Формирование речевой компетентности студентов – будущих экономистов до уровня самостоятельного владения английским языком (B2)

Введение. Знание английского языка становится все более важным в мировой экономике, особенно в сфере бизнеса и финансов. Достижение уровня самостоятельного владения английским языком (B2) очень актуально для будущих экономистов, поскольку это необходимое требование для эффективного общения в международной бизнес среде и для достижения успеха в их профессиональной карьере. Изучая английский язык, студенты-экономисты могут улучшить свои коммуникативные навыки, получить доступ к информации, карьерным возможностям, а также получить конкурентное преимущество в своих академических и профессиональных интересах. Именно поэтому в современной системе высшего образования особого внимания требует процесс обучения иностранному языку по профессиональному направлению, что предполагает подготовку будущих специалистов к использованию иностранного (английского) языка в конкретных деловых сферах.

Цель данного исследования – определить наиболее эффективную модель обучения студентов – будущих экономистов английской профессиональной лексике (АПЛ) до уровня самостоятельного владения английским языком (B2) и разработать предложения по совершенствованию этой модели.

Методы исследования. В педагогическом эксперименте приняло участие 96 студентов 2 курса финансового факультета Финансового университета при Правительстве Российской Федерации. Исследование было проведено в течение 5-ти месяцев. Основными методами исследования были выбраны метод анализа научной литературы и экспериментальное исследование процесса обучения студентов – будущих экономистов с использованием трех моделей обучения. Использованные методы математической статистики: H-критерий Краскела-Уоллиса и U-критерий Манна-Уитни.

Результаты. Данное исследование было направлено на изучение смешанной модели обучения и формированию предложений для её эффективного развития. Расчеты показали, что использование смешанной модели обучения АПЛ студентов экономических специальностей в итоге привело к наибольшему приросту показателей выполнения письменных заданий на 24,8% и устных – 20.54%. Полученные статистические данные по результатам тестирования, показали, что во всех экспериментальных группах произошел рост всех показателей, но наибольший прогресс наблюдался в показателях выполнения письменных и устных заданий в группе ЭГ3, в которой обучение АПЛ проходило по смешанной модели.

Заключение. В исследовании была представлена методика смешанного обучения и предложения по совершенствованию, при внедрении которых, модель смешанного обучения станет более эффективной при обучении английскому языку до уровня самостоятельного владения (B2) студентов – будущих экономистов. Практическая значимость определяется возможностью использования рекомендаций для улучшения существующей модели при обучении студентов – будущих экономистов. Результаты данного исследования могут применяться для разработки и внедрении новых эффективных практик обучения английскому языку до уровня самостоятельного владения (B2).

Ключевые слова: английская профессиональная лексика, информационно-компьютерные технологии, смешанное обучение, дистанционное (электронное), традиционное (аудиторное) обучение
Introduction. Proficiency in English is becoming increasingly important in the global economy, especially in business and finance. By studying English, economics students can improve their communication skills, gain access to information, career opportunities, and gain a competitive edge in their academic and professional interests. That is why in the modern system of higher education, the process of teaching a foreign language in a professional direction requires special attention, which involves the preparation of future specialists for the use of a foreign (English) language in specific business areas. An important property for effective intercultural communication is the ability to correctly formulate statements and understand the speech of other people in English. An important property for effective intercultural communication is the ability to correctly formulate statements and understand the speech of other people in English. First of all, communication should be carried out by mastering the English professional vocabulary (EPV). In turn, the possession of EPV is one of the most important components of the formation of speech competence up to level B2 (according to the all-European scale of levels CEFR), which is the main aspect of learning English at a university for students of foreign language professional communicative competence.

The purpose of this study is to determine the most effective model for teaching students – future economists English professional vocabulary (EPL) to the level of independent English proficiency (B2) and develop proposals for improving this model.

