

Психолого-педагогічні аспекти формування іншомовної компетентності студентів.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF TEACHING EFL

It goes without saying that teaching English as a foreign language in higher educational establishments is becoming increasingly important. Ukraine's integration into the world community and the establishment of closer economic, political and cultural ties has resulted in a tremendous increase of the necessity to master at least one foreign language.

There seems to be no compelling reason to argue that English language teachers in higher educational establishments in the overwhelming majority of cases have to tackle some difficult problems associated with psychological peculiarities of students as well as psychological barriers to language learning imposed at the early stages of acquiring language skills.

It is indisputable that the learning process is based not only on personal abilities of the learner, but also on the psychological peculiarities. It is necessary to mention that the psychological barrier to language learning is one of the obstacles that can significantly reduce the effectiveness of teaching a foreign language. Psychological barriers are such mental conditions that inhibit thinking processes and do not allow even talented students to fully use and improve their abilities, practice different types of skills acquired in the process of foreign language learning.

According to our observations, the main factor influencing the implementation of speaking in the given communicative situation is neither the lack of the necessary basic knowledge of the subject, so-called lexical and grammatical minimum, nor the lack of desire to conduct a conversation on a given topic because of a misunderstanding of the subject of conversation, nor the desire to avoid participation in the discussion, but it is the presence of psychological barriers that prevent the overcoming of fear, whether it is fear of making a mistake or fear of implementing a new kind of language activity in front of an audience and a reluctance to undergo a critical assessment by the teacher or other students. There is no doubt that the possible "inadequate" reaction of group mates is the strongest stress factor for students, who are shy and prone to underestimation of their abilities. All the factors mentioned above deteriorate the process of acquiring new language skills, make the process of overcoming psychological barriers more complicated while posing certain challenges to EFL teachers.

Overcoming psychological barriers in the process of teaching a foreign language is one of the most important problems for EFL teachers. It has become one of the most pressing problem due to the fact that, despite a number of effective methods of teaching a foreign language, the problem, nevertheless, still remains unsolved. Perhaps this is the result of a lack of understanding of the need to take into account versatile psychological aspects of learners when developing new teaching

methods. Thus, there is an acute need to find ways and develop practical recommendations for possible ways to overcome the psychological barrier to learning foreign languages.

It is necessary to focus on personality traits of those students who can be affected by the above factors. In general, this is typical to learners with low self-esteem and an increased level of anxiety, i.e. people experiencing psychological discomfort in any situation associated with the assessment of their abilities. Defining anxiety associated with foreign language learning process, i.e. the anxiety occurring while studying or using foreign language, Perevozchikova V.N., on the basis of the analysis of foreign studies, distinguishes 3 components of anxiety:

- communicative anxiety associated with the difficulties experienced by students in expressing their thoughts and goals;
- fear of negative social assessment, which results from the need of students to make a positive impression on others;
- test anxiety associated with fear for academic performance. [4]

According to Elaine M. Phillips, usually it doesn't pose any difficulties for EFL teachers to recognize students who have psychological barriers to language learning. As a rule, they "often sit in the back of the room, attempt to "hide" in their seats, neglect to turn in homework, never volunteer, and, when called upon, respond in a barely audible whisper, if at all." [3,1]

On the basis of the foregoing, it is important to help EFL teachers find the necessary solutions for organizing the educational process in such a way that they would have the opportunity to minimize the stress factors that arise in the course of their work and impede the students' communication activities.

One of the most effective methods used by EFL teachers in order to improve students' speaking skills is the modeling of a real communicative situation (e.g. role play), in which students have the opportunity to demonstrate their skills in conditions that are close to the real life situation. It was noted that performing this task students who are prone to anxiety and high level of neuroticism actively participate in the process of communication, provided that the teacher does not "listen" to their speech and does not set up an expectation for the "ideal" task performance. Otherwise, these students start to feel uncomfortable, and most of the time they do their best to steer away from talking. Thus, EFL teachers, from their position of critical evaluation, can become one of the stressful factor that is certain to affect students' verbal behavior in a negative way.

In order to avoid this, it is possible to recommend to EFL teachers to organize the learning process in such a way that the fulfillment of such tasks is carried out in the form of a play, creating a relaxed atmosphere of "non evaluation". Thus, anxious students will feel free knowing that their work is not evaluated and the number of mistakes made will not affect the academic performance, which undoubtedly will relieve the burden of responsibility for the result and partially neutralize the psychological fear of speaking. It is essential to emphasize that the analysis of the mistakes made by students in the process of speaking activities can be carried out after the completion of the task. Undoubtedly, it would be even better, if possible, to

predict the possible mistakes beforehand and prevent their appearance at the stage of preparing pre-speaking activities.

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