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PRACTICAL ASPECT OF ESP STUDENTS RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is an important language course provided by the Universities. It is so due to necessity to train a specialist able to use foreign language in a real professional surrounding. Thus, ESP learners are supposed to acquire extensive terminological vocabulary related to their field of study together with receptive and productive skills enabling them to effectively communicate in professional surrounding. Developing ESP students' receptive and productive skills, as well as practical aspect of these skills training is the focus of the given research. Receptive and productive skills are essential language skills to develop while delivering both General English and ESP courses. Yet the difficulty to be faced while teaching ESP students is that ESP materials are filled with terminology, thus to be able to successfully perform the tasks, the learners have to master not only a foreign language but professional terminology according to their specialism as well. As it is specified in the article, formation of learners' perceptive and receptive skills while teaching them ESP may be challenging due to terminology which is inherent to the specific field of study. Reading, listening, writing and speaking are essential skills while teaching ESP students, therefore it is necessary to carefully choose materials learners should work with. Both graded and authentic materials are to be used in classroom activities; while the first provide the necessary training, the second let the learners see practical essence of using the skills and knowledge acquired. While developing ESP students receptive and productive skills, different activities may be applied. Among them are reading and listening to a wide range of both graded and authentic professional texts, from lectures in English to announcements, adverts and various broadcasts; summarizing the text orally or in a short written form; sentence completion activities; multiple-choice activities etc. It is also suggested in the article, that a combination of language activities is highly useful since reading materials can provide a good basis for spoken discussions while authentic listening materials can be a valuable source of the necessary language chunks.

Key words: *ESP, receptive and productive skills, ESP materials, ESP learners, graded and authentic materials.*

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ПРАКТИЧНИЙ АСПЕКТ ФОРМУВАННЯ У СТУДЕНТІВ АНГЛОМОВНИХ ПРОФЕСІЙНО ОРІЄНТОВАНИХ РЕЦЕПТИВНИХ ТА ПРОДУКТИВНИХ УМІНЬ

Англійська для спеціальних цілей (ESP) є одним із важливих мовних курсів, які викладаються в університеті. Це пов'язано з необхідністю підготовки фахівця, здатного користуватися іноземною мовою у справжньому професійному оточенні. Отже, передбачається, що ті, хто вивчає англійську мову спеціального вжитку, ово-

лодіють значним термінологічним словником, пов'язаним із їхньою сферою навчання, а також рецептивними та продуктивними навичками, які дозволять їм ефективно спілкуватися в професійному середовищі. Розвиток рецептивних і продуктивних навичок студентів ESP, а також практичний аспект навчання цих навичок знаходиться у фокусі цього дослідження. Рецептивні та продуктивні навички є важливими мовними навичками, які необхідно розвивати під час навчання як загальної англійської, так і курсу ESP. Проте складність, з якою доводиться стикатися під час навчання ESP студентів, полягає в тому, що матеріали з ESP наповнені термінологією, тому, щоб мати змогу успішно виконувати завдання, студенти повинні опанувати не лише іноземну мову, а й професійну термінологію відповідно до своєї спеціальності. У статті зазначається, що формування рецептивних і продуктивних навичок студентів під час навчання їх ESP може бути складним через термінологію, притаманну тій чи іншій галузі навчання. Читання, аудіювання, письмо та говоріння є важливими навичками під час навчання студентів ESP, тому необхідно ретельно обирати матеріали, з якими вони мають працювати. У практичній аудиторній діяльності слід використовувати як адаптовані, так і автентичні матеріали; якщо перші забезпечують необхідну підготовку, то другі дозволяють студентам побачити практичну суть використання отриманих знань і навичок. Розвиваючи рецептивні та продуктивні навички ESP студентів, можна застосовувати різні види діяльності. Серед них читання та прослуховування широкого спектру як адаптовані, так і автентичні професійні текстів, від лекцій англійською до оголошень, реклами та різноманітних передач, конспектування тексту в короткій письмовій формі, вправи з вибором відповідей тощо. У статті також стверджується, що поєднання мовних вправ є дуже корисним, оскільки матеріали для читання можуть стати гарною основою для розмовної дискусії, тоді як автентичні матеріали для аудіювання можуть бути цінним джерелом мовних фрагментів, необхідних для розвитку майбутніх фахівців.

