THE DRAMATIZATION TECHNIQUE AS A MEANS OF DEVELOPING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE OF NON-PHILOLOGY STUDENTS (A CASE STUDY OF ESP COURSE FOR STUDENTS MAJORING IN HISTORY, NATIONAL SECURITY, AND LAW)

Abstract. The article analyzes the formation of foreign language communicative competence of students from the standpoint of their professional training, seeking to find out in which field of future professional activity each non-philology student will most need the skills of communicative behavior in a foreign language environment. The study has revealed that the university course of English for professional purposes (ESP) is very effective in this context, as it involves a mutually enriching exchange of information through the use of a foreign language, and the acquisition of communication skills necessary for solving professional problems and tasks. The research aims to find an answer to the question: how can the use of the dramatization method in TESL facilitate the development of a student's foreign language communicative competence? The research findings convincingly prove that the technique of dramatization is an ideal way to combine all aspects of developing skills in grammar, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and pronunciation in studying the course English for Specific Purposes, where the emphasis is not on the form, but rather on the content and fluent communication in a foreign language in the professional field. The theoretical provisions of the article are illustrated with examples of the dramatization method used in work with students majoring in History, Law, National Security, and Philology. The research findings argue that drama provides a conducive context for learning professional vocabulary,
helps students practice work-related speaking activities, and can be useful for testing professional roles at a linguistic level.

**Keywords:** communicative behavior, a foreign language environment, foreign language for professional purposes, dramatization method/technique, professional vocabulary.

Смалько Людмила Євгенівна кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов гуманітарних спеціальностей, Волинський національний університет імені Лесі Українки, просп. Волі, 13, м. Луцьк, 43025, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6624-2203

Гусак Людміла Євгеніївна доктор педагогічних наук, професор кафедри іноземних мов гуманітарних спеціальностей, Волинський національний університет імені Лесі Українки, просп. Волі, 13, м. Луцьк, 43025, https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7570-2574

**ДРАМАТИЗАЦІЯ ЯК ЗАСІБ ФОРМУВАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ СТУДЕНТІВ (НА ПРИКЛАДІ ВИКЛАДАННЯ КУРСУ ESP СТУДЕНТАМ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЕЙ «ІСТОРІЯ», «НАЦІОНАЛЬНА БЕЗПЕКА» ТА «ПРАВО»)**

**Анотація.** Стаття аналізує методи формування іншомовної комунікативної компетенції студентів із позицій їхньої фахової підготовки, з’ясувавши у якій сфері майбутньої професійної діяльності кожного студента-нефілолога йому найбільше будуть потрібні навички комунікативної поведінки в іншомовному середовищі. Обґрунтовано, що університетський курс англійської мови професійного спрямування (ESP) – дуже ефективний у цьому контексті, оскільки передбачає взаємозбагачувальний обмін інформацією шляхом використання іноземної мови і набуття комунікативних навичок, необхідних для вирішення професійних проблем і завдань. Дослідження має на меті знайти відповіді на запитання: як використання методу драматизації у TESL впливає на розвиток іншомовної комунікативної компетентності студента? Результати дослідження аргументовано доводять, що техніка драматизації – це ідеальний спосіб об’єднати процес формування навичок граматики, читання, письма, говоріння, аудіювання та вимови у процесі вивчення курсу «Англійська мова за професійним спрямуванням», де акцент робиться не на формі, а швидше на змісті і вільному спілкуванні іноземною мовою у професійній сфері. Теоретичні положення статті проілюстровані прикладами використання методу драматизації у роботі зі студентами факультетів історії, права, національної безпеки та філології. Доведено, що драма створює сприятливий контекст для вивчення професійної лексики, допомагає студентам практикувати мовленнєву діяльність, пов’язану з
Statement of the Problem. In the modern globalized world, a successful professional activity is hardly possible without a foreign language communicative competence. Investigating the formation of foreign language communicative competence of students from the standpoint of their professional training, we sought in the educational process the points of contact that would help reveal the areas of future professional activity in which non-philological students will need foreign language communication skills.

