

Review research paper

INTEGRATING NATION'S FOUR STRANDS IN TEACHING LEGAL ENGLISH VOCABULARY TO AROUSE LEARNERS' INTEREST - AN EMPIRICAL STUDY AT HANOI LAW UNIVERSITY

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Abstract. *Contemporary researches on vocabulary acquisition have equipped teachers with countless diverse approaches to motivate their learners to enrich and retain their in-class taught terms. Nonetheless, employing these designed methods into teaching practices has not drawn up many teachers' attention. In order to facilitate the teachers' vocabulary teaching, Nation (2007a) introduced a method called The Four Strands. The paper aims to examine whether integrating the Four Strands into Legal English classes will waken students' enjoyment of Legal English vocabulary learning or not. Therewith, it reveals students' memorizing capability in legal English terms after a 7-week period. Two batches of juniors at Hanoi Law University in Vietnam were involved in the experimentation: One labelled the treatment group (N=30) and the other marked the control one (N=30). Survey questionnaires were used to figure out students' awareness of necessity of legal English vocabulary learning and obstacles they faced as well. Besides, pre-test and post-test, and semi-structured interview were also imposed to collect data. The two first instruments illustrated that the experimental group outperformed the control group. Meanwhile, the third one was to measure students' interest in the treatment group in legal English classes where the Four Strands principle used. The outcomes demonstrated that population in the treatment group showed more delectation in picking up legal English terms and their ability of retaining the words is more excellent than those in the control one, which was witnessed by scores of the two post-tests.*

Key words: *Four Strands, Legal English Vocabulary, Learners' Interest*

1. INTRODUCTION

Enrolling for English language major at Hanoi Law University means that legal English will become undergraduates' main tool in their future career. This means that legal English vocabulary will be their accoutrements in working life. Therefore, the bigger vocabulary size they possess, the more confident they experience themselves. In other words, a rich vocabulary budget enables them to be proficient in all communication skills. However, anomalous idiosyncrasies of legal English vocabulary extinguish learners'

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motivation. For that reason, tracking down an approach that can inspire learners in learning legal English vocabulary is comparatively crucial for teachers in that they would like to make use of the university time to equip their students the most to harmonize with the global market, where new workforce, as in Lan's (2022), are selected and hired with a demanding recruitment procedure on a regular basis. Furthermore, job seekers in legal field now tend to obtain at least two diploma degrees, one is a bachelor of law and another is in legal English or general English major. What is more, English certificates or corporate English competency tests are not highly appreciated by headhunters since they reason that to acquire legal English literacy, people surely experience an intensive and formal education to comprehend its nature. This proves that the white-collar workers in legal bodies must possess a proficient advanced English competency.

Needless to say, learning vocabulary is a fundamental part of acquiring and being proficient in a language. Unlike other components in language learning process such as grammar, semantics, phonology, pragmatics all taught in distinct courses, vocabulary cannot be separately learned or taught (Zorica & Sanja, 2022). It is only acquired in the context of Reading, Listening, Speaking and Writing. Due to the fact that vocabulary is the first item which learners must learn and it splices learners' language learning operations lastingly. Without vocabulary, learners cannot deepen their comprehension into any language subjects. In other words, vocabulary is not up to be unmindful throughout language learning experiences. Accordingly, enriching vocabulary is incumbent and relentless to language learners. Notwithstanding, learning words can be utterly uninspiring and weary. Opposite to general English vocabulary that is close and happens repeatedly in learners' daily situations, learning legal English terminologies becomes more arduous because of their features and applications. It requires learners to master both their own major and language. Therefore, designating a vocabulary teaching method which stimulates learners' enjoyment is a tough challenge for teachers. Only when learners find learning vocabulary diverting can they memorize more words deeply and permanently.

As aforementioned, vocabulary learning is crucial in language learning. However, this activity is often considered a boring one that demotivates learners the most. Therefore, arousing students' interest is an in-question issue for any language teachers as interest is known as an active energy that supports its owner to do everything the best. Building and maintaining interest for learners in learning process is the activity that any teachers and educators keep hunting for. The reason why is that learning enjoyment is consistently considered as the conduit between the learners and particular subjects from which they can have an untroubled intake of knowledge without hassle or hurdle. In other words, if learners are engaged in their desired subjects, their vigorous involvement in learning activities will be sparked with full time and effort investment. Accordingly, they are able to exploit the content deeply as well as spring up creative and meaningful ideas. In essence, the interest shall turn invisible concepts into visible ones.

Arousing learners' interest in learning legal English vocabulary plays a vital role in legal English learning process. Only when learners possess a huge stock of vocabulary, will they become more confident and effective in their professional communications. Applying Nation's four strands theory in English language teaching is trendy these days because of its outweigh advantages to other teaching approaches, which proved through many researches. The Four Strands theory was introduced by Nation (2007) emphasizing that four equal strands, including meaning focused input, meaning focused output, language focused learning, and fluency development must be fundamental components of

a well balance language course. There have been numerous applications carried out by teachers worldwide. Paul and Azusa (2012) employed this principle in language learning in which they depicted how a balance of learning opportunities was implemented in self-study foreign language learning without the teacher's presence. The research indicated that the four strands principle is not mere for teaching and course designing, but it is a useful tool for learners' to boost their autonomy. Another study accomplished by Brian (2012) investigated the effectiveness of incorporating Nation's theory to broaden students receptive and productive vocabularies. The research result evidences that Nation's theory facilitates teaching and learning vocabulary. As Dario (2014) concluded in his study, vocabulary should not learned by memorizing a term separately from its context. On the contrary, providing a meaningful context will enhance the effectiveness of vocabulary acquisition and retention. From abovementioned analysis, it can be concluded that boosting the interest and facilitating learning in students can only be done by balancing learning tasks during classes rather than putting a big focus on any of them.

