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NEW WAYS TO PRESENT THE INFORMATION IN THE TEACHING ACTIVITY

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Abstract: *In the context of an information society with an accelerated dynamics, special attention must be granted to the teacher training, so as to meet the requirements that the new technologies introduce into the teaching activity. The teaching staff training as regards the use of new technologies in the classroom is an immense challenge for them who must, in their turns, adapt to the evolution of technique and technology and acquire new skills and competencies.*

Thus, the way the teachers prepare the pupils-students to deal with the changing world, a world completely different from the one the teachers themselves were educated in, becomes extremely important.

In the educational process, the teachers who want to keep themselves updated with the news within their own professional fields cannot stay outside the new WEB 2.0 technologies facilitating the access to information.

In this paper, a comparative study is performed regarding the new ways of delivering the information by using presentations such as PowerPoint – Prezi–VoiceThread. Furthermore, the requirements that a presentation must meet in order for it to be successful and have a maximum impact on the audience are also shown.

Prezi is a tool able to easily replace the classical presentations, an application combining the creative thinking with the facilities of modern technology, which leads to interactive and highly customised presentations, structured approximately like a mind map (zoom puzzles).

Voice Thread can integrate comments and other multimedia effects in the presentation, thus creating an original application. It is a suitable medium for the pupils and students who do not have advanced ITC competences, where they can interact on-line to create highly impressive virtual portfolios.

All these facilities, but also the integration of this technology within other web 2.0 technologies; this is what the paper hereafter will be dealing with.

Keywords: *education, presentation, tools on-line, Prezi, PowerPoint, VoiceThread*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the digitised society we live in, the way information is conveyed covers various aspects. Whether we are pupils, students, teachers or business persons, we are all interested in presenting our memos and reports, concepts and business plans, as intuitively, and attractively as possible, by using the resources made available by the computer. Accompanying the verbal speech with images strengthening what we say makes our presentation a lot more interesting, and catches the audience's interest and curiosity. Thus, the use of a PowerPoint presentation is no longer a novelty, since most of the ones using the computer know how to create and use such a presentation. In this context, presentations such as Prezi appear as an alternative to the already well-known Power Point slides, allowing the one creating them to have a personal vision and an original approach to the presented content. In Prezi, a presentation is created online, easily and in an agreeable manner, without using



slides, having available an enormous space to move inside of, where the movement to any area within that space is done with a high mobility, by using a path. The creation of a Prezi presentation does not require the users to have advanced IT&C skills, so they can interact on-line for creating highly impactful virtual portfolios.


A third way of making presentations is through the VoiceThread application, which has a series of advantages: it allows integrating comments, it introduces multimedia effects in the presentation, thus creating an original application. Moreover, just like Prezi, the VoiceThread is also an appropriate environment for collaborative activities coordinated by a teacher, where the teacher's personal reflections, indications and assessments can be collected and preserved.

In this paper we proposed to do a comparative SWOT analysis of the three to create a presentation, Power Point, Prezi and VoiceThread.




II. SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE PRESENTATIONS MADE BY USING POWER POINT, PREZI AND VOICETHREAD

2.1. Strengths


	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It is the most well-known presentation-making programme. ✓ It provides a user-friendly interface. ✓ It allows the fast data transfer to the other Microsoft Office applications (it allows information created in Word and Excel to be integrated in a presentation). ✓ The presentations are grouped in slides, where the information can be alternated with multimedia content (varying from slides with simple text, to slides with graphs, tables, movies, animation, etc.). ✓ It allows introducing various graphical elements by using the drawing bar, images in clipart format, pictures (e.g., GIF, JPG, BMP), effects on text and imagines, music files (e.g., MPG, WAV) and videos (in AVI, MOV, MPEG formats); ✓ It offers the possibility to compress audio and video clips. ✓ Microsoft PowerPoint Mobile allows presentations to be viewed and edited on telephone, as well. The PowerPoint slides are displayed on a full screen, with rich graphical and animation effects, allowing presentations being made without a prior preparation, editing in the slide text or in the speaker's notes.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It is an interesting alternative to the Power Point presentations ✓ It introduces an innovative style ✓ It is accessible and it can be made by creating a simple user account ✓ The presentation is dynamic, and attractive ✓ It is easy to use ✓ It values the ideas and stimulates the creativity of the one preparing it ✓ It helps delivering a more fluent demonstration ✓ It has an attractive aspect ✓ It does not require an external software, since all the commands are available in the application interface ✓ The Prezi site has an already made presentation library where we can learn from and choose the most innovative examples.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The user has a series of tutorial movies available and the online manual to learn how to use the Prezi application ✓ The application is free of charge and it provides the opportunity to create spectacular presentations ✓ The application allows the presentations to be unloaded for offline use. ✓ There is a total storage space of 100 MB. ✓ The presentations created in the free mode are marked with the Prezi logo ✓ There is the possibility to use a site paying account, where the offer for making the presentations is diversified and improved. ✓ Once completed, the Prezi presentation can be stored online, using the browser, or downloaded offline, downloading a portable version of the presentation. ✓ Images, audio and video materials, PDF, PowerPoint, Excel and Flash files, and YouTube movies, they all can be inserted in the presentation. ✓ The presentation editing space can be divided into areas or groups by using the frames. They are graphical elements designed to help structure the information. ✓ Besides adding text and frames, the creator can draw freely, draw lines or arrows or highlight already pre-existing texts.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Easy to use ✓ It stimulates creativity ✓ Comments and multimedia effects can be integrated in the presentation leading to an original application. ✓ It does not require an external software, since all the commands are available in the application interface ✓ It allows creating private or public groups ✓ It allows performing collaborative activities ✓ It favours the development of a virtual community ✓ Various roles and responsibilities can be allocated within the presentations ✓ Pre-existing multimedia documents can be uploaded (digital photos, PDF, Word, Excel, PowerPoint files, images and video files). ✓ Titles, descriptions and tags can be mentioned ✓ The inserted images can be taken from the del.icio.us account; they can be rotated, enlarged or shrunk ✓ It allows adding audio comments, drawing on the images, not only by the current user, but also by the group users or by any user having a public presentation. The comments can be posted in 5 ways (by using the voice by means of the microphone / telephone; by using webcams – video files, by typing in a text or by uploading an audio file).

