

УДК 371.315:378:811.11

Z.M. KORNIEVA,
*Candidate of Pedagogy, Associate Professor,
Associate Professor of the Department of Theory, Practice and Translation
of the English Language at National Technical University of Ukraine
«Kyiv Polytechnic Institute»,
Kyiv*

PRACTICAL EXPERIENTIAL METHODOLOGY OF CONTENT-BASED TEACHING ENGLISH TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS MAJORING IN ECONOMICS AND TECHNOLOGY

The article highlights the peculiarities of development and practical implementation of an experiential textbook. In particular, the model, principles and experiential activities embedded in the textbook are described.

Key words: experiential methodology, content-based teaching, experiential activities, implementation of the experiential methodology in teaching practice.

For more than nine years, the opportunities for experiential learning programmes implementation and immersion programmes in particular, have been successfully researched across Ukraine [1; 2; 3; 4; 6]. However, there was no appropriate ESP/BE textbook as yet which could unify the existing experience in the field in question. In this article we are going to discuss the practical methodology (or teaching techniques) through analyzing the content of the textbook aimed at university students majoring in Economics and Technology that is based on experiential (constructivist) approach.

The textbook *Professional Basics* created by the group of scholars under Professor O.B. Tarnopolsky's supervision is aimed at 1st year university students majoring in economics and technology. It is designed for 144 hours of in-class work and approximately the same number of hours of out-of-class students' work on their home assignments. It is supposed that every *Unit* in the textbook is studied during five two-hour classes, and each of the five parts in every *Unit* is worked on during one two-hour class.

The goal of the textbook is embedded in its title – *Professional Basics*. It is aimed not at teaching professional communication in English specific to any given technical or economic speciality. The aim is the most general professional communication on the issues that every specialist in all areas of either technology or economics has to know how to solve in English if their professional communication is international and not limited to the boundaries of their home country. What is meant are the following types of professional activities/professional communication:

1. Professional telephoning;
2. Writing for professional purposes (e.g., business letters);
3. Professional negotiations;
4. Professional presentations;
5. Advertising one's own organization/company and its products/services;
6. Discussing and writing about the structure of one's own organization/company;
7. Purchasing goods/products/equipment from other organizations/companies;

8. Selling goods/products/equipment of one's own organization/company;
9. Preparing and receiving instructions on how to use products/equipment;
10. Professional and business contracts with other organizations/companies;
11. Organizing and financing joint ventures;
12. Participating in professional/business fairs and exhibitions.

These types of professional communication in English are typical of international professional activities of every specialist in technology and economics as the professional communication in these two areas is conducted in quite a similar manner, that is why all future specialists in these two very broad fields have to know how to conduct such communication in English if they want to work internationally.

The given textbook is based on the following principles:

1) general professionalization – all communicative skills are developed using professional topics that do not require specialized knowledge and are accessible to 1st year students. They are also developed on the basis of *General English* with a thin admixture of professional terminology, that terminology being common to practically all technical and economic specialities and, again, not requiring any specialized knowledge from students.

2) content-based approach – instruction presupposes focusing students' attention on the acquisition of the subject matter content acquired through the target language so that communication skills in that language are developed as a by-product of the integrated content/language learning process.

3) experiential nature of learning activities – all activities are designed in such a way that learning English is implemented through using it for communication directed at ensuring extra-linguistic activities of professional nature.

4) aspected structure of every Unit – dividing units into aspects, each aspect corresponding to one component of the communicative competence: a linguistic competence, a sociolinguistic competence, a pragmatic competence, a formal-logical competence, a psychological competence and a subject competence. [5].

In accordance with that, every *Unit* in the textbook is divided into **five parts**:

1. Functional and Content Focus (the subject aspect – for ensuring connection with the future profession, the professional nature of the communicative competence being developed and for developing a formal-logical competence);

2. Cultural Focus (the sociolinguistic aspect – for developing the sociolinguistic and pragmatic components of the communicative competence);

3. Language Focus (the linguistic aspect – for developing the linguistic and pragmatic components of communicative competence);

4. Psychological Focus (the psychological aspect – for developing the psychological competence with the aim of ensuring the psychological adequacy of communication in the target language);

5. Communicative Focus (for uniting all the aspects in one single communicative competence).

It is expedient to exemplify all the above mentioned principles by the activities introduced in the textbook. All the examples are taken from Unit 6 «Corporate Advertising».

