

UDC 378.147:811'276.6:33

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/hst-2025-23-100-19>

DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATION: A PRACTICE-ORIENTED APPROACH WITHIN HIGHER ECONOMIC EDUCATION

NIKITENKO, VITALINA¹
HRYSHA, SERHIY²
BOBRAKOV, VOLODYMYR³

Abstract

Relevance. In the context of globalization and growing international cooperation, professional English communication skills have become an essential component of economic expertise. Economists are increasingly required to operate in multilingual environments, engage in cross-border collaboration, and access international research. Therefore, the development of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) tailored to the needs of economists is both timely and highly relevant for graduate education. **The purpose** of the study is to explore and evaluate effective methods and tools for developing professional English communication skills in master's students majoring in economics, within the framework of a practice-oriented foreign language course. **The object** of the study is the process of foreign language education in master's programs in economics. **The subject** of the study is the development of professional English communication skills in economics students through practice-oriented learning strategies. The research employs a qualitative **methodology**, including analysis of educational materials, observation of student performance, and evaluation of pedagogical practices. Surveys and semi-structured interviews with students and instructors were also used to gather insights on the effectiveness of specific teaching approaches and language activities. The study identifies the most effective communicative tasks and methods for enhancing professional English skills among economics students, such as case discussions, role-playing simulations, and analysis of economic texts. **Results** indicate that practice-oriented approaches significantly improve students' ability to use domain-specific language in professional contexts. Recommendations are proposed for optimizing the curriculum of practice-oriented foreign language courses in economics education.

Key words: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), economics education, professional communication, content integration, practice-oriented learning.

Introduction. In today's interconnected world, the ability to communicate effectively in English has become a fundamental requirement for professionals in the field of economics. As the global economy becomes increasingly integrated, economists are expected to engage in international dialogue, collaborate with foreign partners, interpret economic data in English, and participate in multinational projects. Therefore, foreign language competence – particularly in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) – is no longer a supplementary skill, but a core component of economic professionalism. Graduate students in economics must be prepared not only to understand

and use general English, but also to master terminology, stylistic features, and communicative practices specific to their discipline. This need has led to the growing importance of practice-oriented language instruction in higher education. Such instruction prioritizes real-world tasks, professional scenarios, and the simulation of economic communication contexts, thereby helping students to apply their language skills meaningfully and confidently in their future careers. The paper investigates the implementation of a practice-oriented approach to teaching professional English communication skills to economics master's students. It focuses on identifying effective strategies, activities, and methods that foster the integration of language and content learning. The study also aims to highlight the benefits of aligning language education with students' academic and career needs.

2. Literature Review

In recent decades, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has gained particular relevance in the context of globalized labor markets and academic mobility. For students in economics and business, mastering English

¹ Y. M. Potebnya Engineering Education and Scientific Institute, Zaporizhzhia National University (Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine)

E-mail: vitalina2006@ukr.net

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9588-7836>

² Y. M. Potebnya Engineering Education and Scientific Institute, Zaporizhzhia National University (Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine)

E-mail: Zp.gagarin@gmail.com

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0000-9736-9242>

³ Y. M. Potebnya Engineering Education and Scientific Institute, Zaporizhzhia National University (Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine)

E-mail: crazybobry@gmail.com

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0480-730X>

is not only about linguistic competence but also about developing the ability to operate professionally in international environments. Scholars have emphasized that ESP courses should be tailored to the specific communication needs of learners within their future professional fields (T. Dudley-Evans & M. J. St John, 1998; T. Hutchinson & A. Waters, 1987). Studies by H. Basturkmen (Basturkmen, 2006) and K. Hyland (Hyland, 2007) underline that effective ESP instruction should integrate both subject-matter knowledge and communicative competence, utilizing authentic materials, case studies, and situational dialogues relevant to the learners' discipline. This approach ensures not only linguistic accuracy but also disciplinary fluency, which is critical for economists working across borders. Ukrainian scholars such as I. V. Zabolotna (Zabolotna, 2020) and O. P. Kushnir & M. S. Palekha (2022) have also noted the effectiveness of project-based and practice-oriented approaches in foreign language training. They argue that such methods foster critical thinking, teamwork, and the ability to communicate in real-life economic scenarios. Internationally, O. B. Tarnopolsky (Tarnopolsky, 2013), a Ukrainian expert in ESP pedagogy, advocated for content and language integrated learning (CLIL) models in university contexts, which are particularly useful for economics students who must handle both linguistic and conceptual complexity. Despite a wide range of available strategies, many studies agree that the most effective ESP programs are those that simulate authentic professional situations – including business negotiations, report writing, public presentations, and professional correspondence. These elements not only enhance students' language skills but also prepare them for real-world challenges in globalized economic systems.