Research methods. 96 2nd year students of the financial faculty of the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation took part in the pedagogical experiment. The study was conducted within 5 months. The main research methods were the method of scientific literature analysis and experimental study of the learning process of students – future economists using three learning models (traditional (classroom learning), distance (electronic), blended). Methods of mathematical statistics used: Kruskal-Wallis H-test and Mann-Whitney U-test.

Results. Conducted test tasks (both written and oral) by students of three experimental groups before the methodological experiment showed the absence of statistical significance between the results of performance. This indicated that in the three experimental groups, first-year students are at the same level of mastering the EPV. However, after conducting a methodical experiment, the presence of statistical significance was revealed. This indicated that after the completion of the methodological experiment, the students of the three experimental groups of the first year of study are at different levels of mastering the EVP. Based on the results of the control assignments performed by students, it was found that in all experimental groups there was an increase in all indicators, but the greatest progress was observed in the performance of written and oral tasks in the EG3 group, in which the EPV was trained according to a blended model.

Conclusion. Thus, the blended learning model turned out to be the most practical approach to the educational process at the university when learning a foreign language. Calculations have shown that the use of a blended model of EPV training for students of economic specialties ultimately led to the largest increase in the performance of written and oral assignments. To improve the model of blended learning, the authors have developed some improvements, upon implementation of which, the model of blended learning will become more effective in teaching English to the level of independent proficiency (B2) of students – future economists. The prospect of further research may be to determine the most effective ratio of classroom (traditional) and distance (remote) classes in teaching English to reduce the cost of education while increasing the level of foreign language professional communicative competence among students.

Keywords: information and computer technologies, blended learning model, remote (online) learning, traditional (classroom) training

Education is a fundamental human right and a key driver of sustainable development. In this regard international organizations such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and The Council of Europe, have launched a number of initiatives aimed at promoting access to quality education for all. The UNESCO is dedicated to promoting peace, human rights, and sustainable development through education, science, and culture. The organization is responsible for a wide range of initiatives related to education, including the Education for All initiative [1], which seeks to ensure that all children have access to primary education, and the Global Education Monitoring Report [2], which tracks progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals related to education [3].

The Council of Europe, for example, has been working to promote education for democratic citizenship and human rights since the 1990s, while the Union of International Associations (UIA) has launched a number of initiatives related to higher education and international cooperation.

In today’s increasingly interconnected and globalized world [4], proficiency in English has become an essential tool for communication and success in many professions [5]. This is particularly true for professionals working in fields that require international collaboration, such as education. To address this need, a number of international initiatives have been launched to promote English language proficiency and communication skills among professionals.

One of the most important international initiatives in this regard is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) [6], which provides a standardized system for assessing and certifying language proficiency across Europe. The CEFR is used by a wide range of organizations and institutions, including universities, language schools, and government agencies, and is recognized as the standard for language learning and assessment in many countries around the world.

Other initiatives aimed at promoting English language proficiency and communication skills include the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) [7], which provides a standardized test of English language proficiency, and the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program [8], which provides language training and support to non-native speakers of English.

In modern conditions, specialists should be able to solve professional problems at the international level, which implies communication in English both in a personal and professional foreign language (FL) environment [9; 10]. That is why in the modern system of higher education, the process of teaching a FL in a professional direction requires special attention, which involves preparing future specialists to use a foreign (English) language in specific business, scientific, and industrial spheres [11].

By promoting English language proficiency and communication skills among professionals, these initiatives are helping to address professional problems at the international level and to facilitate greater collaboration and understanding among professionals from different countries. English is a universal language used in the business world [12], and it has become an essential tool for economic professionals [13]. In today's global economy,
economic professionals are required to interact with clients and colleagues from different countries who speak different languages, and English is often the common language used for communication [14]. Knowing English enables economic professionals to participate in international conferences, present papers, engage in research, and collaborate with colleagues from different countries. It also helps them understand international economic policies, trends, and practices [15]. Furthermore, the ability to communicate effectively in English is essential for economic professionals who wish to work in an international environment or want to conduct business with foreign partners. Therefore, learning English has become a critical requirement for economic professionals, enabling them to be more competitive, productive, and successful in their careers [16].

