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MAIN ASPECTS OF TEACHING VOCABULARY IN BUSSINESS ENGLISH COURSES FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATION

The article deals with the predominant role of vocabulary teaching in the framework of Business English courses. The scope of business vocabulary for successful communication is analyzed, the necessity to pay attention to metaphors and idioms is stressed. Apart from the vocabulary stratification model the article presents main techniques for teaching lexical units.

Key words: *stratification model, specialist vocabulary, general business vocabulary, common core, vocabulary teaching techniques.*

The problem statement. At the time of developing economic relations between Ukraine and other foreign countries there grows a necessity of highly qualified specialists who would be ready for professional communication in English. Users of Business English need to speak English well to achieve more in their jobs, as business is so competitive and multi-faceted. To be good negotiators and to be well versed in all aspects of business they are to be able to communicate their ideas without ambiguity and without stress for listeners. Therefore, the recognition of the need for business people to be proficient not only in language knowledge but in business communication skills as well, has had a major impact on Business English teaching lately (1:5). Learning vocabulary occupies the predominant role in learning and teaching English. If you make a grammar mistake, it may be 'wrong' but very often people will understand you anyway. But if you do not know the exact word that you need, it is very frustrating for you and the person you are talking to. Sometimes, without knowledge of the proper range of words communication in a foreign language cannot happen in any meaningful way.

The analysis of resent researches. There are a lot of components which characterize the professional proficiency and communication skills in Business English, vocabulary playing the essential role among them. The aspects and problems of vocabulary teaching for successful communication have been widely discussed by scholars and Business English teachers abroad as well as in this country (see 1-6). Some of the most interesting publications on this topic are "Teaching Business English Handbook" by N. Brieger, "ESP Today" by P. Robinson.

The aim of this paper is to look at the scope of vocabulary teaching in a Business English students' group of the intermediate level and consider the main techniques for teaching meanings of lexical units.

The main body of the article. For many people vocabulary, particularly specialist vocabulary (or terminology) is a key element of Business English. But specialist vocabulary is only part of vocabulary used in Business English. According to the scholars (5: 28) the whole range of vocabulary used could be stratified in the following way:

- specialist vocabulary;
- general business vocabulary;
- common core.

Specialist vocabulary is identified as the first of three levels of vocabulary differentiated by researchers. As a rule, it is not a problem for students because they have either some experience in a field or a network of specialist disciplines. In any case specialist vocabulary is specialist knowledge and conceptual network (sometimes it is a more serious problem to a teacher who lacks specialist knowledge than to a student). What helps to identify specialist vocabulary? First of all, it is frequency studies. Statistical methods play an important role in selecting an inventory of highly effective lexical items. There have been many developments in the ways in which teachers and course designers look at Business English. In the early 70s, specialist vocabulary was seen to be what distinguished Business English from General English and there was a preoccupation with

business-related words and terminology. Earlier textbooks reflect this approach. The principle underlying these earliest Business English course books was to present target specialist vocabulary in the context of a written text or a dialogue which dealt with a particular topic. But there was no consideration of how the learner might apply the language in real life and there was no development of skills such as interacting in meetings or writing letters. Modern textbooks eliminate these drawbacks and develop not only all language skills but also communication skills, specialist vocabulary playing important role in all of them.

General business vocabulary. This second level of vocabulary is called general business one and comprises words, which occur in a number of specialist areas: these are items necessary for discussing the research process, for analyzing and evaluating data, describing trends, whatever the specialist area is (3: 133). Most Business English practitioners agree that it is the second level which should be paid most of attention to, because here a lot of features given below are referred to as important ones:

- Formulaic language, gambits;
- Logical connectors or frame words;
- Softeners and intensifiers;
- Word clusters or business collocations.

