

ICEST 2021**II International Conference on Economic and Social Trends for Sustainability of Modern Society****FORMS AND METHODS OF TEACHING ENGLISH AT A
HIGHER SCHOOL OF TECHNOLOGY**

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Abstract

The article discusses the features of the use of forms and methods with the use of information and communication technologies in the process of teaching and learning a foreign (English) language in a technical university. Four main directions among modern methods and approaches to teaching a foreign language are described: structural/linguistic, cognitive, affective/interpersonal, functional / communicative. One of the most common approaches to teaching foreign languages in a non-linguistic university is considered in detail - a mixed approach, and the Station Rotation approach is one of its types. A striking example of the use of information and communication technologies in a mixed approach to teaching a foreign (English) language in a technical university is Moodle, an open source software. The author describes in detail the features of working with this platform. Speaking about the communicative approach, the article discusses the use of blogs as an effective tool for learning a foreign language, as well as the FluentU program, where you can make a thematic selection of the necessary lexical groups, including technical terminology, in accordance with the student's learning profile, which is important when learning English. at a technical university. Kahoot is another free online platform for creating and running tutorials. It can be used to create multiple choice questions using embedded images and videos. The author comes to the conclusion that the integration of technologies into existing forms and methods of teaching English in a technical university is of great importance in the development of basic foreign language skills.

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Keywords: Information and communication technology, blogging, Station Rotation, Moodle, FluentU

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1. Introduction

The modern approaches to foreign language teaching at higher schools of technology often actively resort to linguistic means in studying a chosen specialty in typical situations of professional communication. This is necessary in order to enable students to independently enrich and enhance their professional knowledge in the future by reading, watching videos, etc., without experiencing the language barrier and a deficiency of information support. Korotaeva (2019) considers that information and communication technologies are actively used to achieve this purpose.

There are four main trends in modern methods of and approaches to teaching a foreign language: structural / linguistic, cognitive, affective / interpersonal, functional / communicative.

The structural / linguistic method is based on the ideas of the language structure and a descriptive or contrastive linguistics. This includes an isolation of grammatical and syntactic elements taught either deductively or inductively in a given succession. It often contains much of meta-linguistic matter.

The cognitive method is based on teaching theories applied specifically to teaching a second language. The focus is on teaching strategies incompatible with the students' own learning style. The content is chosen according to concepts and techniques that ease the understanding of a language, the memorizing and acquisition of "competence" that increase the "production efficiency."

The affective / interpersonal method is focused on psychological and affective disposition of the student, which improves teaching or hampers it. Here an emphasis is placed on interaction between the teacher and the student, on the atmosphere of studies and the students' motivation for learning.

Mamadaliyeva and Tursunova (2018) note that the functional / communicative method is based on theories of the language learning often called "the natural approach" and on the use of a language for communication and social intercourse. This embraces many aspects of the communication act, in which case the linguistic structures are chosen according to their applicability to achieving the aim of communication.

2. Problem Statement

The work is based on educators' scientific research into the following issues:

- the use of information and communication technologies for education;
- modern concepts of mixed training;
- theory and methods of teaching foreign languages.

3. Research Questions

In course of the study the following questions were raised:

- What are the features of the use of forms and methods with the use of information and communication technologies in the process of teaching and learning a foreign (English) language in a technical university?

- What is a mixed approach to teaching foreign languages in a non-linguistic university?
- Is the use of blogs and FluentU program an effective tool for learning a foreign language?

4. Purpose of the Study

This investigation seeks to describe the specifics of the process and estimate the applied forms and methods using the information and communication technologies in teaching and studying a foreign (English) language at higher schools of technology.

5. Research Methods

In order to achieve the purpose the following methods were used: analysis of the scientific literature on the subject, the study on modern information and communication technologies used in education, demonstration of the author's own teaching experience and data analysis.

In compliance with the purpose of the study, the following objects of investigation can be singled out:

- estimation of efficiency of modern approaches in teaching and learning English at higher schools of technology (structural / linguistic, cognitive, affective / interpersonal, functional / communicative, including the Station Rotation method);
- description of the most sought-after platforms used in teaching and learning English;
- concentration on advantages offered by electronic teaching aids.

