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REVIEW OF THE LEGISLATION ON THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN UKRAINE

Summary. *In the context of globalization, examining the issue of the English language education (ELE) is considered to be crucial in the present day. The main purpose of the research is to provide a detailed analysis of the legislation on the ELE in Ukraine. This article scrutinizes the issue of the ELE development in Ukraine by reviewing statistical data, legislative frameworks, scientific and methodological literature, and educational materials. The evolution of legislation consolidating the ELE from 2015 to 2025 has been traced.*

The article presents a model of the ELE system for Ukraine including its goals, language proficiency levels according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment, and the structure of the ELE, its forms, approaches, content, principles, tools, methods, and technologies for developing English communicative competency, as well as learning outcomes assessment.

Besides, the study exposes the results of the comparative analysis of the traditional English educational process and its updated format in the digital era. It was found that in modern challenges (war, pandemic, etc.), the student's internal motivation is the driving force for successful English learning. However, societal challenges in the field of the ELE are constantly changing and interacting with each other. Among them there is a complex of problems: government and institutional challenges (low government efficiency, societal polarization), health and well-being (pandemic (COVID-19)), economic inequalities (unemployment, poverty), migration (displaced people due to the war), technological changes (digital gap, impact of Artificial Intelligence, disinformation), security challenges (armed conflict and war, national security). Solving these issues requires the joint efforts of the government, civil society, international organizations, and every citizen.

Keywords: *English language education; legislation; pandemic; Russia-Ukraine war; system of English language education.*

Problem statement. The statistical data indicate the global dominance of English, noting that over 1.5 billion people speak it and that 91% of countries have formal English language programs. Its popularity has led to over 160 varieties of English and specialized languages (e.g. aviation English) (What ahead, 2024).

Mastering English offers significant economic, social, cultural, and psychological

benefits, especially during crises (pandemic, war, migration). It enhances job opportunities, aids assimilation, and provides psychological coping mechanisms.

It should be noted that over the past ten years, ELE in Ukraine has transitioned from a gradual increase in attention to the language to its legislative embodiment as one of the languages of international communication.

In the present day, the academic community considers the most up-to-date and cutting-edge teaching methods of teaching General English and English for Specific Purposes. H. Apelt, M. Zhumbel, O. Pozdnyakov, R. Poznansky, N. Savchuk emphasize foreign language mastery to be inseparable from socio-cultural competency and national culture acquisition. The authors argue that modern education must prioritize developing students' ability and willingness to understand the mentality and communicative behaviour of native speakers (Apelt et al., 2023).

However, the main *objective* of our study is to trace the legislative consolidation of the ELE development in Ukraine in order to state its evolution while facing crucial societal challenges during the last ten years.

To solve the stated problem, we used both theoretical and empirical research methods (analysis and synthesis of statistical data, content of legislation, scientific publications, instructional, and teaching materials in the field of ELE).

The main body. English has not always been so popular. French historically served as the *Lingua Franca*, the language of trade and diplomacy, stemming from the original Mediterranean *Lingua Franca* and solidified after the Norman Conquest in the 11th century making it the language of England's aristocracy. By the 18th century, France's military and cultural leadership had firmly established French as the language of international diplomacy, replacing Latin. The balance began to shift during World War I as England's dominance in technology and innovation due to the Industrial Revolution was observed. Agreements were increasingly written in English. After World War II, France's power declined,

and English gained prominence due to the rise of the United States as a major global economic power. Today, American English maintains and expands its status as the global language, largely driven by the worldwide influence of pop culture (music, cinema, and media).

In the 21 century, Ukraine set a clear path for integration into the European and global community. Overcoming the language barrier was crucial for that, as it significantly limited opportunities for international cooperation, education, business, and cultural exchange. In the mid-2010s, the impact of globalization and digital technologies became even more palpable. English has always been the language of technology, science, international trade, and most global online communications. Insufficient English proficiency limited Ukrainians' access to new knowledge, innovations, and opportunities in the global labor market. To attract foreign investment and develop the country's export potential, it was crucial to have qualified staff capable of communicating with international partners effectively. English proficiency allowed for broader integration into the global cultural and information space, enabling access to primary sources, understanding global trends, and countering information propaganda.

The decision by President Petro Poroshenko to declare 2016 the Year of the English Language in Ukraine was a landmark step. The President's Decree demonstrated the critical importance of English proficiency for national development and Euro-Atlantic integration (President's Decree, 2015). It was not accidental but a logical continuation of Ukraine's general policy toward closer ties with Europe and a reflection of a growing understanding of the English language role as a key tool for global communication.

