

YouTube as an open resource for foreign language learning: a case study of German

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Abstract

The integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) in education has increased the possibilities and expanded the boundaries of the learning process. It is also a prerequisite for implementing distance learning. Various online resources, such as e-mail, blogs, forums, online applications, and video hosting sites, can be used to create open learning and education environments. This study focuses on the use of informational educational technologies for learning foreign languages, especially German. The article presents the results of a theoretical analysis of the content of YouTube video materials in terms of their personal and didactic relevance for teaching German as a first or second foreign language in higher education, specifically at a pedagogical university. Based on the practical experience of using several popular thematic YouTube channels with a large and stable audience, a brief didactic analysis of their products is provided and suggestions are made on how to transform video content into methodological material for the practical course of German language for future teachers. The article also explores the potential of using alternative YouTube resources for distance learning with regard to the development of mediation skills as defined by the authors of the CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors. Four types of resources that can serve as teaching materials are identified and analyzed; some examples of their preparation and use for the training of future foreign language teachers are given. The article also discusses the open resources ONCOO and TWINE, which can be used to foster the autonomy of future foreign language teachers, and describes their features. The proposed recommendations can help to achieve the following objectives: enriching vocabulary; semanticizing phraseological units, fixed expressions, clichés; developing pronunciation skills; enhancing linguistic and ICT competencies; improving listening and speaking skills; increasing motivation to learn, etc.

Keywords

YouTube, foreign language learning, German, distance learning, mediation skills, ONCOO, TWINE

1. Introduction

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have become an integral part of education, creating new opportunities and expanding the scope of the learning process. The global crisis of

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2020 highlighted the need to develop open learning and education based on the latest ICT and open resources, among which web services that allow users to upload and watch videos in their browsers are particularly attractive. The crisis also emphasized the importance of the teacher's role in society. Distance learning [1, 2], digitalization [3, 4] and integration [5, 6] are not just buzzwords; they are now the foundation of the educational process. The problem of training and retraining personnel, developing autonomy as a component of educational competence (for both students and teachers [7, 8]), and enhancing ICT skills [9, 10] became especially relevant, leading to changes in the Qualifications Framework.

YouTube [11] is a video hosting service that provides a platform for amateur and professional videos and videoblogs. It is one of the most visited sites on the Internet due to its simplicity and convenience, its ability to facilitate communication without time and spatial constraints, and its feature of enabling users to share their opinions in the comments on the videos.

According to statistics from recent years, "education" is consistently among the top ten most popular categories of videos, attracting the attention of billions of regular users from around the world. Education ranked sixth with 38.6 billion views and 2.9 billion regular users. This allows us to confidently consider video hosting as a modern learning tool, especially for learning German.

About 80 million videos were found on YouTube in four languages (Ukrainian, Russian, German and English). You can find videos of different specializations on YouTube. Table 1 summarizes the information of the orientation of the authors of the numerous channels of video materials, which are offered to everybody, who is interested in learning German as a foreign language.

However, the issue of increasing the efficiency of the use of video materials disseminated through the platform in the process of learning German in a higher education institution, in particular in the context of distance learning, remains relevant.

2. Theoretical comprehension of YouTube possibilities in education

Analysis of last researches and publications worldwide indicates an increase of the number of authors who devote their works to the problems of using YouTube in teaching foreign languages. The highest level of interest is shown in learning English as a foreign language. This is due to the status of this language in the modern world as *lingua franca*.

The subject covers a wide range of issues. In particular, Arndt and Woore [12] aim to compare the processes of forming the vocabulary of the second language as a result of interaction with two network media: written blog posts and video blogs. In this analysis the level of assimilation of various aspects of lexical knowledge (spelling, semantic and grammatical) was a subject. In turn, Saudi Arabia scholars have experimentally demonstrated higher productivity of targeting vocabulary in a multimedia environment using video on YouTube compared to the traditional way of learning with images [13].

Antoro [14] explores the use of ICTs, including YouTube, as key tools for creating training materials in order to support distance learning and language learning.

The experimental study of Iranian scholars Souzanzan and Bagheri [15] is concerned with

Table 1
Orientation of educational videos.

Personal-definite orientation	
by age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – for children – for teenagers – for adults
by level of language proficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – for beginners – according to the levels of the European Language Education Recommendations
by line of work of users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – for pupils – for students – for professional purposes
Didactic-definite orientation	
by aim	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – development of certain linguistic competence (lexical, grammatical) – preparation for the examination to confirm the level of language proficiency – everyday communication – communication in a professional environment
by the type of speech activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – lexical trainer – grammar trainer – trainer for improving pronunciation – listening and / or reading
by means and forms of study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – based upon real / educational videos – in the dialogues – by means of exercises – based upon stories – by films – “on the street” – with music

the problem of perceiving English as a foreign language in the context of expediency of ICTs use, in particular YouTube, during individual learning.

Brazilian researchers Chimenti and Lins [16], having analyzed the impact of some digital resources on the quality of teaching English at elementary school concluded that the latest ITs could make learning of foreign languages more contextualized, creative and motivated.

On the strength of the assertion, that life-satisfying learning is the best policy for learning English (especially by children), Lee et al. [17] believe that the video is a good bearer of information that is the most suitable for language learning. First of all, it is a great opportunity to capture real life situations, and secondly, it is easy to access the necessary information through YouTube.

According to Cakir [18], due to the emergence of numerous open sources of information (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Internet newspapers and magazines) during the globalization

period, we are able to observe the phenomenon called “Teaching English to the Speakers of Other Languages” (TESOL) as well as “Teaching English as a Language of Open Sources” (TELOS). TELOS can provide expected multimodal and multidimensional support for TESOL (especially in the context of learning English as a foreign language), enabling the acquisition of pragmatic skills (in particular semantic-syntactic skills), which can only be partially formed in traditional lessons, according to Cakir [18].

According to Bastos et al. [19], YouTube acts as a cognitive tool, which is able to promote raise of the level of critical thinking and cognitive ability of students in the process of learning English as a foreign language.

The analysis of experimental data [20] showed that the use of existing videos and creation of their own videos for the distribution through video hosting increases the motivation of students to learn foreign languages.

