

Integrated education and the development of professional English communicative competence among journalism students

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Suggested Citation:

Turgunova F. (2026). Integrated education and the development of professional English communicative competence among journalism students. *Cypriot Journal of Educational Science*, 21(1), 63-73. <https://doi.org/10.18844/cjes.v21i1.9532>

Received from September 10, 2025; revised from November 12, 2025; accepted from January 20, 2026.

Selection and peer review under the responsibility of Prof. Dr. Hafize Keser, Ankara University, Turkey (retired)

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iThenticate Similarity Rate: 2%

Abstract

This study examines the central role of integrated education in enhancing the professional competencies of journalism students, focusing on the incorporation of mass media and diverse media materials into the learning process. By engaging with a variety of media texts and audiovisual resources, the study demonstrates its influence on increasing learners' motivation, structuring knowledge, and expanding proficiency in English. These resources are instrumental in developing professionally oriented communicative competence, a critical skill for emerging journalists. The research addresses a gap in understanding how media materials contribute to the simultaneous cultivation of critical thinking, memory, creativity, communication skills, aesthetic appreciation, and analytical abilities within journalism education. A test-based evaluation was conducted to assess students' professional communicative competence in English across four dimensions: motivation, language proficiency, professional skills, and communication strategies. The findings indicate that mass media function as a comprehensive and effective tool for enhancing domain-specific English communicative competence, providing a robust foundation for students to meet the practical demands of their professional careers. The study underscores the pedagogical implications of integrating media resources to promote holistic skill development in journalism education.

Keywords: Communication skills; English proficiency; integrated education; journalism education; professional competence.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In the developing modern world, the professional communicative competence of journalists in English includes communication in English in the professional field. The targeted educational process in our country is a set of systematic actions aimed at acquiring knowledge, skills, qualifications, and experience. This set of qualities should become the object of journalism education in English lessons. An analysis of scientific works in this direction shows that current problems include such issues as the concept of professional competence and the development of communicative competence in English using the media.

The goal of integrated education is to contribute to the creation of a harmonious and holistic vision of the world, and the use of an integrated approach to education contributes to the formation of the natural integrity of the educational process. In modern methods, an integrated approach to teaching foreign languages means teaching four types of speech activity in an interdependent form. According to some researchers, it means “the natural combination of conscious and unconscious components in the educational process, which means parallel acquisition of language knowledge and speech skills” (Mercier & Higgins, 2014). According to the foreign concept, the main factor of integrated education is the practical preparation of students for speech and communication activities, the interconnected formation of effective foreign language skills, as well as the joint use of traditional and modern teaching aids (Toro et al, 2019). Research also shows that integrating communicative tasks with real-world digital contexts and media use enhances both linguistic and interactional competencies in foreign language instruction (Zhou et al., 2024; Al-khresheh et al., 2025)

To foster the oral communicative competence of journalism students, it is advisable to implement integrative pedagogical models that synthesize multiple instructional methods and techniques. Ensuring equilibrium in the development of all forms of speech activity, together with their integration, mutual dependence, and dynamic interaction, enables the comprehensive cultivation of communicative abilities without privileging any single modality. Within this framework, scholars propose addressing existing challenges through systemic, interdisciplinary, technological, and competency-oriented perspectives.

An interdisciplinary orientation underscores the interconnected nature of the academic disciplines included in the curriculum and promotes coherence across courses. A technology-oriented perspective prioritizes the construction of instructional methodologies that incorporate mass media resources as core components of the learning process. The competency-based perspective emphasizes the acquisition of structured competencies grounded in knowledge, skills, and abilities that emerge through systematic training. In contrast, the systemic perspective conceptualizes professional preparation as an integrated unity of content, structure, and functional dimensions. In a related vein, systematic reviews in the field of technology-enhanced language education identify telecollaboration as an effective mechanism for strengthening intercultural communicative competence and for aligning pedagogical theory with authentic communicative practice (Emir & Yangın-Ekşi, 2024).

