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USEFUL TOOLS FOR THE ENGLISH TEACHERS

O.V. Ivanova
PhD in Pedagogy, Associate Professor,
the Head of the Department of English for Technical and Agrobiological Specialties,
National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine (Kyiv)
email: ok.ko176@gmail.com

КОРИСНІ ІНСТРУМЕНТИ ДЛЯ ВИКЛАДАЧІВ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

О.В. Іванова
кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент,
завідувач кафедри англійської мови для технічних та агробіологічних спеціальностей,
Національний університет біоресурсів і природокористування України (м. Київ)

ПОЛЕЗНЫЕ ИНТРУМЕНТЫ ДЛЯ ПРЕПОДАВАТЕЛЕЙ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

О.В. Иванова
кандидат педагогических наук, доцент,
заведующая кафедрой английского языка для технических и агробиологических специальностей,
Национальный университет биоресурсов и природоиспользования Украины (г. Киев)

The article deals with useful tools for the language teachers. It explores the answers to the questions: How to become a good teacher for your students? What requirements draw up for the modern teacher? The professional teacher's tasks are also described in the research.

Keywords: English teacher, professional, motivation, rapport, ice-breaking practice.

Стаття присвячена корисним інструментам для викладачів англійської мови. В ній досліджуються відповіді на питання: як стати гарним викладачем для студентів? Які вимоги висуваються для сучасних викладачів? Завдання викладача професіонала також описані в дослідженні.

Ключові слова: викладач англійської, професійний, мотивація, взаєморозуміння, практика зняття напруги.

Статья посвящена полезным инструментам для преподавателей английского языка. В ней исследуются ответы на вопросы: как стать хорошим преподавателем для студентов? Какие требования ставятся перед современным преподавателем? Задачи преподавателя-профессионала также описаны в исследовании.

Ключевые слова: преподаватель английского, профессиональный, мотивация, взаимопонимание, практика снятия напряжения.

The question of a better education is complex. By collecting information about what goes on in our classroom, and by analyzing and evaluating this information, we identify and explore our own practices and underlying beliefs. This may then lead to changes and improvements in our teaching.

The problem of language teaching has been explored by many foreign (J. Harmer, J. Scrivener) and native scientists (G. Barabanova, G. Kytaigorodska, L. Nikolaeva, D. Runov and others). But language teaching for effective learning is still interesting nowadays because the participants of communication are more exacting, independent and indifferent at the same time. That means the teachers must discover new approaches, methods and forms of teaching, taking into account age, level, goals, interests and demands of the students.

The aim of the article is to define the best components of a professional English teacher and to discuss the effective tools for successful learning of students.

To start with, it is worth to mention that being a professional for English teacher, means understanding your learners, knowing the subject, using inclusive practices and assessing learning. Professionalism also includes being 'well-organized and well-prepared (that is, they [i.e. the teachers] have thought about what they are going to do in the lesson)'[5].

To make teaching of English successful your students must be motivated intrinsically and extrinsically. It includes self-motivation (enjoy the process of learning language through the speaking activity, games, reading interesting and relevant material) and motivated by the teachers, circumstances or other people (the results of this kind of motivation can be good grade or promotion at work, achieving goals, some kinds of rewards).

What is motivation itself? "Motivation is the thoughts and feelings we have which make us want to do something, continue to want to do it and turn our wishes into action, i.e. motivation influences: a) why people decide to do something; 2) how long they want to do it for; how hard they are prepared to work to achieve it" [4, p. 38].

Motivation is very important in language learning. For some students motivation of language learning includes the usefulness and future prospects with language knowledge; for others – it's a way of self-confidence, independence; for the rest it can be concernment in the learning process, and probably not only process itself, but sometimes they are motivated by the interest in the target language culture etc. Learners may have strong motivation in one of these reasons and little in another. Doesn't matter what motivates your learners, more important to find the way to their strong desire of foreign language learning. There are some tips for the students' motivation:

1. Choose the right topic. Without any doubts learners will be more motivated to participate in an activity which they are interested in and which relates to their lives or experience. For example, if the topic of your lesson is "Relationships", students will be active and highly motivated in discussing related to this theme issues and give live experiences of their friends and class-mates. And watching the episode from an authentic film about heroes' relationships, they will be happily involved in the dispute about the plot and predict the end of it.

2. Be specific. Speaking activities with a clear communicative goal work best. For example, 'Tell your partner what you did at the weekend and find one thing you have in common' gives learners a specific task and an end goal so that they know when they have achieved it. Vague activities like 'Talk about things you like' can leave learners wondering what a teacher wants.

3. Give support and preparation time. Sometimes, a speaking activity falls flat because learners simply don't feel ready to speak. Make sure they have the language they need and give them a bit of time to prepare. This could be time to read instructions for a role play for example. Making notes can help, but writing a speech interferes with fluency. Also in this case you may use the methodology of "station teaching" where students will be given clear written instructions in each station and time to prepare the answer. Moreover, they will do their tasks without teacher's assessment. It helps them develop their potential, self-confidence and responsibility for the result.

