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ԹԵՄԱ	The use of modern technologies in learning a foreign language
ԱՌԱՐԿԱ	Անգլերեն
ՀԵՂԻՆԱԿ	Մարինե Հակոբյան
ՄԱՐԶ	Երևան
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Introduction

Nowadays modern technologies are surrounding us. We need to use a touch screen machine if we want to buy a bus ticket, send a postcard or do the check-in at the airport. In the library all the catalogues are computerized, when we go to the doctor we get our medical examination's results on a CD. Even such everyday activities like grocery shopping, paying bills or booking holidays we do online, using different devices. It is even difficult to find a kindergarten or school without a website or facebook profile. What is more the enrollment to those institutions is online as well. All those examples show us that if we, as teachers, want to educate future citizens we should not avoid modern technologies. Now, a computer or tablet is the same as a notebook and a pen 20 years ago.

With the rapid development of science and technology, the emerging and developing of multimedia technology and its application to teaching, featuring audio, visual, animation effects comes into full play in English class teaching and sets a favorable platform for reform and exploration on English teaching model in the new era. It's proved that multimedia technology plays a positive role in promoting activities and initiatives of student and teaching effect in English class. Technological innovations have gone hand –in hand with the growth of English and are changing the way in which we communicate.

This paper deals with the necessity and importance of innovative technology in the foreign language classroom. It also discusses in detail multimedia technology acting as a method for special intellectual activity. This technology has a number of advantages compared with other information technology training, as it allows: improvements in the process of organic combinations of traditional and innovative forms and methods of education; implementation of training, information, games, modeling, design and analysis functions; performance of such principles as visibility and accessibility; feasibility of systematic transition from education to self-education; creation of a positive emotional background for learning; and linking theory with practice. The use of innovative learning technology creates the most favorable conditions and contributes significantly to motivation in learning foreign languages.



Learning foreign languages is impossible to imagine without the use of multimedia learning tools. Of course, important tasks for the methodology of teaching foreign languages include providing opportunities to illustrate the actual process of communication in English, and creating an educational environment that provides real conditions for learning use of the target language and its culture.

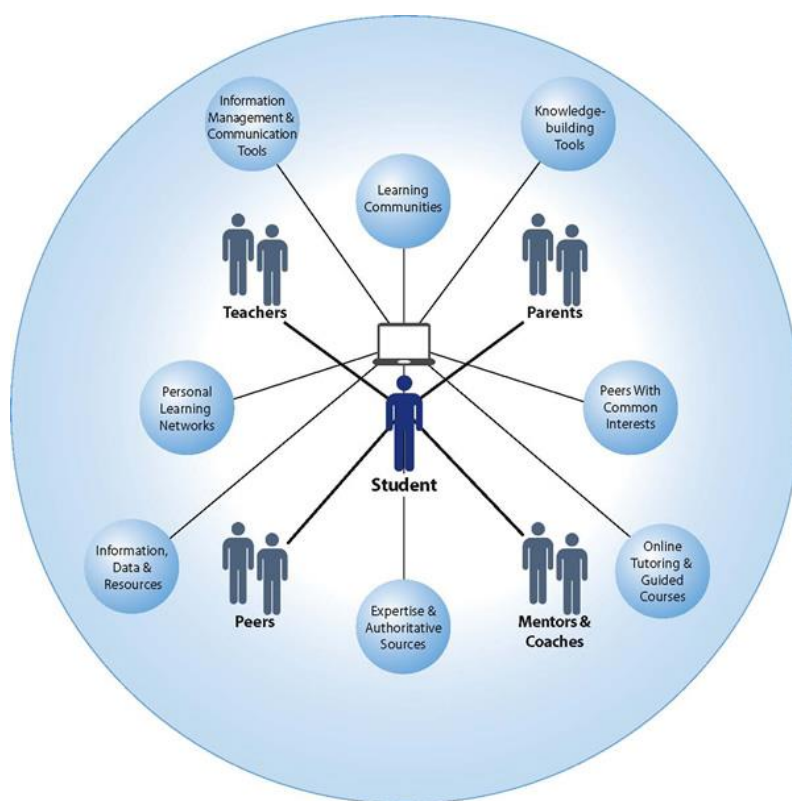
Computer assisted language learning (CALL) software has provided another teaching tool for second language education. The use of computers in English language classroom is useful for both teachers and learners. Currently, there are numerous software application programs available such as vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation programs, spelling check utilities, electronic workbooks, reading and writing programs, and different learning packages to assist instructors in creating tutorial exercises to enhance their English language courses.

