INNOVATIVE METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Yuliia Zahrebniuk, Ph.D. in Pedagogy, Associate Professor at the English Language and Methods of Teaching Department, Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University.
ORCID: 0000-0002-0997-4026
E-mail: yu.zahrebniuk@udpu.edu.ua

This article discusses the features of the use of interactive teaching methods during English lessons, examples are given and methods of conducting are analyzed. Special attention is devoted to the application of these technologies during the foreign language speech activity of students: dialogue/monologue/polylogue, vocabulary work, reading a foreign text, translation and discussion, studying lexical and grammatical phenomena of the English language.

Keywords: interactive learning; multimedia tools; brainstorming; group work; project method; monologue; dialogue; discussion; English; traditional teaching methods.
The main direction of development of modern humanitarian education in Ukraine is raising the level of domestic education to European. That is, entering the pan-European educational space.

One of the priority areas of education reform, identified by the State National Program “Education. Ukraine of the XXI century”, there is a need to “achieve a qualitatively new level in the study of foreign languages” [5]. Unlike others subjects, a foreign language is a whole field of knowledge, because it opens the treasury to a human foreign culture, new lifestyles. Ukraine’s integration into the world community requires additional knowledge of foreign languages.

The article highlights current issues of modernization and improving the quality of teaching the English language. Particular attention is paid to the characteristics of the most effective methods of teaching English in higher education. The realization of this idea is impossible without the development and implementation of appropriate learning technologies. High school should not be a preparation for a life, high school should be a life. It is possible to achieve this goal due to the innovative approach, creating an interactive environment. The word interactive means interaction. An interactive method is a way of interacting with students through a conversation, dialogue [3].

In scientific researches of teachers and methodologists (O. Bihych, H. Boretska, N. Borysko etc.) the necessity of using electronic means of teaching foreign languages is substantiated [1].

O. Pometun highlights interactive techniques and training systems. According to O. Pometun, interactive technologies are carried out through active interaction during the lesson. They help to gain new knowledge and organize group activities, starting from the interaction of two-three individuals and to the broad cooperation of many [6].

Methodists (O. Bihych, H. Boretska, N. Borysko) believe that learning the English language is a complex, multifaceted process that requires regular and creative activities. It is considered by experts as one of the main directions of the introduction of a foreign language in public [1].

It is important for the current educator to know the new methods of teaching English, special teaching techniques and methods in order to choose one or another method of teaching according to the level of knowledge, needs and interests of the students.

The aim of this article is to reveal the role and importance of innovative methods of teaching English subjects, in particular, the English language, identify the most effective methods and forms of teaching methods.

The current communicative method suggests a wide introduction into the teaching process of active non-standard methods and forms of work for a better understanding of the material. In practice, the following forms of work have proved to be quite effective: individual, pair, group and teamwork [4].

The most effective are such forms of team and group work: internal (outside) circles; brainstorming; jigsaw reading; think-pair-share; pair-interviews and others.

One of the technologies that ensure a special-oriented learning is the project method as a means of developing creativity, cognitive activity, self-reliance. Projects can be divided into mono-projects, group, multi-, written and Internet projects. Project work is a pedagogical approach to the study of the English language, which involves reading, listening, speaking,
and grammar. The project method facilitates the development of students’ active independent thinking and organizes them for collaborative research work [4].

Project-based learning is relevant because it teaches students to collaborate, develops ethical values such as mutual aid, forms creative abilities and activates students.

The project method implements differentiation, the project-based approach to learning. The project can be investigative, research, creative, predictive, analytical and playful. The basis of the project method is focused on the interests and wishes of the participants. The author of the project as a special learning task can be both a teacher and a student (if the latter makes a proposal). As the project is planned and is implemented by the student individually or in a group of students, this method provides favorable conditions for the activation of their responsibility, the formation of partnerships between the executors of the project and the teacher.

The use of a multimedia system (MS) is an important way of innovative learning (an interactive whiteboard, a personal computer, a multimedia projector, etc). This complex combines all the advantages of modern computer technology and brings the learning process to a qualitatively new level. The clarity and MS interactivity allow to engage the whole audience to active work [4].

