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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF «TED TALKS» VIDEO MATERIALS IN TEACHING ENGLISH AT A MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

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The article examines the methodological potential of video materials from the TED Talks resource (Technology Entertainment Design) in the context of teaching English for Professional Purposes and Academic English at medical higher education institutions. The TED Talks video materials cover not only topical issues of natural sciences but also modern problems of education, culture, history, business, sustainable development, etc., therefore, they can contribute to the development of both hard and soft skills of undergraduate and Ph.D. students majoring in Health Care and Biology. Short TED talks delivered by experts from various spheres can be used to develop public speaking skills, analytical listening, rhetorical text analysis, etc. The paper presents several linguodidactic mechanisms aimed at the development, practice, and systematization of the above skills to optimize students' mastering of grammatical constructions and lexical material. The methodological algorithm is represented by receptive, reproductive, and productive types of exercises and can be used to improve communicative competence and English language proficiency, to organize the classroom and extra-curricular activities, as well as a distance learning mode. The research may be of interest to teachers of English at medical universities, as well as specialists from other fields, in the process of planning training sessions and developing educational and methodological materials.

Keywords: English for Professional Purposes, English for Academic Purposes, the fields of knowledge 22 – «Health care» and 09 – «Biology», linguodidactic mechanisms.

ЕФЕКТИВНІСТЬ ВІДЕОМАТЕРІАЛІВ РЕСУРСУ «TED TALKS» ПРИ ВИКЛАДАННІ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ У МЕДИЧНОМУ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІ

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У статті досліджено методологічний потенціал відеоматеріалів ресурсу "TED Talks" (Technology Entertainment Design) у контексті викладання англійської мови за професійним спрямуванням та англійської мови наукового спілкування у медичному ЗВО. Відеоматеріали ресурсу "TED Talks" охоплюють не лише актуальні питання природничих наук, але й сучасні проблеми освіти, культури, історії, бізнесу, сталого розвитку тощо, тому одночасно можуть сприяти розвитку як hard, так і soft skills здобувачів вищої освіти третього (освітньо-наукового) та другого (магістерського) рівнів вищої освіти напрямів підготовки 22 – «Охорона здоров'я», 09 – «Біологія». Короткі англійські виступи фахівців з різноманітних галузей знань, представлені на платформі "TED", можуть використовуватися з метою розвитку навичок публічного мовлення, аналітичного слухання, риторичного аналізу тексту тощо. Розроблено лінгводидактичні механізми, спрямовані на розвиток, відпрацювання і систематизацію вищевказаних навичок з метою оптимізації засвоєння граматичних конструкцій та лексичного матеріалу. Методологічний алгоритм представлений рецептивним, репродуктивним і продуктивним типами вправ і може застосовуватися для вдосконалення різних видів мовленнєвої діяльності, для організації роботи здобувачів освіти в аудиторний і позааудиторний час, а також в умовах дистанційного навчання. Дослідження може бути цікавим викладачам англійської мови як іноземної у медичних вишах, а також фахівцям з інших професійних галузей, у процесі планування навчальних занять та розробки навчально-методичних матеріалів.

Ключові слова: англійська мова за професійним спрямуванням, англійська мова наукового спілкування, напрями підготовки 22 – «Охорона здоров'я» та 09 – «Біологія», лінгводидактичні механізми.

During the 2022 Russian full-scale invasion of Ukraine, higher education in our country strives to keep developing and enhancing. In this context, the search for new feasible teaching tools and techniques is of paramount importance. It is essential to provide students with access to modern learning tools and platforms, effective teaching methods and didactic materials. This is particularly relevant for teaching English at a medical university, since we aspire to promote the terminological compe-

tence of future specialists in the field of medicine and health care, and develop the communication skills necessary for successful international communication and cooperation. These circumstances require a reasonable and elaborated approach to using the available resources efficiently, to ensure that students can continue to develop and improve their skills and English language proficiency, and pursue their dream to become healthcare professionals in spite of Russian terrorist attacks. In our

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previous studies, we have already focused on some modern teaching and learning platforms and online resources, which are effective in higher medical education [2,3,6,7,8,9]. In this research, we will discuss the benefits of using the TED Talks video materials in teaching English for Specific Purposes at a medical university, and provide a methodological algorithm of training exercises to use the TED Talks in the classroom efficiently. We developed the linguodidactic mechanisms for organizing the training material based on TED resources for delivering the courses in English for Specific Purposes (Medicine and Dentistry) and English for Academic Communication (PhD programs in Healthcare) at higher medical educational institutions in teaching and revising relevant grammar and lexical units. In this paper, we present excerpts of several sample tasks from our methodological database.

