

THE USE OF MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Ekaterina V. Martynova, Guzel M. Galeeva, Svetlana M. Peretochkina, Tatyana V. Marsheva

Kazan Federal University (RUSSIAN FEDERATION)

Abstract

Modern information technology is coming closer into our lives. One of the main parts of Informatization of education is the use of information technologies in educational disciplines to enhance teaching effectiveness. In the era of globalization are increasingly in demand professionals with knowledge of a foreign language, whether it is engineers, physicists, economists, programmers, doctors etc. Therefore, the main task for teachers is to prepare students to think creatively, able to apply obtained knowledge and skills, able to argue and defend their point of view in a foreign language. In this respect, the modern teachers and methodologists are developing various interactive teaching methods. Today, teachers of all educational institutions use information and, in particular, multimedia technology in teaching and organizational and pedagogical activities. Use of multimedia technologies is the introduction of effective, high quality educational programs in the educational process by combining different types of educational information. Media usage involves consideration of individual student characteristics, and, motivating him; develops a desire to gain knowledge. Such learning technologies help to develop students' cognitive skills, the ability to think creatively and to navigate in the information space. In addition, the information technology greatly helps a teacher in his work. They are: selection additional text and illustrative material, creating cards with individual tasks and supplementary informative texts, creating an electronic database of monitoring, systematization and preservation of personal methodological developments, preparation of reporting documentation, design of educational stands, etc. All these allow to lower costs over time to obtain a better result in the training of students.

Keywords: multimedia, information technology, presentation, the effectiveness of training.

1 INTRODUCTION

Currently, Media technology, representing a special kind of computer technology, is implemented in educational process. It combines both traditional static visual information (text, graphics) and dynamic (speech, music, movies, animation), causing the possibility of simultaneous exposure to visual and auditory senses of students, which allow them to create dynamic images in various information representations (auditory, visual).

A specific feature of the multimedia technology compared to the traditional learning process is to present information not only as a text but also as images, which allow concentrating students' attention, to promote a better understanding, comprehension and memorization.

Due to simultaneous impact on student auditory (sound) and visual (static and dynamic) multimedia training systems have a large emotional charge, contribute to the development of the creative potential of students, creating a diverse and effective forms and methods of training.

The study of foreign languages causes a great difficulty to students but even a greater difficulty causes the teaching of a foreign language. It is not an easy task for teachers – not only to teach the student language, but also to attract interest in the subject to inculcate the love and respect to a "foreign" language.

This article shows the use of multimedia technologies in the teaching of English as a second language (ESL) to students of the English for specific purposes (ESP) classroom. We discuss types of multimedia technologies, their features and specificity. The goal is to reduce the necessity of using multimedia technologies for enhancing teaching effectiveness in ESP classrooms for ESL students of non – linguistic departments, like: Economics, Management, Information technologies (IT), Physics, Mathematics and Mechanics. For that, we are to set the following questions:

- 1 What are the means of multimedia technologies for use in ESP classrooms?

- 2 What is the accessibility and effectiveness of multimedia tools in the classrooms?
- 3 What are the teaching methods with the use of multimedia technologies?

2 METHODOLOGY

The research method includes the students' survey with open and close questions, which is aimed to define their awareness of multimedia technologies, the frequency of use the technologies on the lessons. Moreover, we tend to know students' opinion about the effectiveness of using mentioned technologies in ESP classrooms. The survey is held among 198 first –year and second – year undergraduate students of the departments of: Economics, Management, IT, Physics, Mathematics and Mechanics. The respondents are of a diverse level of English knowledge. Second-year students have already worked with Multimedia technologies on English lessons at the University whereas first-year students experience this for the first time.

3 MULTIMEDIA TECHNOLOGIES AS A TOOL OF TEACHING ENGLISH

Now in the age of information technology it is necessary to apply new teaching methods such as multimedia.

The term "Media" means "electronic media, including several types (text, image, animation, etc.) or "amount of technology that enables a computer to enter, process, store, transmit and display data such as text, graphics, animation, video, sound, speech."

