a key role of teaching content selection and agreed on the priority of communicative aspect (topics and spheres of communication); followed by linguistic aspect (texts and language material), which are followed by procedural aspects (selection of knowledge, skills etc.). According to academics examining mostly the problems of general and language curriculum design, the content of language education has to be based on the following: spheres of communication, related topics and situations, social roles, speech acts and speech material, language material, knowledge and a set of skills etc. (Gal'skova & Solovova, 1991).

The mentioned works outline the latest research on foreign language teaching content. This problem at universities still needs specification which is caused by changing objectives of teaching foreign languages, depend on the social demands, national and international educational policy, conditions of teaching, as well as approaches to teaching foreign languages adopted at a particular stage. This view is based on analyzing the latest findings of Russian researchers on the issues of Russian HE transformation and those concerning foreign language teaching (Gerasimova, 2010; Glebova & Yasnitskaya, 2015; Obdalova & Sazonova, 2014; Gal'skova & Solovtsova, 1991; Gazizova, 2015). Special attention was paid to the features of job-oriented foreign language teaching at the Master degree level (Chikileva, 2018; Grichenkova, 2018; Dubinina & Kondrakhina, 2016; Chiknaverova & Gazizova, 2017) as well as principles, content requirements, methods and means of foreign language training in a nonlinguistic university (Chiknaverova, 2017; Lysakova & Samarskaya, 2014; Shiryayeva, 2016; Prismotrova, 2016; Krutskaya & Nurtdinova, 2014).

The analysis of both earlier and current researches clearly indicates that there is no single view on issues related to the content of teaching, its components and their priority as well as the process and order of their selection. We relied on the approach according to which selection of teaching content and specifically the order of such selection are of primary importance and that it should start from career content and be followed by real-content, as such teaching foreign languages is based on the content of professional disciplines. It should also be noted that unlike western counterparts, in particular Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, most Russian researchers believe that learners' needs analysis should be applied at the stage of topics selection whereas the rest is to be done by foreign language teachers and language methodologists.

### **3. Methodology**

The methods used to collect and interpret the data include the content analysis of regulatory and standard-setting documents (Federal Educational Standards on Higher Education, syllabi of separate universities, master programs), textbooks and other teaching materials used for Master`s programs in MGIMO (Moscow), Kazan National Research Technical University named after A.N. Tupolev – KAI, Kazan Federal University; linguistic analysis of legal texts (including, primarily, authentic texts of legal documents (specified in detail in table 4), as well as texts designed for educational purposes); direct observation of students` activities. Methods of analysis and synthesis, classification and descriptive methods, theoretical analysis of methodological and applied research literature were applied in the study of factors determining the content-setting of LLM graduate programs.

### **4. Results**

The results of the investigation show that the conditions of teaching foreign languages in Russian Master Graduate Programs are mostly dictated by the form of education (full-time, part-time, evening classes), forms of teaching (classroom and extracurricular work, group work project, etc.) and the relevant training field. The scope of the Programs is 120 credit units and the duration is 2 years regardless of the form of education, the educational technologies applied, including inter alia the network form, and the individual trajectories such as accelerated training. HE institutes are entitled to supplement the set of graduates' competencies provided by the FSESHE, taking into account the specific expertise and / or type (s) of master students' activity. The programs are of two components: the basic part, including compulsory disciplines on specialization, and the variable part, consisting of practical and scientific work determined by the universities.

In Russia most master`s programs are designed for graduates planning to work in home country, thus, most programs focus on various aspects of Russian law. However, institutions / faculties specializing in international relations also include international as well as comparative law issues. These programs usually involve one or a combination of levels (international, federal, state, or private). Various legal documents studied by students are also determined by one of the levels mentioned above, involving international organizations, the people, the State Duma, the President of the Russian Federation, the Government of the Russian Federation, the ministries, the Legislative Assembly of the Duma, the governors of the regions, territories, presidents of the republics, the administration of the regions, territories, republics, local governments, organizations.

Below we speculate upon basic factors of selecting the content of foreign language teaching according to the current learning environment. These factors are determined by the following: the field of professional activity of graduates, types and areas of professional activity, professional tasks, requirements as for the output of graduates' training.

