USING VIDEO IN THE CLASSROOM: AUTHENTIC AND STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIVITY

N.Kovalska, N.Prisyazhnyuk
Assistant Professors Faculty of Linguistics
National Technical University of Ukraine «KPI»

У статті пропонується досвід застосування відео при вивченні англійської мови на факультеті лінгвістики НТУУ «КПІ».

Ключові слова: відео, навчальні цілі, автентичність, послання фільму.

The strategic development of Ukraine is aimed at Euro integration in various spheres of economy. "We are going to Europe"- we can hear from our leaders. Changes are unavoidable and they stipulate specific alterations in the framework of educational system. Looking ahead to the future of education in Ukraine, what are the prospects of the most important and wide-ranging reform of higher education in Europe which is called Bologna process? There is considerable diversity in the linguistic and cultural diversity of the European Union member states.

Ukraine is going through a period of reflection and reforms. Its system of education is looking at improving openness and regulation. But the implementation of European standards recommended by European Council will continue to be a domestic matter for the foreseeable future.

The slogan of the EU language policy is as follows "Languages Open Doors to Cultures". According to it intercultural communication is impossible without mastering the language. Therefore quality teaching and learning are the core values of the ELT community [1].

Nowadays Ukrainian institutions face an extremely difficult task of making up new kinds of educational programs hence the importance of studying not only home but foreign experience too [2].

.The new University Curriculum for English language development envisages correlation of content, methods of teaching and assessment with the recommendations of the Council of Europe. What is more it promotes principles of democratic and humanistic education, aiming at developing language personality that is really able to function successfully in multicultural and multilingual context [3].

The introduction of the new University Curriculum demands developing new materials such as multimedia resources to cater for specific needs of Ukrainian students to promote:
- communicative approach;
- skills integration;
- students personal, cultural and professional development.

Time-tested techniques and effective new ways of learning the language reflective tasks and materials with intelligent, non-trivial content, high-quality production values (colour, action, sound, production, cast/actors, plot, issues or problems for discussion etc.) raise students' motivation to learning English, developing and improving their communicative skills, using the language as well as practicing it.

We draw your attention that the most important of all known senses is sight. A great Italian scientist and painter Leonardo da Vinci who lived and worked in the XII century A.D. considered an eye to be a mirror of a soul. We perceive the surrounding world with eyes. Many scientists underline the importance of engaging as many senses as possible in learning activities because such activities stimulate both hemispheres of the brain, thus resulting in better learning and involve the use of both low-tech and high-tech images and are suitable for a wide variety of teaching context; young learners and adults: specialized and general English; richly- or minimally- equipped classrooms [4]. There are many reasons why it is advantageous for a lecturer to use video or audio and other broadcast media. If the instructural goal for students is to practice authentic communication, then a video / activities based on a video might be used. We underline that authenticity means genuineness, realness, ambiguity, condensed life etc. Table 1 shows the relationship between different kinds of authenticity according to Breen M. and Taylor J.[5; 6].

Facets of authenticity

• Authenticity of language	• Authenticity of the text is used as input data for learners
	• Authenticity of the learners' own interpretation of such texts
• Authenticity of task	• Authenticity of the tasks conductive to language learning
• Authenticity of situation	• Authenticity of the actual social situation of the language classroom

In other words, authenticity is created through the interaction of users, situations and the texts.

But textbooks continue to be used by many lecturers as the central element in classroom teaching. Even authentic materials can be frustrating, confusing and de-motivating because they are too difficult for lower level students to comprehend [7]. We do understand that using films/television and other broadcast media is the time consuming process. However, these teaching tools are currently widespread and popular. Films are assumed to be natural and authentic, they represent the natural discourse, they are supplementary to course texts/textbooks. We would like to indicate that pragmalinguistic and form-oriented dialogues in films, television interviews resemble naturally occurring data.

Obviously using video in any form for educational purposes has become the demand of the day as it is considered to be one of the most efficient methods of teaching foreign languages. Using video is no longer seen as a passive activity but an active one, because it demands involvement from the learners. When we talk about practical classroom teaching , we insist on both proper video exploiting and increased students' involvement. Dealing with classroom management we underline that the notion student – centeredness has to be applied to teaching practice, methodology, curriculum development and student training. Video practitioners can accommodate increased student involvement in skill area acquirement and development. Video classes can be regarded as an ideal environment for piloting and implementing student-centered techniques. Lecturers, on the other hand, are seen as facilitators, consultants and resources, but their role should be decentralized.

