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MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING AND LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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The rapid development of information technology in today's world society is undoubtedly entailed the automation and computerization of the learning process. At present one of the most popular and advanced information technology tool used in the non-native speaking classroom is multimedia. This article tries to consider advantages and disadvantages of using multimedia technologies in the process of teaching and learning foreign languages.

Key words: multimedia, technique, technology, teaching method, means, quality.

Traditionally foreign language teachers use a great variety of teaching methods, techniques and means in the classroom for increasing effectiveness of the teaching and learning processes. In the modern world due to the rapid development of information society teachers have new opportunities and advanced technical means for realizing their professional goals. Lots of teachers believe that new multimedia technology should be necessarily involved into teaching and learning processes and replace the traditional teaching methods. This paper doesn't claim that traditional teaching manners are bad. It is an attempt to realize advantages and disadvantages of using modern multimedia means in education and the way of combining both traditional and modern educational technologies and techniques.

Multimedia means several different ways of giving information using sound, pictures and films in addition to the text material. Multimedia is composed of various components: text, graphics, animation, sound and video. The components should be used in an integrated way [1].

Is it so essential to use multimedia? Teachers and professors believe that there is a certain necessity of using multimedia in English teaching and learning processes which is determined by:

1) The necessity of development of modern educational technology.

Modern educational technology is a combination of modern education and modern technology. The development of modern educational technology not only promotes the development of educational methods and means, but also promotes the development of educational thinking and model. Only multimedia teaching can develop and improve the modern education technology well.

2) The need of quality education.

There is no doubt, with the global economic development and strong social competition educational establishments pay much attention to the quality of education. Multimedia is one of the ways to promote the development of quality education. It can enable students to be involved in a variety of sensory organ in the learning process and stimulate the students in the corresponding cortical function area. This stimulation is favor of understanding and memorizing knowledge, produces better learning outcomes, and improves classroom efficiency, thus breaking the traditional English teaching. Multimedia English teaching provides a good educational platform and adds vigor for quality education, enabling students to change and update their thinking from the traditional teaching, thereby enhancing the quality of all aspects.

3) The Need of Students' Cognitive Mental.

It is obviously that the visual organs are the most important informed organs of human. Under the present circumstances, only the multimedia teaching system can fully mobilize the students' audio-visual and other sensory organs, and thus get the best of the cognitive effect. Therefore, using multimedia teaching is very necessary, especially in English teaching; only effective co-ordination of multimedia can better complete the teaching task [1].

As the multimedia technology becomes more available for teachers and pupils, it happens appropriate that the language teachers should integrate it into their lessons to take full advantages of technology to teach English in the non-native speaking countries. The *advantages* are the following:

1) Multimedia motivates students to learn English.

Multimedia technology motivates the students to learn English quickly and effectively. It makes an easy access to information regarding the culture of the target language. Multimedia technology creates a real-life or native speaking country context for English language teaching, which greatly cultivates students' interest and motivation in learning the language.

2) Multimedia develops students' communicative competence.

Multimedia technology has been a great help to integrate teaching and learning and make students active recipients of knowledge. The teachers' instructions lead to the students' thought patterns and motivate the students' emotions. It creates a positive environment for the classroom activities such as group discussion, subject discussion and debates, which can offer more opportunities for communication among students and between teachers and students.

3) Multimedia widens students' knowledge about the culture of English.

The use of multimedia technology offers the students with more information than textbooks, and helps them to be familiar with cultural backgrounds and real-life language materials, which can attract the students to learning.

4) Multimedia improves teaching efficiency.

In large classes, it is difficult for the students to have speaking communication, but the utilization of multi-media sound laboratory materializes the face-to-face teaching. The traditional teaching techniques only emphasize on teachers' instructions and provide limited information to the students. But multimedia technology goes beyond time and space, and creates more real-life environment for English teaching. It stimulates students' initiatives and economizes class time, providing more information to the students.

5) Multimedia provides opportunities for English teaching outside the classroom.

Multimedia technology provides opportunities to have English teaching not only within the classroom situations, but also outside them. Teaching should be handled by the teachers but it should be student-centered, which is one of the principles of good language teaching. In such circumstances, the students can take the advantage of multimedia technology, contacting the teachers through Internet and having their problems resolved thereby [2].

Despite the following advantages experienced teachers distinguish several *disadvantages* of the technology. Among them are the following:

1) Emphasis on the supplementary of effective teaching.

The use of multimedia technology should be a supplementary tool for English language teaching. If the teachers are totally dependent on multimedia devices during their teaching, they may turn into slaves to multimedia technology and cannot play the key role as a facilitator to the students.

2) Lack of communication between teachers and students.

It is important that there should be a lot of communicative activities in the language classrooms. The teacher should teach the students on how to pronounce certain words, to comprehend the sentences, to improve thought patterns and to express what they have learned. Though the use of multimedia technology in the language classrooms enhances the interest of the students through audio, visual and textual effects upon the students, it lacks in-

teraction among the students and between teachers and students. The sound and image of multimedia technology affect the students' initiative to think and speak. The English language class turns into a show case and the students are considered only as viewers rather than the active participants in the classroom.

