



APPROACHERS TO UNIVERSITY ESP TEACHING

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Abstract.

Relevance: agriculture is the only branch in Ukraine that shows its stable growth and is the main source of foreign currency revenues even in period of economic slowdown. The urgent tasks of Agricultural sector of Ukraine are to provide collaboration of Ukrainian experts in agriculture with foreign partners. Foreign language fluency is required to encourage seminal work of Ukrainian government, EU and its members.

Aim: the purpose of this study was to highlight the strategies for effective ESP teaching in agricultural university and development of recommendations for the introduction of an interdisciplinary approach to teaching discipline in the educational process in agricultural university.

Methods: Theoretical (induction, synthesis and generalization), empirical (study and analysis of pedagogical experience, training programs for future specialists in the field of engineering and agronomy, the results of their activities) are used in the work.

Results: the paper presents an overview of the key issues in ESP teaching in agricultural universities. The difficulties in ESP teaching in non-linguistic university, are examined in the paper. The main approaches of teaching ESP to students majoring in agriculture and engineering are discussed. Recommendations on the implementation of the interdisciplinary course ESP with technical students have been created.

Conclusions: a conclusion has been made that ESP teaching with the students majoring in agriculture and engineering can benefit from using and experimenting with different learning strategies giving preferences to interdisciplinary and profession-based approaches. A special focus should be placed on the web-based techniques and training materials used to foster motivation to learn the foreign language.

Keywords: *ESP teaching, agricultural university, multidisciplinary, profession-based, web-based techniques, agriculture*

Introduction. Agriculture is of particular importance in the economy of Ukraine. It belongs to the main complexes that determine the strategies for supporting the state's activity. The importance of agro-industrial complex is not only in ensuring the needs of people in food, but also in significant affect on the employment and efficiency of national production in general. The agro-industrial complex of Ukraine employs about 35% of all workers in the field of material production. More than a quarter of all production funds are concentrated in this field and almost 15% of the country's GDP is formed in

agro-industrial complex. It includes all types of production and production services, the creation and development of which are aimed at the production of final consumer products from agricultural raw materials.

Ukrainian farmers outpaced metallurgists and entered the market leaders in terms of exports of products, providing almost 40% of all foreign currency revenues of Ukraine in 2018. In recent years, Ukraine became one of the world's largest producer and exporter of sunflower oil and has taken one of the first positions in the export of sunflower cattle

cake. According to exports of grain and legumes, Ukraine takes the second place in the export of rapeseed, the fourth place in the world export of corn and barley and the sixth place in the export of wheat and soybeans. Honey production has declined and in 2018 the amount of exported honey has increased. Ukraine is ranked as the number one country in Europe for honey production, producing 75 thousand metric tons of honey annually.

Today, agriculture is almost the only industry in Ukraine that shows its stable growth, despite the complicated social and economic conditions. Recently, this industry has become almost the main exporter and the main source of foreign currency revenues to the country. However, despite some progress, the agricultural industry requires systematic reforms. It considers, primarily, the transition to EU standards that will provide increasing exports. In view of this, the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food developed a Comprehensive Strategy for the Development of Agriculture and Rural Areas for 2015-2020. The strategy is considered to be a crucial element in the progress the collaborative work of Ukrainian government and EU and its members, USAID, Global bank, Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, European Investment Bank and budget contributors (countries, organizations and companies, scientific laboratories). Consequently, Ukraine will create competitive, export-oriented agricultural environment. According to this concept one of the urgent issues is improvement of agrarian policy in the field of science, education and innovation. It is aimed, in particular, to reform the field of agrarian education for improving the quality of specialists, working in the agricultural sector of Ukraine.

The implementation of this concept in terms of international cooperation is possible due to increasing foreign language fluency in educational establishments that prepare future specialists for agricultural industry.

The question is whether agricultural universities are ready to prepare competitive agricultural experts for the world labor market. The policy of Ministry of education of Ukraine is compliant with the concept of agricultural development for 2015-2020. Ministry of education of Ukraine considers higher education to be the engine of social transformation, and English to be a key competence for integration and globalization of the economy, a tool for international communication, a strategy for incorporation

into the European educational, scientific and professional environment, conditions for effective integration and factor of economic growth of the country. Ukraine also admits the importance of language fluency for education and profession opportunities of Ukrainian people. The concept on the development of foreign language learning in higher schools considers university students to take part in educational and professional life at local and international levels (Mon.gov.ua. news, 2021). A. Fălăuș admits that "in comparison with teaching EGP, teaching ESP usually poses a lot more challenges" (Fălăuș, 2017).

