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Some videoconferencing software may be use in teaching-learning foreign language

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The article presents a general concept of distance training technology with ICT applications, summary some foreign language teaching-learning methods, technical factors affecting the implementation of a training program with the application of information technology and communication; the use of online videoconferencing application supporting language training. At the same time, the article also suggests, introduces some videoconferencing software currently popular, mostly free of charge, can be used in the teaching-learning languages in the foreign language institutions in Vietnam.

The development of distance education is associated with technological progress: "*Even when a technology was invented media (radio, telephone, television, etc.); it is used to develop distance learning system*" (Blandin, B., 2004).

Since the sixties of the last century to recent years, the tools such as television, video, cassette, CD and DVD, and especially the creation of personal computers has contributed to begin the multimedia era. Today, in the age of Internet and virtual platforms, we see new concept appeared: "information technology and communications" (ICT) (Drissi, MMH & *al.*, 2006).

The innovation of teaching and learning methods, the application of ICT in the process of training are objective, urgent requirements in short and long term; are the decisive factors improving the education and training high quality in the digital era.

In the traditional classroom, students should contact directly with the teacher; in the distance training, teachers and students have the flexibility in environment and time. The online videoconferencing software - take advantage of all of these training models - is a combination of simultaneous activities (synchrony) and not at the same time (asynchrony) that allows students to contact directly with their teachers, to learn at the pace and appropriated time; but not has to arrive to the place organizing the course.

The research team, including teachers from Japan Tsukamoto, M., Nuspliger, B., and Senzaki, Y., in 2005, use the online videoconferencing software named Skype to connect their classrooms in Japan to a university partner in the United States. The study

results showed that Japanese students practice speaking skill in English more often than normal through the Skype software; and students also participate more actively in activities of classroom through the software (Tsukamoto, M. & *al.*, 2009).

It is also in a research project on online applications in education in 2003, an experimental course taught in French language (FLE) in Applied Linguistics Center of Besançon, France, was deployed to connect remotely via network to Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan. The connection is made through the Polycom ViewStation H323 system running on IP (Internet Protocol), the terminal is Polycom ViewStation FX. The recorded results show that the learners of French language in both France and Japan did not have any problem while performing the role play, because they did the language practice repeatedly through system. They also felt more confident when doing presentations because they have time and be proactive to prepare content of their presentation (Marcelli, A. & *al.*, 2005).

In traditional teaching method, knowledge is commonly transmitted from the teacher to the learner who waits and receives passively the opportunity to practice the language given by the teacher.

Currently, communication methods has and have been put to use in some foreign language institutions in Vietnam - learners try proactively to learn the content, to participate in the learning activities, to practice language skills under the guidance of teachers to achieve communication goals - with the support of ICT tools. Numerous foreign language training programs was built with the goal of improving the quality of education through ICT, many tools are integrated, and many functions are included in the software for the training program. However, over time, lacking of scenarios for attracting students, many of these programs do not run efficiency, and has been gradually removed or reduced their activities.

For a successful application of ICT in the teaching of foreign languages training program, in parallel with the innovation of teaching methods, curricula, learning materials, it is necessary to select and use the appropriate ICT tools. In most cases, for the quality of teaching, the advanced curriculum of foreign language training requires the practice for all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Therefore, we need for tools to support these all four skills.

In his study, Pascal Marquet said that there are three interrelated and interdependent factors affecting the operation of a training program with the application of ICT, such as didactic artefact, pedagogical artefact and technical artefact. If one of

three artefacts is not respected, it is difficult to obtain good results in the training program with the application of ICT. (P. Marquet, 2005).

In this paper, we will discuss only on the technical artefact and introduce some online videoconferencing software can be used in online foreign language training.

Talking about online tools is talking of the Internet, an indispensable factor when implementing a training program. First of all, the quality of the Internet connection is a major influence on the implementation of the program, then the other technical tools to support audio, images, interactive whiteboard... are also significant impact for the success of the program. These tools often need to be invested in time to build or learn how to use (if using free version).

