

СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ТЕХНОЛОГИИ В ПРЕПОДАВАНИИ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ

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The approach used for teaching foreign languages in the past was to provide the students with enough vocabulary and grammar so that they could read a language. Speaking the language was not as important as reading it. The current philosophy in language instruction emphasises speaking over reading. Today to meet this end every effort is made to engage the students in more productive activities, resulting in greater use of communication skills. A way to do this is to incorporate more technology in the foreign language classroom.

Since the appearance of using computers in teaching foreign languages, people have shifted the focus from pedagogics to technology. Computer technology has been regarded as synonymous with better language pedagogics and more efficient language teaching and learning. However, having the latest language teaching computer technology is not the universal method for language teaching pedagogics. Integrating computer technology into language teaching efficiently requires “a combined knowledge of foreign language pedagogy, teaching experience and some computer literacy” [1, p. 222]. Language technologists have been sorting through novel technologies, evaluating various instructional potentials, researching current educational uses and sharing findings with educators to help design instructional technology that enhances language learning.

The applications of technology in the teaching of foreign languages today fall into three major categories: basic language instruction, reinforcement of language skills and enhancement of the target language. Each of these categories is open to multiple applications of technology. Each of them has available support from computer programs, Web sites and satellite transmissions.

Basic language instruction deals with the acquisition of a new language. Three fundamental modes of delivery exist in using technology to accomplish this. They are: software programs, the Internet and distance learning, using a program of instruction transmitted via satellite. Each of these has special requirements, advantages, disadvantages and potentials.

Reinforcement is the process by which learned material is ingrained to a greater depth. It increases retention of the subject matter. This is especially important in the study of foreign languages, where learning is cumulative. Technology can achieve this goal and focus student attention to a degree often superior to regular classroom instructional techniques.

Enhancement is whatever the teacher does to make the learning more vivid and interesting. It enriches the students' understanding of the culture they are studying. Opportunities for enhancement are exceptionally varied today. They include offerings in art, music, customs, foods, dress styles, geography, history and the political structure of the native countries related to the languages students are studying. They are also available in a software format, through Web sites and via satellite transmissions.

With the arrival of portable audio-video and computing devices, there was great interest expressed by language teachers in exploring their use in language learning.

Let us consider some examples of modern widgets which help us master foreign language.

Computers have video making programs that can be used to create interactive movies to engage students in learning a foreign language. Video making programs, such as Windows Movie Maker and iMovie, can easily import images or video clips from digital camera or camcorder to a computer. Educators can make video clips to teach students pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and culture. The video clips made by the educators can be used repeatedly. Students watch video clips again and again until they have mastered the required language skills. Students can also make video clips to demonstrate what they have learned from a foreign

language. When making a video clip, students can also record their voice to the computer and type subtitles in the video, which will enhance their speaking and writing skills. There are also some free movie making programs, such as Jing Project, Moviestorm and Xtranormal, that can create interactive movies online.

As portable cassette players yielded to iPods and other MP3 players, the new capabilities of the hardware led to enhanced use of audio-based learning such as language podcasts with integrated transcripts [2, p.2].

Language learners can now be exposed to authentic language on current issues in the form of conversations, radio commentary and reports. Additionally, transcripts allow for the specific teaching of grammatical structures and functions necessary to comprehend both specific detail and nuance. As PDAs (personal digital assistants) became more widespread with the advent of the Palm Pilot and its successors, language dictionaries, e-book grammars and flashcard programs began to emerge [2, p.2]. These allowed learners to have greater autonomy over their language learning.

Today students have access to information technologies which provide access to a wide range of contemporary material in the target language and about the target communities. Websites, e-mails, video conferences, podcasts, music and video streaming are a few of the ways in which students today are able to interact with speakers of the language that they study. Technologies have provided enhanced opportunities for such interaction [3, p.56]. Personal devices, smart phones and the like, together with the ever increasing number of applications are ideal for individualized, informal learning. The user can determine which applications to acquire and how they can best use them. As language educators we should encourage and assist the learner autonomy; this enables and provides means for learners to combine formal and informal learning [2, p.8].

When these technologies are used suitably and in the right context, they have the power to complete, enhance and add value to the language learning. Anyway they will never replace the teaching or learning of a language.

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