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PRACTICAL CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES OF SOCIOLINGUISTIC COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHING ESP TO STUDENTS MAJORING IN TECHNOLOGY

Highlighted in the article is the necessity to incorporate sociolinguistic activities into textbooks on ESP. The role of sociolinguistic information for teaching ESP is identified. All the provisions of the article are exemplified with classroom activities used for developing sociolinguistic competence in teaching ESP to students majoring in technology.
Key words: *ESP, professionally oriented sociolinguistic competence, classroom techniques.*

Teaching ESP to tertiary school students has become one of the most challenging methodological problems nowadays. A lot has been done so far in this sphere. Such aspects of the above mentioned problem as identifying the significance of ESP teaching to tertiary school students; theoretical background of professionally oriented foreign language competence formation; developing practical methodologies of teaching ESP to students majoring in economics, law, engineering, medicine; developing ESP teaching software as well as many other issues have already been highlighted in numerous publications on the topic [1; 2; 3; 4 and others].

But teaching ESP at tertiary schools, and technical universities in particular, is still one of the most underdeveloped fields in methodology of teaching foreign languages in Ukraine, first of all, from the point of view of the teaching objectives, content and classroom techniques peculiar to each stage in teaching process.

There is no denying the fact that teaching ESP at tertiary schools is supposed to be professionally oriented. This orientation is achieved through identifying the basic aim of such teaching as professionally oriented foreign language competence formation. This very competence is made up of content, linguistic, sociolinguistic and psychological competences [6].

The main aim of the given article is to identify the role of sociolinguistic competence in professionally oriented foreign language competence formation and to exemplify the peculiarities of its formation with practical classroom techniques used in teaching ESP to students majoring in technology.

Among all the competences sociolinguistic one plays a crucial role as it makes professional communication relevant in terms of social norms imbedded in the culture of a certain society. It comprises such vital for communication aspects as pragmatics, paralinguistics, logics and lifestyle. Sociolinguistic competence as a whole as well as each of its components is governed by linguistic means in communication. The latter depends on existing cultural norms. That is why in comparison with linguistic competence, sociolinguistic one is predominant. It also influences psychological competence, as this aspect of communication in terms of both speech perception and speech production, in many respects depends on existing cultural norms too.

We support the viewpoint that sociolinguistic competence of professional communication differs from similar competences that exist in other forms of communication and ensure its adequacy [5, p. 34-35]. According to the authors, this difference is determined by the fact that under professional communication sociolinguistic competence falls into two elements, i.e. sociolinguistic element (verbal stereotypes and realities typical of the given society) and professional sociolinguistic element (stereotypes and realities necessary for professional communication and used for settling business issues).

The above mentioned division of sociolinguistic competence into two components can hardly occur in any other professional communicative competences, as their sphere of functioning is narrower, and consequently, the narrower is the spectrum of those phenomena which belong to the sociolinguistic component.

Today linguists, methodologists, teachers stress the necessity in incorporation of sociolinguistic activities into textbooks on ESP. The one we are going to describe in this article is entitled "Professional Basics". Its aim is the most general professional communication on the issues that every specialist in all areas of technology has to know how to solve in English if their professional communication is international and not limited to the boundaries of their home country.

What is meant here are the following types of professional activities / professional communication:
1. Professional telephoning;
2. Writing for professional purposes (e.g., business letters);
3. Professional negotiations;
4. Professional presentations;
5. Advertising one's own organization / company and its products / services;
6. Discussing and writing about the structure of one's own organization / company;
7. Purchasing goods / products / equipment from other organizations / companies;
8. Selling goods / products / equipment of one's own organization / company;
9. Preparing and receiving instructions on how to use products / equipment;
10. Professional and business contracts with other organizations / companies;
11. Organizing and financing joint ventures;
12. Participating in professional / business fairs and exhibitions.

The topics listed above, undoubtedly, have significant sociolinguistic background. That is why sociolinguistic competence is developed in the given textbook within the limits of aspected structure of every Unit:

1. Functional and Content Focus (the subject aspect – for ensuring connection with the future profession, the professional nature of the communicative competence being developed and for developing a formal-logical competence);

2. Cultural Focus (the sociolinguistic aspect – for developing the sociolinguistic and pragmatic components of the communicative competence);

3. Language Focus (the linguistic aspect – for developing the linguistic and pragmatic components of communicative competence);

4. Psychological Focus (the psychological aspect – for developing the psychological competence with the aim of ensuring the psychological adequacy of communication in the target language);

5. Communicative Focus (for uniting all the aspects in one single communicative competence).

Taking into consideration everything mentioned above it is expedient to exemplify how sociolinguistic aspect may be realised in classroom activities on learning ESP by students majoring in technology.