The technical tools to perform an online working session first of all include: a computer or smart devices (tablets, mobile phones...) with connection to the Internet; microphone and speakers (or headphones with microphone integrated, speaker and microphone integrated in the laptops) to transmit and receive sounds; webcam to transmit and receive videos, images. Depending on the requirements of the training program, we need the corresponding configuration of computers, microphones, speakers, to have appropriate sounds, images.

Then we need to have software systems. There are three types of videoconferencing software:

- Software installed on each individual computer,
- Integrated software in a dedicated hardware device or specifically designed for a fixed hardware,
- Web-based software.

The different software systems are often incompatible with each other. When teachers and students want to be connected, they have to use the same software. Whatever is not required, but the software installed in the personal computer need to be updated in all computers. We suggest some of the following videoconferencing software. Of course, there are many others software, here, we choose the software that we had the opportunity to use for experience.

1. Software installed on each individual computer:

The advantage of this type of software is the deployment very easy, because teachers and learners can download (usually for free) and install the software on a

personal computer. The system features support four skills in foreign teaching and learning: Listening (call / video chat, video / audio messaging, embedded video from YouTube...); Speaking (call / video chat, video / audio messaging); Reading (text messages, sending files, screen sharing...) and Writing (text messaging, screen sharing, sending files...). However, the system do not offer any features related to the interactive exercises (QCM...); there is not calendar for classes, authorization for class members (teachers, students...), and study reports. Technically, the features of this kind of software entirely dependent to the supplier; the quality of sound and picture is limited by the computer terminal equipments of teachers and learners. Therefore, when using this type of software, we should apply the model of blended learning. Some examples of videoconferencing software systems:

1.1. ooVoo: A video chat application is completely free and has over 75 million users worldwide. Users can make video calls and send instant messages. Some key features:

- Send large files: let's send the file size exceeds the allowed limit that email, so that users can share favorite video and audio files on ooVoo.

- Send a video message: It is possible to leave a video message for free (up to 5 minutes) for people who are currently not logged into ooVoo; users are allowed to upload these messages to their social networks.

- Record video calls: Record any video and upload to YouTube.

- Send Instant Message: You can send messages even when you're on video chatting.

- Group video chats: Users can create a group chat synchronously on ooVoo with many members.

- Screen sharing: Screen sharing feature allows users to share a file, image, chart... in video chat sessions.

- Watch together: It allows adding YouTube videos into a group conversation via video chat.

- Find and make friends easily.

1.2. Skype: A software system for free calls over the network. In addition, users can also chat live via Skype. It also allows users to send large files that they cannot send by email. However, with the free version, some features have not been available, such

as screen sharing, group meeting...

1.3. Google talk / Hangouts: A system that allows sending messages, pictures, emoticons and make video calls; available in Gmail, Google+, iOS or Android devices and as an extension of Chrome, users can keep in touch despite being in a fixed place or on the move.

1.4. Yahoo! Messenger: A program and instant messaging client very popular with advertising provided by Yahoo! This is a free program that users can download it for use with a Yahoo! account, which allows connection to other Yahoo! services, such as Yahoo! Mail. Users can be automatically notified when receiving an email. Yahoo! provides call features from computer to computer, transfer files, use the webcam, messaging service, and chat with many different types.

1.5. Camfrog: A powerful system utility that allows users participate in online video chat room, to be able to hear, see and chat with others at the same time. Users can participate in a room with about 1000 users and just click on name someone to start observing. Press the 'talk' to talk to the entire room with audio chat. The video chat rooms are hosted by broadband users and software running Camfrog Video Chat Room Server, so any user can always set up a video conferencing, then others can join in.

2. Integrated software in a dedicated hardware device or specifically designed for a fixed hardware:

The advantage of this type of software is the quality of sound and image is relatively high, because the software is integrated into the hardware. The system features support four skills in foreign teaching and learning: Listening (call / video chat, audio chat...); Speaking (call / video chat, audio chat); Reading (text messages, screen sharing...) and Writing (text messaging, screen sharing...). However, the system do not offer any features related to the interactive exercises (QCM...); there is not calendar for classes, authorization for class members (teachers, students...), and study reports. In economic terms, as the hardware and software for commercial use, the investment cost can be high, it can only be deployed in two or a certain number of learning points, and it cannot be equipped for individual users (teachers, learners...). To join the course, the teachers and learners have to arrive to certain locations which have equipment set. Therefore, when using this type of software, we should apply the model of blended learning, and only apply the implementation for bilateral cooperation programs (there are 2 locations fixed for the teaching and learning). Some examples of videoconferencing software systems:

