

The Challenge of Acquiring Proficiency in Legal Terminology

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Abstract: *This study examines the challenges of integrating legal terminology into the teaching of professional foreign languages for students in law enforcement universities. It explores methodologies for presenting this terminology in ways that are comprehensible, accessible, and effective for learners. The focus is on professional terms related to the vocabulary and semantics of "crime."*

Keywords: *Vocabulary, "False Friends," Context, Polysynths, Professional Terminology, Etymology*

I. INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of teaching professional foreign language courses in universities is to equip students with the skills to comprehend and extract essential information from professional literature, textbooks, and research materials. This enables them to effectively communicate with foreign professionals within their area of expertise, achieve language fluency, enhance their educational pursuits, and utilize these skills for professional purposes. Accordingly, it is crucial to expand students' vocabulary relevant to their profession, particularly by enhancing their proficiency in legal terminology for audiences such as police academy students.

Currently, the Foreign Language Institute offers professional English, Russian, and Chinese language training to students in the II, III, IV, and Border School Divisions of the University of the Internal Affairs. These courses are developed using data sourced from international organizations such as UN Peacekeeping, Interpol, and various law enforcement, border patrol, customs, and judiciary agencies worldwide. This ensures that the curriculum incorporates practical examples of professional terminology and commonly used phrases relevant to the daily operations of law enforcement officials. Textbooks aligned with the objectives of professional foreign language education are employed to train future law enforcement officers in university settings.

There is a clear need to enhance students' vocabulary to enable them to effectively read, comprehend, and translate the textual material within these textbooks. Based on my experience in teaching professional foreign languages, I have found it advantageous to expand students' vocabulary resources within thematic areas by introducing them to short crime stories sourced from television and other media. This approach serves as a preparatory step before engaging students with simplified and unsimplified texts derived from theoretical textbooks.

Vocabulary refers to words that were previously unfamiliar to students but can be interpreted without the assistance of a dictionary when students encounter them. This interpretation is made possible by their understanding of the word's structure. Words derived from roots, compounds, and related stems constitute the majority of such vocabulary. The educational and psychological foundations for developing professional vocabulary are grounded in A.N. Leontiev's theory of operations and P.Y. Galperin's theory of the gradual formation of intellectual actions. These theories align with the principles of modern pragmatic approaches to education, such as developmental and student-centered learning, and are supported by relevant instructional technologies.

According to many researchers, including Dr. H. Tsedev, vocabulary acquisition can be categorized into the following key types:

1. **Derived Words:** These are terms whose meanings students can independently infer based on their understanding of the word's constituent components. For example, *incitement to suicide* (*доведение до самоубийства*).

2. **Borrowed Words with International Usage:** These are terms that exhibit similar spelling, pronunciation, and meaning across languages such as English, Russian, and Mongolian. Examples include:

- *Violation of inventor's rights and patent rights (нарушение изобретательских или патентных прав);*
- *Hooliganism (хулиганство, хулиган, танхайрал);*
- *Illegal Making and Distribution of Pornographic Materials or Objects (незаконные изготовление и оборот порнографических материалов или предметов, порнограф материал, эд зүйлсийг хууль бусаар үйлдвэрлэн борлуулах).*

These categories reflect the linguistic and semantic connections that facilitate vocabulary learning in a multilingual context.

3. Students can expand their vocabulary by understanding words through contextual cues. For instance, in the sentence "*Police seized five pounds of heroin, ten pounds of methamphetamine, and several bottles of illegal prescription drugs,*" the term *seizure* (*хураан авах*) can be easily interpreted based on its use within the context of the sentence.

Relying solely on the original text of legal terms can present challenges in reading and interpretation, potentially leading to significant errors. For instance, the term *adultery* is frequently misconstrued as referring to a crime involving adults. Similarly, *juvenile crimes* (crimes committed by minors) may be misunderstood due to the existence of the term *juvenile*. In legal terminology, however, *adultery* specifically refers to "infidelity in marriage."

EXAMPLES OF CHALLENGES AND CLARIFICATIONS

- ***Solution versus Dissolution:*** These terms can have distinct legal implications depending on the context.
- ***Synonyms with Variations in Meaning:***
 - ***Collateral:*** Mortgage of property;
 - ***Pledge:*** Mortgage of cash;
 - ***Pledge:*** Mortgage of a person.
- ***Legal Roles with Contextual Distinctions:***
 - ***Solicitor:*** Advocate specializing in industry, family, or civil disputes;
 - ***Advocate:*** Legal professional handling criminal cases;
 - ***Lawyer:*** General legal practitioner;
 - ***Legal Counsel:*** Attorney specializing in corporate legal matters.

These examples highlight the importance of precise interpretation and contextual understanding of legal terminology to avoid miscommunication.

