Traduction et Langues Volume 24 Numéro 02/2025
Journal of Translation Languages **مجلة الترجمة واللغات**
ISSN (Print): 1112-3974 **EISSN (Online): 2600-6235**

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Communicative Competence in Ukrainian and English for Professional Learners

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To cite this paper:
Didenko, N., Goriunova, M., Polinok, O., Kalashnyk, O., & Shevchenko, L. (2025). Culturally Responsive Teaching and Communicative Competence in Ukrainian and English for Professional Learners. *Traduction et Langues 24, (2*), 192-215.

Received: 15/07/2025; **Accepted**: 30/09/2025; **Published:** 31/12/2025

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Keywords

Communicative Competence; Students' Interaction; Training of Future Specialists; International Experience; Teaching Methodologies; Intercultural Education; Professional Communication

Abstract

The study aims to identify effective and innovative methods of developing communicative competence in students studying Ukrainian and English for professional purposes. The research methodology included experimental training of students at several universities, namely Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, National Academy of Statistics, Accounting and Audit, and Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University, using modern interactive methods. The research was conducted from March to April 2024, comparing various methodologies for developing communicative competence. The experimental group, comprising 300 students, was taught using a new methodology focused on cultural context, while the control group followed traditional methods. The experimental group engaged in tasks like cultural reflections, dialogues, and proverbs analysis to enhance cultural communication competence. The main study results demonstrated that the development of communicative competence covers not only linguistic knowledge but also the ability to interact with representatives of different cultures. The students who participated in the learning process have successfully developed the skills of understanding the cultural peculiarities of Ukrainian and English in their professional fields. The results of the study also showed that the introduction of an improved teaching methodology focused on the cultural context significantly improves students' communication skills in the field of intercultural interaction. Participants in the experimental group demonstrated significantly higher results in all three areas of the study: creating dialogues, analysing cultural expressions and proverbs, and reflecting on cultural values. The use of interactive methods, such as role-playing, discussions and analysis of cultural cases, helped students to better master cultural communication. This contributed to the development of their ability to interact effectively in a globalised world. Based on the results obtained, the article reveals the importance of integrating the analysed methods to improve the Ukrainian system of ESP teaching, which can contribute to improving the quality of teaching and developing students' communication skills.

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Ключові слова

Комунікативна компетентність; Взаємодія між студентами; Підготовка майбутніх фахівців; Міжнародний досвід; Методика викладання; Міжкультурна освіта; Професійна комунікація

Анотація

Метою дослідження є визначення ефективних методів розвитку комунікативної компетентності у студентів, які вивчають українську та англійську мови за професійною метою. Методологія дослідження включала експериментальне навчання студентів кількох університетів, а саме: Київського національного університету імені Тараса Шевченка, Національної академії статистики, обліку та аудиту та Київського столичного університету імені Бориса Грінченка, з використанням сучасних інтерактивних методів. Учасники отримали як теоретичну, так і практичну підготовку, спрямовану на розвиток культурної компетентності через культурний контекст. Основні результати дослідження показали, що розвиток комунікативної компетентності охоплює не лише лінгвістичні знання, а й здатність взаємодіяти з представниками різних культур. Студенти, які брали участь у навчальному процесі, успішно розвинули навички розуміння культурних особливостей української та англійської мов у своїх професійних сферах. Результати дослідження також показали, що впровадження вдосконаленої методики навчання, зосередженої на культурному контексті, значно покращує комунікативні навички студентів у сфері міжкультурної взаємодії. Учасники експериментальної групи продемонстрували значно вищі результати в усіх трьох напрямках дослідження: створення діалогів, аналіз культурних виразів та прислів'їв, а також рефлексія над культурними цінностями. На основі отриманих результатів у статті розкривається важливість інтеграції проаналізованих методів для вдосконалення української системи викладання англійської мови для спеціалістів, що може сприяти підвищенню якості викладання та розвитку комунікативних навичок студентів.

1. Introduction

In the context of globalisation, interaction between different cultures is becoming increasingly relevant both in everyday life and in the professional environment. Communication skills are critical for efficiency in a multicultural context. An important aspect of these skills is communication competence – the ability to comprehend, interpret and use cultural characteristics when communicating with representatives of other cultures. Accordingly, the process of teaching communication skills contributes to the development of analytical skills, thus students can critically evaluate information, form personal opinions and defend them.

Communication competence helps students develop social skills, self-confidence and the ability to engage in constructive dialogue, which has a positive impact on their overall self-perception and interaction with others. Therefore, the development of this competence in the study of Ukrainian and English not only improves language literacy

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but also prepares students for active participation in professional and social life, ensuring their successful careers in various fields.

Several researchers studied the issue of communicative competence and contributed to the development of this concept, in particular, Berezenko et al. (2022) and Hoyte-West (2024) in their studies addressed the structure and components of communicative competence. The authors determined that communicative competence consists of linguistic, sociocultural and pragmatic components. According to the conclusions, effective acquisition of communicative competence requires not only knowledge of language rules but also an understanding of social and cultural.