The use of an interactive whiteboard in the classroom significantly increases the effectiveness of student learning. It is necessary to identify the following key areas for the application of MS: presentations, demonstrations and simulations of situations; increasing the activity of students in the classroom; increasing the pace of training.

Use of MS during English classes allows you to involve students in the learning process, increases learning motivation, stimulates creative activity and promotes the development of personality, expands the possibilities of presenting educational information, it is the most effective and time-saving, helps students prepare for tests, exams. MS is a powerful tool that can be adapted for use in learning English with a wide range of topics.

Achieving this goal involves the implementation of the following tasks: to identify ways of developing higher education in the context of European integration; to highlight the essence of “innovation” in relation to higher education; to describe the most effective innovative methods and techniques of teaching English.

Optimization (from the Latin “optimus” – “the best”) in general means choosing the best, the most favorable option from the set of possible conditions, means, actions, etc. If the optimization is transferred to the learning process, it will mean the choice of such a technique, which ensures the achievement of the best results with minimal time and effort of the teacher and students under certain conditions.

The optimization of the educational process is influenced by a comfortable physiological existence (housing, food, clothing), favorable learning conditions (premises, equipment, textbooks), friendly moral and psychological climate (student-student, student-teacher), aesthetics of the surrounding space (design, spiritual interests), psychological and pedagogical vectors of learning (forms, methods, complexity, feasibility), conscious and subconscious understanding of the life perspective of learning.

The most acceptable for teaching English seems to be the classification of methods by means of interaction between a teacher and students in the classroom, substantiated by O. M. Bilyaev [3]. Ways of such interaction could be different: a teacher teaches language material – students listen (story, explanation); students and a teacher exchange views on issues studied during English classes, thanks to which the necessary conclusions and generalizations are reached, definitions and rules are formulated; a teacher organizes the
observation of students on the facts which are being studied and language phenomena with a subsequent collective discussion of its results; students under the guidance of the teacher independently acquire knowledge of the language of the textbook; students by performing practical tasks and exercises acquire the necessary knowledge. Based on this appropriate methods of language teaching in higher education are identified.

To create an emotional situation in the classroom very important are: successfully selected examples from literature tours, feature films, and personal experiences of a teacher. A teacher arouses the interest of students both in certain issues of the topic and in the material in general. The most common among the methods of these groups that should be used in English classes are: the method of creating a situation of the novelty of educational material (provides the delineation of new knowledge in the teaching process, creating an atmosphere of moral satisfaction from the intellectual labor; the feeling of enrichment with knowledge encourages students to self-improvement); the method of cognitive games (contributes to the creation of emotionally sublime atmosphere, assimilation of material with the help of the emotionally rich form of its reproduction); cognitive games (business, role-playing, situational) simulate life situations, human relations, the interaction of things, phenomena; they can be the main or auxiliary form of the educational process; the developing effect is achieved due to improvisation, the natural manifestation of free creative talents of students). In education, in this sense, the game helps students to overcome insecurity, promotes self-affirmation, the fullest expression of their strengths and capabilities [4].

The game is the most accessible type for students’ activities, a way of processing the impressions received from the outside world. The game clearly shows the features of thinking and imagination, emotionality, activity, developing the need for communication. An interesting game increases the level of students’ activity, and it can solve a more difficult problem than in a regular class. But this does not indicate that during all classes the form of a game has to be used. The game is just one of the methods, and it gives good results only in combination with others: listening, conversations, reading and others.

Choosing a certain interactive method, namely “Interview”, “Round-Table (Discussion)”, “Reflection Session”, “Project”, “Expert Groups”, “Guided Tour”, the teacher develops students’ appropriate skills. In addition, as a result of the interaction of communication, mutual learning of both sides takes place [5].

The following games involve mastering the vocabulary of the studied topic and commonly used words.

Grabaminute – a game in which the student is given 1 minute to present the term written on an interactive map. The participant has to provide the most information about the given subject (term, its meaning, use etc.). Winners are the students, who provide the most complete and coherent information about the subject or term specified in the card. Knowledge test: vocabulary from a certain topic combined with grammar. A good way to fix the passed material. The game features: improved skills of quick response, critical thinking [6].

