

## **IMPROVING STUDENTS' COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCY WITHIN THE SCOPE OF ESP TEACHING AND LEARNING AT UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The 21st century has swiftly turned into the epoch of increasing international communication focused on global ties formation in the sphere of politics, economics, business, medicine, computer sciences, etc. The role of international communication and corroboration is further strengthened for the countries which find themselves in situations of conflict, including war, civil war and/or occupation. For such countries the processes of peace-keeping, peace-enforcement and humanitarian action in war zones make the tasks for improving foreign language proficiency of businessmen, negotiators as well as social workers extremely vigorous and imperative.

Following the 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, a bill for a new law (No. 9432) “On the Use of the English Language in Ukraine”, specifying English as one of Ukraine’s languages for international communication, was introduced by president Zelenskyy in June 2023<sup>1</sup>. The law provides for the official establishment of the status of English language as one of the languages of international communication in Ukraine. It specifies the list of occupations for which a good command of English is required; the regulations for English language use in state authorities, local self-government bodies, units of emergency assistance to the population, on the state border, in education, transport and health care systems. The requirements for fluency in English for A category public servants, heads of local state administrations and their deputies will come into force two years after the termination of martial law, and for other officials – four years after the martial law cancellation as outlined in transitional provisions. Among other things, the bill encourages

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<sup>1</sup> Kovaliova A. Zelenskyy proposes a new status for the English language: a bill has been submitted. News. 2023. URL: <https://en.thepage.ua/news/a-new-status-for-the-english-language-in-ukraine-bill-no-9432>

the use of Ukrainian subtitles rather than dubbing for imported English-language movies.

In other words, there is a national understanding and governmental support for the need to further develop and strengthen the foreign language competency of Ukrainian higher educational establishments' graduates, young specialists and businessmen as foreign language fluent professionals are currently in great demand at the economic market of our country.

However, the targeted enhancement of students' foreign language proficiency presents an important challenge for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers nowadays. One of the main concerns in this respect is the search for helpful means, ways, methods and techniques, which would enable learners develop satisfying foreign language speaking proficiency, which is viewed as one of the most crucial skills, since the ability to communicate one's thoughts and organize ideas into a verbal structure is considered the ultimate goal of the whole language learning process.

Communicative efficiency is evaluated according to the ability to conduct a conversation in the target language. A lot of language learners assess their progress in foreign language based on their communicative achievements, as they perceive speaking skills as the primary indicator of language proficiency. For these learners, fluency and the ability to engage in conversations are far more significant than reading, writing, or listening comprehension. Therefore, it is essential for foreign language teachers and instructors to offer the most effective methods and support learners in developing their communicative competency, equipping them for real-life interactions.

Communicative proficiency is especially important in terms of teaching and learning English for Specific Purposes, as this subject aims at addressing students' communicative needs within a specific discipline or occupation and is aimed to serve the functions of their professional communication. Thus, the ultimate goal of ESP studying is to develop students' essential communicative competency within their professional field, enhance their speaking proficiency through different speech practices and activities simulating future workplace situations as well as to enable them acquire up-to-date professional information via foreign sources. In other words, the ESP objective is to develop students' foreign language communicative and professional competencies as an integrated whole<sup>2</sup>.

Currently many linguists and EFL teachers agree that students develop their foreign language speaking competency by "interacting". A communicative approach to foreign language teaching encompassing English for Specific Purposes serves this goal best.

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<sup>2</sup> Hildebrant K. Ways to Enhance Students' Communicative Skills in ESP Teaching and Learning. *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук*. 2024. Вип. 73. Том 1. С. 355.

## 1. Communicative approach to FLT

The concept of communicative language teaching emerged in the UK during the 1960s and 1970s and was later influenced by the works of N. Chomsky and S. Krashen. Its primary goal was to develop learners' communicative competency. M. Canale and M. Swain defined “communicative competency” as the ability to use a studied language effectively within a specific social context. They viewed it as a synthesis of three key aspects: knowledge of fundamental grammatical principles, understanding of how language functions in social interactions to fulfill communicative purposes, and awareness of how utterances and communicative functions can be structured according to discourse principles.<sup>3</sup> These researchers emphasize that communicative competency encompasses various components, including speech, linguistic, socio-cultural, educational, cognitive, and other skills. Over time, the concept of communicative competency expanded beyond linguistics and sociolinguistics, becoming closely associated with language teaching. Consequently, communicative language teaching came to be understood as the practice of teaching language for effective communication.<sup>4</sup> Nowadays FLT communicative approach helps learners to develop four types of FL competencies: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Furthermore, students develop correct pronunciation, enlarge their vocabulary, memorize grammatical structures as well as learn about the culture, traditions and realities of the target language<sup>5</sup>.