Ключові слова: англійська мова спеціального вжитку, рецептивні та продуктивні навички, матеріали з англійської мови спеціального вжитку, учні, оцінені та автентичні матеріали.

The problem statement. Teaching foreign languages is an integral part of any university academic program. Modern methodology of teaching foreign languages in high school is primarily based on communicative approach application which enables effective development of students' language skills. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is one of the most important language courses provided by the Universities. It is so due to necessity to train a specialist able to use foreign language in a real professional surrounding. Thus ESP learners are supposed to acquire extensive terminological vocabulary related to their field of study together with receptive and productive skills enabling them to effectively communicate in professional surrounding. As it is commonly acknowledged, there are four language skills, including reading, listening, writing and speaking. Reading and writing skills relate to written language while listening and speaking skills relate to spoken language. Language skills are divided into receptive and productive skills. Developing students' receptive and productive skills, as well as practical aspect of these skills training is the focus of the given research.

Analyses of the recent research and publications. Receptive and productive skills have already become a focus of scientific research. This issue was under study in the works by such domestic scholars as L. Baidak, O. Sypko and S. Kolomiets as well as foreign ones including F. Grellet, S. Greenblatt and J. Harmer who investigated different aspects of receptive and productive skills formation and made their contribution into the study of the issue. Still, practical aspect of their developing at the university academic surrounding needs further investigation considering the latest research in the field.

The purpose of the article. The current research is aimed at investigating the practical aspect of receptive and productive skills formation when teaching ESP students.

The main material. Receptive and productive skills are essential language skills. Receptive skills are forms of language that we receive without producing them. These include reading and listening since learners do not produce but receive. Productive skills are forms of language that we produce. These include speaking and writing since learners create them. Receptive and productive skills, i.e. reading, listening, speaking and writing taught in classroom may be commonly referred to as communication skills.

In this research we mainly address formation of receptive and productive skills when teaching ESP students. The difficulty to be faced here with is that ESP materials are filled with terminology, thus to be able to successfully perform the tasks, the learners have to master not only a foreign language but professional terminology inherent to their specialism as well. While developing an ESP course, it is important to ensure that it is balanced well enough to include practice of reading, writing, listening, pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar.

Reading and writing are a two-way communicative process, the same as speaking and listening are. In order to read something, it must have been written first. For example, Oil and Gas students may see a sign that reads "Warning. High pressure flammable liquids pipeline" while dealing with petroleum pipeline warning signs. In this case the learners have to perform a task including a few steps. The first is to read a notice communicating a warning. The next is to

comprehend a message, and finally to take necessary action of not entering the area specified. It has to be noted that learners used to General English classes vocabulary may find it difficult at first to comprehend terminology of professional contractions or multi meaning words used in their terminological meaning. Let's consider the two following examples.

Example 1.

The three variable resistors in the circuit each allow different adjustments to be made. VR1 allows you to 'balance' the bridge, getting the resistance exactly equal. VR2 allows you to adjust the 'gain' of the amplifier, in other words, how much the voltage is amplified. By adjusting VR3 the output can be adjusted to exactly zero before a load is applied to the member being tested.

Example 2.

Takeovers using borrowed money are called 'leveraged buyouts' or 'LBOs'. Leverage means having a large proportion of debt compared to equity capital. Raiders and their supporters argue that the permanent threat of takeovers is a challenge to company managers and directors to do their jobs better, and that well-run businesses that are not undervalued are at a little risk. The threat of raids forces companies to put capital to productive use. Fat or lazy companies that fail to do this will be taken over by raiders who will use assets more efficiently, cut costs and increase shareholder value.

