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PROBLEMS OF TEACHING ENGLISH TO IT STUDENTS

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Keywords: English language, IT sphere, IT specialists, personnel training, foreign language competence, career guidance text, specialized vocabulary, project method.

Abstract. The article examines the problems of teaching English to IT students. The modern labor market persistently requires professionals who can organize their activities with maximum efficiency and flexibility. Researchers continue their continuous search for a solution to the most complex problem associated with the training of competent personnel. This necessitates a detailed study of the process of forming a complex of foreign language skills and abilities in the professional competence of IT students as an integral part of their professionalism.

ПРОБЛЕМЫ ОБУЧЕНИЯ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ СТУДЕНТОВ ИТ СПЕЦИАЛЬНОСТЕЙ

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Ключевые слова: английский язык, ИТ сфера, ИТ специалисты, подготовка кадров, иноязычная компетентность, профориентационный текст, специализированная лексика, метод проектов.

Аннотация. В статье рассматриваются проблемы обучения английскому языку студентов ИТ специальностей. Современный рынок труда настойчиво требует наличия профессионалов, умеющих выстраивать свою деятельность с максимальной эффективностью, гибкостью. Исследователи продолжают непрерывный поиск решения сложнейшей проблемы, связанной с подготовкой компетентных кадров. Это обуславливает необходимость детального изучения процесса формирования комплекса иноязычных умений и навыков в профессиональной компетентности студентов ИТ специальностей как неотъемлемой составляющей их профессионализма.

Knowledge of English is very important in the IT sphere. Most keywords, program errors, exceptions, as a rule, are written and explained in English. That is why in the modern education system so much time is devoted to the development of programs and technologies for teaching English to future IT specialists.

But at the moment there are a number of contradictions in the process of teaching English to students majoring in IT:

– between the increasing integration of Russian society into the global technological community, as a whole, on the one hand, and the low level of development of foreign language skills and abilities in the professional competence of university graduates, on the other;

– between the need of a programmer to develop foreign language skills and abilities in professional competence and the lack of appropriate, well-founded technology that ensures the effectiveness of the learning process;

– between the requirements for programmers to proficiency in English for professional activities (most professional products for developers are not supported in Russian at all) and the actual level of training of student programmers in professionally oriented English.

Therefore, a modern teacher has a responsible task to take into account all factors and offer a training program that would really provide students with the necessary knowledge and skills, and also form the necessary foreign language communicative competence in studying English in the IT sphere.

Of course, future IT specialists must be well prepared for participation and organization of professional projects, and for interaction with foreign colleagues. To successfully complete these tasks in the learning process, it is necessary to solve several problems.

The first and most common problem in learning professional English is misunderstanding the different meanings of the same word (for example, the literal meaning and a technical term). These mistakes are typical for beginning computer users and can be easily solved by referring to a special dictionary or thesaurus. The most common examples are: icon, mouse, window, escape, and others.

The second problem is cultural misunderstanding. Language is also a problem for understanding people of different cultures. Language barriers are communication obstacles caused by language differences between the sender and the recipient. Both parties to the conversation not only need to know the literal meaning of words in a given language, but also interpret them in the context of use. One simple example is the Sony Play Station. In Japan, if you press the X button, you cancel the operation, and if you press the O button, you apply your choice. In Europe and America, the meanings of these buttons are opposite: X – apply; O – cancel.

The third and most difficult problem is the use of professional slang or jargon. The difficulty is that, like any other type of slang, computer slang/jargon is constantly growing. Every day, a new term or meaning is introduced. Here are some examples: Copy, paste and pray – a simple phrase used by a programmer to refer to some work he found on the Internet and plans to use; PEBCAK – Problem Exists between Chair and Keyboard, or another version of PICNIC – problem in chair, not in computer – this term means that the reason a technician cannot fix a computer is not the fault of the computer itself [1].

To solve these problems, students need to follow new trends in the field of information technology, the development of their professional field, reading specialized literature in the original language.

