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Academic conferences in professionally oriented language acquisition by public relations undergraduates

Конференции как метод обучения английскому языку специальности студентов, обучающихся на отделениях по связям с общественностью

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Abstract

The present paper deals with the attempt to analyze the basics of the theoretical and practical issues in terms of academic conferences as part of the curriculum within the learner-oriented approach to teaching professional English as the second language (L2) to public relations (PR) undergraduates. The objective of the article is to reveal strategies and tactics, necessary for the preparation of the PR undergraduates for participation in professionally oriented scientific conferences in the English language. The research methodology relies on the previous theoretical achievements of the authors of the article, who have worked out special methods, necessary for the modelling of real life situations, including case studies, large-scale role-play games and academic discussions, alongside with the acquisition and consolidation of language knowledge and skills. The actualized skills in the specially constructed academic milieu contribute to the development of the knowledgeable and competent future experts in the field of Public Relations. The graphs accompanying the result of the present research have been created by the authors of the article. The main results of the

Аннотация

Настоящая статья посвящена анализу теоретических и практических вопросов, касающихся проведения студенческих конференций как метода преподавания профессионально ориентированного английского языка студентам, обучающимся по направлению «связи с общественностью» (PR). Цель данной работы заключается в раскрытии стратегии и тактики, необходимых для подготовки студентов к проведению профессионально-ориентированных конференций на английском языке. Методология данного исследования базируется на теоретических достижениях авторов данной статьи, которые разработали методы, требуемые для воспроизведения студентами на занятиях реальных жизненных ситуаций, включая тематические исследования, ролевые игры и академические дискуссии, необходимые для проведения студенческих конференций. Актуализированные навыки в специально выстроенной академической среде способствуют расширению знаний и формированию компетентных будущих специалистов по связям с общественностью. Графики, представленные в работе,

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conducted research indicate that the academic conferences held in English, contribute to effective professionally oriented English language acquisition by PR undergraduates.

Keywords: public relations, English language, academic conferences, language acquisition.

Introduction

As recent events, connected with Covid-19 have illustrated, the world is highly interconnected and interdependent. This is one facet of the multifarious Public Relations, dealing with the image and promoting goodwill. There being no universally accepted definition of the International Relations (IR), commonly considered as part of Public Relations, some scholars suggest that it “means the diplomatic–strategic relations of states, and the characteristic focus of IR is on issues of war and peace, conflict and cooperation” (Brown, Ainley, 2009, p.6). For others international relations is “a complex, issue-sensitive affair” (Brown, Ainley, 2009, p.8) with “interdependence of states and societies <...> as striking a feature as their independence” (Brown, Ainley, 2009, p.8).

PR on the international level is practically defined as an academic discipline creating and preserving a status quo, as well as the strive to pursue peace and prosperity for all countries. Thus, no single individual can control political, economic and cultural interests, which stimulates the requirement to be profoundly informed and thoroughly educated on the relevant and most imposing issues of Public Relations on the international level. Thus, it comes clear that undergraduates of Public Relations are to develop special competences permitting them to effectively deal with the counterparts in the international arena. This makes the current research highly relevant.

The purpose of this paper is to show most effective strategies of teaching professionally oriented English to the undergraduates of Public Relations. It is common knowledge that English as *lingua franca* of today (Crystal, 1997) serves as ‘a global language’. The global status of the English language, in accordance with David Crystal, is attained owing to its ‘special role that is recognized in every country’ (Crystal, 1997, p.22). When teaching English for Specific Purposes we resort to the thoughts of our predecessors who have worked out the existing methodology and linguodidactics. We proceed

составлены авторами статьи. В результате проведенного исследования было установлено, что студенческие конференции, проводимые на английском языке, способствуют повышению эффективности усвоения языка специальности студентами отделений по связям с общественностью.

