



The advantages of using multimedia cultural and linguistic environment in the process of teaching foreign languages

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The advantages of using multimedia cultural and linguistic environment in the process of teaching foreign languages

Albina F. Mukhamadiarova¹, Nataliya E. Merkish², Mariya A. Kulkova¹

1 Kazan Federal University, Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication

2 Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University), German Language

Department, info@ores.su

ABSTRACT

This article is devoted to the phenomenon of multimedia cultural-linguistic environment, as a factor of successful mastering of foreign language. The issues of creation of foreign communicative space, based on Internet resources, are considered in the article. The examples of information resources, with the help of which German-speaking cultural-linguistic environment can be created, are given in the work. In the organized cultural-linguistic environment, an active perception of information is realized. Performing the tasks, developed for audio and video records, students are in the state of intellectual stress, and the material is memorized arbitrary. The article analyzes the advantages of staying in multimedia cultural-linguistic environment. These are the use of several channels of socio-cultural information in the process of training, and the possibility of using various types of information (texts, audio and video materials of all styles and genres). It should be noted, that students independently immerse themselves in the modeled foreign reality. Due to this, they can implement metacognitive strategies in learning process. The possibilities of listening and watching the material at any time repeatedly, as well as the combination with other activities, are undeniable advantages of staying in the environment. This environment has a positive impact on the development of all types of speech activity. There are the incidental memorization of grammatical constructions, digestion of pronunciation norms, consolidation of lexical material, and contextual semantization of vocabulary. The article emphasizes the importance of creation the methodology for working with foreign-language media, based on the development of students' critical thinking, the ability to compare the positions of the parties, and proving of their own point of view. The authors conclude that multimedia environment can be considered as a factor, significantly increasing the effectiveness of learning the language and culture.

Keywords: multimedia, teaching foreign language, cultural and linguistic environment, foreign mass media, information technologies.



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INTRODUCTION

The modern level of information technologies development, the availability of computer equipment and the Internet in schools and universities and in almost every student allows us to talk about the prevailing preconditions for the transfer of teaching foreign languages to a qualitatively new level [1-7].

Learning a foreign language today is no longer learning in isolation from the language environment, but training in conditions, which model it successfully. Cognitive-oriented methodology [8], intending learning outside the country of studied language, can be strengthened by the introduction of a foreign language environment in the learning process. Factors, facilitating the digestion of new linguistic and cultural code, for example, in German or French-speaking country, can be used in the process of training in Russia. Thus, the intensive development of listening skills, vocabulary learning, incidental memorization of grammatical forms, the increase in the motivational component of training, i.e. all positive moments, which are observed in the process of training in natural environment, are now achieved in the conditions of its artificial modeling.

So, the investigation of methodological foundations for the creation of foreign communicative environment, imitating the presence of students in the country of studied language, is one of the current problems of methodology. The key role in the creation of a foreign language environment is played by the multimedia training tools, i.e. software and hardware, which "provide visual representation of video information (with sound), recorded on a data medium, received via computer network, e-mail, TV broadcast channels" [9].

It seems advisable to talk not only about the language environment, understood as "a speech, perceiving by the person in usual conditions: the language of the family, radio, television, the language of books", but also as "a kind of communicative space, in which communication is realized" [10]. We believe that it is necessary to consider the cultural component of the environment, reflected in the language and delivering through it. Moreover, multimedia allows to transfer the cultural-specific information, with the help of audio and video files [11].

METHODS

To determine the nature of cultural environment, it is necessary to proceed from the interpretation of the concept "culture" as the totality of "results of human society activity in all spheres of life, and all factors (ideas, beliefs, customs, traditions), constituting and determining the way of life of nation, class, in a certain period of time" [12]. Getting into the country of studied



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language and being surrounded by foreign culture, the learner finds himself in the so-called cultural environment. According to the concept of culture of S.G. Terminasova, this environment can be designated as a set of cultural factors, such as ideas, values, beliefs, customs, traditions, affecting the way of life, thinking and worldview of the individual.

