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E-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT: CHALLENGES AND BENEFITS IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

E-LEARING: WYZWANIA I KORZYŚCI W NAUCZANIU JĘZYKA OBCEGO

One of the main distinctive features of modern education system is moving of gravitation centre from the traditional methodology of conducting lessons to innovational one. This process is usually accompanied with a series of obstacles that do not leave the teaching and learning process unmarked.

Technology classroom activities differ greatly from the traditional ones. The teacher should take into account various methodological, psychological, linguistic and physical aspects that indisputably impact the process of learning of foreign language. The process of teaching changes itself indisputably as language laboratory acquires new form and purpose: to form high language competence and prepare a student for challenges of information society. On the one hand, it causes new problems, charges and on the other hand, it leads to encouraging perspectives.

Throughout the work we mention the importance of correct application of information communication technologies in teaching a foreign language and various factors which, undoubtedly, accompany that complicated educational process.

Information technologies are the catalysts of the social progress. Their use in the sphere of education allows not just collecting, saving, processing, presenting and circulating of all information types but also contains vast opportunities for person-oriented education, promotes the selection of content, individualization, management programming of learning process, cognitive work of every student. The peculiarities information technologies lead education to the level of personalization that allows take into account the initial state of the object, to diagnose the quality and the motivation of the basis knowledge, to avoid learning gaps and so on.

The transition from traditional forms and methods of teaching into technology classroom requires methodology improvement and attentive teacher's approach to conducting the lesson. Unfortunately, many teachers ignore to be well prepared to their disciplines explaining the fact of being the experienced teacher for over 15–25 years. No one can contradict the experience in education system but one should bear in mind the readiness and experience in ICT tools. A large group of teachers have already acquired the necessary knowledge and skills in the application of ICT

in teaching but haven't realized the importance of psychological factors in the process of teaching and learning a foreign language.

Thus, the application of ICT in teaching a foreign language is mostly done in modern language laboratory. Unfortunately, not all of them respond to various kinds of demands.

Quality in e-learning has a twofold significance. First, e-learning is associated in many discussion papers and plans with an increase in the quality of educational opportunities, ensuring that the shift to the information society is more successful. This context is named "quality through e-learning". Second, there is a separate but associated debate about ways of improving the quality of e-learning itself; this context is called "quality for e-learning"[1].

R. Webster proposed the definition of personalized e-learning environment (PELE) as a virtual leaning environment which acts as an interface to learning resources as well as to other learning systems and environments. The process of developing the PELE is regarded as a way of enabling students to develop as autonomous learners in that it helps them to think about their own learning in a structured manner. The student and individual e-learning environment combine as student learning more effective e-learning system. This new system produces a tight coupling between the student and the personalized e-learning environment. This then allows a loose and flexible coupling with the subjects as e-learning and learning support system. This is a concept of flexible Student Alignment[2].

In the game world, a kid is immersed in a complex, information-rich, dynamic realm where one must sense, infer, decide, and act quickly, always responding at new situations[3].

A model in which the student occupies the center of the training scenario, far from being a privilege and a stimulus, in many cases ends up being a drawback and gives rise to results contrary to those desired. To show this graphically, the central position of students means that all the elements revolve around and none of these elements are a point of reference, but rather they all have the student as a reference. This image, which may seem somewhat strange, is disconcerting for many students who are not used to an autonomous style of learning, to setting their own rhythm of learning, and to adapting to the peculiarities of the environment, because the environment never adapts to them[4].

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[1] U-D. Ehlers, L. Goerts, B. Hildebrandt, J.M. Pawlowski, *Quality in e-learning. Use and dissemination of quality approaches in European e-learning. A study by the European Quality Observatory.* Cedefop Panorama Series 2005, No. 116. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

[2] W.R. Webster, *A reflective and participatory approach to the design of the personalised learning environments.* Unpublished PhD thesis. Lancaster University, Lancaster 2005.

[3] J.S. Brown, *New learning environments for the 21st century.* Paper presented at the Forum for the Future of Higher Education's 2005 Aspen Symposium.

[4] F.J. García-Peñalvo, *Advances in E-learning: Experiences and Methodologies.* Hershey 2008, p. 51.