The university course of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is highly beneficial in this context. The study of a foreign language for professional purpose provides for a mutually enriching exchange of information through the use of a foreign language, the acquisition of communication skills required to solve professional problems and tasks [1: 210]. In other words, it implies the integration of linguistic and professional competence.

However, the analysis of teaching a foreign language both at school and in higher educational institutions of the non-philological profile has revealed that the vast majority of them only declare the introduction of a modern communication-based approach. In practice, the methods of educational activities remain mostly traditional: reading and translating texts, translation, performing grammatical and lexical exercises for substitution, multiple-choice tasks, composing sentences from separately given words, memorizing ready-made dialogues and conversational topics.

The methodology of teaching English to students of non-philological specialties (future economists, political scientists, historians, social workers, ecologists, lawyers) surely needs a shift in approaches. Modern teaching-learning content focuses on a teacher’s ability to design not only a lesson but also to create such a pedagogical-learning environment in which it is possible to encourage active critical thinking and practical activity in mastering educational/learning material.

The choice of the method is in a close relationship with the teacher's personality and the level of his/her professional preparation or predisposition. The teacher who keeps in view the students' learning styles is more likely to achieve the goal of developing students’ high-quality communication skills in a foreign language.

The dramatization technique is the creativity-based method and an effective tool to promote the development of the students’ communicative language skills in the ESP classroom, promoting a team-bonding experience since there is usually a great deal of sociability at such lessons. The drama-based method is important in learning foreign languages and cultures. In the English for Special Purposes classroom, the technique appears helpful in many ways. Drama provides a favorable
context for learning professional vocabulary, helps learners to practice job-related speaking activities, and can be beneficial for testing professional roles linguistically.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Many Ukrainian and foreign scientists consider the problem of the development of intercultural competence of students of non-philology majors according to the theoretical framework of contextual learning of foreign languages. Among them are O. Honcharova, A. Maslova, R. Hryshkova, O. Larionova, and others. Foreign scientists (G. Bolton, R. Via, S. Golden, J. Imkamp, J. Ladus, M. Sheva, E. Celikas, S. Wessels) highlight the peculiarities of learning a foreign language via the use of dramatization and consider dramatization to be a promising tool for improvement of students’ communicative competence.

In contextual learning, the subjective and social (intercultural) content of the professional activity is modeled using interactive methods, means, and forms. It implies using a set of situations characteristic of a certain field of professional activity. According to S. Dobson (2000), «dramatization is an excellent activity for learning oral skills in a safe environment in the classroom. It is an ideal way to bring skills of grammar, reading, writing, speaking, listening, and pronunciation together in a course where the focus is not on form but rather fluency and meaning» (Dodson, 2000). [2: 139]

Charlyn Wessels, in his book Drama (1987), substantiates the benefits of using drama methods in the foreign language classroom and argues that they are meant to promote fluent oral communication. According to Wessels, grammar and vocabulary become contextualized, and students get an opportunity to increase their confidence in their capacity to learn and use a foreign language [6].

A widely cited definition of drama comes from Holden (1981: 1), who defines it as «any activity which asks the student to portray a) himself in an imaginary situation or b) another person in an imaginary situation». This definition can be applied to most formats of drama-based methods in foreign language teaching, for example, role-playing [4].

The drama-based method exploits CLIL’s basic principles in teaching ESP, as language is taught through content and content via language.

Drama is a highly motivating factor in increasing students’ enthusiasm for learning. However, organizing such an activity and designing it meaningfully is quite a challenging task for teachers. Researchers state that some teachers have difficulty in controlling the class, while some students complain that drama activities only bring them fun, not knowledge.

**The goal of the study** is to answer the question about how the use of the dramatization method in TESL affects the development of a student’s foreign language communicative competence and formulate reliable conclusions concerning its effectiveness in ESP course for students majoring in History, National Security, and Law. The study attempts to compare the advantages of the dramatization technique against the methods and techniques widely used in teaching topics on
history, law, literature, or some other subject, such as lectures or question-answer forms of learning activity.

