

TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO JOURNALISM AND MEDIA COMMUNICATION STUDENTS: THE COMBINATION OF MODERN AND CLASSICAL APPROACHES

Svetlana Evgenievna Nikitina^{1*}, Gulnara Faridovna Dulmukhametova²

¹Senior Teacher of the English Language for Humanities Department, Institute of International Relations, History, and Oriental Studies, Kazan Federal University, Kremlevskaya Str. 18, 420008, Kazan, Russian Federation, ²Associate Professor of the English Language for Humanities Department, Institute of International Relations, History, and Oriental Studies, Kazan Federal University, Kremlevskaya Str. 18, 420008, Kazan, Russian Federation.
Email: ^{1*}svetlananik2011@yandex.ru, ²dulmuhametova.gulnara@yandex.ru

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: This research reveals the problem of teaching foreign languages to future journalists. Attention to the issue of learning and teaching foreign languages is dictated by their special role in the professional activities of journalists, which cover almost the entire world's geography and include systematic communication in a foreign language with native speakers.

Results: Under the conditions of constant transformations, it is not only the student audience that is changing, in particular, journalism and media communication students, by the example of which the high rate of transformations of the surrounding world becomes especially noticeable due to the specifics of their profession. Higher education, functioning in the age of the "digits", also undergoes great changes in terms of material selection and educational approaches. This study examines the feasibility of combining classical and modern educational technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language to future journalists.

Applications of this study: This research can be used for the universities, teachers, and students.

Novelty/Originality of this study: In this research, the model of the Teaching Foreign Languages to Journalism and Media Communication Students: The Combination of Modern and Classical Approaches are presented in a comprehensive and complete manner.

Keywords: *journalism, media communication, education, foreign language, student, professional communication.*

INTRODUCTION

Journalism as an integral part of modern society makes it possible to intensify cooperation between different countries, it strengthens business and international relations between states and promotes the development of cultural interaction. Such interaction presupposes the practical importance of competence and proficiency of journalists in foreign languages. The ability to communicate in a foreign language is integral parts of a modern journalist who must be capable of convincingly conduct a dialogue in a foreign language during conferences or briefings. They must also be able to take an interview, to say nothing of the fact that journalists must be highly proficient in a written foreign language, which is necessary for them to write articles and other journalistic products. Thus, ideally, a modern journalist, who lives and works in the conditions of tough competition in a professional media field, should completely acquire all the skills of a foreign language such as the ability to perceive foreign speech by ear, the ability to conduct a dialogue and monologue in a foreign language, and also the ability to understand the information taken from foreign sources, which he needs to build a successful career and to be effectively engaged in his professional activity.

The high level of competition among representatives of media professions makes more and more new demands on the quality of foreign language skills of journalists. The professional knowledge of journalists in the field of foreign languages is formed and actively developed during that period when they study at university. A higher education institution, like any other part of modern reality, is undergoing major transformations associated with a change in science and technology in the direction of a greater practical orientation. Therefore, the requirements for the methodology of teaching a foreign language to future journalists are also changing in terms of globalization and the development of information technology. The emergence of new ways and formats to transmit information in the modern society (the Internet, blogs) entails the emergence of new methodological approaches ([Shatilova et al, 2018](#); [Bakhshandeh et al, 2015](#); [Haghshenas et al, 2015](#); [Fitriani & Suryadi, 2019](#); [Ameen et al, 2018](#); [Araújo et al, 2018](#)).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The specifics of working in the media leaves an imprint on students enrolled in the Department of Journalism and Media Communication since they begin their professional activities in journalism and media communication as first-year students. The keyword "deadline" forms such a feature of a journalist as his ultimate mobility. On the one hand, being remarkably active and in constant movement, journalists have scattered attention, and in the process of learning they can forget about doing their homework. However, on the other hand, the ability of journalists to concentrate on the implementation of several tasks at once and to be absolutely multitasking as professionals is an indisputable advantage

when teaching a foreign language to journalism students. Such multitasking also gives rise to one more useful quality of Journalism and Media Communication students in terms of mastering a foreign language, especially its communicative aspect, which is their amazing sociability and communicability. In this regard, more attention should be paid to the implementation of communicative tasks by journalism students. Among them, it is possible to emphasize those tasks that are associated with speed work, and thus imitate the working environment with the establishment of deadlines, which is typical of journalists. Among these tasks, it is possible to single out an interview with a subsequent survey of groupmates, a news bulletin in a foreign language or an imitation of a conference on a given topic in a foreign language. However, when setting the time limit, one should not neglect the correctness of oral speech, which should be under the constant control of the teacher. The second important aspect of the personality of a future journalist is his creativity, which is also developed in the course of his professional activity. The development of this quality in the conditions of the educational space and academic environment of a higher education institution can be provided by various kinds of creative tasks encouraging not only the development of the creative potential of students, but also the stimulation of the language skills development in the process of implementing these tasks by journalism and media communication students. It can be exemplified by the task of preparing a talk show in a foreign language in a group with the distribution of roles among students. Students are also very positive about writing an article for a specific title or about an opposite task when they should come up with a title for a particular article in a foreign language. Materials for creative assignments and tasks can be taken from foreign language sites dedicated to journalism. Among English-speaking online resources, it would be worth highlighting the site of the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation), Euro news network, and TED media organization.

