

ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION AS A GLOBAL LANGUAGE

The article is aimed at substantiating the hypothesis that English for Professional Communication (EPC), a variant of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), can be regarded as a Global Language that should be taught at non-linguistic Universities together with profession-oriented subjects. This variant of EFL should be simplified, culturally neutral and satisfy the needs of both speakers and non-speakers of English for international communication. The attempts to adjust Lingua franca for global communication on the grounds that it developed around the world throughout human history for commercial, cultural, religious, diplomatic and administrative convenience, and as a means of exchanging information between scientists and scholars of different nationalities are held back by numerous problems with traditional spelling and varied content of teaching and approaches. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) which appeared on the stage in the 1960s of the last century gave some hope to overcome the difficulties but soon it became clear that it also failed to satisfy the needs of the professionals to communicate freely in their branches because it was confined rather to learning specialized terminology and translating texts instead of developing fluency in speech which is of primary importance for the employees in the workplace nowadays when they are to solve a wide range of work-related tasks on the world scale via ICT and deal with complex social and professional issues.

EPC is a new discipline that focuses not only on professional issues but also on the study of information and the ways it is created, managed, presented, distributed, and consumed. Hence the necessity to turn the researchers' attention to this new discipline, define its characteristics and content, the range of other disciplines related to it, and develop the appropriate methodology of teaching it. Thus, English for Professional Communication seems the most appropriate variant of a global language worth teaching now.

Key words: *globalization, global language, English for Professional Communication, fluency in speech, to solve work-related tasks, digital media design.*

The epoch of globalization penetrates deep into all the spheres of our life including education. To understand this phenomenon, it is reasonable to consult the dictionaries. In Wikipedia globalization is defined as the process of international integration arising from the interchange of worldviews, products, ideas and mutual sharing, and other aspects of culture. The definition is rather general and obscure. That is why we looked for a more detailed one. Jane Knight specifies globalization as a free dissemination on the world scale of the ideas, concepts, resources (including human), cultures, values, goods, services and technologies [5].

The key words in both definitions are 'interchange' and 'dissemination'. Naturally, 'interchange' and 'dissemination' on the world scale should be conducted in some language. What language should it be?

The problem of a global language for international communication has been stirring imagination of many distinguished researchers for years. We can mention such world-famous names as David Block, Debora Cameron, David Crystal, Tony Dudley-Evans, John Gray, Roxy Harris, Monica Heller, Martin Hewings, Maggie St John, Jane Knight, Kevin Knight, Claire Kramsch, Ben Rampton, Steven L. Thorn, Penny Ur, Catherine Wallace, Jo Westcombe and many others [1-10] who devoted their works to the solution of this problem.

Nowadays English has been recognized as the language of international communication though Chinese and Spanish rival English on the global scale, and Arabic is dynamically spreading too. Anyway, being the dominant language on the Internet, mail, telexes, cables and mass media English has conquered the leading position in the world. And this position is further strengthening thanks to the development of international business and law, science and ICT, swift spread of the Internet and mobile communication where English is predominant. Besides, it is estimated that by 2025 there will be more speakers of English as a second language than the speakers of English as a first language on the planet [1; 2; 5].

Still the problem remains because learning classical English for international communication is too time-consuming, hard and boring which does not agree with the pragmatic goals of its users. Politicians, businessmen, researchers, bankers, lawyers, representatives of social and cultural spheres have to negotiate, interact and come to an agreement on professional issues here and now. They need a simplified and culturally neutral variant of the language, which excludes ambiguity, is clear to both speakers and non-speakers of English and is sufficient to express themselves successfully, a kind of World Standard English (WSE) [9].

The idea of World Standard English has been actively debated on of late [1; 5; 7; 9; 10]. The linguists are striving to elaborate the corpus of WSE that might serve as a landmark for all its users on the globe. However, for many reasons this idea is developing very slowly because the researchers cannot come to consensus on the path to this goal. On the one hand, everyone agrees that Global English should be more accessible to people from different nationalities and cultures, but on the other hand, that same majority of protagonists agree that the criteria for this simplicity should not be achieved at the expense of accuracy. If most lexis and grammar for this new international variety of English is fairly well defined by now, sometimes the standard is not clear and the teachers have to make choices on their own which causes misunderstanding. Many unsolved questions remain in the area of pronunciation and spelling. Strong and weak forms (*because* and *'cause*), long and short vowels (*steal* and *still*), full and contracted forms (*they had* and *they'd*), linking 'r' (*father and*), voiced and unvoiced consonants (*white* and *wide*), word stress (*'black bird* and *'blackbird*), sentence stress and the variety of intonation patterns are still argued upon. At the same time, there are voices that such phenomena are of minor importance and do not cause communication breakdown, which lack convincing proof and therefore are doubtful [1; 9; 10].