Multifunctionality and effectiveness of YouTube as a tool for learning foreign languages is thus evident.

The purpose of the submitted report is:

- the illustration of certain aspects of the practical use of commonly used sources of video material in the process of teaching German as the first or second foreign language in a higher school, namely at the pedagogical university;
- the representation of recommendations on the conversion of video hosting content to didactic material while learning Practical Course of German Language by future teacher and the development of educational autonomy of all participants in the educational process.

3. Research results

3.1. German courses on YouTube

The interest of the main German apologists, in particular of the Goethe-Institut [21] and DeutscheWelle (DW) [22], to the platform undeniably proves its availability and effectiveness in influencing the process of mastering foreign languages. In the legitimacy of the said, once again the activity of the German international public broadcaster DeutscheWelle convinces of worldwide popularization of German language and the creation and dissemination of the necessary free study programs for its successful completion. Several video playlists that can be used both during class work while learning language and in the process of individual studying, are presented on “Deutschlernen mit der DW” channel. The differentiation of the levels of language proficiency from the “absolute beginner” to C1 / C2 allows the user independently organize his/her work according to the principle “from simple to more difficult”, and the teacher – quickly orientates in the selection of educational material for a particular audience. The length of the video increases gradually, in order not to overload the viewer and maximize the focus on the didactic material of each lesson or series. It is the series, because most of the educational videos are inherently films whose heroes live a particular part of their lives in the German-speaking environment. Heroes, as a rule, are foreigners, and therefore “they look at Germany and German language” through the eyes of YouTube channel viewers.

In addition to the main theme, the mention should be made of the traditional separation in the structure of the speech activity of the four components: speaking and listening (these two types belong to oral speech), writing and reading (written speech). The exams for determining the level of language proficiency, including the “Goethe-Zertifikat”, consist of “Lesen” (reading), “Hören” (listening), “Schreiben” (writing) and “Sprechen” (speaking) (oral or individual exam) “Sprechen” (oral or individual exam). Such a division is quite logical, since mastering the native language takes place precisely in this natural scenario: from listening to speaking, reading, and, finally, writing. The practice of working with students, who learn German, shows, that audio competence is the most difficult to formulate. Although at first glance there may be an impression that listening is the easiest for children, without much visible effort, as opposed to writing. However, before starting to pronounce the first words and construct a coherent phrases and sentences, the child for several years is in an absolute linguistic environment where he/she can hear sounds and words of his/her native language, in fact, 24 hours a day. Learning the same foreign language often begins with reading and writing, and then speaking and listening. The perception of speech in real life rarely occurs without visual support, and therefore a significant percentage of information is transmitted by non-verbal means. Involving video materials for listening to music is much more effective than using audio tracks. When a video hero pick up a certain item, naming it at the same time, the need to accompany the introduction of a new lexical unit by the translation disappears. Contemplating certain actions with the subject and listening to the commentary of the heroes, the viewer learns the linguistic roots and grammatical structures.

Of course, it is impossible to make a training video to explain every linguistic phenomenon, so the effectiveness of this learning tool can be greatly enhanced by fixing the new material with additional exercises. Understanding this, the authors of the training series DW offer users to go to interactive tasks at the specified link to the official personal site of the television and radio company. Given the current tendency to reduce the audience load in higher schools of Ukraine and increase the amount of material for independent learning by the student, the use of educational films with exercise complexes can help to optimize their independent work.

YouTube, with its openness to everyone, can be used by teachers as a space for communication. The format of communication in the form of comments is ordinary for modern youth. Free expression of opinions in a foreign language (i.e. speaking) in classes is often hindered by the fear of a public demonstration of an error. Being in a position of assessment by a teacher places the latter in the eyes of the first as a controller, and not as an equal partner in communication.

Offering students the opportunity to discuss certain video materials in comments without mandatory identification of the person, the teacher uses the opportunity to remove excessive nervous tension of the audience and thus intensify the speech activity. Leading a live dialogue requires a quick reaction of the interlocutors, which is difficult to achieve, especially at the initial stage of language learning. In addition, the limited auditorium time does not allow thinking for too long. Pause reduces the dynamics of conversation, thoughts do not find the personification in the right words, the conversation fails, and thus the ability to feel the language as a means of communication loses. A written discussion of a given topic gives an opportunity to think about a replica, to engage in a conversation in a convenient time, to comment on the previously stated statements more reasonably. The tasks performed during the comments may be verified by the teacher (sometimes by the owner of the channel or by other users). If you

watch online video tutorials, you can also achieve momentary synchronous interactivity that brings the conversation as close as possible to the “live” one, but this format is more likely to be used for individual work at home, since for class usage this can be technically difficult and organizationally incompatible, with the same schedule.

On the other hand, the teacher’s own comments (if necessary also incognito) can promote the unobtrusive orientation of the conversation to a certain didactically determined path, and the usage of correct or contextually relevant linguistic constructions, in response to mistaken or misused, will allow correction of errors without causing a psychological discomfort. Observation of the general course of the conversation may become a valuable source of information for revealing personal qualities, preferences, interests and the level of formation of the foreign language competence of its participants. Such a format of communication may become a kind of modernized Socratic dialogue. It will replace the control by monitoring of the quality of education with the subsequent full realization of all the advantages of the latter for the constant improvement of the educational process.

In addition, participants who are not members of a particular training group may be involved in the conversation, so to speak “strangers”. To distinguish them from others in the absence of the desire to register under their own names (at least for the reasons above), you can by agreeing to add a certain code word to the name of the subscriber. The presence of “strangers” opens up good opportunities for the search for “pen-friend”, because among them there are rarely happen to random people. Users from around the world are usually interested in learning German. Focusing on comments, you can choose a potentially interesting and useful for further private communication with the interlocutor. Not only students but also teachers can find for themselves like-minded colleagues in the hosting. Viewers often conduct didactic discussions and share reflections on problems and difficulties related to the learning of German language, especially difficult topics, stylistic nuances, etc.

The occasional cases of participation in commentary discussions on language video teaching media positively motivate those who are only German learners, to search for a tandem partner not only on educational channels. Having a certain passion or hobby and watching videos of relevant subjects in German, where the language ceases are the subject of study and are used exclusively as a means of communication, one can turn to those, who are interested in the common theme of the language and to establish contacts on the appropriate language basis.

