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**Катерина МУЛИК**

ДЗ «Південноукраїнський національний університет ім. К. Д. Ушинського», Україна

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6403-3360>

[m.katrin81@gmail.com](mailto:m.katrin81@gmail.com)

**Ганна ДИШЕЛЬ**

ДЗ «Південноукраїнський національний університет ім. К. Д. Ушинського», Україна

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1737-7907>

[anna.dyshel@gmail.com](mailto:anna.dyshel@gmail.com)

## СУТНІСТЬ МУЛЬТИМОДАЛЬНОГО ПІДХОДУ ДО ВИКЛАДАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ У ПЕДАГОГІЧНИХ ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

**Анотація.** Це наукове дослідження присвячено глибинному аналізу сутності мультимодального підходу в контексті фахової підготовки у закладах вищої освіти. У сучасному глобалізованому світі англійська мова є стратегічним інструментом для міжкультурного діалогу, економічної інтеграції та реалізації міжнародних науково-технічних проєктів. Як наслідок, суспільство має значний запит на висококваліфікованих фахівців, які не лише вільно володіють професійним іноземним мовленням, а й здатні опрацьовувати спеціалізовані матеріали іноземними мовами. Цей запит зумовлює кардинальні трансформації у методиці викладання іноземних мов професійного спрямування (LSP) в університетах, де ключовим стає інтегрований підхід. Відповідно до нього, студенти-педагоги починають опановувати навички професійного спілкування та використання різних каналів інформації вже з перших занять. Сучасні освітні орієнтири передбачають перехід від традиційних лінійних моделей до динамічних дидактичних систем та розуміння множинності змісту освіти. Сучасні умови вимагають посиленої уваги до мультимодальності, що означає включення багатьох семіотичних засобів у комунікативні та освітні практики. У роботі теоретично обґрунтовано застосування мультимодальності для навчання професійної англійської мови з урахуванням взаємодії численних знакових систем. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена потребою у фахівцях, які демонструють глибоке володіння англійською мовою саме у своїй фаховій галузі. Здійснено аналіз наукового дискурсу щодо мультимодальності у вітчизняних та зарубіжних джерелах. Як результат, визначено ключові переваги інтегрування мультимодальних дидактичних матеріалів у процес навчання LSP у педагогічних закладах вищої освіти. Перспективним напрямком подальших наукових розвідок є деталізація та формулювання сутнісних характеристик мультимодального підходу як ефективної освітньої стратегії для інтегрованого викладання іноземних мов у педагогічних університетах.

**Ключові слова:** мультимодальність; семіотичні системи; інтегроване навчання; професійно-спрямовані іноземні мови; заклади вищої освіти.

**Kateryna MULYK**

State Institution 'South Ukrainian National University named after K.D. Ushynsky', Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6403-3360>

[m.katrin81@gmail.com](mailto:m.katrin81@gmail.com)

**Ganna DYSHEL**

State Institution 'South Ukrainian National University named after K.D. Ushynsky', Ukraine

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1737-7907>

[anna.dyshel@gmail.com](mailto:anna.dyshel@gmail.com)

## THE ESSENCE OF THE MULTIMODAL APPROACH TO TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

**Abstract.** This scientific study is devoted to an in-depth analysis of the essence of the multimodal approach in the context of professional training of future teachers in higher education institutions. In today's globalised world, English is a strategic tool for intercultural dialogue, economic integration, and the implementation of international scientific and technical projects. As a result, society has a significant demand for highly qualified specialists who not only speak a foreign language fluently, but are also able to work with specialised materials in foreign languages. This demand is driving fundamental changes in the teaching of foreign languages for professional purposes (LSP) at universities, where an integrated approach is becoming key. According to this approach, student teachers begin to master the skills of professional communication and utilize various information channels from the very first lessons. Modern educational guidelines envisage a transition from traditional linear models to dynamic didactic systems and an understanding of the multiplicity of educational content. Modern conditions require increased attention to multimodality, which means incorporating many semiotic means into communication and teaching practices. The paper theoretically substantiates the use of multimodality for teaching professional English, taking into account the interaction of numerous sign systems. The relevance of the study is determined by the need for specialists who demonstrate a deep command of English in their professional field. An analysis of the scientific discourse on multimodality in both domestic and foreign sources has been conducted. As a

result, the key advantages of integrating multimodal teaching materials into the process of teaching LSP in higher education institutions have been identified. A promising direction for further scientific research is the detailing and formulation of the essential characteristics of the multimodal approach as an effective educational strategy for integrated foreign language teaching in pedagogical universities.

