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SPEAKING SKILLS ACQUISITION IN «ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES: ACCOUNTING» COURSE

Formulation and justification of the relevance of the problem. As English continues to dominate in business, accounting, education, law, engineering, IT technology, medicine, media, and research, the demand for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is rapidly growing to fulfil students' professional needs. Achieving a high level of foreign language is not possible without basic language training in high school. Foreign language today is not just part of the culture of a nation, but it is the key to success in the future career of students. One of the foundations of business is accounting as it allows organizations to view and analyze the past, allowing them to make sound decisions in the future. Good communication skills in English are vital for our graduates, especially for accountants.

Analysis of recent research and publications. The concept of ESP arose in response to the need for improved communication between the developed and the developing countries of the world. As ESP course has always been based on learners needs focusing on special subjects, the students should acquire the variety of skills they will be able to apply in their professional environment. Out of this focus on specific need it is preferable to analyze what specific skills the learners need to attain in any given situation.

Speaking is one of the four language skills that plays the critical role not only in communication, but also in the acquisition of language. The importance of speaking in English learning process has never been underestimated.

Speaking is the most often used skill outside

(Rivers W.M., 1981) as well as inside the classroom (Brown H.D., 1994). It is recognized as critical for functioning in an English language context, both by teachers and by learners. It is basic skill, undoubtedly important in a second language acquisition process.

Specific studies and suggestions on speaking process and the factors that affect speaking were given by the number of researches: S. Thornbury (Thornbury S., 2005), K. M. Bailey, L. Savage (Bailey K.M., Savage L., 1994), A. Burns, H. Joyce (Burns A., Joyce H., 1997), R. Carter, M. McCarthy (Carter R., McCarthy M., 1995), C. Lindsay, P. Knight (Lindsay C., Knight P., 2006), J. Harmer (Harmer J., 2007), T. Dudley-Evans, M. Johns (Dudley-Evans T. and Johns M., 1998).

Speaking is one of the most difficult skills language learners have to face. In spite of this, it has traditionally been forced into the background. Indeed, one frustration commonly voiced by learners is that they have spent years studying English, but still they cannot speak it. Nevertheless, «speaking in a second or foreign language has often been viewed as the most demanding of the four skills» (Bailey K.M., Savage L., 1994).

Brown H. D. (Brown H.D., 1994) labels speaking as the most challenging skill for students because of the set of features that characterize oral discourse: contractions, vowel reductions and elision; the use of slang and idioms; stress, rhythm and intonation; the need to interact with at least one other speaker.

Furthermore, to know the language doesn't mean to speak this language (Thornbury S., 2005). Speaking is definitely the most complex skill to be acquired by language learners. The reasons are: one must master pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, register, functions, elements of cohesion and coherence. If we were to give a more formal definition of speaking, a good illustration would be the one suggested by A. L. Chaney, according to whom speaking is «the process of building and sharing meaning through the use of verbal and non-verbal symbols, in a variety of contexts» (Chaney A.L., 1998). This definition is relevant when speaking productions are envisaged in an ESP class, where context and symbols are particularly important. The context refers to the students' particular needs, which require an adjustment of both techniques and materials to be used during the teaching process.

For the students who study Accounting course it is important to develop the ability in English speaking comprehension first of all due to the great variety of specific accounting terms they need to learn to be able to recognize in reading, apply in writing and then, through modeled listening situations, use in speaking process.

The purpose of the article. The objective of

this article is to analyze the peculiarities of the course «English For Specific Purposes: Accounting» in higher education institutions as well as suggest the most effective speaking activities useful in speaking skills acquisition for accounting students.

The main material of the study. The globalization of business practices doubled by a reevaluation of the Accounting profession's specific features – with greater emphasis laid on communication and intrapersonal skills has naturally led to a reconfiguration of the role of linguistic preparation in ESP class.

The roles of accountants around the world have been changing over the past decades, and these professionals are slowly learning to embrace the increased responsibilities that their career demands. Many specialists in linguistics and methodology regard speaking as the main criterion by which a person's knowledge of a language may be measured.

Thus, speaking skills are important in accounting field like any other profession. They are the basic requirement to handle a job of accountant effectively and efficiently, because, in addition to performing regular tasks (draft letters, send emails, prepare reports, interpretations and foot notes for management review, perusal and decisions) accounting professionals are also required to coordinate with various parties, such as, debtors, creditors, clients, banks or affiliate companies. Hence, improving speaking skills is very important for accounting professionals as they can open many doors to success including professional development for the employees. Besides, strong speaking skills also enable the professionals to express themselves clearly.

Some people seem to have opinion that they do not need to improve English speaking skills, as the major part of their job involves dealing with numbers. While it is true that accounting entails working with numbers and they must be good at using numbers in number of different ways as required by the profession, they must pay enough attention to the importance of developing speaking skills. It must be noted that accounting also involves looking beyond the numbers, gathering and preparing reliable information for the intended parties.

