

CHAPTER 1

COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN HIGH SCHOOL: A VIDEO-BASED APPROACH

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Effective participation of an individual in social life and the satisfaction of personal practical needs largely depend on the ability to communicate successfully. In this regard, the issue of developing communicative competence occupies a central place in the overall structure of personal education and development.

Communicative competence involves mastery of linguistic competence, knowledge of the language system, the ability to select appropriate linguistic means in accordance with the purpose and conditions of communication, awareness of the nature of relationships between interlocutors, as well as the capacity to organize speech interaction in compliance with social norms and communicative appropriateness.

Any cognitive activity, along with its operational components (knowledge, skills, and abilities), also includes motivational elements such as motives, interests, and attitudes. Motivation serves as the primary source of personal activity and determines its direction. The relevance of developing motivation in the process of foreign language learning is обусловлена тим, що most learners begin studying a foreign language with interest and a positive attitude; however, this motivation often declines over time.

During the learning process, students encounter certain psychological difficulties, including lack of self-confidence, increased anxiety when performing challenging tasks, low self-esteem, and an insufficient awareness of the practical value of a foreign language for their future professional and personal development.

Thus, one of the key conditions for the development of communicative competence and for sustaining interest in learning a foreign language is the enhancement of communicative motivation. Pedagogical practice demonstrates that an effective means of fostering such motivation is the integration of foreign language learning activities into age-appropriate leading forms of activity, particularly through the use of role-playing, intellectual, and competitive games, which have a positive impact on students' psychological development.

One of the effective tools for developing students' communicative motivation in the process of foreign language instruction is the use of visual aids. It is essential that visual materials be informative, carry semantic meaning, and correspond to learners' age-related and cognitive characteristics. The significant motivational and developmental potential of audiovisual media places them among the most important modern technical teaching aids.

Audiovisual materials activate inner speech, which constitutes the basis of speech-related cognitive activity, ensure the integrated functioning of such mental processes as thinking, perception, attention, and memory, help maintain sustained learning interest, and stimulate foreign language communicative activity. The use of video and audio fragments engages visual and auditory analyzers, which positively affects both the effectiveness of learning and the durability of information retention.

The incorporation of video materials into English language teaching is appropriate when working with various thematic areas and types of language material, including lexical, grammatical, and phonetic components, provided that the lesson is organized in a methodologically sound and professionally competent manner.

Preparing a lesson that involves video materials requires the teacher to carefully preview the selected video segment, identify the lexical and grammatical content to be acquired, and design a system of tasks for students' language and communicative practice.

Taking into account the nature of the video material and the instructional objectives, a specific sequence of learning activities is determined, along with video-specific teaching techniques. In contemporary foreign language methodology, a three-stage model of organizing work with video materials is generally accepted.

The use of video materials in English language lessons is appropriate when teaching a wide range of language content—lexical, grammatical, or phonetic—provided that the teacher’s work is methodologically grounded and professionally organized.

Depending on the instructional objectives and the specific features of the video material, the sequence of learning activities is determined and appropriate teaching techniques are selected. In contemporary foreign language teaching methodology, the most widely used approach to organizing learning activities with video materials is the three-stage model.

The first stage—the comprehension stage—involves learners’ general familiarization with the video fragment and the completion of tasks aimed at understanding the logic of events and cause-and-effect relationships. In order to prepare learners for active perception of the video material, it is advisable to offer tasks focused on identifying the setting and characters, as well as exercises oriented toward grasping the main idea, such as determining the truth or falsity of statements and establishing the logical sequence of events. These tasks may be presented in written form or displayed on the board before viewing and checked by the teacher after the video has been watched.

The second stage—the language practice stage—entails viewing the video fragment with pauses (using freeze-frame techniques), the purpose of which is to focus learners’ attention on selected language units. The use of these units is commented on by the teacher and reinforced through communicatively oriented exercises. Upon completion of the exercises, the language phenomena intended for

further acquisition should be recorded on the board and in students' notebooks for independent study at home.

At the third stage—the speech (communicative) practice stage—the main emphasis is placed on activating learners' communicative activity on the basis of situations presented in the video fragment, using previously practiced language material. Before repeated viewing, students are asked to pay attention to various aspects of the characters' behavior, as well as to sociocultural features of the situations, comparing them with corresponding phenomena in their native culture. After viewing, these aspects are discussed.

