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Specifics of integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English for future social workers

The relevance of the study is driven by globalisation and the European vector of Ukraine, demanding enhanced foreign language proficiency. As mandated by the Law, proficiency in professionally-oriented English is an essential component of social worker training, critical for accessing international knowledge and ensuring effective intercultural interaction. The purpose of the article is to establish the fundamental essence of integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English for future social workers and outline its critical significance in their profession-centred training. To achieve this goal, theoretical methods (analysis, systematisation, generalization) were used. The study traces the historical development of integration (Socrates, Plato, Ushynsky and others), emphasizing that integration is a fundamental didactic principle necessary for a holistic view of knowledge. Main concepts are clarified: "integration", "integrated teaching", "interdisciplinary relations", and "pedagogical integration". The research posits that professionally-oriented English must synthesize linguistic knowledge with professional skills. Procedural integration is prioritized within foreign language training, ensuring interconnection between professional content and language skills, aligning with the CLIL model. Analysis of foreign studies (D. Coyle) confirms that integrated learning promotes the simultaneous mastery of both content and language, significantly boosting student motivation, autonomy, and critical decision-making abilities through the processing of authentic professional materials. The theoretical findings are supported by Ukrainian researchers which confirm that CLIL elements are effective and their implementation is a strategic goal for higher educational system. The results of the theoretical analysis confirm that integrated teaching is the key didactic principle for developing the professional and communicative proficiency (preparedness) of future social workers, which is absolutely vital for international collaboration and effective use of global experience. The study concludes that this approach must be systematically implemented. The prospect for further research is seen in the practical development of an original didactic model of integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English for future social workers.

Keywords: social workers, professionally-oriented English, integrated teaching, pedagogical integration, interdisciplinary relations.

Introduction. The relevance of strengthening the foreign language communication skills of specialists, particularly in social work, is determined by globalisation and Ukraine's European vector of development. The current state policy, supported by the Law of Ukraine 'On the Use of the English Language in Ukraine,' officially confirms its status as a language of international communication and its key role in various fields.

The training of social workers requires the integration of professionally oriented English language skills. Proficiency in professional English is an integral part of their professional preparedness, as it provides: access to modern international research and methodologies in social work; establishment of international cooperation and participation in projects; intercultural professional communication with partners and beneficiaries, which is especially important in the context of international aid.

Thus, integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English is critically important for the development of competitive specialists capable of international activity. This emphasizes the urgent need to introduce innovative integrated teaching methods.

Formulation of the problem. The objective of this article is to clarify the essence of integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English and to outline its significance in the training of future social workers.

To achieve this goal, the following tasks were implemented:

1. To examine the historical development of the idea of integration in global pedagogical thought, starting with antiquity (Socrates, Plato) and classical pedagogy (J. Comensky, K. Ushynsky).

2. To clarify the content of the key concepts of phenomenological research: 'integration', 'integrated learning', 'interdisciplinary connections' and 'pedagogical integration'.

3. To justify integrated teaching as a fundamental didactic principle that ensures the synthesis of linguistic knowledge with professional competencies.

4. To determine the priority of procedural integration, which ensures the interconnection between the formation of professional knowledge and language skills, in particular in accordance with the CLIL model.

5. To prove that integrated teaching is a key didactic principle in the formation of the professional and communicative proficiency (preparedness) of future social workers, which is necessary for international activities.

The research material consisted of native and foreign psychological, pedagogical, methodological, and linguistic-didactic sources. The source base included works devoted to: the historical development of the idea of integration; contemporary research focused on methodological problems of the integrated approach; didactic principles of integrated teaching; integrated foreign language teaching in higher education institutions; pedagogical integration and technologies of integrated courses.

To achieve the set goal and objectives, these methods of theoretical research were used: analysis of psychological and pedagogical works and scientific literature; systematization of the phenomenology of research and generalization of various approaches to understanding the essence of the concept 'integration'.

Approbation of research results. The idea of an integrated approach to education dates back to antiquity, when philosophers emphasized the integrity of knowledge as the basis for personal development (Petruk, 2010). In classical pedagogy, these views were developed by Comenius, who substantiated the importance of interdisciplinary connections (Honcharenko, 2011), Ushynsky, who rejected the division of subjects and applied an analytical-synthetic method (Savchenko, 1999), and Pestalozzi, who insisted on the systematization of material (Ivanchuk, 2004). Historical ideas confirm that integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English is a fundamental didactic principle necessary for combining language and professional competencies (Petruk, 2010).

The concept of 'integration' is interpreted as the creation of a new whole based on the combination of elements. In pedagogy, this means the purposeful combination of material from different disciplines for a comprehensive study of cross-cutting themes or professional issues. Therefore, integrated English language teaching for future social workers is a dynamic process that combines language skills with knowledge of social policy, psychology and social work methods. This approach forms a single professional and communicative proficiency (preparedness) that is important for international activities in the social sphere (Zagnitko, 2012; Antonova, 2017).

