Section 3. Language Taching Methology. Pedagogy

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Teaching English Through the Integration of Laptop Equipment and the Associated Technologies at an English Class

"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew".
(Abraham Lincoln).

The educational system of Kyrgyzstan was greatly influenced by a number of factors, including gaining independence from the USSR and moving from the command economy to a market one. That is why, the Kyrgyz educational system had to solve a number of principal questions by reorganizing its Ministry of Education and redirect training programs at all educational levels in order to make education in our country susceptible to the needs of the modern global economy by being demand-driven, supple, student-oriented, concentrated on problem solving and practical usage of students' knowledge. As the Kyrgyz education is significantly supported and financed by different Western organizations and non-governmental institutions, including the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the World Bank, the SOROS Foundation, USAID, and other international sources, they have granted loans or subsidies of more than $50 million since 1993 to help create "open society" and introduce liberal educational values into the Kyrgyz education. (3, p. 154) As one of the basic features of the Western type of education is to use a lot of high-tech classroom equipment and technical aids; our Department of Education has to take up these challenges, and provide all secondary and higher educational institutions with modern sophisticated teaching classroom equipment.

Hence, teaching ESL English has developed into such thrilling and diversified forms, with a variety of teaching material and data, that with each day passing by, it becomes more and more challenging for an instructor to come into the classroom and conduct an adequate English lesson in front of the students' auditorium. With the infusion of high-tech into all aspects of daily life, more and more students become "computer-minded" and bring laptops to the AUCA or enjoy performing their academic duties on their PCs at home (some of them can even produce promotional companies' websites, which is quite intellectual and requires a lot of technical knowledge). Besides, there are some computer laboratories for students in the AUCA itself. Judging by this fact, the faculty should keep pace with their students and feel increasingly prepared to integrate technology into the classroom, because for the AUCA teaching staff, acting the opposite way may serve as an ill case for our technologically advanced students. With the world moving technically ahead at an immeasurable pace, it was once acknowledged that "...technologically savvy instructors must model instructional methods and activities ... which help future teachers understand that technology-based instruction is no longer an option. It is a requirement." (7)

As all Kyrgyz universities are now fee paying, student rights and expectations have changed. Today students want to get adequate education, provided by professional professors' staff and high-tech teaching pattern. Especially important does it become, when we speak about Chinese and Korean students, who come to study in the AUCA, since these nations are extremely technically-minded. At the same time, so much "high-tech" attention should be paid to teaching freshmen, as they represent a diversified students' group with different needs and reactions, different levels of knowledge, and most of such problems can be solved at the expense of interactive multimedia training. At the same time, this kind of instruction could undoubtedly even their knowledge level as quickly as it can be, together with the introduction of remedial courses and services offered. Although such remedial courses do not totally remove students' "defects". Moreover, misconception may occur from freshmen's side by thinking that "...they are not college material". (1, p. 199)

In recent years, higher education formations have commenced to invest intensively in forceful technological supply by creating environments in which faculty members use their own laptops at class, or both faculty and students have their own laptop computers inside the classroom. For instance, among the early incentives by higher education formations to demand the use of laptops by faculty and students in classrooms was "...the Laptop Initiative for Future Educators (LIFE) in the College of Education at the University of Texas at Austin..." (8)

So far, the use of active learning is favored by most teachers. Active learning is usually understood to "...stand in contrast to traditional classroom styles where teachers do most of the work, and students remain passive..." (2, p. xi) From this point of view, interactive multimedia teaching proves to be a practical tool to organize active learning in the classroom.

As teaching and learning is a partnership between students and faculty, laptop equipment can serve as a mediator to introduce educational technology into the classroom as a useful tool for studying and opening a wide range of information to create a richer teaching and learning culture, to establish a climate in which colleagues allure satisfaction in teaching and learning, enhance certitude about the efficacy of teaching, and share effective learning practices.

There are two basic teaching approaches. One teaching approach is to teach without the use of a computer or laptop, which excludes online training as well. Traditional alternatives falling under the category of non-computer training include teaching by case, teaching in

the form of a lecture, teaching by a union of lecture and case, and instruction by means of a major project. The second teaching approach will undoubtedly include the usage of modern technical aid equipment to provide interactive multi-media intelligence-based learning at an English class.

