PRACTICAL STRATEGIES USED FOR TEACHING ENGLISH TO DEAF STUDENTS AT BAUMAN MOSCOW STATE TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

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Teaching Deaf Students at Bauman: History

Mainstream

- Years 1 – 3 – Center on Deafness
- Later: joining mainstream

ADVANTAGES:

- integration into the national system of higher education
- orientation towards the common integrated job market

Our Students

- Age: 17-23-year-olds
- Educational Level:

  - 68% – specialized schools for the deaf

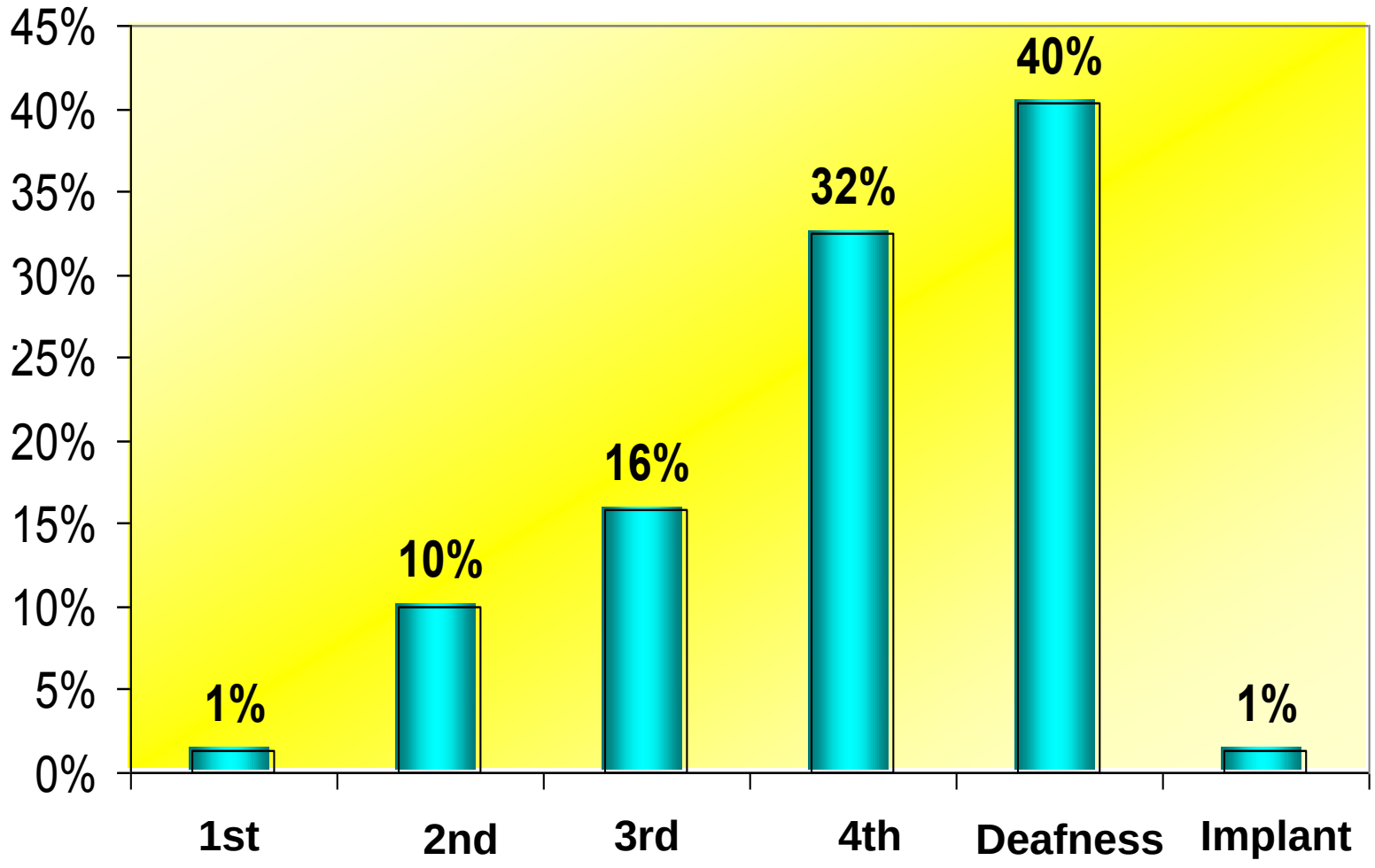
  - 32% – ordinary secondary schools

- Initial Level of English:

  - 80% - beginners (0 – 4 years of English instruction at school)

  - 20% - pre-intermediate students

Hearing Loss



Importance of English

- development of science and engineering
- necessity to cope with growing wealth of information
- Russia's integration into world economy
- growing cooperation between Russian scientists and students with their counterparts abroad
- participation of the Center on Deafness in PEN-International project

Goals and Objectives of English Language Program

- Reading (emphasis on computer engineering)
- Writing (short essays, e-mail messages)
- Speaking (make oneself understood, optional)

Organization of Studies

- small groups of 6-8 students each (depending on initial level)

Levels

- **Level 1a** (English for beginners)
- **Level 1b** (English for “false” beginners)
- **Level 2** (English for lower intermediate students)

Every year – **3 groups** of first-year students (6 subgroups & 6 teachers of English)

Group Formation

- a short test (to find out level of knowledge)
- a simple questionnaire (hearing needs and abilities)

Groups by level

- 2 beginner groups
- 2 - 3 groups of “false” beginners
- 1 - 2 groups of lower-intermediate students

Beginner Program

Deafness Department - three years (six terms)

- terms 1 – 2 - rules of reading, basic Grammar; basic skills, simple texts;
- terms 3 – 5 - more complicated texts, more advanced Grammar (e.g. Non-Finite Forms of the Verb);
- 6th term - authentic articles from scientific journals.

Joining mainstream for another two terms of English.

Hours

- Course lasts four years as compared to three years with hearing students
- Hours:

  2 academic hours (1 hr and 30 min.) + 2-hour consultation per week

  272 hr of classroom training

Individualized Instruction

- individual consultations (tutoring)
- written assignments sent via e-mail (*Appendix 1*).

- **Marking students' papers**

different colors and other ways of highlighting (*Appendix 1a*).

Instructional Materials

Textbooks

- Same textbook as for hearing students
- Materials designed for deaf students

Additional materials

- “Reward” (Beginner and Pre-Intermediate)
- “English grammar in use” by Raymond Murphy

Teacher-produced materials

- Handouts
- Materials to be used with computer

English language publications, newspapers

- Articles from American scientific journals

Instructional Activities

- Grammatical explanations and grammar practice
- Reading: textbook and scientific journals in the third year
- Translation from both English to Russian and Russian to English
- Essay Writing

Ways of Improving Teaching English to Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students

Problems

- psychological and physiological peculiarities of deaf students
- teachers can not sign
- classrooms are not well-equipped
- lack of good materials

