

Yu.O.Semenchuk

*Ternopil National Economic University, Ukraine
(E-mail: yulian24semenchuk@gmail.com)*

Interactive techniques in the process of teaching students economic terminology

The article analyzes the theoretical premises of teaching students majoring in International Economics special terminology in a foreign language. The research aims at finding effective and adequate methods of presenting, understanding meaning, memorizing and proper using economic terms in oral and written communication of English learners. On the basis of theoretical analysis of the above-mentioned problem the paper provides implications for applying interactive forms of work to enhance the quality of teaching students economic terminology in English.

Key words: lexical competence, economic terminology, non-linguistic learners of English, methodology of teaching vocabulary, interactive techniques.

Introduction

Teaching students professional terminology in the course of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has always been a subject of interest for researchers. This interest has been enhanced with the necessity to arm future specialists, namely in the field of International Economics, Business, and Management, with the knowledge of terms and ability to use these specific language means in communication in order to sign contracts, hold negotiations and develop cooperation with their foreign business partners. To perform these and numerous other functions specialists will obviously need the knowledge of special vocabulary and will require skills how to use terms in practice. Gaining such knowledge and acquiring proper skills can be feasible if researchers develop effective ways of teaching terminology to be applied by ESP teachers in practice. Hence, the demand of society to foster qualified specialists in the conditions of integrating into the world economy and the requirements of governmental documents evoke the need to find new approaches to teaching students terminology in the framework of ESP course. In this context the methodology of teaching terminology by means of using interactive forms of work remains open for new ideas, and therefore a further research is needed to develop a sustainable theoretical foundation to realize this task. This inference allows us to suggest the following *thesis statement*: One of the ways of increasing the effectiveness of teaching terms can be a deliberate and purposeful usage of interactive techniques both in classroom and out-of-class activities. Consequently, the *aim* of this paper is to analyze relevant sources devoted to teaching students economic terminology in order to substantiate theoretical premises of the considered problem and on this basis prove that using interactive techniques can enrich students' business vocabulary load and promote its adequate to situation usage both in oral and written communication.

Materials and methods

The necessity to substantiate the methodology of using interactive techniques while teaching non-linguistic students special vocabulary in the framework of ESP can be defined as a research problem of this paper. The topicality of the highlighted theme is due to the development of international cooperation and radical changes of political, economic, social conditions of life, the strive of the society to modernize the current system of education so that the university graduates' can be competitive, professional, and competent on the contemporary labor market.

To perform the study we undertook a thorough analysis of the relevant publications and critically evaluated our own experience, and also used the materials from our worked-out manuals with samples of interactive tasks for teaching future economists, managers, and tourists. To do the current research we applied such theoretical and empirical methods as analysis of the students' needs and requirements of the actual teaching programs, observation of pedagogical and psychological conditions for a successful implementation of interactive techniques into the studying process, reasoning and comparison of different types of interactive forms of work, generalization of the most effective approaches to interactive teaching/learning which helped us make scientific conclusions on the basis of our findings. Discussed in the paper interactive techniques have been successfully used with students majoring in International Economics, Business Administration, and In-

ternational Tourism, starting from the 1st year of preparation and finishing with the 4th year of study in Ternopil National Economic University, Ukraine.