Video interests and appeals to students, encouraging their interaction. With videos/films/DVDs the teacher can organize activi-ties to practice and develop English-language skills that capitalize on student-centered learning.

Such student-centered activities can be organized in pairs, small groups or the whole class. Targeted skills may vary. Depending on the objectives, lecturers may focus on videotape use for speaking, listening and writing skills development.

Lecturers have to use information technology (IT) in their professional activity as movies, and later videos become readily available for teaching purposes, bringing authenticity, reality, diversity and flexibility into the language classroom.

Lecturer's role is of great importance. In order to incorporate video materials in classroom effectively lecturers have to have certain knowledge and skills. They do need some practice to employ them appropriately as a powerful educational tool and powerful classroom resources. As media specialists have noted films do not stand alone in the instructional process. Their productivity depends in great measure on how ably they are used. Their potential is attained when they serve as a rich experience which the instructor or students relate to other experience, interpret, generalize, talk back to, and think critically about, and respond to in other intellectual ways. The instructor who understands this principle does not "show" films but USES them, making them a vital part of the course and a memorable learning experience for students [8]. Lecturers should bear in mind that videos are neither a substitute for the lecturer [9] or for instruction [10].

At the National Technical University of Ukraine (the NTTU "KPI") we have the experience of using videos in EFL classes at the Faculty of Linguistics. Our language professionals have agreed that utilization of videos enhances not only language-skill development, but decides the multicultural problems, makes students get real-life information directly from the source, unites the non-native speakers and native ones, presents a realistic image of the culture, linked with the language. We can add that video quickly attracts attention and is enjoyable to students. It

ВІСНИК НТУУ "КПІ". Філософія. Психологія. Педагогіка. Випуск 2'2010

148

lends variety to the learning process and the conversation format activates students, raises interest to language studying.

To promote active viewing the following procedures and techniques are suggested for the lecturer

–Film previewing;

–Film selection (the film should be suitable for the age, interests, studying material and proficiency level of students);

–Careful lesson planning (lecturers familiarize with the content in order to get ready for careful lesson planning and they have to define instructional objectives);

–Vocabulary learning activities;

–Follow-up effective tasks / exercises and successful activities to complement the video / the video materials;

–Careful timing.

The definition of language learning objectives is of significant importance. There is an old rule in the theatre that, when the house lights go down, the audience is never to be left in the dark for more than a brief moment. A ray of lights is shown on the curtain even before it opens. These metaphoric words are used to explain the need of clear goal setting in a lesson. Students should always, at all stages, know what they are doing and why they are doing it. This is necessary not only for they will feel a certain satisfaction about their achievements at the end of the lesson, but also for good motivation throughout the lesson.

This research has also shown that students are more attentive to their work if the teacher explains the goals of the video lesson. They are skill- oriented, whereas the new grammar feature serves only as a means to achieve this goal. This communicative goal setting is derived from our personal experience, as will be seen in the following stage.

Although the students' feedback confirmed that videos are a creative teaching tool, but it is important to note the necessity to adopt/develop appropriate stages and accordingly appropriate exercises / tasks. If the tasks are too difficult, the students cannot do them; but if the tasks are too easy the students do not improve their English and what is more they may lose interest. It is really very useful to link each short activity to what the students are studying (topic, vocabulary, grammar, structures etc.). Learning, what is meaningful and relevant, depends partly on what is taught and partly on how it is taught.

The work over videos can be divided into following stages:

I The Pre-Viewing Stage

II The Viewing Stage

III The Post-Viewing Stage

I The Pre-Viewing Stage

This is the most important and time-consuming stage for the lecturer and it should never be neglected. We must confess that in the real life classroom our students are not very seldom faced with the idea of film-watching without any introductory or preparatory work. So at this stage the lecturer's task is as following:

- to prepare students for the actual viewing of a video;

- to get information connected with the subject, characters;

- to stimulate students' interest in the topic/theme;

- to activate students' background knowledge;

- to introduce students to vocabulary that will help them successfully complete the task;

- to prepare students for the content of the video in order to aid comprehension;

- to distribute the flexible system of the individual/group tasks.

