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ОБУЧЕНИЕ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЕЙ УНИВЕРСИТЕТА АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ УРОВНЯ С1-С2

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Аннотация. Открытость международному общению, как в сфере образования, так и в научной деятельности требует от преподавателей высшей школы хорошего знания английского языка. В статье рассматривается опыт Южно-Уральского государственного университета. Сотрудники вуза имели возможность обучаться на курсах Лингва, организованных руководством вуза. Образовательная траектория включала в себя обучение общему английскому с уровня А1 до уровня С1. Так же сотрудники проходили курс EMI, направленный на развитие методических и педагогических навыков с учетом международного опыта преподавания на английском языке. В статье рассматривается возможность обучения и вероятность освоения слушателями уровня С2 на примере одной группы слушателей. Результаты показывают, что слушатели вполне могут освоить уровень С2, при условии, что выбрана правильная траектория и освоены предшествующие уровни.

Ключевые слова: НЕПРЕРЫВНОЕ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНОЕ РАЗВИТИЕ, ИЗУЧЕНИЕ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА, УРОВЕНЬ PROFICIENCY, ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНАЯ ТРАЕКТОРИЯ, ОБУЧЕНИЕ ВЗРОСЛЫХ

TRAINING UNIVERSITY TEACHERS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT PROFICIENCY LEVEL C1-C2

Abstract. The international academic environment requires good knowledge of the English language to communicate and proficient level knowledge to deliver lessons for international students and writing papers for high-ranking journals. This paper discusses the case of South Ural State University. The teaching and research staff of the university attended Lingva courses which is a training program for different levels aimed at developing general and specific knowledge of English. Learners usually follow the trajectory from A1 to C1 levels, while additional courses of "English Medium Instruction", "Academic English for Writing Purposes", "Conferences", and "Presentations" are also available. Even having achieved C1, the teaching and research staff still lack confidence. Therefore, it was suggested to start a Proficiency (C2) level course to check the possibility of achieving this level. The results suggest that the successful achievement of C2 might be possible if the trajectory is chosen correctly and the results of the previous courses are sufficient.

Keywords: CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION, PROFICIENCY LEVEL, EDUCATIONAL TRAJECTORY, ADULT EDUCATION

Introduction. The globalized world requires global changes in all spheres of life, and in science and education in particular. Studying abroad, reading professional literature, attending conferences, writing papers, and much more require a good knowledge of English. Higher education institutions pay a great deal of attention to continuous professional development (CPD) of research and teaching staff. For staff working with foreign students, doing research, and writing papers, but not speaking English, which is the lingua franca in many universities, courses of English are of high priority. Although English is an integral part of educational programs at schools and universities, students have different levels of English, some not very high as school and university programs alone are not enough to achieve the level necessary for conducting scientific work or attending and lectures in English. Consequently, upon enrollment in university, students often show poor results in placement tests.

Project 5-100 was launched by the Russian Ministry of Education and Science to improve the prestige of Russian higher education and lift at least five universities into top one hundred universities in the world according to the three most authoritative world university rankings: Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), Times Higher Education (THE), and Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU).

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Participation in Project 5-100 contributed to the internalization of academic programs and the academic mobility of students, researchers, and teaching staff. Project 5-100 played a significant role in increasing the visibility and status of Russian higher education and science in the global science and education. The Accounts Chamber of Russia concluded that Project 5-100 generally corresponded to many trends that designate the initiatives of academic excellence in leading economies, including stimulating competition among universities, internationalizing all areas of activity and increasing scientific potential. The Project led to significant positive systemic changes and strengthened university science, without which advancement in global rankings would not be possible. The number of Russian universities in the international institutional rankings ARWU, THE, and QS increased more than threefold, from 15 to 51. Sixteen subjects at eight universities were included in the top-100 World subject rankings. A significant qualitative shift took place in the development of Russian higher education system and science in general. Project 5-100 universities (including SUSU) also formed a modern infrastructure for solving various scientific issues. Within educational institutions, new world-class research laboratories were established, headed by leading Russian and foreign scientists, and involving undergraduates and postgraduates.