Multimedia products include both graphical, audio and visual information that allows you to work with information of different types (e.g., sound, hypertext, photos and video) therefore extends the field of activity of the teacher.

In other words, multimedia is the integration of technologies and ideas. It is the idea of doing multimedia multilateral system, adding the third dimension - the development over time, but not chaotic, and planted and thoughtful person.

Traditionally, modern multimedia tools include a computer. The versatility of the computer lies in the fact that together with the appropriate set of peripherals (projector, modem and printer) it is able to meet all the features of multimedia learning tools.

Multimedia comes from latin words "multum" (many) and "medium" (facilities). The other definition of multimedia – the complex of hardware and software, giving the opportunity to work in dialog mode with different data (graphics, text, sound, video), which is organized in unified informative medium.

The term and the start point of multimedia took place in 1980. In the end of 80-th multimedia appeared in Russia, but it was used only by specialists. And only in 1993 the importance of multimedia was realized. The special conference was held in Russia on the 25-26 February, 1993, which opened the season of multimedia in Russia. The beginning of multimedia boom on Russian computer market was the year of 1994. Multimedia technologies made the breakthrough in the development of computer networks (WWW) and brought global communication to our planet. This revolution in communication can be compared with the appearance of writing.

The field of using multimedia technologies is very wide. The idea of using computers in education appeared long ago, but its embodiment was possible only with the appearance of PC (personal computers) equipped with multimedia devices.

In the era of globalization are increasingly in demand professionals with knowledge of a foreign language, whether it is engineers, physicists, economists, programmers, doctors etc. Therefore, the main task for teachers is to prepare students creatively thinking, able to apply obtained knowledge and skills, able to argue and defend their point of view in a foreign language.

3.1 Multimedia technologies in ESP classroom

Today, teachers of all educational institutions use information and, in particular, multimedia technology in teaching and organizational and pedagogical activities. Use of multimedia technologies is the introduction of effective, high quality educational programs in the educational process by combining different types of educational information and media usage involves consideration of individual student characteristics, and, motivating him, develops a desire to gain knowledge.

Such learning technologies help to develop students' cognitive skills, the ability to think creatively and to navigate in the information space. In this respect, the modern teachers and methodologists are develop various interactive teaching methods where the learning process is carried out in a continuous, active cooperation of all learners. The student and the teacher are equal subjects of study. Interactive learning technology is aimed to creating a favorable motivational and emotional background of a foreign language lesson, which leads to the development of sustainable students' interest in its mastery. The use of multimedia devices gives a lot of opportunities for interactive education.

Usually, multimedia (information) technology is known as the electronic media and the technical processing means. They are: computer and computer software, printer, scanner for copying materials from paper, a multimedia projector, etc. The use of these devices in school improves the efficiency of teaching and helps teachers to save their time and energy.

In addition, the information technology helps greatly the teacher in his work. This is selection of an additional text and illustrative material, creating cards with individual tasks and additional informative texts, creating an electronic database of monitoring, systematization and preservation of personal methodological developments, preparation of reporting documentation, design of educational stands, etc. They all allow to lower costs over time to obtain a better result in the training of students.

3.2 Method of projects in teaching ESL students

One of the most effective ways to raise awareness of studying foreign language is the use of the method of projects, encouraging students to prepare a presentation independently. The choice of subject, the selection of a visual storyboard, design presentations in Power Point program, an oral presentation of the material - all these help to develop students' creative thinking, as well as causing an increased interest to the subject of study. Project-based learning involves the joint work of students and teachers, students have rights to choose and develop thinking. Students are active participants and the teacher directs their activities and helps them.

The famous researcher in the field of modern teaching technologies, E.N. Polat emphasized that the basis of the method of projects is the development of cognitive students' abilities, the skills to design their own knowledge and to navigate in the information space, as well as the development of critical thinking. In the teaching practice, method of projects is aimed to a realization of students' creative potential. It teaches them creativity, originality of thought, the development of their mental activity, the selection and analysis of information that is necessary to the future specialist in his professional activity. Polat defines the method of projects as "organized research students activity" and "organized process of result achieving".

