

Theory and practice of creating the textbook for railway students

Creating a textbook designed specifically for the students of railway institutions of higher learning has been fostered by several motivating factors, the most important of them being: 1) the absence of any English textbooks for students in this field of engineering, neither in Ukraine nor Russia; 2) the desire to implement the best of what has been accumulated in teaching ESP with the due regard for our students' content area. The textbook is intended as a basic course for the first- and second-year students of engineering, transport and railway higher educational establishments. The main purpose is to develop basic linguistic and communicative competence of future railway engineers. To achieve this aim in the comprehensive English course, we have applied the balanced activity approach so that students could benefit from all-round development of the four language skills.

Each of the ten units is structured as follows: Reading Rules, Grammar, Reading and Discussion, Conversational Practice, Word Building, Grammar Revision, Enjoy Yourself. One of the strong points of the textbook is the novelty and information value of the texts discussing the latest and the most urgent trends in world railway development, as well as other, non-professional topics of general interest. Reading and discussion section offers a variety of pre-text and comprehension exercises, followed by organized group discussion, problem-solving exercises, role plays (conferences) with the purpose of developing presentation and participation skills. At the final stage students may be required to deliver talks on topics specified by the syllabus or based on their independent reading related to the content area. The roles of both the reporter as an innovative leader and the listeners as critical thinkers are equally important for the discussion.