This study attempts to verify The Four Strands by Nation in a context of underexplored legal English majors. More precisely, this paper tends to detect whether applying this theory to the teaching legal vocabulary leads to effective vocabulary learning and long-term memorization or not, by addressing the two following questions:

1. What is the difference between students' academic results in four strands applied class and the other?
2. What are students' perceptions on teacher's implementing Nation's four strands in legal English classes

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Legal Vocabulary

Legal English is a vehicle that legal practitioners communicate with each other in their workplace in the countries where English is spoken officially. It is unquestionable that globalization moulds legal English into a lingua franca in legal field worldwide. On that account, affiliating with distinct legal systems obliges legal experts to practise proficiently in English using the pertinent legal language. Alternatively stated, legal experts are involved in both being knowledgeable in law and possessing an excellent knowledge of legal English to furnish themselves. Therefore, designing legal English courses in the curriculum is the top priority for any schools of law worldwide.

Legal English is supposed to be challenging to construe even for native speakers because of its typical qualities consisting of technical terms, linguistic structure, linguistic convention and punctuation. Legalese is an outstanding characteristic of legal English. Schane (2006) stated "incomprehensible verbiage found in legal documents as well as an arcane jargon used among attorneys". Thus, it is always thought that legal English is notably distinctive from other types of English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Northcott (2008) investigated legalese in terms of the forensic linguistics and legal discourse. Both dimensions require deep comprehension of linguistic characteristics in the context of law or legal texts. According to the linguists, Veretina (2012) indicated that stylistics was not to list the kinds of styles but to observe and describe the language features of a style, including morphological, lexical, syntactic and textual features. She explored legal English vocabulary into two dimensions, that is, lexical and syntactic features.

In the matter of lexical feature which refers to the use of archaic terms, a formal style used by legal experts called legalese such as *pursuant to* (e.g., under; in accordance with); *prior to* (before); *subsequent to* (after), etc. Legalese sets up barriers for laypersons to construe. Veretina illustrated (2012) that although legal experts tend to use archaic words less frequently than other terms, many archaic words including *hereinafter*; *aforesaid*; *therein*; *thereto*; *thereof* can still be found in many legal documents. Besides, Rylance (1994) noted that *technical terms* are used on a regular basis in the field of law. Some of them are familiar to laypersons (e.g., *patent*, *share*, *royalty*), while others are only known to lawyers (e.g., *bailment*, *abatement*), which can cause misunderstanding. Also, there are common words with uncommon meanings in specific legal contexts, e.g., “*attachment*, *action*, *consideration*, *execute*, *party*”. What’s more, a variety of Latin and French words and phrases are found in legal English. Examples of words of Latin origin are *negligence*, *inferior*, *versus*, *pro se*, *stare decisis*, *obiter dictum*, etc. Moreover, Veretina (2012) affirmed the influence of French was shown not only in the words of French origin (e.g., *appeal*, *claim*, *complaint*, *court*, *default*), but also in the position of adjectives behind the modified nouns in phrases such as *attorney general*, *fee simple absolute*, *state auditor general*, etc. Especially, the presence of synonyms is an outstanding feature in legal English documents. Garner (1989) listed that most common types of synonym pairs were doublets and triplets with the conjunction “and”, e.g., *act and deed*, *legal and valid*, *goods and chattels*, *null and void*, etc.

On the subject of the syntactic features, Veretina (2012) mentioned that complex and compound sentences rather than simple ones are drafted in legal documents. Specifically, sentences in legal documents include a great deal of information, repetitiveness, noun phrases with plenty of modification as well as coordinate and subordinate clauses. Nominalization is more preferred to use in formal writings, and legal writing is not an exception. Nouns deriving from verbs are often used instead of verbs. For example, *to give consideration* instead of *to consider*, *to be in opposition* rather than *to oppose*. Bhatia (1993) noted that nominalization made the text long and non-dynamic. Into the bargain, third person (e.g., *everybody*, *nobody*, and *everybody*) and passive voice belonging to the impersonal style are employed frequently in legal writing, which sounds that law is impartial and unbiased. However, Veretina (2012) highlighted that such generalization somewhat incited vagueness and blocked people not specializing in law to perceive the actual meaning.

2.2. Nation’s Four Strands

Nation (2007a) invented a new language teaching method which highlighted the role of the Four Strands to ensure the success of learning and retaining vocabulary that is considered a key factor of language learning. This approach includes four components, namely *meaning-focused input*, *meaning-focused output*, *language-focused learning*, and *fluency development*. The aims of these strands are to create a balance of tasks implemented or concerned during language learning process. In other words, vocabulary should be learned and understood comprehensively and applied skillfully among various situations. In the following paragraphs, the relations of researches on vocabulary to these components have been outlined. Recognizing how they are related to lexical acquisition is material to access the most optimal way to teach vocabulary effectively.

Meaning-focused input is depicted as a phase in which learners’ main concern is gaining knowledge from what they read and listen to in a foreign language. Using the language

receptively while listening and reading through typical activities such as listening to stories, watching TV or films, being a listener in a conversation, or extensive reading, and shared reading, will guarantee learners' hunger to access the input. To reach the mentioned achievement in this strand, Nation (2007) listed five of its prerequisites, including (1) most of what is read and listened to must be accustomed to learners; (2) learners shall show their great engagement in the input and desire to explore it; (3) the unknown word ratio in learning materials should occupy less than five percent; (4) context clues and background knowledge can facilitate learners to exploit unknown language items; and (5) the quantities of input are large. Sharing with Nation's viewpoint, Laufer (1992) found that learners should apprehend 95 % of the words or more of what they obtain as input. In Schmitt, Jiang & Grabe's study (2011), this proportion is about 98%. Karen (1989) concluded that learning lexical from reading materials is a gainful method in that learner can acquire the meaning and usage of their unknown words most fully and thoroughly in reading contexts which no dictionary, not even the best, can provide them.

