

The Use of Video in Foreign Language Teaching

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Abstract. In recent years, a great tendency towards the use of video technology and its integration into the curriculum has gained a great importance. Today this problem is especially relevant in foreign language teaching in higher education institutions. The article considers some innovative technologies of using video in foreign language teaching and some Internet resources are given. The authors offer the results of the survey of Siberian Institute of Management students and teachers. The advantages and disadvantages of the use of video in foreign language teaching are analysed in the paper. Recommendations as the result of the research are given here.

В последние годы большое значение приобрело использование видеотехнологий в современной системе образования и интеграция данной технологии в учебные планы. В наши дни эта проблема особенно актуальна в области преподавания иностранного языка в современном вузе. В статье рассмотрены инновационные видеотехнологии и приведены в качестве конкретных примеров интернет ресурсы для обучения иностранного языка. Авторы статьи представили результаты опроса студентов и преподавателей Сибирского института управления, которые отметили необходимость и востребованность применения современных аутентичных иностранных источников при обучении иностранному языку, особенно видеоматериалов. В работе проанализированы положительные и отрицательные стороны применения видеоматериалов на занятиях по иностранному языку. В конце статьи предложены рекомендации по рассматриваемой тематике.

Keywords. foreign language teaching, video technologies, video resources, teacher's professionalism

Introduction

Nowadays, a great deal of attention is paid to the ability of future professionals to think outside the box and make responsible decisions. The level of success that a university graduate achieves in society is defined by a new way of thinking and functioning, which is system-integrative, interdisciplinary and innovative (ready for changes) [1, p. 8]. Constantly rising quality requirements on one's education and the processes of preparing highly qualified and achievement-oriented graduates, which among other spheres includes foreign language skills, encourage almost all higher education institutions in our country to search for cutting-edge tools for the transmission and mastering of foreign language competences.

The model of a modern graduate is supposed to have two constituents: professional and language ones, because the work efficiency of the future specialist depends on the extent to which the foreign language component is integrated within their professional competence [2]. As it

stands, there is a clear-cut necessity to look for new opportunities to optimize the learning process and the use of up to date authentic video resources in the foreign language learning process, will contribute to that.

Theoretical Undepinnings

To begin with, the use of video resources in the foreign language learning process have been considered by such Russian scientists as I.N. Gavrilin, N. D. Galskaya, N.I. Gez, I. A. Zimniaya, A. A. Neiolov, E.N. Solovova, V. A. Shevchenko, etc. and by foreign authors such as L. M. Gorder, J. Keddie, M. McKinnon, L. Lansford, R. Thorpe, etc. What's considered to be a video resource, are any television programmes (the news, interviews, talk shows, commercials etc.), as well as feature, documentary and animation films that are recorded in digital or any other format and that are used as multiple-use educational materials, with "stop" and "pause" functions as well as the "quick search" function [3].

The following didactic functions of the video materials are mentioned in the works of many researchers:

- informative function: explaining the gist of all the information a video contains;
- management and coordination function: defines the range of the materials used, signposts, grades and harmonizes the educational material and makes a link to the other elements of the educational system (textbooks, standards, programmes);
- motivation function: increases students' interest in the material, contributes to the development of such self-education skills as working with supplementary and reference books etc.;
- practice and self-assessment function: contributes to a profound knowledge and skill acquisition, by practical tasks and self-assessment tests;
- rationality function: saves students' and teachers' time by rational presentation of learning material;
- educational (worldview) function: contributes to the development of the students' scientific worldview, scientific and creative thinking and technical culture.

Material and Methods

The students and teachers of SIM RANEPА were interviewed on the subject discussed. They mentioned the most interesting and useful technologies, methods and ways of using video in foreign language teaching.

Results

Internet video materials (lectures, the news, public speeches etc.) are constantly discussed while learning during the courses of «The Language of Politics» and «Globalization and International Integration». We interviewed 136 students and 20 teachers of Siberian Institute of Management – branch of RANEPA to reveal the most interesting technologies of using video in foreign language teaching.

Most students like it the use of video when studying English because they are interesting, funny, motivating and challenging. The students and the teachers emphasized that topical issues are often raised when we use video materials, and that contributes to a deeper understanding of all the implications from public speeches; this allows students to analyse the reasons for the clash of cultures and subcultures within the multicultural context and to compare customs and traditions in different cultures etc. Another useful task is to create a lingo-cultural comment to all realia from the video fragment under consideration.