The Project facilitated an increase in the number of hours of English language classes and ability to divide students into groups according to their level. The university management of SUSU realized the importance of advanced knowledge of English not only for students but for the teaching staff as well. After introduction of Project 5-100, publication activity with an emphasis on high-ranked publications, which require a high level of English, became a priority. Understanding the prospects of teaching in English and attracting foreign students, courses of English for the teaching staff were introduced. Groups were formed according to the level starting from elementary and progressing to advanced. Courses such as "English Medium Instruction", "Business Writing", "Preparation for BEC" and "Presentations" were also taught. When Project 5-100 was introduced, the program was aimed at taking IELTS and conducting research and writing papers in English.

Increasing the English language level from elementary (A1) to advanced (C1) was primarily to facilitate writing papers for high-ranked journals. Reaching a level sufficient for reading scientific works in English and writing papers was aided by the SUSU Academic Writing Office which provided support and editing by native speakers. Teaching in English was also introduced into many academic courses. However, teaching in English requires an even higher level of English as many students have high levels themselves and the lecturer may therefore feel uncomfortable not being able to conduct the lesson to the highest standard. Thus, the possibility of increasing the English language level to proficiency (C2) was

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discussed. A group of lecturers having papers in high-ranked journals and who teach in English was formed. This paper analyses the results which learners of this group presented after a year of study at C2 level. Although a substantial amount of research has been done on teaching English, high levels such as C1 and C2 are often ignored. In this paper, we discuss the possibility of teaching such high levels to teaching staff.

The paper aims to answer two research questions: Is it possible for Russian speaking teaching staff to achieve Proficiency (C2) level? What are the advantages of teaching staff having Proficiency level?

Literature review. Teaching staff of modern universities spend much time and efforts on improving their English skills for different purposes. The internationalization of modern higher education requires faculty to communicate on the international level, that is, to take part in international conferences, to publish articles in high-ranked journals in Scopus or Web of Science, to communicate with researchers from different parts of the world, to follow the latest trends in their area, to teach multinational groups, etc. That means an intermediate level of English is not enough. For the purposes of this paper we consider the literature on English for Scientific Purposes and EMI. Flowerdew indicates that the main purpose of English as a global lingua franca is promoting the dissemination of knowledge. "This is good for all those concerned and improves the overall creation of scientific knowledge and, ultimately, the well-being of our planet" [4]. However, he points out that for "anglophone scholars, English is mother tongue and the language in which they have received their education. Thus, they do not need to make any special effort to learn an additional language (although they do need to acquire the particular register and genres which are required for academic publication)", whereas "non-Anglophones and their governments, have to invest in learning English" and their Anglophone counterparts will be able to produce "linguistically more refined texts" with "a superior impact on the recipients" [4].

Understanding that those, as Flowerdew puts it, "who do not know English to adequate levels of proficiency are denied access to important research findings of value to their communities". Researchers in Russia try not to apply to the help of translation agencies but study English and improve to the level necessary for their own high-quality transition of their research.

Teaching requires a knowledge of English high enough for lecturers to transfer knowledge of their discipline and to be able to discuss, analyze, and assess information. Macaro et al. state that English Medium Instruction (EMI) in countries where the first language of the majority of the population is not English is a "growing global phenomena in all phases of education and educational settings. Other authors acknowledge the presence of this phenomena in higher education [9].

Lasagabaster, Doiz, Sierra and Earls say that higher educational institutions are eager to "offer both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes through the

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medium of English" [8]. Macaro et al. point out that "the reasons for this are various and context-dependent, but in general it is a perceived need to internationalize the university in order to increase its prestige, a need to attract foreign students because of falling enrolment numbers of local students through changing demographics, national cuts in higher education investment; the need of the state sector to compete with the private sector; and the status of English as an international language, particularly in the domain of research publications" [9].

