

Natalia Shandra

nataliashandra@gmail.com

Lviv Ivan Franko National University

ORCID iD: 0000-0003-13214828

MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES IN BUILDING PROFESSIONALLY ORIENTED WRITTEN SKILLS OF IT SPECIALISTS

Introduction

An efficient operation of IT company can be achieved by employing qualified specialists who display both a high level of professional competence as well as an ability to communicate in English, which is the language of global communication.

The purpose of the article is to reveal the peculiarities of professionally oriented written communication in English of IT specialists and the possible role of multimedia in building their professionally oriented written skills.

According to the purpose, the objectives of the article are as follows:

- a) to analyze the key concepts of “communication”, “written communication”, “written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists”;
- b) to ascertain situations, functions, genres, types, features of professionally oriented written communication in English of IT specialists.
- c) to highlight the role of multimedia technologies in building professionally oriented written communication skills of IT specialists.

Nowadays, the issues of communicative linguistics and intercultural communication are widely researched (Бацевич, 2004). The study of professionally oriented communication of non-philological specialties has also received

some attention in the research of Mykytenko, Kozolup, Sulym (2017), Тарнопольський (2008) and others. At the same time, Castelss (1992), Дедова (2004), Moursund (2004), Zhao (2010), Ромашенко (2013), Смирнов (2009) focused solely on the peculiarities of communication with the use of multimedia technologies. Below we are to present some of the key concepts connected with the topic.

The key concepts of the research

In order to describe the peculiarities of written English communication of IT specialists we will analyze the concept of communication.

Famous Ukrainian linguist Бацевич defines communication as a set of links and interactions of people, societies and subjects, namely classes, groups or individuals within which exchange of information, experiences, abilities and skills takes place (Бацевич, 2007). It is important to remember that communication exhibits in oral and written forms. Verbal communication is a form of social interaction by means of language that is implemented in communicative activity of the partners (Бацевич, 2007).

The core of English written communication is characterized by production of written texts with the use of appropriate grammatical structures, stylistic and lexical peculiarities, that include English lexical units: words, collocations, etc. (Тарнопольський, 2008). Proceeding from the descriptions presented above, we interpret a professionally oriented written communication in English of prospective IT specialists as the process that implies creation and exchange of English written texts with professionally oriented content that is characterized by relevant grammatical structure, stylistic and IT vocabulary. Thus, written communication in English of IT specialists takes place with the aim of performing professional duties, fulfilling professional functions and roles of the specialists which hold aforementioned post in IT sphere.

Situations, functions, genres, types and features of English written communication of IT specialists

Situations concerning communication could be described as special circumstances in which the participants of the communicative act are placed and which prompts them to interact and guide their communicative behaviour in many ways like implementing communicative intention, communicative

strategies and tactics of communication (Бацевич, 2007). Mentioned functions of communication comprise: contact, information, inducing, cognitive, emotive, influencing ones and fence-mending (Бацевич, 2004). In reference to professionally oriented communication, a function of problem-solving and assignment completion can be added to the list (Moursund, 2005, p. 5). Thereafter, in the framework of the main situations of written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists, which are represented by business correspondence, correspondence with colleagues and managers and performance reports. The abovementioned functions of written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists realize: contact, information, inducing, cognitive, emotive, influencing ones and fence-mending.

On the basis of analysis of functions and professional duties of IT specialists and the communicative situations of their professionally oriented written communication we can deduce that the types of written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists include: private and business e-mail correspondence, texting in chats and forums, posting on net announcement boards, memo, and reports. Along with it, the listed genres exhibit different degrees of interactivity. Thus, email correspondence is characterized by a low degree of interactivity while texting in chats and forums are notable for an average degree of interactivity. Hence, posting on net announcement boards, memo and reports have a low level of interactivity or its absence (Смирнов, 2009, p. 159). The main devices of production of written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists are computers and the Internet.

Having analyzed the works of Castells (1992), we can outline the general features that are pertinent to written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists: available electronic transmission channel, mediation (communication occurs between its participants by means of technical, electronic communication facilities), remoteness (distance between the participants of communication and absence of immediate visual contact), hypertextuality (written text in network space changes and acquire hypertextual shape), virtuality (signs and symbols of computer-aided interaction), creolity (written texts use both linguistic means and paralinguistic devices, e.g. picture, photo, symbols, colours, fonts), stylistic heterogeneity, genre diversity, relevant online etiquette (the participants of that communication have certain communicative status that is recognized, supported and implemented by an array of special tools and is regulated by special rules).