Possible solutions

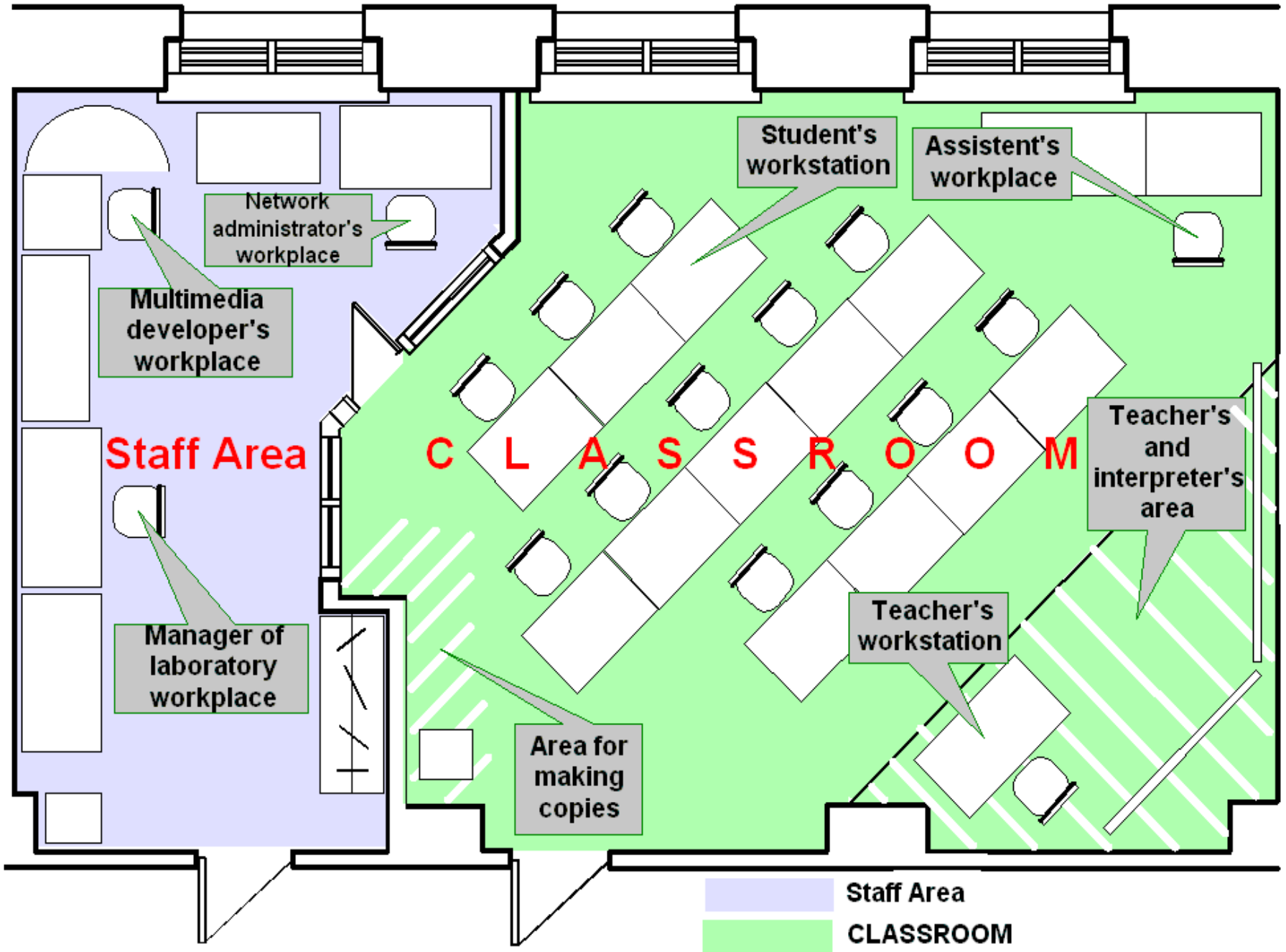
- prepare lots of hand-outs
- use “new” technologies
- be energetic
- use multimedia

Multimedia laboratory

- launched 3 years ago due to the efforts of the originators of and participants in PEN-International project: The Nippon Foundation, NTID, BMSTU, TCT,TTC.
- equipped with the most sophisticated devices

Use of the Facilities of the Multimedia Laboratory

Plan of Specialized Multimedia Laboratory at BMSTU



Use of the Facilities of the Multimedia Laboratory

1. **Explaining and practicing grammar**
   a. Use of pre-prepared grammar tables
   b. Use of active studio
   c. Use of ‘smart board’ technique
   d. Use of grammar web sites to practice grammar

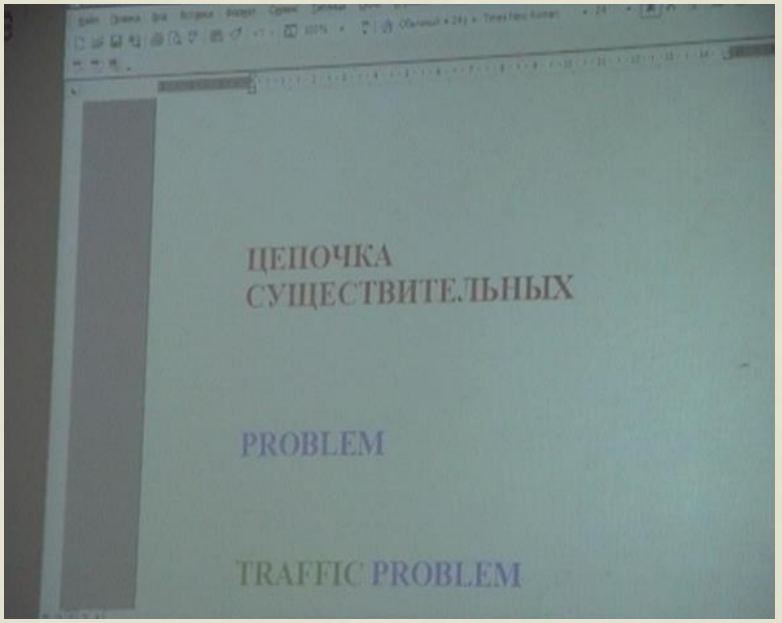
2. **Working on vocabulary**

3. **Speaking skills development**
   a. The Internet search in class
   b. Students’ work in the Internet from home or the computer center of the Center on Deafness
   c. “Round-tables”

1. Explaining and Practicing Grammar

a. Use of pre-prepared grammar tables

grammar material, mainly in tables, is shown on students' computers and the "smart" board (Appendix 2)



Tables are used for

- presenting grammar (Appendices 3, 5)
- practicing grammar (Appendix 4)