According to CEFR, C1 and C2 levels require knowledge of both General and Academic English. Researchers should have good level of Academic English to share the results of their work through publishing and teaching. Researchers who create a corpus of words for each level pay special attention to word usage so that people can acquire vocabulary which is relevant to the sphere they study, work in, or research. The importance of language proficiency is stressed by a number of researchers who write about the appropriate use of the language according to the context that shows whether the speaker is fluent enough in the target language [1]. Some researchers pay special attention to fluency and proficiency in the written communication which are assessed according to CEFR scales: a range of cohesive links, a variety of organizational patterns, logic, etc. [6].

The question is: how to evaluate the level of proficiency? Research suggests using the Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency (CAF) formula [13]. Different definitions and interpretations of these three criteria are given and we use the ones which provide us with special measurements to assess the level of our learners. Complexity (lexical, morphological, syntactic, and phonological) is a property or quality that includes the number and the nature of discrete components and the relationship among them [7]. To analyze the progress of our learners we paid special attention to complexity: lexical range; morphological inflection, derivation, and composition; syntactic devices, subordination and clause constituents; and phonological pronunciation, tone, and stress patterns. To make assessment easier, computational systems for the automatic analysis of complexity have been created. The most popular computational systems work with written sources to analyze syntactic or lexical complexity [7].

Accuracy is supposed to be the most transparent CAF notion as it is connected with errors the speaker makes; any deviation from the norm influences speaker's accuracy. The third constituent of CAF, fluency, is described as the ability to speak or write a language easily, well, and quickly. We usually associate fluency of the second language with smooth and effortless speech or with use of different sentence structures in written texts. Researchers speaking about L2 fluency also mention speed which can be a valid indicator in oral speech (though sometimes speed depends on psychological traits of a person) but in written texts it seen more in organizational patterns than in the time a person spends on a written task. As the etymology of the term fluency suggests, "flow" in assessing the fluency

ВАК: 5.8 Педагогика ГРНТИ: 140000. Народное образование. Педагогика

should be about smoothness of speech either it is oral or written [4]. Fluency can also be assessed by special automatic systems like automatic speech recognition technology which analyzes speech rate, the number and length of pauses, articulation rate, and other indicators of fluency [3]. Talking about L2 proficiency, researchers name several things a learner needs to acquire: linguistic competence (the use syntax and morphology), linguistic knowledge (rules in grammars and vocabulary in dictionaries), and a representation of the language in real time [7]. While developing linguistic competence and deepening linguistic knowledge learners face L1 interference which can be a challenge for reaching C2 level proficiency. Researchers identify social reasons and cognitive factors such as wide social and psychological distance between cultures, lack of motivation, difficulties in acquiring certain rules which can prevent learners from getting better results (Myles, 2002). To overcome these difficulties learners are suggested to acquire fundamentals or standards to follow, to learn from their mistakes, to self-monitor, and to immerse themselves in the target language and culture [12].

Methods. *Background.* The C2 course was introduced to provide teaching staff with the opportunity of improving their language skills. The learners had different backgrounds in terms of English language learning. They studied at C2 level for 240 hours and had to pass a mock exam CPE at the end of the course. The content of the educational program and the results of the exam will be discussed below. Learners filled out a questionnaire about their background details, their attitude to the program, and their aims. Table 1 shows the main purposes the participants of the course identified.

Table 1.

Learners' course aims

Таблица 1.

