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Developing Listening Skills for Improving Foreign Language Communicative Competence

## АКТУАЛЬНІ ПРОБЛЕМИ ПРОФЕСІЙНО-ПЕДАГОГІЧНОЇ ОСВІТИ

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### DEVELOPING LISTENING SKILLS FOR IMPROVING FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

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**Abstract.** The article deals with the problem of developing listening skills for improving foreign language communicative competence. The practical value of using an authentic foreign language text at a foreign language lesson is determined. The ways of the use of the English language recordings in the educational process of students are outlined. It is found out that tracks with foreign information should be used only in the certain methodical situations. Multimedia helps effectively a teacher to achieve outlined objectives of improving foreign language communicative competence for multiple repetition of a speech model for making permanent listening item of language units. The basic stages of work with foreign language recordings are determined: teaching a foreign language listening (teaching to listen and understand the foreign language track means to overcome the methodological difficulties that require a certain amount of time and special training. This is explained by the fact that there are lots of difficulties on the way of understanding a foreign language: an unusual speed of speech, presence of unknown vocabulary, specific rhythms and melody); teaching a foreign language speech with the special models pronounced by foreign speakers (teaching students to practical mastery of a foreign language is intrinsically linked with involvement into the educational process of original English tracks, those are made by highly skilled experts (foreign speakers); learning a new vocabulary due to a dialogue, an extract of a play or a conversation, songs, prose and poetry (it is noted that the students’ interest of learning foreign language songs and poems is extremely high, and it primarily promotes strong learning); analysing the recorded students’ speech (fixing student’s speech and analysing their mistakes is very important at any stage of learning a foreign language for self-control and self-correction).

**Key words:** listening; listening skills; authentic foreign language text; foreign language activity; foreign language communicative competence; multimedia.

### РОЗВИТОК НАВИЧОК АУДІОВАННЯ ДЛЯ ВДОСКОНАЛЕННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ

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**Анотація.** Статтю присвячено проблемі вдосконалення іншомовної комунікативної компетентності особистості завдяки розвитку навичок аудіювання. Визначено практичну цінність застосування аутентичного іншомовного тексту на уроці іноземної мови. Окреслено шляхи використання англомовного запису в навчальному процесі учнів. З'ясовано, що треки з іншомовною інформацією слід використовувати лише в чітко окреслених методичних ситуаціях. Мультимедійні засоби ефективно допомагають учителю досягти поставленої мети щодо вдосконалення іншомовної комунікативної компетентності через кількаразове повторення мовного зразка для вироблення постійного слухового образу мовних одиниць. Виокремлено основні етапи роботи з іншомовним записом: навчання аудіювання, іншомовного мовлення завдяки спеціальним зразкам у виконанні носіїв іноземної мови, уведення нового лексичного матеріалу у формі монологу, діалогу, бесіди, пісень тощо, запис мовленнєвої діяльності учнів для самоконтролю і самокорекції.

**Ключові слова:** аудіювання; навички аудіювання; автентичний іншомовний текст; іншомовна діяльність; іншомовна комунікативна компетентність; мультимедійні засоби.

## РАЗВИТИЕ НАВЫКОВ АУДИРОВАНИЯ ДЛЯ УСОВЕРШЕНСТВОВАНИЯ ИНОЯЗЫЧНОЙ КОММУНИКАТИВНОЙ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТИ

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**Аннотация.** Статья посвящена проблеме совершенствования иноязычной коммуникативной компетентности личности благодаря развитию навыков аудирования. Определена практическая ценность применения аутентичного иноязычного текста на уроке иностранного языка. Определены пути использования англоязычной записи в учебном процессе учеников. Выяснено, что треки с иноязычной информацией следует использовать только в четко определенных методических ситуациях. Мультимедийные средства эффективно помогают учителю достичь поставленной цели по совершенствованию иноязычной коммуникативной компетентности через неоднократное повторение речевого образца для выработки постоянного слухового образа языковых единиц. Выделены основные этапы работы с иноязычной записью: обучение аудированию, иноязычной речи благодаря специальным образцам в исполнении носителей иностранного языка, введение нового лексического материала в форме монолога, диалога, беседы, песен и т.п., запись речевой деятельности учащихся для самоконтроля и самокоррекции.