3) Loss of students' logical thinking.

The use of multimedia technology in teaching makes the students understand the content easily, but their abstract thinking would be restricted and thereby their logical thinking would be faded away. Nowadays, the diminishing process of acquiring knowledge has been the major concern for today's students. Because textual words are replaced by sound and image, and handwriting is replaced by keyboard input.

4) Expensive way of conducting language classes.

Using multimedia technology in English language teaching is an expensive way of conducting language classes, which may not be fulfilled. Over time, it tends to result in higher expenses though it will help create more effective education. The expenses usually entail hardware, software, staffing, and training for at least one networked computer laboratory where teachers and students can come and use it. It is often the case in poorly-funded language classes that the hardware itself comes in through a one-time grant, with little funding left over for software, staff training and maintenance [2].

So, multimedia technology and traditional teaching technologies and techniques go side by side with each other. Still lots of teachers feel insecure about using multimedia means; some of them still have no interest and desire to teach foreign languages with technologies. European and Asian specialists in teaching foreign languages give several recommendations dealing with the above mentioned problem:

1) Teachers should play the leading role in teaching.

The teachers should play the leading role even if they use multimedia technology. Their position should not be replaced by the computers and other devices. Multimedia technology in spite of its extraordinary effects in teaching should be an assisting tool for the teachers. So the teachers should determine whether to adopt multimedia technology in English language teaching or not.

2) Teachers should not consider the computer screen as a blackboard or whiteboard.

It is recommended to use the blackboard or whiteboard very often in order to bring the traditional and modern teaching methods together. It is wrong to consider the computer screen as the blackboard or whiteboard as some teachers do. So they should use the blackboard or whiteboard to write questions raised by the students. In this way, the teachers can create a real-life context for effective teaching.

3) Teachers should encourage students to use their own mind and speak more.

One of the features of using multimedia technology is to cause audio and visual effects that lively display the content of textual materials. But only displaying the content of texts through the PowerPoint presentations cannot stimulate the students thinking. In the English communication situations, the teachers have to encourage the students to use their own mind and speak more.

4) Teachers should use all possible teaching aids and techniques.

It should be taken into consideration that multimedia technology cannot be replaced by many teaching methods. The functions of other traditional forms of teaching instruments are equally important in English language teaching though multimedia technology has its unique advantages in teaching. Thus, the language teachers are supposed to choose from the appropriate teaching instruments according to the requirements of the teaching context. So, in the non-native English speaking countries, the teachers should integrate multimedia technology

with the traditional teaching tools as they can play an important part in the successful English language teaching.

5) Teachers should not overuse multimedia technology.

It is wrong to believe that the utilization of multimedia technology would have a magic to English language teaching. If multimedia technology is utilized properly in teaching, without being overused, the students can be able to make full use of listening and speaking materials and develop their overall language skills. So the language teachers should introduce both traditional teaching instruments and multimedia technology to English language teaching so that the students can have the overall training on their listening, speaking, reading and writing skills [2].

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ABOUT THE ELECTIVE COURSES ON “TRANSPORT TECHNOLOGIES” BACHELOR LEARNING

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The paper reveals the approaches associated with special disciplines teaching. The article is based on experience and in the context of a selective course “Intermodal transportation” (“Maritime Transportation” Dpt. of Odesa National Maritime University, Ukraine) and applies to both specific and general implementation points of the variable part of the Curriculum.

Keywords: transport technologies, electives, ECTS, bachelor degree, Curriculum.

In accordance with [1], [2] the total volume for elective courses at Ukrainian universities today must be not less than 25 % of the total ECTS credit's volume. So, the bachelor's choice of course “Intermodal transportation” in the amount of 4 ECTS credits was invited to select for bachelors in the context of the of integrated delivery systems development and Containerization Era.

The proposed course is completing for the specialist forming (bachelor degree) and plays a vital role in terms of the educational training quality in the Transport Sector. Experience in the implementation of the new standards is unique for Ukrainian students, as well as for the teaching staff.

According to the draft of the Standard of Higher Education [3], bachelors in “Transport Technologies” need to learn the types of skills, included in *National* classificatory of Ukraine ДК 003:2010. National Standard, based on “International Standard Classification of Occupations” [4]. It's relates bachelors to “Technicians and associate professionals” group.

Unfortunately, neither the National nor the International Standard does not give a clear idea regarding the profession's nature, specific abilities and skills. This uncertainty and lack of experience gives rise to issues such:

1. Lack of awareness of students about the content of Selective Course and the non-acquaintance regarding the teaching staff (their names, fields of research, degrees, publications). Self-selection of academic disciplines theoretically contributes to student's motivating through the educational programs, which are as close as possible to the individual abilities and closely match the personal career trend. In fact, in a lack of awareness of the course content, students choosing the courses that require minimal effort.

2. Failure to understand the functions of teaching and teaching methods of selective courses. The essence of their own choice is revealed in the concept of "Person-centered