The article aims to determine the strategies for effective ESP teaching in technical university taking into account the experience of top-notch experts in the field of ESP learning and to create of recommendations for the effective implementation of an interdisciplinary approach to the ESP course for students of technical specialties.

Research methods: Theoretical (induction, deduction, synthesis and generalization); empirical (study and analysis of pedagogical experience, work plans, training programs for future engineers and agricultural workers and the results of their activities) are used in the paper.

Results and discussion. The history of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) instructions is rather young. The qualification of a specialist in agricultural sphere in the middle of the 20th century didn't require foreign language fluency. Foreign language university learning was based on Grammar Translation method. This means that foreign language instruction included detailed analysis and memorizing grammar rules in order to translate sentences and literary texts. According to Howatt, vocabulary selection is based solely on the reading texts used, and words are taught through bilingual word lists, dictionary study, and memorization. In a typical Grammar-Translation text, the grammar rules are presented and illustrated, a list of vocabulary items is presented with their translation equivalents, and translation exercises are prescribed. The sentence is the basic unit of teaching and language practice. Much of the lesson is devoted to translating sentences into and out of the target language, and it is this focus on the sentence that is a distinctive feature of the method. Earlier approaches to foreign language study used grammar as an aid to the study of texts in a foreign language. But this was thought to be too difficult for students in secondary schools, and the focus on the sentence was an attempt to make language learning easier (Howatt, 1984, p.131). As we see, reading and writing were the major focus, little or no

systematic attention was paid to university students' speaking or listening. Therefore, engineering graduates could cite a grammar rule, but wasn't able to correctly determine part of speech in the text, represent the information in monologue speech, but not to participate the dialogue.

Only in 1970th the physiological and linguistic peculiarities of foreign language learning became subject matter of Ukrainian pedagogy. From the survey of approaches and methods we have seen that the history of language teaching in the last one hundred years has been characterized by a search for more effective ways of teaching foreign languages. The adoption of new teaching approach or method such as Communicative Language Teaching, Competency-Based Language Teaching, Content-Based Instruction, Cooperative Learning contributed to the systematization of foreign language teaching instruction in the context of student individual work, final testing of basic competences, creating new printed and interactive course books, curriculum.

However, not all of mentioned above approaches are relevant in ESP teaching. We analyzed surveys conveyed from 1970 till 2020 on approaches and methods of ESP teaching in agricultural and engineering universities and found out that ESP in technical university faces a lot of difficulties: discrepancy between the hours devoted to ESP learning and high standards for profession-based foreign language classes, low motivation, speaking deskilling in the last years of study (Bobrova, 2015, p.38). To overcome these challenges each university searches for the ways of improving foreign language fluency. First of all, it concerns grouping of the students according to the language skills. The survey conducted with the first-year and second-year undergraduate students of Kosovo university (N = 239) from the Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Computer Sciences, Architecture, Construction Engineering, and Food Technology departments showed that "the engineering students' perception regarding professional vocabulary, the selection of engineering topics, and their modification and adoption in the classroom should be based on the students' language knowledge as a group, and the instructors' teaching skills need to be adapted to deliver courses in a more interactive learning environment" (Bekteshi and Xhaferi, 2020, p. 100). E. [Bekteshi](#) and B. [Xhaferi](#) determine two basic factors that influence ESP successful learning: first of all, it is grouping the students according the level of foreign language competence and "instructors' teaching skills" that include the desire and ability of a teacher to use technology.

Second of all, the author suggests improving ESP learning by designing computer-based textbooks for individual students' work of different level of difficulty. "They need to design courses keeping in mind the nature of the particular target and learning situations they are to deal with, at the same time juggling professionally with the requirements imposed by working with large heterogeneous classes" (Fălăuș, 2017, p. 12059).

Another effective strategy (in terms of increasing the motivation of students) is organizing projects, festivals, theaters, scientific and practical conferences. "These types of events not only increase the motivation of students to learn a foreign language, but also contribute to the development of communication and presentation skills, team skills and other necessary engineering competencies (Batunova, 2014; Aksenova, Shepetovski, 2014).

Some scientists claim that to have excellent outcomes in the context of ESP learning in technical university is possible if integrated use of communicative method and grammar and translation method are applied (Mihailov, 2018, p.149). The significance of cross-subject teaching in ESP learning is described in research of a number of scientists. Ishina L., for example, states that teaching two languages (English and Latin) to students majoring in agriculture can benefit ESP learning. "The ability to compare and analyze in this specialty contributes to the formation of language experience on the basis of cross-subject connections" (Ishina, 2011). Voinatovska S. agrees that cross-subject teaching enhances agricultural student motivation and performance. ESP learning, from Obratsov P. point of view, mustn't be limited by learning foreign language for special purposes. It should be integrated with the disciplines of professional cycle to acquire competences (Obratsov, 2005). Cross-subject teaching as a process and result causes the systematicity and integrity of professional training, ensuring the formation of a system of professional knowledge, skills in accordance with the state standards of quality of education through the structural organization of educational content, promotes the formation and development of key personal competencies (Hannichenko, 2017, p. 6).