Words are inherently complex and multifaceted, consisting not only of roots but also of a continuum of word-forming elements. By understanding the specific morphemes and syllables used in word formation, students can generate a wide range of words, including adjectives and compound expressions, without the need to memorize each individual term. This approach promotes deeper linguistic competence and enhances vocabulary development.

In pursuit of this objective, our research focused on the collection of 174 words and phrases, specifically selected for instruction in Russian and English language lessons.

These terms were drawn exclusively from the vocabulary and semantic group of "crimes" and were

categorized according to various crime types, subjects of crimes, the impact on human life and health, environmental damage, vehicle use, traffic safety, and the computer information industry. The words were further organized into 20 distinct semantic chapters, including categories such as crimes against state and judicial power, crimes against the military, and crimes against human peace and security. The goal of this research was to create a comprehensive lexicon for students. In the following, we will examine some of the most prevalent patterns of "crime" across Russian, English, and Mongolian.

1. The **Adj+N** pattern is commonly used in both English and Russian; however, its frequency is notably higher in Russian compared to English. For example: *illegal enterprise* (*незаконное предпринимательство*), *illegal adoption* (*незаконное усыновление/удочерение*), and *illegal hunting* (*незаконная охота*). In contrast, this pattern is nearly impossible to construct in Mongolian, with the exception of terms like *commercial bribery* (*commercial bribery*). Additionally, in Mongolian, the word that conveys the core meaning of a synonym is typically a verb, as seen in *illegal adoption* *незаконное усыновление \удочерение*- хууль бусаар хүүхэд **үрчлэн авах**.
2. One of the simplest and most frequently observed patterns across the languages under comparison is the **N+N** construction. Examples include: *pollution of water* (*загрязнение воды* - усны бохирдол), *pollution of the atmosphere* (*загрязнение атмосферы* - агаар мандлын бохирдол), *land degradation* (*порча земли* - хөрсний эвдрэл/эвдэн сүйтгэх), *soil damage/destruction* (*порча земли* - хөрсний эвдрэл), *human trafficking* (*торговля людьми* - хүний наймаа or хүний хулгай), and *mass riots* (*похищение человека* - хүний хулгай, *массовые беспорядки* - нийтийг хамарсан эмх замбараагүй байдал).
3. By augmenting the aforementioned model with an additional component or descriptive term, a structure known as **N+Adj+N** can be created, which retains the same translation across the three languages. For example: *act of international terrorism* (*акт международного терроризма* - олон улсын алан хядах ажиллагаа). In Mongolian, however, key concepts related to this structure are often expressed using verbs rather than nouns, as seen in *pollution of the marine environment* (*загрязнение морской среды* - тэнгисийн орчны бохирдол or *орчинг бохирдуулах*), and *infection with a venereal disease* (*заражение венерической болезнью* - бэлгийн замын халдварт өвчин халдаах).
4. The pattern that constitutes approximately 70 percent of the 174 sample words is the **N+N** (genitive form), a structure in which two or more nouns, synonyms, or other distinctions are combined to form a meaningful expression.

Therefore, by teaching students the appropriate methods and patterns for word pronunciation based on these four structures, it is possible to comprehend both the form and meaning of words while reading and translating professional texts, without the need to memorize new vocabulary. Research by Russian scholars R.A. Andreev, S.G. Ter-Minasova, and I.V. Federova indicates that approximately 1,600 terms are most frequently used and form the foundation of around 1,800 words that are acquired throughout the course of training. Furthermore, their research suggests that the most effective language learning method involves a conscious parallel approach, integrating reading and translation practices.

AS A RESULT OF THIS STUDY, THE FOLLOWING CONCLUSIONS HAVE BEEN DRAWN

1. Given the various formations, compounds, word structures, commonly used word-generation patterns, and loanwords, it is essential to teach students in non-linguistic fields the fundamental principles of word structure in both Russian and English. Additionally, students should be encouraged to develop the ability to infer word meanings and identify their semantic components.
2. The systematization of terms, such as grouping law enforcement vocabulary thematically and creating sequences of synonymous and antonymous nouns, proves highly effective in facilitating the understanding of professional texts and in the accurate use of specialized terminology.

3. The establishment of a systematic approach to vocabulary exercises will play a crucial role in enhancing students' ability to independently comprehend compound words when reading professional literature and textbooks.
4. Utilizing the vocabulary from the *Law Enforcement Concise Dictionary*, it is possible to compile a list of essential terms and key vocabulary, which can then serve as the foundation for making modifications to the curriculum and content of professional foreign language courses.

RECOMMENDATION

Establish a project team consisting of professional instructors and foreign language educators to develop and integrate training materials, including books, textbooks, manuals, and dictionaries, into the educational framework.

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