From a communicative standpoint, media resources constitute a productive instrument for advancing English language acquisition. Studies examining the impact of foreign media on the development of professional English communicative competence among future journalists indicate that learners actively engage with printed texts, audio materials, audiovisual content, and digital platforms. Such engagement enhances the effectiveness of instruction, supports the structured organization of media journalism training in innovative and information-rich formats, and contributes to the formation of media literacy (Becker et al., 2014; Guarda & Helm, 2017; Batoš et al., 2010). Within contemporary academic discourse, media education is regarded as a distinct branch of pedagogy that investigates interactions between individuals and diverse media environments, including television, radio, print press, cinema, video technologies, telecommunication systems, and the internet.

Tyurina & Staroverova (2017) argue that the principal objectives of media education include preparing younger generations for participation in contemporary information societies, fostering confidence and critical awareness in navigating modern media environments, and encouraging the responsible application of media tools in both scholarly and practical contexts. Furthermore, media education seeks to cultivate an

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understanding of the psychological impact of media exposure when individuals obtain information from multiple sources, to develop communicative competence grounded in nonverbal forms of expression, and to promote effective use of technological resources (Tyurina, 2019; Tyurina & Staroverova, 2017).

1.1. Purpose of study

This research work examines the levels of development of communicative competence of English for specific purposes among students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Journalism and Mass Communications of Uzbekistan in 2022-2023.

2. METHODS AND MATERIALS

Appropriate technology has been developed to achieve the research objectives. This contributed to increasing the professional communicative competence of future journalists in English and creating a clear structure of professional training. Methods, techniques, forms, and means were the basis for the development of competence in the communication process. The implementation of the technology of using media materials as an educational tool for various types of media (newspapers, magazines, audio, audiovisual, and electronic media materials) was carried out in three stages: preparation, educational process, and creative approach.

At the first preparatory stage, during the course “English for Specific Purposes,” students received a deeper understanding of journalism issues in English. At the stage of the educational process, practical classes were conducted using media materials based on problem-solving and active learning methods. The use of interactive methods such as project-based learning, brainstorming, snowballing, role-playing, dialogue building, stop-motion animation, sound and visual, critical analysis, student creativity, self-education, and practical skills was encouraged. All these methods increased students' motivation to study and learn, as well as helped them analyze authentic materials related to their future professional fields. At the creative approach stage, students communicated in English (prepared interviews with foreigners, communicated orally and in written forms with native English speakers via the Internet), prepared their own articles for media, television, and radio interviews, and printed newspapers.

During the research, special attention was paid to the techniques, forms, and methodologies of journalism education using the media. Media text turned out to be most necessary for the development of communicative competence in professional English. Such texts act as examples of national culture and speech behavior, and represent logical and complete statements in the process of communication (Deuze & Prenger, 2019). Media texts have become sources of stylistic types of language, such as aphorisms, allusions, neologisms, dialectisms, and archaisms. Thus, students worked not only with educational and artistic texts, but also with the entire genre and stylistic coloring of speech.

2.1. Participants

A total of 93 students (18-22 years old) from 3rd and 4th year students of the International Journalism and Public Relations directions, as well as 3rd year students of the Internet Journalism direction, took part in the research. The research was carried out by dividing the total number of students into control (47 students) and experimental (46 students) groups.

2.2. Data collection instruments

Internet publications and blogs published in a foreign language, especially in English, serve as another useful information and communication tool for improving students' knowledge of journalism (Zhovnych, 2016). The use of electronic periodicals and Internet resources, such as the PressReader web portal, is of particular importance in achieving high efficiency in the development of professional communicative competence of future journalists in English. It allows users to get the latest issues of more than 3,000 English-language newspapers and magazines. Students of the Faculty of International Journalism, Public Relations and Internet Journalism studied electronic versions of English and American publishing houses like “The Guardian”, “The Daily Telegraph”, “Daily Mail”, “The Times”, “The Washington Post”, “Los Angeles”. By studying the electronic forms of the New York Times, Forbes, and other similar newspapers, we improved our knowledge

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and skills in the English language. Foreign language resources contributed to the formation of a high level of English communicative competence of students in such activities as obtaining clear and complete information, improving written and oral skills, and understanding foreigners.

