THE TECHNOLOGY "INTERVIEW" IN ENGLISH TEACHING OF THE TECHNICAL STUDENTS

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Abstract: The paper deals with the analyses of the technology "interview" in English teaching of students in higher technical universities. The objectives of the paper are outlined; the definition of the notion 'interview' is clarified; the characteristics of the technology "interview" are considered; the skills of the interview participants are shown; the classifications of interviews in the field of teaching foreign languages are outlined; the classification of an interviews according to the suggested criteria (the purpose of the interview, the degree of controllability, the quantity of participants, the method of communication, the format of arrangement) is described; the examples of situations are given.

Keywords: language education, English, interview, English teaching, technical students, foreign language.

Introduction

Nowadays, in the information society the new opportunities of studying and working, sharing experiences and enhancing qualifications abroad are open for Ukrainian students and young professionals in various fields of science and technology. This tendency causes the expansion of international scientific and technical links, and thus demands the teaching foreign languages optimization methods of the students in higher technical educational institutions.

Foreign language is known to be a means of communication. It is a tool that helps a speaker to express himself. In foreign language teaching speaking is one of the most complicated skills. The ability to speak a foreign language means directly using a foreign language or producing speech.

A number of theoretical and methodological researches in the field of teaching speaking methodology of the students (F. Klippel − communicative fluency activities (Klippel, 2008); S. Luoma − assessment of speaking (Luoma, 2011); D. Norman, W. Levihn, J. Hedenquist − methodology of communicative ideas (Norman, Levihn, Hedenquist, 2002); N. Underhill − testing spoken language (Underhill, 2006); N. Bilbrough − dialogues from theoretical and practical point of view (Bilbrough, 2007); R. Fujishin − communication during an interview (Fujishin, 2009) have been considered. However, the teaching foreign language speaking problem of technical students is still open for further scientific investigations.

Speaking skills for future specialists in different technical fields are very important. The students of technical universities have to relatively freely communicate on different topics of their professional sphere. Therefore, teachers should organize the learning process so that students can actively practice in speaking foreign languages.

The technology "interview" occupies a significant place among a variety of technologies aimed at developing and improving speaking skills. Using this technology in teaching foreign languages for specific purposes is little discussed by methodologists.

So, the aim of this paper is

✔ to clarify the definition of the word 'interview';
✔ to analyse the main characteristics of the interview;
✔ to outline the main skills of the participants of the interview;
✔ to consider the organization of the interview;
✔ to determine the classification of the interview for teaching technical students.

Overview

There are various associations with the word "interview". They are 'conversation', 'dialogue', 'meeting'. The definitions of the notion depend mostly on the usage. For example, in the journalistic field M. Lukina
interprets the interview as interpersonal verbal communication for getting information and producing new knowledge in order to satisfy the information needs of society (Lukina, 2003). In the context of teaching foreign languages for specific purposes the notion 'interview' can be considered as the foreign language verbal communication of communicants in the form of questions and answers to obtain information about technical/specific field of knowledge.

In technical universities the technology "interview" can be used in the educational process of the 1−6th year students within the consideration of various general, technical and professional oriented topics. For instance, making up a job-interview, interviews with famous scientists or specialists in a particular sphere. So, using such a technology enables the teacher to reinforce interdisciplinary between humanitarian, technical and special disciplines.

Consider the characteristics of the interview. Since interviews belong to dialogue speech therefore they have the dialogue characteristics and particular ones. According to S. Nikolajeva et al, a dialogue is directed to somebody, purposeful, communicatively motivated, situational, spontaneous, unplanned, emotional, rich in elliptical replicas and colloquial clichés (Nikolajeva, 2004). On the base of these characteristics it is possible to outline the interview ones. It is directed to somebody, purposeful, communicatively motivated, situational, spontaneous, emotional/neutral, unplanned/planned, interactive, rich in elliptical replicas and colloquial clichés.