2.1. Multi points video conferencing system software from Sony: PCS-VCS HD / SD (High Definition / Standard Definition) (Communication Server software) - provides a virtual conferencing communication environment, and support multi-point connection for two or 3 points and up to 500 different points. Sony also extends the possibility to connect to Windows PC anywhere with the broadband networks through PCS-EP Endpoint software. With this virtual conferencing communication, visual meetings can be virtually conducted from any remote location. This software allows flexibility and expensively the connection between the videoconferencing products of Sony.

2.2. RealPresence videoconferencing system software from Polycom: The two software versions of "Polycom RealPresence Mobile" and "Polycom RealPresence Desktop" enhance the ability to share content while expanding on many devices produced by Apple, LG, Samsung and Sony; the ability to extend video collaboration and high quality content to multiple smartphones, tablets. Polycom RealPresence Mobile lets users easily connect to tablets, smartphones running iOS and Android with other standard video system at anywhere as moving on the road, remote areas... In addition, the software can share many file formats, such as jpg, png, html, PDF, PowerPoint, Excel and Word which stored on the device or in the cloud storage services; can remotely control the camera; connect a tablet with the Polycom videoconferencing system by wireless connection; can control all functions of a videoconferencing such as adjust the volume, turn off, restart, stop by the Polycom RealPresence through a tablet... Polycom RealPresence Desktop is a high quality video collaboration system for computers running Windows, Mac; with the connection from anytime and anywhere, it aims to increase the benefits of the videoconferencing system.

3. Web-based software

The advantage of this type of software is the deployment is very easy, because teachers and students do not have to install; they can use an Internet browser to participate in teaching and learning sessions. Some systems allow the free download to install on the server of training institution, making favorable conditions for modules adding, and development on specific features. The system features support four skills in foreign teaching and learning: Listening (call / video chat, video / audio messaging); Speaking (call / video chat, video / audio messaging); Reading (text messages, slideshows, screen sharing...) and Writing (text messaging, screen sharing, sending files, forum...). The system has a calendar for classes, an authorization for class members (teachers, students...). However, the system do not offer any features related to the

interactive exercises (QCM...), and study reports. Therefore, when using this type of software, we should apply the model of blended learning. Some examples of videoconferencing software systems:

3.1. Bigbluebutton (BBB) System: The system include 15 different open source software (Red5, Asterix, Nginx, BBB, Tomcat,...) running on PC, Mac, and Unix. This is a free system of video conferencing software which can be redesigned to a virtual classroom format - simulation of different tools in traditional classroom, especially in foreign language classroom - can transmit pictures, sounds, movies, text... It has been divided into different modules. The system's interface is user-friendly for online teaching and learning. BBB system differs from other systems in that it supports an unlimited number of webcam screens; supports the online slideshow with many file formats (PDF, PPT, images...) and supports the sharing of all or a part of the computer screen. There are three main privileges in the BBB system: learners, teachers / trainers; and moderators (may be included the privileges of teachers). The system can support the teaching of the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing in the foreign language curriculum.

3.2. Adobe Connect System: Similar to BBB system, but Adobe Connect is commercial software, sold under the copyright. Adobe Connect system has some key features such as broadcasting the video of teachers; play audio (voice, sound); PowerPoint presentations; screen slideshows to share other applications; screened windows sharing; chatting room; files transfer; exchange forum...

Conclusion

Videoconferencing - a tool to be applied in foreign language teaching and learning - creates a favorable environment for communication and exchange of lesson content and support the good classroom management, to ameliorate the acquisition competencies of learners, to improve the quality of training, to motivate the learners and teachers. However, for the moment, depending on some technical conditions, when there is the need to deploy to the language training programs, we should choose the model of blended learning between learning in regular classroom and learning on the videoconferencing which can be a tool to supplement the learning. When we want to deploy a language training programs entirely online, in addition to pay special attention to the teaching staff, the program development, the curriculum, we have to build a content management system which support the interaction, the assessment... for a successful online language training program.

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