

ЛИТЕРАТУРА В ОБУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ ДЛЯ ПРОФЕССИОНАЛЬНЫХ ЦЕЛЕЙ

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Статья посвящена роли художественной литературы в обучении английскому языку в неязыковом вузе на разных этапах обучения. Автор рассматривает потенциал художественного текста для развития у студентов широкого спектра компетенций: общих, собственно языковых, предметных и навыков «широкого применения» ('transferable skills'). Среди них – ряд компетенций, которые получили название «умения XXI века» [1]. Перечни данных компетенций и умений разнятся по объёму и структуре, но в них есть общее: это работа с информацией, критическое мышление и способность к решению проблем, коммуникативные компетенции, сотрудничество, работа в команде и ряд других, заложенных в программах подготовки студентов МГИМО. Особое внимание в статье уделяется широким возможностям художественного текста для развития у студентов воображения, творчества, а также эмоциональной грамотности и этических норм. Основной целью данной статьи является демонстрация путей интеграции предметных и иноязычных коммуникативных компетенций на уроках домашнего и индивидуального чтения при выборе книги, тематика которой близка направлению подготовки студентов. В статье предлагаются различные формы работы с художественным текстом: от написания альтернативного финала до ролевых игр и проектной работы. Выводы автора основываются на рефлексивном подходе к собственной практике и поисках новых форм в преподавании аспекта «домашнее чтение», на опыте коллег и изучении публикаций об использовании художественной литературы в обучении английскому языку.

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Ключевые слова: художественная литература, коммуникативные компетенции, критическое мышление, творчество, морально-нравственный потенциал, кросскультурные коммуникации, профессиональная терминология, интеграция предметных и языковых компетенций.

FICTION IN TEACHING ENGLISH FOR JOB-RELATED NEEDS

Before the advent of the communicative approach, teaching English even at non-linguistic universities for a long time was literary based. The new methodology brought about a lot of changes and reading fiction ceased to be the end in itself and became a possible vehicle for learning other things.

Nonetheless, literature remains an infinite resource for teaching and learning a foreign language. It is in a work of literature that a reader can observe all complexity and diversity of the language texture, the intricacy and interplay of intra- and extra-textual connections. A reader can penetrate a writer's 'laboratory' and even become 'a co-author' in interpreting the text. A cast of characters, a book's imagery and other stylistic devices, literary tradition, philosophy, genre, historical and social settings and many other aspects of literary analysis *per se* seldom become the subject of study and discussion in the ESP classroom. Literature is a resource rather than the end in itself.

The competence approach that underpins modern language teaching methodology with its principle of 'necessity and sufficiency' does not allow for such 'extras' within the framework of an ESP syllabus. The English curriculum of the School of International Business and Business Administration does not contain any comprehensive course in British literature, but two hours a week during seven terms the students of the faculty have a 'home reading' class, which enables them to read and discuss quite a number of books in English. Along with classic books it is recommended that books by modern authors should be used. They are supposed to contain current topics, new realities, background knowledge, which would expose students to the culture of the target language, national values, traditions, psychology and a way of life so that fiction would help

students better understand another culture and enable them to work more efficiently in a multicultural business environment. Besides, studying literary texts in a foreign language makes learners reflect on their own culture too. Having esthetic and didactic value, books in English also provide an opportunity to develop students' generic competencies, such as creativity, analytical and logical thinking as well as to hone speaking, writing, debating and study skills, to name a few. The above said constitutes integral competencies of the MGI-MO undergraduates specializing in management.

Unlike students majoring in English, their ESP peers seldom study literary criticism in depth, but their own interpretation and argumentation, ability to prove their point of view facilitate critical thinking and develop imagination.

Besides, a writer places his characters in situations, which readers can project to their own life experience and draw a lesson from them. Literature teaches them to take adequate decisions in analogous circumstances. This could be exemplified by the article from *Economist.com* 'Literature and the law. Why lawyers love Shakespeare'. According to the article, many judges in their rulings resort to 'quotable wisdom' of many writers, the oft-quoted among them are W. Shakespeare, L. Carroll, G. Orwell, Ch. Dickens, A. Huxley, etc [2].

