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LANGUAGE ACTIVITY STAGES ON IMPROVING RECEPTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE SKILLS IN TEACHING ESP

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Abstract. In this article we have analyzed pre, current and post activity stages having used in teaching ESP specifically teaching to students of agriculture and veterinary of Shushi University of Technology for improving writing, speaking, reading and listening skills. We have proposed some activities for teachers to include in their plans for developing receptive and productive skills. We have included such activities as role plays, interviews, discussions, writing emails, social media posts, essays, listening to records, telling a story, watching a video, introducing vocabulary and reading professional texts in teaching ESP. So it is the duty of teacher to differentiate material and to adapt it to his/her students' needs and interests.

Keywords: receptive skills; productive skills; English for specific purpose; pre-teaching; pre-activities; post-activities.

Teaching ESP like teaching ESL includes some stages for improving receptive and productive skills. Both receptive and productive skills lessons include “before, during and after” activities. So we shall introduce some ideas of what you could include in your lesson plan to help your agricultural students to develop their speaking and writing or reading and listening skills.

Let us start with activities on developing *speaking and writing skills*. Before speaking or writing you should introduce the agricultural topic to your students and ask them what they know about it by showing images to them. *Reading* could serve as “before activities” for further stages on developing productive skills.

Other useful techniques that we offer as “before activities” for speaking and writing is *to show a video* on the topic or *listen to records* and allow your students to use what they know and their imaginations and *to brainstorm all their ideas* on the current top-

ic. It is advisable to give preparation time to learners. They need to think about what they are going to say or write. They should also think about *who* they will be speaking/writing to and *why*. You can delegate them to do their preparation alone, in pairs or in groups. Learners can make notes to help themselves later.

During our speaking and writing it is helpful to use a real life task. Students like to become concerned with personalities or feelings rather than with general or abstract matters. So you can use such tasks as *drama or role plays, interviews, discussions, problem solving, surveys, and presentations*. Examples of writing tasks are the following [1]:

- Stories,
- Text messages,
- Emails,
- Social media posts,
- Essays,
- Instructions,
- Reviews.

In post writing/speaking you can follow up with activities for example sharing ideas with each others on what they heard or reading each other's writing.

Here we present a short plan of the lesson in TESP including the *pre, current and post* stages of speaking and writing:

Topic: Agriculture

Pre-speaking:

- Students work in pairs, find out *when farming first began in their country and what farmers first grew there.*

-Teacher show an interview of the farmer to students on www.youtube.com.

- Teacher introduces vocabulary on the theme

Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (a-f) [2]

1. agriculture
2. crop
3. cultivate
4. produce
5. domesticate
6. plant

- a) a large group of cultivated plants
- b) to put seeds in soil
- c) growing plants and raising animals
- d) to make something
- e) to raise a crop from seeding to harvest
- f) to tame an animal

Speaking:

- Students work in groups. Each group chooses a process in agriculture they would like to discuss. Groups imagine that they will be agronomists trying to promote agriculture in their country. Students discuss what kind of agriculture they want to deal with. (Group discussion)

- Students discuss what is important for good farming in the role of agronomists. (Role-play)

Post-speaking:

- Students write a letter to their colleges how to develop agriculture in their country and give him/her pieces of advice. (Writing practice)

Theme: Swine Industry

Pre-writing:

- Present the topic by giving them to listen to the audio about swine industry

- Introducing vocabulary: list of words with pictures.

Writing

- Using the audio task heard from the previous task, students are given the instruction to review the changes in the swine industry described in audio record. Learners work alone and do their writing task.

Post writing

- Students swap their papers and read the papers of a learner sitting next to him and tell whether it is described right or wrong.