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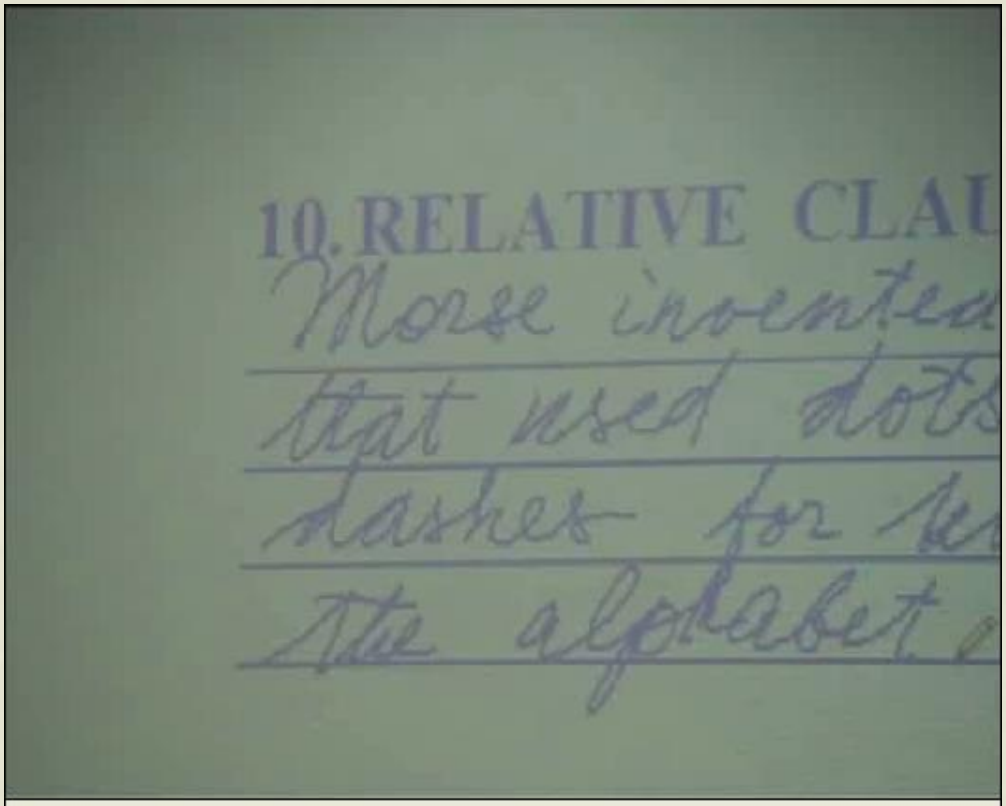
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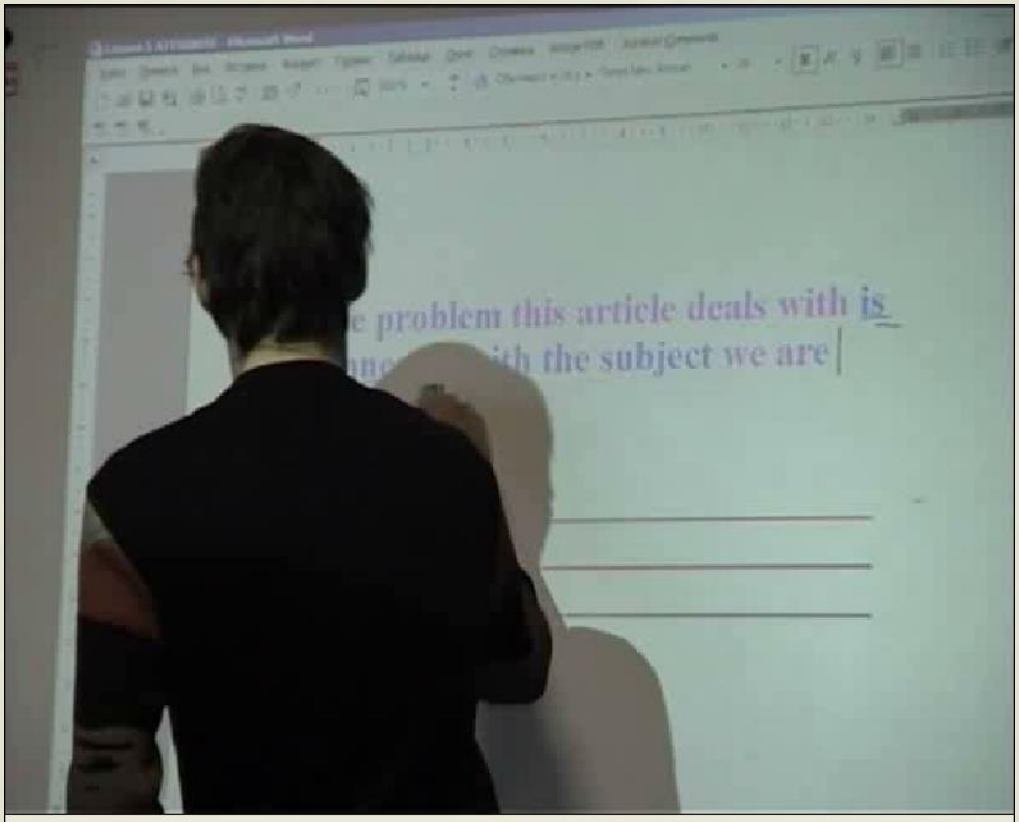

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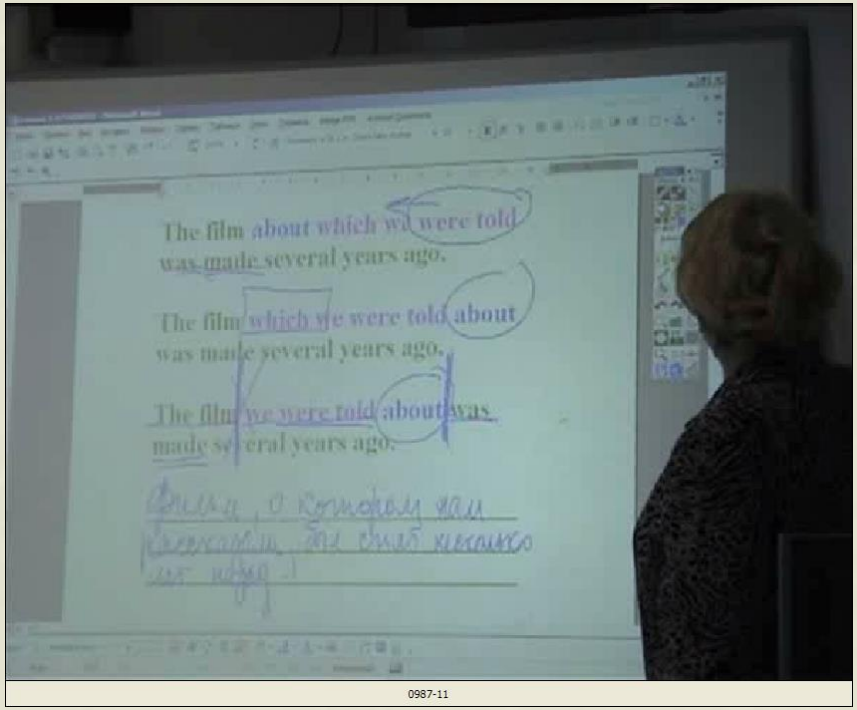
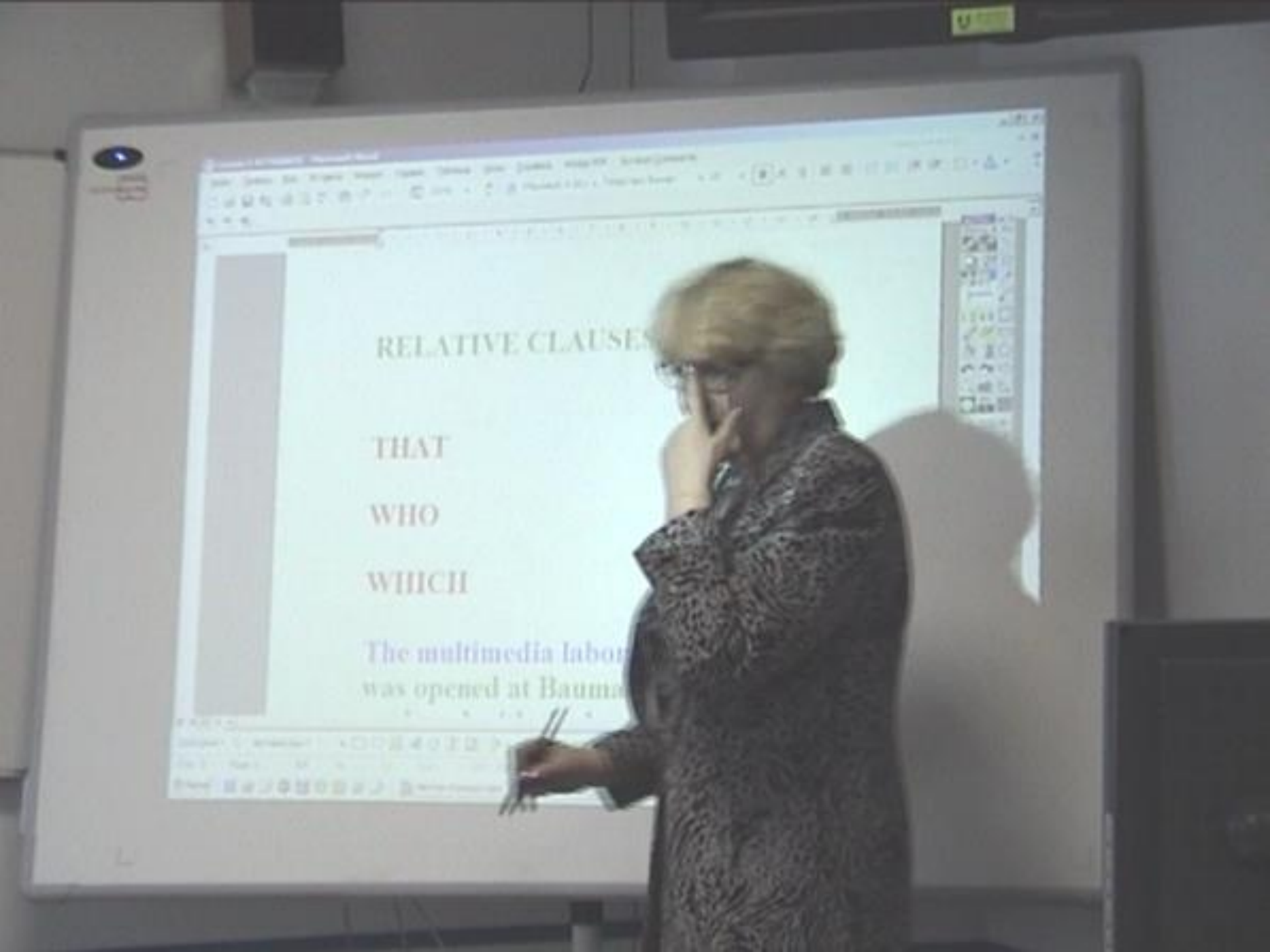
b. Use of Active Studio