Moreover, at Harvard Law School students can attend a seminar on 'justice and morality in the plays of Shakespeare'. King's College offers a module 'Shakespeare and the Law' which is taught by both the Literature and Law faculties. The study, conducted by D. C. Kidd and E. Castano, concludes that "reading literary fiction makes people show empathy, and challenge preconceptions. "Understanding others' mental states is a crucial skill that enables the complex social relationships that characterize human societies. ... Fiction seems also to expand our knowledge of others' lives, helping us recognize our similarity to them, ... fiction may explicitly convey social values and reduce the strangeness of others" [3]. It is almost superfluous to say that the aforementioned is much needed in today's global world.

Home reading guide books prepared by the department staff aim to exploit literature's potential to the full to enhance students' generic and language-specific competencies set forth in the English syllabus. The latter (among other things) includes the ability to work in a multicultural environment, to maintain professional contacts with partners from other cultures, to hold business talks,

to write a report, a business proposal, a job description, etc. Students are supposed to know different types of legal entities, various organizational structures existing in companies and such like.

As regards literary devices, students should be aware of idiomatic expressions, metaphors, allusions, which permeate fiction. They should also be able to discriminate between different types of discourse and register, formal and informal styles, written and spoken English.

The competence approach to ESP teaching is for the most part pragmatic. It is aimed at enabling learners to use the language in a relevant professional sphere in those communicative situations where interaction takes place in English. Pragmatism is inherent in today's youngsters, the so-called 'generation Y'. Those who read English books 'just for pleasure' are few among them, and reading is rarely mentioned by students as a leisure activity – literature gives no advantage over other applicants when seeking employment.

Given students' professional needs in English and their preferences for dynamic, eventful books with an intriguing plot, it was decided to select those which would meet both their interests and needs in their specialism – management and business administration.

The departmental English language syllabus also includes a module in translation for professional needs which embraces such areas as organizational structure of a company, advertising, brand names, competitive market strategies, mergers and acquisitions, financial markets and stock exchanges, risk and project management, etc. So, when choosing a book for home reading it was decided to kill two birds with one stone.

The problems raised in the book by contemporary American writer Stephen W. Frey '*The Takeover*' (1995) determined its choice for four-year students. '*The Takeover*' cannot, possibly, compete in literary artistry with the novels by P. Ackroyd, A. Byatt, J. Barnes, G. Swift, J.M. Coetzee or those by any other Booker or Nobel Prize winner for literature. Nonetheless, the book has a dynamic plot and is written by a person who knows all about finance, mergers, and the corporate world. S. Frey is a financier, who participated in many deals of this kind when he worked at J. P. Morgan. He also held the position of a vice president of corporate finance at an international

bank. So far he has written 18 books (one every year, ‘*Jury Town*’ being the latest, 2015). ‘*The Takeover*’ is the first of his novels.

It is about a clandestine society (‘The Sevens’) of rich and powerful businessmen who plot a far-reaching economic disaster to overthrow the democratic President and his administration and take over the political power in the country. The novel lays bare intricate financial schemes engineered by this closely connected influential group, who would not stop at anything, even committing murders, to pave their way to power.

The central figure of the novel is a young shrewd Harvard graduate, who specializes in mergers and acquisitions and at some point finds himself amid the conspiracy entailing a huge leveraged buyout. Andrew Falcon is binge working to accomplish the biggest hostile takeover of a large chemical company to reap a five-million-dollar bonus.

From their core subjects MGIMO undergraduates know a lot about business and management, and the novel provides a good opportunity for learners to discuss them in English. An excellent guidebook stands them in good stead [4].