At present, TED (Technology Entertainment Design: <https://www.ted.com/>) platform is one of the richest and most frequently updated sources of instructional videos [1,4]. This project suggests a great number of talks on the most relevant topics, and they are ideal for students with upper-intermediate levels of English proficiency and above [10,11]. Most videos are about 20 minutes long, and this is perhaps the only challenge of TED talks, because a teacher virtually has to dedicate the entire lesson to one video. Therefore, TED talks are especially relevant for online instruction (e.g., due to war) and self-paced learning. One more undeniable benefit of TED Talks is that they can be easily integrated into various learning platforms, such as Moodle, Google Classroom and others.

Hence, we assert that the use of TED talks in teaching English for specific purposes online has the following benefits: (1) motivating and inspiring learners in learning a foreign language; (2) enriching learners with new ideas; (3) development of listening skills; (4) development of critical thinking; (5) expanding active and passive vocabulary; (6) the possibility to download the instruction content: video, audio and scripts; (7) broadening students' outlook [5].

There are numerous TED talks suitable for various ESP contexts. For instance, for curricula at a medical university, the following TED talks are highly relevant: "A Stroke of Insight" by Jill Bolte Taylor; "A Promising Test for Pancreatic Cancer... From a Teenager" by Jack Andraka; "Can We Eat to Starve Cancer?" by William Li; "What Your Doctor Won't Disclose" by Leana Wen; "How Do We Heal Medicine?" by Atul Gawande; "Is Anatomy Destiny?" by Alice Dreger and any others [12]. To illustrate the suggested methodological approach, we will focus on a TED talk entitled "Soon we'll cure diseases with a cell, not a pill" by Siddhartha Mukherjee (2015). In our teaching context, we suggest the following set of tasks aimed at the development of different language skills:

1. Pre-watching. This step aims to trigger some discussions on the topic of the video to prepare students for watching.

1.1. Predicting the content based on the video's title: In your opinion, what is the video about?

1.2. Work in pairs. Discuss the questions: What are the future perspectives of medicine? How is pharmacology expected to change in the years to come? Will there still be any incurable diseases?

1.3. Check you understand the words and expressions in bold. Use a dictionary if necessary. Discuss any new words with your peers.

- a very common **ailment**
- introduction was **nothing short of** transformative
- their numbers **decline precipitously, tenfold, fiftyfold**
- organs **coalesce** to form things called humans
- **exquisite deftness**, exquisite **specificity**
- **a perceptual shift** in our way of thinking
- the signals that **elicit** depression

The didactic purposes of the tasks: helping students to be more prepared for what they are about to watch, for vocabulary and grammar that will be used in the talk; helping them anticipate the topic of the video; revising vocabulary and mastering new English words and medical terms.

2. Watch the full video (<https://www.ted.com/talks/>) [12]. After watching, take a mini-quiz with questions about the video. This will help to check how well the students understood the material from the video.

2.1. Decide if these statements are true or false:

1) Siddhartha Mukherjee envisages a future of medicine that will transform the perception of how the human body is healed.

2) Dr. Mukherjee proposes a perceptual shift in the way people think about treating diseases, by reinforcing the traditional "kill the microbe" method.

3) Dr. Mukherjee had a problem with the shoulder joint.

2.2. Understanding key details: Summarize the key points of Dr. Mukherjee's talk. What is the aim of his presentation? What issues does he aspire to raise?

The didactic purposes of the tasks: developing listening comprehension skills for professionally-oriented purposes; stimulating the cognitive processes of thinking and reasoning; engaging students with a complex medical theme, and facilitating further engagement with the content.

3. Post-watching. Discuss the topic of the video and the impressions with peers. Encourage students to make up a few questions and ask each other.

