

НОВЫЙ ФОРМАТ ФИНАЛЬНОЙ АТТЕСТАЦИИ СТУДЕНТОВ НЕЯЗЫКОВЫХ СПЕЦИАЛЬНОСТЕЙ

INNOVATIVE CONCEPT OF FINAL ASSESSMENT IN ENGLISH FOR ESP STUDENTS

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This paper deals with the new vision of final assessment for ESP students learning English as a foreign language. The issue of assessing higher education students appears to be urgent within EFL learning requirements. Higher educational establishments are aimed at forming linguistic, socio-cultural and pragmatic ESP competences. The up-to-date method of evaluating all above mentioned competences is in great demand nowadays. Traditional approaches lack in the universal tool for assessing multifunctional skills of graduates ready to apply their practical knowledge and demonstrate professional progress. English Chair for Science Departments of Voronezh State University has introduced presentation as a form of final assessment as it proves to be the most successful way of getting useful experience for future academic and professional development. The shift towards the new format of final exam was initiated by the implementation of the Model Program in Foreign Languages for Non-linguistic Departments which was approved by Russian Scientific and Methodological Council for Foreign languages in 2009 [2]. New updated and revised edition of the Program was issued in 2016 [3].

English Chair for Science Departments of Voronezh State University established a new form of final assessment for the second year students in 2010. Oral presentation was considered to be the most relevant technique to reveal students' potential and progress. The final presentation is to be based on the topic within Professional Sphere and evaluate all acquired communicative competences in reading, listening, speaking and writing. Since then the format of final exam for ESP students has undergone several revisions and as a result universally applicable techniques for various non-linguistic departments has been adapted.

First of all, during the preparation process to the final exam a student is supposed to choose a topic for presentation within Professional Sphere, find authentic sources, read and pick up relevant information, design logical presentation using visual aids. At this point the biggest challenge is to demonstrate the ability to feel familiar with the professional field and choose a contemporary and catching topic for future presentation.

The next step is to select and compile relevant materials, rearrange and structure them logically to be presented in class. So it is a vivid opportunity for a student to demonstrate writing skills. The majority find it problematic to summarize information from multiple sources and to construct proper slides.

Speaking skills are to be tested during the presentation in class. It is compulsory for a presenter to deliver the speech fluently. It is crucial to either learn the material by heart or demonstrate the expertise in this sphere. Besides, it is not of less importance to have a good language command and to signpost logical parts of presentation. The rest of the students in the class are to listen attentively to the given presentation and to ask questions as required in the format.

The main objective of the teacher is to evaluate and assess acquired reading, writing, listening and speaking skills as well as the quality of the presented material and the communicative behavior in accordance with the approved table of criteria.

It is obvious that during the preparation to the final exam students, taking into account all theoretical issues of presentation should do much work by themselves at home. They are allowed to present in class once or twice with related material before the final exam just to develop skills in dealing with nervousness and understand their weak points.

As practice shows there are a number of typical mistakes that students can avoid if to focus on them on the preparation phase. The first thing is to distinguish between format of presentation in Russian and in English. The most difficult thing is to make well-structured presentations with well-marked, clear-cut opening, body and conclusion using signposting phrases and linkers. Visuals and slides should contain only significant information that should be correctly, uniformly listed and designed. Also, handling the question-answer session, rephrasing, clarifying, and summarizing are the obstacles which are difficult to surmount.

It is significant to help students reveal mistakes and acknowledge them. The practical activity of video shooting students' presentations has been introduced recently to analyze their speech and visuals from the audience viewpoint [4]. Students are given an opportunity to film their presentations in class and provide peer-to-peer discussions in groups. This procedure allows finding out possible failures and avoiding them during the final exam. Such

preparation to the final assessment helps teachers define, classify and generalize the most common problems that students face presenting in public.

To assist students in overcoming eventual difficulties a course “Basics of Presentation for the students of Science Departments” has been developed which gives the general overview of presentation techniques and communicative skills as well as supplies students with necessary presentation terminology and collocations, and allows feeling more confident presenting in public [1].

Presentation as a form of final assessment has proved to be quite a new approach to ESP and a state-of-the-art concept of final assessment integrating all communicative competences vital for future academic, professional and social development of graduates. It appears to be highly innovative and can be recommended as a format of final testing in higher educational institutions.

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