
ЕКОНОМІКА ТА УПРАВЛІННЯ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИМ ГОСПОДАРСТВОМ

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O. V. Los, Candidate of Philological Sciences, Associate Professor**FOSTERING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF UKRAINE
THROUGH INCREASING ENGLISH PROFICIENCY**

Abstract. *The importance of English proficiency in the context of economic growth of Ukraine is studied in the article. The authors focus attention on those business fields where English proficiency is a core competence and at the same time a key factor of their advancement and economic development of the nation as a whole. The ways of improving low English proficiency among adult population of Ukraine are proposed.*

Keywords: *English proficiency; economic development; linguistic skills; global language; labour market; language competence.*

Н. В. Гагіна, к. п. н., доцент,
О. В. Лось, к. філол. н., доцент**СТИМУЛЮВАННЯ ЕКОНОМІЧНОГО РОЗВИТКУ УКРАЇНИ ШЛЯХОМ ПІДВИЩЕННЯ
РІВНЯ ВОЛОДІННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ**

Анотація. *У статті досліджується важливість англійської мови в контексті економічного зростання України. Автори зосереджують увагу на тих сферах бізнесу, де знання англійської мови є основною компетенцією і водночас ключовим фактором їх успішності та економічного розвитку країни загалом. Пропонуються шляхи подолання низької англомовної компетенції серед населення України.*

Ключові слова: *рівень володіння англійською мовою; економічний розвиток; лінгвістичні вміння; мова міжнародного спілкування; ринок праці; мовна компетенція.*

Н. В. Гагіна, к. п. н., доцент,
Е. В. Лось, к. філол. н., доцент**СТИМУЛИРОВАНИЕ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКОГО РАЗВИТИЯ УКРАИНЫ ПУТЕМ ПОВЫШЕНИЯ
УРОВНЯ ВЛАДЕНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКИМ ЯЗЫКОМ**

Аннотация. *В статье рассматривается важность английского языка в контексте экономического роста Украины. Авторы акцентируют внимание на тех сферах бизнеса, где знание английского языка является основной компетенцией и одновременно ключевым фактором их успешности и экономического развития страны в целом. Предлагаются пути преодоления низкой англоязычной компетенции среди населения Украины.*

Ключевые слова: *уровень владения английским языком; экономическое развитие; лингвистические умения; язык международного общения; рынок труда; языковая компетенция.*

Relevance of the study. Over the last decade there has been a remarkable growth of English as the international language of communication. The need for a global language is widely recognized and appreciated in the academic and business communities.

Statement of the problem. Governments around the world are more and more realising the role of English as an essential communication tool, required in a globalized economy, since English proficiency is a necessary skill in the international business environment. International communication taking place among businesses, experts and scientists is crucial in any joint collaborative research and business projects and programmes. The vast majority of the scientific, technological or academic pro-

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duction in the world today is done in English. Sharing technology between countries can contribute to international innovations and economic growth.

Analysis of recent researches and publications. The relationship between English and economic gain has been the focus of the orising for a number of scholars (Bourdieu P., Chowdhur Q.H., Coleman H., Erling E. J., Hayden J., Pinon R., Rahman S., Seargeant P., Solly M.) in recent decades. A key notion underpinning this work is Bourdieu's concept of "linguistic capital" that is related in specific ways to the distribution of other forms of capital (economic capital, cultural capital) which define the location of an individual within the social space [1, p. 18]. Thus, owing some of resources opens access to better social opportunities which can, consequently, be transformed into economic capital. According to Euromonitor research [2], for example, there is a strong perception across developing economies that knowledge of English can provide personal economic growth and better career prospects, giving the chance for people to escape poverty. In the study commissioned by the British Council [3] English is considered crucial for countries' successful participation in the global economy, as it provides individuals with access to core knowledge, skills and employment opportunities and enables organizations to create and sustain international links. English proficiency plays a significant role in development, by, for example, increasing individuals' employability; enabling international collaboration and cooperation; providing access to research and information; facilitating the international mobility [3, p. 15].

In many contexts, therefore, improving English skills is viewed as an important means of developing both individual wealth and the economy of a country [4]. In countries where English is not an official language, the ease of doing business closely correlates with the strength of English skills as language barriers may limit international business activities.

The findings of a global language survey released by the international company Education First in 2015 show that English proficiency correlates with social and economic indicators such as Gross National Income per capita and the Human Development Index. Countries with higher levels of English language skills also have stronger economies, and are characterized by higher levels of Gross National Income per capita and a higher quality of life [5].

English Proficiency Index introduced by Education First ranks countries by the average level of English language skills using the best available data from four different English tests including grammar, vocabulary, reading and listening sections completed by hundreds of thousands of adults every year.

Ukraine first appeared in the EF EPI report in 2013 and in 2015 it showed an increase in proficiency scores in comparison with the previous year (EF EPI score: moderate proficiency 52.61, has risen 4.11 points) taking the thirty-fourth place out of seventy countries [5]. Though in Ukraine there have been made several efforts to improve English language skills of its nationals within the context of economic growth, participating actively in different joint business projects and international programs, there are no obvious considerable changes in assuming the actual correlation between English proficiency and economic development.

