Content-Based Internet-Assisted ESP Teaching to Ukrainian University Students Majoring in Psychology

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the issues of teaching ESP to Ukrainian tertiary students majoring in psychology. The suggested approach is based on teaching English through the content matter of special subjects included in the program of training practical psychologists. The example of an ESP textbook for psychologists is used for demonstrating the interconnection between content learning and learning assignments requiring students' mandatory research for authentic materials in professional Internet sources in English.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching ESP is aimed at developing students' skills of professional communication in English depending on the area of their professional expertise. It means that such teaching should be inextricably connected to students' particular specialization. It is hardly sufficient to teach English for medical students in general or for students of science in technology in particular. Dentists require different ESP as compared with cardiologists, just as metallurgists cannot be satisfied with the same ESP that is taught to specialists in designing planes–though all these students need English either for medicine or for technology.

Just such a differentiated approach is followed when teaching ESP to university students within differing academic disciplines in Ukraine. Mining engineers are taught English using different learning materials and different content matter (*carrier content*, as it is called by Dudley-Evans & St. John, 1998) from what is used for teaching railway transport engineers; future pediatricians are taught differently as compared with future obstetricians, etc.

Regretfully, specific teaching/learning materials, specific textbooks (corresponding to students' future profession), and specific methods of teaching have yet to be developed for the ESP training of future psychologists at Ukrainian universities. This explains why the English professional communication skills of future psychologists do not meet the requirements that are conditioned by their growing needs in establishing and maintaining professional contacts with foreign colleagues and their needs in getting themselves familiarized with the latest achievements in the field of psychology through reading professional journals. Meeting such requirements becomes impossible without a good command of English for specific professional communication in the particular professional area under discussion.

Everything explicated above served as a stimulus for developing a specific approach to teaching ESP to Ukrainian university students majoring in psychology and a special textbook of English for them. The textbook in which the developed approach has been fully embodied was called *Psychological Matters*, and it is planned for publication in Ukraine by the end of 2009 or in early 2010.

The purpose of this article is to discuss the concept underlying the developed approach and the textbook, as well as to discuss the practice of implementing the concept in question in the learning activities suggested in the textbook. The discussion in the article is focused on two principal postulates underlying the approach and the concept developed: *content-based learning of English for future psychologists* and *Internet-assisted organization of the teaching/learning process*.

ENGLISH CONTENT-BASED LEARNING FOR FUTURE PSYCHOLOGISTS

Content-based learning (or *content learning* — the two terms will further be used interchangeably) is a kind of ESP teaching/learning process organization in which the focus of instruction is shifted from pure language instruction to the integration of mastering both language for professional communication and the content matter of professional disciplines (Snow, Met, & Genesee, 1989; Spanos, 1990). The shift in focus creates a situation where the teacher and students' attention is mostly concentrated on the professional discipline's content matter while the language (ESP) and communicative skills are to a great extent acquired implicitly, i.e., in the process of mastering the content through the medium of English. In recent years, such an approach under the name of CLIL has become commonplace in Western Europe for teaching different foreign languages for professional communication (Coyle, 2007).

This approach became the fundamental one for both the textbook under discussion, *Psychological Matters*, and the methods of teaching embodied in it. Using the textbook, students learn English for professional communication through the content matter of such professional disciplines as *General Psychology*, *Practical Psychology*, and *Psychotherapy*. The textbook is designed for second and/or third-year students majoring in Psychology and is to be used in their regular and mandatory course of English for professional communication. Before starting to work on that textbook, the students are supposed to achieve at least the intermediate level of proficiency in their command of General English (Level B2— *independent user*—according to the Council's of Europe *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, 2001) and have the fundamental knowledge of psychology enabling them to comprehend the subject matter of the materials in the textbook. *Psychological Matters* requires 144 academic hours of class work and approximately the same time for independent learners' work out of class. Thus, the textbook is designed for work in the ESP course during one whole academic year. The textbook set includes the *Student's Book* with the *Workbook* (the latter being designed for out-of-class work), the *Teacher's Book*, and audio materials for listening recorded on a CD.