**Key words:** multimodality; semiotic systems; integrated learning; professionally-oriented foreign languages; higher education institutions.

**Statement of the problem.** In the modern professional landscape, command of a foreign language is recognized as a non-negotiable skill for the successful career development of any specialist. This reality continuously pushes educators to research and adopt more creative and impactful teaching methodologies. Crucially, the multimodal approach has risen to prominence, becoming a key focus. This method is founded on the concept of merging various semiotic systems – like text, pictures, sound, video, and body language – for both direct interaction and educational purposes. Given the elevated expectations of today's job market, there is an urgent need to explore the integrated instruction of profession-specific foreign languages in higher education using multimodal techniques. The labour market specifically seeks highly skilled professionals who not only possess language knowledge but can also apply it with sophistication in their chosen field. Multimodality is the very tool that facilitates the production of these graduates – specialists adept at interpreting and creating complex professional communications using the complete range of contemporary information and communication technologies. Therefore, the core challenge of this research is to theoretically validate and practically implement multimodal techniques for the integrated teaching of professionally oriented foreign languages at the university level.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** An analysis of scientific works devoted to the issue of multimodality in the context of the integrated teaching of professionally oriented foreign languages (PIM) in higher education institutions indicates a wide range of interest in this topic among both Ukrainian and foreign researchers. Ukrainian scientists have focused their attention on studying the functioning and application of multimodal educational methods in several key areas:

- linguistic essence and discursive perspectives: The multimodal nature of communication and its potential in linguistic discourse has been studied (in particular, the works of T. Boboshko [2], O. Babeluk [1], L. Hlyvinska [3], and others);
- practical implementation in teaching: The features of using multimodality directly in the process of teaching foreign languages were studied (for example, in the study of the Korean language conducted by N. Oskina, A. Pak, A. Yumrukuz [5], and others);
- professional training of students of non-philological specialties: Multimodal tools were analysed in the context of the formation of professional competences of students who are not future philologists or language teachers (works by L. Larikova and M. Tkach [7] and others);
- translation of foreign content: Researchers have focused on the translation aspects of multimodality (in particular, O. Pashun [6], L. Makaruk [4], and others).

Foreign scholars have made a significant contribution to the development of multimodality methodology, whose research is particularly fruitful for theory. Among them, it is worth highlighting the fundamental works of V. Deborah [9], who worked on the analysis of multimodal interaction, S. Mattissen [12] and M. Halliday [10], whose work in the field of functional grammar is key, as well as J. Collins and R. Blott [8], who studied literacy and texts in the context of power and identity.

**The research goal:** to conduct a comprehensive and systematic study of the features of the functioning and application of multimodal educational methods. In particular, attention is focused on their role in enhancing the effectiveness of integrated foreign language teaching for professional purposes in higher educational institutions with a pedagogical profile.

**Methods:** analysis, synthesis, generalisation and systematisation were used to theoretically substantiate the essence of the multimodal approach, its key components (linguistic, visual, audio-lingual, gestures, facial expressions) and to review the scientific discourse on the issue; a pedagogical experiment (based at Ushynsky University) was conducted on the implementation of multimodal methods in teaching professional English; statistical methods (comparative analysis of data before and after the experiment) and analysis of the results of students' learning activities were used to evaluate the effectiveness according to the following criteria: optimisation of perception, development of communication skills and formation of intercultural awareness.

**Findings.** In view of this, integrated teaching is not only relevant but also the most effective way to master professionally oriented English. This approach enables future specialists to actively engage in intercultural communication, thereby significantly enhancing their professional communication skills. These skills, in turn, are a direct guarantee of their competitiveness in the modern labour market. Achieving the goals set by an integrated approach to teaching professional foreign languages is impossible without the use of multimodal methods. These methods are aimed at ensuring the most profound and comprehensive development of students, both cognitive, social, and personal.