To be able to correctly comprehend information contained in the given texts and be able to use it in their communication with each other, the learners need not only to have (preferably) the same command of language, but to share the knowledge of the given field and understanding of the way it works.

The text given in the first example is intended for the students of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering specialisms, while the second one can be used when teaching ESP to Economics/Finance students. Assuming the students from both target groups (Engineering and Economics) share the same or near-equal command of English, they will be able to use information presented in the first text without any difficulties within their specialism group due to shared knowledge of the subject itself. Yet, it will be almost impossible for students from different specialisms groups to commonly use information given in any of the examples because of the lack of shared specific knowledge. Thus while developing the learners' receptive and productive skills in ESP class it is important to ensure first they have shared understanding of the field of study. Here it may be useful to use prediction as a way of activating the learners' knowledge about the field of study. Both

reading and listening (receptive skills activities) may help make predictions about the text.

Reading remains an important skill while teaching students General English, however it is of even greater importance while teaching them ESP. The reasons for this are as follows:

- reading of authentic professional texts is a big part of the process of ESP acquisition;
- reading, including those of professional texts provides good models for English writing, which may present some difficulties for ESP students;
- reading authentic professional texts enables studying language e.g. vocabulary, grammar, punctuation as well as the way the sentences, paragraphs and texts are constructed, thus providing a good example for the learners;
- information presented in the text for reading can introduce valuable topics for discussion and stimulate discussion;
- in terms of modern world text-based social interaction e.g. social networking, texting, emails, reading is of specific interest for ESP students since provides a true insight into what their future professional activity will include.

While teaching ESP students reading, it's important to use both authentic and graded texts. The first type of texts gives idea of what level comprehension is required from ESP learners in their professional activity, while the second one helps reach that level providing texts that are written specifically for English language learners. While teaching reading, it is important not just comprehend the language but encourage students to respond to the content of a text, give an opportunity to express their opinion on the idea of the text. Exploiting authentic professional texts to the full helps teacher develop the learners' reading skills and sub-skills (i.e. skimming and scanning) as well as encourage their cognitive activity.

The following receptive skill, namely listening, is also an important skill to master ESP. Listening exposes learners to different varieties of professional English and different accents of the speakers, providing at the same time a good model for speaking professional English. It should also be noted that acquiring language through listening is usually of big importance for the learners who aims at understanding the spoken language addressed to them as well as various professional audio materials.

While teaching ESP, it is necessary to carefully choose the listening materials learners should do. Both authentic and graded materials can be beneficial, though the learners' capabilities should be considered. Some simple authentic listening materials can be understood by even beginner level students

e.g. simple adverts. Lower level students can get valuable listening practice by using graded materials, written and adapted for their learner level. Since ESP group of learners may be multilevel, then authentic texts could be used in class with simplified tasks. It is also important to provide the students with a wide range of listening materials, from lectures in English to announcements, adverts and various broadcasts.

Developing learners' perceptive skills while teaching them listening should include the following:

- preparation; it is important to get prepared for the listening for both teacher and students;
- multiple listening, which will probably be required;
- listening materials can be exploited not only for comprehension but for language study as well.

While dealing with both reading and listening in ESP class, different activities may be applied. Among them are the following:

- comprehension questions completion;
- true/false activities completion;
- multiple-choice activities;
- sentence completion activities;
- summarizing the text orally or in a short written summary;
- ordering the sequence of events;
- comparing and contrasting different opinions.

Applying various listening tasks helps students develop their listening and comprehension skills and therefore feel more comfortable while communicating in a professional oriented surrounding.

A syllabus cannot be considered a balanced one if it doesn't include writing. The reasons for teaching ESP students writing are the following:

- producing written language is part of the learning experience;
- it provides students with tangible evidence of progress;
- some students prefer writing to speaking activities since it provides them with more time for thinking the task over;
- writing is usually a valuable skill for ESP students since different forms of written communication are often required in working surrounding.