Content learning in the textbook is implemented based on four principles. The first is *ensuring the systemic character of professional information (professional content matter) in the textbook and the ESP course based on that textbook*. Both may be considered as systemically covering a compressed course on psychology for future professionals in the field, while being taught through the medium of English. This systemic character can be seen even from the list of topics covered in the four modules and ten units of the textbook:

MODULE 1. PSYCHOLOGY, ITS BRANCHES, AND HISTORY

>UNIT 1. *Psychology and its Branches*
>UNIT 2. *History of Psychology*

MODULE 2. PSYCHOLOGICAL CHALLENGES IN THE WORKPLACE

>UNIT 3. *Job Burnout*
>UNIT 4. *Balancing Work and Family*
>UNIT 5. *Psychology of Employment and Working Place Conflicts*

MODULE 3. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

>UNIT 6. *Managing Emotions and Feelings*
>UNIT 7. *Personality and Individual Differences*

MODULE 4. PSYCHOTHERAPY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING

>UNIT 8. *Psychotherapy*
>UNIT 9. *Gestalt Therapy*
>UNIT 10. *Psychological Counseling*

The above list of topics demonstrates that the theme-based ESP course embraces both the most general issues of psychology as a science and, even more importantly, a great number of issues that practical psychologists (for whom the textbook is designed) have to deal with in their everyday professional activities. All these issues are fully developed in the topics, which are chosen not at random but systematically to heighten the required knowledge base of a particular professional field. This gives students ample opportunities to develop their professional knowledge while enrolled in a 'compressed' course on Psychology taught in English. Such an approach to ESP teaching is clearly advantageous in that the professional information learned in this course helps focus learners' attention more on the content information than on the language, thereby allowing implicit language acquisition to take place—the basic feature of content learning (Brinton & Master, 1997; Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989).

The second principle of implementing the content-based approach is *ensuring professional authenticity of learning materials*; that is to say, using only such learning materials (for instance, texts for students' reading or audio materials for their listening) that not only render professional content information but are also prepared by native speakers, professionals in the given field, for other native speakers who are professionals in the same field as well. Such an approach guarantees learners' work with what is called *genuine texts* (Trimble, 1992), i.e., texts that give students *professionally valuable information* and not the information which, though professionally-oriented, is selected because of the language, in which case the language is focused on more than simply content matter. Only genuine texts are acceptable for content learning because they provide students with what really helps them in deepening their professional knowledge, as postulated by the content-based approach to ESP teaching.

Accordingly, the textbook *Psychological Matters* includes only the learning materials meeting the above criterion of *professional authenticity*. One such 'authentic' example can be found in the audio script of one of the listening texts in Unit 9—*Gestalt Therapy*:

Client: I would like to understand...

Psychotherapist: I hear a wailing in your voice. Can you hear it?

Client: Yes… There is a trembling…

Psychotherapist: Be your voice now.

Client: I am a weak, complaining voice, the voice of a child that doesn't dare to demand. She is afraid…

Psychotherapist: I am…

Client: I am a little girl and I am afraid to ask for anything, can only ask for what I want by showing my sadness, so that mommy will have pity and take care of me…

Psychotherapist: Could you be your mother, now?

This extract is an audio script of an authentic fragment from a Gestalt-therapeutic session, and students analyze it from a professional point of view after listening. It gives learners a clear idea of how such sessions are organized and conducted.

In this context, it should be noted that *professional authenticity of learning materials* is sometimes in conflict with what is reasonable and useful for purposes of ESP learning. Authentic texts may be too long or overcomplicated for the students' level of English, or they may abound in professional details that are not necessary for the course where the main (though implicit) aim still remains acquiring English and English communication skills. For such cases, Trimble (1992) recommends that the so-called *synthesized texts* be used. Synthesized texts are those authentic texts used for learning purposes that are shortened to take some unnecessary or overcomplicated parts out of them, or several authentic texts combined into one without the loss of unity, coherence, and cohesion or, finally, authentic texts both shortened and combined with others. Such texts do not lose the quality of authenticity, despite being processed by the author of a textbook or a teacher, but they become better suited for ESP teaching and learning thanks to that processing. That is why they still meet the criterion of professional authenticity and, as such, were widely used in the textbook *Psychological Matters*.

