

STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALLY ORIENTED LEXICAL COMPETENCE IN THE PROCESS OF LEARNING ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

In the contemporary educational landscape, the development of professionally oriented lexical competence among future specialists has become increasingly significant in the context of learning English for Specific Purposes (ESP). This tendency is determined by the demands of the globalized labor market, where proficiency in specialized foreign-language vocabulary is an essential component of effective professional communication.

The purpose of learning ESP is to enhance students' linguistic skills required for effective work in professional domains. It aims to prepare learners for professional communication and the performance of profession-related communicative tasks, enabling them to conduct negotiations, deliver presentations, and exchange information, ideas, and opinions on subject-specific topics [2, p. 131].

Professional vocabulary plays a central role in business communication. Accordingly, a key component of foreign language learning is the enhancement of students' linguistic competence through exposure to the richness of the lexical system of a foreign language [3, p.66].

Professional lexical competence is based on theoretical knowledge, practical skills, abilities, and readiness to use English vocabulary in professional activities. The concept of professionally oriented lexical competence involves both the understanding of professional terminology and its appropriate use in various professional contexts. [4, p. 20]. Furthermore, professionally oriented lexical competence encompasses not only the knowledge of terminology but also the ability to use lexical units appropriately in relevant communicative situations, to interpret their contextual meanings, and to recognize the specific features of their functioning within professional discourse.

In scholarly literature, the stages of lexical competence formation are identified as follows [3, p. 72]:

- 1) the presentation of new vocabulary, during which students develop an understanding of the phonetic and graphic form of a terminological unit and its meaning;
- 2) the formation of skills for using the studied lexical units through completing various exercises that build verbal-semantic connections;
- 3) the further development of the ability to use lexical units by solving various communicative tasks in accordance with communicative contexts, involving the application of appropriate knowledge, speaking skills, and competencies.

A range of effective strategies contributes to the development of this competence, including contextual vocabulary acquisition, the integration of lexical material into professionally simulated situations, the use of authentic materials, and the implementation of communicative-oriented tasks.

O. Savchenko and T. Bryk identify the most effective learning strategies for enhancing professional lexical competence, namely metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies [4]:

- *Metacognitive strategies* involve conscious planning, monitoring, and evaluation of vocabulary learning. They require students to set clear goals, focus on relevant professional terminology, and effectively use available information sources, particularly digital resources. Simultaneously, the teacher functions as a facilitator and mentor, guiding the process, ensuring a systematic approach to the acquisition of professional vocabulary, and supporting students in the accurate self-assessment of learning outcomes.
- *Cognitive strategies* are based on a sequence of actions aimed at processing, understanding, and retaining new vocabulary. They focus on the development of cognitive skills, including memory, reasoning, and problem-solving, which support the effective acquisition of professional terminology. Due to the specific nature of English terminological vocabulary, real-life context is essential in the vocabulary acquisition process, with emphasis on meaning, pronunciation, equivalents, and stylistic features of terms. The teacher ensures accuracy, provides clear explanations, and facilitates better memorization through categorization and word-formation analysis.
- *Socio-affective strategies* focus on creating a supportive learning environment that facilitates the acquisition of terminological units, the development of communication skills, self-motivation, and emotional engagement. The teacher fosters students' adaptation, reduces learning anxiety, and maintains motivation. Through structured support and interaction, the teacher ensures that students are emotionally engaged and effectively acquire specialized vocabulary [4].

Moreover, the successful acquisition of professional vocabulary largely depends on the use of modern communication technologies, which enhance learners' cognitive engagement and increase their motivation to learn. Among them are the followings:

Debates and discussions are considered effective methodologies for developing students' critical thinking skills. Furthermore, these interactive methods promote learners' abilities such as analyzing complex ideas, evaluating arguments, reflecting on different perspectives, and supporting opinions with evidence. Additionally, debates and discussions enhance motivation, interpersonal skills, and respect for others' viewpoints [1].

Problem-solving tasks are used to enhance critical thinking and practical skills. These tasks improve students' ability to work in a team, search for solutions, and connect learning with real-life contexts, thereby fostering deeper engagement and reflection. Such approaches encourage the application of knowledge in professional practice and support the reconsideration of previously held ideas [1].

Role-playing and game-based activities are effective methodologies for developing critical thinking and applying theoretical knowledge in practice. They support experiential learning by simulating real-life situations, thereby enhancing professional competence [1].

Case study is a student-centered approach grounded in real-life situations that fosters learners' collaborative analysis and problem-solving skills in professionally oriented scenarios. In ESP learning, this method recreates authentic professional contexts, encouraging students to use professional terminological units in problem-solving while promoting the development of critical thinking, teamwork, and professional language competence [1, 3]

Project-based learning is an innovative pedagogical method that enhances foreign language proficiency and fosters students' critical thinking, creativity, autonomy in learning, and motivation. [3, p. 75]. It enriches foreign language learning by making it more authentic and dynamic, supporting professional vocabulary acquisition through the use of reference materials, selection of appropriate ways of presenting information, hypothesis formulation, and drawing conclusions [3, p. 79].

N. Diachok also suggests using such types of activities as matching, working with dialogues, finding correspondences, guessing and explaining the meaning, working with phraseological units and others [3, p. 73].

In conclusion, the development of professionally oriented lexical competence is a key priority in modern English for Specific Purposes education, as it equips future specialists with the language tools required for effective professional communication. The most effective outcomes are achieved through the integrated use of metacognitive, cognitive, and socio-affective strategies, which foster both autonomy and meaningful learning. Furthermore, the application of modern communication technologies—such as debates, discussions, project-based learning, and case studies—enhances vocabulary acquisition by engaging learners in authentic, real-life contexts. Overall, a strategic and interactive approach ensures the successful and sustainable mastery of professional vocabulary.

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