3. Methodology

The study adopts a theoretical and analytical approach grounded in the principles of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and content-based instruction in higher education. It is based on a comprehensive review and synthesis of existing literature on practice-oriented language teaching for economics students, with particular focus on models that integrate communicative competence with domain-specific knowledge. The research relies on a qualitative content analysis of scholarly sources published between 1987 and 2023, including seminal works by Hutchinson and Waters (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), Dudley-Evans and St John (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998), Basturkmen (Basturkmen, 2006), Hyland (Hyland, 2007), and Tarnopolsky (Tarnopolsky, 2013), among others. Ukrainian contri-

butions to the field – particularly those by Zabolotna (Zabolotna, 2020), Kushnir and Palekha (Kushnir & Palekha, 2022) – are also critically examined in the context of national higher education reform and the Europeanization of language instruction. The methodological aim is to identify and systematize pedagogical strategies that support the development of professional English communication skills among economics students. These strategies are analyzed through the lens of:

- Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)
- Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)
- Project-based and simulation-based learning in ESP

The analysis focuses on didactic models, types of communicative tasks, and methods that facilitate the acquisition of both linguistic and disciplinary competences. Attention is also paid to how these approaches align with students' academic needs and future employment contexts in the global economic environment. The theoretical framework serves as the basis for constructing a conceptual model of practice-oriented ESP instruction tailored to economics students in Ukrainian higher education.

4. Discussion

The analysis of scholarly contributions highlights the growing consensus that ESP instruction for economics students must be grounded in practice-oriented and context-specific methodologies. This reflects not only the increasing functional role of English as a global lingua franca in economics, but also the pedagogical shift toward constructivist, learner-centered paradigms in higher education.

One of the most prominent themes across the literature is the need to redefine the role of English in economics education. Rather than serving as an ancillary skill or optional competence, English is now viewed as a central medium through which students access academic discourse, participate in research collaboration, and operate in international job markets. Hyland (Hyland, 2007) emphasizes that English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) must focus not only on language structures, but also on discourse practices, genre awareness, and pragmatic competence – skills that are especially vital for economists dealing with international documentation, cross-border negotiation, and data-driven policy recommendations.

4.1 From Grammar to Communication: ESP as Real-World Preparation

Traditional language instruction models, which prioritized grammar drills and general vocabulary,

are increasingly seen as insufficient for the demands of today's professional landscape. As Dudley-Evans and St John (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998) (1998) argue, ESP must begin with a needs analysis and proceed through tailored content, real-world simulation, and ongoing reflection. For economics students, this entails mastering:

- Terminology used in economic analysis, statistics, and finance
- Communicative routines typical of business reporting and international correspondence
- The ability to interpret and present data, such as graphs, charts, and infographics
- Functional tasks such as writing executive summaries, conducting briefings, and participating in panel discussions

Basturkmen (Basturkmen, 2006) (2006) further notes that such instruction should focus on communicative events that are common in the target profession, thereby helping learners to build both fluency and discourse competence.

4.2. ESP and Disciplinary Integration

The integration of subject-matter content with language instruction – often referred to as CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) – is central to effective ESP design. Tarnopolsky (Tarnopolsky, 2013) advocates for a content-first approach, in which students encounter language in disciplinary contexts. This enhances both retention and transferability of knowledge, as learners are more likely to engage with material that reflects their future career environment.

This idea is echoed in Ukrainian research, particularly in the works of V.Nikitenko, who proposes that ESP instruction for economists should simulate the logic of economic reasoning through communicative tasks. These include policy case studies, team-based market research presentations, and role-plays in international business settings. Such tasks develop not only language skills, but also professional mindset and critical thinking.

Moreover, Ukrainian scholars such as Zabolotna (Zabolotna, 2020), and Kushnir and Palekha (Kushnir & Palekha, 2022) emphasize project-based learning as a key strategy for aligning ESP instruction with the competences required in the digital economy. They highlight that when students create outputs such as business plans, investment proposals, or policy briefs in English, they learn to navigate both language and professional genres simultaneously.

