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PECULIARITIES OF DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS

The article deals with developing professionally oriented English writing skills which play an important role in our present-day world, helping IT-professionals to communicate the ideas to the addressee in the way that is lexically, grammatically and stylistically correct. The written form of business correspondence demands fluency from IT-students as well as mastering lexico-grammatical competence in writing e-mails, messages, posts on electronic bulletin boards, memos, business reports, letters, proposals, press releases, etc. In order to prepare competitive future professionals, to develop relevant writing skills and abilities of further learning and applying the acquired knowledge in professional activities for performing their duties, lexico-grammatical competence should be mastered at a sufficiently high level while doing correspondence with external suppliers, foreign companies and entrepreneurs. The purpose of the study is to help IT-students to develop English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written communication by means of writing exercises. As the process of the formation of English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally-oriented writing of future IT-specialists is quite complex, it has been proved that it should be organized in three stages: receptive, receptive-reproductive and productive. At each stage certain writing skills should be developed which can further be applied in specific situations of written communication. It has been emphasized that special attention should be paid to modeling the process of writing by finding effective ways of expressing thoughts and ideas, choosing the appropriate vocabulary and grammatical patterns. The specially designed exercises will help teach IT-students the most up-to-date information technology-related words and expressions, grammatical structures as well as create their own writing messages.

Key words: professionally oriented English, lexico-grammatical competence, writing skills, IT-professional, official correspondence.

Introduction. The demand for programmers and developers in the field of information technology in our country is growing year by year and the requirements of the modern job market for IT professionals necessitate their fluency in foreign languages, English in particular. It includes various forms of foreign language professionally oriented communication, among which, in addition to oral communication, a significant place is occupied by the written one, including official correspondence with customers, suppliers, colleagues and management. The specific character of the work of information technology specialists includes writing in English as the customers of Ukrainian IT companies are mostly foreign clients, so that a written message must be lexically, grammatically and stylistically correct. Due to this, the requirements for foreign language training of future IT-specialists in higher educational institutions are significantly increasing nowadays and the training of

English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written communication is of vital importance.

The analysis of recent research and publications has shown that such scientists as O. Bihych, N. Borysko, S. Nikolaeva and others studied the problem of foreign language communicative competence. Various aspects of the formation of foreign language lexical and grammatical competence have become the subject of scientific research of such scholars as I.P. Zadorozhna (theoretical and methodological principles of organizing independent work of future specialists in mastering English communicative competence), S.E. Zontova (cognitive approaches to learning foreign language vocabulary), N.O. Mykytenko (theory and technologies of forming professional foreign language competence of prospective specialists of sciences), I.Z. Semeryak (the formation of strategies for foreign language professionally oriented commu-

nication of future programmers using the Internet), N.A. Sura (teaching students professionally oriented communication in a foreign language), V.G. Tereshchuk (the formation of English lexical competence of students of non-linguistic specialties in virtual educational environment), N.A. Shandra (approaches to formation of English lexical competence in professionally-oriented writing), N.I. Dychka (methods of teaching English-speaking professionally oriented writing to future IT-professionals), J. Harmer and G. King who have made significant contributions to its solution.

One of the tasks of innovative modern education is to prepare competitive future professionals who possess relevant skills and abilities of lifelong learning and the application of the acquired knowledge in professional activities. At the current stage of higher education development, the importance is given to professional training, so that future IT-professionals must be fluent speakers in performing their professional duties.

With the development of communication and information technologies, there is an increase in the written forms of communication which, in turn, allows us to consider writing not only as a means of improving language skills, but also as one of the most relevant ways of exchanging thoughts and ideas.

Future IT-professionals must demonstrate a high level of not only professional competence, but also the ability to implement efficient written and oral professional-oriented communication in English at a sufficiently high level. This can be confirmed by the fact that the specific work of an IT-specialist involves a significant amount of English correspondence with external suppliers as well as foreign companies and entrepreneurs.

The purpose of the study lies in the fact that despite the significant interest of scientists in the theoretical and methodological foundations of teaching foreign languages for specific purposes, there is no comprehensive study of English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented writing of future IT-specialists. The problem mentioned above remains not fully investigated. These factors as well as the social demand for well-trained IT-professionals justified the choice of the research topic.

The object of the study is the process of mastering of English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written communication of future IT-specialists in modern conditions.

The purpose of the study is to substantiate theoretically and develop practically English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written

communication of future IT-professionals by means of writing exercises.

To achieve the purpose of the study, the following tasks should be solved:

1) to determine the methodological foundation of the study of the formation of lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written communication of future IT-specialists;

3) to substantiate the content of lexico-grammatical competence in developing writing skills;

4) to identify the stages of the formation of lexico-grammatical competence in writing;

5) to develop a system of practical exercises for improving writing skills.