The third, and probably the focal principle is *the authenticity of profession-related learning activities* in ESP classes. What is meant is not just *profession-oriented communication in the target language* that is a characteristic feature of every ESP course. To provide profession-oriented communication in the target language in ESP classes, it is quite sufficient to have students speak or write on the topics connected with their profession or read or listen to the materials discussing aspects of that profession. This is professionally-oriented learning but not content learning because acquiring the language comes first both implicitly and explicitly. Whether learners progress in their professional development thanks to such learning is of little concern to the ESP teacher or ESP textbook writer. Students usually do not expect progressive professional development in ESP classes. In content learning the situation is reversed; students expect their professional development, even in ESP classes, to come first. Acquisition of the target language is seen as a by-product of such development. Of course, for an ESP teacher, even in a content learning course, language always comes first. In addition, to help students focus on their professional development and not on the language per se in the ESP classes, it must be said, the learning activities in classes that follow the content learning approach have to be rather specific. Expressed differently, to focus students' attention on their professional development in a content-based ESP course, *the learning activities must model the professional activities of a specialist in the given field*. While modeling such professional activities, learners engage in professional activities—they are implicitly learning the target language through explicit professional content, not content through language.

Under such framework, *the authenticity of profession-related learning activities* in ESP classes presupposes the design of a learning process that serves as a model of

professional work and professional communication for specialists in various fields; in our case, the model of professional work and professional communication of a practical psychologist. But it would hardly be rational to expect someone to be able to model all the professional activities of a practical psychologist in a content-based ESP course. On the contrary, it seems quite logical to assert that *only those professional activities Ukrainian psychologists are likely to need most in their professional communication in English should be modeled.* Thus argued, such needs analysis will determine the type of professional field communication needed for specific professional activities requiring command of the English language. The analysis will also help to formulate specific end goals of professional communication for each of the four basic language skills (reading, speaking, listening, and writing) discussed next.

Reading

While personal oral or written contact with foreign English-speaking colleagues may not be an everyday occurrence, nonetheless, Ukrainian professional psychologists need to be able to read with facility in English if only to remain abreast of the professional developments in their field. The ability to read the professional literature in English with ease and competence is one skill that must be mastered and practiced daily, not to mention reading for continuous professional growth. This is why reading in English for professional purposes is probably the most important English communication skill that tertiary students majoring in Psychology must develop. The importance of such skill development notwithstanding, every content-based ESP textbook and ESP course for future practical psychologists has to be primarily reading-oriented. It should be noted here that the same holds true for many 'other' professionals who are taught ESP in non-English-speaking countries where English is taught as a foreign and not as a second language. Consequently, the textbook *Psychological Matters* and the course based upon it place a heavy emphasis on the development of professional reading skills resulting in numerous reading-related learning activities within each unit.

Another key consideration worth noting here is the *reading purpose* itself. Ukrainian psychologists, like many other field specialists, read professional literature in English for various purposes: some read for professional growth, others for preparing a presentation for Ukrainian or foreign colleagues at a conference, and still others for writing an article/thesis or for searching for the best ways to deal with a particular psychological case. All these varied purposes have one thing in common: professional reading in English is done to find purposeful information and put that information to some further use. By extension, reading tasks in a content-based ESP course need to be designed in such a way as to make clear to students what specific information they are supposed to find in the professional texts they are given to read and what they are to do with the information found after reading. Purposeful reading tasks of the sort discussed here abound in the textbook *Psychological Matters*. Unit 7—*Personality and Individual Differences* provides one such example.

> **Example 1:** *Read the text below (10 minutes). On the basis of the text read and all the other information about human characters that you already have, make a list of 10 questions that can help you determine to what character type one of your classmates (with whom you will be talking when doing the next activity) belongs and prove it by his/her answers to your questions.*

Furthermore, to ensure the authenticity of profession-related reading activities in content-based ESP classes, it is imperative that the learners themselves search for professional literature in English to be read in order to find some particular professional information and do some professional task on the basis of that information. However, before

requiring them to do so, a psychologist—just like any 'other' professional—needs to search for viable sources where the particular professional information can be found. Such a search may well require a library search or an Internet search. Therefore, to make the reading tasks in an ESP course authentic, English professional literature search assignments exemplifying such practices must be included. Again, authentic searches abound in the textbook *Psychological Matters.* Consider the following 'authentic' task offered in Unit 8—*Psychotherapy:*