Generally, while developing and implementing master programs, universities focus on the specific type(s) of graduates' professional activity (lawmaking; law implementation; law enforcement; expert and consulting; organizational, scientific and pedagogical practice) subject to the current situation of the labor market, objectives of training and competences (cultural, professional, etc.) to be formed. In the framework of law-making the students are engaged in preparation of regulatory legal acts. While exercising law enforcement they are expected to take decisions and substantiate them, as well as to take actions related to the implementation of legal norms, to draw up legal documents. Law enforcement presupposes ensuring the rule of law, law and order, security of the individual, society and the state; protection of public order; protection of private, state, municipal and other forms of ownership; prevention, suppression, detection, disclosure and investigation of offenses; protection of the rights and legitimate interests of citizens and legal entities. Expert and advisory activities embrace legal assistance, legal advice; legal expertise of regulatory legal acts.

Organizational and management skills reflect the implementation of organizational and management functions. Research work involves the study of legal issues; participation in scientific conferences in light of the profession profile. And, finally, pedagogical practice provides for teaching legal disciplines and promoting legal education. The teaching process is determined both by educational and pedagogical purposes, providing for the development of students' humanistic outlook, internationalism, patriotism, deeper understanding of domestic and international processes and phenomena etc.

The key factor of content-setting of LLM graduate programs primarily concerns mastering students' competences acquired during the previous level of education to solve professional tasks within their activities specified above.

The whole teaching process is determined by the concentric principle of studying language phenomena and their structure that provides for complementation and sophistication of grammatical, lexical, stylistic phenomena in the context of the relevant training field. The lexical, grammar and constructive experience is enriched by expanding learners' vocabulary, taking into account the complexity of words, words expressing synonymous notions, having similar and different collocations, homonymous and multivalent terms. Students develop a better awareness of



identifying grammar patterns, transferring vocabulary from passive to active usage. Their functional and stylistic experience is evolved by fostering skills of identifying stylistic peculiarities, selection of language means relevant to the particular speech situation, identifying language usage, norm, occasionalisms and deviations.

The output measured by means of competencies is presented in an excerpt from the FSESHE (Table 1)

Table 1. *Competencies to be Developed by Means of LLM Programs Stipulated by FSESHE*

Professional competencies	General professional competencies	General cultural competencies
lawmaking activity: the ability to develop regulatory legal acts; law enforcement activity: the ability to competently apply regulatory legal acts in specific areas of legal activity, implement the norms of substantive and procedural law in professional activities; law enforcement: readiness to perform official duties to ensure law and order, security of the individual, society, state; the ability to detect, suppress, disclose and investigate offenses and crimes; the ability to prevent offenses, identify and eliminate the causes and conditions conducive to their perpetration; the ability to identify, evaluate and help curb corrupt behavior; expert and consulting activities;	awareness of the social significance of their future profession, manifestation of intolerance towards corrupt behavior, respectful attitude to law and characterized by the sufficient level of professional legal conscience;  ability to conscientiously perform professional duties, to comply with the principles of the lawyers' ethics;  the ability to put into practice the acquired skills and abilities while organizing research;  readiness to lead the team in the field of their professional activities ;	ability to abstract thinking, analysis, synthesis; readiness to act in non-standard situations, to bear social and ethical responsibility for the decisions made;  readiness for self-development, self-realization, use of creative potential; ability to freely use Russian and foreign languages as a means of professional communication;

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the ability to competently interpret regulatory legal acts;

the ability to take part in the legal examination of draft regulations, including those aimed at identifying provisions that create the conditions for corruption, to give qualified legal opinions and advice in specific areas of legal activity;

organizational and management activities: the ability to make optimal management decisions;

the ability to track, analyze and implement managerial innovations in professional activities;

research activities: the ability to competently conduct scientific research in the field of law;

pedagogical activity: the ability to teach legal disciplines at a high theoretical and methodological level;

the ability to manage the independent work of students;

the ability to organize and conduct pedagogical research;

the ability to effectively carry out legal education ;

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The competences are developed by a combination of classroom and extracurricular work aimed at developing the creative activity of post-graduates and their independence and self-confidence in improving language proficiency, expanding horizons and effective usage of background knowledge gained in the professional communication process. In educational process various forms are employed: individual, pair, group ones, stimulating motivation by imitating inter and intra-professional communication. Due to the variety of training forms learners are

encouraged to apply collective research, jointly develop learning strategies, practice creative and research projects making, reflexive dialogues, polylogues, positional discussions.

The content of training forms various types of speech activity mediated by professional activity, specifically interaction and speaking, translation, writing, reading, listening. As for referring to the interaction, speaking and translation they include interpretation of negotiations, formal and informal meetings, other situations of professional communication and related documents (from English into Russian and vice versa); mastering of communicative skills; further development of the ability to adequately use of special language for the text annotation, both in English and Russian.

