

LESSON PLANING IN ESP

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The Teachers of NTU “KhPI” participated in the British Council Teacher Development Winter School. The event was organized in the framework of the British Council English for Universities project on 08-13 February, Kyiv, 2017.

The British Council is United Kingdom’s international organization for cultural and educational opportunities. Some of us completed the 35 hour English for Specific Purposes (ESP) course. The course included the following aspects: What is ESP; Understanding needs; Motivation; Positive classroom interaction; Developing authentic tasks; Exploiting vocational contexts as resource; etc.

I propose you to pay attention to the module devoted to lesson planning in ESP. By the end of this module we were to understand the different roles of the teacher such as planner, manager, informer, involver, language resource, diagnostician, facilitator, counselor, monitor etc. We realized why variety was important in lesson planning. There are three main reasons for having variety. Human beings can only concentrate on one thing for so long. There is something that has been called ‘90/20/8 Rule’. This means that adults can listen with understanding for 90 minutes. However, they only listen with retention for 20 minutes and they need to be involved every eight minutes. So learning is optimal if you break your content into chunks that are 20 minutes or in length, and involve people in those chunks at least once every eight minutes.

The second reason for making sure your lesson has plenty of variety is that learners have different learning styles and preferences. One learner may learn well by reading about something, whereas another may learn better by speaking or by listening. If you change the focus often enough that means that you have more chance of all the learners. The third reason is that by including all aspects of language development - speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary extension, grammar learners are able to perform better across the range of skills.

The different learning styles were discussed at the session. Do learners learn best when teaching methods match their learning style? Will they do better in class when activities are aligned to their learning strengths and preference? Learning styles are a popular concept in psychology and education that are intended to identify how people learn best. The popularity of this concept grew dramatically the 1970s and 1980s, despite the evidence suggesting that personal learning preference have no actual influence on learning results.

In Fleming’s model, learners are identified by whether they have a preference for visual learning, auditory learning, reading and writing, or kinesthetic learning. We applied a variety of interaction patterns when planning lessons.

During our discussion we analyzed when group work could be most effective and different ways of grouping learners. All these methods are very useful and they are successfully introduced in teaching process.

References:

1. British Council 2014/D017