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ИННОВАЦИОННЫЕ ПОДХОДЫ В ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНОМ ПРОЦЕССЕ ВЫСШЕЙ ШКОЛЫ: НАЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ И МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ АСПЕКТЫ

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Инновационные подходы в образовательном процессе высшей школы: национальный и международный аспекты [Электронный ресурс] : электронный сборник статей международной научно-практической конференции, посвященной 50-летию Полоцкого государственного университета, Новополоцк, 8-9 февр. 2018 г. / Полоцкий государственный университет ; под. ред. Ю. П. Голубева, Н. А. Борейко. – Новополоцк, 2018. – 1 электрон. опт. диск (CD-ROM).

Представлены результаты новейших научных исследований, посвященных различным аспектам организации образовательного процесса высшей школы в инновационной среде, а именно: проблемам проектирования и реализации компетентностно-ориентированных образовательных программ в учреждениях высшего образования, возможностям использования информационно-коммуникационных технологий в образовательном процессе, вопросам педагогики и методики высшего образования.

Предназначен для научных и педагогических работников высшей школы, будет полезен студентам, магистрантам и аспирантам университетов педагогических специальностей.

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INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF LANGUAGE TEACHING

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It is impossible to imagine contemporary life without information technology. The Internet with its vast opportunities, including social networks, has become an essential part of people's daily activities. So it is essential that teachers should incorporate information technology into teaching languages to students who are the most advanced users of all modern gadgets. They can use their tremendous potential to their benefit. The teacher's role is to think of the most efficient techniques of incorporating information technology resources into language learning and teaching.

One of the simplest ways of implementing this task is to use email. You can use it as a means of communication with students. It may be setting homework by email, students' returning the assignment via email, the teacher's providing them with feedback. Students can be asked to get in touch with various organizations to obtain relevant information (facts, figures, prices, terms, etc.) required for a large-scale project. It may be followed by processing and summarizing the data and making a PowerPoint presentation which is to be sent to the teacher by email.

For example, when I teach first-year students who major in programming and we work on the topic "My Future Profession", I ask them to send their CVs and cover letters to potential employers describing their educational background and experience of programming. First, they do some research what companies they can apply to, study where they operate, what they specialize in, what they can offer to employees. They may start with looking through job advertisements which are in abundance on the Internet. Such sites as Total jobs have several hundred up-to-date job ads. Then they make up a CV and a cover letter specific to that application thinking over their personal and professional strengths, how they can benefit the company, what makes them a good candidate for a job. If they send their CVs and cover letters to real employers, they can even be invited to a job interview. While doing this assignment, students enrich their vocabulary, get aware of some new realities concerning the process of job hunting and the world of programming on the whole. No doubt that it motivates students, makes them more ambitious in language learning. It can also make them think consciously about their future career and its prospects.

You can also keep students informed on a wide range of issues with the help of email. They can be related to the topic you are working on at the moment or can be of general interest. In the latter case, the teacher can recommend a recent film or a book. But most often it seems more relevant to inform students of something that has to do with the topic they are working on in class. While studying the topic "The Republic of Belarus", the teacher may send students the latest news in various spheres of life, e.g. economy, culture, business, science, education. Students may be asked to outline the news and comment on it. This task takes quite a lot of time so it is more preferable to do it at home and send to the teacher for evaluation than in class. Besides I can not but mention that there are always some students

who may be shy and lack confidence to express their thoughts and ideas in the presence of their group mates. So the format of communication via email with the teacher lets them be heard, which raises their self-esteem and in the long run can let them participate in class activities more freely.

As it has already been mentioned, the Internet has an enormous potential, which can benefit you if the process of learning is rationally organized. First of all, it must be admitted that specific websites devoted to teaching English are of major importance. Many of them have interactive multiple-choice tasks so students can get instant feedback having completed them. The discussion forum is another popular tool. Teachers and students post messages which others can read and reply to. Here we come across the best and at the same time the worst about the Internet. Anyone can upload their work. As a result one may find materials which are either methodologically unsound or linguistically incorrect. Besides, students must be ready to face some hostility or at least criticism to their postings. There is a simple solution to this problem. It seems reasonable for students to choose a specific forum recommended by the teacher. It will hardly prevent them from being criticized but at least it will enable the teacher to read students' postings and correct their mistakes either in class or by email.