The ability to speak is now one the top qualities that employers are seeing in their future employees, as a recognition of the importance of good communication skills in a working environment. The increasingly important role played by speaking skills as a factor boosting a candidate's chances of finding a good job is explained by following information.

Knowledge of foreign languages (especially English) is one of the essential criteria which has been taken into consideration for the determination of the professional level of an accountant among

the education, professional experience, professional knowledge, analytical work ability, perception of new knowledge, ability to work with a computer.

The idea of 'successful candidate' has changed so much that employers are currently looking for good communicators who, through their skills, are likely to boost the profit of the company. Among the situations requiring communication skills in an Accounting profession, the most notable would be the discussion, the oral presentation, the participation in meetings, in negotiations, the instructions, the conversation on the phone and other similar communication media.

Accounting students are also required to make proof of their speaking skills in a variety of circumstances. Among these, the most relevant are: the responses during seminars, courses and laboratory works, home projects, presentations, participations in students' conferences, presentation of reports, of practical activities, exams and colloquia, final defenses of their graduation papers. Moreover, one of the most important circumstances when they need to display proficient speaking skills and sufficient practice of oral communication is the job interview.

The main difficulties faced during the ESP: Accounting course are: 1) students' motivation to exercise their speaking skills; 2) selection of the subjects for the speaking activities that reflects students' personal interests and curiosities, thus enhancing their desire to speak; 3) teachers do not have much time to concentrate on this skill.

Thus, speaking must be part of each class. Furthermore, it is very important to combine all basic language skills with speaking during the lesson.

Dialogues and conversations, discussions, speeches and role-plays are the most typical and most often used speaking activities in language classrooms. A selected topic is given to the students through a reading, a listening passage or a videotape and then, in pairs or groups, they discuss the chosen topic in order to come up with a solution. Students will be more involved with and motivated to participate in discussions if they choose the topics that are not too difficult or, on the contrary, too easy for them to speak.

According to H.D. Brown (Brown H. D., 1994); A. Burns, H. Joyce (Burns A., Joyce H., 1997); R. Carter, M. McCarthy, 1995) speaking lessons can follow the usual pattern of preparation, presentation, practice, evaluation, and extension. The teacher can use the «preparation» step to establish a context for the speaking task (where, when, why, and with whom it will occur) and to initiate awareness of the speaking skill to be targeted (asking for clarification, stressing key words, using reduced forms of words). In «presentation», the teacher can provide learners with video clips of small talk in casual situations that furthers learner comprehension and helps them

become more attentive observers of language use. «Practice» involves learners in reproducing the targeted structure, usually in a controlled or highly supported manner. «Evaluation» involves directing attention to the skill being examined and asking learners to monitor and assess their own progress. Finally, «extension» consists of activities that ask learners to use the strategy or skill in a different context or authentic communicative situation, or to integrate use of the new skill or strategy with previously acquired ones.

Many English teachers claim that the best way to acquire speaking skills is by interacting. This aim is fulfilled by means of communicative language teaching and collaborative learning. Communicative language teaching is based on real-life situations that require communication. Following this method in ESP classes, there will be opportunities for the students to communicate with their partners in the target language. It is teachers' task to create situations in class where students have real-life communication, activities related to their daily life and meaningful tasks that give them the chance to practice oral language.

In the present study, we will suggest three possible activities involving speaking skill together with the practice of other skills or specific language structures. They are all examples of how speaking may be used in relation with specific language purposes such as the acquisition of specialized accounting vocabulary or of grammar structures in the context of an ESP class.

All of the speaking activities below have been practised in real ESP classes for Accounting students. They are as follows:

1) «*What is it?*». The aims of this activity are to rehearse specific accounting vocabulary; to rehearse functions of accounting objects / processes; to increase students' motivation to speak. During this activity one student goes in front of the class and faces his/her classmates. The teacher gives 5–10 cards to this student with a picture (for lower level students word / phrase may be written on the card) that means some accounting term that students should remember and rehearse and he/she tries to explain what it is not naming it. The student explains the meaning of the words or phrases until other students find out the word or phrase.

Possible words in an Accounting class: an accountant, calculator, money, financial statements, PPE (plant, property and equipment) etc. As a variation, if student's speaking skills are at the low level he/she may give separate words connected with the word on the card until the students guess the word.

2) *Compare and contrast the photos* and say what topics are both photos connected to. How are these pictures similar? How are these pictures different? During this activity students in pairs describe and compare photos. The aims of this activity are: to interact with each other in pairs; to

use accounting vocabulary in context; to describe photos, to use Q/A techniques in a situational context in order to check understanding. During this activity the students are grouped in pairs. Student A and B have a handout containing two photos. Student A describes the content of the photo as clearly as possible, he/she tries to compare and contrast the photos. After student B agrees or disagrees with the student A and adds his/her point of view. If it is difficult for students (low level) to speak without preparation they may have 5–7 minutes to write their description in the copybook.

