

TEACHING STUDENTS OF TECHNICAL SPECIALTIES ORAL COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH USING AUTHENTIC VIDEOS

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НАВЧАННЯ УСНОГО АНГЛОМОВНОГО СПІЛКУВАННЯ СТУДЕНТІВ ТЕХНІЧНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЕЙ ЗА ДОПОМОГОЮ АВТЕНТИЧНИХ ВІДЕОЗАПИСІВ

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According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), students studying English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at universities should aim at obtaining the upper intermediate (B2) level and thus have communicative competence good enough to “understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization” and “interact in English with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party” [1]. As long as one of the key tasks of students of technical specialties after graduation is communication with their colleagues, who often are from foreign countries, it is of the highest importance to teach these students proper oral communication in English, including listening and speaking.

Perception (listening) and production (speaking) in English or any other foreign language are impossible without broad active and passive vocabulary while a person can convey their thoughts without ideal grammar expertise but without knowledge of words, word combinations and specific terminology the possibility of their success in communication is close to none.

During studying at university, students are mainly in the late teen years and early 20s, and, as has been proven by various psychologists, their visual memory is at its peak. Therefore, English lecturers should take full advantage of it to reach educational goals, i.e. improve their students' oral communication to correspond to the B2 level.

The best visual teaching aids for the aforementioned objective are authentic videos in English. Under 'authenticity' is understood "a term which loosely implies as close an approximation as possible to the world outside the classroom, in the selection both of language material and of the activities and methods used for practice in the classroom" [2, p. 43]. Authentic video records are clips or full-length videos that were not created specifically for pedagogical purposes [3].

When videos are taken from original sources in full or partially (feature films or TV programmes corresponding to students' specialty and lesson topics), for students of technical specialties they become illustrative examples of the use of words, phrases, expressions and special terminology in reality, not just in course books. Watching authentic videos, students see that the information they study in English lessons is actually applicable to their future work, i.e. in the real life.

Authentic videos in English can be various, as was mentioned above, thus ESP lessons topics can be diverse, as well as communicative tasks provided to students: from dialogues, discussions, and debates to role play. Students become highly motivated working with videos as long as they are not afraid to give an incorrect answer or express a wrong idea while performing communicative tasks: their communication becomes just like in the real world – multifarious.

Apart from providing diversity and reality to English lessons and incentive to students, authentic English videos used in ESP lessons of students of technical specialties introduce vocabulary broadening and, simultaneously, visual explanation of the topic studied. Thus, students can see what kind of technical or ecological issue they are studying or what device, machinery or technology is in question, they are able to see how people, for example, in the movie are dealing with the issue or handling the machine, and what their body language is. That serves as the basis for students' further discussion during which they can not only practice new and already-known lexis and exchange thoughts with their peers but also apply the knowledge from other specialty subjects they have at the university. Hence, authentic videos in English lessons become a link that makes interdisciplinary education possible.

To summarize, authentic English videos in the ESP lessons of technical students can play the roles of basis (topics presentation), support (comprehension tasks) and stimulation (discussion) in the process of oral communication studying and advancing, while improving students' English vocabulary and desire to study, as well as enabling interdisciplinary education.

Using authentic video clips as a means of teaching students of technical specialties oral communication, i.e. listening and speaking in English, can create the effect of "immersion" of students into the foreign environment and the culture of the country language of which is being studied. This not only contributes to learning the perception and understanding of the "living" and continually-changing English language but is also a strong motivational stimulus to continue studying English even at their off-hours since videos can be easily accessed anywhere now at the time of constantly developing Internet technologies.

References:

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2. McDonough, J. and Shaw, C. (1993). *Materials and Methods in ELT*. Oxford: Blackwell.
3. Richards, J. C. (2001). *Curriculum Development in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 321.