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DEVELOPING FUTURE SPECIALISTS' COMMUNICATION CULTURE THROUGH ESP IN THE CONTEXT OF ETHNO-CULTURAL RELATIONS

Abstract. *This article examines how the communication culture of future specialists can be developed through English for Specific Purposes (ESP) in the context of ethno-cultural relations. It discusses the theoretical foundations of communicative culture, intercultural communicative competence, multilingual interaction and professional communication in higher education. Particular attention is paid to the integration of ethnocultural values into ESP instruction as a way of preparing competitive specialists who can work effectively in multicultural professional environments.*

Keywords: *ESP, communication culture, intercultural communication, ethno-cultural relations, communicative competence, multilingual education, higher education, future specialists.*

РАЗВИТИЕ КУЛЬТУРЫ ОБЩЕНИЯ БУДУЩИХ СПЕЦИАЛИСТОВ ПОСРЕДСТВОМ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА ДЛЯ СПЕЦИАЛЬНЫХ ЦЕЛЕЙ (ESP) В КОНТЕКСТЕ ЭТНОКУЛЬТУРНЫХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ

Аннотация. *Данная статья посвящена развитию коммуникативной культуры будущих специалистов посредством обучения английскому языку для специальных целей (ESP) в контексте этнокультурных отношений. В статье рассматриваются теоретические основы коммуникативной культуры, межкультурной коммуникативной компетенции, многоязычного взаимодействия и профессиональной коммуникации в системе высшего образования. Особое внимание уделяется интеграции этнокультурных ценностей в преподавание ESP как средству подготовки конкурентоспособных специалистов, способных эффективно функционировать в мультикультурной профессиональной среде.*

Ключевые слова: *ESP, коммуникативная культура, межкультурная коммуникация, этнокультурные отношения, коммуникативная компетенция, многоязычное образование, высшее образование.*

Globalization, digital technologies, academic mobility, ever closer contact between cultures – this is the environment in which today's graduates will build their careers. Professional knowledge alone no longer guarantees success: a specialist is also expected to communicate confidently in multilingual and multicultural settings. Communication culture has therefore moved into the list of key competencies that higher education is expected to develop. By communication culture we mean a person's ability to interact with members of other social and cultural groups ethically, professionally and with genuine cultural awareness. In education this covers several things at once: command of the language itself, intercultural sensitivity, empathy, tolerance and the ethics of professional communication.

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is particularly well placed to develop this culture, since the discipline by its very nature ties language learning to professional communication and intercultural contact. What current ESP methodology values most is not knowledge about the language but the practical skills a learner will actually need in real working situations. Universities and workplaces are becoming more ethnically mixed every year, which makes the integration of

ethnocultural values into ESP teaching less a fashionable option than a practical necessity. Where such integration succeeds, it builds mutual understanding, tolerance and a calmer, more constructive intercultural dialogue.

In theoretical terms, communication culture is a multidimensional concept: its linguistic, sociological, psychological, ethical and intercultural components are difficult to separate from one another. It is usually described as a system of communicative knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that regulates how people interact in social and professional life.

At the heart of this system lies intercultural communicative competence – the ability to communicate appropriately and effectively in intercultural situations [1, p. 46–55]. Empathy, flexibility, tolerance and respect for cultural difference are repeatedly singled out as conditions for its development [2, p. 126–134].



The formation of communication culture is closely tied to professional identity and social adaptation. Here lies the difference between ESP and General English: an ESP course is built around the communication needs of a specific profession, and its content follows the learners' future occupational context rather than a universal syllabus.

A well-designed ESP course places student in situations that imitate their future workplace. They negotiate, give presentations, take part in mock conferences and interviews, defend their position in discussions and work on joint projects – developing professional communication skills and intercultural competence along the way. The logic is simple: the abilities needed for professional interaction are best formed by practicing that interaction.

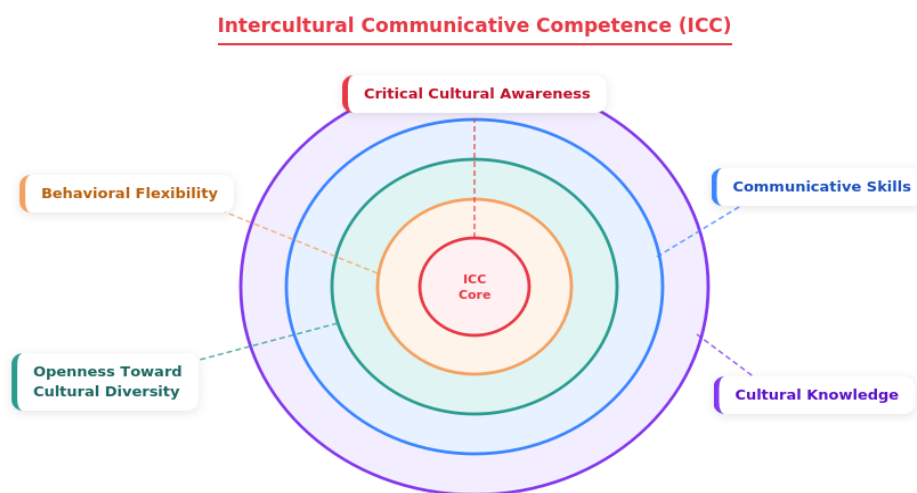
Primary Objectives of ESP – English for Specific Purposes



Contemporary ESP methodology increasingly combines language work with intercultural education and digital tools. Recent studies suggest that explicit intercultural instruction noticeably improves the communicative competence of ESP students [3, p. 1–12]. Problem-solving tasks and collaborative formats bring a further benefit, pushing learners toward autonomy and critical thinking. Ethno-cultural relations are, in essence, the everyday interactions of people who belong to different ethnic, linguistic, cultural and religious communities. Universities have become exactly such spaces: a student today routinely encounters communication styles, traditions and worldviews quite unlike their own.

