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IMPLEMENTATION OF TED (TECHNOLOGY, ENTERTAINMENT, DESIGN) TALKS CONTENT IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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Abstract

The article raises the problem of the inconsistency of the English-language training of students of Russian universities with the challenges of the time, which are dictated by the need to expand academic exchange, participate in international scientific forums, competitions, and interaction in terms of professional interests. In particular it touches upon the issue of teaching professional English to non-linguistic students as there are not enough foreign language materials for listening related to professional communication. It is stated that most educational teaching complexes are based on reading and translation of foreign texts. After examining and evaluating the benefits of TED Talks media content in the practice of professional language training, the authors developed criteria for choosing conference video and experimentally tested a technique for using this Internet content in the educational process for students of the area of preparation “Technosphere Safety” and “Chemistry” (undergraduate level). The article demonstrates the example of training exercises based on video lecture material, connected with the area of environmental issues. Observation of the participants of the experiment, the results of the questionnaire and the analysis of the learning results have proved, on the one hand, the effectiveness of this technique, on the other hand, the need for further research.

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Keywords: Educational resource, professional foreign language, academic mobility, non-linguistic students, video materials, listening.



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1. Introduction

In the 21st century great attention is paid to the issue of teaching a foreign language to students of various areas. This is due to the expansion of international cooperation programs, the main form of which is academic exchange, involving the training and internship of students of Russian universities abroad. The participation of student representatives of the Russian Federation in international scientific and professional forums and conferences also actualizes the problem of professional language training for a future university graduate.

1.1. Students' readiness for English-language communication: challenges of the time

All this is presented in the Federal State Educational Standards of Higher Education (FSSES HE), which reflects the requirements for a graduate - the ability to communicate in a foreign language in oral and written forms (Federal state educational standard, 2016). Studying at universities abroad requires participants to have sufficient fluency in the language of professional and business communication, good translation skills of foreign literature, and free communication skills on both general and professional topics.

Unfortunately, language training communication of bachelors and masters in Russia in terms of professional communication often does not correspond to the proper levels, which, according to many teaching practitioners is due to 1) an insufficient number of class hours allocated to the discipline 2) teachers often do not have training in theory and the practice of professional communication in a foreign language 3) the presence of a number of problems in the language training of students, such as, for example, the lack or absence of an English-speaking environment for communication. 4) the lack of authentic audio and video materials to implement into training process (Chesnokova, 2019, p.123).

1.2. Literature review

Most researchers believe the use of Internet-technologies is the most promising direction in teaching foreign languages, especially English, because this one is the language of international scientific communication, relevant foreign professional literature.

Many works of Russian and foreign researchers are devoted to the development of the theory and practice of professionally oriented teaching of a foreign language. Most studies are based on the experience of teaching a foreign language in Russian universities. The research works of Barbashova, Klimova, Melnichuk, and Chikileva (2014), Ishmuradova and Yevgrafova (2016) are devoted to both traditional and innovative methods used in training, such as the use of the media, the method of discussion, case-method, design method and others. Nesterova and Sitkareva (2016) were engaged in the studying the problem of applying provisions of the international standards in teaching foreign language.

Many researches deal with the issue of developing listening skills. Field (2011) provides an informed account of the psychological processes which make up the skill of listening, and analyses the characteristics of the speech signal from which listeners have to construct a message.

Over the past decade and a half, a number of candidate dissertations have been devoted to the use of Internet technologies in the practice of teaching a foreign language at a university. This is the work of

Devterova (2007), dedicated to the didactic basics of the use of Internet technologies. Candidate dissertation of Zhuk (2006) reveals the possibilities of creating and using a website in the system of vocational training on the example of a foreign language. Ugolkov (2004) describes her methodology of distance teaching a foreign language through Internet blogs.

2. Problem Statement

Recently, more and more often one may face the idea of introducing the open educational resource TED Talks into the practice of teaching English. The capabilities of this educational resource of the Internet are described in the work of a number of authors: Mallider (2016), Landsford (2018), Rubenstein (2012) and others. Foreign scientists note the following advantages of TED conferences that set a completely different vector in the formation of the education process. Working with such videos motivates to study new topics, contributes to the desire for continuing education, to gain new experience (Taibi, Chawla, Dietze, Marenzi, & Fetahu, 2015, p. 1094). Foreign publishers produced educational materials (Blass & Williams, 2015). However, sufficient attention has not yet been paid to the problem of the effectiveness of using this Internet content and the development of teaching methods using TED Talks in the practice of teaching English for professional purposes.

