



**PROFESSIONS AND JOBS: EFFECTIVE WAYS OF TEACHING
PROFESSION-RELATED VOCABULARY AND SPEECH IN ENGLISH
CLASSES**

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Abstract. The lexical topic “Professions and Jobs” occupies a central place in school and vocational English curricula, because it directly connects language learning with the learner’s future life and career. This article analyses the linguistic and methodological content of the topic: the semantic groups of profession-related vocabulary, the difference between the words job, work, profession, occupation and career, typical word-formation patterns of profession names in English, and the speech functions connected with describing duties, workplaces and career plans. On the basis of scientific literature, the requirements of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the author’s practical experience in a technical school of Uzbekistan, the article describes effective techniques for teaching the topic: visual and contextual presentation of vocabulary, communicative and game-based activities, role plays such as a job interview, project work on “My future profession”, and the use of digital tools. The article concludes that the topic “Professions and Jobs”, when taught communicatively and connected with students’ specialities, develops not only lexical competence but also career awareness and motivation for learning English.

Key words: professions; jobs; vocabulary teaching; lexical competence; word formation; communicative method; role play; job interview; career guidance; English for specific purposes; vocational education.



Introduction

The world of work is one of the universal spheres of human life, and therefore the topic “Professions and Jobs” is included in practically every English language curriculum in the world -from primary school, where children learn the words teacher, doctor and driver, to vocational and higher education, where learners discuss labour markets, write CVs and pass job interviews. In the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, the thematic area “work and occupation” appears already at level A1 (saying what one does), develops at A2–B1 (describing duties, workplaces, plans) and reaches B2 and higher in the form of discussing career choice, employment problems and professional communication. This shows that profession-related language is not a single lesson but a spiral theme that accompanies the learner throughout the entire course of English.

For Uzbekistan, the topic has special importance. The Decree of the First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-1875 of 10 December 2012 “On measures to further improve the system of learning foreign languages” and the Resolution of the President No. PQ-5117 of 19 May 2021 set the task of teaching foreign languages on the basis of CEFR and connecting them with the practical needs of learners. In technical schools and vocational colleges, which train specialists for the national economy, the topic “Professions and Jobs” directly serves these needs: it links the English lesson with the student’s chosen speciality, prepares graduates for employment, and forms the basis of English for Specific Purposes. International statistics confirm the practical value of such preparation: according to the International Labour Organization, hundreds of millions of people work in international companies and migrate for work, and English remains the main working language of international business and technical documentation.

At the same time, experience shows that the topic is often taught superficially -as a list of profession names to be memorised with translation. Such an approach



does not form real communicative ability: students may know fifty profession words but cannot describe their own future job in three sentences. The purpose of this article is to analyse the linguistic content of the topic “Professions and Jobs” and to present effective methods and techniques of teaching it, verified by methodological literature and the author’s practice at a technical school.

Linguistic content of the topic

Effective teaching of the topic begins with an exact understanding of its linguistic content, which includes vocabulary, word formation and characteristic speech patterns.

Core lexical distinctions. English distinguishes several words that Uzbek learners often confuse because their native language covers them with the words *kasb* and *ish*. Job is a concrete paid position (She has a job at a bank); work is an uncountable noun denoting activity in general (He is looking for work); profession traditionally refers to occupations requiring long special training (the medical profession); occupation is a formal, official word used in documents and statistics; career means the path of professional life over time (a career in engineering). Explicit comparison of these words, with examples and translation analysis, prevents persistent errors such as *a work or *go to job.

Word formation. Most English profession names are derived by productive suffixes, and teaching these patterns multiplies the learners’ vocabulary economically: -er/-or (teach → teacher, drive → driver, act → actor), -ist (science → scientist, art → artist), -ian (electricity → electrician, music → musician), -ant/-ent (assist → assistant), and compound nouns (firefighter, hairdresser, software developer). When students discover the rule themselves from a set of examples, they are able to understand and even predict new profession names independently -a clear case of learning strategy formation.