The communicative approach to foreign language teaching is closely linked to learner-centered education. In this approach, the traditional “subject-to-object” teaching model, where the teacher serves as the primary agent, determining the content, methods, and interaction style, is replaced by a “subject-to-subject” framework. Here, the teacher's role shifts to that of a facilitator, initiating the learning process and encouraging students to become active participants in communication. As noted by H. D. Brown, the starting point of the learner-centered teaching theory is the idea of an individual as a purpose and factor of the educational process; the main objective of an educator is to create the conditions necessary for comprehensive development

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<sup>3</sup> Canale M., Swain M. Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*. 1980. Vol. 1. No 1. P. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Richards J. C. Communicative Language Teaching Today. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. P. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Adronova E. Implementing Communicative Approach in ESP Training as a Pedagogical Aspect at Uzbekistan Universities. *Advances in Economics, Business and Management Research*. V. 129. 2020. P. 222. URL: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340305168\\_Implementing\\_Communicative\\_Approach\\_in\\_ESP\\_Training\\_as\\_a\\_Pedagogical\\_Aspect\\_at\\_Uzbekistan\\_Universities](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/340305168_Implementing_Communicative_Approach_in_ESP_Training_as_a_Pedagogical_Aspect_at_Uzbekistan_Universities)

of student's personality<sup>6</sup>. In this respect information is acquired and produced not only through the teacher but also from various sources. As a result, students' creative engagement increases, their motivation to complete assigned tasks grows, and this, in turn, fosters the development of their communicative, intellectual, sociocultural, linguistic, and speech competencies.

The study of the most efficient means and techniques application to enhance students' speaking practice has been the subject of investigation for miscellaneous researchers and EFL teachers (Brown H. D., Crocetti G., Deines L., Folse K. S., Harsch K., Magrath D. R., Marshall K. E., Plaister T., Schneider P., Vo G., Welch R. A. and others) and is still a relevant issue if we analyze recent EFL methodology findings. Mainly, Heini-Marja Pakula focuses on teaching fluency through formulaic language, which is language in pre-fabricated formulas like collocations; phrasal verbs; figures of speech; idioms; lexical bundles, etc.<sup>7</sup> Taher Bahrani explores the strategy "Language input and communicative output" to help students improve communicative efficiency, where the language input is specified by teacher talk, listening practices, reading passages, language heard and read outside the classroom that equips learners with necessary material to start producing language themselves – the language output<sup>8</sup>. H. Kayi studies speech practices enhancing students' communicative competencies such as brainstorming, role-play, class discussion, information gap, simulation, storytelling, interview and others<sup>9</sup>.

In the domain of English for Specific Purposes, some of the most functional teaching methods aimed at improving students' communicative competencies encompass pair work and groupwork. In this respect, X. Murodjonovna describes the Think-Pair-Share teaching method as a cooperative learning strategy that encourages individual participation and is suitable to all learners' grades and class sizes in teaching and learning ESP<sup>10</sup>. N. Yu. Ishchuk distinguishes debates as a fruitful educational activity for developing analytical and critical thinking, as well as enabling students to

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<sup>6</sup> Brown H.D. Principles of Language Learning and Teaching. USA : Pearson Education, 2006. P. 26.

<sup>7</sup> Pakula H.-M. Teaching speaking. *Apples Journal of Applied Language Studies*. 2019. Vol. 13. No 1. P. 102.

<sup>8</sup> Bahrani T. How to Teach Speaking Skill? *Journal of Education and Practice*. 2012. Vol. 3. No 2. P. 27. URL: <https://core.ac.uk/reader/234633290>

<sup>9</sup> Kayi H. Teaching Speaking: Activities to Promote Speaking in a Second Language. *The Internet TESL Journal*. 2006. Vol. XII. No 11. URL: <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Kayi-TeachingSpeaking.html>

<sup>10</sup> Murodjonovna X. Improving students' speaking skills through the technique "Think-Pair-Share" in ESP classes. *Eurasian Research Bulletin*. 2021. Vol. 3. P. 67. URL: <https://geniusjournals.org/index.php/erb/article/view/307/273>

apply foreign language in solving job-related tasks<sup>11</sup>. G. M. Mo'minova and M. Y. Sayilova specify latest technological developments as well as electronic applications which can be useful for making students speak like speech recognition software, online blogs, online discussion forums, games and videos<sup>12</sup>.