The book is discussed at several levels – a cast of characters and their relationships, the role of each in the planned plot, different financial organizations (including the Federal Reserve System), their structure and management, business activities and reputation, personnel and executive officers, asserts and transactions. The topics involve a wide range of students’ professional terminology like *a takeover bid*, *a leverage buyout*, *a securities subsidiary*, *risky transactions*, *money transfers*, *investment bankers and investment portfolios*, *stock and bond markets*, *going public* and so on. Subject-specific words and topics crop up throughout the book, and as the narrative draws to a close, learners sufficiently enrich their specialism-related vocabulary as well as review some core subject concepts. This integration of language and subject competencies correlates, in a way, with CLIL principles [5].

No wonder that another stratum of words refers to legal English – the subtle fraudulent schemes are tracked down, investigated and finally frustrated. Most of the vocabulary belongs to finance law, and it is also given attention in the classroom as future managers should be aware of legal aspects of business, safeguard uncompromising integrity and follow due diligence. Thus, while dis-

cussing the book learners acquire and develop not only job-related competencies but also existential competence which is understood as a synergy of a person's individual qualities, views, self-awareness, readiness for social interaction. The didactic potential of the novel is exploited to the full too.

Pursuant to the English language syllabus, students should be able to communicate effectively not only in professional and socio-cultural spheres but in the academic world, especially in view of the Bologna process, of which MGIMO is a participant. Some passages of the book, concerning Harvard traditions, are dense in terms of academic and campus life lexis, providing another opportunity for learners to expand their relevant vocabulary or recycle the existing one.

There are other contemporary topics in the novel: the press and its role in shaping public opinion, financial fraud, ordered murders and political terrorism. They arouse students' interest as these social ills have, unfortunately, become ubiquitous.

To develop learners' creativity and imagination they could be asked to suggest an alternative ending to the novel, rewrite some episodes in the name of this or that character, hold a panel discussion, etc.

Another approach to reading fiction is practiced in the Master's course, where English is almost exclusively taught for professional purposes. The syllabus includes such areas of study as team-work and the personality types (a shaper, a plant, a resource investigator, a completer, etc.) necessary to ensure its success; the importance of ethical principles in business and an employees' code of business conduct; kinds of law-breaches in business and possible ways of combating them; time management and personal knowledge management; the business culture of 'generation Y'; risk management; research methods in business and others [5].

The book that embraces many of the above mentioned topics is *'Not a Penny More, not a Penny Less'* (1976) by Jeffrey Archer, a novelist, short-story writer, playwright – the list is far from being complete.

Born in London in 1940, he graduated from Oxford and at the age of 29 was elected to the House of Commons. After five years there he became a member of the House of Lords. His disgrace and downfall came fourteen years later after accusations of perjury

followed by a four-year imprisonment; actually, the incarceration lasted only for two. In *'Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less'* the writer makes use of his first-hand painful experience: when he was still an MP, he had invested heavily in a corporation and lost huge money because of embezzlement. Although morally crushed and financially ruined, he took to writing and recounted his sad experience in his debut novel, *'Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less'*, which immediately enjoyed enormous success. He has written about ten novels since and earned the reputation of one of the most widely read British writers and the author of bestsellers. (*'First Among Equals'*, 1984 could be highly recommended to students of political science).

Although written about forty years ago, *'Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less'* retains its topicality: unfortunately, fraud and sham in business do not disappear overnight. Harvey Metcalf, the son of a baker who emigrated from Poland to America, rises from rags to riches by floating a bogus oil company and cheating credulous investors into buying unsecured shares. He swindles out of one million an Oxford don, a respectable physician, a successful French art dealer and a young heir to an earldom. The quartet conspire to steal their money back – 'not a penny more, not a penny less'. Stephen Bradley, a visiting American professor at University of Oxford is the mastermind who initiates the pursuit of Metcalf, arranges a meeting of the four and suggests that everyone should design a plan. However, James Brigsley, a British aristocrat, is unable to, but he is absolutely indispensable in assisting the team.

