ОБЩАЯ ПЕДАГОГИКА, ИСТОРИЯ ПЕДАГОГИКИ И ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ / GENERAL PEDAGOGY, HISTORY OF PEDAGOGY AND EDUCATION

MOODLE – ELECTRONIC EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR TEACHING ENGLISH

Research article

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Abstract

Currently, information and communication technologies (ICT) are actively used in the educational and research activities of the modern Russian education system. Teaching foreign languages plays a leading role in education, which is universally recognized. It is not surprising that information and communication technologies have penetrated into education. Knowledge of foreign languages, in particular English, distinguishes the leading specialists of professional industries and is a mandatory item in the questionnaires when applying for a job. English helps them to communicate with foreign colleagues, read literature in the language, participate in international conferences, projects and exhibitions. In this regard, the modernization of teaching process at the university is one of the main points of methodological and pedagogical issues. The purpose of this article is to describe the possibilities of the electronic educational platform Moodle for teaching English in non-linguistic universities, using the example of Southwest State University. Thanks to the information and communication environment, it is possible to use E-learning technologies. Russian universities often turn to the virtual learning management system Moodle, which helps students learn English. The relevance of this work is that the electronic educational platform satisfies the interests of modern students and provides them with the access to various information sources.

Keywords: education, information and communication technologies, virtual educational environment Moodle, English.

ЭЛЕКТРОННАЯ ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНАЯ ПЛАТФОРМА MOODLE В ОБУЧЕНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОМУ ЯЗЫКУ

Научная статья

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Аннотация

В настоящее время в учебно-воспитательной и научно-исследовательской деятельности современной российской системы образования активно используется информационно-коммуникационные технологии. Обучение иностранным языкам играет ведущую роль в образовании это признается повсеместно. Неудивительно, что информационно-коммуникационные технологии проникли и в образование. Владение иностранными языками, в частности английским, отличает ведущих специалистов профессиональных отраслей и является обязательным пунктом в анкетах при поступлении на работу. Знание английского языка помогает им в общении с зарубежными партнерами по работе, чтении литературы на языке, участие в международных конференциях, проектах и выставках. В этой связи, модернизация процесса преподавания английского языка в вузе является одним из главных моментов методико-педагогических вопросов. Целью данной статьи является описание возможностей электронной образовательной платформы Moodle при обучении английскому языку в неязыковых вузах, на примере Юго-Западного государственного университета. Благодаря информационно-коммуникационной среде возможно использовать технологии E-learning. Российские вузы чаще всего обращаются к виртуальной системе управления обучением Moodle, которая помогает студентам изучать английский язык. Актуальность данной работы заключается в том, что электронная образовательная среда удовлетворяет интересы современных студентов и предоставляет им возможность доступа к различным источникам информации.

Ключевые слова: образование, информационные и коммуникационные технологии, электронная обучающая платформа Moodle, английский язык.

Introduction

Nowadays, we live in an information society, and the distinctive feature of this time is the emergence of new interactive communication methods generated by scientific and technological progress, such as interactive television and the Internet.

The development of technologies and the Internet resources is increasingly being used in the field of education. This makes it possible to change and implement advanced teaching methods taking into account the latest information technologies, to interest students in studying various subjects through the accumulation and extension of their knowledge and experience. The communicative ability of trainees is developed via the Internet by involving them in solving a wide range of meaningful and realistic tasks. The successful achievement of them gives satisfaction and increases students' self-confidence. For example, computerization of the field of communication defines a new level of requirements for English language proficiency. It means that the study's goals and objectives are changed.

The integration of new information technologies into the learning process modernized it, contributed to the revision of views on the methodological potential of traditional technologies and the possibility of introducing new ones, and this, in turn, made the process of learning English interesting and more entertaining for students. Information and communication technologies (ICT) are a variety of digital technologies used to create, transmit and distribute information and provide services [1], [2], [3].

Methodology

The main goal of the modern educational system with the use of ICT is to explain the advantages of independent work, and not to convey information to students in a ready-made form. Classroom work can also be carried out through interactive computer programs [4], [5], [6]. The use of ICT in teaching English makes it possible to convey the topics studied in a clear and visual form, applying a differentiated approach to learning, and this, in turn, allows students to study new material and complete tasks at a pace convenient for them. Computer training programs are used to train various types of speech activity, study lexical and grammatical phenomena, develop communicative competencies, and model various communicative situations [7]. The purpose of this work is to study the possibilities of ICT in teaching English at a university.