The level of professional communicative competence of future journalist students in English was studied using a test instrument consisting of four sections. In the first section of the tests, the level of professional communicative competence of students in English was determined according to the criterion of motivation based on A.A. Rean and V.A. Yakunina's test "Diagnostics of students' motivation to study" (Chernii et al., 2020). The second section used the language criterion for foreign language teaching, the Assessment of Language Proficiency, developed by the American Council. The third section defines the professional criteria of students based on the book "English for Journalists" (Hicks, 2006). In the last section of the tests, the criterion of strategy and tactics of students' communication in English was assessed based on V.F. Ryakhovsky's test "Assessment of the level of communication" (Karelin, 2007).

2.3. Procedure

The purpose of the study was to identify the significance of the use of mass media and media materials in the formation and development of professionally oriented communicative competence of student journalists in English. During the research process, students from the experimental group worked with media materials. They analyzed the genre, subject, and compositional characteristics of media products in English and identified differences between English and local media. During the study, students became familiar with journalistic, sociocultural, and sociolinguistic terms in English. Based on the educational materials, communicative situations were created, such as organizing an interview, organizing a press conference, casting or advertising campaign, writing reviews and articles on various topics, filming a video clip, recording radio programs, implementing projects on social networks to solve assigned tasks in their future professional activities.

At the beginning and end of the experiment, student journalists took part in tests to assess their level of communicative competence in English for specific purposes. The level of professional communicative competence of students in the same conditions in English was assessed using a unified methodology based on data analysis and processing.

Printed, audio, audiovisual, and electronic media and their functions, such as information, educational, development of cognitive interests, phraseology, and monitoring, were considered as learning tools in the process of developing profile-oriented communicative competence of the English language. The use of the media has a significant impact on the motivation, systematization, and expansion of knowledge of student journalists. It helps to develop professional skills, critical thinking, memory, creativity, communication skills, aesthetic perception, and analysis. Based on theoretical data (Tyurina, 2019; Batoš et al., 2010; Goodman & Steyn, 2017), the criteria of motivation, language criteria, professional criteria, and criteria of communication strategy and tactics turned out to be the most correct.

3. RESULTS

Motivational criteria encompass learners' recognition of the necessity to communicate in English, sustain social interaction, and appreciate the significance of continued language learning. The linguistic criterion incorporates the capacity to comprehend texts representing diverse functional styles, to identify central themes and specific details, and to interpret information in an integrated manner. It also includes adherence to grammatical norms, lexical accuracy, orthographic conventions, and competence in both oral and written forms of communication.

Professional criteria comprise knowledge of the structural and functional characteristics of professional discourse, including formal correspondence, as well as the ability to retrieve relevant information from multiple sources for the resolution of practical tasks. These criteria further involve the capacity to construct reasoned statements grounded in empirical data, conceptual frameworks, and established scientific principles. The criterion related to communicative strategy and tactics addresses the ability to define communicative objectives, assess communicative outcomes, and identify and correct deficiencies that arise during interaction.

In the empirical phase of the study, four performance levels, namely high, sufficient, average, and low, were employed to assess the degree of professional English communicative competence. The aggregated findings enabled the classification of students in the experimental group according to established standards of professional English communicative competence and facilitated comparison with the corresponding results obtained from the control group. Table 1 presents data concerning the determination of the baseline condition, whereas Table 2 outlines the results related to the formative phase; collectively, these tables offer a comprehensive overview of the research outcomes.

Table 1

Results of experiments to determine professional English communicative competence of journalism students

		Experiment of determination							
		(In the control group – 47 students, in the experimental group – 46 students)							
Level	Group	Motivation criterion		Language criterion		Professional criterion		Criterion of communication strategy and tactics	
		Number of students	%	Number of students	%	Number of students	%	Number of students	%
High	control	5	11	4	9	6	13	5	11
	experimental	6	13	5	11	4	9	4	9
Sufficient	control	11	23	10	21	12	26	11	23
	experimental	12	26	13	28	10	22	12	26
Average	control	16	34	18	38	16	34	15	32
	experimental	17	37	16	35	17	37	17	37
Low	control	15	32	15	32	13	28	16	34
	experimental	11	24	12	26	15	33	13	28