Цели курса

Purpose	Percentage of participants	Comments
Education	91%	*Teaching in English, conducting lectures in English fluently Reading scientific literature in English*
Research	100%	*Participating in international conferences Communication and collaboration with foreign colleagues Working within the Presidential Grant aimed at foreign student adaptation Writing papers for high-ranked journals*
Improvement	26%	*Improving professional skills The development of communication and academic skills*

Program of the course. The purpose of the program was to develop English language competency among teaching staff to Proficiency (C2) level, to increase language integration, to conduct educational and research activity successfully, and

ASJC Scopus: Education 3304   OECD: 05.03.00 Educational sciences

to deliver seminars and lectures in English. The sphere of professional activity includes pedagogical activity in professional education and additional professional education. The results required the competency necessary to the understanding practically any oral or written message, producing coherent texts based on several oral and written prompts, speaking spontaneously, quickly and accurately, and understanding nuanced shades of meaning. The course also aimed at improving universal cultural competencies, such as abstract thinking, analysis, and synthesis; self-development, self-realization, and creativity; and general professional competencies such as the ability to communicate professionally in oral and written forms, to have a command of communicative strategies, rhetoric, stylistic, and linguistic norms and techniques in different spheres of communication; professional competencies such as the analysis, evaluation, annotation, and summarizing of their research results; the preparation and editing of scientific publications; and planning, organizing, and teaching in different types of lessons (e.g. laboratory classes, lectures, and seminars).

"Expert Proficiency" by Megan Roderick, Carol Nuttall, Nick Kenny was chosen as the main textbook for the course. Both the course and the resource books were used. The textbook was chosen based on the amount of listening as the learners considered this aspect the most difficult. Figure 1 shows which textbooks learners had used previously to show the basis for the Proficiency course. We can see that only few learners covered the whole course starting from level Elementary, some learners started from the Intermediate level which means they had good command of the language at the beginning of the Proficiency course.
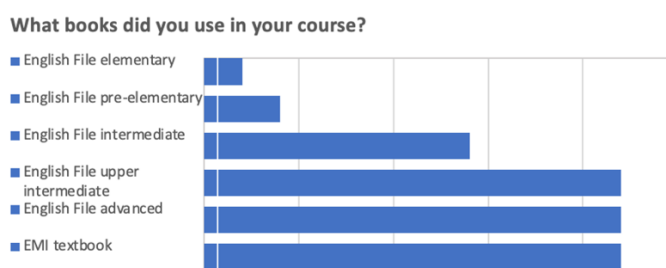

Fig. 1. Books used in the courses
Рис. 1. Учебники, использованные на курсах

*Participants.*Thirteen lecturers were enrolled into the course. They all had different background in English language study (Table 2). The majority of learners started the program from B2 level. The EMI course cannot be considered a general course of English as it covers the methodology, techniques, and strategies of teaching in English. Although it pays no explicit attention to grammar, vocabulary and listening skills, it improves speaking skills and critical thinking.

BEC was suggested as a higher level course for teachers of Economics and Management. It can be considered a level preparing for C2 as it helps learners to communicate effectively at managerial and professional level, to participate with

ВАК: 5.8 Педагогика ГРНТИ: 140000. Народное образование. Педагогика

confidence in meetings and presentations, to express themselves with a high level of fluency, and to react appropriately in different cultural and social situations. All the learners had experience in taking exams.

Table 2.

Levels attained by learners prior to the C2 course

Таблица 2.

Уровни, достигнутые слушателями, до прохождения уровня С2

Level	Those having it	Percentage out of total number
A1	1	7%
A2	2	15%
B1	5	38%
B2	11	84%
C1	10	76%
EMI	11	84%
BEC	3	23%

Table 3 shows the exams passed and the number of people who took them in figures and percentage. However, it should be noted that these were all mock exams. They were taken at the university and by the teachers working on the courses. In compliance with the requirements of the Road map of Project 5-100, 100 members of the university, including master's students, teachers, and researchers, took the IELTS exam.

Table 3.

Exams taken by learners prior to the C2 course

Таблица 3.