To achieve this goal, theoretical and empirical research methods were used, namely: theoretical analysis of literature on a given topic, observation of the results of students' work in the electronic educational environment Moodle.

Results

Learning Management Systems (LMS) have become widespread in Russian universities. One of the most popular open information systems is a modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment or the Moodle system [8], [9]. This is a virtual learning environment that allows you to supervise the educational process, create and manage training courses and organize work for both teachers and students [10]. It opens up new perspectives for teaching schoolchildren, students and adults, combining a competent structure, flexibility and many functions for organizing distance learning. The Moodle system is very easy to use. It allows the teacher to communicate with students individually and work with their personal needs, at the same time directing discussions and activities of the entire students group to achieve common educational goals. So this system can be used to ensure students communication when learning English. The main functions of the Moodle e-learning environment are:

· the development of an electronic, educational and methodological complex;

· the use of various electronic resources, both for classroom work (lectures and practical classes) and for independent work;

· the contact between teachers and students online to perform educational tasks both in the classroom and outside the classes;

· the storage and transmission of various kinds of information;

· the development of test tasks;

· the possibility of studying more difficult topics later and the possibility of returning to them [11].

Due to the fact that the Moodle system has a wide variety of resources, we have developed an electronic educational and methodological complex (EEMC) in English for technical specialties, which includes 4 blocks:

• educational block;

• control block;

• hyperlinks to websites and internet resources;

• recommended literature.

The objectives of this complex are:

• to promote full-time and part-time forms of education;

• to conduct Olympiads, competitions in English;

• to conduct computer testing.

The aim of the EEMC is to develop professional and communicative competence in English. Based on this goal, students should:

• know the English language system and master all types of speech activity in English;

• possess communication skills that allow you to communicate fluently in the language on personal and professional topics;

• get acquainted with the peculiarities of the etiquette of the countries and linguistic and cultural realities;

• be able to build their behavior in various situations of intercultural communication.

The content of the EEMC reflects the requirements of the point-rating system, activity-based and communicative approaches to teaching undergraduate students of technical specialties. Modern E-learning technologies have been included in this course. It helps to implement individual learning trajectories with the help of a teacher and make the process of learning English more interesting, more attractive and more successful.

Each EEMC includes topics corresponding to a particular technical specialty, and consists of 4 sections.

The first section is an introduction. This section has an organizational and methodological nature. It includes a reference block with information about what students have to do during their studies at the university. This section also outlines the main areas of work and expected learning outcomes, gives instructions on how to work in the Moodle system and talks about teaching methods. In the introduction, students can find a programme with the main content of the discipline, mandatory and additional literature and types of control.

The second section is informational and reference. Here students will find educational, methodological and informational support of the discipline, hyperlinks to Internet sources and electronic libraries.

The third section is the main one. It includes all materials on all didactic units.

The last, fourth section is a test one, with tasks for conducting entrance, current, and boundary control. Materials for the interim certification of students (credit/exam) are also included here.

Thus, for the educational process of teaching English, the teacher has a huge variety of tools at its disposal. At its discretion, one can use such elements of the course as:

• forum;
• glossary;
• lecture;
• task;
• test.

Depending on the purpose and objectives of the lesson, you can use a different combination of course elements. Each topic of the e-learning course has a clear structure. One of the features of this course is the presence in each topic of a "Glossary" with words and expressions on a specific topic. Mastering words will allow students to speak English fluently, as well as participate in the development and correction of the Glossary, complementing the lexical units that, in their opinion, are necessary for mastering the topic. This leads to a better assimilation of new and consolidation of already known vocabulary. For example, when studying the topic "My University" after reading the text "South-West State University", students are invited to add vocabulary to the glossary on this topic. The system highlights all the words and expressions entered in the glossary in the material on the topic. This attracts the attention of students to them, making it easier to memorize them. Students can also view how and in what context these lexical units are used.

