

**Секція 10. ІННОВАЦІЙНІ ПІДХОДИ ДО ВИКЛАДАННЯ
ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ ДЛЯ ПРОФЕСІЙНОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ**

ORAL TESTING TECHNIQUES IN ESP

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An oral test as a test in which a student is encouraged to speak, and is then assessed on the basis of that speech is difficult to treat in the same way as other more conventional tests. Being qualitatively different from other kinds of tests oral tests are not always easily marked.

It is rare for an oral test to consist of just one technique. Usually, several techniques are placed in a sequence. A good test will reflect different types of language use. For instance, a sequence of tasks will involve picking out key points from a passage, reconstituting an argument from written notes, engaging in group discussion on specific issue etc. A sequence of test tasks will make a test fair, i.e. the one which will give a picture of oral proficiency. It will also help to make a test balanced (communicative tasks can be mixed with mechanical ones; subjective tests with reliable tests). Multiple tasks may need multiple assessment. To improve and maintain the consistency of grading the assessors negotiate their way to an agreed score. Allowance is made for those occasions when a third opinion is needed (if there is a discrepancy between grades that are initially given by two assessors).

In case of oral standardized tests a fixed series of techniques with a fixed series of questions is laid down as the correct test procedure to follow. An oral test sequence of techniques may give enough flexibility in the procedure for the interaction (for example, the questions and the order of questions may be changed to suit each learner) as it happens in normal conversation. While the test procedure is flexible, it elicits similar language from each learner.

Some of the oral testing techniques described below can be successfully used in the ESP course. It should be noted that in the ESP programme more weight should be given to fluency and style, and less to the language itself.

The example of making a presentation as an authentic and communicative activity both for professional and academic purposes may be a routine part of the daily student's schedule with a subsequent classroom analysis (particular weaknesses are identified for further practice) and a formal test procedure. When giving presentations specific grade categories can be used for the different functional skills involved (explaining factual data, giving arguments, summarizing etc.).

Grade categories are combined with rating scales for each category. Grade categories follow the model of performance criteria (vs traditional model of language components). As the emphasis is shifted to a language as a tool for communication, grade categories cover all aspects of speaker's performance.

Oral language ability is very complex. It combines a number of different skills and factors and gives the assessor a profile of a learner. Performance criteria are

diverse. It is not so easy to keep track of a lot of them at the same time. To assess objectively and make assessment feasible assessors are asked to keep track of not more than three/four criteria.

The interview as a direct face-to-face exchange between the learner and the interviewer is one of the most common oral tests. Being structured, it should have consistency and the relevance, present series of questions and prompts to establish the level against a specific scale, and allow the learner to show his oral proficiency. Oral interview technique is well-suited for testing students when detailed well-defined rating scales present easily-recognizable learner profiles. To elicit the learner's best language performance it is necessary to allow the learner to display his conversational fluency skills and to self-repair (correct his own errors).

Student-student description can be used as a regular test task in the ESP course. ESP learners need work-related language. For instance, to cope with the task described below the students need a command of the language of colour, dimension, location in three dimensions, and sequence in description. They will need to describe objects and talk about relative location. The technique involves giving a description of the model by the student to his partner who has to reconstruct the model from the description not seeing the original one. The student can give any verbal assistance revising and expanding his description as he watches. Then, the learners may switch their roles and repeat the task with a different model. The technique is a good one for generating and checking detailed description of physical objects. To succeed in their joint communicative authentic task the students wish to transfer the information accurately across the gap between them.

One of the popular testing methods in ESP is based on the functionally appropriate response. ESP learners may be given a number of situations that might occur in their academic and future professional life and asked to provide what they think would be an appropriate spoken response. The situations are designed to elicit functional language (for example, to ask for information). Functional aspect of language is seen as a very important part of language proficiency. Recognizing when a situation calls for a particular type of response and supplying it appropriately ESP students show a good command of functional language.

To assess the appropriateness of response grades can be awarded on the following scale: inappropriate or seriously incorrect, relevant but not entirely acceptable, appropriate and correct. A prepared list of acceptable answers can be constructed by trying each situation out.

The broad aim of the techniques described is to encourage learners to speak. Close attention to the design of the evaluation and assessment system will ensure that it rewards the oral proficiency of the ESP students.