**Ключевые слова:** аудирование; навыки аудирования; аутентичный иноязычный текст; иноязычная деятельность; иноязычная коммуникативная компетентность; мультимедийные средства.

**Statement of the problem in general.** Integration of Ukraine into the global educational environment requires constant improvement of the national

educational system, testing and implementation of innovative pedagogical systems, modernization of the educational content and organization of adequate global trends and needs of the modern labour market requires from graduates not only deep theoretical knowledge, but also their ability for independently using in non-standard, constantly changing situations [3, p. 7–8]. It is available as upgrade of education maintenance, in particular studying foreign languages in comprehensive schools. This is primarily due to some changes in the strategic areas of modern schooling – direction of studying activities on the development of students' life competencies needed in the future to provide opportunities for graduate school to feel comfortable in a modern world of multinational space. This fact is objectively conditioned by a number of factors, the priority of which is the constant tendency of globalization and intensification of international contacts in various spheres of life. An important role in these transformation processes belongs to determination and implementation of updated training content. First of all, it's provided with an active reorientation of school foreign language education into the communicative and active direction, learner oriented and cultural ones of educational process. Exactly this aspect makes to rethink theoretical approaches to the choice of efficient technologies and foreign language means. But the main purpose of foreign language teaching is to develop students' communicative competence, which provides linguistic, speech and sociocultural experience, consistent with age-related abilities of students [2, p. 1]. Listening to English tracks will achieve this purpose effectively, it creates an artificial foreign language communicative environment for learners. In general multimedia (Latin "multum" – lots and English "media" – tools) is a system of modern technical devices that allow to work with text information, graphics, audio (speech, music and effects), animation computer graphics (drawn films, three-dimensional graphics (3D)) into a single complex [1]. The right combination of pedagogical technologies and multimedia is carried out: a) to improve the efficiency and quality of education; b) orientation on modern aims of learning; c) instantaneous control over work; d) improving the quality of visibility; e) using the country-dimension aspect; and f) increasing cognitive activity and students' motivation to learn more.

**Analysing the latest researches and publications.** The considerable number of scientific researches devoted to the problem of using multimedia at the foreign language lesson at school is appeared at the present stage of the development of linguomethodics. Thus, the principles of multimedia in an

educational process are analysed by O. Korchazhkina. The question of intensification of the foreign language learning using computer technologies is trained by H. Shkliaruk. Modern methods of teaching foreign languages and basic students' activities at English lessons are considered by O. Vishnevskiy and S. Gaponova. The problem of individual teaching listening to students of schools with the deep studying foreign language is explored by N. Zherenko. Multimedia at the English classes as a mean of intensification of students' educational and cognitive activity is studied by O. Bihych. Available linguomethodics articles actualize a necessity of the detailed research of the problem of functioning multimedia as audio recordings to create a foreign language communicative situation at foreign language lessons at school.

**Putting aims of the article (tasks).** The purpose of the article is to define expedience and principles of using English tracks in the educational process at different stages of foreign language studying. The goal involves performing the following tasks: 1) to find out the practical value of using English tracks for improving foreign speech competence at English lessons; 2) to describe the principles of using English audio recordings in the educational process of students.

**Presenting the main material of the research.** Some English teachers try to represent some material using different kinds of teaching visual tools, including tracks of various types in their teaching and educational activities. However, due to imperfection of equipped classrooms with multimedia such activity is not always justified.