Content videos can be used in the EFL classroom in order to bring the realistic aspect of what is being taught into the class. This serves not only as support but also as a motivator to the students. As Furmanovsky wrote in an article published in the Internet TESL Journal, teachers should have more than a casual interest in the topic being discussed or taught. Teachers should have access to materials, especially videos and books aimed at the listening and reading level of the students.

Modern technology, if used correctly, can be an asset to a bilingual curriculum due to the objectives that are outlined in bilingual education. Greenberg states that effective use of the Internet will improve teacher creativity as well as reduce the time that is

required to plan units or lessons and at the same time, involve students in an immersive whole language-learning environment. Teachers and students alike will be able to use technology as an instrument of creativity and empowerment. Teachers and students will be able to publish and share their work instantly. This alone is a huge advantage in that they do not have to kill themselves planning and coming up with new ideas on how to teach their class. Greenberg also states that a foundation should be provided for the effective integration of the internet into the teacher and student's lives.

In this model, technology supports learning by providing engaging environments and tools for understanding and remembering content. For example, game-based courses use features familiar to game players to teach core subject content, such as history.



Analysis on Necessity of Application of Multimedia Technology to English Teaching

1. To Cultivate Students' Interest in Study

Nowadays, the stereotyped traditional teaching methods and environment are unpopular while multimedia technology featuring audio, visual animation effects naturally and humanely makes us more access to information besides, multimedia

technology offers a sense of reality and functions very well, which greatly cultivates students' interest and motivation in study and their involvement in class activities.

2. To Promote Students' Communication Capacity

Traditional teaching has hampered students' capacity to comprehend certain language and also understanding to structure, meaning and function of the language, and makes the students passive recipients of knowledge. So it is hard to achieve the target of communication. With teachers' instructions leading students' thought patterns and motivating students' emotions, the multimedia technology seeks integration of teaching and learning and provides the students greater incentives, The PPT courseware activate students' thinking. And such in-class activities as group discussion, subject discussion, and debates can also offer more opportunities for communication among students and between teachers and students. So multimedia technology teaching has uniquely inspired students' positive thinking and communication skills in social practice.

3. To Widen Students' Knowledge to Gain an Insightful Understanding to Western Culture.

The multimedia courseware can offer the students abundant information; more plentiful than textbooks, and help them to get of displays vivid cultural background, rich content and true-to-life language materials, which are much natural and closer to life. Not only could learners improve their listening ability, but also learn the western culture. Grasping information through various channels can equip; the students with knowledge and bring about information-sharing among students and make them actively participate in class discussion and communication.

4. To Improve Teaching Effect

Multimedia teachings enrich teaching content and make the best of class time and break the "teachercentered" teaching pattern and fundamentally improve class efficiency. Due to large classes it is difficult for the students to have speaking communication. The utilization of multi-media sound lab materializes the individualized and co-operative teaching. The traditional teaching model mainly emphasized on teachers' instruction, and the information provided is limited due to traditional classes. On the contrary, multimedia technology goes beyond time and space, creates more vivid, visual, authentic environment for English learning, stimulates students' initiatives and economizes class time meanwhile increases class information.

5. To Improve Interaction Between Teacher and Student

Multimedia teaching stresses the role of students, and enhances the importance of “interaction” between teachers and students. A major feature of multimedia teaching is to train and improve students’ ability to listen and speak, and to develop their communicative competence. During this process, the teacher’s role as a facilitator is particularly prominent. Using multimedia in context creation creates a good platform for the exchange between teachers and students, while at the same time providing a language environment that improves on the traditional classroom teaching model. In this way, teachers in the classroom no longer blindly input information and force students to receive it in a passive way.

6. Creates a Context for Language teaching

Multimedia teaching creates a context for language teaching. This method makes the class lively and interesting, as well as optimizing the organization of the class. Multimedia has its own features such as visibility and liveliness. During the process of multimedia English teaching, sounds and pictures can be set together, which enhances the initiative of both teachers and students. When using multimedia software, teachers can use pictures and images to enrich the content of classes, and also imagine different contexts in the process of producing teaching courseware. Students in the class can use multimedia to understand the class in a clear way. Through the whole interactive process, it is apparent that using multimedia in ELT is effective in nurturing students’ interest in learning English, as well as enhancing teachers’ interest in English teaching. As Zhang (2006:11.1) points out through Multimedia and network technology we can offer 152 students not only rich, sources of authentic learning materials, but also an attractive and a friendly interface, vivid pictures and pleasant sounds, which to a large extent overcomes the lack of authentic language environment and arouses students’ interest in learning English.