Writing develops the editorial skills in translating professionally-oriented texts to ensure their stylistic and terminological uniformity; translating papers and legal documents from Russian into English and vice versa; making an annotation and abstracting of texts, both in English and Russian. The improvement of listening skills is achieved by the practice of constant understanding of English-language messages (presentations, talks, reports, lectures, instructions; explanations, descriptions, as well as other listening materials). Reading stimulates information extracting and analytic skills (perception and processing in accordance with professional tasks) while studying different types of extracts: legal documents, summaries; reports, scientific and professional magazines.

#### **4. Discussion**

The purpose of this research is caused by the necessity of defining key components in the content of language education at Master's level. According to experts examining mostly the problems of general and language curriculum design, the content of language education has to be based on the following: spheres of communication, related topics and situations, social roles, speech acts and speech material, language material, knowledge and a set of skills etc. (Gal'skova & Solovova, 1991). Analyzing various viewpoints, we have revealed the elements of content which are invariable and applicable to the conditions of foreign languages teaching in LLM Programs. Among the elements there are the following:

- language, professional, and intercultural knowledge,
- the corresponding productive and receptive skills,
- language and speech material reflecting the subject matter of the foreign language professional communication.

The knowledge and skills are developed on the bases of foreign language communicative competence embracing the following components:

- general language knowledge (grammar, lexical, phonetic, spelling), and the relevant skills, as well as lingvo-professional ones (*linguistic component*),
- identification and analysis of culture specific lexis (*sociocultural component*),
- determination of genre, stylistic characteristics of the foreign language material, substantiating its usage within the framework of particular genres, choice of the corresponding language form relevant to the situations of professional communication (*sociolinguistic component*),
- logical operations of analysis, comparison, differentiation, abstracting, generalization, classification, creative transformation of the language material, in particular logical fragmentation and sequencing, differentiating the principal and secondary, factual and evaluative information, using logical links, making conclusions and inferences (*discursive competence*),
- constructing and interpretation of foreign language information, prognostic skills (understanding the meaning of unfamiliar words using context, associations and analogies), employing probabilistic forecasting (*strategic competence*).

As for the of content-elements of LLM Programs we have revealed the structure of professional and intercultural knowledge, applying the method of content analysis to the norm-setting FSESHE document related to competencies (general professional, professional, and general cultural) as well as other requirements to graduates output, which is provided below as Table 2.

Table 2. *Professional and Intercultural Knowledge Designed to be Developed within LLM Courses*

Professional Knowledge	Intercultural knowledge
-the system of law under study;	- the hierarchy of values;
-norm setting documents, their content and structure, including inter alia the difference in legal documents determined by the subjects adopting them at the international, federal, regional and local levels;	-algorithm of the comparative analysis of students' native and foreign culture;
	-background knowledge; national cultural components of semantics in

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-the content and functions of lawmaking, implementing, enforcement activities;	speech in situations of intercultural communication;
-fields of legal activities;	-strategies for establishing contact with representatives of other cultures;
-rules of implementing legal acts in particular fields of legal activities;	-probable situations of intercultural communication;
-norms of procedural and substantive law;	-the possible reasons for the violation of intercultural communication;
-rules of interpreting norm setting documents;	-stereotypes;
-the essence of legal expertise of drafts of norm setting acts, the pattern of behavior, the requirements as for its conduct;	-culture of professional communication;
-the content, structure and requirements as for perfection of qualified legal consultations in particular types of legal activities;	-culture specific communicative behavior
-the pattern of identification of managerial innovations, their functions and potential as applied to the professional activities;	
-the pattern and requirements as for conducting legal research;	
-pedagogical, theoretical, methodological foundations of teaching law subjects;	
-the pattern and requirements as for the conduct of research in the field of teaching law and legal education	

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Language knowledge mainly includes the theoretical foundations of professional translation, terms interpretation and basic ways of term making collocations and set phrases phraseological units; lexical and grammatical transformations; lexical and semantic, grammatical and stylistic peculiarities of the legal language (both Russian and English). It is also relevant for students to know the ways to translate terms, realia, proper names, and names of organizations, enterprises, academic and professional titles in the context of various documents, the rules of using common abbreviations. The teaching course also raises awareness in lexical and grammatical substitutions, modulations, generalization, syntactic assimilation, division of the sentence, antonymous translation, explication, implication, compensation, contextual substitutions, additions, omissions, pronoun repetition, deep transformations, as well as the techniques of translating culture specific vocabulary: transliteration, transcription, calquing, translation-explanation.

