PREPARATION AND ORGANIZATION OF DISCUSSION AT THE MILITARY ACADEMY ENGLISH LANGUAGES CLASSES

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The article is devoted to the problem of teaching speaking at the classes of the English language. General types of problems and the ways for their resolving are analyzed. The importance of discussion as one of the methods of teaching speaking a foreign language is stated. The example of preparation and organization of discussion at the classes of the English language at the military academy is given in the article.

Key words: teaching speaking, the problems of learners, organization of discussion.

The purpose of the article is to analyze some aspects of teaching speaking skills and organization of discussion at the military academy English languages classes. As it is well known, teaching speaking as one of the forms of oral communication plays a primary role in teaching English. Speaking at the classes of English can act as the means of allied language and speaking skills formation and as the independent learning objective.

Teaching speaking is aimed at the development of the ability to understand a foreign language utterance depending on the communicative situation and to respond to the words of an interlocutor in accordance with the speaking task and accounting national and cultural peculiarities of the English language [1, p. 165].

However, it is necessary to use special exercises and tasks to form speaking skills. This necessity is first of all connected to the problems learners experience while speaking a foreign language. For example, Penny Ur distinguishes four general types of problems [2, p. 121]:

1)   Inhibition, caused by the necessity of real-time exposure to the audience. Learners are often inhibited about trying to say thing in a foreign language in the classroom: worried about making mistakes, are full of criticism or losing face or simply shy of the attention that their speech attracts.

2)   Nothing to say. Learners often complain that they cannot think of anything to say; that they have no motive to express themselves beyond the guilty feeling that they should be speaking.

3)   Low or uneven participation. Only one participant can talk at a time if he or she is to be heard; and in a large group this means that each one will have only very little talking time. This problem is compounded by the tendency of some learners to dominate, while others speak very little or not at all.

4)   Mother-tongue use. In classes where all, or a number of, the learners share the same mother tongue, they may tend to use it: because it is easier, because it feels unnatural to speak to one another in a foreign language, and because they feel less 'exposed' if they are speaking their

mother tongue. If they are talking in small groups it can be quite difficult to get some classes- particularly the less disciplined or motivated ones - to keep to the target language.

Apart from the mentioned above, E.N. Solovova distinguishes such problems as wrong understanding of a speaking task and a lack language and speech means to complete the task given [1, p. 166].

Several ways for overcoming such problems are usually suggested:

1) To use group work forms in a much broader way. This can help learners to overcome psychological discomfort and a fear of making a mistake, gives a teacher a possibility to pay his/her attention to a much bigger number of students than using a front method of work for a given amount of time.

2) The usage of the language one level lower the students are studying at the moment allows them to feel more confident, to formulate the phrases quicker and to speak more fluently.

3) A clear statement of the task and instructions for its fulfillment enhances motivation to class work.

4) A teacher should ensure the students do not speak their mother tongue when teaching speaking a foreign language.

5) To create a sufficient number of content, language and speech means of support and supplementary resources of appropriate level.

Thinking about methods of teaching speaking, modern specialists in teaching methods apply to interactive technologies, the basic method in the system of which is discussion. Discussion is a collective ventilation of a particular problem or question or comparing and contrasting different positions, information, ideas, opinions and suggestions. Opponents can either supplement or confront each other. In the first case they reveal qualities inherent to a dialogue, in the second a discussion has some features of an argument.

To organize discussion and information exchange the lesson should be thoroughly prepared. For this a teacher should: prepare questions that could be asked during a discussion not to let it out; not allow speakers fall beyond the scope of the problems being discussed; not convert a discussion into a dialogue of the most active students or their dialogue with a teacher; provide involvement of as big number of students as possible; not leave any wrong judgment uncommented, but should not give the correct answer at once – the participants of a discussion should do that; take care that it is the opinion not the person that is criticized.

As an example illustrating organization of a discussion at the English language classes at the military academy we can suggest a discussion on the topic "The Role of Aircrew Life Support Equipment during the Flight", which is studied in the 4th year. Before holding the discussion cadets learn the new words on the topic, read some texts devoted to the problem of life support system. With the help of presentation, a text book and its electronic version cadets do different types of exercises aimed at consolidating lexical material, developing grammar skills of expressing purpose, learn to differentiate gerund and Participle I and to use them in their speech.
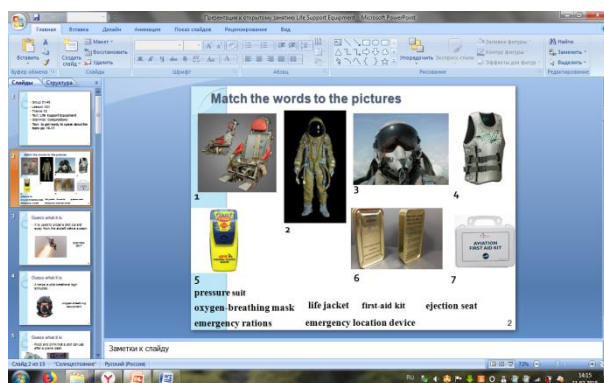
A print screen of the presentation "Life Support System"

Cadets also watch a short video fragment about different devices used for aircrew life support full of lexis studied during the lesson. Next cadets are suggested to roleplay a dialogue of a pilot and aircraft equipment specialist, using the following substitution table:

What should I do if	fly at high altitudes	You should	rely on oxygen masks
	the plane is crashed		utilize a parachute
What would you advise me to do in case of	am injured	You'd better	use a pressure suit
	suffer from high G-load	I advise you to	employ ejection seat to escape an aircraft
What can I do if I	can't define location after escaping the plane	You can	apply portable respirators
	am hungry		use a first-aid kit
	depressurization		use life support system
	biological and chemical threats		take advantage of emergency location devices

After that cadets read one more short text and choose all the adjectives characterizing the importance of the life support system from it. After that we can pass to the discussion itself. A teacher may play the role of a spokesperson or may stay behind and give this role to one of the best cadets. The spokesperson asks cadets to imagine themselves being experts and evaluate the life support system and its role paying attention to its positive and negative sides. Cadets speak about advantages and disadvantages of the life support system, agreeing and disagreeing with each other. For this they use such expressions as *I agree/don't agree with the previous speaker…, I can add…, I'd like to say that…, all that you say is very important, but…, on the one hand…, on the other hand…, not only, but also…, on the contrary, etc.* The teacher outwatches that as many cadets as possible would express their idea on the subject. At the end one or two cadets or the spokesperson make a conclusion, summarizing all the ideas that were previously mentioned. For this, the teacher reminds the cadets using such expression as *firstly, secondly, finally, to sum up, to make a conclusion.*

Thus, a proficient introduction of lexis and grammar and their proper training, a sufficient number of supporting elements and correct formulation of tasks contribute to emancipation of learners at the lesson, remove obstructions of speaking fear and encourage development of foreign language speaking skills.

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