3. Research Questions

At the beginning of the experimental study, we put forward the following tasks:

- analyze the state and prospects of using TED Talks media content in the practice of teaching English;
- clarify the selection criteria for video materials of conference participants;
- develop and theoretically substantiate the strategy and stages of working with the TED.com video material in the process of teaching English at a technical university;
- evaluate the benefits of this media resource, reinforcing them with the obtained data from the results of an experimental study;

4. Purpose of the Study

Thus, we set a goal - to explore the possibilities of effective implementation of the educational resource TED talks in English language teaching practice at non-linguistic university, testing the techniques and methods of working with this content, evaluating the effectiveness of listening and professional communication training using the developed methodology for first -year students studying in the areas of professional training "Technosphere safety" and "Chemistry".

5. Research Methods

To solve the above problem, the following research methods were used:

- general scientific methods of theoretical research: analysis of domestic and foreign pedagogical, psychological and methodological literature on the research problem, analysis of educational-programmatic and normative documentation of higher education;
- methods of empirical research: observation, testing, questioning, studying the products of students' activities, pedagogical experiment, qualitative and quantitative analysis of its results.

5.1. Materials and resources

The Department of Foreign Languages of Kazan Federal University actively uses the resources of the Internet when teaching English to students. Among them there are the most frequently used sites of the You Tube social service, containing video materials with lessons of English grammar sections, documentary films in English, news sites of CNN, BBC companies, articles and video collections of magazines Harvard Business Review, The Wall Street Journal, and The Economist.

Most of the above resources make a certain contribution to develop communicative competence, which includes knowledge about the use of words and expressions as well as how the language changes depending on a particular communicative situation and the participants in this situation (for example, the difference between formal speech and informal, oral from written one), the ability to create, read and understand texts of various types and character, the ability to keep a conversation going even with a limited lexical and grammatical base, to hear and understand English-language speech. It is known that the perception and understanding of speech is facilitated when we see the speaker's face, we monitor his facial expressions and gestures. Visual perception, although it is not an indispensable condition for perceiving speech, always plays a positive role. As Field (2011) states oratory advantage lies in the fact that it is close to the book, resulting in a more complex syntax and lexical constructs but at the same time has the expressive means as repeats, rhetorical questions, exclamation, input speech and interjection

5.2. Selecting the topics in accordance with the needs of the subject curriculum requirements

TED Talks (Technology Entertainment Design) is a private non-profit fund in the USA, known for annual conferences, has been held since 1984 in Monterey (California, USA). The goal of the conference is to spread "unique ideas worth spreading", selected lectures are available on the conference website. The topics of the lectures are diverse: science, art, design, politics, economics, culture, business, global issues, technology and entertainment. On the site you can select materials according to the following criteria: topic of the presentation, duration of the presentation (from 5 to 18 minutes), scientific field, information content, "genius" of the idea, popularity among site visitors, etc. An obvious advantage is the presence of scripts for speeches with timing. They are available for viewing on the website online and for download. All performances are in English and are accompanied by subtitles translated into 40 languages. The transcript highlights the words spoken by the speaker. Thus, you can follow the presentation and not lose the thread of the narration. Speeches are accompanied by links and comments. The main positive feature of TED Talks is its modern content, the authenticity and relevance of topics.

Speakers share their own experience, discuss important issues of our time, draw conclusions, conduct a conversation with the audience, each performance is accompanied by a presentation. The main

conditions for the selection of TED-speeches for classes or independent work are: the choice of topic, duration, the complexity of phonetic perception and lexical units. The fast pace of the speakers' speech and the content of highly specialized vocabulary create additional difficulties for perception.

We agree with many researchers that a careful selection of presentations is needed, which either supplement the information and lexical units in the course textbook, or provide an opposite view of the problem being studied. The minimum level of English language proficiency for understanding TED-conferences should correspond to the level B1 - B2 (Pre-Intermediate - Intermediate) on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Consequently, the teacher has the right to select materials and topics for training in accordance with the level of the group as well as their future professional communication needs.