Encouraging students or pupils to review not only educational videos but also native speakers’ and various video knowledge departments, you can somewhat make a transition to substantive-linguistic integrated learning in German – CLLIG. Participation in the conference organized by the Goethe-Institute in Kyiv in September, 2017 [23] has become the basis for understanding that learning with the help of the CLIL method allows achieving higher levels of linguistic and substantive competence. The emergence of this methodology has become a response to the needs of the era of technical and digital technologies in specialists of different specialties, which, in addition to specialized knowledge, also speak foreign languages. The combination of professional knowledge, substantive-linguistic and general competences, which is the main goal of CLIL, has become a guarantee of a successful specialist’s career. Numerous reports of conference participants from Germany, Italy, Lithuania and Hungary have revealed the specifics of the usage of the CLIL methodology in the process of learning and the experience of foreign colleagues in integrating foreign language learning with other subjects during school education.

Substantially interesting learning motivates learning of German language and creates a linguistic basis, with the help of which it will be possible to build further education, in particular, in a higher school.

The wide theme range of YouTube videos allows you to organize CLIL-based learning not only at school but also in higher school. Implementations of the principle of inter-subject communications are subordinated to the program from all disciplines, regardless of the cycles they belong to. So it only remains to make established communications in foreign languages. We will speculate on the example of students learning German language within the specialty 014.02 Secondary education. Language and literature (German / English) with an additional specialty, accordingly (English / German) language. The main professional disciplines for them are Pedagogics, German and English languages. The vast majority of educational videos, where the German language is the subject of a study as a foreign language, is aimed to the English-speaking audience. They are often accompanied by English subtitles or by the translation of individual lexical units (for example [24]). The experience of using similar videos in the learning of Practical Course of German as a second foreign language shows a significant increase in students' interest in learning material, since they are able to orientate on "native" English. The latter in this case ceases to play the role of the direct object of study and becomes a means of learning, although indirectly it continues to study. The topics of practical classes in German and English are often coincided and studied in parallel, so the use of English-German video as a didactic material contributes to improving the quality of knowledge in both disciplines. It also serves as the development of translation skills. At the very least, practice shows that the quality of the implementation of the author's didactic game "Translator" is significantly increased (according to the rules of the game, one or more participants, performing the role of English speakers, and the other / others German speakers, must be understood on a specific topic, using the participant's help, who is playing the translator).

A narrowly-focused video may be useful while studying a wide range of topics within practical courses and linguistic studies.

As for Pedagogics and German language, it should be noted that it is not difficult to find videos on the YouTube of a particular topic (for example, the Christian Kißler [25] channel). However, the question arises – within which discipline is it more appropriate to use them? In our opinion, it is most appropriate to do this at classes on the methodology of teaching a foreign language, since this discipline is taught, as a rule, by a specialist in Pedagogics and the corresponding foreign language simultaneously. Teacher of pedagogical disciplines who does not speak German can find the necessary material in collaboration with his colleagues, and offer students the opportunity to study individually in order to consolidate the knowledge gained during their class work in their native language.

The video format, which is offered by the "LearnGerman" channel, for example [26], allows you to achieve better results in one more direction of language work. This is a kind of educational activity, such as home or academic reading. Generally, the main goal of individual reading is to develop perceiving skills of written foreign language text, expanding vocabulary and deepening linguistic competence. The accompaniment of audio reproduction of the available for visual perception of the printed source contributes not only to the accompanying development of the above-mentioned listening skills, but also to the improvement of pronunciation. Comparison of the results of text work in two groups of students, one of which used only paper, and the other

– audiovisual, showed that the pronunciation, and most importantly intonation, during the retelling of certain passages of the read (and listened) story in the second group significantly improved.

Returning to the institutions that promote German in the world, the Goethe-Institute should be reminded once more and noted that a significant number of its projects on YouTube and not only there is intended to prepare applicants for exams to confirm a certain level of language proficiency. In collaboration with the institute, there are also numerous printed guides from several German publishing houses, mostly accompanied by interactive exercises and audio materials. This logically updates the question of what is and is there in general the prevalence of video channels over “classical”, albeit modernized, learning tools. In our opinion, the advantage becomes more obvious, the higher level of language proficiency of the person who prepares for the exam is.

According to [27], having passed the “Goethe-Zertifikat” C1 / C2 exam, you confirm the ability to “understand a wide range of long, rather difficult texts, also capturing the hidden meaning, ... flexible use of language in public and professional life, ... easy understanding of almost everything, read or heard in German”. So, in order to confirm the C1 / C2 level it is not enough just to speak correctly and quickly on all well-known topics, but you must be aware of all topics, understand the current trends in the development of science and culture in the world and Germany in particular, and therefore be able to get the latest information about the country. Despite the fact that exam preparation tools are quite often updated, so that available information at the time of the exam may become somewhat obsolete. It’s possible to be informed if you read periodicals regularly, listen to radio or watch videos on television or YouTube channels. However, only special videos are accompanied by subtitles or full text, translations, explanations, and exercises that convert them from the usual source of information to the learning tool. The “LearnGerman” channel offers, among other things, German daily news editions, and adapted by subtitles for foreigners videos, which are published several times a day, for example [28].

The number of educational author channels of various content (from lexical / grammatical explanations and audio exercises to reading / listening to literary texts and preparation for language tests) is constantly increasing. Informal educational videos feature a relaxed atmosphere, relevance, and meta-language reflection opportunity, gaining increasing popularity due to such characteristics. Interested in learning language may choose a teacher not only by the form of teaching didactic material (home videos in the format of communication *tete-a-tete* or recorded videos), but also by the personal authors’ qualities. The latter, in fact, significantly contribute to the promotion of the language and its coverage by a broad audience. It is rarely when a higher schoolteacher may boast thousands of students from around the world who are eagerly awaiting each of his lectures, often defining its topic.

A brief didactical analysis of the general opportunities and practical experience of using the materials of several relevant in the thematic plan channels with a quite wide permanent audience is presented below.