Where these relations are positive, the gains are considerable – social cohesion, tolerance, genuine intercultural dialogue, less ground for discrimination, peaceful coexistence. It is no accident that researchers keep urging universities to promote multicultural values and intercultural communication practices [4, p. 126–130].

Bringing ethnocultural content into ESP instruction resolves what might look like a contradiction: students preserve and even strengthen their national identity while acquiring a global communicative competence. Educational policy is moving in the same direction, since a globalized labour market needs specialists able to function in international professional environments. Intercultural communicative competence (ICC) has become one of the central concepts of modern language education. Ertay and Gilanlioglu have shown that it directly affects how effectively students communicate and how well they adapt professionally [2, p. 126–134]. The competence-based approach draws the practical conclusion: what counts is communication outcomes, not theoretical knowledge about the language.



Intercultural competence does not grow out of textbooks alone – it develops through authentic communication and contact with culturally diverse communities [5, p. 128–134]. The ESP classroom is a natural setting for this, because its communication tasks are connected with professional and intercultural situations from the very start. The competence-based approach now holds the leading position in higher education, and its logic is straightforward: a student should be able to apply knowledge and skills in practice, not merely reproduce them.

In ESP this translates into active communication, collaborative learning and authentic professional interaction, drawing together communicative, professional, intercultural, social and digital competences. There is also growing agreement that communicative competence cannot be reduced to its cognitive side – the emotional and behavioral dimensions matter just as much [2, p. 126–134].

Embedding intercultural communication tasks in the ESP curriculum has a further effect: it strengthens students' socio-cultural adaptability and makes their communication more flexible.

None of this happens by itself; developing communication culture through ESP requires specific pedagogical conditions. Teaching materials should be authentic and should reflect cultural diversity and the norms of international communication. Interactive methods – role-plays, debates, case studies, simulations, project-based learning – give students more communication practice and keep them genuinely engaged. Group projects and teamwork sharpen interpersonal and intercultural interaction. Reflective learning asks students to look critically at their own communication experience and compare cultural perspectives. A student-centered approach, with its emphasis on autonomy and active participation, reinforces the whole process. Culturally inclusive learning environments, as research shows, have a measurable positive effect on students' communication development [6, p. 1–14].

Much depends on the teacher. In such a classroom an ESP instructor is not only a language teacher but also an intercultural mediator, a facilitator, a mentor and, in a sense, a communication coach. Part of this role is encouraging students to respect cultural difference and to question their own stereotypes. Pedagogical research confirms that intercultural sensitivity directly influences how communicative competence takes shape [5, p. 128–134]. Organizing collaborative activities and maintaining a psychologically safe classroom climate belong to the same set of professional tasks. The picture is not without problems. Universities still face insufficient intercultural training, a shortage of authentic ESP materials, limited opportunities for communication practice, language anxiety among students, persistent stereotypes and prejudice and unequal access to digital technologies.

Students often run into psychological barriers when communicating in multicultural settings, and research shows that stereotypes measurably reduce the efficiency of communication. The practical answer lies in inclusive institutional policies that promote tolerance and intercultural dialogue rather than merely declaring them. Multilingualism deserves separate mention. Multilingual education supports international cooperation and academic mobility, and in multicultural societies ESP often works as a bridge between national identity and global communicative competence.

Preserving one's native cultural identity while remaining open to other cultures is among the main objectives of education today. Multilingual interaction, as researchers note, enhances both communicative competence and socio-cultural adaptation [7, p. 88–101]. Taken together, the analysis shows that forming communication culture through ESP is a multidimensional process in which language learning, intercultural education, professional communication and digital competence development all feed into one another. ESP improves more than linguistic proficiency – it shapes students' intercultural awareness, tolerance and professional ethics. Integrating ethnocultural values into ESP curricula makes students' communication more flexible and their intercultural sensitivity sharper. For universities this is an argument for treating communication culture not as an optional extra but as a priority: the demand for specialists who can work in multicultural professional contexts will only grow.

As a conclusion we can note that developing future specialists' communication culture through ESP in the context of ethno-cultural relations is among the key priorities of higher education today. Communication culture is broader than language competence alone – it includes intercultural awareness, tolerance, emotional intelligence, professional ethics and communicative flexibility.

ESP offers favorable conditions for this work precisely because it ties language learning to authentic professional communication and intercultural interaction. Effective development of communication culture, as the study shows, rests on competence-based education, multicultural learning environments, interactive methods, digital technologies and deliberate intercultural strategies. Graduates with a well-developed communication culture and solid intercultural competence will be more competitive, more adaptable and, in the end, more successful in global professional settings. The next step is empirical: testing how well intercultural ESP methodologies actually perform across different academic and professional contexts.

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