The impact of professional language training on students' communicative competence is an important aspect that requires a combination of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, through the performance of professional tasks. This issue was addressed by Kaldarova et al. (2024) and Kuchyn and Lymar (2023). These researchers also determined that ESP students achieve higher levels of language competence through specific terminology and realistic case studies. Their research emphasises the importance of developing specialised vocabulary, which is essential for successful professional communication. Their findings also indicate that the integration of practical tasks using professional vocabulary significantly improves students' communication skills.

The formal business style of the Ukrainian language is of great importance for the development of professional communication in Ukraine. Zavaruieva et al. (2022) studied this issue and pointed out that knowledge of this style is necessary for effective negotiation, writing official documents, and business communication. The researchers emphasised that learning Ukrainian for professional purposes should focus on specific language norms that meet the requirements of the business environment. In addition, it is necessary to adapt speech patterns to professional contexts. Li et al. (2023) studied this issue and noted that the formation of students' communicative competence lies in the ability to adapt their speech patterns to different professional situations. The study emphasised that students should practice speech models in real situations that may arise in the workplace. Their research has shown that the integration of practical tasks that correspond to professional settings contributes to the successful development of communicative competence.

The issue of English language use in professional communication in international companies was studied by Plakhotniuk et al. (2024). The authors identified that English is more commonly used for written communication, including emails, reports, and presentations. They also emphasised the importance of having more than two languages for effective professional activity in the context of globalisation. Jordaan and Nel (2023) studied the effectiveness of interactive teaching methods in developing communicative competence. The authors concluded that methods including modelling professional situations, role-playing games, and analysing real-life cases significantly improve students' communication skills. Their study showed that students who learn using interactive methods achieve higher results in the practical use of language skills.

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The role of digital technologies in language teaching for professional purposes was studied by Griffith and Lim (2024), who revealed that the use of online platforms and language applications facilitates the learning process and increases the level of communicative interaction between the teacher and students. Their findings confirm that digital technologies contribute to the improvement of communicative competence, especially in the aspects of written and intercultural communication. The issue of intercultural competence in the process of learning English for professional purposes was investigated by Mahan et al. (2024). Their study showed that students taking professional courses are more aware of cultural differences and demonstrate a higher level of intercultural competence. They emphasised the importance of using intercultural aspects in the learning process to prepare students for professional activities in international environments. Researchers have paid insufficient attention to the impact of emotional intelligence on the development of communicative competence in learning foreign languages and how the use of modern neuropedagogical methods or technologies can contribute to the development of these skills.

The study aims to identify the most effective methods of developing communicative competence in the study of Ukrainian and English languages focused on professional communication. Tasks of the study:

- to identify the main components of communicative competence for both languages for professional purposes;
- to study the development of professional communication competence using a new methodology developed based on a combination of existing ones to strengthen this aspect;
- to develop recommendations for improving the curriculum to enhance students' communication competence.

2. Methodology

The study consisted of two parts, namely theoretical and empirical over March – April 2024. According to the first part, the main components of communication competence were analysed. Next, a comparison of existing methodologies was made, namely the Communicative Approach with Professional Specialisation (Ivanshchuk et al., 2023) in Ukraine, Frost (2024) in the UK, Content and Language Integrated Learning (2024) in Canada, Phenomenon-Based Learning (Drew, 2020) in Finland and the Japanese method of communicative learning (Abe, 2013). Further, based on the information obtained, the importance of integrating all the methods to improve the Ukrainian system of ESP learning was identified. After that, the study conducted experimental pedagogical research covering several Ukrainian universities, including Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, National Academy of Accounting, Statistics and Audit, and Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University. The experiment lasted for two months, from March to April 2024, and involved 300 students

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aged 20-21, of whom 43% were girls and 57% were boys.

The participants of the experiment were divided into two groups: a control group, which was taught using the traditional methodology, and an experimental group, which used the new methodology with an emphasis on cultural context. Each group consisted of 150 students. The conventional teaching materials, textbooks and teaching methods were used, which included linguistic analysis of texts and the development of communication skills without a special emphasis on cultural context. The experimental group was trained using a new methodology designed to enhance cultural communication competence. This methodology included:

- Cultural reflections: students analysed the cultural differences and similarities between Ukrainian and English-speaking cultures. The task was to compare cultural traditions, rituals and symbols.
- Dialogues on cultural topics: students created dialogues in which they discussed cultural values and their impact on professional communication. This developed the skills of conducting conversations on culturally rich topics.
- Comparison of proverbs: analysing proverbs and sayings in Ukrainian and English helped students understand the deep cultural meanings behind language expressions.

During the two months of training, the control group continued to work according to the standard programme, while the experimental group regularly completed tasks aimed at developing cultural communication competence. At the end of the experiment, a control sample was taken to determine the level of cultural communication development.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Theoretical Foundations of the Development of Communicative Competence in Modern Education

Communicative competence has become a key component of modern language education and training, especially in the study of English and Ukrainian. Increasing globalisation, strengthening of international relations and the introduction of new information technologies have significantly changed the requirements for language proficiency. In these circumstances, communicative competence has come to the fore, as it allows professionals to interact effectively in an intercultural environment, participate in international projects, and successfully solve professional problems using English and Ukrainian.

