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SITUATIONAL METHOD OF TEACHING ENGLISH TO MILITARY STUDENTS IN AZERBAIJAN

METODA SYTUACYJNA NAUCZANIA JĘZYKA ANGIELSKIEGO STUDENTÓW WOJSKOWYCH W AZERBEJDŻANIE

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Abstract. Teaching English to military students is considered to be a branch of ESP. English teachers working in this field face some problems, which are firstly related to choosing methods of teaching that would be effective within the specific framework of the military linguistic context. The given article aims at presenting the practical effects of the situational model or situational language teaching (SLT). In this paper, the authors try to investigate the roles of both - the teacher and the learners (cadets) in SLT and to determine why it is suitable to be used for military English teaching.

Keywords: foreign language, teaching English, situational language teaching, content, linguistic skills

Abstrakt. Nauczanie języka angielskiego studentów wojskowych jest uważane za gałąź nauczania języka angielskiego specjalistycznego (ESP). Nauczyciele języka angielskiego, którzy pracują w tej dziedzinie napotyka pewne problemy, które są związane przede wszystkim z wyborem metod nauczania, które byłyby skuteczne w kontekście języka wojskowego. Artykuł ma na celu przedstawienie praktycznych efektów zastosowania modelu sytuacyjnego lub sytuacyjnego nauczania języka (SLT). W niniejszym artykule autor próbuje zbadać role zarówno nauczyciela, jak i uczniów (kadetów) w SLT oraz ustalić, dlaczego nadaje się on do nauczania wojskowego języka angielskiego.

Słowa kluczowe: język obcy, nauczanie języka angielskiego, sytuacyjne nauczanie języka, treści, umiejętności językowe

Introduction

Teaching foreign languages from the content side is multidimensionally and represents the total amount of material that must be mastered by the military

student (s) to match his (their) level of foreign language proficiency of the tasks, goals and standards of training. For obvious reasons, studying a foreign language is very different from learning any other subject. The difficulty arises from the fact that language is typically used as a tool rather than the real issue (Исмаилова 2002, 115). The purpose of instruction while learning a language is to acquire both the skill (the language) and the knowledge (the content). Along with the educational process, it is a complex without developing and educational elements, and can by no means be reduced to teaching a particular discipline. Therefore, the content of education can also be understood as a set of different activities, involved in the learning process (Миролюбов, Бим 1999, 38).

On the one hand, content-based training should correspond to the educational order and the specifics of educational programs, taking into account the actual communicative needs in various fields, such as: practical, intellectual, emotional, etc. On the other hand, the content of the training should meet such requirements as accessibility, high educational value, communicative and incentive orientation, authenticity and should be informative (Байдинова 2008, 32-36).

The greatest teaching strategies acknowledge that an instructor's selection of a method depends on the course's goals, the depth and breadth of the material being covered, the classroom's physical setting, and the ability of the students to learn the given technique. The technique chosen must take into account the preferences of the faculty as well as its usefulness for assisting the students in achieving the goals. According to Palmer, "the individuality and integrity of the instructor are the foundations of excellent teaching" (Parker 2007, 10). Alternatively, "we educate who we are." The relationship between a teacher and their pupils/students/learners establishes the learning environment. Therefore, even if an approach or a method is well-intentioned, instructors should not use it if they do not think it fits with who they are as people.

Methodology

For investigating the given issue, the following relevant investigation methods and an approach are chosen.

The *descriptive* method is the starting point to any analytic research, which does this by ordering and interpreting raw data from various sources to turn it into valuable insights for our paper.

The *predictive method* allows investigators to look into the future, and it uses the results of the previously mentioned descriptive (possibly some other methods, too) analysis. It allows us to uncover future trends, potential problems or inefficiencies, connections in the selected data.

The *synchronic method* or an approach means studying any scientific topic solely in one particular period of time (typically the present), without taking into account other periods of time concerning that topic or problem.