**Statement regarding the basic material of the research and justification of the results obtained.** The in-depth analysis of the recent research into the issue under discussion and publications dealing with it has revealed that many teaching techniques imply using drama. Class materials that are often tedious become alive with drama activities. Drama can support foreign language mastering at the university level and facilitate learners’ acquisition of professional competencies, developing their linguistic competence through using grammar and vocabulary in a meaningful context.

There is a wide range of drama strategies that we regularly use in our English classes. From their own experience, teachers know that the most important thing is to select a method with which they feel confident. For example, the teacher and class’s collective work on designing a project provides certain confidence to transfer to drama work. Let us consider some other interesting and effective techniques.

**Teacher in the role method.** First of all, this is not about the teacher turning into an actor! The technique requires the teacher to take on the point of view of someone else and deliver it in an emotive way. The power of the teacher in the role method lies in being able to inform students about the issue under consideration in an original way and encourage the class to gain confidence in taking on some roles themselves.

**Hot-seating.** Using this technique, the teacher or students can question or interview someone who remains in character. In the early stages, it might be the teacher who, for example, performs the role of a historical character such as Alfred the Great. The students question the teacher who responds in his or her historical role. At the next stage, a student or some students take a «hot seat». They take on historical roles and respond to questions as characters from the past.

**Still-image / Expressive Movement.** According to this technique, groups of students, using their bodies, attempt to reconstitute a moment in time, an idea, or a plot. This can be a very useful approach to studying a painting, photo, or portrait. We ask a group of students to copy the position of the people in the picture, and then we gradually bring the picture to life.

**Forum theatre.** The procedure of applying this technique looks like that. A situation is chosen by the teacher or group. It is enacted by a pair of students or a small group. The rest of the class observes. Both the actors and observers have the right to intervene in the action and give advice. The observers may step in and take on roles or complement them. This is a useful method for helping pupils explore a historical situation based on documents or stories. The observers are able to use the evidence to check the actors’ actions.

There are several reasons for incorporating drama in the ESP classroom. But first and foremost, it is a valuable teaching-learning tool as it contributes greatly to students' interaction with each other during the lesson, particularly appealing to
kinesthetic learners. It also contextualizes language, making what is on the printed page real and three-dimensional.

The case study of numerous methods for incorporating drama in the ESP class allows for identifying the most universal and efficient ones, in our opinion. Among them:

1) Act the dialogue. Acting out dialogues from textbooks is the easiest way to incorporate drama in the classroom. Students just simply choose roles, then work together to act out the dialogue.

2) Write the dialogue for a scene. The students may watch a brief clip of a movie without sound, write the dialogue for it, and act it out.

When students have gained some experience with the basics of dramatizing characters, dialogues, and stage movement, they can proceed to some more advanced dramatics, involving more of the student's personal creativity and critical thinking skills.

3) Put Words to an Emotion. A teacher tells the students about an emotion (for example, anger, joy, or fear). The students, firstly, act out that emotion and then, use words to express it. In this way, they enrich their vocabulary.

4) Give «voice» to an inanimate object. (e.g. What would the railway station loudspeaker say, if it could talk, about the people wandering around?). The teacher encourages students to write monologues with inanimate objects as characters. A monologue is a short scene with just one character talking, either addressing the audience, boss, or oneself (like Hamlet’s soliloquy «To Be or Not to Be»). Having written them, students can read the monologues aloud.

5) Mime and Dubbing. The teacher asks students to act out short situation scenes without dialogue. The rest of the class then creates a dialogue, as if developing the «script». While performing scenes, students can improve their speaking and listening skills and also develop their writing skills when writing dialogues.

The drama also teaches the pragmatics of language. We mean that in this way, we can teach students how appropriately use language in this or that situation, like making a request. According to Dougill J., the most widely used are drama games (ice-breakers, warm-ups, fillers, concentration games), guided improvisation (a scene of a crime, a company meeting, a summer camp at night etc.), prepared improvised drama (when students themselves work and perform a story, a situation or a number of situations), mime («a non-verbal representation of an idea or story through gesture, bodily movement and expression») [3]. Finally, there is usually a great deal of sociability in using drama techniques in the lesson.

