

## MEDIA RESOURCES IN TEACHING LISTENING IN THE FRAMEWORK OF ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES

(Recibido el 13-06-2017. Aprobado el 08-09-2017)

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**Abstract.** The article deals with the problem of using modern information technologies in teaching English for specific purposes. It is primarily focused on teaching listening comprehension in the professional field of medicine with the help of media resources, which provide new opportunities for learning English and using it in many professional areas. The relevance of the problem is due to the fact that media resources are an integral part of the educational process. Methodological base for the investigation is the course of the experiment carried out in the process of teaching English to students of medical department of Kazan Federal University. The results of the experiment can be applied in integration of such language aspects as reading, listening and speaking in the framework of teaching ESP. The article proceedings may be useful for specialists, researchers and teachers of English, who deal with the language of a certain professional field. The methodological material worked out by the authors can serve as an example for further development and implementation in the educational process.

**Keywords:** education, language teaching, student, education technology, English for specific purposes, media resources, listening, critical thinking, communication skills.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching English for specific purposes (ESP) is regarded as a special area in teaching a foreign language. This is due to the necessity of modern society, which places high demands on future professionals in their fields. In addition, the need to learn a special English language has increased dramatically due to the need to match the level of international professionals with the opportunity to work in foreign companies, as well as to study foreign universities. Today, the main objectives of teaching professionally oriented English language is the formation of a professional communicative competence of a student, as well as the development of professional thinking with the help of a foreign language (Nalimova, 2017).

What does teaching ESP represent? Having considered the stages of formation of ESP (Hutchinson, & Waters, 1987), we came to the conclusion that for more than 50 years of existence, ESP researchers are in search of methods and technologies of teaching. Scientists and methodologists are looking for an optimal balance of teaching aspects of the language – at different times this ratio has changed. For example, in a certain period, the main priority was reading professionally-oriented texts, only the most common grammatical constructions were taught. (Ewer & Latorre, 1969) (Stevens, 1988) Polyakova, 1987) Other methodologists gave preference to learning the language clichés and typical situations of communication (Henry Widdowson, Larry Selinker, Louis Trimble, John Lackstrom, Mary Todd-Trimble.) Gradually, methodologists and researchers moved away from the dominant written language, reading texts in specific fields, and the focus shifted to oral communication within a particular professional field (Munby, 1987) (Kondrateva, Galiullina & Madyakina, 2015) (Valeev, et. al 2016) (Voronina, 2015) (Voronina Ismagilova, 2016a, 2016b).

Undoubtedly reading as a language aspect, is still important today. Currently, students have access to large amounts of information on the Internet – mainly presented in the form of printed (written) pages to be read. Most of the information is presented in English. Being at junior courses, students choose the direction of their future scientific work. Considering the prospects and opportunities for further professional development within the framework of academic mobility programs, grants, they understand the need to study

professionally-directed English language – the motivation question predetermines learning ESP (Nalimova, 2017).

We believe that the relevance of ESP is supported by introduction of new information technologies in the educational process. They provide more opportunities for learning English and its application in various professional fields.

During our own experience in teaching ESP, we came to the conclusion that reading is not so much the main aspect, but the so-called base for further development and consolidation of linguistic and speech skills (Nalimova, 2017). Here the principle of variability becomes of great importance. Consolidation will be more effective if techniques, which provide diversity, are used – changing the environment in which the language units are repeated (teacher's speech –text for reading –audio recording for listening) (Eremeev, Baranova & Mefodeva, 2016).

Our study is devoted to the problem of an optimal balance of language aspects in teaching English for specific purposes to university students. It focuses on teaching professionally oriented listening skills with the help of media resources.

## 2. METHODS

For our research and experiment we took a group of Kazan state university students of medical department, who studied professionally-focused English language in the medical field – systems of the human body, the work of physicians, history of medicine etc.

In order the course to be more effective, at the English language lessons we tried to correlate the topics with students' lectures in Anatomy. The order of the topics we covered generally coincided. For instance, at Anatomy classes students began with the musculoskeletal system of the human body, so did we at the English language classes.

