INNOVATIONS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES ONLINE

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Online foreign language learning has undergone crucial changes on account of introducing recently developed multimedia and digital technologies over the decade. The fact is of special importance for Ukraine as a post-Soviet republic struggling to build English-speaking environment through numerous intensified courses at secondary and higher schools.

Nonetheless, the prior multimedia technologies widely practiced in the classroom via plasma smart-TVs allowed to simulate foreign language speaking environment quite effortlessly with the student-centered approach that enabled the students to use native-speaking videos which. Thus the gap of natural foreign language environment was closed with considerable success.

However, online education brought about challenges of their own, among which lack of face-to-face communication and sedentary lifestyle came to the fore. Luckily, the recent advances in IT-technologies moved hand-in-hand with the above inconveniences and eventually solved the problem by introducing special online Communication Simulating Spaces [1].

To be more exact, the tool we have in mind is the digital creation of "Jigsaw groups" where the teacher can move from one group to another on the screen to control and assist in the students 'doing their assignments "in class". It is obvious, though, that the simulated teacher's movements can only partially cover for the lack of the participants' mobility, but is viewed as a great help to ease the tension of the sedentary learning mode online.

Furthermore, new digital platforms keep appearing on a daily basis, among them Large Language Models, the AI chatbots that serve as efficient communication simulators of the ChatGPT or Bard-type. With their use foreign language acquisition has become tenfold more rapid and intensified. The 'student-centered' approach embraces the use of such tools, even though some authors claim that they can be harmful to students' cognitive abilities [2]. To minimize the harmful effect in using these platforms in writing assignments, it is advisable to get back to the newly active vocabulary by means of appropriate exercises. In this way 'cheating' may become 'saturation with the new vocabulary'.

To summarize, non-traditional methods of foreign language acquisition and innovative multimedia and digital technologies have become indispensable in everyday teaching practices and have really unbounded possibilities for improvement in the domain of modern foreign language acquisition.

References:
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