On the basis of the analysis we can deduce that the main types of written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists, defined by the nature of interaction and status-role relations between communicators, and also by relevant application in the field of IT business, are formal (communication with colleagues), semi-formal and formal communication (communication with suppliers, clients, managers), analytical and scientific communication (reports).

Informal and semi-formal written English professionally oriented communication prevails while IT specialists perform their professional functions and duties. Informal written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists reflects the peculiarities of spoken informal style. Semi-formal written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists come closer to informal spoken style (Ромашенко, 2015). Therefore, informal and semi-formal written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists possesses the following stylistic features: large bulk of lexical units, which are found in spoken language; specific usage of first and small letters; ignorance of spelling; usage of specific abbreviations; substitution of words or their parts by homonymous letters or figures, “smiles” and emoticons. A grammatical aspect of informal and semi-formal written communication of IT specialists is represented by such phenomena as frequent omission of auxiliary verbs (*everyone having a nice day*); absence of subject and verb inversion or absence of auxiliary verb in questions (*you wanna...?*); special punctuation, namely absence of apostrophe and repeated use of a question mark and exclamation mark to render additional expressivity. A lexical aspect of informal and semi-formal written communication of IT specialists is notable for a bulk of special words and collocations, phrases and expressions related to computer terminology, especially – computer slang words. It contributes to the creation of peculiar idiolect (computer jargon) based on specific computer vocabulary that is used as a way of self-expression of participants of the communication act (Дедова, 2004, p. 39–61).

Formal written communication of IT specialists in email correspondence generally reflects the rule of the epistolary genre and is characterized by the dominance of pragmatic set that is embodied in the text by a conscious communicative addressee’s intention to have an effect on the addresser (Бугайчук, 2018). Formal letters and emails are required to be concise and formal. Abbreviations of technical terminology are used to save space and time. A concise letter, email should be written in a simple and natural

way, directly to the point (Zhao, 2010). The general vocabulary, phrasal verbs, simple prepositions and conjunctions should be avoided for formal expressions that are accurate in meaning and more preferred (*to advise and inform instead of to tell*). As far as grammar in formal writing is concerned, it isn't appropriate to use active verb forms with the first person, to leave out the word *or* to use contractions etc. The main ideas are better developed by longer and more complex sentences which provide more details and descriptions.

English analytic scientific professionally oriented writing of IT specialists in the form of the report requires a certain structure, follows the scientific style and certain format. It presents facts and data about the work done. The key features of analytic scientific writing are as follows: precision, clarity and objectivity. Precise concrete language and quantitative rather than qualitative descriptions are preferred in analytic scientific writing. There are several stylistic conventions that enhance objectivity: preferred usage of passive voice, avoiding emotive words and first-person pronouns (Mykytenko, Sulym & Kozolup, 2017, p. 42–44). What concerns the choice of terms, IT specialists tend to use familiar terms rather than obscure ones.

Multimedia technologies in building professionally oriented written communication skills

The world transforms itself toward a digital era and the technological innovations in social media and information technology are taking foreign-language education in new directions (Samuels, 2013, p. 19). Many scholars focus on an essential role of technology in pedagogy, namely in English language teaching. Along with computer technology, multimedia technology has proved its effectiveness in teaching of English for Professional Purposes.

Multimedia technology refers to computer-based interactive applications that use both the hardware and software, allowing people to share their ideas and information. It is a combination of text, graphics, animation, video and sound that is displayed on a computer screen (Ravazi, 2013). Pun advocates that teachers can use multimedia technology to create more colorful and stimulating language classes (Pun, 2013, p. 31). Multimedia addresses more than one of the senses simultaneously as it focuses on the senses of sight and hearing. Multimedia applications can be also used for the classroom presentations, collaborative and individual learning.

The use of multimedia technology motivates students to learn English. Different quality of learning environment (audio, visual and animation effects) stirs visual facet of a human being inducing students to learn English quickly and effectively. In addition, computer-aided teaching methods improve short-term memory, visual memory and memorization (Motameedi, Barghi & Karimi, 2013). Multimedia techniques provide flexibility in presenting information and access to information regarding the culture of target language. With such features as abundant-information an crossing time and space, multimedia technology creates a real-life context for English language learning. (Pun, 2013, p. 31). It stimulates students' initiative and economize class time, providing more information to the students. Moreover, abundant information brings about an information-sharing opportunity among students and makes them to actively participate in class activities (Pun, 2013, p. 32).