> **Example 2:** *Divide into groups of four students. Every group should find and read on the Internet one case study of psychotherapeutic problems. You are required to inform your teacher what particular case your group is going to study, so that all the groups have different ones. On the basis of the information found, prepare "a seminar of psychotherapists" for the next class. During the 15-minute seminar that each small group is going to conduct in the next class two students from that group will present the case: they will speak about the client's problem(s) and complaint(s) that s/he came with to the therapist. They will also discuss what real underlying causes of the problem(s) and complaint(s) were revealed during the first psychotherapeutic sessions. After that, the third student from the small group will ask the opinions of "colleagues" (all the other students from the class who are taking part in the "seminar") as to how the problem(s) should be dealt with (what the psychotherapist should do during the following sessions to help that particular client). When all the ideas are collected, the fourth presenter should inform what the course taken by the psychotherapist who described the case on the Internet site really was. The 15-minute seminar should finish with the discussion of the relative merits and demerits of the courses of treatment suggested by "the participants of the seminar" (students) and the psychotherapist who was actually dealing with the case.*

In sum, the reading considerations elucidated herein result in professional literature reading tasks that psychologists in general, and Ukrainian psychologists in particular, will find most authentic given the nature and purpose of reading/searching for purposeful information in an ESP course. Next, we turn our attention to speaking, a must have communicative skill.

Speaking

Conducting psychological counseling and psychotherapeutic sessions appears to be one of the most frequent professional speaking activities practical psychologists engage in. Naturally, students must emulate such practices and be offered opportunities to role-play and simulate such sessions if they are to acquire the requisite professional English speaking skills. The textbook *Psychological Matters* and the course based upon it make ample use of such role-plays and simulations aimed at students' acquisition of professional English speaking skills. Consider here one of the tasks found in Unit 5—*Psychology of Employment and Working Place Conflicts*:

> **Example 3:** *Every pair of students is asked to role-play a psychological consultation on the basis of the particular case that they have discussed and the particular psychologist's recommendations that have been considered and decided upon when doing assignment 4 above.*

It needs stating that such activities cannot and should not occupy a leading place among the speaking activities in a content-based ESP course for psychologists since their purpose is not so much to teach students how to conduct psychological counseling and

psychotherapeutic sessions in English but to make them better realize how those sessions are conducted by native-speaking psychologists and psychotherapists, especially if the students ever have an opportunity to observe 'real' psychological sessions in English-speaking countries. In all likelihood, there exists a very low probability of situations where Ukrainian psychologists will need to conduct psychological counseling or psychotherapeutic sessions for clients who are not their fellow-countrymen and who do not share their L1. On the contrary, they will most likely need speaking knowledge of English to communicate in a professional manner with their English-speaking colleagues than with their clients. In fact, they will mostly require the ability to make professional presentations in English (conferences, seminars, etc.), to discuss particular cases (case studies), or to take part in professional discussions on different theoretical and practical professional issues. Speaking tasks of this kind occupy a central place in the textbook *Psychological Matters* and the ESP course based upon it. Two examples of such professional oral communication tasks are given below:

> **Example 4:** *Every pair of students is asked to make their presentations on personal experiences in the area of emotions and feelings and personal successes in managing them. Presenters will be asked additional questions by the students and the teacher when the presentations are over. The time for every presentation is up to 5 minutes* (Unit 6—*Managing Emotions and Feelings*).

> **Example 5***: Case study. Divide into groups of three or four students and discuss what you would say to the same client at the next stage of the consultation if you were Professor Smart. You have 7 minutes for your small group discussion. After the discussion is over, every group should present their ideas to the class as a whole. Discuss the suggestions given by every group in a whole-class discussion and decide what small-group's suggestions were the best* (Unit 3—*Job burnout*).

The two examples above illustrate one more feature that is typical of a number of learning activities included in the textbook *Psychological Matters* and the ESP course based upon it: *Cooperative learning* (Kessler, 1992). Students do a great part of learning activities in cooperation – in pairs and small groups (especially productive and creative communicative activities, such as speaking and writing). This not only creates better conditions for natural language use, since the target language is used for organizing joint efforts, but also creates dynamic conditions for learners' mutual help and for pooling their individual knowledge and abilities to achieve a common goal, thus learning from each other. Listening is the skill discussed next.