Discussions

The main goal of teaching a foreign language at a university is to improving the primary level of foreign language proficiency, acquired at the previous stage of education, and mastering communicative competence of a foreign language on a level sufficient to solve professional social communicative tasks, when communicating with native speakers, as well as for further self-education. Foreign language teaching is aimed at:

- to increase the level of self-education, autonomous learning;
- to improve research and cognitive skills;
- to be aware of culture of information;
- to expand the range of interests, erudition and cultural level of students (cadets);
- to form tolerance and respect for various moral values of nations and peoples.

Different researchers treat the constituent elements of content of training and their structure in different ways. According to A.A.Miroljubov, content learning includes the following components:

- linguistic skills (by language levels including phonetics, vocabulary, grammar, etc.);
- generate speech skills (writing, speaking, reading);
- problems, objects and situations;
- written and oral texts (Миролюбков, БИМ 1999, 97).

For students (cadets) studying in the “Military Academy of Armed Forces”, the purpose of training foreign language is the formation of communicative competence, which implies the readiness and ability of students (cadets) to carry out professional foreign language mediated and direct communication within a certain situational context, which in turn is determined by military realities (Slastenin, Isaev et al., 2007, 163).

The established specific features of a foreign professional sublanguage allow you to designate these components of the learning content foreign languages, which are the basis of foreign language education and are professionally oriented to:

- sphere of professional communicative activity, communicative and social roles, topics and situations of communication in professional context, professional texts, speech patterns of professional communication in oral and written form, in the whole, the components of speech material;
- linguistic material of a professional orientation along with the rules for its use;

- a set of special speech skills, by the help of which the use of a foreign language is provided as a means of professional communication in practice;
- a system of knowledge of generally accepted and etiquette-usual forms of speech, as well as ability to apply them in appropriate situations of professional communication;
- appropriate methods for processing the information presented in foreign language code;
- the culture of the educational-cognitive process, creating conditions for self-organization in mastering knowledge and skills in foreign language education, and their specialty (Гураль, Минакова 2012, 121-130).

Military knowledge allows you to form a set of competencies of Military English, corresponding to the current state of society, the current scientific, technical and geopolitical situation (Article of Ministry of Defense of RF 2015, 22; Кислякова 2009, 128-139; Нелюбин 2006, 216).

To one of the most important skills of a Military English, can be included a confident command of the statutory language. First, this implies good knowledge of military terminology (operational-tactical, command staff, technical) both in native and in a foreign language. Secondly, it is necessary to have a deep understanding of military affairs, strategy, operational art and tactics. And thirdly, it is important to know the organization features of the armies of various states, to understand weapons and combat technique (Лapidус 1986, 48).

One of the main methods in the modern methodology of teaching a foreign language is the Situational Teaching Method or Situational Language Teaching (SLT). This method not only requires academic knowledge of the language and language material, but also transforms the process of cognition into the process of discovering a new experience of connections and relationships between events, phenomena, objects, and requires or necessitates of critical thinking. Depending on the course material and the instructor's use of active learning tactics, Situational Language Teaching is an adaption of multiple teaching methodologies in which the instructor employs a wide range of teacher- and student-centered techniques. Students should be encouraged to ACE a course, which stands for *Analyzing* the problem, *Creating* a solution, and *Explaining* and defending the answer, as is the case with any active learning technique. It is clear that students pick up structures or models to make sense of the world, but they should be involved in frameworks that connect what they learn in the classroom to the reality outside of it. Participation in a community is a necessary component of learning, and the situational model seeks to establish through language identifiable patterns of reality. The learners' concerns with identification and learning to speak, behave, and improvise in ways that make sense in the community they are learning the language for are driven by their desire to integrate themselves into that community. This orientation, according to M.Tennant, has the unquestionable benefit of highlighting the necessity of

understanding information and learning in context (Tennant 1997, 43). As a result, situational learning is predicated on two claims:

- a) new knowledge must be delivered in a realistic environment and must be contextualized;
- b) it should not be abstract or broad.

