

TEACHING ENGLISH FOR PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES (EPP) VS CONTENT AND LANGUAGE INTEGRATED LEARNING (CLIL):THE CASE OF PLEKHANOV RUSSIAN UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS (PRUE)

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Abstract

This article intends to explore the special aspects of Teaching English for Professional Purposes (EPP) and Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (PRUE), one of the biggest and oldest economic universities in the Russian Federation. The paper adopts both quantitative and qualitative methodology approaches, i.e. it applies statistical data collected during the research and literature review in order to highlight the benefits and opportunities of both approaches as well as the problem areas in teaching professional English at the university level. It also focuses on the controversies faced by EPP and CLIL teachers and investigates how well current programmes and curricula satisfy both the teachers' and students' needs. The paper advocates that only integrated interdisciplinary approach between language and academic subject studies can result in synergy needed to prepare highly-qualified specialists in a particular field of economics.

Keywords: EPP, ESP, CLIL, CBI, foreign language, academic subject, integration

Introduction

The paper considers experience in teaching English for Professional Purposes to senior Bachelor and Master students at Plekhanov Russian University of Economics (PRUE). Established in 1907 with its 17 thousand student body PRUE has always prided itself as an innovative educational and research institute at the cutting edge of economics, open to new progressive trends in science and teaching. Having joined the Bologna Process in higher education Russian universities are now undergoing through an intricate process of aligning their language programmes in accordance with competence-based approach in education. The primary objective of both Bachelors' and Masters' programmes is building up professional communicative competences of students of economics, i.e. the ability to solve communicative tasks within their professional activity. Many of PRUE graduates seek employment with the biggest multinational companies (such as PwC, E&Y, Citibank, Raiffeisenbank and the like) where the office working language is English. Therefore the increasing pressure of globalization is changing our perceptions of education when getting knowledge is more and more biased to its saleability and future graduates' employability to find the best career options possible. In this context, teaching English for its own sake in a regular classroom environment is no longer the case, and the key task of English language studies is becoming to train students for cross-cultural issues, general linguistic awareness, and communicative strategies. The emphasis of language learning is shifted towards immediacy and clarity of communication, rather than control over the subtle shades of meaning and nuances typical of native speakers. Though the need to sensitize students to such linguistic nuances is generally acknowledged, teaching them to speak like native speakers is now considered to be outmoded

and even archaic. The decreasing number of interactive teacher-student hours accentuates self-study and thus affects the conventional patterns of language practice provided for students. Naturally, non-English-speaking universities all over the world are seeking ways and methods to improve their language studies. In our view, the best solution would be a wide implementation of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) when at least some subjects for senior undergraduates are delivered in English. Presently PRUE offers some very popular courses fully presented in English (for example, the International Business School (IBS-Plekhanov) and some Masters' programmes); but a full-scale introduction of them is impeded by some obvious obstacles such as heterogeneity of the students, insufficiency of subject teachers with a good command of English and etc. Hence, the only remaining option for redirecting the objectives and upgrading the course could be further enhancement of EPP courses and enriching them with elements of Content-Based Language Instruction (CBLI) with the focus on Task-Based Learning (TBL) approach.

The elective course English for Professional Purposes (EPP) crowns the hierarchy of language studies at university and stands out among them due to its inherent difficulty and importance for future specialists. It is a relatively short customized language course tailored to satisfy the particular needs of future graduates in a narrow field of their future profession, training them in the focus vocabulary in certain areas. As the contemporary labour market requires more and more narrow specialists, therefore there is a need for a huge variety of such courses. The formidable scope of the task which every chair of foreign languages in a large university faces can be exemplified with PRUE with its 49 specialization programmes providing education on 170 different professional profiles. The list of programmes and courses ranges from "Accounting and Audit" to "Management in Sports Industry" and "Commodity Management" and each of them must be equipped with its own language course. Our research discloses that the foreign language teachers who have to deliver EPP courses, albeit being highly intrinsically motivated, regularly point out numerous problems which they encounter and which impede the successful implementation of the courses. Looking in the rear view window of our past 20-year experience in EPP teaching, we have conducted our research in order to spot problem areas, analyse them and suggest ways of raising students' foreign language professional competence by promoting interdisciplinary approach in EPP courses at economic universities and making them more flexible in response to the demands of job markets.