Advantages:

- using different colors
- highlighting
- erasing
- underlining
- storing explanation
- appealing to students


RELATIVE CLAUSES
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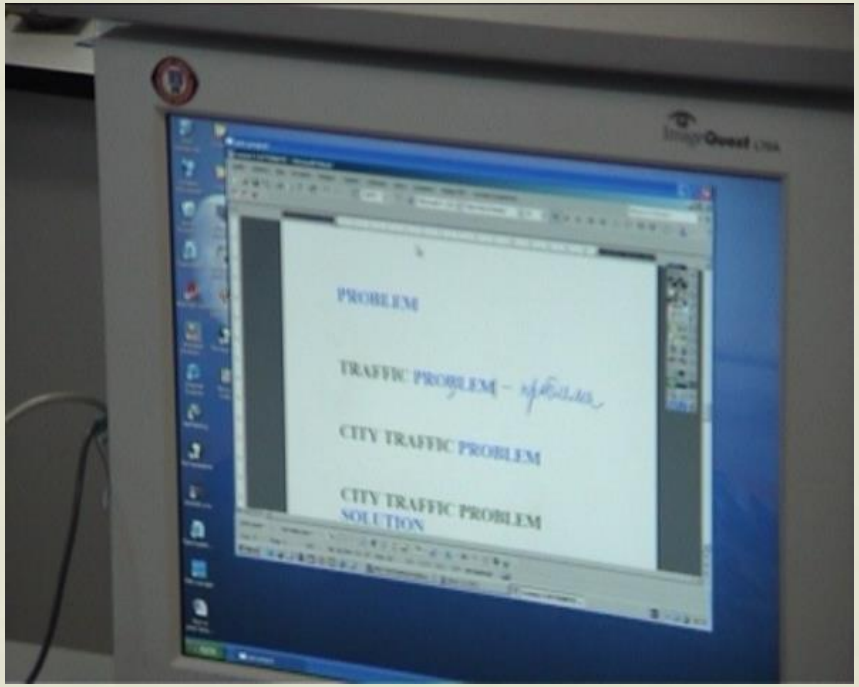
c. Use of 'Smart Board' Technique for Practicing Grammar

- "Complete the gaps" type of exercises and sentences for translation
- Students can do this either on the 'smart board' or on their computers.



d. Use of Grammar Web Sites to Practice Grammar

Web sites containing

- grammar tests
- crosswords

Why use them?

- any non-standard practice facilitates students' interest and understanding

- http://www.englishlearner.com/tests/past2.html
- http://grammar.englishclub.com/
- http://www.pacificnet.net/~sperling/quiz/
- http://a4esl.org/q/j/ck/mc-vf02.html
- http://www.nonstopenglish.com/

2. Working on Vocabulary

Explaining active vocabulary

- use of “smart board”

Practicing words and word-combinations

- using words in context
- recalling words related to the same topic, e.g. education: to do a course, to take an exam, etc.
- giving verbs to go with nouns from the text, e.g. requirements – to follow/to meet; an exam – to pass/to take, etc.
- giving noun + noun or adjective + noun word-combinations (*Appendix 6*)

3. Speaking Skills Development

a. The Internet Search in Class

Requirements to texts:

- attractive
- informative
- authentic

Surfing the Internet

Ultimate aim

- to find a good web site on the topic studied, e.g. http://www.ecology.com (opens with informative quiz)

Search machines

- Google
- Yahoo

b. Students' Work in the Internet from Home or the Computer Center

- As a continuation of the class work the students were offered the task of preparing short but interesting talks on the subject. Preference was given to the texts having pictures and tables, anything that could facilitate understanding.

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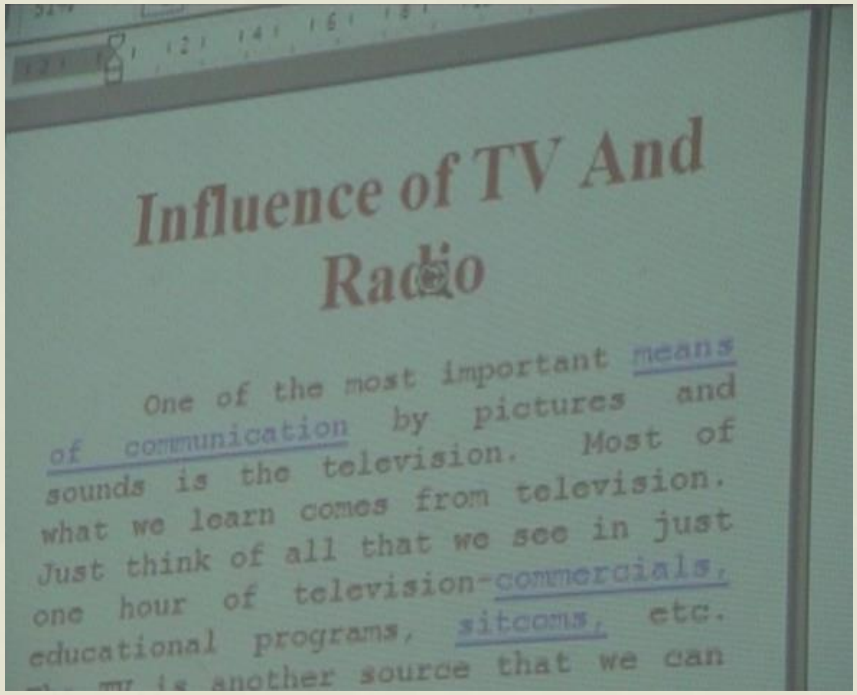
c. Conference

- Work on each unit is crowned with a conference or ‘round table’ discussion. The web sites which the students had found at home were shown on the smart board to demonstrate interesting diagrams or pictures.