Effective means of developing oral communication skills include such forms of work as dramatization and role-play. While dramatization is aimed at creative reproduction of the video fragment's content, role-play stimulates learners' speech activity in similar communicative situations.

Work with video materials primarily contributes to the formation and improvement of listening and speaking skills; however, it is also advisable to include tasks aimed at developing writing skills. In particular, learners may be asked to compose a short written summary (up to 10 sentences) of the video fragment's content with subsequent oral presentation, or to complete a traditional written homework assignment based on the viewed material.

The sequence of learning activities may vary depending on the regularity of video use in lessons, the specific characteristics of the video material, as well as the level of learners' language skills and abilities (Pokushalova, 2011). In addition to the approach described above, there exists an alternative model of organizing a video-based lesson, which will be discussed below.

In foreign language teaching methodology, when working with any type of text, including video materials, three main stages are traditionally distinguished: the pre-text (pre-viewing), text (while-viewing), and post-text ((post-)after-viewing) stages.

I. Pre-viewing Stage

Objectives of the stage:

1. to form positive learner motivation and engage students in active learning;
2. to reduce possible difficulties in video perception and prepare learners for the successful completion of subsequent tasks.

Types of tasks:

1. Tasks aimed at predicting the content of the video based on previously acquired topic knowledge; analysis of the video title; viewing a fragment without sound; working with a list of new vocabulary accompanied by translation or explanations; or analyzing the content of true/false statements.
2. A brief presentation of the main content of the video fragment by the teacher.

At this stage, the teacher may briefly outline the video plot, explaining which events and situations will be presented. Such an introduction, provided it engages learners' interest, contributes to achieving the motivational objective of the stage. The main idea may be conveyed using simple and accessible formulations or with the inclusion of certain more complex language units. It is important to anticipate potential linguistic and sociocultural difficulties and address them through explanation, clarification, translation, or comparison with previously studied material. Performing this type of task requires the teacher to possess a sufficient level of professional-methodological and communicative competence.

At the same time, it is essential to clearly formulate the viewing task, as an introductory comment alone does not replace the tasks of the text (while-viewing) stage.

3. Preliminary research or project-based activity

Viewing a video material may conclude a cycle of lessons devoted to a particular topic or issue. In this case, learners receive advance assignments aimed at studying relevant material, which logically prepares them for video perception. Preliminary reading of texts and discussion of the same issues in the native or

foreign language increases motivation, provided that the video content contains new information, an element of surprise, and expands learners' understanding of the problem.

II. While-viewing Stage

Objectives of the stage: further development of learners' linguistic, communicative, and sociocultural competence, taking into account their actual foreign language communication abilities.

Types of tasks:

1. Tasks aimed at identifying linguistic information

This type of exercise focuses on identifying, recording, and transforming language material—lexical, grammatical, or phonetic. The effectiveness of such tasks is determined primarily by their content rather than merely by the wording of the instructions. Tasks may include the following: watch the video fragment and select English equivalents for the given Ukrainian words and expressions; identify Ukrainian equivalents of English lexical items; fill in gaps in sentences with appropriate words; list adjectives used with the noun *road* (or verbs collocated with the noun *products*, etc.); write verbs from a given list in the grammatical forms in which they are used in the video text; identify intonation features in the pronunciation of certain words; compare given synonymous expressions with those that were or were not used in the video.

2. Tasks aimed at developing receptive skills (at the level of understanding factual and semantic information)

At this stage of instruction, it is advisable to use traditional types of exercises focused on finding answers to questions formulated prior to viewing; determining the truth or falsity of statements; matching individual sentences with corresponding semantic parts of the text (when a plan or headings are provided); arranging text fragments in logical order; and identifying cause-and-effect relationships between events.

3. Tasks aimed at developing speaking skills

The following techniques of working with video materials are primarily oriented toward the development of monologic speaking skills. In particular, effective activities include viewing the video without the visual component while retaining the audio track, followed by tasks that involve describing the probable appearance and clothing of the characters; objects that may surround them; the setting of the events; and the nature of relationships between the participants.

An important role is also played by tasks focused on predicting the further development of events using the “pause” function. Such tasks stimulate learners to express assumptions and contribute to the development of discourse skills, including the establishment of logical-semantic links within the text. In addition, tasks aimed at reproducing the viewed content in the form of a narrative, report, or brief oral summary are employed.