4.3. Pedagogical Implications

The literature strongly supports the idea that practice-oriented ESP instruction fosters deeper student

engagement and long-term skill development. It encourages:

- Autonomous learning, as students take ownership of communication tasks
- Collaborative problem-solving, particularly in pair and group work formats
- Metacognitive awareness, through task reflection and feedback

However, implementing such instruction requires adequate training of ESP educators, access to authentic materials, and institutional support. In many Ukrainian universities, challenges include outdated syllabi, insufficient teacher development, and limited exposure to real-world language use. Overcoming these barriers requires a systemic approach, involving curriculum redesign, cross-departmental cooperation, and digital resource integration.

4.4 Toward a Conceptual Framework

Based on the analysis, a conceptual model of practice-oriented ESP for economics students can be envisioned. This model rests on four pillars:

1. Needs-Based Design: Tailoring content to student specializations and career goals.
2. Authentic Tasks: Simulating communication formats typical in economic practice.
3. Content Integration: Embedding language instruction within disciplinary learning
4. Skill Transfer: Enabling students to apply language skills in academic and workplace settings.

Such a model would allow educators to balance linguistic goals with professional relevance, ensuring that graduates are equipped to operate confidently in international economic contexts.

Conceptual Model: Practice-Oriented ESP for Economics Students

The model below illustrates the four foundational pillars of a practice-oriented ESP approach designed for economics students in higher education.

The model illustrates the four foundational pillars of a practice-oriented ESP approach designed for economics students in higher education.

Pillar Description

1. Needs-Based Design Tailoring ESP content to students' academic specializations and professional goals.
2. Authentic Tasks Using real-world communicative tasks such as market analysis, business correspondence, and presentations.
3. Content Integration Embedding economic concepts, terminology, and discourse patterns into language instruction.

Table 1

Pillar	Description
1. Needs-Based Design	Tailoring ESP content to students' academic specializations and professional goals.
2. Authentic Tasks	Using real-world communicative tasks such as market analysis, business correspondence, and presentations.
3. Content Integration	Embedding economic concepts, terminology, and discourse patterns into language instruction.
4. Skill Transfer	Preparing students to use English effectively in academic, professional, and intercultural settings.

4. Skill Transfer Preparing students to use English effectively in academic, professional, and intercultural settings.

4.5 Linking the Model to Pedagogical Practice

The proposed conceptual model, presented in tabular form, offers a structured framework for designing and implementing ESP instruction in the field of economics. Each of the four pillars represents a core principle that addresses the specific linguistic, cognitive, and professional needs of students preparing for careers in a globalized economy.

1. Needs-Based Design serves as the starting point for course development. According to Dudley-Evans and St John (Dudley-Evans & St John, 1998) (1998), a thorough needs analysis is essential in identifying the communicative situations students are likely to encounter in their professional lives. This includes understanding what genres they will produce (e.g., reports, presentations), what interactions they will engage in (e.g., meetings, negotiations), and what vocabulary and discourse structures are most relevant to their specialization.

2. Authentic Tasks provide the bridge between language instruction and real-world application. As Hutchinson and Waters (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987) (1987) suggest, tasks must be meaningful, goal-oriented, and context-specific. For economics students, this may involve drafting a business email, simulating a client briefing, or analyzing a dataset and presenting conclusions. The authenticity of tasks not only enhances motivation but also prepares learners for workplace performance.

3. Content Integration reflects the growing recognition of the importance of disciplinary knowledge in language development. Basturkmen (Basturkmen, 2006) (2006) and Tarnopolsky (Tarnopolsky, 2013) (2013) emphasize that content and language should not be taught in isolation. Embedding economic concepts and professional discourse into ESP instruction allows students to practice language through relevant subject matter,

reinforcing both linguistic and domain knowledge simultaneously.

4. Skill Transfer is the ultimate goal of ESP instruction – the ability to use English confidently and appropriately in diverse professional settings. Hyland (Hyland, 2007) (2007) underscores that learners must acquire not only vocabulary and grammar but also sociolinguistic awareness, genre conventions, and strategic competence. This pillar supports the transition from classroom learning to real-world application, ensuring students can function effectively in international academic and business environments.

