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# THE IMPORTANCE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

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**Abstract:**This article examines the importance of foreign language learning, particularly English, in vocational education. In the modern labour market, technical and professional knowledge is increasingly complemented by the ability to communicate in a foreign language, access international information, and use professional resources. The article discusses the role of English in developing learners’ professional and communicative competences, acquiring occupational terminology, accessing digital and international resources, and preparing students for future employment. Particular attention is paid to integrating language learning with students’ professional specialisations and using communicative, practical and technology-supported activities in vocational classrooms.
**Keywords:** vocational education, foreign language, English, professional competence, communicative competence, occupational terminology, labour market, digital technologies, international communication.

## INTRODUCTION

Globalisation, digitalisation and rapid technological development have increased the importance of foreign language competence in modern education. For students in vocational education, learning a foreign language is not limited to everyday communication. It also provides access to professional information, technical documentation, international experience and modern technologies.

Vocational education institutions prepare learners for specific occupations such as information technology, computer engineering, energy, automotive services, tourism, agriculture and other fields. A considerable amount of professional information, software documentation, manuals and online learning materials in these fields is available in English. Therefore, English language competence can support students in extending their professional knowledge and becoming more independent learners.

The main purpose of vocational education is to prepare competitive specialists who possess practical knowledge and skills. In this context, foreign language competence can complement professional qualifications by enabling students to understand professional texts, communicate with international colleagues and use relevant sources in their future careers.

## THE ROLE OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Foreign language teaching in vocational education should be connected with learners’ future occupations. Instead of focusing exclusively on general vocabulary and grammar, teachers can introduce terminology and communication patterns related to students’ professional fields.

For example, students of computer engineering may learn terms such as computer hardware, software, network, database, programming and operating system. Learners in tourism can study vocabulary related to hotels, travel and customer service, while students in automotive fields can develop terminology connected with vehicle parts, maintenance and repair.

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This approach makes language learning more meaningful because students can see a direct connection between English and their future professional activities. It can also increase motivation and encourage learners to use English for practical purposes.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF PROFESSIONAL TERMINOLOGY**

Professional terminology is an important bridge between foreign language learning and vocational knowledge. When students understand the key English terms used in their specialisation, they can more effectively read professional materials, search for information and follow technical instructions.

Professional vocabulary can be taught through context rather than through isolated memorisation. Dialogues, short professional texts, role plays, practical tasks and projects can help students understand how terminology is used in realistic situations.

Teachers can also introduce authentic materials such as short manuals, workplace instructions, technical descriptions and professional websites. These resources allow learners to develop both language skills and occupational knowledge.

**FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES**

Digital technologies have created additional opportunities for foreign language learning. Online dictionaries, educational platforms, video materials, interactive exercises and artificial-intelligence-based tools can provide learners with flexible opportunities to practise English.

Technology is particularly useful in vocational education because students can work with authentic materials related to their specialisations. For example, they can watch professional videos, read technical articles, complete online tasks and prepare presentations in English. Such activities combine language development with professional learning.

Working with digital resources can also develop students' independent learning skills. Learners can practise searching for information, evaluating sources, understanding professional content and applying newly acquired knowledge to practical tasks.

**A COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING**

A communicative approach can help vocational students develop the ability to use English in realistic professional situations. Classroom activities should therefore provide opportunities for students to speak, listen, read and write for meaningful purposes.

Students can practise situations such as communicating with customers, explaining a technical problem, discussing a workplace task, communicating with colleagues, writing professional emails and giving short presentations. Role plays, pair work, group work and project work can make such activities more interactive.

These activities also allow teachers to assess not only grammatical accuracy but also learners' ability to communicate ideas, solve problems and cooperate with others. Such competences are relevant to many modern workplaces.

**FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMPETENCE AND THE LABOUR MARKET**

The contemporary labour market requires specialists who can combine occupational knowledge with a range of transferable skills. Foreign language competence can be particularly useful when employees work with international companies, foreign technologies, professional documentation or international partners.

English can give vocational graduates access to a wider range of professional information and learning opportunities. They may use international websites, online courses, professional communities and educational resources to continue developing their knowledge after graduation.

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Consequently, foreign language learning can contribute to lifelong learning and professional development. It can help learners become more flexible in responding to changes in technology and the requirements of their occupation.

## CONCLUSION

Foreign language learning is an important component of modern vocational education. English can support students not only in communication but also in accessing professional information, understanding technical materials, using digital resources and developing their professional knowledge. The effectiveness of foreign language teaching in vocational institutions can be strengthened by connecting language content with students' occupations, introducing professional terminology, using authentic materials and applying communicative and technology-supported methods. Such an integrated approach can make English more relevant to learners' future careers.

Therefore, foreign language education should be viewed as a practical element of vocational preparation. Developing both professional and communicative competences can help students participate more effectively in further education, professional development and an increasingly international labour environment.

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