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ЯКІСНА МОВНА ОСВІТА
У СУЧАСНОМУ ГЛОБАЛІЗОВАНОМУ СВІТІ:
ТЕНДЕНЦІЇ, ВИКЛИКИ, ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ

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EFFECTIVE TRAINING APPROACHES TO LEARNING/TEACHING BUSINESS ENGLISH

English language teaching has gone through a radical shift of emphasis in the last forty years, beginning with the communicative revolution in the mid-1970-s. The English language teachers are no longer all alone in their role as trainers as they are able to bring parts of the outside world to the classroom. Beyond the trainer's "chalk and talk" and the trainees' language and communication practice there is a range of materials in different media, which help the trainer to turn the Business English classroom into a varied learning/teaching environment. While printed text remains the most common training medium, both the ELT world and the non-ELT world give us access to a wide range of video and audio material, and increasingly multimedia.

Multimedia is not without its problems but, used properly, it can be a tremendous asset and positive tool in the Business English trainer's armoury. Multimedia is very useful and helpful because:

- most students are already well used to computers and computer learning
- the same material can be used in small groups, in large groups in rotation, one-to-one and for self-learning, even for distance learning when required
- students can find multimedia learning invigorating, and it can be useful for those who have developed a “learning block” as a result of bad school experiences etc.
- use of multimedia with groups of mixed ability and mixed need can often be handled more positively and effectively when multimedia is integrated into the training programme
- specialist material produced on CD-ROM can be used to supplement the trainer’s own knowledge and experience
- multimedia learning – especially computer based – can be the first step in a long lasting relationship
- the trainer is able to give more individual attention to students knowing the others are gainfully employed
- students get used to self - monitoring and self - correcting.

The classroom is, by its nature, a very different place from the real world, which most professionals inhabit. But the Business English classroom is to act as a bridge to this world and prepare trainees for the types of communication that they are likely to encounter in the real world. There are different methods of perceiving and constructing this bridge. Training approaches and activities will vary according to the diverse viewpoints that trainers may have about the classroom.

In the real world approach, the trainer will try to recreate in the classroom a believable professional environment through simulations in which trainees will play their own real – life roles. Not only will they be expected to work on their communication skills, but the context in which the skills will be practised will aim to simulate professional reality.

Where the classroom is viewed as an arena for developing skills for later transfer, the focus will be on practice around case studies, situations which present a reality, but not the trainees’ own. These case studies and such learning environment will provide a backdrop against which communication skills can be practised and developed.

For some trainers and trainees, the best results may be achieved by creating a learning environment where skills can be encouraged to develop naturally. In this situation a supportive learning environment, which promotes stress – free learning, is the aim. Tasks can be challenging, but

they should be firmly positioned within the ambit of the classroom. Beyond the classroom is another world with its own patterns of behaviour and the trainer's role is to prepare trainees for the demands of this world.

Finally, the classroom can be seen as separate and divorced from the professional world. Within such learning environment the trainees will need to make the jump from the classroom themselves. Trainers see their role in terms of giving their trainees a secure linguistic base. A good grasp of language forms will give them the foundation they require to succeed in the real professional world.

These viewpoints are obviously not mutually exclusive. While teaching, Business English trainers may move between all of them, adapting teaching methodology according to the learners, their objectives and their preferred learning styles.

Business English is a multifaceted subject. Regarding the wide ranging content of Business English with influences drawn from a range of disciplines and the needs – driven approach at the heart of Business English, which requires trainer responsiveness in terms of both content and methodology, it is not surprising that the repertoire of different training styles which Business English trainers may call upon draws on a range of approaches from different areas. Among them ranks the approaches to learning and language - a behaviorist approach, a cognitive code approach (building upon mentalist theories), etc.

The relationship between learning and language is complex, as is that between language and thought. Much learning takes place through language (e.g. listening to the teacher, reading a textbook), and learning may be internalized through language and thought. So, language is vital in any learning context. In the Business English classroom, the situation develops to include the use of language as a learning tool and language as the object of learning itself. On the one hand, Business English teachers aim to help their trainees extend their English language knowledge, on the other to facilitate the development of the communication skills needed in their professional environments. In both cases, the learning and practice in the classroom are not an end in themselves – they should act as a bridge to the real world in which language is used as a tool for communication. Besides, I do believe that the Business English trainee should be considered as an intelligent human being who brings an assortment of knowledge and experience to the learning situation and is capable of finding things out for himself. So, this brings me on to a cognitive approach to learning and language which is more likely to provide a suitable learning environment and lead to successful learning of Business

English and that is why should be admitted as more preferable one in teaching Business English.

The Business English trainee brings his existing knowledge and previous experience to the classroom. He is very active cognitively in discovering language. Learning takes place by relating the new information to existing information, often within a problem – solving framework. Meaning is crucial in assisting the trainee to understand the material. This combination of discovery, meaning and thinking can lead to greater depth and duration of learning, which in turn can facilitate retrieval. Instead of language being the object of study, it is viewed from an interactive and communicative standpoint. It takes into account not only linguistic knowledge, but also language skills and functions and the context in which they appear. Contextualized presentation of language (i.e. comprehensible input) helps facilitate access to meaning and also assists in transfer of the language to other situations.

Within the cognitive approach all the necessary skills – listening, reading, speaking and writing - are actively developed. Activities in the Business English class are mainly task – based. Trainees work in pairs and groups, with each individual contributing his/her own knowledge/experience. Challenging learning games and role-plays, case studies are widely practiced. A wide range of visual aids (audio and video material, and increasingly multimedia) is extensively used to bring more dynamic and authentic models of language, communication and content which today's sophisticated trainees expect into the Business English classroom. Material is mostly presented within a business context – that is relevant and of interest to the Business English trainees. Mistakes are accepted as a normal part of the learning process.

The learner dependence has implications for the role of the Business English teacher. The learner thinks, discovers, uses, solves problems, learns. The teacher organizes, assists, guides, encourages, monitors and evaluates. It is trainer's responsibility to turn the Business English classroom into a varied learning/teaching environment, creating the positive learning context for each Business English trainee and to present material in such a clear, concise way that meaning is apparent and effective learning may take place.