MEDIA COMPETENCE OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER (PERSONAL TEACHING EXPERIENCE)

Ludmila Koniaeva

PhD (Pedagogy), Assocate Professor
Kemerovo State University

RUSSIA
LOUDMILLAKONI@MAIL.RU

ABSTRACT: The article deals with a significant role of media competence for both ESL teacher and students in the modern world where media are omnipresent. Based on the opportunities which Global network provides to involve students in authentic situations of intercultural interaction, the paper analyses some innovative methods of using internet resources to improve students' listening comprehension skills.

KEY WORDS: media competence, interactive and intercultural communication, media education, listening comprehension.

CHANGES in the world technologies and human society in the second half of the 20th and the beginning of the 21 century have made language learning more important than ever. Humanistic goals of understanding others, their cultures and their cultural heritage are more important in the promotion of social cohesion within different states, countries, and within the world nations and nationalities as a whole. The Internet as a Global network provides opportunities to involve students in authentic situations of intercultural interaction, i.e, intercultural communication with native speakers of the target language. Thus, there was an objective necessity of integration of information technology into the learning process.

MODERN information environment involves interaction with a "prepared" media literate consumer. In Russia and abroad, the most common terms which are used interchangeably, are "media culture", "information culture", "media education", "information education", "information competence", "media competence", "audiovisual competence" and others. Media Literacy on the whole is the ability to access all media – radio and social networks, digital TV, the printed press and the most recent mobile devices, as well as the ability to exploit their potential to full extent and use them in all possible ways - critical, active and creative. This is a fundamental task for a modern teacher. Media literate teachers and students thus have a higher degree of freedom because they can choose and evaluate media sources and participate most actively in the teaching and learning process.

TODAY we meet generation of students for whom the possession of digital tools is commonplace. With these tools, they get information, form the knowledge and report on their achievements to others. Digital tools, many of which involve collaboration, are available anytime and anywhere where there is Internet. Students expect a similar educational authenticity, relevance and interactivity from their instructors. We live in a world where media are omnipresent: Internet-based technologies are an essential part of education in the

XXI century. Learning a foreign language just from textbooks, dictionaries and grammar reference became ineffective, unprofessional and uninteresting. With the advent of modern multimedia technologies and Internet services it is possible to optimize the process of language learning. Such a complex learning process of students acquiring personal experience with a foreign language and culture requires the creation of situations of practical use of language as a tool for intercultural learning and interaction.

THE competent foreign language teacher comprehends the processes involved in acquiring another language. He uses print, electronic, and other resources to obtain information on the subject in which a second language is an asset. Both learners and teachers - and others professionally engaged in language teaching - can benefit from a means of talking about their language use and the multiplicity of approaches to teaching and learning. Multimedia technologies effectively underpin innovative methods of teaching languages. Russian Pedagogical Encyclopedia interprets the term "media education" as "trend in linguistics, acting for the study of the laws of mass communication (press, television, radio, cinema, video, etc.).

THE main objectives of media education: to prepare the next generation for life in the modern information age, the perception of different information, teach a man to understand it, to realize the consequences of its impact on the psyche, master means of communication based on the non-verbal forms of communication by technical means. [2, p.51]

FOLLOWING A.N. Shchukin, we believe that "multimedia technologies - is a learning tool, including its structure in different types of information - in the form of text, audio, video and animated elements" [1, p.16]. The media provides interactive communication with students. In this context innovative technologies are changing the roles of teacher and student: both parties become responsible for the final result of education. To do this, elements of research work are introduced in the learning process; in addition, it is supported by independent work of students. Foreign language is a compulsory subject of the federal component of the basic educational program and should be implemented with the use of both traditional and information technology educational process [3, p. 3].

IN the practice of teaching ESL, we make extensive use of podcasts, believing that listening is an important part of foreign language teaching and learning tool for students' speech activity. We must remind ourselves that "Speaking does not of itself constitute communication unless what is said is comprehended by another person" (Rivers cited in Morley, 1991, p. 82). ESL teachers need to allocate a considerable amount of classroom time to teaching and practicing it in order to inspire the habit of 'good listeners'.