The need for increased efficiency of teaching stems from the acute interest in integration of various methods with teaching technologies that are supposed to motivate students and promptly meet their requirements. Akbari et al. (2013) indicate that higher schools of technology often lag behind in terms of total time assigned to language teaching, which is why the use of such methods in educational media is required for a more intense and efficient training.

Tena et al. (2021) state that the information and communication technologies in the form of electronic and on-line teaching have supplied extra advantages for instruction since they make it possible to integrate virtually unlimited multimedia teaching aids from external sources, introducing them into the process of training. Thus they become available to students anywhere in the world where a computer, a mobile phone or a tablet PC with an access to the Internet is within reach.

Howard and Scott (2017) consider that one of the most common approaches to foreign language teaching at a non-linguistic higher school is a mixed language teaching method. Some researchers suggest adhering to four guiding principles in considering the mixed approach to teaching. The first principle implies that the function of a teacher and that of technology should be separated because they are not interchangeable though mutually supplemental. Secondly, it is essential to teach with a focus on students' needs, not just using the technologies as such. The third principle implies that it is necessary to use the technologies for supplementing and improving the F2F instruction. Thus the researchers point out that integration is a key factor and that there is a close link between the content of studies and the online

materials. At the basis of the fourth principle is the importance of creating a principal approach to the mixed training course in order to avoid chaotic mixing of the course components.

5.1. What is Moodle?

A glaring example of using the information and communication technologies in the mixed approach to teaching a foreign language (English) at a higher school of technology is Moodle (Figure 1), open source-code software (OSS), a software package designed for helping teachers create online courses and obtain a capability for a dynamic interaction.

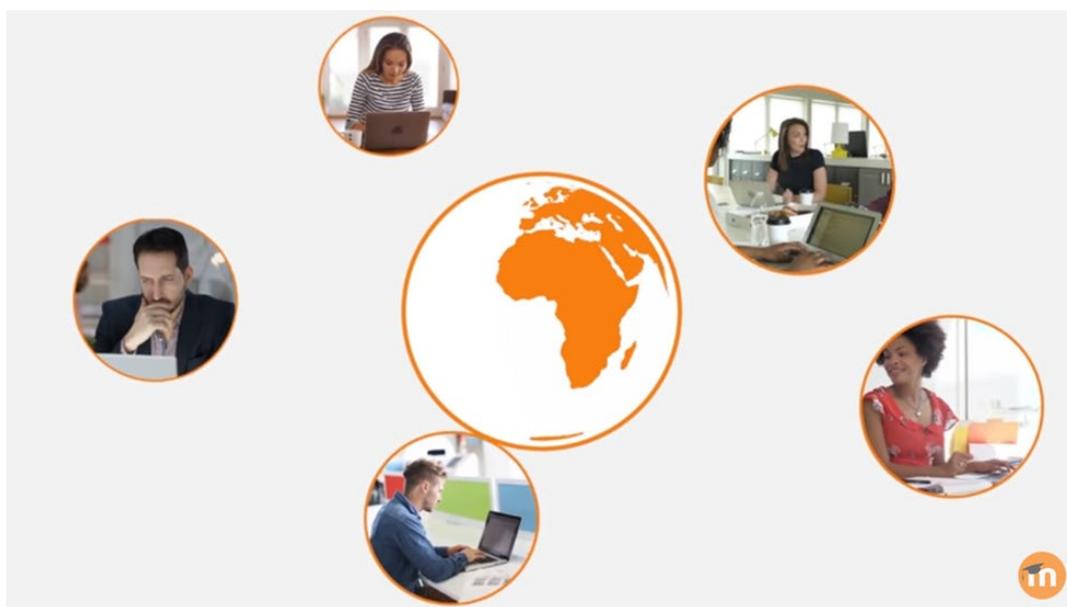


Figure 1. Moodle page

“The “Moodle” is developed taking into account the social constructivism of training. It offers a variety of useful tools, such as wiki, forums, chats, blogs and seminars enabling teachers to use different formats of social intercourse and cooperation for training. The students can be divided into subgroups (visible or individual), synchronically interact in chats or participate in non-synchronic discussions in wiki and forums. All written “dialogues” in chats can be saved for further use.”