From the above-mentioned review of recent research works and investigations, one may conclude that the use of communicative teaching methods in ESP classes at non-linguistic higher education establishments and the choice of the most efficient technologies for the improvement of students' communicative competencies in the field of professional communication require more thorough study. The purpose of this paper is to analyze up-to-date teaching methods and techniques aimed at the formation and development of learners' foreign language speaking proficiency for professional purposes, determine functional means of students' communicative competency enhancement in the sphere of ESP studying, as well as adapt most popular ESL speaking activities to ESP purposes. Those objectives are particularly relevant in the conditions of constantly increasing requirements for the future specialists' foreign language training combined with students' low levels of motivation to master a subject which is not their major and a continuous reduction of contact hours allotted to ESP studying at Ukrainian higher educational establishments.

Modern life and daily activities involve more speaking than reading or writing. However, many ESP teachers still dedicate most of their class time to reading, translating, and writing, particularly when working with authentic materials such as scientific articles, documents, and forms, which are considered essential in ESP methodology. As a result, communicative activities receive significantly less attention, leading to the neglect of students' speaking skills.

Nevertheless, if the primary goal of a language course is to enable learners to communicate effectively in English, speaking practice and communicative activities should be prioritized in the ESP classroom. The shift from a traditional learning approach, focused on memorization and passive information reproduction, toward developing students' productive thinking, creativity, and communicative competency is crucial for professional communication training.

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<sup>11</sup> Ishchuk N.Yu. Teaching Speaking Skills Through Debates in ESP Classroom. *Materials of the scientific conference of professors, academics and candidates for scientific degrees on the results of scientific and research work for the period 2017–2018 (May 16–17, 2019): in 2 volumes*. 2019. Vol. 2. P. 33.

<sup>12</sup> Mo'minova G.M., Sayilova M.Y. How to teach speaking to ESP students using technology. *International Journal of Recently Scientific Researcher's Work*. 2023. Volume 1. Number 6. P. 135. URL: <https://uzresearchers.com/index.php/ijrs/article/view/805/742>

Communicative language teaching emphasizes real-life situations that require interaction. Through this approach, students engage with each other in the target language, preparing them for future professional challenges. Therefore, ESP instructors should foster a supportive classroom environment where students engage in real-life communication, practice authentic activities, and complete meaningful tasks that enhance speaking skills. This can be achieved through collaborative problem-solving and task-based activities in pairs or groups.

## 2. Collaborative learning. Pair work and teamwork

Collaborative learning is an educational approach that encourages students to take an active role in their learning and engage in the learning process themselves. This method provides individuals with the opportunity to share responsibility while benefiting from the knowledge and strengths of their peers<sup>13</sup>. This approach to organizing the learning process is considered the most effective alternative to the “subject-to-object” teaching model mentioned above, as it values both the subject matter and the process of personality development equally. Pair and group work foster the development of essential communication and collaboration skills. Engaging in teamwork allows all participants to contribute meaningfully and stay actively involved. These activities create a comfortable environment where students can freely express their opinions, generate ideas, propose solutions, and independently assess both their own and their peers’ contributions. Group or pair work is particularly beneficial in classrooms with students of varying language proficiency levels. In such cases, knowledge exchange is enhanced, and students with lower proficiency gain confidence by participating alongside their peers, making meaningful contributions to achieving shared learning goals.

A compelling form of group and/or pair work is *class research*. This activity is simple yet highly effective, especially as a warm-up at the beginning of a lesson or as a way to capture students’ attention and ensure active participation. It reshapes the traditional lesson organization scheme, where students passively listen and reproduce the teacher’s words, by encouraging interaction and mutual discovery among learners. In an ESP class, for instance, students can explore topics such as why their peers chose a particular major, whether they find microeconomics or macroeconomics more engaging and why, which types of advertisements they consider most effective, etc. To facilitate this activity, key vocabulary related to the topic can be introduced or reviewed in advance, including relevant terminology,

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<sup>13</sup> Riel Sh. Collaborative Learning Strategies for Fostering Teamwork in the ESL Classroom. Pedagogy (TESOL/TEFL Strategies & Methodology). 2022. URL: <https://bridge.edu/tefl/blog/collaborative-learning-strategies/>

question words, and grammatical structures for forming questions. Additionally, a crucial aspect of this task is the purposeful use of collected information. The teacher should clarify the research objective and outline how the gathered data can be applied in a meaningful way.