A quality online training initiative has to have as its goal that the students should achieve significant, active, learning constructed within a social context whenever possible in the midst of a learning community[5].

According to J. Wright technological literacy means the ability to use, manage, and understand technology[6].

Computer use, multimedia programs have become quite popular among teacher staff and for that reason we single out the following reasons:

- access to Internet network, students' work in Internet-cafe become more and more popular among students and teachers;
- young generation grows up together with the informational technologies which has become an inseparable part of their lives;
- English, as a main international one, is used in informational contexts;
- Internet offers excellent opportunities for communication and cooperative work between learners who are geographically separated and live in various countries, on various continents;
- learners increasingly expect language schools to integrate technology into teaching;
- technology offers new ways for practising language and assessing performance;
- technology is becoming increasingly mobile. It can be used not only in the classroom, lecture hall, computer room or self-assess centre, it can also be used at home, on the way to school and in Internet cafes[7].

While conducting the lesson in technology classroom, the teacher should remember some factors which will influence the result of foreign language competence. Among them:

1. *Individual learning.* Multimedia learning programs open new opportunities and borders for learners' process. But not all can use this "learning freedom". Much attention, observation and control should be given to such group of students (pupils). Individual work should acquire some features of self-work, self-control which can be achieved after permanent psychological and educational teachers' help;

2. *Attention dispersion*. This factor can be the result of failed teacher's work. While working in the technology classroom, the learners can be side-tracked if the learning material was not organized well and the classroom activities were not managed in a proper way. And the learner can be tempted to browse some proposed links and website. That requires hard

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[5] Ibidem, p. 53.

[6] J. Wright, *The lexicon of technological literacy.* The Technology Teacher 1993, No. 52 (8). pp. 3–8.

[7] G. Dudeney, N. Hockly, *How to teach English with technology*. – Pearson Education, Harlow 2007.

work of the teacher to concentrate the learner at the process of learning and cognition;

3. *Lack of interactivity*. The level of live interactivity between the learner and the screen (monitor) is far from the level of interpersonal communication. Thus, interactivity in the technology classroom should not consist just of working at the computers but involve different forms and methods of work;

4. *The absence of proper feedback.* Unfortunately, the feedback in multimedia programs is limited by the answer "yes/correct" or "no/incorrect";

5. *Insufficient teachers' and learners skills in the application of ICT*;

6. *The complexity of learning material designing.* The work in the technology classroom quite often is really more difficult than to put down a lecture. It takes more strength, imagination, attention, creative and logical thinking;

7. *The use of time*. Some teachers can not forecast the lesson in time context. That causes insurmountable troubles in material understanding, group and solo work;

8. *Accessibility*. Not all learners have got necessary software and hardware in their disposal that can limit learning a foreign language with the help of ICT;

9. *The complexity of software and hardware use*;

10. *The complexity of reading the learning material from the screen and others.*

Unfortunately, many teachers ignore training in the use of information-communication technology. Teachers do not pay enough attention to the lesson preparation and thus very often are far less skilled that their own students. A gap arises not just between students and the teacher but between the latter and the technology. Some decades ago the teacher was the main person which conducted the foreign language lesson. All attention and efforts were directed to satisfy his demands. But implementing ICT in the classroom opens not just new horizons for the teacher but causes new demands, first of all, for his readiness to conduct the lesson on the appropriate pedagogical, methodological and technological level. Is any of these components are beyond his attention or control, the lesson is expected to be unsuccessful.

Information communication technologies individualize the learning and teaching process by introducing adaptive learning programs of various levels. Learning multimedia programs promotes the adequate design of content components of the learning material, individual and independent way of full or shortened learning variant.

Supporting the integration tendencies of cognition, the process of education informatization actualizes the design and development of approaches to the potential use of information technologies in order to develop the personality of a student, his alternative thinking, imagination, attention, abilities.

Learning environment must be the effective and reliable centre which accumulates the best sources for the students and wide opportunities for permanent mastering of teacher's preparation level to the lessons. Secondary school is like "a springboard" for the pupils' future successful "learning flight". And if this centre doesn't become a second homeland for the pupil, the high education will achieve nothing with a crippled children's fate. The role of the secondary school is in the providing of the appropriate knowledge, practice on the one hand, and the love, trust and patience on the other.

