



Professional English Language Education Model Developed Using Cognitive and Practical Methods

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Abstract

This article aims to develop a linguodidactic model of teaching professional English in the field of law and jurisprudence. This linguodidactic model is conceptually based on a combination of cognitive and practical activity methods as well as basic theoretical statements of English for Special Purposes (EOS) methodology. The model focuses on the outcome of the university learning process - training specialists with a high level of communicative competence in English, ready to carry out professional activities, and capable of self-improvement in the knowledge, skills, and abilities acquired. To ensure the functioning of this linguodidactic model, it is necessary to focus on the specific educational needs of the student audience and the level of their language skills, situational and thematic training organization, involving the implementation of interactive tasks in real situations of professional communication; consistent implementation of practical, conditional, and speech exercises aimed at forming necessary language skills and speech abilities. The proposed training model is a collection of conceptual foundations, structural and functional elements, and technologies for the complex development of cognitive and practical independence in students. As a result, the successful acquisition of communicative competence in the field of a professional foreign language is ensured by relying on authentic sources when developing didactic materials, as well as the extensive use of information technologies and game simulations, allowing the learning process to be closer to the actual situation in the professional sphere and facilitating the efficient formation of professional and communicative skills of the students.

Keywords: English Language; English Learning; Education.

1. Introduction

Constant globalization leads to increased interdependence of countries as well as their participation in global integration processes to ensure intensive economic, social, and cultural development. This internationalization of the social interaction field places new demands on participants in both personal and business communication to ensure the long-term growth and mutual benefit of enterprises. This raises the bar for both specialist training and the educational system, particularly for foreign language teaching methodology, with the main goal of constantly seeking effective methods and techniques for developing students' communicative competence in foreign languages in various spheres of everyday and professional communication (Yarkova & Khamitova, 2013; Mamaeva et al., 2018).

Nowadays, the goals of higher education in the field of foreign language teaching include not only the training of qualified philologists, interpreters, and teachers but also the training of a diverse range of specialists whose foreign language communication competence is sufficient for direct contact with foreign colleagues, clients, and partners in both standard everyday situations and directly in the sphere of their professional activities. Because graduates must gain experience in proficient business foreign language communication, the educational system must devise new methods of better training future specialists (Sharafieva et al., 2019). We created the linguodidactic model of professional foreign language teaching, which is based on both cognitive and practical activity methods, as well as English for Special Purposes (EOS) methodology, with the goal of providing students with effective communicative competence in their field

of specialization, as well as enhancing cognitive independence and enabling opportunities for further personal and professional growth (Tulusina et al., 2021; Vassilieva & Drugov, 2019).

2. Literature Review

As the name implies, EOS can be defined in terms of the 'purposes' and 'specificity' of the purposes for which English instruction is deemed necessary. This entails the importance of the 'needs' of the learners who learn English to respond to the specific requirements of the target situation in which they will have to use the language which, of course, cannot be 'contrived' but will have to be 'genuine' and 'authentic' to be able to serve its purpose as such, English for Specific Purposes comprises (a) purpose, (b) specificity, (c) learners' needs, (d) target situation, and (e) authenticity and genuineness. Dudley-Evans (1998) argued that EOS encompasses almost all instances of language learning, which Johns and Salmani Nodoushan (2015) agreed with because they consider all instances of 'good' teaching to be EOS. Nonetheless, they emphasized that much EOS teaching—particularly in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts—is primarily aimed at adult professionals or academics.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) argued, drawing on ideas from Cummins (1979) and others, that English for Specific Purposes (ESP) can be best defined by arguing what it is 'not' rather than what it is. This approach can be seen in attempts to differentiate ESP from other specific or general approaches to English teaching, such as English for General Purposes (EGP), English for Academic and Occupational Purposes (EAOP), English for Academic Purposes (EAP), English for Occupational Purposes (EOP), English for Science and Technology (EST), and others. Cummins (1979), for example, classified ESP into three categories: (1) English as a Restricted Language (ERL), (2) English for Academic and Occupational Purposes (EAOP), and (3) English with Specific Topics (EwST). However, Mackay and Mountford (1978) argued that ERLs (such as situationbound English utterances used by waiters, air hostesses, and air traffic controllers) are situationally-determined clichés that cannot be called 'language'; ERLs fail their users in novel situations or contexts outside of their vocational environments.