As a rule, the teachers use different Internet resources to show video such as YouTube, Ted.com, some educational apps (FluentU, British Council Resources, Breaking News English, American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages). Different fragments from films, lectures, TV programs, news and video clips are often shown for developing communication and cultural competences of students.

One of the innovative methods to use video is Interactive Learning today. It means that students do different tasks in any place any time. The most popular platforms among students today are Moodle, Edmodo, Blackboard, SumTotal, Schoology and SkillSoft. The platform Edmodo is widely used in our Foreign Language Department as a part of additional English training. As a rule, students enjoy it because they become more independent, self-organized and mobile. Moreover, they actively intercommunicate and they are often ready to feedback [4, p.45]. This type of training allows not only to save time, but also to guide students' activity and help them at any moment.

The analysis of working with video materials allowed us to outline the advantages and disadvantages of using them in an English classroom. As for the positive side of using videos, let us begin with increasing the role of visual aids by using documental visualization and animation, and dynamic information performance. Great importance is placed on changing an activity type during a class. Moreover, learners understand dialogues in video materials much better than those in an audio form, because speakers make use of unfinished sentences and other features that are a characteristic of spoken language. A student can easier comprehend information from the video as

the video maker represents real life situations. Undoubtedly, this leads to greater student motivation and interest for learning English, which is also triggered by getting acquainted with the specifics of television materials broadcast on the TV channels of a country whose language is being studied, with real dialogue from native speakers, their culture, geography and traditions of their country. On the whole, reliable sources of information increases the authority and validity of the broadcast materials. All of the above listed reasons contribute to an intensification of the educational process and better comprehension and memory of the material, as well as forming a better student communicative competence.

It should be pointed out here tht the requirements for using the current innovative educational methods and the media must be carefully considered when using video resources. The following key requirements for video resources were highlighted by the students and the teachers:

- topicality, scientific character and comprehensibility;
- the link to other subjects and professionally-oriented practices;
- the adequacy and representation of different spheres of communication;
- the exemplarity of the conceptual and compositional structure, coherence and clarity;
- the suitability of the language level to the syllabus requirements;
- problem-solving environment;
- the presence of a cross-cultural component;
- sound and picture quality;
- interesting plot;
- the viewers engagement with the plot of the video;
- moral values.

It is known that exercises and tasks developed in accordance with the learning goals, language and cross-cultural peculiarities of a video, play an important role in the foreign language teaching process. Such exercises and tasks are aimed at the removal of language difficulties, full understanding of the plot of the video, clarification and discussion of the key message of the video, cultural references, peculiarities of the mindset and linguistic world image. They are roughly divided into three groups:

- “Before Watching” exercises;
- “While Watching” exercises;
- “After Watching” exercises.

The given system of exercises for working with authentic resources allows one not only to provide students with new vocabulary and real-life communicative situations, but also helps the

learners to get to know accepted forms of language interaction and the peculiarities of the native speakers' communicative behavior.

In addition, these are the techniques that are used to facilitate the perception of the video material:

- to prepare a text with similar content (to the video), set of photos, postcards, cards etc.
- to refer to the previous video materials on different topics, initiate a guessing game;
- to divide the video into logical episodes, to separate the visual and sound components and work on each of them;
- to carry out extra “Before Watching” exercises from the methodological recommendations for students.

It is important to note that our teachers use alternative forms of working with video materials after having watched it, such as:

- repetition (to improve the perception and comprehension, it is advisable to watch some episodes again to highlight the key scenes and scenes difficult for understanding)
- rewinding (it allows one to watch some episodes with omissions, or work on specific scenes and dialogues);
- separation of the channels for the perception of information (watching: a). volume off, b). picture off)
- pausing the video (it allows one to check the understanding and, if necessary, repeat the scene again; this technique can also be used to solve different communicative or discourse tasks);
- the use of still pictures (to focus on the key scene again);
- the use of jumbled sequence scenes (the teacher divides the video into several parts (not less than three) and mixes them randomly, the task is put the parts in order);
- to separate synchronisation of audio and video information (jigsaw listening).

A variety of current video materials is used in the foreign language learning process in the Foreign Languages Department of Siberian Institute of Management – branch of RANEPA.

Discussion

There are some advantages of using video in foreign language teaching: it brings the real world into the classroom and motivates students to improve foreign language skills, presents the culture of different countries, gives a natural context for practicing listening skills, develops reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. Other challenges refer to the lack of resources such as interactive whiteboards, video projectors and screens.