It has also been argued that its traditional spelling holds Global English back. There have been numerous attempts to simplify the traditional English spelling but they are sooner accepted as fun, as a joke than taken seriously. The idea to adopt an alternative artificial spelling is blocked by too many scholars and users because it makes English hardly recognizable. There are too many difficult choices that have to be made if there is any further standardisation of English in the future. These include the choice over whether to adopt a current standard, or move towards a more neutral, but artificial one. We still remember unsuccessful attempts to create the artificial language of Esperanto which failed to live up to the hopes of its creator and lost its popularity. As we may conclude, WSE remains in the status of an idea and can hardly be referred to as a starting point for practical use so far [5].

As the problem of Global English is lingering about there have also been proposals for English as a Lingua Franca (ELF). ELF developed around the world throughout human history for commercial, cultural, religious, diplomatic and administrative convenience, and as a means of exchanging information between scientists and other scholars of different nationalities. While linguists are working at defining its main characteristics, educationalists seek the most rational ways of teaching it, but both are held back by unsolvable problems beginning with varied content of teaching and approaches, and finishing with its traditional spelling [1; 10].

There are some researchers who reject both linguistic imperialism and David Crystal's theory of the neutrality of English [1]. They argue that the phenomenon of the global spread of English is better understood in the framework of appropriation, that is, English used for local purposes around the world. For instance, demonstrators in non-English speaking countries often use signs in English to convey their demands to TV-audiences around the globe [6]. The idea of using English for local purposes seemed so attractive, that in early 1960's there appeared a new branch – English for Specific Purposes (ESP) that has grown and became one of the most prominent areas of EFL teaching. Researchers define ESP as English that is learnt or taught to get specific goals in specific fields like English in technology, science, business, law, study etc. [8].

Tony Dudley-Evans and Maggie St John regard ESP as a multi-disciplinary activity and define the meaning of ESP in terms of its 'absolute' and 'variable' characteristics. Its *absolute* characteristics are as follows: ESP meets specific needs of the learners; it makes use of underlying methodology and activities of the discipline it serves; ESP is centred on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre. To *variable* characteristics of ESP belong: its relation to or design for specific disciplines; usage of a different methodology from that of English as a Foreign Language in specific teaching situations; its orientation at adult learners either at a tertiary level institution or in a professional work situation; its general design for intermediate or advanced students; assumption of some basic knowledge of the language systems [2].

To clarify the role of ESP in global communication let us refer to Martin Hewings' research. He explored the contributions made to *ESP Journal*, included in the Social Science Citation Index, to provide a representative overview of the growth of ESP over 1980 to 2001 years around the world. In the end, he came to the conclusion that there was a steady and marked decline in the proportion of papers that looked at ESP in general, with a corresponding steady increase in papers on English for Occupational Purposes [4].

Thus, there appeared a new variant of EFL – English for Occupational Purposes. How does it differ from ESP? Why has it appeared? As Martin Hewings concludes, it is more likely to be a further reflection of the increased specialisation of ESP. As ESP becomes more specialised it becomes more difficult to write an account of a particular programme that will be of relevance to a wide part of users [4]. That is why ESP split into English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Occupational Purposes (EOP).

The difference between EAP and EOP is clearly described by Ronna Timpa. She writes that language learners who are in the process of developing expertise in their fields need English communication skills as tools in their training, i.e. EAP. But language learners who are already experts in their fields need English communication skills as tools in their work, i.e. EOP because EOP is more relevant to the learners' target needs and wants than ESP [6].

Teaching EAP the instructor selects the spheres a student needs to be able to succeed in the specific course; e.g., how to write certain papers, how to make presentations, how to work in teams, how to talk to the professor, how to participate in class discussions, how to do research in the field, etc. The course content is defined and the vocabulary is selected in view of these tasks. Hence the corresponding methodology is applied to master EAP.

Teaching EOP the instructor often comes to the workplace of the learner who is an expert in his / her field or to the language school or even to the coffee bar. Teaching is always aimed at a very specific goal (e.g., making a specific business presentation about the company's performance to the non-native or native English speakers or to conduct negotiations with foreign partners, to design an advertisement or a project etc.). Later on, as Kevin Knight states, former students of EOP may act as language training consultants themselves [6].

Tariq Mahmood Khan, Ghulamullah, M. Naeem Mohsin, Ashiq Hussain Dogar and Ahmed Sher Awan admit in their article that ESP is not a different variety of English but it is a contextual and need based situation in which some specific purposes of language functions are gained. To carry out ESP courses a needs analysis of English for Occupational and Specific Purposes needs analysis is conducted to get information about target needs and learners' wants [8].