Meaning-focused output is the stage when learners absorb knowledge through speaking and writing, that means the language is practiced productively through common tasks like communicating in conversations, making a speech or lecture, drafting a letter, writing a note to someone, keeping a diary, telling a story, or instructing someone how to do something. Most of these activities are completed under the presence of both meaning-focused input and output. The requirements for the success in this phase, as noted in Nation's (2007), comprise the following: (1) issues that learners are asked to speak or write about must be popular to them; (2) learners' message must be addressed to someone else; (3) learners' unfamiliar language items should account for a very small portion; (4) communication strategies, dictionaries, and available input should be utilized to the fullest extent to complement learners' understanding; (5) opportunities of speaking and writing should be accessible for learners. These conditions were proved their role in Griffin & Harley's (1996) that learners can acquire more and richer knowledge from productive learning than receptive learning.

Language focused learning is the time when some language learning aspects are aimed at, such as practicing pronunciation, using substitution tables and drills, learning words from cards, reading intensively, translating, memorizing dialogues, and getting feedback about writing. This strand is formerly known as *focus on form*, *form-focused instruction*, or *deliberate study deliberate teaching*, and so on. However, the name given by Nation (2007) *language-focused learning* can avoid misleading, so it becomes a popular and preferable one. Although most of these activities can vest practical impacts in language learning and using, the amount of time spent on this phase, from Nation's point of view, should make up one-quarter of the entire course. Nonetheless, this strand cannot be actualized without required conditions detailed in Nation's (2007): (1) applied language features must receive learners' deliberate attention; (2) the focused language features should be processed deeply and thoughtfully; (3) the same focused language features should be repeated attentively and persistently; (4) the focused language features should be relevant and pertinent to the learners' developmental knowledge; (5) the studied language items in the language-focused learning strand should appear in other phases of the course. Previously, in his research, Laufer (2006) also demonstrated the effectiveness of the language-focused learning by concluding that *focused on forms* is crucial to deepening knowledge, enriching vocabulary, enhancing vocabulary use ability, and flourishing strategic competencies.

Fluency development is the strand in which four language skills including listening, speaking, reading, and writing, are integrated to develop learners' ability to communicate messages fluently, coherently and accurately. The usual tasks which can be seen in this phase are reading speedily, skimming and scanning, reading repeatedly, retelling again and again, writing in ten minutes, and listening to short stories. Nation (2007) described four requirements to ensure the realization of this strand, namely (1) all content that learners access must be familiar to them; (2) the learners' great concern is communicating meaning; (3) some pressure and encouragement from the teacher should be applied to speed up learners' performance; (4) the amount of accessible input and output shall be in a larger size. The role of these conditions used to be confirmed in an earlier study by Gatbonton & Segalowitz (2006) that there is a close relationship between learners' fluency level and their vocabulary size. Or Hilton's (2008) findings reveal a clear conduit between learners' understanding of a second language and their proficiency in using it. Her research also evidenced that the richer the learners' vocabulary is, the higher their speaking speed reaches.

3. METHOD

3.1. Research design

This descriptive, empirical research was primarily designed to test whether applying Nation's Four Strands theory in teaching legal English vocabulary could build up students' motivation in their learning practices and expand their vocabulary retention or not. Two groups with 60 students were selected at random, employing the stratified random sampling method. The study data were gathered by four distinctive instruments including pre-test and post-tests, adopted questionnaires, semi-structured interview and class observation. Each instrument serves a different purpose. Firstly, The pre-test and two post-tests discharged onsite at the first class, the twelfth and the fourteenth class respectively were to measure the gap between the experimental group and the control group; The adopted questionnaire (Huong, 2022) launched by active Google form in the emails in the course of a week with a clear explanation of the purpose and pertinence of the study to ensure that students are neither exposed nor obliged to participate if they find it inconvenient, was to estimate students' evaluation on the role of legal vocabulary learning. The semi-structured interview completed by 9 participants from different academic level based on teacher's assessment was to mark out students' engagement in legal vocabulary learning in legal English classes. Nine participants in semi-structured interview were formed as three 3-members groups. The first group includes 3 students with excellent academic result and quite dynamic during classes (student 1, student 2, student 3). The second group are students achieving good academic results and sometimes show their willingness in class activities (student 4, student 5, student 6). And the students with average academic results and often quiet in classes are the participants of the last group (student 7, student 8, and student 9), and researcher's class observation carried through 7-week course was to ascertain the alteration to legal English class atmosphere where the Four Strands was utilized. Finally, the data collected were treated by appropriate tools to unveil the most precise results.

3.2. Participants

Two classes (N01 and N03) with 60 students between the ages of 20 and 22 chosen randomly were employed in this study, in which the class N01 labelled the treatment group includes 9 boys and 21 girls, the other N03 marked the control group consisting of 10 boys and 20 girls. All of them are juniors from the faculty of Legal Foreign Language at Hanoi Law University in Vietnam, majoring in Legal English. They have already finished three legal English courses, including Basic Legal English Course 1, Basic Legal English Course 2, Advanced Legal English Course 1. They are going to start 42-period Advanced Legal English Course 2 course in 7 weeks. They have three 100-minute classes each week. For this course, they chiefly engage in three main topics during seven weeks including Unit – Employment Law; Unit - Intellectual Property and Unit - Competition Law.

All students sat in the pre-test to measure their vocabulary capacity and competence level. Their scores after being treated by SPSS and an independent samples t-test showed that there was no clear distinction between the two batches [No1 M=4.933, SD=1.1984; No3 M=4.700, SD=1.1332, $t(58)=-.303$, $p=.367$]. They all classified into the pre-intermediate level and it was for this reason that the students could be assessed as a homogenous group.

