FORMAL ASSESSMENT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE COURSE FOR STUDENTS OF ECONOMIC SPECIALTIES

Abstract. The article reveals different ways of evaluation the efficiency of teaching professional English lexis to the students of economic specialties in institutions of tertiary education in Ukraine. The author analyzes the main types of students’ professional translation skills estimation from the contextual, structural, methodological and situational perspectives.

Keywords: English language teaching, evaluation, economic specialties, tertiary education, professional translation.

Foreign language competencies are seen as the primary topic of change in today's information evidence-based society. So it is difficult to alter the postmodern community as a whole without significant developments in the field of foreign language teaching and learning. We know that Ukraine is on its approach to joining the European educational system, thus there is a need for considerable transformation and renewal throughout the whole system of its higher education, including the economic one. In order to provide Ukrainian society with economists whose abilities satisfy the needs of the contemporary labor market, it is important to modernize the professional education of economists especially in its foreign languages teaching [7].

Judging from the Bachelor’s in Economics curriculum, one of the most urgent aims in current economists' training is the formation of the necessary language competences in the spheres of professional and situational communication in oral and written forms [3].

To achieve this goal, language tutors should monitor primarily the training results, including the level of contextual professional lexical knowledge and the
students’ skills to translate texts in the scope of topics due to professional needs.

To understand the process of students’ individual results assessment, we should approach to the monitoring procedure from the point of the four-type evaluation, which basically includes:

1) Informal evaluation;
2) Semi-formal evaluation;
3) Self-assessment;
4) Formal assessment.

Though examining the first three forms of evaluation is beyond the scope of this study, nevertheless, to make our analysis more profound, we should characterize them in a few words. Both informal and semi-formal evaluation are used in English language teaching, based on the tutor's personal preference. So these types of evaluation are rather casual, and a tutor can practice them spontaneously judging from the learning situation or the level of students’ knowledge and activities [2]. When we speak about self-evaluation, we mean that a student can estimate his English language level individually. This process is, to a certain extent, subjective. It depends on a number of factors: psychological, pedagogic, and even sociologic [9]. Although very often it is self-evaluation that becomes a highly motivating factor for a student to achieve better results in English learning.

The main aim of our study is to analyze tools of formal assessment of students' abilities to perform professionally-oriented oral or written communication based on economic terminology. As the curriculum says, the study of a foreign language in a professional direction provides the development of an integrated competence of the specialist with the educational degree Bachelor of Economics: the ability to solve complex specialized and practical problems in economics and learning by applying world progressive economic theories and methods. This integrated competence development is impossible without contemporary economists' key abilities: the ability to communicate in a foreign language, apply knowledge and professional skills in a practical decision-making process [6].

So, speaking of any formal assessment, we cannot but mention that these are the results of education that must be recognized. If we now turn to the curriculum,
we’ll see that it focuses on the following program educational results of those who study English language in the sphere of Economics:

– abilities of monologue and dialogic speech;
– having a number of individual communicative-professional strategies;
– skills of introductory, analytical, and skimming and scanning reading of professional texts;
– skills and abilities to translate and write texts in the economic specialty [8].

These particular results are evaluated during the formal assessment indicated in the syllabus as current assessment or tests after each of the topics (there are 6 in total per semester) and the final assessment at the end of the course. Both current and final types of assessment are specified by the dates and program material. Current control is carried out during English language classes [5]. Based on the results of the current control, the average current score (ACS) is derived according to a 100-point system [4]. Table 1 indicates the basic current evaluation criteria used in Ukrainian Universities.

**Table 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample of Program Evaluation Criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Oral presentation and performance of a written task, testing</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-100 (excellent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-89 (good)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-74 (satisfactory)</td>
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</table>
 Applicants for higher education do not have a curriculum, competencies and program learning outcomes. Fragmentarily, superficially (without argumentation and justification) teaches educational material during oral presentations and written answers, insufficiently discloses the content of theoretical questions and practical tasks, while allowing significant inaccuracies.

Our research has demonstrated that these criteria are standardized for all the institutions of tertiary education in Ukraine, including those of economic profile. Moreover, full-time students are admitted to the final control if they have met the requirements of this working curriculum for the current semester and have no academic debt for the previous semester. Students who have missed classes in the current semester and have not mastered the material of the missed topics and sections of the English language discipline before the beginning of the examination session are not allowed to take the final assessment in the relevant discipline.

### Table 2

**Correspondence of the Ukrainian final assessment rating in points to the ECTS scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score in points</th>
<th>Score on the national scale</th>
<th>Score on the ECTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>Final Credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>Credited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82 - 89</td>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75 - 81</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67 - 74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 - 66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 59</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Not credited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As English for Economists is considered to be a practical course, final control is twofold (Tables 1 and 2). It embraces both the results of the current evaluation and the outcomes of final assessments. Based on the results of the work of applicants
for higher education during the study of the course, the final grade is derived according to the formula: average current grade (maximum 100 points) + final control grade (maximum 100 points) (Table 2).

In view of all that has been mentioned so far, one may suppose that the results assessment in an English language course for students of economic specialties is very complicated and crucial at certain moments, composed of formal and informal evaluation. Both of these types of control are vital, though they can be judged by their subjective (psychological) and objective (methodological) dimensions. Moreover, in response to the current pandemic situation with COVID-19, the procedure of final assessment must be changed, taking into account distance format. In the case of the introduction of distance learning, the current control of the learning outcomes of students using distance technology is carried out during computer-based learning as well as by assessing individual and group tasks [1]. As for the distance technology of final testing in the Ukrainian educational environment, it has not been standardized and methodologically regulated. For this reason, our future research will focus on the issues of monitoring and evaluating economic students' development in remote language teaching and learning dimensions.

References:
1. Astri, Yu., Nor Azilah, H., & Faiz, A. (2019). Channeling assessments in English language learning via interactive online platforms. Studies in English Language and Education. 6 (2), 228-238. DOI: 10.24815/siele.v6i2.14103
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