

Чеботарьова Л.І.

кандидат педагогічних наук, доцент кафедри іноземних мов та міжкультурної комунікації
Київського національного економічного університету імені Вадима Гетьмана

DISCUSSIONS IN TEACHING BUSINESS ENGLISH

***Анотація.** Автор вивчає тему «Дискусія, як один з методів викладання курсу «Ділова англійська мова»» та ділиться практичними висновками на прикладі викладання курсу «Ділова англійська мова» зі студентами I курсу спеціальності «Міжнародні відносини». Дискусія може бути плідною за умовою, що у студентів та викладача складаються гарні творчі стосунки, вільне висловлювання та обмін думками та заохочення. Заняття проходять із використанням комп'ютерної платформи MyLab, методики та підручника, розроблених методистами видавництва Pearson, і це дає можливість викладачеві плідно готувати студентів до закріплення матеріалу, плавно підводячи групу до дискусій та творчих завдань.*

***Abstract.** The author investigates the topic «Discussion as one of the methods in teaching «Business English»» course and presents practical results on the example of teaching «Business English» to the first-year students, specializing in «International relations». Any discussion can be fruitful only in challenging creative environment of good working relations of the teacher and his or her students, openness and atmosphere of encouragement. The lessons are based on online platform MyLab, methodical developments and software, created by methodologists of the Publishing House Pearson and it gives a possibility to the teacher to use a best possible way of preparing the students to master the topic, channeling the class to discussions and creative tasks and their accomplishment.*

***Ключові слова:** метод викладання, курс «Ділова англійська мова», дискусія, закріплення теми, обмін думками, заохочення.*

***Key words:** methods of teaching, «Business English» course, to master the topic, exchange of opinions, encouragement.*

In my practical work discussions have always played a most important role as I teach Business English (oral practice aspect). I have always clearly seen what activities need to be present in the classroom for any discussion to be fruitful. Discussions can be fruitful only if they comprise a lot of other constituents: our practical activity should comprise such elements as: 1) listening, 2) focusing on other students' opinions, 3) clear vision of the problem, i.e. understanding, 4) asking questions, 5) be honest if not know the answer, 6) openness (disagreeing), 7) probing, and etc. [1].

There is no possibility of planning any class without classroom discussions. In my opinion teachers are able to make discussions purposeful on the condition they create the best possible conditions under which discussions and learning can take place. Teachers should give their students a lot of encouragement, even if some students may feel some lack of self-confidence and are not sure of their ability to express their ideas in a right way. Even if we are able to create a friendly atmosphere in the classroom, we should establish some dominant position over our students as any discussion should be controlled [2]. We should always praise appropriate behavior of our students who take part in the discussion and, sometimes, even ignore some disruptive moments. We should establish a routine pattern of our discussions as then students feel adapted to the situation and it brings to them some recognizable things.

Discussions are possible when students have already studied the subject of their discussion properly, enriched their vocabulary, prepared a lot of additional grammatical and lexical units.

As an example, I can mention some moments from my oral practice classes with 1st year students (international relations). It was Unit 5 Advertising from Market Leader intermediate. Our work is based on MyLab platform, developed by Pearson IT specialists. It allows us, teachers to set tasks, see the results of students' homework, their progress on line that makes our mutual working process easier, more productive, challenging and very modern, up to the most advanced methodology and attitudes to studying foreign languages. All the materials are authentic: texts, CDs, and, what is even more important is the vision of how to make students highly motivated and interested in becoming fully prepared for working in authentic business environment. They have become conscientious players of advertising market depicting different products and brands, able to reach target audiences, persuading prospective consumers, pushing them skillfully to become loyal to their products, to accept their vision of usefulness of different goods. It was too interesting to see the progress in their activity, very extensive specialized vocabulary that have given the students the ability to express their ideas and increased professional skills. Without discussions the process of learning and studying the topic in question and any other one could not have been possible. Another very important constituent of introducing discussions into practical work is motivation of those students who haven't yet reached the necessary level and nutrition of those students who are already well motivated to the task of learning and mastering a foreign language. For example, a certain language point may take some time to absorb the material by less motivated students, so we should do our best to keep motivation of more motivated students up. It could be done by giving students meaningful, relevant and interesting tasks. We should create a reasonable working atmosphere that does not necessarily mean complete silence but again, the atmosphere of organized discussion, with no one speaker, but a group of people voicing their ideas on the subject. We shouldn't allow the less motivated students to become bored and uninterested which may happen from time to time. Discussions present the activity that could be considered a type of inter-student communication and co-operative efforts on their part. Group work and simulation are two example of the activities designed to help student s to feel prepared to fruitfully participate in discussions. It helps to introduce students to the concept of self-appraisal and self-evaluation through different presentations and discussions. We should try to stop any attempts of students to begin speaking in Ukrainian. It should be regarded as a danger signal.

Many teachers try to use discussions on a regular basis, assign grades for student participation and inform students of the specific criteria that they will use [3].

For example, we should evaluate the frequency and quality of their contributions, as well as how effectively they each respond to others' comments.

We should always develop clear goals and a specific plan for each class, compose specific questions that will move the discussion forward and highlight major points. We should always expect that students bring different learning background. For example, while some may be active learners who prefer to solve problems in order to learn concepts, others are reflective learners who prefer to master concepts through uninterrupted reflection. In other words, we never assume that it's possible to teach in the same way get the same results with all of our students. We usually have a list of

guiding questions on the board before we begin the discussion. Each discussion usually consists of a clear beginning, middle and end.

Of course, it's important to combine discussions with other methods. At our lessons we use frequent small-group work: I divide the class into groups of 2–4 students, then give each group a focused assignment, with specific objectives and roles that they should each take on in order to complete the assignment. Small-group discussions, writing assignments can be effective methods for encouraging participation by students who are uncomfortable speaking in large groups and for enabling students to learn from one another.

We should ask students to respond directly to one another's ideas. The use of small-group discussions will allow students to become better acquainted and thus facilitate their communication with one another [4].

We should always show respect for all questions and comments, made by our students and always listen carefully, thank students for their contributions, point out whether agree or not agree with them and never answer our own questions.

With any new discussion I try to learn something about how best to approach the topic. I am sure that leading discussions can be a stimulating, enjoyable way to teach. We should always try to understand that first year students are new to a university environment and do not possess highly developed discussion skills. No matter what level of students we are teaching, we should carefully prepare and actively facilitate the discussions to ensure that they are disciplined and inclusive and that they promote learning.

References

1. Marti Anderson, School of International Training, 2012, p. 10.
2. Davis, Barbara Gross. Tools for Teaching. — San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.
3. Facilitating Discussions in Humanities and Social Science. The McGraw Center. Princeton University, 2007, p. 25.
4. Stephen D. and Stephen Preskill. Discussion as a Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms. 2nd ed. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005, p. 11.