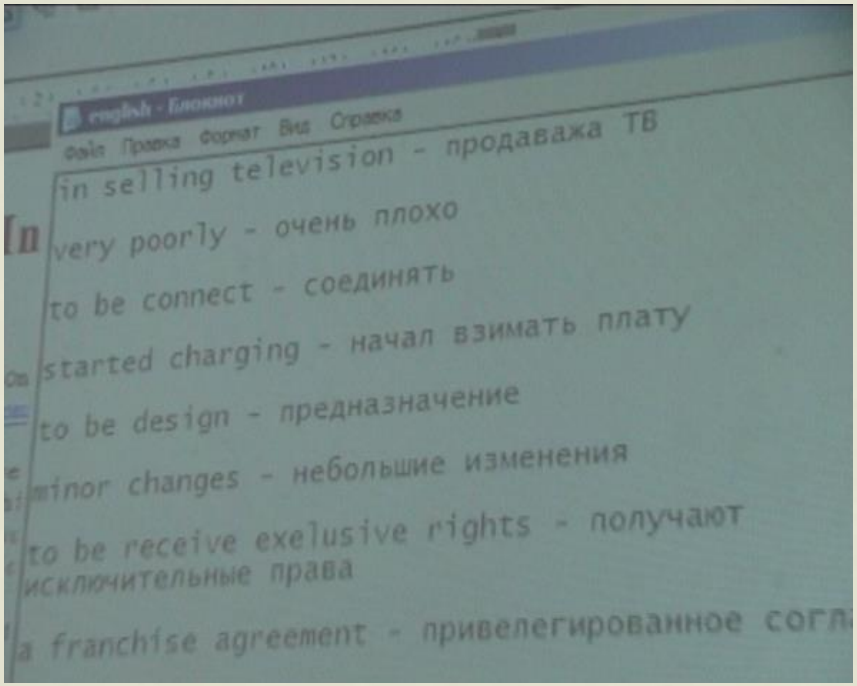
Texts of Presentations

- Students were equipped with the texts of the presentations

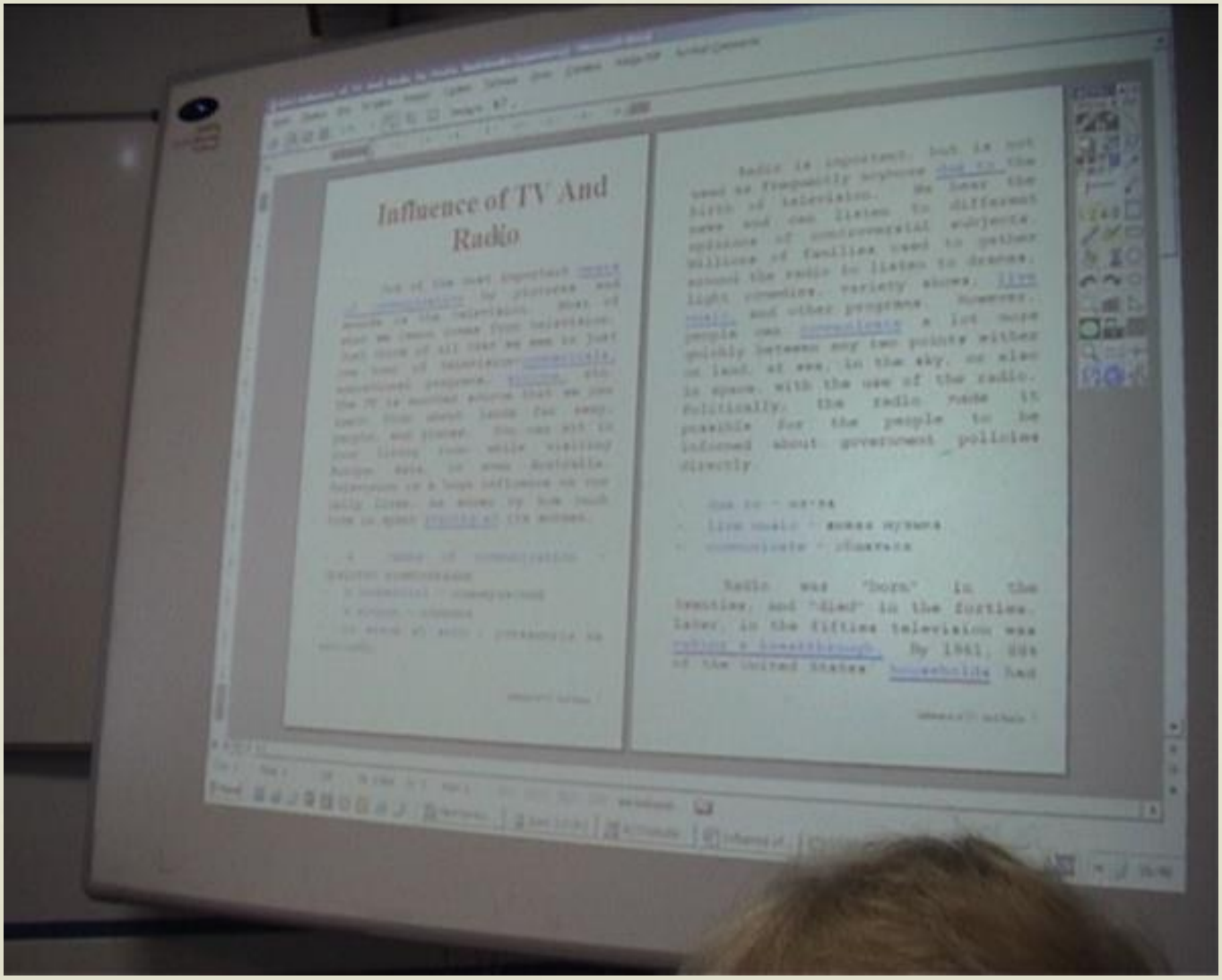


Key Words

- Besides the text of the presentation the students had to make a list of the most essential key words with Russian translation, which were demonstrated on the board during the 5-minute talk.



While the student was speaking, the text of the presentation was on the screen …



…and on the students' computers.

