

Teaching English to Low Proficiency Students

Holbekova Matluba Abdufattoyevna,

Teacher of Fergana State University

Abstract: This article examines the problem of teaching students with a low level of a foreign (English) language at a non-linguistic university. The root causes of problems arising in the learning process, including from the point of view of psychology, are considered. The article also presents the results of a survey of subjects about the teaching methods that were applied to them, then certain teaching methods used to solve problems that arose during training, and conclusions regarding the situation with teaching English in a non-linguistic university. The descriptions of the methods follow from a carefully conducted analysis of the test subjects' responses. The article also contains diagrams that clearly illustrate the results of the research, along with comments on each diagram presented.

Key words: English language, teaching methods, learning features, visual and auditory memory, foreign language teaching, psycholinguistics.

Introduction

We propose a completely new classification of students based on the degree of their learning ability. In this regard, we highlight:

Taught students are students for whom the material must be explained no more than ten times to fully understand it. This group of students includes the following subgroups:

1. Fast-learning students of the first category are those who grasp on the fly, but store the acquired knowledge in short-term memory (just to pass the test). They are characterized by the fact that after receiving the test, everything is literally forgotten right outside the door. Forgotten material can be easily recovered in a short time and for an equally short time. This distinguishes them from the next subgroup.

2. Fast-learning students of the second category differ from students of the first category in that after receiving a test they lose the acquired knowledge irrevocably. In rare cases, when such students see material they have once covered, they say: "I've already seen this somewhere!"

3. Long-term learning students are those who learn new material for a long time and for a long time. They are characterized by the ability to quote verbatim what has been memorized even in a state of sleep, heavy alcohol intoxication, and even ten years after receiving the test. Oh, if only everyone could be like this!

4. We figuratively called the last subgroup "Roma". We include students who have a certain amount of knowledge that is used at the most inopportune moments. Thus, when translating texts from one language to another, of the three meanings of a word in the dictionary, they choose the most inappropriate for the given context. However, in a critical situation, for example, when a

ship is sunk or at gunpoint, they completely inappropriately begin to list all the cases of using the Present Continuous.

II. Unteachable students are students for whom the material can be explained indefinitely, and each time they will think that this is a new topic. Uneducated students are extremely heterogeneous in their mass. So, among them stand out:

a) Unteachable conscious ones, that is, those who, due to mental abilities, cannot master the given material, but earn credit by attending, exemplary behavior and doing homework with the help of taught students. As statistics show, this category mainly includes female students.

b) Unteachable unconscious, that is, those whose mental abilities are limited not only in a particular subject, but also in life. These students can be easily identified by the phrase: "Well, I'm an athlete, meet me halfway!" Characterized by disgusting behavior during classes or non-attendance. Instead of taking the test, they often offer an alternative: push-ups, squats, a pool pass for the teacher. Students with particularly limited imagination and high self-esteem resort to courtship methods: flowers, sweets, invitations to the movies. The expulsion rate among such students is especially high. Among them there are also two varieties:

1. UNN (unteachable, irresponsible whiners) – students who have all the qualities of the previous subgroup, with the additional annoying ability to stand for hours at the teacher's desk with the words: "Well, please...", "I beg you..."

2. NSF (unteachable unconscious dreamers) - students who invent the most incredible reasons why they systematically do not do their homework, as well as reasons for which they need to give credit in advance, for example: illness ("Yesterday I went outside without a T-shirt and caught a cold, look how I cough, but I came..."), the regular need to do fluorography ("Well, this is once a year for everyone else, but I was told to be observed every week...") and many other reasons. It is very easy to identify such students, because when talking about the extremely difficult financial situation of the family and the need to work three jobs, they usually forget to take off their Giorgio Armani hat.

III. Бездарные студенты – студенты, которым преподаватели боятся смотреть в глаза, потому что есть поверье, что если долго смотреть на такого студента сам станешь таким же. Характеризуются тем, что на десятом году обучения начинают догадываться, что правила чтения в разных языках разные. И что например буква «А» в английском языке произносится «Эй», а буква «R» как раз - таки «А». Также они могут открыть для себя, что «salary» читается не как «салЯри» и следовательно не переводится как «солярий». А истинный перевод этого слова (зарплата) вообще вызывает ступор.

Based on the proposed classification, trainable students are amenable to standard teaching methods, and mediocre students do not need training at all; let us focus our attention on untrained students.

I. Motivation.

Based on the general definition of unteachable students, classes in such groups should begin with the information that we are repeating material from the previous lesson, which may encourage them to search their memory for similar information.

To motivate unconscious students, you should constantly resort to life examples that can convince them that they need a foreign language like air. We draw your attention to the fact that

motivation must be approached very individually, based on the purpose of the student on earth. For example, a sports student can be put in the right frame of mind by convincing him that when he becomes a famous coach and buys a foreign player, his knowledge of a foreign language can play a decisive role in the success of his team. Students of history and political science can be convinced that when Russia is enslaved by George Bush, in slavery it will be difficult for them to explain in Russian to their master, for example, that kangaroos do not live in Austria. The only way to influence FEU students is to place on their desks printouts of articles supposedly from the Internet about how not knowing a foreign language has a bad effect on the condition of hair and nails.

