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A TASK-BASED APPROACH IN ENGLISH TEACHING FOR FUTURE TOURISM MANAGERS

As usual teachers are eager to find the best technique in learning and mastering English as a foreign language. It is a well-known fact that learning materials, approaches and methods of teaching depend on the aims of education and, in our case, the demands of the labor market for tourism management experts. For our students mastering English is connected to their speaking and writing skills development, achieving this goal enables them to fulfill professional duties and responsibilities.

So, what are the requirements that future tour managers should meet? It goes without saying that due to international communication standards graduates have to represent high English language knowledge to perform appropriately dealing with customers and colleagues. In our opinion, the best solution is to recreate future professional situations to make students prepare for challenges of business communication. Traditional paradigm (with the plan Present-Practice-Produce) sometimes is not relevant to modern needs of our students. A lot of methodologists (and we totally agree with them) highlight such issues: «Students can give the impression that they are comfortable with the new language as they are producing it accurately in the class. Often though a few lessons later, students will either not be able to produce the language correctly or even won't produce it at all… Students will often produce the language but overuse the target structure so that it sounds completely unnatural. Students may not produce the target language during the free practice stage because they find they are able to use existing language resources to complete the task» [1].

Using a Task-based approach correctly we can eliminate some of their problems. Offering tasks that are connected to students' future professional activity teachers build students' confidence by role-playing some scenarios, so at work the former student will not feel lost. The other essential part of this paradigm is to allow students to dominate during the classroom activities when the teacher only carefully scaffolds the educational process. Being initiative, ready to take responsibility, taking leadership positions – these are the qualities of an employee that are highly appreciated nowadays. The last, but not the least benefit in this case could be creating an associative link between the target language and professional communicative situation. So students will remember functional language, grammar construction, terminology and other aspects easier, because they

memorize not separate constructions and vocabulary which 'maybe-can-be-used-someday', but English that is represented in a particular professional communication framework.

We cannot agree more with David Weller that there are some reasons for TBL approach being ineffective: when tasks are not well-designed, when students are lazy or bored, and when they are too excited [2]. In our teaching practice we found out that the most successful to choose among for TBL approach are Speaking and Functional Language focus lessons. Writing-focus lessons were less fruitful (time limits; lack of monitoring possibility, some students did not take part in activity, delegating their 'part of work' to others). The most appropriate topics, in our opinion, are negotiations about destination profile, travel agency profile, creating tour packages, SWOT-analysis, presenting a campaign, website page creation, tour product analysis and so on. Choice of these topics allows to set up a natural background for contradicting opinion exchange, highlighting advantages and disadvantages of the solution. Students admit that the TBL paradigm enables them to be not only speakers but listeners as well. Moreover, there is a necessity to cooperate with other students, look for compromise, agree and disagree politely, persuade opponents, be ready to «fight» verbal aggression etc.

By the way, the TBL approach is useful not only in off-line education format, a zoom-platform based class, with its breakout rooms is ideal for such Business English lessons. We do not recommend trying TBL-approach lessons with a group of fresheners; still a teacher must be aware of learning style peculiarities of students to create appropriate activities and to solve classroom problems efficiently and quickly. The other issue that we have come across implementing TBL-techniques is the necessity of teacher's clear and strict instructions for every stage of the lesson and, no doubt, monitoring task performance according to these instructions.

In a nutshell, task-based learning methodology is an extremely helpful background to create interesting and productive English lessons for future tourism managers, but preparing materials for such a lesson to be effective a teacher must take into consideration a huge range of factors.

References:

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