Certain types of tasks are effective for developing dialogic speech. For example, turning off the sound while keeping the visual component and then reconstructing a possible dialogue. This technique is less suitable for working with monologic texts, as their content is difficult to predict. In contrast, in the case of dialogues, the presence of elements of the communicative situation (place and time of events, participants, their non-verbal behavior) makes it possible to formulate well-grounded assumptions about the content of utterances, especially in typical communicative situations (e.g., in a shop, at the theatre, at the doctor’s office).

4. Tasks aimed at developing sociocultural skills

Sociocultural competence is often mistakenly equated exclusively with country-specific knowledge. Undoubtedly, knowledge about the country of the target language is a necessary condition for its development. However, equally important is the ability to compare cultures, identify culture-specific features, and determine universal cultural patterns.

One of the most challenging tasks for teachers is to develop learners’ ability to interpret verbal and non-verbal situations with regard to the cultural context of a

particular country, while avoiding the reinforcement of false stereotypes and the influence of imposed perceptions.

The use of video materials creates favorable conditions for developing such skills; however, without the teacher's purposeful guidance and a system of specially designed tasks, they do not develop spontaneously. When working with video materials, it is advisable to employ tasks aimed at identifying intercultural similarities and differences. At the initial stages, it is especially important to provide a system of supports that help learners focus on identifying, recording, and interpreting culturally marked information.

III. Post-text Stage (post-/after-viewing)

The purpose of the post-text stage is to use the video text as a meaningful scaffold for the formation and development of productive skills in both spoken and written communication. The two preceding stages are considered mandatory both when video materials are used for the comprehensive development of communicative competence and in cases where video serves primarily as a means of developing or assessing receptive skills, particularly listening. In contrast, the post-text stage may be omitted if work with the video text is limited exclusively to the development and assessment of receptive skills.

Some activities aimed at developing productive speaking skills have already been described at the previous stages. At the post-text stage, in addition to the activities mentioned above, it is advisable to employ the following forms of work: *project-based activities* related to students' creation of their own video materials (e.g., a video tour of the city or school, a report on a school event, a story about one's family, etc.); *role-playing activities* based on the plot or selected situations from the video film, which may be partially transformed or adapted if necessary (Svyrydenko et al., 2022).

Recent methodological research confirms that the integration of video materials into the educational process is most effective when accompanied by a

system of tasks aimed at active learner engagement during the while-viewing stage.

Such activities include:

Prediction. The video fragment is shown with both sound and image; however, viewing is paused at certain moments. During the pause, learners are asked to predict the characters' subsequent actions or their lines in the next scene.

Jigsaw listening and viewing. The class is divided into two groups. One group watches the episode without sound, while the other group remains outside the classroom. The groups then switch places: the video is played with sound but without image. Afterwards, students work in pairs to discuss what they have seen and heard, reconstructing the events of the plot.

What are they thinking? This activity is based on the idea of a discrepancy between what characters say and their inner intentions. The video is paused at key moments, after which learners express assumptions about the characters' true thoughts.

Character role-play. Each learner is assigned a specific character to observe during viewing. Students focus on the character's behavior and speech features and then reproduce the role from memory. Verbatim reproduction of the text is not required; the main criterion is consistency with the character's image. If necessary, short fragments may be memorized. Subsequently, the video may be shown without sound, and students provide voice-over for the characters during viewing.

Character study. Working in groups, learners select lexical characteristics for each character in the video episode and justify their choices by explaining why these traits correspond to a particular character.

Deducing dialogue from pictures. A video episode featuring a dialogue between two characters is selected. One character's dialogue is presented in full, while the other's lines are provided in the form of gaps (a gapped dialogue). First, the video is shown without sound; then only the audio track is played without the image. Afterwards, learners work in pairs to fill in the gaps. The viewing may be repeated

several times without sound. At the final stage, the video is shown in full, and the learners' versions are compared with the original. Assessment focuses not on exact textual reproduction but on the appropriateness of the proposed utterances in relation to the visual context.