Экзамены, сданные слушателями, до прохождения уровня С2

Mock exams	KET	PET	FCE	IELTS	EMI	CAE	BEC
Number of students who took the exam	2	3	8	5	3	11	3
Percentage out of total number	15.4%	23.1%	61.5%	38.5%	23.1%	84.6%	23.1%

Table 2 and Table 3 show that course participants had previous experience in preparing for and taking exams; the EMI course included preparing a lecture making use of all the necessary teaching strategies and methodologies. The learners were asked to evaluate what they considered difficult during the course. Figure 2 shows the main aspects of language acquisition which they found difficult.
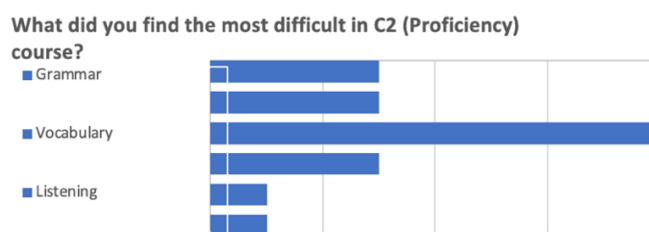

Fig. 2. Difficulties in mastering level C2
Рис. 2. Трудности в освоении уровня С2

Judging by the answers, listening skill is the hardest to master, 61% of learners mentioned it. The students found grammar vocabulary and speaking similarly difficult, about 23%, respectively, mentioned it.

Table 4.

Example of lesson content

Таблица 4.

Примерное содержание урока

Aspect	Time	Materials used	Comments
Grammar	40 min	Additional grammar exercises from the Internet, grammar tables	Grammar is usually a weak point, so additional emphasis was put on its revision.
Vocabulary	20 min	Vocabulary quizzes and tasks on using vocabulary in speech	Dictation was often used to check how they learn words. If learners did not have enough time to learn words, they were asked to make up their own sentences with active vocabulary and practice them in class with other learners translating these sentences from English into Russian and back.
Listening	20 min	Audio files from mock tests CPE from the Internet	Listening was the most difficult part and was stressful for learners. Therefore, not to discourage them, audio from book were presented in class and much attention was put on pre-listening tasks.
Reading	20 min	No additional texts	There were enough texts in the coursebook, however to increase the amount of vocabulary, the learners were asked to write out and learn new words and word combinations from the texts.
Speaking	30 min	No additional speaking exercise	The learners had good experience in speaking English as much attention was placed on speaking in every level they passed. However, each speaking task in the student book was covered and each learner was given enough time in the lesson to focus on it.
Writing	15 min	No additional writing tasks	Writing tasks from the book were discussed in class, but the writing was given as homework.

Structure and content of lessons. The lesson usually lasted for 3 hours - 4 academic hours of 45 minutes each. Each lesson covered Grammar, Vocabulary, Reading, and Listening. Writing was usually trained once every two lessons. Additional materials were used in every lesson to facilitate the mastering of skills. This paper focuses on the feasibility of using C2 level in the program of CPD for teaching staff of a higher educational establishment, therefore we do not go into the content or teaching of the lessons in detail. However, the timing of each lesson could be changed according to the needs of the learners. If problems were spotted in any topic or material, next lesson was supported by some additional materials. Tables 4 shows example content from a lesson.

Results and Findings. To evaluate the results of the course a mock CPE exam was conducted. The exam consisted of two parts, which took place on different days. The first day, was the written part of the exam, which was done in class under the supervision of their teacher. The second day they did the Speaking

ВАК: 5.8 Педагогика ГРНТИ: 140000. Народное образование. Педагогика

part. The interlocuter was the teacher of the group and the assessor was a teacher unknown to the learners. Table 5 shows the mock exam results.

Table 5.

Mock CPE exam results

Таблица 5.

