

## SOME PECULIARITIES OF TEACHING ENGLISH TO STUDENTS OF TECHNICAL SPECIALTIES AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL\*

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**Keywords:** professionally-oriented, technical communication, communicative – oriented, interdisciplinary approach, practical inadequacy, educational environment.

*Work experience in technical high institutions and examining the initial level of students' proficiency of language skills in the technical specialties at university level in the NKR point out that the methods of teaching professional English need to enhance. This indicates to the fact that there is a gap in modern methods of teaching English. Even if the student captures an essential part of educational material, it does not ensure that he is master of foreign language. As the popularity of the English language has enlarged, there is a need for highly competent masters to train students in the language. Of course, there are teachers who use new techniques, but the most part of teachers still use the traditional methods of teaching. None of these traditional means are bad or inappropriate for the students. Indeed, until present they are found to be useful as well. The person who teaches English for specific purposes (ESP) must be aware of how the teaching skills of English as a second language (ESL) can be adapted to teaching English for specific purposes. [1]*

*Besides, they should work with other specialists to elaborate appropriate courses to update some points regarding the technical glossary or content. Teaching English to students of technical specialties at university level in the modern educational environment has some peculiarities. There are rather limited number of classes to master English; unequal level of foreign language proficiency of students; different level of students' motivation and interest.*

*Today the NKR has a great demand of professionals in the field of Technology. The proficiency of technical English breaks new grounds for students and gives them new chances of promotions in professional career. So the prosperity of our country depends on future generation involved in modern digital technology. Nowadays ESL students have many opportunities to practice their English for obtaining a profound knowledge and competency. The Internet gives access to authentic texts, possibility to communicate with native speakers of the studied language and creates a natural language environment thus providing opportunities for developing media competence of students. [2].*

*The Educational Standard of secondary vocational education states that the main objectives of teaching English for students of technical specialties are:*

- 1. Ability to communicate orally and in written form on professional and everyday topics.*
- 2. To translate foreign professional texts with a dictionary.*
- 3. To improve their own spoken and written language.*
- 4. To know lexical and grammar material necessary for reading and translation of foreign technical texts with a dictionary.*
- 5. To enrich their vocabulary. [3]*

*Teaching English in Technical Universities was based on reading texts, conception and translation of specialized texts, as well as the accurate examination of the problems of syntax. At present the development of oral skills on professional issues and scientific discussions play an important role in teaching and its' development does not interfere with the advancement of skills, abilities and knowledge, because speaking is based on it. Saying "communication in English" in the*

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\* Հոդվածն ընդունվել է 02.02.17

Հոդվածը տպագրության է երաշխավորել Շուշիի տեխնոլոգիական համալսարանի «Հումանիտար և էկոլոների» ամբիոնը:

teaching process, obviously, we mean listening or reading, comprehension and its reproduction in the form of conversation, dialogues or discussions, and written and oral assignments.

Thus it is talked about the performance of the act of speaking in communication between two or more people. Educational templates of professional English speech can be based on the following objectives:

- defining list of features and models of communicative speech of the given specialty and working out of exercises for its practice;

- comparison of these means and models selection for its active and passive training;

- analysis of the different communicative – oriented kinds of texts of the given specialty, the usage of certain types of texts for teaching purposes, the definition of basic communicative features, models and the development of an effective system of exercises for structural units training;-the formation of “background base” for the improvement of speaking skills, that is, the selection and training of word formation, lexical and grammatical structures needed for reading, comprehension, listening and speaking;

- the development and improvement of the student learning algorithms for all types of speaking activity;

- communication in the forms of monologue and dialogue with problem solving tasks.[4]

Analyzing the early test results entrusted to the 1st year students at Shushi University of Technology it can be claimed that even having studied English both during secondary and high schools, the majority of students do not master the basic grammatical structures and vocabulary. The differentiation criteria are varied: the knowledge of possessing language, the power of assimilation, motivation, temperament, imagination, effort, behavior, socio-cultural environment etc. In this connection 2-phase education pattern seems to be efficient. In the first phase we suggest language learning for general purpose encompassing the first and the second years of education. The second phase should include studying language for professional purposes during the third year of education

The first stage is designated for improving pronunciation, word-building and grammar skills, studying collocations and phrasal verbs. During the first stage students are introduced the following themes: “Hobby”, “Climate and weather”, “My country”, “Shopping, Clothes and Accessories”, “Educational system of Armenia” etc. The grammar material at the first stage rests on comprehension of the following grammatical material: nouns and cases, pronouns, tenses of verbs, modal verbs, the degrees of adjective, the degrees of adverb, articles, relative clauses, question forms, short answers, first and second conditionals, direct and indirect speech. [5].