Scientists from Tomsk polytechnic university established perspectives for the concepts of designing an interdisciplinary course that aims to develop and master relevant communication and professional skills, using English as a means and a kind of mediator in shaping future engineers. Analytical revision and careful selection of the sources of information (including the above) for ESP materials develop-

ment can proceed with the cooperation of subject teachers. Overseas experience showed that collaboration between a subject expert and an English language teacher might be employed for the benefit of learners who will make the most of this integration (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998). According to I.A. Cheremissina and M.J. Riemer, internationally recognized and validated tests, such as the British and Australian International English Testing Service (IELTS) examinations, which have a strong focus on academic matters might be taken as basis to evaluate the students' skills (Cheremissina and Riemer, 2001 p. 59).

The learning outcomes in A. Dragoescu, S. Stefanovic syllabus design were the starting point, i.e. what a future mechanical engineer is supposed to know when the required course is completed. Learning outcomes are defined with the help of experts from Industry, the Union of Employers, the Union of Engineers and Technicians, and students. The knowledge and skills concerned with the English language are categorized as ESP for professional and occupational purposes which enable students to read technical literature and contribute to students' specialization and ESP for soft skills such as entrepreneurship, business communication, IT, etc. (Dragoescu and Stefanovic, 2010, p.224).

The concept of profession-based foreign language learning was investigated in the end of the 20th century by M.V. Lyakhovitskiy, L.S. Gegechkori, N.I. Gez, E.I. Passov, G.A Kitaygorodskaya.

In 1973 M.V. Lyakhovitskiy pointed out that foreign language learning is not an end in itself, but a strategy for improving educational attainment. Profession based approach should respond to the distinctive circumstances such as "working on special texts, learning profession-based topics and vocabulary to develop speaking skills, designing instructions for teachers to improve students' grammar and vocabulary" (Liakhovetskiy, 1973). The scientist considers that ESP teaching in agricultural university should be focused "learning language (grammar, vocabulary, phonetics) and developing communication skills specific to a particular area related to a particular profession". E.V. Roschina insists on designing ESP textbooks and instructions that will help future specialists in agrarian sphere to solve practical professional tasks. To fulfill the profession-based potential of ESP learning, the following conditions must be observed:

- to set clear objectives of ESP learning activities;
- the social and professional focus of these activities;

- the trainees must be satisfied solving professional tasks;
- the ability of trainees to be creative in solving professional problems;
- a favourable psychological climate in class (Roschina, 1978, p. 4).

According to O. Koval, implementation of «competence-based approach» in university foreign language learning involves scheduling educational material with a focus on three key stages of learning, which depend on the objectives set by the curriculum such as:

- general training, including the basics of phonetics, conversational practice, study of grammar;
- specialized training, which involves the acquisition of skills of selection, scanning, reading texts within the specialty, as well as writing abstracts (e.g. technical articles, reviews, research), the preparation of messages within the received specialty (reports, abstracts in English);
- social and professional training, which involves the students' achievement of an advanced level of language proficiency, which includes the ability to listen and understand lecture material in English, as well as take part in University and international seminars and discussions on technical topics within the framework of the received specialty, independently prepare and conduct presentations in the specialty (Roschina, 1978, p. 3).

Both profession-based and integrated approach in ESP teaching involves the provides using different forms and elements of interactive and problem based learning; using up-to-date audio and video resources, multimedia programs and web-based technology, application of student-centered approach when creating individual tasks and choosing the forms of communication; improving the content of professional training (Dubina, 2016, p. 119).

The technology of ESP learning in technical university is usually focused on the student's personality, his active participation in self-development, gaining quality knowledge, professional skills, including skills of teamwork and creative solutions to specific problems. In order to enhance ESP learning university teachers use interactive methods such as project web-based activities (Kuleshov and Gorohova, 2019), Moodle platform, mass media and blogs, e-mails and webinars, interactive lectures, online tests, ESP teacher site as foreign language learning technology, skype group work. (Lomachenko, Kokodey and Hituschenko, 2019; Chernyshkova, 2018), smart books, multimedia presentations, online testing and videos, web-based apps and platforms (Chaikovska and Zbaravska, 2020), podcasts