Let us give some explanations of outlined characteristics. The interview is directed to somebody because of communication exchange between an interviewer and a respondent under certain conditions when one asks and the other – answers. Purposefulness is realized through simulated scenarios that stimulate participants of communication to achieve a certain goal. For example, to find out information about the contribution of a researcher to the field of information technology. Communicative motivation focuses on the desire of students to participate in the particular interview and to learn how to communicate in a foreign language. The importance of the situational characteristic of the interview is connected with the fact that simulated learning communicative situations have to reflect closely the realities and in future the students can easily transfer their knowledge in real-life situations. Spontaneity is mainly caused when the student either answers or asks unprepared questions without any hesitations. Emotionality is achieved by using facial expressions, gestures, emotional phrases. But job-interviews are mostly restrained or neutral. Language cliches and elliptical replicas are an integral part of interviews because they help students start and end the interview, switch from one issue to another. Instead of the fact that dialogues are unplanned the interview can be either planned or unplanned. It depends on the interview. In general the interviews should be carefully planned (an interviewer has pre-planned questions), but some of them are not planned or they are combined. Also, interactivity is an important characteristic of the interview. It means an active interview participation of students that leads to sharing information during collaboration.

Now, it is necessary to outline the roles in the interview and the main skills of the interview participants. The interview usually involves the following roles:

- interviewer / journalist / student / employer / person;
- interlocutor / interviewee / scientist / expert / employee / student / respondent.

In the conversation the leading role belongs to the interviewer because he/she suggests questions and controls the development of the interview. On the second plan of the conversation it is the role of the interlocutor. It should be noted that the choice of roles simplifies communication of students because the immersion in roles eliminates the participants of the interview to speak with fear and thereby the learning atmosphere is comfortable and acceptable for communication.

Participating in the interview, both the interviewer and the interlocutor, should demonstrate the foreign language activity and interest; show the knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, relative linguistic correctness; understand the purpose of the interview; use speech cliches; carefully listen to each other; understand each other.

The interviewer should clearly be aware of the subject of the interview; prepare and ask questions; think over a logic sequence of possible questions; build communication progress; be tolerant to the interlocutor; express his/her opinion; fill pauses and interrupt if necessary; control communication; stimulate the speech of an interlocutor; accept and deny; ask for clarification; detail information; agree or disagree.

At the same time the interlocutor should answer questions of various types; respond quickly; be able to substantiate his/her opinion; concisely express his/her point of view; detail information; justify an opinion.
Let us consider the structure of the interview. The parts of the interview are introduction (the interviewer and interlocutor exchange polite phrases, the purpose of the interview is defined), main part (it contains the sequence of answers to questions within the topic), conclusions (this part consists of thanks for the interview, defining future perspectives).

Now it is necessary to define the types of the interview. The technology interview is considered in the context of various fields of knowledge such as journalism, sociology, medicine, psychology. Thus, there are different types of interviews. For example, Grabel'nikov A.A. (in the journalistic field) identifies the following types: interview-monologue, interview-dialogue, interview-conversation, interview-polylogue, interview-message, interview-sketching (Grabel'nikov, 2007).

Methodists of teaching foreign languages classify interviews in different ways. Consider some of them. According to Kosolapova M. et al., there are a documentary interview (the study of past events, clarifying facts and opinions; the purpose of such interviews – identification opinions, judgments), an interview-opinion (to find out the respondents' opinion on a particular issue) and an interview press-conference (usually a discussion on a particular topic where the interviewer can comment on any event) (Kosolapova et al., 2012).

F. Klippel classifies interviews in the following way: self-directed interviews (each student prepares 5–10 questions then exchange these questions and ask each other); a group interview (one student is asked by other students of the group); an opinion poll (the students prepare a list of questions for clarifying opinion on a particular topic); guided interviews (the students get prepared answers and they need to generate questions) (Klippel, 2008).