3.3. Research instruments

The chosen instruments were structured to supply various sources of data. In such event, pre-test and post-tests, survey questionnaires and semi-structured interview were adopted. Each tool established a material role in independent data collection: tests figured out the difference of students' vocabulary acquisition, survey questionnaires gained students' insights, and semi-structured interview determined students' engagement with some new applied teaching practices.

The pre-test and the first post-test nominated some sections of the TOLES¹ foundation test applied, includes 30 vocabulary questions related to legal English topics (company law, contract law, tort law they have just learned in Advanced Legal Course 1 that finished one week prior Advanced Legal Course 2 started) and lasts 25 minutes. The test includes three parts; the 1st part consists of questions where first to tenth check their understanding of using verbs and phrasal verb given to complete the sentences; the 2nd part is with questions 11 to 20 requiring to think of one word which best fits each space; the last part is with questions 21 – 30 requiring to put a preposition in each space to complete the sentences. The second post-test in the form of group work is oral presentation assignment. Each three-member group was told to prepare a presentation under one course topic. They were asked to apply the language learned. Each group presentation lasted around fifteen minutes, about 5 minutes for each group member. Students presented their work in power point presentations illustrated with pictures, facts, and figures. All tests were to display out the difference in legal English vocabulary competence between the experimental group and the control group before and after the treatment.

The survey questionnaire was adapted from Huong's (2022) to measure students' perceptions of the obstacles in learning legal English and the necessity of legal English vocabularies. The items in Huong's questionnaires were piloted by three experienced

¹ Practice papers for TOLES foundation and higher – Practice book one. The world's Leading Legal English Exam published by Global Legal English Limited, England.

instructors of English and a group of twenty students at Hanoi Law University to certify the strengths and weaknesses of the instrument, and then checked to meet the Alpha value, ranging from 0.84-0.90 reliable (Cronbach, 1951). The questionnaires include one question to find the participant's opinions on the necessity of learning legal English vocabulary. It was designed on a 5-point Likert Scale and the research participants were asked to show their thought by marking (1) very unnecessary, (2) unnecessary, (3) uncertain, (4) necessary, (5) very necessary. The other is to identify their difficulties in learning legal English. The latter comprises 15 items in which the first nine items are about typical characteristics of legal English deemed to cause troubles for learner, even native speakers (Haigh, 2009), the last 6 items are engaged in the differences between the Vietnamese and English legal system. Both questionnaires were designed on a 5-point Likert Scale and the research participants were asked to show their thought by marking (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) neutral, (4) agree, (5) strongly agree.

The semi-structured interview as Gill, Stewart, Treasure et al (2008) defended that interview as a qualitative method could provide a deeper understanding of a social phenomenon than a purely quantitative method, like questionnaire. In this study, nine researcher-made questions were structured based on the factual problems met by three experienced instructors of Legal English at Hanoi Law University in the course of their teaching operations. Then, a pilot interview was achieved by a group of five randomly selected students to validate the reliability of the set of questions. The result of the rehearsal turned out to be quite acceptable to obtain the research objectives.

3.4. Statistical tools

The paper made use of the Likert scale with equal attitudinal value. Therefore, the quantitative data was interpreted through descriptive statistics. Precisely, frequency count and percentage were inspected the necessity of Legal English vocabulary learning. Whereas, Descriptive mean was exercised to reflect an attitude toward the difficulties of legal English vocabulary learning and the differences in academic scores. Particularly, the former was depicted by participants in the rank from strongly disagree (1 – 1.8), disagree (1.9 – 2.6), neutral (2.7 – 3.4), agree (3.5 – 4.2), and strongly agree (4.3 – 5.0) while the latter was expressed on a 10-mark scale.

3.5. Procedure

At the time of Advanced Legal English course 2 starts, two groups (N01, N03) were opted unintentionally. Then, they were marked the treatment group (N01) and the control one (N03). In the course of experiment, the treatment group was engaged in Nation's Four Strand in their legal English classes. This means that they experienced the balance of activities relating to meaning-focused input (reading & listening activities); meaning-focused output (speaking & writing activities); language-focused learning, and fluency development. These strands were displayed as following.

The Four Strands applied in Legal English Classes

The Advanced legal English course 2 compared to Nation's (2007) descriptions is a content-based course. This signifies that all Nation's Four Strands will be taken together during each unit of study in the course. The teacher will decide flexibly how to sequence *meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output and language-focused learning* under

particular theme of the unit. Then, all learners' obtained knowledge from those three previous strands will be consolidated and polished in the strand of *fluency development*. The Four Strands set up contexts for learning tasks under certain conditions. Accordingly, it is advisable that the teacher in a single class ensures well-prepared perquisites to make the best use of each strand and expand learners' knowledge gained in the maximum size.

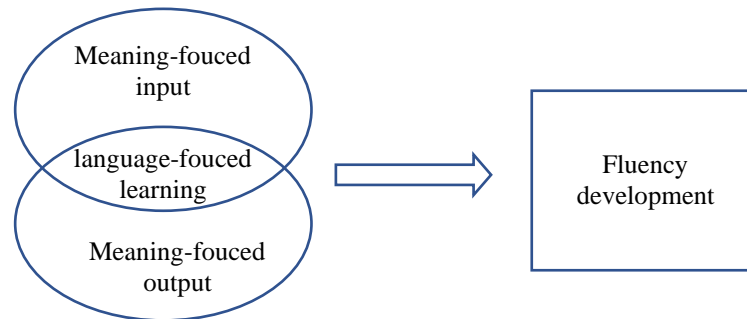


Fig. 1 Nation's Four Strands order application in the study

Figure 1 illustrates the application of Nation's Four Strands in this study. Because of the typical characteristics of legal vocabulary and structures of legal content in units extracted to the course, the designation of the Four Strands is allocated into two main stages, in which the first one includes all activities happening inside classroom where learners are exposed to the teacher's assistance the most. Otherwise, students are partly proactive with their activities based on the assigned tasks outside classroom. Namely, activities in the first stage covered three strands; meaning-focused input, meaning-focused output and language-focused learning which were administered flexibility during classes to equip students overall understanding on the topic, key terms and their functions for which students could gain fully comprehension of the terms. Then, students were engaged in tasks that inspired them to employ their just learned terms and knowledge to show their understanding. In the second stage, students were assigned writing tasks and oral tasks in the form of homework and asked to submit or present it in the next class.