Ключевые слова: связи с общественностью, английский язык, учебные конференции.

from the premise that teaching English in the field of Public Relations involves the processing of the previous theories to ensure the continuity. The main theory is primarily based on the idea of language dichotomy first suggested by Ferdinand de Saussure, according to which initial language interaction is presented in a form of distinction of language from speech – or ‘langue and parole’ (de Saussure, 1983). The scholar’s ideas decades later resulted in the Competency-Based Language Teaching (CBLT) (Larsen-Freeman, 2007, p.141). The undergraduates’ needs can be now embraced by the specific perceptible models of knowledge, skills, and the reactions of the undergraduates’ behavior to the given situation. The paper consists of Introduction, the Body, Conclusion and References.

Theoretical Framework or Literature Review

While teaching English to the PR undergraduates, the teacher should set the goals that can help the undergraduates to ensure adequate understanding of the information by PR undergraduates and their reaction to it. However, one of the most important tasks on the part of the teacher is to create a positive feedback to the subject to facilitate the process of its learning. It should be emphasized that the teachers of English should pay attention not only to innovative methods of teaching, but also to the psychological aspect of this process (Vygotsky, 1978, Vishnyakova et al, 2020b).

It should be noted that the process of learning cannot be separated from the emotional state of the PR undergraduates, which is of particular importance in teaching foreign languages in general, as well as linguodidactics (Minyar-Beloucheva et al., 2020b). The modern curriculum is created with regard to the psychological foundations of the methods of teaching foreign languages to undergraduates. The wide spread ideas of the Russian psychological school pioneered L.S. Vygotsky are widely used in the world educational theory and practice, in particular in teaching foreign

languages (Kolb, 2015; Nistor, Samarasinghe, 2019). According to L.S. Vygotsky, mental development is the integral part of the multifaceted personality per se (Vygotsky, 1982, p. 251). The processes of education and development of a personality come hand in hand. Generally, development process should be ahead of education, guiding it forward, but at the same time education relies on particular experience and is set for the future. Works by L.S. Vygotsky are included into the teachers' training colleges' curricula, which lay the foundation for the Western linguodidacts, based on the activity approach that stimulates creative activity of the undergraduates and their teachers. Their achievements are widely used in teaching professionally oriented English (Malyuga, Tomalin, 2017).

To a large extent, the climate in the classroom depends on the emotional state of the teacher, who is in charge of the students' motivation, moral wellbeing and encourages the undergraduates to learn a foreign language with delight. Undoubtedly, motivation is always expected to be a moving force of learning English on the part of the PR undergraduates. Impetus is considered the most powerful incentive in learning languages and cultures (Vishnyakova, Visnyakova, 2019). To master the English language, the PR undergraduates should plunge into the vocabulary of their profession, terminology in particular, as well as into the set of grammar forms peculiar to their specialization, syntax and style.

Methodology

The present investigation was carried out at Lomonosov Moscow State University in 2018-2020. The participants of the survey were two groups of the PR undergraduates, who annually participated in L2 academic conferences. The major interest lay in the qualitative rather than quantitative analysis of some aspects concerning students' conferences. The analysis of the responses required a reflective approach to data coding and interpretation (Duff, 2018). The main concern dealt with the investigation into the attitude of the undergraduates to the students' conferences in English and the role of the teacher in their preparation for the conferences. The questionnaire given to the PR undergraduates, contained three main multiple choice questions:

1. What are the major difficulties in L2 conference preparation?
 - a. the choice of the topic; b. insufficient time; c. insufficient knowledge of English; d. lack of confidence.

2. To what extent do you find L2 students' conferences useful for developing English proficiency?
 - a. not in the least useful; b. not very useful; c. useful; d. rather useful; e. extremely useful.
3. What are the basics for the choice of the topic for the PR undergraduates' reports at the students' conferences?
 - a. the availability of the English sources; b. the well-known subject, studied in the curriculum; c. the media coverage; d. the relevance of the issue for the PR undergraduates' research.

It should be said that the questionnaires were on the overt type, and on the basis of the answers of the PR undergraduates it was possible to synthesize and represent them in the graph forms of various types. Besides the method of questionnaire and statistics, some other methods were applied. They are the method of observation, respondents' analysis, the methods of comparative and descriptive analyses.

