

TO THE ISSUE OF COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

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The importance of learning English as a language of international communication in today's reality is difficult to overestimate. Most negotiations and bargains all over the world are held in English, business is extending through international companies, communication in English is essential in technology, trade, tourism, diplomacy etc. The successful development of the economy and competitiveness in international markets requires highly qualified specialists in various fields of science, technology and economics possessing a foreign language to the extent necessary for mutual understanding of different language cultures. So, the requirements to foreign language proficiency are significantly changing today, the practical skills of using business language in oral and written language, the ability to use a foreign language in professional activity are becoming more and more important.

In order to communicate effectively in English, a person must not only possess a good understanding of the English lexicon and related syntactical structures and rules but also be able to use them in various speech situations. Thus, the formation of the communicative competence of students has become the priority in teaching English for specific purposes.

Professional foreign language competence entails a combination of knowledge and speaking skills applicable to professional sphere, plus a mastery of foreign language communication strategies and tactics, combined with the ability to apply special methods of emotional communicative interaction [1, p.78].

How efficiently professional foreign language competence is formed in students depends on how the context of their future professional activity is introduced into the educational process: whether the teacher takes into consideration the students' experience, interests and requirements, and how the motivation to study a foreign language is ensured. Efficiency increases when students' future professional activities are modelled in a foreign language class. The purpose of teaching a foreign language in a higher education institution is no longer just a matter of passing on knowledge of the subject (language competence), but the development of certain practical abilities, skills and personal traits, which enable and prepare experts to use language competently in the professional sphere.

In ESP teaching the communicative approach, which involves learning a language in a psychologically comfortable surroundings, has proven to be the most effective. A student must not only be interested in communication, but also understand that he is in the same situation as other students involved in the communication process, which in its turn will help him to forget about the fear of learning a foreign language. Students should be immersed into a foreign language as fully as possible, and the more student speaks English, the less his communication in a foreign language is slowed down by a native language.

The teachers' task is to create and develop opportunities for their students to use foreign language for the natural purposes in relations with other people, where they can exchange messages of real interest to them. Various natural communicative contexts can be proposed to encourage students to develop their speaking skills (establishing and maintaining social relations, expressing one's reactions, seeking and giving information, talking one's way out of a trouble, learning or teaching how to do or make something, conversing over the telephone, problem solving, acting out social roles, discussing ideas, sharing activities, entertaining, etc.).

The learning process should be focused on mastering all types of speech activity. A modern specialist should study the possibilities of foreign colleagues or partners, their work, achievements in their professional sphere in order to implement the best results into his work; maintain professional contacts with the help of technical means of communication or face-to-face

communication; negotiate with foreign business partners; choose literary sources, use general scientific and specific methods of primary information collection if needed.

English for specific purposes provides certain lexical material and certain types of communication in the professional context. Teaching ESP includes not only the provision of language knowledge, skills and abilities, but also the formation of understanding the nature of communication in professional sphere, mastering the methods of their implementation, cultural consciousness, as well as generalization on the pragmatic level of knowledge and skills received by the students while studying special, social and humanitarian disciplines [2, c.13].

When teaching students English for specific purposes, the tasks of the teacher are, first of all, to form a student's communicative competence in professional speech, to expand his vocabulary with the help of special terms, to minimize uncertainties associated with the assimilation of the lexical and normative base of international documents.

In correspondence with the communicative orientation of the learning process, much attention in practical professional English classes should be paid to the development of dialogical speech. Students should be put in such conditions, in which they could solve the problems that are important to them, with the help of a foreign language, that is their educational activities should be as close to the real situation as possible. They acquire skills, experience in professional activities and learn language simultaneously.

The linguistic interaction of students in ESP lessons usually takes place in a variety of forms: pairs, triads, small groups, with the whole group. An active style of learning a foreign language by means of communication has proven to be the most effective in such activities as role-plays, problem-solving situations and free communication.

The use of role-plays enables the simulation of real communication situations, where ideas are discussed and opinions and feelings can be expressed. Role-plays, as a method of active learning, are aimed at both prepared and spontaneous speech development. The task of role-play games is to demonstrate models of behaviour in standard social and professional situations. Role-play games help to form such key qualities as communicative abilities, tolerance, ability to work in small groups, independence of thinking, etc. [4, p. 84].

The problem-solving activities during an English class focus on the use of critical thinking skills and techniques. Students may read some professionally oriented texts or articles that demonstrate various ways of solving problems; practice making their own suggestions to solve specific problems; practice giving each other advice on real-life problems; work in groups to role-play a problem-solving meeting.

Group discussion on the practical lessons increases the motivation and personal involvement of the interlocutors in solving the problems discussed. They not only have to use the knowledge of a foreign language, but also formulate their own thoughts, find some means for defending their points of view. The discussion contributes to the development of lexical, grammatical, logical skills, encourages students to listen to the words said by others, thus developing the skills of understanding the spoken language, helps to develop the ability to express one's own thoughts independently.

Thus, to develop students' communicative skills in ESP the work should be conducted towards modelling various communicative situations that would contribute to the effective mastering of lexical material, provide conditions for the development of students' thinking, contribute to forming certain skills of oral speech in their professional sphere.

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