Methods of scientific research. To achieve the purpose and solve the tasks, the following methods of scientific research have been used, in particular, theoretical: study and analysis of the available reference literature on the problem under investigation in order to determine the essence of key concepts of lexico-grammatical competence; empirical: observations at English lessons and in the process of independent work as well as tests to determine the level of writing skills of future IT-specialists.

The scientific novelty of the study lies in the fact that the system of exercises for developing writing skills aimed at the formation of lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written communication will help future IT-specialists develop their writing skills.

The practical significance of the study is that the proposed system of exercises can be used for further compiling of methodological recommendations on the formation of lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written communication.

Results and discussion. English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written communication of future IT-specialists is understood by the majority of researchers as the integrated unity which allows using the acquired knowledge, skills and abilities related to the use of English grammar and vocabulary in writing when creating written messages in accordance with the communicative task in real-life situations [2, p. 6]. The structure of lexico-grammatical competence in professionally oriented written communication of future IT-specialists consists of the following components: knowledge of English vocabulary and grammar, lexical and grammatical skills (receptive and productive), knowledge of the style and structure of a written business message, writing skills, abilities to express thoughts in a logical sequence in a written form [3, p.9].

The English-language professionally oriented written communication of IT-specialists include: correspondence via e-mail, exchange of messages in chats and forums, posts on electronic bulletin boards, memos, business reports and letters, proposals, press releases, etc. In the context of the main situations of English-language communication in the IT-field, written correspondence with customers, suppliers, colleagues, managers is of great importance as it performs various functions, namely: staying in contact, exchanging information, motivational, coordinational, cognitive, emotional, influential, the function of establishing relationships, solving problems and performing tasks [1, p. 6].

The process of the formation of English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally-oriented writing of future IT-specialists is quite complex, as it is based on the synthesis of competency-based, communicative-cognitive, communicative-active, sociocognitive, personality-oriented and integrated approaches.

The competency-based approach determines the goals, content, organization and outcome of the process of foreign language training of future IT-specialists in higher education institutions, in particular, provides a comprehensive formation of targeted competencies which consist of vocabulary and grammar knowledge, skills and abilities acquired in the learning process and can further be used in professional activities. Lexico-grammatical competence, being a component of the communicative one, consists of a set of skills and abilities in using English knowledge in the process of professional writing [5, p.46].

Communicative-cognitive approach provides the formation of the ability to choose and use of lexical items in phrases and sentences according to the corresponding grammar rules during writing and editing, the ability to use the correct tense forms while exchanging business correspondence in writing as well as improving students' awareness of the effectiveness of self-assessment which is considered to be a key learning strategy for autonomous language learning, enabling students to monitor their progress and relate learning to individual needs [4, p.10].

The essence of any written form of communication is to create and exchange written messages of English professionally-oriented content which are characterized by appropriate grammatical structures, stylistic peculiarities and professionally-oriented vocabulary. This written communication is carried out in order to exchange information through writing as business correspondence, being one of the main written communications of IT-specialists,

should be succinct, to the point and correspond to the communicative task [3, p.9].

The communicative-active approach is realized through the process of involving students in active English-language writing activities, mastering the rules of usage of clichés and phrases in writing together with the grammatical structural patterns, peculiarities of their usage.

Sociocognitive approach helps to create learning atmosphere conducive to learning, students' learning satisfaction, use of various educational technologies and interactions with others in new innovative ways which will influence individual cognition, performance expectations and self-efficacy [2, p.120]. In the context of a personality-oriented approach, the English language acquisition and skills development can provide active stimulation of a student to self-assessment activity, possibility of self-education, self-development, self-motivation [6, p.82].

In order to learn how to write effectively, it is necessary to be actively involved in communicative situations, taking into account personal goals and intentions, knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, semantical or grammatical meanings of words, ability to use antonyms, synonyms, homonyms, know lexical and grammatical compatibility, have basic knowledge of the rules of word formation, types of word structure, knowledge of the rules of spelling and syntax, grammatical structures, means of written communication, stylistic features of texts of different genres, knowledge of grammar rules, professional vocabulary and grammar patterns to reveal a topic or solve a problem.

For effective written communication it is necessary to know the standards of writing business letters, know how to plan, organize and write own text messages, have graphic, spelling, grammar skills necessary for different kinds of writing, according to styles and genres, compositional correctness of the structure of the written text, the ability to convey information coherently at the level of a sentence or text, to use paraphrasing techniques, formulate complex statements by implementing a variety of language tools.

The analysis of scientific research on the criteria for selecting vocabulary and grammar structures for writing purposes has shown that special attention should be paid to modelling the process of writing by finding effective ways of expressing ideas, choosing the appropriate lexical units and grammatical patterns that will enable English learners to express important concepts in compliance with certain dominant style of a written message.