Presentation on Television

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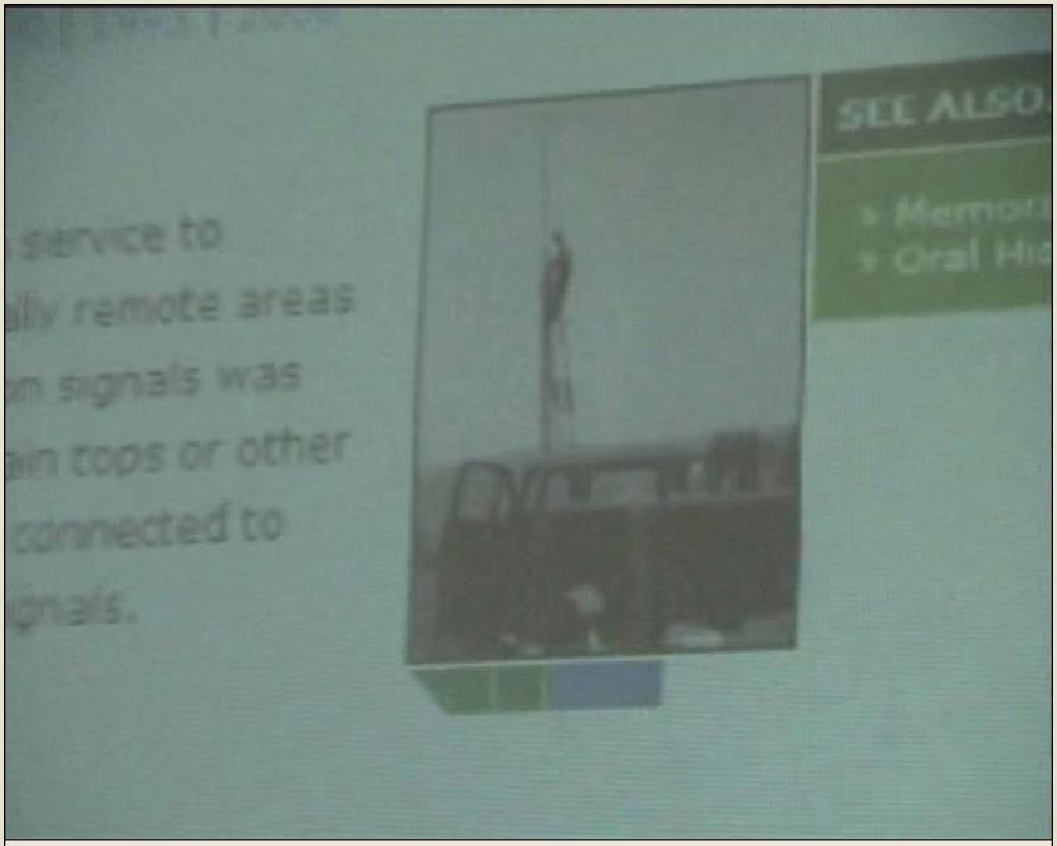
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“Television is all about…”

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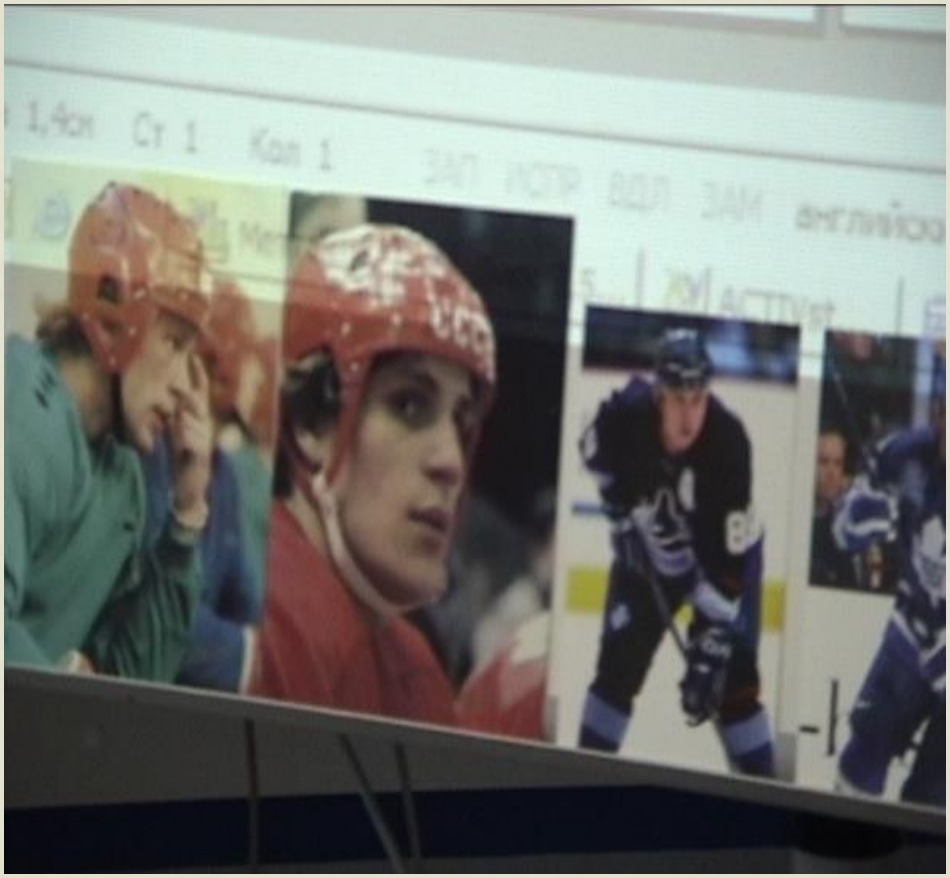

Discussing Television

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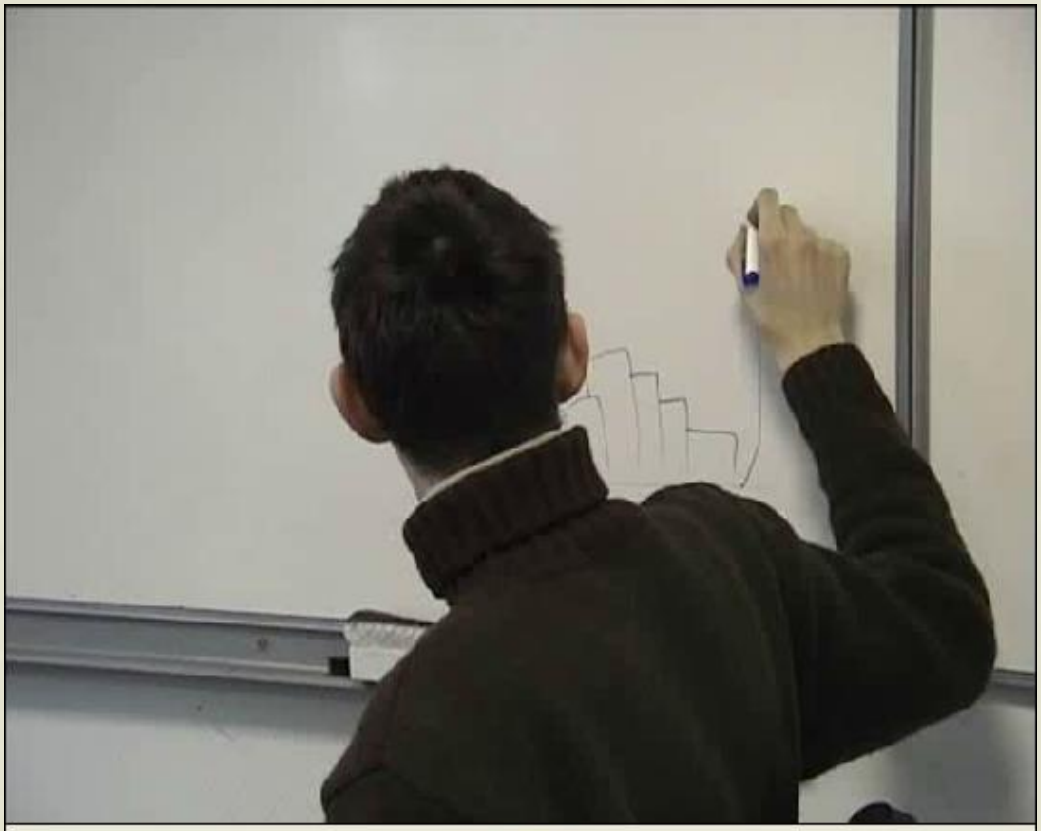
More TV