Therefore, there is a problem of choosing the optimal model of the educational process [17], which can be solved by comparative analysis of various models of the educational process up to the B2 level. When carrying out such a study, it is also necessary to consider the features of professional economic vocabulary that contains a significant stock of special terms constantly updated in the face of active changes in the professional international environment and the development of information and communications technology (ICT), which leads to the need to constantly expand the vocabulary of future economists and search for effective forms of education [18].

In connection with the above, the purpose of the study was to determine the most effective educational model for students future economists when teaching English Professional Vocabulary (EVP) up to the B2 level and develop proposals for improving that model.

Considering the purpose of the research authors have set the following objectives of the study:

• conduct the analysis of scientific literature;
• consider the prerequisites for teaching EPV to economics students;
• determine the procedure for selecting material when teaching EPV to economics students up to the B2 level;
• carry out an experimental study of the EPV teaching process up to the B2 level using three models of the educational process;
• conclude the effectiveness of the studied learning models;
• develop proposals for improving the most effective educational model.

Literature review

Prerequisites for teaching EPV to economics students

Researchers ambiguously define the ultimate goal of learning a FL for economics students. Thus, L.E. Alekseeva [19] believes that the ultimate goal of teaching FL to students of non-linguistic fields in universities is formulated as follows: the development of a personality ready to participate in intercultural communication by forming intercultural communicative competence in its professional version.

I.N. Puzenko et al. [20] define the ultimate goal of professional English-language training for economics students as the formation of a minimum level of English-speaking competence and social and motivational core competencies as the ability to constructive interpersonal relationships and a productive attitude to one's activities.

When teaching EPV to future economists up to the B2 level, researchers [21; 22] identify the following objectives: acquiring knowledge of professional terminological...
vocabulary (including terms and abbreviations) to ensure understanding and extended speech competence within economic topics of varying complexity; developing the ability to search for the necessary analytical, statistical, normative, and methodological economic information from various sources; formation of the necessary skills for further assessment [23], comparison, and critical analysis of socio-economic phenomena and events using professional terminology; preparation for writing business-related documents, reports, and presentations in English [24]; development of the ability to conduct business correspondence with foreign counterparties [25].

EPV learning is an important component of the professionally-oriented English-speaking competence of future economists because EPV facilitates the process of understanding the speech of others and direct communication. The teacher should effectively compile the content of the English-language professional course for economics students, considering the following components: spheres of professional communication; types of professional communication; typical topics; practical situations [26; 27].

Analyzing the prerequisites for teaching EPV to economics students, researchers, focusing on various aspects of English professional education, formalize the following areas of research:

- a set of principles reflecting general patterns and basic approaches to the organization of EPV learning [28];
- procedural conditions for teaching English to economics students [29];
- linguistic features of the English economic vocabulary [30].

Thus, A.N. Shamov [31], identifies the following principles reflecting the general patterns and basic approaches to the organization of EPV learning that affect the quality of acquisition of educational lexical material: visibility, consciousness, activity, interdisciplinary coordination, communication, and the interconnectedness of teaching various types of FL speech with the professional orientation of training.

O.I. Zhdanko [32] defines the procedural conditions for teaching FLs to economics students:

- integration of the formation of English communicative and informational/cognitive skills;
- integral intensification of all links of the educational process due to increased motivation and technicalization of collective and independent learning activities;
- meaningful and procedural unity of learning based on the integration of collective and independent forms of educational activity;
- application of the provisions of the conscious communicative method to ensure an optimal balance between the conscious assimilation of educational material and the communicative orientation of the educational process;
- ensuring the intensification of independent learning activities.