7. To Provide Flexibility to Course Content:

In addition, multimedia teaching is also flexible. It is obvious that the context can be created not only in the classroom, but also after class. Multimedia language teaching can also create a multimedia language environment for the purpose of conducting language teaching. English teaching itself must focus on the guidance of teachers and be student-centered which we believe is one of the principles for language teaching. Students are bound to have some problems in classroom teaching, which can be

addressed under the guidance of teachers. In such circumstances, students can use the new technology to their advantage, such as manipulating the network to contact teachers, and receiving answers by email.

English is the predominant language of instruction in most U.S. classrooms and in the vast majority of Web resources. The challenges of learning the content and skills necessary to function as a 21st-century citizen are heightened if English is not a person's first language. Recent advances in language translation technology provide powerful tools for reducing language barriers. With proper design, technology can easily represent information so that there are multiple alternatives for English, multiple options for unfamiliar vocabulary or syntax, and even alternatives to language itself (use of image, video, and audio).

The International Society for Technology in Education has created National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS-S) that encompass a full range of technology competencies. The NETS standards include

- **Creativity and innovation.** Students should be able to use technology and their existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes.
- **Communication and collaboration.** Students should be able to work collaboratively, both in person and at a distance, and to communicate ideas effectively to multiple audiences using new media.
- **Research and information fluency.** Students should be able to use a variety of digital media to locate, organize, analyze, and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
- **Critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making.** Students should be able to define problems, plan and conduct research, and identify solutions or appropriate decisions using digital tools and resources.
- **Digital citizenship.** Students should take responsibility for their own lifelong learning and should practice safe, legal, and ethical use of information and digital tools.
- **Technology operations and concepts.** Students should understand technology systems, select and use technology applications effectively, and be able to troubleshoot systems and applications.

Analysis on Problems Arising from Application for Multimedia Technology to English Teaching.

In spite of advantages of application of multimedia technology to English class teaching has to improve teaching effect and university students' overall capacities, there are many problems existing in practical teaching, such as:

1. Major Means Replaced by the Assisting One

Application of multimedia technology is and assisting instrument to achieve the projected teaching effect, While if totally dependent on, multimedia devices during teaching, the teachers may be turned into slaves to the multimedia and cannot play the leading role in teaching, It is observed in practice that a lot of teachers are active in multimedia technology application but not proficient enough to handle it confidently. In class, they are standing by the computer and students are fixing their attention only on the screen, and therefore, there is no eye contact between teachers and students.. The trend of modern information and technology teaching appears to the extremity regardless of the essence of the traditional teaching. And hence, the notion of Creative Education is to be fully comprehended that modern educational techniques serves an assisting instrument rather than a target: and that should not dominate class. They are substitutes to effective teaching and learning

2. Loss of Speaking Communication

English language and English analysis by the teachers are effective in conveying knowledge to the students from English pronunciation to comprehension, improving students' English thought patterns and oral expression, Whereas, the introduction of multimedia technology featuring audio, visual, textual effect fully meets audio and visual requirements of the students and enhance their interest, but it also results in lack of communication between teachers and students, replacement of teachers' voice by computer sound, and teachers' analysis by visual image and students have' few chances for speaking communication . With the favorable atmosphere by the mutual communication between teachers and students fading away, and sound and image of multimedia affecting students' initiative to think and speak, English class turns to course

ware show and students are made viewers rather than the participants of class activities.

3. The restriction of Students' Thinking Potential

It is clear that language teaching is different from science subjects, for language teaching does not require demonstration by various steps, rather, the tense and orderly atmosphere is formed through questions and answer between teachers and students, Teachers raise impromptu and real-time questions and guide the students to think, cultivate their capacity to discover and solve problems, however, due to over demonstration and pre-arranged order, the courseware lacks real-time effect and cannot give feedback. It ignores emphasis and importance in teaching; it also neglects instruction in students' thinking, inspiring their paths of thinking, strengthening their capacity contemplating and solving problems. In this way, it should be noted that cultivation of students' thinking capacity should be the major objective in teaching and 153 using of multimedia technology and it should not take up the students' time for thinking, analyzing and exploring questions.