The basis of communicative competence is the ability of an individual to communicate freely and effectively in different situations, using all aspects of the

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language. Its formation includes not only the acquisition of grammar, vocabulary and syntax but also the development of skills and abilities that help to adapt language tools to situations of professional communication, interpersonal communication or participation in public discussions. For students studying English and Ukrainian for professional purposes, this aspect is especially important, as successful language acquisition becomes not only a tool but also the basis for their future careers. In the modern world, where English is the international language of communication and Ukrainian is becoming increasingly important in the context of the development of national identity and professional activity within the country, communication competence is becoming an integral part of curricula. A special place in this process is occupied by the integration of different approaches to language teaching that are focused on practical results. Students should not only be able to operate with theoretical knowledge but also apply it effectively in real-life situations. This includes conducting business negotiations, writing professional emails, participating in international conferences, discussing professional topics and resolving conflicts using both English and Ukrainian.

Communicative competence is studied from different perspectives. One of them is intercultural competence, which helps comprehend and address the cultural characteristics of other peoples and nations when communicating. The modern world is a world of cultural diversity, and understanding the norms, traditions, values and worldviews of other people significantly improves the quality of communication and helps to avoid conflict situations. For instance, students learning English for professional communication should be prepared to interact with colleagues from different cultural backgrounds. This requires not only knowledge of the language but also an understanding of the cultural codes and customs of other countries, which helps to achieve professional goals. Another important component is the development of cognitive competence, which implies the ability to adequately express thoughts, present information in a logical and structured manner, and formulate arguments. This is critical for professional activities, especially in areas such as business, politics, science and technology. Mastery of English and Ukrainian enables future professionals to participate in international projects, conduct scientific discussions, speak at conferences, and discuss important issues at the global level.

An important component of communicative competence is also pragmatic adaptation, i.e., the ability to choose appropriate language tools depending on the context. For instance, a business conversation requires one style of speech, while informal communication requires another. Students should be able to clearly distinguish between formal and informal situations, use appropriate language structures and maintain a style that is appropriate for communication. Mastering pragmatic skills helps avoid misunderstandings and succeed in different communication situations. Another important aspect is the acquisition of specialised vocabulary and terminology relevant to a particular field of activity. Studying Ukrainian and English for professional purposes

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involves the acquisition of knowledge and skills that will help students work successfully in their respective fields. For instance, healthcare professionals, lawyers, engineers or economists must not only speak the language in general but also have a deep understanding of specialised terminology. This helps to avoid inaccuracies in communication, contributes to a clearer performance of professional tasks and allows for more effective interaction with colleagues and partners. The development of communicative competence in learning English and Ukrainian is also closely linked to the use of modern technologies. Online resources, e-learning platforms, and distance education opportunities open up new ways to develop language skills. Students can take part in webinars, international conferences, and discussions, and engage in dialogues with native speakers, regardless of their location. This significantly speeds up the process of language learning and helps to immerse students in an authentic language environment.

The educational paradigm emphasises the importance of integrating communicative competence into interdisciplinary learning. Knowledge of languages becomes a universal tool for mastering other disciplines. Language serves as a means of access to information and knowledge, which is the basis for innovative development in various fields. In this context, communicative competence in the study of Ukrainian and English provides students with the opportunity to work with international sources, read scientific articles, and monographs, and participate in international research and projects. Communicative competence in the process of learning English and Ukrainian for professional purposes is an important factor not only for successful language acquisition but also for building a career, professional growth and participation in the global information space.

The development of communicative competence in the process of learning Ukrainian and English for professional purposes includes the following important aspects: linguistic, situational, cognitive, cultural and pragmatic. The linguistic aspect involves mastering the language system, including vocabulary, grammar, phonetics and professional terminology. The situational aspect involves the ability to respond adequately to specific communication situations, taking into account the context, purpose and social status of the interlocutors. The cognitive aspect refers to the thought process and the ability to express thoughts clearly and logically, which is important for professional communication. The cultural aspect includes an understanding of cultural peculiarities, norms and rules of behaviour that affect professional communication in an international context. The pragmatic aspect is the ability to use language tools to achieve specific goals, such as negotiating, concluding agreements or solving work issues. The development of communicative skills in foreign language learning around the world is based on modern approaches that focus on the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical speech situations (Table 1).

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Table 1.

International Experience in Teaching Languages for Professional Purposes

Country	Names of methods	Main elements	Characteristic
Ukraine	Communication approach with professional specialisation	Focus on professional vocabulary; integration of professional terms	There is an emphasis on developing communication skills in professional contexts (business, medicine, IT), but not enough. Role-playing games are used
Great Britain	A Task-Based Learning (TBL)	Use of tasks close to real professional situations; focus on practice and interactive tasks	TBL is aimed at solving practical problems by students through projects that simulate real professional challenges
Canada	Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)	Teaching professional subjects in English; integration of the language with specific professional disciplines	In Canada, the language is often taught through professional content (e.g., through training in the fields of economics, IT, or medicine). Students learn the language through the material of their profession
Finland	Phenomenon-Based Learning (PhBL)	Language learning through multidisciplinary phenomena; focus on project activities and solving interdisciplinary problems	Language instruction is integrated into the study of larger themes or phenomena, which helps students apply the language in the context of real-world situations and tasks
Japan	Japanese Communication Learning Technique (JCLT)	Use of communication techniques with a focus on professional communication; integration of technology and digital tools into the learning process	Japanese vocational education combines traditional communication approaches with modern technologies, such as multimedia, simulation, and mobile applications for language learning.