The Year of the English Language reinforced that trend when foreign language education acquired a special status. However, the problem of implementing ELE in various types of educational institutions required further comprehensive analysis and resolution. It was evidenced by the analysis of the state of ELE in Ukraine, which did not meet those societal demands, as confirmed by the rather low results of the 2015 external independent evaluation (EIE) in foreign languages (Ніколаєва, 2016, p. 60). The level of foreign language proficiency among HEIs' graduates also left much to be desired, a concern highlighted by the Minister of Education and Science of Ukraine, university rectors, and employers.

It was fundamentally important to define the recommended levels of foreign language communicative competency, as a result of the implementation of ELE, for graduates of

different types of educational institutions. Most European countries used the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment" (CEFR, 2001) for this purpose. Almost all instructional and methodical materials for English teaching in Ukraine have been developed according to those documents, but they slightly reflected the CEFR, with little attention paid to their methodical foundations. Thus, most domestic documents in the field of foreign language education required clarification.

In the series of state standards (Держстандарт ПО, 2018; Держстандарт ПО, 2025), State Standard of Basic Secondary Education (Держстандарт БСО, 2020), more attention was paid to the CEFR. For instance, one of the stated competencies is the ability to communicate in foreign languages, which included the skills to communicate orally and in writing based on knowledge of language functions, resources (vocabulary, grammar) and language norms, features of the main styles and genres of speech, and types of linguistic interaction; to acquire and process information from various (print and digital, including audiovisual) sources, critically evaluate it, and use it in oral and written communication to defend one's own views, beliefs, and social and national values.

The New Ukrainian School (NUS) reform significantly changed teaching approaches across all subjects, and English language instruction was not an exception. These changes were part of a broader modernisation of Ukraine's educational system, aimed at developing students' key competencies and preparing them for life in a globalized world (Hrynevych, Linnik, Herczyński, 2023). The core change was that NUS moved away from traditional memorization of rules and words towards developing practical skills and communicative competencies. That meant that the main goal was not just to know English, but to be able to use it in real-life situations. The focus was on four language skills.

Beginning in 2018, learning started concentrating on the simultaneous development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing, rather than the separate study of grammar or vocabulary. English has become no longer an isolated subject. It was integrated with other school disciplines (e.g., CLIL), which allowed English to be used as a means of understanding the world, not just as an object of study. NUS began actively to implement new, more interactive, and student-centered methods. English lessons became an environment for active communication. Students had to work in pairs and groups, perform role-plays, conduct dialogues, and engage in discussions.

The goal was set to overcome the language barrier and develop confidence in using the language. Game elements, quizzes (e.g., using *Kahoot!*, *Quizlet*, *Wordwall*), and interactive exercises made the learning process engaging and motivating, especially in primary school. Students started working on long-term projects that required applying English for research, presentation, and collaboration in order to develop critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and teamwork. Instead of adapted texts, authentic videos, audio recordings, and articles were increasingly used, allowing students to immerse themselves in real-life language situations.

In 2019, the Concept for English Language Development in Universities was approved by the Ministry of Education and Science and launched to address Ukraine's low English proficiency ranking (28th out of 32 non-English-speaking European countries) and boost the economic competitiveness of its specialists. The core goals were to mandate B1 proficiency for Bachelor's admission and B2 proficiency for Master's (PhD) admission and graduation.

The Concept dealt with key reforms and mechanisms:

1. *Mandatory entry screening by 2023*. It proposed a mandatory English screening test (e.g. EIE or standardized tests) for all applicants;

2. *Exit requirements*. It stipulated that all Bachelor's graduates must achieve a B1+ level, and Master's (PhD) graduates must achieve a B2 level to receive a diploma. B2 requirement must to be confirmed via the Unified Entrance Exam (UEE) or a new mandatory standardized exit exam;

3. *English as EMI*. It strongly encouraged universities to teach professional disciplines in English to provide an immersive language environment;

4. *Quality assurance*. It mandated that English language teaching quality should be assessed as part of both internal (University) and external (NAQA) quality assurance systems;

5. *Support*. It encouraged the development of free online self-study courses (complementary to classroom instruction) for students needing to achieve the required proficiency levels (Concept for the Development of English Language in Universities, 2019).