According to some researchers, the effective formation of lexico-grammatical competence of future IT-specialists should be organized in three stages [1, p. 8]: 1) receptive, on which students are familiarized with the semantics of words, their spelling, lexical and grammatical valency, word and grammar structures, types of written messages that will serve as samples of writing; 2) receptive-reproductive, on which receptive and productive lexical and grammatical skills are developed by means of using lexical units and grammar structures, understanding the peculiarities of their functioning, acquiring knowledge of syntax rules, proper planning, organizing and creating text messages.

3) productive which involves the formation and development of writing skills in the process of writing their own texts, ensuring their integrity, coherence, completeness, addressability and relevance with the style and genre typical of the IT-field, in compliance with the compositional structure of a text.

The ability to convey meaningful information logically and present ideas in writing consistently, to design structural and compositional texts testifies to the fact that insufficient attention is paid to teaching written literacy which is considered to be an indicator that determines the conscious readiness of future professionals to adapt quickly to the working environment, improve their further personal development, be competent in solving a range of professional tasks [3, p. 12].

Lexico-grammatical competence in writing should be based on the ability to implement written messages in different areas and situations of communication in accordance with the communicative task based on acquired lexical and grammatical knowledge and skills to recognize, perceive, identify the contextual meaning of a word, use its grammatical form correctly, combine it with other lexical units in a specific communicative piece of writing.

The task of the first stage is the formation of lexico-grammatical skills, so that the future IT specialist must be able to:

- to correlate the graphic image of a word with its meaning;
- to determine the semantic meaning of a lexical unit taking into account its lexical and grammatical compatibility;
- to understand how sentences are put together, how to build grammatically correct sentences;
- to differentiate parts of speech a word belongs to;
- to use punctuation marks in writing;

On the second receptive-reproductive stage, the main task of students is to master certain techniques in order to be able to create a new text, namely:

- the ability to understand the polysemantic words;
- to differentiate synonyms, antonyms, valency of words;
- the ability to use lexical units for the realization of communicative intentions at the level of phrases, sentences, texts;
- the ability to master different types of sentences typical of writing:
 - to expand and rearrange lexical items in various types of sentences;
 - to know the word order in affirmative, interrogative, imperative and exclamatory sentences.

At the productive stage the creation of own written messages are taken place, which requires:

- lexical skills to combine lexical units with other words to form phrases and sentences according to the corresponding rules;
- grammatical skills to build own grammatically correct sentences;
- the ability to recall the necessary lexical units and grammatical structures to reveal the communicative task;
- the ability to choose the appropriate style;
- the ability to use sentences at the textual level in conditions close to the real situation of communication;
- the ability to self-assessment and self-correctness, in other words, the ability to evaluate themselves critically, taking into account their own business writing. At this stage, the correctness of the choice of lexical units as well as appropriate structures of the sentence typical of the IT-field should be paid much attention as written messages should be concise, logical, clear, accessible and as meaningful as possible.

In order to master English lexico-grammatical competence, a special attention should be focused on the relevant topics related to the professional environment of IT-specialists in order to choose the lexical minimum necessary for the formation of the above mentioned competence. The main list of topics should include the following: -Data Projects; -Database Administration; -Decision-making Techniques; – DevOps Trends; -Digital Media; -IT Careers; -IT optimal decisions; -Networking; -Outsourcing; -Programming languages; -Sales Figures; -Security; -Software Engineering; -Technical Support, etc.

The proposed topics should include important business issues that are discussed and approved – for example, terms of application, tasks for the developers of a particular project, ways to solve various problems related to the field of professional communication of IT-specialists.

Therefore, a necessary component of the educational process should be aimed at applying acquired lexical and grammatical skills in specific situations of communication that may arise in the working environment, namely: «Providing customer support to a client», «Discussing a project with a client», «Clarification of details», «Discussing website designs», «Describing the specification of a new product», «Selling or troubleshooting computer applications», «Understanding basic computer vocabulary», «Discussing a software development framework», «Managing project development», etc.

Communication with foreign customers requires not only knowledge of vocabulary and grammar but also certain stylistic skills in order to implement a written message in the form of official letters and other business documents. Thus, in the formation of lexico-grammatical competence, the future IT-professionals need to do as many exercises close to the conditions of real communication as possible. A specially designed set of exercises will be aimed at creating written messages that successfully convey the intention of a writer to his/her intended audience.

Having analyzed the relationship between the stages of the vocabulary and grammar acquisition, stages of work on the formation of writing skills, stages of creating a written message, real situations of the professional environment of IT-professionals, we have developed a set of exercises which will be able to help develop writing skills and be good at expressing thoughts effectively in writing. Step-by-step formation of skills and abilities of future IT-specialists while doing these exercises will help get acquainted with lexical and grammatical material much easier and create their own written messages faster:

a) exercises to get acquainted with the professional vocabulary and grammatical patterns, the structure of different sentence types, stylistic features of written texts for IT-specialists. They are specially designed to teach them the most up-to-date information technology-related words and expressions, grammatical structures used in IT:

I believe we should take a different _____. (*I think we should do something different*).