There are various definitions of integration in scientific literature. S. Kravets considers integration as a system of interrelated disciplines that reflects the integrity of the world. O. Petruk defines pedagogical integration as a complex process of convergence of sciences, which is a qualitatively higher form of realization of interdisciplinary connections in education. There is considerable terminological variability, but the terms 'integrated teaching' and 'integrative learning' are often synonymous. In this study, integration is understood as a purposeful process of combining educational components, leading to the emergence of qualitatively new knowledge and a synergistic effect in learning (Mukan et al., 2020; Petruk, 2010).

The modern educational paradigm reinforces integrated processes driven by the need to universalize educational spheres and form a comprehensive knowledge system. Integrated teaching is a powerful didactic tool that accelerates the formation of a worldview and stimulates students to independently solve interdisciplinary problems. The objectives include: the formation of systematic knowledge about the unity of the professional sphere, high-quality preparation for international activities, and the development of creative thinking (Zagnitko, 2012; Antonova, 2017).

In the context of profession-centred training, integrated teaching is a process of meaningful and structurally coordinated study of disciplines, focused on the assimilation of interdisciplinary connections for the comprehensive improvement of the professional qualities of social workers. The application of this approach to the study of professionally-oriented English involves the organic use of professional knowledge (social pedagogy, psychology). Such interdisciplinary synthesis supports cognitive activity and motivation, contributing to the comprehensive improvement of linguistic and professional skills, which is critically important for international professional communication. Ukrainian scientists have made a significant contribution to research in this area (Mukan et al., 2020; Petruk, 2010). The analysis of their work allows us to identify key scientific areas:

1. Methodological problems of the integrated approach. The research focused on the philosophical and theoretical justification of integration in education (S. Honcharenko, I. Kozlovskaya, L. Sazhko, E. Ganish, O. Petruk).

2. Didactic principles of integrated teaching. The development of basic rules and conditions for the effective organisation of the integrated educational process (O. Tarnopolsky, M. Artsyshevskaya, S. Klepko, A. Zimul'dinova).

3. Integrated foreign language teaching in higher education institutions. Study of the specifics of integrating language and profession-oriented components in higher education institutions (S. Nikolaeva, G. Turchynova, I. Korotaeva, N. Morska).

4. Pedagogical integration in foreign language teaching. The research on the convergence of linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge (R. Martynova, I. Bekh, L. Dobrovolska, I. Myrkovich).

5. Integrated course technologies. The development of practical models and methods for implementing integrated teaching (N. Hrytsenko, S. Bortnyk, O. Vovchenko, T. Druzhchenko, M. Ivanchuk).

The research forms the theoretical basis for an integrated methodology for teaching professionally-oriented English to future social workers, emphasizing the need to contextualize language material through profession-based activity. The essence of integrated teaching in profession-centred training is based on interdisciplinary links that ensure the integrity of content and a systematic approach (Zagnitko, 2012). In S. Goncharenko's interpretation, they appear as 'mutual coordination of educational programs,' reflecting the complexity of training. These connections perform educational, developmental, and determinative functions necessary for solving professional tasks.

Ukrainian scientists have theoretically substantiated the importance of distinguishing between the concepts 'interdisciplinary connections' and 'integrated lesson' (Honcharenko, 2011). According to O. Savchenko, an integrated lesson covers material from different disciplines, united by a common theme, while interdisciplinary connections are short-term content moments of a lesson (Savchenko, 199: 261). Modern didactics considers integration based on problem situations at the intersection of disciplines to be the most effective, since fundamental knowledge becomes the basis for complex solutions (Burlak et al., 2021). In the context of professionally-oriented English, interdisciplinary connections are a key tool for contextualizing material, allowing the vocabulary of social policy to be combined with case studies in English and developing communication proficiency (both communicative and professional preparedness) (Coyle, 2007).

In international discourse, integrated teaching is known as CLIL – a combination of subject content with foreign language learning objectives, where language is a tool for professional communication. Research, in particular by D. Coyle, shows that CLIL promotes the development of language proficiency (linguistic preparedness) and confidence, increases motivation through profession-based topics, develops spontaneous speech and the ability to solve interdisciplinary tasks, and stimulates cognitive development (Zagnitko, 2012). For future social workers, this model is optimal because it provides simultaneous mastery of professional content and English terminology necessary for international cooperation (Coyle, 2007).