Literature Review

Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL)

CLIL has become an "umbrella term" encompassing different forms of using language as the medium of instruction in bi-lingual education such as Bilingual Integration of Languages and Disciplines (BILD), English Across the Curriculum (EAC), English as an Academic Language (EAL), English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI), Foreign Language Immersion Program (FLIP) Foreign Languages as a Medium of Education (FLAME), Languages Across the Curriculum (LAC), Teaching Content Through English and others. The term CLIL was coined by David Marsh, University of Jyväskylä, Finland in 1994 who first described a methodological approach in which a foreign language tuition is integrated within subject teaching as follows: "CLIL refers to situations where subjects, or parts of subjects, are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language." The 'dual-focused' objective implies that CLIL works two ways. Being based on an integrated interdisciplinary approach, CLIL differs from all other approaches to language teaching and learning. Many researchers highlight the fact that if it is properly implemented, it not only contributes to improving students' language skills and subject knowledge, but also promotes multiculturalism, intercultural knowledge and understanding. Fostering the development of diverse learning strategies and the application of

innovative teaching methods, content related instruction facilitates students' cognitive development and learning in general as well. Besides, CLIL presents one more advantage to the higher educational establishment, namely, better time-management. In desperate attempts to find timetabling space educational and administrative departments often compete for elective courses while CLIL could be a compromising solution benefiting all the parties involved. In order to provide high-level education for their students and increase their international rating in the educational community many non-English speaking universities are seeking ways to introduce CLIL in their study programs.

Content Based Language Instruction (CBI)

CBI is designed to provide second-language learners instruction in content and language. The CBI approach can be comparable to English for Specific Purposes (ESP), English for Professional Purposes (EPP) or English for Academic Purposes (EAP). The main objective of CBI is acquiring the language within the specific context of any academic subject matter. Rather than learning a language for its own sake, it is learned within the context of a specific academic subject (Brinton, Snow and Wesche, 1989). There are many advantages of CBI: being involved in studying interesting and stimulating content, students learn language automatically without much effort; making connections between the language and their prior knowledge, students learn useful vocabulary within relevant context thus getting a fuller picture of the subject. Additionally, CBI approach suggests great flexibility and adaptability of the courses to satisfy particular students needs. And finally, delivering complex information in real life situations increases students' motivation as they feel close links between their studies and future professional activity. Being focused on a communicative approach, the CBI classroom is learner rather than teacher centered (Littlewood, 1981) when students are actively involved in the studying process and learn through doing rather than passive consuming of the teacher's input. Students' social roles in the classroom are biased towards interactive learning, negotiation, information gathering and the co-construction of meaning (Lee and VanPatten, 1995). Therefore, many researchers now view CBI as a progressive way of increasing the student proficiency in English and providing them with competences required by different professions.

Task Based Language Learning (TBLL)

Task-based language learning (TBLL), also known as task-based language teaching (TBLT) or task-based instruction (TBI) focuses on the use of authentic language and on asking students to do meaningful tasks using the target language. In an economic context such tasks may include attending a job interview, discussing a budget or chasing up slow payers. In the book 'A Framework for Task-Based Learning' J. Willis (1996) defines a task as an activity when the target language is used by the learner with a communicative objective to achieve the desired outcome. As a result assessment of the task is primarily based on task outcome rather than on accuracy of the language. This makes TBLL especially popular for developing foreign language fluency and student confidence thus destroying psychological barriers and eliminating a fear of making a mistake. TBLL has world-wide support in the teaching community as it offers a great deal of flexibility, wide range of open-ended stimulating tasks (case studies, problem-solving tasks, role-plays, listening and reading exercises for further discussion, presentations, negotiations, etc.) and invariably promotes students' autonomy. One of the major scholars, who have done research in this area, Jon Larsson (2001) sees one of the main virtues of TBLL in displaying significant improvement in students' communicative skills and general ability of social interaction which are two central factors in language learning. A language course built around assignments that require students to act, interact and communicate "on site" is much more beneficial than learning a foreign

language exclusively for its own sake in pseudo-communication classroom activities with no direct connection to real-life situations.

