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## TEACHING LEXICALLY «ENGLISH FOR IT SPECIALISTS»

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*The article gives the theoretical background of the course book "English for IT specialists" that is built on competency-based and communication-centered approaches. The main attention is paid to lexical approach as the modern key way of teaching English. The tasks from the 1<sup>st</sup> unit "The world of the Internet" are taken as examples.*

"English for IT specialists" is a course book targeted on students of the department "Computer Science and Electric Power Engineering", Pskov State University, Russia. It is going to be used for teaching such subjects as "Technical English" and "English in the sphere of professional communication". The book is aimed at the development of language and speech skills in ICT context. It contains lexical and grammatical course content united with the topic of the unit. Technical concepts are clearly presented using authentic texts. Topics reflect the latest developments in technology and are relevant to student's needs. The course uses the core language common to a range of specializations. "English for IT specialists" is being created within competence-based, communication-centered and lexical approaches. Therefore, the objective of the article is to give the theoretical background the course book is based on, special attention is paid to teaching lexically.

**Task formulation.** This paper is devoted to English teacher's work being studied at the moment. The tasks under consideration are: 1. to review the literature that is relevant to the topic under study; 2. to explain the methodological concept of the course book presented; 3. to demonstrate tasks from the book as examples of lexical approach at work.

**Methods of research.** Literature review and analysis are core research methods used. The scope of this applied research supposed review of literature within several basic scientific fields.

Firstly, competence-based approach was contemplated as it is the methodological basis of higher education in The Russian Federation according to Federal State Educational Standards of Higher Education (generation 3+) introduced in 2013. The approach is studied by V.M. Avdeev, L.S. Grebnev, D.A. Ivanov, S.I. Grigor'ev, E. Zeer, D. Zavodchikov, V.S. Senashenko, U.G. Tatur, S.A. Sharonova, J. C. Richards, T. S. Rogers, R. Harris, J. A. Bowden. According to J. C. Richards and T. S. Rodgers, Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) is an application of the principles of competency-based education to language teaching. In competency-based education the focus is on the "outcomes or outputs of learning". By the end of the 1970s CBLT was mostly used in "work-related and survival-oriented language teaching programs for adults" (Richards, Rodgers, 2001). The competency-based education is a functional approach to education that emphasizes life skills and evaluates mastery of those skills according to actual learner performance. "It was defined by the U.S. Office of Education as a performance-based process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society" (Saliha, 2011).

Secondly, communication-centered approach was explored as it is the methodological standard on the modern stage of foreign languages teaching. The following scientists can be mentioned in this regard: E.G. Azimov, A.N. Schukin, E.I. Passov, N. Chomsky, D. Hymes, M. Canale, M. Swain, J. C. Richards, D. Nunan. The idea of communicative competence is originally derived from Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance. By competence Chomsky means the shared knowledge of the ideal speaker-listener set in a completely homogeneous community. Such underlying knowledge enables a user of language to produce and understand an infinite set of sentences out of a finite set of rules. Performance, on the other hand, is concerned with the process of applying the underlying knowledge to the actual language use. However, performance cannot reflect competence except under the ideal circumstances because it can be affected by such variables as memory limitations, distractions, shift of attention and interest, errors and some other variables (Chomsky, 1975). As the scope of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) has expanded, it was considered as an approach rather than a method. Communicative language teaching can be understood as a set of principles about the goals of language teaching, how learners learn a language, the kinds of classroom activities that best facilitate learning, and the roles of teachers and learners in the classroom (Richards, 2006). Other authors in the field defined and characterized CLT in various ways, for example, Littlewood explains that "one of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language, combining these into a more fully communicative view" (Littlewood, 1981).

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The last but not least, the lexical approach, which is the main and basic one in the concept of the course book considered, is based on Lewis' (Lewis, 1997) statement that "Language is grammaticalised lexis, not lexicalised grammar". It focuses on teaching lexico-grammatical units, considering words to be the most important element in the communicative process. Due to the study of language corpuses, e.g. National Corpus of Russian language and British National Corpus, which contain over 100 million words of texts from a wide range of genres (e.g. spoken, fiction, magazines, newspapers, and academic), it was stated that every language has a set of "lexical chunks" (Richards, Rogers, 1986; Harmer, Thornbury, 2014). Other scientists investigating the approach are: M. Canale, G. Cook, J. O'Malley and A. Chamot, N. Shmitt and M. McCarthy. The basic concept on which this approach rests is the idea that an important part of learning a language consists of being able to understand and produce lexical phrases as chunks. Students are thought to be able to perceive patterns of language (grammar) as well as have meaningful set uses of words at their disposal when they are taught in this way. The most important highlight is the importance of vocabulary as being basic to communication (Sethi, 2013). Consequently, lexical approach is supposed to be based on lexis. Michael Lewis (Lewis, 1993), one of the founders of the approach, offered the classification of vocabulary tasks, many of which are used in the course book by the author of this paper.

**Results, their discussion and perspectives.** Coursebooks "English for IT Specialists" is divided into units. This paper considers Unit 1 "The world of the Internet" from the point of lexical approach. The unit has several basic parts: *LEAD IN, VOCABULARY, READING, VOCABULARY PRACTICE, TALKING POINTS, LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT, GRAMMAR, SPEAKING AND WRITING*. As it was mentioned earlier the author uses lexical tasks including those offered by Michael Lewis. Let's consider the types of tasks used in parts *VOCABULARY* (before reading vocabulary practice) and *VOCABULARY PRACTICE* (after reading vocabulary practice).