For learning English on their own, a "Lecture" is very well suited, as students get acquainted with grammatical phenomena, regional realities, the basics of text annotation and the rules for writing letters of various types in English. The effectiveness of the "Lecture" is visible when studying and repeating grammatical material. In the Moodle system, lectures on such grammatical topics as "Active Voice", "Passive Voice", "Prepositions", "Modal Verbs", "Subjunctive Mood", "Articles", "Adjectives" and others have been developed as part of the study of the discipline "Foreign Language". The system settings allow you to set a mode of operation in which students can master the material at a time convenient for them and at the pace they need. At the end of each lecture, the teacher makes a list of questions, which contributes to communication with students and at the same time monitoring the understanding of the topic covered. Students will be able to move on to the next section of the lecture by demonstrating the assimilation of the material. To do this, they must complete a number of tasks and answer questions (the transition to the next question occurs after the correct answer to the previous one). If a mistake is made, students are invited to study the material again and do the task again.

The most used element of the course, in our practice, was the "Task". These are various kinds of tasks that are suitable for working on lexical, grammatical material, improving reading and listening skills. For example, after listening to or reading a text, students are asked to complete a lexical and grammatical task. Communicative exercises are well suited to test the understanding of the content of the text. At the final stage of the work, they are invited to perform a creative task in the form of a presentation. Students upload their work to the next element of the block, which is called "Forum". At the "Forum" group work is carried out together with the teacher. However, students should not only upload their papers, but also get acquainted with the abstracts, annotations, presentations of their classmates, evaluate them, leave their comments. For example, upon completion of the study of the topic "Food", the student must present a presentation "My favorite dish". At the "Forum" one gets acquainted with the works of other students and evaluates them. For this purpose, evaluation criteria and speech clichés are proposed, with the help of which students should write an appropriate comment. The main feature of the "Forum" is the possibility of consulting with a teacher on all available issues remotely.

The control of the material passed is carried out using such an element as a "Test". However, it seems to us that it can be used not only as a control, but also as an assistant in the educational process. Before performing the test, its settings are made: scores, number of attempts, time and deadlines are set, etc. If the test is intended for training purposes, then the time for its passage may not be limited and several attempts are provided. In addition, students can familiarize themselves with their mistakes, draw appropriate conclusions, study the material more thoroughly, and then perform the test again. After passing the test several times, the average score will be entered in the evaluation log. The Moodle electronic educational environment with its capabilities controls the degree of assimilation of the material passed, evaluates the results, fills in the gaps on the topic.

When developing the EEMC in English, we have created test systems that include tasks of various levels of complexity. The tasks are designed to check the assimilation of lexical, grammatical and country-specific material, read or listened to information.

At the final stage, students must complete creative tasks, for example, give a characteristic, express an opinion, write an essay. The "Test" element is of great importance for the teacher, because the results are checked automatically, recorded and stored in the evaluation log. This saves a lot of time and ensures transparency and objectivity of the results.

Conclusion

The capabilities of the Moodle learning platform for teaching English meet the requirements of modern education. With the help of the Moodle platform, the learning process has become relevant and attractive for students, and economical and efficient for teachers. The advantage of the EEMC in English on the Moodle platform is:

• the improvement of the learning process and the organization of productive independent work of students who study English;

• the modernization of the content of English language education, the emergence of new information resources. The Moodle system helps to provide students with up-to-date methodological materials;

• the flexibility and the availability of training at any time and in any place. This allows students to build the learning process in a convenient and accessible mode;

• the use of differentiated approach to learning. Thanks to the Moodle system, students, depending on their level of training and language competence, can choose the pace of studying a particular section themselves, and after testing analyze and correct their mistakes. This, in turn, creates a comfortable atmosphere and increases the effectiveness of training;

• the work in the Moodle system not only contributes to the development of students' foreign language competence based on current modern methodological resources, but also educates them such qualities as independence, responsibility, and stimulates creative activity;

• the objective system for evaluating works. Student papers and their grades are recorded and stored in the "Assessment Journal", where students and teachers can track the dynamics of academic performance.

The experience of using the Moodle distance learning system at South-West State University to teach English students of technical specialties, allows us to draw an unambiguous conclusion that at present, according to the totality of indicators, this system is one of the most accessible and promising distance learning systems.

Distance learning using the Moodle system, which has such advantages as the ability to study anywhere and at any time, modularity, flexibility, parallelism and accessibility, meets the requirements of modern education.

Конфликт интересов
Не указан.

Conflict of Interest
None declared.

Рецензия
Все статьи проходят рецензирование. Но рецензент или автор статьи предпочли не публиковать рецензию к этой статье в открытом доступе. Рецензия может быть предоставлена компетентным органам по запросу.

Review
All articles are peer-reviewed. But the reviewer or the author of the article chose not to publish a review of this article in the public domain. The review can be provided to the competent authorities upon request.

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