The author of the “Slow German” channel, Anik Rubens, offers users of YouTube audio clips on a wide variety of topics (biographies of prominent German figures, national traditions and customs, domestic issues, social relationships, etc.), dictated at a slow tempo in order to ensure their better understanding. Each lesson is complemented by full written support of the sounded

text. Using the Urlaub (Vacation) [29] material while studying the topic “Travelling” by the Practical Course of German Language (PCGL) program, in combination with self-developed exercises to control understanding showed that the tempo of teaching is optimal for students who speak German at the A2 level / B1, since the vast majority of them understood the general meaning of the heard information after the first listening, and some nuances - after the second or the third.

The “Deutschlernen durch Hören” channel also produces audio tutorials (educational dialogues on various themes, songs) and video materials. In particular, audio texts with control tasks are similar to those used during the “Telc” language exam passing, for example [30]. Doing a trial test on the YouTube platform allows you to feel the atmosphere of a real exam, to assess the difficulty of the task, and to determine the level of your own audio competence by using the correct answer key added to each video. The mentioned above materials may be used as control tasks while the Practical Course of German Language. At the initial stage of learning language, it was quite positive to use a study song which is composed of numerous language clichés typical to the situations “Acquaintance” and “At the cafe / restaurant” [31].

The real master of the visual-dramatic song, which does not leave anyone indifferent and awakens interest to learn language, is Uwe Kind, the author of the “UweKind & LingoTech” channel, and Singling techniques. Thanks to the amusement, the extraordinariness and, at the same time, the noticeable efficiency of the latter is used by the students and teachers of the whole world in studying spoken foreign languages. In collaboration with composer Mark Schaffel, “LingoTech” was created – “it is a music that combines melody, rhythm, drama, movement and linguistic feedback, becoming a common experience that inspires young people to learn languages.” LingoTech is based on the assumption that music simplifies the process of memorization, which allows students to improve foreign pronunciation and intonation [32]. It is a song, dance, drama and an interesting way of learning. Due to the understanding interest appears, music (melody) provides the duration of preservation in memory, the dance determines the interaction, and all together contributes to the success of learning. The fact that after the use of the song “Romanze im Perfekt” [33], students easily memorized three main forms of the irregular Verbs mentioned therein and chanted it on breaks, is an irrefutable proof of the effectiveness of this methodology, the basis of which consists a mnemonic technology based on music and motor activity.

The author of the “Deutsch in Bildern” channel creates his own educational videos using the positive aspects of another mnemonic technique, namely, illustrative. In order to demonstrate the syntactic structure of the sentence and the relationship between its members, there was a train, in which the locomotive is as a Subject, numerous wagons replace the Object, and the Adverbial Modifier is associated with railways [34]. According to the laws of mnemonic, an interesting picture, which will appear before the inner sight in the future, at the right moment will help to find quickly the necessary grammatical material in the long-term memory. The channel is created for native speakers to help them learn German and Literature (as native), Physics, Mathematics and other subjects. For this reason, the tempo of the author’s speech is fast enough, which complicates the use of materials (in any case at the initial stage and for self-study). However, the expressiveness of graphic illustrations and the non-standard creative approach to the giving complex teaching material make the channel as a valuable source of positive experience for teachers.

Despite the enormous amount of educational YouTube channels, it is difficult sometimes to find “your own channel” – the one that offers comprehensive, competent answers to relevant issues regarding a wide variety of linguistic aspects and promotes the development of speech and meta-language competencies. Before advising a specific video or channel to students, you should critically treat content, format, and the author’s professionalism. Three next channels were created by YouTube bloggers who not only studied German as a specialty for a long time, but also have many years of experience in teaching it.

The “Deutsch mit Marija” channel may be useful, first of all, for those who are preparing to pass a language exam, in particular TELC. The author herself is one of the company’s examiners (telc GmbH) [35] and has a great practical experience in pre-test candidate training. A series of videos was created in the form of tips on how to avoid typical mistakes while passing the exam and to what features of each type of task should attention be paid to. At the following links [36, 37], for example, we find videos that provide specific recommendations for the successful doing the “Image Description” task. The description skills are necessary for productive communication in real life and are checked not only during the preparation of the above exam. The method of image description is successfully used in Practical classes of a foreign language. In particular, it is the basis for card games that are equally effective at the initial (for the acquisition of the new vocabulary), as well as at subsequent stages of language learning (deploying the speech situation, creating a story / dialogue with the help of the image). Among other things, the author explains what is the difference between doing the “Description” task at the level A1 / A2 and at higher levels, beginning with B / 1; what is the principle of the transfer, according to which the image should be described, in order to demonstrate a good level of language proficiency; how to make the best use of visual information to ensure a productive and informative process of communication; how to make a logical transition from the real image to the situations associated with it, etc. That is why such videos should be used not only while preparing for language tests, but also at Practical Course of German Language as a means of improving communicative competences of students.

In the channel playlists, you can find videos that are dedicated to the enrichment of the vocabulary (Wortschatz). Some of them explain the meaning of constant figures of speech or cliché and contain recommendations on the practicability of using them in speech. Some of them highlight semantic and stylistic features of cognate verbs or nouns. Other video groups are aimed to help you learn grammar and expand your country studying competence. The description of different life situations, seemingly, is devoid of didactic loading, becomes a valuable source of information for those who learn the language in the absence of the possibility of constant communication with its native speakers, who are in modern realities of Germany or another German-speaking country.

Considering information given above, let us note that the author of the next channel has developed a unique method of flooding in a foreign environment. Peter Heinrich, a teacher of German language from Austria, has engaged all his family to create nominal YouTube channel [38]. Based on the fact that “most of those who learn German have little access to authentic everyday language and culture”, over 120 videos were made within the framework of the online family project (ONLINE-Gastfamilie), which show the actual everyday life of an ordinary German family: family holidays, traditions, travelling, problematic home situations, typical working days, etc. Video materials are accompanied by vocabulary, which shows the

key communicative structures and reveals important cultural aspects. With a wide range of suggested topics, the training videos can be easily adapted to the tasks of the curriculum of Practical Course of German Language. However, the situation may be somewhat complicated by the fact that not all videos and teaching materials are available on YouTube, but there are more than enough to “catapult your German language from theoretical grammar to active understanding and speaking and make a leap into German culture” [39].

