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PREPARING NON-LANGUAGE MAJORS FOR PROFESSIONAL AND BUSINESS COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH: OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SPEAKING AND WRITING

The article examines the development of professional English communication skills among students of non-language majors through the lens of overcoming linguistic and non-linguistic barriers that hinder fluent oral and written performance. The relevance of the study is driven by the growing demand for English-mediated interaction across fields and the need to align university training with global professional standards. Drawing on contemporary research in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), and technology-enhanced language education, the paper identifies the main difficulties faced by students (restricted vocabulary, grammatical and pronunciation issues, low motivation, and speaking anxiety) and explores ways to address them.

A theoretical analysis of scholarly and methodological literature was conducted to outline strategies for effective oral and written communication. The discussion emphasizes communicative and process-oriented approaches: in speaking, the gradual transition from guided dialogues to spontaneous professional interaction supported by formative feedback; in writing, the step-by-step development of texts through planning, drafting, revision, and peer assessment. The integration of ESP and CLIL principles ensures alignment with students' disciplinary contexts, while the use of digital and AI-based tools enhances feedback and self-regulation opportunities.

Based on the analysis, a set of methodological recommendations is proposed: strengthening communicative orientation, applying interactive formats and flipped learning models, embedding authentic professional writing tasks, and advancing teacher expertise in ESP and CLIL methodology.

Key words: *professional communication, ESP, CLIL, speaking and writing skills, partnership interaction, barriers, learning.*

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ПІДГОТОВКА СТУДЕНТІВ НЕМОВНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЕЙ ДО ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ ТА ДІЛОВОЇ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ: ПОДОЛАННЯ БАР'ЄРІВ У ГОВОРІННІ ТА ПИСЬМІ

У статті розглядається проблема формування навичок професійної комунікації англійською мовою у студентів немовних спеціальностей через призму подолання лінгвістичних і нелінгвістичних бар'єрів, що перешкоджають вільному володінню усним та писемним мовленням. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена зростанням потреби у спілкуванні англійською мовою в різних галузях і необхідністю узгодження університетської підготовки з глобальними професійними стандартами. Спираючись на сучасні дослідження у сфері англійської мови для спеціальних цілей (ESP), інтегрованого навчання предмету та мови (CLIL) і технологічно підтримуваного навчання, у роботі визначено основні труднощі студентів (обмежений словниковий запас, граматичні та фонетичні помилки, низьку мотивацію й страх говоріння) та окреслено шляхи їх подолання.

Проведено теоретичний аналіз наукової та методичної літератури з метою визначення ефективних стратегій розвитку усної та писемної комунікації. Основну увагу приділено комунікативним і діяльнісно орієнтованим підходам: у говорінні – поступовому переходу від керованих діалогів до спонтанної професійної взаємодії з формувальним зворотним зв'язком; у письмі – поетапному створенню текстів через планування, написання чорнової версії, редагування й взаємооцінювання. Інтеграція принципів ESP і CLIL забезпечує відповідність змісту фаховим контекстам студентів, а використання цифрових та AI-інструментів розширює можливості зворотного зв'язку та саморегуляції.

На основі аналізу запропоновано методичні рекомендації: посилення комунікативної спрямованості, застосування інтерактивних і перевернутих моделей навчання, упровадження автентичних письмових завдань і підвищення кваліфікації викладачів у сфері ESP і CLIL.

Ключові слова: *професійна комунікація, ESP, CLIL, навички усного та писемного мовлення, партнерська взаємодія, бар'єри, навчання.*

General statement of the problem. In the 21st century, English has firmly established itself as the global *lingua franca*, especially in science, technology, and business. Proficiency in English for professional communication has become an essential condition of competitiveness for modern specialists on the global labor market. For graduates of higher education institutions in any field, the ability to communicate in English in professional settings opens wide opportunities for career growth and participation in international projects. For example, engineers and IT specialists take part in international projects and must present results in English; researchers and medical professionals read and publish scholarly work in English; economists and managers negotiate with foreign partners and conclude contracts in English, and so on. This is particularly relevant in Ukraine in the context of integration into the European educational and research space. Many universities now require graduates of non-language majors to confirm English proficiency at level B2 or higher as a condition for graduation, which underscores the importance of English language mastery.

In practice, however, many non-language students face difficulties mastering foreign-language communication for professional purposes. Typical problems include limited vocabulary and linguistic challenges (grammar, pronunciation), psychological barriers such as fear of making mistakes and lack of self-confidence, low motivation, and insufficient opportunities for sustained language practice. Even with strong subject-matter knowledge, students often cannot present it clearly and confidently in English, which negatively affects academic success and future career prospects. Hence, preparing future specialists in non-language majors for effective professional communication in English is highly relevant.