The study of the linguistic features of the English economic vocabulary shows that economic terms do not have signs of ambiguity and expressiveness and are characterized by stylistic neutrality and the absence of synonyms [33; 34]. The current trend characterizing economic terms is their internationalization [35]. This feature contributes to the development of students' language speculation and expands their opportunities for continuous semantic understanding and rapid and long-term memorization of economic vocabulary.

Thus, the prerequisites for teaching EPV to economics students include the analysis of the features of the economic sphere and special economic vocabulary, considering the
requirements of professional activities and the study of the psychological characteristics of economics students [36]. The ultimate goal of teaching EPV to economics students is to prepare them to carry out effective communication in English in the professional field.

**Procedure for selecting the material when teaching EPV related to economics**

G. Gumovskaya [37], A.V. Guzova, and N.V. Savitskaya [38] believe that authentic professional texts are the main type of educational material for teaching EPV for economics up to the B2 level. Such texts are not only the main source of forming the base of economic terms for future economists but also a means of developing students' professional skills. Authentic professional texts contribute to the improvement of the culture of terminological communication, satisfy the informational and cognitive needs of students, act as a support for stimulating students' verbal interaction in a professional environment, and complement existing professional knowledge [39].

The subject matter of authentic professional texts can include both general and highly specialized topics, combining professional interests and cognitive needs of economics students [40].

The study [41] identifies the following sources that it is advisable to use in the process of selecting material for teaching EPV in the economic field, namely, scientific publications (monographs, textbooks, articles in professional journals, materials of scientific conferences, dissertations, etc.); analytical and statistical materials (statistical information on official websites); regulatory and legal acts (standards, codes, recommendations, protocols, memoranda, laws, etc.); authentic samples of business documents (summaries, business letters, contracts, price lists, reports, etc.); authentic video recordings (BBC news, TED talks, etc.); authentic audio recordings (radio reports, recorded webinars).

O.I. Zhdanko [42] identifies the following criteria for the selection of professional texts: contextuality (connection with typical situations of real communication); illustrative character (the ability of the text to convey a specific situation); cognitive value (considering informative and socio-cultural aspects); accessibility (content simplicity that allows students to understand professional economic texts); methodological value (saturation of the text with speech units: categories, terms, speech cliches, and structures); linguistic value (the correspondence of the text to such features as communicative and semantic integrity, semantic and structural coherence, and completeness).

In addition to the criteria for the selection of professional texts, L.P. Pavlova [28] separately identifies the criteria for the selection of the English terminological vocabulary for economists:

- professional orientation is manifested in the fact that each lexical unit (LU) is selected from the point of view of its importance for the correct understanding and perception of the economic text for the subsequent use of terms in communication in a professional environment;
- the criterion of adequacy involves the selection of LUs that would correspond to typical situations of English professional communication. Adequately selected terminology provides an opportunity to correctly express or argue one's opinion, using exactly the terminology that most correctly conveys the opinion and allows one to respond appropriately to information and choose the right strategy of communicative behavior;
The frequency criterion is aimed at selecting such vocabulary, the coefficient of repetition of which (in different sources of selection) is not less than five; the criterion of thematic grouping is used for contextual grouping of terminological vocabulary on a thematic basis, which contributes to the activation of associative assimilation.

Thus, the criteria for the selection of materials in the field and the criteria for the selection of LUs in teaching EPV for economists form the theoretical basis for the practical implementation of this process. The effectiveness of studying professional terminology in English by economics students during their studies directly depends on the selection made.

