

PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE LANGUAGE TEACHING (FOR NON-PHILOLOGISTS)

It is of common knowledge among the professionals that teaching a foreign language to non-philologists is a specific and labour-consuming task. As it is in the case with the NTUU “KPI” technical students who require special learner-oriented teaching methods and textbooks. On the other hand, there exists no qualification of a “teacher of foreign languages for scientists” [4], which has recently become one of the major educational problems on the CIS territory in particular. Teachers are to be trained and, apparently, they have to fulfill this mission by themselves.

One of the key elements of effective teaching is choosing the appropriate strategy. A traditional grammatical/analytical approach is based upon the deep study of different syntactical and morphological patterns of language. Although it is considered to be obsolete, technical students are expected to have good understanding and memorizing of an almost “mathematical” structure of to a large extent analytical Germanic and Romanic languages. Communicative approach (CLT) defines interaction as both goal and methods of learning. It has gained much popularity along with the rapid development of means of communication. Students have to realize and professionally accept the purpose of activities in order to use them in spontaneous situations. It is virtually impossible to design an ultimate curriculum [2], so the teacher’s task is to carefully combine and synthesize the two approaches according to the learners’ needs.

In this connection, one has to remember the rules of communication teaching: correct choice of the topic under discussion, providing the students with basic lexical and syntactical material and permanent monitoring of the process. It is also vital to give corrections in the form of prompts, not recasts – when the teacher repeats the phrase with the mistake amended, which is in any case better than ignoring the errors completely.

Also, opposing the traditional “drill-and-practice” programmes, there exists Computer-assisted language learning (CALL), which has become popular in the United States. It uses various information technology applications and approaches, submerging the student in a virtual learning environment – ideally. This method also includes the use of language corpora and concordancers, interactive whiteboards, Computer-mediated communication (CMC), language learning in virtual worlds, and Mobile-assisted language learning (MALL).

Once the teaching strategy is chosen, tasks and exercises are to be made. As far as most of commercial materials “are not aimed at any specific group of learners” [3], there exists immense amount of teacher-designed materials. The advantages and disadvantages were pointed out by J. Howard and J. Major:

Contextualization, for instance, is an obvious benefit, as it was stated above. In addition, such materials correspond to the individual needs and the level of students varying from group to group. Timeliness is of great importance as well, for it is necessary to provide learners with an up-to-date information (political news,

scientific developments, etc.). And the last advantageous factor is personalization – the personal “touch of teacher” [3], which is invisible but cannot be overestimated.

The unfavorable traits are organization and quality. The largest part of teacher-designed materials are not improved or developed into a textbook, they might lack general direction and perspective. Further and worse, materials turn into a collection of scrap notes and indistinctive photo-copies.

In order to benefit from methods and tips mentioned earlier, it is essential to understand and use them skillfully and in balance. Teachers train learners not only to be qualified in the subject, but to study and process information themselves and make them realize that “teachers open the door but one must walk through it himself”.

Літєратура:

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