The goal of teaching a foreign language in a higher education institution is to prepare a competent specialist who is able to:

- Possess professional terminology at an advanced level
- Analyze and synthesize information obtained from sources in a foreign language
- Have the skill of mastering a foreign language as an instrument of professional communication in the course of taking interviews, participating in conferences, round tables, etc.
- Generate texts in a foreign language in the form of articles
- Perceive and assimilate foreign language information by ear with subsequent analysis of the material heard a moment before

Proficiency in professional terminology is achieved by practicing vocabulary on authentic material and samples of practical speech in a foreign language. This practicing includes such steps as explaining the meanings of words, as well as the subsequent professional vocabulary skill consolidation in the form of performing special tasks. In terms of selecting authentic material for the development of professional vocabulary, Bill Muscull's book "Keywords in the media" is of particular interest, it presents the samples of real speech taken from such famous radio stations as the BBC World Service and National Geographic, as well as from the British and US periodicals, e.g. Today, The Times, The Independent, The Economist, Newsweek, The Sunday Times and other newspapers and magazines (Muscull, 2005).

The topics of professional vocabulary offered to prospective journalists are very diverse and can include global issues such as politics and political correctness, diplomacy, show business, sports journalism, the world of economics and business, general information about the media, virtual reality and multimedia technologies, freedom of speech, types of media, media ratings, high-profile lawsuits and others [Essential journalism and media writing]. Students consider these topics through the prism of foreign-language media and, thus, have the opportunity to get acquainted with the modern journalistic text, its structural and linguostylistic features. Acquaintance with professional vocabulary should begin with an explanation of new words in a form accessible to students. An authentic context in the form of sentences is to be used to illustrate the meanings of new vocabulary units. When new words are acquired, the next stage is the reproduction of lexical patterns and practical use of new lexical units in comprehensive contexts. Among the words that have been learned, there are also new concepts in the field of mass media, which have only recently been commonly used by journalists, for example, infotainment (information and entertainment), docudrama (documentary and drama). Learning key media words and concepts will allow media students and journalists to get prepared for productive work with foreign media and other sources.

Foreign language proficiency as an instrument of professional communication is acquired in the course of various kinds of communicative tasks and practices that allow students to actively implement the adopted professional vocabulary in conversational speech (Fakhrutdinova & Grebtsova, 2014). Among such exercises, students most like taking interviews, role-playing and discussions/debates as a type of group practice. Debates are aimed at developing the culture of public speaking and enhancing students' communicative competence. "To perform such tasks, students are invited to divide into two teams which are for and against the proposed message, and which have to defend their points of view" (Kostanyan, 2018). Regarding individual tasks aimed at improving monologue speech, they include reports, presentations, as well as world news review in a foreign language, which can be made the traditional beginning of each lesson. In the process of performing such tasks, students not only improve their spoken language but also expand their professional horizons, learn to overcome language barriers and get rid of tension and shyness that a language barrier logically results in.

The skills of analysis and synthesis of information obtained from written foreign-language sources, as well as the most important skill of a contextual guess, is developed when students are practicing reading for details and summarizing authentic media texts. Professional texts for journalists always abound with the latest media vocabulary, since globalization and the rapid growth of high technologies dictate the need for constant updating of media content, whereas the almost universal availability of multimedia tools allows you to find the latest material on the Internet with one click of a computer mouse. The study of texts is accompanied by pre-text tasks that allow students to actualize all the existing knowledge on this subject and prepare them for full-fledged perception of the text being studied. The texts include the glossary with transcription, as well as post-text exercises aimed at checking the understanding of the content and developing the ability to extract information from the text that students can use to perform certain tasks in the classroom.