Thus, if you convey to students the need to study foreign languages, they will be less careless about the translation process and the teacher will be able to rid his ear of phrases like “men, women and people.”

II. Methods of teaching vocabulary.

This methodological guide does not provide a justification for the choice of vocabulary, because it is prescribed by the educational institution's program. Therefore, let's move directly to the technique itself.

The most common and effective method is the method of associations. But the examples should be lively - either vulgar, or funny, or taken from an area close to the student. An example of a vulgar association is the French phrase “...Mais aux hiboux points de genoux”, which, if read correctly (mae hiboux point de genoux) does not need commentary and is put aside for life.

One example of a funny association is the German word der Schaffner, which can be inserted into a song and set to music. The result can be either “Stop the locomotive, don't knock the wheels, der Schaffner press the brakes...”, or “Der Schaffner is in no hurry, der Schaffner understands that I am saying goodbye to the girl forever...”.

And how can you say after this that teachers are killing students???

Thus, the task of the teacher is to teach the student to build associations on his own without external influence. It is possible that with regular training of this method, some students will even move into the category of trainees, but we will prove this assumption later.

III. Methods of teaching grammar.

How to teach a student to distinguish Present Simple from Present Continuous? - this question is asked by all teachers without exception who work with uneducated students. And if we add the Present Perfect here, then this situation can be called hopeless.

The first task for the teacher is to teach students to distinguish one part of speech from another, because not so long ago an outrageous, out-of-the-ordinary incident occurred before our eyes. The task was as follows: translate the sentence “The train leaves every day at eight o'clock” into English. After the unscrupulous student carefully found out from the commission how to say “train”, “depart” and “every day at eight o'clock”, she began to try to combine the words into a simple English sentence: the train depart every day... The commission immediately stopped her, with the goal is to find out in what tense she is trying to construct a sentence.

The student replied:

- Present.
- Which one of the three you completed? - the commission clarified.
- In future.

- In the present future? How is that?

We will not give you the entire useless half-hour dialogue, the meaning of which boiled down to the fact that when the student decided on the tense, having learned from the commission that in this tense in the third person singular the ending –s is added to the verb, she immediately put it in the very appropriate place. “The trains or what? - she began her answer, - no? Well then, probably every day...”

The conclusion from this suggests the following - in order to avoid such situations, a student in foreign language classes must obtain a clear understanding of the fixed word order in a sentence, which is inherent in most European languages. It should be noted that in this context, English can be considered a relatively easy language, since only verb forms change in an English sentence; That’s why the excuses of some students, “It would be better if I took French/German,” look especially ridiculous.

Thus, having taught students to look for a verb among the first three words in a sentence with the help of a dictionary or a student being taught, you can move on to the next stage - tenses.

Here, as well as when teaching vocabulary, it is important to orient students to the need to draw analogies with life situations. When explaining the Present Simple tense, repeating that it denotes a regularly performed action or an absolute truth is useless. This can only cause bewilderment in the eyes of athletes and their loss in time and space, since they do not always understand that “the sun rises in the east” - this is an indisputable fact. But in their case, we can refer to the following vital facts. A sports department student will best understand this time if he is given the following example: “I train every day - I train every day.” The main thing in this situation is to be prepared for the question: “Does train look like a train?...”.

Students of political science will remember the use of the Present Simple using the following example: “Before each election, my colleagues and I compile election statistics.” For FEU students, the example options come down to an area already known to us: “Once a month I get my nails done.”

Present Continuous. The passage of the seemingly easiest time of the Present Continuous often turns into a tragedy. By explaining that the action is happening at the moment of speech and trying to provide additional information that the action is happening not only now, but also around now, you can drive students into deep depression and make them doubt that this world is even worth living .

Let's return to our theory about burning examples. Students of the sports department may understand this time after this example: “This year I am playing for Manchester United, but next year I will go to Real Madrid.” When explaining this time to FEU students, you need to choose a gentle and trusting tone: “Imagine that you are dating a guy, but you don’t feel stable, you live every day like it’s your last, you’re afraid that he will leave you. Present Continuous is that very lack of stability.” Based on what was said to FEU students and political science students, it is even easier - it is enough to just emphasize that in Russia there is no stability in anything at all, which means that living in our country you need to speak exclusively in the Present Continuous.

To communicate with athletes about this, you need to be patient in order to explain which action took longer. For example, the phrase “Mozart died while he was writing his Requiem” does not raise doubts among trained students, while athletes, already preoccupied at this time with the three previous times, will look for a catch in this phrase, and the most inadequate among the untrained will go to the dictionary for the words Mozart and Requiem . Let's avoid examples that are not related to an area about which the student has at least some idea.

In order to determine a student’s level of proficiency in a foreign language, as well as the level of intelligence and psychological stability, the test must consist of two parts: in the native and

in a foreign language. The first part should present a number of situations that allow you to determine how a student will act in a standard situation in a foreign language class. The test should reflect how often the student plans to attend foreign language classes, and how many of this number he plans to be ready for. You also need to find out from the student how he will act in one of the critical situations, i.e. in case of unpreparedness for a test or colloquium, etc.

The second part contains a test directly in a foreign language. Because The first-year program presupposes that students have at least an intermediate level of knowledge of a foreign language, then the test must combine several types of tasks, such as choosing the correct option from several proposed ones, opening the brackets and correcting errors in the finished text.

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