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THE POTENTIAL USE OF TEDX TALKS IN DEVELOPING ORAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Introduction

Oral communication reflects the persistent and powerful role of language and communication in human society. Oral communication includes the abilities to speak and listen effectively for the purposes of informing, persuading, and/or relating [1]. Strong oral communication skills contribute significantly to academic success, fostering active participation in class discussions, clear presentation delivery, and insightful analysis of written materials. Beyond the classroom, these skills translate into confident self-expression in social settings, effective collaboration in future careers, and impactful engagement with the world around them [2;3].

The ability to communicate effectively through spoken language is an essential skill for students at all levels, but especially for those in the B2 level. The Kazakhstani government requires middle school students, particularly those in 9th grade, to achieve a B2 (Upper Intermediate) level of English proficiency according to the State Compulsory Education Standard. This standard was approved by the government on August 19th, 2022, through decree № 581.The B1 to B2 leap is significant because it signifies a shift from basic communication to a more nuanced understanding of the language. At B1, you can handle everyday situations and conversations, but your vocabulary and grammar may be limited. B2, however, demands a wider range of expression, the ability to grasp complex ideas, and the confidence to discuss abstract topics [4].

Students who find communication challenging might exhibit signs like hesitation, using filler words ("um," "uh") to pause, and repeating themselves. This difficulty finding the right words to say can stem from various factors. These include a lack of interest in the topic, insufficient listening practice, and a limited vocabulary, which can ultimately lead to anxiety, lack of confidence when speaking [5].

This is where TEDx Talks emerge as a powerful and engaging tool to support the development of oral communications skills. Starting out in 1984, TEDx Talks was a conference focused on the intersection of technology, entertainment, and design. Today, it has grown into a massive platform covering a huge range of topics – everything from science and business to global challenges – all delivered in over 100 languages [6]. TEDx Talks, renowned for their captivating presentations tackling diverse and thought-provoking topics, offer a treasure trove of learning opportunities for B2 students. By the engaging content that sparks curiosity and ignites discussion TEDx Talks hold the key to unlocking several vital aspects of oral communication:

- 1. Exposure to authentic language: Students immerse themselves in real-world English, encountering diverse accents, natural vocabulary use, and varied sentence structures.
- 2. Enhanced listening comprehension: The captivating presentations and compelling visuals encourage active listening, improving students' ability to follow complex ideas and key points.

- 3. Boosted vocabulary development: Exposure to rich vocabulary within stimulating contexts allows students to actively learn and retain new words and expressions.
- 4. Confidence building through role-playing and presentations: By mimicking TEDx Talk styles and engaging in classroom activities inspired by them, students build confidence in public speaking and self-expression.
- 5. Critical thinking and discussion skills: TEDx Talks spark meaningful discussions, encouraging students to analyze, debate, and articulate their own perspectives on various topics [7:8:9].

Methodology

This article delves into the specific benefits of TEDx Talks for B2 learners, outlining practical classroom activities that leverage their unique format and content. By harnessing the potential of TEDx Talks, we can empower B2 students to become articulate communicators, ready to confidently navigate the world and embrace their voices.

In order to study the effectiveness of using TEDx Talks in developing oral communication skills among schoolchildren, we conducted an experiment. 15 students from a 9th-grade with a B2 level of English as a second language (ESL) participated in this study. The experiment includes doing a pre-test, implementing a bank of tasks to fill the gap, doing a post-test.

Before the intervention, students completed a pre-test to assess their current listening and speaking skills. The pre-test consists of a listening test taken from Cambridgeenglish.org, which includes six questions. They evaluate the comprehension of spoken English and speaking task, consisting of three questions that assess fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary use. Students listen to the audio recording about two final year archaeology students, Geeta and Paul, in the first task answered three questions on "True/False" and in the second task completed four multiple choice questions, which are connected with the theme plan of teaching program:

Listen to the conversation and choose the correct statements:

Task 1

- 1. The mysterious character is called the Explorer.
- a) True
- b) False
- 2. The Professor claims that everyone is fine after the virtual experience.
- a) True
- b) False
- 3. Geeta and Paul are first-year students in archaeology.
- a) True
- b) False

Task 2

- 1. How does Virtually Anywhere recreate experiences?
- a) It uses historical documents.
- b) It relies on the Professor's imagination.
- c) It combines available information to make an educated guess.
- 2. What does Geeta find interesting about The Avenue of the Dead?
- *a)* The modern architecture.
- b) The ancient market and street life.
- c) The peaceful ambiance.
- 3. Why did the virtual market disappear suddenly?
- a) Technical issues with Virtually Anywhere.
- b) The Professor intentionally ended it.
- c) Fernando disrupted the signal.
- 4. Fernando mentions a material used by the ancient people of Teotihuacan. What is it?
- a) Marble
- b) Obsidian
- c) Gold

Speaking task included 3 questions about virtual transportation: *Task 3*.