Overcoming these barriers and developing an adequate level of foreign-language communicative competence has a direct impact on students' professional competence as specialists. Globally and in Ukraine, research continues into optimal teaching methods that help non-language majors master both oral and written professional communication in English. This paper is a review: it analyzes recent studies on the topic, points out key barriers, and synthesizes effective strategies for preparing students for successful professional communication in English.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Foreign-language communicative competence is defined as a multidimensional construct comprising linguistic, sociolinguistic/sociocultural, discourse, learning, and strategic components; professional English therefore requires command of form and con-text-appropriate use in disciplinary settings (Ridel & Kyrychenko, 2023). For students of non-language majors, the literature identifies two principal clusters of barriers: linguistic (restricted vocabulary, grammatical gaps, pronunciation/comprehensibility) and non-linguistic (speaking anxiety, low self-efficacy/motivation, organizational constraints) (Glazkova et al., 2025; Iswati & Triastuti, 2021; Mahdi, 2024). Empirical data indicate that low self-confidence is a primary inhibitor of speaking and limited vocabulary a salient linguistic barrier; both are intensified by limited exposure and curricula that underemphasize oral practice (Mahdi, 2024; Iswati & Triastuti, 2021). Large, heterogeneous groups and insufficient ESP-specific teacher preparation further constrain outcomes (Iswati & Triastuti, 2021).

Evidence supports communicative, activity-based instruction. Collaborative formats (small groups, projects, role-plays) increase opportunities for production and reduce anxiety, improving willingness to communicate (Tatarin & Glazkova, 2024; Alzubi et al., 2024). Technology-enhanced designs yield additional gains: flipped delivery improves writing performance among engineering students (Pathan & Qureshi, 2024), and AI-mediated interaction outperforms traditional methods for speaking development (Fathi et al., 2024).

Course architecture is decisive. ESP aligns lexis, genres, and tasks with disciplinary demands and outperforms general English on career-relevant skills (Kausar, 2025). CLIL increases authentic exposure by teaching content through English and supports policy goals in Ukrainian higher education while strengthening both content and language learning (Myronenko et al., 2023). Combining ESP and CLIL provides a complementary pathway that advances subject outcomes and the communicative repertoire required for professional contexts.

The purpose of the article. The purpose of this review article is to synthesize current experience and research on preparing non-language majors for professional communication in English, specifically by identifying the main barriers that hinder effective English-medium interaction and outlining ways to overcome them. To achieve this aim, we used theoretical analysis and synthesis: we analyzed scholarly literature, compared different approaches, and generalized the findings.

Presentation of the main material
Oral Professional Communication
Oral professional communication encompasses a wide range of professional situations such as business negotiations, presentations, meetings, and phone conversations with international partners. To commu-

nicate effectively in English, students must master not only professional vocabulary but also the ability to articulate ideas clearly, interpret interlocutors' intentions, and adhere to norms of business etiquette. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that even after several years of formal instruction, many graduates still experience insecurity when speaking English. They fear making mistakes, fail to understand questions quickly, or speak with hesitation and low fluency. The predominant causes of this phenomenon include psychological barriers such as fear and shyness, combined with limited opportunities for consistent speaking practice (Mahdi, 2024). To visualize the progression of pedagogical interventions addressing these barriers, Figure 1 illustrates a scaffolded framework for developing oral professional communication, moving from simple interactive tasks toward more complex, autonomous speech activities supported by formative feedback.

Creating a supportive classroom environment and maximizing opportunities for active speaking are key strategies for overcoming these obstacles. Instructors are encouraged to engage students in communicative interaction during every class session through small-group discussions role-plays, and case analyses. Such formats provide, pair dialogues, brainstorming, students with more frequent opportunities to use English, gradually lowering psychological tension and increasing confidence. Empirical research confirms that cooperative learning significantly enhances students' willingness to speak and reduces anxiety in foreign-language communication (Alzubi et al., 2024). In addition, collaborative speaking tasks simulate authentic workplace interaction, cultivate teamwork, and strengthen intercultural communicative competence – core components of professional effectiveness.

Pronunciation and listening also require targeted attention. Students of technical and other non-lan-

guage majors often find it difficult to recognize diverse accents or follow rapid native speech. These challenges can be addressed through exposure to authentic audio and video materials featuring speakers from varied backgrounds, as well as structured listening exercises of increasing complexity – from simplified dialogues to authentic recordings. Pronunciation accuracy improves through phonetic drills and the shadowing technique, where students immediately repeat phrases after a speaker, mirroring intonation and rhythm. Regular application of these methods enhances comprehensibility, reduces anxiety, and builds communicative confidence.