As for EAOP, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) disagreed with Carver (1983) and preferred to keep these as distinct areas, which they called English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP). They divided English for Specific Purposes into three branches in their 'Tree of ELT': (1) English for Science and Technology (EST), (2) English for Business and Economics (EBE), and (3) English for Social Studies (ESS), each of which is further divided into the two sub-branches of EAP and EOP. EAP is distinguished from EOP based on Cummins' (1979) concepts of Cognitive Academic Proficiency versus Basic Interpersonal Skills. Finally, by focusing on situational language, EwST shifts our emphasis from "purpose" to "topic." Many ESP practitioners consider this to be an integral component of ESP rather than something separate from it; they are primarily courses within an ESP program that prepare students for specific topics (e.g., paper presentations, attending conferences, and others).

Nevertheless, ESP has three main characteristics: (a) authentic materials, (b) purpose-related orientation, and (c) self-direction. While 'authentic materials' are self-evident, the other two require brief definitions. The simulation of communicative tasks, which prepares students for real-life target situations, is what purpose-related orientation is all about. Self-direction, on the other hand, refers to the ESP quality that transforms language 'learners' into language 'users'; this is where teaching learning strategies and fostering self-regulated learning in learners become important.

3. Methodology

The study sought to examine the strategy and conditions for implementing a linguodidactic model of teaching professional English in order to organize professional communication training in the legal field. The training model we propose is based on both the concept of cognitive-practical activity methods in foreign language teaching, which ensures a gradual increase in students' independence while performing speech activities and on the fundamental concepts of English methodology for special purposes, which has the main feature of taking into account the specifics of speech and nonverbal behavior in certain areas of professional communication and the related educational needs of the target audience. The research materials are the practical outcomes of implementing this educational model, derived from the results of teaching professional English to Kazan Federal University students in the fields of jurisprudence and law. To organize the experimental training, materials on professional English provided by free-access network educational resources such as TV5 Monde and RFI were used.

The research methods used were theoretical analysis of the scientific literature devoted to the problem of teaching a foreign language for professional purposes, observation of the educational process within the framework of the proposed educational model approval, study and consolidation of the acquired teaching experience, language testing, and analysis of the educational activity results on mastering professional English in the sphere of the law. Both Russian and foreign methodologists believe that language courses should be designed not only to meet students' presumptive language needs but also to help them develop their professional knowledge, abilities, and skills because foreign language communication is an environment for performing tasks specific to a specific sphere of social activity.

Since mastering a foreign language is not the ultimate educational goal but rather a means of achieving other professional goals, it was necessary to take into account the specifications of the professional tasks faced by the students, which corresponds to the didactic principles of the EOS methodology, in order to ensure the effectiveness of the developed linguodidactic model. Thus, teaching professional English in the field of law begins with the selection of suitable pedagogical methods and techniques, didactic materials, and modes of learning activities, all of which are components of the proposed educational model (Varlamova et al., 2016).

4. Results

The EOS methodology's authors-developers concept of the teacher's activity algorithm consists of five elements: 1) revealing the trainees' educational demand or specific communicative needs; 2) assessing these needs and determining the learning objectives for the selected target audience; 3) collecting factual data regarding linguistic specifics of the chosen field of professional communication; 4) considering the collected data in relation to the identified learning objectives, for example, concerning the language style features of statements (specific terminology) in the typical situations context; 5) selecting or developing appropriate didactic resources and effective teaching technologies in accordance with the submitted educational demand. This model can be applied to various professional training needs and situations; it eliminates accidental improvisation in determining an appropriate teaching strategy. It is also a flexible, adaptive system that defines logic and mechanisms for designing training courses that can be applied to a wide range of specific training cases. This is precisely what guided us as we methodically developed the linguodidactic model of teaching professional English in the legal field and modeled the stages of the educational process.