The Moodle platform also gives a lot of benefits for distance learners. The idea of the platform or the so-called virtual class is in many ways similar to a real class. This enables students to contact with their teachers. Esnaola-Arribillaga and Bezanilla (2020) note that it also supplies them with all the materials and demonstrations the teachers present to their students in lectures.

Thanks to Moodle the online teaching provides opportunities not only for active discussions, exchange of ideas and information, but also for joint training of students. The function of the teacher in such a medium is to ease generation of information by students and an exchange of this information, not to control its distribution and its rate. However, the primary purpose of instruction is to drill the students in

the use of certain elements enabling them to act in a group and help them achieve what is unachievable for them on an individual basis.

The students can be engaged in active training using the Moodle platform. This is achieved by giving the students an opportunity to edit so that they would be able to document the knowledge they acquired. Instruction as a teaching method with an option to edit as an instructor gives the students a chance to assume responsibility for the content which they must share with the rest of the group. Moodle allows the teacher to give options to his students because this system is based on a hierarchy of roles from the top down to the very bottom. The bottom-most is an authenticated user or a guest/visitor having only watching rights. On the topmost position in the scale is the manager.

After each training session the students can check their knowledge by performing exercises and tasks that test their grammar, word stock, and auditing and writing skills (there is an option for electronic dictation). One can take these tests several times. The results become visible without delay. The exams and evaluation tests carried out on the Moodle platform are arranged in accordance with tests conducted at the university in the instructors' presence. The examination questions are similar to those the normal students are given. They can be answered just once within a certain period of time.

The elements used for creating courses based on the Moodle platform are divided into two categories: resources and types of activity. These elements are used according to the course requirements. The use of a specific element depends on the course content. Website pages are the most useful resource for creating courses. They contain texts, usually with grammatical commentaries, or a vocabulary plus references and a catalogue data.

A lesson consists of several web pages. Classes may vary in content, depending on the course requirements. Also, depending on the content, the navigation can be simple or very complex.

The "Lesson" option may contain Power Point in presentation, which makes the training more efficient in mastering grammar and increasing the word stock.

One of the best training sessions for interaction between students and teachers is the Forum version. In its framework the students can put questions to their teachers concerning lexical and grammatical phenomena. The external files (insertions) can also be uploaded in this exercise. Another two versions of communication with the teacher on this platform is provided by Chat and Online Newspaper.

5.2. Station Rotation Model

Truitt and Ku (2018) did the research related to learning in a Station Rotation blended learning setting (Figure 2). This strategy helps teachers to design stations that would meet the students' learning requirements. After the teacher has defined the target skill and assigned the students to groups based on the data available, he can design stations for the students to practice their skills in individually or in small groups. This strategy enables the teachers to think out the station's organization, the flow and the transition between the stations. Also, they can review and decide which stations to further develop for meeting specific requirements. There are several types of mixed training.

So, mixed project training is a model in which a student uses both online training - in the form of courses or an independent approach - and individual studies with collective activities for developing, iterating, and publishing education projects.

In the framework of supplemental mixed training the students either do completely interactive work to supplement their daily individual studies or carry on entirely individual training to supplement the training they received at online courses and other training sessions.