Results and Discussion

Preparation for academic conferences

In a short period of time, the PR undergraduates need to do a lot of work in the process of mastering the professionally oriented English language in accordance with the academic goals set during the preparation for the conference. The main thing in achieving the goals, as has already been stated, is motivation. It is motivation that activates all the internal forces of the PR undergraduates that foster the psychological processes of L2 learning, such as thinking, perception, understanding, and assimilation. Students should learn English not for practical purposes but also for pleasure. The advantage of this approach to L2 teaching consists in the requirement to work with professionally oriented texts as well as with the source material, and communicate with the counterparts in different countries, participate in international conferences and forums.

To prepare for a real international conference concerning foreign policy issues the PR undergraduates can practice their reports in the classroom in the form of role-playing games, when different types of modern international congresses, forums, and round table discussion are played. Any international meeting is a complicated, multi-staged process, they are held despite the paradigm shift in history or linguistics. It does not only embrace the entire group of speakers and the audience, but also the

Chairman and the Presidium of the conference. Thus, when studying the professionally oriented vocabulary, the PR undergraduates need to pay attention to both formative lexical units (package phrases) and text-forming ones (terminological units).

Primarily, the PR undergraduates are to master the formative lexical units, which are the linguistic skeleton of the reports. This is the essential basis for the successful presentation of their scholarly report. The linguistic skeleton should be paid special attention to, since the participation of the PR undergraduates in the academic conference presents a novel approach to teaching professionally oriented English.

Innovations in teaching foreign languages is always a break through, a state of the-art-approach that motivates learners to yield tangible results. That is the reason for the spread of the academic conferences at the universities of Russia. The students' conferences concern the subjects of the future profession of the PR undergraduates. It becomes clear that such role-play conferences are favored by the students who like not only participate in them, but also enjoy all the stages of the preparatory work.

During the role-playing games dedicated to the conferences, the PR undergraduates who Chair the conference need to know the conference management algorithm, and the most applied package phrases that indicate the beginning of the conference, the announcement of the agenda, the invitation of the speakers, addressing the audience, the continuation of the conference and its conclusion.

These phrases are recommended for acquisition by the PR undergraduates who will be given the part of the Chairman. This part can be in turn played by every student of the class that is why all of them should learn the following package phrases and rehearse them in class during the role-play. The phrases are as follows.

*I hereby declare the Conference open.
On behalf of the Organizing Committee and in my own name I welcome you and those who are participating in the Conference.
The purpose (subject) of the Conference is...
There are ... reports on the agenda.
The time-limit of each report is ... minutes.
You are welcome to ask questions after each report has been made.
Let's take the first item on the agenda...
I give the floor to Professor ... who is going to speak on ...*

*(After the report) Have you got any questions?
Any questions to the speaker?
Please, you are welcome.
Are you happy with the reply?
Now we could move on to the next point of the agenda.
The next report is to be delivered by Professor ..., who will make a report on ...
(After the report) Are there any questions, please?
You are welcome.
Are you happy on the question?
As we are running short of time, we could just move on to...
The next person to speak is...
Now let me proceed to the last point of the agenda.
I shall ask Professor...
Is there anyone else who would like to express his/her opinion on the reports made?
Prof. ... you are welcome ...
In conclusion, allow me to express great appreciation of the work performed by the speakers and those who took part in the Conference.
Let me just summarize our main points again.
Now I declare the Conference closed (Minyar-Beloruicheva, 2012).*

These package phrases are always learnt with pleasure, because they are an inalienable aspect of the conferences. Within the current trend of a foreign language acquisition the method of real-life gamification is very popular with the PR undergraduates. Thus by the real-life games within the academic milieu the PR undergraduates enthusiastically learn the English language. Academic assignments which provide favourable environment in classroom practices are widely used and deserve a separate investigation, similar to the one, carried out by Beard and Wilson (Beard, Wilson, 2015).