The use of this algorithm in the educational process assigns a number of tasks to the teacher that must be completed prior to the start of training in order to establish an effective educational strategy. This refers to the preliminary assessment of the trainees' educational background. Based on the data analysis, there is a selection of teaching technologies aimed at developing the student's cognitive and practical independence, as well as teaching tools and appropriate didactic materials that are consistent with all requirements in terms of both the content aspect and the manner in which the information is presented. The trainee must become acquainted with the current reality, practices, and rules of the English legal system's operation, as well as acquire specific knowledge on the various aspects of the justice system in the target language by performing simulated professional tasks, such as references to regulations, legislative acts and their interpretation, negotiations, arguments, customer relations, and others.

The teacher is required to assess the student's level of written and oral understanding and expression, while the ultimate goal of training is to master various linguistic and extralinguistic professional competencies in the field of jurisprudence and law. The assessment of listeners' abilities to communicate professionally in four types of foreign language speech activities: speaking, reading, listening, and writing, represents the communicative component of these competencies. Positive learning outcomes imply fairly fluent English proficiency, allowing effective foreign language communication both orally and in writing to be carried out in standard professional situations, even those requiring certain contingency management.

Notably, one of the prerequisites for the successful operation of professional English training technology using both EOS methodology and cognitive-practical activity methods is the use of authentic materials (written texts, visual and audio sources, video records) that provide simulation of conditional and real situations of professional communication. To support the EOS methodology, specially developed authentic educational resources are available on the TV5 Monde and RFI websites. When conducting classes and organizing students' independent work, these resources serve as the foundation for creating real-life conversation situations and game simulations.

5. Discussion

The proposed linguodidactic model of teaching professional English in the field of law is based on the cognitive-practical activity methods concept, which states that teaching speech discourse begins with creating an indicative basis for action, i.e., analysis of various types of oral and written speech works standard samples related to legal relations in terms of their design, content, and linguistic features. Then we move on to the formation of speech skills, which is accomplished through a variety of training exercises (lexical, aimed at consolidating and correct use of professional vocabulary; grammar, involving the study of syntactic structures specific to a specific type of discourse and practicing them in the typical for the professional sphere of speech models) and actual speech exercises.

At the final stage of mastering speech discourses within both conditional speech and authentic-speech communication situations, there is work on improving acquired language skills and speech skills through the creation of their own oral and written speech works. At this stage of training, interactive educational technologies and game simulations that mimic real-world situations of professional communication in the legal field are widely used. As a result, the process of gradually increasing students' cognitive independence leads to a qualitative transformation from performing tasks with the teacher's guidance and based on the sample to an entirely independent approach to professional, communicative tasks.

6. Conclusion

The developed model of teaching professional English ensures high-quality speech training and systematic development of students' cognitive independence, which is accomplished through the use of EOS methods in the learning process, as well as methods of cognitive and practical activities, allowing students to acquire the ability to self-educate by mastering the methods of working with normative samples while learning new types and forms of professional communication. The model satisfies the requirements of comprehensive foreign language specialists training, developing, and strengthening their competence to understand specific information in an English juridical text, to use appropriate legal terms, and to interact with counterparts or clients in accordance with the English juridical system to identify a specific communicative situation, define a related problem or legal solution, and associate them according to a legal issue or area of expertise, providing an appropriate response to the problem; supply with legal information and create separate legislative documents.

The use of information technology increases the effectiveness of this educational model, allowing for the improvement of the educational process and more efficient development of students' foreign language communicative competence. The construction of game simulations enables the practice and consolidation of relevant behavior patterns, ensuring the development of students' flexibility, adaptability, creativity, and intellectual potential, which is critical for the future successful work of a specialist in a professional English-speaking environment.

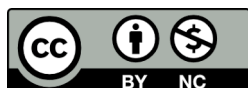
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