4. Abstract Thinking Replaced by Imaginable Thinking

The Process of cognition goes through perceptual stage and rational stage. It also applies to studying process. It is our hope that teaching makes students adopt the outlook cognition from perceptual recognition to rational apprehension, and greatly leap from perceptual thinking to rational thinking; therefore it is the major objective in teaching. To enhance the students' abstract thinking, the multimedia technology makes content easier, and with its unique advantages, it can clarify the emphasis in teaching. While the image and imagination in students' mind were merely showed on the screen, their abstract thinking would be restricted and logical thinking would waste away. At present the decreased students' reading competence has become a major concern for reason that, textual words are replaced by sound and image, handwriting by keyboard input. All in all, the multimedia as an assisting instrument, cannot replace the dominant role of teachers and it is part of a complete teaching process. Besides, it is not a mechanic imitation of teaching, rather it integrates the visual, textual demonstration with teachers' experience to contribute to the programmed, automatic and continuous teaching project so as to enhance the overall improvement of students' listening, speaking, reading and writing.

While many education experts tout the advantages of incorporating technology into the school curriculum and the classroom, technology can sometimes hinder learning and the educational process. Because schools occasionally purchase technology before their systems and educators are adequately equipped for and trained to use it effectively, technology sometimes goes unused or actually prevents student learning. Becoming aware of some of the disadvantages in utilizing technology in the classrooms can allow schools to better prepare for the widespread use of computers and devices by their student and teacher populations.

Teaching theory behind technology education is called constructivism; teacher preparation programs or courses in educational technology teach the concepts of inquiry-based learning. In inquiry-based classrooms or lessons, students are encouraged to research topics under their own guidance and direction with teachers acting as facilitators. This type of thinking and teaching can take years to achieve, and it often requires great expense in terms of both money and time. To use technology most effectively, extensive professional development is required for the classroom teacher.

1. Some teachers feel that they don't want to have yet another new thing to learn.

They have spent years learning about the language and dealing with the different designer approaches and fads in ELT. And now, they are being told that all the knowledge and experience they have accrued from teaching English is not enough if they are unable to get to grips with the latest device or online software.

They feel that the ability to use technology has got nothing to do with learning English per se, and if such high standard and qualification are needed for learners to survive in the job market, then these learners should be taking classes in IT, and not be relying on their English teacher to provide them with such training.

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2. Teachers are not paid enough to spend all their free time learning to use new digital tools and implementing them.

It takes hours to moderate a wiki or Moodle account, to respond to comments on a blog, to find appropriate games and video clips, to maintain the students' interest in class

chats on Twitter or Facebook, and to read other teachers' blogs for more ideas and development. And most schools do not pay teachers to do this.

10 Skills for Modern Teachers



3. Not all students want to participate in the use of online tools.

There could be several reasons for this. Some of my teenage learners equate the use of social media and blogging with something that is done with their friends, and not something that is done with their teachers as part of the curriculum. Making them use the same tools for learning might just turn something fun into something repellent. Just like the use of text speak. It's just no longer cool among teenagers.

Some learners from less-privileged backgrounds might feel left out and inferior. They might not be as familiar with certain online platforms and styles of games because they do not have easy access to a computer or a game console at home. They might not have a smart phone and have to share a classmate's

So we know that we can't force students to use or participate in the use of these digital tools. But how then can we cater for those students who choose to opt out?

4. Some schools cannot afford to invest in the latest technology.

The bigger schools and the more profitable chains are keen to invest in this move towards an E-Learning and M-Learning environment by purchasing the latest computers, Interactive White Boards, newest programmes, subscriptions to the fancy online tools, and iPads for every student enrolled. They advertise this fact and this helps their marketing efforts. Meanwhile, the smaller schools that offer perfectly student-centred classes that cannot afford such luxuries are seen as not keeping up with the times.

5. Many educators who talk about the use of technology in a classroom often assume easy and available internet access.

Those who are involved in 'in-company' training would identify with the fact that wifi access is often blocked and the use of firewalls is not uncommon so as to protect company secrets.

Essentially, this means that you can't bring up a picture on Google images to explain a word away easily. It means that you can't connect to Youtube or any video streaming sites for your listening activities (unless you download them illegally...and you don't want to do that). It means that you can't use social media, chat rooms, or any backchannelling software.

Suggestions and Strategies to the Existing Problems In practical teaching.

