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**FEATURES OF WRITTEN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION
FOR MARINE OFFICERS**

***Abstract.** Particular interest in the teaching of business communication in Ukrainian society arose in the late 1980s and early 1990s due to the global changes that have taken place and continue to take place in the 21st century, both in social and in economic life of the country. Relations in the economic sphere are the subject of increased interest, which entails the need to answer the question: "What do you need to know and what skills do you need to have to become a true specialist in your profession?" Therefore, the problem of professional communication competence in specialists is especially relevant at present. This is understandable: modern society requires, above all, specialists in their profession, who have a high level business communication culture. Especially this matter concerns the maritime specialists, that have to deal not only with the professional English but to combine it with the business one. The analysis of communication situations confirmed that for the effective knowledge of a foreign language, only linguistic aspects of language are insufficient, because, in all its importance, language competence is only one of the components of communicative competence. The discipline "Business English" in combination with other special subjects occupies one of the main places in educational and vocational training of marine specialists and is an integral part of the overall training of highly*

qualified specialists for the merchant fleet of Ukraine.

Modern maritime business language that provides communication in the professional scope, is represented by several types, and each of them meets the specific needs of communication in certain situations and has its own language features. The purpose of the discipline "Business English" is to enrich the professional skills of future mariners in analyzing cases related to mistakes or tampered records in documents onboard the ship, differentiating between accidents, incidents, near-misses, hazardous conditions and demonstrates knowledge and practical skills of safety reporting procedures. Also, ensure them with writing skills to describe principles of good communication and state importance of briefings and debriefings in the engine room and navigation bridge, to characterize involvement in business correspondence and paperwork responsibilities.

Keywords: *modern business language, foreign business language, professional communication competence, professional education.*

In our ever-evolving world, the written business communication skills are important. And since English is recognized as the world language of international relations, written business communication in English is one of the main requirements of a modern specialist. The special attention should be paid to the maritime specialists who mostly work at the merchant fleet vessels.

Written business communication differs from other types of business communication in that it takes place in writing. In addition, it is precisely in the field of maritime written business communication, as in no other sphere, that such a specific feature of the process of business communication, such as regularity, that is, subordination to established restrictions, determined by national and cultural and professional ethical principles, is clearly manifested. Thus, we cannot in any way apply the rules of Ukrainian business communication to other languages.

The skills required for maritime business correspondence are among the basic skills of a specialist of any profile, without which he cannot present himself properly in the labor market today. Both of these factors prove the need to train professionals in

writing business communication skills.

The foreign language learning system includes three stages of preparation. Dynamics of speech skills development is achieved by the inclusion of new, more complex spheres and situations that allow for written contacts at each subsequent stage. Yes, at the initial stage of study the student should be able to make business contacts at elementary level. With regard to the written sphere of business communication, business contacts of this kind are made by exchanging and responding to so-called labeled business letters and letterhead letters. Accordingly, students should be able to develop the language skills necessary for the realization of such communicative intentions as information, motivation, refusal, agreement. These intentions are set out in the following letter types, especially the proper recognition of these letter types are important for Masters and Chief Engineers who keep up the active correspondence with agents, port authorities and ship management:

- cover letter, confirmation letter, information letter / message; these letters can be called labeled, first, due to the high degree of their formality and normalization, and secondly, in connection with the performed functions of protocol nature;

- application, request, strictly formal invitation and invitation response; these letters are otherwise called letterhead letters and are characterized by high predictability of textual structure and linguistic content.

With regard to the field of maritime written communication, this means that the student should be able to make written business contacts with a partner through business letters of various types. At the same time, during the course of the student the speech skills necessary for disclosing the following more difficult (compared to the initial stage of learning) communicative intentions should be formed: motivation, complaints, apologies, agreements, rejections. These intentions are reflected in the types of letters such as order, offer, meeting request, not strictly formal invitation, complaint, relevant letters of complaint (affirmative, negative). All types of letters

listed are significantly different by the almost complete absence of template phrases inherent in letterheads.

The backgrounds for writing a letter may be given by one short phrase or an excuse indicating the reason for writing the letter/document, e.g.:

- Further to our telephone conversation we are happy to advise you that
- Further to your recent interview, I am pleased to offer you the position of.

These examples show that every part of any written information message is strictly functional. For example, the short sentence "In response to your letter we are pleased to inform you that your order is ready for shipment" contains an indication of the reason for writing the letter, a courtesy formula is given, followed by the main information block. Of course the vessel's correspondence is not that much formal, though when corresponding with port authorities, ship shandlers it is better to follow the basic rules accordingly. There is a certain connection between the introduction and the main part of the letter, which is expressed by means of the obligatory when writing business letters of designs and cliches.

For example: "Referring to your enquiry of 25 January we have pleasure in sending you a copy of our catalogue, which includes details and prices for our complete range of goods".

The properly drawn conclusion is of great importance in the letter, as it is there is a constructive element of the message: what to do, whom to contact, etc.

For example: "Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me" or "We hope you will be pleased with the catalogue and look forward to receiving your order".

A letter without such termination is ineffective and violates the basic principle of business etiquette, since, when communicating with Western partners, it should be remembered that politeness is a basic requirement for business correspondence, since, as already stated, written business communication eliminates the possibility of using non-verbal communication such as a smile, a friendly nod, a handshake that help to show our goodwill and affection for the other person. Observance of politeness is an



important tool to achieve our goal, to establish a certain tone of the relationship, and changes in the tone of our letters can be perceived as an alarm or even rejection. When conducting business correspondence it is always necessary to remember that the monologue appropriate in oral communication, without any changes laid down on paper, can seriously affect (not always positively) the expected result of business communication. Of course, words and expressions such as “well, I see, why not” cannot be used in a business letter, the letter can become familiar even when expressions and lexical units of spoken character are used in it. Yes, it is quite appropriate in interpersonal business communication that the expression "to mess up the task" is inadmissible in a report addressed to a senior manager. The same can be said about imaginative idioms, such as “to blow somebody's trumpet, to be the boss's yesman”, etc., since the expression of personal emotions is not peculiar to business written communication; In a standard business letter, metaphors and epithets, hyperbolas, and emphatic constructions are usually not found, but words with bookish color are used, for example: to request, to reply (respond), to regret, to identify, to specify, to finalize, to acknowledge.

