

**PROFESSIONALLY-ORIENTED FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING:
LINGUODIDACTIC FOUNDATIONS AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

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Abstract

Professionally-oriented foreign language teaching has become an essential component of higher education, particularly in non-philological specialties. This article examines the key characteristics of such instruction, including the selection of language material, the central role of needs analysis, the use of authentic resources, and integration with professional competencies. Drawing on the works of international, CIS, and Uzbek scholars, the study highlights the methodological differences between general and professional language courses and substantiates the importance of a competency-based and content-integrated approach.

Key words

Professionally-oriented foreign language teaching, language material, authentic resources, professional competency, content-integrated approach.

Introduction. In the context of globalization and increasing professional mobility, the demand for foreign language proficiency tailored to specific occupational domains has significantly increased. Unlike general foreign language instruction, professionally-oriented language teaching focuses on developing communicative competence within a specific field. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is defined by learners' needs rather than by linguistic content alone. Similarly, Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998) emphasize that ESP courses are designed to meet specific needs of learners and are centered on the language appropriate to particular disciplines.

In the CIS pedagogical tradition, scholars such as Galskova (2004) and Zimnyaya (2003) underline the importance of integrating language learning with professional activity. Uzbek researchers, including Jalolov (2012) and Nizamova (2020), also stress that foreign language teaching in non-philological universities must be closely aligned with students' future professional tasks.

Literature review. The theoretical foundations of professionally-oriented foreign language teaching have been widely discussed in the works of international and regional scholars, who emphasize the importance of needs-based, context-driven instruction.

According to Tom Hutchinson and Alan Waters, "ESP is not a matter of teaching specialized varieties of English, but rather an approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to content and method are based on the learner's reason for learning" (1987). This definition highlights the central role of learners' professional needs in shaping course design and instructional strategies.

Expanding this perspective, Tony Dudley-Evans notes that "ESP is designed to meet specific needs of the learner and makes use of the underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves" (1998). Together with Maggie Jo St John, he stresses that language teaching must reflect real professional practices and discourse patterns.

The significance of vocabulary in ESP is underlined by I. S. P. Nation, who states that "specialized vocabulary is essential for comprehension and production in specific fields, and it requires deliberate and systematic teaching" (2001). He categorizes vocabulary into general, academic, and technical layers, which is especially relevant for professionally-oriented courses.

The role of authentic materials has also been emphasized in the literature. Andrew Gilmore argues that “authentic materials provide learners with exposure to real language use and increase motivation by demonstrating the relevance of classroom learning to real-life communication” (2007). Similarly, Jeremy Harmer points out that “while authentic texts are beneficial, they often need adaptation to suit learners’ levels and learning goals” (2007).

The integration of language and professional content is supported by the CLIL approach. Do Coyle emphasizes that “CLIL is a dual-focused educational approach in which an additional language is used for the learning and teaching of both content and language” (2010). Along with Philip Hood and David Marsh, she highlights that this integration enhances both subject knowledge and language competence.

In the CIS context, Natalia Galskova states that “foreign language teaching in higher education should be professionally oriented and communicatively relevant to students’ future activities” (2004). Likewise, Irina Zimnyaya argues that “education should focus on the formation of competencies that integrate knowledge, skills, and personal qualities necessary for professional activity” (2003).

Uzbek scholars also contribute significantly to this field. Jamol Jalolov emphasizes that “teaching foreign languages in non-philological institutions must be based on professional orientation and the use of specialized texts” (1997).

Overall, these scholarly perspectives confirm that professionally-oriented foreign language teaching is grounded in needs analysis, authentic communication, specialized vocabulary, and integration with professional competencies.

Methods. This study is based on a qualitative research design that integrates the analysis of pedagogical and methodological literature with a comparative examination of general foreign language teaching and professionally-oriented language instruction. The qualitative approach allows for an in-depth exploration of theoretical concepts, methodological principles, and practical implications related to teaching foreign languages for specific purposes. In particular, the study relies on the interpretative analysis of key scholarly works in the field of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), competency-based education, and content-integrated learning.