The web is a great resource for planning lessons. First of all, it provides teachers with authentic texts which can be used for creating exercises of various kinds. One of the simplest ways to do it is to remove words from a chosen text to make a gap-fill exercise. In case of teaching elementary students, it is advisable to provide students with the missing words. Advanced students have to guess the words without any help. The teacher may want to focus on collocations (words which occur together). Another task may include reconstructing the text. The text is divided into a few parts which are mixed up. Students are to restore the proper sequence. One more task is practiced for pair work. One student in the pair gets a printout of a text with elements of the information removed, another student is given the same text with other elements removed. They are supposed to read their variants of the text, share the information to get the missing information. Students are stimulated to ask appropriate questions to elicit the information. Elementary level students can be provided with prompts to formulate questions.

Song lyrics are a very popular source for vocabulary work. They can be used in a gap-fill exercise or the teacher can make a lyrics quiz by taking and reading out lines form famous songs to be identified by students. The teacher may rewrite the lyrics so that some lines of a song are wrong. Students listen and correct the lyrics. The most creative students can be challenged to add their own verse to the song or shoot a video to the song. All the above-mentioned tasks appeal to students as most of them are music-lovers and listen to a wide variety of music produced by English speaking musicians.

Another task which requires using the web resources and opportunities and also stimulates students' interest in language learning expands their knowledge about the United Kingdom. It can also have a cultural effect breaking some stereotypes about the country and its people and borders between the two countries. There is access to various resources related to the UK. Students may be asked to work out an itinerary of a trip around the country. They are supposed to visit the websites of the hotels they are planning to stay at, the sites of the museums, various landmarks they want to visit. They are also to think about the means of transport, food, communication with local people, etc. This work is carried out in a team. So

students have to distribute their tasks, set deadlines for different activities, evaluate various options and choose the best ones. One of the main tasks is to decide how to present the output. It can be a brochure containing pictures, maps and texts. Or they may choose to make a PowerPoint presentation. All teams present their project and they also assess other ones. The teacher may propose the criteria according to which they decide on the best presentation. Students are asked to determine whether the project is relevant, practical, interesting, well-presented. Another point to take into account is whether all team members participated in that work, whether everybody contributed to it. The teacher's role is to coordinate this final stage, stimulate evaluation and discussion and correct students' mistakes in the most efficient way.

News websites make another great resource for learning and teaching English. It can especially benefit those students who major in journalism. Students can comment on the latest news or they may study how one event is covered at various news websites and make some conclusions concerning this particular event and a journalist's gob in general. News sites always have forums which provide students with an opportunity to express their opinions on the issues featured and practice the language in the real world.

Teachers of English can not ignore opportunities that YouTube gives to them. Its unlimited potential may be used to develop students' oral comprehension skills, speaking skills, to improve their pronunciation and to enrich their vocabulary. There are videos on every subject under the sun. They are documentaries, feature films, TV programmes, vlogs, etc. It is the teacher's task to choose relevant videos and decide how to incorporate them into class activities. As a rule the teacher provides students with a glossary to facilitate comprehension. Before watching a video students are asked to share their opinion on the topic which the video is devoted to. They are also told what feedback is expected after watching the video. They can do gap-fill exercises, state if the sentences are true of false, expand on the statements, answer the questions. Finally students are required to write an essay on the problem raised in the video. Authentic videos can illustrate students different linguistic aspects. They may compare the British and the American variants of the English language, draw students' attention to phonetic, grammar and vocabulary differences. Students also get more aware of the current changes in the language, its slang in particular. They may be exposed to the real life situations concerning their major, their future career. For instance, it is interesting for law students to watch a trial video. It can be a TV show or a real trial. The pre-watching stage includes questions-answers session to refresh students' relevant knowledge. While watching they are asked to describe the court room, the participants of the trial, their actions, speech, non-verbal ways of communicating. After watching the teacher asks to comment on the verdict, express their own opinion whether it is fair or not and explain why they think so. The most challenging follow-up activity is to role-play a trial similar to the one they have watched. It takes a lot of time and effort but it is a very efficient means of improving speaking skills, activating juridical vocabulary, motivating students to keep up their English.

There are many more techniques and ways of incorporating information technology into learning and teaching English. Their usage depends on learners' language proficiency, the purpose of learning the language, topics and some other factors. All tools are worth investigating and implementing. They do not replace face-to-face communication, they complement it, contribute to the creation of true-to-life atmosphere in class and out-of-class activities.