Thus, we can conclude that neither ESP nor EOP are able to satisfy the needs of global communication. Both refer to a rather limited number of users and cannot be applied on a wide scale.

One of the most perspective approaches to solving the problem of a global language for international communication nowadays seems teaching English for Professional Communication (EPC).

EPC is a new branch of ESP but unlike ESP, which for many years was confined to learning specialized terminology, translating texts and developing speaking skills limited by the University curricula, EPC is aimed at developing fluency in speech that is increasingly essential in the workplace, especially in managerial and executive positions. Many employers now require that their employees should be able to carry out a wide range of work-related tasks and deal with complex social and professional issues in English. EPC may be the answer to this new reality because besides oral professional communication it also encompasses written, visual and digital communication. EPC blends together pedagogical principles of rhetoric, technology, software, and learning theory to improve and deliver communication in a variety of settings ranging from technical writing to usability and digital media design. It is a new discipline that focuses on the study of information and the ways it is created, managed, distributed, and consumed [8; 6].

Since communication in modern society is a rapidly developing area, the progress of technologies often outpaces the number of available expert practitioners. This creates the discrepancy between a strong demand for skilled communicators who continue to exceed the supply of trained professionals, on the one hand, and the lack of the instructors of a new type, on the other hand.

The field of professional communication is closely related to that of technical communication, though professional communication encompasses a wider variety of skills. Professional communicators use strategies, learning theory, and technologies to more effectively communicate in the business world. Successful communication skills are critical to business because all businesses, though to varying degrees, involve writing, reading, editing, speaking, listening, software applications, computer graphics, and Internet research. Job candidates with professional communication backgrounds are more likely to bring to the organization sophisticated perspectives on society, culture, science, and technology [4; 6; 7].

In conclusion, we must admit that the problem of a global language for international communication remains open. There are still too many authors mixing definitions, assuming that, in certain cases, there is not a very clear distinguishing border between Global English and English as a Lingua Franca, between English for Specific Purposes and English for Occupational Purposes. The attempts to develop an artificial World Standard English for international communication do not find support either because there arise too many serious problems on the way. Linguistic research is hindered by uncertain goals; as well as elaborating a rational methodology of teaching some mythical Global Language seems illusive.

Anyway, appearance of English for Professional Communication on the stage can solve most of the problems mentioned above, in our opinion. There are several reasons for such a belief.

Firstly, this new discipline is aimed at particular students' needs, integrates deep into their profession, and is flexible and accessible.

Secondly, it focuses on complex professional communication skills such as: writing, reading, editing, speaking, listening, software applications, computer graphics, and Internet research.

Thirdly, it focuses on the study of information and the ways it is created, managed, distributed, and consumed.

Fourthly, English for Professional Communication blends together pedagogical principles of rhetoric, technology, software, and learning theory to deliver communication in a variety of settings ranging from technical writing to usability and digital media design.

And finally, experts with profound professional communication background are more likely to bring to the organization sophisticated perspectives on society, culture, science, and technology than the ones being prepared today.

Each of the mentioned above scopes of problems may become a separate object of further detailed investigation.

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АНГЛІЙСЬКА МОВА ДЛЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ ЯК ГЛОБАЛЬНА МОВА

У статті розглядається проблема глобальної мови для міжнародного спілкування. Сьогодні не існує чіткої межі між визначеннями глобальної англійської мови та Lingua Franca, англійської мови для спеціальних цілей (ESP) та для виробничих потреб (EOP). Спроби створити всесвітню стандартну англійську мову (WSE) нашоюхуються на непереборні перепони. Рішення цієї проблеми автор вбачає у розгляді англійської мови для професійного спілкування (EPC) як оптимального варіанту глобальної мови, який заслуговує всебічного вивчення.

Ключові слова: глобалізація, глобальна мова, англійська мова для професійного спілкування, плінність усного мовлення, вирішувати виробничі завдання, дизайн електронних матеріалів.

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АНГЛИЙСКИЙ ЯЗЫК ДЛЯ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОГО ОБЩЕНИЯ КАК ГЛОБАЛЬНЫЙ ЯЗЫК

В статье рассматривается проблема глобального языка для международного общения. Сегодня не существует четкой границы между определениями глобального английского языка и Lingua Franca, английского языка для специальных целей (ESP) и для производственных целей (EOP). Попытки создать искусственный всемирный стандартный английский язык (WSE) наталкиваются на непреодолимые препоны. Решение этой проблемы автор видит в рассмотрении английского языка для профессионального общения (EPC) как оптимального варианта глобального языка, который заслуживает всестороннего изучения.

Ключевые слова: глобализация, глобальный язык, английский язык для профессионального общения, беглость устной речи, решают производственные вопросы, дизайн электронных материалов.

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