The PR undergraduates are happy to be able to quickly learn professional vocabulary for the formal organization and conference holding whether they are held face-to-face or online. It should be noted here that it is essential to develop reading competences. Reading as such has always been important for learning languages. The texts do not only inform us about different facts and situations but even academic texts are able to exert feelings and emotions on part of the PR undergraduates. There are scholars who think that reading a text is the key to cognitive interacting within the text with the purpose of extracting meaning from it, in this case the reader and the author get involved into (Nuttal, 2008). The success of reading is the result not only of

the language knowledge application, but also of the complex cognitive brain function as it is abundant of abbreviations and other symbolic expressions. PR texts present a certain difficulty for PR undergraduates that are not very well prepared (Minyar-Beloroucheva et al., 2020a).

PR undergraduates should get pleasure in reading and understanding the words, grammar and syntax of the English texts, which function in the PR discourse and are used in by them in their reports during the role-play conference. This method of learning languages is sure to reveal new horizons in the perception of the world and the new worldview. To choose a subject matter for their reports the PR undergraduates need to study and analyze various sources and texts of professional discourse in English.

The Role of the teacher in the Preparation for academic conferences

The role of the teachers in this process is very important as for the successful result they are obliged to find out the strengths and weaknesses as well as other psychological particularities (Vishnyakova et al., 2020a) of the PR undergraduates to create a favorable climate in class. It is the teacher who can help the PR undergraduates overcome the initial language barrier, defeat self-distrust, make them believe in their own ability and support them in not being afraid of making mistakes. Traditionally the undergraduates know the acquired material, can operate with it, but cannot utter a word, as they fear to fail, which they are not psychologically prepared for. It is very important for the PR undergraduates to know that the teacher is a collaborator, a person who wants to facilitate the process of their L2 learning. Recent research has shown certain effectiveness of collaborative and cooperative method for target language acquisition (Badjadi, 2020). Likewise, they should keep in mind that they and the teacher are "in the same boat" and are aimed at achieving the goal.

In fact, the preparation for the academic conferences should be initiated right from the very beginning of the PR professional education and should be included in the PR Department curriculum. As a rule, the acquisition of a foreign language starts with theory and practice of phonetics. The simplest specific phonetical

sounds may cause certain difficulties brining about ambiguity or unintended mistakes. Moreover, the sound of the PR undergraduates should be in full accordance with the Standard English. It is being a complicated linguistic notion that has brought about multifarious research on part of the greatest linguists in the World Englishes paradigm (Kachru, 1998; Kirkpatrick, 2007; Proshina, 2019). Within the standard variety of English phonetics is purified on the material of grammar structures and lexical units typical of the PR discourse. Concise meaningful phrases contribute and facilitate the professionally oriented English fluency. Every teacher of English should seize the chance to get the undergraduates involved in the process of learning regardless of their previous academic achievement.

The PR undergraduates should be inspired to be confident in speaking English within the professional PR discourse in a short period of time. They should be ensured to be able to acquire new knowledge due to their belief in their language ability. It should be noted though that to assure the PR undergraduates in their ability to learn the English language is not sufficient. It is necessary to introduce new phrases to the PR undergraduates to prepare them for creating and making their reports at the conference. The PR undergraduate speakers are to know the package phrases for the beginning of the report such as "I could begin by saying that...", for the continuation of the report "I think I should mention here that ...", transition to a new aspect "Now we could turn our attention to ...", verification "Would it be true to say that...", expressions of doubt "It is very doubtful how..." and assurance "There can be no doubt as to..." and conclusion "It would be useful to summarize what I have said so far" and other essential expressions. The phonetic aspect should not be set aside here as well (Council of Europe, 2018). It is necessary to emphasize that for some PR undergraduates who have difficulties with the Received pronunciation (RP), the phonetic drill never loses its relevance during the whole process of mastering PR English.

The pie chart in Fig.1 demonstrates the difficulties the PR undergraduates encounter in preparing for the professionally oriented academic conference conducted in the English language.