However, using video material has certain drawbacks. Thus, when one is watching video fragments one becomes tired much faster than when only listening to a recording, which is why it is highly recommended to consider the length of video excerpts and not to overload students' attention. What is more, logical barriers may occur when the logic of information consequence appears to be too complicated and confusing, contradicts habitual stereotypes of a learning environment, and also when content, form and style of the information does not correspond to the educational and cultural level of the recipient. It is also worth mentioning about the comparatively large amount of time a teacher requires to prepare for using video materials in class.

Visuals are ineffective in the learning process “when the visual is too small; when the visual or video uses stereotypes; when the visual or video is a poor reproduction; when the picture is too far away from the text illustration; when the video has irrelevant captioning; when the video or visual offers too much information related or unrelated to the picture; when the video or visual is poorly scaled; and when the picture is not esthetically meaningful ” [5].

The process of planning and making use of modern technology in higher educational institutions undoubtedly presupposes a high level of teaching professionalism and a creative component of educational activity from the teacher [6, p. 107] . In this regard, it is important to emphasise the changing role of a teacher in the contemporary world. A teacher is no longer just a source of information, but a coordinator and facilitator of the development of creative abilities in students. The shift from a teacher transmitting knowledge to the position of a teacher facilitating it improves the motivation of cognitive activity and of the learners while solving problematic communicative problems. It is a teacher who provides for the development of communicative peculiarities of professional behavior for future specialists, helps to choose the right communicative strategy in career-defining situations based on their own cultural background [7, p.54]. From a teacher's point of view, information technologies, including video materials, eliminate routine problems and allow us to replace lecturing by discussion, joint research and new forms of education and to creative work on the whole. From the point of view of students, new information technologies significantly individualises the education process, increases the speed and quality of digesting education materials, greatly increases practical value and generally improves the quality of education.

All in all, the idea of information technology being almighty is not quite the case. Whichever video film we process, it will only be a mere instrument to obtain knowledge, abilities and skills. The same video can be used, by an experienced teacher in various groups of students, differently, taking into account the degree of their preparation, the specifics and even time of lessons, i.e. learners time cycles of workability.

As a rule, teachers use videos episodically (formal level), systematically (formal usage of methodic mindset level) or synchronically (creative usage level). Using video resources can be best used if implemented on a systematical, not occasional basis and is based on the willingness and readiness of a teacher and students to work with a particular education material. The right psychological climate in class is crucial, and it depends mainly on the ability to communicate, which a teacher must be especially good at.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the following recommendations for effective use of video resources have been developed by us.

1) Consistency of stages should be ensured while working with a video resource (to watch a fragment at least three times: the first – for general comprehension, the second – for more detailed study, and the third – for discussion).

2) It is necessary to consider the length of video fragments without overloading students with information, as it is more tiring to watch video materials than to comprehend listening tasks.

3) If a video fragment is shortened for any reason, it must not affect the vocabulary, phraseology grammar, text cohesion, naturalness of the situation, continuity, etc.

4) It is possible to change the order of exercises and tasks according to the situation in a particular class, lesson aims, etc. In cases when the text is not fully understood, re-watching the episode is advised.

5) Theoretical and practical materials from the Internet should be constantly used both for class work and self-development.

6) It is recommended to watch videos and complete tasks systematically, which will contribute to more effective listening skills.

It is worth mentioning that educational video technologies are a means, not the sole aim of the pedagogical process and must, in our opinion, play the role of a linking (integrating) environment for a wider range of teaching techniques. Nevertheless, for their development and implementation in the process of education the following requirements should be applied: pedagogical aims of personally oriented knowledge, ability and skill acquisition, and goals contributing to self-development of students in their professional activity.

Thus, using video resources is now one of the most attractive means of teaching foreign languages. Correct implementation of authentic video materials contributes to the intensification of the educational process and a better acquisition and memory of the material in English, as well as forming a communicative competence. What is more, motivation of students for learning a

foreign language increases, and positive emotions strengthen the influence and the development of communicative skills in a good way. The example of using video technologies in the process of the preparation and development of communicative skills and abilities among the students of foreign languages department of Siberian Institute of Management described in this article do not cover all the possibilities. But at the same time, their application allows us to successfully solve the task of forming a poly-cultural poly-lingual personality.

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