

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

Khodjayeva Yulduzkhon Alisher Qizi

Bachelor student, Uzbekistan State University of World Languages

Annotation: This article focuses on clarifying the significance of innovative technologies in teaching foreign languages. Several types of up-to-date technologies had been analyzed in order to define their efficiency and importance in language teaching process. The article provides the analysis of innovative technologies as tools for efficient language teaching

Keywords: innovative technologies, lingua-phone cabinet, interactive whiteboard, audio recorder, digital learning platforms, language learning websites, blog

The XXI century is the era of up-to-date technologies. People have already totally surrounded by various hi-techs, so it is impossible to imagine even a day without them. For decades innovative technologies became part of the life. According to a study done by the Council for Research Excellence, the average adult now spends roughly 8.5 hours a day looking at screens. In every sphere the use of technologies simplifies the process of task fulfillment, economizes time and possible costs, increases effectiveness and productivity leading to the stable prosperity.

After the advent of technologies diverse opportunities for learning, working and communicating became open to humanity. In recent years, it became impossible not to notice how day by day the demand for the use of technology in the field of education is increasing. From preschool establishments to higher educational institutions, the main tool that greatly contributes to the constant development of education is technology.

Not so long ago, technology began being used in the area of applied linguistics and foreign language teaching. The utility of technology enables teachers to apply classroom activities and to enhance language learning process. Moreover, new technologies facilitate the easily execution of a task from language being learned.

Currently the list of technologies being utilized in classrooms to ameliorate language learning includes Laptops, Multimedia systems, Audio recorders, Lingua-phone cabinets, Mobile applications, Interactive Whiteboards, Digital Learning Platforms.

According to American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) while technology can play an important role in supporting and enhancing language learning, the effectiveness of any technological tool depends on the knowledge and expertise of the qualified language teacher who manages and facilitates the language learning environment. Therefore, to obtain high results in foreign languages teaching an appropriate technology for each individual or class, in general, should be chosen by teacher taking into account abilities, age and the eligible learning style (Visual, Kinesthetic, Auditory) of each student.

The following educative innovations are widely used in the process of foreign language teaching.

Lingua-phone cabinet. A special class equipped with a complex of sound engineering, audio, video and multimedia tools that allows creating optimal conditions for independent work of learners on mastering the skills of non-native speech.

Modern lingua-phone systems are portative and easy to use which does not require additional training of teacher. In lingua-phone cabinets learners can simultaneously study non-native languages using any programs that allow them to do it and the only thing which should be done is to download necessary program to the computer. Up-to-date lingua-phone cabinets allow:

- to considerably improve perception of study material
- to increase motivation in learning
- to deal with individual, paired and group activities
- to record the work of any student on a tape recorder or teacher's computer for further analyses
- to improve learners listening, speaking skills, pronunciation and enrich vocabulary
- to concentrate on the process of language learning.

Apart from lingua-phone systems another generation of innovative technologies called Interactive Whiteboard has already become an indispensable tool of language teaching.

Interactive Whiteboard can be defined as a touch-sensitive screen that works in conjunction with a projector and a computer. With the help of this tool teacher presents already prepared lesson in electronic version. While demonstrating prepared multimedia presentation or explaining the lesson teacher can overwrite, underline, circle or highlight the elements that he wants to emphasize and draw the attention of learners on these elements. This innovation is effective while explaining grammatical rules and specific language elements which are the basis of any language.

Audio recorder. This type of tools have been introduced and used in a variety of ways in language teaching. By using such kind of tools teachers attempt to provide learners with the opportunities to produce oral output allowing learners to practice and enhance their speaking skills. The utility of this educative innovation provides learners with feedback of teacher on their performance. Sachiko Aoki (2014) holds the view that in recording activities, feedback from teachers and peers seems to have a positive influence on the speaking performance of learners. By recording voice, learners can listen to, edit and assess their own recorded voice and notice weaknesses and mistakes. [1]

Digital Learning platforms. Such kind of digital innovations have significantly changed the process of teaching. Digital Learning Platform is a piece of software designed to assist teacher during the teaching process. The utility of the tool can be beneficial both for learner and teacher. The tool is universal. Learning resources accessible for learners not only in the

classroom, but they can use it whenever they chose, wherever they want. Using the tool learner has access to multimedia materials, virtual conversations and interactive exercises.

The benefits of Digital Learning platforms for teacher are as follows:

- It's extremely creative and completely automated
- It demonstrates a clear view of students progress in language learning
- Planning lessons are a great deal easier
- Give teachers the ability to review which topics are complicated and which topics their students more confident with.

Language learning websites. Another representative of language teaching innovations is language learning websites. José Aldemar Alvarez (2017) defines LLW as “an online environment characterized by offering language learners practice on some or all of the language skills.” [2] After learners have been getting input from authentic sources, teachers may suggest learners to try some guided practice activities provided by websites. The most renowned and reliable language learning websites are Duolingo, FluentU, Rype, Memrise. Each website has its own method of teaching. For example, Duolingo starts by teaching learner the most basic words in the language of his choice, then lesson by lesson it changes the level of words. Duolingo also let learner go through lesson with native speakers to strengthen learning. FluentU teaches new language using videos that have interactive caption. The caption is presented in both learner's native language and the language of his preference. Such kind of websites is essential for developing listening and speaking skills.

Blogs. Nowadays it is hard to find a person who does not use social networking or personal blogs. Blog is a kind of online diary which may refer to either one or more topics. William and Jacobs (2004) write that blogging has “the potential to be a transformational technology for teaching and learning” [3] The use of blogs by teacher as a tool for teaching foreign languages is completely new approach. Blogs run by teacher, can possess multiple functions. Blog assists teacher to encourage learner to develop language skill outside the classroom. Other functions blogs may have in the process of foreign language teaching are as follows:

- motivating language learning
- promoting language awareness
- developing communicative and language competence
- allowing learners freely express themselves using foreign language during online question-answer sessions and/or in an online discussion.

Dieu (2004) contends that blogging gives a learner chance to “maximize focused exposure to language in new situations, peer collaboration, and contact with experts.” [3]

The use of innovative technologies can make the teaching process more meaningful and engaging, developing learner's outlook, creativity and mental abilities. It provides class with free from pressure atmosphere, guarantees better perception of learning material and keeps class in touch with the complex of resources necessary for language learning.

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