Among the positive achievements of the GermanSkills.com channel, it has to be noted the provided methodological recommendations for the development of pronunciation skills. The proposed exercises, for example [40], brought tangible results in the formation of the correct articulation of one of the most difficult sounds in German language for Ukrainian students, – pronounced in the French manner [r].

The practical application for materials, which appears within the framework of 30 Days Challenge, has also been found at Practical Course of German Language lessons. 30 TageChallenge is dedicated to the problems of learning German language: how to speak correctly and quickly, how to use multimedia to learn language, how to master different types of speech activity, how to avoid mistakes while learning new vocabulary, why there is a fear of speaking in foreign languages, etc. [41]. Students were asked to register as the project participant and to join a peculiar thirty-day marathon. Depending on the level of language proficiency, the participants received an e-mail daily task – the theme of the day from which they had to speak by recording an audio message. The predicted audio format of the answer helped many to overcome the fear of speaking aloud, and the ability to listen to the messages of other participants and discuss them contributed to the activation of speech skills. Several reports by the author of the channel on the issues of challenge were offered for individual extra-audition listening to students who did not join the experiment, which caused an active reflection of the latter.

3.2. Use of alternative YouTube resources for teaching and learning German

Distance learning as a form of organization of the educational process is extremely relevant during quarantine activities. Most educational institutions have switched to online mode and use various resources to do so, which allow both synchronous and asynchronous communication with their students. The use of such resources in independent work is especially effective, because it allows to satisfy the interests of students (they choose the time, the forms, the materials that are convenient and interesting to them), on the one hand, and fill the educational space with educational materials. which are diverse in nature, sometimes offer alternative views on the problem and encourage its critical reflection with the subsequent formation of their own opinion, on the other.

One of such resources is YouTube channels, because they offer not only purely educational materials for learning German (or another foreign language, because these platforms also offer materials for learning other foreign languages), which was analyzed in the previous section, but directly are related to various disciplines in both general and higher education. Obviously, YouTube uploads and stores materials that, regardless of their purpose at the time of creation and placement on the platform, can be used to teach foreign languages, if they are properly prepared.

All these materials can be divided into several groups: materials that include educational con-

tent of different disciplines (geography, biology, physics, history, literature, etc.); informational videos and blogs about interesting facts, events, regions, prominent people, politicians, other information, mainly of an advertising nature; documentaries, popular science short and feature films; feature films and TV series on various topics.

One of the positives of this kind of material is that YouTube presents materials from all 4 groups in several languages, so the content is multilingual and allows you to work with sources that cover the same issue in different languages. This possibility is especially relevant in light of Companion Volume of the Common European Reference for Languages, where mediation is considered as one of the competencies with an appropriate description for each level of language proficiency from pre-A1 to C1. This concept was introduced by authors of Common European Framework of reference for language: learning, teaching and assessment in 2.1.3 – Language activities we can read the following: “The language learner/user’s communicative language competence is activated in the performance of the various language activities, involving reception, production, interaction or mediation (in particular interpreting or translating). Each of these types of activity is possible in relation to texts in oral or written form, or both” [42, p. 23]. Mediation is one of the types of interaction and cannot be limited only to it, and therefore further in the text the authors specify their understanding of mediation, but through “mediative types” of speech activity, which “make communication possible between persons who are unable, for whatever reason, to communicate with each other directly” [42, p. 23]. These include: translation or interpretation, a paraphrase, summary or record, (re)formulation of a source text.

In addition, paragraph 4.4.4 Communicative and languages activities and strategies take into account the communicative actions that fall under the interpretation of “mediation”, because among the examples of mediation activities, the authors call primarily oral and written translation, abstracting and translation of texts in a language understandable to the third speaker. It is emphasized that in mediation the speaker do not express his / her own thoughts but “is acting as a channel of communication (often, but not necessarily, in different languages) between two or more persons who for one reason or another cannot communicate directly” [42, p. 66].

In fact, CEFR understands mediation as translation, as evidenced by explanations of oral (simultaneous, consecutive, informal translation) and written (exact (contracts, agreements), literary (works), transfer of the main content (newspaper, magazine articles), translation (specialized texts for non-professionals) mediation [42, p. 66].

The modern version of CEFR Companion Volume with New Descriptors [43] uses the term “mediation”, which is much broader in scope, as it is not limited to the translation and transmission of the main content without taking into account the opinion of the user who performs mediation, but includes those communicative activities that were not considered before. “In mediation, the user/learner acts as a social agent who creates bridges and helps to construct or convey meaning, sometimes within the same language, sometimes from one language to another (cross-linguistic mediation).

The focus is on the role of language in processes like creating the space and conditions for communicating and/or learning, collaborating to construct new meaning, encouraging others to construct or understand new meaning, and passing on new information in an appropriate form. The context can be social, pedagogic, cultural, linguistic or professional” [44, p. 103]. The Companion Volume considers at least three aspects of the concept of “mediation” as a descriptor

and the main activities, which are described in CEFR 2018 and shown at figure 1.

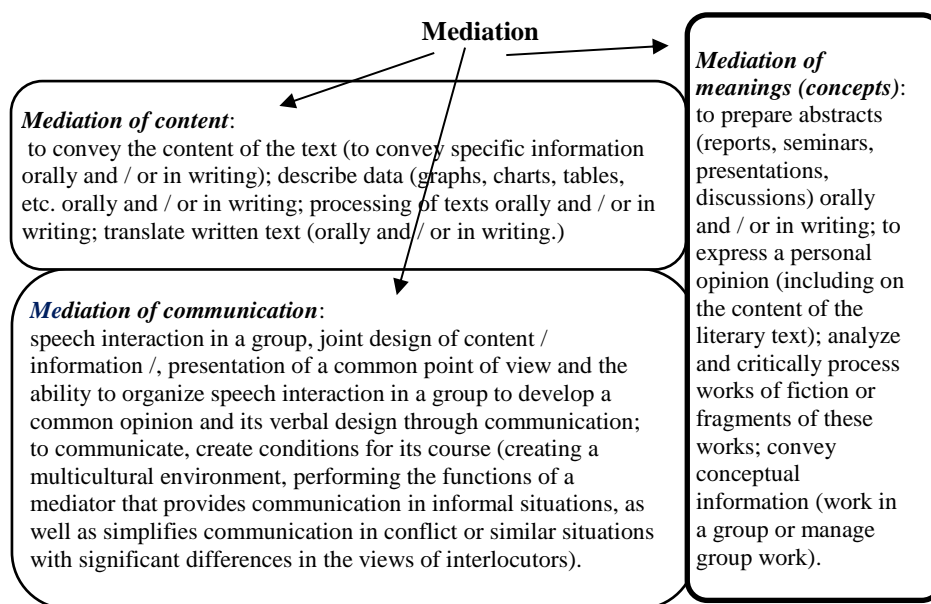


Figure 1: Three aspects of concept of “mediation” and their main activities [44, pp. 109–123].

