

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN A REGIONAL CONTEXT

The article is devoted to the problem of intercultural communication on the regional level. The author underlines that Ukraine's integration into European and world community depends not only on the level of knowledge of foreign languages by its inhabitants but also on its ability to comprehend the European values and implement European life standards. As the article concerns developing intercultural communication skills of non-philological students the main task of a professional English teacher is to encourage students to master English and to support their interest and motivation to learning foreign languages. Among various modern approaches to professional English teaching nowadays preference should be given to competence approach as it better corresponds to the tasks of teaching professional English at either humanitarian or technical specialties.

Key words: *professional English; intercultural communication; European values and life standards; motivation to learning foreign languages; competence approach; regional context.*

Introduction. Intercultural communication has become a regular fact of our everyday life because more and more people used to go abroad to get education, to work, to travel and rest. Many Ukrainians have foreigners as their business partners at joint ventures or colleagues in scientific community. In general the modern world is becoming more globalized every decade as not only people but capital as well is transferred from country to country. This phenomenon has become a reality of our life and it needs special researches to be adequately appreciated and used for the benefit of our state.

In the context of the further development of intercultural communication numerous researches have been done to find answers to many questions connected with the peculiarities of the process. As every year more and more people are involved in intercultural communication this process has got the status of a global problem with many specific aspects. They concern the influence of cultures, peculiarities of business communication in different countries, readiness of people for cooperation, skills of team work, abilities of adaptation to new environment etc. This global problem is reflected on the regional level as people in different regions react differently on the economic situation in our country. In the search of well-paid work inhabitants of the west Ukraine mostly go to European countries while people from the east parts of the state prefer to look for vacancies in Russia. Citizens of our region (South Ukraine) go to work to Poland, Italy, Spain or Check Republic and to our north neighbor as well. This fact mostly concerns the representatives of the older population or middle-aged people. As for the young people no matter where they are going to work they should all know English as the language of international communication. Good knowledge of English and well formed cooperation skills open wide perspec-

tives for our university graduates on the European labor market. In this article we are going to discuss the situation with the development of intercultural communication on a regional level.

The progress on the way of Ukraine's integration into European and world community depends not only on the level of knowledge of foreign languages by its inhabitants but also on its ability to comprehend the European values and implement European life standards. This process needs a lot of common efforts both on the part of the state and on the part of people. The state has to adopt a number of laws and decrees aimed at regulation of cooperation with foreign partners and define the frames of possible actions on its side. The more complicated is the task connected with people's readiness to work in one team and cooperate with representatives of other nations and cultures.

Recent research analysis. The problems of intercultural communication were researched by scientists from different viewpoints. It goes without saying that for successful intercultural communication it is absolutely necessary to know foreign languages. In the context of teaching and learning foreign languages a lot of scientific works were devoted to professional training of future philologists, foreign language teachers, interpreters, etc. Yu.Passov formulated the main idea of cultural approach to teaching foreign languages – «teaching language through culture and culture through language» [4]. R. Gryshkova paid attention to social and cultural aspects of intercultural communication proving the necessity of knowledge of national customs, traditions, values and beliefs of different peoples for mutual understanding and successful cooperation [1]. O. Tarnopolsky concerning approaches to teaching professional English noticed that «in teaching English for professional purposes at universities it is quite possible to organize the

teaching/learning process on the basis of the principled pragmatic approach. This approach... is necessarily eclectic being formed out of five constituent methods: content-based instruction, interculturalism, constructivism, blended language learning and balanced combination of communicative learning activities and non-communicative language exercises. All these methods belong to different approaches: content-based instruction belongs to the approach whose essence is in trying and merging language studies and professional studies in higher education; interculturalism represents the culture-oriented approach to language studies; constructivism embodies the approach aimed at attaining students' autonomy in language acquisition; blended learning implements the approach based on applying information technologies for improving language learning. A balanced combination of communicative learning activities and non-communicative language exercises unites two opposing approaches: communicative language instruction and traditional form-focused language teaching [6].

Here in the article we are going to concentrate on teaching English for specific purposes (ESP), that is how English should be taught to non-philological students: future economists, computer engineers, ecologists, psychologists, sportsmen and others. On one hand as an academic discipline «English for specific purposes» differs from general English and has its own peculiarities: professionally oriented lexicon, passive grammar constructions characteristic of academic style, presence of many specific abbreviations etc. On the other hand not all non-philological students consider English as a necessary component of their education which will help them in the future job hunting and building a professional carrier. That is why the task of an ESP teacher is to encourage students to master English and to support their interest and motivation to learning foreign languages. Intercultural communication presupposes tolerant attitude towards other people and respect to their traditions, manner of speech, the way they dress and behave in different situations. On the regional level it means that representatives of different nations should live in the same community and share the values of each other. All disputable problems should be solved in a non-violated way and for the benefit of the community.