To ensure high-quality English language learning in HEIs in Ukraine methodical recommendations focused on a comprehensive approach that encompassed improving the educational process, fostering professional development for educators, implementing innovative technologies, and creating an English-speaking environment.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the implementation of digital technologies and innovations in education. In particular, online platforms and applications were actively used in English language education. Teachers of HEIs started improving remote learning by creating virtual learning environments with the help of online services (e.g. *Zoom*, *Google Meet*, *MS Teams*), mobile language learning applications, and interactive tools (Khomyshak, 2022). Later, Artificial Intelligence was integrated for personalized learning, automated written work checks (e.g. *Grammarly*), creating adaptive tests, and developing virtual language assistants. The access to resources was expanded to encourage and support the development of free online courses for self-study of English by students and prospective students.

The beginning of Russia-Ukraine war in 2022 has led to the destruction of educational institutions, the displacement of students and teachers, and significant educational and financial losses. The psycho-emotional consequences of the war affected motivation and the quality of learning. Online sessions often became the only way to maintain the educational process. Power cuts and a lack of stable internet access created obstacles to full-fledged distance learning. There was a need to develop programs and logistics to compensate for learning losses caused by the war.

Facing various societal challenges, Ukraine launched the national project Future Perfect at the end of 2023. This initiative made by the President and coordinated by the Ministries of Digital Transformation, Education, and Culture, aimed to officially establish English as the language of international communication in Ukraine. The project's goal is to provide Ukrainians with new professional and personal development opportunities, enabling them to compete globally better and secure higher salaries. The program facilitates accessible English learning through digital products and services (e.g. Promova is a personalised language learning platform offering Ukrainians 3 years of Premium access via Diia.Signature; Empower, an online English learning platform from Cambridge University, is available to all Ukrainian teachers and students as a part of Cambridge support package). Thus, Future Perfect stimulates language learning across all social groups (educators, civil servants, entrepreneurs, etc.), helping to expand the use of English in public life and create a favorable language climate nationwide (Про англійську мову в Україні, 2024).

The Law of Ukraine "On the Use of the English Language in Ukraine" (2024) is a landmark act aimed at establishing English as a

language of international communication and fully integrating Ukraine into the global space. It mandates English language learning at all educational levels, including senior preschool age, and introduces a mandatory State Final Assessment for students studying English as their first foreign language. Educational standards will be updated to align with the CEFR. The law promotes the use of English in culture, film (authentic with subtitles), television, radio, and advertising. It also ensures English information provision at transport hubs and tourist infrastructure, and guarantees communication in English for emergency services. The law represents a fundamental step to boost the competitiveness of Ukrainian citizens, attract investment, accelerate Euro-Atlantic integration, and transform English from a “desirable” to a “necessary” language nationwide.

The Concept of the study program Concept of the State Targeted National and Cultural Program to Promote the Study and Use of the English Language in Ukraine for 2026–2030 is a strategic document that builds upon the 2025 Law (Концепція вивчення англійської мови, 2025). The goal is to establish a concrete action plan and secure funding over five years to create favourable conditions for the comprehensive acquisition of English by citizens, thereby strengthening international cooperation, attracting investment, increasing national resilience, and countering disinformation. The Program outlines several interconnected strategies: modernisation of education (implementation of innovative, communicative, and competency-based teaching methods at all levels); training of personnel (systematical enhancement of the qualifications of English teachers and encouragement of specialised discipline instructors to teach in English); standardisation (alignment of teaching and assessment with international standards (CEFR); application in public life (stimulation of the use of English in state institutions, business, science, transport, and other sectors); information space (creating and adapting English-speaking content and ensuring public information is accessible in English); infrastructure and technology (active development of digital platforms and AI tools for learning and practice); promotion and motivation (conducting national campaigns to increase motivation among the population).

Thus, the Concept transforms the legal mandate of the 2025 Law into a funded, five-year roadmap for the systematic development of English language competency across Ukrainian society (Концепція вивчення англійської мови, 2025).

Summing up the review of Ukrainian legislation, we should outline obvious changes and

development due to recent societal challenges (European integration policy, globalization, coronavirus pandemic, war, etc.). It is illustrated in table 1 below.