We as well may propose the so called pre-viewing activities that we widely use in one case or another before watching videos. The pre-viewing activities are as follows:

1. Student Interviews.

2. Problem Solving.

3. Discussion of the Video Title.

4. Brainstorming Activities.

5. Film Summary.

6. Vocabulary Work etc.

1. Student Interviews on the issues related to the video, its concept, its problem(s).

The procedure is as follows:

– students can ask each other the same question(s);

– students can be given separate questions;

– pair work in small groups;

– students share their findings.

2. Problem Solving

Students attempt to solve the presented problem of the film in pairs/in small groups. Then they report possible solutions to the whole class.

We are convinced that teaching English nowadays has to be professionally oriented. Students of the linguistic faculty in the NTUU the 'KPI' are future technical interpreters and as any specialists they have to be truly professional and should acquire such qualities as personal motivation, professional commit-

ВІСНИК НТУУ "КПІ". Філософія. Психологія. Педагогіка. Випуск 2'2010

149

ment, interpersonal and communication skills but what is more they have to be flexible and creative in problem solving [*11*]. In addition to being a member of our country, we are members of the world, and this gives us a global identity. So it is quite natural for us to think about world affairs and cooperate in solving the world's problems Science and technology are by nature concerned with problem-solving. The variety of problems to solve is infinite and in our case high-tech [*12*].

3. Discussion of the Video Title.

The objective of it is to hypothesize the film content. Students can discuss in a class/small groups. Students can be offered to answer film-related questions focusing on key ideas, main issues, personal experiences and cultural observations that are raised to stimulate discussions in which students have the opportunity to use the new vocabulary even the new language in simulated real life situations [*13*]. We encourage students to be en-

gaged in meaningful interaction, in which they are focused more on what they are saying than on how they are saying it. Students have real practice that enables them to use the language outside the classroom. We stress that the use of films/videos significantly reduces the monotony of mechanical drills and such kind of speaking practice is useful, meaningful, interesting and beneficial. The important element of fun can be injected with games, simulated dialogues and/or simulated role plays.

4. Brainstorming Activities.

Brainstorming can be used as a group technique for stimulating creative thinking. Students are asked to answer leading questions about a topic or idea that is under focus. The questions could be presented on the chalkboard and each student has to make up his/her mind how to answer them.

These brainstorming activities may include using "watching cards" which the students become used to while watching video:

WATCHING CARDS

Title _____

Plot _____

Main idea _____

Background _____

Characters _____

Vocabulary _____

Film message_____

With the help of such viewing cards the teacher is supposed to use a simple but rather flexible checking scheme. The checking scheme we usually use includes group conversation, cross-questioning, storytelling and film "message". We usually ask our students to express the "message" of any film in one word. The possible list of such messages may be listed on the blackboard: Friendship, Love, Environment, Nature, Peace, War, Help, Charity, Suffering, Hope, Faith etc.

This approach appeals to the whole class and attracts even the most passive or distant students. By means of such activities they overcome shyness and gain new experiences to generate new ideas.

So brainstorming can be regarded as a versatile thinking tool and can be used at any stage of the video process.

5. Film Summary.

a) Students are asked to skim a typed / given summary of the film / video for the main

idea(s) and / or scan the summary for specific details as it is really important for viewing comprehension. To facilitate note-making some "scheme" of the film can be distributed with blanks for students to fill in the missing information.

b) Students can be asked to write a film summary (50-70 words) : to summarize main issues raised in the film in written form. If a group is small, this task can be done orally.

6. Vocabulary Work

Students are introduced to important words, word expressions, even phrases, necessary for better comprehension of the film / video. The appropriate timing for vocabulary instruction should not be a conflicting point. The lecturer may vary such options as s/he may present vocabulary lists before the screening time or after the film / video has been shown or the word / word expression may be introduced at that moment of necessity and not only by the lecturer but by another student in class as well. We have to

ВІСНИК НТУУ "КПІ". Філософія. Психологія. Педагогіка. Випуск 2'2010

150

consider how to introduce new vocabulary. In order to keep all students active lecturers provide enough language support and crucial vocabulary. Follow up by repeating key ideas and vocabulary throughout and after the film / video event. Repetition also allows for more student interaction

The importance of vocabulary in language acquisition is without question.