Possible photos can depict accounting objects (current versus non-current assets, tangible versus intangible assets) or types of accounting (managerial accounting, financial accounting, tax accounting) or users of accounting information (external and internal), etc.

3) *True or false?* The aims of this activity are: to use accurate language hypothesizing with regard to a variety of accounting issues; to express and sustain opinion, to explain points of view and bring counterarguments; to practise expressing modality: present and past possibility and impossibility: may, may have, can't, can't have. For this activity teacher hands out papers with a list of controversial beliefs related to accounting. Students are given some time to read the list and decide whether they consider the statements are true or false. They must also give arguments pro or against each statement and be prepared to defend their opinion in group / class discussion. Possible examples of statements: 1. Accounting is used only in profit-oriented organizations. 2. There is no difference between bookkeeping and accounting. 3. The primary users of managerial, financial, tax accounting information are the same. 4. Accounting field is considered to be challenging and regarding etc.

Depending on the level of the students, various speaking activities can be performed from prepared scripts, created from a set of prompts and expressions or written using and consolidating knowledge gained from instruction or discussion of the speech act. A teacher can select activities from a variety of tasks that are suitable for all students in the accounting class.

These tasks are not sequential. Each can be used independently or they can be integrated with one another, depending on learners' needs.

Teachers should also be careful not to overload a speaking lesson with other new material such as numerous vocabulary or grammatical structures. This can distract learners from the primary speaking goals of the lesson.

Conclusions and prospects for further researches of directions. Nowadays university education has changed, and the Ukrainian universities have been integrated in the European Space, so students will need a second language to succeed their careers.

As the result of our research we have concluded that the main peculiarities of teaching the course ESP: Accounting are as follows: 1) greater emphasis laid on speaking skills has naturally led to a reconfiguration of the role of linguistic preparation in a ESP class; 2) the roles of accountants around the world have been changing over the past decades, thus, speaking skills are important in accounting field like any other profession as well as they are the basic requirement to handle a job of accountant effectively and efficiently; 3) knowledge of foreign languages (especially English) is one of the essential criteria which has been taken into consideration for the determination of the professional level of an accountant. Taking into consideration peculiarities mentioned above teachers have to choose the most effective speaking activities in speaking skills acquisition to enable future accountants to perform their job properly.

By all counts, and with proven results the most effective speaking activities in speaking skills acquisition to enable future accountants to perform their job properly have been suggested. They are as follows:

1) guessing activity «*What is it?*». The aims of this activity are to rehearse specific accounting vocabulary; to rehearse functions of accounting objects / processes; to increase students' motivation to speak.

2) activity that where students should compare and contrast the photos.

3) activity for agreeing and disagreeing «*True or false?*». Students must give arguments pro or against each statement given by teacher and be prepared to defend their opinion in group or class discussion.

Developing speaking skills in an ESP class is one of the most important tasks faced by the teachers, due to the importance of fluent and accurate spoken production both as a professional goal and in the context of the general language acquisition process. The language teacher's role is that of creating and maintaining motivation by a careful selection of speaking topics and by integrating speaking skills in a wide variety of activities. The combination of oral activities with other aspects of language (skills) will ensure students' consistent exposure to speaking situations, which may be a guarantee of their future professional success.

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СОЦІАЛЬНО-ЕКОНОМІЧНА ДЕТЕРМІНОВАНІСТЬ РОЗВИТКУ ВИЩОЇ ПЕДАГОГІЧНОЇ ОСВІТИ ВЕЛИКОЇ БРИТАНІЇ

Постановка та обґрунтування актуальності проблеми. Кілька століть вищу освіту Великої Британії репрезентували університети в Оксфорді та Кембриджі, засновані для навчання еліти. Навчання у місті Оксфорд почалося ще у 1096 році, що робить Оксфордський університет найстарішим університетом англослов'янського світу. Кембриджський університет у 2009 році відзначив свою 800-ту річницю, ушанувавши пам'ять об'єднання науковців, які вперше зібралися у Кембриджі у 1209 році. Слід зазначити і такі університети: три шотландські – університет Св. Андрія, університет Глазго та Абердинський – були засновані папською буллою у 15-му сторіччі, а четвертий, Единбурзький, був створений за королівською грамотою у 1583 році [1].

Мета статті. Розглянути проблеми підготовки педагогічних кадрів, зокрема початкової школи, та їхній вплив на економіку Великої Британії на різних етапах соціально-економічного розвитку.

Виклад основного матеріалу дослідження. У XIX столітті у Великій Британії відбулося прискорення темпів розвитку освіти, що обумовлено комплексом економічних, соціальних і культурних факторів, зокрема: розвитком промисловості, яка вимагала працівників високої кваліфікації; підвищення рівня добробуту населення, яке б мало можливість платити за навчання дітей; розвитком наук про суспільство і людину, що сформувало базу для створення педагогічної освіти [2].

У зв'язку із зазначеним, під тиском