Table 2

Results of experiments on formulating professional English communicative competence of journalism students

		Experience in formulation							
		(In the control group – 47 students, in the experimental group – 46 students)							
Level	Group	Motivation criterion		Language criterion		Professional criterion		Criterion of communication strategy and tactics	
		Number of students	%	Number of students	%	Number of students	%	Number of students	%
High	control	6	13	5	11	6	13	7	15
	experimental	9	20	8	17	10	22	8	17
Sufficient	control	13	28	11	23	14	30	12	26
	experimental	20	43	21	46	21	46	22	48
Average	control	15	32	17	36	16	34	13	28
	experimental	11	24	10	22	9	20	11	24
Low	control	13	28	14	30	11	23	15	32
	experimental	6	13	7	15	6	13	5	11

Positive dynamics were observed when comparing the results of the formative experiment with the defining experiment. The experiment was successful with an increase in high and sufficient levels and a decrease in average and low levels.

The results of the study showed that the outcome in the control groups remained almost unchanged, while the experimental groups showed significant changes. According to the “Criteria of Motivation,” the number of high-level students in the experimental groups increased by 7%, and the number of students of a sufficient level increased by 17%. It should be noted that according to these indicators, the number of middle and low-level students, on the contrary, has decreased. The number of average-level students in the experimental groups decreased by 13%, and the number of low-level students decreased by 11%.

Similarly, the dynamics of growth of high and sufficient levels and a decrease in average and low levels were observed for the indicators “Language criterion”, “Professional criterion”, and “Criterion of communication strategies and tactics”.

A comparative analysis showed that according to four criteria, there are significant differences between the experimental and control groups. Figure 1 shows a comparison diagram of the results of the defining and formative experiments on the “Criterion of Motivation”.

Figure 1

Results of experiments to determine and develop the level of professional communicative competence of future journalism students in English according to the “Motivation Criterion”