Source: compiled by the authors based on Abe (2013), Drew (2020), Ivanshchuk et al. (2023), Frost (2024), Content and Language Integrated Learning (2024).

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In many countries, especially in Europe (UK, Finland) and North America (Canada), the communicative approach to language teaching is actively used, which has become the basis of language education. This approach involves not only learning grammar and vocabulary, but also developing active communication skills through role-playing, simulations, project activities, and group discussions. Emphasis is placed on situations close to real life, such as work meetings, negotiations, travel, or intercultural communication. This practice ensures confidence in the use of language in real-life situations.

In countries such as the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and the United States, foreign language curricula integrate online technologies and digital platforms to develop communication skills (Ouahmiche and Bouguebs, 2025). For instance, learners and students can communicate with native speakers through video chats, participate in forums and discussion clubs, and complete interactive tasks that help improve language comprehension and use. Platforms such as Duolingo, Babbel, or Tandem can be used to practice language skills in a convenient format, which increases motivation to learn.

In many European countries, such as Germany, France, Spain, Sweden and Finland, the "immersion" approach is important, which means teaching subjects in other languages, including English, so that students not only learn a foreign language but also use it to learn other subjects. This encourages the constant use of the language in different contexts, which helps students to master it on a deeper level. This method is particularly effective in multicultural environments and promotes intercultural communication. In Asian countries, such as China, Japan, South Korea and Singapore, there is an emphasis on early exposure to foreign languages, especially English, and the introduction of programmes that support communicative learning from a young age. Often, schools and universities organise language camps where students can communicate exclusively in a foreign language. In Japan and South Korea, abroad internships also actively participate in the development of communication skills, allowing students to practice language skills in a real-life environment.

In Ukraine, the communicative approach to foreign language learning is also gaining popularity, especially among young people and in private educational institutions. An important component is the introduction of new technologies, such as multimedia and online platforms, which allow students to communicate with native speakers or participate in international exchanges. However, unlike in Western countries, where interactive teaching methods are common practice, Ukraine often retains a traditional approach to language learning, based on grammar and vocabulary, with minimal attention to practical communication. Hence, many students have good theoretical knowledge but experience difficulties in communicating in a foreign language in real-life situations. Notably, in recent years, more and more language schools and courses have appeared in Ukraine that focus on developing communication skills through interactive methods and project-based learning. In addition, some Ukrainian universities, such as Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv and

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Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University, are starting to introduce international exchange programmes, which allow students to travel abroad, communicate with native speakers, and gain invaluable experience in intercultural communication. Academic mobility programmes, such as Erasmus+, are becoming an important tool for developing the communication competence of Ukrainian students.

Although Ukraine is taking steps towards introducing modern approaches to foreign language learning, including communicative methods, there is still a need for greater integration of interactive forms of learning and international exchanges. This will allow students to master foreign languages more effectively and use them in their professional activities in the international arena. To effectively develop communication skills in students in Ukraine, it is advisable to use interactive teaching methods that immerse students in real professional situations when studying Ukrainian and English for professional purposes. Role-playing games, simulations and debates help not only to improve language skills but also to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Project assignments help integrate language practice with professional skills through teamwork, presentation preparation and negotiation modelling. The use of modern technologies, such as online platforms for communicating with native speakers or participating in international language exchanges, expands students' opportunities for intercultural communication. This provides practical experience in using the language in professional and international contexts. Language immersion, when a part of the academic disciplines is taught in a foreign language, is also an effective method for in-depth language learning. This approach stimulates the use of the language in different contexts and promotes active learning.

To improve the development of communicative competence in Ukrainian vocational education in language learning, the existing methodology can be improved by combining elements from the approaches of different countries. First, the tasks should be focused on professional activities (TBL from the UK). This way, learning will be based on completing tasks that correspond to real professional scenarios. This can be integrated into all stages of the learning process, for example, in the form of case studies or role-playing games. It is important to combine the study of professional topics with the language, as in CLIL (Canada). This will allow students to master not only the language but also professional knowledge in the context of their specialisation (economics, medicine, technology, etc.). It is worth considering a focus on interdisciplinary topics and phenomena (PhBL from Finland), which will help students apply language skills to solve complex problems. Studying large social, cultural or technological issues will integrate the language into a wider context. In addition, multimedia and interactive technologies should be actively used to provide flexible and dynamic learning, allowing students to practice communication skills in a digital environment (Japan). Such integration will create a multidimensional learning environment that not only develops communication competence but also adapts to the professional realities of students, combining theoretical knowledge with practical skills.