The dramatization technique is particularly significant in disciplines that include certain event patterns, such as history. This is due to the fact that students should convey the events in compliance with the historical reality. They, of course, need some guidance from a text to do this. We have carefully studied the case study materials suggested for discussion in the Journal of the Historical Association (Great Britain) by John Rainer and Pat Hoodless, Senior lecturers in Drama Education and
History Education at the Institute of Education, MMU. It is incorporated into the article as a basic model of how to organize such an activity in the ESP classroom for the students majoring in History and make it really beneficial [5: 30].

The authors recommend starting with familiarizing students with artifacts, replicas, and pictures dealing with Ancient Celts and arranged on the walls/tables of the classroom as if they were a museum. The students perform the roles of museum curators responsible for the exhibits. Then, students are invited to travel in time back to the Ancient Celts’ village. The teacher adopts the role of a fellow villager who welcomes to the tribe meeting. The students are encouraged to take on the roles of villagers. The teacher in role sets up a village meeting; the villagers share news and stories. Suddenly, the meeting is interrupted by a message delivered by a neighboring Celt that Queen Boudicca is about to arrive. Boudicca (Teacher in Role) makes an emotionally-impressive speech.[5: 32] When the Queen leaves, villagers (students in the role) start debating whether or not they will support Boudicca in the fight against the Romans, giving their arguments for and against it. The decision being made, the teacher announces it.

Thus, by participating in various activities, students develop their skills in source analysis, their sense of chronology, and historical imagination. The final stage in the drama activity allows introducing students to notions of decision-making.

Having role-played the above script of the Celtic period in the history of Great Britain, students were asked to write Boudicca’s farewell speech to the Iceni people before she poisoned her daughters and took her life not to be captured by Romans. The speeches of some students in the role of Queen Boudicca were so touching and pathetic that caused tears in the eyes of fellow students who listened to them. Thus, we may conclude that implementing drama technique in learning process we can bring brightness and emotion to the classroom and facilitate memorization of information and facts. The students will remember the events they dramatize forever, and, firstly, owing to the perception of them on an emotional level.

We used the borrowed strategy in learning different topics in History of Ukraine (dramatizing pictures, historical events, etc.), Great Britain, the USA, and other English-speaking countries. The students were offered to role-play the Margaret Thatcher’s TV interview for London Weekend Television Weekend World («Victorian Values»). During the preparatory stage, the students read a lot of materials on the biography of the Prime minister, her activity, and her role in social, political, and international life. It helped them to better understand M. Thatcher’s personality features and embody them closer to the real image in the role-play interview.

Among the methods recommended by scholars for incorporating drama in the ESP class, staging passages from appropriate literary works by English authors deserves particular attention.

Ch. Dickens traced an accurate picture of Victorian England that matches the image of child labor as a sign of cruelty, poverty, and the relaxation of the middle
classes that turned a blind eye to the suffering of the working class. We have chosen his works for role play as they quite vividly reflect the true picture of life in Britain in the Victorian epoch. Recorded music was added as part of staging the passages to create atmosphere, to suggest the location of the action (19th century in a working-class suburb in London).

We used some dramatization techniques in teaching English to students majoring in National Security. The method turned out to be quite effective in learning and practical use of special vocabulary and terminology. Firstly, it was a virtual excursion to the Air Force Armament Museum in Florida. Students in the roles of museum guides or curators prepared video materials with the museum exhibits and the accompanying information about the history of the museum and the characteristics of the aircraft and missiles. The rest of the group, in the roles of museum visitors, expressed their ideas and admiration as to the exhibits they watched and the information they heard, asking for additional information. Secondly, we held a role-play press conference. Students in the roles of the officials of the National security and Defense Council of Ukraine addressed the journalists from Ukrainian and foreign media attending the event. The speakers informed those present about the latest decisions of the Council concerning the urgent hotly-debated issues of national security. The journalists (students in roles) asked many questions, demanding clarification of some information. The students enjoy this method of dramatization and actively participate in performances. It stimulates the development of the communication skills necessary for their future professional activity.