Multimodal tools are intended to become a key mechanism for implementing the concept of student-centredness, improving the quality of educational services and creating an effective learning environment in higher education. According to modern standards, these factors are prerequisites for ensuring the overall quality of education.

The concept of multiliteracies emerged as a response to changing pedagogical approaches to literacy development, which was a direct consequence of the emergence of new communication technologies, in particular the Internet, multimedia systems, and digital information tools [3]. In contrast, the term 'multimodality' as a concept related to speech and perception was formed at the end of the 20th century, integrating knowledge from such diverse fields as linguistics, philosophy, psychology, and cultural studies. Ukrainian scientists are actively researching the essence of multimodality, offering a number of definitions:

1. Complex communication: multimodality is seen as a concept that involves the simultaneous use of multiple communication channels to transmit data. It is based on a combination of text, audio, graphic images, video, gestures, and other forms of interaction, which significantly increases the effectiveness of perception and comprehension of information [1].

2. Multichannel cognition: multimodality is also interpreted as the natural ability of humans to combine several ways of cognising the world and communicating: verbal (speech), visual (sight), and kinetic (movement/gestures), and other sensory channels [2, p. 87].

3. Technology integration: in an educational context, multimodality is described as a combined way of presenting information, where digital technologies are integrated, for example, through multimodal mobile messengers that provide continuous interaction between teachers and students [10].

4. Everyday reality: in a broader sense, multimodality is an integral part of our daily lives, as our perception of reality is achieved through the constant interaction of sight, hearing, and movement [6, p. 207].

Thus, in foreign language teaching, a multimodal approach means engaging all of the student's sensory channels for maximum effectiveness in learning the material.

Researcher L. Makaruk proposes an interesting structure of multimodality, defining its content as a set of five interrelated semiotic elements: linguistic (language), visual (images, graphics), audio-lingual (sound, speech), as well as gestures and facial expressions. Thus, the author emphasizes that multimodality is a tool for complete understanding and adequate response to a situation. This goes beyond the traditional perception of literacy, which focuses exclusively on the textual component. Instead, the approach requires the active use of modern multimedia technologies for a more accurate and deeper understanding of the context [14].

A large variety of modern multimedia resources, tools, and techniques are currently available for teaching Professionally Oriented English. With the shift to remote education, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and martial law in Ukraine, the use of online platforms like Zoom, Teams, Discord, and Skype has become significantly more prevalent. These have evolved into vital supplementary channels that maintain the continuity of the educational process. Incorporating multimodal methodologies within an integrated framework for teaching foreign languages in higher education presents unique features and several key benefits, such as a focus on communication, enhanced visualization, organizational efficiency, and greater adaptability.

Classes that use multimedia applications further motivate students to continue learning English. This also promotes the development of autonomous learning (independent work), which increases students' self-esteem and confidence. In addition, these tools enhance interaction between learners regardless of their physical location, encouraging verbalization and group collaboration.

The effective use of presentations, video, and audio materials directly contributes to the improvement of foreign language skills. It should be noted that the use of the following multimodal tools is particularly effective in improving the effectiveness of integrated teaching of professionally-oriented English: multimedia projectors, interactive whiteboards, electronic encyclopedias and reference systems, educational online platforms, video and audio equipment, training simulators, testing software, electronic textbooks and manuals, the organization of interactive conferences and competitions, as well as research and project activities (in particular, distance learning).

The effectiveness of developing foreign language communication skills is significantly bolstered by the use of multimodal instructional resources, which serve as a profound learning accelerator. These resources are central to making the learning process more efficient, giving instructors a much richer range of pedagogical options. We must underscore that their purpose is to augment existing, time-tested methodologies, not supplant them; they blend naturally and successfully with standard educational frameworks throughout every phase. A cornerstone benefit of multimodal practices, especially in the context of distance learning, lies in their utility for out-of-class activities. This function fosters fresh possibilities for increasing the intensity of interaction between students and teachers, promotes greater learner participation in foreign language discourse, and critically, mitigates the limitations imposed by reduced contact hours in the classroom.