Part 1. Functional and Content Focus

The tasks in this part of every unit are developed so that the students are immersed into the content matter of the unit through speaking, brain-storming, subject-matter reading or discussion tasks. For example:

1. The role of advertising in modern business world cannot be overestimated. New advertising technologies and the emergence of new media outlets offer more options for targeted advertising.

Work in groups of three students and try to name and define as many types of advertising as possible (based on its primary «focus» and not on how it is delivered). Draw your conclusions in the form of a two-minute presentation. *You have 10 minutes for discussion and preparing your presentation (20 minutes for the whole task).*

2. Listen (two times) to Angie Gentry, an advertising specialist, who describes different media for delivering your advertising message. What media does she mention? What are the

benefits of each one? According to Angie Gentry, what makes a good advertising campaign? After listening, in a whole-class discussion decide what advertising media, taking into account Angie Gentry's advice, is/are more effective and in which cases. Why do you think so? Give examples of what was said to support your point of view. *You have 30 minutes for the entire task.*

Part 2. Cultural Focus

In this part of every unit the tasks focus is on cultural peculiarities of the phenomena discussed:

1. Culture affects everything we do. This applies to all areas of human life from personal relationships to conducting business abroad. When interacting within our native cultures, culture acts as a framework of understanding. However, when interacting with different cultures this framework no longer applies due to cross cultural differences. Cross cultural communication solutions are also critical to effective cross cultural advertising. Services and products are usually designed and marketed at a domestic audience. When a product is then marketed at an international audience the same domestic advertising campaign abroad will in most cases be ineffective.

Many of you may have heard of these infamous errors made by multinational corporations when translating brands or slogans abroad. Language, of course, is only one of many cultural barriers you may have to bridge with your partner organization. Look thorough the list of errors below and think of any similar slogans you have come across on TV in your country.

You have 20 minutes for reading and whole-class discussion.

2. Now listen to a short lecture on how to eliminate cross cultural clashes in developing your advertising campaign. When listening make notes under the following headings.

Know your markets	Adapt your product	Stay neutral	Translate correctly

After listening, in a whole-class discussion summarize the recommendations given by the speaker.

You have 20 minutes for doing the task.

Part 3. Language Focus

As an inseparable part of any textbook, language competence in our textbook is developed through content matter which can be illustrated by the following activities:

1. Advertisers use a variety of techniques to persuade the consumer, including the **claim**. The «*claim*» is the verbal or print part of an ad that makes some claim of superiority for the product. Some claims are lies and some claims are honest statements about a superior product, but many claims fit into neither category. The text given below analyses different types of claims used in advertising. Read the text and in *20 minutes* be ready to summarize the peculiarities of each type of advertising claims from the point of view of their language (*30 minutes* for the entire task).

2. Now work in small groups of four or five students and develop your own advertising slogans using some claims described above. In your presentations:

Group A is going to develop a slogan for computer software that has recently been developed by your company.

Group B is going to develop a slogan for a new printer developed by your company.

Group C is going to develop a slogan for a new processor developed by your company.

You have 15 minutes to prepare your slogans and decide who of the students from your small group will actually be presenting them. The presenters should be ready to answer question from the other students. *You have time until the end of the class for your presentations and discussion.*

Part 4. Psychological Focus

Among the tasks ensuring psychological adequacy of communication there are such as:

1. Achieving success in advertising requires some psychological skills. Psychology in advertising has long been used as an effective means to sell a product or service. Understanding the underlying concepts that affect human psychology can help a company better sell their

product or alternatively can help a consumer understand marketing strategies that get them to buy products.