The ability of students to independently write in the media format, especially to create texts in a foreign language in the form of author articles, reviews, news blocks, stories or reviews is developed through the development of theoretical aspects and authentic material with the control and analysis of the work performed. Writing a news story, for example, begins with a detailed analysis of the structure of news, the characteristics of each news item and its place in this structure. The title, lead, quotations of the lead, an introduction to the topic of the plot, links to sources and the background of the plot are studied in detail. Then it is proposed to students to identify all the components in the completed story, that is, to analyze the prepared authentic story and to begin to write their own work. The most important part of writing in the media format is editing a completed media text. Analyzing his own publication, article or story, the student puts himself in the position of a critic to assess the work performed. This work is compared to the original goal and is assessed in terms of the structure correctness, language, compliance with the genre and style (Udalova & Udalova, 2014).

The skills of perception and understanding foreign language information by ear, followed by the analysis of the material listened to, are practiced by students on authentic audio recordings; for English language learners, this is primarily BBC, Euronews and TED-talks information networks. The BBC network has developed a training complex with exercises for the development of listening skills, presented on the network site. TED-talks organization (an abbreviation of the English words technology, entertainment, design) is an American non-profit foundation, known for its annual conferences. The mission of the conferences is to disseminate unique ideas, some selected lectures are available on the conference website. The themes of the lectures are diverse; among them are science, art, design, politics, culture, business, global problems, technology, and entertainment. The list of speakers includes famous people in the world of science, politics and show business. Videos of speeches, available to view and download for free, are published on TED.com. There are available applications that allow you to watch videos of performances with Russian subtitles, listen to TED Internet radio, etc.

One of the options for working with audio is “transcript” when students listen to the recording over and over again in order to write down and reproduce the listened text as accurately and carefully as possible.

The development of listening comprehension is also facilitated by watching authentic feature films made by native speakers for native speakers. Frey describes the term “authentic” as “having something to do with the real world” (Frey et al, 2012). Repeated and prolonged listening allows students to gradually improve their foreign speech perception skills (Gorbunova & Fakhrutdinova, 2014). Watching an authentic film not only enriches the vocabulary of students but also plays an important cultural role both in broadening students’ general outlook and gaining specific knowledge about the target language country. Watching an authentic film is preceded by pre-watching tasks that prepare the audience for watching the film, simplify the process of watching and help students understand the story more deeply. Exercises performed in the course of watching are aimed at better understanding of the film events and its plot. These tasks should be done with periodic pauses during the film, which helps the teacher to maintain the working climate in the classroom during the watching process and to control the extent to which students understand the events of the film.

Post-watching tasks are intended to encourage students to use a foreign language in everyday life, as well as to increase their critical thinking and ability to analyze in a foreign language. The choice of a film for watching is made based on the level of proficiency in a foreign language or taking into account the professional specialization of a particular audience. For students studying journalism, the film “American Dreamz” will be of undoubted interest because it abounds with professional media terms presented in the context of the media and, therefore, learning English through acquiring real professional vocabulary, abundantly found in the film, seems very effective for journalism and media communication students. Radji Abdelkarim believes that authentic videos play an important role in the development of teaching oral speech. They let students overcome difficulties associated with learning the vocabulary of target language native speakers (Abdelkarim, 2013).

The supporters of introducing fundamentally new formats into the educational process can refer to the video blog as a tool for project-based learning of foreign languages. Video blogs allow creating media products in a foreign language, as well as formulating the main problems of society which require immediate decision-making. Video blogging is integrating multimedia technologies into the educational process, which allows prospective journalists to create videos in a foreign language on current events taking place in society or on some other cultural and historical events (Petrova, 2018). The advantage of video blogging as educational technology is that it addresses not only the development of a foreign language but also professional competencies of students who want to become media professionals and journalists.

FINDINGS

Thus, teaching the English language to future journalists is an essential part of the formation of both linguistic and professional competences. Improving the language competence of students of journalism and media communications in a rapidly developing information society is achieved through the parallel use of both classical methods and educational technologies of the latest format (video blogs and other Internet resources), which allows students to systematize, correct and improve the knowledge gained during learning with a combination of different learning options. The specifics of the work of journalists, imposing a certain imprint on the personality and character, entails an adjustment of the lesson format in terms of teaching and selecting exercises to be performed in the classroom and as homework.

CONCLUSIONS

This study introduces examples of how to apply the classical approach with task options based on the peculiarities of journalism and media communication with an emphasis on the communicative approach, the need for which arises from personal characteristics formed by journalists in the process of their professional activity. Along with classical methods, modern formats for conducting classes in a foreign language are also introduced, for example working with authentic feature films and project activities in the form of video blogging.

This study suggests the importance of foreign language teaching to journalism and communication students and explains the necessity of incorporating the above-mentioned methods of teaching in the university curriculum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this study can be used by teachers who seek to create an authentic language environment in the classroom when teaching journalism and media communications students, they can be applied by anyone interested in the media, as well as in learning foreign languages using modern educational technologies.

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