Detailed tasks in each Strand carried out in Legal English Classes

The Four Strands principle has been witnessed to be applied in a numerous studies by different researchers worldwide. However, the employment of Four Strands in legal English vocabulary teaching and learning has not been seen anywhere else to the author's knowledge. In this study, the designation of the tasks was done on the platform of the principle of the Four Strands.

Table 2 Integrating the Four Strands into Legal English classes

Strands	Activities		
	Unit 8: Employment Law	Unit 11: Intellectual Property	Unit 15: Competition Law
Meaning focused Input	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read the Reading A: Introduction to Employment law and match the heading with the paragraph ▪ Read the text and answer given questions ▪ Read and decide the provided statements are True or False ▪ Translate the text into Vietnamese, pay attention to the meaning of bold key terms² ▪ Listen to the discussion and choose the mentioned topics ▪ Listen to the discussion and choose the correct answer among A, B or C. ▪ Listen and decide the given statements are True or False 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read the Reading A: Introduction to Intellectual Property and match the heading with the paragraph ▪ Read the text and answer the given questions ▪ Read and decide the provided statements are True or False ▪ Translate the text into Vietnamese, pay attention to the meaning of bold key terms (see Index 1) ▪ Listen to the discussion and choose the mentioned topics ▪ Listen to the discussion and choose the correct answer among A, B or C. ▪ Listen and decide the given statements are True or False 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read the Reading A: Introduction to Competition Law and match the heading with the paragraph ▪ Read the text and answer the given questions ▪ Read and decide the provided statements are True or False ▪ Translate the text into Vietnamese, pay attention to the meaning of bold key terms (see Index 1) ▪ Listen to the discussion and choose the mentioned topics ▪ Listen to the discussion and choose the correct answer among A, B or C. ▪ Listen and decide the given statements are True or False
Language focused Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Match the words to form collocations. ▪ Match the formal expressions with informal counterparts. ▪ Match the expressions with their functions. ▪ Study the use of passive voice in given illustrations ▪ Match the adjectives with their synonyms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Match the words to form collocations. ▪ Match the formal expressions with informal counterparts. ▪ Match the expressions with their functions. ▪ Study the use of passive voice in given illustrations ▪ Match the adjectives with their synonyms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Match the words to form collocations. ▪ Match the formal expressions with informal counterparts. ▪ Match the expressions with their functions. ▪ Study the use of passive voice in given illustrations ▪ Match the adjectives with their synonyms
Meaning focused Output	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make a short conversation to explain just-learned terms (bold terms in Reading A: Introduction to employment law) ▪ Work in pair to discuss the law that govern employment in your jurisdiction ▪ Summarize the Reading in a 100-150 word paragraph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make a short conversation to explain just-learned terms (bold terms in Reading A: Introduction to intellectual property) ▪ Work in pair to discuss the law that govern employment in your jurisdiction ▪ Summarize the Reading in a 100-150 word paragraph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make a short conversation to explain just-learned terms (bold terms in Reading A: Introduction to competition law) ▪ Work in pair to discuss the law that govern employment in your jurisdiction ▪ Summarize the Reading in a 100-150 word paragraph
Fluency Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare a group discussion on the required topic (sex discrimination, drug testing in the workplace, employer's responsibility, maternity leave), apply the phrases for agreeing and disagreeing just learned ▪ Write an email of advice based on the discussed topic (remedy for employment rights disputes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare a group discussion on the required topic, apply the phrases for agreeing and disagreeing just learned ▪ Choose a case and write Notes for a case brief based on the suggested heading: (facts of the case, legal issue in question, holdings and reasoning of the courts, and general legal significant of the case) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare a group discussion on the required topic, apply the phrases for warning a client of risks just learned ▪ Write a proposal based on the guided information and model letter (a proposal in the form of a letter to a client who is the managing director of a large company in the service sector)

² Appendix 1: Must-learn topic term list

Table 2 demonstrates a list of tasks carried out in legal English classes extracted from International Legal English under three adopted topics including Employment Law, Intellectual Property and Competition Law. As aforementioned in Figure 1, to tailor these tasks to the Four Strands principle, the author reordered the normal arrangement of the Four Strands, in which the Strand of language-focused learning was assimilated closely in both meaning-focused input and meaning-focused output rather than placed after one by one. During lectures in classroom, the teacher integrated these four strands flexibility to maximize the number of legal terms that learners can apprehend and retain. Particularly, the tasks such as understanding word forms and word collocations, functions of expression, word counterparts or grammar items in *language-focused learning* would be followed by activities in *meaning-focused input* like matching paragraph heading, deciding the statement True or False, answering the given questions, or finding equivalent terms in Vietnamese. Next, in the *meaning-focused output* phase, words forms, word collocations, word meaning acquired from reading or listening contexts are applied in learners' reproduced situations such as making a short conversation to explain the just-learned words with their partner or writing a 100-word summary on the reading text. Finally, in the strand of *fluency development*, learners are asked to work in group on a required topic related to the unit theme employing legal terms, phrases for agreeing or disagreeing to express their ideas. They would be asked to present their prepared topic in front of the class. Whereas, another task in writing an email of advice would be assigned as a homework for them and handed in the coming class. All tasks in all the Four Strands implemented under right conditions in a balanced period of time enables students to comprehend legal terms deeply and thoroughly. From that, learners were able to use the terms in appropriate contexts and memorize in a longer period.