3. Allow learners to work together. If learners talk in pairs or groups, they get much more speaking practice than when you are asking questions to one learner at a time. You could demonstrate the speaking activity with a strong learner first, to make sure that learners are clear about what you want them to do. Students need "to gain exposure to comprehensible samples of language, and they need chances to play with and communicate with the language themselves in relatively safe way" [3, p. 19].

4. Provide a clear purpose. Activities where learners have to exchange information in order to complete an activity provide a real reason for speaking. These are sometimes known as 'information gap' activities. It could be a simple question and answer activity or something more complex like a group activity where learners have different information which they have to share in order to solve a puzzle or do a crossword. To make your students be motivated to do an activity, the teacher has to give clear instructions. There are two main rules of giving instructions: they must be kept as simple as possible, and they must be logical [1, p. 37]. While giving instructions, get students' attention, focus on sequencing, show 'don't tell', get physical, check students' understanding, and remember: your voice is your instrument.

Teachers are to help diverse learners become competent and skilled, understand what they are doing, and communicate effectively. For effective work, first of all a teacher has to know the subject he/she teaches the students. The second important element of having positive changes in students' studying is to build a rapport. There are several ways to build a rapport. Among them are the following:

1. Choose your attitude. You need to be friendly but professional. Remember that your students don't want you as a friend, but want to respect you as a teacher. Show them from the outset that you expect them to work hard in your class, but that it can be enjoyable.

2. Use names. It can be difficult with a large class to learn names quickly, but using your learners' names shows that you see them as individuals and creates bonds.

3. Listen. Really listen to the messages in what your learners say, not just the English that they produce. Try to avoid unnecessary 'echoing', or simply repeating what learners say and be aware of the amount of time you spend talking in a class.

4. Avoid over-correcting. Teachers who correct learners every time they speak run the risk of damaging learner confidence and breaking down rapport. Of course, learners need correcting at times, and when this is done supportively it can increase trust between learner and teacher.

5. Stand tall. Work on your voice and body language so that you appear confident, even if you really don't feel it. Your voice needs to be loud and clear. Stand straight in front of the class, and don't hide behind a desk.

To conclude with this aspect we can say that establishing rapport includes:
- showing respect
- being fair
- really listening to the students
- giving clear, positive feedback
- being authentically oneself [1].

And one more useful piece of information: the learners will be clearly engaged and interested in the topic of the lesson if the teacher knows the learners' interests and is tapping into their intrinsic motivation. You might not be able to plan every lesson around the interests of your learners, but there are some things you can always do to build rapport and create a good relationship with your learners.

To conclude this part we can mention that in many occasions that students understand quickly when we treat them quite closely with individual attention. When they start noticing that we pay attention to them, they start responding in a similar way which creates a healthy learning environment. Jokes are also a good way to know students quickly, and it also helps them feel comfortable and relaxed.

From the beginning of the course with the first year-students it's essential to use one of the breaking-ice practices which make them feel more comfortable, more confident, and easily involved in the educational process. This academic year I have practiced the game "I'm cool because…" where students tried to give reasons why they were cool, i.e. why they are special. They were astonished to share

the information with unknown group-mates in such a way. With the other group I have used the game "Three common, one unique". According to the rule, their task was: to discover three things that all the members of the group have in common and one thing which is unique personally for each one. The requirement was not to repeat the answers of the previous students.

Another way to get them involved into the learning process is to play the game "Tell me about me" where student has to show some objects from the pocket or a bag that can tell something about his or her life, the rest of the group are to guess or characterize a person according to the proposed things. One more activity where students have a chance to introduce themselves in pairs, and after that each partner introduces another one. This method helps remove students' hesitation and become familiar with each other.

To be aware with the language level of your students', propose them to play "word association" game where one student says a word (category eg. summer vocation) and the next person must say a word associated with that word, etc. If the level of your students is high, then you can complete the task to begin the word with the last letter of the previous word.

And essential information for planning your work with the group would be reflected in the game with the name "New Year's Resolutions". Have students partner up with each other and discuss what goals they have for themselves for the academic year. Encourage them to be specific with the things they would like to accomplish, and what they want to be different. Create a poster of their resolution.

Teaching doesn't just involve the relationship with students, as a professional we are also asked to perform certain tasks. Before the process of teaching we have the preparation stage. Effective teachers are well-prepared. This term includes not only excellent knowledge of the subject but also careful work with the material before the lesson, and work planning according to the learning outcomes. Professional teachers are reliable teachers. They are the example for their students in timekeeping and homework: they are always in time in the lesson and check homework at once after receiving. One more essential thing for a professional teacher is "to try to evaluate how successful an activity has been in terms of student engagement and learning outcomes. Good teachers are constantly changing and developing their teaching practice as a result of reflecting on their teaching experiences" [1, p.28].

One more thing which is not less essential than acquaintance is feedback from the students. To make lessons efficient you have to get information from your students asking them what and how they expect their learning and use this information to plan your work in future.

To conclude, we can summarize that teaching fundamentally means working with people. Aware and sensitive teacher understands her/his students, respects and listens to them, and finds the ways of enabling learning rather than on performing as a teacher, every time looks for the new creative ideas in which a great deal of learning is likely to take place.

The perspectives of further research deal with the subject matter of language teaching and analysis of learners' and teachers' types.

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