УДК 811.111:378.147

INTRODUCING PROBLEM –BASED LEARNING INTO ESP CONTEXT

Fomenko N. S.

Стаття присвячується проблемному методу навчання англійській мові для спеціальних цілей. Описується метод "case study", як форма проблемного навчання у професійному спілкуванні. Пропонується організація занять з використанням даного методу, система оцінювання рішення проблеми кейсу.
Ключові слова: проблемний метод, метод "case study", спеціальні цілі, проблемна ситуація, засоби вирішення проблеми.

Статья посвящена проблемному методу обучения английскому языку для специальных целей. Рассматривается метод "case study" как форма проблемного обучения. Предлагается организация занятий с использованием метода "case study" и система оценивания решения проблемы кейса.
Ключевые слова: проблемный метод, метод "case study", специальные цели, проблемная ситуация, способы решения проблемы.

The paper is devoted to the problem-based teaching English for Specific Purposes. The method of "case study" is a form of problem method. The organization of classes with applying this method and assessment of problem solution are proposed.
Key words: problem-based method, method of "case study", special purposes, problem situation, ways of solving problem.

Actuality of the research. Rapid changes in the life of our society and the modern world have outlined new trends in the development of the English language teaching/learning process. Teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP) has become one of the main concerns of teaching English at Universities aimed at meeting the requirements of the current situation to provide such a level of language training which will allow University graduates to compete successfully on the labour market.

The paramount importance attached to teaching ESP to university students calls a number of changes in the organization of a teaching process, in a lesson format itself.

The last studies analysis. There is a good deal of researchers who have contributed to the problem-based learning in ESP content. Different forms of problem teaching are discussed in the works of researchers. Teaching English for Specific Purposes are touched in the works of L. V. Barabanova, O. S. Voznyuk, P. Oliva, T. Hutchinson, M. Ellis. Involving role play activity in the teaching process for the development of communicative competence in speaking is concerned in the works of C. Livingstone, W. Littlewood, K. Jones. Problem-based teaching in reading and speaking, project method and method of "case study" are discussed in the works of G. I. Borodina, Y. N. Kalmikova, Y. V. Musnitskaya, H. S. Polat, D. Gouran, D. Easton. However only few investigations have focused on the method of "case study" in non-case environment in teaching ESP. This method is not fully developed and introduced.

The purpose of the paper is to describe the method of "case study" and its applying in ESP learning. To achieve this aim it is necessary to solve the following tasks:

- to determine the principles of organization of "case-study" learning;
- to determine requirements for the material selection for cases;
- to determine assessment forms for the solution of the problem;
- to determine conditions for creating problem-based situations;
- to determine stages of case study at the lesson.

General information synopsis. Problem-based learning (PBL) is an instructional method characterized by the use of "real world" problems as a context for students to learn critical thinking and problem solving skills, and acquire knowledge of

the essential concepts of the course. Problem-based method also offers numerous possibilities for developing various language skills.

The selection and development of situations and their inherent problems is crucial to the success of the approach. A critical factor in the success of problem-based method is the problem itself. The effective problem should be interesting, motivating and relevant to the professional field connected with real life situation. It should stimulate cooperation between learners as an essential element of the problem-solving process and engage higher order thinking.

Planning process in PBL commonly involves the following steps:
- identifying and defining the problem;
- formulating questions and queries;
- identifying current knowledge (how much students know about the problem);
- identifying learning needs;
- distributing assignments among the group;
- research (using different sources for research and exchanging ideas during meetings);
- discussion and evaluation of the information gathered and deciding if there is enough to argue their situation and present it.

PBL implies integration of students' professional knowledge and knowledge of English. For this reason the importance of the subject teacher's cooperation is undisputed. The subject teacher should act as an advisor and designer of the problem (or case) helping students to formulate it in such a way that basic knowledge will be structured around the situation likely encounted in professional world.

The primary role of language teacher is to teach language skills which can be integrated into PBL practice. PBL offers numerous possibilities for language teacher to introduce alternative forms of teaching (role-play, simulations, giving input whenever necessary) and to give students support in development of communication skills which being a transferable type will always come handy for students in real world of work in future. Among interpersonal skills necessary for students when they work at the project the most essential are listening giving and receiving feedback, creative and critical thinking skill, conducting meetings and negotiating, evaluating, persuading, problem-solving and decision-making, cooperation, leadership, tome management, ability to work in team. Teaching these skills is the challenge to the language teacher.

The context for learning in PBL is highly specific. It serves to teach content by presenting the students with a real-world challenge. Teaching content through skills is one of the distinguishing features of PBL. In PBL students learn the content as they try to address a problem. Unlike the case with traditional course papers when the subject is defined for students, for PBL they choose the problem to investigate on their own.