**Part: VOCABULARY****Exercise type: categorizing**

**Group the following verbs according to whether they form strong word partnerships with the verbs. Some of them belong to more than one group.**

*a photo // a movie // twice // through the website // down the page // software // a file // a battery // an e-mail // the Net // up the page // a song // a phone // a message // on a word // the text // a film // a dictionary // the right mouse button // an application // a document // a device // a game // to wireless Internet // on "NEXT" // an image // Driver Software // a picture // and paste // to account // a tablet // an account // to the Internet // an object // a menu // information // photos*

1. download \_\_\_\_\_
2. upload \_\_\_\_\_
3. click \_\_\_\_\_
4. recharge \_\_\_\_\_
5. send \_\_\_\_\_
6. browse \_\_\_\_\_
7. surf \_\_\_\_\_
8. connect \_\_\_\_\_
9. register \_\_\_\_\_
10. navigate \_\_\_\_\_
11. scroll \_\_\_\_\_
12. log in \_\_\_\_\_
13. copy \_\_\_\_\_
14. paste \_\_\_\_\_
15. install \_\_\_\_\_
16. stream \_\_\_\_\_
17. insert \_\_\_\_\_
18. update \_\_\_\_\_

This exercise offers practice of building up collocations. Students can know some of them, but the teacher should encourage them to use collocation dictionaries in case they doubt. "A particular word may interest or be important to a student, who will naturally want to explore its collocational field further" (Lewis, 2000). The lexical focus is put on matching parts of collocations. By finding the correct word partnerships learners show they have mastered collocational fields of the given words.

**Exercise type: completing**

Fill in the gaps in the sentences with the correct form of the verb from ex.1.

1. If you want to open up a document in Windows, you need to double \_\_\_\_\_ it.
2. As soon as we get home, we're going \_\_\_\_\_ this short film to YouTube.
3. I don't have American sports stations on my TV, so I usually just \_\_\_\_\_ games on my laptop.
4. The website is easy \_\_\_\_\_ and provides practical step-by-step information on all aspects of the formal system.
5. This program allows \_\_\_\_\_ several dictionaries.
6. Holding down the left mouse button on an image allows you \_\_\_\_\_ the image.
7. You have \_\_\_\_\_ to wireless Internet if necessary.
8. It was time-consuming to enter data because it was not possible to \_\_\_\_\_ from other cells.
9. This action will open a dialog which lets you \_\_\_\_\_ to the log system.
10. To install Skype, you need to \_\_\_\_\_ the latest version from the Skype website.

This exercise provides practice of collocations and word grammar. It is supposed that learners recorded the lexical items from the previous task and now they are able to use them more easily.

**Exercise type: synonyms**

Rewrite these sentences using one of the word combinations from ex.1 instead of the underlined words.

1. Each display advert is 240x100, it has a place for you to put an image or logo and another section for a brief text message about your event.
2. Using this device you can energize your telephone from car charger outlet.
3. To move around the site, please use the menus at the top and left of the page.
4. To insert the copy currently in the clipboard, use the Edit Paste menu item.
5. Public authorities should regularly collect and renovate adequate environmental data.
6. Here you can transmit your pictures from your PC, add or change communities, as well as personal and business information.

This sort of exercise gives learners alternative ways of saying the same thing. It also serves as a revision of lexical items that learners have acquired in exercise 1.

**Part: VOCABULARY PRACTICE****Exercise type: completing**

Fill in the correct word(s) from the list below. Use the words only once.

*initial*  
software  
*get (x2)*  
*put out*  
*insert*  
*log into*

*develop*  
*solve*  
*send*  
Internet  
*hold*  
*support*

*give*  
*make*  
*release*  
*network*  
*create*

- |                               |                                |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. to _____ the Internet      | 10. to _____ the computer.     |
| 2. the _____ idea             | 11. to _____ messages          |
| 3. to _____ smb's vision      | 12. to _____ online.           |
| 4. to _____ the meeting       | 13. to _____ real-time traffic |
| 5. to _____ issues            | 14. to _____ a contribution    |
| 6. to _____ a report          | 15. to _____ inspiration       |
| 7. to _____ specifications    | 16. _____ programs             |
| 8. to _____ press release     | 17. _____ applications         |
| 9. to install _____ equipment | 18. to _____ code              |

In this exercise learners are presupposed to have gone through the text "Who invented the Internet?" given in the unit as it would provide them with the necessary context. The second part of the word combination is given in order to limit the number of possible variants. This exercise type helps learners to take notice of different lexical chunks in authentic texts and process them.

**Exercise type: completing**

Fill in the correct preposition, then choose any five items and make sentences with them.

1. contribute \_\_ smth.;
2. credited \_\_ smth.;
3. to be chaired \_\_ smb.;
4. to be related \_\_ smth.;
5. to introduce \_\_ smb.;
6. to be able \_\_ do smth.;
7. to be installed \_\_ smth.;
8. to connect \_\_ smth.;
9. to be \_\_ the

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Internet; 10. to be \_\_ March,15; 11. to make a contribution \_\_ smth.; 12. to get inspiration \_\_ smth; 13. to be known \_\_ smb./smth.; 14. to insert \_\_ smth.

This exercise is also based on the text. After reading the text, learners are given a set of incomplete phrases and are asked to complete them. The emphasis is put on prepositions. Learners need to be stimulated to take note of prepositional expressions while reading texts. It is advisable that learners follow the recorded material in their notebooks.

**Conclusion.** The book is for learners of technical English at intermediate level and above. It helps them increase their knowledge of technical vocabulary and grammar. The material of each unit is given logically and outlined successively to practice the vocabulary of the unit. Grammar is also given in technical context.

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