The algorithm for working with career guidance texts on information technology is practically no different from working with other professionally oriented texts. But, given the fact that specialization requires special knowledge in such areas as programming, information and communication technologies, computer technologies and security, then students of IT faculties, unlike students of other technical fields, should learn to read and translate original technical literature

on the specialty, which is mostly published in English, from the first year. When selecting material, the teacher should be guided by:

- relevance of information;
- problematic nature of the material;
- authority of sources (texts should not be compiled by the authors of manuals, but taken from real sources – printed or electronic popular science magazines, specialized Internet sites, books written for professionals in this field).

In addition to texts for reading, the educational material may include a "Dictionary of Computer Science", diagrams, tables, as well as training exercises for developing grammar and vocabulary skills, oral and written speech skills, audio and video materials. The topics of the texts are quite diverse: "Computer security", "Internet applications", "Programming languages", "Cloud technology", "Databases and database management systems", etc.

The teacher's work on preparing for the study of texts on the above topics includes three stages.

At the first stage, sources of information and the texts themselves are selected. At the same time, as the researchers believe, "it is necessary to test students so that the texts and assignments for them are not too difficult" [3, p. 78]. However, as practice has shown, young people who have chosen the profession of a programmer begin to study professionally oriented English from their school years, and therefore reading original literature does not cause them any particular difficulties.

At the second stage, the teacher develops a system of exercises using different types of reading – skimming, searching, familiarization, and study [2].

The third stage is the development of an algorithm for working with the text, which involves reading, performing lexical and grammar exercises, as well as creative tasks.

The work with the texts themselves also includes three stages – pre-text, text and post-text.

At the pre-text stage, students, first of all, study the terminological vocabulary of the specialty, which is part of the text structure. Looking through the text, they underline unfamiliar lexical units and try to determine their meaning themselves. In principle, this is not difficult to do, because many English terms have already entered the terminological field of the Russian language. Students try to determine the semantics of unknown lexical nominations themselves, relying on lexicographic sources. When working with lexical units, one should not forget about the national and cultural specificity of English specialized vocabulary and terminology, because many terminological nominations of the source text do not have correspondences in the Russian language and are translated only descriptively.

The next stage is the text stage. Having mastered the terminology and other special units necessary for understanding the text, students proceed to reading the text. An important part of this stage is the translation of text fragments or the entire text, which will help develop students' professional thinking and ensure their

readiness for the practical application of the studied material in a different linguacultural environment.

At the post-text stage of working with the text, students complete a series of exercises related to the content of the text and its subject matter. For example, “Answer the questions using the information from the text”; “Find the English/Russian equivalents of the following words and word expressions; “Find the Russian equivalents for the abbreviations used in the text” “Comment on ...”; “What do you think ...”, etc. In the process of studying English based on the material of the specialty, one must not forget about studying grammatical phenomena. Without knowing the aspectual tense forms, the features of using the active and passive voice, singular and plural, one can misinterpret the text [3].

In addition to working with career guidance texts, the successful mastery of the discipline of studying English by students is facilitated by active interaction between the teacher and teachers of special disciplines. This joint work ensures high-quality training of the future IT specialist and his/her formation as an active person, ready for self-education, self-improvement [4]. One of the effective types of such interaction is the project activity of students, a type of educational activity, the main task of which is a project-based way of achieving a goal through solving a specific problem in the conditions of limited time and resources, which ends with a practical result in the form of a project.

For example, when using an interdisciplinary project in the process of teaching foreign language professionally oriented vocabulary to students, the effectiveness of the formulation of the material is ensured, and the dynamics of the level of formation of knowledge, skills, and abilities of students in mastering sets of tables of foreign language speech activity based on the professional focus of training increases. It is the project method that enables students not only to integrate knowledge from the field of special disciplines into foreign language communicative activity, but also to improve their knowledge and understanding of professional vocabulary in Russian [5].

In general, the combination of the above approaches to the process of teaching a foreign language contributes to the formation of a professionally prepared, competitive, mobile and creative specialist. The training takes place with great desire and enthusiasm, since this material is interesting to students, and it is directly related to their future profession.

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