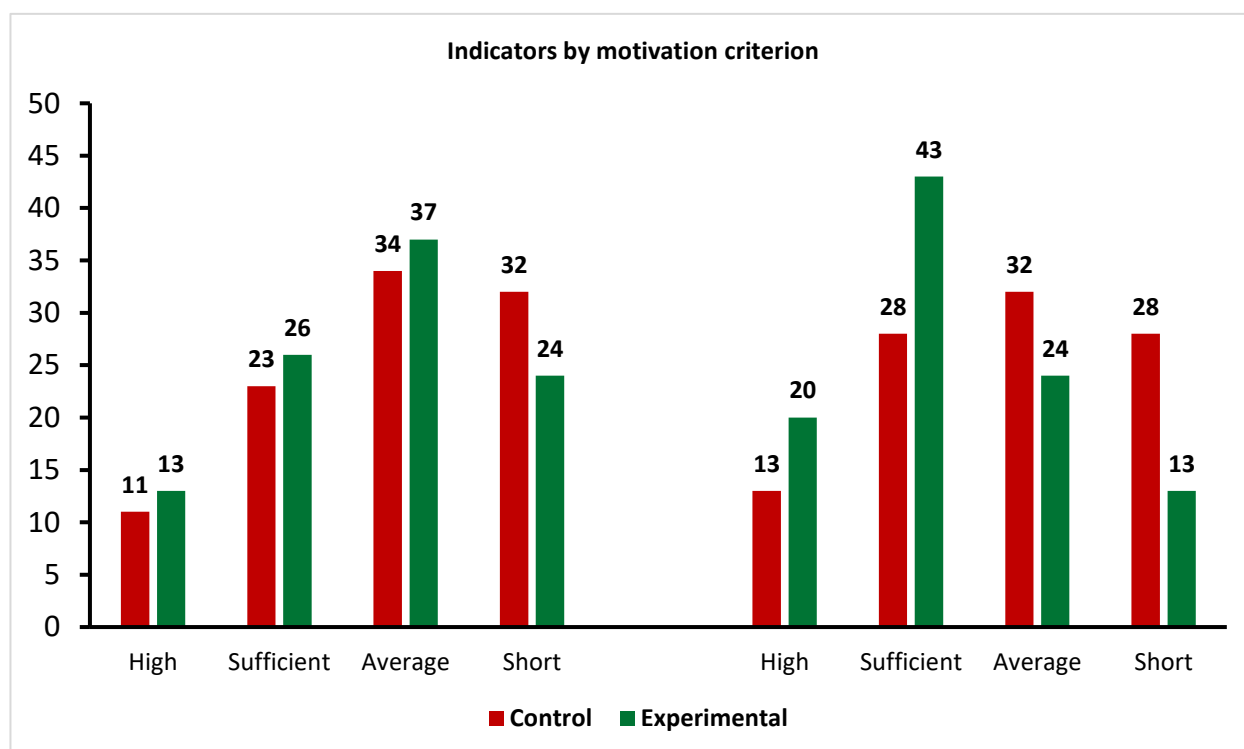


Figure 2 shows a diagram of the results of the defining and formative experiments on the “Language Criterion”, according to which the number of high-level students in the experimental groups increased by 6%, and the number of students with a sufficient level increased by 18%. It was also noted