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ON SOME ACTIVE LEARNING TECHNIQUES AT ENGLISH LESSONS

The article reviews some of the psychological characteristics in language activity which is considered as a complex mental process. The problems of learning a foreign language are disclosed by the author. Furthermore, some psychological mechanisms of formation the English language competence among the students of technical universities are treated. The peculiarities of professionally oriented information obtained from the English sources that is an effective way of accumulating knowledge for their chosen technical specialty and its use in their professional activities are under consideration.

Key words: foreign language, the English language, professionally oriented text, psychological mechanisms of formation the English language competence, Technical University.

У статті розглядаються деякі психологічні характеристики в мовній діяльності, яка є складним психологічним процесом. Автором аналізуються проблеми вивчення іноземної мови. Окрім того, розглядаються деякі психологічні механізми формування мовної компетенції англійської мови серед студентів технічних вузів. Особливості професійно орієнтованої інформації, отриманої з англомовних джерел, є ефективним способом накопичення знань, і її використання у професійній діяльності знаходяться на стадії розгляду.

Ключові слова: іноземна мова, англійська мова, професійно орієнтовані тексти, психологічні механізми формування мовної компетенції, технічний університет.

В статье рассматриваются некоторые психологические характеристики в речевой деятельности, которая является сложным психологическим процессом. Автором анализируются проблемы изучения иностранного языка. Кроме того, рассматриваются некоторые психологические механизмы формирования языковой компетенции английского языка среди

студентов технических вузов. Особенности профессионально ориентированной информации, полученной из англоязычных источников, является эффективным способом накопления знаний, и ее использование в профессиональной деятельности находятся на стадии рассмотрения.

Ключевые слова: *иностранный язык, английский язык, профессионально ориентированные тексты, психологические механизмы.*

Those who start speaking any foreign language are sure to come across some problems in oral communication. These problems that are very much in evidence can arise due to the presence of both the language barrier and lack of skills to overcome the psychological barrier while speaking. The fear of embarrassment to choose a wrong word, not to pronounce it correctly, concerns about the inaccuracy of the verb tense choice, worries about misunderstanding your interlocutor - here is an incomplete list of problems that have to be overcome in order to acquire a sufficient communicative practice.

It should be noted that the current system of teaching foreign languages in the post-Soviet states is focused to a greater extent on acquiring appropriate grammar skills, writing and different types of translation.

Any text translation in a written form (widely popular among the students as "text acceptance by thousands of symbols") still takes place here and there to evaluate the student's knowledge but obviously does not contribute to the development of their language communication skills.

Reading is definitely considered to be one of the uttermost intellectual functions which changes the perception of a person and surely influences the personality. Concept

processing and comprehension are a complex mental process.

Reading English texts is a complex activity that involves such psychological functions as attention, semantic perception, memorizing, thinking, and so on.

1970s were marked by an upsurge of psychological research on learning foreign languages (I. Zimnyaya, Z. Klichnikova, T. Serov) [1; 5; 7]. Often, in these works the joint issues on psychology and psycholinguistics and questions dealing with psychological characteristics of teaching a personality are pointed out.

The advance of understanding the information that is presented in English is closely connected with the process of development. From the very beginning of studying the formation of understanding skills follows the process of perception. And this is possible only on the basis of a permanent, long-term analysis and synthesis of the information received. Gradually, understanding is being developed and rising to a new automatic mode level. Here understanding outruns the process of perception which is manifested in the semantic comprehension of information.

The following staging points show that understanding of the information received involves the grasp of the word content and sentence purpose.

The final stage exhibits the student's perception of the information as a whole, i.e. perception and understanding. At this stage point the process of learning a foreign language gets automated, and this implements quick and proper understanding.

Considering the stages of perception in the course of active learning of English, it should be noted that in the early stages of perceiving information there arise some hypotheses about the content, and the search for meaning is carried out from the individual words and phrases.

The student gets an information impulse and transforms it into his/her thought on the ground of their knowledge of the English language meaning system and their life experience.

Completeness, accuracy, deepness are sure to be the main characteristics of student understanding of any type of information [3].

The degree of understanding completeness represents a quantitative aspect of information obtained by the student. The accuracy of understanding characterizes its qualitative aspect, the adequacy of this understanding allows to draw conclusions on the quality of perception, while the accuracy and correct understanding of the linguistic form of the text being estimated in this case. The completeness of understanding is manifested in student's personal interpretation of the information that depends entirely on the reader's background notion and his/her intellectual abilities. In this regard, the depth of understanding can be judged by checking understanding of the text. It is this very characteristic that makes a point of subjective and personal feature to information understanding.

