

USING MEDIAEDUCATIONAL TECHNIQUES IN THE CLASSROOM

The idea that technology can revolutionise education is not new. In the 20th century almost every new invention was supposed to have big implications for schools. Companies promoting typewriters, moving pictures, film projectors, educational television, computers and CD-ROMS have all promised to improve student performance.

It's hard to talk about schools today without talking about technology. Enthusiasts celebrate the wonders of tablets, virtual schools, and "blended" learning. That's why media education (or literacy) becomes a key component in the education of children and young people. Media education is part of basic entitlement of every citizen, in every country in the world, to freedom of expression and the right to information and is instrumental in building and sustaining democracy" [3, c. 273-274].

Media education in the modern world can be described as the process of the development of personality with the help of and on the material of media, aimed at the shaping of culture of interaction with media, the development of creative, communicative skills, critical thinking, perception, interpretation, analysis and evaluation of media texts, teaching different forms of self-expression using media technology [2, c.6].

According to the definition given in the UNESCO documents, Media Education:

- deals with all communication media and includes the printed word and graphics, the sound, the still as well as the moving image, delivered on any kind of technology;
- enables people to gain understanding of the communication media used in their society and the way they operate and to acquire skills using these media to communicate with others;
- ensures that people learn how to analyse, critically reflect upon and create media texts;
- identify the sources of media texts, their political, social, commercial and/or cultural interests, and their contexts;
- interpret the messages and values offered by the media;
- select appropriate media for communicating their own messages or stories and for reaching their intended audience;
- gain or demand access to media for both reception and production [2, c. 6].

Mediaeducational techniques make the process of teaching and learning English up-to-date and, thus, motivating. "Word cloud", „Photos for Captions" and "Dubbing" are mediaeducational techniques that can make your lesson interesting and funny [1, c. 49-51; 74-75].

"Word cloud" is one of the mediaeducational techniques which is known as a powerful way to really get through to visual learners in the classroom.

A "word cloud" is a graphical representation of word frequency. The bigger the words, the more frequent they are used in the text. You can type or paste text into the box on the site, press the button and generate the "word cloud". It is also easy to save and/or print the "cloud".

There are many ways of using "word clouds":

- Use word cloud tools to brainstorm a topic or create a discussion either inside the class or online;
- Use them to teach vocabulary;
- Use them in reading activities to promote comprehension;
- The entire class can use word clouds to react to a certain topic;
- Have pupils create word clouds that generate understanding of a concept, standards or vocabulary word;
- Illustrate classroom thoughts or views using a word cloud to survey students;
- Create a class word cloud that highlights class expectation;
- Post pupils first names to create a class or group word cloud;
- You can create a “word cloud” using works of famous writers for famous texts analyzing.

There are many free web-sites that help pupils and teachers to create their own “word clouds”:

- Wordle <http://www.wordle.net> – is a toy for generating “word clouds” from text that you provide. You can tweak your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes. You can print them out, or save them to the Wordle gallery to share with your friends.

- Tagxedo <http://www.tagxedo.com> – turns different texts into a visually stunning word cloud, words individually sized appropriately to highlight the frequencies of occurrence within the body of text.

- ABCya http://www.abcya.com/word_clouds.htm –for kids! Once it is ready with the results, you can make changes to the font or color and pick any layout at random.

- Word Mosaic http://www.imagechef.com/ic/word_mosaic/ – is a good idea to experiment with different colors, fonts and shapes. You can email your creations to various social network forums and have them posted. Saving information is easy.

Using these sites, you can: make word clouds in real-time; customize font, theme, color, orientation, and shape; save as images for printing and sharing; choose from many standard fonts; constrain the word cloud to selected shapes (heart, star, animals, etc); use images as custom shapes (e.g. a portrait, an animal silhouette).

Instructions:

1. Look at your friend’s “word cloud”.
2. Guess the topic of the “word cloud”.
3. Retell about your friend’s “Daily Routine”.

Everybody knows that a great advantage of video is that it provides authentic language input. Movies and TV programmes are made for native speakers, so in that sense video provides authentic language input. We can stop, start and rewind to repeat it for several times where necessary.

Of course there are also advantages of silent viewing. It arouses pupils' interests, stimulates thought, and develops skills of anticipation. In silent viewing, the video segment is played with the sound off using only the picture.

“Dubbing” can be done when pupils have the necessary language competence. Pupils are asked to fill in the missing dialogues after watching a sound-off video episode. It is interesting and enjoyable for the pupils to complete a scene from the video by dubbing.

References

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2. Fedorov, Alexander. On Media Education. Moscow: ICOS UNESCO IFAP (Russia), 2008. – 156 p.
3. Recommendations Addressed to the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization UNESCO, 1999, pp.273-274.