Versatile experiential classroom activities are used to work on each aspect and sociolinguistic aspect in particular. These activities are designed in such a way that learning English is implemented through using it for communication directed at ensuring extra-linguistic activities of professional nature. For instance, teaching students professional telephoning in English is organized as modelling real-life professional telephone conversations, i.e. by way of letting students experience such professional telephoning in practice. Therefore, the most frequent learning activities suggested in the textbook are those that imitate, or model, relevant professional activities – role plays and simulations, students' professionally-oriented presentations and discussions, writing professionally-oriented documents (essays, abstracts, summaries, letters, etc.), project tasks, reading or listening to obtain some professionally relevant information, Internet searches for such information and others.

The examples below were taken from Cultural Focus of Unit 1 "Telephoning":

Task 1. Read the information below about the cultural norms of starting and ending telephone conversations in English-speaking countries. You have two minutes for reading.

Appropriate greetings and endings to calls help build a good rapport and avoid misunderstandings and wasting time. The three elements of an appropriate greeting are:
– identifying your company;
– giving your name and job title / department;
– asking how you can help the caller.
When you close the call you should:
– make sure that the caller has no more queries;
– thank the caller;
– let the caller put down the receiver first so they don't feel you have cut them off.

(The text is borrowed from: http://www.enotes.com/business-finance-encyclopedia/telephone-skills
as of 29 January 2011)

Task 2. Now listen again to the first of the telephone conversations out of seven that you were listening to in the last class and say (in a whole-class discussion) how the recommendations above were followed by Jenny Ross in her talk with Mr. Sakai. You have 5 minutes for listening and discussion.

Task 3. Work in pairs. Role play a telephone conversation between a company's secretary and business person who is that company's business partner. The secretary is calling the business person to give details about his/her arrangements to travel home (see the details below). Pay special attention to using appropriate greetings and end of the conversation remarks. You have 4 minutes for your role play.
Details of travel arrangements to be used in the role play:
1) leaving New York City tomorrow at 9:30 a.m. by Delta Airlines from JFK airport, Terminal 2;
2) latest check-in at 8:30 a.m.;
3) flying by business class;
4) arrival at Amsterdam airport at 9:30 p.m. local time.

Task 4. Read the information below about the cultural norms of holding telephone conversations in English-speaking countries. You have five minutes for reading.

Always remember to try and answer the phone promptly, before the third ring if possible: this will give the impression to the caller that their phone call is important.

When answering the phone, welcome callers courteously and identify yourself and your organization. Say, for instance, "Good morning. Cypress Technologies. Susan speaking. How may I help you?" No one should ever have to ask if they've reached such and such a business.

Before picking up the receiver, take a second to compose yourself, and discontinue any conversation or activity such as typing or chewing gum.

Keep the tone of the conversation light and speak clearly.

Always follow up bad news with good news. For example, if the person they are trying to reach is out, offer them a chance to leave a message with you or on their voicemail.

When transferring a call, be sure to explain to the caller what you are doing and where you are transferring them to.

Always have a pen and a pad of paper at hand to take down notes, as well as any contact details such as phone numbers and email addresses you can provide to the other person.

When the called party is not in or in a meeting, responses such as "I am sorry s/he has just stepped out of the office at the moment…." should be used, to protect the privacy of those in the office and to provide a tactful response.

Listen – Clarify – Confirm. You must listen attentively without interrupting, clarify everything – even the smallest details – and confirm back the understanding of the situation.

Take telephone messages completely and accurately. If there's something you don't understand or can't spell, such as a person's surname, ask the caller to repeat it or spell it for you. Then make sure the message gets to the intended recipient.

