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VARIETY IN ESP LESSON PLANNING

The teachers of National Technical University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute" participated in the British Council Teacher Development Winter School. The event was organized in the framework of the British Council English for Universities project on 08-13 February, Kyiv, 2017. The British Council is United Kingdom's international organization for cultural and educational opportunities [1]. The English for Universities project was initiated by the British Council Ukraine in December 2013 after the Ukrainian Ministry of Education had identified the improvement in levels of English in Ukraine's universities as a priority [2].

The author of the synopsis completed the 35 hour English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. The course included the following aspects:

- What is ESP
- Understanding needs
- Motivation
- Positive classroom interaction
- Developing authentic tasks
- Exploiting vocational contexts as resource
- Adapting the given course book
- Identifying and selecting lesson aims
- Identifying the components of a lesson
- Lesson planning – the roles of the teacher
- The basic elements of lesson planning.

I propose you to pay attention to the module devoted to lesson planning in ESP. By the end of this module we were able to:

- understand the different roles of the teacher
- understand variety is important in lesson planning
- be aware of a range of ways of introducing variety
- be aware of our learning styles
- be aware that learners will have different learning styles
- take different learning styles into account when planning
- apply variety of interaction patterns when planning lessons
- understand when group work can be most effective

- understand different ways of grouping learners [3].

During our sessions we realized why variety was important in lesson planning. There are three main reasons for having variety. Human beings can only concentrate on one thing for so long. There is something that has been called '90/20/8 Rule'. This means that adults can listen with understanding for 90 minutes. However, they only listen with retention for 20 minutes and they need to be involved every eight minutes. So learning is optimal if you break your content into chunks that are 20 minutes or in length, and involve people in those chunks at least once every eight minutes.

The second reason for making sure your lesson has plenty of variety is that learners have different learning styles and preferences. One learner may learn well by reading about something, whereas another may learn better by speaking or by listening. If you change the focus often enough that means that you have more chance of all the learners.

The third reason is that by including all aspects of language development - speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary extension, grammar learners are able to perform better across the range of skills.

The different learning styles were also discussed at the sessions. We found out the answers to the following questions:

- Do learners learn best when teaching methods match their learning style?
- Will they do better in class when activities are aligned to their learning strengths and preference?

Learning styles are a popular concept in psychology and education that are intended to identify how people learn best. The popularity of this concept grew dramatically the 1970s and 1980s, despite the evidence suggesting that personal learning preference have no actual influence on learning results.

There are many ways of categorising learning styles. The VARK model, developed by Neil Fleming in 1987, is one of the most popular representations. In Fleming's model, learners are identified by whether they have a preference for visual learning, auditory learning, reading and writing, or kinaesthetic learning [4].

During our discussion the project participants applied a variety of interaction patterns when planning lessons. We analyzed when group work could be most effective and different ways of grouping learners. All these methods and creative approaches are very useful and they can be successfully introduced in ESP teaching process.

List of References

1. Electronic resource: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/British_Council
2. Electronic resource: <http://www.britishcouncil.org.ua/en/year-of-english/projects/english-universities>
3. The materials introduced by the British Council at the Teacher Development Winter School, Kyiv, 08-13 February 2017 // britishcouncil.org.ua
4. Electronic resource: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neil_Fleming