Listening

Without a doubt, professionally authentic listening learning activities are naturally and inextricably connected with the above mentioned speaking activities because the latter ones presuppose listening. But listening to fellow-students speaking in English on professional issues cannot alone ensure the development of learners' English professional listening skills. Again, special listening tasks are required to achieve this end goal. It is suggested that students listen to native-speaking professionals discussing cases, conducting psychological counseling and psychotherapeutic sessions, giving lectures, and making presentations. Listening tasks may not involve full sessions, lectures, or presentations. Even small excerpts may be considered professionally authentic listening learning activities because they represent situations in which future Ukrainian psychologists may require competent listening skills in earnest in English for professional purposes. A good example of a fragment for

'authentic' listening meeting the above requirements has already been given in this article in the audio script (Unit 9—*Gestalt Therapy*) cited earlier from the textbook *Psychological Matters*.

In what concerns the after-listening tasks for professionally authentic listening learning activities, they are of the same nature as the speaking tasks discussed above. An example of such an after-listening task can be found in Unit 6—*Managing Emotions and Feelings*:

> **Example 6:** *Listen to the first part of Professor Smart's lecture* "What to Do with Your Feelings?" *and take notes while listening. Following the listening session, discuss (in a whole-class discussion) everything that Professor Smart recommends for:*
>
> *1) identifying how you feel;*
> *2) acknowledging your feelings;*
> *3) identifying the source of your feelings.*
>
> *Discuss whether you agree with the recommendations or whether you can recommend some other procedures.*

Writing

Similar to the other three language skills thus far discussed, a Ukrainian practical psychologist may frequently need writing in English for producing different kinds of formal letters (e.g., a letter of invitation to an English-speaking colleague to attend some professional event in Ukraine, a letter of response to an invitation, etc.). But such formal letter-writing is not strictly professionally oriented. Therefore, relevant skills should mostly be taught in a General English course preceding the ESP course. Again, a Ukrainian psychologist may need to develop competency in writing in order to write with facility summaries, abstracts, essays, reports, or articles on professional issues to be submitted to foreign colleagues for consideration (akin to the writing of an article submitted for professional publication abroad or an abstract of a talk at a professional conference in an English-speaking country). Professionally authentic learning activities for developing English writing skills should thus be based on teaching students to write just such written documents, as shown in the two examples taken from the textbook *Psychological Matters*:

> **Example 7:** *Write a 150-180-word summarizing essay on psychological counseling and its principal forms* (Unit 10—*Psychological Counseling*).
>
> *After listening to a short lecture, write a fifty to seventy word summary of the lecture demonstrating the characteristics of psychoanalysis as a treatment and the procedure of treatment in psychoanalysis* (Unit 2—*History of Psychology*).

The above discussion of professionally authentic learning activities used in the textbook *Psychological Matters* and the ESP course based upon it demonstrates one important feature: all of them, just like all the other learning activities included in the textbook, are *task-based*, that is to say, they exemplify *the task-based approach* (Prabhu, 1987; Skehan, 2002). The task-based approach is a natural and inalienable characteristic of content-based instruction for it ensures the best opportunities for focusing learners' attention on the content matter and not on the language forms in the tasks, thereby promoting both explicit and conscious learning of subject matter and implicit and unconscious acquisition of language forms and skills by using them in communication. Conversely, this characteristic

requires that students already have the basic language forms and English communication skills at their command, otherwise the ESP course may prove to be linguistically too difficult for them. This is why at the outset of this article, it was emphasized that the textbook *Psychological Matters* and the ESP course based upon it were designed for students who have already achieved the intermediate level in their command of General English (Level B2 – *independent user* – see Council of Europe, 2001). At lower levels of proficiency students may well not be able to cope effectively with the language and communication characteristics of those learning tasks they are required to master.