We consider that tracks should be used only in well-defined teaching and methodical situations. Today there are such common tasks of practical using multimedia at foreign language lessons in linguomethodics:

### **1. Teaching a foreign language listening.**

It is believed that to teach listening and understanding the «mechanical foreign language» is an easy task. But where the track is not used at a lesson, even well prepared students at first understand nothing, simply not perceiving a «mechanical language». Teaching to listen and understand the foreign language track means to overcome the methodological difficulties that require a certain amount of time and special training. This is explained by the fact that there are lots of difficulties on the way of understanding a foreign language: an unusual speed of speech, presence of unknown vocabulary, specific rhythms and melody. Difficulties arise from the fact that students perceiving the «mechanical

language» by ear without visual support, so they can not see the speaker, his mimicry, gestures, and movements. The «mechanical language» has lacking emotionality: it is usually not addressed to a certain person. So, teaching to listen and understand the «mechanical» foreign language is quite complicated, it requires a special technique. The first phase of this studying should give students for listening the processed linguistic units, phrases and texts. So, gradually the students get used to the perception of a foreign language track, and will acquire language skills on that they heard.

## **2. Teaching a foreign language speech with the special models pronounced by foreign speakers.**

Teaching students to practical mastery of a foreign language is intrinsically linked with involvement into the educational process of original English tracks, those are made by highly skilled experts – foreign speakers. Students' foreign language activity can only work when they learned the form and content of a number of expression means. However, students do not build language models and they are ready to use prepared constructions, an amount of which is limited for certain class. Intensive training on speech models, which are successfully given with a track is necessary for making language skills on a vocabulary or grammatical constructions. Subsequently, students will use mastered material in various situations, but a primary perception of the correct sounding of linguistic units has the high value.

## **3. Multiple repetition of a speech model for making permanent listening items of language units.**

Existence of models does not provide mastering of linguistic units and does not lead to the development of automatic skills. It is need an intense training on a specially developed system of exercises. The taught linguistic units can be reproduced with a track to auditory images of such units to become the property of students, due to this using linguistic models in certain communicative situations would be automatic. The need of frequent repetition is particularly felt on the primary stage of studying where bases of pronunciation are exactly mortgaged. Repetitions of linguistic units are very useful for further stages of studying, because piling up of linguistic models must go continuously. Such work should be performed at lessons devoted to the reiteration and systematization of phonetics, rules of reading. Thus, the repetition of linguistic units with a track makes teaching a foreign language more effective.

#### **4. Learning a new vocabulary due to a dialogue, an extract of a play or a conversation.**

The introduction of a new vocabulary (can take a form of a monologue, a dialogue or a conversation) at a foreign language lesson is a very important stage of teacher's work. Work not on a monologic (although it also has to take its place at a lesson) but on a dialogic speech will be major as the practical goal of foreign speech learning. To realize such studying dialogues should be used as often as possible, they are an integral part of studying a foreign language, if the purpose of studying is to impart students the practical skills of using a language as a mean of communication. Thus, input dialogues can be successfully implemented only by English tracks. Depending on the stage of learning a teacher selects dialogues for students' reproduction. Original English audio recordings that are played repeatedly at a lesson give students an opportunity to create images articulation of linguistic units and use them successfully in their speech for the purpose of communication.

#### **5. Implementation of new foreign units in the form of songs, prose and poetry.**

Trying to maximize the practical orientation and performance of foreign language classes conduces to using specific forms of work on the linguistic material. The question is above artistic reading and songs, which are defined by linguistic difficulties for students of certain classes. It is noted that the students' interest of learning foreign language songs and poems is extremely high, and it primarily promotes strong learning. Of course, it is best to give foreign language songs and poetry by a track that is carefully worked by a teacher.

#### **6. Analysing the recorded students' speech.**

Fixing student's speech and analysing their mistakes is very important at any stage of learning a foreign language. Correction of various kinds of mistakes takes place at every lesson, and teachers spend a lot of time on it. Lack of such work depends on a student who does not often feel that he makes mistakes. Therefore, it is necessary to record students' speech to hear themselves. This approach mobilizes all students to diligent preparation of a special task (control reading of the text, answers the questions on specific topics, etc.), provides strong memory learning.