These actions can be developed by the use of existing YouTube content.

We will analyze the available context of resources posted on YouTube, that can be used in the process of teaching German (as the first and/or the second language) for future teachers. We consider it advisable to observe resources according to the nature of the offered material, after all it is decisive at the didactic stage.

The first group includes educational materials that are not directly related to foreign language teaching, but contain information related to those topics that are included in the program and are studied in practical German course as the first or the second language, or reveal the content of particular modules or blocks of other disciplines of the educational program, such as the history of the German language, literature, stylistics or intercultural communication. The vast majority of such materials are video clips from 3 to 15 minutes, that offer basic information about the essence of concepts, their key features, peculiarities, differences from other similar phenomena and more in an accessible and understandable form. Such information is provided in the form of a lecture given by a teacher, a presentation voiced by a moderator, a story accompanied by fragments of animated or documentary films, comments of a schematic representation of processes, and so on. We consider it possible to illustrate different approaches to the presentation of educational content on the example of the course “History of German Literature”, namely the theme “Baroque”, because this literary era has certain features in the European context.

The second group includes informational videos and blogs about interesting facts, events, regions, outstanding people, politicians, that contain other information, often of advertising nature. This content is not educational but can be used in the educational process for different educational purposes and in different ways. The main advantage of such content is that

firstly, the duration of video clips is up to 10-15 minutes and commercials last from 1 to 3 minutes; they contain condensed information that is easy to remember because it is supported by graphic images; the same information can be offered in different languages, that encourages the implementation of mediation. The use of such material is especially effective when design work is being done. For example, within the framework of the project “Deutsche Spuren in der Ukraine” [45] students were asked to do a number of tasks using the YouTube resource, the fragment of one of them is offered below.

Arbeitsblatt 8

Aufgabe 1. Sehen sie sich den Kurzfilm über das Leben der Deutschen in Transkarpatien: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OarTBeBi1DI>

Während des Sehens notieren Sie sich Informationen, die Sie brauchen, um die Fragen zu beantworten.

1. Wie kamen die Deutschen nach Transkarpatien?
2. Wie leben die Deutschen in Transkarpatien? Haben Sie ihre Organisationen? Womit beschäftigen sie sich?
3. Gibt es Probleme in der Kommunikation mit den Ukrainern?
4. Woher kamen die Deutschen nach Swalawa?
5. Was hat Herr Kmeti über seine Familie erzählt?
6. Was hat Herr Zwanko über die Gruppe „Schwalbach“ erzählt?
7. Haben die Deutschen Kontakte zu deutschen Firmen, Organisationen? Welche Projekte werden realisiert?
8. Deutsche Bäckerei in einem ukrainischen Dorf. Erzählen Sie darüber.
9. Wie fühlen sich die Deutschen in der Ukraine? Was hat Julia erzählt?

Mehr Informationen finden Sie hier: <https://ukrainer.net/nmtsi-ukrainy/>

Aufgabe 2. *Deutsche Unternehmer versuchen in der Ukraine ihr Glück. Sehen Sie sich den Kurzfilm mit dem deutschen Unternehmer und geben Sie den Inhalt wieder: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G4oRsnyc8D4&t=155s>*

Was lockt die Deutschen an? Haben Sie Probleme? Womit? Oder mit wem? Sind die Arbeiter der deutschen Unternehmen in der Ukraine mit ihrer Arbeit zufrieden?

Aufgabe 3. *Schlechte Erfahrung mit der Ukraine. Der Film aus dem Jahr 2014. Sehen Sie den Film und notieren Sie sich Probleme und Schwierigkeiten, die bei den Unternehmern und Firmen auftreten. Was kann man dagegen tun? <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tf7vqeAlRwU>*

Aufgabe 4. *Lesen Sie die Beschreibung des Filmes und dann sehen Sie sich den Kurzfilm an: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9i2M7M5K49Q&t=112s>*

Table 2

“Barock in der deutschen Literaturgeschichte” on YouTube.

A lecture given by a teacher	Barock kurz und einfach erklärt I musstewissen Deutsch A2 Literatur des Barock - Barocke Lyrik	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f-75XBb2ZiI https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnri4WHOpdg
A presentation voiced by a moderator	Barock - Literaturepoche einfach erklärt - Merkmale, Literatur, Geschichte, Vertreter; A4 Literatur des Barock - Barocke Romane	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Khpymxy37mQ , https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNROLtbE6LQ , https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=735QsJh-znw
A story accompanied by fragments of animated or documentary films	Wallenstein und der Krieg - Die Deutschen (Staffel 1) - ZDF	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=za1gJdLzba8
Comments of a schematic representation of processes	Epoche des Barock - (studentische) Einführung DiB	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fc2VgMyyCuE&list=PLAtaQ-5u2Yrhf75wbrFIY_bM4V4ikonPu&index=2
Full-length educational, documentary or feature film	Johann Grimmelshausen Abenteuerlicher Simplicissimus	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8020Ls8b_Q

The third group includes popular science, documentary short or full-length films that are not designed for a specific target group and contain general information. They can be used first of all for the development of receptive competencies, checking the understanding of what is heard, systematization of the received information, its further consolidation and presentation through the target language. Films of the ZDF channel “Die Deutschen” 1 and 2 are extremely interesting, they tell about outstanding people in the context of German history from the Middle Ages to the Present (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F1t6-UyHV8U&list=PLtkAitkGhcGLS1y1xPdxGzBUE45ico2zY>); “Wir Europäer”, (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dax4xCtxPd0&t=71s>), which deals with the history of Europeans; films about culture, life, problems, landscapes, historical monuments, etc.

