

## THE WAY OF TEACHING *WIRTSCHAFTSDEUTSCH* TO THE ECONOMICS STUDENTS

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**Abstract:** *The paper is organized on three central themes. In the first part, it has as its central point the term Fachsprache in our case Wirtschaftdeutsch, starting from terminology. The second part deals with the premises of learning and teaching the German language for economics students, the necessary conditions being an advanced knowledge of the German language, conditioned by basic knowledge of economics. An important factor of learning foreign languages is the emotional factor; the student's motivation is decisive. The last part of the paper presents the methodology of teaching the German language for economics students Wirtschaftdeutsch, the teacher being oriented towards business situations, as close as possible to reality, interspersed with dialogues, with terminology exercises; the logical and free thinking of the economics students is called upon.*

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### 1. General considerations

Specialized language refers to a particular field of activity, this language is found in a particular field of activity. It can be said that we are dealing with a language different from literary language, littered with specialized expressions and terms.

Specialized language is based on literary language marked by specialized terms and words, which make up the specialized vocabulary. There are situations in which the specialized words take on a different meaning from the words in the literary language. Some aspects of grammar and intonation may also differ from literary language.

Specialized language belongs to the *standardisierten Sprachvarianten*. This language is distinguished according to the groups of speakers who use it, and specialized terms are called terminus technicus. The totality of terms is called terminology. Many specialized terms were invented as a result of scientific developments. A common feature of specialized language is the emergence of new terms, especially from the English language. Specialized terms are found in technical dictionaries or glossaries.

## **2. The challenges of learning a specialized language**

The fundamental prerequisite for learning a foreign language is a mastery of the terminology in the mother tongue, accompanied by a solid knowledge of the grammar of the mother tongue. These two elements will support eager learners in mastering their new specialized language.

The second basic condition is the mastery of basic foreign language skills, if possible, the applicant should master German at A2 level. In this case, the specialized language lessons would also correspond to this language level. However, a good command of the technical language, regardless of the subject area, requires a solid knowledge of German, confirmed by the B2-C1 certificate. The higher the general level of German, the easier it will be to acquire a specialized language.

Learners' motivation plays a major role in acquiring specialized language. The need to act is much stronger in motivated people than in demotivated people. We should bear in mind that the person's attitude towards the task determines the learning process. The person who takes action has a greater chance of success if he/she believes that he/she can solve a problem than if he/she perceives the problem as difficult or even too difficult from the start.

### **2.1 The premises of business language teaching**

Excellent knowledge of general linguistics is a prerequisite for teaching general linguistics. The necessary linguistic competences of teachers should correspond to the language level C1-C2.

The second step in teacher training is to learn the technical language. This language is difficult to learn and takes a long time. The teacher must study specialized literature both in his/her mother tongue and in a foreign language in order to become familiar with the specialist terminology and the specialist issues. This stage requires a lot of time, ambition and effort from the teacher. All this is worth the effort if we want to excel in business language. For any teacher the challenge is great. Thorough knowledge of the relevant subject area is extremely important when preparing teaching materials and in our teaching work. They are our best supports.

### **2.2 Consulting specialists**

However, as teachers specializing in foreign languages, they cannot be called connoisseurs. Teachers who are interested in this issue, it would be advisable to consult experts, as teachers are not able to understand the specialized literature.

Teachers specializing in foreign languages are not experts but philologists, trying their best to master the underlying terminology before entering the classroom.

## **3. Methodology of teaching technical language (Business German)**

Before talking or writing about a range of methods and strategies in special language teaching, we need to be clear about the objectives and end results of our professional activities. Of course, it is important to know which students we are

working with and what year of study they are in. It is important to take into account their language level so that we are clear on what kind of foundation we need to build on.

Second and third year bachelor students as well as master students already have general language skills, and when they encounter difficulties while teaching specialized languages, they often feel that they cannot overcome these obstacles. As is well known, technical language is a broad domain and mastering it requires great effort, perseverance and hard work. This is why teachers need to think about and choose their teaching strategies and methods carefully.