Nowadays students and teachers make the projects using the computer presentations. A multimedia presentation (MMP) is a powerful communicative approach. MMP is a means of communication that can be adapted to various speaking situations, such as talking to a group, addressing a meeting or briefing a team, etc. The program Power-Point (PP) is one of the most frequently used programs in creating MMP.

Presentations in PP have following features:

- 1 Multimedia – use of different effects in presenting information
- 2 Interactivity – possibility to be changed
- 3 Comprehensiveness in performing information – possibility to manage the presentation in different ways
- 4 Discrete – the sensible completeness of separate slide

MMP has a lot of advantages:

- a) easy to realize
- b) interesting and useful
- c) can be applied to groups of different levels
- d) no speaking barrier
- e) learning public speaking
- f) source for further academic work

g) opportunity to take part in international conferences

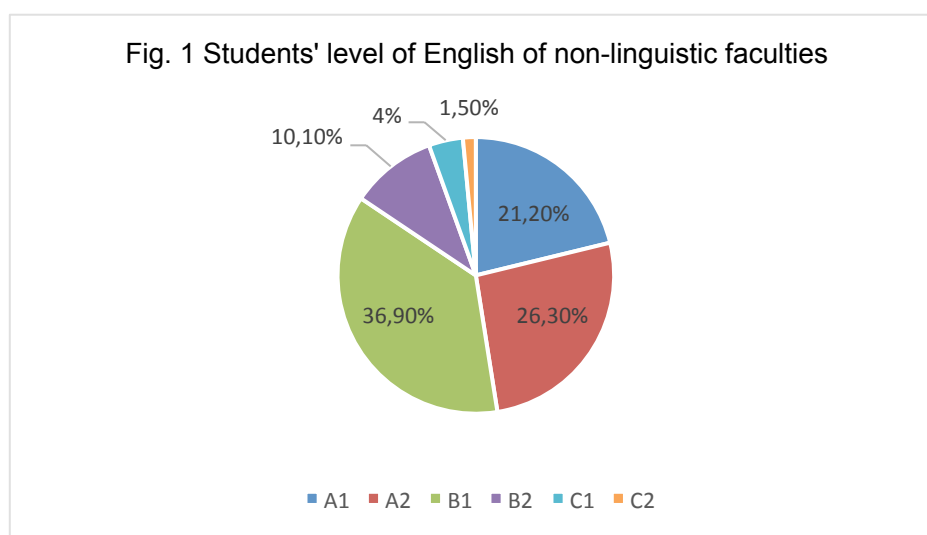
As a result, students:

- are not afraid of speaking, there is a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere in a classroom;
- wait for questions from their group mates, so it's a great group work and feedback for a teacher;
- learn from their mistakes;
- tend to make next presentation better and more interesting;
- apply their computer skills.

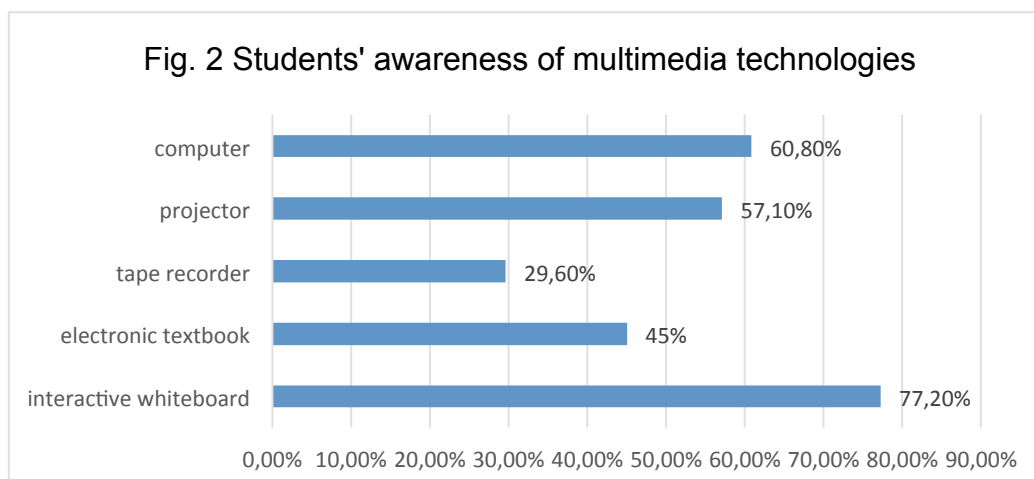
In the capable hands of a talented teacher MMP certainly has advantages and brings only benefits for students in the learning process, especially in studying foreign languages. The foreign language teacher should take advantages of the opportunities that MMP provides for training of real communication in a foreign language. The use of MMP creates students' communicative and professional competence.