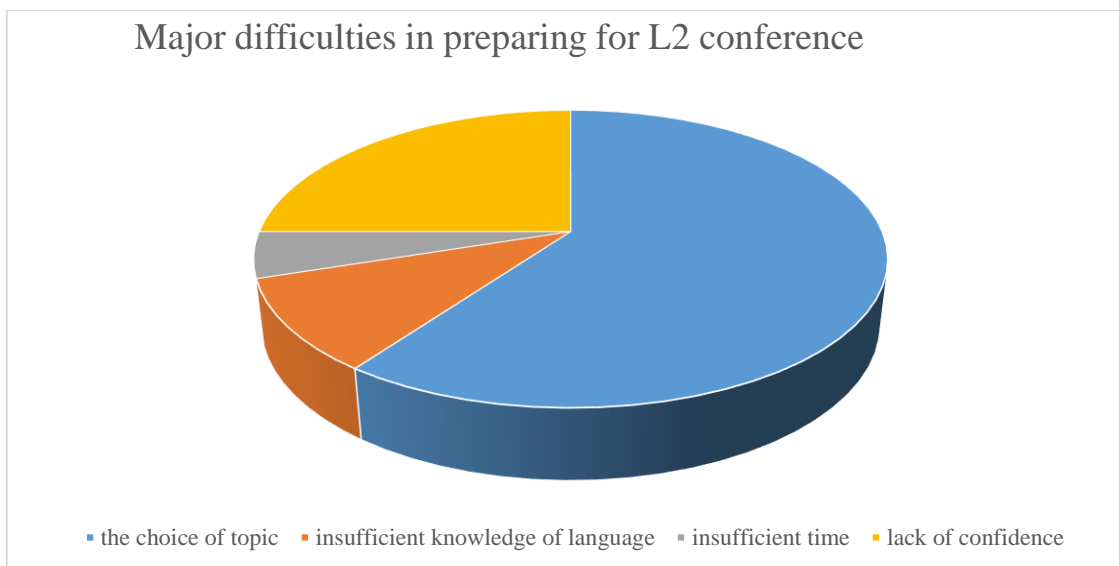


Figure 1. Major difficulties in L2 conference preparation (Own authorship)

As shown in Figure 1, for an effective students' conference report, four aspects should be taken into account. They are the choice of topic, insufficient time, insufficient knowledge of English, lack of confidence. According to the conducted survey, more than 50 per cent of the effective report depends upon the choice of the topic. The line graph in Figure 3 demonstrates it. Insufficient knowledge of L2 is the second obstacle on the way of making efficacious reports. To prepare a good report for the academic conference PR undergraduates need time. Lack of time is considered to be one of the greatest scourges of the PR undergraduates (although its percentage is the smallest on the pie chart) who attempt to write their reports the day before the students' conference. It is a conventional way for the undergraduates, as they do not want to do anything that is not connected with their immediate duties. What is more, lack of confidence can spoil even the best report.

The Role of the PR Undergraduates in preparation for academic conferences

In the process of preparation for the academic conferences, much of the work can be performed independently by the PR undergraduates. By means of modern technologies, audio and video podcasts it becomes possible to hone the pronunciation skill, taken the academic use of their PCs and other devices for advanced learning (Sim, Butson, 2014). During the semesters' work, the PR undergraduates can actualize their

grammar knowledge on the vast material of professional texts, practicing them in dialogues and individual speeches or reports, which helps them in their activities, retain the learnt lexical units and grammatical structures.

Reading the professional PR texts, the undergraduates gradually gain confidence in their awareness of professional knowledge and the ability to grasp the professional literature. Along with this process, reading also helps develop the analytical skill. Thus, it allows us to speak of the future success of the teacher's efforts provided he/she has managed to combine the cognitive and the emotional aspects (Minyar-Beloucheva et al., 2018).

The PR undergraduates should learn how not to be afraid of asking comprehension questions, as communication and discussion constitute a dialogue, when interlocutors ask and answer questions. Therefore, the participants will ask questions and discuss the topics, raised in professional texts. The teacher in his/her turn should not interfere into the dialogue, but put down the mistakes and point at them at the end of the exercise.