Instead of a usual dialogue, involving two learners, a “*linear dialogue*” as a type of group activity can be introduced. This activity engages all students as active participants, fosters a lively and relaxed atmosphere, reduces teacher’s influence, and encourages natural conversation. During this assignment, students form two lines: A and B. The students in line A receive a set of suggested questions to ask their counterparts in line B (or they can create their own based on the topic). Standing in place, they ask the same question to each participant in line B. After responding, the students in line B shift to the right to answer a new question from the next student in line A. This process continues until all students in line B have answered every question from the students in line A. The teacher should refrain from interfering in the conversations but may take notes and provide feedback or recommendations afterwards. As a follow-up, students in line A can summarize and report their classmates’ responses to the class.

Another effective problem-solving activity in an ESP classroom is a *pyramid discussion*, which starts with a think-pair-share exercise and gradually expands into a full-class discussion. Initially, students work in pairs or small groups to reach an agreement on specific items. They then merge with another group and negotiate a new consensus. This structured approach allows students to practice speaking in smaller, low-pressure settings before engaging with the entire class. As a less controlled fluency activity, a pyramid discussion enables learners to use a wide range of language skills, both those formally taught in class and those acquired from other sources. It builds students’ confidence by allowing them to rehearse and refine their arguments through repeated discussions. The key principle of the pyramid format is that as students progress, they continuously refine their viewpoints until reaching a final consensus at the “top” of the discussion. In an ESP class, possible topics for a pyramid discussion might include “Pros and Cons of Starting a Business”, “Challenges and Benefits of Conducting Business Abroad”, “My Motivation for Pursuing a Business Career”, “Advantages and Disadvantages of My Future Profession”, etc.

An efficient type of group or pair work aimed at promoting speaking in an ESP class is “*information gaps*”, which can be one-way (one group has only gaps, the other – all answers) or two-way (both groups have their gaps and their answers to them). Students receive informative blocks (textual or dialogic) in which there are gaps and an important part of information is missing for understanding the whole, which they can learn from their groupmates, who were given the answers. In this activity students learn to

build correct questions, require necessary information as well as provide answers to a query.

A variation of this activity, particularly helpful in teaching professional terms, can be structured as a collaborative crossword exercise. In this version, each group receives a partially completed crossword, with some terms already filled in and others left blank. The groups take turns describing the missing concepts using definitions, clues, and the number of letters in the word. The opposing group must then deduce and complete the missing terms based on the given information and any known letters. This approach enhances vocabulary retention and promotes interactive learning.

Finally, role-plays are essential and valuable in teaching English for Specific Purposes, as they involve simulating real-life professional scenarios and solving job-related tasks. A role-play or a simulation as a more detailed version, where students may use props to create a realistic setting, helps bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-life application. These activities recreate authentic communication situations, allowing students to practice and apply their acquired knowledge and skills in a practical context. Engaging ESP role-plays may include conducting various types of interviews, such as job interviews, enacting office interactions, checking guests in and out of a hotel, navigating customs procedures, and completing official forms. For successful participation in these activities, students must have a solid grasp of the necessary vocabulary and anticipate potential developments within the scenario. The teacher plays a key role in guiding students through the preparatory stage, ensuring they are well-equipped to handle different situations effectively.

For a role-play to be successful, especially for low students with low foreign language proficiency levels, the teacher should prescribe the roles and provide in advance as much detail about the situation as possible. For instance, to practice ordering goods and solving problems with delivery, students might be offered the following scenarios:

*Student A: You are Mr./ Ms. Simpson, a customer. Connect (phone) Mr./ Ms. Johnes to discover whether the goods you have ordered have been dispatched yet. The order number was BGD7304. You placed the order on March 24. If the goods haven't been sent yet, try to hurry them up. Ask him/her to phone you back (+380502276589) to specify when the goods can be expected to arrive.*

*Student B: You are Mr./ Ms. Johnes, responsible for shipping customers' orders and answering inquiries on delayed shipments. The order FLP8467 has been delayed due to temporary incapacity of staff in the distribution*



*department. Revised shipment date is Tuesday next week. Airfreight at no additional charge. Be polite and apologize for all the inconveniences*<sup>14</sup>.

