

PRACTICAL AND THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF MASTERING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES SKILLS IN FUTURE TOURISM EXPERTS

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The article under consideration deals with the problem of mastering English for specific purposes skills for future tourism experts. The paper outlines key strategies, main criteria of material selection. Also, the piece of survey underlines English for specific purposes skills activities, such as: warming-up activities, receptive activities, productive activities and follow-up activities that are supplemented with extensive practical examples. **Keywords:** English for specific purposes, tourism experts, skills, communication, strategies, activities, learning environment.

Stating of the Problem. The topicality of the issue is caused by the fact that «English for specific purposes is a term that refers to teaching or studying English for a particular career (like law, medicine) or for business in general». There is a specific reason for which English is learned. Pauline C. Robinson describes ESP as a type of ELT and defines it as: «Goal-oriented language learning» that means student has a specific goal that is going to be attained. The origin of ESP and its development is closely linked with learners' interest in various specific disciplines e.g. 'Law English', 'English for Hotel Industry' or 'English for Tourist Management', as I present in my work [15].

Students learn English for a specific purpose, represented by studying subject matter, to gain and develop appropriate knowledge and skills through English. That is why English language is not seen as the main goal in the process of learning, but rather a vehicle for its acquirement. «Students study ESP not because they are interested in the English language as such but because they have to perform a task in English. Their command of the English language must be such that they can reach a satisfactory level in their specialist subject studies» [13, 15].

Recent Surveys and Issues Analysis. In theory, all learners need ESP and would benefit from a course tailored to their needs. In practice, however, there has to be a compromise where learners with sufficiently similar needs can be grouped together. This is fairly easy in the context of pre-experience courses (e.g. an English course for Media Studies students at a university), where a large number of students have similar needs, decided in advance by experienced specialists (e.g. university professors). This branch of ESP is sometimes called ESAP, (English for Specific Academic Purposes). In principle, there is a clear distinction between ESAP, which trains students for their future work, and EGAP (English for General Academic Purposes), which trains them for their current studies, but in practice the distinction is often blurred [2, 3, 4].

Highlighting of the Earlier Unsolved Problem Sections. For teachers of General English, a key question is finding materials and methodologies which are effective for a particular class. This question is also relevant to ESP but one other factor should also be considered: subject specific knowledge. By definition, the learners on an ESP course will usually know more about the subject than the teacher. This additional factor is often

what makes ESP a daunting, but also an exciting, challenge. However, there are three key strategies open to ESP teachers whose knowledge of the specific subject is limited: honesty and openness, preparation and confidence [10, 11].

Material Exposition. Honesty and openness are about managing expectations. ESP teachers don't need to pretend to be something they are not. Don't be afraid to tell your learners that you are unfamiliar with the specific subject. An important skill for any specialist is the ability to describe what they do in language non-specialists will understand: a doctor explaining a medical procedure to a patient; an engineer explaining to a client why a project cannot be completed in less than four months. You can be their starting point in developing that essential skill. Learning should be a joint process based on the teacher's expertise in language and methodology and the learner's subject knowledge [6, 7, 8].

That said, preparation should include learning as much about the learners' professional field as the teacher can: research before the course; careful planning of the language and problems that are likely to come up in a lesson; strategies to deal with vocabulary problems that can't be solved during the lesson; and a commitment to learn, actively, the learners' specialization in order to be more prepared next time.

Finally, ESP teachers need to be confident that they have the skills that will help their learners, such as knowledge of how to make learning successful, how to make language memorable, and how to motivate learners. In other words, an ESP teacher with strong methodology but limited subject knowledge may be more effective than a subject specialist with no knowledge of methodology [12].

Many teachers new to ESP wonder how they will be able to handle lesson planning in ESP classes, and are often anxious that there may be too many hurdles to overcome. Some reassuring advice is that most of the principles used in the teaching of General English are directly transferable to ESP with only minor modifications and adjustments. There are similarities between lesson planning for a General English class and an ESP class. For example, you would want to consider the following elements when planning for both types of classes:

– class profile: the number of learners, their age, preferred learning style;

- aims and sub-aims: an example of a specimen main aim could be: 'To provide practice in speed reading (skimming and scanning) of specialist texts with emphasis on selecting most relevant information' An example of a specimen sub-aim could be: 'To improve group cohesion/group dynamics through use of communicative activities (e.g. pair work and group work)';

- learning outcomes: 'By the end of the lesson, the learners will have learnt basic strategies for speed reading when dealing with specialist literature';

- anticipated difficulties: 'Some learners may feel «resistant» to communicative methodologies, and may need more encouragement or patience on the teacher's part';