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3.2. An Empirical Study of the Development of Professional Communicative Competence Using a New Methodology

One of the participants' tasks was to create dialogues that reflected the specific cultural contexts of both languages. The students in the experimental group used a new teaching methodology that focused on the cultural context, which allowed them to better understand the peculiarities of dialogue and incorporate cultural elements into their communication (Fig. 1).

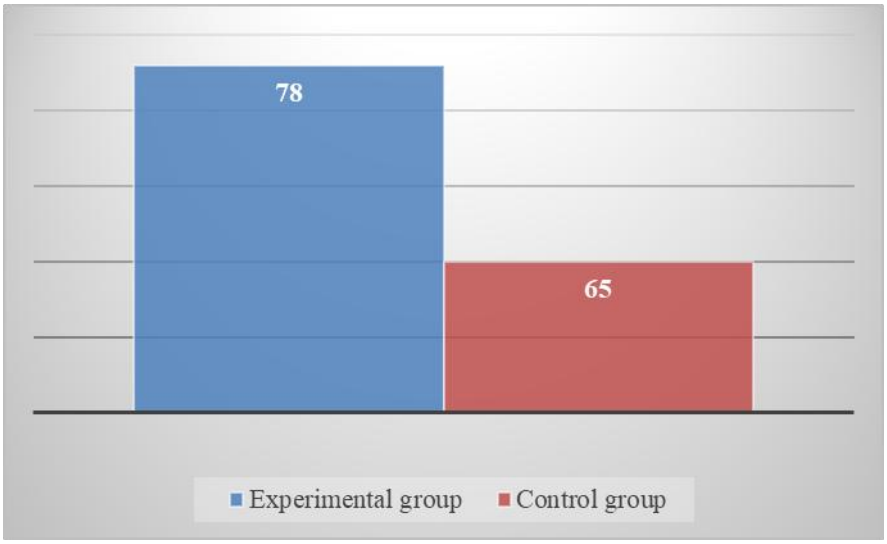


Figure 1. Results of Both Groups According to the Criteria of "Creating Dialogues", %

The results of the assessment of this task showed that almost 80% of the students in the experimental group received marks in the range of 8 to 10 points. This indicator indicates a high level of knowledge acquisition and the development of communication skills in the context of cultural dialogue. In the control group, which was taught using the traditional methodology, 13% fewer participants achieved similar results. The resulting dialogues of the students in the experimental group demonstrated significant progress in conversations on cultural topics. Compared to the control groups, the dialogues of the experimental participants were more structured, and enriched with cultural references and various examples from the life of different countries. Notably, students in the experimental group discussed such topics as cultural ethics, traditions, intercultural misunderstandings and professional norms in different cultures more often. This difference can be explained by the fact that the new methodology involved more active interaction of students with cultural elements, which helped them not only to comprehend but also to apply this knowledge in practice when building dialogues. This emphasises the importance of contextualising learning materials, especially when learning languages and cultures.

Comparing proverbs from Ukrainian and English gave students a better

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understanding of not only the linguistic but also the cultural aspects of communication. Fig. 2 shows a comparison of the results of both groups in this aspect.

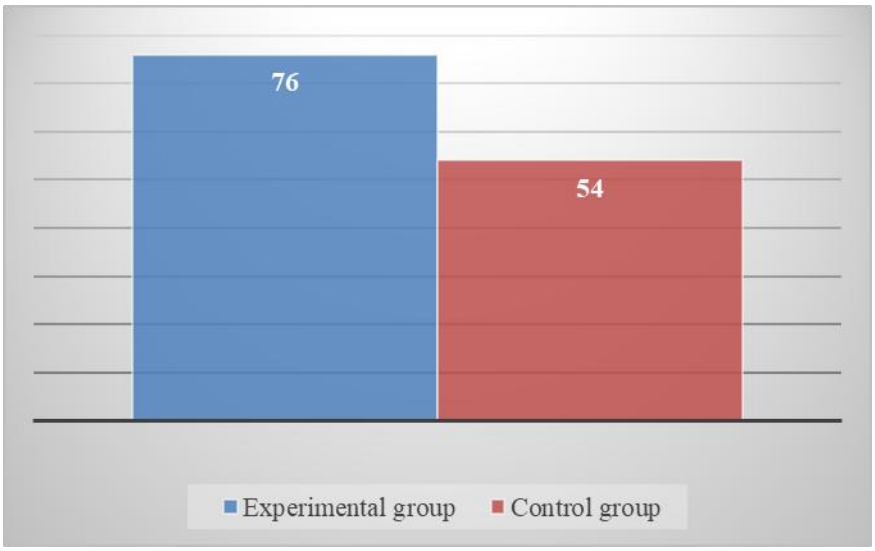


Figure 2. The Results of Both Groups According to the Criteria of "Comparison of Cultural Expressions", %

This task required a deep comprehension of cultural characteristics and the ability to compare them with each other. In this case, the results also showed the advantage of the experimental group. The experimental group demonstrated a deeper level of understanding of the hidden meanings in proverbs and sayings that reflect cultural values and norms. For instance, students' dialogues often included reflections on how different cultural views on work, family or society are reflected in traditional expressions.