6. Findings

We have selected 10 video presentations of TED Talks and its TEDed podcast, relevant to the topics of the modules of the work programs of the “Technosphere Security” as well as “Chemistry” training areas. The experiment was conducted in two groups of first- and second-year students. We also selected control groups enrolled in the regular program. For each tapescript of the presentation we created an English-Russian dictionary containing that set of language units, which may cause difficulty in viewing the video presentation. The manual for students, future environmental and chemistry engineers, included various kinds of tasks motivating to perceive information (stage before listening), to train a new vocabulary (while listening), to check understanding the video speech (stage after listening), tasks for organizing the subsequent discussions, topics were proposed for writing an essay on the issue raised.

Among the topics are: A new way to remove CO₂ from the atmosphere (Wicox, 2018); How pollution is changing the ocean's chemistry (McGrath, 2016); Ecology from the air (Anwer, 2013); Could fish social networks help us save coral reefs (Gil, 2017) and others.

We have developed an algorithm for working with each video presentation and a strategy for the subsequent mastery of the presented language material. In the final results, we evaluated the effectiveness of introducing this strategy into training through the analysis of questionnaires from students, focus groups, and analysis of score sheets.

6.1. Learning Strategy with Ted Talks

We agree with many foreign researchers who consider listening to be underestimated in teaching (Field, 2011). Our observations confirm that 1st year students lack confidence and experience in listening, they prefer their own learning styles. The insufficiently formed ability to listen and understand the speech of a native speaker causes enormous problems in the formation of the skill of spontaneous oral speech. Here, of course, a great independent work of students with audio information obtained via the Internet and other information sources is useful (Nesterova, 2017, p.108).

What criteria guided us when choosing performances?

1.Availability. The level of language content is quite complicated, but it is accessible for students to understand, since the general level of the students is Intermediate and speakers quite often use words

and word combinations that students met and used in a secondary school on the topic Environment or the meaning of some of them they can guess.

2.Science and argumentation. Speeches are examples of monologue speech of both native speakers and non-native speakers. Speeches are supported by scientific facts, accompanied by graphs, charts, compiled according to the results of the study. In the context of the actualization of academic mobility, the skill of public speaking, the so-called presentation skills, is very important.

3.Continuity with the material of the main educational program in the subject Foreign language. The presence of professional vocabulary and terminology presented in the course textbook.

4.The relevance in modern content.

5.Short duration of the performance (4 – 16 minutes). Otherwise, divisibility into episodes is allowed.

6.Visibility. Visuals and sound are of high quality; the presence of subtitles, an interactive transcript.

Strategies, in general, are a set of actions that contribute to the effectiveness of learning a language, which means helping to learn, store, find and use information. Consideration of strategies in this context allows us to distinguish them from other varieties of strategies, in particular - communication strategies.

Research by scientists in the twenty-first century has changed traditional listening formats before / during / after, adding vocabulary and context-sensitive tasks to authentic teaching materials. According to Field (2011) three learning strategies: metacognitive, cognitive, social, are also used in learning to listen.

Metacognitive strategies relate to the planning, monitoring and evaluation of learning success. Cognitive strategies are directly related to the information received, while social strategies involve working with others and self-control.

Table 01. Learning Strategies

Strategy	Definition
Cognitive	Manipulate incoming information directly to enhance learning
Meta-cognitive	Planning for, monitoring or evaluating the success of a learning activity
Socio-affective	Interacting with another person to assist learning

Based on the Table 01, we identify the levels or stages of listening: before listening (updating the topic, warming up, motivation to listen, activating lexical units, training the dictionary for maximum understanding; while listening (extensive - questions about the general content of the heard, intensive - pre-asked questions, verification of answers; after listening, training vocabulary mentioned in the speaker's speech, analysis of grammatical phenomena, pause mode - we listen and repeat, determine the meaning of words, work with the script.

Table 02. Early and Current Formats for Listening Lessons

Stage	Prior Listening Format	Current Listening Format
Pre-listening	- Pre-teach vocabulary for maximum understanding	- Establish context - Create motivation - Pre-teach critical vocabulary
While-listening	- Extensive: general context questions - Intensive: detailed comprehension questions	- Extensive: General Questions for context/attitude - Intensive: Pre-set questions / Check answers
Post-listening	- Teach any new vocabulary - Analyze language / grammar - Paused play (listen & repeat)	- Functional language in text - Infer meaning of words - Play: Look at transcript

6.2. An example of the use of teaching technology in the classroom

Let's look at how we introduce the TED resource and the performance of Biddle (2011). We can recycle plastic (Table 02).

The lesson takes place in a computer class, where each student is given access to TED Talks. The first stage is a preliminary discussion and removal of language difficulties. Students get acquainted with brief information about the speaker, discussing the following issues in mini-groups.