Many types of maritime written business communication can identify special complex prepositions that express relationships between different occurrences and circumstances, such as:

With reference to (your recent request, our future plans); in compliance with (the existing regulations, the policy adopted by); in keeping with (the changing business environment; due to (the improvements introduced into our service); consequently (the accounting system changed); provided that (the decision is to be enacted provided there is a mutual consent); in case of (further discrepancy); should (should you require any additional information).

Often, maritime business letters use special clichés that have different functions, for example:

This is to (certify, inform, notify, confirm, etc);

We regret to (inform, reject, etc.);

We offer an apology for (the delay, failure to... etc.);

Please do not hesitate to (contact, request, inquire, etc);

We look forward to (hearing from you/our future cooperation);

It is common practice when in the maritime business correspondence the abbreviations are used, for example:

Send the answer ASAP (as soon as possible);

FYI (for your information);

MEMO (Memorandum);

Attn. (attention);

Successful maritime written business communication requires effective interaction with your partner, so when conducting correspondence it is recommended to follow the same style in which our partner communicates with us. However, when initiating a written communication with a foreign partner, we should, as far as possible, maintain a neutral style, which is the main rule of business correspondence.

Getting started with written business communication training should take into consideration the difficulties that are usually face the students. First of all, the lack of their skills and ability to work in their native language with such text as a business letter. The vast majority of students have a poor understanding of the concepts required for this course, in particular, the structure of the text of a business letter, its planning, the selection of the main opinion, minor facts, details. Students tend to have difficulty formulating the communicative intent that they seek to implement in the text. Once they have determined their intention, they cannot make a plan for a specific text based on it. The algorithm of work with students when writing a business letter is formed in the framework of one of the following schemes:

- first the whole text of the letter is written in the native language, and then it is translated into a foreign language. However, as a rule, they do not adhere to the English-Ukrainian maritime business correspondence equivalent, which leads to stylistic disharmony of the text of a business letter and even to semantic mistakes;

- students convey their thoughts in English in a letter, without subjecting them to preliminary analysis or grouping them, that is, in complete violation of the logical plan of the text. As a result, similar to the flow of thoughts in the internal language, the

- process of writing a business letter is unconscious and chaotic.

Each of these options for writing a business letter indicates a lack of skills in working with the text, the ability to think logically, knowledge of lexical and grammatical features of the Ukrainian business letter and the rules of constructing a business letter in a foreign language.

If the first group of difficulties is related to the peculiarities of the logical and semantic structure of the text, then the second group is directly related to style. In studying the peculiarities of the business letter, the student is actually introduced to the official business style of the language. At first, clichés, which are the norm of a business letter in a foreign language, and stereotypical expressions and phrases, and sentences with a complex structure containing complex grammatical references are also difficult. Due to the novelty of the material offered for the study, as well as the diverse nature of the difficulties, it is advisable to build a method of teaching business writing based on the following principles:

- work on the logical and semantic structure of a business letter should be a mandatory component of the course of study;
- it is not necessary to simultaneously work on the compositional and linguistic plans of the text;
- a large number of samples of business letters should be provided for the course of study.

Different, indeed, maritime business letters are written solely for the purpose of communicating information. This was the aim for their unification. The author sets out his intention in the text not in an arbitrary fashion, but in a certain sequence that forms the basis for a plan of a particular type of letter. Work on such plans is the starting point of business correspondence teaching, which involves two steps.

The purpose of the first stage is:

- students learn the sequence of actions when writing a specific type of maritime business letter, meaning, essentially, its plan;
- acquaintance with the linguistic means necessary for the implementation of
- this plan;
- reading and analyzing samples of maritime business letters (during the work on the sample students get an idea of how communicative intent is materialized in the text, what words and expressions are needed for it, and what are the features of their use in the business letter).

The second stage is aimed at the primary fixation of highlighted language tools. Various, mostly linguistic, exercises are offered to work them out. For example:

- Insert missing parts into the letter;
- Restore broken text;
- Rewrite the text of the letter using synonymous expressions;
- Suggest several options for completing the text of a letter;

The task of the second stage is to prepare students for the third stage of study, the purpose of which is to organize a practice in writing different types of letters that function in situations of real business communication. Practice has shown that such method of teaching written business communication is most appropriate in a foreign language course at higher education institutions. When learning maritime written business communication, one should not forget the rules of the English language, its strict regulation, and emphasize these differences. Of course, the forms of written business communication are very diverse and are not limited to business letters. The notes, reports, plans, and job descriptions have a different structure, which may vary depending on the purpose, content of the document, or the traditions that exist in that particular business culture for writing this type of letter. However, when teaching this type of business communication, the foreign language teacher should be able to explain to the students that any type of written communication has a clear structure, which is expressed in the form of headings, subheadings, paragraphs, section numbering and other components of the document. The ability to correctly and clearly design a

business letter, resume, report or plan is a critical component of the competency that a modern professional needs, regardless of the field in which he/she works [2, p. 39].

Thus, effective written maritime business communication requires both respect for the specifics of this type of business communication, which is reflected in the strict adherence to the standards, requirements, lexical and grammatical features, as well as respect for the traditions established in a particular national culture in relation to a particular national culture of the business communication.

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