The fourth group includes feature films and TV series which can be used as a means of developing of both receptive and communicative skills, a source of local lore information because heroes of any film live in conditions close to reality that gives an idea of German lifestyle.

The right choice of material and effective approaches to the use of each case of didactic approaches are the key components in work with YouTube videos.

3.3. Tools for developing educational autonomy on YouTube channel

The use of the content of the above-listed channels contributes to the acquisition of professionally significant knowledge and the formation of the necessary skills for the success of a teacher as a specialist in the labour market. However, current trends in society set new demands for the system of professional training of foreign language teachers. The qualification of a

specialist and his/her demand is also currently determined by the level of his/her readiness for further independent professional development and self-improvement and by the formation of educational competence or autonomy in education.

Autonomy is a component of qualification levels in the National and European Qualifications Framework along with knowledge, skills and competences and is defined as the ability to act independently within one's professional competences. Gaining a certain learning autonomy in language learning will allow developing an individual work schedule according to one's learning type, to set educational tasks following one's own goal, to choose the forms and methods of language learning that are the most effective to achieve this goal.

The project ONCOO, designed by Olaf Müller and Thomas Rohde, provides extensive opportunities for the development of educational autonomy [46]. The tools, that are used on this platform, provide support for both classroom and extracurricular cooperative forms of learning. Cooperative methods are useful at different stages of classes (introductory, main, at the stage of delving into the topic, for reflection and evaluation) and can be used for both beginners and students with good language skills. The tool is easy to use: it does not require registration and entering personal data. A teacher provides access to the worksheet by sending students an access code. ONCOO generally offers five tools to organize the learning process more efficiently and interestingly (figure 2).

Card survey (Kartenabfrage): a teacher initiates a survey on a virtual board, students create message cards and attach them to the virtual board. These cards can be sorted and structured using special tools that are located in the active window in the process of further group work.

Assistant system (Helfer-system): this tool has the form of a namelist involving all the students according to their status ("a participant" or "an assistant"), it helps to create atmosphere of competition and to develop the participants' responsibility for their own and partners' achievements. Using the tool "participants" report that they have coped with their own task and in the following stage they begin to act as "a helper" for those who need support and assistance. Thus, those participants who have difficulty completing the task may ask "helpers" for help.

Training tempo-duet (Lerntempoduet): a teacher can effectively manage individual work and work in pairs: students begin to work individually and report with the help of this tool on the readiness to check the task, a teacher divides students into pairs for further processing of the task and its checking.

Placemat is used to support individual work of students and allows a smooth transition to group discussion. ONCOO makes it possible to set the timing for the first phase (thinking and solving a crossword puzzle): firstly, students give answers individually and a teacher can make them available to all other group members at his/her own discretion. Secondly, there is a search for a common solution in the process of group discussion).

Target (Zielscheibe) creates an opportunity to conduct a joint evaluation and reflection on the work done. With the help of this tool, a virtual target is created, which presents various aspects of assessment, and students make their assessments individually using a virtual dart.

The web tool Twine (webtool) is available on YouTube and can be useful for the development of future teachers autonomy in education [47, 48].

It is designed to create interactive texts and can be used both by teachers to create textbooks – tutorials and other materials for independent work, and by students to develop their methodological competence, developing their own learning materials: games, creative interactive

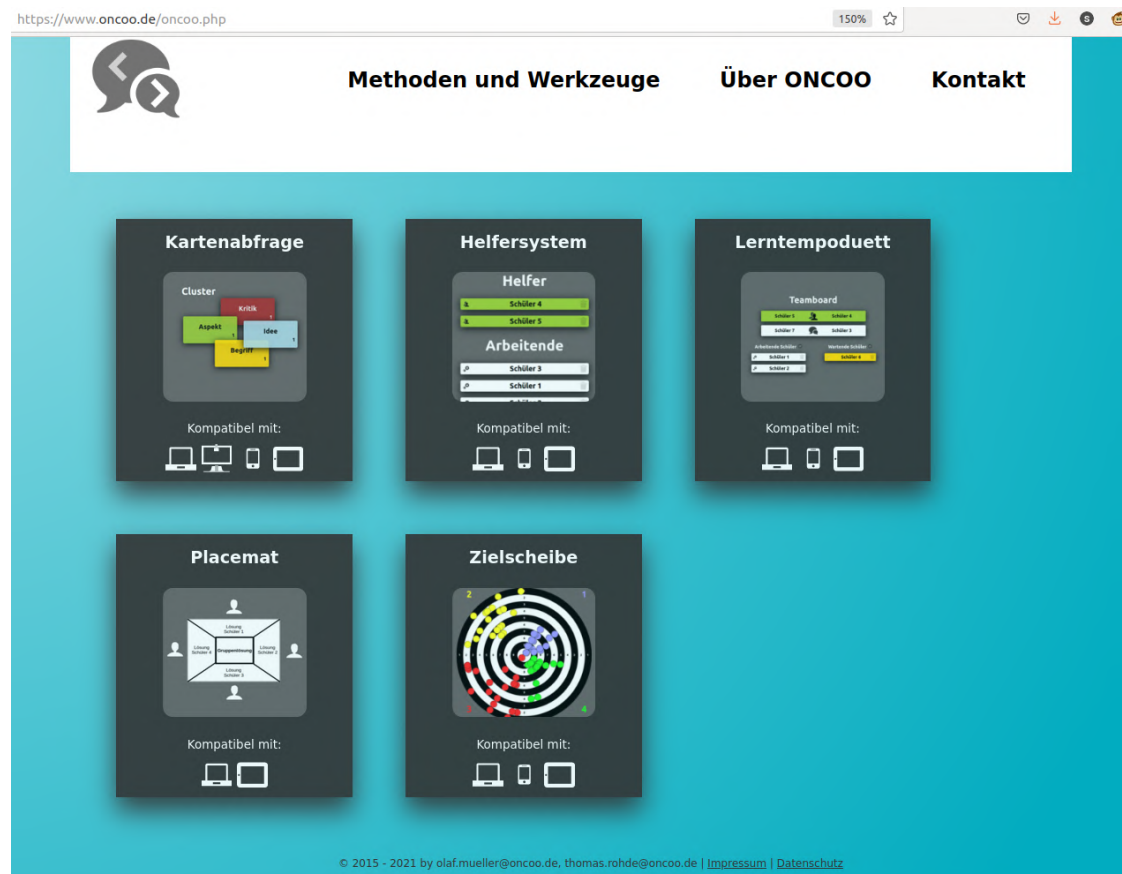


Figure 2: ONCOO tools [43].