### 3. Communicative grammar teaching

The communicative approach to grammar teaching emphasizes learning language through communication and practical application. However, many foreign language instructors continue to teach grammar separately from students' communicative needs, reducing grammatical competency to a mechanical process of memorizing rules and completing drills. This traditional method remains prevalent in ESP classes, where grammar instruction typically consists of explaining rules, practicing correct structures, and completing written exercises often disconnected from the ESP context and students' real-world professional communication needs.

However, if grammar is viewed as a dynamic tool for creating meaning, shaped by cognitive mechanisms, it becomes an integral part of developing foreign language communicative competence. Grammatical proficiency should be fostered through solving real-life, practical communicative tasks. Students should learn grammar as a means to achieve specific communicative objectives rather than as isolated knowledge. Therefore, ESP students' grammatical competence should prioritize applying grammatical rules in professional communication rather than simply memorizing or drilling them. This remains a critical yet challenging aspect of modern language teaching.

The communicative approach to grammar teaching is a relatively recent development compared to the grammar-translation and audio-lingual methods, originating from the communicative language teaching movement. Recent research supports teaching grammar communicatively, as this approach enhances students' ability to use language in context and communicate effectively, which are essential goals of language learning. V. Guseva claims that grammar should be taught not for the sake of grammar form, but for its use in talking about this or that topic, thus stressing on communicative teaching of grammar<sup>15</sup>. O. D. Ostafiychuk stipulates the use of communicative tasks that allow students to apply their knowledge of grammar in real communication situations, and the inclusion of grammar in

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<sup>14</sup> Hildebrant K. Ways to Enhance Students' Communicative Skills in ESP Teaching and Learning. *Актуальні питання гуманітарних наук*. 2024. Вип. 73. Том 1. С. 357-358. URL: [http://www.apfn-journal.in.ua/archive/73\\_2024/part\\_1/56.pdf](http://www.apfn-journal.in.ua/archive/73_2024/part_1/56.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Guseva V. Teaching grammar communicatively. Karlsruhe : University of Education. 2024. URL: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377841794\\_Teaching\\_grammar\\_communicatively](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377841794_Teaching_grammar_communicatively)

context as important elements of the communicative approach in English grammar teaching and learning<sup>16</sup>.

In the field of teaching and learning English for Specific Purposes, there is a concept of teaching grammar as a social function within the communicative grammar teaching approach. This approach emphasizes the development of students' ability to use and understand grammatical structures spontaneously and appropriately in various social contexts. Students practice the target language by expressing their own thoughts, experiences, and perspectives, as these personal connections help reinforce grammar patterns more effectively than sentences unrelated to their lives. This perspective aligns with the core principles of ESP, which aims to meet students' communication needs in professional settings and focuses on language aspects relevant to their field of study and interests.

Thus, the approach of teaching grammar as a social function focuses on developing students' communicative grammatical competency by integrating grammar instruction into a communicative ESP classroom. This involves engaging students in interactive activities and communicative tasks that reinforce grammar patterns. By using specific grammatical structures to express their own ideas, experiences, and opinions on professional topics, students naturally enhance their grammatical competency. This method transforms foreign language learning into a motivating and rewarding process by embedding grammar practice within meaningful communication.

Despite the general understanding of the importance of teaching grammar communicatively, there are few investigations in the sphere of specific activities that could guide the teachers to implement the approach, especially in the sphere of teaching/ learning English for Specific Purposes. The present paper is aiming to reveal the means of communicative approach application to grammar teaching within the scope of ESP studying by students of Economics majors as well as to analyze specific activities that enable teaching grammar communicatively in ESP classes.