Результаты пробного экзамена CPE

	Use of English (max.30)	Reading (max. 16)	Listening (max. 30)	Writing (max. 25)	Speaking (max. 25)	Total (max. 126)
Irina	15/50%	4/25%	8/37%	22/73%	23/77%	62/49%
Elena	21/70%	12/75%	16/53%	23/77%	25/100%	97/77%
Maria	16/53%	11/69%	4/13%	20/67%	23/77%	74/59%
Olga	22/77%	16/100%	30/100%	25/100%	25/100%	118/94%
Anna	12/40%	10/62%	20/67%	23/77%	25/100%	90/71%
Leonid	14/47%	6/37%	7/23%	23/77%	23/67%	70/55%
Sergey	13/43%	7/44%	16/53%	25/100%	25/100%	86/68%
Elena	24/80%	7/44%	21/70%	25/100%	24/80%	101/80%
Larisa	15/50%	8/50%	2/7%	20/67%	25/100%	70/55%
Kirill	20/67%	14/87%	17/57%	25/100%	25/100%	101/80%
Natalya	26/87%	14/87%	13/43%	25/100%	25/100%	103/81%

To show the improvement of individual learners during the course, Table 6 gives the results of previous exams.

Discussion. This paper studied the possibility of using a Proficiency course of general English in CPD of teaching staff who teach in English at SUSU. The results were evaluated using a mock CPE exam and on the basis of the exam results at the end of the learners' previous course, which differed for learners as they had studied different courses prior to the Proficiency course. The learners underwent a preliminary test, which consisted of the same parts as the final CPE mock exam. However, this was considered uninformative to compare the results of the preliminary and final test as not all learners were not familiar with the format of the CPE exam, and such international exams are usually procedurally oriented and strategies are usually provided in coursebooks. The results are discussed separately based on the course and the aspects checked. The conclusions and the results of the two mock exams are compared to check the feasibility of introducing Proficiency (C2) level into the CPD of the teaching staff of SUSU. The aspects being analyzed are Use of English (Grammar and Vocabulary), Reading, Listening, Writing and Speaking. The average passing grade is supposed to be 87%. The result at 78% mean C1 level.

Table 3 depicts the results for each aspect of the exam and total result for all the aspects in percentage view. Consequently, the results will be discussed considering all the aspects to discuss the feasibility of introducing C2 course into the continuous professional development of the teaching staff. However, the findings will not be discussed as the reason for abandoning the idea of introducing such course, more likely it would mean that both more time should be spared for this

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course mastering and more focus should be placed on the aspect which were failed by the learners.

Table 6.

Learners' previous English language exam results

Таблица 6.

Результаты ранее сданных слушателями экзаменов

BEC	Use of English	Reading (max.17)	Listening (max.5)	Writing (max.5)	Speaking (max.30)	Total (max.57)
Lena	Not tested	16/94%	4/80%	5/100%	29/96%	54/95%
Larisa	Not tested	16/94%	4/80%	5/100%	28/93%	53/93%
Leonid	Not tested	14/82%	4/80%	5/100%	29/96%	51/89%
Sergey	Not tested	17/100%	4/80%	5/100%	30/100%	56/98%
CAE	Use of English (max.28)	Reading (max.50)	Listening (max.30)	Writing (max.40)	Speaking (max.25)	Total (max.173)
Anna	26/93%	49/98%	29/98%	32/80%	22/88%	158/91%
Olga	27/96%	50/100%	30/100%	39/97%	24/96%	170/98%
Natalya	27/96%	49/98%	29/98%	38/95%	24/96%	168/97%
Elena	25/89%	49/98%	28/93%	30/75%	23/92%	155/89%
FCE	Use of English (max.28)	Reading (max.42)	Listening (max.30)	Writing (max.40)	Speaking (max.60)	Total (max.200)
Masha	26/93%	40/95%	29/97%	39/97%	57/95%	191/95%
Kirill	*No previous results available*					
Irina	*No previous results available*					

Aspects of the testing evaluation analysis. The pass mark for C2 grade is 87% result, Speaking and Writing test results suggest that these aspects were passed for C2 level by all the learners of the group, the average results were 93 % and 96 % respectively. However, Reading was passed by three learners (Olga 100 %, Kirill 88 %, and Natalya 88 %). Listening was passed for C2 level only by one learner (Olga 100 %), and Use of English by one learner (Natalya 87 %).