The course of the experiment consisted in the following. At first students studied the text of a professional orientation (for example, the composition of blood, types of blood cells). At the stage of working on the text, new professional lexical units and terms were analyzed; the pronunciation was worked out (*blood, plasma, erythrocyte, leukocyte, thrombocyte, bone marrow, protein, hemoglobin, coagulation, etc.*). Then it

was suggested to compose words into verb phrases (*centrifuge the blood; contain water / hemoglobin/ protein; prevent / keep from clotting; carry oxygen; etc.*).

After working out the terms, grammatical constructions in the text, answers to basic questions on the content of the text, students were offered to listen and watch – videos on the topic of the study from the Internet, for example a website of free access [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). It should be noted that during the whole experiment students showed a special interest to such video clips of professional orientation. They were eager to fulfill the assignments to these videos– in general, their motivation level was high.

For our experiment we specially created and methodologically composed the assignments to these video clips. Traditionally we divided them into before-listening/ watching, while-listening/ watching and after-listening/ watching exercises. Before-listening tasks began with the revision of new lexical units from the previous text of professional orientation. The vocabulary was divided into professional terms and verbs which are needed to make verb phrases and use them in a certain context. The next pre-listening exercise was directed to making word derivatives.

An example from the blood system: *to clot – clotting – anticlotting – clot; to coagulate – coagulation – coagulant – anticoagulant; etc.*

An example from the digestive system: *to digest – digestion – digestive; to contract – contraction – contractive, esophagus – esophageal; saliva – salivary; etc.*

The next exercise was matching the professional terms with their definitions – using their knowledge from Anatomy classes students tried to choose the description of special terms.

An example from the respiratory system: *bronchus – branch of the trachea that is a passageway into the lung; trachea – windpipe; lungs – two organs inside your chest that are used for breathing; etc.*

One more before-watching exercise was to think or predict. For example, studying the blood system, students were shown a picture of a centrifuge, and they were asked whether they knew that machine, what the function of the machine was. Then the students were shown two pictures of tubes with

blood – the one with the blood before centrifugation and the one with the blood after centrifugation with distinct blood layers. And students were supposed to answer what the difference of blood in the two tubes was.

Analyzing students' work on the given before-watching exercises, we can point out that they made progress in *gradual* consolidation of the professional vocabulary (words – word derivatives – verb phrases – sentences) and its basic use. It made further watching and listening much easier.

The next stage was watching the video clip of about 10 minutes long (sometimes less, sometimes more). Students were supposed to watch the video twice – the first time to watch the whole way through and get the general information, and the second time to watch and listen for detail. Students were working at their own pace, making pauses in the clip to write something down, repeating the most difficult episodes. The while-watching assignments were directed to further consolidation of the professional terms of the topic – the ability to catch and understand them in the flow of speech, as well as comprehension of the material from the professional field.

The most common while-watching exercise was gap-filling. Students were given some sentences from the video with gaps (the missing words were primarily from the covered professional vocabulary of the topic), and they were to fill them in.

An example from the skeletal system: *Skeleton is broken down into two different parts – we have the ...(axial) skeleton and the ...(appendicular) skeleton.*

An example from cancer medicine: *The goal of cancer treatment is to eliminate the ...(tumor) and cure the patient in the early-stage cancer.*

An example from the endocrine system: *The endocrine system consists of ...(glands) and endocrine tissue inside other organs that secrete ...(hormones).*

The next while-watching exercise was matching. An example from the nervous system: watch the video and match the lobes of the cerebrum with their areas of their control 1) *the frontal lobe*, 2) *the parietal lobe*, 3) *the occipital lobe*, 4) *the temporal lobe*, a) *vision analysis*, b) *executive functions, conscious, decision making and speech*, c) *analysis*

of sounds, smell, language and memory, d) analysis of touch.

One more exercise was to catch the information and listen to the functions of some organs. An example from the respiratory system: watch and listen to the functions of nostrils, cilia, epiglottis, tiny hair in the trachea. An example from the digestive system: watch and listen to the functions of saliva, stomach, esophagus, pancreas, liver, gallbladder, small intestine, large intestine.

One more while-watching assignment was tracking information. An example from the cardiovascular system: watch and follow the movement of the blood in chambers of the heart, paying attention to their names and the valves. Also trace the pulmonary circulation and systemic circulation (through the heart and the lungs to all cells of the body). An example from the urinary system: watch and follow the process of urine formation (filtration, reabsorption, secretion).

Analyzing the students' progress in doing while-watching exercises, we can assume that they fulfilled the main task – to consolidate the material in the form of listening.