that according to this criterion, the number of students with an average level decreased by 13%, and the number of students with a low level decreased by 11%.

Figure 2
Results of defining and formative experiments according to the “Language Criterion”

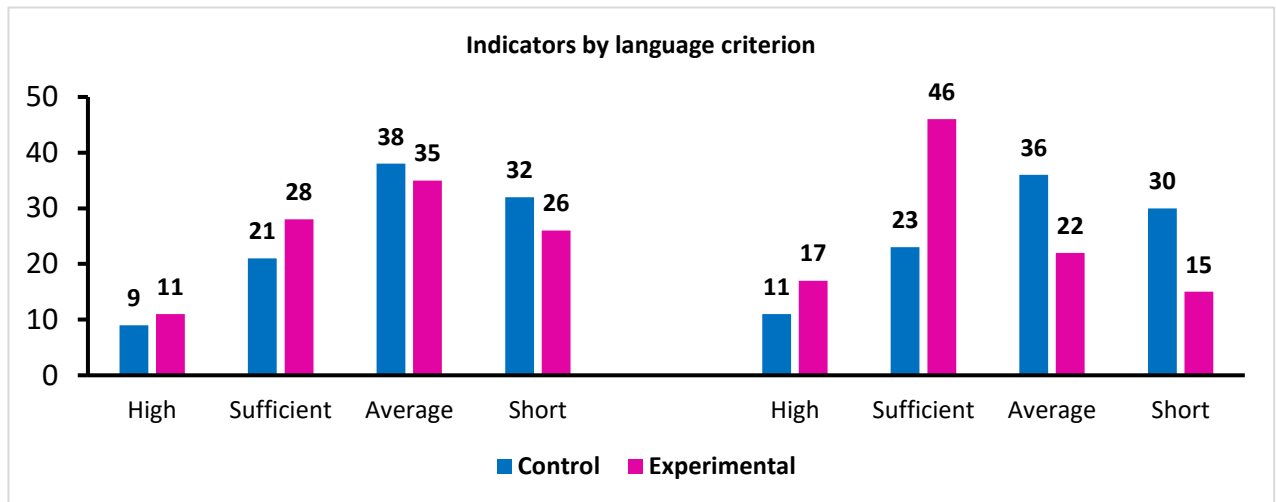
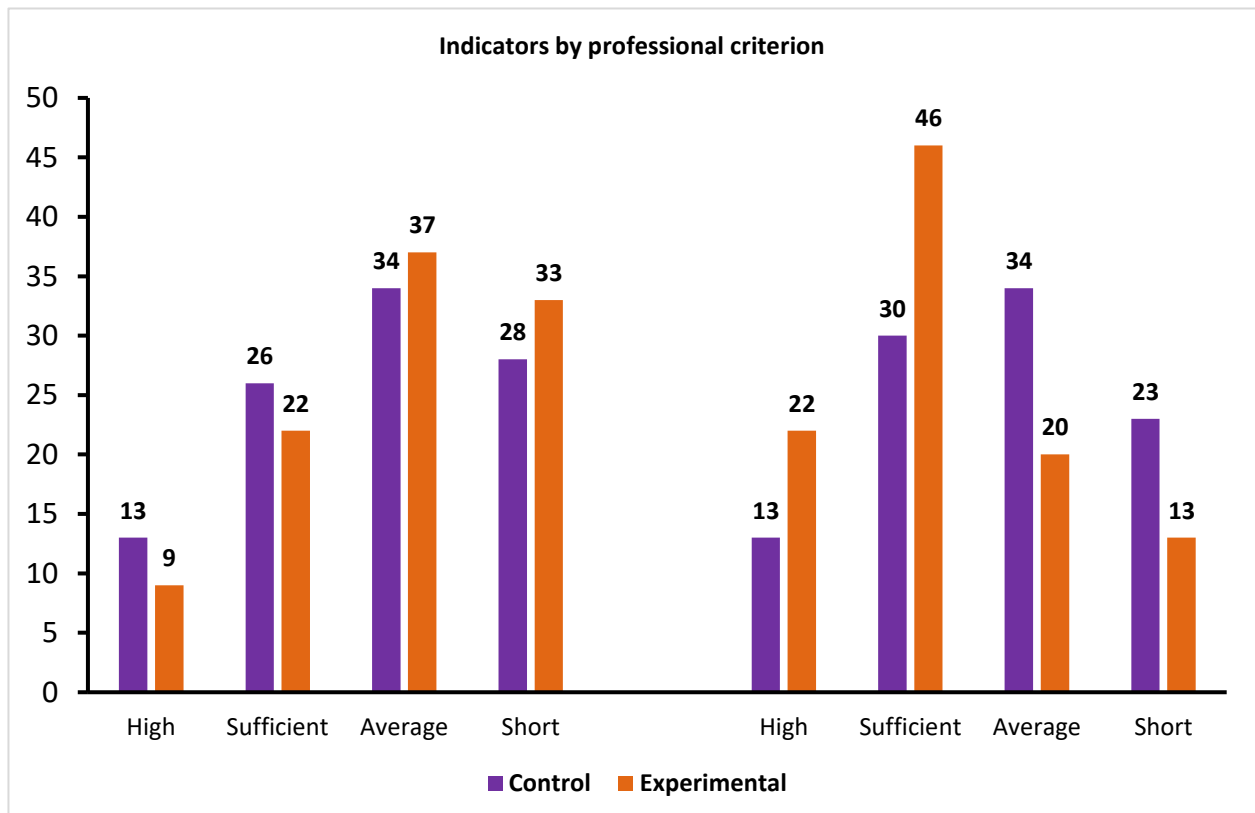