Oral tasks should follow a stepwise trajectory: beginning with guided pair dialogues, advancing to spontaneous exchanges, project presentations, and culminating in formal debates. Constructive feedback plays a central role in this process. Teachers should highlight learners' strengths, gently correct errors, and provide explicit strategies for improvement, thereby promoting motivation and self-reflection. The use of authentic materials (such as recordings of real business meetings or presentations) further helps students internalize discourse conventions and rhetorical patterns typical of professional communication.

Because exposure to English outside the classroom is often limited, institutions should incorporate extracurricular practice into language programs. Conversation clubs, meetings with native speakers, and participation in international academic or professional events offer valuable real-world communication opportunities. Within universities, inter-faculty debates, speaking contests, and collaborative projects can further encourage active language use. Technological tools expand these possibilities: mobile applications and online platforms allow learners to practice pronunciation and dialogue skills independently. Recent studies show that interactive AI-mediated
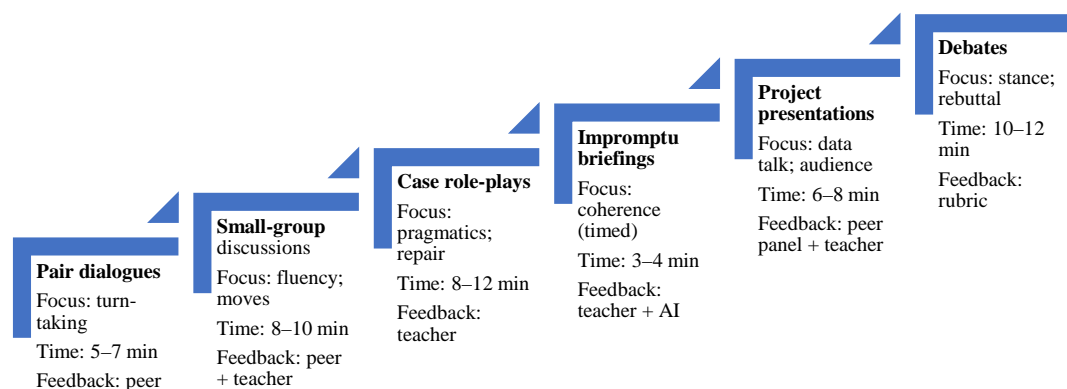
Fig. 1. Scaffolded progression of oral professional tasks

Compiled by the author.

speaking practice can significantly improve fluency and confidence compared with traditional approaches (Fathi et al., 2024). Thus, combining structured classroom instruction with guided self-practice supported by digital technologies constitutes an effective strategy for developing professional oral communication in English.

Written Professional Communication

Written communication in professional contexts encompasses business correspondence (emails and notices), reports, technical instructions, scholarly articles, and résumés. Unlike speaking, writing requires precision, structure, and adherence to professional conventions. For non-language majors, developing writing competence in English often proves demanding: even students with solid disciplinary knowledge may struggle to compose cohesive and stylistically appropriate texts. Common issues include literal translation from the first language, limited academic vocabulary, grammatical inaccuracy, and difficulty following document conventions. Insufficient focus on writing during instruction further leads to low confidence and limited self-efficacy in English composition (Iswati & Triastuti, 2021; Pathan & Qureshi, 2024). To conceptualize the pedagogical cycle that supports the gradual development of these skills, Figure 2 presents a process-oriented model of professional writing, mapping sequential stages from planning to submission with iterative feedback and reflection.

Improving writing competence requires tasks closely aligned with authentic professional functions. Effective instruction encourages students to create their own professional texts within a structured and recurrent framework. Each semester, learners should advance through the full writing cycle, guided by explicit modeling of structure, genre, and purpose.
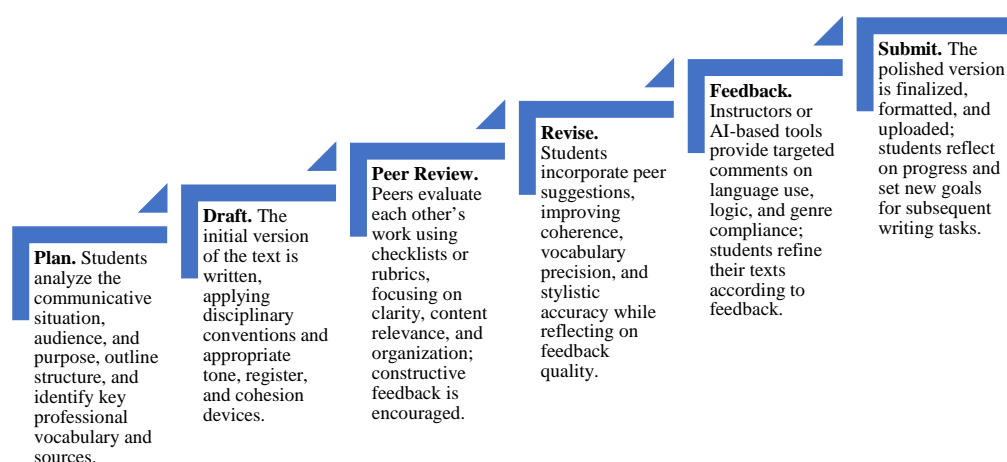
Emphasis on the writing process (planning, drafting, revising, and editing) develops not only technical proficiency but also metacognitive awareness of how meaning is constructed and refined. Peer review is particularly valuable: by evaluating one another's drafts, students cultivate critical judgment, stylistic sensitivity, and responsibility for quality.

