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Role of technology in foreign language teaching

The article deals with a new look at teaching foreign languages with technology (tools that help students become fluent). It highlights different methodologies with instructional technologies that promise to motivate learners and to respond effectively to their needs.

Teaching foreign languages with technology.

In recent years, technology has been used to both assist and enhance language learning. Teachers have incorporated various forms of technology to support their teaching and engage students in the learning process. Some technology tools enable teachers to differentiate instruction and adapt classroom activities and homework assignments, thus enhancing the language learning experience. Distance learning programs can enable language educators to expand language-learning opportunities to all students, regardless of where they live, the human and material resources available to them, or their language background and needs [1].

It is clear that information and communication technology in the form of e-learning and the Internet have presented additional benefits to the learning environment as they enable the integration of virtually unlimited multimedia learning materials from external sources into the curriculum and make them available to students at any location in the world (distance education) where there is a computer, mobile phone or tablet device with Internet access [3].

Multimedia technology is considered to be information technology training that integrates audiovisual information in several media (text, video, audio, graphics, animation, etc.). This implements interactive dialogue with user systems and various forms of self-employment. The use of multimedia technology in the learning process allows for improvements in the process of combination of traditional and innovative forms and methods of education; implementation of training, information, games, modeling, design and analysis functions; performance of such general didactic principles as visibility and accessibility; feasibility of systematic transition from education to self-education; a positive emotional background for training; and linking theory to practice. In addition, multimedia technology is supported by multimedia programs, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and a special information educational environment created for holistic knowledge of the world in the context of computer-aided design and modeling [4].

It should be noted that multimedia technology acts as a special intellectual activity, which means it has a number of advantages compared with other information technology training:

1. The pedagogy means continuous improvement of content and methods of education in modern conditions.
2. Provides opportunities to identify and support students with linguistic abilities.
3. Represents the basis of distance learning.

4. Provides access to best practices in education and training of the general public through the educational world of the Internet and an extensive communication network [4].

According to Jumanova L., Tulegenova M. (2015), along with positive aspects, there are some negative trends affecting the mass creation and implementation of multimedia technology in the learning process. These include :

1. Lack of ability of existing education systems to make active use of multimedia technology, and to integrate it into the educational process and its organization.
2. Lack of qualified developers.
3. Lack of a developed methodology of multimedia technology.
4. Lack of financial resources for the creation and widespread adoption of multimedia technology.
5. The device is not designed evaluation [4].

In order to introduce multimedia technology in the learning process, it is first necessary to create conditions for sound pedagogical and methodological application of multimedia technology. The integration of the Internet in education and, in particular, its use in the teaching of foreign languages, is now quite relevant.

The use of technology should never be the goal in and of itself, but rather one tool for helping language learners to use the target language in culturally appropriate ways to accomplish authentic tasks. Further, all language learning opportunities whether provided through technology or in a traditional classroom setting, should be standards-based and help develop students' proficiency in the target language through interactive, meaningful, and cognitively engaging learning experiences, facilitated by a qualified language teacher [1]. According to Al-Mahrooqi R., Troudi S. (2014), technology use reduces teacher-centeredness, it is capable of reducing student language learning anxiety as it gives them the chance to practice language comfortably without being embarrassed of making mistakes [3].

Technology lends itself very well to personalised and independent learning where students can work at their own pace, complete interactive exercises rigorously in class or at home and receive immediate feedback. Gaining points for their efforts and being able to compare their scores with their classmates is motivating for them too and adds an element of engaging gamification to their learning.

For many teachers learning vocabulary is an essential and effective way of memorising and embedding words, phrases and making sound spelling links. Students and teachers can search for existing lists and easily create their own [2].

Rehearsing, recording and editing spoken work digitally allows students to improve their pronunciation, boost their confidence, extend their speaking and listen back as many times as they like. They can also produce a script individually or collaboratively through a Google doc and import their text into an online teleprompter like Cue Prompter or the Visioprompt app so they can record their audio while it scrolls up the screen using Audacity or Voice Record Pro [2].

Video is another powerful vehicle in and out of the languages classroom. Making videos draws upon multiple intelligences, promotes creativity and fosters collaboration. The process gives students ownership of their work which increases engagement. Students can produce short films in the target language, create animations using apps. Using video to flip the classroom is another possibility where

learners access the lesson content they would normally learn in class, at home which frees up more class time for practising and accessing higher-order thinking skills [2].

Recommended suggestions for teachers in teaching foreign languages with technology:

1. Lead by example and introduce some of the easier tools or apps to begin with to boost confidence and then share outcomes generated through their use.
2. Team-teach a lesson incorporating technology and afterwards discuss the successes and challenges.
3. Offer in-house mentoring sessions at lunchtime, after university or during professional development days.
4. Nominate student digital leaders who can troubleshoot issues and offer support in class.
5. Propose having technology as a performance management target [2].

The technology mediates the process, getting language out there and giving feedback that shows whether someone has or hasn't understood what you have said. The application of computer technologies in language instruction provides a student-centred learning environment. It enables teachers to vary lesson presentation styles to motivate students of varying interests, provides learning opportunities outside the classroom.

References

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