

УДК 371.00176

DEVELOPMENT OF BUSINESS MEETING SKILLS WHEN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES**Н.Ю.Іщук**

Анотація. У статті висвітлено проблеми формування мовних і мовленнєвих компетенцій ділового спілкування на заняттях з іноземної мови в університеті. Запропоновано низку завдань, спрямованих на розвиток відповідних компетенцій у студентів-економістів для участі у наукових конференціях та проведення ділових нарад.

Ключові слова: ділове спілкування, ділові наради, навички проведення ділових нарад, конференція, мовні та мовленнєві компетенції.

Аннотация. В статье раскрыты проблемы формирования языковых и речевых компетенций делового общения на занятиях по иностранному языку в университете. Предложен ряд заданий, направленных на развитие соответствующих компетенций у студентов-экономистов для участия в научных конференциях и проведения деловых совещаний.

Ключевые слова: деловое общение, деловые совещания, навыки проведения деловых совещаний, конференция, языковые и речевые компетенции.

Summary. The article is dedicated to the problems of development of language and speaking skills of business communication at high school foreign language lessons. A number of tasks aimed to train students of economics to acquire the appropriate competences for participating in scientific conferences and holding a business meeting are presented in the article.

Key words: business communication, business meetings, skills for holding business meetings, conference, language and speaking skills.

Stating a problem. Due to the integration of Ukraine into the European Community, the knowledge of business meeting skills and ability to apply them in every business sphere (either in public or private sector) has become very important. The topicality of this problem is intensified by the fact that production has become more complex; microeconomic, managerial, commercial and legal fields have been increasingly developing that clearly indicates the need in acquiring skills of professional culture as a significant component of intercultural communication of future specialists. Thus the Business English, English for

Specific Purposes courses introduced into every private and public higher economic educational establishment in recent years are aimed at the development of the relevant business communication skills in order to make students able to be competitive in the labour market .

Recent scientific investigation. Training university students for professional and business communication is not as easy as it can seem. A great deal of university teachers and psychologists studied this problem, V.Andreev, V.Bondarenko, N. Krylova, Yu. Zhukov, N. Totska among them. The following components can be distinguished within the term “professional/business communication”:

communicative skills;

characteristics of a specialist that enable him/her to solve complex professional tasks.

The **aim** of the article is to present the methods and activities for developing business meeting skills at English lessons in high school.

We must say that in practice students are not provided with sufficient workshops to practise business meeting skills although they are of great importance for the students’ academic and future professional activity. When studying at university students take part at annual scientific conferences and practical seminars. There they are supposed to deliver speeches at plenary sessions and tutorials. To perform at a conferences or a seminar, every student has to be communicatively competent. This competence involves the students’ ability to share the information in the acceptable and understandable manner.

Consequently, to succeed at a conference or meeting it is not enough to carry out scientific research and prepare a report. Students must also be properly trained to use appropriate vocabulary, to learn body language skills to enhance the message that is possible to be done at language lessons.

A number of activities have been developed to develop the skills which will be presented in major business sector contexts such as banking/finance, law, tourism. Dealing with meetings in English requires special vocabulary and language skills. Words need to be in the right form and used correctly in certain phrases.

Activity 1. These terms are closely related to the word CONFERENCE. Study them carefully and be ready to explain the meaning of each of them to the class.

1. Conference - a prearranged meeting for consultation or exchange of information or discussion (especially one with a formal agenda);

group meeting, meeting - a formally arranged gathering; "next year the meeting will be in Chicago"; "the meeting elected a chairperson";

symposium - a meeting or conference for the public discussion of some topic especially one in which the participants form an audience and make presentations;

seminar - any meeting for an exchange of ideas;

colloquium - an academic meeting or seminar usually led by a different lecturer and on a different topic at each meeting; a meeting for discussion of a specific problem;

conferee - a member of a conference;

2. Conference - a discussion among participants who have an agreed (serious) topic;

give-and-take, discussion, word – a lively exchange of views on some topic; "we had a good discussion"; "we had a word or two about it";

bull session - an informal discussion (usually among men);

colloquy - a conversation especially a formal one;

consultation - a conference between two or more people to consider a particular question; "frequent consultations with his lawyer"; "a consultation of several medical specialists";

consultation, interview, audience - a conference (usually with someone important); "he had a consultation with the judge"; "he requested an audience with the king";

huddle - (informal) a quick private conference;

news conference, press conference - a conference at which press and TV reporters ask questions of a politician or other celebrity;

round table, round-table conference, roundtable - a meeting of peers for discussion and exchange of views; "a roundtable on the future of computing";

session - a meeting for execution of a group's functions; "it was the opening session of the legislature";

teleconference, teleconferencing - a conference of people who are in different locations that is made possible by the use of such telecommunications equipment as closed-circuit television [1].

Activity 2. Complete the sentences below with appropriate words from the box:

bull session	round table	press conference
colloquium	consultation	huddle
give-and take	symposium	teleconference

Women and politics were the favourite topics for the _____. 2. We are going to hold a _____ on ecology next year. 3. A _____ was held on the future of the EU. 4. The candidates engaged in a lively _____, witnessed by a huge television audience. 5. She has a _____ with the lawyer at 3.00 pm today. 6. They went into a _____ and later declared their decision 7. Did you watch the July 16 _____ held at Apple’s campus in Cupertino, California? 8. The Committee for Asian Women is organising a one-day expert _____ meeting on “Trade policy and gender” which will take place in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 9. It its simplest, a _____ can be an audio conference with one or both ends of the conference sharing a speaker phone [3].