The importance of L2 academic conferences has been analyzed with the help of students' responses to the questions given to them. The bar chart in Figure 2 shows the opinion of the PR undergraduates.

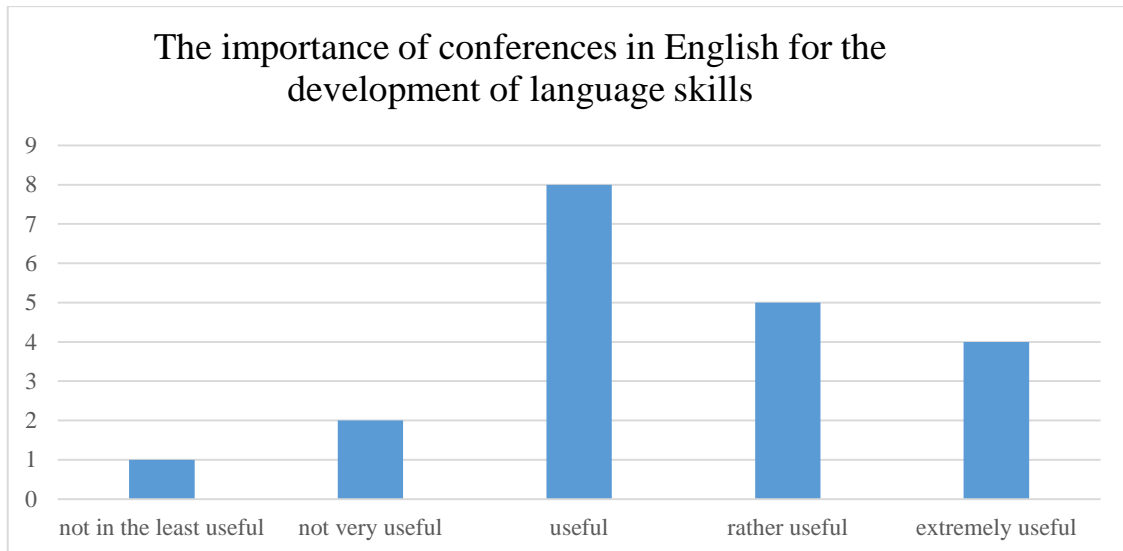


Figure 2. The importance of L2 conferences assessed by the PR undergraduates (own authorship)

This bar chart compares different levels of the importance of the professionally oriented academic conference in English for the development of language skills. The bar that reaches the highest point indicates that the PR undergraduates consider students' conferences to be useful for the development of their language skills. The lowest point hits the bar indicating that academic conferences are not in the least useful for the PR undergraduates' development language skills. Three other bars demonstrate the opinion of the PR undergraduates who believe that students' conferences are not very useful, rather useful or extremely useful.

The choice of scientific issues

Not all of the undergraduates who pursue the education in the sphere of Public Relations will necessarily become theorists PR management or PR practitioners, but their participation in the conference, the opportunity to take part in round table discussions and panels are very important for the future PR specialists' activities, as it leads to the study of the necessary materials and scrutinizing submission procedures.

The main issue in preparing for the conference of the PR undergraduates is the choice of the topic and the selection of original English-language literature, academic articles and various Internet sources for the research. The selection of the sources is very important as eventually it can bring about the discussions at the conference, resulting in heated debates, since the English-language sources used by the PR undergraduates can be often unknown to the participants of the conference and thus are not always favorably accepted. The debates on such topics can be

controversial and presented from unconventional points of view, as for example, the topics of environmental protection (*Minyar-Beloroucheva, Sergienko, 2021*) or other social issues (Sergienko et al., 2021).

At first sight, it seems that in the context of the Internet prevalence, the choice of literature seems to be a simple task, but in fact, for the PR undergraduates with a low level of English this becomes a serious obstacle. Here, they do usually resort to the help of electronic dictionaries and translators, as well as the teacher. When preparing the PR undergraduates for the conference, teachers of English are advised to divide their students into groups depending on their language proficiency.