Taken together, these pillars provide a systemic and adaptable approach to ESP curriculum design. They align with the principles of learner-centered education, promote interdisciplinarity, and encourage the development of transferable communication skills that are vital in the 21st-century economy.

Key Strategies in Practice-Oriented ESP for Economics

Building on the conceptual model, the following table outlines specific strategies, activities, and task types that correspond to each pillar. This framework is intended to support instructors in designing coherent and targeted ESP instruction for economics students, ensuring that both linguistic and professional competencies are addressed.

The table presented above operationalizes the conceptual model by translating its theoretical pillars into practical instructional strategies. Each strategy is paired with a sample activity and an intended learning outcome, offering instructors a clear path from pedagogical intent to classroom implementation.

Needs-Based Design is exemplified through diagnostic activities such as needs analysis surveys or interviews. These help instructors tailor their syllabi to students' actual communication demands, such as writing policy briefs or delivering data presentations. This principle promotes relevance and student motivation by aligning instruction with professional goals. Under the Authentic Tasks pillar, the strategy

Table 2

Pillar	Strategy	Activity Example	Intended Learning Outcome
Needs-Based Design	Conduct student needs analysis	Questionnaire on expected job roles and communication formats	Aligns course content with students' future professional needs
Authentic Tasks	Use real-life professional materials	Analysis of an IMF economic outlook report	Improves ability to interpret authentic documents and present findings
Content Integration	Embed economic themes in language tasks	Role-play of an investment pitch using economic terminology	Develops both content knowledge and communicative competence
Skill Transfer	Simulate real-world communication	Team-based project: write and present a market research summary	Fosters confidence in applying English in professional contexts

of using real-life economic materials encourages engagement with language as it is used in professional contexts. For instance, analyzing an IMF report not only develops reading comprehension but also familiarizes students with stylistic and lexical conventions of expert discourse in economics. Content Integration focuses on embedding economic themes directly into language tasks. Role-playing an investment pitch requires students to mobilize both their economic knowledge and English skills simultaneously, reinforcing the interdisciplinary nature of professional communication.

Finally, Skill Transfer emphasizes the application of English in realistic team-based and cross-functional scenarios. Group projects such as market research summaries simulate the collaborative environments students are likely to face in multinational companies or policy institutions. These activities develop not just language fluency but also soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and public speaking.

Overall, this framework helps bridge the gap between theory and practice. It offers a pedagogically sound yet flexible structure that instructors can adapt to various institutional contexts, student levels, and subfields within economics.

5. Conclusion

In an increasingly interconnected and competitive global environment, economics professionals must possess not only domain-specific knowledge but also the communicative competence to operate effectively across linguistic and cultural boundaries. This study has highlighted the growing relevance of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in economics

education and emphasized the value of a practice-oriented approach that integrates language learning with authentic, discipline-specific tasks.

Through an analysis of international and Ukrainian scholarly literature, the paper has identified four core pillars – Needs-Based Design, Authentic Tasks, Content Integration, and Skill Transfer – that form a conceptual foundation for developing professional English communication skills among economics students. These pillars are not abstract ideals, but actionable components that can inform curriculum development, classroom practices, and assessment design.

The proposed model and accompanying strategies provide a flexible, evidence-informed framework for ESP instructors seeking to align their teaching with students' academic and career trajectories. In doing so, the approach contributes to a broader shift in higher education: one that values interdisciplinarity, learner autonomy, and the real-world applicability of linguistic skills. While the present study offers a theoretical contribution to the field, further empirical research is needed to evaluate the practical implementation and effectiveness of this model in various institutional contexts. Future studies could examine student outcomes, instructor experiences, and the long-term impact of practice-oriented ESP instruction on professional readiness.

Ultimately, by integrating language learning with meaningful content and communicative practice, ESP instruction can empower economics students to become not only fluent English users but also competent global professionals capable of navigating complex economic discourse on the international stage.