Application of multimedia techniques builds and develops basic language skills. First and foremost, students improve their abilities to listen and speak, and thereby develop their communicative competence. However, multimedia technology can also be used as a platform to build professionally oriented written skills. The most effective multimedia communication tools are emails, chats and forum. An e-mail is one of the fastest ways to send a message to a recipient. An email allows for a short communication, thereby writing skills are gradually developed because emails don't possess a rigid structure and don't require a set of fixed expressions etc.

Online chats create comfortable learning virtual environment where communication and interaction take the upper hand (Семеряк, 2016, p. 66). Chats facilitate largely collaboration between students. Forums, blogs, chat conferences allow prospective IT specialists to share information both on personal and professional subjects, work together on projects, take part in role plays, discussions that are outlined by typical professional situations of IT field.

Conclusion

On the basis of the literature overview presented above we can make the following conclusions. Effective execution of professional duties requires IT specialists to accomplish oral exchange of information, to conduct oral and written negotiations, to provide oral and written arrangements, and also to handle correspondence in order to coordinate business activity within the

system “company-external supplier (contractor)” with the aim of information provision and high quality of technologies. We claim that special attention must be paid to written communication, since correspondence constitutes company’s documents and, consequently, it should be lexically, grammatically and stylistically correct. A substantial amount of correspondence is maintained in English, because external suppliers or contractors of Ukrainian IT companies are overseas companies and entrepreneurs.

A professionally oriented written communication in English of prospective IT specialists stand for creation and exchange of English written texts with professionally oriented content. Relevant grammatical structure, stylistic and lexical peculiarities (IT vocabulary) are pertinent to professionally oriented communication in English of prospective IT specialists.

The genres of professionally oriented written communication in English of IT specialists, which are notable for different degrees of interactivity in main situations of professionally oriented communication in English of prospective IT specialists, namely business correspondence, correspondence with colleagues and managers, performance report include: private and business e-mail correspondence, texting in chats and forums, posting on net announcement boards, memo, and reports. Among the main types of professionally oriented written communication in English of IT specialists prevail informal (communication with colleagues), semi-formal communication (communication with suppliers, clients, managers), as well as analytical and scientific communication (reports). These types of professionally oriented written communication in English of prospective IT specialists possesses the following stylistic features: large bulk of lexical units, which are found in spoken language, specific usage of first and small letters, ignorance of spelling, usage of specific abbreviations, substitute of words or their parts by homonymous letters or figures, “smiles” and emoticons. The listed features provide for the creation of peculiar idiolect (computer jargon) based on specific computer vocabulary. Analytic scientific written communication in English of IT specialists has a clear structure, follows a certain structure and form, and reflects key features of English scientific writing, namely: precision, clarity and objectivity.

Along with computer technology, multimedia technology has proved its effectiveness in teaching of English for Professional Purposes. Multimedia technology refers to computer-based interactive applications information (combination of text, graphics, animation, video and sound) which both facilitate students to share their ideas and encourage them to learn English.

Emails, chats and forum have proved to be the most effective multimedia communication tools and learning techniques for developing written skills.

The analysis of the peculiarities of professionally oriented written communication in English of prospective IT specialists will be attributed to the foundation of content structuring within the framework of methods of building English lexical competence in professionally oriented writing.