There should be also mentioned the problem of interference, i.e. the influence of one language on another one. The

identification of this problem by the teachers of foreign languages suggests including different types of exercises that would help students of technical universities give it up.

From the point of effectiveness in psychological analysis any understanding of an English text means understanding information and may be disclosed only with the help of a general theory of understanding that characterizes the development of human mentality and determines the attitude towards the object perceptible at the moment. Understanding an English text suggests typological interrelationships between the native language and a foreign one and the degree of mastering the latter.

If a student of a technical university has a poor knowledge of English, there might be some cases of false synthesis.

Practice-oriented students' teaching should involve information digestion in a foreign language that would give them the highest level of understanding.

The use of unfamiliar or entirely new words has a great impact on the students of non-language specialties. This might lead to an erroneous prediction, wrong associations, inability to use an analogy, refer to the formal grammatical features. Though we cannot but take into account the existing experience of the students, focus of their attention, emotional readiness, interest in the information, age specific and individual personality characteristics of the students.

The specific character of training students studying in technical universities should include a dynamic hierarchical structure of all the activities of the future expert in the field of technical or scientific and technical activities, though it is not considered to be the leading quality but just an attendant activity.

Any sophisticated language activity is determined by professional

information capabilities and needs, and this is in fact a specific form of active verbal communication - a dialogue, in which the primary thing is the continuous focus on search, reception and further intended use of experience in professional fields.

For technical universities the professional orientation approach should be the guiding principle. And mastering the special technical terminology is considered to be the crucial one.

Students' request for "spoken English" is becoming increasingly urgent within the awareness of changing social and cultural situation in Ukraine that is becoming more direct to the outside world. Numerous cultural and sports events in Ukraine in which foreigners have been taking part, the possibility for the citizens of Ukraine to travel abroad, student exchange programs, and "Work & Travel" program that is widely popular among the students are the real stimulus for the students' request to interact with the help of the English language.

These are the reasons that affect the requirements for the up-to-date English Syllabus. Today, university programs in this aspect are undoubtedly losing rapidly developing additional education programs that should be more flexible to take into account the students' demands. At the same time, university programs are increasingly concerned not only about the process of teaching students the English language, but its final result as well - the student's ability to use the language skills in his/her real life. The emergence and progression of communication skills are largely facilitated by the use of so-called active learning methods. Methods of active learning (active learning methods) are the ways of organizing the learning process which provides a compulsory, evaluative and managerial activity of trainees comparable to the activity of

the teacher" [1: 161]. With such training course tailoring, even in the classroom the student is continuously in the state of a learning activity whereas the role of the teacher is increasingly becoming a consultative moderator.

In class, teaching English is often conducted using the so called INSERT method. This method helps to work with an English text. It belongs to active learning methods, and allows initiate an analytical type of reading English texts followed by a discussion in English. The core of this method is as follows. All the students receive one and the same text but read it individually. The text should be controversial and ambiguous in its content and have a professionally oriented focus. This text is quite easy to pick up for students, engineers, using data from various sociological studies.

Before the students begin to read the text, they are offered to express their attitude to what they are going to read with special symbols in the text fields:

«+» — if you approve what you have read;

«-» — if you deny what you have read;

«!» — if you come across some important information that you did not expect to see;

«?» — facts you would like to learn more [3; 25].

For some period of time, the students are encouraged to read the text (not longer than 8-10 minutes), making notes with the proposed signs in appropriate places of the text. Then, the teacher suggests the students to read out those text fragments that are designated as the confirmation of assumption. As a rule, at this staging point, the students do not have any textual discrepancy, and the teacher can ask the students to explain where they have taken such assumptions from (as a rule, the students appeal to their previous academic knowledge).

As we move on from sign to sign, we can come across quite a large number of discrepancies in students' understanding, and this may give rise to shift from reading the text to its discussing using both academic vocabulary and social examples that expects the students to use their communication skills in a proposed training situation.

Upon completing the work with the help of INSERT method the students are offered to briefly sum up for the text one by one, define the process of working with the text and its subsequent discussion. In the discussion any idiomatic expressions, evaluative judgments or collocations that have been previously learned are allowed to take advantage of. In addition to the above the teacher tries to pick up such structures and make out such type of feedback that would allow the students

to expand their active communicative competence and successfully master different grammar complexes.

It should be taken into account that at the very initial stage of work both the students and the teacher might come to an idea that the methods of active learning give a smell of artificiality that can lead to the decision to get on with the usual forms of training. However, in a few lessons a sense of artificiality disappears, and the students expect for the new forms and methods of work at every passing lesson.

From our point of view, the lessons that are enhanced due to active learning methods enable students to reach a better result in language communication skill improvement among the students of technical universities.

TRANSLITERATION:

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