Action-orientated exercises should be included in business German courses. These are methods that motivate learners and enable them to be independent. The emphasis is on dialogue exercises ranging from simple repetition to variations and role-play. Listening, understanding and reacting appropriately should become routine. Compensatory strategies could be supplemented with pantomimes and games. In addition, there should be exercises based on group work and learning posters, group discussion exercises, suggestions for projects and presentations with topics taken from the Internet and interdisciplinary work.

### **3.1 Practice related aspects**

Each chapter should have as its centre point the leaning into practice, which facilitates action-oriented learning and introduces students to the material to be taught. Only if students are convinced of the usefulness and relevance of putting into practice the knowledge they have learnt, success in the learning process is assured.

### **3.2 Phasing in of teaching materials**

In the teaching activity the materials to be taught are introduced gradually, dealing with different aspects of economics, business management, marketing, accounting, finance. Students will not be unnecessarily burdened with a large volume of new information, lest they lose interest in business terminology.

Topics that would be indicated in the teaching of business language are aspects of the European Community's economic market inflows, economic development, current trends caused by social and environmental policy, intercultural aspects. It would present European consumer market conditions, specifically German contexts of practical economic activity.

An important principle should be the gradual introduction and practice of specialized terminology using practical and case examples that relate to the student's knowledge and experience, in my opinion this approach has proven to be particularly recommended.

### **3.3 Teaching and practicing specialized vocabulary**

Vocabulary building exercises are action-orientated and subject specific. Learning and working strategies are extended and reflected in special exercises. Technical terms that are essential for the covered topics must also be defined in detail and, if necessary, clarified, and appropriate translations of technical terms in their ambiguity in the mother tongue must be provided by the teacher. Logical thinking helps in interpreting foreign words and internationalisms, which abound in

technical language. Specialized words are often understood by students, advancing their roots in literary German. It is advisable for the teacher to guide them to explain the content of the unfamiliar word in their own words.

The most important thing is that the students are not just passive recipients of the lesson, but rather become active participants in the lesson. New terms and new items in the course should be worded in such a way that they stand out, thus facilitating learning.

### **3.4 Stimulating logical thinking**

Students often encounter new, unfamiliar terms or technical terms in non-fiction texts. The teacher's task is to explain these terms to them by describing them. It is advisable to use internationalisms for German terms. Another helpful aspect would be to mention the synonyms and antonyms of the presented words; the terms will be better fixed in memory.

It is advisable that students are not offered immediate translation of terms into their mother tongue, in order to stimulate logical and associative thinking. They are stimulated to discover the meaning of technical words. It is advisable that the students are guided along the path of interpreting the technical vocabulary and, in the end, they come to understand the meaning themselves. As a result, their motivation increases significantly, students will be conquered by the technical language and the feeling of helplessness and confusion will disappear completely. This method of teaching is the most recommended and has proven its effectiveness over the years.

### **3.5 Visualizing the material to be learnt**

The material to be presented should be highlighted using tables, learning grids, large presentations, etc., in order to get a better visualization and a better overview for the students. Students are stimulated to comment on them, make predictions, draw conclusions. The teacher should present graphs, diagrams, which could be discussed and interpreted. They prove their effectiveness in checking the knowledge acquired. These written or oral exercises significantly increase the students' language skills.

### **3.6 Stimulating students' creativity**

In the process of teaching, the success of learning new terms depends essentially on the steps taken by the student independently, students comparing the results of their evolution and becoming aware of the evolution of the learning process. The students' discussions in the plenary about the solutions they have found by themselves are much more important than the verification of the correct answers at the end of the textbook.

