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Сучасні тенденції викладання іноземних мов у закладах вищої освіти: Матеріали Міжнародної науково-практичної конференції, 16 травня 2019 р. – К., 2019. – 205 с.

Збірник містить матеріали щорічної науково-практичної конференції з актуальних питань й інноваційних тенденцій викладання іноземних мов у вищих навчальних закладах. Конференція зібрала науковців з різних міст України, Туреччини, Норвегії, Польщі, Азербайджанської Республіки. Матеріали конференції можуть бути цікавими та корисними для науковців, аспірантів, викладачів і студентів вищих навчальних закладів. викладачів і студентів вищих навчальних закладів.

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Annual Conference on Current Foreign Languages Teaching Issues in Higher Education: Conference Proceedings of the International Scientific and Practical Conference, 16 May 2019. – K., 2019. – 205 p.

The collection contains proceedings of the annual international scientific and practical conference on the topical issues of modern approaches and innovative tendencies in foreign languages teaching in higher education institutions. The scientists from different cities of Ukraine, Turkey, Poland, Norway and the Republic of Azerbaijan took part in the event. The conference proceedings can be interesting and useful for scientists, postgraduates, lecturers and students of higher educational institutions.

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vision of a projected software product, to demonstrate their creative abilities not only from a linguistic but also from a professional point of view.

Conclusion. The didactic and methodological principles of teaching English writing for specific purposes future specialists in software engineering are highlighted. Among the didactic principles the principles of interdisciplinary relations, autonomy of the student are described. The methodological principles of interactivity, integration of teaching writing with other types of activities, variability, self-control and control of learning are considered. Special methodological principle of taking into account the professional intelligence of students is also presented.

The identified preconditions are the theoretical basis for the development of a methodology and the creation of a model for organizing the teaching ESP writing course for students of IT specialties.

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USING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES AND DISCUSSION IN ESP CLASSROOM TO BOOST STUDENTS' CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Key words: controversial issues, discussion, critical thinking, critical thinking skills, ESP classroom.

Introduction. Due to the technological advances that have changed the way people process flux and glut of information, it has become a mainstream to infuse the 21st Century Skills into education in general and into teaching ESP in particular. The latter involves developing a wide range of job-related hard and soft skills, critical thinking being one of the "Four Cs" along with problem solving, communication, collaboration, creativity and innovation.

The nature of critical thinking has been studied by a number of scientists, both domestic and foreign, including D. Halpbern, P. Facione, R. Paul, S. Rubinshtain, V. Ruggiero, S. Terno, O. Tiahlo, L. Tkachenko, T. Voropai and others. Significant contribution to the exploration of controversial issues in the classroom has been made by D. Krieger, H. Claire, C. Holden, M. Hand and R. Levinson etc. However, the issue of stimulating critical thinking in ESP classroom through controversy has been given little attention so far. In this study we look at the ways controversial issues can be used in teaching-learning ESP as an enhancing critical thinking tool.

Methodology. The paper presents a brief analysis of research findings for critical thinking and using controversial issues in EFL classroom. During 2017-2019 we conducted a small-scale empirical study of some aspects of discussion-based approach to teaching ESP. On the basis of the carried out analysis and our theoretical background along with teaching experience we suggest some activities and tasks that can stimulate critical thinking through discussion.

Results and discussion. The previous studies showed that critical thinking, according to Dr. D. Halpbern, is "the use of those cognitive skills or strategies that increase the probability of

a desirable outcome" (Halpern, 2007, p. 6), i.e. it can be an efficacious way to enhance students' reflection, sensitivity to the context, analytical and synthetic thinking.

In Tiahlo's opinion, critical thinking is a higher-order thinking which relies on information, a conscious perception of the own intellectual activity and the activity of others (Tjaghlo, 2008, p. 35). Thus, development of critical thinking skills involves improving students' ability to analyze academic and job-related information from both logical and their own point of view, so that they could apply the obtained results to both standard and non-standard situations and problems, find arguments and make independent decisions (Ishhuk, & Dzhyzhora, 2018, p. 113).

Noteworthy is the fact that critical thinking does not imply criticizing other people's opinions. Both teacher and students must have a clear understanding of what critical thinking and criticism are. The former is about identifying and examining assumptions and biases about some ideas, with further giving reasons and evidence for or against the idea. Criticism, in its turn, is about finding fault with a person or an idea rather than agreeing or disagreeing with an argument. It is driven by emotion whilst critical thinking involves judgment justified with reasons and evidence.