While discussing the novel, students are asked to analyze the role of each in the scheme and identify their type as a team player.

The characters have different interests and talents, and pursuant to them, each comes up with a revenge plan, its final version is masterminded by Professor Bradley.

Jean-Pierre Lamanns manages to trick Harvey into buying a fake Van Gogh and paying a tidy sum for it. During Harvey's holidays in Monte Carlo a pill put in his glass provokes appendicitis symptoms; he is rushed to hospital where Dr. Robert Oakley is already waiting to operate on him. The operation is not serious, the incision being just skin-deep, but Harvey has to pay a hefty medical bill. Stephan Bradley brilliantly impersonates an Oxford official and, playing on Harvey's inflated self-importance and va-

nity, assures him that he will be awarded an honorary degree if he contributes \$250,000 to the university's endowment. Harvey swallows the bait.

There is another twist in the plot – Harvey turns out to be the father of James Brigsley's bride. All the characters meet at the wedding party. The story comes full circle. The gentlemen get their million, but they are considering the possibility of giving it back on learning that oil, after all, has been discovered, which made share prices rocket. In the end they become another million richer.

The tricks played on Harvey raise some moral questions, like: "Are they any better than Harvey? Why didn't they take the case to court?"

But in the first place the book is written in a humorous vein and does not admit of too serious judgments. The witticism of the story adds to its value, it creates a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom, charged with positive emotions, which facilitate learning.

Students profit by reading the book in many other ways. They acquire academic vocabulary, which permeates the chapters describing Oxford traditions and ceremonies; learn the names of academic positions and titles and some facts from the history of the university: *the chancellor and vice chancellor of the university; the principal of Jesus College; the university marshal and the bedels; Oxonians; senior tutor; an extra session of tuition; the Crewian Oration; the day of the Encaenia and the Garden Party; the College Dramatic Society; the Sheldonian Theatre; Trinity College; Magdalen "which has educated King Edward VII, Prince Henry, Cardinal Wolsey, Edward Gibbon and Oscar Wilde."* "He (Stephan) put on his gown, a magnificent scarlet that announced he was a Doctor of Philosophy of the University of Oxford. It amused him that Oxford had to be different. Every other university abbreviated this, the ubiquitous award for research work, to Ph.D. In Oxford, it was D.Phil." Thus, by reading the novel closely, students pick up a lot of lexis pertaining to campus life, which comes in handy if they enroll on a course of study abroad.

The characters belong to different nationalities and walks of society. This offers an educational opportunity to raise the question of national character. American practicality of Stephan Bradley stands out against the background of James Brigsley's aristocratic inertia; Jean-Pierre Lamanns typifies French love of art. All of them

profess the principle of ‘fair play’ (‘not a penny more’). It may not be accidental that their offender has Polish roots (‘them and us?’). These and some other aspects of the novel provide a platform for raising students’ cross-cultural awareness and understanding.

Leadership and problem-solving skills, ability to act as a team player, flexibility and adaptability, good communication skills – all these constitute some top XXI century skills, which employers seek when filling a vacancy of any kind. *‘Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less’* lends itself admirably to discussing the above competencies.

After reading the book the students are asked to compare it with its screen version and either to prepare presentations or write an essay on one of the topics relevant to their field of study. Learners themselves identify the book’s themes – leadership, team work, time management, fraud in business and ethical and cross-cultural issues. Moreover, the aforementioned correlate with the contents of students’ textbook – *‘English Masters Course’* – which provides another opportunity for final-year students to revise the material before the exam.

Yet another option to introduce literature into the language classroom is ‘individual reading’. Students read a book of their own choice, but instead of making traditional book reports they participate in a role-play. A typical scenario (discussed beforehand in class) has the following cast of characters: ‘a writer’ (the student, who submits a ‘manuscript’ for publication); the people from the publishing house (‘an editor’, ‘a publisher’, ‘a reviewer’, ‘a distribution agent’, ‘a representative of the finance department’, ‘a production manager’, ‘advertising manager’, etc.). They can either accept or reject the ‘manuscript’. The objective of the simulation is ‘to get the book published’. The discussion is conducted interactively.

