USING MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATIONS IN THE ENGLISH LESSONS

ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЕ МУЛЬТИМЕДИЙНЫХ ПРЕЗЕНТАЦИЙ НА УРОКАХ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА

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The article deals with the problem of using multimedia presentations in the English lessons. Effectiveness of teaching is impossible without introducing new forms of organising the studying process. One of the main ways to implement this idea is using multimedia technologies. Using multimedia presentations gives teachers an opportunity to intensify the process of teaching English, to make it more visual and dynamic.

Keywords: multimedia presentation, English lesson, computers, multimedia lesson.

В статье рассматривается проблема использования мультимедийных презентаций на уроках английского языка. Эффективность обучения невозможна без внедрения новых форм организации учебного процесса. Одним из способов осуществления такого подхода являются мультимедийные технологии. Использование мультимедийных презентаций дает учителям возможность сделать обучение английского языка более интенсивным, наглядным и динамичным.

Ключевые слова: мультимедийная презентация, урок английского языка, компьютеры, мультимедийный урок.

Computer applications are now being used in many school disciplines and changing the teaching methodologies throughout the curriculum. With computers and mobile devices becoming prolific in the classrooms, teachers are increasingly gaining greater opportunities in bringing the multimedia resources into the classroom. Teachers might create a presentation to guide student learning, or incorporate a video to illustrate a new concept. Students can tell digital stories, create movies and publish audio as podcasts.

Multimedia presentation is a special interactive technology, the combination of special hardware and software programs that can contain texts, pictures, graphics, slide shows, sound effects, as well as the oral speech accompaniment, movies and animations. Nowadays multimedia presentation is one of the most common and useful means to illustrate the educational material. It provides opportunities of making a learner's interaction with virtual objects or processes of cognition that are reflected on the screen. The use of a multimedia presentation allows creating an informative and visual image of the object. It also contributes to simulating the reality through participation in the processes taking place on the screen.

Multimedia presentations give the teacher an opportunity to visualize static and dynamic information conveniently and effectively, prepare tasks and select educational materials. Depending on how they are used multimedia can provide motivation for learning and can become an alternative to traditional assessment.

In order to create a multimedia presentation teachers may use well-known software tools such as Microsoft PowerPoint, Macromedia Flash, Picasa, Photodex ProShow etc. For example, at the English lessons different presentations may be made according to the theme with the help of computer and overhead projector. In addition, advanced multimedia software can empower educators to design audio-visual narrative themes involving the student's actual participation (learning video games). Adobe Flash offers industry-standard products assisting developers in creating such applications.

With advancements in information technology like multimedia applications and interactive software, teachers can increase literacy and understanding in any subject. Lessons with audio and video components that directly engage students reach more types of learners in comparison with traditional lecture methods of teaching, encouraging more students to participate in class activities and raising their level of understanding. New technology also helps disabled or disadvantaged students participate in subjects they were once unable to join, thanks to assistive programs and devices.

Recently added features have equipped today's presentation software with hypermedia capabilities allowing a more dynamic experience. Through hot spots users can click on hyperlinks to jump to other slides, other presentations, or even websites. Video and sound can be creatively embedded within slides (Roblyer & Doering, 2012).

Roblyer and Doering give three reasons, why teachers should use presentations as a "complex, multipurpose classroom tool" (2012, p. 128):

1. Presentations help teachers organize their thinking on a subject. A teacher must think through what he or she will say and in what order, essentially planning the perfect delivery of a lesson. They also help with sequencing and breaking large concepts into smaller parts. Additionally, the use of multimedia presentation software "provides an avenue by which students can learn through the act of organizing information" (Siegle & Foster, 2000, p. 3).

2. Presentations, when done well, enhance and support what the teacher says, especially when appropriate hypermedia tools like graphics, images, and sound are incorporated. Presentations also engage children having various cognitive learning styles. "Cognitive principles suggest that a coherent blend of verbal-visual material boosts retention of scientific concepts beyond the level attained by verbal summary alone" (Marek & Christopher, 2002, p. 70).

3. Presentations allow students practice collaborative skills, especially through websites like SlideShare or Google Docs presentations. Students can work together online simultaneously.

Researchers have been studying the

presentation technology for years, and they "have looked at its impact on both educational processes and outcomes" (Roblyer & Doering, 2012, p. 128). While students generally respond more positively to the presentation-enhanced instruction, the impact largely depends on how teachers use such tools (Roblyer & Doering, 2012). One study by Siegle and Foster (2000) showed that using multimedia presentations helped boost student achievement scores in biology. Additionally, and these were strong benefits found back in 2000, presentations can help students be active - not passive learners, develop research skills, encourage cooperative learning and problem solving, and engage in more meaningful learning (Siegle & Foster, 2000). Teachers modelling the use of technology for presentation well, also help train students in the application of such technology (Marek & Christopher, 2002). Solid research indicates that teachers should not discount presentations as a potentially effective tool for learning.

