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IMMERSIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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Abstract
This article explores the immersive approach to teaching the English language, emphasizing its pedagogical foundations, practical methods, and benefits for learners. It highlights how immersion creates a natural and effective language acquisition environment by surrounding students with English in real-life contexts. The article outlines strategies such as English-only instruction, task-based learning, role-play, and content integration, while also discussing curriculum design and assessment techniques aligned with immersion. The immersive method promotes language fluency, confidence, and cultural awareness, making it an effective alternative to traditional language teaching methods.

Keywords: Immersive learning, english language teaching, language acquisition, task-based learning, content and language integrated learning (CLIL), communicative competence, language immersion, pedagogical strategies.

Introduction

The evolution of current trends in pedagogical methodology, in the context of creating new and revising existing teaching methods, has become the foundation for the emergence of immersive technologies. Exploring all the possibilities for implementing the immersive approach in the educational process, developing scientific and pedagogical support, and analyzing the outcomes obtained is the task of scholars, lecturers, and teachers [1]. A competent approach to interpreting the prospects of immersive technologies in the context of professional training across various fields of activity will reveal both the strengths and weaknesses of these technologies to participants in the educational process.

Among the essential skills through which individuals acquire important and necessary information is the mastery of foreign languages. Consequently, this article investigates the didactic potential of immersive technologies using the example of foreign language learning. In this area, it is possible to provide learners

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with instructional material, its practical application, and expand the types of classroom activities, thereby increasing student motivation in learning foreign languages. In addressing the relevance of the above topic, the authors focus on the exceptional capabilities and the vast, yet still insufficiently explored, didactic potential of immersive technologies.

The aim of this study is to determine the potential of immersive technologies in teaching foreign languages to students of technical universities. The following objectives are addressed:

To conduct a comparative analysis of existing approaches related to the research topic;

To present the main characteristics of the immersive approach and the immersive educational environment;

To define the concept of "immersive technologies," their advantages, and the challenges of their application in education;

To justify the use of immersive technologies in teaching foreign languages to students in technical disciplines;

To analyze promising directions for the introduction of immersive technologies into the process of foreign language learning in technical education;

To conduct a survey of foreign language department faculty and students at a technical university to identify their attitudes toward the use of immersive technologies in education.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

At present, immersive technologies have become the subject of active study by both domestic and foreign researchers. An analysis of scientific literature shows that the first developments in this field began in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. In 1992, J. Steuer made an attempt to define virtual reality based on technological variables, which could be used to classify virtual reality in relation to other mass media. This definition is based on the concepts of "presence" and "telepresence" and refers to the sensation of being in an environment created by natural or mediated means [2].

In subsequent works, researchers increasingly turned their attention to exploring the possibilities of virtual reality in education. For example, S. Bronack examined the role of immersive media in online education. According to him, educators are

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increasingly integrating immersive media into their academic courses. Virtual worlds, serious games, simulations, and augmented reality enable students and teachers to interact with content and with each other in new ways [3]. New models of instructional design, content delivery, and facilitation of learning are emerging, many of which are aimed at supporting 21st-century learners.

The works of M. Dunleavy, C. Dede, and R. Mitchell investigate the possibilities and limitations of immersive augmented reality (AR) simulations for participants in the educational process. By conducting numerous studies through formal and informal interviews, direct observations, website publications, and site documents, the authors collected a substantial amount of data showing that technology-mediated communication and interactive collaborative problem-solving opportunities offered by AR simulations were particularly appealing—especially to students who had previously posed behavioral and academic challenges for instructors. It was also noted that while AR simulations provided strong learning outcomes, they simultaneously presented unique technological, managerial, and cognitive challenges for teaching and learning [4].