(The text is compiled and modified from two texts borrowed from:
http://www.frontofhousemagazine.co.uk/phoneetiquette.asp,
http://sbinfocanada.about.com/cs/management/qt/telephonetips.htm as of 29 January 2011)

Task 5. *Now listen to telephone conversations 3 and 6 again and out of those seven conversations that you were listening to in the last class and say (in a whole-class discussion) how the recommendations above were followed in them. You have 10 minutes for listening and discussion.*

Task 6. *Work in pairs. Role play two telephone conversations: 1) a telephone complaint to the company that sold your corporation mobile phones for your employees (the telephone batteries get uncharged too fast and need to be recharged every 12 hours); 2) a telephone conversation with a company's secretary (you want to speak to Mr. Robinson, the Sales Manager, but he is out of office, so you leave the message with the secretary with your phone number and a request to call you back when he returns). You have 10 minutes for both role plays.*

Task 7. *Read the information below about the cultural norms concerning the etiquette of making your phone calls to an official person in an organization. You have three minutes for reading.*

1. **Plan the call.** Always jot down key objectives before making a call.
2. **Know who you are calling**. When practicing telephone etiquette and manners, getting a person's name right is critical. Understand the person's position in the organization and acknowledge that in your greeting.
3. **Introduce yourself.** Make sure that your party knows who you are, what company you represent and the nature of your call.
4. **Get to the point.** Once you are successful in reaching your party and have introduced yourself, get to the point at once. One of the main phone etiquette tips is not to waste another's time.
5. **Listen.** Allow the person you are calling to ask questions and convey his or her point of view. Do not interrupt, and answer questions honestly and directly.
6. **Be patient.** Never try to rush a call, and allow the individual to fully express his or her opinions, reactions, etc.
7. **Know when to end the call.** There is generally a point at which it becomes clear that the call should be concluded. Use positive statements such as "I know you are busy, and want to thank you for your time," to politely signal the end of the conversation.

(The text is borrowed and modified from: http://www.howtodothings.
com/careers/a2495-how-to-practice-telephone-etiquette-and-manners.html as of 29 January 2011)

Task 8. *Now listen again to telephone conversation 4 out of seven conversations that you were listening to in the last class and say (in a whole-class discussion) how the recommendations above were followed by the caller in the talk with Mr. Zain. Name the tips that were followed. You have 4 minutes for listening and discussion.*

Task 9. *Work in pairs. Role play an appointment making telephone conversation. You represent Petrovsky Iron-and-Steel Works in Dnipropetrovsk, Ukraine and are calling Mr. Robinson, the Sales Manager of an engineering company in England. Your appointment on the issue of the equipment that your iron-and-steel works is purchasing from Mr. Robinson's company was for Monday at 2 p.m. You want it to be changed for Wednesday at 3 p.m. because of the problem with your flight to London. But you can also have it after 3 p.m. on Wednesday or any time on Thursday since your flight back is only on Friday morning. You have time until the end of the class for your pair work.*

Judging from all the above described activities we can conclude that the methodology developed and embedded in the textbook "Professional Basics" beyond all doubt contributes to the development of sociolinguistic component of professionally oriented communicative competence. All these give grounds to believe that sociolinguistic aspect will be included into the textbooks developed not only for beginners in learning foreign languages for specific purposes, but also for advanced and proficient learners.

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ПРИЙОМИ АУДИТОРНОЇ РОБОТИ ІЗ ФОРМУВАННЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНО ОРІЄНТОВАНОЇ АНГЛОМОВНОЇ СОЦІОЛІНГВІСТИЧНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ СТУДЕНТІВ ТЕХНІЧНИХ ВНЗ

Статтю присвячено обґрунтуванню необхідності включення соціолінгвістичного компоненту до підручників із навчання англійської мови професійного спрямування. Зокрема, визначено роль та місце соціолінгвістичного складника у навчанні англійської мови професійного спрямування. Всі положення статті проілюстровано прикладами вправ, що спрямовані на розвиток професійно орієнтованої соціолінгвістичної компетентності студентів технічних спеціальностей.

Ключові слова: англійська мова професійного спрямування, професійно орієнтована соціолінгвістична компетентність, вправи.

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ПРИЕМЫ АУДИТОРНОЙ РАБОТЫ ПО ФОРМИРОВАНИЮ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНО ОРИЕНТОРОВАННОЙ АНГЛОЯЗЫЧНОЙ СОЦИОЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКОЙ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТИ СТУДЕНТОВ ТЕХНИЧЕСКИЙ ВУЗОВ

Статья посвящена обоснованию необходимости введения социолингвистического компонента в учебники по английскому языку профессиональной направленности. В частности, определены роль и место социолингвистической составляющей в обучении английскому языку профессиональной направленности. Все положения статьи проиллюстрированы примерами упражнений, направленных на развитие профессионально ориентированной социолингвистической компетентности студентов технических специальностей.

Ключевые слова: английский язык профессиональной направленности, профессионально ориентированная социолингвистическая компетентность, упражнения.