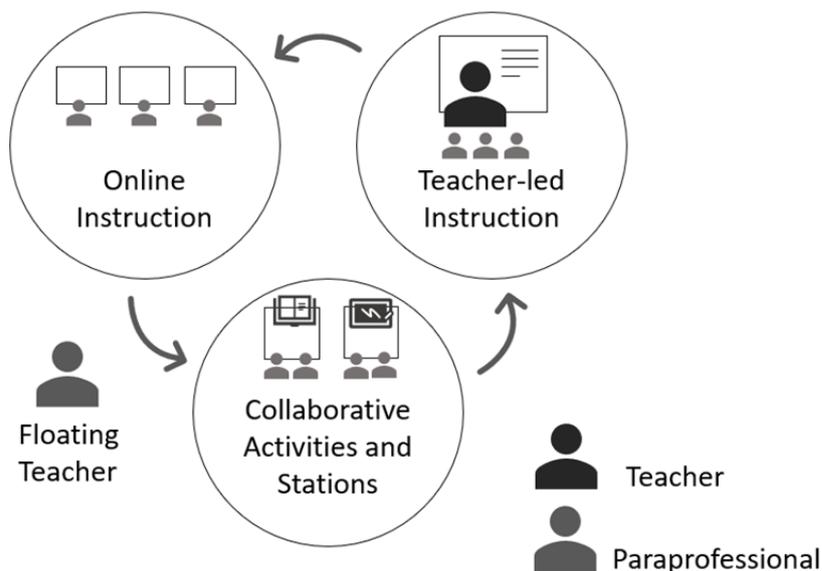


Figure 2. Station Rotation Model

In the mixed Inside-Out training it is planned that the training would “terminate” beyond the academic premises. However, there are still unique benefits in the form of physical and digital space.

So, in this model the nature of online training is less important than preoccupation with platforms, space, people and out of class options. Online components can be independent requests or official courses and electronic training curriculums.

As with distance learning, in the mixed format there is a need for an expert instruction, regular feedback and teaching the course contents. The main idea is in the supplement, i.e., essential goals of instruction are fully achieved in one space while the “opposite” space provides a special extra experience to the student, which no other factor could supply.

5.3. Language-learning platform FluentU

The total immersion method for teaching and learning a foreign language is rarely used at non-linguistic institutions of higher learning. However, with the help of online program it provides an excellent resource for linguistic immersion in both classroom and on remote premises. FluentU supplies a monitored library of real video content (including film trailers, clips from music videos, news reports and dedicated dialogues) at different language levels. Each word is thoroughly annotated. In addition, one can click on a word to see how it is used in other video materials on the website. Here, one can easily gather materials on

a subject for required lexical groups, including technical terms in accordance with a students' major specialty, which is essential when studying English at an engineering college.

Probably, the most interesting part of FluentU is the "teaching mode", which makes a video, converting it to language study lessons. The lessons are fully personalized, which is why the student training history is taken into account in supplying the questions. The FluentU algorithm tunes up the students for success, teaching them based on what they already know.

Besides, FluentU always monitors the word stock studied by the students. This program uses such information to give exclusively to the students an individual experience, recommendation for video materials and examples. It is possible to arrange the chosen video as courses, assigning them to students for home and in-class work. Each of them can enter the system by using his password.

As a result, the students' progress can be monitored individually and collectively in a group, i.e. information is supplied on how many videos and units they mastered, what percentage of questions with exercises they answered correctly, etc.

The communicative approach is one of the most common methods of teaching a foreign language. In many ways it is a culmination of such approaches and methods that took place previously. It points out the student's ability to perform different functions such as asking and replying questions, making requests, describing, relating and comparing. The task performance and problem resolution are two key components of critical thinking by means of which the communicative approach works. Also Ruiz and Spínola (2019) consider that one of the most important thing in teaching a foreign language (English) is not just communication but intercultural communication so that students are ready to interact and communicate with people from different cultures.

Unlike the direct method, grammar is not taught as a separate subject. Its teaching proceeds in a context, i.e., a detailed correction of mistakes is rejected in favor of a theory according to which the students will naturally develop a precise speech ability if they use it often. So the students develop fluency by communicating in a language, not by analyzing it.

The communication class includes training sessions at which the students can resolve a problem or settle an issue by a narration or a negotiation and thus determine a communicative competence. So, some types of activities can include making a dialogue in which the participants agree, for instance, when and where they come together to have a dinner, creating a history based on a series of pictures or finding differences and similarities in two pictures.

5.4. Blogs

The communicative approach is realized by using different platforms and blogs. In recent years, the use of blogs has become a tool for learning a foreign language. Most blogs are textual entities combining texts, images, videos, and references and links to other blogs with a focus on certain areas and objects.