Review of relevant literature

Learning terminology from different fields of science and technology, acquiring knowledge of special vocabulary, and mastering the ability to use it in communication has long been proved to be the necessary prerequisite of mastering ESP by non-linguistic students. Without learning/acquiring professional terminology students of economic and technical higher educational establishments will not be able to form their lexical competence as an integral part of communicative competence. Plenty of scholars (I.Berman, V.Bukhbinder, V.Korostylov, O.Tarnopolsky) have paid a considerable attention to the methodology of teaching students different facets of foreign language terminology. In particular, they have suggested a wide range of techniques for disclosing the meaning of terms, offered ways of translation and contextual explanation of new words, worked out numerous exercises for learning new vocabulary and fixing it in the students' memory. Scientists and methodologists have focused their works on making the process of teaching/learning vocabulary purposeful, communicative and effective. Learning vocabulary «functionally», students form their «verbal networks» [1;21], which function as a basis for keeping words in the memory and as a condition of their reproduction in speech. Having acquired reproductive skills, which are mainly based on the work of memory to solve standard, conventional tasks with the learning material, students move on to forming and producing their own patterns of speech with that material, offering creative, original solutions, thus involving not only memory, but their thinking [2;17–19]. Scientists (O.Tarnopolsky, V.Borshchovetska, D.Bubnova, I.Lipska, Z.Korneva, L.Morska, O.Petrashchuk and others) have also formed the methodological basis for further research in the field of teaching terminology in the framework of ESP. In particular, as it has been revealed in numerous studies by the researchers, they described the principles of selecting terminology and suggested lists of terms to be acquired by students of different specialties, offered methodology of learning terms in different types of speaking activity, paid attention to the ways of translating and disclosing meanings of such lexical units, analyzed different strategies for memorizing and applying terms in oral and written communication, studied the effectiveness of using computers and special training programs in teaching/learning vocabulary, elaborated complexes and systems of exercises for learning and brushing up terminological vocabulary while reading and/or listening to different authentic professionally oriented texts [3;23]. These inferences help teachers of ESP organize the process of teaching special vocabulary, play a significant role in the classroom activity and especially in the independent or self-study work of students, because, according to H.G.Widdowson [4;121], «learning is now seen as a self-generating process by learners themselves.» Thus applying the abovementioned results in the field of the methodology of teaching terms, teachers support students' motivation to learn such lexical units, help them acquire practical skills of proper using terms in different types of discourse. Consequently, having acquired a linguistic competence (in our case, a lexical one), students get the ability and power to apply their knowledge of special vocabulary into practice and form their communicative competence as the utmost goal of ESP course.

Foreign researchers of the problem under discussion (N.Schmitt, R.Carter, M.McCarthy, R.Ellis, R.Gairns, D.Gardner, M.Lewis, I.Nation, L.Taylor and others) have also made a great contribution to the methodology of teaching professional vocabulary, and the results of their thorough study have been widely used by Ukrainian theoreticians and practitioners of ESP. In this respect it is worth mentioning N.Schmitt [5;133–136], who determined and described vocabulary learning strategies and also proved the necessity of using them concurrently by good learners to structure their vocabulary learning, review and practice target words, define semantic relationships between new and previously learned words so that students can be conscious of their learning and can take steps to regulate it. Consequently, the researcher assumes that «vocabulary acquisition is an incremental process, and the teachers must concentrate not only on introducing new words, but also on enhancing learners' knowledge of previously presented words.» J.Nattinger [6;62] stresses that comprehension of vocabulary relies on strategies that permit learners to understand words and store them, to commit them to memory, while production concerns strategies that activate one's storage by retrieving these words from memory, and using them in appropriate situations. I Nation [7;182] underlines two important factors affecting productive vocabulary use: knowledge and motivation. Productive knowledge of vocabulary requires more learning efforts than receptive knowledge, the researcher claims. The necessity of applying stimulating, social, mnemonic, cognitive, metacognitive, and compensatory strategies in the process of teaching/learning target words has also been substantiated [8], because due to using these strategies learners are able to enrich significantly their vocabulary load in the process of mastering foreign languages. In

that case we agree with N.Schmitt [5; 158], who resumes that patterns of strategy use can change over time as a learner either matures or becomes more proficient in the target language. At the same time we cannot expect that the student will be able to use his/her knowledge of linguistic rules (new words) for effective communication even if he/she has learned these rules (new words). Therefore, it is recommended that teachers teach vocabulary and grammar through contexts so that students can learn how to apply their knowledge into practice [9;58]. Also it is evident that scholars and teachers must find the most effective ways to make students realize their potential in a close-to-real communication, which is or might be typical to future professional activity of ESP learners. To provide such conditions we came to understanding that interactive activity, which presupposes using group and pair work to conduct discussions, debates, case-studies, etc., can enhance the process of acquiring professional terminology (forming lexical competence) and ensure effective mastering it in communication.

Discussion of the research results

The importance of using interactive activity which can take different forms in the classroom has been long proved by various researchers (H.G.Widdowson, N.Brieger, M.Ellis, Ch. Johnson, J.M.Dobson, J.Comfort, D.Nunan, W.Rivers and others). According to R.Arends [10;229], the interactive aspects of teaching combine the following items: presentation, direct instruction, concept teaching, cooperative learning, problem-based instruction, and classroom discussion. Scholars emphasize the effectiveness of such forms of interactive cooperation in the teaching/ learning process which implies full participation of the teacher and students and their interaction with the purpose of planning (classroom and independent work, different projects), making effective choices (of words relevant to future profession), helping each other (to organize vocabulary, to draw lexical charts). Interactive, or cooperative learning, also implies «small-group activity, large group instruction, interacting in pairs» [11;78], sharing information with others, etc., while the teacher becomes an advisor, guide, helper, supporter, and partner in such a cooperative venture. Such an approach to teacher-student relations can ensure mutual respect and responsibility for the results of studying, provide information for discussions, which all together promote interaction as a powerful means of forming all constituent parts of communicative competence and successful language learning. We cannot but agree with A.Vornachev [12;60], who states that using interactive techniques in the professional education helps to create an authentic virtual language environment, involve students into real situations of cross-cultural communication, acquire individual experience of dealing with people from another culture, which in the long run influences the effectiveness of forming foreign language communicative culture of future specialists. Also it goes without saying that interaction in the classroom can be established and stimulated if the teacher creates «friendly relationships and supportive atmosphere, in which students feel free to communicate using the target language» [13;72]. Under such conditions students can acquire new vocabulary, use adequate to situation lexical units in the process of meaningful and appropriate to the context communication, which altogether corresponds with the requirements of communicative and student-oriented approach to foreign language teaching.