The fourth and last principle in implementing the content-based approach is *the integration of all four basic skills of communication: reading, speaking, listening, and writing*. The importance of this direction rests not only on the belief that *the integrated communicative skills approach* is one of the leading approaches in modern ESL/EFL teaching (Byrne, 1987; Oxford, 2001), but more so on the professional long-held axiom that the integration of ESP communication skills in developing and ensuring content learning is paramount to language acquisition. In his/her professional practice a practical psychologist always proceeds from one communication skill to another. For instance, after holding a session or sessions with a client (speaking and listening), s/he usually may want to consult professional literature (reading), then make notes or describe the case in writing to present it to colleagues and discuss it (speaking and listening), and so on starting a new cycle of progression from one communication skill to another one. The same also holds true of all kinds of professional contacts with colleagues, including foreign colleagues. Therefore, integrating different communication skills in the teaching/learning process helps model professional activities, thus making it more professionally authentic and content-based. Needless to say, such an approach also helps in developing even further the communication skills given their mutually supportive nature (e.g., reading supports speaking and listening, writing is based on reading and oral discussions, etc.).

That is why all learning activities in the textbook *Psychological Matters* and the ESP course based upon it are designed in ways that allow students to pass naturally from one communication skill to another, the transition being conditioned by the requirements of modeled professional situations. For instance, students may read a text about types and psychological reasons of workplace conflicts. On the basis of the generalized information in the text read, listening to a case study of a particular workplace conflict will follow. The information received when reading and listening should naturally be discussed by learners with the purpose of finding ways of helping clients suffering from workplace conflicts when they turn to a psychologist. Based on the conclusions drawn during the discussion, students may do a role-play/simulation modeling a session with such a client. Finally, they may be asked to describe a particular case in writing while offering recommendations, or prepare a short professional article or presentation for their 'colleagues,' and the like. Explicitly, this approach provides for more natural (professionally authentic) modeling of professional communication in English while implicitly accelerating the development of communication skills because the development of one communication skill is supported by all the other skills.

Naturally, all the ways of implementing content-based ESP learning for future psychologists described and discussed above would be incomplete and ineffective without one more basic feature of the textbook *Psychological Matters* and the ESP course based upon it – their *Internet-assisted* character.

INTERNET-ASSISTED LEARNING OF ENGLISH
FOR FUTURE PSYCHOLOGISTS

In today's language teaching, the Internet is used for a wide variety of purposes (Sharma, 2003; Warschauer, Shetzer, & Meloni, 2000; Warschauer, & Whittaker, 1997). But in what concerns the content-based ESP course, such as discussed in this article, the most important use for Internet-assisted learning may well lie within the students' Internet searches and research seeking diverse authentic professional materials in various English professional websites. There are a number of reasons why the judicious use of the Internet for assisting ESP learning is important, the most important of which are:

1. Without 'purposeful' and 'authentic' Internet searches, content-based ESP courses will be unable to meet the requirements for sound professional information (professional content matter) as already postulated in this article. It is worth noting that even a well-designed textbook such as *Psychological Matters* remains just a textbook on ESP, not a textbook on psychology. However systematically and systemically the content information is developed therein, it will remain incomplete should additional professional information not be included in order to fill existing gaps in professional content material. State-of-the-art professional information in the target language can only be found on the Internet, especially in EFL teaching/learning situations where access to printed professional sources in English is quite limited.

2. Without access to the Internet, a content-based ESP course will be unable to provide students with a sufficient number of *professionally authentic learning materials*. Even in a well-designed textbook such as *Psychological Matters*, however professionally authentic and purposeful the reading and listening texts may be, such texts are nonetheless too limited in number to meet all the students' needs. Those students who wish to engage in purposeful authentic learning activities targeting the development of sound professional ESP communication skills, they must simply have access to the Internet. The Internet thus allows both instructors and students to access such authentic materials in unlimited quantities.

3. The requirement of authenticity of profession-related learning activities in ESP classes can hardly be fully met without recourse to professional Internet sources in English. It is thus difficult to imagine a more authentic, professionally-related learning activity for future Ukrainian psychologists than allowing them to research professional websites in English in order to find the much needed professional information prior to using such information for specific professional uses (e.g., sharing information with colleagues at a seminar, preparing a professional talk or presentation). Given these concerns and in an effort to raise the level of professional authenticity of learning activities, Internet searches aimed at researching relevant information on professional websites in English must be made part and parcel of every content-based ESP course.

4. Professional Internet sources in English researched by students may also greatly help to raise the level of integration of all four basic communication skills in English (reading, speaking, listening, and writing) that learners are taught. Reading the information on professional websites in English is certain to bring about a great many class discussions of what has been learned. Having students make ample use of their developing speaking and listening skills, as well as having them summarize in writing the information found on the Internet or the results of their discussions, can only hasten their acquisition of professional content and language knowledge. It goes without saying that there is indeed clear need to promote natural and regular transitions from one communication skill to another while encouraging the full integration of all language skills in the teaching/learning process.