English for Specific (Professional) Purposes (ESP / EPP)

The significance of English in academic and professional settings began to be recognized several decades ago, in the 1960s, and it has not decreased since then. Ypsilandis and Kantaridou (2007) say that English for Professional Purposes (EPP) refers to “the actual needs of (future) professionals at work”. The spread of science and technology all over the world, together with the internationalization of the university world and the globalisation of the world economy has made the English language the current lingua franca of international communication. Specialised languages and professional jargons usually refer to the specific discourse used by professionals in order to communicate and transfer information and knowledge. There are as many specialised languages as there are trades and professions.

On studying research literature on the matter we have to admit that, since the term English for Professional Purposes was first coined, there has been no unanimity in either positioning it in the hierarchy of other English language courses or its content, with different scholars viewing EPP as a branch of English for Specific Purposes, English for Academic Purposes, English for Restricted Areas, Functional English, etc. It is not our aim to define the term or to carry out a historical review of the essence of EPP, since many authors have already done that in the last 50 years (e.g. Gunnarson, 1994, Alcaraz-Varo E. 2000, Hewings, M., 2002, Engberg, J., 2006). Nor do we want to get involved in the debate over whether English for Professional Purposes (EPP) should be viewed as a branch of ESP or if they are now two different areas of teaching and research.

Our aim is to summarize the issues concerning implementation of EPP courses at university level and suggest the ways of their improvement. Being designed to meet specific needs of the learners EPP makes use of underlying methodology, and activities of the discipline it serves and is centered on the language appropriate to these activities in terms of grammar, lexis, register, study skills, discourse and genre. Unlike other language courses EPP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced adult learners and senior students and rests on confident knowledge of the language system. The highlight of EPP is to equip learners with specialised vocabulary and jargon within a professional framework and everyday professional communication patterns.

Research Methodology

Data Collection Methods and Procedures

The subjects of the study were 137 undergraduate Bachelor and Master students of different faculties and departments, 19 EPP teachers, 23 academic subject lecturers, 12 PRUE alumni working in multinational companies, agencies and banks.

The method which we employed in our research was a descriptive survey research method. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1996) a descriptive survey “involves asking the same set of questions (often prepared in the form of a written questionnaire or ability test) of a large number of individuals either by mail, by telephone, or in person”. The data were collected by means of one-to-one interviews (former graduates and academic subject lecturers), brainstorming and panel discussions (EPP colleagues) and questionnaires (PRUE students).

The questionnaire was specially designed to collect the information about the student’s needs and expectations of the course; panel discussions with EPP colleagues mainly focused on the difficulties in preparing and delivering EPP courses and the ways of overcoming them; one-to-one interviews with former graduates now working in multinational companies sought to receive their feedback on relevance of PRUE’s EPP courses to their professional activity and spot problem areas which need further correction and improvement.

Having received insightful replies to our questions we got first-hand information about the respondents' thoughts and visions which gave us enthusiasm to share our views as well.

Findings

Examples of successful implementation of CLIL at PRUE

PRUE can boast some successful internationally-recognized results in implementing CLIL approach. International Business School (IBS-Plekhanov) set up in 1997 functions under "Double Degree" program and has fully compatible study programs of the University and foreign partner schools. Having obtained the International Accreditation by the European Council for Business Education (ECBE) IBS provides a unique opportunity to study all academic disciplines in English. No wonder that IBS alumni work for PriceWaterhouseCoopers, Ernst & Young, Deloitte & Touche, McKinsey, Nestle, Philips, Samsung Electronics, Procter&Gamble, Sun-Interbru, Unilever, L'Oreal, etc. It should be noted, though, that successful realization of CLIL approach at IBS would be unthinkable without strict selection criteria demanding future students to present an international language certificate (IELTS, TOEFL, CAE, CPE).

