

## Multimedia Applications in Teaching of Foreign Language

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**Abstract:** This article discusses multimedia applications in teaching of foreign language in higher school, which makes it possible to improve quality and efficiency of training of experts. A sufficiently efficient tool for learning foreign language is multimedia educational software. With regard to teaching of foreign languages web-technologies are applied in three fields: communication, information and publication. Combination of conventional methods and means of education with computer-aided technologies promotes improvement in progress of students and their interest in object language, increases motivation, creates conditions for independent studies and convenient educational environment. These aspects are the most urgent within the first year of education, at departments of correspondent training, where one and the same groups include students with different initial level of competence. The functions of a teacher are supplemented with control of independent studies of students: to monitor psychological state of students, efficiency of step-by-step mastering of educational material and, if required, to adjust programmed actions. Computer can be used at all steps of education: within explanation of new material, reinforcement, repetition, control. The main methodological functions implemented by computer aids are as follows: information, training, control and correction, communication, organization and promotion.

**Key words:** Foreign language • Communication • Didactic • Computer-aided technologies • Multimedia training tools • Presentation • Level of training.

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### INTRODUCTION

State of the art education is associated with intensive application of innovative information systems and educational technologies, application of interactive and media methods of training, including electronic collections, digital educational equipment, internet. Therefore, the strategy of acquisition and distribution of knowledge varies, thus opening wide possibilities for updating of content of education and teaching methods; in addition, the role of a teacher in education also varies. Combination of conventional methods and means of education with computer-aided technologies promotes improvement in progress of students, increases motivation and cognitive activity and promotes creative endeavor of the teacher with regard to didactic innovations [1].

**The Main Part:** In Russia application of computer-aided technologies to education originated in 1980-s, however, capabilities of existing domestic computers were restricted

and more sophisticated Western personal computers became available for education only in late 1980-s--early 1990-s. Herewith, it was the significant technical weakness that made it possible to concentrate the main efforts of teachers on methodic (conceptual) aspects of developed educational materials intended for independent studies using computers. Application of personal computers attracted and attracts with the fact that it supports organization of individual studies of students with various level of knowledge and provides possibility to proper correction of mistakes in order to avoid their overlearning and in the case of correct answer to develop motivation of success by means of prompt feed-back. This is highly important for the first year students, especially of non-linguistic correspondence departments, where one and the same groups include students with different initial level of competence.

It is widely thought that even in ancient times the elements of programmed learning were used by Socrates and Plato. The teaching method, based on cybernetic approach involving activities of a student according to a

predetermined program, within execution of which knowledge is acquired, was proposed initially in 1954 by Prof. Skinner [2]. Crowder [3], Pask [4], Hartley [5], Polat [6] and others made their respective contributions to development of certain foundations of programmed learning.

The programmed learning is a system of methods and aids of training, aimed at independent acquisition of knowledge and skills by students as a result of step-by-step mastering of material. In order to achieve this aim specialized programmed training packages are developed, which can be used by students without direct instructions from a teacher and without time limits, as well as according to individual level of competence. Scientists developed and proposed for implementation into educational process various algorithms of programmed learning: linear algorithm by Skinner, branch algorithm by Crowder, adaptive algorithm by Pask.

At present computer adaptive algorithms are used in the programmed learning. A distinctive feature of this technique, which provides positive effect, is variation of teacher's function in educational process. Now the teacher should only control the process of independent study of a student: to monitor psychological state of a student, efficiency of step-by-step mastering of educational material and, if required, to adjust programmed actions. Algorithms of programmed learning are implemented by computer aids in combination with appropriate learning packages, developed in accordance with the following didactic principles of the programmed learning: succession, availability, consistency, independence.

Recent researches made it possible to propose and to prove a new interpretation of the essence of the programmed learning with regard to learning foreign languages and their theoretical backgrounds. Based on these researches, the structure of multimedia learning program was proposed as a specific learning guidance for foreign language, aimed at independent outside activities of students, the theoretical foundations are based on the main provisions of Russian methods for language training: conscious approach to learning; communicative orientation of education; consideration for influence of native language; consideration for intralingual interference [7].

One of the most important trends of improvement of training in modern higher school is implementation of media forms into education in general and into language learning in particular. Thus, application of recent techniques in language training by teachers of the Chair

of Foreign Languages, North Caucasian Federal University (NCFU), Affiliate in Pyatigorsk makes it possible to improve quality and efficiency of training, to implement differentiated approach to training of students with consideration for their individual peculiarities. Computer-aided tools simplify the process of interactive information exchange between teacher and student. The main purpose of language training in higher school is generation of communicative competence, that is, communication, transfer and perception of information in foreign language [8].

Three regions should be highlighted in application of web-technologies with regard to language learning: communication, information and publication. In terms of didactics the advantage of internet in comparison with conventional training tools is, first of all, availability and relevancy of authentic materials, as well as simplification and acceleration of international communication. As informational system Internet proposes to its users versatility of information and resources, which can be used in training, including language learning [9].

It can be stated for sure that to achieve communicative competence in foreign language in isolation from verbal environment is a complicated problem. Therefore, an important didactic task of teacher is creation of actual and imaginary communicative situations at a foreign language lesson, using various methods and techniques for this aim. In this regard we believe that project oriented methods and cooperation methods, role and pragmatist games, individual creative tasks and discussions are very efficient. Within solution of this problem a vital role is played by technical means of education, which make it possible to provide the most complete and accurate information with regard to a mastered topic, increase visualization of education and promotes aspiration to further improvement of linguistic culture [10].