- 1. Imagine being able to instantly move machinery across vast distances. What industries or situations would benefit most from virtual transportation?
- 2. What are the biggest challenges we'd need to overcome to make virtual transportation a reality?
- 3. If we could virtually transport anything, what ethical considerations would arise? (e.g., potential for misuse, environmental impact)

The answers were checked according to the learning objectives, which meet the State Compulsory Education Standard (primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education) approved by Republic of Kazakhstan government.



Figure 1 The results of pre-test

The intervention of Tedx Talks videos in the educational process lasted for three weeks. Each week, students are given the following steps:

- 1. Watch TEDx Talks: Students watched a short TEDx Talks on a topic aligned with their curriculum, chosen for its engaging content and clear delivery by a native speaker. For example, students were given to watch a Tedx Talks video "Try something new for 30 days" by an American software engineer Matt Cutts.
- 2.Listening comprehension: Students completed tasks related to the TEDx Talks, such as answering True/False questions, multiple-choice questions, summarizing key points, and identifying vocabulary terms:
- Task 1. Listen again and list the three main things the speaker learned from doing 30-day challenges. For each point, identify at least one specific example they used to support it.

Vocabulary: rut, memorable, self-confidence, adventurous, achievable, sustainable, forgotten, confidence, sleep-deprived, awful, guarantee, add, subtract.

Task 2. Listen to the statements below and write "True" or "False"

- A)The speaker always enjoyed doing 30-day challenges.
- *B)They found it easier to remember events during a challenge.*
- C)Writing a novel in 30 days proved to be the best way to create great literature.
- D)Small, lasting changes are more likely to become habits.
- H) The speaker encourages everyone to start a 30-day challenge immediately.
- 3. Vocabulary practice

Task 3. Listen for words or phrases missing from the sentences below and fill them in based on the context.

- 1. The speaker wanted to _something new_ like Morgan Spurlock.
- 2. They realized 30 days is enough to _a new habit_ or _an old one_.
- 3. Taking pictures every day made the time much more memorable.
- 4. Doing these challenges helped the speaker become more _.
- 5. Writing 1,667 words a day for a month will get you a _50,000-word novel_

4. Speaking practice: Students practiced imitating the speaker's vocal delivery and body language, adding their individuality while delivering a short presentation on a related topic. They were encouraged to use the new vocabulary learned.

Speaking

- 1. Share your thoughts on the speaker's experience with 30-day challenges. Have you ever tried a similar approach to improve or change something in your life?
- 2. Discuss with a partner or group: What do you think about the idea of making small, sustainable changes versus taking on big, crazy challenges? Share examples from your own life.
- 3. Imagine you have decided to take on a 30-day challenge. What would it be, and why did you choose it? Discuss your reasons and expectations with a partner or in a group.
- 4. Reflect on the speaker's statement, "If you really want something badly enough, you can do anything for 30 days." Share a personal experience where determination and a 30-day commitment led to a positive change.
- 5. Discuss the impact of the speaker's statement, "When I made small, sustainable changes, things were more likely to stick." Share examples from your life where small changes had a lasting effect.

After the intervention, students completed a post-test similar to the pre-test, which was taken from Britishcouncil.org to assess their progress in listening and speaking skills:

Check your understanding: multiple choice

Do this exercise while you listen. Circle the best option to complete these sentences.

- 1. Many famous and successful teenagers have used new technology / worked from an early age / been inspired by YouTube videos.
- 2. Justin Bieber started off singing with R&B star Usher / sending videos to talent scouts / posting videos on YouTube.
- 3. Some people say Justin Bieber is the most influential person in the world because he has had so many number one songs / he has so many followers on Twitter / he is friends with Barack Obama.
- 4. A negative consequence of fame for Justin Bieber is he has very little privacy / people get bored of hearing about him / people criticize his appearance.
- 5. Tavi Gevinson started a fashion blog when she was 11 years old / when she was in 11th grade in high school / in 2011.

Check your understanding: gap fill

Do this exercise while you listen. Write the numbers to complete the gaps.

- 1. Justin Bieber started off posting videos on YouTube at the age of.......
- 2. Justin Bieber has over..... followers on Twitter.
- 3. Tavi Gevinson started Style Rookie when she was only..... years old.
- 4. Tavi's blog soon built up a huge following of up to.....reader per day.
- 5. One magazine upset Tavi by printing an article saying the writer didn't believe Tavi was only......

Discussion

Do you think Justin Bieber and Tavi Gevinson deserve their success, or are they just lucky? I think ... deserves his/her success because ...

I don't think ... deserves his/her success because...

Result

The experiment showed an improvement in students' overall oral communication skills after the 3-week intervention. Specifically:



Figure 2 The results of post-test

This experiment investigated the effectiveness of using TEDx Talks to improve oral communication skills in a group of 15 B2-level 9th-grade ESL students. Over a 3-week period, students engaged with TEDx Talks twice a week, participating in various activities such as discussions, summarizing key points, and preparing short presentations based on the talks. The pretest and post-test, using standardized listening and speaking tasks, demonstrated a statistically significant improvement of 10% in speaking and 20% in listening skills. These results suggest that using TEDx Talks within a structured intervention can be an effective tool for enhancing oral communication skills in B2-level ESL students.

