INDIVIDUAL THINKING CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDENTS TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHILE TEACHING ESP SPEAKING

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Annotation. Software engineering students have to possess considerable level of English language speaking competence to succeed in their further career. In this article we analyzed some students' thinking characteristics that are to be taken into account while working on ESP speaking in class. Several thinking features are described, namely depth of thinking, thinking sequencing, thinking independence, thinking criticality, and thinking flexibility.

Key words: speaking skills, ESP, software engineers, individual thinking characteristics, depth of thinking, thinking sequencing, thinking independence, thinking criticality, and thinking flexibility.

English speaking skills have become a necessity for a number of specialists among which are future software engineers. Students are to be able to hold a discussion with their English speaking colleagues, to explain the process of working on a project, to provide details, give arguments, negotiate the dates, etc. They mostly acknowledge the importance of such skills for their future career (as the questionnaire allows us to state).

Teaching ESP to software engineering students represents an interesting and, at times, a challenging task. Students of this specialty possess considerable knowledge in Mathematics, Computer Science; they are generally motivated and have high level of analytical thinking abilities. Yet, when it comes to developing English speaking skills teachers face a number of problems in class. Speaking a

foreign language is psychologically a difficult process. Thus in this article we want to draw attention to some individual thinking characteristics that are to be given attention while teaching ESP speaking to software engineering students.

All students have different characteristic features of their thinking processes as thinking is formed in the result of their intellectual activity, educational processes, life experience, etc. Teachers are to account for the differences in students' behaviors that may be caused by their thinking peculiarities in order to make use of them while teaching ESP speaking.

Thinking can be characterized by its depth. It provides students an ability to explore the essence of the phenomenon, to reveal its reasons, to analyze the connections between the events of objective reality, to predict the upcoming consequences. The opposite of this feature is thinking superficiality. Students with such thinking characteristic are satisfied with knowing an aspect only partly without clear differentiation of what is proved and what is not. Experience shows that students with highly developed depth of thinking take more time to structure their speech in English, unlike those with thinking superficiality, which place no burdens on themselves and tend to have fewer hesitations while speaking.

Students also have different levels of thinking sequencing. It means that they have different views on grounding their thoughts and concluding. They differ in the ability to stick to the topic without switching attention to another aspect and thus plan their thoughts differently which results in different organization of students' speech.

Each student has his own level of thinking independence. By this we understand students' ability to show initiative in dealing with the tasks. If a students' thinking can be characterized as independent, he/she can not only make use of new knowledge but he/she acts creatively in exploring reality, puts forward new explanations, expresses his personal judgements about the reality. Such feature can help students to express new ideas which are often rather innovative; if the task allows they are able to give a fresh look at things.

Another feature which is closely connected to the previous one is thinking criticality. This feature of thinking accounts for the ability of a person to reconsider his/her views, theories and vary them if they come into conflict with new knowledge. People who are innovators in science or technology show this feature of their thinking. They aren't afraid to criticize the old; they bravely violate the former rules and put forward new ideas. Teachers have to develop the tasks in such a way that students have the possibility to practice critical thinking by offering them team games or group tasks with contradictory hypotheses. If students are motivated by the topic it will greatly increase the chances for good speaking practice in class. The opposite to this feature of thinking is thinking noncriticality. There is always a number of students who fall under the influence of other students' opinions without analyzing them thoroughly because of this thinking characteristics. They promptly accept other people's thoughts without checking them.

A very important individual thinking characteristics is thinking flexibility. It is responsible for the ability of a person to change the way to solve a problem in case it is wrong or inadequate. Such students easily accept different speaking tasks, different ways of presentation, they are flexible in terms of correcting their mistakes. The opposite thinking feature is thinking rigidity, which has to do with the inability of a student to easily switch to new rules and tasks; such students tend to have fixed modes of work they feel comfortable with, they may have problems with self-correction.

Summarizing the abovementioned, we can say that all students and their groups are different in their thinking characteristics which always results in different outcomes of the same speaking tasks in each of the groups. They all have different depth of thinking, thinking sequencing, thinking independence, thinking criticality, and thinking flexibility. ESP teachers are to account for these differences in order to provide students with a positive atmosphere so they don't feel intimidated which can contribute greatly to students' development of English language speaking competence.

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