The Oral Approach and Situational Language Teaching are based on the structural perspective of language. Speech is seen as the foundation of language, and speaking skill is centered on organization. As a result, scenarios in class that are as comparable to real-life circumstances as feasible must be utilized to introduce structures in situations in which they may be applied. This is what makes situational language instruction unique. We are aware that students pick up structures or models to make sense of the world, but they should be involved in frameworks that connect what they learn in the classroom to the reality outside of it. Participation in a community is a necessary component of learning, and the situational model seeks to establish via language identifiable patterns of reality. The learners' concerns with identification and learning to talk, behave, and improvise in ways that make sense in the community they are learning the language for are driven by their desire to integrate themselves into that community.

In modern conditions, it is important to speak foreign languages, which means not only knowing rules, structure, lexical material, but also to develop the ability to think, to critically perceive the received information, adequately relate to it, which is not possible without the possession of sociolinguistic competence, knowledge of culture, literature, traditions and mentality of the country of the target language. Speech action is impossible outside the communication situation (Гусейнзаде 2001, 71). From a methodological point of view, the concreteness of the speech action and the substantive content plan of speech in a situation, its influence on the choice of speech means is essential one. The SLT is characterized by a significant deepening of the semantic aspect of any discipline, in particular foreign language communication, and the presence of problematic, independent, dynamic elements.

We have completely utilized the scenarios present in the military English textbooks when using SLT in our educational context. We created vivid scenarios that would improve language education using the instances from the course texts. The exercises' practical importance comes from the fact that they provide a real opportunity to experience different military scenarios derived from actual combat or non-combat experiences. The resources can be used to concentrate on and practice vocabulary or grammar points. The emphasis is usually placed on teaching specialized military terminology in context, evaluating and decoding challenging sentences, and improving students' language and information input. Typically, the teacher prepares materials that are explained to the class single item at a time. Students are able to comprehend the language taught to them and apply it to their own professional experience in the military due to the situations the teacher has

created as well as the context. The role plays and simulations that ask students to act out scenarios from real life and use language patterns to resolve them are the optimal activities that fit this method. By achieving the following goals, we can draw the conclusion that situational language teaching offers considerably more advantages than disadvantages:

- through structure, it provides a practical grasp of the four fundamental language abilities;
- correctness in both pronunciation and grammar;
- it improves students' capacity to respond rapidly in conversational circumstances and establishes automatic control of simple and complicated linguistic patterns.

Situational games are based on a set of communicative role-playing exercises aimed at developing the skills of analyzing communicative tasks and games (tactical). Using interactive forms in teaching foreign languages in a military university is sufficient effective, since the content of the educational process resonates with the future professional activities of students (cadets). Organization of the multilateral communication is facilitated by the use appropriate interactive training methods aimed at developing the creative abilities of students (cadets), oriented towards activity, stimulating activity and resourcefulness. The followings are included varieties: brainstorming, project method, role-playing and business games, discussions, debates.

Situational learning refers to the repeated use of situations in classroom activities, where permanent components of foreign language teaching are used systematically, methodically and didactically.

A problem situation has a number of characteristic features, such as a state of intellectual or psychological stress, a certain contradiction; the situation is not consistent with the idea of it, hence the need arises search for additional knowledge, information and evidence, the need for new approaches, views and solutions.

It is within the framework of the SLT military students in Azerbaijan form sociolinguistic competence. Authentic films are the source of the situational method of teaching. Exactly authentic cinema, video and television films are inherent functions of original relays of national-cultural material. They are quite effective tools that form sociolinguistic competence during oral communication, mainly through the demonstration of holistic scenarios, a visual representation of the socio-cultural reality, context and communicative situation both with regard to verbal and non-verbal planes of expression; contribute to the formation of stable associations among military students, who are inherent in a certain situational context and predetermine the expected behavior.

To select authentic films and at the same time form sociolinguistic competence, it is necessary to consider at what level of development communicative competence and interests of military students are resided, whether the film contains sociocultural and sociolinguistic information that serves reflection of various spheres of

communication and communication situations. When studying the social English course, it is advisable to give preference for melodramas, comedies and TV shows that have a lot of dialogues, lively colloquial speech, there is a correspondence between the content of these films and age and communication needs of military students. Comedies, characteristic of native speakers of the target language, as features of their mentality help to learn humor.