1. Pre-listening Discussion

a) Do you agree with the following statements? Explain why / why not.

People use too much stuff during their life.

Electronic waste is among the rapidly growing parts of our waste streams.

We consume more and more plastics.

There is no need for plastics to be recycled.

b) Building Vocabulary

The analysis of the typescript made it possible to identify a number of words and word combinations that were already mastered in the school course and intensified in the previous lesson communication at the university, but the rest of which requires elaboration. Therefore, providing the students with a dictionary of unfamiliar vocabulary, as well as carrying out phonetic exercises to refine these words in a speech by the teacher, we offered students the following assignment tasks.

Read and try to give Russian equivalents to the words and phrases:

Toddler rules, to develop into adults, increasingly important, durable goods, above-ground mines, to get from ore, significant implication, to recover materials, to extract from, to put it in perspective, density, end-of-life stuff.

It would be wise to offer to make sentences with these words: affirmative, interrogative, negative, a mini-story, play with words, etc.

2. The second stage is visual.

a) Watching the first part of the presentation (without subtitles).

- Learners are offered questions (a goal setting is given), the answers to which they should find in the first part of the presentation.

1) What kind of mountains does Mike Biddle describe in his report?

2) What is the main reason for the need for recycling he speaks of?

- 3) Which two materials does he mention?
- 4) How are they different in a recycling process?

Students distinguish the main idea, which the speaker wants to bring, answer the questions to express their attitude after listening. Further, students are invited to participate in a discussion about a possible way to solve the problem, which is inextricably linked with such skills as the definition and establishment of logical and semantic relationships.

b) Listening and watching the second part of the speech.

Students are offered questions, the answers to which must be found at the stage of viewing the second part of the video. Or they may choose one of the options for statements.

- Choose the right option to complete the statement:

- 1) According to Mike, plastics have a) very little value
b) very great value.
- 2) Plastics and metals have a) different electrical and magnetic properties
b) similar properties.
- 3) Traditional ways of separating materials are a) suitable
b) unsuitable for plastics.
- 4) Low-cost recycling is located in a) developed
b) developing countries.
- 5) People on the photo separate plastics a) in small workshops by shape and colour
b) at plastic processing enterprises.
- 6) Mike a) has improved the technology of separating similar materials from each other
b) has helped poor people to get a space-aged material, called plastics.
c) View the entire performance with subtitles

Students are offered to view the presentation of the report (both parts) and answer the question:

How has Mike's Biddle's innovation solved the problem of recycling and conserving natural resources?

3. The third stage, the final.

Students study the comments on the video presentation and perform a creative task. This task may be the organization of a discussion in mini-groups (5-7 people) on the issue raised by the speaker both in order to activate the mastered lexical units, and to build the ability to build and argue his opinion, reinforce it with facts, and scientifically prove his point of view. In this regard, language formulas and clichés are trained in speech: What if we try to apply a different approach.... / There is evidence to suggest.... / I appreciate what he feels about ... / I doubt that.... / I can't fully agree with ... / This argument doesn't seem very convincing to me ... / From my perspective etc. Students learn to cooperate in a team, comment on various points of view, thoughtfully analyse the incoming information and sometimes be sceptical of some assessments and conclusions. Another type of work may be the creation of a collective project. For example, "Modern plastics processing technologies" or "What is more profitable to recycle in the modern world?"

Thus, the process of formation of communicative competence is closely intertwined with the creation of motivation for scientific research, improving the ability to use knowledge of the fundamentals

of chemistry (general professional competence - 1), economic (general cultural competence -3), and natural-science knowledge (general professional competence -3), ability to search for scientific information (general professional competence - 5). Homework can be writing an essay on the topic “Technologies of garbage processing” with the involvement of additional sources of information and fixing material on the topic in writing.

As you can see, thoughtfully selected material from the TED Talks resource allows you to create a learning environment that is completely different from traditional lessons, your own microworld filled with professional English, expand the scope of the learning space, bringing it closer to a professional, moreover, a scientific environment, allowing each student to engage in conversational practice of the English-speaking world.

6.3. Advantages of using TED Talks

Among the advantages of using TED Talks in professional foreign language classes, teachers of the Department of Foreign Languages of KFU identified the following:

1. The possibility of immersion in an authentic linguistic and cultural environment. The speeches contain background information about the national-cultural specifics of the country the language of which is being studied, and allow you to study the features of people's behaviour in situations of professional communication.