During the lesson a teacher should develop such skills as making up dialogues, asking questions and finding out personal information; expressing preferences and opinions, giving advice, asking for / giving directions, making guesses, finding out information; making a phone call, seeing the doctor, buying things, etc. By the end of the second year students should pass the exam and the exact level of student’s English proficiency should be checked.

A foreign language for specific purposes should be studied at all levels of language acquisition. It is also necessary to review interdisciplinary approach i.e. to include the materials of special classes which students learn in the framework of the special course program. [6]

The learners of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) have already focused their education on a specific area and consider foreign language acquisition as an important element for being successful in their career. They will constantly have to enrich their vocabulary and develop the skills needed for oral and written communication. [7]

During the third year of studies the teacher can deliver some professional texts to students, for example, “Properties of materials”, “Steel, Metalworking”, “Hot working of steel”, “Technological processes”, “Welding”, “Machine Tools”, “Lathe”, “Milling Machine”, “Dies” etc.. The second phase includes advancing all four language skills (reading, writing, speaking and

listening) in a technical context. It presupposes studying translation rules and techniques and summarizing technical texts. The learning material contains texts for reading comprehension, texts for translation with a dictionary, pictures, glossaries, and various training lexical exercises for developing oral and written skills, glossary of technical terms. The grammatical aspect of teaching should be focused on translating participle I/II and the passive voice. In translating special texts students must be able to cope with the problem of polysemy of terms.

With the assistance of teachers and through trial and error, students will master the English language as they work with texts they find creative and sapid and they can use them in their paper or researches. Students should also be aware of the structural peculiarities of terms: they may consist of one word or a group of words of one key-word and the meaning of the main element can be modified with one or several additions.

The third year students of technical specialties encounter difficulties in the process of learning specialized vocabulary. For example, in teaching to translate word groups consisting of several components from English into Armenian, an English teacher should explain the certain sequence of actions intended to take place. Students are taught from which member start to translate, translate the word-group beginning from the dependent element and then translate every sense group from right to left. For instance in the expression **Software for Market Analysis and Restrictions on Trade** the main word is **software**— **ծրագրային ապահովում**, and the several additions **Market Analysis and Restrictions on Trade** —**շուկայի վերլուծություն և առևտրի սահմանափակումներ** modifies the noun **software**, so the translation is **շուկայի վերլուծության և առևտրային սահմանափակումների համար ծրագրային ապահովում**. Another example which can perform certain difficulties is the English word **unit** that has Armenian equivalents **տարր** and **միավոր**, but it also may be rendered as **‘սարք’, ‘աղբեգատ’, ‘կոմպլեկտ’**.

Technical vocabulary is not always easy to assimilate: barn, starch, quest, reap, plow etc.. In order to help students to acquire professional words a specific work on synonyms, antonyms, suffixes, prefixes, verbal expressions, homonyms etc. is needed. On the other hand good assimilation of professional glossary can be achieved through various exercises such as true-false, matching words with their definition; finding Armenian equivalence to English words and vice versa.

The students have also problems both in pronunciation and in writing. For example, when treating pronunciation, one of the mistakes is confusing the words **flower** [ˈflaʊə] and **flour** [ˈflaʊə(r)], **to knit** [nit] and **neat** [ni:t] so they should take into account the context of the text.

Some students with a high level of English who plan to continue their studies abroad must be able to follow a corresponding educational course at university level, so students must also have proper language proficiency. Teachers should stimulate students to read special literature and watch specialized TV programs in the studied language.