As for the type of writing ESP students should do, these may include the following:

- emails, both formal and informal ones;
- test messages;
- messages for social networking communication;
- messages for forums or blogs;
- different types of formal letters;
- filling in the application forms;
- reports etc.

In order for the learners to be effective writers of English, it is important to include a range of writing text types in class. It is also useful to choose writing tasks that reflect common everyday styles or tasks, including postcards, letters/emails, form filling, narratives and essays. Surely the type of writing depends on students' field of studying and the learners' needs defined by it and their language level. Students' age and life experience should also be taken into account; thus younger learners who are generally able to cope with descriptive tasks may find it difficult to write a covering letter due to the lack of the necessary knowledge.

Task 1. Writing a job application.

One of useful writing tasks for senior ESP students may be a job application, which consists of analyzing different cover letters and CVs taken from the Internet with following choosing the best examples/phrases/collocations and writing drafts. The drafts may then be corrected and redrafted. Applications got as a result of a task may then be sent off to actually apply for a job.

Task 2. Setting up a blog.

Students write posts on a blog and respond to other students' posts on a daily basis or other. Such a task besides developing the learners' essential writing skills also reflects social interaction practices.

Writing tasks may be regarded difficult by ESP students. Therefore in order to encourage them to write, the tasks should be well-thought and as much closely reflect their professional needs as possible. A good example provided by a teacher is of a great use as well as the necessary language chunks to be used while writing.

One of probably the most essential reflective skills for all the language learners including those of ESP is speaking. The kinds of speaking that are essential for ESP students are the following:

- exchanging personal information;
- small talk;
- formal and informal telephone conversations;
- video conference talk;
- leaving voicemail messages;
- corporate gossiping;
- giving advice or exchanging information with colleagues;
- talking to people in authority;
- bargaining/negotiating;
- participating in/chairing a business meetings;
- attending a job interview etc.

Studying ESP in group provides the students with great opportunity to practice their speaking skills, interacting with a single speaking partner, a micro group of students or giving a talk, both prepared

and spontaneous. These may include exchanging information in dialogues, participation in social interactions like gossiping or small talk, brainstorming ideas, public discussions etc.

Participating in public discussions and debates is a good opportunity for the students, including those of ESP to practice their speaking. The topic for discussion should be related to the students field of studies and therefore be of interest to them.

One more excellent language activity is role-play which reflects real life interaction in professional surrounding. The topics for the role-play may vary from job interviews to negotiations, small talk and participation in business meetings. Students may rehearse their roles before actually taking part in the activity which will enable better speaking and confidence. While teaching ESP students speaking, it is important to make them aware of functional vocabulary which will help them agree and disagree politely, acquire about, specify the necessary information, express their opinion and ask for the opinion of others.

Teaching presentations as speaking activity is essential for ESP students. They are usually interesting for students to prepare, to give and to listen to. Group presentations when the micro group members take turn to speak may be a good way to develop their presentation skills for those students who are shy to speak publicly.

Presentations are a good example of inter-connection which exists between different types of language skills. For example, to prepare a presentation, the students should first collect the necessary information which includes reading or listening, then organize the collected information in a well-structured way, usually with the help of writing; and only after that present it orally. The examples of other language exercises which include language skills interconnection are job interview dialogues, summaries writing, discussions based on read or listened to materials and many others. Thus, a well-balanced curriculum should include all the language skills.

Conclusion. Receptive and productive language skills development makes up an essential part of ESP students language preparation. Various language activities may be implemented to train students in reading, listening, writing and speaking. The choice of language activities should reflect the real life situations that ESP learners may face with in their professional surrounding. The learning materials to be used in class may be both graded and authentic. A special focus of ESP studies should be made on those activities including interaction between the skills of different types in order to provide students with additional language practice and therefore provide higher efficiency of their learning.

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