The second component of the language teaching content is developed within professional, language and intercultural knowledge and is related to lexical and grammar skills that are traditionally divided into productive (stipulating the speaking and writing skills development) and receptive ones (as a condition for the implementation of receptive types of speech activity: reading and listening) (Table 3).

Table 3. *Language and Intercultural Skills*

Language Skills	Intercultural skills
<p><i>Lexical skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-revealing the meaning of words using context or familiar affixation;</li> <li>-combination;</li> <li>-making wide use of the prediction;</li> <li>-enriching vocabulary;</li> <li>-choosing the right words / phrases in accordance with the communicative intention;</li> <li>-using lexico-semantic and lexico-thematic associations;</li> <li>-combining new words with those previously learned;</li> <li>-performing equivalent replacements.</li> </ul> <p><i>Grammar skills:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-further development of recognition of the grammatical forms;</li> <li>-perception of the model, its imitation, reproduction (by analogy) including isolated and independent use of the learned model;</li> <li>-substitution;</li> <li>-transformation;</li> <li>-combination (transfer from model to model);</li> <li>-grammatical design of the generated text when speaking and writing;</li> <li>-making grammatical forms and constructions;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-differentiating the hierarchy of values in different cultures;</li> <li>-critically interpreting these phenomena in conjunction with students' own outlook;</li> <li>-comparing and contrasting their own and foreign language culture;</li> <li>-using background knowledge, lexical units with the culture specific component of semantics in situations of intercultural communication;</li> <li>-flexibly using a variety of strategies to establish contact with representatives of other cultures;</li> <li>-predicting probable cases of intercultural communication;</li> <li>-acting as an intermediary between representatives of their own and foreign-language cultures;</li> <li>-determining the causes of violation of intercultural communication and effectively eliminating misunderstandings and conflict situations caused by intercultural differences;</li> <li>-overcoming existing stereotypes;</li> <li>-comparing and contrasting the culture specific notions under study.</li> </ul>

- choosing and using grammatical constructions depending on the situation of communication;
  - changing the grammatical structure of the statement when changing communicative intentions;
  - distinguishing between grammatical design of oral and written texts;
  - differentiating and identifying grammatical phenomena;
  - correlating the meaning of grammatical forms / constructions according to the context;
  - distinguishing between grammatical phenomena of similar form;
  - predicting the grammatical forms of words / constructions;
  - determining the structure of a complex sentences, the boundary of clauses (infinitive, participial, gerundial, definitive, adverbial, etc.);
  - establishing logical, temporal, cause-and-effect, and subordinating relations and connections between the elements of sentences;
  - establishing links between sentences within a paragraph or a complex syntactic whole
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The corresponding professional skills are not enumerated in the table above as they are provided for in FSESHE in the section stipulating professional competences (given above in Table 1).

The whole teaching process is determined by the concentric principle of studying language phenomena and their structure that provides for linguistic knowledge and the corresponding skills of complementation and sophistication of grammatical, lexical, stylistic phenomena in proper training field. The lexical, grammar and constructive experience is enriched by expanding learners' vocabulary, taking into account the complexity of words, those expressing synonymous notions, having different collocations, homonymous and multivalent terms, moreover, students improve skills of activating passive vocabulary into active one. Learners

develop a better awareness of grammar patterns relevant in oral and written form of professional communication. Their functional and stylistic experience is evolved by fostering skills of identifying stylistic peculiarities, selection of language means appropriate to the particular professional situation, identifying language usage, norms, occasionalisms and deviations. Students further master lexical and grammatical transformations such as substitutions, generalization, syntactic assimilation, implication, compensation, contextual substitutions etc. as well as the techniques of translating culture specific vocabulary.