Procedure in the session and order of tests

Table 3 Outline of the procedure in the sessions and order of tests

Group	Pre-test	Session 1	Session 2			Session 3	Post-tests	
E	Pre-test	Teacher introduces the topic	Meaning-focused input tasks	Language-focused learning tasks	Meaning-focused output tasks	Fluency development tasks	Post-test 1	Post-test 2 (oral presentation)
C	Pre-test	Teacher introduces the topic	Follow the introduced tasks under the topic in the coursebook (Language-focused learning)				Post-test 1	Post-test 2 (oral presentation)

E: Experimental Group; D: Control Group

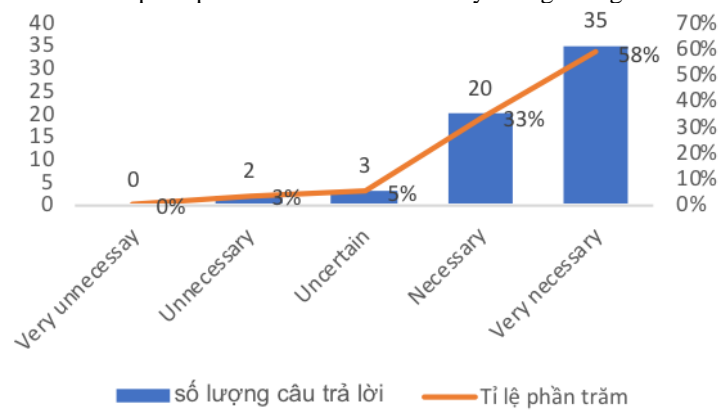
Table 3 illustrates the procedure of the study. Initially, two groups were seated in a pre-test to see where there was a difference between them. And then, the experimental group was engaged in the classes with the Four Strands applied. This means that the teacher researcher would deploy the tasks based on the Four Strands principle to provide students more opportunities to expose the content of the topic, especially acquire most legal English terms. The treatment was carried out during a seven-week course covering three main topics – Employment law; Intellectual property and Competition Law. These topics were structured in the syllabus of the Advanced legal English course 3 based on many requirements and the legal knowledge that they learned. Whereas, the control class would follow strictly the tasks and activities designed under each topic. After seven

week, two groups again seated in the post test 1 that was formatted the same as the pre-test. The ability of the students to apply the legal knowledge and legal terms on topics they learned in form of the oral presentation group assignment. The students' post-test 2 results were estimated based on how deeply they could explore the chosen legal topic, how many legal terms and how much language use they applied.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. The importance of legal English vocabulary

Table 4 Learners' perception towards the necessity of legal English vocabulary



From Table 4 it can be seen that almost all students surveyed stated that learning legal English vocabulary is essential in their legal English learning process. Total of 55 of 60 students agreed that legal English vocabulary is very necessary and necessary. This means that students considered learning legal English vocabulary as the premise for their succeeding legal English courses.

4.2. The difficulties of legal English vocabulary

Table 5 Students' difficulties in learning legal English terminology

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Legal major knowledge			
1. Use of common words with uncommon meaning	60	4.69	.052
2. Double and triple synonyms	60	3.15	.766
3. Archaic words	60	4.04	.938
4. Latin terms	60	3.71	1.048
5. French borrowed words	60	3.59	1.034
6. Nominalization	60	3.36	.564
7. Impersonal style	60	3.25	.732
8. Highly specialized concept	60	4.21	.827
9. Non-equivalent legal terms	60	4.27	.938

All nine items from Table 5 display students' opinion related to legal English vocabulary features that make them difficult to acquire. Among those characters, the participants strongly agreed that the use of common words with uncommon meaning was the most difficult factor with the highest mean of 4.69. Following this tendency, the factors of highly specialized concept and non-equivalent legal terms challenge learners in acquiring the legal English vocabulary. These items showed a high agreement among participants with mean of 4.21 and 4.27 respectively. Archaic words also cause some fear and boredom for learners with mean of 4.04. However, the use of double and triple synonyms, nominalization, and impersonal styles get the neutral idea from the participants with mean of 3.15, 3.29, and 3.36 respectively. Presence of Latin terms and French borrowed words induce some difficulties for learners with mean of 3.71 and 3.59 respectively, however SD of 1.048 and 1.034 respectively means that participants' opinion was quite scattered with different level of agreement. In short, legal English vocabulary features provoke many barriers for learners, particularly due to unpopular meaning, no equivalence, and quite specialized concepts deter learners from retaining and applying their learned terms.

4.3. The differences between students' results between four strands applied class and the other

To assess whether there is a difference in terms of academic results between the treatment group and the control group before and after the treatment, one pre-test and two post-tests were applied. The pre-test and 1st post-test adopted some parts of the TOLES test which matched the topics students had already learned. The 2nd post-test was in the form of oral presentation group assignment that students had some time to prepare with the teacher's assistance. And the grades of three mentioned tests are displayed in the Table 6 following.