Firstly, it looked as if the laptop could yield more problems than assets, and some instructors used to resist computers in class. Certainly, it is never easy to update the style and the method one uses in his (her) teaching, but it is becoming more obvious today, that not only the future, but the present of teaching the English language belongs to the method of using high-tech capacities at the classroom. Many authors fix a number of reasons why some teachers are comfortable with the basics – textbooks, lecture notes, blackboards, and chalk – and introducing teaching technology into the classroom makes us a bit uneasy. "...Maybe, we worry about looking frantic and foolish in front of our students, as we search vainly for an isolated segment in a videotape. Perhaps, we shy away from using some advanced technologies, such as computers, because our students may know more about them, than we do. Probably, as creatures of habit, we just find it easier to stay with the tried and true, rather than experiment with an electronic presentation. Still, the educational potential inherent in technology, from creative uses of basic audiovisual equipment to more sophisticated equipment high-tech options, is impressive, and we would be foolish to dismiss it..." (2, p. 141) "...the Office of Social and Economic Data Analysis reported that at least 50 percent of instructors identified themselves as educational technology novices, and only 42 percent felt prepared to use technology in the classroom." (9) Those instructors, who incorporate laptop equipment and other sophisticated media into their classroom banalities, seem to get the score of their students significantly higher on all graded examinations than students of instructors who are used to sustaining traditional instructional and note-taking methods. With laptop equipment incorporated into executing their instructional process, such teachers enhance their students' motivation and curiosity in the course as well as teachers' competence in the process of teaching.

While delivering a lesson in the classroom, where students have laptops which either use some computer teaching programs or are networked, it is crucial to keep in mind that a teacher actually conducts a holistically integrated classroom with a "partner" – a laptop. The more computers a teacher has in the classroom, the more opportunities this circumstance opens for him (her), and the more "virtual classroom teachers" it provides. Today modern computers with excellent technical performances can serve as effective "teaching stations" with all necessary media tools, which can easily turn a computer into a VCD/DVD player, a recorder with a microphone, a video camera, etc. With the laptops up or with the computers on, a teacher has a computer laboratory, and thus, integrates seamlessly the following two linguistic environments - a lecture and interactive multimedia training - into a single coordinated and ordered lesson, and exploits the strengths of each where and when appropriate during the class. If the laptop is covered down, a teacher will have a ropy, ordinary lecture room. Blackboard is quite satisfactory to use as a classroom implement. But vexation is strong, however, when the teaching high-tech does not work.

There exist a great number of positive factors about the usage of a laptop or Internet resources in the class. An instructor can prepare a complete set of notes, lectures, materials including audio and video files and place them on the Web, which they are encouraged to download and study after the class is done, with the help of their laptops, USB disks and their PC desktops. If an instructor wants students to pay sole attention to his (her) lecturing, one

can insist on their shutting the laptop covers. In this case, an instructor may organize the traditional classroom environment without having the students being burdened with their laptops. After introducing some material on a topic, an instructor may prepare an in-class set of exercises for the students to perform with their laptops or with their PC desktops: concepts just presented are reinforced through the designed exercises. An instructor may tell his (her) students to open their laptop covers and deflect from the habitual course of a lecture to the computer environment. This flexible back-and-forth approach of switching between "laptops down" and "laptops up" proves to be highly effective, because it enables students to plunge actively into the learning process and does not allow them to distract their attention.

Certainly, one of the questions posed while introducing laptop equipment into the class is how to control what students are doing with their laptops during the class. Some ratio of control over students' performance is interwoven into most modern computer teaching programs. "...Such software like CrossTec Corp.'s "NetOp School" and SMART Technologies' "SynchronEyes" allow instructors to effectively control what students are doing with their laptops..." (7) These types of programs also grant instructors a chance of monitoring and taking control of a student's computer device, as well as of projecting the screen of a student's laptop so that everyone in class can see it. The application of such software turns students off using their laptops for anything that is non-class related (e.g.: playing games on a laptop in class).

Modern computer equipment enhances the teacher's possibility of using a variety of teaching methods – visual, auditory, etc.., and of developing interest from students to the educational process. Laptop training programs help to coordinate and improve educational values of a student and better comprehension of training data by means of introducing high-tech computer technologies during the class. This helps students be well-organized and better prepared with their homework. Laptops yield better conditions for building up different course projects. Some computer programs can serve as a serious regular quizzes and tests' fount and contain "self-evaluation" options to monitor their progress at home. As a laptop is very "spacious" for some information storage, it serves as a very promising data concentration tool for more teaching and reference material and, thus, gives more opportunity for overwhelming course preparation at home (e.g.: investigate electronic versions of study guides prior to a test or revise main postulates of a quiz or a lecture for students to aid themselves). Many students like to chat online, so organizing this kind of course activity online with the help of laptops could encourage students to join into small discussion groups to be more relaxed and easy-going and come up with good ideas thanks to non-official environment. If group work is not very helpful to learning, some students shoulder a burden while others do not involve: in this case an instructor conducts a class with some integrated teaching forms. At the same time, an instructor should have endless patience with students who have low levels of computer knowledge proficiency and experiences with using laptops in a learning environment.