Even though the blogs are not designed for educational purposes, they draw attention of foreign language teachers since they are a tool for creating Online Newspapers by those without any experience or expertise in computing software.

The blogs are efficient tools for developing the conceptualization, brainstorm, articulation, monitoring, evaluation, self-presentation and information exchange. Audio blogs improve the students' oral performance, enabling an individual oral feedback.

Aaron Campbell (2003) singles out three types of blogs for use with language lessons. So, the Tutor Blog is maintained by the teacher. The content of this type of blog can be restricted by curriculums, information about the course, homework, assigned tasks, etc. Or, if the teacher can turn out an essay about his life, offering his speculations about the culture under study and the language dealt with in order to keep up the online activity and further in-class discussions. In this blog the students are usually restricted to an option to write comments to the teacher's posts.

The Class Blog (Figure 3) is a common space for teachers and students. It's best to use such a blog as a discussion platform for joint work and as an option for moving in-class training to out-of-school premises. The students can be encouraged to ponder carefully in writing on the subjects dealt with in class. The students get a feeling of greater freedom and involvement than in the teacher's blog.

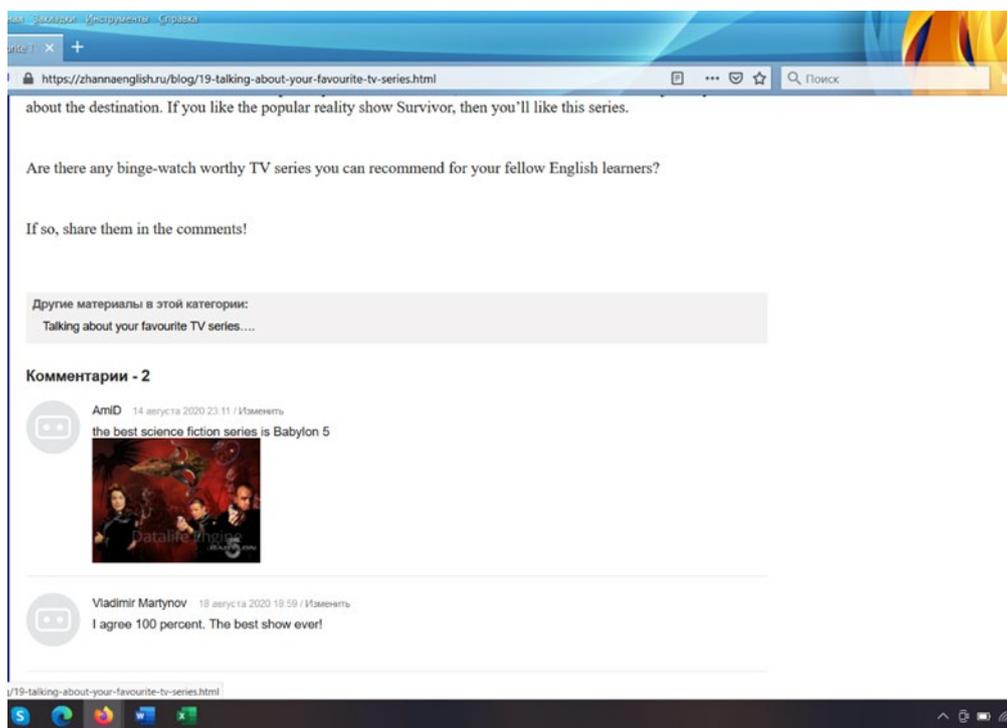


Figure 3. Author's blog

The Learner Blog is a third type of blog. It demands more time and effort from the teacher for its tuning and moderation. For all that, however, it is the most efficient of all. This involves giving an individual blog to each student. Its advantage is that it becomes the student's personal online space. The students can be urged to write more often about what interests them and leave comments in other students' blogs.

The students often use a combination of all three types of blogs with hyperlinks that connect them.

As we can see, the types of blogs are various, including blogs for teachers, auditorium blogs, and blogs for students, which can be integrated into teaching English as a foreign language.