More recently some Masters' programs also introduced CLIL-based courses such as International Marketing and International Financial Management also aimed at the brightest students with a good command of English. Some other Bachelor programs also have a good record of introducing CLIL in their curricula – the Finance Faculty, for example, two years ago began to select students with fluent English to form groups studying all academic subjects in English.

Although, despite the evident success and popularity of such programs, many students point out that there are some downsides to them. As only the minority of lecturers are native speakers, not all of the Russian subject teachers are proficient enough in English. Moreover, some subjects due to their inherent difficulty (for example, Higher Mathematics or Statistics) are hard to study even in a mother tongue, let alone in a foreign language, which in turn may result in academic failure, underperformance and demotivation.

Factors impeding wider implementation of CLIL

Successful CLIL depends on a variety of factors. Lack or insufficient development of any of them may impede wider CLIL implementation in PRUE.

Firstly, management factors play a crucial role in implementing CLIL at a university. On a university level the shift from national curricula in the mother tongue to a foreign language requires much administrative work. In discussions with our colleagues from academic departments it has become evident that there are some subjects which are correspondent to their analogies in English-speaking countries whereas others, like the History of Russia, when lectured in a foreign language may sound unnatural, to say the least. More than that, the same subjects by name may contain very different subject matter (e.g. Accountancy studies in European countries are based on IFRS principles which are not yet widely used by Russian companies). So such courses may actually benefit only to those who will later seek employment in international accounting and auditing firms. At the same time, when in English, attempts to deliver accountancy as it has traditionally been done in Russia may cause significant errors in terminology understanding and application. So a university management should not react over-enthusiastically every time they receive bottom-up initiatives from subject teachers who would like to attempt to deliver their courses in English. People responsible for CLIL introduction must demonstrate common sense and the ability to balance between university staff aspirations and actual students' needs. Otherwise, if not managed skillfully, language immersion instead of desired synergy may lead to academic failures. And last, but, by no means, least, university management must exercise strict control over CLIL implementation for another reason: a teacher in CLIL needs much more lecture

and seminar preparation time and the curricula must abundantly fit with this need for extra time.

Although management factor is all important, some more factors are vital for CLIL to work effectively. Teacher factor implies the answer to the question: who makes a better CLIL teacher - a native speaker or the Russian bi-lingual subject teacher. Many economic schools tend to invite foreign lectures believing that due to their authenticity native speakers will always outperform their non-native colleagues in the CLIL classroom. In our opinion, it's an arguable point. The feedback from recent graduates received during our research gives warning examples when a native speaker, speaking at full speed, using jargon, slang and colloquialisms, may unintentionally cause a lot of anxiety for CLIL learners. Statistical data prove the fact that only the brightest students can really make full use of all the linguistic input provided by a native speaker whereas about 70% of student respondents would prefer to have a bi-lingual local subject teacher who, in case there is a need, could clarify the most complicated issues or murky areas with the help of the mother tongue.

Another concern is the language level required from teachers working through the medium of a foreign language. What benchmark do we need here to assess it? In our view, it should be functionally adequate for teaching the subject in the classroom, somewhere B2+, which is rather challenging for an average lecturer. CLIL teachers at PREU are expected to be thoroughly proficient in everything they ask their students to do in their subject in English as a foreign language. Although the University provides free English classes for subject teachers on a regular basis, still there are not enough of those who dare to teach their subjects in English.

As important as the question of the language level is the question of methodology used in the classroom. It is universally accepted that CLIL classroom methodology must be communicative with extensive use of visuals to embed the content in a form that students can easily consume, it needs to be cognitively challenging, being sequenced from less demanding to more thought-provoking tasks and, probably, most importantly, it needs to have as much learners' collaboration as possible. Specialist subject teachers in our University, by far and large are highly-qualified specialists in their subjects (with more than 1280 faculty members holding PhD Degree), and when some of them attempt CLIL they don't need any subject refreshment courses, of course. What subject teachers employing CLIL do need, and need a lot, is the awareness of how the foreign language works in their subject, that is what the language of their subject is, and how it functions. They also need a repertoire of activities, methodology and techniques to help students develop the specific language they need to deliver in English in their subject. Unless special teacher-training courses to bridge this gap are organized in PRUE, further implementing of CLIL is being slowed down.