3.1. Word building. Prefixes "self-", "semi-", "multi-", "anti-", "pro-", and suffix "-able". Read the sentences and explain the meaning of the above-mentioned term elements:

1) ...incorporating genomics into what we call **multi-order, semi-autonomous, self-regulating** systems, like cells, like organs.

2) And you would end up taking a previously fatal, lethal disease – pneumonia, syphilis, tuberculosis – and transforming that into a **curable, or treatable** illness.

3) ...one of the most potent neurostimulants that we know, called nicotine, and you add to that one of the most potent addictive substances that you know, and you have a **pro-carcinogenic** environment.

4) But you can have **anti-carcinogenic** environments too.

Provide 2-3 terms using prefixes "self-", "semi-", "multi-", "anti-", "pro-", and suffix "-able".

3.2. Vocabulary building: Phrasal verbs. Explain the meaning of the following phrasal verbs, used in the video. Try to substitute them with non-phrasal synonyms:

- 1) We've tried, again, desperately to **turn off** molecules that operate between nerve cells.
- 2) And you would **end up** taking a previously fatal, lethal disease and transforming that into a curable, or treatable illness.
- 3) A skeletal stem cell that **builds up** the entire vertebrate skeleton, bone, cartilage and the fibrous elements of skeleton.

3.3. Grammar: Perfect tenses. Complete the sentences by putting the verbs in brackets in appropriate perfect tenses:

1) Essentially, the meniscus of cartilage that is between bone completely (*to tear*) and the bone itself (*to shatter*).

2) I (*to be*) a runner most of my life.

3) So really the question was, were we looking for a pill when we should really (*to look for*) a cell.

4) You know, in every culture, shamans (*to use*) environments as medicines.

3.4. Speaking. Make a presentation to your class on one of the following topics:

(1) The future of medicine in 25 years; (2) Novel medicines and therapies in the nearest future; (3) Stem cells: therapy, controversy, and research.

3.5. Writing. Write a statement of opinion: do you agree or disagree with Dr. Mukherjee's point of view? To what extent and why?

The didactic purposes of the tasks: revising the use and formation of perfect tenses; practicing the use of perfect tenses; developing the reading, and translation skills for professionally-oriented purposes; revising some English morphemes and practicing term formation; mastering new English medical terms and professional vocabulary; to master the skills of coherence and cohesion in producing the English spoken and written discourse.

Moreover, TED talks not only provide the opportunity to improve students' critical thinking, listening, note-taking and speaking skills. They are also powerful tools in raising the awareness of the younger generation about global issues and involving students in worldwide discussions on relevant topics. This aspect is particularly relevant for PhD students, who can improve their soft skills. To facilitate these skills in PhD students, we suggest the following additional tasks:

4. Work in pairs. Discuss the questions: Which is the most important reason the author gives to support his point? What metaphors does the author apply in his talk and for what purpose? ("the metaphor of lock and key" [12]); How do you understand the expression "Turtles all the way down"? How does the author implement the strategy of persuasiveness in his talk? How does Dr. Mukherjee apply humor to enhance his talk's appeal? ("The nice thing about Australians is that they're habitually used to looking at the world upside down" [12]); What bioethical issues does Dr. Mukherjee's talk raise?

The didactic purposes of the tasks: developing the skills of public speaking, analytical listening, making inferences, evaluating ideas, rhetorical text analysis, understanding the implied meaning; improving presentation skills, and promotion of critical thinking and persuasive speaking.

Thus, TED talks can be used in teaching English at higher education institutions to improve basic language skills (listening, speaking and writing), as well as soft skills (teamwork, problem-solving, critical thinking, etc.) in undergraduate and PhD students. The prospects of using the TED talks are in the further selection of available materials and careful elaboration of new tasks to work in different contexts when teaching English for Specific Purposes and English for Academic Communication. In such a way, we foster students' communication skills, facilitate self-paced learning and formative assessment, enable students to continue learning, improve their English proficiency and acquire a profession.

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Conflict of interests:

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

A – concept and design of the study; **B** – data collection; **C** – data analysis and interpretation; **D** – article writing; **E** – editing the article; **F** – final approval of the article

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