

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES AS AN INALIENABLE COMPONENT OF ESP TEACHING

Currently the Globalization has been penetrating all spheres of human life, the sphere of University education being not an exception. There are numerous manifestations of this process, the appearance of multicultural academic groups is among them. Multicultural academic groups, having definite characteristics from the methodological point of view, present certain peculiarities as to the groups' organization, management and subjects teaching. The authors investigate the phenomenon "multicultural groups" and define their characteristics from the psycholinguistic point of view, present their recommendations as to ESP teaching.

School leavers from European, Asian, African, South American countries such as Ukraine and Armenia, Israel and Moldova, Bulgaria and Turkey, Georgia and Iran, Egypt and Vietnam, Mexico and Chile, India and Japan have been studying at the university departments : Mathematics and Physics, History and Biology, Philology and Journalism, Geography and Law, International Relations and Economy. These representatives from different nationalities, national groups and minorities study side by side within an academic group of their department.

Despite the fact that all school leavers worldwide are required to obtain B1-B2 level of English (as the first or basic foreign language), the reality is far more specific. It is manifested both in general vocabulary and grammar stock of the first-year students and their abilities to understand and process information in English, their skills for oral and written self-expression and self-actualization via this foreign for them language. In the long run, the dominating countries' teaching strategies and school curriculum requirements effect the learners' motivation to read or to write, to listen to the speakers or to participate in a dialogue and polylogue, to deliver a speech or just to make notes etc.

Every department's academic group is formed by the Dean's office due to the learners' preference in their would-be field of specialization and particular specialty. It means that all the groups turn out to be multicultural as to their membership.

In order to stream the first-year students according to the level of English

knowledge the teachers of the Foreign Languages Department created the diagnostic placement test. It is actually a GOOGLE Form test, which economizes the time for filling in the answers and evaluating the learners' vocabulary and grammar general knowledge, checking their writing and reading habits, prognostic and analytical skills, skim and scan reading strategies etc. The results of the placement test were taken into consideration when creating A, B, C subgroups for English language learning. We utterly support such scholars as J.A.Large, P.Hudelson, B.Schloman, D.Bridgers who vote for equal educational opportunities environment as the means to eliminate the language barrier for adult learners [5]. At the same time, our Foreign Languages Department teachers view the language acquisition (referring to English) by the multicultural university community members not as the Academic English learning, but as the English for the Specific Purposes (ESP).

In the A, B, and C sub-groups it proved relevantly easier to achieve the goals of Credit- Modular System education, as the attention of the educators was constantly paid to the process of forming the students' lagging behind skills in the four basic speech activities of this particular group. We practiced numerous forms and strategies of teaching ESP, the main frame of the methodology being communicatively and IT-grounded. The authors enumerate the subjective and objective peculiarities of the multicultural groups; analyze the possibilities of the Information Technologies as an Inalienable Component of ESP students' learning environment; discuss the decade's practical experience via thesaurus-thematic cycle methodology teaching at Odessa National I.I.Mechnikov University.

The authentic articles were considered the most appropriate real-life proficiency-oriented materials on the would-be students' specialty, because these articles embodied both the terminology of the chosen field and the communicative techniques of the professional information coding. For instance, National Geographic speakers and Gresham College professors had delivered and recorded numerous lectures on various topics ("The Universe Exploration", "Ecology", "Efficient Management", "Mathematics Mysteries" and so on) which we presented to our students either in the oral or in the written form. Many A sub-group students were able to understand and grasp the general information rather easily, could operate this information so that to make notes, write abstracts or discuss the presented material. The learners of B and C sub-groups experienced difficulties in listening as they had been lagging behind in their English language knowledge. For these learners we, first, dosed the information of the article and presented it mainly in the written form, section (a fragment of the text) after section; second, supplied the fragments of the text with the multiple-choice mini-tests in the form of statements and questions (three variants of the answers were given).

The questions of the mini-tests served as orientation points for the students, helped them to single out and identify the reason-and-consequence ties between the textual

information. Screen presentation of the material was especially good for visual learners who according to psychologists dominate in any human society [3]. Generally speaking, all the group students were happy to participate in the discussion of the article after this kind of work – they were sure of the correct answer and did not fear to make a mistake, the more that the atmosphere of the lesson was friendly and democratic due to the general disposition of all the cooperative learners. During the on-line study screen presentation of the material was inalienable for oral-mode Module control, as well as for learning to write a review of the learned material etc.