- action item
- course of action
- action plan

b) exercises to master skills of writing professionally-oriented texts in the field of IT, to create writing messages which differ in their formality, intended audience and desired outcomes with the aim of accomplishing communication goals. These exercises

will help students to practise professional vocabulary, special terminology, typical grammar constructions relating to IT project management:

1. *We need to ensure that the correct version of a document _____ at any given time.*

- is accessed
- is being assisted
- will be accented

c) exercises to develop students' ability to create their own professionally oriented texts.

Write a letter to your business partners about your proposals referring the latest IT specifications. Provide the following details:

- the purpose for writing
- give some frame of reference for the discussed issue
- state the desired outcome

The introductory part of any written message should be specially designed to specify the essence of the question that served as an occasion for writing. The motivational part serves to describe various aspects of the issue under discussion consistently and in details. Depending on its complexity and novelty, the motivational part may include from one to three or more paragraphs. The final part of the written communication usually consists of one paragraph, which contains the conclusions as well as the request (suggestion, instruction) to the addressee and the nature of the expectations of the author of the letter in which thoughts should be organized in a logical sequence. For this purpose it is recommended to try brainstorming techniques like mapping, listing or outlining which help organize thoughts in the way to be clearly understood [1, p. 5]. In order to get the intended result, the following order should be observed: 1) state the purpose for writing at the very beginning; 2) provide the addressee with some context in order to have some frame of reference for the discussed issue. When replying to someone else's letter, it is advisable either include or restate the sender's message; 3) use paragraphs to separate thoughts (each thought per paragraph); 4) state the desired outcome or response that is required; 5) check grammar, spelling, capitalization and punctuation.

The skills gained in the process of doing these exercises will allow the future IT-specialists to work professionally, competently and quickly with foreign clients, contractors and business partners.

Conclusions. Thus, having analyzed the problem of the formation of lexico-grammatical competence, it is important to understand that conveying a written message to the recipient in the clear way by choosing a simple communication strategy makes the process

of writing more efficient. With the help of the proposed system of exercises IT-specialists will be able to recognize and perceive lexical units and grammatical structures easier and on the basis of acquired writing skills will write texts and messages appropriate for specific communication situations.

The experimental study of the formation of English lexico-grammatical competence in professionally-oriented written business communication of future IT specialists, the effectiveness of the proposed system of exercises will be the subject of our further research.

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Білик О. О., Вілюс Н. М. ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ФОРМУВАННЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНИХ НАВИЧОК ПИСЬМА

У статті йдеться про формування професійно-орієнтованих навичок письма англійською мовою, які відіграють важливу роль у сучасному світі, допомагаючи ІТ-фахівцям доносити ідеї до адресата у лексично, граматично та стилістично коректний спосіб. Письмова форма ділового листування вимагає від ІТ-студентів вільного володіння англійською мовою, а також опанування лексико-граматичною компетенцією в написанні електронних листів, повідомлень, дописів на електронних дошках оголошень, ділових звітів, листів, пропозицій, прес-релізів, тощо. Для того, щоб підготувати конкурентоспроможних майбутніх фахівців, формувати відповідні навички та розвивати вміння письма для їх подальшого вдосконалення і застосування у професійній діяльності для успішного виконання своїх обов'язків, лексико-граматична компетенція має бути опанована на достатньо високому рівні для листування із зовнішніми постачальниками, іноземними компаніями та підприємцями. Мета дослідження – допомогти ІТ-студентам розвинути лексико-граматичну компетенцію у професійно-орієнтованому письмовому спілкуванні за допомогою письмових вправ. Оскільки процес формування лексико-граматичної компетенції англійської мови у професійно-орієнтованому письмі майбутніх ІТ-фахівців є досить складним, доведено, що він повинен бути організований у три етапи: рецептивний, рецептивно-репродуктивний та продуктивний. На кожному етапі необхідно розвивати певні навички письма, які можна буде застосовувати в конкретних ситуаціях письмового спілкування. Підкреслено, що особливу увагу слід приділяти моделюванню процесу письма шляхом пошуку ефективних способів вираження думок та ідей, добору відповідної лексики та граматичних зразків. Спеціально розроблені вправи допоможуть засвоїти ІТ-студентам слова та вирази, що пов'язані з інформаційними технологіями, граматичні структури, а також створювати власні письмові повідомлення.

Ключові слова: професійно-орієнтована англійська мова, лексико-граматична компетентність, навички письма, ІТ-фахівець, ділове листування.