By taking a systematic approach to vocabulary learning, lecturers can make the best use of class time and help students get the best return for their efforts. In addition the design of the activities allows lecturers to adapt or to apply the vocabulary, the ideas to other topics.

II The Viewing Stage

This stage is the key one for both the lecturer and students. For the lecturer it is important to:

- to facilitate the actual viewing of a video;
- to help students deal with specific issues;
- to focus on character or plot;
- to allow students to practice viewing, listening, note-taking;
- to give students the opportunity to use key vocabulary and concepts associated with the theme ;
- to check individual and group tasks.

The Viewing itself may vary as well. The lecturer may propose:

- viewing the whole film;
- breaking it into snippets;
- assigning tasks;
- viewing of the film/video without turning on the sound. This allows the students to concentrate on the context in which the scene / the dialogue is taking place. This context is giving the students the non linguistic information which helps them to imagine, interpret, reconstruct and even predict what is being said, what is happening and what is about to follow.

At this stage we as well practice using "viewing sheets" which consist of easy multiple-choice questions for intermediate level students to answer as they watch the video. Previewing and post viewing discussions are conducted in conjunction with the viewing sheets. The students listen to the dialogues, answer the questions on the viewing sheets and discuss the questions and events of the video section. Thus students use three of the four major skills areas of language learning. The main feedback of this class activity is developing fluency of English. This technique is highly effective as students usually adore watching movies.

The language of movies is too fast, too difficult and too idiomatic for the (intermediate-level) students to follow. Thus the lecturer must prepare viewing questions that are based on every clear and easy segment of dialogue and visual clues in the video section. Answering these easy questions keeps students involved in and focused on the viewing procedure.

The film can be interrupted in progress to clarify key ideas/points. Film interruptions allow the student opportunities to predict outcomes, solve problems and think critically [*14*] by comparing , contrasting and synthesizing. Students are encouraged to consider alternative solutions or endings.

Students can measure their comprehension based on the accuracy of their answers to the viewing questions as the feedback of the viewing stage of the proposed scheme. This may be regarded as indicator of students' progress that keeps them optimistic and motivated during the lesson.

It goes without saying that this technique requires a significant amount of teacher preparation. In addition to the viewing sheets, the teacher may create visual aids diagramming aspects of the film (or its section) such as characters, locations or major events in the plot.

III The Post-Viewing Stage

At this stage students interact and cooperate as they work toward completing the task. This is important in language learning because the students are involved in "comprehending, manipulating, producing and interacting in the target language (TL), while their attention is principally focused on meaning rather than form".

The post-viewing stage can be subdivided into the communicative exercises section and the extension section.

1) The Communicative Exercises Section.

In this section the lecturer's goal is:

- to provide students with opportunities to use English in a meaningful way acting out scenes, role-plays, doing communicative tasks;
- to reinforce key concept and vocabulary associated with the theme;
- to allow students to report information discussed earlier with their groupmates.

2) The Extension Section

In this section the lecturer's goal is:

- to have students write a paragraph or two on the theme;
- to arrange students to do a mini-survey on the video/topic/theme. Students should interview 10 people and then they can summarize their finding in a one-page written report;

ВІСНИК НТУУ "КПІ". Філософія. Психологія. Педагогіка. Випуск 2'2010

151

- to arrange students to work over an alternative ending.

Alternative endings: students work together and their tasks are to come up with an alternative ending and report it in an oral and/or written activity.

Using "alternative endings" as a creative task/activity helps our students express their ideas. Usually all students' responses show that they understand the film as they all have different endings. This kind of task makes students draw from their imagination, backgrounds and experiences when interpreting the video. It gives students the opportunity to practice creative writing.

Conclusions

To sum up, instead of studying English in order to learn it, our students should study English in order to master it. If a language is "the active social process through which the real is made" and if we create our own authenticity through social interactions, through our use of language, a huge burden falls on the lecturer.

As curriculum reformers and syllabus designers we may need to re-think what we mean by authenticity in terms of appropriateness. Richard Day writes that the use of authentic materials is a major preoccupation in English language teaching (ELT) [*15*]. Lecturers often try to ensure their students use authentic materials; publishers proclaim proudly that their materials are authentic. The assumption, of course, is that authentic materials are to be preferred over other types of materials.