2. A variety of accents. Although not all speakers are native speakers of English, which allows us to learn to perceive speech not of native speakers, but of people of different nationalities. In real professional activities, you often have to communicate with non-native speakers.

3. Actual content of speeches, speeches are diverse in subject and issue. Many teachers and students are faced with the fact that the information presented in textbooks is often outdated and irrelevant, which does not contribute to the motivation to learn a professional foreign language.

4. Original feed. Most speakers support public interest through visualization - diagrams, charts, graphs, photos, animation, etc. Speakers ask themselves questions, forcing viewers to look for an answer during the report. Students acquire skills of public speaking, the so-called presentation skills, which are rather important in conditions of economic and scientific competition.

5. TED Talks provides an opportunity for the integrated development of language and speech skills: listening, speaking, spontaneous speech skills are improved, thought processes and critical thinking are stimulated. In a complex, this develops the ability to build a monologue speech on a proposed topic.

7. Conclusion

TED Talks media content is currently an important component in professionally-oriented teaching of a foreign language, updating interdisciplinary connections and revealing the wide possibilities of the subject “Foreign Language”. The ability to select video materials in accordance with the level of students' language skills, as well as selecting the issues of speaker presentations required in the framework of professional communication, contributes to the development of communicative, intercultural and professional competencies of future university graduates.

The knowledge gained in the classroom using TED Talks is freely integrated into other subjects, becoming stronger and wider. The created work algorithm and selection criteria for working material for organizing training will allow students to immerse themselves in communication situations similar to natural ones, help to eliminate the language barrier, enrich students' vocabulary with relevant lexical material, equip language clichés and grammatical formulas that provide the most comfortable conditions for real foreign language communications.

7.1. Assessment of TED Talks as an educational resource

In order to determine the level of students' interest in the further use of the TED Talks resource, according to the results of a questionnaire survey, it was found that most of them 81% recognize the connection of the heard presentations from TED.com content with their future professional activities, 10% of those surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with this type of activity, since they have difficulty understanding the material, 9% of the survey participants were unable to evaluate this type of activity for objective reasons.

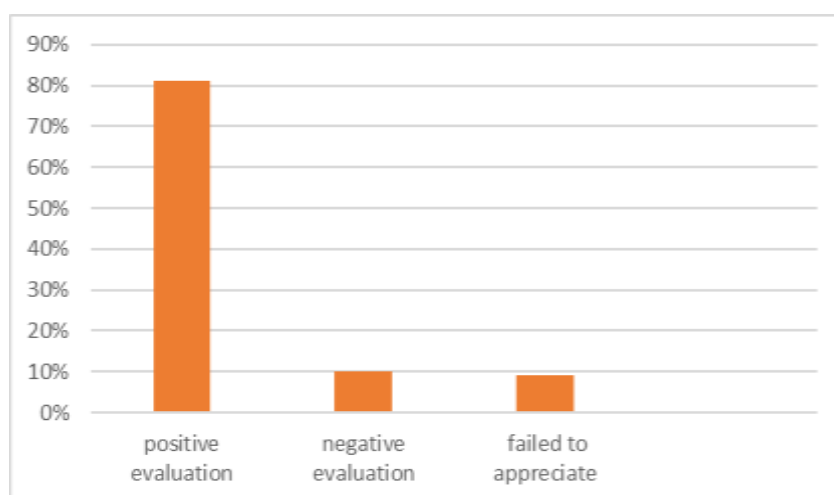


Figure 01. The educational resource TED Talks assessment by trainees

The general high assessment by students of the lessons using TED resources allows us to conclude that their motivation to learn English is increased in order to further apply it in future professional and scientific activities. Students stressed the relevance of the proposed material, the intensity of the mode of operation, the possibility of using this content in the practice of training in specialized subjects.

As a result of the ascertaining experiment, according to the final tests at the end of the semester, the learning outcomes in the experimental groups were 36% higher than in the control groups mastering the material without the use of TED Talks media content. The majority (79%) of students in the groups participating in the experiment, according to the analysis of their grades and the final tests, expanded their vocabulary minimum, demonstrated the ability to use the language phenomena studied by examples from TED. Com (Passive Voice, Complex Objects, Modal verbs and others) in specific foreign languages situations which are similar to situations of professional communication. Some students (21%) showed satisfactory results (Figure 01).

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