

M. V. Shevchenko

The National Technical University of Ukraine “Kyiv Polytechnic Institute”, Ukraine

Requirements for and Principles of Teaching Students of Technical Specialities Speaking English

According to Oxford Dictionary of English [4, p. 1698], speaking is the action of information transmission or conveying one’s feelings in speech.

As is mentioned in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR), students for whom English is a foreign language should have the following B2 level oral skills in order to be able to communicate in English with their future colleagues from other countries more or less freely [1, p. 58-60]:

- Capability to give understandable, comprehensive, systematically developed presentations (or continual monologues), as well as descriptions, on numerous topics related to their general and professional interests, developing and supporting ideas with supplementary details and pertinent examples, and highlighting significant facts while presenting the pros and cons of a particular point of view, mentioning advantages and disadvantages;
- Ability to deviate spontaneously from a text prepared in advance and follow up thought-provoking points proposed by members of the audience, as well as know how to address the audience properly and at high level: can answer a series of subsequent questions with sufficient degree of ease, fluency and spontaneity without stressing out or making the audience feel themselves that way;
- In the process of a debate, should be able to offer and confute an argument, expanding and substantiating their viewpoints and/or constructing a chain of

coherent arguments: can present the advantages and disadvantages of various possibilities and emphasize significant details.

To meet the above-mentioned B2 requirements and help students achieve success in studying English and become good speakers in English, it is necessary to base the work in class on the following important principles [3, p. 55-56]:

1. Teaching speaking basing on the communicative approach (using group- or pair work, while limiting teacher talk to explaining some essential details at the lesson and clarifying tasks).
2. Allow students practice speaking with both fluency and accuracy, i.e. correctly, quickly and confidently; the teacher should not interrupt a student each time he/she makes a mistake but give them an opportunity to develop fluency.
3. Prepare speaking tasks for students that involve negotiation for meaning: students make progress while speaking in foreign language because communication inevitably involves attempting to comprehend and make yourself understood; according to D. Nunan [3, p. 55], this process is called “negotiating for meaning”, i.e. checking whether you figured out what your interlocutor has said, making your understanding clear, and making sure that person you were talking to has understood your point of view. By asking for elucidation, explanation or repetition in the process of a conversation, students of technical specialities get their interlocutors to address them with the foreign language at a level they can learn from and comprehend.
4. Provide guidance for students of technical specialities and arrange their practice in both interactional and transactional speaking at the English lesson as long as in the real world, not in class, we usually speak with interactional or transactional aims. The former one is done for social purposes – starting and maintaining social relations, whereas the aim of the latter – transactional speech – is to get something done, for instance, order or exchange goods and/or services. Real-life conversations are quite unpredictable and can have numerous topics, with

participants taking turns and commenting freely. In contrast, as David Nunan [2, p. 42] states, transactional interaction is fairly restricted and usually contains highly predictable patterns. For students of technical specialities, that may be a conversation while calling to some technical company in order to order machine parts. D. Nunan states that interactional speech is much more unpredictable and fluid than transactional one. Therefore, speaking activities at the English for Special Purposes lesson need to involve both interactional and transactional purposes as students, who are studying the foreign language now, will have to speak English in both transactional and interactional situations in the future (with colleagues from other countries and with common people.)

Thus, it is very important to take into account all the requirements of the CEFR while teaching students of technical specialities speaking English, as long as now-students will someday become professionals and will have to correspond to the European standards if they want to be successful and influential in their field; and that always and first of all comprises communication with colleagues from around the world. Therefore, teaching professional speaking in English must be the top priority at English for Special Purposes lessons at present.

References:

1. Council of Europe (2001). *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 278.
2. Nunan, D (1991). *Language Teaching Methodology. A Textbook for Teachers*. USA: Prentice Hall. 264.
3. Nunan, D (2003). *Practical English Language Teaching (Methodology)*. USA: McGraw-Hill Education. 342.
4. *Oxford Dictionary of English* (2003). Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2088.