Figure 3 shows a diagram of the results of the defining and formative experiments according to the “Professional Criterion”. It can be seen that the number of high-level students in the experimental groups according to the “Professional Criterion” increased by 13%, and the number of students with a sufficient level increased by 24%. In addition, according to this criterion, it was observed that the number of students with an average level decreased by 17%, and the number of students with a low level decreased by 20%.

Figure 3
Results of defining and formative experiments on the “Professional Criterion”

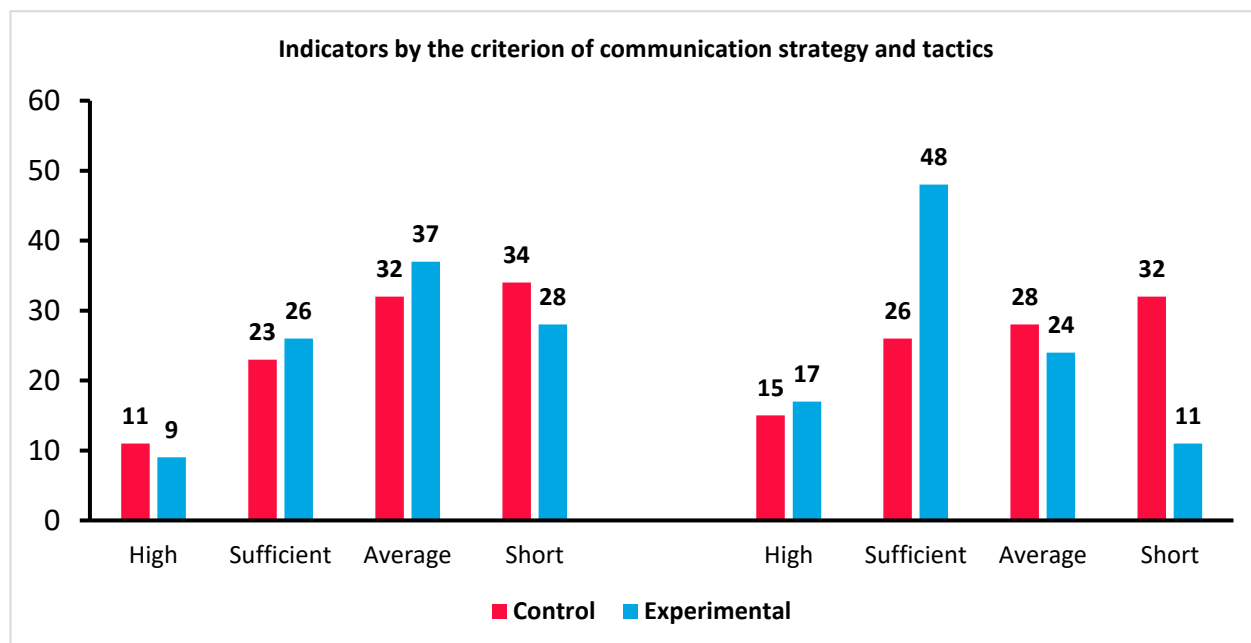


A diagram of the results of the defining and formative experiments on the “Criterion of communication strategy and tactics” is presented in Figure 4. Based on this criterion, it can be seen that the number of students with a high level in the experimental groups increased by 8%, and the number of students with a sufficient level increased by 22%. By this criterion, the number of students with an average level decreased by 13%, and the number of students with a low level decreased by 17%.

According to the results obtained in the study, we can say that in groups according to all four criteria, there was an increase in the number of students of a high and sufficient level, and conversely, a decrease in the number of students of an average and low level. This, in turn, indicates a significant increase in performance in the experimental groups.

Figure 4

Results of defining and formative experiments on the “Criteria of communication strategy and tactics”



To check and confirm the effectiveness of the experiment, Student's *t-test* was used. The Student coefficient is a numerical property commonly used in mathematical statistics problems, such as finding confidence intervals and testing statistical hypotheses. It can be calculated using the following formula:

$$t_{st} = \frac{q_{exp} - q_{con}}{\sqrt{\frac{p_1(100-p_1)}{r_1} + \frac{p_2(100-p_2)}{r_2}}} \quad (1)$$

where: q_{exp} – the number of students with a high and sufficient level in the experimental groups, q_{con} – the number of students with a high and sufficient level in the control groups; p_1, r_1 – data from the control group; p_2, r_2 – data from the experimental group; p – the number of students with a high and sufficient level of professional English communicative competence; r – absolute value of respondents.

Based on the relevant data in Tables 1 and 2, the t_{st} coefficient was calculated separately for each criterion. As a result of calculations, if $P > 2$ (P is the average indicator reflecting the number of students with a high and sufficient level), then this result confirms the effectiveness of the teaching experience.

Summarizing the data through appropriate calculation operations, the following results were obtained.

Coefficient t_{st1} based on the motivation criterion data:

$$t_{st1} = \frac{22}{\sqrt{\frac{41(100-41)}{47} + \frac{63(100-63)}{46}}} = 2,18 \quad (2)$$

Coefficient t_{st2} based on language criterion data:

$$t_{st2} = \frac{29}{\sqrt{\frac{34(100-34)}{47} + \frac{63(100-63)}{46}}} = 2,92 \quad (3)$$

Coefficient t_{st3} based on professional criterion data:

$$t_{st3} = \frac{25}{\sqrt{\frac{43(100-43)}{47} + \frac{68(100-68)}{46}}} = 2,42 \quad (4)$$

Coefficient t_{st4} based on the data of the criterion of communication strategy and tactics:

$$t_{st4} = \frac{24}{\sqrt{\frac{41(100-41)}{47} + \frac{65(100-65)}{46}}} = 2,39 \quad (5)$$

In addition, the average relative quantitative indicator for students with high and sufficient communicative competence in English was determined using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{T_{st1} + T_{st2} + T_{st3} + T_{st4}}{4} \quad (6)$$

where: P is the average indicator reflecting the number of students with a high and sufficient level. T_{st} is the coefficient of communicative competence in English, oriented towards a certain level of the field, based on the results of each criterion.