2.2. Weaknesses




	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The slides are static, linear ✓ Lack of diversity ✓ Unlike Prezi, it requires the installation of the entire Microsoft Office Pack ✓ Compatibility problems may appear between versions (e.g., incompatibility of 2007 / 2010 versions with the older 2003 version). ✓ The fonts must be available and various problems may occur with the video files. ✓ It does not offer the possibility of simultaneously having a document edited by several users. ✓ It requires resizing the pictures at an optimal resolution. Very large pictures can be framed in the slide, but the final presentation size in Mbits will be large. ✓ Effect combinations are difficult to apply.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Many of the previously presented strengths are only available in the paid account version ✓ It requires the existence of an internet connexion and the creation of a user account on the Prezi.com website ✓ When using less high-performance computers, the frame movement during the presentation may be fragmented (jerky). ✓ The Prezi Desktop version has several disadvantages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it is only available for a fee; - the more complicated graphs must be made by using a specialised software, exported then as PDF files and then imported in Prezi. The limit per inserted file is 50 MB. - files can be inserted, regardless of their size; - PDF files cannot be inserted; - the application can be used on 3 computers with one licence; - the presentations created online can be downloaded and edited on the computer, and the ones on the desktop can be uploaded online. ✓ A significant amount of time is required for creating quality presentations ✓ The forms can overload the presentation content ✓ Due to the over-mobility, imagines can create visual discomfort.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ It required an internet connection ✓ A user account must be created (need for a pre-existing e-mail address) ✓ The free version is only limited to 5 presentations, thus imposing the need to buy the full version. ✓ The presentations can be downloaded for being viewed on mobile devices only in the full version

2.3. Opportunities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New ideas of templates might keep Microsoft PowerPoint on the first place in the use of presentations ✓ A simplistic online version one can log on by using the home kit key
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Through development, they have the chance to surpass Microsoft PowerPoint ✓ A better promotion and the focus on the business area could turn them into leaders ✓ Unlimited access to information ✓ An innovative way to present and convey information ✓ It allows making multi-dimensional presentations ✓ It can be published online ✓ It offers collaboration support. ✓ The possibility to incorporate the presentations - as an object - in an e-learning platform, blog or web page
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ A better promotion and the focus on the educational area could raise them in the top ✓ Unlimited access to information ✓ It can be published online ✓ It offers collaboration support. ✓ The possibility to distribute the presentations to the friends list ✓ The possibility to incorporate the presentations - as an object - in an e-learning platform, blog or web page

2.4. Threats

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Google documents platform solves the problem of simultaneous editing. The collaborative documents which can be edited online (amongst which is also the possibility to create a PowerPoint presentation) supports the simultaneous works of several users. ✓ Alternative programmes such as “Prezi” with a simpler working manner exist. ✓ The lack of innovation in time – it has largely the same commands in different versions ✓ The lack of a possibility to deeper personalise the presentations - to monotone templates
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The peoples’ familiarization to Microsoft PowerPoint makes them reluctant to learning / practising creating presentations in Prezi ✓ Reluctance in mass-use should they not improve the Desktop version ✓ The movies incorporated in presentations are blocked. ✓ Disappearance of files unless saved ✓ The presentation aspect can draw the attention from the content itself ✓ Addition to only one means of creating presentations is damaging over the long run
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existence of much more attractive applications (e.g., Prezi) or of much more known applications (PowerPoint) - Reluctance in mass-use unless they increase the number of applications included in the free version.

III. CONCLUSIONS

Regardless of the used software for creating a presentation and of the purpose they are made for, (presenting a material in a conference, describing the products and services that a company can provide, showing a work report or the conclusions of a research), the presentations are extremely necessary. The advantages of the presentations, no matter how they are built, are obvious:

- The conveyed message is clear, concise, systematised and structured.
- The message is accompanied by pictures, animations, movies, etc.
- It is attractive, it stimulates curiosity and it holds the audience's interest

Whether they are prepared in Power Point, Prezi or VoiceThread, they offer a new and creative range of choices to present the information. It is up to everyone's IT skills, creativity and innovative spirit to choose how to make the presentations.

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