**Modern learning models**

Within the framework of our study, authors were interested in the research of scholars aimed at studying three models of teaching a FL:

- the traditional (classroom) training model (lectures, seminars, etc.), which is covered in sufficient detail in numerous monographs and textbooks [19; 20];
- remote (online, electronic) learning model is a type of distance learning that provides for interaction between organizers and participants of the educational process both synchronously in time and asynchronously, fundamentally and mainly using electronic transport systems for the delivery of educational material and other information objects, computer networks, and ICT [43]. Remote learning can be defined as a kind of learning model where students work independently at home, and their communicative relationships with other students and teachers are carried out mainly through videoconferences, electronic forums, e-mail, and other network communication opportunities [44];
- a blended learning model, which researchers understand as a combination of formal learning tools (working in classrooms, studying theoretical material) and innovative (electronic) forms of learning (discussion via e-mail, Internet conferences, performing practical assignments and posting the results online, etc.) [45; 46]. M. Mondejar [47] believes that the blended model of teaching a FL is a model that uses distributed information and educational resources in stationary learning while also using elements of asynchronous and synchronous distance learning, which is practiced as an element of stationary learning during classroom hours and in students’ independent work. Based on this, blended learning incorporates some elements of distance learning but excludes its disadvantages.

Despite a large number of different interpretations and definitions, researchers share a common opinion regarding the combination of various learning technologies (traditional and electronic; in particular, computer, remote, mobile, etc.), the use of which is an important condition for the effective implementation of the blended learning model [48]. Thus, blended learning is a learning model that allows the use of traditional and innovative teaching methods.

In recent years, it has gained popularity due to its effectiveness in providing personalized and flexible learning experiences to students [49]. Blended learning can be categorized into several types, such as rotation, flex, online driver and etc. The rotation model [50] involves students rotating between traditional classroom learning and online learning, while the flex model [51] provides students with the flexibility to choose when and where they want to
learn. In the online driver model [52], students have the opportunity to choose specific online courses to supplement their traditional classroom learning.

Blended learning is an innovative approach to education that provides students with the opportunity to learn using multiple modes of instruction. It offers several benefits over traditional classroom learning, such as increased student engagement [53], personalized learning experiences [54], and improved student outcomes [55]. Blended learning also provides teachers with the flexibility to design and deliver customized learning experiences for their students [56], based on their individual needs and learning styles. With the advent of new technologies and learning tools, blended learning is becoming more accessible and affordable.

The blended learning model has been used successfully in many different educational settings, from primary and secondary schools to higher education institutions. It has also been used in professional training programs and corporate learning environments [57], where employees can access training materials online at their own pace. Blended learning has been shown to be effective in enhancing student motivation, engagement, and academic achievement, particularly in subjects like foreign languages [58], where students need to develop both their oral and written skills [59].

Thus, in the context of restrictions affecting the learning process for students (such as restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic), other force majeure situations, and the need for students to develop self-study skills to improve and maintain their FL professional communicative competence at least at the B2 level, it is necessary to implement effective forms of education. To do this, authors have analyzed the conditions and compared the models of the educational process in teaching EPV to economics students in the formation of speech competence up to the B2 level.

The hypothesis of the study is based on the assumption that the effectiveness of training future economists in the professional vocabulary is different when using different models of the organization of the educational process, and the most effective is a blended model of the learning for future economists.

The following statistical hypotheses were formulated:

- $H_0$: There are no statistically significant differences between the study groups in the level of written and oral assignments.
- $H_1$: There are statistically significant differences between the study groups in the level of performance of written and oral assignments.
- $H_2$: Statistically significant differences in the level of performance of written and oral assignments exist when comparing the study groups in pairs.

### Materials and methods

**Research design and methods used**

To achieve the purpose of the research and prove one of the research hypotheses, authors have chosen the mixed type of study. The mixed type of consisted of the use of qualitative and quantitative methods of information collection. The study was carried out from January to May of 2021 at the Finance Faculty of the Financial Control and Treasury Department of the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation.
In the process of the study authors have used following methods:

- analysis of scientific literature on the problems of teaching EPV to economics students, selecting material when teaching EPV to economics students up to the B2 level and learning models used in modern education;
- experimental study of the process of teaching EPV to future economists using various models of the educational process.

To conduct an experimental study, authors selected a methodological experiment (an activity aimed at investigating cause-and-effect relationships in pedagogical phenomena), which includes the following components: modeling of experimental training; the active influence of the researcher on the course of the experiment during its conduct; analysis and interpretation of the results.