References

- Castells, M. (1992). *The Informational City. Economic Restructuring and Urban Development*. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Min, P. (2013). The Use of Multimedia Technology in English Language Teaching. A Global Perspective Crossing the Border. *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 1, 29–38.
- Motameedi, A., Barghi, Z. & Karimi, B. (2013). Comparison of the Efficacy of Three Methods of Direct Instruction, Computer Assisted Instruction to Reduce the Problems of Students with Mathematical Disorder. *Learn Disabil*, 2, 76–100.
- Moursund, D. (2005). *Introduction to Information and Communication Technology in Education*, <https://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~moursund/Books/ICT/ICTBook.pdf>. [accessed: 5.10.2018].
- Мукытенко, Н.О., Сулим, В.Т. & Козолуп, М.С. (2017). *Developing Academic Literacy. EAP for Science Majors*. Lviv: IvsnFrankoLviv National University.
- Samuels, H. (2013). “20th Century Humanism and 21st Century Technology. A Match Made in Cyberspace”. *English Teaching Forum* 51.3.
- Shunhui, Z. (2010). *Analysis of Language Features in Business Correspondences*. Proceedings of the 2010 International conference on Information Technology and Scientific Management, <file.scirp.org/pdf/20-1.76.pdf> [accessed: 10.10.2018].
- Razavi, A. (2013). *New Topics in Learning Technology*. Ahwaz: Chamran Martyr University.
- Бацевич, Ф.С. (2004). *Основи комунікативної лінгвістики*. Київ: Академія.
- Бацевич, Ф.С. (2007). *Словник термінів міжкультурної комунікації*. Київ: Довіра.
- Бугайчук, К.Л. (2011). *Електронний підручник: поняття, структура, вимоги*, <http://www.journal.iitta.gov.ua> [accessed: 15.09.2018].
- Дедова, О.В. (2004). *О специфике компьютерного дискурса. Русский язык. Исторические судьбы и современность: тезисы*. Москва.
- Ромашенко, В.Є. (2013). *Комп’ютерний дискурс як засіб формування інформаційно-комунікаційної компетенції бакалаврів філології*, www.irbis-nbuv.gov.ua/cgi-bin/irbis.64exe? [accessed: 15.09.2018].

- Смирнов, Ф.О. (2009). *Искусство общения в Интернете*. Москва: Издательский дом Вильямс.
- Семеряк, І.З. (2016). *Соціокогнітивний підхід до формування стратегій інішомовного професійно орієнтованого спілкування майбутніх програмістів з використанням Інтернету*. дис. на здобуття наукового ступеня к.пед.н.: 13.00.02. Тернопіль.
- Тарнапольський, О.Б. (2008). *Методика навчання студентів вищих навчальних закладів письма англійською мовою*. Вінниця: Нова Книга.

MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES IN BUILDING PROFESSIONALLY ORIENTED WRITTEN SKILLS OF IT SPECIALISTS

Summary: The article reveals the peculiarities of written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists. In the framework of the main situations of written English professionally oriented communication (business correspondence, correspondence with colleagues and managers) the functions of the communication realize: contact, information, inducing, cognitive, emotive, influencing ones and fence-mending. The genres of written English professionally oriented communication of IT specialists include: private and business e-mail correspondence, texting in chats and forums, posting on net announcement boards, memo, and reports. The main types of this communication are formal (communication with colleagues), semi-formal and formal communication (communication with suppliers, clients, managers), analytical and scientific communication (reports). Each type of communication has its peculiar stylistic feature concerning lexical and grammatical presentation.

Keywords: written English professionally oriented communication, IT specialists, functions and duties, correspondence, genres, types of communications

PROFESJONALNIE ZORIENTOWANA KOMUNIKACJA SPECJALISTÓW IT W JĘZYKU ANGIELSKIM

Streszczenie: Artykuł omawia osobliwości anglojęzycznej, profesjonalnie zorientowanej komunikacji specjalistów IT. W ramach głównych sytuacji komunikowania się na tym polu (korespondencja biznesowa, korespondencja z kolegami i medżerami) można zaobserwować następujące funkcje komunikacyjne: kontaktu, informacyjną, wywołującą, poznawczą, emocjonalną, wpływającą i poprawiającą. Z kolei gatunki pisanej angielszczyzny w tym zakresie obejmują: prywatną i biznesową korespondencję e-mailową, teksty na czatach i forach, komunikaty na

tablicach ogłoszeń, notatki i raporty. Główne rodzaje tej komunikacji to: komunikacja nieformalna (komunikacja z kolegami), komunikacja półformalna i formalna (komunikacja z dostawcami, klientami, szefami), komunikacja analityczna i profesjonalna (raporty). Każdy rodzaj omawianej komunikacji ma swoistą cechę stylistyczną, dotyczącą głównie reprezentacji leksykalnej i gramatycznej.

Słowa kluczowe: profesjonalnie zorientowana komunikacja specjalistów IT w języku angielskim, specjaliści IT, funkcje i obowiązki, korespondencja, gatunki komunikacji, rodzaje komunikacji