These four reasons alone make clear why Internet searches/research for authentic professional information in English have become commonplace and obligatory learning activities in the ESP course for students of Psychology. Such considerations in no way suggest that all other uses of Internet-assisted instruction (such as communication and collaborative projects with students in a single class or across classes in different parts of the world or publishing students' work on the World Wide Web—see Warschauer, Shetzer, & Meloni, 2000) are excluded from the course or even discouraged. On the contrary, such activities can and should be included but they are considered optional depending on such factors as relevance, local conditions, students' needs, decisions of the teacher, and the like.

By including Internet-based tasks and assignments into the textbook *Psychological Matters*, we were able to strengthen the content-based nature of the ESP course discussed here. An example of one such assignment has already been elucidated in Example 2 above. And while a great number of textbook assignments are not feasible without Internet search/research, the most important of Internet search/research assignments are given in the so-called *Internet-search classes* that are part of every unit in the textbook. More specifically, the *Internet-search class* is designed for one full 80-minute class period out of seven 80-minute class periods allocated for work on each of the units in the textbook. During the Internet-search class students work in a computer laboratory with Internet connections. Their work is organized mostly in pairs or small groups of three students to encourage cooperative learning. Hence, every pair or small group engages in joint Internet research in order to fulfill the demands of a joint learning task. As a rule of thumb, students engage in two assignments during the 80-minute *Internet-search class*, each assignment requiring about 40-minutes of work. The first assignment is most closely linked to the unit's theme that is currently being worked on. A prime *Internet-search class* example is easily found in Unit 5—*Psychology of Employment and Working Place Conflicts*.

> **Example 8:** *Working in the Internet class, do an Internet search using the websites your teacher recommends and the sites you were able to find.*
>
> *Your home task was to read a text devoted to some difficult personality types who can often generate conflicts at work* (a hardcore bully, an ego-centred princess, a passive-aggressive, a baby, a negative Ned or Nancy, a people pleaser, and a non-player) *and the ways of dealing with them. Now the class will be divided into pairs. Every pair will be assigned some definite personality type (for example,* a baby, *or* a hardcore bully, *or* a non-player*). Search the site or sites recommended to you or the ones you were able to find while searching for additional information about the personality type assigned to your pair and the ways of dealing with such a type in the workplace. Keep in mind that on some sites you can find a different name for your personality type, for instance,* an uncooperative person *instead of* a non-player*; so you should search not only by name but also by features distinguishing a particular personality type. Your task is to find particular cases of conflicts and problems at work caused by a person belonging to a certain personality type and how those conflicts and problems were dealt with. You should also find and develop specific methods for a psychologist to work with such a personality type and present your methods as recommendations. On the basis of the information found, prepare a presentation to be delivered by your pair during the next class period.*
>
> *Your presentation will be about 5 minutes in duration. It should start with presenting the practical cases found by you (practical cases of conflicts and problems at work caused by a person belonging to a certain personality type and how those conflicts and problems were dealt with). Then, focus on the recommendations you have for managers and psychologists who are in need of dealing with such people.*

The second type of assignment administered in the *Internet-search class* is connected to the students' learning project, an integral part of every content-based ESP course. Project work (Fried-Booth, 1996) can be considered a typical example of a professionally-related authentic learning activity precisely because every practical psychologist, much like every other specialist in the field, is likely to participate in different professional projects with colleagues. Project work also ensures the implementation of the task-based approach as every project includes one or more professional problems to be solved; it also promotes cooperative learning since learning projects are mostly completed by groups of students, and the integration of all four basic communication skills (reading, speaking, listening, and writing): reading is required to collect the materials for project work, the work being done is discussed orally, and the results are always presented in writing. Finally, only authentic materials can be employed during project work.