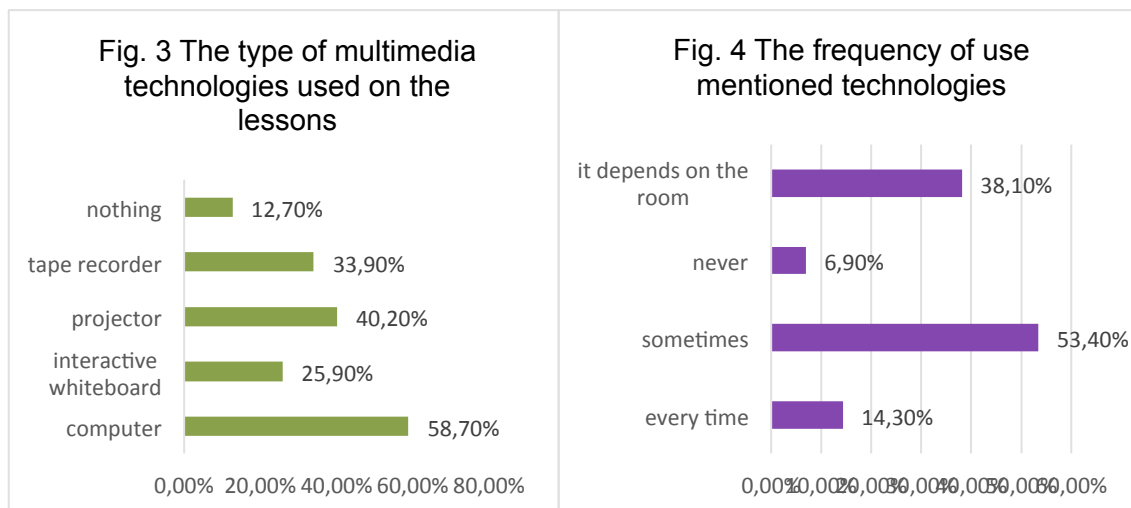
4 RESULTS

The survey was taken among 198 respondents has revealed that the average level of English is between A 1 and B 2 (Fig. 1).

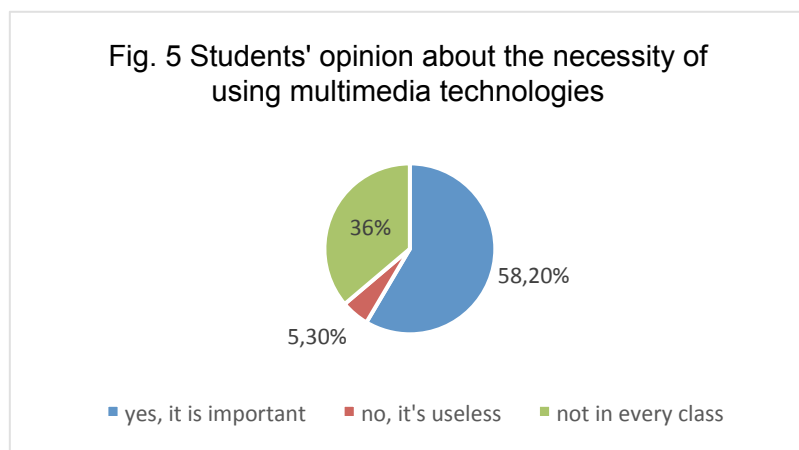


Students also gave their own definition of multimedia technologies (Fig. 2). In the questionnaire we concern what exactly they use in ESP classrooms and how often (Fig. 3; Fig. 4).