Integrating multimodal approaches into the instruction of professional foreign languages offers a robust method for equipping students to face the actual demands of their future careers. This strategy provides

them with the essential knowledge and competencies required for sustained professional success. The key benefits of weaving multimodal resources into the curriculum for professional foreign languages in higher education are manifold:

- improved knowledge retention: the blending of diverse information types (both verbal and non-verbal) stimulates students' cognitive functions, such as memory and critical thinking. This leads to a deeper comprehension of the material and superior long-term recall;
- refined practical communication: employing authentic audio-visual content is highly motivating and dramatically boosts students' ability to communicate effectively in scenarios that closely mimic real-world professional environments;
- cultivating intercultural fluency: multimodal tools facilitate a richer understanding of the cultural nuances associated with the target language. This is crucial for enabling respectful and productive professional engagement within the modern global setting;
- boosting digital and critical literacy: utilizing varied media formats compels students to analyze, critique, and synthesize meaning from different sources (e.g., evaluating the reliability of video-based information versus a written report). This process is vital for developing the digital literacy and critical thinking skills necessary to navigate, utilize, and create educational materials in a technology-driven professional landscape.

To effectively harness the inherent advantages of multimodality, pedagogical institutions must transition from simply using digital tools to strategically integrating them into a coherent, student-centric curriculum. This requires viewing each sensory channel – visual, auditory, textual, and kinetic – not as isolated inputs, but as interdependent semiotic resources working in concert to reinforce learning.

This pedagogical shift necessitates a redefinition of the teacher's role – from being a content transmitter to becoming a multimodal curator and facilitator. Instructors must possess not only a deep command of the foreign language but also advanced technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) to effectively select, adapt, and integrate diverse digital resources. Crucially, they must be skilled in designing tasks that intentionally manage cognitive load for students, ensuring that the novelty of the medium does not distract from the primary linguistic and professional learning objectives. The efficacy of multimodal methods, therefore, relies heavily on the continuous professional development of faculty, empowering them to leverage the full potential of these interactive tools and guide students through the complexities of multimodal communication.

For instance, rather than merely assigning a reading, the multimodal approach involves utilizing a CLIL-based video case study (visual/auditory) accompanied by an interactive transcript (textual), which students can annotate and discuss via an online forum (textual/kinetic interaction). We must move past simply absorbing information; this methodology ensures technology actively promotes high-level intellectual functions like creation, evaluation, and analysis within the foreign language context. The selection criteria for every tool—from specialized software like Teams to open educational assets like podcasts and video platforms—must be rooted in the particular professional expertise needed by future language instructors.

This strategic framework emphasizes the importance of authentic context and simulated professional practice. Multimodal tools are indispensable for modeling the complex realities future educators will face, such as leading a remote lesson, providing multimedia feedback, or engaging in cross-cultural communication with international colleagues.

By employing techniques like role-playing simulations executed via video conferencing or collaborative multimedia project design, students not only practice their language skills but also master the digital literacies essential for the 21st-century classroom.

Maintaining the efficacy of this dynamic multimodal environment demands continuous curriculum evaluation and faculty support. Universities must establish feedback loops to assess not only student outcomes but also the usability and relevance of the integrated technologies. This includes periodically updating resources, providing ongoing technical training for instructors, and fostering a culture of pedagogical innovation where teachers can share best practices in multimodal design. Ultimately, the successful implementation of this strategic framework transforms the higher education institution into a learning ecosystem – one where the physical classroom, digital platforms, and human expertise are seamlessly interwoven to ensure the consistent development of highly adaptable, technologically adept, and professionally competent language educators.

The aim is to make the learning experience itself an act of professional development, validating the premise that the multimodal classroom is the most realistic preparation for a career rooted in complex, technologically mediated communication. The following section details an experiment designed to rigorously test this principle of holistic integration.

Beyond the choice of specific tools, successful multimodal integration depends heavily on the pedagogical design – the intentional sequencing and layering of different semiotic resources to manage cognitive load and facilitate complex concept formation. In the context of training future teachers, this means

structuring tasks that progress from single-modality analysis (e.g., translating a specialized text) to multi-modality synthesis (e.g., creating a video tutorial explaining the translated concept).

This systematic progression ensures that students develop not only linguistic fluency but also digital literacy and multimodal design competence – the ability to select, combine, and produce meaning across various media effectively. This holistic approach prepares graduates not just to teach language, but to function as multimodal communicators ready to engage with and design learning experiences for the highly diverse and technologically mediated classrooms of the future.