Moreover, it is necessary to promote a wider teacher collaboration among like-minded CLIL teachers all over the world. Very few of our university colleagues know about the existence of international associations of teachers of CLIL, such as The Forum for Across the Curriculum Teaching (FACTWorld), which is a forum set up to support the teaching of subjects through the medium of a foreign language, bilingual education, immersion education, content and language integrated learning. In order not to reinvent innovative methods every time subject teachers develop a new lecture or lesson in English they need to join this and similar networks. The above described state of things is very different from the chair of Foreign languages where each of us is actively involved into educational schemes of publishers like CUP, MacMillan, Longman, etc. – we regularly attend their seminars and webinars, review their textbooks, take part in piloting projects, etc., which keeps us in the picture of the latest trends in English language teaching and methodology.

Learner factors can also either facilitate (when eager students request for the introduction of CLIL) or impede the process. Though some modern researchers advocate that provided the conditions are satisfactory all learners are able to achieve their best and they

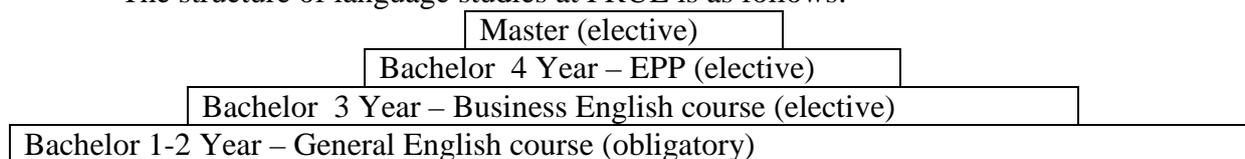
believe that all learners are equally suited to CLIL, our research contradicts this assumption and data collected show that presently CLIL in PRUE is the domain of the selected educational elite. There are many reasons for this. Higher education is on the top of educational pyramid and students with very different language background are admitted to universities. Language studies provided in PRUE, though being very intensive and stimulating, still cannot fill the huge gap in the students' language level, ranging from pre-intermediate to advanced. Until the State Examination in a foreign language is introduced on a national scale (as right now it is elective), the situation will hardly change.

Obtaining teaching resources can also be a problem. Every subject teacher faces a dilemma which materials to use in his/her classroom: authentic textbooks, translated into English Russian textbooks, Internet resources or their own materials. Each of them has their own advantages and disadvantages and our discussions with the colleagues prove that most of them have to compromise somewhere among all sources. Consequently, each course is utterly unique! When preparing their courses in English subject teachers in PRUE have to do a formidable amount of work: text adaptation of foreign publications, translations from English into Russian and vice versa, while making sure that the concepts are contextually embedded and language is sequenced and recycled. Additionally, culture specificity in the foreign books unfailingly causes extra challenges to local learners of content in English. What's more, CLIL courses are expected to be developed around a skills-based curriculum and be interactive, must involve practice in all aspects of language: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Such courses will also need to be highly dynamic, to provide 'custom-made' resources implying that students must be involved in individual, pair, small group, and large group activities, workshops, presentations and so on. Naturally, these titanic efforts must be compensated with not only teacher's personal feeling of self-satisfaction and self-actualization and this leads us to the last problem impeding implementation of CLIL: that is the question of reward. CLIL courses cost a university two- or even threefold more than courses delivered in the lecturer's native language. As most universities in the world, even the biggest of them, like PRUE, have to struggle for fund-raising, this additional financial burden may be very heavy for the University to carry if implemented on an overall basis. Therefore full-scale introduction of CLIL is hardly possible in the near future and the only alternative to it is EPP.