The advantages of the video/films, television and other broadcast media are:

1. It is a very useful resource as it is natural and authentic.
2. It also prepares students for authentic communication.
3. Students rapidly become aware of the richness and complexity of the English language.
4. Students see that English is not only an object of academic interest but a key to success in their professional life.
5. English becomes a real means of interaction and communication among students.
6. Students demonstrate progress in multiple skills at the same time.
7. The video can be used at any level of their language knowledge both for beginners and advanced students.
8. With careful selection and purposeful planning it can be highly motivating to students.

We underline that lecturers have to be not only recipients of teaching innovations but also designers of methods (in our case video technique) appropriate to their own teaching context. We hope that the article will certainly be of interest from methodological point of view as videos are an important part of a lecturer's repertoire because it helps to establish a good classroom climate. The most convincing argument in favor of the procedure is that most students demonstrate marked language skill improvements in later work. Fortunately, the students are bright, curious, and really willing to try something new.

ЛІТЕРАТУРА

1. *Бориско Н.Ф.* Диалог культур и содержание материалов учебно-методического комплекса / Н.Ф.Бориско // Іноземні мови. –1999. – № 2. – С.53-58.
2. *Вдовцова С.А.* Забезпечення мовної і мовленнєвої компетенції фахівця у системі професійно-технічної освіти / Вдовцова С.А. // Українська мова і література в середніх школах, ліцеях, гімназіях. – 2003. – № 5. – С.131-134.
3. *Інтерактивні технології навчання*: теорія, практика, досвід: [метод. посіб.] / авт.-уклад.: О.Пометун, Л.Пироженко. – К.: А.П.Н., 2002. – 136 с.
4. *Картавих О.В.* Загальнокультурна підготовка студентів технічних вищих навчальних закладів освіти / О.В.Картавих // Проблеми сучасного мистецтва і культури: Зб. наук. праць. – К.: Логос, 2001. – С.68-72.
5. *Картавих О.В.* Засоби формування духовної культури особистості / О.В.Картавих // Теоретичні і методологічні засади професійної освіти. – К., 2001. – С.76-81.
6. *Коваль І.В.* Про систему естетичного виховання студентів в технічному вузі / О.В.Картавих // Вісник технологічного університету «Поділля». – 1999. – № 1. – С.178-186.
7. *Коваль І.В.* Вплив когнітивного стилю студентів на особливості оволодіння іноземною мовою: Зб. наук. праць Інституту психології ім. Г.С. Костюка / І.В Коваль // Проблеми загальної та педагогічної психології / за ред. Максименка С.Д. – К., 2001. – Ч.6. – С.196-201.

8. *Ковалинська І.В.* Загальнокультурна компетенція студента, її вплив на лінгвістичну компетенцію: Науково-теоретичний збірник / І.В.Ковалинська // Гуманітарний вісник ДВНЗ «Переяслав-Хмельницький державний педагогічний університет імені Григорія Сковороди». – Переяслав-Хмельницький: ПП «Медвєдєв», 2006. – С.21-24.

9. *Конопляник Л.* Критерії та показники рівнів сформованості готовності інженерів авіаційної галузі до іншомовної професійної діяльності / Л.Конопляник // Освітянські обрії: реалії та перспективи / Н.Г. Тверезовська (голова) та ін. – 2008. – №1(14). – С.81-85.

10. *Остапенко А.А.* Моделирование многомерной педагогической реальности / А.А.Остапенко. – М.: Народное образование, 2005. – 384 с.

11. *Паламарчук В.Ф.* Як виростити інтелектуала: [посібник для вчителів і керівників шкіл] / В.Ф.Паламарчук. – Т.: Навчальна книга-Богдан, 2001. – 149 с.

12. *Сидоренко О.Л.* Проблеми реформування системи вищої освіти в Україні: [наук.-практ. посіб. для працівників системи освіти] / Л.О.Сидоренко. – Х., 2000. – 52 с.

13. *Щеголєва Т.Л.* Професійна культура майбутніх прикордонників як педагогічна проблема / Т.Л.Щеголєва // Наукові записки Тернопільського національного педагогічного університету. Серія: Педагогіка. – 2006. – № 9. – С.46-50.

Стаття надійшла до редакції 19.05.2010 р.

ВІСНИК НТУУ "КПІ". Філософія. Психологія. Педагогіка. Випуск 2'2010

153