**Research participants**

The study involved 96 2nd-year students of the Finance Faculty of the Financial Control and Treasury Department. These student were randomly divided into three experimental groups (EGs), 32 students each.

**Research stages**

- At the first stage of the study, the authors analyzed scientific literature. In the process of work, the materials for the study were monographs and articles by authors on the problems analysis of on the problems of teaching EPV, selecting material when teaching EPV and learning models used in modern education published in journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science over the past 5-7 years.
- At second stage authors have organized pre-experimental testing by performing oral and written tests for students, compiled considering professional specifics based on the freely available "Free: Paper-based sample test" papers (https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-tests/first/preparation/), in three EGs.

Based on the context of the study, the objects of control were the knowledge of professional vocabulary, as well as skills and the ability to use LUs in oral and written communication.

The prepared tests (oral and written assignments) to control the level of knowledge of professional vocabulary consisted of 20 questions each, which were evaluated within a 100-point scale.

- At the third stage authors have held the EPV training. It was structured as follows:
  - EG1 was taught EPV in the traditional way, in the classroom at the university;
  - EG2 worked remotely, learning EPV (spelling and pronunciation) using Google or Reverso resources;
  - EG3 learned EPV according to a given schedule (alternately in the traditional way or remotely), where part of the training was carried out in the classroom at the university, and the other part was performed remotely, using Google resources or Reverso.
- At the fourth stage of the study to compare the initial and final results of the methodological experiment to determine the proficiency level in EPV post-experimental testing in the same way as in the second stage was performed.

The model of the organization of EPV learning for future economists is presented in Table 1.
Table 1

The model of the organization of the EPV learning for future economists

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Total number of hours</th>
<th>Number of classroom hours</th>
<th>Number of hours of remote (including independent) classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EG1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Analysis

To determine the most effective model for organizing the training of future economists, authors mathematically processed the results of pre-experimental and post-experimental testing using the Kruskal-Wallis H-test, followed by a posteriori (paired) comparisons using the Mann-Whitney U-test.

The indicators of the increase in the performance of written and oral assignments were calculated according to the formula \((B*100 / A) - 100\), where \(A\) is the indicator of pre-experimental testing and \(B\) is the indicator of post-experimental testing.

Results

The results of pre-experimental and post-experimental testing in three EGs are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Comparison of the results of pre-experimental and post-experimental testing in three EGs (average values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Written assignments</th>
<th>H-test</th>
<th>Oral assignments</th>
<th>H-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Indicators of pre-experimental testing</td>
<td></td>
<td>Indicators of post-experimental testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>5.346</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>4.678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>67.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td></td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td></td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>61.532</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>57.486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Growth indicators, %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>13.89</td>
<td></td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>24.89</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 2 show that there was no statistically significant difference between the results of the test assignments (both written and oral) performed by the students of the three EGs before the methodological experiment \((H = 5.346, H = 4.678, \text{with a value of } H\text{-test} = 38.9, p < 0.05)\). This indicates that in three EGs, first-year students were at the same level of EPV development.
However, the data in Table 2 indicate the presence of statistical significance between the results of test assignments (both written and oral) by students of the three EGs after the experiment ($H = 61.532$, $H = 57.486$, with a value of $H$-test $= 45.6$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that after the completion of the experiment, the first-year students of the three EGs were at different levels of EPV development.

The analysis of the control assignments performed by students (Table 2) showed that in all EGs there was an increase in all indicators. However, the greatest progress was observed in the performance of written (+24.895) and oral (+20.54%) assignments in the EG3 group, where the EPV learning took place according to the blended model.

To confirm the hypothesis about the existence of statistically significant differences in the level of performance of written and oral assignments in a pairwise comparison of the studied groups, the results of post-experimental testing were processed using the Mann-Whitney U-test.

