DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN TECHNICAL ENGLISH CLASSES

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Abstract

This article discusses methodological approaches to the formation and development of professional communication skills among students of technical universities in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) classes. It highlights the features of technical discourse, the requirements for foreign language communicative competence of future engineers and IT specialists, and emphasizes the importance of dialogic and monologic speech practice in professionally-oriented situations. The article also analyzes effective teaching strategies such as role-playing, simulations, project-based learning, and the use of authentic materials.

Keywords: technical English, professional communication, communicative competence, project-based learning, technical discourse, ESP.

Introduction

In the era of globalization and rapid technological progress, new demands are placed on the language training of technical specialists. English functions not only as a tool for accessing professional information but also as a means of international business and scientific communication. Developing professional communication skills in technical English classes is thus of strategic importance in the education of engineers, IT specialists, energy experts, architects, and other professionals.

Technical English, as a branch of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), is characterized by a high degree of terminological specificity, standardized structures, and pragmatic focus. The instructor’s task is not limited to teaching grammar and vocabulary; rather, it includes preparing students to apply language in real or simulated professional contexts such as discussing technical problems, delivering presentations, participating in negotiations, and writing technical

documentation. Therefore, building professional communication skills requires the integration of linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural components.

1. Features of Professional Communication in Technical Discourse

Professional communication in technical domains has the following features:

- **Functionality and precision** — language should be clear, unambiguous, and concise.
- **Terminological density** — use of specialized vocabulary.
- **Communicative conventions** — standard formats for reports, documentation, presentations, etc.
- **Interdisciplinarity** — interaction across different fields of technical expertise.
- **Cross-cultural sensitivity** — awareness of differences in communication styles and expectations.

Students must not only understand technical terms but also be able to apply them appropriately in professional contexts.

2. Methodological Approaches to Developing Communication Skills

2.1 Communicative and Activity-Based Approach

The goal is to simulate real-life professional situations, implemented through:

- Business games;
- Problem-solving tasks;
- Simulated professional interactions (e.g., engineering meetings, technical presentations, project teamwork).

2.2 Project-Based Learning

Designing and presenting projects related to students' technical fields (e.g., "Smart Home," "Renewable Energy") encourages:

- Active language use;
- Engagement with authentic English-language sources;
- Development of both monologic and dialogic speaking skills.

2.3 Integration of CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning)

When language instruction is paired with technical topics, students benefit from content-driven language acquisition. For example, a course like “Introduction to Robotics” in English helps students practice reading academic texts, discussing technical issues, and writing reports.

2.4 Use of Authentic Materials

Such materials include:

- TED Talks on technical topics;
- Articles from IEEE, Nature, and ScienceDirect;
- Excerpts from technical documentation and video presentations.

3. Developing Oral and Written Communication Skills

3.1 Dialogic Speech

Skills for negotiations, interviews, and team discussions are developed through:

- Role-playing (e.g., engineer–client, developer–investor);
- Pair and group work;
- Debates and discussions on technical topics.

3.2 Monologic Speech

Skills are developed through:

- Technical project presentations;
- Oral summaries of academic texts;
- Defending engineering solutions in English.

3.3 Written Communication

Instruction includes:

- Writing technical reports;
- Drafting CVs and cover letters;
- Creating article abstracts, manuals, and specifications.

4. The Role of the Instructor and Learning Environment

Instructors at technical universities must be proficient in both English and the relevant technical field. An effective teaching model includes:

- Modular courses;

- Flexible assessment systems (e.g., based on participation, clarity, accuracy);
- Digital tools (LMS, online platforms, technical simulators).

A supportive language environment — participation in English-language hackathons, conferences, and publishing projects — boosts student motivation and communication confidence.

Conclusion

Developing professional communication skills in technical English classes is a key component of preparing future specialists. Successfully achieving this goal requires a comprehensive approach that combines linguistic, methodological, and professionally-oriented dimensions. An effective system of instruction must align with the demands of the global labor market while taking into account the technical mindset and professional discourse of students.

Training competent users of technical English enhances graduate competitiveness and their ability to adapt in digital and cross-cultural work environments. This approach modernizes technical education and aligns it with real-world practice and global collaboration.

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