‘The writer’ presents a book by defining its genre, giving the synopsis, introducing its cast of characters, major story lines, the literary tradition the book belongs to, etc. The rest of the group take on personas mentioned above (they prepare their role cards at home) and ask questions about the target readership and whose tastes and interests in literature the book caters for, its innovative and artistic features, literary devices and merits, etc. ‘The critic’ has his/ her say too, agreeing or disagreeing on some points with

‘the author’. Depending on the reasoning the group decides on the number of copies, an advertizing campaign and channels of distribution, production costs, book pricing and other technical aspects involved in publishing. The outcome of the role-play is a contract signed between ‘the author’ and ‘the publishers’.

Activities like these necessitate students’ research outside the classroom as well as familiarizing themselves with some literary criticism.

The role-play offers a possibility for revising some management aspects too. A book is treated as any other product involving a whole range of managerial decisions, and students enjoy the opportunity to use their core subject knowledge. Needless to say, that in course of preparation and discussion they revise an extensive vocabulary referring to their specialism, as well as enhance competencies in speaking (prepared and extemporaneous), master monologue, dialogue or debate skills. Functional English and linguistic means of persuasion are also revisited and improved.

If students experience difficulty in choosing a book for individual reading, they could be referred to the site *encompass-The Global Bookclub-enCompass Culture.url*, which offers a wide choice of contemporary books, related to this or that field of students’ specialization. There is also a long list of recommended mainstream books by Julian Barnes, William Boyd, Angela Carter, J. M. Coetzee, David Lodge and many others, not mentioning widely used (and available) home reading books, like those by A. Hailey or J. Grisham which could be studied with the focus on students’ areas of study.

Thus, ‘*Hotel*’ by A. Hailey allows interpreting in terms of hospitality business. Students could be asked to make presentations on hotel jobs and services, management styles, the procedure of a takeover and other aspects of the novel, connected with running a hotel.

Given the above, it is possible to conclude that fiction could be successfully utilized in teaching ESP. A thoroughly chosen book with its content relating to students’ areas of study enables them to hone ‘high order thinking skills’; facilitates acquisition of job-related competencies and a specialist lexis; bridges the gap between core subjects and foreign language teaching. In addition, it can do what a non-fiction text can not: it broadens imagination, refines

feelings and ‘soft skill’ and opens the door to another culture. Furthermore, a genuine work of literature allows for multiplicity of judgments and interpretations, thus creating ‘opinion gaps’ which entail discussions and debates. Last but not least, fiction promotes students’ further extensive reading in a self-directed and autonomous manner.

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FICTION IN TEACHING ESP

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***Abstract:** The article is devoted to the role of fiction in teaching ESP at different levels. The author explores fiction’s potential for the development of*

students' broad spectrum of competencies: generic, language proper, subject- and transferable skills. Among them there are ones, commonly referred to as the '21st century skills' [1]. The lists of these skills and competencies vary in length and structure, but they have a common core – processing information, critical thinking, problem-solving ability, communicative competence, cooperation, team work and a number of others, embedded in MGIMO curricula. Special attention in the article is given to the vast possibilities of fiction for broadening students' imagination, promoting creativity as well as emotional and ethical literacy. The main objective of the article is to demonstrate some ways of integrating core subject and foreign language communicative competencies at the lesson of 'home- and individual reading', provided the content of the book chosen is in line with the students' field of study. The article offers various forms of studying fiction: from writing an alternate ending to a story to role-plays or project work. The author's conclusions rest on reflective approach to the teaching practice, experimenting with various modes of teaching 'home reading', peer observation as well as analysis of relevant publications.

Key Words: fiction, communicative competencies, critical thinking, creativity, moral potential, cross-cultural communication, professional terminology, integration of subject-specific and language competencies.

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