### 3. RESULTS

When comparing the results in mastering listening comprehension in the professionally-oriented English language of the experimental group of students and the group where the teaching took place without the use of information media resources, the positive dynamics can be traced in the experimental group. The level of listening proficiency has improved significantly – students have become much more confident to carry out assignments; they stopped being afraid of incomprehensible words in the flow of oral speech; they began to better orient themselves and navigate in the flow of sounding information – to identify the main, important and secondary points.

*Table 1 shows the comparison of the results of mastering listening comprehension skills and further communication skills, on the basis of teaching professionally-oriented English with the help of media technologies (in %):*

Group	Stages	B1 (level)	B2 (level)	C1 (level)
Experimental	By the start of the experiment	64.5	30.3	5.2
	By the end of the experiment	15.4	48.8	35.8
Control	By the start of the experiment	63.2	27.5	9.3
	By the end of the experiment	58.6	27.5	19.9

Taking into account the aim of while-watching exercises, it's necessary to say that listening for detail and revision of the material prepared students for the next step – after-watching exercises. They were primarily focused on speaking and discussion – using the professional vocabulary in different communicative situations. The first task here was to answer the questions.

An example from the endocrine system: 1) *What do endocrine system and nervous system have in common? How are they similar?* 2) *What is homeostasis?* 3) *What is the function of endocrine system? etc.*

An example from the integumentary system: 1) *What does the integumentary system of the body include?* 2) *What are the four functions of the body?* 3) *What does the skin protect?*

One more variant of assignments to practice the covered professional terminology was to fill in the sentences with the suitable words. An example from the respiratory system: *Air enters the body via the ... (1) through two openings called nostrils or ... (2). Air then passes through the ... (3). After passing through the nasal cavity, the air next reaches the ... (4) (throat).*

One more after-watching exercise was directed to oral description of the material from the video clip. For example, to describe the process of digestion, respiration, circulation of blood, nerve impulses transmission, classification and divisions of the nervous system, ways of cancer treatment, structure of the skin, etc.

Analyzing students' work during after-watching exercises, it should be noted that their attempts to use professional English terminology revealed and gave path to the opportunities of speaking English in communicative situations in the medical field.

### 4. DISCUSSION

At the final stage of working with the topic, students surfed the Internet by themselves in order to find the material of professional orientation (article or video) individually and present it. It should be emphasized that they preferred to choose videos on the topic under consideration, not websites for reading. For example, after studying the digestive system, the students prepared reports about digestive system disorders – obesity,

anorexia, jaundice. The consolidation and practical usage of the material was carried out successively in different sources: text for reading – video (listening comprehension) – speaking, presentation.

Comparing the level of students' progress in listening skills at the start and at the end of the experiment it becomes obvious that their English proficiency level became higher. It can be explained by the fact that while watching the videos students not only revised lexical material but subconsciously grammar as well. Tasks for making individual presentations and their discussions contributed to students' progress.

## 5. SUMMARY

With the growth of globalization processes, the role of English as a means of international communication becomes paramount. In this regard, there is a need for training professionals who speak English in a specific professional environment – the English language for specific purposes (Sosnovskaya & Nalimova, 2016). Researchers who study ESP from a teaching perspective have considered professional language as an approach to learning English, where the course of study is aimed at meeting the needs of learners who are learning the language with specific professional goals (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987).

Modern media resources and information technologies provide new opportunities for learning English and use it in many professional areas. That's why the relevance of using them in educational process has become an integral part of teaching university students.

In this study the main focus was on teaching listening comprehension in the professional field of medicine with the help of media resources. The attempt to integrate and correlate such language aspects as reading, listening and speaking in the framework of ESP was carried out.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

Using media resources in listening comprehension while teaching ESP provided the improvement in mastering the communicative skills of professional communication. The students of the experimental group compared the material from the originally read text with the information from the video clip, as well as with their knowledge of medicine. They used critical thinking, which encouraged students to think. After all, when everything is clear, there is

no need to think. And it's a well-known fact that learning is a thinking process.

Thus, the results of our experiment allow us to conclude that the use of information media resources within the framework of professionally-oriented English language teaching contributes to the successful formation of students' professional communicative competence and the development of professional thinking.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The work is performed according to the Russian Government Program of Competitive Growth of Kazan Federal University.

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