LISTENING comprehension is a key initial step in communication. The better a student can understand what is being said, the better will be their ability to communicate. In addition, they will be better able to notice the characteristics of the target language which will help improve their language development in all four key skill areas. Students may feel a great deal of pride when they are able to comprehend something in the target language. This can be a great motivating factor in continuing to learn the language, and teachers should do whatever possible to promote this sense of accomplishment. Consequently, teachers need to construct learning activities which will enhance learners' oral comprehension (listening skills) and motivate them, as well.

THERE is a series of questions which teachers need to consider when preparing listening activities:

➢ What is the context for listening?
➢ Should one or two items from the listening exercises be modeled for the whole class so that learners know what to do?
➢ How many times should the item be heard by students?
➢ How will learners check the accuracy of their listening? (that is, the students' answers?)
➢ Is it possible to check listening accuracy to be done independently or collaboratively?

PODCASTS, like any other audio recording, contribute to the development of skills and practical auditive perception of authentic listening comprehension. Listening to podcasts regularly, students and English language learners, over time, begin to better understand it, and will go to more complex audio or video materials. There are three types of podcasts: audio podcast, video podcast, and a screencast. If the first two types of podcasts are widely known, the third type - a new phenomenon which has simplified language training via the Internet. The essence of the screencast is a special program that mimics the actions of a computer screen with audio support.

Example: video podcast: Example: screencast:

SUBJECTS of podcasts are quite extensive - Arts and Entertainment, Biography, Business, Education and Professional, History, Languages, Literature, Philosophy, Politics, Self Development, Sports and Hobbies, Travel and others. With podcasts work is much easier than with print media. They allow to save time of the teacher and students in preparation for communication (some texts are provided with dictionaries, questions, assignments, parallel text versions).

Didactic tasks are as follows:
➕ build and improve reading skills directly using materials networks of varying difficulty;
➕ improve listening skills through authentic audio texts on the Internet, as well as texts prepared by the teacher;
➕ improve the skills of writing and speaking skills;
➕ replenish the active and passive vocabulary of modern English vocabulary;
➕ to acquaint students with the Cultural realities, including speech etiquette, especially verbal behavior of various peoples in a dialogue, especially culture and traditions of the country the language is spoken;

✦ form a stable motivation of foreign language activities in the classroom based on the systematic use of authentic materials and the principle of connection with life

FOR 1st year students, we have compiled a quiz «English Ice-Breakers» using FrontPage programme. This introductory lesson quiz allows freshers to intensify the knowledge acquired in school and socialize in the new group. This multimedia product requires a lecture room with a screen, projector, loudspeakers or interactive whiteboard; on the left side one can see contains links to nine tasks (phonetic (1.8), cultural (2, 3, 7), listening (4), language guess (5, 6, 9).

The 1st page with links to the tasks

CLICKING the appropriate link takes you to the tab with brightly illustrated task within which contains links to the answers, activated by pressing the corresponding illustration. The program allows you to listen to task for listening and watch Flash video without leaving the main shell.

For example, the phonetic task (task 1):

THE material presented is built in a logical sequence and promotes independent thinking, active learning activities, and motivates educational interests of students. The advantage of this work is also a sensible and efficient use of the methods of cognitive independence of students, the rational combination of scientific principle and the principles of availability, clarity, abstraction; use ICT tools greatly facilitate learning.

THE other multimedia product is "*Electronic textbook on English grammar.*" The relevance of electronic teaching aids is to use modern information technologies, engaging a wide range of authentic materials and resources online environment with teaching opportunities in the practice of professional pedagogical activity of foreign language teaching.

GRAMMAR is traditionally a separate aspect of the practical mastery of a foreign language in artificial conditions at any stage of training. The most effective way of working with grammatical material in the classroom is to promote the process of forming the trainees own thoughts, ideas, and find effective means of linguistic forms and their adequate expression in the process of communication. Theoretical and practical grammar textbook presents ample opportunities to think and speak, to express feelings, emotions, inspires debate and becomes crucial in learning a foreign language.