stories, etc. If you want to create your own interactive story (Twine) or hypertext you need to go through a few simple procedures: add individual snippets of history, connect them using links, select “stylesheet” in the menu and design appearance of the story with available options, choose the menu “als Datei veröffentlichen”, download and share with the group. You can send this file by email or any messenger. Stories are designed in such a way that a reader must choose from the text one of several options for the development of events, creating from the proposed material his/her own story. In this way, a teacher gets an opportunity to conduct a group discussion after a stage of individual work, and to encourage students to actively cooperate, comparing different versions of stories.

H5P is an interesting, useful and at the same time accessible of all types of devices (computers, tablets, smartphones) for creating interactive educational content. Content can be created directly in the browser. It is effortless to work with this tool, and it does not require special skills in working with ICT. A large amount of different content is available on H5P [49] page:

- Audio Recorder (for creating an audio recording);
- Advent Calendar (for creating an advent calendar);

Table 3

Content characteristics and some recommendations toward using YouTube channels.

Channel / Level	Kind of educational material	Subject / additional information	Resource	Scope of use
Deutsche Welle / A1 – C1	video clips	casual situations, intercultural differences	interactive tasks, forum	classwork, homework
Learn German / A1 – C1	video clips	various subjects, news of culture and science	subtitles in English, full text, exercises, explanations	home reading
Slow German / A1 – B1	audio	everyday situations, social problems, country studies	full text, slow speech	classwork, homework, listening
Deutsch lernen durch hören / A1 – C1	training dialogs, video clips, songs	everyday topics, country studies	exam format, task keys	classwork, homework
Deutsch mit Marija / A1 – C1	video clips	everyday topics, country studies	tasks, grammar- and vocabulary-training	classwork, homework
Materials with learning content	learn- video	various subjects, news of culture and science	information to various subjects; <i>tasks to be prepared</i>	homework, project
Informational videos and blogs about interesting facts, events, regions, prominent people, politicians, other information, mainly of an advertising nature	video	various subjects, news of culture and science; casual situations, intercultural differences, country studies	general information to various subjects; <i>tasks to be prepared</i>	homework, project
Documentaries, popular science short and feature films	video	various subjects, news of culture and science; intercultural differences, country studies	general or specific information to various subjects; <i>tasks to be prepared</i>	homework, project
Feature films and TV series on various topics	video	casual situations, intercultural differences, country studies	features of everyday life, country studies; <i>tasks to be prepared</i>	homework, project

- Dialog Cards (for creating text-based turning cards);
- Dictation (for creating a dictation with instant feedback);
- Essay (for creating an essay with instant feedback) and many others.

Consider as an example Advent Calendar: a teacher independently fills the calendar with pictures, links, videos, texts focusing on the objectives of his/her training course. There are videos on YouTube that guide teachers on the methodological principles of using such tools and creating their own modern interesting and motivating learning material [50, 51].

Specialized publishers of educational and methodical literature, which organize methodical

Table 4

The logical framework for the development of linguistic and general competences by using YouTube channels.

Channel / Level	speaking competence	listening competence	reading competence	writing competence	cross-cultural competence	methodical competence	learning autonomy	general competences
Deutsche Welle / A1 – C1		*	*		*		*	*
Learn German / A1 – C1	*	*	*	*			*	*
Slow German / A1 – B1		*	*		*		*	*
Deutsch lernen durch hören / A1 – C1		*					*	*
Deutsch mit Marija / A1 – C1	*	*	*	*			*	*
Informational videos and blogs	*	*		*	*		*	*
Documentaries, popular science short and feature films		*			*		*	*
Feature films and TV series on various topics	*	*			*		*	*
ONCOO	*		*	*		*	*	*
Twine	*		*	*		*	*	*
H5P	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
Future-Teach		*				*	*	*

webinars, also help teachers to develop independently their methodological competence and improve professionally. Online webinars later become public on YouTube. For example, the well-known publishing house Klett publishes numerous digital learning webinars, reviews of textbooks with guidelines for their use and much more on its channel [52].

Support for online classes is offered by the YouTube channel Future-Teach [53]. There are practical tips for using Microsoft Teams für Office 365 for educational purposes, tips for creating online surveys and quizzes, using various digital Apps and Tools, Skype and Zoom – conferences that promote the educational students' autonomy and methodological competence of (future) teachers.

4. Conclusions and future work

We have shown that YouTube channels created by professional and amateur authors can be used as supplementary teaching materials in class and outside for students who learn German. The use of these materials has a positive impact on: creating a dynamic learning environment; increasing the motivation of students' learning and cognitive activity by immersing them in the linguistic environment through authentic videos; optimizing individual work aimed at deepening or consolidating knowledge on specific topics, provided that there is professional monitoring and feedback. The use of ICT also creates new opportunities for teachers, but requires a careful and

responsible approach to achieve the goals and objectives of the curriculum. The integration of open information sources into the educational process in higher education institutions requires a rigorous selection and a creative didactic adaptation (in particular, adding training activities aligned with the purpose of each practical lesson) of the available materials. However, the question of whether a certain level of language proficiency can be attained solely based on these sources remains open. This calls for further empirical research.

We have summarized the content features and some tips for using YouTube channels in table 3.

We have also explored the potential of expanding the use of educational videos, which are provided as additional tools for teaching foreign languages on video hosting, on the condition that they are pre-adapted to the requirements of the educational programs. We have presented the possibilities of developing certain competencies by using the YouTube channels mentioned above in table 4.

Therefore, we suggest that it is worthwhile to master the methodological techniques of introducing them into the training process of pedagogical students in higher education institutions and encouraging them to create their own educational videos that are suitable for work in class and outside.

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