Much traditional teaching in Business English has consisted of handing gambits and formulae lists. Learners have found themselves with long lists of phrases, which are supposed to help them to agree, disagree, put forward points of view, or interrupt. Our view is that trainers should treat gambits as only one of several means of achieving certain goals. They are useful as props, although they may not reflect native speaker use. Some research data shows that native speakers of English can be limited in their use of gambits. They do not go around saying "I disagree completely" or "I cannot go along with that". They are much more likely to indicate disagreement rather than express it overtly (communication skills!). So, native speakers will probably use intonation and pitch rather than fixed expressions to indicate the finer shades of meaning. Whilst many learners will probably be unable to do this effectively themselves, they may need to be aware of this feature. Of course, it may be argued that learners need to use gambits because they lack proficiency in the use of the subtler means of expressions. However, there should be a limit to the amount of stress placed on the teaching of them.

Trainers of Business English should not ignore teaching logical connectors or frame words as business communication calls for clarity, conciseness and brevity. Much of the language needed by business people (apart from social language) will be transactional: getting what you want, persuading others to agree with the course of action you propose. The language will frequently be objective rather than subjective and personal. For example, in discussion and meeting it will be more appropriate to evaluate facts from an objective standpoint ("This is a positive point", "on the other hand the disadvantage is...") rather than expressing personal feelings and opinions. Information has to be conveyed with minimum risk of misunderstanding, and the time for processing (both by the speaker and by the listener) needs to be short. Therefore, there is a preference for clear, logical process (e.g. as a result, for this reason, in order to...) reflected by logical connectors and frame words.

The special stratum of vocabulary is presented by so called softeners and intensifiers, the words and combinations like: marginally higher, considerably lower, slightly lower, a little higher, substantially higher, dramatically lower, to rise gradually, to increase slowly, to grow sharply, to decline rapidly, to drop suddenly etc. They occupy their place in the logical structure of business communication (written or oral) and should be paid and are paid attention to.

Teaching word clusters or business collocations is connected with nature of business communication itself ("timing is everything"). Certain terms have evolved to save time in referring to concepts which people in business are familiar with (e.g. "primary industry", "parent company"). Many of them are acronyms, for example:

- CIF - cost, insurance, freight
- FOB - free of board

FAS - free alongside ship

RSVP - please reply

R&D - research and development

There is often need to be concise, particularly when communicating by fax or telephone, and certain familiar concepts may be expressed in a word cluster to avoid circumlocution (e.g. "cash with order", "just in time delivery")

Common core. The third level of vocabulary is general, such as would be central to a General English course. This is the broadest stratum that relates to the topics and concepts of daily life, understood and manipulated by all normal (native speakers) users of the language. In general, Business English vocabulary in all its complexity, cannot be something completely independent. It is a system, derived from general language and it is nourished by it constantly.

Though most Business English practitioners think that it is the second level which should be paid most of attention to, there are other views of vocabulary in Business English that come from work in listening comprehension. Here it is suggested that what can cause a problem for the non-native user of English is not specialist or even general business vocabulary but the colloquial words, phrases and idioms used by some business people (5: 28). Let us have a closer look at some examples, taken from the tapescripts of the business course:

1. I have decided to get out of the *rat race* and buy a cottage in the country
2. What this country needs more than anything is *a level playing field*.
3. The Cabinet thinks that economy will be *a soft landing*.
4. In the software industry it is *a dog-eat-dog situation*.
5. Our advertising company will blow the competitor out of the water.

As we can see from these examples, Business English can be rather imagistic and the sources of these images are absolutely different: animals and natural life (ex.1, 4), sports and game (ex.2), journey (ex.3), war and military sphere (ex.5). The proper understanding of these extracts is not always easy if the students are not aware of the metaphoric images used as very effective means of communication. Therefore, a Business English teacher should pay proper attention to the analyses of images.

As we see this stratification of Business English vocabulary gives a teacher the answers to the questions about content of a Business English course, it helps to judge what exactly is to be taught. But the questions about how the material should be taught is not less important for successful teaching and learning.

Teaching vocabulary is more than just presenting new words. Experiments on vocabulary seem to suggest that students remember best when they have actually done something with the words they are learning. There is a definite advantage in getting students to do something with words than just in translating and repeating them.

