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The role of the Internet in foreign language teaching

Knowledge of a foreign language (English in particular) makes a specialist in any field more competitive in the labour market. The educational role of a foreign language is associated with the possibility of access to sources of information, timely access to which is practically possible only with the knowledge of a foreign language, with the expansion of general and professional outlook, with the mastery of communication skills with foreign colleagues, with an increase in speech culture. The educational potential is realised in the readiness to promote intercultural communication, and to be sensitive to the spiritual values of other nations. The Internet can provide invaluable assistance to students in mastering a foreign language. The World Wide Web is a unique opportunity for foreign language learners to use authentic texts, communicate with native speakers, creating a natural language environment and shaping the ability of intercultural interaction. Access to the Internet stimulates the desire for fluency in a foreign language. The Internet as a means of information delivery is especially relevant for students' independent work outside class hours, due to the inexpediency of time spent in class. The Internet provides students with independent information retrieval skills, the ability to work with large volumes of information, analysis skills, the ability to see and solve problems. However, in the learning process, it is of interest that the complex includes both "on-line" information retrieval and dialogue, which implements the learning management process. A variety of tasks for individual work on the Internet can later be successfully used for group work in the classroom. Targeted use of Internet materials in foreign language classes at technical universities allows for effective solution of a number of didactic tasks, namely:

- 1) improve reading skills;
- 2) increase vocabulary with modern foreign language vocabulary;
- 3) improve the skills of monological and dialogical expression, discussing web materials;
- 4) to form sustainable motivation for foreign language activities in the process of discussing issues relevant to all.

The Internet presents exceptional opportunities in the foreign language learning process for mastering the means of communication in written form, making it possible to implement a communicative approach to the teaching of written speech activities. For the purposes of teaching a foreign language, both free communication on the Internet and e-mail communication are used. The latter makes it necessary to think carefully about one's message and, if necessary, to correct it. Internet resources offer a unique opportunity to use authentic texts, listen to real audio materials and even communicate with native speakers, i.e. it creates a natural language environment. Since the main goal of foreign language teaching in the modern world is to develop students' communicative competence. The ability to communicate cross-culturally and to use the language learnt as a tool for this communication. The teacher is therefore faced with the task of selecting methods, means and forms of foreign language teaching that would contribute to the achievement of this objective. Thus, there is an objective need to integrate information technology into the learning process in order to engage students in situations of intercultural communication, as today the global Internet provides a wide range of opportunities for students to engage in authentic intercultural interaction with representatives of the target language.

The use of Internet resources in teaching foreign languages, the integration of Internet tools into the teaching process, makes it possible to solve a number of didactic tasks more effectively:

to form and improve reading skills by directly using materials of varying degrees of complexity; to improve listening skills on the basis of authentic audio texts of the Internet, as well as texts prepared by the teacher; to improve written and speaking skills; to enrich the vocabulary, both active and passive, with the vocabulary of modern English; to acquaint students with cultural realities, including speech etiquette, peculiarities of speech behaviour of different nations in terms of communication, features of culture, traditions of the country of the studied language; to form sustainable motivation of students' foreign language activity in the classroom based on systematic use of authentic materials and compliance with the principle of connection with life.

Under these conditions, it is inevitable to revise the hitherto established organizational forms, principles and methods of teaching, i.e. there is a tendency to increase the share of independent individual and group work of students, and also to increase the volume of practical and creative work of exploratory and research nature. Thus, Internet technologies are designed to contribute to the development of educational technology: to a greater extent to adapt the content of educational material to the individual characteristics of students, the level of their knowledge and skills. The provision of educational institutions with computers makes it possible to actively introduce computer programmes in the teaching of foreign languages. There are concerns that computers may supplant the teacher, which is why some teachers are sceptical of the method. They may be right, but as aids to foreign language teaching, computer programmes have their advantages. They allow for an individual approach to students and the adjustment of curricula based on the interests and abilities of individual students. In connection with the development of the process of informatisation of education, the scope and content of educational material is changing, curricula of subjects (courses) are being restructured, the integration of topics is taking place, which leads to changes in the structure and content of subjects and, consequently, the structure and content, and also leads to changes in private teaching methodologies. Currently, significant changes in the field of education have also affected the teaching of foreign languages in higher education. In particular, new

information technologies, such as the use of Internet resources, training computer programs, have been intensively introduced in the educational process. Active work is underway to develop and implement computer-based tests in the studied foreign languages. As practice shows, of all existing teaching tools, the computer is the best "fit" in the structure of the learning process, most fully satisfies didactic requirements and brings the foreign language learning process as close as possible to the real conditions. The problem of introducing information technologies in the educational process of foreign language teaching in non-linguistic universities is due to insufficient development and is still topical. Teachers experience a number of difficulties caused by objective factors, among which is the insufficiently formed ability of students to use computers as a means of working with information, respectively, to apply information technology in the process of teaching a foreign language in a technical university. Most students use the global Internet either to obtain authentic materials for essays, term papers or diploma theses, or to communicate in chat channels. When familiarising themselves with the discipline of "Foreign Language" (in a non-language HEI), one can confidently state that foreign language is recognised as an obligatory component of professional training of a modern specialist of any profile.

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