As can be seen from the calculations, the results obtained from pedagogical experience confirmed that $P > 2$. This indicates the effectiveness of the pedagogical experience and shows that organizing training sessions to develop students' communicative competence in the field of English using this method will lead to positive results.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the integrated use of media materials significantly enhanced the professional communicative competence of journalism students in English, as evidenced by the substantial increase in high and sufficient levels across all four criteria in the experimental group. These results corroborate the theoretical positions of Mercier and Higgins (2014) and Toro et al. (2019), who argue that integrated foreign language instruction, combining knowledge acquisition with speech skills and practical application, promotes holistic communicative development. The parallel growth in motivational, linguistic, professional, and strategic competencies observed in this research confirms that the interdependent teaching of all speech activities contributes to balanced and comprehensive competence formation, rather than isolated skill improvement.

The outcomes also align with research emphasizing the pedagogical value of digital and media-rich environments. Zhou et al. (2024) and Al-khresheh et al. (2025) highlight that integrating communicative tasks into authentic digital contexts strengthens both linguistic and interactional competence. Similarly, in the present study, students' engagement with authentic English-language newspapers, audiovisual materials, online interviews, and media production tasks led to measurable improvements in language proficiency and communicative strategy. The significant reduction in low-level performance across criteria supports earlier conclusions that real-world communicative practice enhances functional language use more effectively than traditional instruction alone.

Furthermore, the results are consistent with the principles of media education advanced by Tyurina (2019) and Tyurina and Staroverova (2017), who emphasize the development of critical awareness, professional readiness, and communicative competence through systematic interaction with diverse media forms. The marked improvement in the professional criterion, in particular, confirms the importance of working with authentic media texts as models of stylistic diversity and professional discourse, as also suggested by Becker et al. (2014), Guarda and Helm (2017), and Batoš et al. (2010). The study extends these findings by

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demonstrating statistically significant effects within a controlled experimental framework, thereby providing quantitative validation of media-integrated instruction in journalism education.

At the same time, the present research differs from many prior studies by employing a multidimensional assessment model that incorporates motivation, language proficiency, professional discourse skills, and communicative strategies. While earlier investigations often focus on single aspects of competence, this study demonstrates that an integrated, systemic, and competency-based approach produces simultaneous improvements across all domains. The statistically confirmed effectiveness of the intervention ($P > 2$) reinforces the conclusion that structured integration of media resources in English for Specific Purposes courses constitutes a reliable and pedagogically sound strategy for developing the professional communicative competence of future journalists.

5. CONCLUSION

It has been confirmed that the media materials are a valuable content foundation in the development of professionally oriented English communicative competence, contributing to the communicative activities of students. The results of the study showed that organizing activities using media products as a learning tool can bring journalism education to a more flexible, evolving, interesting, and effective level. Features of printing, such as versatility, multitasking, accessibility, material intensity, audiovisual (multi-genre, high dynamics, effect of relevance, sensation and appearance), audio (free use of publications, convenience, low cost), electronic (interactive, multimedia, virtual reality) materials allow us to raise the teaching of English at the Faculty of Journalism to a new level.

The purposeful use of the media in integrated training to develop the professional communicative competence of future journalist students in English, taking into account the specifics of the topic being studied, the criteria for selecting media texts, forms, and teaching methods, will certainly ensure maximum effectiveness.

Acknowledgments: The author of the article thanks the administration of the University of Journalism and Mass Communications of Uzbekistan for the assistance provided and the opportunities provided to conduct research work to study the levels of development of communicative competence of the specialized English language of students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Ethical Approval: The study adheres to the ethical guidelines for conducting research.

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