For instance, to practice conditionals, learn to express one's ideas as well as advocate a personal point of view students majoring in Economics could be given the communicative activity – a *sentence filler*. For every situation they are required to pick one option and support one's choice with clarifications. This practice enables learners rehearse rules of II Conditional formulation, revise target vocabulary besides stimulating learners' imagination and creative thinking:

*If I were a businessman, I would be a wholesaler/retailer because...*

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<sup>16</sup> Ostafiychuk O. D. Teaching Grammar Communicatively. *Innovative pedagogy. Theory and methodology of professional education*. 2023. Vol. 2. No 58. P. 100. DOI:10.32782/2663-6085/2023/58.2.20

*If I had my own enterprise, it would employ 50/100/200 employees because...*

*If I owned a company, it would be a sole proprietorship/partnership/corporation because...*

*If I developed a product, it would be an innovation/adaptation because...*

*If I decided to promote my product, I would use Internet/TV/magazine/newspaper advertising because...*

*If I ran a business, it would be a domestic/international/multinational enterprise because...*

*If I were a company owner, I would implement a line/line and staff/matrix organization structure because...*

*If I were a Rolls-Royce manufacturer, I would market it to businessmen/ millionaires/ the general public because...*

*If I were a business tycoon, I would run a charity project/finance innovations/support scientists because...*

The aforementioned pair or group work, such as *class research*, is particularly effective for practicing various grammatical rules (e.g., the use of tenses, degrees of comparison, modal verbs), reinforcing ESP vocabulary, and keeping students engaged while ensuring active participation from everyone. For instance, students majoring in Tourism or Hospitality Business could create questions about their classmates' native towns or villages by putting adjectives in the appropriate form:

1. Which is (popular) place to visit?
2. What is (interesting) activity to do?
3. Which is (dangerous) area there?
4. Where is (good) spot to take a picture of the town/village?
5. Which is (simple) way to get around?
6. What is (impressive) local event?
7. What is (typical) food and drink to try?
8. What is (ancient) construction?
9. Which is (good) hotel there?
10. What is (famous) area to go out at night?
11. What is (beautiful) place to visit for an excursion?
12. What is (memorable) souvenir to purchase?

As a follow-up to this activity, students later report their findings to the rest of the group, thus rehearsing degrees of comparison of adjectives and giving their fellow-students valued tourist insights about native cities, towns or villages in the area. This being a student-centered activity, the teacher acts rather as a facilitator, than an instructor, thus strengthening students' communicative efficiency while making them repeat important grammar structures.

A valuable activity to make the students rehearse some difficult grammatical forms is *substitution*. The teacher writes a fairly long sentence on the board and replaces any word with another, ensuring the sentence remains grammatically correct. Then, students take turns changing one word at a time while maintaining grammatical accuracy. Throughout the activity, students are encouraged to be creative and come up with unexpected yet grammatically sound sentences. For instance:

*25 tourists booked a flight to Rome last Saturday.*

*25 lions booked a flight to Rome last Saturday.*

*25 lions missed a flight to Rome last Saturday.*

*25 lions missed a ride to Rome last Saturday.*

This engaging activity allows students to participate effortlessly while reinforcing grammar in a fun and interactive way.

A variation of this exercise can take the form of a dialogue, known as a *substitution dialogue*. In this version, students receive a model conversation and are asked to replace specific parts to create new but structurally similar dialogues. For instance, Marketing students could practice describing world-famous advertisements while reinforcing the superlative degree of adjectives and Present Continuous structures. In this activity, they construct dialogues following a given model, substituting pre-defined sections using provided prompts.

Example:

– Have you noticed **the most recent commercial** of a **Kodak camera** on TV?

– No, sadly not. Why are you asking? Was there anything **amazing** in it?

– Oh yeah! This **Kodak commercial** is featuring **Rihanna and the brand new m590 camera from Kodak**.

– I'll try to search it on the Internet!

Apply the following substitutes:

1. Recent/ commercial / Kodak camera/ on TV/ amazing / Kodak commercial/ Rihanna and the brand new m590 camera from Kodak.

2. Exciting/ advertisement / Nike/ in the recent newspaper/ strange / Nike advert/ a huge ball bombarding a rather old building.

3. Large / advertisement / Nescafe / on a building in the capital of Venezuela/ unusual/ the advertisement of Nescafe / a Nescafe branded cup and perhaps is among the biggest world hot-air balloons.

4. Witty / print advert / Panasonic 3d TV / on a billboard / unexpected / Panasonic advert / an unrealistic dinosaur emerging out of a rather realistic picture on TV.

5. Imaginative / print ad / Fitness Company / in a sports magazine / extraordinary / Fitness Company advert / shopping bags with weights on them offered to clients when purchasing at the Fitness Company centers.