Conclusion

TEDx Talks provide a unique platform for students to develop their oral communication skills. Through exposure to rich vocabulary, active listening exercises, and speaking practice, students gain the tools they need to express themselves confidently and effectively. Effective oral communication, a cornerstone of academic and professional success, relies on a foundation of both active listening and clear speaking. B2 level English students, though on their way to fluency, often face challenges in these areas due to limited practice, vocabulary gaps, and a lack of motivation. TEDx Talks, with their engaging presentations on diverse topics by passionate speakers, emerge as a powerful tool to address these hurdles. The experiment conducted confirms that incorporating TEDx Talks into learning can significantly enhance B2 students' oral communication skills. By fostering active listening through captivating content and providing models of clear, concise speaking, TEDx Talks can empower students to become more confident and articulate communicators.

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ФЛЕШ ФАНТАСТИКА УНИВЕРСИТЕТ СТУДЕНТТЕРІНІҢ СӨЗДІК ҚОРЫН БАЙЫТУДАҒЫ ДЕДУКТИВТІ ҚҰРАЛЫ РЕТІНДЕ

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Кіріспе

бұл адамдардың өміріндегі сауатты сөйлеудің ажырамас бөлігі. Сөздік – Студенттердің сөздік қоры ағылшын тілі сабақтарында ақпаратты табысты қабылдауға ықпал етеді. Сөздік қоры бай студент өз ойын сауатты және анық жеткізе алады. Сондықтан жоғары оқу орнының ағылшын тілі курсының басты міндеті студенттердің сөздік қорын үнемі байыту болып табылады. Қазіргі әлемде ағылшын тілі тек қарым-қатынас құралы ғана емес, сонымен қатар оқу мен жұмыс үшін қажетті құралға айналды. Адамдар күнделікті өмірде ағылшын тілін қолдану қажеттілігіне жиі тап болады. Сонымен қатар, ағылшын тілі студенттің мүмкіндіктерін кеңейтеді, қызығушылықтарын ашады, дүниетанымы мен жеке тәжірибесін қалыптастырады. Бұл жанрдын ғаламторда кездестіруге болатын көптеген басқа мысалы, микро-фанастика, нано-фантастика және т.б. жеделдігімен флеш-фантастика қазіргі кезде көптеген адамдар арасында танымал бола бастады. Сондықтан студенттердің сөздік қорын байыту шет тілін оқытуда өте маңызды аспект болып табылады. Бұл мақаланың мақсаты жоғары оқу орнының тілдік емес мамандықтар студенттерінің сөздік қорын байыту үшін ағылшын тілі сабақтарында флеш фанастика жанрындағы мәтіндерді пайдалану туралы эксперимент деректерімен бөлісу болып табылады.

Флеш фанастика — университет студенттеріне лексиканы оқыту саласындағы жаңа бағыт. Заманауи цифрлық, планшеттік және мобильді экрандардың талаптарына сәйкес келетін, сондай-ақ мәтіндердің және басқа да тартымды нұсқалардың кең ауқымы арасында оқырманның оқуы мен уақытқа сәйкес келетін шағын мәтінді баяндау формасы болып табылады [1]. Осы жанрдың көлемі нақты анықтамасы болмаса да, 5 сөзден 1500 сөзге дейін жазылады. Сөздердің саны 1500-ден аз болса да, оқушылардың сөздік қорын соншалықты сөзбен байытуға болады. Қысқа әңгіме мен флеш фантастика арасындағы негізгі айырмашылық — флеш фанастика қысқа әңгімелерге қарағанда айтарлықтай қысқа [2]. Аудитория ішінде мәтінді оқып, түсінуге аз уақыт жұмсайды. Бұл қарапайым процесс болып көрінсе де, 1500 сөздің ішінде студенттер өздерінің ойлау процесін дамыта алады, сабақ жоспарына сәйкес белгілі бір тақырып бойынша өз пікірлері мен ойларымен бөлісу үшін белсенді сөздік қорын кеңейте алады.

Негізгі бөлім

Бүгінгі күнде студенттер сабақ барысында жаңа сөздікті үйренуге уақыты жетпеуі мүмкін. Сондықтан сөздік дағдылары контексттен шекті дағдыларға айналған. Бұл зерттеу осы мәселені қарастырады және флеш фанастика жанрдағы мәтіндерді студенттердің сөздік қорын байыту үшін қолдануға болатынын анықтауға тырысады. Бұл зерттеудің өзектілігі – флеш фантастика мәтіндері студенттердің сөздік дағдыларын жетілдіру құралы ретіндегі рөлі.

Майкл Грейвз тиімді оқытуды және студенттердің білімін дамытуды қолдайтын табысты сөздік бағдарламаларының негізін ұсынады. Оның оқу бағдарламасының негізі сенімді сөздік қорын дамытуға арналған төрт бөлімнен тұратын тәсілді қамтиды: 1) бай және