More than 70% of the participants in the experimental group received scores between 8 and 10 for this task, which is 22% more than in the control group, which achieved similar results. The improved results of the experimental group may be because the new methodology included interactive exercises and discussions of cultural peculiarities, which contributed to better knowledge acquisition. The students in the experimental group said that they were interested in learning different proverbs and expressions in the context of cultural differences, which increased their motivation to learn languages and cultures. In the control group, most students used only general theoretical knowledge, without actively participating in the discussion, which affected their results.

Another key element of the new methodology was cultural reflection. A comparison of the results of both groups is shown in Fig. 3.

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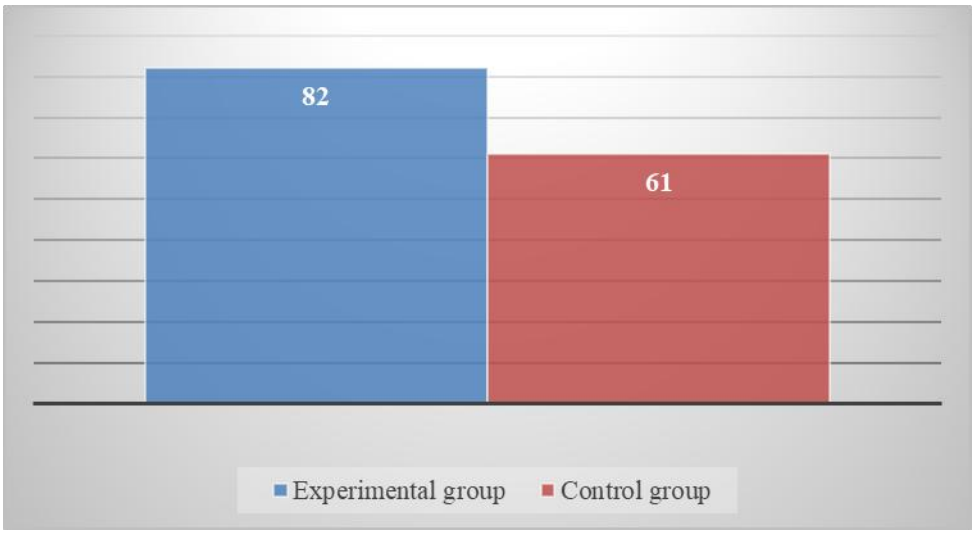


Figure 3. The Results of Both Groups According to the Criteria "Reflection on Cultural Values", %

The reflection task revealed how students comprehend and interpret cultural values, as well as how they are capable of critical reflection on this aspect. This component of the experiment was important for assessing the depth of understanding of cultural communication and its importance for personal development. The results showed that more than 80% of the students in the experimental group received grades in the range of 7 to 10 points for this task, which is significantly higher than the control group, where 21% fewer students received similar grades. Analysis of the student's work showed that the participants in the experimental group had a deeper understanding of cultural differences. Not only did they identify more differences between cultures, but they also showed a better ability to explain how these differences affect communication. The students in the experimental group were also more inclined to think critically when it came to their own culture and its reflection in communication processes. This suggests that the use of a new teaching methodology that focused on the cultural context helped students not only to better understand cultural values but also to develop the ability to reflect on their own experiences of interacting with other cultures. An important factor here was the use of practical exercises where students could express their opinions and discuss values in groups.

The overall analysis of the results showed a significant advantage for the experimental group, which was taught using the new methodology. All key indicators (creating dialogues, comparing expressions and proverbs, reflecting on values) were 15-20% higher in the experimental group than in the control group. This suggests that the new methodology is more effective in shaping cultural communication, as students in the experimental group demonstrated a significantly higher level of cultural communication competence than the control participants. This was particularly

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noticeable in such aspects as understanding another culture, the ability to communicate effectively across cultures, and the ability to integrate cultural knowledge into professional communication. It is important to integrate into the learning process tasks that help students comprehend and analyse the cultural aspects of communication. This will allow them not only to learn the language better but also to be more prepared to communicate in a globalised world.

The results of the study showed that the new teaching methodology, which includes cultural reflections, dialogues on cultural topics and analysis of proverbs, effectively promotes the development of cultural communication competence. Students who were trained using this methodology demonstrated a significantly higher level of understanding of intercultural aspects of communication, which is important for successful professional activity in a global environment.

To further develop the cultural communication competence of higher education students, it is important to integrate relevant methods not only into English courses but also into the curricula of other foreign languages. This approach will contribute to a deeper understanding of the cultural specifics of different nations and improve intercultural communication skills. An important aspect is the introduction of an interdisciplinary approach that combines language learning with other sciences, such as sociology, cultural studies, psychology and others. This will allow students not only to master the linguistic aspects but also to better understand the social and cultural contexts in which they will use their knowledge. The interdisciplinary approach will develop students' ability to analyse social and cultural phenomena through the prism of foreign languages and promote critical thinking and flexibility in intercultural communication. For instance, combining linguistic knowledge with cultural concepts will allow students to gain a deeper understanding of national characteristics and influences on language. This, in turn, will help students to adapt their communication strategies more effectively when interacting with representatives of other cultures. In addition, regular monitoring and correction of curricula is necessary to respond to new challenges of globalisation and changes in the cultural environment. Curriculum development should incorporate technological developments, new trends in intercultural communication, and changes in students' needs that arise from interacting with other cultures.