EPP at PRUE

Course description

The structure of language studies at PRUE is as follows:



As can be seen from the figure EPP is an elective course offered for senior Bachelor and Master students. Irrespective of the faculty and specialization (profile), it outnumbers all other elective courses and enjoys a great popularity with the students as it is directly linked with their future career and pay prospects, status expectations and so on. The duration of the course differs from faculty to faculty and ranges from 22 to 56 classroom hours, which is not much, of course. Being positioned as a foreign language course EPP aims to develop all language skills: speaking, listening, reading and writing thus employing various teaching methods to do it. The main focus of the course is communication and competences building.

Though feedback from our former graduates is generally positive and the majority of current learners are also very enthusiastic about it, there are some specific areas of teachers' concern which still await scrutiny.

Areas of special concern

Teaching resources for EPP in many cases seem to be a highly problematic area. When EPP teachers start preparing their course looking for available textbooks, they discover that, unlike the abundance of various learning materials on Business English let alone General English for all levels, the choice of books for EPP courses is second to none. In all fairness, it should be noted that some EL publishers have recently made quite successful attempts to fill in this gap in the market, for example, the Cambridge University Press "Professional English in Use" series, or Pearson Longman "Market Leader" Business English series, and some others, but still there is a long way ahead to cater for the narrow specialization the graduates will seek. Thus while preparing for EPP course language teachers drench themselves in authentic textbooks on Professional English; textbooks prepared by local language teachers; professional subject textbooks, relevant websites and their own materials specially created for other courses, – composing a unique blend of carefully selected material, modern approaches and innovative techniques.

Besides, approaches to teaching subject matter differ from country to country. As far as we know, no deep research on comparability of the study plans and classroom curricula on different subjects between Russia and English-speaking countries has been conducted so far. But even from the bird's eye view it may be noted that the contents of the textbook on some subjects in Russian are so much different from the corresponding books from Great Britain that you may get the impression that they teach different subjects. As a result, while reading authentic textbooks many Russian students simply don't recognize the issues related to their future profession. Sometimes this fact creates a real mess at a lesson when neither students nor the teacher can make out what the text is about. Moreover, very often topics, which we start teaching in English following the order of the textbook contents, have not yet been studied by the students in their native language because their subject curriculum covers them only some time ahead. As a result, a language teacher has to explain the complicated things far beyond the limits of a language teacher professional requirements.

Second comes the teacher factor. As in any other profession, "teachers must have the knowledge and skills required in order to properly perform their duties" (Zabalza, 2004) and EPP teachers also feel a great responsibility for the quality of their work, though in case with EPP it is much more demanding than with other language courses. Being neither a pure language course nor an academic subject taught in English, EPP is unstably positioned somewhere between them when the background linguistic education pulls the teacher towards traditional methods of language teaching whereas the material itself pushes them towards Content Based Language Instruction (CBI) and Task Based Language Learning (TBLL). Successful teaching of EPP is impossible without a deep insight into the contents of the subject, the professional jargon of which they attempt to train. All vocabulary-building exercises such as multiple choice, definitions, matching, etc. require not only the ability to translate the specific terms into one's mother tongue but to understand their meaning as well. Nor can an EPP teacher trigger students' discussions of the issues which he/she is unaware of. Using even specially prepared conventional format textbooks for EPP requires very serious preparation from the teachers, otherwise any attempts to teach students the language of the subjects, where language teachers have no background, are in many cases doomed to fail. So, in a nutshell, unlike General and Business English teacher whose job is most likely to choose one good textbook among the existing abundance supplemented with a detailed teacher's book, hand-out materials, CD, video, tests, etc., and just follow the precise instructions, an EPP teacher has to plan each lesson very carefully, find energizing materials from different sources, either copy or send them via e-mail, draw up tests, etc., which is very time- and labour-consuming.