Another possibility to apply different electronic devices during the ESP lesson was noted by us – it was the possibility of developing students' strategies of skim and scan reading. Here is one example of the work organization we practiced at the lessons both in off- and online mode. The set of relevant tasks preceded or followed the article. The text of the article and the tasks were displayed on the screen. Depending upon the goal of the lesson the teacher could choose the tasks (that had been stored in the Task-repository in the computer) and encourage the students to fulfill them and send via e-mail or Viber, the deadline been set. The students eagerly participated in this activity, their motivation was not only to cope with the tasks but also to make the tasks within the shortest possible time. It was like a self-control of the learning achievements. For the completion of the thesaurus-thematic cycle we practiced giving the multiple choice tests, the tests' vocabulary and grammar coinciding with the ones that had been learned within the module. The tests were based on the textual material. . All the textual material, tasks and exercises taken together constituted the so-called "thesaurus-thematic cycles" [1].

Our students found it useful and exciting to learn in the new way, the more that learning English was going side by side with gaining professional knowledge. Their academic achievements were even more when the learners shared the new proficiency-oriented information with the others via English, thus multiplying the time of the language usage. It was equally effective in offline and online learning. The students of all the sub-groups found it useful and motivating, the more that the found materials reflected their personal interests and inclinations in the topics applicable in their future specialty or job. The teachers noticed that the learners wished to share the information with the team (group) mates, moreover, they were proud to speak before the audience. Searching for information, selecting the necessary facts, arranging the Power Point presentation, delivering the speech, answering the questions – these were the real life operations our students learned and mastered in addition to acquiring English as the language of professional communication. Besides, each personality felt an integral part of the multicultural learning community, who could give some valuable information to the others. No doubt, the experience of this kind was and is valuable for any specialist, especially in the Digital World we live in.

Several years ago our preferences as to the IT were mainly on the side of the off-

line teaching for the day department students, while the correspondence students activity within the University walls was dominantly IT free. It was explained by the fact that life communication with the teachers and fellow students was of more importance for the learners, according to their feedback. The situation with the COVID-19 shifted both the mode of teaching and strategies of incorporating various regimes of individual and team work at the day departments as well as at the extra-mural department of the University. We were eager to apply the numerous materials from the sites of the English speaking educational establishments, we needed to sustain the interest of the learners to the current achievements in their field of specialization, we wanted to plunge the learners into the search work and involve every individual into the common activity of reading, speaking and writing.

The students took for granted the tendency to widen the IT usage and quickly got accustomed to working on the platforms suggested by the EST teachers, to filling in Google test-forms both with the fixed and open-answer items.

Of interest is the fact that the team spirit was born in tandem with the mutual respect and mutual understanding of different national and social layers of the multicultural university academic groups. More than that –one of the goals was developing the learners' skills in presentation making, which in many cases, had been underdeveloped during the previous years of education. Special tasks within the thesaurus-thematic cycle helped to liquidate the drawback and step-by-step develop the students' habits and skills of presentation making. It was noticed during the scientific students' conferences and the material consolidation lessons.

Our more than 10-year practical experience proved that no matter whether the teacher of a foreign language worked with the learners of A1 or B2 level, no matter how many nationalities were in the academic group, the effectiveness of the lessons grew substantially in case Information technologies were incorporated into the process of teaching. Work management, intermediate and remote control functions turned out to be easier, if IT-grounded. Digital learning engaged the students of the university into effective proficiency-oriented activity, put technology into their hands as the means to master English and grow a professional in each and every personality, enhanced the learners' independence and raised their self-esteem. Such consequential outcomes were of importance for the would-be university graduates.

The perspectives of the work are viewed in creating the IT-grounded ESP course for masters of science and post-graduate students of Exact sciences departments, because in our solid understanding when Digital Reality is interlaced with the proper teaching strategies and methodology, the outcomes of the ESP university teachers' efforts will be Global citizens who feel at home in the realms of the IT world.

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