Anitemdescription – a game in which you need to describe the word or phrase indicated on the interactive cards, without naming the root of the word and without using gestures. At the same time, the active role is played by the rest of the group who have to guess the word. Knowledge test: vocabulary from a certain topic combined with grammar. Can be used as a “Warm-up activity”. The game features: improved skills of quick response, the search for synonyms in English is intensified. Direct communicative contact with the group has a positive effect on relationships within the group [6].

Chainstory – a game of logic, a manifestation of imagination and individuality. The
essence of the game is to continue the story of the previous student. Knowledge test: vocabulary from a certain topic and general vocabulary in combination with grammar. The game features: improved skills quick response, logical thinking, increased attention, no less important is the focus on the plot of the story which helps to develop memory [6].

The above-mentioned games can be held in the second part of the lesson to increase the activity of students and improve their perception of information. They do not require significant training and depend on the theoretical level of students’ knowledge.

Regarding the discussion group forms, which will be given below, in addition to the theoretical basis, argumentative answers have to be there. The following are the current discussion forms that force students to analyze thoughts first before announcing, because it is a mandatory element – not only a speech, but also an explanation of one’s own thoughts.

1. “Round-table (Discussion)” (a collective game to solve common problems).
2. Scientific debate (an educational debate-dialogue in which students defend their opposite opinions).
3. Competition in small groups (a motivational game that encourages students to be active).
4. “Brainstorm” (a game that develops critical thinking).
5. Situation (a game that develops skills to react and fantasize quickly).
6. Judicial sitting (a game with the distribution of roles and finding constructive answers).
7. Training (a form of training with the use of various forms of work with a small group for improving skills in the process of modeling the situations that are close to reality) [5; 6].

For example, the game “What? Where? When?” could be effectively used. The audience is divided into two teams that take turns sitting at the table. The game is similar to a famous TV show. Each team receives an envelope with a question. The jury determines the correctness of the answers, counts the number of points.

“Brainstorm”. This is a method of organization of joint group and creative work in the auditorium in order to increase the mental activity of participants and find ideas, constructive solutions to complex problems or unusual situations. It is advisable to use it at the very beginning of solving the problem or if this process has reached a dead end. The object of this game is to provide ideas for an extraordinary solution to a problem.

To interesting extracurricular interactive classes can be included English guided tours and video recording. An important stage of carrying out of this action is preparation: distribution of roles between students, the statement route list, an independent search of information by students and approval by the teacher, acting as an expert [2].

The main problem in attracting interactive games is that the student often does not have his own opinion, and if he has, he is afraid to express it openly, to the whole audience. Constant conducting of interactive classes contributes to significant improvement of communication skills, as a result, internal restrictions of students disappear. In the process of communication, students learn: to communicate with different people, express alternative opinions, participate in discussions [3].

Interactive games with the involvement of multimedia technologies include the method of projects “Presentations”, demonstration of video projects “Video projects”, conducting interactive games “First Million”, “The brain of the class”, “Blinking frames” and others. The use of multimedia technologies is possible to supplement training and lectures. The main advantage of interactive learning is the combination with traditional methods. The
interactivity of English teaching methods is manifested in the synthesis of the above technologies, in a variety of forms of conducting classes.

From the above-mentioned examples we see that there are a large number of forms of interactive classes. The teacher’s biggest mistake is to use one teaching method or one form of conducting an interactive task. It is important to remember that the ways of perception of information are not one-sided, so different forms should be involved.

Analyzing the above material, it can be concluded that the use of interactive forms and methods in the implementation of the personal oriented approach and teaching English makes it possible to increase the number of conversational practice in class, are interesting for students, help to master the material and use it in further classes, perform didactic and various developmental functions.

Thus, the teacher becomes a mentor of independent educational, cognitive and creative student’s activities. Having many advantages, there are some disadvantages: with frequent contact, the perception of interactive games becomes mechanical, loses creative interest, therefore it is necessary to diversify games and combine interactive teaching methods with traditional ones.

Summarizing the above, it should be added that the work in this direction is quite effective in teaching English.

Prospects for further research will be aimed at studying the problem of using interactive teaching methods in the training of future English teachers during blended learning.

REFERENCES