It is evident that vocabulary development may take place and be conducted in all types of speaking activity aimed at language acquisition, namely, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. In our paper we highlight and stress the importance of using interactive activity as a powerful means of stimulating learning vocabulary through communication. Different kinds of interactive activity ensure «learning by doing» principle and are crucial in triggering the speaking mechanism of the learners, when they start producing their own pieces of speech, crammed with the active vocabulary. A willingness to use the language in a given situation, as many researchers (D.Norman, U.Levihn, J.A.Hedenquist) write, can often be of greater importance for understanding and communication than grammatical correctness. Thus we can assume that despite possible language mistakes in utterances (such as incorrect grammar forms, mispronunciation, etc., which do not hinder, or distort effective communication), learners in their interactive forms of work can experiment with building word-combinations and «word families,» prepare lists of collocations and transform words using derivatives. Also they can expand their vocabulary storage when expressing their own judgments as to the problem described in the before-read authentic professionally oriented text or participate in the whole class post-reading discussion, based on the ideas from that text. It is worth saying that learners in such and the like activities do not learn single words, do not memorize texts as speech patterns, but create their own texts, mobilizing their efforts aimed at retrieving necessary words from their long-term memory, processing and transforming lexical units, organizing their speech patterns into meaningful communication. Different activities promote a desire of students for interaction with each other, with the teacher, with the textbook or computer,

and also involve learners into productive work on building their vocabulary stock and effectively using lexical units adequately to the communicative situation or prescribed task. Learning in activities provides implicit memorizing vocabulary through doing creative tasks, allows practice target words subconsciously within the framework of integrated speech system, reduces tension and uncertainty among learners which is in contrast to explicit teaching vocabulary and/or acquisition of separate words in the process of language training. On the basis of studied scientific literature and our long-term experience we believe that only adherence of teachers to task-based teaching, when students in the classroom «act in the belief that they can learn the language indirectly through communicating in it rather than directly through studying it» [14;252], opportunities for learners to demonstrate productive and effective utilization of their linguistic resources can be created.

Researchers suggest different types of activities to be used in class, analyze their strong points, emphasize the positive effects they bring for students in the process of vocabulary learning. We agree with the statement that «instructors can benefit by designing activities to increase student engagement with each other and build students' community, otherwise students feel isolated, bored, and even over-loaded» [15;251]. Also we support the idea that «peer collaboration and group work can be extremely stimulating for students, especially when they have a chance to freely express themselves» [16;10]. In ESP course such activities like role playing, simulations, small-group discussions, etc. can and should be widely used. What is the difference between the simulation and the role play? The overall aim of simulations and role plays is very similar: to train students to deal with the unpredictable nature of language, writes G.P.Ladousse [17;6]. The researcher claims that «Role-play is an activity in the same way as talking or playing are, whereas a simulation is an event which involves the students in a particular type of role play» [17;20]. M.Ellis and Ch. Johnson [18;196,197] resume that role play differs from simulation in that the participants are asked to adopt a new character, who may have different attitudes and opinions from their own. Simulations, on the other hand, allow the learners to be themselves. According to P.Ur [19;132], «in simulations the individual participants speak and react as themselves, but the group role, situation and task they are given is an imaginary one; participants in role plays are given a situation plus problem or task, as in simulations, but they are also allotted individual roles.» As we can see, there is only an invisible 'border' between a simulation and a role play, that is why we would like to agree with W.Rivers [11;28], who suggests the term «a simulation game,» in which «a particular situation is outlined with distinctively defined participants who have conflicting interests in the project under discussion, and the parties involved work out a solution acceptable to all.» As an example of such a simulation game, students of the group can be offered the task to role-play the functions of a line manager in the tourist company when solving a problem described by an irritated client. The situation may be the following: *Student 1: You are the line manager in a middle-sized tourist company. You meet a customer who has just returned from the holiday trip and who expresses his/her dissatisfaction with the services which were in contrast to those advertised by your company before the trip. Student 2: You have just returned back from a holiday trip, but you are disappointed with the services you were offered. As a recent client of this tourist company express your state of mind to the manager and demand a compensation for the spoiled holiday.*