The first group includes the PR undergraduates who are fluent in English within the framework of the curriculum and even a little over it. They have no difficulties in coping with any. These PR undergraduates are able not only to find original information in English, which has no analogues, for example, in Russian, but also to deliver a message in English. Such students are able not only to find the original information in English independently, do a certain research and analysis, but also make a report in English.

The second group should include less academically successful PR undergraduates. These PR undergraduates can also find original foreign-language materials on their own, but public speaking in English is fraught with some difficulties. The role of the teacher in this case is increasing.

Finally, the third group of the PR undergraduates are the weakest students catching up with the curriculum. They would mainly rely on the information found in their native language and then translate it into English for their report. This allows them to be more confident in the research and then just train their presentation in English. That would be fair enough to claim that the undergraduates' investigations make little contribution to science but are supposed to be extremely useful for their language knowledge development.

Moreover, not all of the undergraduates pursuing the education in the sphere of PR will necessarily become scientists or politicians, but their participation in the conference, the opportunity to take part in round table discussions and panels - all this leads to the life-like experience of the PR experts and proves a good challenge to achieve the goal and to succeed.

It should be emphasized that before taking part in a real international conference, the PR undergraduates should learn to hold them at the local, or the department level, at the faculty, at the level of different faculties of the same university, at the level of different universities of the country and finally at the level of different universities in the world. Accordingly, even the weakest undergraduates tend to be on equal terms with strong undergraduates, which motivates them to work much more than their more successful fellow-students.

Accordingly, even the weakest students tend to be on equal terms with strong PR undergraduates, which motivates them to work much more than their more successful fellow-students. For those who have a lower level of knowledge of English, it is possible to recommend conventional topics to be presented at the conference. Current topics arouse the greatest interest and, as a rule, questions arise concerning their coverage in the from abroad Media.

The choice of the actual topics of PR undergraduates may vary. As an illustration of it you may see the cited topics, chosen by the PR students at the Lomonosov State University in 2019 to participate at the annual conference on Humanitarian Problems of the Modern Society in the English language:

The relevance of Public relations for present-day Indian society: the shine and poverty;
European identity crisis in the 21st century in the coverage of PR papers;
Youth environmental activism and environmental activities;
The decrease of TV loyalty level as a social problem in modern Russia;
PR vs Advertising: a study of 'Procter and Gamble' press-releases;
Women in emigration: a study of PR papers;
The rise of 'green' politics in PR discourse;
The influence of social media on public behaviour;
Creativity as a way of PR campaigns realization;

Generally speaking, it can be claimed that regardless of the choice, the PR undergraduates take the research work seriously and spare great effort for it. Most acute topics are of the greatest interest and, as a rule, questions arise regarding their coverage in the international Media. Thus, the participation of undergraduates in the conference can help in solving several problems at the same time.

Primarily, the PR undergraduates develop competence to work with foreign-language electronic sources, the ability to extract the necessary information from texts and understand the meaning of the message.

Secondly, the very form of a scientific conference for undergraduates is extremely attractive, which consists in the ability to see their names in the conference program, the ability to publish abstracts or messages, to obtain a participant's certificate, and enjoy a cultural programme. As a result, many undergraduates who did not participate in the conference subsequently expressed requests and wishes for participation in subsequent conferences.

Thirdly, the promotion and popularization of L2 academic conferences did not influence only potential participants, but also all other undergraduates, even less successful in the subject.

A survey was conducted among the PR undergraduates to find out the major factors defining the choice of the topic of the report. Figure 3 demonstrates the most common answers to the question.