Table 6 The pre-test and post-tests results between the treatment group and the control group

Descriptive Statistics				
	Class	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Pre-Test	N01	4.933	1.1984	30
	N03	4.700	1.1332	30
	Total	4.817	1.1623	60
Post-Test 1	N01	8.443	.5431	30
	N03	7.130	.7764	30
	Total	7.787	.9380	60
Post-Test 2	N01	8.300	.7497	30
	N03	7.583	.6958	30
	Total	7.942	.8030	60

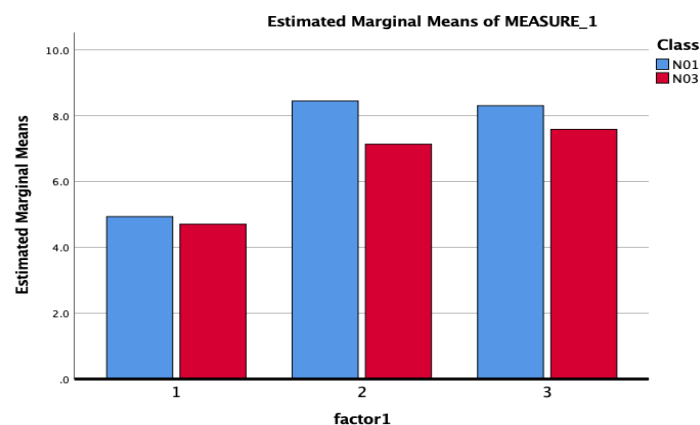
As clearly seen from Table 6, the results of pre-test are quite low and have no big difference between the two groups; the gap is just about 0.233 (N01, Mean=4.933 and N03, Mean=4.700). In addition, N01 and N03 with SD=1.1984 and 1.1332 respectively indicate the marks that students in both groups were quite sporadic, and many of them got low marks. Namely, in N01 the highest mark is 7.4, and the lowest one is 3.4. There were 12 students getting grade higher than 5, and the rest of 18 got lower than five. Besides,

the same can be witnessed in N03, the highest mark is also 7.4, but the lowest one is just 2.9. There are 14 students getting the mark higher than five, and 16 ones merited the marks lower than five. In a nutshell, the scores of pre-test between two groups were quite similar and ranked from low to above average. The number of students who got under average marks is more than above average mark. It can be concluded that although they just finished a course Advance legal English 1 one week earlier but the amount of learned legal terms retained is limit.

However, the grades of post-test 1 displayed in Table 6 show that the treatment group and the control group performed much differently. The members of the formers achieved much better marks and their marks scattered around good mark 8 ($M=8.443$; $SD=.5431$). In which the highest one is 9.1, and the lowest one is 7.7. There are 24 students getting mark 8. The members in the latter group did not show their outstanding ability in doing the post-test 1 ($M=7.130$; $SD=.9380$). Although their results in the post-test 1 was much better than the pre-test, but compared to the treatment group, their mark is lower than 1.313 mark. $SD=.9380$ revealing that the members' marks were quite close to each other, and that there was no big gap among members. In a few words, there can be witnessed a significant difference in terms of academic result between the group which was treated with the Four Strands method and the one which was just engaged in the traditional one.

To provide a confirmation of the effect of the Four Strands theory on legal English vocabulary teaching and learning, another test named post-test 2 in the presentation form was carried out. Students' presentations were assessed by criteria adopted from Matthews and Mario's (1990) including how logically the presentation is organized, how relevant to the topic the content is developed, how appropriate and diverse the language is applied, and how dynamic and attractive the presentation is delivered. All details were marked by two teachers and their final marks of post-test 2 were calculated by the average of two teachers'. In comparison with the control group, the results of the post-test 2 of the treatment group are also much better and the scores of the group member were quite close to each other with the $M=8.300$; $SD=.7497$ for N01 and $M=7.538$; $SD=.6958$ (see Table 6). In brief, the language demonstration of the treatment group in their oral presentation is quite better than the control group.

Table 7 The pre-test and post-tests results between the treatment group and the control group



Data displays in Table 7, once more time, illustrate the difference in academic scores between two groups in three test times. In the pre-test, both groups' results were rather low and the gap was insignificant. However, the distance was bigger in the post-test two, and the biggest in the post-test 1.

In conclusion, applying the Four Strands resulted in a significant effect on ameliorating the academic result. It can be evidenced undoubtedly from the outcome of the post-test 1 and post-test 2 between the treatment group and the control one that can be viewed in Tables 6 and 7.

4.4. Students' perceptions on teacher's implementing Nation's Four Strands in legal English classes

During the teaching and learning process, students' perception is a key factor that is considered whenever the teacher applies new methods. Rizky (2015) defined perception as one of the crucial psychological features because thanks to perception we are able to recognize the sorts of phenomenon existing in our environment. In another study performed by Depdiknas (2003), perception is depicted as a person's impression of a certain object which is generated by internal factors like personality and external factors such as circumstances. In his research, Danim (2010) reasoned that students are the key resource in the process of teaching and learning. This means that without students, teachers have nothing to do in their professional activities. Therefore, it is essential to discover students' perception of teacher's integrating the Four Strands in teaching legal English vocabulary implemented during legal English classes. Those perceptions affect students' inclination to participate dynamically in all classroom activities and find more interest in self-study out of classroom. (Shapiro & Cole, 1994). These studies ensure that students' opinions function as a navigator to suggest the teacher what she/he should adjust, to benefit them the most during classes. Applying new approaches to improve efficiency of the class, as well as arousing learners' engagement in classes, are what the teacher keeps hunting for. Due to the unusual features of legal English vocabulary, along with the teacher's desire for the students to be keener on learning legal English vocabulary which is indispensable for their legal English learning process and their future career as a global employee.

The data from the interview between the researcher and intentionally chosen students show how the students evaluated the teacher's new approach during legal English classes. As aforementioned, almost all students confirmed that legal English vocabulary learning is necessary for them (Table 4). However, the specific features of legal English vocabulary act as a great barrier for them in acquisition (Table 5).

For the first question "What demotivates you from learning vocabulary?"

"I sometimes feel fed up with learning legal English vocabulary because I can't understand precise meaning of the words. Therefore, I can't remember them long. Worse than that, my learned legal terms sometimes seem to be isolated somewhere in my mind and I can't employ them in speaking and writing as well." (Student 7)

"Learning legal English vocabulary outside classroom sometimes becomes much harder because I can't find the meanings of the terms that match with the legal context. So, I find so confused that induces me boredom and don't want to keep learning." (Students 4)

“I am often good at doing reading and listening exercises required but to apply the terms and knowledge provided through the reading and listening seems impossible to me. Therefore, I often cannot remember the words long.” (Student 1)

All students surveyed answered when they all were aware of the necessity of learning legal vocabulary and they all tried to do it regularly. But sometimes the ability of finding no equivalence or exact meaning to understand the words, and the ambiguity in applying the terms in specific context are hurdles that demotivate them in learning vocabulary.