3.3 Interpretation of the Research Results in the Context of Communication Competence Development

The results of the study show that communicative competence is one of the key components of training future professionals, especially in a world where globalisation and labour market integration require a high level of language proficiency. The ability to communicate effectively in Ukrainian and English is a critical factor in professional success, which makes this issue particularly relevant for teachers, researchers and students. In a professional context, communicative competence is defined as the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with others during professional activities. This

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concept includes language skills, cultural competence and the ability to adapt to different communication situations. According to Lehan et al. (2023), communicative competence is a multilevel construct that combines knowledge, skills and abilities to communicate effectively, taking into account socio-cultural norms. Rizakhodzhaeva and Zhusupova (2022) emphasised the importance of developing communicative competence when learning languages for professional purposes. This is confirmed by the results of the study, which showed that students studying both Ukrainian and English for professional purposes demonstrated a higher level of communicative competence compared to those who did not take such courses.

One of the main aspects of communicative competence is language proficiency, or the ability to use language correctly in different situations. Studying Ukrainian and English for professional purposes is not only about providing students with theoretical knowledge of the language but also about developing practical skills for real-life communication in a professional environment. The study showed that students who had taken an English for Specific Purposes course were significantly more proficient in the specialised vocabulary required for their professions than those who had not. These findings correlate with the study by Trinh and Dinh (2024), who emphasised the importance of developing specialised vocabulary when learning a foreign language, as it increases the effectiveness of professional communication. In addition, learning Ukrainian contributes to the formation of communicative competence, especially in the context of professional ethics and legal aspects. Landone (2024) demonstrated that knowledge of the formal business style of the Ukrainian language is essential for effective communication in government, business and public services.

Language training with a professional orientation involves not only general language competence but also the development of specific skills required for specific professional situations. Kahanurak et al. (2023) noted that successful communication in a professional context requires the adaptation of speech patterns to specific work conditions. This is confirmed by the results of the present study, where students showed improvements not only in their language skills but also in their ability to apply this knowledge in different professional situations. Although the students had a good command of both Ukrainian and English, they used English more often for writing official documents or presentations, while Ukrainian was used more for oral communication during negotiations or meetings with local partners. This reflects the findings of Pahsko and Pinchuk (2023), demonstrated that English is more commonly used for written communication in international companies, while Ukrainian is used in internal business relations.

The issue of professional language teaching methods was also a subject of numerous studies. For instance, the studies by Liubashenko et al. (2022) and Melnychuk et al. (2024) highlighted that the use of interactive methods such as role-playing, modelling professional situations and discussing real-life cases significantly improves students' communicative competence. In this study, students also demonstrated higher

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communicative competence after participating in interactive classes where real-life professional situations were used to practice language skills. This approach allowed students not only to master the necessary language constructs but also to adapt them to specific professional settings. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of Pishghadam and Ebrahimi (2022) and Furtoso et al. (2023), who confirmed the importance of interactive methods in the development of communicative competence.

In addition, Khoroshkovska-Nosach (2020), and Alzhanova and Chaklikova (2022) demonstrated that the use of digital platforms such as Zoom, Google Classroom and specialised language apps facilitates the learning process and improves interaction between teachers and students. This study also confirmed this trend. Students who had access to digital resources during their language training for professional purposes demonstrated a higher level of communicative competence, particularly in written communication. In addition, digital platforms contributed to the improvement of intercultural competence, as students were able to communicate with native speakers and participate in international projects.

The results of the study also demonstrated that in the modern world, where international contacts are an integral part of professional activities, intercultural competence is a critical aspect of communication competence. This includes effective communication with people from different cultures, understanding their socio-cultural characteristics and adjusting communication accordingly. Gong et al. (2022), Eren (2022) and Leeming et al. (2024) determined that students learning English for professional purposes demonstrate a higher level of intercultural competence than those learning the language in general courses. This can be explained by the fact that professional courses include more tasks aimed at developing intercultural communication skills, such as presentations, discussions and analysis of international case studies. This study also confirms the importance of intercultural competence in developing students' communication skills. Those who were actively involved in international projects and discussions with native speakers not only demonstrated a high level of language proficiency but also showed a better knowledge of cultural differences and nuances of communication in other countries. This is consistent with the findings of Symonenko (2020) and Yurieva et al. (2021), who suggested that the development of intercultural competence is an important part of preparing students for professional work in an international environment. The study identified that communicative competence is particularly important in the field of business and international relations, where even minor communication errors can lead to misunderstandings or even the loss of important business partners. In this context, the role of English as a language of international communication becomes critical, which is confirmed by the results of this study. Students who studied English for professional purposes were better versed in the specifics of international communication, which improved their professional prospects.