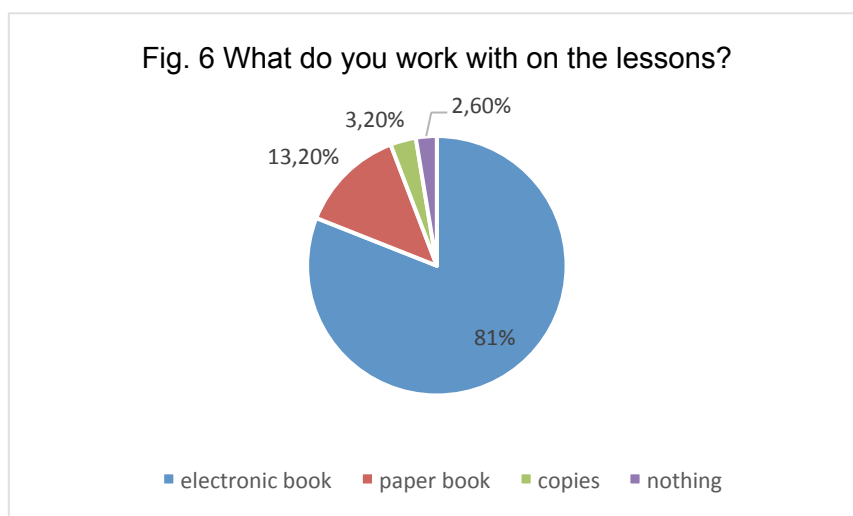




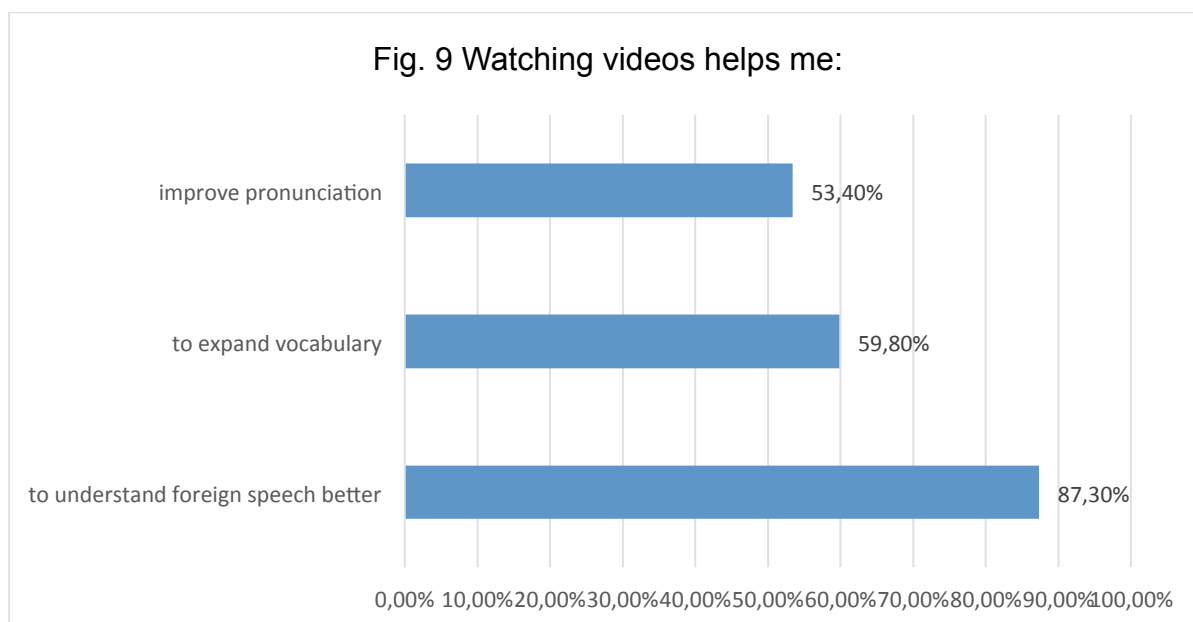
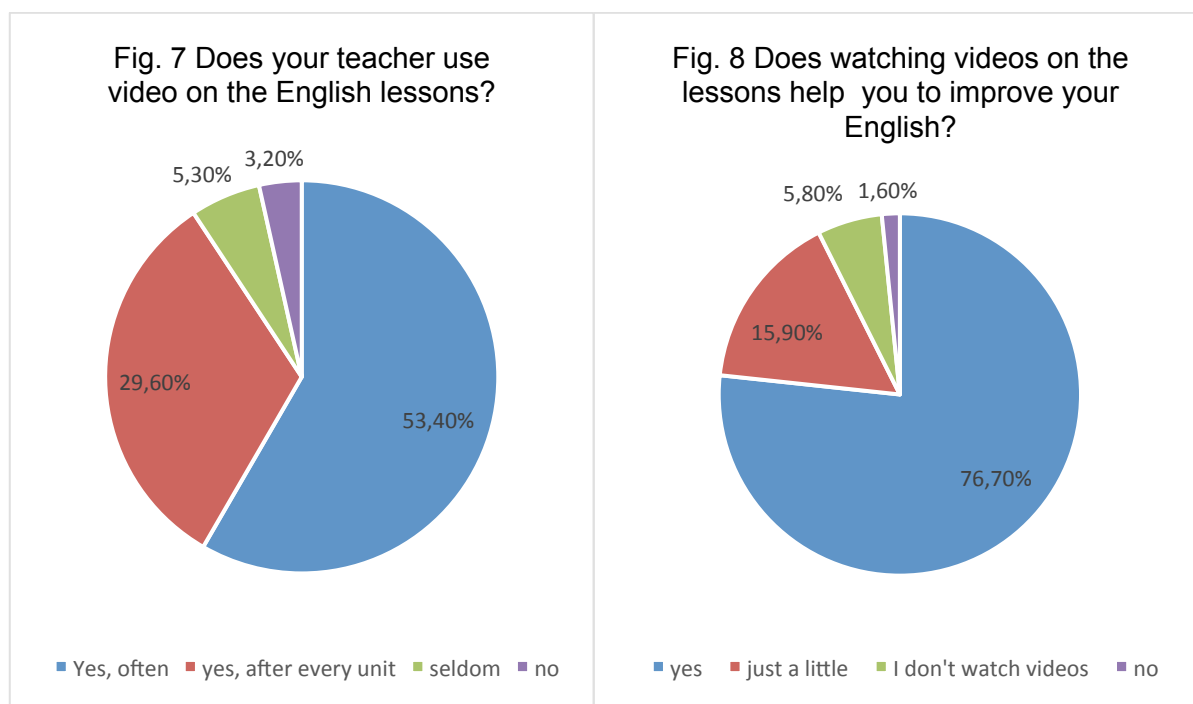
Students are aware that using multimedia technologies makes lessons more effective and interesting. The importance of applying multimedia technologies on the ESL lessons is seen from the answers, most of respondents confirm the necessity of applying mentioned technologies (Fig. 5).



The survey has revealed that the students prefer to use electronic textbooks instead of paper textbooks (Fig. 6).

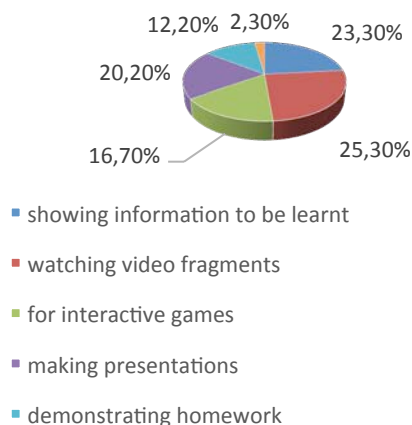


Multimedia technologies allow showing videos on the lessons. We discovered that watching video fragments with ESL students is an effective methodology for learning English. It helps to understand foreign speech better, expand vocabulary and improve pronunciation. Work experience shows that students like activities of this kind and the survey proves it (Fig. 7; Fig. 8; Fig. 9).