Table 1

Ukrainian Legislation
on the English Language Education

Government documents on English language education	Year
The President's Decree “On Declaring 2016 the Year of English Language in Ukraine”.	2015
Conceptual Framework of NUS.	2016
State Standard of Primary Education.	2018
Conceptual Framework of State Policy on the Development of the English Language in Higher Education.	2019
State Standard of Basic Secondary Education.	2020
Methodical Recommendations on Ensuring Quality Learning, Teaching, and Use of the English Language in Institutions of Higher Education in Ukraine.	2023
National Project for the Promotion of the English Language in Ukraine “Future Perfect”.	2023
Law of Ukraine “On the Application of the English Language in Ukraine”.	2024
Law of Ukraine “On Approving the Concept of the State Target National Cultural Program for Promoting the Study and Use of the English Language in Ukraine for 2026-2030”.	2025

All the documents in the table above are listed in chronological order. It should be noted that the frequency of legislative initiatives towards English in Ukraine points to the evolution of ELE state policy, in particular, after the beginning of Russia-Ukraine war.

Meanwhile, having observed general market trends during the full-scale invasion, we should outline that the demand for learning English in Ukraine has significantly increased. It can be explained by Euro-integration aspirations, the need for international communication (e.g. displaced people), access to the international labor market, and information. According to the international English Proficiency Index, Ukraine has significantly improved its position in English proficiency. For example, in 2022, Ukraine climbed to 35th place among 111 countries when it was 40th in 2021 (English PI, 2025). Buki, a Ukrainian service for finding tutors, recorded a significant surge in demand for English teachers after February 2022. About 60% of those who sought tutors were adults (Buki, 2025).

The pandemic and the war accelerated the transition of most language schools to an online format. Currently, this is the primary mode of learning for many Ukrainians. According to Buki, 60% of their service users prefer online learning. The market is highly

diverse in terms of price ranges, programs, and services. There are large online schools, medium and small offline centers, and a vast number of individual tutors and informal clubs. There are several dozen language schools with extensive advertising campaigns and large student bases. Some of them include *Englishdom*, *Speak Up*, *Antischool*, *English Prime*, *Green Forest*, *Friends Club*, etc. Business portal rankings (e.g., Ukrainian Business Award) regularly publish Top 10 or Top 20 lists of such schools based on certain criteria (e.g., website traffic, number of reviews). As for medium and small schools, their number is significantly larger across Ukraine, in particular, in large and medium-sized cities (Kyiv, Lviv, Dnipro, Odesa, Kharkiv). Many of them operate locally, targeting a local audience. English private tutors are the largest and least traceable segment. Thousands of private tutors work both online and offline, providing individual or group lessons.

While the exact number of private English language schools and centers in Ukraine isn't tracked in a single database. The market is highly competitive and actively growing. Increased demand has led to an expansion of offerings, with a notable predominance of online formats. Legislative initiatives, such as the Law "On the Application of the English Language in Ukraine" (Про англійську мову в Україні, 2024), will further stimulate this market, as English becomes not just a desirable skill but a mandatory requirement for many professions and spheres of life.

Based on the types of educational institutions, stages of education, and corresponding English language proficiency levels, we propose the following model for a multilevel ELE system in Ukraine (Figure 1).

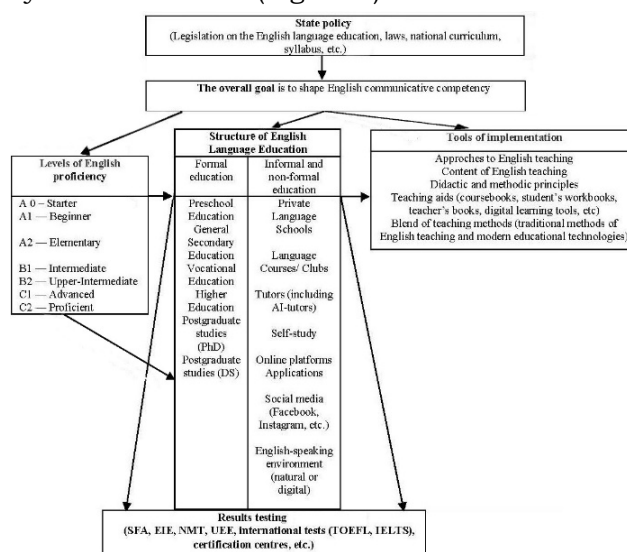


Figure 1. Model of English Language Education System in Ukraine

The components of the presented system require specification. The state policy and