Teachers need to be aware of the techniques available for introducing and consolidating new lexical items. We should get students to interact with words. We should get them to adopt words that they like and that they want to use. Vocabulary teaching needs a range of activities, which are designed to teach and practice words and their various uses. Presentation, Discovery and Practice techniques are among them. Of course, effective techniques in explaining the meanings are absolutely necessary. The more appropriate the techniques, the better process of memorizing will be (2: 12). One way of presenting words is visuals, which help the learners to build words or guess their meaning. Another is guessing from the context, surrounding a word to find out its meaning. Demonstrating, synonyms, pictograms, opposites, familiar or famous words, scales, examples of the type are some of the well-known techniques, used for vocabulary presentation. As far as activities of presenting vocabulary are concerned, we may mention various types of vocabulary exercises such as gap-filling, multiple choice, matching, grouping lexical items according to a certain criterion, predicting key words in a text by reading the title, word partnerships (collocations) word formation to introduce business-related vocabulary and terms, different highly reflective word games. These activities can be done by students, working together in pairs or in teams, as well as set as homework, where extra vocabulary practice seems to be necessary. Special attention must be

paid to lexical sets which are groups of related words, connected in different ways: (by topic, by similarity of meaning, in series or a scale, by superordinates (market, domestic market, foreign market, oversea market), by activity or process-steps (making a contract) etc.

As we see there are a lot of different techniques at the disposal of a Business English teacher. Therefore, it is important not to stick to the same ones all the time. Trying to insert variety into a lesson, a teacher should never stop asking himself/herself what technique or activity suits best this or that particular case and this or that particular group.

Since learning vocabulary is a matter of selecting what you need to know, students should be encouraged to make decisions during the course with respect to those lexical items which they want to include in their own vocabulary according to their needs (4:53). While learning vocabulary, students recognize not only forms and main meanings of the words, but also their metaphorical and idiomatic language uses, as well as their collocations. They also realize what stylistic and topical context words and expressions occur in. They get to know about word formation and word grammar. All these aspects are essential for successful communication in business and should be paid proper attention to during classes, otherwise we cannot speak of adequate language proficiency and proper communication skills of our students.

Conclusions.

1. Analyzing components which characterize the professional proficiency and communication skills in Business English we should accept that vocabulary occupies the essential role and requires constant attention of teachers.
2. The vocabulary stratification model presented by modern scholars is really helpful in determining *what* exactly should be included into Business English courses and constitute their content.
3. All three layers of vocabulary (specialist vocabulary, general business vocabulary and common core) should be given adequate consideration as we want our students to be successful in business communication.
4. The question of *how* the lexical units should be taught cannot be ignored as well. Modern scholars and practitioners provide a lot of techniques for introducing and consolidating new lexical items, and Business English teachers need to be aware of availability of these resources.

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Канівець О. І., Оніпченко Л. М. Основні аспекти викладання лексики в курсах з ділової англійської мови для успішного спілкування

Стаття розглядає головну роль лексики в змісті курсів з ділової англійської мови. Аналізуються три шари лексики: спеціальна, загально ділова та звичайна, яка може включати метафоричні та ідіоматичні вислови. Крім стратифікаційної моделі у статті наведено різноманітні техніки й прийоми презентації та закріплення значень лексичних одиниць.

Ключові слова: *стратифікаційна модель, спеціальна лексика, загальна ділова лексика, прийоми викладання лексики.*

Канивец Е. И., Онипченко Л. Н. Основные аспекты обучения лексике в курсах по

деловому английскому языку для успешного общения

Статья рассматривает определяющую роль вокабуляра в содержании курсов по деловому английскому языку. Анализируются три слоя лексики: специальная, общеделовая и обычная, включающая метафорические и идиоматические выражения. Помимо стратификационной модели приводятся различные техники и приемы введения и закрепления лексических единиц.

Ключевые слова: *стратификационная модель, специальная лексика, общеделовая лексика, приемы обучения лексике.*