The only question you are supposed to answer after reading the below given text is «Why did Renvoisé sign really work?» Read it (5 minutes for reading) and discuss in a whole-group discussion. Every student should also think about any other psychological techniques used in advertising. Formulate your tips and give reasons for them in the course of the whole-group discussion. *You have 20 minutes for doing the task.*

PSYCHOLOGY AND ADVERTISING: HOW NEUROMARKETERS ABUSE SCIENCE



Several years ago Patrick Renvoisé found himself in a moral dilemma. As he was walking into a restaurant in San Francisco, a homeless man approached asking for some cash – «Homeless, PLEASE HELP,» his sign read. On one hand Renvoisé felt a sense of guilt and obligation but on the other he didn't want to see his dollars go towards booze and drugs. To resolve his predicament, he made a deal. In exchange for two dollars, the homeless man allowed Renvoisé to change his sign for the next two hours – Renvoisé even promised an additional five dollars if he hung around the restaurant until the end of dinner.

Why?

Renvoisé is a marketer, and what he saw in the homeless man was a classic case of poor brand management. Think about it. San Francisco is home to thousands of homeless people who are all asking for help. But because they are all doing it in the same way with the same messages none of them are standing out. It would be like trying to sell bottled water with a label that just said, «Water».

When Renvoisé finished his meal, he walked out of the restaurant to hand over his promised five dollars. To his surprise, though, the homeless man refused, and insisted on giving him ten because while Renvoisé was dining he took in a killing – sixty dollars, much more than his average two to ten dollars an hour. So what did Renvoisé write on his sign?

«What if YOU were hungry?»

The genius of Renvoisé's sign is that it puts us in the shoes of the homeless man, at least long enough for us to feel what it would be like to not know when the next meal will be. That is not to say anyone who saw the sign suddenly understood what it's like to be homeless, but it is to suggest that it evoked an altruistic sentiment strong enough to influence more people to give.

(The text is borrowed and modified from:

<http://whywereason.wordpress.com/2011/10/11/psychology-and-advertising-how-neuromarketers-abuse-science/> as of 6 December 2011)

Part 5. Communication Focus

All communicative skills (reading, listening, speaking and writing) are developed in an integrated manner. In each case, there is one «focal» communicative activity around which all the other communicative activities concentrate:

1. Listen to a short lecture in which seven important tips for successful advertising are given. Write the notes of the lecture while listening. Your notes should render the essence of all the seven tips (the meaning, not the exact words). You may listen to the lecture twice but *you*

have not more than 15 minutes for doing the task. After finishing, hand in your notes to your teacher for checking and grading.

2. *Role play.* In pairs do a role play «*At a trade fair.*» The role play that continues for about 15-20 minutes is done according to the tasks for *Student A* and *Student B* below.

Student A

You are your company's trade agent selling computer software. You are now talking to an attendee of your booth at the fair who is interested in buying the software that you are offering. Your goal is to persuade the potential customer that buying the product from your company would be the right decision. Use the techniques of persuasion described in the previous exercise.

Student B

You are an attendee at a trade fair. You like the software that they are offering and may order it if you are persuaded that it would be the best decision to order the products from just this company. Listen to the arguments of the company's representative; ask him/her all the questions that may interest you. Make a decision on the basis of what you hear and inform your interlocutor of your decision.

Judging from all the above described activities we can conclude that the methodology developed and embedded in the textbook *Professional Basics* is experiential. Its efficiency is now being tested at the National Technical University of Ukraine «Kyiv Polytechnic Institute».

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У статті висвітлено особливості розробки та практичної реалізації експерієнційного навчально-методичного комплексу. Зокрема описано модель, принципи та види експерієнційної навчальної діяльності, які втілені у розробленому підручнику.

Ключові слова: експерієнційна методика, навчання через зміст професійної діяльності, запровадження експерієнційної методики у практику викладання.

В статье раскрыты особенности разработки и практической реализации эксперециального учебно-методического комплекса. В частности описаны модель, принципы и виды эксперециальной учебной деятельности, которые воплощены в разработанном учебнике.

Ключевые слова: эксперециальная методика, обучение через содержание профессиональной деятельности, внедрение эксперециальной методики в практику преподавания.

Надійшло до редакції 5.05.2012.