All the mentioned above led us to the idea that students play the most important role in the process of teaching, so teachers of English should take into account students' needs, reasons for motivation, the presence of special skills, the ways of learning. In the situation where students from one class have different levels of English, the teacher's role is more significant than any method or material. The specialists should transform the written material into speech, to make all these words, expressions and phrases from texts helpful in different situations. For doing this he must use all his capabilities, all his energies and talent. One of the teacher's goals during the educational process is to set up precise learning objectives which correspond to the curriculum, students' knowledge level, their concerns, behavior and what they need to know until the end of the course. In the so-called task-based learning, the teacher should:

- improve all the time the methods of planning the lesson
- become acquainted with the concepts and principles of task-based learning and practice them using methods of planning and projecting
- increase the effectiveness of learning by taking into account the theories about learning

*how to apply*

- *concentration on students when teaching*
- *foster the development of student responsibility and independent learning techniques*
- *improve learning in groups*
- *use materials in a creative way*

*Learning English at universities with technical profile has a number of peculiarities detected by the variety of the vocabulary, different number of hours for the specializations and inequable degree of assimilation of English during high school studies. [8] The introduced model of English teaching process which comprises 2 stages is assigned to study English for general use during the first two years and English for professional use during the last two years. The fundamental point of these two phases is to teach to acquire the general knowledge of English in order to handle with technical texts and translate simple and compound terms in communication professionally. The peculiarities of teaching English at technical universities are expanding every year: strengthening material-technical base of higher educational institutions; in the process of learning material science technologies, basic engineering learning tools are applied increasingly; there are more opportunities to use a variety of authentic sources by students, benefits for the teachers, and so on. Teacher's primary role is to coach and facilitate student learning and overall comprehension of material. It is necessary to use different techniques and various approaches to raise students' interest and enthusiasm. Therefore, teaching English to students of technical specialties should be organized on a well-planned and regular manner and based not only on teacher-centered approach but also on student-oriented approach to learning.*

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## SUMMARY

### Some Peculiarities of Teaching English to Students of Technical Specialties at University Level Tamara Danielyan

The article presents the ways of teaching and enriching the technical vocabulary, formation and development of lexical skills by means of reading technical texts. The criteria of training material selection are described; some tips and techniques for learning vocabulary are provided. As the curriculum presupposes studying English for both general and special purposes, as well as mastering skills essential for corresponding professional communication sphere, it influences the content of the studied material and the structure of academic process. The description of the highlighted stages enables specialists to apply the results for experimental purposes.

## ԱՄՓՈՓԱԳԻՐ

### Համալսարանում տեխնիկական մասնագիտությամբ ուսանողների անգլերենի ուսուցման մի քանի առանձնահատկություններ Թամարա Դանիելյան

*Բանալի բառեր՝ մասնագիտորեն կողմնորոշված, տեխնիկական կապ, կոմունիկատիվ կողմնորոշված, միջդիսցիպլինար մոտեցում, գործնական անհրաժեշտությունը, կրթական միջավայր:*

Հոդվածում նկարագրված են դասավանդման մեթոդները և տեխնիկական տերմինաբանության հարստացման միջոցները, լեզվաբանական հմտությունների ձևավորումն ու զարգացումը տեխնիկական տեքստերի ընթերցման միջոցով: Հոդվածում նաև նկարագրված են դասավանդման նյութերի ընտրության չափանիշները և ապահովված են մեթոդներ ու խորհուրդներ բառապաշարը ուսումնասիրելու համար: Քանի որ ուսումնական պլանը ներառում է անգլերենի ուսումնասիրությունը ընհանուր և հատուկ նպատակներով, ինչպես նաև հմտությունների տիրապետում, որը պահանջում է համապատասխան բնագավառի մասնագիտական հաղորդակցումը, դա ազդում է ուսուցման նյութի բովանդակության և կրթական գործընթացի կառուցվածքի վրա:

## РЕЗЮМЕ

### Некоторые особенности преподавания английского языка студентам технических специальностей в университете.

Тамара Даниелян

*Ключевые слова: профессионально-ориентированные, технические средства передачи информации, коммуникативно – ориентированный, междисциплинарный подход, практическая неадекватность, образовательная среда.*

В статье представлены способы преподавания и обогащения технической терминологии, формирование и развитие лексических навыков посредством чтения технических текстов. Также в статье описаны критерии выбора учебных материалов и предусмотрены методы и советы для изучения словарного запаса. Так как учебная программа предусматривает изучение английского языка, как для общего, так и для специального назначения, а также освоение навыков, необходимых для соответствующей сферы профессиональной коммуникации, то она влияет на содержание изучаемого материала и структуру учебного процесса. Описание выделенных этапов позволяет специалистам применить полученные результаты для экспериментальных целей.