- assumptions: 'The initial syllabus should more or less work otherwise the teacher may have to apply a «process syllabus» model and renegotiate certain parts of the syllabus with his/her group of learners';

- pronunciation: 'How will this be taught?';

- materials to be used: coursebooks? audio? video? online learning? If these seven points represent the first part of the plan, the next step (as with General English) is to draw up a grid showing the what, how and when of the lesson. See opposite page for examples. [13, 15]

Modern workplace communication expects well-rounded professionals who not only have an excellent command of their subject area, but who can also communicate well both with colleagues and the general public. The focus needs to be on communication, and consider both accuracy and fluency (with fluency being possibly more important than accuracy 'at all costs'). This ability to go beyond the subject specialism and be able to communicate well in professional (and by extension ESP) contexts is called 'soft skills'. A set of further answers to the question 'How can I teach professional communication skills?' would be:

- by creating an atmosphere in the classroom which is conducive to learning and teaching;

- by setting a memorable context, with meaningful activities and authentic activities to enhance learning;

- by applying a judicious mix of activities and techniques (depending on the level of the learners), e.g. information gap, opinion gap, role play, drilling, 'find someone who', pair work, group work, project work – to mention but a few;

- by providing learners with meaningful models of good practice to emulate (e.g. TV or radio footage, workplace written correspondence and archived documentation);

- by identifying and reinforcing aspects of communication most relevant for a particular profession (e.g. identifying the kind of language used in professional communication internationally among pilots and air traffic controllers) [7, 14].

Concerning the selection of «General English» material and 'ESP' material some criteria must be matched as well. Language teacher is responsible for selecting an appropriate text that contributes to students' effectiveness that means he or she should pay attention to suitable criteria for its choice.

Wallace suggests those main criteria:

- *adequacy* – should be at the appropriate language, age level;

- *motivation* – should present content which is interesting and motivating for students work. It goes into students effectiveness, interest and pleasure of work;

- *sequence* – it is important if there is some relation to previous texts, activities, topics not to miss the sense of a lesson;

- *diversity* – should lead to a range of classroom activities, be a vehicle for teaching specific language structure and vocabulary and promote reading strategies;

- *acceptability* – it should accept different cultural customs or taboos [9].

Selecting an appropriate material regarding the main criteria is an essential phase in organizing each course. It may happen that learners' needs and expectations are not met due to wrong choice of material. «Materials provide a stimulus to learning. Good materials do not teach: they encourage learners to learn».

Text as a learning material can be used for learning and practising wide range of skills. In ESP course it can be source for new vocabulary, communicative or reading skills. To make working with a text as much effective as possible it is necessary to involve all students' skills. It is preferred to combine working with printed text with listening to audio-cassette or video-cassette that means receptive with productive activities. Concerning the ESP activities it is necessary to keep in mind the context that should be consistent with studying subject matter.

- *Warming-up activities* – pre-teaching and activation of new vocabulary or grammar structures, discussing questions concerning the topic. We can use various types of plays, puzzles, collocation grids, questionnaires etc. to increase students' interests in given topic and lead them into further problems. It is a kind of preparing step. Wallace considers pre-reading activity very important for students motivation; topic or genre of the text is introduced e.g. with collective discussion or some pictures to be fully motivated. I see warming-up activities as a very important and necessary phase on which the next working process depends [8].

For example: 1. *Get acquainted with the most inspiring travel quotes of all times:*

- «Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness». – Mark Twain.

- «The world is a book and those who do not travel read only one page». – St. Augustine.

2. *Study the following phrases with the Longman Dictionary assistance and perform mini-dialogues or conversations with them.*

3. *Perform the scenes between the holidaymakers and the foreigners occurring at such places as: hospital, shop, bank, restaurant, hotel, airport terminal, bookstore, museum, theatre and cinema. It is obligatory to work travel phrases in your communication practice.*

4. *Read out the description of a type of niche tourism and the partner then guesses what it is.*

- I've worn glasses since I was a child and never thought about laser treatment before because it's so

expensive. Then a friend recommended going to Venezuela.

– She said I could get my eyes done at a really competitive price by a top quality surgeon and combine it with a fantastic holiday on the Caribbean islands of Los Roques afterwards.

– Do you enjoy experimenting with new ingredients and learning how to create fantastic dishes with them?

– *Receptive activities* – work with a text itself, reading, listening. We can realize various reading strategies aloud, quiet, skimming, scanning, with or without translation, informative. They should lead to encouragement of students. We can distinguish language-based approaches (e.g. jigsaw reading, gap-filling) or approaches relating to content of the text. Both of them should aim students to be as much active and reflexive as possible.

For example: Read the dialogues with partners giving it an appropriate heading. Role play some of them switching roles.

