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COMMUNICATING WITH THE WORLD OR VIDEO NEWS AS A STARTER IN BUSINESS ENGLISH CLASS

Introduction. It is hard to deny the importance of online video resources in developing communication skills and acquiring new vocabulary as well as cross-cultural competencies.

Some powerful changes have had their impact on our teaching routine and given rise to some refreshing approaches to teaching Business English in particular. Among them availability of various online video materials should be mentioned as well as the ease with which the ICT (Information Communication Technology) can facilitate their application in the classroom.

Main part. Since today's students are obviously better equipped for acquiring knowledge and skills based on integrating online resources into the language classes, teachers can apply BBC video news as systematic warm ups to create English environment and involve students into subsequent analyses and group discussion.

Any starter offered has the only purpose to provoke appetite and facilitate further digestion. That is why carefully selected activities at the beginning of the lesson deserve more attention and could serve as a good alternative to a notorious checking home task. Here come a number of questions. How to tap multiple interests and intelligences of today's students? How to plunge them into the foreign language environment softly? Why not let some fresh air into the classroom using online news resources. They can set the tone of the lesson; provoke interest and deeper focus on English. This activity can often result in a lively group discussion or even dispute.

Still there is a lot of evidence that students might have difficulties in authentic video comprehension due to the lack of efficient strategies but mostly to persistent training. The hardships to overcome include video perception and diffused focus on presented material, very often due to mobile phones at hand. Video perception refers to active and very complicated mental processes (interactive and interpretive). Strong focus (which should be well-grounded in their interests) is required in order to recognize a certain amount of vocabulary and grammar patterns, to separate each utterance into small meaningful units, where the visual content is of great help.

Using video news in business English class as a starter helps to handle the above difficulties, as it not only grabs students' attention but also helps to focus, triggers anticipation, decreases anxiety and tension, thus relaxing them for subsequent group communication activities. Students need to keep all of the components in short-term memory before retrieving background knowledge. On the other hand, video news increase memory of content as they create memorable visual images and foster speedy learning. Finally, they inspire and motivate students for self-study, which the internet makes easily available nowadays [1].

The Internet is an efficient provider of authentic audio and video files for teaching practices. Here comes the problem of selecting materials. They should meet some requirements, namely, they primarily need to be authentic, relevant, interesting, selective and efficient.

The Internet resources have a number of advantages, such as opportunities to pause at will, and repeat the episode or to download subtitles if necessary. A teacher of English can choose from a rich variety of news sites, which offer a good menu to choose from for a starter. *The BBC News* (<http://www.bbc.com/news>). It has proved to be very efficient, especially for upper-intermediate learners. It is number one choice to grab students' attention; to decrease anxiety and relax students; to achieve strong focus; to trigger anticipation; to inspire and motivate students; to create memorable visual images in order to fix the information in short-term memory and so on. It stands out for plenty of advantages. In addition to exciting up-to-date stories, each video lasts no more than 2—3 minutes and is supplied with a short review, which can help the students with the story background and useful vocabulary at preliminary stage.

Breaking News English (<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com>). This site can be recommended for work outside the class as well. It gives free access to recent news in all spheres, worksheets and audio files in addition. It is also an extra source of fresh business articles.

Monthly News Digest Online (<http://www.englishclub.com/listening/news.htm>). Monthly News Digest Online designed to provide numerous audio feeds, texts, and exercises for comprehension check.

Teaching strategies in integrating BBC news. First of all they should be targeted at psychological support helping the student to accept the fact that he or she is not going to understand everything, to stay relaxed when they continue to not understand for a long time, to avoid translating into native language as understanding English is efficient only in English.

When planning your warm up practice the following factors should be taken into account: the time available, proficiency level, their ability and content of the material for analysis.

Warm up activities can be approached as three stages: pre, while and post watching ones [2].

Preliminary stage. In real life environment, it is unusual for people to watch, listen and comprehend something without having some idea of the background. A waiter knows the menu, which the diner is choosing their food from. It is important to allocate a fair proportion of a lesson to the preliminary or introductory tasks.

Preliminary activities are aimed at: setting the context, generating interest, building confidence, predicting content and activating new vocabulary. Class work sheets or handouts with new vocabulary may be prepared or taken from internet by the teacher.

As large numbers of unknown words will often hinder comprehension, and lower confidence the teacher selects “difficult” vocabulary for the students to review beforehand.

The teacher should hand out the work sheets and go through the introductory article or review and difficult vocabulary list to make sure everyone understands. It enables them to grasp the gist of it. They may even try to predict answers before watching activity.

Main stage. Watch the video at least two times: firstly, to get the gist, secondly, to deepen understanding, to do the comprehension tasks and check their answers. For students with low level of language proficiency it is recommended to repeat the video on students’ request. After that, students can work on the quiz sheet in small groups or in pairs.

Final stage. For homework: students should find a short video of their own to present to the class for warm up activity. Ask them to pick up difficult vocabulary and prepare a worksheet modeled on yours.

Conclusion. The key to success lies in close cooperation with student group and delegation of video news selection and identifying points for discussion. One must admit that the strategy has a great potential to make a Business English class more enjoyable. It offers innumerable opportunities to keep in touch with the whole world.

References

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EFFECTIVE APPROACHES IN TEACHING ENGLISH TO STUDENTS-ECONOMISTS

Introduction. Teaching English to specialists of economic specialties requires a methodical approach that is tailored to students’ needs. It is important to understand that these learners come to class with a specific set of language needs and goals, which differ from those of other learners. They require a more specialized approach that is designed to meet their unique language needs effectively.

Main part. There are different methods and approaches in teaching English to specialists of economic specialties and it is necessary to choose the most efficient and productive. The following are some of the approaches that can be used to teach English to the specialists of economic specialties.

Needs analysis approach. The Needs Analysis approach was developed by John Munby in his book, “Communicative Syllabus Design” in 1987. Munby emphasized the importance of analyzing the needs of learners in order to design an effective syllabus. The first step in teaching English to specialists is a needs analysis. The purpose of this approach is to identify the specific language needs of the learners. It involves an assessment of their language proficiency level, previous English learning experience, and their needs and goals. This information can be used to design a tailored program that meets the learners’ needs. This approach has been used by many language teachers and remains tremendously effective and popular nowadays.

Content-driven approach. This approach was popularized by Diane Larsen-Freeman and Marti Anderson in their book “Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching” in 1983. This approach focuses on teaching language through meaningful, real-life content such as news articles, songs, and films. A content-driven approach is an effective method of teaching English to economic learners as it emphasizes real-world economic issues, concepts, and language. The approach involves teaching economic content using authentic materials such as news articles, case studies, and research papers. This approach helps learners to understand the language in context, allowing them to learn new vocabulary and structures and increasing their overall comprehension [1, p. 165].