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Distinctive Features of Teaching EAP

It is impossible to study at the university without reading scientific articles, taking part in conference discussions, writing essays and course papers. As a result, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) is an essential part of every Bachelor's, Master's or Postgraduate course.

Academic writing usually causes some difficulties for anyone not just second language learners as it is different from business, personal or creative types of writing. It requires special skills and knowledge not only for students but also for lecturers who teach the EAP course.

English for Academic Purposes is the course aimed to teach people how to study or work in higher education. Typically, it is obligatory for students as it explains some basic linguistic and cultural peculiarities of working and studying through the English language [2]. Afterwards academic writing may be required for researching, publishing or teaching.

As this course is different from English taught at the Ukrainian higher institutions, there are certain requirements for the EAP lecturers.

The EAP teacher:

- is able to work with materials and tasks from different subject areas;
- is familiar with methods and techniques used for academic writing;
- is able to teach the language and skills required by academic tasks and processes;
- is able to identify and analyze genres and features of academic texts and train students to do the same [2].

Moreover, the EAP teachers are responsible for developing global competence in their students. Through academic writing they help their students to develop critical thinking, to understand world processes, to respect intellectual property and cultural diversity.

In order to create a successful and useful course the EAP lecturers have to follow some steps. First of all, it is necessary to analyze the target needs of the participants of the course. According to the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education [2] there are five major aspects which help to identify the target needs of the students. These are the following:

- Usage of the target language (e.g. seminars, conferences, dissertations, professional development courses, student exchange programs etc.);
- Knowledge of the language in the students' specific subject area;
- Knowledge of the difference between their own academic cultures and culture of the studying language;
- Development of such skills as general study skills, time management, remembering and studying habits.
- Moving from general EAP to subject-specific teaching (ESAP).

After analyzing students' target needs and their performance it is easy to specify the objectives of the course. Next and the most important step is to select the teaching approach. There is a great variety of the approaches proposed in the research works dedicated to academic writing. We will discuss only three of them:

1) The Isolated Skills Approach (is organized as ordinary EFL course and designed to develop four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking).

2) The Project Based Approach (the course is based on an individual research projects while using all the academic skills: listening to lectures, literature searching, reading, completion of a presentation or written report).

3) The CLIL (CBL) Approach (uses "real" seminars taught by the subject specialist lecturers which are recorded or are attended by the EAP teacher. Then on the basis of students' notes or recorded materials the lecture is reconstructed with the focus on the language used) [1].

It is necessary to notice that any of these approaches shouldn't be used separately. They become more effective either in the combination with each other or as a supplementary for the General English course.

The next step is the implementation of the chosen approach into educational process. For example, in the UK academic writing is taught as a Pre-Sessional course in order to familiarize students with the peculiarities of higher education. However, in Ukraine the EAP is presented as a part of the General English course and academic writing itself is studied only by senior students, masters and postgraduates. It means that students obtain the necessary writing skills while preparing a course paper or a report for a scientific conference but not beforehand.

The last but not the least is evaluation and feedback. It is important to evaluate to what extent the EAP course helps the students in their chosen academic fields. And what is rarely used in Ukrainian higher education but appears to be an integral part of European education is feedback from the students. Giving their feedback students can influence the study process and help teachers to improve the course making it more useful and sophisticated.

Hence, the EAP course plays a significant role in the formation of well-educated individuals and qualified specialists. The existing variety of approaches to academic writing gives English teachers the possibility of designing a syllabus appropriate for the particular students and the particular country.

References:

1. *EAP – Approaches to Course Design and Methodology*. (2010). Available: <https://www.slideshare.net/SueSwift/eap-approaches-to-course-design-and-methodology>. Last accessed 04th Apr 2017.
2. Gillett, A. J. (2011). *What is EAP?* Available: <http://www.uefap.com/bgnd/whatfram.htm>. Last accessed 04th Apr 2017.