Innovative pedagogical models have demonstrated tangible benefits. Pathan and Qureshi (2024) found that the flipped-classroom approach significantly enhanced writing proficiency among engineering students: post-course assessments showed higher scores, and learners reported greater motivation and engagement. Flipping reallocates classroom time for authentic writing and feedback, while theoretical material is mastered independently. Another effective strategy involves integrating writing assignments into disciplinary courses. Rather than isolating "English writing," a cross-curricular approach encourages students to produce project reports or research papers directly within their field of study, thereby operationalizing CLIL principles. Such integration expands technical vocabulary and enables learners to express professional ideas with clarity and disciplinary accuracy (Kausar, 2025).

Recommendations for Enhancing Preparation for Professional Communication in English

The analysis of research and pedagogical practices in developing oral and written professional communication among non-language majors allows formulating several practical recommendations:

– *communicative orientation:* increase the proportion of practical sessions in which students actively speak and write English within their disciplinary contexts. Systematic engagement in authentic communication enhances fluency and confidence;

Plan. Students analyze the communicative situation, audience, and purpose, outline structure, and identify key professional vocabulary and sources.

Draft. The initial version of the text is written, applying disciplinary conventions and appropriate tone, register, and cohesion devices.

Peer Review. Peers evaluate each other's work using checklists or rubrics, focusing on clarity, content relevance, and organization; constructive feedback is encouraged.

Revise. Students incorporate peer suggestions, improving coherence, vocabulary precision, and stylistic accuracy while reflecting on feedback quality.

Feedback. Instructors or AI-based tools provide targeted comments on language use, logic, and genre compliance; students refine their texts according to feedback.

Submit. The polished version is finalized, formatted, and uploaded; students reflect on progress and set new goals for subsequent writing tasks.

Fig. 2. Process-oriented workflow for professional writing

Compiled by the author.

– *specialized content (ESP):* design programs tailored to specific professional domains, emphasizing relevant terminology and typical communicative situations. Profession-oriented content ensures applicability of language skills;

– *interactive methods:* implement group projects, discussions, simulations, role-plays, and flipped classroom models to foster learner autonomy, motivation, and cooperation while mitigating speaking anxiety;

– *use of technology:* integrate multimedia resources, online platforms, and AI-based tools to provide flexible opportunities for practice, self-assessment, and immediate feedback beyond the classroom;

– *writing development:* introduce regular professional and academic writing tasks in English, supported by revision, peer review, and instructor consultation to promote coherence, accuracy, and genre awareness;

– *teacher development:* enhance instructors' competence in ESP and CLIL methodologies, involve field specialists in course and material design, and encourage the creation of communities of pedagogical practice;

– *student motivation:* link English learning explicitly to professional growth trajectories, showcase real success stories, and encourage student participation in international projects, internships, and exchanges.

Conclusions. Preparing non-language majors for professional communication in English is a multifaceted task requiring the removal of both linguistic and non-linguistic barriers. The literature review shows that key challenges include limited vocabulary, difficulties with pronunciation and written expression, and fear of communicating due to potential errors or language difficulties. These barriers, however, are surmountable: contemporary teaching methods and targeted interventions can substantially improve outcomes.

Effective preparation must develop both oral and written skills. For speaking, it is critical to create supportive environments where students receive abundant practice without fear of judgment. Emphasis should be placed on communicative tasks, group work, and simulation of real-world situations – all of which build confidence in using English. For writing, programs should institute regular production of professional texts, provide high-quality feedback, and teach students to revise independently. Integrating language learning with disciplinary content (ESP, CLIL) has proven to be a promising approach that enables students to acquire language skills in close connection with their field.

Future research should include evaluations of different pedagogical innovations and the development of optimal models that combine technology with traditional methods. Continuous improvement of content and methods in English for Specific Purposes will support the formation of a new generation of professionals capable of communicating effectively at the international level.

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