PBL is certainly most effective when students are familiar with their profile, but we believe that PBL should not be used only with senior students. It may also be rewarding with junior students though they will be more dependent on their teacher. Choice of the subject should be relevant to their current knowledge and experience. At the initial stage students may simply be taught the learning format of PBL and train job-related skills so that in their senior courses they could add business awareness to that prior knowledge for learning new concepts.

Good performance in PBL situation is not a sum of skills and abilities. Much work is done by the students outside the class which the teacher cannot see and monitor. In PBL environment traditional methods of assessment (when teacher is the only assessor) do not work. For this reason assessment process in PBL environment should focus on two strands: the product strand and the process strand.

In the product strand the products assessed are the written report and the group oral presentation. For this purpose several models of rating scales can be developed. In the process strand we assess the quality of student's involvement in terms of his contributions to the learning process and personal improvement. Mechanisms of process assessment are self-and-peer-assessment questionnaires and records of meetings. Self-assessment widens the perspectives of both teacher

and learner. Peer-assessment is motivational tool awareness building tool for possible weaknesses and of what is going on in the group.

In our paper we dwell on the one form of the problem-based teaching "case study". Cases have been used in the business history and economics programs in many high schools for a number of years. Case contains a set of theoretical material, practical tasks, tests, additional and questionair material, simulations and computer models.

The case studies are based on realistic problems or situations and are designed to motivate and actively engage students. Every case discussion must be linked to the topic studied. Students use the language and the communication skills which they have acquired while working through the topic. Typically students are involved in discussion problem proposed and recommending solutions through active group work. All of the case studies must be developed and tested with the students and designed to be easy to present and use.

Organization of classes on the bases of "case study" method includes the following stages [3, p. 45]

1. Organizational stage: teacher's commentary on case materials student acquaintance with the content of the case.

2. Working stage: students study the case in detail assume the position for the problem of the case analyze the problem, propose and asses alternative decisions.

3. Final stage: learners reporting, discussion of the problem, teacher's commentaries teacher's assessment, written task to the problem discussed.

One of the difficult questions in using "case study" method is the selection of suitable materials. To organize work with a case a teacher should select the material corresponding to the criteria [5, p. 101-102]:
- authenticity,
- exactness,
- novelty,
- completeness.

Creating problem-based situation depends on the principles to be strictly adhered:
- the problem should correspond to the level of students' knowledge;
- the involvement of the whole group in the solution of the problem;
- consideration of time allowing for the solution of the problem, this factor affects the thinking ability of students [1, p. 25], [3].

As an example we'll give the case for study and discussion [1, p. 32]

Panglossia

The tropical island state of Panglossia lies in the centre of the Pacific Ocean, close to the Equator. Thanks to cool but gentle sea breezes its climate is pleasant and healthy. Until now the 200,000 islanders have lived from fishing, agriculture and a little tourism. Half the population lives in small villages on the north and south coasts, the other half live in the three main towns. Now that oil has been discovered off the east coast of the island, the government wishes to make Panglossia into "the best of all possible worlds".

Work as 3 committees. Each committee will be discussing a different aspect of the island's future, and producing a report. Committee A should look at activity a), committee B at activity b), committee C at activity c).

a) Your committee is responsible for BUILDING: this includes housing and public buildings like schools and sports centres. Work out a plan for the island's future building programme. Prepare a brief report to inform the other committees about your plans.

At present there is a primary school in each of the main towns but there is only one secondary school (at Alphaville). Most of the people live in small one-storey houses without modern conveniences.

b) Your committee is responsible for TRANSPORT. Work out a plan for the island's future system incorporating air, rail, road and sea transport. Prepare a brief report to inform the other committees about your plans.

At present there is a small airfield at Alphaville but no deepwater port. There are no railways and no good roads, so most of the population travel by small boat or on foot.

c) Your committee is responsible for COMMERCE: this includes manufacturing industry, banking and tourism. Work out a plan for the commercial future of the island. Prepare a brief report to inform the other committees about your plans.

At present the main industries are fish canning and coconut oil production. The few tourists who visit the island appreciate its unspoilt character and the friendliness of the natives. There are no first-class hotels. Although Panglossia is a tax haven, relatively few international companies have taken advantage of this so far.

Conclusion and further research prospects. Problem-based learning is a shift from developing traditional language skills to developing job-related knowledge and skills young people will need to successfully realize wide opportunities today's information society and new knowledge-based economy offer.

The key methods used in PBL is that of "case study", when food for thought is a set of data (business documents, mass media publications, ads, scripts of conversation, etc.), containing background information about the problem to be solved. Through a range of individual and group activities like discussion, presentation, meeting, negotiation, etc. learners are supposed to find a solution to the targeted problem and present it in the particular written or oral form (a report, a presentation). It is important to emphasize that the method of solving problem situations in groups gives wide opportunities to develop skills in communicative competence in reading, speaking, listening and writing, besides students learn to express their opinion, to work in teams and to come to a compromise.

In future it is planned to work out cases in marketing, management and finance which improve not only students' business language skills but teach students to solve business problems by means of a foreign language.

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