Of equal importance is the task of introducing of students into cultural values of native speakers of foreign language. Application of authentic materials is very important for such aims: texts, visual aids, audio- and video-records and so on [11].

Personal computer can be used by a teacher for solution of didactic problems during a lesson. Computer can be used at all stages of training process: within rendering of new material, mastering, repetition, control.

We can highlight the main methodical functions, which are implemented by computer aids: information, training, control and correction, communication, organization and encouragement.

Numerous multimedia training programs are available today, of which the teachers of the Chair of Foreign Languages, NCFU, Affiliate in Pyatigorsk have chosen and apply in part as an auxiliary tool within introduction and mastering of lexical and grammatical material the following ones:

- English language learning: Repetitor; Hello, America!; English Gold; Reward; Triple Play Plus! English; English on holidays; Bridge to English; Professor Higgins; English for communication.
- German language learning: Deutsch DeLux; Talk to Me Platinum; Diamond Deutsch; Tell Me More; Talk Now! Deutsch; Lehr- und Übungs-CD-ROM der deutschen Grammatik; Langenscheidt Vokabeltrainer».
- French language learning: Triple Play Plus! French; French in one, two, three; Lang Trainer French; Course de français, French Language.

We recognize that language acquisition via multimedia training programs is very efficient, since each program includes the task, which should be solved, thus creating positive motivation with regard to learning.

Among the teachers of the Chair of Foreign Languages, NCFU, Affiliate in Pyatigorsk of especial popularity is the interactive computer-aided tool by Yu. Golitsynsky: Grammar, Exercise Book. This English grammar exercise book is very intelligible and efficient within lessons with students of full-time and correspondence studies, since each student has a possibility not only in classroom, but also outside to continue mastering of grammar topics, which should be individually repeated and mastered. This expands possibilities of individual approach to language learning in non-linguistic higher school.

However, we believe that application of ready computer-aided training programs in higher school has some disadvantages. It is well known that any training guidebook guarantees achievement of declared result only in the case of scrupulous adherence to methodological concept of the author, which sometimes cannot be accomplished:

- Exact hours for studying material;
- Execution of all exercises in predetermined sequence;
- Obligatory usage of attached audio- and video-materials and so on.

Rather often teachers are forced to alter a learning package according to amount of academic hours allocated for discipline, purposes and targets, established in Federal State Standards for Higher Vocational Education, which can decrease efficiency of working with the package. This refers also to ready multimedia learning programs, which are used in parts by teachers at their discretion. Theoretically, teachers should develop their own learning multimedia packages, which requires steady skills of programming.

One more method of application of computer-aided technologies to intensification of language learning exists: presentation. A teacher develops presentation with consideration for level of training and capabilities of students, thus implementing oriented approach to training. We believe that presentations can be used both at initial and at advanced stage of training. Application of computer presentation in training process makes it possible to intensify mastering of training material by students and to give classes at qualitatively new level, using slide presentations on wall display or on PC for each student instead of conventional blackboard.

The efficiency of influence of training material on students greatly depends on the extent and level of visualization of the material. Presentation can include photos, flowcharts or tables, which additionally increase the influence. Such approach is based significantly on visualization, which leads to better perception of the material. Visual intensity of training material makes it bright and rich, thus promoting intensification of its mastering. Presentation facilitates influence on several types of memory: visual, aural, emotional and, in some cases, motor. If required, this or that stage can be repeated.

Presentation in training process can be used at several stages of a lesson and its essence as visual aids remains unchanged, only its patterns vary depending on final purposes of its usage.

Thus, for instance, the students, specializing in Design specialty at Affiliate in Pyatigorsk, NCFU, prepare individual creative projects aiming at passing of examinations or credits using computer-aided technologies: they arrange presentations, which illustrate their projects and reports in foreign language. This can be implemented both as a collection of masterpieces of a well-known artist, sculptor, couturiere or architect and as their own works in the scope of graphical design, environmental design or fashion design.

Therefore, the training significance of computer-aided telecommunications in education is as follows:

- They promote and simplify exchange of experience of teaching various subjects;
- They increase the interest of students in training process;
- They broaden communication practice of students;
- They facilitate application of new methodological techniques based on comparison of existing knowledge of students with that acquired within communication.

Within comparison of computer-aided training materials and printed guidebooks, audio- and video-courses the following technological and methodological advantages, provided by PC, should be mentioned primarily:

- Individualization of training;
- Operation with vast amounts of information;
- Integrated multisensory influence on various channels of perception based on text, audio, animation, video;
- Unrestricted manipulation with assignments;
- Immediate feedback and others.

However, analysis of the existing software of information technologies in the field of English language teaching has revealed that the considered didactic computer programs are not always adequate to the applied guidebooks and curricula, requirements of State educational standards and level of competence of students. A program, developed with participation of a teacher or completely by a teacher, would be more appropriate with regard to the aforementioned requirements and would promote quality improvement of foreign language teaching. Unfortunately, this is highly problematic at present, since this process requires for more sophisticated qualification of foreign language teacher in the field of programming and operation of programmers is complicated with insufficient knowledge of didactic peculiarities of this discipline.

## CONCLUSION

Application of computer-aided technologies in foreign language teaching obviously increases interest to this subject, enhances motivation, promotes development of self evaluation of students, creates background for independent studies and comfort environment of studies.

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