We can also single out plenty of other activities, such as discussions in pairs or small groups of three or four students, presentations and disputes, simulations of negotiations, case studies, etc. For example, to organize a post-reading discussion, students can do the following exercise: *What can motivate people in their career? What can make jobs more challenging? Do you know how to motivate others? Read the text and explain which factors cause job satisfaction and which lead to dissatisfaction at work.* As a topic for a debate we can suggest the following: *Do employees like performance appraisals? One group supports the necessity of carrying out appraisals; another group thinks that evaluating a person's performance at work is useless.* Also for a discussion either in small groups or in the whole class we can propose such a problem: *Are women well represented in higher management? What or who prevents women from getting right to the top? What are the invisible barriers and prejudices that women have to overcome to be promoted? Discuss these and other urgent problems women face at work. Express your attitude to each problem.* No doubt, all these activities proved to be useful and must be practiced in classroom as they promote communication which in its turn enhances learning vocabulary as the major building material of any language. Such an approach to interactive teaching/learning vocabulary concentrates less on the words and sentence models, but pays a considerable attention to communication, to doing things with language elements, to carrying out communicative functions, such as asking and rejecting, agreeing and denying, and the like. Participating in a meaningful communication, students choose activities they best satisfy their needs as communicators in different social and professional (or rather quasi-professional) roles. Pointing out interactive forms of activity as the most

efficient in acquiring foreign language vocabulary and professional terminology, we can provide students with a powerful means to form their lexical competence as an inseparable element of the communicative competence.

Conclusions

The purpose of this paper was to analyze different approaches to teaching/learning students professional terminology and on this basis elaborate effective means for extending their vocabulary through interactive performance in class. Nobody objects that vocabulary is of major importance for ESP learners, because knowledge of it and the ability to process certain vocabulary storage allow them to retrieve and properly comprehend information from professional texts after reading and/or listening, to express their thoughts both in oral and written forms when interacting and communicating with specialists (native and non-native speakers). That is why we suggest various interactive techniques for enhancing vocabulary development and enrichment, applying effective strategies for acquiring skills in proper using words according to the context and communicative situation. Consequently, this paper also contributes to numerous studies in the methodology of teaching/learning vocabulary, in particular, a special terminology for future economists. It may be reasonably inferred that ESP vocabulary teaching/learning must be conducted in the process of interaction which provides a meaningful professionally oriented communication in class. Participating in different activities, such as role-plays, simulations, discussions, etc., being involved in a close-to-real communication, which is based on the materials from authentic texts for reading and listening, having strong motivation for multiple repetition of new words in different contexts, students can acquire professional terminology and form their vocabulary competence, thus enhancing the effectiveness of their foreign language learning.

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Ю.А.Семенчук

Студенттерге экономикалық терминологияны оқыту процесіндегі интерактивті әдіс-тәсілдер

Мақалада ағылшын тілінде экономика студенттердің терминологияны үйренудің теориялық алғышарттары талданған. Зерттеуде ағылшын тілінде ауызша және жазбаша қарым-қатынастың халықаралық экономиканың талаптары қосалқы тілді дұрыс қолдану құндылықтарын таныстыру, тиімді және тиісті әдістерді табуға бағытталған. Интерактивті оқыту ерекшеліктерінің мақсаты қойылған. Автор осы проблеманы сыни зерттеу негізінде интерактивті нысандарын ағылшын терминология лексикасы студенттерінің оқыту сапасын арттыру бойынша ұсыныстар берген.

Ю.А.Семенчук

Интерактивные приемы в процессе обучения студентов экономической терминологии

В статье проанализированы теоретические предпосылки обучения студентов-экономистов терминологии на английском языке. В исследовании ставится цель — найти эффективные и адекватные методы презентации, раскрытия значений, запоминания и правильного употребления терминов подязыка международной экономики в устной и письменной коммуникации на английском языке. На основании критического изучения данной проблемы в статье рассмотрены особенности интерактивного обучения и даны рекомендации для повышения качества обучения студентов англоязычной терминологической лексике с помощью интерактивных форм работы.

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