For the second question: “In your opinion, how can teacher’s practices during reading sessions help you learn legal English vocabulary?”

“Compared with other classes that I experienced, the tasks applied in classes during this course were more various and allowed me to construe the meaning of the key terms in the Unit.” (Student 2)

“Translating the text that includes that key terms of the Unit enabled me to acquire and remember the terms better.” (Student 5)

“Acquiring the meaning and knowing how to use the legal terms in certain content make me more confident.” (Student 8)

The thoughts participants shared above show that applying the Four Strands with the meaning focused input and language focused learning during reading sessions allow students to comprehend the terms and retain for longer time.

The third question: “In your opinion, how can teacher’s practices during listening sessions help you learn legal English vocabulary?”

“Brainstorming before listening endured me to visualize the topic that I am going to listen. It helps me to recall the terms related to the topic. And while listening, I can get the answer more precisely.” (Student 3)

“Exploring the audio transcripts give me the opportunities to check my listening understanding. Besides, I learn the language use and the discourse markers that the lawyer often used when he/ she consulted the client, delivered a speech or made a conversation with different types of participants.” (Student 6)

“Listening with spontaneous explanations from the teacher facilitates the best in understanding the text. That is because I can understand the meaning of the listening or the questions clearly and thoroughly.” (Student 9)

The fact is that listening is always an intensive skill for any student especially in legal English context on account of legal knowledge and legal terms. However, delivering listening classes was constructed from the strand of meaning-focused input that empowers students to approach listening content most efficiently. Likewise, deploying meaning-focused input in listening sessions facilitates learners to come close to authentic language use by native speaker lawyer. It is extremely important for foreign language learners.

For the fourth question: What benefits you the most during legal English classes?

“Applying the just-learned terms in making a short conversation is the most interesting to me. Doing it at classes with the presence of the teacher is quite helpful because the teacher can check whether the words I apply are appropriate

or not. Besides, working with my friend can help me more confident and chase away my shyness.” (Student 5)

“I think making conversations applying the just-learned terms fosters my ability of learning legal vocabulary the best. At first, I found it hard because my partner was not willing to joint. But later, the teacher asked us to change partner and paired me with a different one in different time. That freshness encourage us more to join each time required.” (Student 3)

„I like writing, therefore, a short writing task after each class gives me more opportunity to apply the thing that I learned into practice. Moreover, by teacher's marking and checking I can see how improve I have achieved. Especially, I feel quite fearless to present out in front of class my prepared things.” (Student 7)

All these during the interview proves that when the meaning of the terms is clear between the source and the target language, and the functions of the terms are acquired thoroughly, the final Strand (fluency development), meaning speaking and writing are implemented easily.

In summary, the above analyzed data from the interview indicate that students show quite positive feelings and deep engagement during classes. Learning legal English vocabulary that used to demotivate students is much better now because students find more confidence with the legal English terms.

5. CONCLUSION

The study carried out an experimental research to investigate the implementation of Nation's Four Strands in legal English vocabulary teaching deployed in two groups of the students of Legal English department. The findings from pre-test and post-tests revealed that integrating the Four Strands in legal English classes enables students to achieve good academic results. Besides, the information from the interview illustrated that the engagement of students during classes implemented the Four Strands was quite positive. Applying the Four Strands minimized troubles the learners faced because they could be exposed to their instructor's support during various class activities. Namely, they can acquire the meaning of the provided legal terms under the topic and their application in certain context. Therefore, they delivered their practices in the form of oral conversation and writing assignment efficiently. The statistics from the surveyed questionnaire shared with Huong's (2022) that almost all participants were aware of the necessity of broadening their legal English vocabulary during their legal English learning process. They explained that legal English vocabulary features cause them numerous difficulties as well.

This study, to some extent, achieves its aim to experiment with the effectiveness of applying the Four Strands in legal English vocabulary classes. These Strands deployed enable learners not only to achieve better academic results, but also to engage actively during legal English classes. The result from this study contributes to the trend of implementing the Four Strands in the field of ESP which gets high requirements from the society. However, the length of the study was not so long due to the length of the course, only seven weeks, and the number of the participants, which included only Legal English juniors, was rather limited. The findings cannot reflect the perception of the law majors in other contexts. Therefore, further research should be carried on a larger scale to provide more insights.

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APPENDIX 1:
MUST-LEARN TOPIC TERM LIST

Unit 8: Employment Law	Unit 11: Intellectual Property	Unit 15: Competition Law
1. sex discrimination	1. intangible property	1. competition law
2. race relations	rights	2. anti-competitive
3. disability	2. patents	3. undertakings
4. terms and conditions of employment	3. trade marks	4. antitrust
5. genuine occupational qualification	4. copyrights	5. trustbusters
6. date of employment	5. trade secrets	6. Sherman Act
7. holiday entitlement	6. design rights	7. Economic efficiency
8. termination of employment	7. passing off	8. Cartels
9. unfair dismissal	8. monopoly right	9. Monopolies
10. discriminatory dismissal	9. non-obvious	10. Oligopolies
11. redundancy dismissal	10. holder	11. Mergers
12. trade union	11. exclusive right	12. Relevant market
13. employment tribunal	12. cybersquatting	13. Barriers to
14. collective bargaining	13. unauthorized use	14. Price fixing
15. arbitration	14. right of fair use	15. Parallel behavior
16. strike	15. infringement	16. Abuse of a dominant position
17. picketing	16. injunction	17. Predatory pricing
18. injunction		18. Tie-in arrangements
19. lockouts		19. Merger regulation