

## THE RESULTS OF THE EDUCATIONAL GROUP PROJECT ON COMPILING LEGAL ENGLISH TERM GLOSSARIES

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This article presents the results of joint work on compiling Legal English term glossaries as one of the means of upgrading students' foreign language professional competence. This assignment has been carried out within the framework of the educational group project organized by the humanitarian section of the Department of English for International Professional Activities of the Faculty of International Relations of the Belarusian State University. The advantages of accumulating lexical material by means of the MOODLE learning platform are described in detail. The given work includes the feedback of legal students who largely believe in the appropriateness of such educational group projects for improving the quality of foreign language professional education.

**Key words:** foreign language professional competence; the MOODLE learning environment; term glossaries.

## РЕЗУЛЬТАТЫ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОГО ГРУППОВОГО ПРОЕКТА ПО СОСТАВЛЕНИЮ ТЕРМИНОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ ГЛОССАРИЕВ ПО ЮРИДИЧЕСКОМУ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ

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В данной статье представлены результаты совместной работы со студентами по составлению терминологических глоссариев по юридическому английскому языку как одному из способов совершенствования профессиональной иноязычной компетенции. Это задание выполнялось в рамках образовательного группового проекта, организованного гуманитарной секцией кафедры английского языка международной профессиональной деятельности факультета международных отношений Белорусского государственного университета. Подробно описаны преимущества накопления лексического материала с помощью обучающей платформы MOODLE. В данной работе отражены мнения студентов юридических специальностей, которые видят целесообразность подобных образовательных групповых проектов для повышения качества их профессионального образования по иностранному языку.

**Ключевые слова:** профессиональная иноязычная компетенция; образовательная среда MOODLE; терминологические глоссарии.

The development of the modern system of higher education is characterized by the transition from the traditional paradigm of education to the competence-based one. The core of the knowledge-based model contains three elements: knowledge, abilities and skills. However, the gap between the knowledge and skills that a student gains in a higher educational institution and those that are needed at work is so dramatic that this clearly shows the disadvantages of such a model. Therefore, the main task of professionally oriented foreign language teaching today is to form those linguistic skills and competencies that would allow a newly qualified specialist to successfully carry out one's professional activity on graduation.

The modern approach to teaching the language for specific purposes aims at the formation of the integrated professional foreign language competence. The term «competence» was introduced in the United States in the 1960-s in the context of outcome-based education, the purpose of which is making future specialists more competitive on the labor market [1, p. 119]. Thus, the professional foreign language competence represents subsets of knowledge, abilities and skills acquired by the secondary linguistic personality that manifest themselves in foreign language activities in a professional context [2, p. 228].

The integrated professional foreign language competence has its own structure and includes subsets (competencies). The competencies of the first group (linguistic and discursive) determine the possession of skills of oral and written foreign language communication. The second group of competencies are the competencies of the socio-cultural and linguo-culturological level. These competencies are considered as the ability to communicate effectively using a foreign language based on authentic texts, including background knowledge, non-equivalent vocabulary, rules of etiquette, as well as samples of literature, song and poetry. The third group of competencies of the pragmatic level are self-educational competencies. Self-educational competency ensures the readiness and ability of the individual to carry out autonomous self-guided learning, which today is of particular relevance, since knowledge is constantly becoming outdated and changing [3, p. 86].

In the present-day non-linguistic university one of the main objectives of foreign language instruction is to teach the language for specific purposes, its multi-level terminological system, functional and stylistic features. The successful achievement of the stated objective is intended to contribute to the development of a multilingual personality with a sufficient level of cultural intelligence that is prepared for effective intercultural interaction in the areas of professional and business communication. In this regard, the pursuit of effective

methods, techniques and forms of teaching a foreign language for specific purposes becomes relevant.

This article presents the results of joint work on compiling Legal English term glossaries with International Law students within the framework of the educational group project elaborated by the humanitarian section of the Department of English for International Professional Activities of the Faculty of International Relations of the Belarusian State University. Educational group projects like these have a great potential for upgrading the students' foreign language professional competence and improving the quality of foreign language instruction, because they belong to the category of interactive methods of teaching. This correlates with the Cone of Learning suggested by *E. Dale*: according to him, learning by performing certain activities accounts for about 75% of the knowledge acquisition [4, p. 15]. While compiling term glossaries students are looking not only for their definitions and translations, but also for contextual examples. After that they submit their results for group consideration, which boosts motivation for producing better quality vocabulary entries. Assignments like these contribute to the development of all the constituent groups of competencies mentioned above in this article.

It should be emphasized that at the humanitarian section of the Department of English for International Professional Activities the work on the creation of term glossaries is carried out at all levels of higher education, and involves both: bachelor and master students.

In 2018 there was published a *Brief English-Russian Terminological Glossary on International Law* [see 5]. It is intended for bachelor and master students of the Faculty of International Relations (chief editor — *I. N. Ivashkevich*, PhD in Philology, Associate Professor). The publication was a result of joint work with the master students (specialty «Jurisprudence») who had been gathering the lexical material relevant for their scientific assignments in the course of the 2017 — 2018 academic year. The glossary is organized according to the thematic principle: it includes basic legal terms based on the content of the respective topics of the students' master theses. The spectrum of topics is quite diverse, ranging from Family Law issues to the legal regulation of cryptocurrencies. The vocabulary entries include Russian equivalents of the terms as well as definitions in English. The project involved 14 master students who articulated their opinion that the suggested activity on compiling the term glossary had contributed to the enrichment of their professional vocabulary and allowed them to systematize words and expressions relevant for their respective master theses. This helped them be better prepared for their candidacy examination in English.

In 2021—2022 International Law students were working on the *Brief English-Russian Glossary of Basic Legal Terms* [see 6]. It is intended for first-year students (chief editor — *S. V. Solovjeva*, Senior Lecturer, MA). Exactly during the first year of getting higher education students are expected to get a solid linguistic foundation necessary for further accumulation of their professional language vocabulary. This glossary includes basic legal terms (mainly selected by students of the Faculty of International Relations based on the course material), their transcription and translation into Russian, the definitions and the examples in sentences.

It is noteworthy that the work on the accumulation of lexical material for this particular glossary was carried out by means of the MOODLE educational platform. From the students' perspective, this offers a number of advantages. Firstly, the respective tool *Glossary* allows adding illustrations, which makes the process of learning professional vocabulary more visual and memorable. Secondly, the students mentioned saving time: the task is split among the group (each person is expected to add no fewer than 15 terms in the course of the semester). Apart from that, the form of presentation of vocabulary entries makes the process of preparation for lexical tests more convenient, as long as relevant material is located in one place.

From the teacher's perspective, there are a number of benefits as well. First and foremost, the task of compiling a glossary allows us to involve all the students in a group. Moreover, the contribution of each person can be made visible provided that the right set-ups are chosen. Finally, the teacher can amend the students' entries and leave comments. It should be mentioned, though, that it's necessary to do the editing job on time. It is also possible to ask students to make cards with the active vocabulary that they have added, and exchange them in class so as to get more practice.

Several years' experience at the Faculty of International Relations has shown that International Law students are generally quite motivated for working on the group projects dealing with compiling Legal English term glossaries. This assignment has proved its efficiency. Consequently, this suggests that such a practice can be implemented for other specialities.

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