The experimental implementation of multimodality in teaching English for professional purposes involved students of specialty 231 «Social Work» of the State Institution «South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky» ( $n = 28$ ). The sample consisted of first-year students. The structure of the experimental sample assumed the unity of the academic level of training, similar results of previous English language studies, and the same conditions of the educational environment. The educational environment of the experiment was adapted to the conditions of multimodal studying: traditional forms of teaching were combined with digital technologies of the Microsoft Teams platform; multimedia presentations, video analysis of authentic materials, role-playing games, virtual tours, online forums, podcasts, and elements of project activities were actively used. Methods for assessing the effectiveness of the experiment were based on a comprehensive approach that combined: diagnostic knowledge sections (tests for understanding lexical and grammatical material, listening and writing); communicatively-oriented tasks (role-playing games, simulations, interviews etc.) aimed at testing practical English language proficiency in the professional context of social work; content analysis of project work, within which students created multimedia products (presentations, infographics, video essays) on the topic of social interaction; questionnaires and self-assessment, which allowed determining the level of learning motivation, sense of success and readiness for intercultural communication; teacher's observation of studying activity and quality of task completion in the Teams environment. The findings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

**Results of implementing multimodality in teaching English for professional purposes to higher education students**

| Indicator                                   | Contents                                                                                                                                      | Educational outcome                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Technologies/tools used                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Educational outcome in percentages |       |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|
|                                             |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Before                             | After |
| Optimisation of perception and assimilation | Combining verbal and non-verbal teaching methods to explain complex linguistic and methodological concepts.                                   | Stimulation of critical thinking and memory, formation of a holistic methodological worldview, and deep understanding of educational material.                                                                                                                                              | Video lectures with interactive elements, infographics of methodological models, multimedia presentations, visual reference notes, and case studies in video format.                                                        | 64,5                               | 78,5  |
| Development of English communication skills | Use of authentic multimodal materials to simulate real pedagogical situations and intercultural communication.                                | Improvement of language skills in a professional context, increased motivation for self-improvement, and development of teaching skills through observation.                                                                                                                                | Viewing and discussing educational videos/lesson recordings, podcasts on modern teaching methods, role-playing games, interviews with native speakers and experts, and CLIL technology.                                     | 55                                 | 82    |
| Building intercultural awareness            | Introduction to cultural traditions, educational characteristics, and social norms of English-speaking countries through audiovisual content. | This involves gaining deeper insight into sociocultural norms and their influence on pedagogical methods, fostering the growth of tolerance and empathetic skills, building competence in intercultural exchange, and recognizing the distinct features of language propriety in education. | Video tours of educational institutions around the world, analysis of authentic media materials (news, talk shows), project activities to study culture, and modelling intercultural language dialogue (virtual exchanges). | 54                                 | 91    |

To verify the reliability of the results obtained, methods of quantitative and qualitative statistical analysis were used. Quantitative data processing was carried out using mathematical statistics methods, in

particular: calculation of arithmetic mean values of indicators (M) and standard deviation (SD); determination of the difference between indicators before and after the experiment. Qualitative analysis involved comparing the dynamics of implementing multimodality in teaching English for professional purposes to higher education students.

Examination of the data in Table 1 reveals that implementing a multimodal teaching methodology for profession-specific English is an exceptionally potent strategy for elevating the standards of instruction. This method fosters intense student engagement by tapping into diverse information reception pathways (such as sight, hearing, and movement). The findings from the experiment conclusively validate this assertion, proving that blending various modalities favorably impacts both material retention and the development of students' foreign language professional skills.

The substantial increase observed across all measured indicators – particularly the impressive growth in intercultural awareness (from 54% to 91%) and development of communication skills (from 55% to 82%) – underscores a crucial shift in the learning paradigm. This growth demonstrates that the multimodal approach is not merely an accessory to traditional methods but a fundamental catalyst for deep, contextual learning. By simulating real-world professional communication scenarios through tools like video case studies and virtual exchanges, multimodality effectively bridges the gap between theoretical knowledge acquisition and the practical demands of the teaching profession. The integrated presentation of verbal and non-verbal information mirrors the complexity of actual pedagogical interactions, preparing future teachers to navigate diverse classroom and professional environments with greater confidence and competence.

