

CREATIVITY THROUGH THE USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES

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Modern methodology of teaching foreign languages is based on the recent results of psychological investigations and applies new information technologies. This provides a solid background for teachers' and learners' creativity.

Usage of various information and technical devices (DVD players, video and audio systems, personal computers, multimedia devices) helps to diversify EFL classes, makes them more interesting, promoting the development of key language skills [2, p. 23]. It also provides:

- students' interest in the material presented and their further motivation for language learning;
- development of listening skills in combination with speaking;
- visual acquisition of communication in certain context;
- a rich source of vocabulary, presented by native speakers;
- development of predicting and decoding skills;
- learning the country's culture.

Development of information technologies broadens the limits of teachers' creativity, giving new opportunities for teaching EFL. Sound-editing software, such as program "Audacity", has a great potential for foreign languages teachers, who would like to increase their creativity and create personalized audio files. This software is freely delivered and can be used on Windows platform PCs. The minimum system requirements are: Windows 98, ME, 2000, XP, or Vista (not compatible with Windows 95 or NT 4.0.), speakers and microphone [1, p. 2]. With Audacity, users can cut, copy, split, and mix sounds together, change the speed or pitch of a recording, and apply other effects such as noise removal and sound amplification. These features allow teachers and learners to create high quality audio files, which can be used to practice such language skills as listening, speaking, and pronunciation.

Both teachers and students can adapt Audacity in a variety of ways depending on their needs and students' level of language proficiency. Teachers can create new

materials and tasks, while students can practice listening comprehension, speaking, and pronunciation. Language tasks may involve original language generated entirely by speakers, or recited language as in pronunciation drills.

It's a good idea to use this program for recording students' monologues and dialogues with further playing back and analysing. Students give a kind of a feedback, which stimulates their self-assessment and self-study. Teachers can use Audacity to record lectures, dialogues, or other types of speaking texts, and upload them to a server to be available for anyone. The program allows users to edit the texts, cutting unwanted parts or adding extra material, such as music or audio extracts from radio programs. Users can add extra material to the recording by mixing parts of two or more audio files together.

Students can perform a variety of speaking tasks and use the aforementioned tools to record and edit their performance. Students could use Audacity to record any number of different types of speaking assignments, and "hand" them in to their teacher via email. Audacity makes the process of distant learning of foreign languages more efficient.

Recent technological developments promote the processes of EFL teaching, giving new opportunities for teachers. Surely, creating personalized teaching materials is a time and efforts consuming process, but it increases teachers' and students' creativity, improving EFL teaching / learning processes.

References

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