(Zaharova, 2020). According to M.V. Zaharova, «presentations, podcasts, various tools that help to contain as much information in different graphic forms make each session on different lexical, grammatical, conversational, professional topics more vivid, diverse and memorable». N.N. Serostanova and E.I. Chopornaya (2020) consider MALL services such as universal (Duolingo, Linguleo, Semper, Busuu, Lingvist, etc.); apps for the formation and development of lexical skills (Easy ten, Upmind, Memrise, Quizlet, etc.); apps for improving grammatical skills (English Phrasal Verbs, Filp and Learn, Color Verbs, etc.); apps that offer video fragments and tasks developed for them as a basis for learning a foreign language (FluentU, TED, YouTube, etc.); news apps (BBC News, CNN News, etc.); apps for the formation of foreign-language communication skills (Urban Dictionary, Genius, Smigin Travel, etc.); mobile dictionaries (ABBY Lingvo Dictionaries, SlovoEd, Multitran, etc.); automatic translators (Word Lens, Google Translate, iTranslate, etc.) allow to better provide self-study, as well as learning activities in groups and help to increase the motivation of students through the use of technical means they know.

Conclusions. Foreign language fluency is a key to economic success of the country, especially when we deal with the most powerful branch of the country like agriculture. The present paper is an attempt to summarize the recommendations and the results of the studies on ESP learning and teaching in technical universities. Literature review showed that the capacity to teach ESP for students majoring in agriculture and engineering remains weak. The main areas of research were the interdisciplinary approach in teaching ESP through team-teaching between career subject

teachers and their ESP colleagues; developing instructions to the topic “Microbiology”.

Based on the review, we can conclude that ESP teaching in agricultural university should contain the following procedures:

- teaching ESP parallel to the integrated major;
- designing ESP course book in accordance with international standards (CEFR), contents and structure of British and Australian International English Testing Service (IELTS); a leveled course book should combine a strong grammar syllabus with the useful industry-specific vocabulary;
- the emphasis in ESP teaching should be done, first of all, on the development of profession-based communicative skills and abilities;
- development of so-called "Soft skills", important for engineering specialties: public speaking and presentations, writing reports, messages, resumes, motivational letters, skills of holding and participating in online meetings, ability to work in a team;
- designing syllabus and training materials in collaboration with subject matter expert;
- grouping the students according their language fluency;
- regular usage of web-based tasks and activities;
- organization of projects, seminars, round tables, scientific and practical student conferences during the ESP course in order to increase motivation among students and improve the previously mentioned "soft skills" such as teamwork, project management, the development of oratorical abilities, etc.

Further study will consider the cross-subject potential of ESP in terms of Latin and English learning with the students majoring in agronomy.

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УДК 37-051:005.336.2-021.121: [37.018.43:004]

ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ ЗАСАДИ ВИКЛАДАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЗА ПРОФЕСІЙНИМ СПРЯМУВАННЯМ У ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

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Реферат.

Актуальність: сільське господарство є єдиною галуззю в Україні, яка демонструє стабільне зростання і є основним джерелом надходжень в іноземній валюті навіть в період економічного спаду. Нагальними завданнями аграрного сектору України є забезпечення співпраці українських експертів у сільському господарстві з іноземними партнерами. Вільне володіння іноземною мовою необхідне для ефективної співпраці українського уряду з ЄС та його партнерами.

Метою цього дослідження було висвітлення стратегій ефективного викладання АПС (англійської за професійним спрямуванням) в аграрному університеті та розробка рекомендацій щодо впровадження міждисциплінарного підходу до викладання дисципліни у навчальний процес ЗВО.

Методи: Теоретичні (індукція, синтез і узагальнення); емпіричні (вивчення та аналіз педагогічного досвіду, програм підготовки майбутніх фахівців у галузі сільського господарства, результатів їх діяльності) використовуються у роботі.

Результати: У статті представлено огляд основних підходів та аналіз експериментальних досліджень з викладання англійської за професійним спрямуванням в аграрних та технічних університетах. Створено рекомендації щодо впровадження міждисциплінарного курсу з АПС в аграрних ЗВО.

Висновки: Аналіз існуючих підходів до вивчення англійської мови за професійним спрямуванням та вивчення передового досвіду викладачів дає підстави стверджувати, що у викладанні АПС можуть бути застосовані різні стратегії навчання, проте переваги варто надавати міждисциплінарним та професійним підходам. Особлива увага повинна бути зосереджена на веб-методах і навчальних матеріалах, які використовуються для підвищення мотивації у студентів нелінгвістичних факультетів.

Ключові слова: викладання АПС, аграрний університет, міждисциплінарний, професійний, цифрові технології, сільське господарство

Received: 15 May 2021

Accepted: 15 June 2021