However, from among those three types of blogs, the students independently choose and use those designed for students. They can keep up the blogs individually or collectively. Ding (2008) deems that the individual maintenance of the blog may help students express their individuality during the training, enhance their interest and increase their motivation for the study of English.

The idea of using blogs for teaching English involves promotion of the students' writing practice. In addition, the blogs help students formulate their thoughts in writing in a foreign language. The students perceive blogs as a useful medium that motivates them to read more.

Thanks to the study of blogs the students learn how to be critically minded in order to glean relevant information for their tasks or their statements in blogs. Besides, the students find a new word stock and different writing styles from other blogs. The new word stock essentially helps the students to read different blogs. At the same time, the writing styles guide them in building their own blogs.

Blogs belong to the Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) applications that can be used in non-synchronous communication. In addition, the blogs are a convenient means of a social intercourse in which interaction and exchange of teaching expertise take place. Blogs can perform as alternative mass media for an authentic interaction with an online community. In the study of English, the blogs enhance the students' interaction not only with information systems but also with other global audiences. The comment function is an important tool that makes blogs more communicative and interactive.

For students who study English at a non-linguistic higher school the study of English language blogs will be an efficient and interesting method for mastering the language. Thus, for instance, in the "Perfect English Grammar" blog one can find an endless collection of short interactive exercises in English grammar which can be easily used for drilling different subjects, from irregular verbs to the use of ideal tenses. The interactive format of the blog makes the complex grammar rules interesting and easy to remember.

The Londoner is one of the most popular blogs in Great Britain. Its author relates about everything concerned with the lifestyle. This is fascinating reading, a mix of sophisticated sentences and detailed descriptions, ideally suited for the intermediate level of English.

Thematic blogs, dedicated to specialized areas in which engineering students are trained, are also useful for increasing and improving the word stock. The training through task performance is an improved communicative approach focusing on performance of specific tasks by means of which the language is taught and studied. In this type of the training medium the students study a certain subject, step by step, using various resources, each of which is completed in the final project, such as a written report or a presentation. The activities are similar to those found in a communication class, but they are always based on a single concrete subject.

5.5. Online platform Kahoot

Kahoot! is another free online platform for creating and launching training sessions. It can be used for formulating questions with several possible answers with the help of built-in images and videos. So the teachers can create their own Kahoots or search generally accessible sessions.

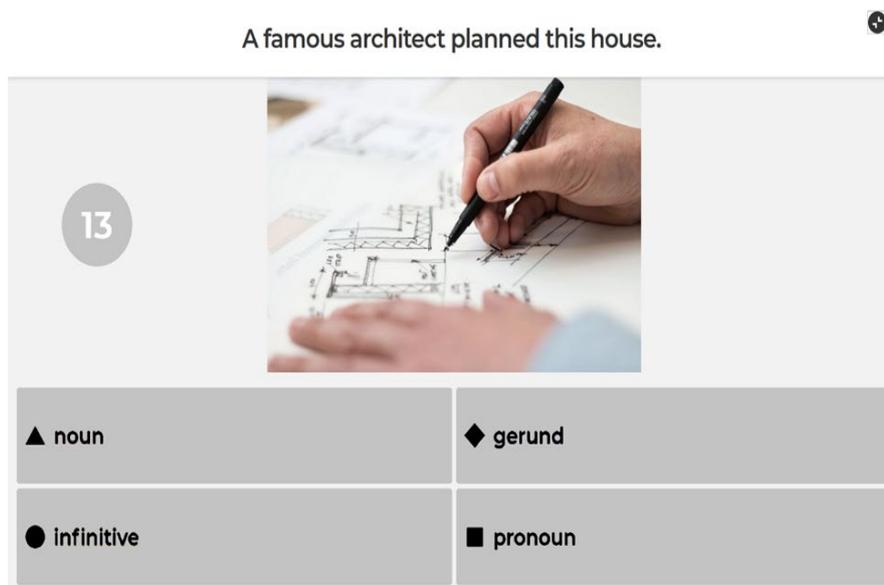


Figure 4. Author's example page. Kahoot

It is enough just to prepare test questions, enter the create.kahoot.it site, and click Quiz for creating a series of questions with several possible answers. Depending on the complexity level, if necessary, each question can be amended by changing the timer and points system. Also, it is possible to add images and videos to produce more interesting content and create cues.