Dialogue 3. D = Dennis, WZ = WenjingZue

D Hello, I'm thinking of spending about six to eight weeks in China, so I was wondering if you could tell me something about what kind of transport is best for me to use for travelling round the country.

WZ Yes, but can you tell me where exactly you're planning to go?

– *Productive activities* – practising of acquired knowledge. Work in pairs, in groups or individual with help of teacher who takes notice of using target language. Summarization of lesson that should be done by students, it shows how students understand given topic.

For example: Make up letters of complaint on the basis of given above information as well as presented ridiculous cases invented by holidaymakers using an approximate structure.

– Think of a holiday you had where not everything went as you had expected. Write a similar letter of complaint

– If you think your travel agency has failed to offer you appropriate service.

– If you think your agency did not execute the agreed-upon contract.

– If you think your agency has caused bodily injury or property damage.

– *Follow-up activities* – next improving, developing, appropriate using of learnt. We can practise it in a form of creative homework, exercises. Harmer draws that large scale of skills and activities can be developed e.g. drawing characters, making discussion, creating some pictures, dramatic activities.

For instance: grammar project. Make a presentation on theory and practice dedicated to one of such grammatical topics, as: «Present tenses», «Past tenses», «Passive Voice», «Conditionals», «Modal verbs of obligation and necessity», «Definite and indefinite articles». 2. Transform the text «An introduction to Japanese Ryokans» using Passive Voice where it is possible «If you visit Japan and are looking to experience traditional Japanese culture and hospitality, then staying at a Ryokan might just be the thing for you. These Japanese inns have a special character and atmosphere and are a centuries-old part of Japanese culture. They were originally built for travellers who needed to rest on long journeys.

Although there are many different styles of Ryokans, offering guests a warm welcome is of great importance at them all. Ryokans not only differ in style but also in quality and price. At the low end is the 'standard Ryokan' and at the high end, the 'luxurious Ryokan'.

The 'standard Ryokan' will provide you with basic accommodation and the rooms will be very plain. However, it will also be cheap, for example 8000 yen. At a 'luxurious Ryokan' you will be given every comfort possible and treated as if royalty. Paying over 70,000 yen, you will be able to enjoy all the modern conveniences and are likely to be situated near to a natural hot spring and somewhere with a spectacular view of nature.

Whilst Ryokans provide fantastic Japanese meals, Western tastes can often be accommodated but it is advisable to choose the Japanese menu so you can use are always those in season at the time and traditionally the menu changes each month. It is this freshness of ingredients that makes the meal so popular».

Conclusions and Future Strategies. Taking everything into consideration, it is worthwhile to mention that the process of teaching English for Specific Purposes for tourism experts comprises numerous practical tasks which must be implemented in learning environment along with theoretical aspects. By the way, judging from methodological outcomes, it is difficult to find an activity that suits all students in the class. Each of the students has various interests that are reflected in their claims and expectations. Teacher is not able to cover all students' needs in every lesson, but he or she is able to present an activity in the most interesting way.

There exist many possibilities of finding out new approaches for teaching English for Specific purposes for future tourism experts that can be outlined in forthcoming researches and investigations.

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ПРАКТИЧНІ ТА ТЕОРЕТИЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ФОРМУВАННЯ ВМІНЬ ДІЛОВОЇ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ У МАЙБУТНІХ ФАХІВЦІВ СФЕРИ ТУРИЗМУ

Анотація

Дана стаття розкриває проблему формування вмінь ділової іноземної мови у майбутніх фахівців сфери туризму. У рукописі виділено основні стратегії та критерії відбору матеріалу. Також, наукова розробка демонструє види діяльності для формування вмінь ділової англійської мови, зокрема: підготовчі вправи, рецептивні вправи, продуктивні вправи та додаткові вправи, які супроводжуються численними практичними прикладами.

Ключові слова: ділова іноземна мова, експерти туризму, вміння, комунікація, стратегії, вправи, новчальне середовище.

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ПРАКТИЧЕСКИЕ И ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ УМЕНИЙ ДЕЛОВОГО АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА У БУДУЩИХ ЭКСПЕРТОВ СФЕРЫ ТУРИЗМА

Аннотация

Данная статья раскрывает проблему формирования умений делового иностранного языка у будущих специалистов сферы туризма. В рукописи выделены основные стратегии и критерии отбора материала. Также, научная разработка демонстрирует виды деятельности для формирования умений делового английского языка, в частности: подготовительные упражнения, рецептивные упражнения, производительные упражнения и дополнительные упражнения, которые сопровождаются многочисленными практическими примерами.

Ключевые слова: деловой иностранный язык, эксперты туризма, умение, коммуникация, стратегии, упражнения, новчальное среду.