Now let us consider “before, during, after” stages to help learners to understand, engage them and really make the most of a reading or listening text. This part of the lesson is where you introduce the topic, find out what learners know about it, get them interested and ready to read or listen. You might choose to deal with some potentially problematic language at this stage. Deciding what to deal with is tricky. Learners don't need to understand every word in a text in order to develop their reading skills but if you're going to set a specific task and there are words learners might not know in the question or answer, then you need to deal with this before they read/or listen [4]. Although this is often called *pre-teaching*, it doesn't always happen *before*. For example, you might set an easy listening task which doesn't require any pre-teaching, but instead do some pre-teaching before the next, more challenging listening task.

While reading or listening a teacher must give a reason to learners for reading or listening. One can start with an easier ‘gist’ task to help learners get an overall understanding of the text, followed by a task that requires more detailed reading or listening.

If you're using a textbook or material from the internet, make sure you can answer the questions and find where the answers are in the text. If you write your own questions, test them on a colleague first to make sure they can find the answer and they are suitable for your learners.

You should think about how you will check answers with your learners, and how to help them if they have difficulty e.g. they could check in pairs, you can play the audio again; you can project the text and show them where the answers are. If you're *telling a story*, you can also ask questions as you go to help learners to understand it. You can also help learners to understand using pictures, facial expressions, your voice, or explaining some words [3].

For post reading/listening activities, you may follow your reading with a listening, or vice versa. Or perhaps you will use a reading or listening text to introduce a new topic, or to start a project. There are some activities that learners can do before they read or listen, to raise interest in the text and prepare learners to read (pre-reading activities), and after reading, to follow up on language work or the theme of the text (post-reading activities).

Below we introduce a short plan of the lesson in TESP including the *pre, current and post* stages of listening and reading:

Topic: Dairy Industry

Pre-Listening task:

- We discuss what the student know about the dairy industry, what the current situation with dairy industry in his country is.

- We introduce vocabulary by using pictures from the text that a learner is going to listen just to be sure s/he understands the vocabulary.

- You could show a photo of the situation they will listen to.

Listening stage:

- Practice listening skills and ask them to answer whether the following statements are true (T) or

false (F). f.e.

1 - The dairy receives calves from a breeder.

2 - The dairy produces more than milk.

3 - The milk at the farm is tested for rBST.

After-listening task:

Learners respond to the content of the record e.g. *Did you like the story? Why? What dairy products are popular in your*

country? How has technology changed dairy production?

Topic: Sheep industry

Pre-Reading task:

- Introduce the topic. Ask learners what they know about it, and what they want to know.

- Use the cover/blurb from a book, article title, newspaper headline and ask students to guess the content.

- Give learners the question sheet and ask them to guess the answers before reading the text. f.e. Talk about these questions: *How is raising sheep is different from raising cattle? Are sheep raised mostly for wool or meat in your country?*

While reading:

- Learners read to check the predictions they made before reading.

- Learners to read the first sentence of each paragraph, then say what the whole text is about,

- A reading race, where learners have to find specific information from a text faster than other learners,

- Choose difficult words from the text and ask learners to choose the correct meaning for each of them, from choices a, b, c, d.

Vocabulary

Match the words (1-6) with the definitions (A-F).

1) – flock

2) –ewe

3) –distribute

4) –feeder lamb

5) –market slaughter lamb

6) –confinement lamb production

A. a large group of domesticated sheep

B. a method for raising sheep indoors

C. a lamb that is sold to be slaughtered

D. a lamb that is sold for finishing

E. to supply goods to shops to be sold

F. a female sheep

After reading:

- Learners act out a dialogue from the text.

- Learners discuss questions related to the topic of the text.

- Learners write their own questions for the text.

- Learners write/role play/record an alternative ending.

- Learners write their own version of the text.

- A language activity which focuses on language structures included in the text (e.g. change present simple in a story into past).

Having analyzed these activities we can conclude that there are no specific tasks for developing your students' receptive and productive skills. We have proposed some of them which we use in teaching to students of Shushi University of Technology. We can also say that in teaching ESP teachers should

vary their tasks and adapt material to their students' needs and interests.

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