THE IMPORTANCE OF WEB MATERIALS IN LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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Abstract

This article explores the growing significance of web-based materials in the process of learning foreign languages. It highlights how online resources—such as interactive websites, digital dictionaries, language learning platforms, video tutorials, forums, and mobile applications—enhance language acquisition through accessibility, real-time interaction, and diverse multimedia content. The article also discusses the motivational impact of web materials and their role in fostering independent and personalized learning. The integration of technology into language education is shown to increase learner engagement and improve practical language skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Keywords: Web materials, foreign language learning, digital resources, online education, multimedia tools, language acquisition, e-learning, mobile apps, learner autonomy, educational technology.

Introduction

Information and communication technologies have become an integral part of many areas of the modern world. They undergo constant testing, evolve, and improve alongside technological progress. In many countries, the exchange of information technologies and services has long been an essential component of educational programs[4].

Despite the high demands placed on practical foreign language proficiency by the federal state educational standards for bachelor's and, even more so, master's degree programs, the number of compulsory hours allocated for learning a foreign language for specific purposes remains extremely limited: only 2–3 hours per week during the first and second years of study. After analyzing the curricula of technical specialties, we concluded that a significant portion of the study time (at least 50%)

is allocated to independent learning, and, as a rule, this workload remains unfulfilled. One of the most effective means of optimizing the independent work of students in non-linguistic universities is the use of internet resources. The aim of our work is to analyze existing educational resources, their advantages, and disadvantages.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The most significant source of information exchange in learning a foreign language can be considered the Internet, which provides free navigation and a wide selection of foreign languages. The Internet, with its vast potential, is not only a source of additional motivation in learning a foreign language but also a tool capable of making the learning process easy and straightforward [5, p. 42]. In addition to motivation, it is worth noting the high cognitive activity of students in non-linguistic universities, for whom a foreign language must be reflected in their professional activities. Through information and communication technologies, it is possible to address key pedagogical tasks in non-linguistic universities, such as: improving language skills, developing foreign language communication abilities in the professional field, fostering independent and research work skills, and enabling international discussions, experience sharing, and acquisition of new knowledge.

From a didactic perspective, the Internet includes at least two main components: forms of telecommunication and informational resources [3, p. 2]. Popular forms of communication such as email, video conferencing, chat, forums, and social networks have only recently begun to be used in foreign language learning. Today, a significant portion of youth communication takes place on various social networks. An alternative to communication in the native language can be various networks that operate in a foreign language. Interpals was specifically created for language learning, allowing users to communicate with people from any profession. On Livemocha, users receive tasks from native speakers, who then check the completed work and provide feedback on any mistakes. Services like MyLanguageExchange and Omegle offer interest-based group communication. Users can also read books online and participate in vocabulary games [2].

Informational resources include a wide range of audio and video materials, reference and bibliographic data, infographics (e.g., Grammer.net), and specially designed educational materials (e.g., Webquest, Hotline, Subject Sampler, etc.).

The resource "Activities for ESL/EFL Students," which offers diverse information, is useful not only for students but also for teachers. Learnenglish.de is an extensive resource offering thematic dictionaries. A major advantage of Internet resources is their simplicity, free access, relevance, informativeness, and, of course, the opportunity for international communication.

The possibility and frequency of using information technologies in foreign language learning depend on the pedagogical and methodological goals at specific stages of instruction. A technology like "paperless education" is highly effective for organizing students' independent and distance learning. This type of learning focuses not merely on information transfer but also on its processing and construction. The student receives a model to work with at their convenience, discusses controversial points or asks questions online, forms opinions, and draws conclusions.

In organizing classroom activities, various Internet technologies can be practically applied (e.g., webinars, wiki technologies, podcasts, blogs, and audioblogs). The service Online Teachers UK (OTUK) offers a course in specialized English that helps learners use a foreign language confidently and fluently for professional purposes. BBC Learning English offers various audio texts on interesting topics and scripts that can be printed and practiced at a convenient time. The Anki program is an indispensable tool for expanding vocabulary [1].

We can see that today there are numerous websites, programs, networks, and resources available for use in foreign language education. However, educators are faced with the challenge of verifying the credibility, scientific-educational value, and content relevance of the information found [1, p. 160]. First and foremost, it is necessary to determine how effective the material is in achieving the communicative goals of professional foreign language instruction and the key competencies defined by the curriculum, as well as its appropriateness for the student's level of preparation. Additionally, the material should allow for an individual and creative approach and provide opportunities to model specific aspects. It is important to remember that information technologies do not replace the traditional approach to teaching; therefore, they should be applied only when and where they prove more effective compared to conventional methods.

The instructor is responsible for determining the goals, timing, and context for using Internet resources, and must plan the lesson in advance. Each type of activity

should be accompanied by clear instructions and include final assessment, such as a test, which may be checked collectively or individually (e.g., tests with answer keys).

By using Internet resources in the process of foreign language education in non-linguistic universities, it is possible to organize vibrant international communication in the form of:

Online conferences;

Discussion clubs and chats;

Various creative projects;

Presentations and reports;

Research projects.

The educational potential of computer technologies is multifaceted and aimed not only at solving the linguistic-didactic task of improving foreign language speech skills but also at addressing specialized learning objectives. Students develop an entirely new perspective on communication, the ability to work with a vast amount of foreign-language information, to analyze and identify professionally relevant content, and to apply acquired knowledge to solve specific tasks.

When organizing independent work, students develop cognitive competence—demonstrating initiative in acquiring necessary knowledge and enhancing research skills—as well as creativity, initiative, and analytical thinking. Furthermore, consistent work with up-to-date, authentic materials contributes to the formation of general cultural competence.

However, the rationality and effectiveness of Internet resources is a matter of methodological appropriateness. The use of educational content in higher education institutions should be conducted in accordance with the academic curriculum, and this process must be clearly structured and well-organized.

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