To practice the use of modal verbs, Marketing students could express their opinions on a number of problematic topics, introduced by the teacher, *discussing them in pairs or groups*. They might use a pre-taught model, if they would like to. An important condition here is for the teacher to stress that the students are expected to use modals whenever possible:

Task: dwell on the following in pairs (groups):

- *Express what you think a successful advert should/ shouldn't do, support your ideas. (...catch the consumer's attention; satisfy the customer's needs; transform benefits into features; advocate its claims; explain the target audience how to respond; be only in flyers; implement an effective advertising technique; be in January or June)*

- *Do you believe there must be some laws or regulations concerning advertising practices?*

- *Do you consider ads directed at children should be more strictly controlled than adverts aimed at grown-ups?*

- *Can you imagine the world without advertisements, what would it be like?*

Use the following structure: *"In my opinion (I am absolutely in favour of the statement that..., I'd rather say that..., To my mind..., I believe that..., I strongly agree that..., I disagree with the saying that..., It's absolutely true that...) an advert should... because..."*

A similar activity to exercise modals (*may/ might, can/ could, must, should*), or any other grammatical forms and structures, is a *pyramid discussion*, already discussed above. It is important to emphasize in the phase of instruction, that a significant component of the task is the usage of modals (or any other grammatical matter), consequently the more modal verbs learners manage to enclose into their argument and apply appropriately – the better.

Task: express your opinion on the following statements:

*Advertisers:*

- *Offer a wide range of consumer goods, thus enlarging your choice;*
- *Maintain you informed about recent products in market;*
- *Stimulate false needs;*
- *Manipulate attitudes and social values;*
- *Foster greed as well as materialism.*

*e.g. We believe that advertisers play a dual role in society. On one hand, they introduce a wide range of consumer goods, giving people more choices and keeping them informed about the latest products available. This can be beneficial, as it allows consumers to compare different options and make informed purchasing decisions. On the other hand, advertising can also create false needs by persuading consumers that they require products that may not be essential. Additionally, advertisements often manipulate social values and*

*attitudes by promoting unrealistic standards of success, beauty, or happiness, which can contribute to materialism and greed. However, it is ultimately up to consumers to critically evaluate advertisements and make choices based on their actual needs and priorities rather than being solely influenced by marketing strategies.*

A great method to warm up and get students practicing question formation is the *Question Game*. Students sit in a circle or around a table, and one student begins by saying another student's name and asking them a question. However, instead of answering, the chosen student must quickly name someone else and ask a different question. If a student fails to come up with a question within five seconds, they are out, and the game continues with the remaining participants. For upper-intermediate or advanced groups, the game can be made more challenging by requiring students to use specific types of questions, such as "Have you ever..." questions, second conditional questions, or indirect questions. This variation helps refine their grammatical accuracy and fluency in forming different question structures.

The forms and methods of organizing the educational process discussed in this article replicate real-life professional situations, encourage students' interaction in the target language, and prepare them for future professional challenges. They also create a unique learning environment where each participant plays a vital role in achieving a common goal and feels like an essential part of the team. In this article, we have attempted to provide examples of communicative language teaching within the context of ESP for students majoring in economics. Several effective activities have been described and analyzed; however, we acknowledge certain limitations of this study. Not all possible technologies and methods aimed at enhancing learners' speaking skills have been thoroughly explored. Further research is needed to examine a wider range of communicative tasks and grammar activities that were beyond the scope of this article. Such research is particularly relevant today, as the demand for well-trained and highly qualified professionals with strong foreign language skills continues to grow in response to the ongoing processes of modernization and globalization.

Among general recommendations and possible suggestions for ESP teachers to stimulate speaking activity in class, the first one is to arrange the desks differently e.g., in circles (groups) instead of lines. This might help students understand, that this is not a traditional class, where they can just sit, listen and note what the teacher is saying, but that the learning process requires their active participation.

An effective way to encourage students' communication in the target language is to allocate a percentage of the final grade to speaking skills and inform them that their speaking performance is continuously assessed throughout the term. This approach motivates students to put in extra effort,

as most of them recognize the importance of learning foreign languages for their future. However, if their active participation is not immediately evaluated, their motivation tends to decline over time.