There are a lot of drama-based activities that could be introduced in classrooms. We often use such forms of dramatization as: a Parliament debate (a problem is discussed for 5 minutes in groups 5 of 4 (1 speaker-proposer, 1 speaker-opposer, 1 Speaker of Parliament, time-keeper); a «political nightmares» role play (students split into two groups – journalists and politicians (e.g. Environment Minister, Foreign Minister, etc.) and conduct an interview arguing points and commenting on the arguments presented); consultancy presentation (4 – 5 students are legal consultants for a company; they have to prepare a «cutting-edge» presentation to present the firm’s findings to the client; the rest of the class are the «clients» and may interject and ask questions during the presentation).

When studying the topic «At the Trial», the students majoring in Law role-play the trial proceedings. The lesson allows students to get an idea of the simplified procedure for making a court decision and conducting a role-playing game. Three persons participate in it: a judge who will listen to both sides and make a decision, the plaintiff, and the defendant. The participation of lawyers, prosecutors, witnesses, etc. is also possible. After the group has decided on the roles, the teacher gives each group a task. The class takes place in compliance with the procedure for conducting a court session: opening statements of the participants in the court process; the plaintiff presents his arguments, the judge asks him questions; the defendant presents the essence of the defense, and the judge asks him questions; the judge makes a decision.
The legal profession implies possessing argumentation skills as a means of persuasion. That is why even a regular class in English for law students must involve elements of lively and energetic discussion. It is obvious that there are some common features between drama and law. They both depend on language correctness to convey messages that affect the recipient.

Using the dramatization method in teaching ESP to law students enhances their speaking skills. Students become more spontaneous in speaking, use longer sentences, give more detailed answers, use idiomatic phrases, and feel more inclined to participate in discussions. The importance of speaking evenly and in a non-hesitant manner is at the center of attention during the acquisition of English by law students. As future lawyers, they need to be able to speak fluently and effectively in court.

Drama helps these students develop the sort of confidence that can give them an edge when it comes to expressing their opinions on debating issues. In this regard, the importance of the role-play of certain passages from authentic English literary works cannot be underestimated. We consider that the works American Tragedy by T. Dreiser and Your Witness by H. Nielsen are rather illustrative and felicitous for achieving the purpose. We have chosen the latter to pinpoint the effectiveness of drama technique in learning English by students majoring in law.

Preparatory stage. Students were to read the text of the story Your Witness by H. Nielsen and do a number of lexical and communicative tasks based on the work. At the next stage of preparing for staging an excerpt from the work, students were asked to write a script and assign roles. The teacher advised the students to watch films in English about the trial proceedings. Then, the classroom was transformed into a courtroom: Attorney tables (Prosecution and Defense), Bailiff’s station, Judge’s Bench, Jury Box, Public Gallery, and Witness Stand. The students in roles performed their roles with great enthusiasm. They tried to cope as best as possible with their pronunciation, grammar, and using professional vocabulary.

Student research activity is another field where the use of the dramatization method is appropriate. In our opinion, the organization of training scientific conferences is quite an interesting experience. Before the conference, students prepare demonstration programs and presentations. During the training conference, they gain experience in speaking in front of an audience, learning how to answer questions, and participating in discussions. Educational conferences become a means of self-development for students and create additional motivation for professional growth.

The research findings clearly indicate that the methodology of teaching English to students of non-philological majors definitely needs changes. The educational activity that contributes to improving the knowledge and skills acquired in the learning process, increases the creative beginning, stimulates imagination, develops memory, attention, and discipline, and helps to overcome passivity is in demand.

Conclusions. Having analyzed all the stages of using the dramatization method to develop students’ communicative competence, we came to the conclusion that in a
foreign language for specific purposes teaching, role-play as a technique should practice: conversation skills of a character in a specific role (how to start, lead and finish a dialogue, how to express oneself even with limited knowledge of vocabulary and grammar); nonverbal communication through mime, gestures, facial expressions, and body posture; how to understand and respond to the situation. Drama provides a favorable context for learning professional vocabulary, helps learners to practice job-related speaking activities, and can be beneficial for testing professional roles. Further research is needed to verify the significance and potential of the CLIL (Content Language Integrated Learning) approach to the development of communicative skills of students via the course of English for Specific Purposes.

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