Not only the learning outcomes are important, but also the learning process. At the end of the course, it would be advisable to have assignments on the presentation of the newly presented economic conditions, drawing a parallel with the economic system in our country. These exercises give students the opportunity to speak and write freely, which stimulates creativity. This type of exercise is not aimed at a grammar-free presentation of the relevant economic relationships and differences, but rather to put into practice the newly acquired knowledge, to stimulate reflection

on economic differences and to promote intercultural understanding and communication related to business.

### **3.7 Freedom of choice**

One of the most important teaching methods is to always give students the freedom of choice, i.e. to be presented with at least 2 questions or topics to solve or discuss. They will choose the topic closest to them. Students will remove what they already know, what is boring, annoying and uninteresting. What is interesting and exciting will remain. If the act of teaching is approached by the teacher with passion and interest, the results will not delay. Mental attitude in any human activity is crucial to its success. There is a saying in German culture that "*Lust und Liebe zum Ding macht alle Arbeit gering*". The process of learning the German language should not be perceived by the students as an imposed task, this aspect will arouse their reluctance. The learner should learn German through play and fun; only then will they achieve their learning goals in an easy and direct way. This is the way the human psyche is programmed, and we must take this into account. From a psychological point of view, this is the guarantee of successful effective training in the active use of language in a completely informal teaching atmosphere. Once the pressure has been removed, then the learning process will become much easier and more fruitful.

During the language course, students have learnt grammatical structures and vocabulary corresponding to their language level with the help of numerous exercises. Everything they have learnt so far is becoming automatic, and the next step will be to translate their acquired knowledge into active language. Now is the time to give a real stimulus to the development of creativity. Students find it a real challenge to formulate and express their thoughts in the foreign language, to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired. They reach the stage where they are proud of their achievements because they already speak the foreign language they have learnt. This transition happens imperceptibly, which is extremely valuable.

In the educational process some errors (both grammatical and lexical) are allowed during their oral or written presentation. The main thing is that the students dare to express themselves freely in front of their peers by presenting papers or answers to questions on a topic of their choice. The initial fear of making mistakes, their own inhibitions and obstacles have finally been overcome. This is real progress, a real victory for the students. It means that they are already at a higher level of language skills.

### **3.8 Ensuring success in the learning process**

After each lesson, it would be advisable to follow the lesson with exercises that provide an opportunity to reinforce the learning content or to apply the knowledge learnt. In most cases, the exercises review the knowledge learnt. In most cases they complement the knowledge learnt. Beyond the given situations, exercise tasks could be the subject of a problem-orientated lesson opening and thus serve to develop learning areas. Students are able to offer suggestions for teaching activities that go beyond classroom activities. Students need to be given about alternative sources such as technical dictionaries, glossaries and specialized

literature such as newspapers, economic journals. These alternative sources allow students to deepen their knowledge of economic language and will also be helpful in the preparation of any reports or presentations on economic topics.

#### 4. Conclusions

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that business German lessons should convey the important technical terms in a practice-oriented manner. Courses should be adapted to the economic reality. In the case of the courses, students should learn a total of 500 technical terms, with this minimum knowledge base they can expand their general language skills so that they are able to express themselves appropriately in a professional or technical language environment. Technical terms should be selected from the field of economics and be relevant to the current economic reality, being indispensable in practical work.

A basic knowledge of economic language will facilitate the student's access to relevant texts from specialized literature that may be of interest to him/her. This would enable him/her to significantly enrich and broaden his/her professional knowledge and skills. His/her communication (both oral and written) with foreign colleagues would also improve significantly. In this way the students would familiarize themselves with the internal business life of companies as well as with events concerning processes between certain companies. The aim of language teaching in the professional area is to increase motivation in language learning. In the future, employers will place greater emphasis on the language skills of students. In particular, job-specific language knowledge and skills will be taken into account. A good command of business language will help future managers and employees in foreign companies to establish and maintain contacts with companies in German-speaking countries. It is strongly useful for students pursuing internships in German companies to know technical language. For those interested in taking business German language exams, the German language courses provide a solid foundation and excellent preparation for taking these exams successfully.

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