

USING VIDEO MATERIALS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR PROFESSIONAL PURPOSES

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It goes without saying that video materials are very popular nowadays because they can provoke learner's interest. This is largely due to the fact that they influence students through various cues – visual, audio, kinesthetic – thus providing a more complete perception of the target language. These materials provide students with the opportunity to experience the target language in a more natural context. Language is presented in an apparently less structured way. Through the use of video materials, students are afforded the opportunity to observe and participate in a more active learning experience, while maximizing some cognitive skills.

A great number of researches have been devoted to the use and design of video materials in the context of communicative language teaching. Authentic materials have long been an integral part of mainstream foreign language teaching, though they are considered only supplementary to the main syllabus, the use of video should be well integrated in classroom activities. Ways of using video materials can be different, according to the aim of the course or a lesson (e.g. being a stimulus, generating discussion, informing on business content, training communication skills, developing business vocabulary and listening skills etc. A number of authors have given different definitions of authentic materials which still have one thing in common: these are materials not designed for the purpose of learning a foreign language. This can stimulate some students' work, they are motivated by the very fact that they are dealing with the "real-life" situation, not with a textbook.

For instance, The European Central Bank provides information about its institutions (including articles, presentations, interactive on-line games and video materials) aimed for different age groups in 22 languages on its web-site (ECB Educational). This source of activities can be useful for those interested in economics, finance and, what is quite convenient, can be exploited either on-line or off-line (the videos provided are downloadable); the materials are not specially designed for language-learning. The last point can be considered a drawback, especially taking into

account the difficulty and appropriateness of using authentic materials with low-level students, but a number of authors make stress on the fact, that that these are materials that have been produced to fulfill some social purpose in the language community. Even if they are not used with the same purpose in the language classroom they contribute to the students' exposure to the real language and the way it is used in the target community, so the students' motivation can be influenced positively.

Certain authors mention as well, that in fact, a video material of any level of difficulty can be used, as the problem lies not only in the video, but in the complexity of the task. The disadvantage of the difference of students' level of language command was turned into advantage, for example by the creators of the French educational channel TV5, where a series of video materials is provided (and updated once a week) together with the tasks elaborated for each video according to the levels from A2 up to B2.

So the conclusion conclusion can be made that, in case of the careful choice and thoughtful tasks elaboration, using authentic video not only makes a lesson much more attractive, but becomes an effective source of intercultural and professional information. Being interdisciplinary in their nature they enhance motivation and development of language as well as professional skills.

References

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Skarloupina, Yu.A. Using video materials in teaching foreign languages for professional purposes [Text] / Yu.A. Skarloupina // Global English - Global decisions: XVIII TESOL - Ukraine National Conference, 12-13 April, 2013. - Севастополь: Рибест, 2013. - P. 306-308.