#### **7. Foreign commentary of visual items that is used at foreign lessons.**

Using English audio recordings is appropriate when lessons are made visually by other training means. Thus, the practical importance of using

paintings, photos, drawings, and the supporting track in studying a foreign language is greatly increased because the information is synchronously acted on two channels – visual and auditory. This presentation of the linguistic material is definitely better than oral comments of the visual illustration, because the carefully prepared track makes it possible to clearly organize the students' work on the linguistic material of a certain lesson.

The practical aim of foreign language teaching at school predetermines the character of using auxiliary devices, including multimedia. Under visual teaching of a foreign language is understood a process that appeals to all components of the sensory perception of a foreign speech. It is shown that using different media visibility tends to create in students' minds a certain image, and psychological analysing the linguistic unit structure showed that it consists of three components – listening, articulation and visual. It is clear that to develop strong skills of foreign language learners should be created in the unity of the general components of the image, but the image of listening is recognized as domineering.

All this testifies on the special role of listening tools, thanks to which the practical knowledge of a foreign language of students is quickly produced. Multimedia is that devices which effectively help to implement listening means into the educational process. But studying which is based on using facilities of listening tools should be based on certain fundamental principles knowledge of which can help a teacher better to use a training English track. Consider the following situation in detail.

1. *Division of a speech stream and a special pause.* It is known that there are some difficulties that are not easily to overcome on the way of foreign language listening. These can be problems of both linguistic and psychological: students understand almost nothing at the first stage of listening an original track. Only with multimedia it is possible to regulate and even to control the perception and mastering of speech. It should be the first steps of learning a foreign language to ensure absorption of a natural language which is achieved by dividing the speech stream in a more or less independent units. Division and pause are needed also to give students an opportunity to do a certain task, the purpose of which is to «react» on linguistic sights. Thanks to pause special types of exercises with the tracks can be used. Thus, students do reproductive language exercises only due to pauses; teaching simultaneous reading takes

place in two stages – reading in a short pause, and at the same time with the announcer.

2. *Comparison, self-control and self-correction.* It is known that without direct or indirect comparison can not be educational activities. What wouldn't a man study, he always compares the taught phenomena and concepts with something known. This process also occurs during using of English audio recordings. Comparing a pronounced version with the announcer's speech pattern students control themselves, trying to determine the mistakes and continue to reproduce the same as the model. Comparing students analyze their speech and it promotes deep understanding the educational material and leads to its strong mastering.

Comparison, self-control and self-correction can be detected in various forms of students with tracks. The most typical example is an exercise during which students compare their recording speech to the announcer's «standard». In any cases, when students compare language patterns with their version, they randomly or spontaneously do self-control. And the essence of self-control is also the ability to determine their mistakes, that requires the development of certain habits, skills so to teach students to work with a track should be gradual, starting with these forms, even when the teacher directs finding and eliminating mistakes. For effective self-control during independent work students should be given the «keys» both in a sound and graphic variants.

3. *Imitation of a linguistic pattern.* In the methodology of teaching foreign languages the term “imitation” means the repetition of any linguistic unit after someone to achieve maximal similarity with the linguistic model. When studying a foreign language by multimedia it is needed to imitate for achieving students' imitation of foreign language speech. Training without the imitation becomes pointless, because student's possibilities of reproducing heard units are not used. The imitation has an important value at the primary stage in teaching a foreign language, however the active imitation of original tracks need to be used during all course of studying.

**Conclusions.** Consequently, it was found that using a track allows to control a speech product of students, to fix a foreign speech in time for further work in the educational process. The analyzed typical tasks and principles of using a track at foreign language lessons will give possibility to a teacher to choose those forms of work in which the time spent on a track will be justified because the effectiveness of a lesson in this case will increase. In further



research it is planned to continue studying the declared issue with emphasis on using multimedia at foreign language lessons at primary school.

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