It is essential to keep every student actively engaged in speaking activities. For those with low foreign language proficiency or a lack of confidence, an effective strategy is to provide them with a set of expressions they can use as minimal responses or sentence starters in various interactions. These are often idiomatic phrases that help express opinions, doubts, hesitation, understanding, misunderstanding, agreement, disagreement, counterarguments, refusals, and more. Having a ready stock of such expressions helps break the ice and allows shy students to overcome their fear of speaking in class. Additionally, when learners have a sentence starter, they can respond immediately while gaining extra time to plan the rest of their statement. In professional settings, everyday business communications often follow predictable patterns, with specific expressions used for selling, buying, placing orders, making and receiving calls, making reservations, and other interactions. Therefore, instructors can enhance students' speaking abilities by familiarizing them with scripts for different professional situations, helping them anticipate what they will hear and how they should respond.

To stimulate as much target language speaking as possible, ESP teachers should: 1) create a rich learning environment with authentic materials, incorporating collaborative learning and shared knowledge strategies; 2) reduce teacher speaking time and increase student speaking time; 3) ensure students are on track by observing their performance in group or pair work and providing assistance only when necessary; 4) respond positively to students' efforts, ignoring their mistakes while speaking. Any corrections should be made after the students finish speaking, as correcting mistakes during speech can distract students, intimidate them, and discourage further active participation; 5) identify the difficulties students face and offer targeted practice to help them overcome these challenges.

## CONCLUSIONS

At present, the whole Ukrainian society acknowledges the importance of foreign languages, considering the country's geographical position, economic prospects, and current challenges brought by the hardships of war. There is a strong interest in enhancing ESP teaching and learning standards to meet the national demand for well-trained and competent professionals with high qualifications and strong foreign language skills, contributing to the country's modernization and integration into global processes.

Speaking is widely recognized as a vital skill in EFL teaching and learning, and it plays an especially important role in mastering English for Specific Purposes. Since the primary objective of ESP is to equip students with a high

level of foreign language communicative competency, they must be prepared to apply these skills in professional settings at their future workplaces. ESP focuses on developing learners' practical communicative competency across various types of speech activities within professionally relevant contexts. Students should be able to articulate their thoughts and ideas clearly while ensuring their message is understood. This requires not only language proficiency but also the ability to convey information accurately and appropriately within a given context, minimizing misunderstandings caused by pronunciation, grammatical, or lexical errors. In this regard, grammatical competency should be viewed as an integral component of the overall communicative goal. It must align with the principles of communicative language teaching in ESP, serving as a tool to enhance effective and meaningful professional communication.

Communicative grammar teaching is an important part of the communicative skill development and focuses on how to use grammatical rules in a communicative situation, rather than just memorizing or drilling grammar structures in isolation from the meaningful context. Thus, communicative approach to grammar teaching views grammar as a linguistic structure, which allows students to give form to their thoughts, ideas, intentions and views and has to be practiced in true-to-life situations, like conversations, discussion, presentation, etc.

In the sphere of ESP studying, communicative grammar teaching can be perceived as teaching grammar as a social function with a main focus on the development of students' ability to apply and comprehend a grammatical structure in miscellaneous social situations of their professional field properly and accurately. This means incorporating grammar instruction into a communicative ESP class, offering students interactive activities and communicative tasks to practice grammar patterns. Students are pushed to produce their own ideas, experiences, opinions on professional topics by applying this or that grammatical structure. In this way, the grammatical competency is developed in a natural way through solving communicative assignments, which turns the process of foreign language learning into a motivating and beneficial procedure.

## SUMMARY

The present paper explores national awareness and governmental support for the ongoing development and reinforcement of foreign language competency among graduates of Ukrainian higher educational institutions, young specialists, and business professionals, as fluency in foreign languages is increasingly demanded in the country's economic market. Given that English for Specific Purposes serves as a key tool for enhancing Ukrainian graduates' communicative competency within their professional fields,



special attention must be given to ESP teaching methodology. The author emphasizes the communicative approach to foreign language instruction, particularly communicative grammar teaching, as a means of improving students' speaking proficiency for professional purposes. The paper aims to identify effective methods for enhancing learners' communicative competency in ESP studies and to adapt widely used ESL speaking activities for ESP classrooms. It highlights class research, linear dialogue, substitution dialogue, pyramid discussion, information gap, unfilled crossword, sentence filler, and role-play as valuable activities that foster speaking practice in ESP lessons and provides general recommendations for ESP teachers to facilitate students' communication in the target language.

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