We believe that even an artificially created cultural and linguistic environment preserves, to a certain extent, the characteristics of the natural environment, and therefore has great value from the point of view of language learning. Creation of such teaching environment today is possible due to the use of multimedia, so it seems appropriate to introduce the concept of multimedia cultural and linguistic environment.

Multimedia cultural-linguistic environment - is the cultural and linguistic communicative space, created for training purposes with the help of multimedia tools, in which the perception of foreign speech and culture is realized [13].

In order to create such an environment, it is necessary to use all kinds of audio, video and printed materials, available to the teacher and trainee. It is worth noting, that with the advent of the Internet era, the amount of such materials is truly unlimited.

There are the examples of information resources, on the basis of which it is possible to model German-speaking cultural and linguistic environment. So, we can recommend the use of materials of such radio stations as "WDR" (www.wdr.de), "Deutschlandradio" (www.dradio.de), "Deutsche Welle" (www.dw.de), "HR" (www.hr.de), "BR" (www.br.de), "MDR" (www.mdr.de), "NDR" (www.ndr.de), and also the first (www.ard.de) and the second (www.zdf.de) channels of German TV, channels "RTL" (www.rtl.de), "3 SAT" (www.3sat.de), "ARTE" (www.artede.de).

Organized cultural and linguistic environment is a set of special audio-, video-, and printed texts, selected for training purposes, where the holistic formation, implementing the certain communicative task, is understood by the term "text" [14], "the way of information reproduction, with the help of signs and sign systems, not only by verbal means" [15]. Unorganized environment is a set of audio-, video- and printed texts, used by the learners themselves.

The main principle of creation of artificial foreign language communicative space is the simplicity and comprehensible structure of its reproduction. Regular character of recipients' presence in the environment is possible only upon this condition. Today it is quite feasible, for example, for independent listening to foreign radio programs it is necessary to enter the site of a particular radio station and turn on the broadcast in real time.



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In an organized cultural-linguistic environment, as a rule, an active perception of information is realized. Tasks and questions are developed for audio and video materials; lexical units and grammatical forms are defined and intensively studied. Training is characterized by clearly defined learning goals and tasks, accomplishing which the students are in the state of intellectual stress. The brain, memory, attention work intensively; memorization of the material is carried out mainly arbitrarily [16].

In an unorganized environment, two types of information perception are possible. Firstly, it is targeted, active listening comprehension, like in an organized environment. Secondly, it is passive perception, occurring when staying in foreign environment, in the state of intellectual and physical relaxation (for example, at the end of working day), the result of which is incidental memorization.

Staying in an unorganized environment, as a rule, takes a longer period of time, than staying in the classroom. Independent, abundant listening is useful due to the alternation of concentrated, intensive listening comprehension phases and relaxation phases, turning the attention to other objects. According to the developers of intensive training methods [17], in a state of relaxation, close to the state of light, superficial sleep, there is an increased ability to memorize new information, and language means of its transmission - lexical constructions and grammatical forms.

In connection with the foregoing, it seems appropriate to develop techniques for active and passive perception of information, while staying in an artificially created foreign communicative space [18].

Staying in a multimedia cultural and linguistic environment has a number of advantages, and a few, in our opinion, minor shortcomings. The disadvantages of the artificial environment, in comparison with the natural, can be the following: a lower degree of impact intensity, the relative difficulty of creation, as well as the lack of feedback, i.e. communication. After all, when you work alone, only receptive types of speech activity and written speech are realized; speaking is possible only when you are in the classroom.

The main advantage of immersion is the use of several channels of sociocultural information in the process of training. This increases the intensity of perception and memorization. In addition, computer gives the opportunity to use almost any type of information: texts, audio and video materials of any styles and genres. Further, this variety is reflected in the production of



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speech, and the result of learning in isolation from the language environment is the predominant mastering of pedantic and conversational style of communication.

"Mass social interaction" takes place in case of presence in learning environment. Unlike the interpersonal communication, it is realized "when a person interacts with a sociocultural environment, without direct contact with individuals". In this case, the recipient takes the information not directly from the speaker, but indirectly, through technical means. Thus, "the indirect communication" [19] is carried out.