Fujishin R. considers information gathering interviewing (with the aim of writing a report, term paper, or speech) and employment interviewing (for looking for or changing a job) (Fujishin, 2009).

Given classifications of the interview do not fully cover the specifics of learning process of technical students. So, it is necessary to outline the types of interviews according to the following criteria:

1) the purpose of the interview (topic-informational interview, job-interview);
2) the functionality (questioning, discussion);
3) the degree of controllability (free interview, guided interview, combined interview);
4) the quantity of participants (individual, group);
5) the method of communication (direct communication, online communication);
6) the format of arrangement (press-conference, roundtable discussion, conversation).

Let us consider these criteria. According to the purpose, the interviews are divided into topic-informational interview and job-interview. The topic-informational interviews include general technical (the interviews with scientists about their scientific achievements, the interview is devoted to advantages and disadvantages of technological innovations, etc.) and professionally-oriented topics (specialized topics such as risks in information security). For example, the following situations can be suggested the students:

Work in pairs. You are a journalist in the journal "New Scientist". You need to interview a scientist who is an expert in the field of smart materials. Prepare 5-6 questions. Role play the interview.

You are a journalist who works for Information Security Journal. You need to write an article about pros and cons of different biometric systems. Study information about these systems. Find an expert in this field, prepare 5-10 questions, role play an interview and write down an article.

Job-interview is actual for the 4-5th year students. They study how to write a CV and an application letter, to make up a job-interview. It is necessary to teach such types of job-interview: biographical and competence interviews, group and panel interviews.

It is possible to distinguish interview according to the functionality. They are the interview-questioning and interview-discussion. The aim of the interview-questioning is to ask and find out information. The interview-questioning includes the following dialogue unities: question – answer, message – question – answer. During the interview-discussion the students ask and consider different points of view. This interview consists of such dialogue unities: message – message, question – answer, message – answer.

Interviews, according to the degree of controllability, are divided into free, controlled and combined. A free interview does not include prepared questions. It means that the interviewer uses his/her subject background knowledge of the conversation. It is also possible previous topic preparation. Guided interviews require preconditioning: a list of the questions and the order of their presentation. Combined interviews are hold on the base of pre-prepared questions and possible situational questions.
According to the criterion "the quantity of participants", the interview can be individual or group. Individual or personal interviews are conducted only by the interviewer and the respondent. The group interview involves either several interviewers (e.g., panel job-interviews) or some respondents (4-6 respondents in the group job-interview).

Interviews by method of communication are divided into direct and online. Typically, direct communication interviews are in a direct contact with the interviewer as questions and answers. Online communication is remote, it means through the Internet (e-mail, forum, chat, webinars, online conferences). Such communication has its advantages, namely: the ability to think through issues, to communicate with a wide range of interlocutors from different parts of the world and to save time.

Interviews can be arranged in different formats: a press-conference, a roundtable discussion, a conversation. At the press-conference a well-known person is asked by a group of interviewers to cover certain information. A moderator of the interview manages communication, giving the first word to the respondent, and then to the interviewers. The roundtable discussion is conducted by the interviewer with several interlocutors. In this format the main functions of the interviewer are to prepare the questions and manage the process of communication. Debates and discussions are varieties of interviews that require careful preparation. In the conversation the interviewer communicates with one or more interlocutors, asks, expresses the opinions in order to find out a solution of the situation.

All these types of interviews allow teachers to teach their students foreign language communication, corresponding behavior in the suggested situations and prepare them for their future real-life interviews.

Conclusions

Given analyses of the technology 'interview' in this paper shows the peculiarities of interview-organization for the students of technical universities. With the help of the technology 'interview' the students can improve communicative skills (express their opinion, inform interesting facts, explain and detail information). At the same time knowing the characteristics and the suggested classification of interviews, the structure and skills of the interview participants can help teachers of foreign languages to organize the learning process effectively.

References