For a deeper understanding of integration, it is necessary to consider the category of 'pedagogical integration.' R. Martynova distinguishes between subject integration (unsuitable for foreign languages as a teaching tool) and procedural integration, which consists in the interdependent formation of professional knowledge and foreign language skills. It is procedural integration that underlies the combination of English with profession-based disciplines. M. Ivanchuk considers pedagogical integration to be a purposefully organised connection between elements of content, forms and methods aimed at developing the student's personality (Ivanchuk, 2004). Effective integration involves the coordination of goals, content (interdisciplinary connections) and methods, in particular project work and case studies (Zagnitko, 2012). Procedural integration is crucial, as it ensures the use of English as a tool for working through authentic professional situations and contributes to the readiness of specialists for international activity (Martynova, 2012).

Foreign language teaching in higher education institutions has its own specific features. First, a foreign language does not convey clearly structured knowledge about the environment, which gives grounds to talk about its purpose as a means of obtaining more complete and multifaceted information about the real world. In this regard, it can be said that the acquisition of lexical, grammatical and phonetic rules is only a prerequisite for the successful use of these norms in the course of professionalization of the individual in the form of developing skills for their application. Secondly, the specificity of a foreign language as an academic discipline lies in its 'boundlessness'. The scope of any language includes a large number of lexical units, and this requires certain restrictions in terms of volume. The creation of a language minimum for different educational levels allows for control and self-control, correction and forward planning of foreign language training, its development within the framework of professional development and practical implementation. Thirdly, foreign languages are part of a group of disciplines in which problem-solving and creative tasks play a significant role. Most importantly, teaching methods play a significant role in foreign language learning at higher education institutions, especially in non-language institutions or faculties where the language is not the main discipline of the speciality and, accordingly, insufficient hours are allocated to its study. Therefore, we consider the use of

integrated teaching to be a modern educational process and the only one possible in the process of studying professionally-oriented English, as it allows students to engage in intercultural interaction and improves their professional communication skills, which will ensure their future competitiveness in the labour market.

Conclusions. Analysis of research defines integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English as a modelled educational process. It is based on strengthening interconnections and combining the content of professional disciplines with the English language. The aim of this process is to develop personality and form professional and foreign language skills, which will enable specialists to use English as a means of communication and improve their professional potential. Analysis of sources has made it possible to systematize the phenomenology of the study and clearly reveal the essence of the categories: “integration”, “pedagogical integration”, “integrated teaching” and “interdisciplinary relations”, which determined the conceptual apparatus of the work.

A summary of the theoretical principles confirmed that integrated teaching is a fundamental didactic principle. It ensures the formation of comprehensive profession-related and communicative proficiency (professional and communicative preparedness), which is critically important for international activities in social work.

We see further scientific exploration in the development of an author's didactic model of integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English for future social workers. This model must include criteria, indicators and methods for diagnosing the level of integrated proficiency (professional preparedness).

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Специфіка інтегрованого навчання професійно-спрямованої англійської мови майбутніх соціальних працівників

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Актуальність дослідження зумовлена потребами глобалізації та європейського розвитку України, що вимагають підвищення іншомовної компетентності фахівців. Закон України «Про застосування англійської мови в Україні» підкреслює її статус як мови міжнародного спілкування, важливої для професійної комунікації та наукової взаємодії. Володіння професійно-спрямованою англійською є необхідним компонентом підготовки соціальних працівників, забезпечуючи доступ до міжнародних джерел та ефективну міжкультурну взаємодію. Мета статті – з'ясувати сутність інтегрованого навчання професійно-спрямованої англійської мови й окреслити його значення у підготовці майбутніх соціальних працівників. Використано методи аналізу, систематизації та узагальнення психолого-педагогічних праць. Розглянуто історичний розвиток ідеї інтеграції (Сократ, Платон, Я. Коменський, К. Ушинський), уточнено зміст понять «інтеграція», «інтегроване навчання», «міжпредметні зв'язки», «педагогічна інтеграція». У рамках іншомовної підготовки пріоритетною визначено процесуальну інтеграцію, що забезпечує взаємозв'язок формування фахових знань і мовних умінь, зокрема відповідно до моделі CLIL. Аналіз зарубіжних досліджень доводить, що інтегроване навчання сприяє одночасному опануванню професійного змісту та мови, підвищує мотивацію, автономію і здатність здобувачів самостійно приймати рішення. Результати засвідчують, що інтегроване навчання є ключовим дидактичним принципом формування професійно-спрямованої англійської підготовленості майбутніх соціальних працівників, необхідної для міжнародної діяльності. Перспективу подальших наукових розвідок вбачаємо в розробленні авторської моделі інтегрованого навчання професійно-спрямованої англійської мови майбутніх соціальних працівників.

Ключові слова: соціальні працівники, професійно-орієнтована англійська мова, інтегроване навчання, педагогічна інтеграція, міждисциплінарні зв'язки.



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