By reason of students' different personal problems, an instructor should be flexible to allow students to work at their own pace and give enough complicacy to let individual interests and needs be satisfied. Such sophisticated equipment as a laptop can afford extensive course assignments that give the student impetus to better critical thinking and problem solving. But if the rank, which the student owns in the academic hierarchy, is low, access to web resources, as well as laptop equipment with some associated programs, that teach through sharing simulation and decision-making, can turn to be particularly valuable. In addition, a

laptop can aid to span gaps in student's learning by helping them surmount complication with lower level skills.

A computer, with its magnificent network system, represents global, rather than just local, examples that can give the best overall picture of the question or of the problem under discussion. This interactive multimedia training method enables teachers to be really democratic towards their students (e.g.: testing students with the help of computer equipment avoids bios on the side of the teacher and also demolishes prejudgment and partiality, thus demonstrating a democratic approach, in that the test, done by the student on the basis of the computer program, is tested by the same computer, not by an instructor).

Those assignments, which are given to students on CDs or on USB disks, may be made not ropy but impressive. They penetrate deeply into the course material. With a laptop, course materials are accessible and right at students' fingertips no matter where the students are: outside the class or at home, or whenever they want to fit them in. And all that is possible only thanks to laptop equipment.

A laptop gives opportunities to explore more and provides easy access to research. If a student deals with a lot of information served by a computer and sees that daily more and more data appear in the world, a student will develop quite a positive feature of his character – an attitude that life is nothing more but an interminable process of learning. Laptops help students read through notes and organize material inside the computer. Besides, with this progressive "intellectual" device, students, in order to keep their information safe, can back up their data not to lose them completely. By owning strong impetus on students, laptops keep students working with their course material on a regular basis. They allow students to study ahead for a test rather than cram at the last minute and originate better approaches to essay writing or making course presentations, which is done by means of in-built presentation and style options, coming from some types of encyclopedias. A laptop will act as a good portfolio instrument: with the notebook a student is quite restricted in expressing his (her) academic inventiveness, because it's a "closed" domain of his thoughts put into the written language, which will primarily be used by a teacher, but not, for example, by his classmates. But by learning through a website or multimedia presentation a student can be involved in an open dialogue with anyone in the world who cares to listen and to watch. Furthermore, what record of their traditional learning a student does in a traditional classroom is more likely to take away with him (her) at the end of the year, whereas a laptop allows the student to record in an affable format, to use it as the storage evidence of a wide range of different learning home assignments, successfully prepared and saved on a device. To sum up, it can be anything that is maintained electronically or grabbed on a video camera: situational dialogues, intellectual contents, board games, presentations, producing scenarios, posters, role plays, public speeches, debates, simulations, class teaching, course movies, etc. Laptop students get a better quality of education since they are exposed to nontraditional methods of teaching which pushes them on. It is nice and convenient, when a laptop is wireless, because it acquires the quality of portability and can be used in such places as the library or the cozy hall, and make preparation for the class more comfortable.

Today some students would prefer to have all their course lectures on the portal. They would have an orientation to the library, since they use the Internet much more and feel lost in the library. Teachers should demonstrate students how to apply specific Web site content to specific analytical frameworks. There are some guiding principles behind the laptop practice: to use the technology as students use it, to mix theory lecture in with technology use and to

keep students busy in class. "...One survey was conducted anonymously and students were given no incentive for completing the survey. In regards to which technologies worked well, over 60 % of the students responded, that Web based real time analysis as used in the course was the most significant enhancer of the course..." (10)

The students' excitement which comes from interactive multimedia training is difficult to overestimate. Here is some summary coming from the feedback of the students who participated in such learning: "... (a) I would continue to use media and Internet resources and games to explain the information and give us a context to put it into. The movies allow us to watch the information in action and then analyze it. The Internet articles and games allow us to actually apply what we have learned and see how well we know the information..." (b) "...I like how it is fun and the lessons are exciting and not dull and lecturish. The PowerPoint presentations and the clips to demonstrate the things we learned in class are great..." (c) "...The best thing about the course is the teaching method used by the professor. The classroom is equipped with interactive teaching equipment and the Power Point organized the material into categories making them easy to learn. I feel I get more out of the actual class than any other class..." (d) "...It is excellent that there are always games, activities, and videos to help tie lessons together instead of just simply taking notes and listening to lectures..." (e) "...The best thing about this course is that it is very interesting and interactive. Because of this, I am able to retain information longer and I am more willing to learn the information and work hard..." (5)

Teachers also illustrate their point concerning the productiveness of interactive-multimedia training by observing and stating that with the introduction of laptop training, the difference in teaching quality and student motivation is marked, and that students who achieve the praise awards from their peers are not necessarily A* students. Changes in teaching include variations to more classroom interactivity, greater feedback, use of more materials and greater accessibility. Changes in learning focus on more student discussion, initiative, cooperation and preparation for class. Classes have more penetration and plunging into the topic under discussion, more group, collaboration work. Classes are "extended", because students can work on materials at any time.