Abovementioned skills facilitate explication of context based on the students' knowledge and experience and contribute to the integrity of perception of the content of education. Further we elaborate on the component of teaching content related to the material used. When speaking about *linguistic material* we primarily mean words/ phrases specific to legal documents which are enshrined in the administrative and clerical speech (clericalism); terms, professionalisms and phrases of a terminological nature, idiomatic expressions, phraseological combinations, rarely used in general language; frequent elliptical constructions in typical documents, the form and content of which vary within small limits (summaries, reports, conclusions, etc.). Another specific feature is the predetermined usage of verb forms, figures of speech, clichés, special and general terminology in certain legal documents, homographs, homophones, synonyms, free collocations, using verbs primarily in the present, frequently present simple; widespread use of indefinite forms of verbs; specific usage of modal verbs and modal and passives constructions; latin words and expressions; anthroponyms, toponyms, abbreviations found only in legal documents, complex prepositions derived from nouns. This material is characterized by complex sentences where one fact is logically subordinate to another one. In addition to that, they can be sophisticated by homogeneous parts, participial constructions as well as parenthesis, wide use of one-word, attributive complexes, attributive word combinations with prepositions, verbal word combinations; lexical and phraseological combinations, combination of nouns without prepositions, complex noun phrases. The context specifies the culture specific information, depending on associative links and augmentation of meaning.

*Speech material* includes job-oriented texts, professional models, dialogues, themes. The authentic and educational texts constitute the key constituent of speech resources. Themes are determined by students' majors. They are selected in accordance with the general complexity, choice of specific vocabulary, sentence structure, quantitative characteristics of conceptual saturation (the correlation of the language chunks and the ideas they denote); the conceptual complexity, information nature of the topics/texts, their consistence with the syllabus of the training field. As



an example we present the main types of legal documents in the form of table (Table 4).

Table 4. *Types of Legal Documents under Study*

Regulations	Interpretation acts	Documents fixing legal facts (fixing the length of service, age, etc.):	Documents containing individual decisions
		1. those fixing the legal status of subjects (passport, marriage certificate, adoption, military ID, education documents, various types of certificates, etc.); 2. documents fixing the legal regime of objects (technical passport of a car, an account in a savings bank, a savings book, a certificate of title to real estate, securities, etc.); 3. fixing acts-events (birth certificate) or acts-actions (act of being in a drunken state at work)	1. individual acts in which expressions of will or decisions of legal entities (contracts, powers of attorney, orders of heads of organizations, receipts, complaints, statements, etc.) are recorded; 2. enforcement documents, which have a domineering and binding nature

These documents differ depending on the types of state bodies that issue them: documents of executive authorities (orders of the Government of the Russian Federation, orders of ministers, heads of federal services and federal agencies, administrations of constituent entities of the Russian Federation, their departments and administrations, etc.); documents of law enforcement agencies, fixing the procedural actions carried out during the investigation and consideration of legal cases (decisions, sentences, rulings, conclusions, etc.).

The overall principles governing the selection of content include the increase of the complexity (including inter alia by progressively increasing the length of educational texts and other materials); change in the ratio of used and new components (the increase of new components in the linguistic, professional, social, socio-cultural and language material); variability; progressive introduction of new material (from general professional to narrow-professional).

The content of training forms various types of speech mediated by professional activities, specifically interaction and speaking, translation, writing, reading, and listening. Interaction, speaking and translation focus on interpretation of negotiations, formal and informal meetings, other situations of professional communication and related documents (from English into Russian, and vice versa); mastering of communicative skills; exercising adequate usage of professional language for text annotation, both in English and Russian.

Writing develops editorial skills in translating job-oriented texts to ensure their stylistic and terminological uniformity; translating papers and legal documents from Russian into English and vice versa; making an annotation and abstracting of texts. The improvement of listening skills is achieved by the practice of constant exposure English-language messages (presentations, talks, reports, lectures, instructions; explanations, descriptions, as well as other listening materials). Reading stimulates extracting of information and develops analytic skills (perception and processing in accordance with professional tasks) while studying different types of texts: legal documents, summaries; reports, scientific and professional magazines.

## **5. Conclusion**

Currently, foreign language teaching in Russian LLM Programs is a multiaspect and complex task which is determined by priority objectives and the corresponding methodological basis of teaching languages. The basic principles of effective educational process take into account the selection of foreign language teaching content in LLM Graduate Programs, which in our research is described in terms of factors determining the process (graduates' professional activity, mastering their competences by FSESHE), and components in the content of language education (linguistic, professional and intercultural knowledge; the corresponding productive and receptive skills; language and speech material reflecting the subject matter of the foreign language professional communication), as well as analysis of the corresponding language and speech resources.

Offering internal practical approaches to the selection of foreign language teaching content in Russian LLM graduate programs, analyzing its content structure, and components we recommend colleagues to monitor the ever-changing social and economic conditions to identify constructive ideas on teaching foreign languages to master students.

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