Objective of the study. The purpose of the article is to analyse the influence of English language proficiency on business activity in Ukraine being a key factor of the overall economic advancement.

Presentation of the main material of the study. English language ability remains a core competence on the global labour market. An increasing number of companies headquartered in non-English speaking countries (including Nokia, Samsung, Honda, Renault, Alcatel or AXA, DaimlerChrysler) have adopted English as their corporate language.

As an example of the growing English language influence on the global economy we consider the IT solutions that are becoming more advanced and more common in all areas of the economy and public institutions. The IT product can be made in a different place than where it is used. The peculiarity of the industry supposes specific legal and business environment and highly qualified human resources that enable the easy functioning of enterprises. Because of the human potential and political stability (associated with joining the European Union), the IT industry, for example, in Poland is growing faster and generating significant profits. It's obvious that the information technology sector relies on international communication. According to a 2014 survey by the Institute of Electrical and Electron-

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ics Engineers, the top 10 programming languages in the world are all English-based [6]. Two of these, Python and Ruby, were created by non-native English speakers. Countries with better English competences also export more high-technology aerospace, computer, pharmaceutical, scientific, industrial products with high research and development intensity.

As all the professional skills in the IT sector are connected with good command of English, soft skills and business skills among key competences recognized by representatives of the IT sector today and referred to the labour market needs we can see English, cooperation, customer orientation, honesty and involvement [6, p. 22]. The importance of mobility and technical English also remains increasing.

Defending the point that the current university education is at some extent remote from the actual labour market demands, representatives of companies under study and experts in the field elaborated a description of foreign language competence as an ability to speak a foreign language in a way that enables effective communication, both oral and written. Students are able to communicate and understand the main aspects of definite and abstract problems outlined in the text, including an expert discussion on professional issues. They can communicate freely and spontaneously so that a conversation with a native speaker is free from tension in the case of both interlocutors. Students are able to express ideas clearly and in detail on different topics [6, p.55]. This competence-based approach allowed Poland to enjoy the 9th ranking with 62,95 points exposing very high level of English, according to the data of EF English Proficiency Index in 2015.

Having in mind the positive tendencies in economy of Poland due to the IT industry growth we could presume for Ukraine similar mechanisms based on the above mentioned correlation of English proficiency and economic fostering.

The Ukrainian IT industry is developing dynamically and can easily generate around 200,000 work places by 2020. Global research shows that Europe will lack 900,000 IT specialists in a few years, while the global shortage will be around five million. This means that more and more companies will need outsourcing options. Ukraine is well-placed to meet this demand. For the last 10 years, the industry has consistently grown at around 25%-30% annually. According to Colliers international, Ukraine is 4th globally by a number of IT specialists. Above 400 educational institutions in Ukraine train IT specialists [7]. All these mentioned above findings prove that IT outsourcing to Ukraine could benefit the national economy.

At the same time some employees utilizing sophisticated PM Software within the Ukrainian IT sector may have English language drawbacks as most of them acquired foreign language skills in Ukraine. Sometimes IT software developers face difficulties in understanding the software applications and instructions because of lack of training or provision of suitable training support. To meet the English language requirements of the industry and remain competitive IT, companies are obliged to provide appropriate language training spending time on rectifying the situation.

Among the most important problems regarding the high school English training is the quality of teaching methods, materials as well as low public expenditure on education. Low-quality, ineffective methods of teaching, poorly matched to the needs of future specialists, result in low English proficiency.

Judging from the features and results of foreign language teaching practices in Ukraine, it's evident that English is still taught with little respect to its practical use and professional needs. The priority should be placed on communication. Another issue that requires consideration relates to encouraging the English language acquisition by adults in various professional fields. Current reforms are aimed, primarily, to make changes in national education system, paying little attention to adults learning the language for specific purposes.

Despite the fact that 2016 was declared the year of the English language it isn't sufficient to overcome difficulties with the linguistic skills of the nation, until all English teachers are teaching English as a tool for communication. As such Ukrainians will not actively integrate into the wider European community and enjoy the full benefit of a global language.

Though Ukrainian government tries to improve the situation and foster English proficiency, there are a lot of obvious problems requiring thoughtful analysis, solutions and quick responses. To improve

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English language proficiency we consider Ukraine should apply a number of effective strategies namely sufficient financial support, development of distinct national standards for English training as well as clear and efficient assessment tools to evaluate competences necessary to meet both current and future business challenges, access to modern high quality resources in libraries, schools and higher education institutions, English training support for adults and adequate investment in technology and online learning tools.

Conclusions. Focusing attention on those business fields where English proficiency is a core competence and at the same time a key factor of their advancement, we assume that their competitiveness and success on the global market could foster economic development of the nation. Though English is regarded as a precondition for economic growth, we still need to change a lot before English can realize its potential as a global language of communication being a tool for better access of Ukraine to the world economic space. We suppose that a measurable increase in English proficiency in the full adult population could only be seen after several decades, thus thinking about national economic progress the foreign language policy in Ukraine needs renovation and persistence in a language acquisition goal.

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