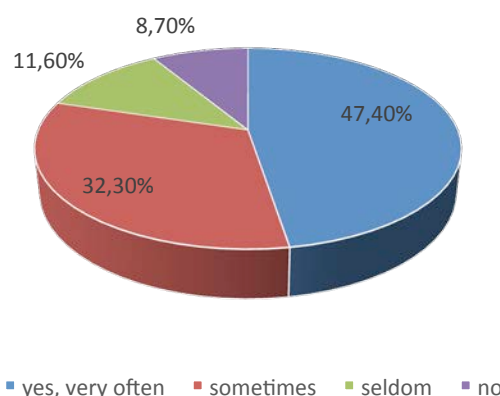
According to the given definition, interactive whiteboard is one of the types of multimedia technologies. Teachers make active use of it in ESP classrooms. The survey shows that interactive whiteboard is used equal as showing learning material, watching video fragments and making presentations (Fig. 10).

Fig. 10 For what purposes is interactive whiteboard used on your lessons?



Students make the projects using the computer program Power Point. The method of projects is aimed to the realization of students' creative potential (Fig. 11).

Fig. 11 Do make project (Power Point presentations) on your lessons?



5 DISCUSSION

The survey shows the effectiveness of using multimedia technologies in teaching ESP classroom students. It allows taking advantage of various types of technologies such as interactive whiteboard, computer, projector, tape recorder, electronic textbook on the lessons.

What is so attractive of multimedia technologies for teachers and students? The fact that knowledge, providing a high level of professional qualification, is always the subject to rapid changes. Multimedia technologies allow you to track these changes and, thus, to ensure the highest level of training.

Advantages of Multimedia technologies:

- Clarity of presentation (use of color, illustrations, sound, video, animation, etc.);
- Fast feedback (test systems provide instant control of assimilation of a material);
- Students' will to learn English;
- Easy to use.

We can conclude that the use of multimedia technologies can significantly transform the educational process, in particular, to help the teacher in teaching foreign language to increase interest of ESL students in effective learning.

6 CONCLUSION

Thousands of institutions abroad and hundreds of Universities and colleges in our country in recent years began to use the opportunities of modern computers and multimedia technologies directly in the classroom, especially when teaching a foreign language. Foreign language being a subject of a great specificity requires the most flexible and widespread use of various technical means of education. It is necessary for creating an artificial language environment due to the lack of natural. Therefore, it is not surprising that in teaching a foreign language multimedia technologies are found the most diverse applications.

Active using of multimedia technologies shows the following conclusions:

- a) in the center of the learning technology is a student;
- b) the basis of educational activity - cooperation;
- c) students play an active role in learning;
- d) the essence of technologies - the development of abilities of self-learning and communicative competence of the learners.

However, there are still a number of barriers to applying information technologies constantly:

- not all educational institutions have the necessary material and technical base;
- some teachers are not confident in their ability to successfully master and use modern technology.

The main groups of problems solved with the help of the multimedia technologies, include:

- 1 support of academic work of students;
- 2 providing access of all participants of educational process to the rapidly growing funds the information stored in the centralized information systems;
- 3 ensure cooperation between teachers, sharing of teaching experience and teaching materials.

Use of multimedia technologies is the introduction of effective, high quality educational programs in the educational process by combining different types of educational information and media usage. It also involves consideration of individual student characteristics, and develops a desire to gain knowledge.

Such learning technologies develop students' cognitive skills, the ability to think creatively and to navigate in the information space. Using multimedia technologies makes your lesson vivid and helps to motivate students for further learning of English.

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