The methodological framework of the research is grounded in several well-established theoretical approaches. Within this theoretical framework, the study conducts a comparative analysis of two major instructional paradigms: general foreign language teaching, which typically focuses on everyday communication and standardized curricula, and professionally-oriented language teaching, which prioritizes domain-specific communication and learner-centered design. The comparison is carried out across several key dimensions. Particular attention is given to the selection of language material, where the study examines how lexical units, grammatical structures, and speech patterns in professionally-oriented courses are derived from authentic professional contexts rather than general topics. The research also analyzes the structure and components of needs analysis, considering how target situation analysis, present situation analysis, learning situation analysis, and lacks analysis contribute to the development of tailored instructional programs.

Results

1. Selection of Language Material

One of the defining features of professionally-oriented language teaching is that linguistic material (lexis, grammar, and speech patterns) is derived from a specific professional context. Unlike general language courses that prioritize everyday topics such as hobbies or travel, ESP courses focus on domain-specific themes.

For example:

- Medical students learn terminology related to symptoms, diagnosis, treatment methods, and pharmaceuticals.
- Business English learners focus on company management, marketing, finance, and contract negotiation.

As noted by Nation (2001), vocabulary in ESP can be divided into three layers:

- General vocabulary
- Academic vocabulary
- Specialized terminology

Terminology plays a crucial role, as precise use of terms is essential for effective professional communication.

2. Central Role of Needs Analysis

Needs analysis is a cornerstone of professionally-oriented language teaching. According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987), it includes several components:

- **Target Situation Analysis** – identifying how learners will use the language in real-life professional contexts.
- **Present Situation Analysis** – assessing learners' current proficiency.
- **Learning Situation Analysis** – understanding learners' preferences, motivation, and learning conditions.
- **Lacks Analysis** – determining the gap between current and desired competence.

Galskova (2004) argues that without a thorough needs analysis, it is impossible to design an effective ESP curriculum. Uzbek scholars also emphasize that tailoring instruction to students' professional needs significantly increases learning efficiency.

3. Use of Authentic Materials

Authentic materials are a fundamental principle of ESP instruction. These include:

- Scientific articles
- Technical documents
- Business reports
- Contracts
- Audio/video recordings of professional interactions

According to Gilmore (2007), authentic materials provide exposure to real language use and enhance learners' motivation. They reflect actual professional discourse and prepare students for real-world communication. However, as noted by Harmer (2007), such materials may be linguistically complex. Therefore, teachers must carefully select and adapt them through:

- Simplification
- Elaboration
- Task scaffolding

4. Integration with Professional Competencies

Professionally-oriented language teaching goes beyond linguistic competence and contributes to the development of professional skills. Language becomes a tool for acquiring domain-specific knowledge.

For instance:

– Engineering students solve technical problems in English, developing both language and analytical skills.

– Economics students create business plans in English, enhancing both linguistic and managerial competencies.

This approach aligns with the **CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)** methodology. As Coyle et al. (2010) state, CLIL promotes simultaneous development of content knowledge and language proficiency.

Discussion. The findings demonstrate that professionally-oriented language teaching significantly differs from general language instruction in its objectives, content, and methodology. While general courses follow standardized curricula, ESP courses are highly adaptive and learner-centered.

The integration of language and professional content enhances not only communicative competence but also critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This is particularly relevant in technical universities, where students must operate in international professional environments.

Uzbek scholars note that implementing ESP and CLIL approaches contributes to improving the quality of higher education and aligning it with global standards.

Conclusion. Professionally-oriented foreign language teaching represents a modern, effective approach that responds to the demands of the global labor market. Its key features include:

- Context-based language material selection
- Comprehensive needs analysis
- Use of authentic professional resources
- Integration with professional competencies

These elements ensure that language learning is meaningful, practical, and directly applicable to students' future careers. The adoption of ESP and CLIL methodologies in higher education institutions is therefore essential for preparing competitive specialists in the international arena.

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