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Using “Interpreter’s Services”

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Round Table on Computers: Typewriter Types

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The First Typewriter

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Computer Processors

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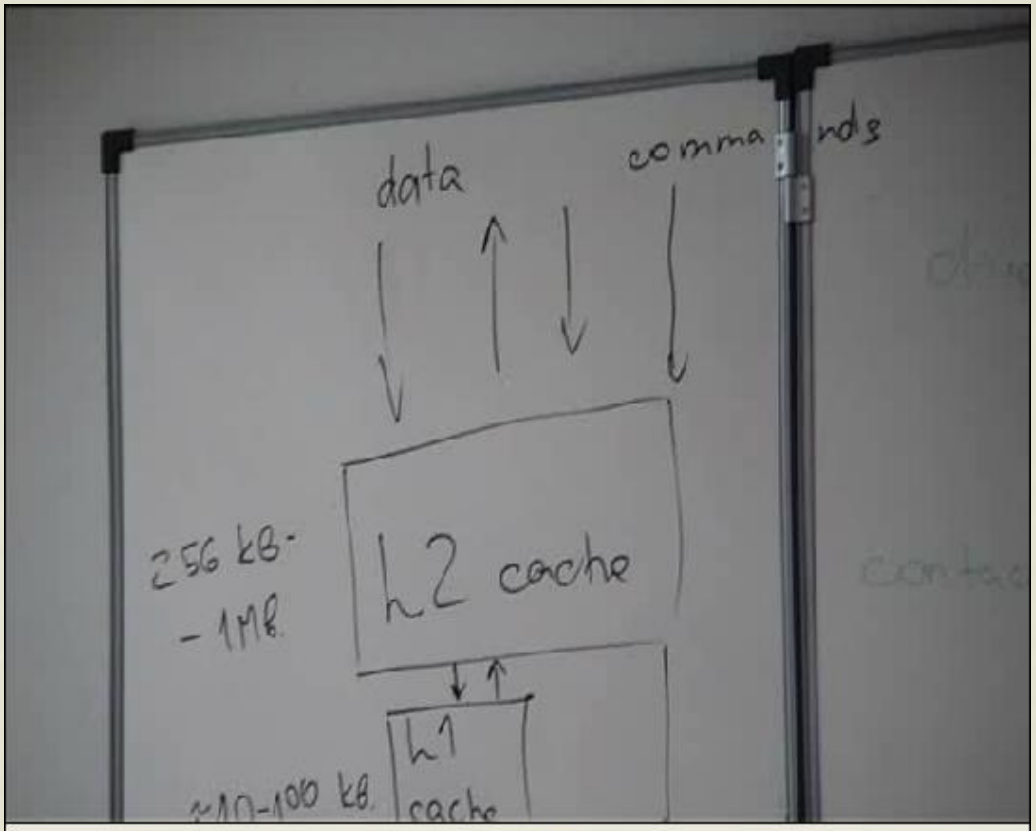

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RAM and ROM

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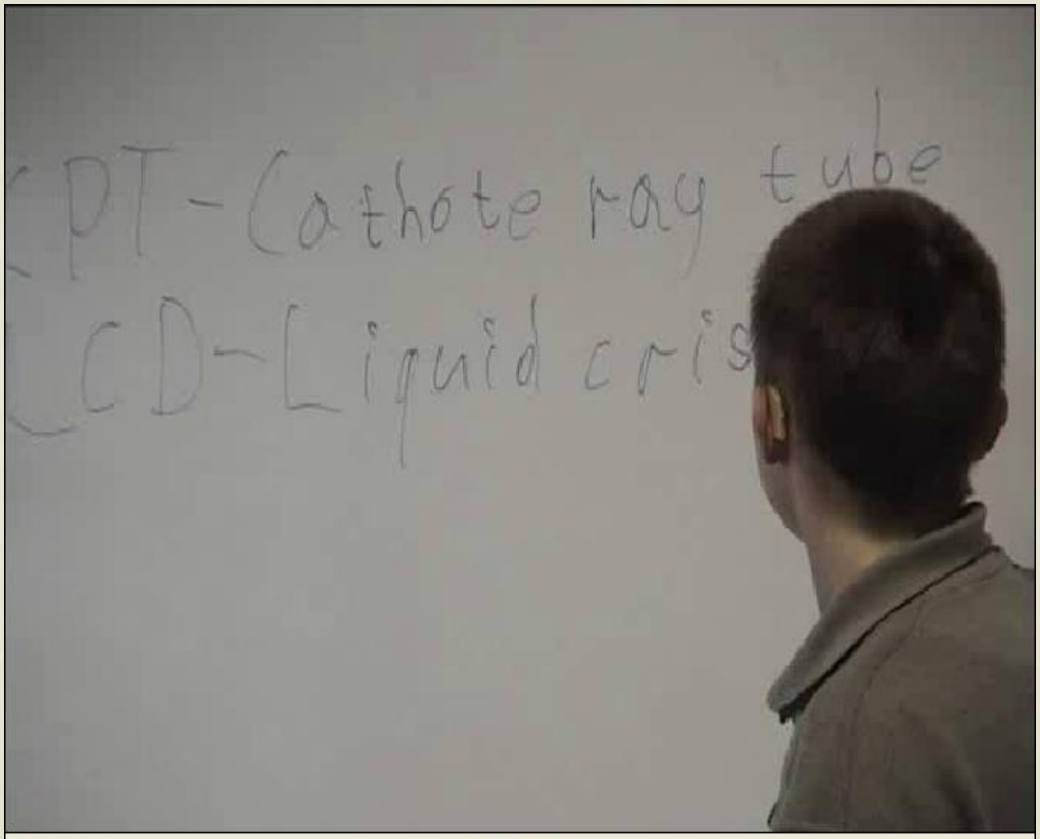
Computer Displays



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Pluses

- Students feel more self-confident
- Students do away with psychological complexes
- Communication skills developed
- Learn more about the world around us

Minuses

- Some students are unable to understand English speech
- Some feel shy to speak
- Some materials are rather difficult even to read