It is improper to duplicate the textual material simply to the screen so that the teacher's position is ignored. In order to ensure the function of multimedia in teaching it should be noted that:

1. The Beauty of Courseware Is not the Sole Pursuit

It is proved through practice that adequate application of multimedia technology to teaching can make breakthroughs in class teaching. That is to say, during multimedia assisting teaching, teachers still play the leading role that their position could never be

replaced by the computer. For instance, the introduction to each lesson and speaking communication are good way to improve students' listening and speaking which the computer cannot fulfill. Therefore, teachers' interpretation shall not be overlooked. Meanwhile, as a practical linguistic science, English should be used very often in class to cultivate the students' communicative competence. Multimedia, as an instrument for assisting teaching, serves the teachers despite its extraordinary effect. So teaching determines whether to adopt multimedia technology. Otherwise, the teachers were acting as the projectionist, clicking the screen.

2. The Computer Screen can't Substitute the Blackboard

Some teachers take the computer screen as the blackboard. They have input exercises, questions, answers and teaching plans into the computer and display them piece by piece, without taking down anything on the blackboard or even the title of a lesson. It is known that teachers are supposed to simulate situations based on teaching and guide the students to communicate in English. Beside traditional writing on blackboard is concise and teachers can make adjustment and amendment to it if necessary. Furthermore, experienced teachers know well that a perfect courseware is an ideal project in mind, and that in practice, they need to enrich the content on the blackboard with emerging of new question raised by the students.

3. Power Point cannot Take the Place of Student's Thinking and Practices

At present, most multimedia courseware mainly feature on image and animation of teaching materials in order to cause audio and visual effect, which lively displays the content of textual materials and helps the student deeply understand the texts. A problem remains that displaying of the content of texts in the PPT courseware cannot take the place of students' thinking or English communication in simulated circumstance, when working on and utilizing the courseware, we need to encourage the students to use their own mind and speak more, actively join in class practice, we should not overuse the courseware merely in the hope of adding the modernized feature to class teaching

4. Traditional Teaching Instruments and Devices should not be Overlooked

The function of multimedia assisting in teaching cannot be replaced by many other instruments, which does not mean that multimedia can replace any other form of instrument; Some teachers tend to entirely depend on multimedia teaching. While, it should be noticed that although multimedia has its unique advantages in teaching, the characteristics functions of other forms of teaching instruments are still incomparable. For example, the recorder still plays a role in broadcasting listening material. So teachers are supposed to choose appropriate media and instrument based on the requirements of teaching and integrate multimedia instrument with traditional one and fully perform their merits, rather than merely in pursuit of trendy method.

5. Multimedia Technology should not be Overused

Some teachers may possess the improper concept that they would totally apply multimedia technology in their teaching. It is also believed that the more utilization of multimedia technology, the better class atmosphere may grow, the more actively the students get involved in class participation, the more easily the material access to the students. Apparently, the students show some interest in leaning, but actually, they feel like looking on. In practice, the more unconscious attention the students pay. The more interference of teaching information during transmission, the less the students take from the language materials. It is impossible to effectively train the students' language expression in class time. It is clear that in spite of advantages of application of multimedia technology, it assists in teaching. During practical teaching, it is part of a complete teaching procedure. In practice, if multimedia technology would be properly implemented in English teaching, the students could make full use of English speaking and listening materials and develop their overall capacities, which is the objective for us to introduce multimedia technology to modern teaching thus, this leads to systematic training on students' listening, speaking, reading and writing, makes teachers' instructions come into great play, help the student gain basic knowledge as well as language training at classes, improves their expression ability in English and lays a fundamental basis for their English communication.



Conclusion

Asking whether technology can improve education is like asking whether experiments can improve science education. Everything depends on what kind of technology is introduced, how it is used, its design and how teachers are supported to use it.

Many people believe that the abundance of technology in our schools is hindering student's ability to think for themselves and learn old style methods of research. People who support the use of technology in the class room argue that they no longer have to. It's a touchy subject, that cannot be solved just by an analysis, but learning all of the advantages and disadvantages of having technology in the classroom can certainly give you a well rounded and informed opinion.

The use of multimedia technology in the learning process allows for improvements in the process of organic combination of traditional and innovative forms and methods of education; implementation of training, information, games, modeling, design and analysis functions; performance of such general didactic principles as visibility and

accessibility; feasibility of systematic transition from education to self-education; a positive emotional background for training; and linking theory to practice [5]. In addition, multimedia technology is supported by multimedia programs, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and a special information educational environment created for holistic knowledge of the world in the context of computer-aided design and modeling.

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