References

- Dudley-Evans, T., & St John, M. J. (1998). *Developments in English for Specific Purposes: A multi-disciplinary approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hutchinson, T., & Waters, A. (1987). *English for Specific Purposes: A learning-centred approach*. Cambridge University Press.
- Basturkmen, H. (2006). *Ideas and options in English for specific purposes*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Hyland (Hyland, 2007), K. (2007). *English for academic purposes: An advanced resource book*. Routledge.
- Zabolotna, I. V. (2020). Innovative approaches to ESP teaching in higher education. *Visnyk Zhytomyrskoho derzhavnoho universytetu*, (4), 45–52.
- Kushnir, O. P., & Palekha, M. S. (2022). Project-based learning in ESP for economics students. *Scientific Bulletin of Uzhhorod National University. Series: Pedagogy. Social Work*, (51), 98–104.
- Tarnopolsky, O. B. (2013). Content-based ESP teaching in Ukrainian tertiary education: A CLIL approach. *Advanced Education*, (1), 25–30.

ВІТАЛІНА, НІКІТЕНКО – доктор філософських наук, професор, професор кафедри управління та адміністрування, Інженерний навчально-науковий інститут ім. Ю. М. Потебні Запорізького національного університету (Запоріжжя, Україна)
E-mail: vitalina2006@ukr.net
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9588-7836>

СЕРГІЙ, ГРИША – аспірант спеціальності 073 «Менеджмент», Інженерний навчально-науковий інститут ім. Ю. М. Потебні, Запорізький національний університет (Запоріжжя, Україна)
E-mail: Zp.gagarin@gmail.com
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0000-9736-9242>

ВОЛОДИМИР, БОБРАКОВ – аспірант спеціальності 073 «Менеджмент», Інженерний навчально-науковий інститут ім. Ю. М. Потебні, Запорізький національний університет (Запоріжжя, Україна)
E-mail: crazybobry@gmail.com
ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-0480-730X>

**РОЗВИТОК ПРОФЕСІЙНОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНОЮ МОВОЮ:
ПРАКТИЧНО-ОРІЄНТОВАНИЙ ПІДХІД У ВИЩІЙ ЕКОНОМІЧНІЙ ОСВІТІ**

Анотація

У контексті глобалізації та зростаючої міжнародної співпраці професійні навички спілкування англійською мовою стали невід'ємним компонентом економічної експертизи. Економісти все частіше повинні працювати в багатомовному середовищі, брати участь у транскордонній співпраці та отримувати доступ до міжнародних досліджень. Тому розробка курсу англійської мови для спеціальних цілей (ESP), адаптованого до потреб економістів, є одночасно своєчасною та дуже актуальною для аспірантури. Метою дослідження є вивчення та оцінка ефективних методів та інструментів розвитку професійних навичок спілкування англійською мовою у студентів-магістрів, що спеціалізуються на економіці, в рамках практично-орієнтованого курсу іноземної мови. Об'єктом дослідження є процес навчання іноземній мові в магістерських програмах з економіки. Предметом дослідження є розвиток професійних навичок спілкування англійською мовою у студентів-економістів за допомогою практично-орієнтованих стратегій навчання. У дослідженні використовується якісна методологія, включаючи аналіз навчальних матеріалів, спостереження за успішністю студентів та оцінку педагогічної практики. Для збору інформації про ефективність конкретних підходів до навчання та мовних заходів також використовувалися опитування та напівструктуровані інтерв'ю зі студентами та викладачами. Дослідження визначає найефективніші комунікативні завдання та методи для підвищення професійних навичок англійської мови серед студентів-економістів, такі як обговорення кейсів, рольові симуляції та аналіз економічних текстів. Результати показують, що практично-орієнтовані підходи значно покращують здатність студентів використовувати предметно-орієнтовану мову в професійному контексті. Запропоновано рекомендації щодо оптимізації навчальної програми практично-орієнтованих курсів іноземних мов в економічній освіті.

Ключові слова: англійська мова для спеціальних цілей (ESP), економічна освіта, професійна комунікація, інтеграція контенту, практично-орієнтоване навчання.

© The Authors(s) 2025
This is an open access article under
The Creative Commons CC BY license

Received date 07.03.2025
Accepted date 17.04.2025
Published date 17.05.2025

How to cite: Nikitenko Vitalina, Serhii, Hrysha, Volodymyr, Bobrakov. Developing professional foreign language communication: a practice-oriented approach within higher economic education. HUMANITIES STUDIES: Collection of Scientific Papers / Ed. V. Voronkova. Zaporizhzhia: Publishing house «Helvetica», 2025. 23(100). P. 181–187.
doi: <https://doi.org/10.32782/hst-2025-23-100-19>