Research results. In the course of searching optimal ways of gaining students' interest and motivation to ESP learning we tried to analyze students' needs in order to understand if all students are ready for learning professional English and communication in a foreign language. The analysis of students' needs at non-philological faculties showed that 59 % of students are not ready to orally communicate in English as they have no experience in meeting English-speaking foreigners. At the same time 88 % of students are ready for communication in the Internet. Of all topics they learn in the course of ESP they prefer «Social net communication» as their personal and professional interests are connected with using computers. They would also like to read more about new technologies in space exploration, roboto techniques, other industries (Elon Musk's contribution to the development of new technologies). The topic «Job hunting» is also among the most popular with students. They demonstrate great interest in writing resume, application letters, filling in different personal

documents. Many students' questions are connected with the procedure of an interview: psychological aspects, manner of communicative behavior, and level of professional competence. 92 % of all specialties third-year students are ready to discuss professional topics at English classes and only 8 % of students give preference to reading professional texts.

Content analysis of English text books for various specialties showed that most of them contain very long professional texts (2000–2300 signs) which are rather difficult for comprehension as they bear a descriptive character and are overloaded with new words. They are not abstracts from famous periodicals or original text books but mostly articles from scientific journals rather difficult for comprehension. They often use text books written by Ukrainian ESP teachers and edited at our universities.

Very often students of the second year of study are not ready to understand English texts as they have not learned the materials such texts contain in their native language. In this case we think it is necessary to unite the efforts of corresponding special departments and the English language department and synchronize the materials in order to give students a possibility to first comprehend the new notions in their native language and then in a foreign language. There should be inter-disciplined coordination between the English language department and professionally oriented departments. We are sure it is not the task of an ESP teacher to explain the meaning of professional terms to students before they cover the necessary materials in their native language. If students do not understand the material it is difficult to make them learn it in English. Inter-disciplined coordination gives broad possibilities for deeper understanding of the learned materials and makes students be more interested in their professional lexicon, English functional grammar, and standard language structures.

Now there exist several approaches to ESP teaching at Ukrainian universities. Cultural, contextual, constructivist, person-centered, experience-reflective, competence and some other approaches go along with the widely spread communicative approach. All of them have equal rights for being used but for different specific purposes. Their choice depends on the type of the universities and the main tasks of the ESP course. It also depends on students' personal motivation and inclinations which are to be taken into consideration. At humanitarian faculties the communicative and cultural approaches are the most appropriate while for technical specialties some other approaches should be chosen. Among various modern approaches to ESP teaching we give preference to competence one as we are sure it better corresponds to the tasks of teaching professional English at either humanitarian or technical specialties. Competence approach to teaching gives the possibility to train students in communication and cooperation with other people using their skills and desire to find common language.

Conclusions. To summarize the material of the article we'd like to draw the attention of the researchers to our local problems of mutual understanding, cooperation and partnership. The country cannot develop being isolated from international community; the mankind will survive only if we unite our efforts.

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МІЖКУЛЬТУРНІ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ В РЕГІОНАЛЬНОМУ КОНТЕКСТІ

Стаття присвячена проблемам міжкультурної комунікації на регіональному рівні. Автор наголошує, що інтеграція України в європейське та світове співтовариство залежить не тільки від знання іноземних мов, але й від готовності наших громадян сприймати й поділяти загальноєвропейські цінності, способи життя, ставлення до оточуючого середовища тощо. У статті йдеться про розвиток навичок міжкультурної комунікації студентів нефілологічних спеціальностей, які вивчають англійську мову за професійним спрямуванням. На думку автора, головне завдання викладача іноземної мови – стимулювати студентів до розширення власних знань та підтримувати в них мотивацію до вивчення мови, культури, звичаїв носіїв мови.

Ключові слова: професійна англійська мова; міжкультурне спілкування; європейські цінності та життєві стандарти; мотивація до вивчення іноземних мов; компетентнісний підхід; регіональний контекст.

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МЕЖКУЛЬТУРНАЯ КОМУНІКАЦІЯ В РЕГІОНАЛЬНОМУ КОНТЕКСТЕ

Статья посвящена проблемам межкультурной коммуникации на региональном уровне. Автор отмечает, что интеграция Украины в европейское и мировое сообщество зависит не только от знания иностранных языков, но и от готовности наших граждан воспринимать и разделять общеевропейские ценности, образы жизни, отношение к окружающей среде и тому подобное. В статье речь идет о развитии навыков межкультурной коммуникации студентов нефилологических специальностей, изучающих английский язык для профессиональных целей. По мнению автора, главная задача преподавателя иностранного языка – стимулировать студентов к расширению собственных знаний и поддерживать в них мотивацию к изучению языка, культуры, обычаев носителей языка.

Ключевые слова: профессиональный английский; межкультурное общение; европейские ценности и жизненные стандарты; мотивация к изучению иностранных языков; компетентностный подход; региональный контекст.

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