The following ideas from Roblyer and Doering (2012) show effective ways to use presentation software:

- presentation of information summaries: when trying to focus student's attention or guide note-taking;

- demonstrations of materials for discussion: electrical circuits, diagrams or types of animals;

- presentation of illustrative problems and solutions: chemistry and mathematical problems;

- practice screens: spelling and vocabulary review, states and capitals, etc.;

- assessment screens: pictures of animals or instruments, essay prompts;

- brief tutorials: reviews of simple concepts like grammar or how-to procedures;

- book reports: teachers can provide templates for students to fill in the missing information;

- students' presentations of project works: a powerful strategy where students create individual or small-group projects and become experts of content by presenting their work to the class later.

Computers activate the teacher's and the student's work, provide the differentiation and individualisation of teaching, develop social and general gift, intensify interdisciplinary relations. Besides, introducing multimedia technologies into the sphere of education makes the teacher's work easier, promotes the student's learning, and improves the effectiveness and quality of the teaching process.

Using the computer helps to create an informational surrounding which promotes the students' interest and curiosity. Nowadays using multimedia presentations in the English lessons is very urgent because they promote the formation of skills and creation of the cooperation atmosphere.

While watching the presentation or after having watched it the teacher has an opportunity to come back to certain slides many times when it is needed, for example, while reviewing the material or while doing exercises. All this gives an opportunity to make the process of teaching better.

The lesson accompanied by a multimedia presentation is very interesting and instructive since multimedia is a modern computer informational technology which can combine text, sound, pictures, videos, graphical pictures and animation. Each of these components has its expressive means and didactical possibilities which make the process of teaching better and more effective.

There are some main capabilities of multimedia presentations in the English lessons:

- promotion of the students' motivation;

- activation of the students' learning activities;

- the teaching process individualisation;

- provision of different forms of information presentation;

- provision of different types of tasks;

- creation of learning environment which provides the students' plunging into the imaginary world, into certain learning and working situations;

- possibility to reproduce any fragment of learning activity.

Presentations used the most frequently are those made with the help of the PowerPoint programme; these include:

- theoretical material presentations;

- presentations for the revision lessons;

- presentations for the thematic control lessons.

Multimedia lessons should have a certain structure:

I. Motivation.

II. The subject and the expected outcome of the lesson.

III. The main part of the lesson which can include: theoretical material, short texts, video, audio, pictures, animation.

IV. Summing-up.

The most advanced of these programs can allow teachers add sound, video, and even interactive charts and graphs to slides. You might, for example, project a map that demonstrates various changes as you advance along a time line. If the classroom computer system has Internet access, you can hyperlink your slides to World Wide Web resources, effectively incorporating that material into the lesson.

The use of presentation software in the classroom requires careful planning and considerable investment of time. You should be prepared to take some or all of the following steps:

1) Determine whether you have access to the equipment and special classrooms necessary to display electronic presentations. At a minimum, you will need a laptop computer, a projection device compatible with your software and hardware, and a classroom with a convenient electrical outlet, dimmable lights and an appropriate screen. Check that the computer is capable of producing all the effects you plan for the class, such as sound, video, or Internet access.

2) Ensure that your own computer equipment will allow you create and maintain these presentations. Manipulating multimedia resources requires a relatively powerful computer and, with some exceptions, a modern graphical operating system such as Microsoft Windows or the Macintosh Operating System.

3) Acquire a presentation program. Many of the more popular office suites (for instance, from Microsoft, Corel, or Lotus) include them. Your campus may already have purchased licenses to one or more of these products. Finally, check to make sure your choice is compatible with the systems installed in classrooms.

4) Write or revise your lectures with the multimedia slide show in mind. Begin to collect compelling pictures and artwork, explanatory maps and charts, music clips, even short videos that might enhance your analysis. Evaluate which of these materials can be rendered in the digital form, and consider the copyright implications – if possible by discussing them with the relevant experts in your school. When preparing text for your presentation - headings or explanatory captions - use simple clauses and standard fonts (for example, Arial or Times New Roman) to ensure that your presentation will look the same regardless of what computer you are using. The best font size for headings is twenty-four points, although you can use thirty-point font or larger if you wish.

Of course, multimedia lessons can contain traditional forms and methods of teaching, as well. It is obvious that multimedia lessons demand much preparation, and the teacher must be able to use different computer programmes to make an interesting and instructive presentation.

When using multimedia presentations it is important to keep in mind the right balance between traditional and new technologies of teaching. The most effective lesson is the one that includes partial usage of multimedia presentations combined with traditional methods.

Systematic usage of multimedia presentations in the English lessons promotes:

- increasing effectiveness of teaching methods;
- realisation of interdisciplinary relations;
- opportunities in making projects and various tasks using computer technologies;
- sharp rise in students' interest to the subject;
- improvement in the student-teacher relations;
- time management in the lesson;
- personal and emotional development of students.

To sum up, it is important to realise that a multimedia lesson gives teachers an opportunity to combine many interesting tasks, to involve more students into active work in the English lesson, to get them interested in the subject and to encourage them to work independently.

Teachers should sometimes involve their students into the process of making presentations, explaining the purposes of presentations and taking into account opinions of students.

So, using multimedia presentations the teacher intensifies the process of teaching, makes it more visual, more interesting, more dynamic and more modern as a result. That will definitely lead to success in the teaching career and students' learning outcomes.

Computers have entered different spheres of people's activity. A computer has also become a necessary thing in the English lesson. It promotes not only the development of students' creative skills, but also the changse in the lesson technology, making it more interesting and effective.

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