Table 3 Presents a comparison of the results of the test assignments at the ascertaining and control stages of the experiment in the control group (CG) and EGs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Written assignments</th>
<th>U-test</th>
<th>Oral assignments</th>
<th>U-test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EG1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>85.24</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>66.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG1</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>74.6</td>
<td>36.79</td>
<td>74.3</td>
<td>25.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>72.3</td>
<td>16.55</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>15.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EG3</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td></td>
<td>80.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 3 indicate the presence of statistical significance between the results of performing test assignments (both written and oral) by students of three EGs in a pairwise comparison after the experiment when performing written ($U_{1-2} = 85.24$, $U_{1-3} = 36.79$, $U_{2-3} = 16.55$, with a value of $U$-test $= 247$, $p < 0.01$), and oral ($U_{1-2} = 66.42$, $U_{1-3} = 25.31$, $U_{2-3} = 15.86$, with a value of $U$-test $= 247$, $p < 0.01$) assignments. This indicates that after the completion of the experiment, the results of tests passed by the students of each of the three EGs differed from the results of students of the other two groups.

At the same time, considering the largest increase in indicators in EG3 where the EPV learning took place according to the blended model, authors can assert that blended model of teaching EPV to economics students is the most effective, and the remote learning model (EG2) is the least effective of the three models considered.

**Discussion**

The conducted study has shown that the blended model of EPV learning improves the level of students' English proficiency and helps to make the language learning process interactive and interesting. In addition, the blended model of EPV learning improves the interaction between teachers and students and gives them enough time to complete
assignments [60; 61]. This is confirmed by the results of the study, according to which the blended learning model, focused on the personal needs of students, forms their self-learning and self-control skills, as it provides students with new opportunities to learn English both in class and online at a convenient time for them [38], allows them to test their knowledge on the topic online, thereby preparing for control or independent work in the classroom [30], and opens access to reference and additional materials [28].

The problems of integration of classroom and independent extracurricular work of students using ICTs were also considered in the works [62; 63] and the authors concluded that blended learning did not require fundamental changes in the classical model, which formed important socio-cultural qualities of the individual. However, due to its use, students' cognitive activity was activated and the qualities necessary for life and activity in conditions of information society were formed [64].

Indeed, there are various opinions and perspectives on education, and different educators and researchers may have different preferences for teaching methods and approaches. However, research has consistently shown that blended learning can be highly effective for enhancing education and improving learning outcomes. Researchers consider the blended learning model to be the most practical and profitable approach to the educational process at a university when learning a FL since it allows students to take advantage of both classroom and remote learning [65]. There are also different types of blended learning that institutions can use to suit their needs and learning objectives:

1. Rotation type: In this model, students rotate between face-to-face instruction and online learning [50]. For example, students might spend half of the class time in the classroom and the other half working on online activities.

2. Flex type: In the flex model, students complete the majority of the course work online, but they can attend face-to-face instruction when necessary [51]. This model allows for more flexibility in scheduling and can accommodate different learning styles.

3. Online driver type: In this model, online learning is the primary method of instruction. Face-to-face instruction is used only for specific purposes, such as assessments or labs [52].

4. Face-to-face driver type: In this model, face-to-face instruction is the primary mode of instruction, and online learning is used to support and supplement the face-to-face instruction [66].

5. Enriched virtual type: In this model, students complete most of their coursework online, but they also attend scheduled face-to-face sessions with their teachers for additional support and instruction [67].

The effectiveness of each blended learning type may depend on various factors, such as the learners' individual needs, the quality of instructional materials, and the skills and training of the teachers [68]. Additionally, different blended learning models may be more effective for different subject areas or specific groups of learners.