Compared to other studies, the present research has revealed several common trends in the development of communicative competence. Studying Ukrainian and

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English for professional purposes significantly improves students' communicative competence. This is confirmed by Khateeb and Hassan (2023), Symonenko et al. (2023) and Li et al. (2024), who emphasised the importance of specialised language training for successful communication in a professional context. In addition, the role of digital technologies in the learning process should not be underestimated. The use of online platforms and resources contributes not only to the development of language skills but also to the development of intercultural competence, which is crucial for professional activities in a globalised world. This study confirmed that the updated methodology significantly improves the level of communication interaction between students and teachers.

4. Conclusion

The study revealed that communicative competence in the process of learning Ukrainian and English for professional purposes is a necessary component of training future specialists. The results of the study confirmed the conclusions of other scholars about the importance of linguistic and intercultural competence, interactive teaching methods and the use of digital technologies in the process of language learning are consistent. All these aspects are key in the process of developing successful communication skills that allow students to function effectively in a professional environment. Importantly, communicative competence is not limited to knowledge of language structures. It is a more comprehensive concept that includes the ability to adapt to different cultural contexts, flexibility in communication and mastery of professional terminology. The study proved that a modern approach to teaching languages for professional purposes should be multicomponent, including both theoretical training and practical application of knowledge in real-life situations. To further develop the cultural communication competence of higher education students, it is important to integrate relevant methods not only into English courses but also into the curricula of other foreign languages. This approach will contribute to a deeper understanding of the cultural specifics of different nations and improve intercultural communication skills.

The results of the study showed that the introduction of an improved teaching methodology that focuses on the cultural context significantly improves students' cultural communication skills. The participants in the experimental group demonstrated significantly higher results in all three aspects of the study: creating dialogues, comparing cultural expressions and proverbs, and reflecting on cultural values. These high scores indicate that the new methodology not only stimulates interest in learning the cultural aspects of languages but also increases students' motivation. It promotes a deeper understanding of cultural differences, which is critical in today's globalised world. Contextualising the learning material, where each element is linked to real-life cultural practices and traditions, makes the learning process more relevant and interesting. The use of interactive methods, such as role-playing and group discussions, ensures that students are actively involved in learning, which helps them to better absorb

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knowledge. The emphasis on cultural context promotes critical thinking and reflection skills, as students learn to analyse and evaluate cultural differences while developing a more comprehensive view of the world. As a result, this teaching methodology not only improves language skills but also prepares students for successful professional activities in a multicultural environment. The high results of the experimental group confirm that methods aimed at developing cultural communication competence are effective. The use of interactive technologies allowed students not only to learn English better but also to broaden their worldview, which had a positive impact on their communication skills. One of the main conclusions of this study is that standard approaches to teaching a foreign language are not always sufficient to prepare students for real intercultural situations.

Despite the positive results, there were limitations to the study. The experiment was conducted over a two-month period, which could affect the duration of the effect of the updated methodology. Prospects for further research on the impact of individual components of this methodology on the results, for example, to compare the effectiveness of different interactive approaches (role-playing games, case studies, discussions).

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Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank to all individuals and institutions that contributed to the completion of this study. Special thanks go to the faculty and students at Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, National Academy of Statistics, Accounting

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and Audit, and Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University for their active participation and collaboration during the research process.

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Authors' Contributions

Nataliia Didenko from National Academy of Statistics, Accounting and Audit led the conceptualization of the research and played a key role in shaping the theoretical foundation of the study. She was also responsible for formal analysis and data curation during the empirical phase, including the collection and organisation of data from the participating universities. Additionaly, she coordinated resource management across institutions and was the primary author of the original draft, ensuring cohesion between theoretical frameworks and empirical results.

Maryna Goriunova from National Academy of Statistics, Accounting and Audit contributed significantly to the study's conceptualization and participated in formal analysis alongside Nataliia Didenko. This author was directly involved in the empirical investigation, particularly in implementing the experimental methodology and monitoring classroom engagement. She also co-authored the original draft, focusing on the methodological and discussion sections.

Olena Polinok from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University was responsible for designing the research methodology, ensuring the alignment of theoretical models with practical teaching interventions. She also contributed to formal data analysis, particularly in assessing student performance across control and experimental groups. Her contribution to drafting the manuscript focused on describing the international methodological comparisons and their relevance for Ukrainian higher education.

Oksana Kalashnyk from Borys Grinchenko Kyiv Metropolitan University was involved in both formal analysis and investigation during the empirical phase. She oversaw resource allocation at one of the participating universities and played a crucial role in editing and reviewing the manuscript, ensuring academic rigor and clarity. Moreover, she developed the visual materials, including charts and graphs that compared the performance of control and experimental groups, and helped interpret their significance.

Liudmyla Shevchenko from Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv contributed to developing and validating the study's methodological tools and checklists used during data collection. She was actively engaged in formal analysis and investigation processes, focusing on ensuring reliability and replicability of the experiment. She also contributed to reviewing and editing the manuscript, helping refine the discussion on the effectiveness of integrated language teaching methods.

Declaration of conflicting interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest to the article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

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