ESP classroom provides vast opportunities for learners to stimulate critical thinking and reasoning. Activities may include mind mapping, generating *WHAT? WHY? HOW?* questions on a topic (e.g. *What is a team? What makes a team efficient? Why to work in a team? How to overcome cross-cultural differences in a team? How to work in virtual teams?*), having students involved in instructional activities mediated by blogs, engaging students in project work, discussing controversial issues etc.

The latter seem to be of particular importance in teaching ESP to international economics students because they might help them communicate efficiently in the multicultural environment.

Controversial issues are regarded as providing the best opportunity to get students involved in discussion, thus enhancing their language and higher order thinking skills as well as fostering discussion. Discussions involve expressing one's own point of view and dealing with those one might disagree with. However, it is insufficient to articulate opinions; participants must be able to tolerate different opinions and respond to them with respect and dignity. Through discussions, students can acquire social, spiritual, moral, cultural skills along with listening, comprehension, distinguishing between fact and opinion, handling conflict, critical thinking skills, problem-solving, which are crucial for their careers in the international arena.

When debating, learners develop empathy and a willingness to perceive and understand the interests, beliefs, and viewpoints of others. Moreover, according to D. Krieger, "debate is an excellent activity for language learning because it engages students in a variety of cognitive and linguistic ways. In addition to providing meaningful listening, speaking and writing practice, debate is also highly effective for developing argumentation skills for persuasive speech and writing" (Krieger, 2005).

In ESP classroom, discussions can take place at different stages of the lesson and for different purposes.

Firstly, by introducing simple but controversial questions at the beginning of the lesson teacher can reduce students' fears and anxieties connected with speaking a foreign language, especially when having students work in small groups. According to the survey of 37 first- and second-year international economics/business students at Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University, 100% of respondents claimed they felt less stressed when discussing issues in small groups because the teacher's role changes: they are not authorities but moderators and facilitators. Examples of the controversial topics for discussion may be as the following:

- *at job interviews, applicants shouldn't be asked questions about their marital status, religion and age;*
- *managers are entirely responsible for reducing stress in the workplace;*
- *men are better bosses than women;*
- *women worldwide still face a glass ceiling;*
- *it is better to work with a homogeneous workforce.*

When giving evidence for or against ideas, students are told to provide strong reasons that must logically support the idea and be convincing for every discussant rather than to the student providing it only.

Secondly, while discussing more complicated topics, especially in the third- and fourth years of study, students boost their interpersonal and critical thinking skills rather than merely language skills. They learn how to work in a collaborative, mutually attentive and responsive way when discussing, for instance, the impact of cross-cultural differences on business.

In my class, fourth-year students majoring in international business were given a task to have a company's meeting. To participate effectively in the discussion, i.e. to analyse and evaluate arguments, the students had to be well-equipped with relevant background information on the topic by reading authentic materials about managing cross-cultural challenges in international business. Having increased their knowledge of the issue, the students could comment, and react in what Henning (2008) defined as a 'low risk environment'. After that, the students were offered to troubleshoot the following problem: "The company subsidiary in Japan is going through difficulties because of cross-cultural differences. The sales are falling and the tension in multicultural teams is constantly increasing. Arrange a company's meeting to identify the causes of the business downturn and find the solution to the problem."

The students had not been assigned any specific roles for the discussion, thus the task was authentic by nature.

Our study revealed factors fostering discussion: effective preparation, job-related topics and diverse opinions among participants. A notable feature of the discussion was that the majority of the discussants tried to treat each other's opinions with respect, avoiding criticism. Instead, solid arguments were put forward indicating the high level of the learners' critical thinking skills. Although the suggested topic was quite complicated, the students claimed they were satisfied with their performance because they acquired hard and soft skills important for their future job. They stated that it was a challenge to think critically and find logical evidence to support their arguments but the task itself made them feel excited about the outcome of the discussion.

Conclusion. The present paper aimed to explore the use of controversial issues and discussion to enhance critical thinking in ESP classroom. The findings revealed that controversial issues raise genuine interest in students. Moreover, it was recognized by the participants that regular discussions improved their social skills through open communication along with critical thinking skills. They found it easier to find evidence to support their arguments instead of rejecting other discussants' opinion. The teacher's role should shift towards facilitation and moderation. To have all students engaged, controversial discussions must be well-prepared with topics being related to students' future career.

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PRAGMATICS-FOCUSED PRACTICES OF PROFESSIONAL DISCOURSE IN THE ESP CLASSROOM

Key words: pragmatic competence, professional discourse, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), communicative situations, interaction.

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