Researchers also claim that the implementation of a blended model of EPV training contributes to the achievement of a high degree of students' work in conditions of the insufficient number of classroom-based classes, which can significantly increase the effectiveness of studying FL [41], and is also one of the effective ways to solve the problem of developing and implementing educational materials adequate to the requirements of smart education [37].
Today, blended learning is a rapidly and dynamically developing learning model. Modern researchers are working on improving the ways of introducing blended learning into the educational process [44], creating integrated curricula and courses, searching for innovative forms and methods of teaching [63; 64], improving the conditions for mastering a FL, including English, by individualizing learning, and increasing the number of the latest technological means of teaching and comprehensive use of non-traditional forms of organization of the educational process at the university [65].

In this connection, authors believe that the introduction of a blended model of teaching EPV in the process of preparing economics students contributes to improving the efficiency of the educational process since it allows for solving many problems that are important not only for teachers but also for students.

Firstly, with the reduction of classroom hours, it becomes possible to devote as much time to the study of FL as is necessary in each specific case.

Secondly, the gap in the level of proficiency between students is reduced due to an individual approach to learning.

Thirdly, the blended model of EPV learning corresponds to the main trend in the development of the modern higher education system towards the use of ICTs in the educational process.

According to the authors, the blended learning model still need some improvements. To improve the English proficiency level of students, a learning model that focuses on both the theoretical and practical aspects of the language can be implemented. The model should incorporate a combination of classroom-based learning, language laboratories, and online learning resources.

In the classroom, students can be exposed to different forms of communication, such as group discussions, presentations, and debates, to develop their speaking and listening skills. Grammar rules and sentence structures can be taught through lectures and exercises. Online learning resources such as language learning apps, videos, and podcasts can be used to supplement classroom learning. These resources can provide students with more exposure to authentic English and help them improve their reading and comprehension skills.

Thus authors of the study have some proposals for the development of the blended learning model. Designing a learning model that aims to raise the level of English proficiency of future economists to the B2 level, in authors’ opinion, involves several key components:

- The model should incorporate an immersive learning environment, where students can engage in authentic communicative activities and interact with native speakers. Being in such environment where English is spoken extensively, can provide learners with opportunities for authentic language use, interaction with native speakers, and cultural exposure. Despite the fact organization of an immersive environment is more difficult according to current restrictions, there are many online platforms and mobile applications where students can communicate with a native speaker and share experiences;

- Also incorporation of real-life business scenarios and case studies can provide students with practical language skills and knowledge that are directly relevant to their future careers;

- To create more effective blended learning models different techniques of blended learning types should be incorporated. For example, rotation learning type could
provide multiple groups or activities that cater to different skill areas, allowing students to receive targeted instruction and practice;

- Learning should include the integration of language skills. For example, students could read and discuss articles on economic theories and policies, write research papers, and give presentations in English, which would enhance their language proficiency as well as their understanding of economic concepts.

Thus, blended learning has proven to be an effective approach in the teaching of professional English. By combining traditional classroom instruction with online learning, blended learning can provide learners with a more flexible and customized approach to language learning, and enable them to access a range of instructional resources and opportunities for practice and feedback. Blended learning can also provide learners with more opportunities for collaboration and interaction, which can be particularly beneficial for developing communication and teamwork skills in a professional context. Additionally, the use of technology in blended learning can help learners to develop important digital literacy skills, which are increasingly important in today's global economy.

Conclusion

The results of the experimental study made it possible to establish that of the three models considered, the most effective one was the blended model of teaching EPV to economics students, the use of which eventually led to the greatest increase in the indicators of performing written and oral assignments. The least effective model, according to the results of the study, was the remote learning model.

The limitations of the study include the size of the sample of students who took part in the pedagogical experiment and the research program, including the selected educational material (teaching EPV to economists). The student population and the study material for the experiment were selected based on the student training program adopted at the university and the resources possessed by us.

The prospect of further research may be to determine the most effective ratio of classroom-based (traditional) and remote (online) classes when teaching English up to the B2 level to reduce training costs while increasing students' level of foreign-language professional communicative competence.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Author contributions

All authors listed have made a substantial, direct, and intellectual contribution to the work, and approved it for publication.
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