In many ways, the ESP course based on the textbook *Psychological Matters* epitomizes a grand learning project beginning with Unit 1—*Psychology and its Branches* and ending with Unit 10—*Psychological Counseling.* Common among all units, the grand learning project itself, is the preparation of *A Short Psychological Encyclopaedia*, a kind of reference book wherein students are asked to summarize the professional content learned during the course. Based on the materials covered in each unit, each chapter summarizes the unit's content and/or provides additional materials on the theme not covered in the unit. In compiling the chapters, students are encouraged to make use of the materials found on the Internet (professional websites in English) during their *Internet-search classes* while working cooperatively in pairs or small groups. Every pair or small group is asked to prepare for each chapter their own version for possible inclusion in the *Encyclopaedia*. In turn, all versions are discussed in class, and the best version(s) is chosen for inclusion but not before undergoing further editing by a specially appointed students' task force. The final edited version is then illustrated and discussed anew before being included in the *Encyclopaedia*. An example of such an assignment from Unit 8—*Psychotherapy* is given below:

> **Example 9:** *In the two pictures above you can see the examples from the practice of art therapy – a branch of psychotherapy that is currently very popular and that you have not yet discussed.*
>
> *The eighth task for preparing one more chapter for your* SHORT PSYCHOLOGICAL ENCYCLOPAEDIA *will be connected with art therapy, a branch of psychotherapy. This explains why the eighth chapter planned for the Encyclopaedia is to be called* Art Therapy as a Specific Branch of Psychotherapy.
>
> *You are now going to conduct your Internet search in groups of four. Use the websites your teacher recommended and your own researched sites. Each group has to search for information on art therapy, its practice, distinctions, and differences from other branches of psychotherapy. You are required to inform your teacher what sites you are going to work on so that every group has different information sources and collects different information.*
>
> *After your source(s) is chosen, start collecting information from the Internet. Your goal is to prepare a 5-minute oral presentation on art therapy and its practice on the basis of the information found. You are also required to write a short article on this issue for the* Encyclopaedia*. All this will have to be handed in the class after the next. Your short article is to be of about 150 words in length.*

CONCLUSION

This article discussed the issues of teaching ESP to Ukrainian tertiary students majoring in psychology. The example of the ESP textbook *Psychological Matters* for psychologists was used to demonstrate the interconnection between content learning and learning assignments which required students to engage in obligatory research for authentic materials in professional Internet sources in English. In clarifying the organization of the teaching/learning process for content learning in the framework of the textbook and the ESP course based upon it, four principles were discussed followed by examples where applicable: (1) ensuring the systemic character of professional information (professional content matter) in the textbook and the ESP course based on that textbook; (2) ensuring professional authenticity of learning materials; (3) ensuring authenticity of profession-related learning activities in ESP classes; and (4) ensuring the integration of all four basic professional communication skills in English (reading, speaking, listening, and writing).

The need for authenticity of profession-related learning activities in ESP classes via the implementation of a task-based approach and use of cooperative learning in the teaching/learning process was argued and examples illustrating those considerations were offered. Similarly, the implementation of students' Internet searches/research for authentic professional materials on professional websites in English, followed by the inclusion of relevant tasks and purposeful assignments was advocated along with the need to require students who have already achieved the intermediate level in their command of General English to take part in targeted *Internet-search classes*. The role of Internet-assisted learning was featured prominently throughout the many parts comprising the nucleus of this article.

In closing, the specific features of the textbook *Psychological Matters* discussed in this article are unique in that ESP teaching is holistically integrated with learning the content of specific professional disciplines, that is, the focus of *integrated ESP teaching/learning* is on the subject matter of professional disciplines with learners' implicit acquisition of ESP and professional ESP communication skills (Snow, Met, & Genesee, 1989; Spanos, 1990). The integration is achieved through content learning which becomes all the more reinforced by the students' Internet search/research of authentic professional sources in English. Such specificity makes the textbook *Psychological Matters* and the ESP course based upon it quite original and state-of-the-art when compared to other existing ESP textbooks and courses for students of English majoring in psychology. In the end, the textbook may well prove to be a valuable aid in language training of future professional psychologists in Ukraine; it may even prove instrumental in raising ESP teaching to ever higher standards. But to prove the efficacy of the ESP task-based approach engendered herein, and by extension the need to offer content-based, Internet-assisted ESP teaching to Ukrainian university students majoring in Psychology, a special experimental study will be required before firm conclusions can be drawn. The arguments presented in this article are but a first step toward the viability of such a study for the future training of practical psychologists at Ukrainian universities.

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