Activity 3. The following words and phrases are frequently used in meetings. Check their meaning in the dictionary and write down a synonym or short explanation for each.

a	to bring forward _____
b	to moderate _____
c	agenda _____
d	to digress _____
e	AOB _____
f	apologies _____
g	to chair _____
h	to get down to (business) _____
i	to call _____
j	to recap _____
k	to kick off _____
l	minutes _____

Activity 4. Put the words and phrases from activity 3 into the following categories. Note that some can go in more than one category. Compare your answers with a partner.

before the meeting _____	opening the meeting
_____	_____
_____	_____
during the meeting	closing the meeting
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Language and skills for meetings can be taught as early as pre-intermediate level, but are ideally polished up at upper intermediate and advanced levels. Activities may include word-building, finding synonyms and opposites. These types of activities are offered to be done through learning meeting-conference etiquette that is dominant in developing students’ intercultural communication skills.

Activity 5. When dealing with people internationally at conferences and meetings one should follow the established etiquette. Skim the text quickly paying attention to the words in bold trying to guess their meaning without a dictionary.

Meeting - Conference Etiquette

Meetings and conferences are a very **important** part in the daily life of a **respectable** businessman. Thus business etiquette during these meetings is a crucial feature and ability that you have to **possess**. Here are a few tips on how to **properly** act during a business meeting or conference.

When you enter the room, shake the hand of every single man and woman that is going to be attending the meeting. Your handshake needs to be firm and steady as to transmit **confidence** and strength.

Express what a true honour it is for you to be in the same room with all of them and that you are looking forward for a meeting that will yield **profitable** results and **pleasant** conversations. Choose a seat at the table that will set you on the same level as everyone else. No one likes a **cocky** man or someone that acts like a boss although he is not in that position.

Let everyone talk and wait for your turn. A good mark of **poor** education is to interrupt someone abruptly while they are talking. If you have something **relevant** to add to the conversation wait for the one

that is already talking to finish and then add your own idea. If the idea is **crucial** to the conversation and you feel the need to talk, then simply apologise for interrupting or ask for permission to give out the idea. Always smile while in a business meeting. You need to be **serious** and **professional** however at the same time you have to be pleasant.

Activity 6. Now for the words in column A complete the column B of the table with the opposites and match the appropriate synonyms in column C. There can be more than one opposite!

A	B	C
1. important	un-.....,	a) duly, correctly
2. respectable	un-.....,	b) fruitful, beneficial, useful
3. possess	dis-	c) self-confident, self-assured
4. properly	im-	d) significant, crucial
5. confidence,	e) germane
6. profitable	un-.....	f) earnest
7. pleasant	un-.....	g) competent
8. cocky,	h) bad, mean
9. poor,	i) urgent, key
10. relevant	ir-.....	j) reputable
11. crucial	non-.....,	k) nice, pleasing
12. serious,	l) certainty
13. professional	un-.....	m) have, own

A teacher should bear in mind that being able to function in meetings in English is often a huge pressure for the students. They may feel insecure about competing in an international meeting setting. Even more personal, the participants' meeting skills in English may make or break their chances to get promoted in the company. So it would be a good idea to put the students at ease by brainstorming in pairs or groups on the following topics:

- What kind of meetings do they attend? Are these meetings informal or formal?
- How often do they go to meetings?
- What is their role in the meetings (e.g. chairperson or participant)?
- What do they like/dislike about meetings?
- What are their biggest problems/complaints about meetings?
- Have they attended/conducted a meeting in English before? What were their experiences like? [2]

Here it is necessary to inform students of the role of the chairperson in different cultures. This may include sticking to an agenda, keeping order and making sure that the meeting does not overrun. So students are to learn about *consensus-oriented* chairmen (in difficult situations, they may focus on compromise and mediation defining their role as that of helping to achieve agreement or consensus) and *result-oriented* chairmen (in difficult situations, they may attempt to control the meeting and use formal rules to keep order defining their role as that of helping to achieve objectives or decide on a series of action points), discuss in groups these roles and decide on the best methods of holding a successful business meeting.

Role-plays are supposed to be the most relevant kind of activities for developing speaking skills when holding a mini business meeting (for example a marketing meeting where students discuss the data from the reports showing figures on sales, consumer preferences and reaction to the products made in the 'company' etc. and make a decision on whether to sell it at all; if they sell it, which people it would appeal to; how to advertise it). To ensure the effective presentation students must decide on the most logical sequence for the material for which *transitional expressions* must be carefully studied. The peers and the teacher evaluate the students' performance by the following criteria: introduction, the logic in presenting the information, tone of voice, body language, the level of attendees' interest to the report, the use of audio and video facilities, making conclusions, leaving contacts.

Summing up the above mentioned we must state that development of business meeting skills when teaching foreign languages at universities still remains one of the most topical issues for educational system as a whole. The further research is to be carried out into the development of the overall educational strategy for training competitive specialists in business, finance and economics.

Reference list:

1. <http://www.effectivemeetings.com>
2. <http://www.macmillandictionaries.com>
3. Ішук Н.Ю. English Through Business. Навчальний посібник з англійської мови за професійним спрямуванням. - 2-ге вид., перероб. та доп. / Н.Ю.Ішук. – Вінниця: ПП «ТД «Едельвейс і К», 2010. – 300 с.: іл.