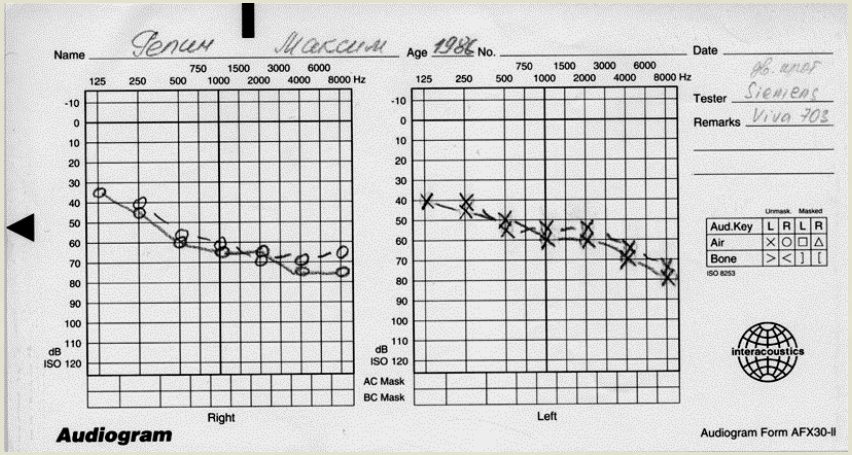
Advantages of Using Multimedia

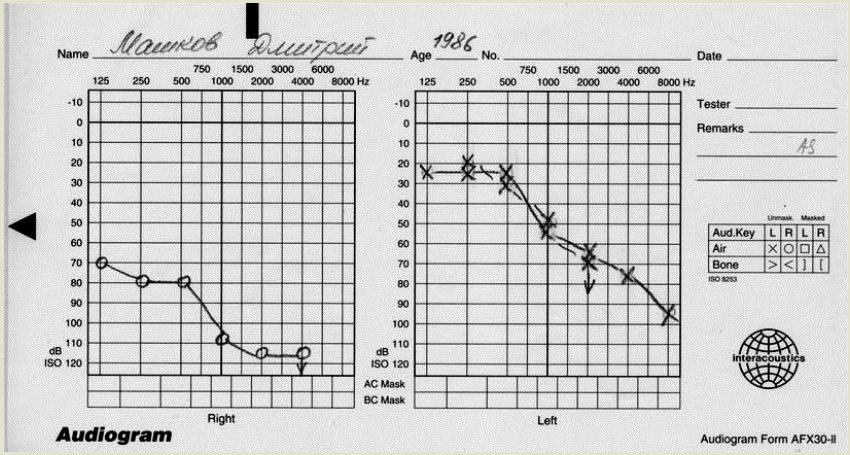
- using ‘smart board’ technique to explain and practice grammar and vocabulary;
- using the Internet resources to look for informative materials;
- using of attractive grammar web sites;
- providing students with hand-outs in all possible forms (printed out and electronic).
- appeal and motivation.

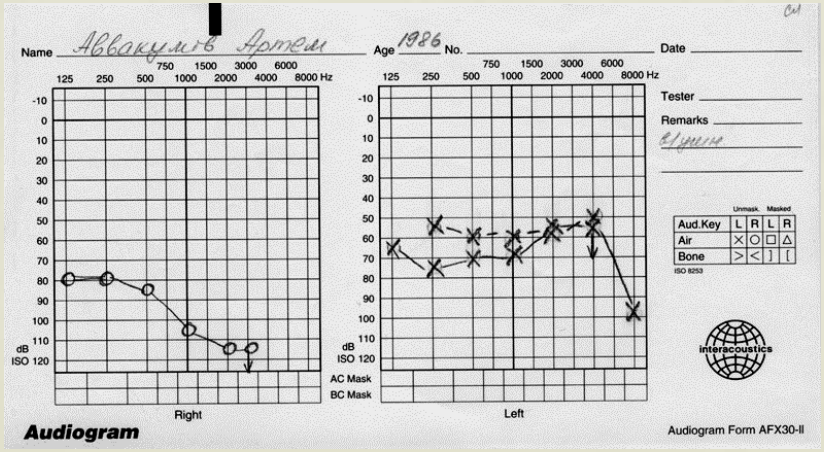
Conclusion

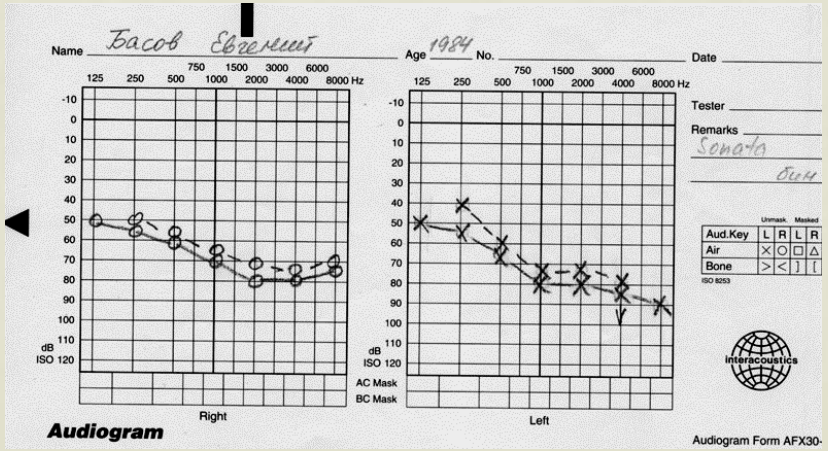
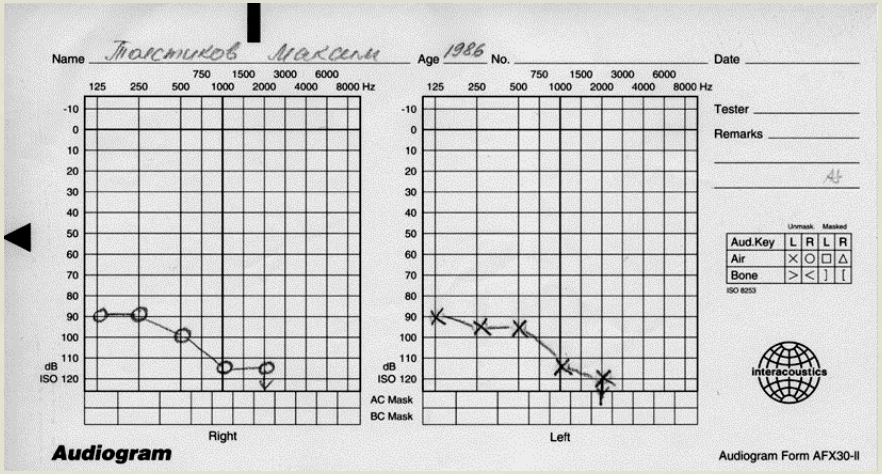
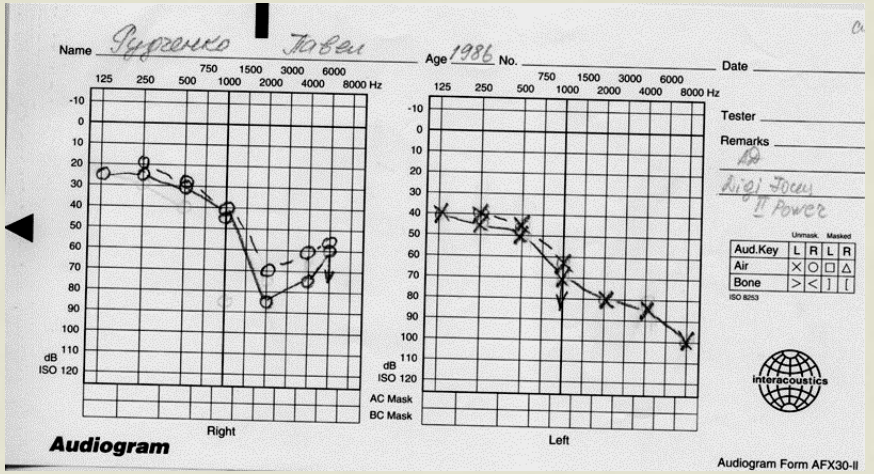
- In spite of years-long experience acquired by different programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing students in Russia, there still is “much room for improvement”. We should always try to experiment with new methods and techniques to find the best ways of teaching English to deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Students' Audiograms





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