High school system is called to be an important social, historically formed institution which is responsible for the accumulation and recreation of scientific and professional knowledge. Its importance in the society forming is confirmed by the world experience. Strategic doctrine of industrially developed countries is based on the development of person's potential, and education system as the essential part of it, plays a vital role in this permanent and fleeting process. Some countries of the Eastern Asia like Japan, Southern Korea, Thailand and others were able to approach and almost overtake industrially developed countries by concentrating their attention at all levels of education. The understanding of the fact that the reason of state's welfare lies in the priority of qualitative education will bring light to the people's mind.

Computer-oriented learning environment actualizes the development of approaches to the use of the IT potential for the personality development, his activity level raising. Student's work in such an atmosphere and environment promotes a student to create new strategies of decisions search to forecast the results of the already made learning, practical or creative decisions by the objects, phenomena and process modeling and interconnections between them.

Computer-oriented learning environment as a part of education system has to contain knowledge kernel, which must be assimilated by the students. Students can work independently, in an individual profile and tempo.

Speaking about the efficiency, we should bear in mind the importance of an adequate choice of these or those technical aids and the methods penetrated into the process of teaching.

And when we analyze about the innovational potential of the teacher, we realize that he is endued with the amount of socio-cultural and creative characteristics and oriented on the continual improvement of his pedagogical activity and always ready to perception, elaboration and the use of innovations in the educational process.

During the process of teaching English with technology, the teacher should bear in mind that his role becomes more and more prominent and vital. The student should feel "protected" himself in this innovational world. It's impossible to achieve if the teacher is indifferent to the process of teaching, or if the student is left alone before a computer screen while a teacher is just a passive spectator.

The creation of lesson should be well-thought and each stage of the lesson should be under the teacher's control and thus, students can easily orient in the informational environment and form the skills of the high language competence.

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SUMMARY

Innovational methods of foreign language teaching in the context of modern language laboratory are considered in the given article. The attention is paid to new educational, cultural opportunities and challenges that learners and teachers come across while learning teaching and a foreign language. The article emphasizes the role of teacher's competence in using computer-based systems. The work suggests some approaches to forming language competence where language laboratory is considered as an artificial language environment. Technical aids and materials exist in the educational sphere for a long time. Media education as a vital trend in education was formed in the 2nd half of the XX century. The present article deals with the importance of an adequate use of innovations in a school system. It is focused on the peculiarities and communicative opportunities of modern educational technologies. The problem of education management is discussed in the context of computer-oriented environment. The article deals with the innovational methods of foreign language teaching. The attention is paid to the

peculiarities of a process of teaching in a personalized e-learning environment. The work suggests some practical approaches to information technologies implementation. The article emphasizes the teacher's readiness in using the opportunities of computer-based systems.

STRESZCZENIE
W artykule omówiono innowacyjne metody nauczania języków obcych w kontekście współczesnego laboratorium językowego. Zwrócono uwagę na nowe możliwości edukacyjne i kulturowe oraz wyzwania, z którymi spotykają się uczniowie i nauczyciele w procesie nauczania i uczenia się języka obcego. W artykule podkreślono rolę kompetencji nauczyciela w posługiwaniu się rozwiązaniami IT. Autor artykułu nakreśla takie podejście do kształtowania kompetencji językowych, w którym laboratorium językowe jest uważane za sztuczne środowisko językowe. Pomoce i materiały techniczno-dydaktyczne istnieją w sferze edukacji przez długi czas. Edukacja medialna jako istotny trend w edukacji powstała w drugiej połowie XX wieku. W niniejszym artykule omówiono znaczenie odpowiedniego wykorzystania innowacji w systemie szkolnym, akcentując osobliwości i możliwości komunikacyjne nowoczesnych technologii edukacyjnych. Problem zarządzania edukacją omówiono w kontekście środowiska komputerowego. Artykuł dotyczy innowacyjnych metod nauczania języków obcych. Zwrócono uwagę na specyfikę procesu nauczania w spersonalizowanym środowisku e-learningu. Praca sugeruje kilka praktycznych podejść do wdrażania technologii informacyjnych. Artykuł podkreśla gotowość nauczyciela do korzystania z możliwości systemów komputerowych.

Chapter IV
On the life of the Scientific Association in Ostrołęka