One more integral feature about a laptop classroom can be mentioned. Unlike the exercise book classroom, a laptop classroom resembles the multimedia 'authentic world' our students inhabit, and will be employed by when they leave school. There is a very pertinent quotation in a John Simkin's article, taken from Dale Spender's book *Nattering on the Net: Women, Power and Cyberspace*, that highlights what is now the central problem of the traditional exercise book classroom: "It's a teaching/learning model that is out of synch with the rest of the world. Many of today's students can tell you in no uncertain terms just how "unreal" (and boring, and silly) the educational context is. Traditional educational theory, practice and organization are each day becoming more irrelevant and unworkable: just as the scribal model became obsolete after print was invented." (6)

Laptop teaching implies not only wide range of possibilities, but also a number of technical responsibilities, such as: (a) using software compatible with products and programs provided by the university; (b) all assignments should be completed using the programs specified by the instructor of each class; (c) using software legally, etc.. At the same time, sadly some teachers use technology primarily as padding for lectures, without much prudence as to how students enhance from such technique. It is consoling, as expected, to abridge our training

preparation time, knowing that a media material will take trouble of carrying most of the training burden in a classroom. Though, even at this level of high-tech usage of overhead projector or computer graphics, students reap the benefit of developing different learning styles, being "...sensitive to the power of visualization..." (4) To add to, students who are trained only with computer modeling software programs are inert "victims" in the learning process, if they do not have lively communication with each other: students will win greatly from any teacher's advice that directs them toward interaction with one another as a condition of learning with this sophisticated technology. The new teaching technology gives students "a more active role in constructing knowledge, with an implicit change in the role of the teacher (6, p.19) In connection to this, the researcher John Bransford indicates, that "...pictures are better remembered than words, and words that can be imagined are easier to retain than less imaginable words. Imagery, therefore, seems to have powerful effects in learning and retention tasks..." (5, p. 190) Meyers C. and Jones T.B. indicate that "...sound and image are used as emotional and symbolic tools..." (2, p. 149) Such approaches become very helpful, especially at the beginner's level, when learning English vocabulary on an intensive base can be eased by using pictorial electronic tools. Our AUCA libraries have a notable line-up of videocassettes and CD-based materials, designated specifically for the classroom usage.

How does the laptop program affect instructor's teaching, and what does it imply? More work for a teacher, more interesting teaching assignments, and more professional development.

Laptop courses tend to contain more active learning experiences. Research shows that this is important. Laptop classes tend to have more cooperative learning experiences. Research also shows that this is important, as employers are looking for students with team experiences. Mobile computing is a fact of life in our society today.

It is crucial for any university to raise the faculty's academic level with technology. The long-serving instructors could organize summer workshops as unique, substantial instruments in how to use basic technology. Faculty could have a more progressive approach toward laptops, after receiving introductory training on their professional computer skills and abilities: all instructors, unfamiliar with the fundamentals of operating a computer, could get an explanation of software programs, applications, and technology available for use; and an adaptation to the standard classroom before getting to classroom modeling or sessions. It is possible for long-serving instructors to teach "observation lessons", as if they teach during the fall or spring semester. The long-serving teachers model many different ways of sufficiently integrating technology in the classroom during a standard lesson, while all other instructors serve as the "students". This allows the new instructors to see different teaching styles, as well as several advanced methods of using and incorporating technology. "...The results of mentoring process (FDW [faculty development workshop]) indicate that when technologically non-minded instructors participated in the three-phase program designed to help show them how to integrate technology into the lesson plan, both the student and the instructor had a richer, fuller classroom experience..." (9) The mentor provides new instructors with an additional resort with whom to talk, reflect, brainstorm, or simply ask questions. It is important that the new instructors feel comfortable with technology before trying to incorporate it into a lesson plan. Any university should possess the so called "hard-core faculty" who have already exploited and grasped how to use high-tech in the classroom.

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Педагогические условия использования художественного текста в процессе поликультурного воспитания студентов

В контексте формирования поликультурной личности современное гуманитарное образование ориентировано на развитие таких качеств, которые направлены на обеспечение ценностно-смыслового восприятия самоценности личности, присущим ей индивидуальным особенностям. Обращение к внутреннему миру личности, осознание ответственности за самореализующее образование и развитие личностных качеств человека является важным направлением воспитательной работы. Личностный подход предполагает развитие внутренней сущности воспитуемого, включающей в себя смыслы, предпочтения, мотивы и жизненные ориентации. При этом в качестве основных средств используются переживания личности в процессе усвоения социального опыта, способность принятия самостоятельных решений, основанных на самопознании и нравственно-волевой саморегуляции.