Among domestic (Russian) research from this period, the works of S. F. Sergeev (2008) are of particular interest. They focus on the development of the concept and resources of educational and professional immersive environments. An immersive environment is described as a technogenic environment possessing properties of artificial intelligence, with which a person interacts by immersing themselves during various activities. The author also discusses the technological progress in visualization tools, the emergence of software for designing 3D objects, and the creation of artificial environments that closely resemble physical reality in their sensory impact on human perception [5].

The expansion and diversification of the technological component of virtual reality is further developed in the works of modern scholars such as C. Lee and P. Cesar. They define virtual reality (VR) as working within a simulated interactive virtual space that provides synthetic sensory feedback in response to user actions [6]. They also highlight social virtual reality as a specific type of VR system that allows multiple users to join a shared virtual environment and communicate with each other, usually through visual and auditory cues.

The current state of this field continues to be actively studied by both Russian and international researchers. Y. V. Kornilov examines the features of applying the

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immersive approach in the education system, which is based on techniques and methods for establishing effective interaction between teachers and learners within an immersive learning environment. He also identifies the interdependence of the immersive approach with other previously existing educational approaches, which, in the author's view, contributes to the overall effectiveness of the learning process [7].

The integration of virtual reality technologies into the educational process has become so widespread that studies have now emerged presenting systematic reviews of the literature, analyzing and synthesizing findings in this area.

DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Originally, the concept of «immersion» referred to «being immersed» or the «effect of presence» and had no connection to education. The phenomenon of immersion has long been studied in relation to its use in theater, literature, and painting. The essence of this approach lies in shifting viewers from being mere observers to becoming direct participants in the depicted events. In such a situation, the action is perceived by the audience as something they are present in, and they experience it as the «reality» of the stage performance. The development of immersion found its expression in cinema and was referred to as the effect of telepresence. The further advancement of digital technologies has contributed to the creation of a full immersion and interactivity effect, thereby leading to the emergence and formation of immersive environments based on virtual reality.

Virtual reality (VR) refers to «the use of computer technology to simulate a three-dimensional environment, allowing users to interact with virtual objects in a way that generates a sense of presence» [5]. In continuation of this topic, the following technologies should also be mentioned:

Augmented Reality (AR);

Mixed Reality (MR);

3D immersive learning, three-dimensional visualization, and environment simulation, which offer users a wide range of interaction opportunities with the environment [6].

An immersive learning environment is considered a «construct» representing a system that dynamically influences users through various components of a simulated external/internal environment [7]. The immersive learning environment

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has several distinct characteristics: redundancy, richness, constructability, observability, autonomy, integrity, motivation-generation, and interactivity.

With such a set of significant features, the immersive learning environment exerts a systemic impact on the learners' sensory modalities, thereby facilitating deeper and more comprehensive mastery of their chosen profession. The correlation between the immersive approach and pre-existing educational approaches determines the interactivity of the learning process. It is assumed that the development of subjectivity and the improvement of the learner's personality occur within the framework of the activity-based approach, while learners' readiness for self-knowledge, self-development, and self-realization is defined by the contextual approach and is realized through the functioning of the educational system.

It is noteworthy that due to the importance of informational aspects in the study of various objects, processes, and natural or social phenomena, the information-based approach has become the most closely related to the immersive approach. The correlation between the principle of visualization in education and the immersive approach promotes learners' acquisition of sensory-based knowledge, which helps them comprehend abstract concepts. This is supported by an emphasis on visual tools made possible through deep immersion in virtual reality using technological means. The principle of complexity implies the engagement of all human senses in the perception of educational content. It is anticipated that the immersive approach may become one of the fundamental elements in the transformation of modern education [8].

CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of the immersive approach in education is beyond doubt, primarily because its main advantage lies in the fact that learners, through participation in immersive projects, become active participants in the learning process. They engage in searching for and selecting the necessary information, learning tools, and presentation opportunities. Moreover, immersive technologies allow for the realistic perception of objects and events that are otherwise out of reach, create a safe learning environment, and—thanks to a game-based approach—enhance student engagement and motivation.

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