The next advantage is the possibility of self-immersion in the modeled foreign reality. This allows the trainees to implement metacognitive strategies in learning [20], i.e. to determine the types of materials and the time of working with them independently, to set the goals in language learning, and to develop the ways for their achievement. Mastering the strategies of independent education is an important factor in the successful learning and professional activity of students in the future.

The phenomenon of "repeated staying in the environment", i.e. the possibility of multiple listening and watching of audio and video information, is also an advantage of artificially created linguistic and cultural environment.

Immersion in an artificial environment is possible at any time, convenient for the recipient. In addition, there is an excellent opportunity to combine staying in the environment with other activities (driving, biking, eating). As a result, there is an effect of time saving. And in case of relaxed, passive listening, there is an effect of the rest.

RESULTS

Modeled communicative space influences the development of all language aspects and types of speech activity. The environment facilitates the digestion of pronunciation norms, and is a powerful means of maintaining the developed phonetic skills. In the process of "immersing", there is an incidental memorization of grammatical structures; passive grammatical minimum is activated. The digestion of new and consolidation of studied lexical material are carried out here. There is the contextual semantization of vocabulary. Trainees study the use of lexical units of different registers. They analyze the compatibility of words, study up upon the background component of the meaning of culturally-specific lexical units.

It is not difficult to see the beneficial influence of the environment on the development of speech skills. Of course, receptive types of speech activity have the greatest development. Immersion facilitates the perception of living, modern authentic speech of monological and



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dialogical nature, inherent to different styles, bringing by native speakers of various gender and age groups. The environment provides good opportunities for reading of authentic texts of different styles and genres, written by native speakers for native speakers, i.e. created not for learning purposes [21]. Listening comprehension and reading promote speech-activity in foreign language, and thus contribute to the development of productive skills. In addition, the inner speech of trainees is developed, that positively influences the improvement of speaking and writing.

The cultural component of the environment is no less important than its linguistic component. Learning "immersion" gives the opportunity to digest the socio-cultural information about the way of life and traditions of people, about the works of modern culture: literature, music, painting, modern theater, cinema, television. Multimedia allows to actualize the knowledge about the studied language community, its place in the world, modern foreign and domestic policy.

DISCUSSION

Modeled learning environment promotes the digestion of language as a linguistic system, as well as its cultural component. It prevents the emergence of linguistic and cultural interference, and as a result, it forms a secondary linguistic personality.

Awareness of the existence of different visions of the world, other principles of interpretation and evaluation of the surrounding reality phenomena, to some extent changes the picture of the world of the trainee, considered as "the set of rational knowledge and ideas about values, norms, customs, mentality of the own culture and cultures of other nations" [18].

The influence of artificially created environment is undoubtedly lower than the influence of natural environment. However, the processes, occurring during the staying in a linguistic and cultural community, to a certain extent, are characteristic for "learning immersion", i.e. the perception of information from foreign mass media. Therefore, we consider it wrongful to completely deny the influence of foreign media on the structure of recipient's values. On the one hand, this impact should not be overestimated, because the trainee is on the territory of his own country, and is surrounded by his native culture. On the other hand, the media is seen today as a weapon, used in the information war, which can be described as a war of cultures and ideologies.

With regard to the process of teaching foreign language, the formation of a system of trainee's values, based on the realization of his own cultural identity, becomes especially important. The methodology of working with foreign-language media should be based on the development of critical thinking of trainees, the ability to compare the positions of the parties, proving of their own point of view. A special role here is played by the phenomenon of "joint



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listening", that is, the perception of new information in foreign language in the learning group, where recipients have similar cultural values.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we would like to note, that successful knowledge of a foreign language assumes the mastery of its linguistic and socio-cultural components. Multimedia learning environment on a full basis can be considered as a factor, significantly increasing the effectiveness of learning the language and culture. Regular "immersion" will reduce the time and intellectual efforts for learning a foreign language; it will allow to "absorb" the language, while engaging in other activities, due to the incidental memorization.

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