In the study of a foreign language in the professional and military-cultural direction, one should not ignore feature films on the relevant topics, as well as documentaries and educational video resources that are presented on the Internet in the educational sites.

In any case, communicants learn about numerous facets of the culture of the people, the language that is being studied, when examining specific situations, especially when listeners are submerged to the very heart of the situation's growth. The situational teaching approach incorporates culture as a key component. Each situation model includes the cultural aspects of communication that are common to different socio-professional categories of the population, including the military. Learning a language encompasses more than only pronunciation, rhythm, stress, intonation, and the choice of the most crucial vocabulary units and discourse structures (Pivkin 2000: 164).

The instruction of speaking, writing, reading, and listening occasionally includes the addition of a "fifth speech skill" called "culture". Culture permeates every aspect of communication, and a speaker's inability to effectively communicate with different cultural groups puts their listeners in constant danger of being let down and hindering their capacity to comprehend their environment (Миньяр-Белоручев 1991, 43-53). One strategy to develop international communication skills is to teach language at all levels, taking into consideration the remarkable originality of each person's vision of the world and their interactions with it. The introduction of particular local history and cultural fields addresses this issue in specialized theoretical and practical cross-cultural communication courses in higher education, Exchange of military experiences, trainee's participation in international joint military exercises, and roundtable discussions with foreign visitors provide opportunities to learn about different military cultures and ethics and experience what it would be like to be a part of a particular military scenario.

The use of authentic films in the educational process of a military university in Azerbaijan is methodologically expedient also because they are opportunities for audiovisual presentation of various communicative situations - "dynamic system, which consists of objective and subjective factors (including language) that attract a person to participate in a communicative act and determine his communicative behavioral motivations within a separate communicative act in the role of both the subject and the object of speaking" (E-resource: <http://www.garant.ru/products/ipo/prime/doc/71383612>).

A definite contributing factor in the development of military students' interpersonal communication skills and involuntary assimilation of appropriate language and means of speech is the use of verbal and non-verbal behaviors by movie characters, which are repeated for several episodes in specific situations.

The following benefits come from using this kind of technical teaching aids, particularly real feature films, in SLT:

- modeling a foreign language environment;
- bringing it closer to real life;
- conducting learning based on natural sound broadcasting depicting extralinguistic means and methods of communication;
- establishment of associative links with the help of polysensory perception;
- teaching communication based on the relationship of linguistic, communicative and extralinguistic factors, which is the basis for imitation;
- the use of an emotional and motivational factor in a certain way in the process of teaching a foreign language. Training games and game studies as part of the situational teaching method, model the speech behavior of military students through the appropriate roles: buyer, patient, tourist, as well as an officer, translator. During training games and sketches, an atmosphere is created in which military students of Azerbaijan, modeling their professional activities, work out the skills and abilities of monologue, listening, dialogue, that contributes to involuntary memorization, occurring without intentional use of special means for better memory retention.

Conclusions

In the system of teaching a military English, the situational approach (or) is one of the most important. Its use allows arouse interest in communication in a foreign language and its teaching in general, which increases the level of development of military education and makes it competitive in international scale.

Teaching military English means teaching one variety of ESP. While some students might enjoy it, many more find it unsettling to study. In these situations, it is best for the teacher to be in constant communication with the students, supporting them to overcome their anxiety and motivating them to use English as a tool to conduct their study in the military. Learning is an internal process that critically depends on the knowledge that students already possess as well as their aptitude for and desire to use that knowledge. Learning, though, is a contract between individuals and society that involves more than simply the mind. The first teaching model, Interactive Teaching Model, which blends teachers' knowledge and practice, is clearly one of the most effective ones for achieving the biggest educational outcomes.

Together, foreign language departments and military institutions could develop a collection of authentic problem-based resources that would let students/ cadets investigate how academic needs and interests and the target foreign language could indeed coexist in a way that is applicable to and relevant to the real world.

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