This empirical validation of the multimodal strategy also provides strong evidence for the effectiveness of student-centered learning principles. The use of engaging, varied modalities – ranging from interactive content on platforms like Teams to project-based learning like creating video blogs – boosts intrinsic motivation and encourages autonomous learning. Students are no longer passive recipients of textual input; they become active creators, decoders, and communicators across multiple semiotic channels. This active engagement enhances their cognitive processing abilities, as the simultaneous involvement of visual, auditory, and kinetic senses facilitates better information retention and recall, thereby leading to the reported optimization of perception and assimilation.

Consequently, the findings support the recommendation that pedagogical institutions should view multimodal methodologies as an essential quality assurance mechanism. The strategic integration of resources like interactive whiteboards, simulators, and professional podcasts significantly expands the didactic arsenal beyond static textbooks. This comprehensive utilization of resources ensures that the training received by future foreign language teachers is current, practical, and fully aligned with the global labor market's demand for adaptable, technologically proficient, and interculturally competent educators. The success of this experiment lays the groundwork for establishing a definitive model for the integrated teaching of LSP in higher education.

Empirical data show the multimodal strategy moves education past simple content transmission, creating a powerful setting for developing professional skills. Blending different modalities is crucial, as it not only boosts students' mental performance and interest but also shapes educators who are flexible, digitally proficient, and skilled at working across cultures. This confirmed success makes the multimodal model the essential, go-to framework for teaching Languages for Specific Purposes (LSP) in universities, naturally leading to further study to pin down and standardize the core features of this innovative teaching approach.

Based on the analysis of the obtained results, the following practical recommendations were formulated for teachers of English for professional purposes: integrate multimodal resources into each stage of the lesson; at the motivation stage - short video fragments, podcasts or infographics that reflect professional situations; while explaining new material - multimedia presentations with a combination of text, audio and visual elements; at the consolidation stage - interactive tasks in Teams or Padlet; for reflection - students create their own video essays or mini-podcasts. Stimulate project activities - involve students in the development of multimedia products (posters, short videos, booklets in English) on the topics of social work, volunteering, tolerance, and cultural dialogue. Develop intercultural awareness through the use of authentic materials - virtual excursions, video interviews with representatives of English-speaking countries, and analysis of socio-cultural cases. Apply multimodal assessment tools that take into account different channels of information perception: oral presentations, visual portfolios, video reports, and electronic tests. Support student reflection through digital diaries or blogs, where they can analyze their own progress, describe difficulties, and ways to overcome them.

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** Contemporary academic research clearly confirms that integrating multimodal techniques into the process of teaching foreign languages has a positive effect on the quality of learning, increases students' intrinsic motivation, and improves the overall productivity of the educational process. Combining various modalities, such as text data, visual elements, audio, and video content, allows for the creation of a richer, dynamic, and interactive learning environment.

Studies on incorporating multimodality into English instruction reveal that this strategy successfully builds a more appealing and fruitful learning space. Core activities often revolve around utilizing genuine video and audio content related to professional fields. Other proven techniques involve simultaneous reading and listening, where learners engage with a text's written and audio formats concurrently. Contemporary teaching strongly features gamification via interactive platforms and mobile apps (like Quizlet or Duolingo). Crucially, developing project-based tasks—such as producing video blogs or multimedia slideshows – is also essential. Furthermore, the toolkit includes engaging interactive assignments and the potent CLIL approach (Content and Language Integrated Learning), which merges subject-matter study with concurrent English language acquisition. Research on how multimodal strategies operate during the integrated instruction of specialized foreign languages in universities has confirmed their significant efficiency. This outcome is due to the method's ability to foster the all-round advancement of students' language, cognitive, and professional competence.

Further scientific inquiry should concentrate on precisely and comprehensively defining the core attributes of the multimodal approach to successfully apply it within the framework of integrated professional foreign language instruction at pedagogical universities. Existing academic studies clearly demonstrate that incorporating multimodal techniques into foreign language pedagogy positively impacts learning quality, boosts students' inherent motivation, and enhances the overall efficiency of the teaching process.

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