Teachers are life-long learners and this inherent thirst for further self-development and self-actualization drives most daring of our colleagues to step into the unknown areas of

finance, accounting, marketing, commodity research, etc. which are often a universe beyond their background education and traditional professional requirements of a language teacher. Many senior students are quite advanced in the subject matter, while EPP language teachers have to teach them the language of the subject they may know very little about. What's more, as EPP teachers are expected to cover an exorbitantly broad range of topics for discussion, this unfeasibility of the task to be "Jack of all trades" discourages many experienced teachers with a very good command of a foreign language from joining the EPP teacher community because they don't want to look incompetent in the eyes of their students. The lack of financial incentives to compensate for the special difficulty of EPP courses (language teachers receive the same hourly pay irrespective of what they are teaching) also demotivates many of them. During the panel discussions with the colleagues many of foreign language teachers highlighted the idea that one needs a much higher level of professional expertise and qualification and has to spend much more time preparing for EPP lessons than for General English classes, as there is a big difference in discussing "your friends" and the "types of securities" or "Leveraged Buy-Outs" at a lesson. As a result, the pool of potential EPP teachers is shrinking from year to year and those most persistent ones face more and more challenges. We have a big record of teachers who in order to enhance their professional development, raise their profile and diversify their portfolio dared to immerse themselves into delivering EPP courses but just after one year of occasionally painful experience shifted back towards teaching General and Business English where they feel more comfortable and professionally confident. Moreover, we should not forget that the older the students are, the more demanding they become to the quality of the lesson and proficiency of the teacher.

And finally, despite the popularity of EPP courses with the students, learner factor, which is obviously all-important, may impose serious constraints on EPP success. As at EPP classes the groups are very large (no fewer than 25 students) each teacher has to deal with the group heterogeneity where students' knowledge may range from low-intermediate to advanced. Inexperienced teachers often fall in a trap of opting for a medium compromise level, thus leaving the brightest and the weakest students feel frustrated and dissatisfied. In addition, it should be noted that, as the Russian Federation is a multilingual country, about 15 – 35 % of learners in each student group have others but Russian mother tongues, therefore for them Russian is the second language, English is the third.

Conclusion and recommendations

Teaching EPP shouldn't be confused with teaching a professional subject in English. Conversely, during EPP class the teacher has to maintain a balance between teaching an academic subject and a foreign language.

Having considered such relevant to teaching EPP factors as teacher factor, learner factor, teaching resources, management factor as well as reward factor we conclude that the successful implementation of an EPP course to the large extent depends on the integrated interdisciplinary approach where a proper balance between foreign language and academic subject studies as well as pedagogical innovations would derive the sought-after competence development for the future specialists in different sectors of economic.

To expose our students to new challenges and facilitate students' self-study and self-directed learning when the role of the EPP teacher is more shifted to that of a motivator we suggest:

- giving first priority to such training activities that develop critical thinking, most of which being centered around task-based learning to enhance competence-based approach;
- making obligatory for the students to choose themes for their interactive presentations in EPP classroom connected with their exit research paper and include information from it;

encouraging undergraduate students to defend their diploma thesis in English following the requirement of the Ministry of Education of Russia to have each exit paper in Russian prefaced with an abstract in English;

supporting students' and post-graduates' participation in interdisciplinary scientific conferences in English and promoting research results at beyond university level.

To facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration with the professional departments, to increase EPP teacher motivation and streamline EPP courses at PRUE we suggest:

providing short induction courses in the academic subject for EPP teachers to increase their awareness what the course is about and consult them on the areas of special concern;

harmonizing, where possible, the university study plans to make sure that students study the topic first in their own language and only then supplement it in English to minimize overtaking of EPP course ahead of professional one to avoid confusion in students' heads;

involving more English-speaking Russian natives PREU lecturers from each specialized department to participate in joint projects of creating up-to-date bilingual glossaries of professional jargon for each narrow field of study where students specialize;

creating language courses for the academic subject teachers where both the language teacher and specialists in their lecture field will be able to contribute to one another's professional development;

continuing the work of educating subject teachers in English in order to achieve better collaboration with them in aligning the programs of EPP course and their subject;

organizing regular workshops for EPP and subject teachers to interchange professional knowledge, innovative methodology and expertise.

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