Functional language. Beyond single words, the topic requires whole speech patterns: What do you do? / What does he do for a living?; I work as a mechanic; She works for a construction company / in a hospital; He is responsible for repairing equipment; I want to become a programmer because... The grammar naturally connected with the topic includes the Present Simple for routines and duties, the construction be going to and want to be for plans, modal verbs in have to / must for obligations, and adjectives for evaluating jobs (well-paid, dangerous, rewarding, challenging). Thus the topic integrates vocabulary and grammar into meaningful communication, which corresponds to the communicative approach described by J. Harmer and by J. Jalolov for the Uzbek audience.

Effective techniques of teaching the topic

Methodological literature and classroom practice allow us to recommend the following sequence of techniques, moving from presentation through practice to free production.

Visual and contextual presentation. New profession vocabulary is best presented through pictures, realia and short contexts rather than translation lists. A photograph of a welder at work introduces not only the noun welder but the verbs weld, wear (a mask), protect. Research on vocabulary acquisition, summarised by I.S.P. Nation, shows that words are remembered better when they are met in meaningful contexts and repeatedly retrieved; therefore presentation should immediately be followed by retrieval activities such as labelling pictures, matching professions with workplaces (chef -kitchen, surgeon -operating theatre) and odd-one-out tasks.

Guessing and game activities. The topic is exceptionally suitable for games. In “Who am I?” one student receives a profession card and answers yes/no questions (Do you work outside? Do you wear a uniform?); in miming games learners act out professions; in “lucky wheel” or Kahoot quizzes they compete in recognising



definitions (a person who designs buildings -an architect). Such activities provide the multiple repetitions necessary for memorisation while keeping motivation high, which is particularly important in vocational groups with mixed language levels.

Role play: the job interview. The culminating communicative activity of the topic is the simulated job interview. Students study typical questions (Tell me about yourself; What are your strengths?; Why do you want this job?), prepare a simple CV in English and act out interviews in pairs, with the class evaluating politeness and clarity. This task is authentic -graduates of technical schools will meet it in real life -and it integrates all four skills. In the author's practice, interview role plays cause the highest engagement of the whole topic, including among students who are usually passive.

Project work and career guidance. The project "My future profession" unites English with career education: each student prepares a short presentation about the chosen speciality -what the specialist does, where he or she works, what qualities and skills are needed, why the student has chosen it. In a technical school, this project is naturally connected with the students' actual specialities (electrician, mechanic, cook, IT technician), turning the English lesson into English for Specific Purposes in the sense of T. Hutchinson and A. Waters. Pedagogical literature of Uzbekistan, in particular the works on interactive methods by O'. Tolipov and M. Usmonboyeva, emphasises exactly this kind of personally significant, activity-based learning.

Digital support. Modern tools strengthen every stage: Quizlet sets for profession vocabulary give spaced repetition on students' phones; short YouTube videos "A day in the life of..." supply authentic listening about real jobs; online dictionaries with audio train the pronunciation of difficult items (engineer, lawyer, psychologist); and Telegram groups allow the teacher to send mini-tasks between lessons. These instruments are accessible in Uzbek conditions even where computer laboratories are absent, since nearly all students own smartphones.



It is essential to organise the topic cyclically: profession vocabulary introduced in one module should reappear later in topics such as “Daily routine”, “Famous people” or “Plans for the future”. Such recycling corresponds to the spiral principle of curriculum design and to the findings of vocabulary research that a word needs many spaced encounters to enter long-term memory.

Conclusion

The topic “Professions and Jobs” is far more than a list of nouns: it is a meeting point of vocabulary, word formation, grammar and real-life communication, and -in vocational education -a direct bridge between the English lesson and the student’s future career. Its effective teaching requires, first, precise work on the lexical system of English (job -work -profession -occupation -career; productive suffixes -er, -ist, -ian); second, communicative practice through games, role plays such as the job interview, and personally significant projects about the learners’ own specialities; and third, systematic recycling of the vocabulary supported by accessible digital tools.

Taught in this way, the topic fulfils a double function. Linguistically, it develops lexical and communicative competence in accordance with CEFR requirements adopted in Uzbekistan by Presidential Decree No. PQ-1875 and Resolution No. PQ-5117. Educationally, it contributes to career guidance and to the formation of conscious, motivated attitudes towards work -a task of direct social importance for technical schools and vocational colleges that prepare young specialists for the labour market. The experience analysed in this article shows that when students speak in English about their own future profession, English stops being an abstract subject and becomes a personally valuable instrument of their professional life.



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