The Speaking results are as a result of several factors. Firstly, the learners had experience of studying for international exams, each of which emphasize speaking skills. Most educational literature used in the course is full of speaking exercises, which generally means that students speak each lesson both individually and in pairs. Secondly, those who studied at the Proficiency course teach in English which involves preparing lectures, structuring the material, answering students' questions, and having to deal with unexpected situations all of which requires fluent English. Seminars and practical classes require knowing English terminology and more. Lastly, this C2 course contained a lot of speaking material, which was focused on right before the mock exam. The good level of Writing skills can be due to teaching in English; preparation for lectures requires selecting and organizing English material. The teaching staff of SUSU does research which implies extensive reading and the writing of scientific papers for international journals. All the learners of the group also participated in Academic writing course, dealing with the structure, stylistics, grammar, and vocabulary of research papers.

ВАК: 5.8 Педагогика ГРНТИ: 140000. Народное образование. Педагогика

The Reading and Use of English sections were difficult for the students due to the abundance of new vocabulary which could have been poorly learned because of the lack of time arising from the high workload at the university. Therefore, more time should probably be spent on mastering these aspects. Learners state that the true/false task are difficult for Russian speaking learners, which could be explained by different world picture and cultural issues of English and Russian people. Listening is described as the most difficult skill to master, (61%, see Figure 1). The greatest problem is to detect the information necessary for the task while avoiding extra, unnecessary, information. Failure to understand even a small amount of the information leads to frustration and difficulty proceeding with the task. The usage of synonyms and paraphrasing are not generally the things taught in Russian schools and universities, so to master them at a later age is challenging, and those who start preparing for international exam at an earlier age have better results.

General grade analysis. Table 5 shows only one student, Olga, reached C2 level; Elena, Anna, Lena, Kirill, and Natalya reached C1 level. The other learners reached B2 or lower. Following individual trajectories, Olga, Natalya, and Elena had sat a mock CAE exam, which is the level preceding the CPE exam, thus, they already knew the procedure and strategies for this type of exam. Lena sat a mock BEC exam which covers vocabulary related to economics and grammar suitable for C1 level, but the exam does not check grammar separately. Kirill had not taken any mock exams, but he teaches in English, writes papers in English for high-ranked journals, and attended academic writing courses. However, the current course structure, with 240 hours of practical training annually without work interruption, is still insufficient for students to achieve mastery. We recommend increasing the practical training to 360 or 480 hours. The additional 120-240 hours should focus on addressing the specific areas where students struggled on the mock exam.

Conclusion. Proficiency level is complicated to achieve for non-native speaker and non-resident of an English-speaking country. The knowledge can be obtained through practice of speaking, reading, writing skills development and grammar and vocabulary revision on a regular basis. However, difficulties connected with time constraints, financial issues and university politics fail to provide teacher with the opportunity to study English up to the highest level. On the one hand, we must admit that the teachers in question have access to practice of the aspects owing to their experience of teaching in English language. On the other hand, only reading lectures which are usually made once and then just reproduced to students fail to improve their knowledge of English. Time constraints due to heavy load with teaching, doing research and mastering foreign language makes teachers use AI for translating lectures into English, which also does not contribute to enhancing foreign language knowledge. Courses of English, designed properly and successively can improve, facilitate and enhance ability to deliver lectures, conduct seminars, lead discussions in English as well

as read and write scientific papers. However, it takes much time and effort to achieve and maintain it. Our research considered the results of a one-year course at CPE level for staff at a university in Russia. The findings suggest that it is possible to improve English levels if learners are appropriately prepared. Future research will be conducted on the same group to assess how they maintained the level obtained or improved it after another course.

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