Main page with hyperlinks to parts of speech:

THE main motive for learning foreign languages is undoubtedly the desire to communicate with representatives of other cultures, and it means - to be able to engage in dialogue, to understand the interlocutor and be able to express their point of view. In our conditions, the main "partner" communication becomes a teacher - not a native speaker, so appeal to foreign-language authentic video and audio materials is not only warranted, but necessary. Electronic teaching manual contains a wide range of video and audio materials provided with questions for discussion, as well as creative tasks on communicative grammar

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made in the format of Power Point. As practice shows, studying of a foreign language becomes much more interesting when it is supported by visuals.

Grammar is explained by native speakers:

FOR the development concerned, free, creative communication in a foreign language learners need special methods that are not limited to doing the exercises for a given sample, retelling and evaluation of events, but primarily contribute to the formation, development and improvement of communicative and speech abilities of students.

THIS teaching aid allows ESL teacher to prepare students to master the theory and practice of communicative grammar, contributes to the further development of a common linguistic competence and aims at preparing students for the implementation of communication activities at a level consistent with the requirements of the educational standard.

THE educational-methodical manual explains the need and urgency for monitoring and assessment of students' knowledge, selection of optimal methods and forms of assessment of student learning, the organization of control by using tests and quizzes, providing objective and qualitative information on the result of teaching.

Page for self-study tests and quizzes:

TESTS can be used for the control of mastering grammatical topics and common grammatical structures. A great variety of tests and exercises, the presence of options allow ESL teacher to use them in team work, for group and individual work under the guidance of a teacher, and for independent extracurricular work of students. They should help students

identify gaps and weak points in English grammar, organize knowledge and, if desired, prepare for more complex international tests such as FCE, IELTS, TOEFL, etc.

ANOTHER factor to consider is the amount of classroom time spent on listening. As classroom time is limited, students should be encouraged to practice listening outside of the class as often as possible. Fortunately, the internet is a rich source of free listening materials for self-study. Many teaching listening comprehension of the better websites allow the students to choose their own level and topic. Students are able to listen to the materials as many times as they wish and never need to feel embarrassed or reluctant to ask the teacher to play the CD again. Helpful Websites are highly recommended on the final page of our Grammar e-book.

FOREIGN language teaching is thus a matter of extending learners' repertoire of languages and language varieties – their plurilingual competence – and giving them the potential to continue to extend their repertoire throughout life, autonomously or with the help of teaching. Foreign language teaching is thus part of education for plurilingualism with many features in common with the teaching of other languages of education and a potential for cooperation as a principle of curriculum design.

Educational blog «For my Students» has got tasks on all aspects of speech activity as well as self-study tasks.

I made an attempt to show that there is much more to teaching ESL and listening comprehension than simply playing a CD and asking students to circle some comprehension questions. We need to use appropriate activities, as well as a wide range of realistic tasks which can be used to practice processing skills. The teacher should be very aware of the needs and interests of the students, and plan lessons accordingly. We should use a variety of listening materials in class and we should encourage the students to practice studying and listening outside of the classroom in their own time. If we keep all these factors in mind, we will certainly come a great deal closer to giving our students the listening skills they'll need to listen and communicate successfully in the future.

LANGUAGE teaching also focuses on cultures associated with the language in question in order to achieve other humanistic goals, namely understanding of people of other societies and their cultures. Understanding of cultures, combined with opportunities for communication, is expected to lead to a reduction of prejudiced views of others. Since communication in modern languages can be both receptive and productive and immediate

rather than mediated through texts, this educational goal has, in the recent decades, been given more emphasis than in classical languages. In modern languages, policy and teaching thus focuses on intercultural competence – the willingness and ability to engage with people of other languages in common pursuits – which has humanistic consequences in the form of reflection on one's own cultures and identities as well as utilitarian consequences since it enables direct interaction with people of other languages and cultures.

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