One can use Kahoot as an alternative for reading / audition based on textbooks. It is enough to ask the students to read part of the text or listen to part of it and then put a question to Kahoot. It is important to put as many questions as possible to make the students read the entire text.

One shouldn't stop at showing the right answer to make sure the students are being taught reading / audition, not just tested. One can ask the students to give argumentation of their answer by an excerpt from the text or ask them why their answers are wrong. If the bulk of the audience didn't come up with the right answer the text can be reviewed. It is possible to create one's own questions or use those from the textbook.

Teaching with the help of Kahoot! also includes tasks of the "blind" question, i.e., a one to which they don't know the answer with a subsequent explanation and a possibility to answer the same question with a supportive question enabling students to use their knowledge and concepts.

The new function of Kahoot, named Challenge, makes it possible to assign Kahoot! as homework, which saves much of the teacher's time. That is why this type of work corrects itself. Besides, after performance of the task one can look through statistics for each question and see the ratio of correct and wrong answers.

Gunduz and Akkoyunlu (2020) came to the conclusion that Kahoot increases students' motivation because the platform is organized as a game platform. This platform has a lot of features that allow to create their course tasks according to the context of the course, students' level and the subject they study.

6. Findings

The vast capabilities of the Moodle and FluentU platforms develop students' communication skills, since both of them make their total immersion in the language possible. This, in turn, allows the students to enhance their skill to communicate and express their opinion through a foreign language. The general and thematic forums of the Moodle platform enable all participants of the course to jointly discuss professional issues, take interest in their colleagues' opinion, and exchange files. The FluentU platform uses many real video clips for teaching a language to the students. Multiple repetition of the same words helps, over time, to enrich their vocabulary. Another advantage of these platforms is that all materials are presented in different form. This makes teaching not only interesting, but also interactive, motivating students to study the foreign language and enhancing their communication capabilities.

The use of the Station Rotation teaching model enables the teacher to maintain differentiation, work at each specific moment with a small group and use interactive forms of teaching during training sessions.

By using the blog the students can develop their communication skills since the blogs help them learn to write laconic reports and comments not only on amateurish but also professional subjects. Also, the blogs can be used not only for learning in class but also in extracurricular work.

The chief advantage of the Kahoot! gaming platform used as a training aid in educational institutions is its option to consolidate and test students' knowledge through educational games. This makes the training process more interesting and interactive. The use of this service can be an effective method for getting feedback from the students.

7. Conclusion

Integration of technologies into existing forms and methods of teaching English at higher schools of technology is essential for developing basic skills in foreign languages, such as audition, reading, speaking and writing. The technological tools used in the teaching and study of English can greatly help both teachers and students by giving an option to reuse materials, access them in any place at all times, obtain free or low-cost teaching and learning aids, and efficiently train in a short period of time. It can be said that the technology integration must be implemented according to plan and in a systematic way, in which case it will essentially contribute to the general introduction of technologies, a process where teachers should play an important role. Consequently, it must be remembered that the technology should be effectively introduced in the teaching and study of English. The use of computer technologies in language teaching provides a student-oriented training medium. This enables the teachers to vary lesson styles in order to motivate students with different interests. Also, it gives an option to teach out of class (which enhances the students' immersion in the language) and, it is believed, to better take into account individual differences. Integration of multimedia into the traditional training medium not only enriches the style of reproduction, but also improves the language level.

Given that the use of technologies reduces orientation to the teacher, it lessens the students' worry over the language studies since it gives them an opportunity to comfortably practice the language without fear of mistakes.

As a rule, the teachers choose the best method and the best approach for each lesson or training session. They are not restricted by any concrete methodology. Thus they can freely combine in time and place their training sessions, tasks, methods and approaches.

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