strategies form the foundation defining the directions for ELE development. It includes key legislative acts and educational reforms. According to the CEFR, the system of ELE aims at shaping a comprehensive level of English communicative competency. The next section referring to the levels of English language proficiency demonstrates the stages of English language learning from preschool to higher education, with an emphasis on specific requirements and goals at each stage. As for the structure of the system it includes formal state educational institutions (e.g. schools, HEIs). It means preschool, primary, basic secondary, and specialized secondary education, higher education with clear requirements for language proficiency at each stage of study (bachelor's, master's, postgraduate, doctoral), vocational (vocational-technical and professional) education with a focus on specialized terminology. Besides, non-formal and informal education is also distinguished. Non-formal education comprises language courses, tutors, online schools, and clubs that work outside official programs. Informal education presupposes self-education through online platforms, digital tools, social media, traveling, interaction with native speakers, using mobile apps (e.g., *Duolingo*, *Promova*), or even spontaneous learning in everyday life.

These are the key components that ensure the effectiveness of ELE at all levels. The main driver of modernisation is digital technology (*online platforms, interactive applications, AI-tutors*). Modern approaches are aimed at developing English communicative skills. The assessment and certification include the system of competency measurement (State Final Attestation, External Independent Evaluation, National Multidisciplinary Test, international exams (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS)).

Conclusions. The evolution of state legislation in Ukraine shows that the importance of English for expanding a person's educational and professional opportunities is widely recognized by students, teachers, and parents. The growing role of English language learning is determined by the need to ensure the competitiveness of Ukrainians at national and international levels, the pursuit of globalization, their participation in lifelong learning, and solving problems.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war spurred the development and diversification of the online segment of English learning (online platforms, private schools, tutors), creating a dynamic market with varying quality standards. The model was suggested to illustrate the complex and multifaceted nature of modern ELE system in Ukraine, where state policy, legislation, educational institutions of all levels (beginning with preschool educati-

onal institutions), forms (formal, non-formal, informal), and property (public, private), teacher's and student's activities, international cooperation interact and create a unique educational space for English communicative competency shaping.

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ХОМИШАК Оксана

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ОГЛЯД ЗАКОНОДАВСТВА З АНГЛОМОВНОЇ ОСВІТИ В УКРАЇНІ

У статті актуалізовано проблему розвитку англо-мовної освіти в Україні на основі огляду статистичних даних, нормативної бази, наукової літератури, навчально-методичних матеріалів.

Простежено еволюцію законодавства з консолідації англомовної освіти, починаючи з 2015 до 2025 років.

Змодельовано систему англомовної освіти в Україні, яка охоплює мету, рівні володіння англійською мовою згідно з Загальноєвропейськими рекомендаціями з мовної освіти: оцінювання, вивчення, викладання, структуру англомовної освіти, форми, підходи, зміст, принципи, засоби, методи та технології формування

англомовної комунікативної компетентності, а також оцінювання результатів навчання.

Здійснено порівняльний аналіз традиційного освітнього процесу з англійської мови та його оновленого формату в цифрову епоху.

Ключові слова: англомовна освіта, законодавство, пандемія, російсько-українська війна, система англомовної освіти.

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**ПОЛІКУЛЬТУРНА КОМУНІКАЦІЯ ТА ФІЗИЧНА АКТИВНІСТЬ ЯК ЧИННИКИ
ФОРМУВАННЯ КЛЮЧОВИХ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТЕЙ СТУДЕНТІВ**

У статті досліджено роль полікультурної комунікації та фізичної активності як взаємопов'язаних чинників формування ключових компетентностей студентів ЗВО.

Мета – теоретичне обґрунтування та емпірична перевірка інтегрованого впливу зазначених чинників на соціальну, комунікативну та здоров'язберезувальну компетентності.

Експеримент охопив 186 студентів; для експериментальної групи впроваджено інтегровану програму (тренінги з полікультурної комунікації + спортивно-оздоровчі заходи з міжкультурним компонентом).

Результати засвідчили статистично значущий приріст високого рівня всіх трьох

компетентностей в ЕГ (на 18,1–19,2 в.п.) проти 2–3 в.п. у КГ.

Доведено синергетичний ефект: фізична активність нівелює культурні бар'єри через невербальну комунікацію, а полікультурне середовище мотивує до здорового способу життя.

Розроблено практичні рекомендації для впровадження в освітній процес.

Ключові слова: ключові компетентності студентів; полікультурна комунікація; фізична активність; полікультурна компетентність; здоров'язберезувальна компетентність; заклади вищої освіти; інтегрований підхід; педагогічний експеримент; soft skills.