Video translation. This activity uses a fictional video fragment with subtitles in the learners' native language. A short episode (up to two minutes) with a relatively simple dialogue is selected. Learners are asked to translate the subtitles into English, focusing not on literal equivalence but on producing natural and contextually appropriate utterances. Viewing begins without sound; when the first subtitle appears, the video is paused and learners write their own translation versions. After completing the task, translations are discussed in small groups and subsequently in the whole class. At this stage, excessive criticism of grammatical errors should be avoided; translations should be evaluated primarily in terms of their communicative appropriateness within the given context.

At the post-/after-viewing stage, particularly in upper secondary school, when watching feature films or their fragments, it is advisable to use a methodological technique known as the "witness role." Learners act as observers of life situations presented in the video material and reproduce what they have seen by reporting factual information without deep interpretation. The video fragment or film is shown once without pauses—from beginning to end. After viewing, the teacher asks several questions aimed at checking comprehension of key elements, such as the setting, the number of characters, their appearance, and the sequence of events. The number of questions is usually limited; however, they should focus on essential plot elements necessary for subsequent reconstruction of the episode.

To facilitate the task, learners may be provided with supporting materials, such as handouts containing characters' names, geographical references, and key vocabulary, or relevant information displayed on the board. As a homework

assignment, learners are asked to reproduce the content of the viewed video in written form as a coherent recall-based narrative.

A significant proportion of activities recommended by both national and international methodologists for working with video materials can be classified as communicatively oriented, including the following:

What did they say? Learners watch a short video fragment without sound (e.g., a scene in a restaurant, a shop, or during a meeting of friends) and make assumptions about the characters' utterances. They then compose and perform their own version of the dialogue as a voice-over for the video. Subsequently, the fragment is viewed with sound and the original dialogue is compared with the learners' versions, after which the teacher provides feedback.

What will you see? Learners listen to the audio track of a video without the visual component. Attention is focused on intonation patterns and sound effects. Learners then answer questions concerning the setting, the number of characters, their actions, and their appearance.

Who said it? Learners are given cards containing individual dialogue lines and the names of the characters. The video is viewed without sound, after which learners decide which utterances they believe belong to particular characters. Final verification takes place during repeated viewing with sound.

Body Language. Learners observe a character's non-verbal behavior (gestures and facial expressions) while watching a video without sound. They then attempt to reproduce what they have observed and interpret the meaning of the non-verbal signals. Viewing the video with sound allows learners to check the accuracy of their assumptions independently, after which the teacher provides explanations.

Biographies. After watching a video episode with sound, learners create fictional biographies of the characters, analyzing their personality traits, social status, and level of education on the basis of speech, behavior, and communicative culture.

Inner monologues. Learners focus on one character from the video fragment. After watching the complete dialogue, they create an inner monologue for that character, drawing on facial expressions, gestures, and reactions.

What if? Following the viewing of a video episode, a discussion is organized around alternative developments of events, for example, how the plot might change if the action took place in a different sociocultural context.

What happens next? While viewing the video with sound, the teacher periodically pauses playback and asks learners to predict the characters' subsequent actions or the further development of events.

An important place in work with video materials is occupied by information-search activities, among which the following can be distinguished:

What's the product? After watching a video fragment in which characters discuss a certain object or product, learners identify what exactly is being referred to.

Five Ws and H. Learners watch a video episode and record key information according to six parameters: *Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?* This activity is particularly effective when working with documentaries and news programs.

Info-Matching. Before viewing, the teacher prepares a list of facts, names, and titles. Working in pairs or groups, learners record as much information from the video as possible and then match it with the teacher's list. Assessment may be based on the number of matches as well as on additional correct facts identified by learners.

What do you want to know about? Prior to viewing a thematic video, learners compile a list of questions related to the topic and attempt to find answers to them during viewing.

What happened when? Learners reconstruct the events of the video episode in chronological order in the form of sentences or questions.

Matching. The task involves matching pre-given names and titles with corresponding characters' actions, utterances, or events that occurred in specific locations.

Summarizing the above, it can be concluded that the use of video materials in foreign language instruction significantly enhances the effectiveness of teaching practice. Video serves as a source of authentic models of speech interaction, contributes to the creation of an atmosphere of real foreign language communication, and makes the process of language acquisition more dynamic, emotionally engaging, and motivating. For modern learners, screen-based media are familiar and appealing, and their use in English language lessons generates interest and a positive attitude toward learning. The integration of video materials enables teachers to realize their creative potential, expand the range of communicative situations within a given topic, stimulate learners' speech activity, and ensure the communicative orientation of the educational process.

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