USE OF INTERNET RESOURCES IN TEACHING LISTENING TO BACHELOR STUDENTS IN NON-LANGUAGE FACULTIES

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Abstract

This article addresses the use of Internet resources in teaching English to enhance listening skills. Special attention is given to improving listening skills among undergraduate students from non-language faculties.

Keywords

Internet resource; listening skills; authentic material; audio material; audio text

For a long time, listening has been considered a neglected aspect in foreign language teaching by educators, as noted in the methodological literature [7]. This was explained by the belief that listening skills develop automatically through immersion in the language environment and practice while working on grammar, vocabulary, and phonetics [8, 9]. Nowadays, society members need to develop a high level of listening proficiency because they want to understand what is being said to them in English during personal conversations, business meetings, on television, in theaters, when watching movies, traveling abroad, listening to audio recordings, etc. [4, 5].

Listening is rightfully considered the most challenging aspect of mastering the English language. This complexity is due to factors such as the nature of the language material, the conditions of its presentation, the semantic content, sources of information, as well as the individual characteristics of both the speaker (manner of speech, pace, presence of an accent) and the listener, their auditory experience, and many others [6].

On the other hand, listening is a powerful means of learning a foreign language, as it contributes to the acquisition of the language's lexical composition and grammatical structure, and provides an opportunity to master the sound aspects of the studied language, its phonemic composition, and intonation: rhythm, stress, melody. In one of his recent publications, M. Rost characterized listening as "an essential type of speech activity because it provides the listener with information. Without understanding the information, no learning can begin..." [10].

It should not be forgotten that listening, along with speaking, enables communication in a foreign language. Without the ability to distinguish foreign speech by ear,

communication with representatives of other cultures is essentially impossible.

Unfortunately, with only two or three academic hours of English per week, teachers cannot devote sufficient attention to developing students' listening skills. Increasing emphasis is placed on independent work, which has become possible thanks to the advent of Internet resources. As an example, let's consider some of them in more detail:

1. TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) is a universal online platform featuring numerous conferences by leading specialists in science, art, design, politics, culture, business, global issues, technology, and entertainment. The mission of the conference is to spread unique ideas ("ideas worth spreading") [13]. Recordings of the most outstanding speakers' presentations can be found on the official TED.com website. Currently, over 1500 selected lectures with translations into various languages are available on the website. All videos are posted under a Creative Commons BY-NC-ND license, allowing their free distribution [14].

The system of working with such a site, as with any other audio text, follows the scheme: "sound - text - sound" (♪ + T + ♪). First, students are offered to watch a video without subtitles to grasp the main idea. Then, a detailed analysis of the text is conducted using the provided subtitles and, if desired by the teacher, with additional exercises on vocabulary and grammar. After this, the video is watched again, during which an auditory-visual synthesis occurs, with simultaneous transmission of sound and image (with subtitles or the just-analyzed text), which promotes the development of listening skills and stimulates oral communication among students during further discussion of the video material.

1. Ororo.tv [12] – a website providing access to the latest TV series and some movies with subtitles in various languages, which can be turned on and off at the viewer's discretion.

Watching movies and TV series in the original language is of great significance in the process of learning foreign languages because it is based on one of the main methodological principles – the principle of visuality. During the viewing of a video, all types of speech activity are engaged. It is known that information that is both seen and heard is remembered five times better than information that is only heard [3].

Watching authentic video materials is also an effective means of increasing students' motivation to study a foreign language because they demonstrate the functioning of the language in the form accepted by its native speakers in a natural social context, familiarize students with norms and rules of communication and behavior, show various

types of relationships, and illustrate the language of facial expressions and gestures. Video is a unique tool for teaching speaking and foreign language communication [2].

2. BBC Podcasts [11]. BBC radio stations cover a wide range of topics that, in the absence of subtitles, can be beneficial to listen to as a background, which immerses the listener in a state of "flow" and creates the illusion of "total immersion" in an authentic environment. This sense of "flow" naturally activates forgotten knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, while also capturing the melody of the language, which is equally important when learning to speak.

It is worth noting that in radio programs such as BBC Learning English – 6 Minute English [15], the podcast hosts are native speakers, providing the opportunity to listen to and study the living language as used by ordinary residents of English-speaking countries, meaning that authentic material is used. The podcasts are divided into three levels: the first for beginners (elementary), the second for learners with intermediate knowledge of English (lower-intermediate and intermediate), and the third for learners with upper-intermediate knowledge. The advantage of the BBC Learning English project is that the speech tempo of the dialogues varies depending on the language proficiency level. In 6 Minute English, there are inserts of English dialogues from BBC correspondents, along with explanations of new English words and expressions. It should be noted that all explanations are given exclusively in English. Moreover, scripts (text versions of the broadcasts) are provided with the podcasts.

It is important to highlight that many foreign language learners do not realize that when they listen to their native speech, they do not actually listen to every word. Moreover, they underestimate the fact that people closely link linguistic knowledge with their existing experience and understanding of concepts such as theme and culture. Færch and Kasper point out that absolute understanding of an audio text is a mistaken notion of how the natural process of perceiving information in one's native language occurs [6]. The effort to understand everything does not lead to effective results, causes a feeling of fatigue, and ultimately leads to failure.

In our view, students need to be taught to select relevant information while ignoring irrelevant information, i.e., to do what they do in their native language [1]. The main thing is to develop the skill of guessing, to learn to anticipate what might be discussed, what the speaker might say in a given situation, thereby bridging potential gaps in perception
Internet resources are an effective means of organizing the educational environment and supporting social relationships, as they enable participants in the learning process to

engage in collaborative activities, use the latest materials in various formats, and practice different types of speech activities. Authentic educational audio material is interesting, informative, accessible for understanding, and aligns with the contemporary reality of foreign societies. It creates favorable conditions for learners to acquire new cultural information, understand the speech behavior of native speakers, and become familiar with the living language, daily life, culture, and modern realities of the people.

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