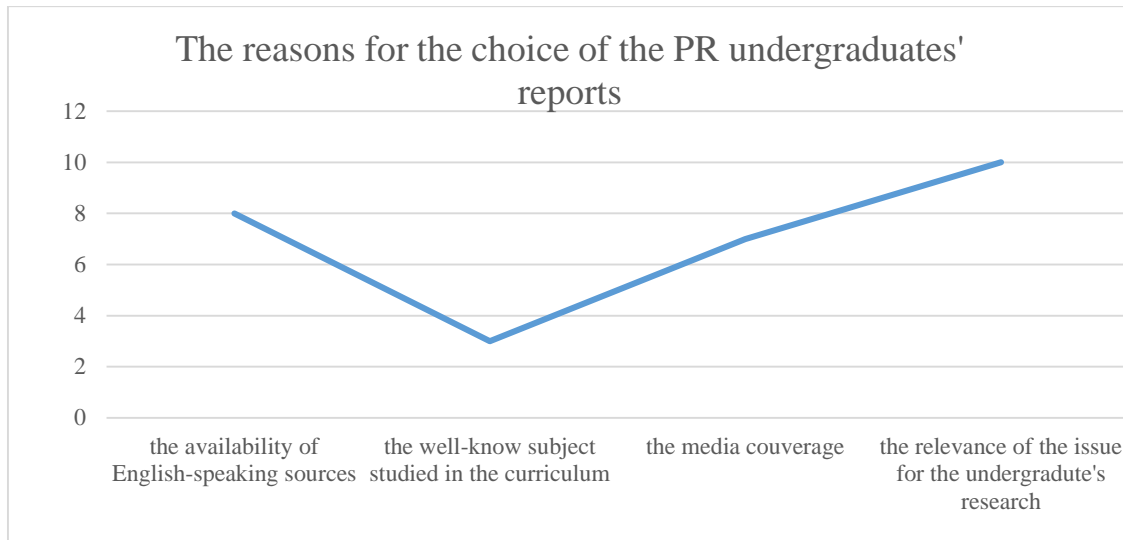


Figure 3. The L2 academic conference topic choice (own authorship)

This line graph represents how data have changed as a result of a responsible approach to the choice of the topic for its presentation at the academic conference. This chart demonstrates that for the proper choice of the topic for the aforementioned conference, its subject should not only be well known to everybody due to its coverage in the Mass media. Figure 3 shows that the availability of the English-language sources can be of great help. The line rises with the increased number of the necessary English-language sources that are required for a sustainable conference report. Moreover, for the participant to be successful the topic of the conference report should be relevant to the undergraduate's research paper topic. The graph line goes up the growing relevance the PR undergraduates' research and the topics of conference reports. This chart shows how the success of the choice of the topic vary within the undergraduate's preparation for the PR undergraduates' conference.

Conclusions

As it has been demonstrated, the real life-like experience educational games within the learner-oriented approach can be described as a favorable factor of L2 acquisition. As it facilitates this process of learning because besides pleasure, i.e. the esthetic interest, a game makes the PR undergraduates be engaged in active learning when they use the grammar constructions or the vocabulary naturally and unconsciously. The same may refer to any of professionally oriented undergraduates in terms of L2 acquisition, in particular PR undergraduates. The preparatory work is a rather prolonged stage and it can hardly be regarded as a soft one and should be understood as a kind of a rehearsal of the

professional conferences. This idea encourages the PR undergraduates to be creative and improvise in the course of the preparatory work. The learning of foreign languages based on games, creates a favorable milieu in which it is possible to experiment by choosing different actions along the way. To learn how to hold a conference, PR undergraduates can watch documentary video films dealing with real conferences. The preparation for the conference requires much time and planning on the part of the teacher as well.

With the recent trend of distance L2 acquisition the preparatory work for the professionally oriented academic conferences becomes more relevant. Online student conferences expand the geography of the participants, as the limits of the borderline dissolve.

Summing up, we may conclude that the participation of the PR undergraduates in academic conferences, pseudo-professional forums and discussions is an effective approach to teaching professionally oriented English. In general, participation of the PR undergraduates in academic conferences should be regarded as a traditional form of activities in L2 acquisition, in general, participation of the PR undergraduates in academic conferences should be regarded as a traditional form of activities in L2 acquisition, viewed as subject to enrichment in the process of practical implementation.

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