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ICT as a tool to optimise foreign language teaching in the HEI

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Abstract

Relevance. In just two decades, our world has changed to such an extent that today's so-called generational differences are no longer limited to different world views and prevailing social relations – today it is often the case that members of the same family, representing different generations, function in very different realities. The generation of the globalisation age has been trained to value completely different values: openness and tolerance, which are shaped by the Internet and open international borders; flexibility and mobility – in work and education; finally, a better understanding of working with technology, above all electronic, information and communication technology, because without this competence it is impossible to imagine functioning in the modern world. This shift necessitates that educators adapt to incorporate modern digital tools to meet the demands of a diverse, technologically integrated world.

Purpose. The purpose of the study is to help future teachers become aware of the importance of modernising and constantly developing their professional workshop during their career, and to offer suggestions for improving their lessons by using the achievements and tools of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in their educational activities and introducing innovations into traditional and well-known teaching and learning methods.

Methodology. The following scientific methods were used to write the study: comparison, analysis and synthesis, ascending from the abstract to the concrete.

Results. The findings reveal that the incorporation of ICT not only enriches the educational experience but also makes it more dynamic and accessible. Specific ICT tools, such as e-learning platforms and blended learning techniques, have shown significant improvements in engaging students and enhancing the learning process.

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Conclusions. The practical significance of the work lies in the applied use of the research materials by foreign language teachers, higher education institutions seeking to improve their lectures and by all concerned with such topics.

Keywords: language education; information and communication technologies; foreign language learning; learning tools; educational platform.

Introduction

The education system aims to prepare students for life and communication in the modern world. Thus, education must adapt to changing conditions – it cannot work in isolation from reality, so it cannot work without modern technologies. Thus, education must adapt to changing conditions – it cannot work in isolation from reality, so it cannot work without modern technology [1]. Computers, MP3s, DVD players, radio, television and the internet, used to transmit different types of information containing text, graphics, sound or video, can significantly help students at any level of education. The use of these devices and technologies in schools has an impact on changing the learning process. The intelligent use of ICT can change the existing concept of school lessons and hence the quality of the lessons. Nowadays, this is an inevitable process. This publication presents the opportunities and benefits of using the Internet as a technology that assists traditional learning. It aims to present the tools and effects of ICT use in schools and the "blended learning" method, still little popular in Ukraine, which is a mixture of modern tools with traditional teaching methods. The emergence of modern communication technologies, the dramatic increase in the amount of information stored on servers, and the growing technical capacity to process and use it have all contributed to their growing impact on society.

Today it is difficult to imagine an area of life without access to computer networks. The dynamic development of ICT has undoubtedly contributed to the development of a knowledge-based society, the main feature of which is continuing education (LLL – Life-Long Learning) [2]. Computer-assisted education has now become particularly important and more effective. The first attempts to use computers in education took place in the United States at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s. Its spread to schools took place in the 1970s, and in the 1980s, 96% of teaching in the USA was already computer-assisted instruction (Cai Computer Assisted Instruction) [3]. However, the rest of the world remained far behind the United States in this area. The United Kingdom's Open University is the first institution (founded in 1969) to focus entirely on distance learning. Its methods consist of active use of content from the internet, radio, and television. The first attempts to use the computer for educational purposes in other European countries, Poland in particular, were made in 1966. In Poland, the first few computers connected to the Internet were launched in 1991 (Warsaw-Kopenhagen). Their number increased only in 1995, at first in higher education institutions only [4].

If we consider Ukraine, an obstacle to the introduction of ICT in education has been the Ukrainian technical infrastructure, which is not then adapted to the use of the latest technologies. Over time, the industry has gradually modernised, allowing new developments to be introduced that have increasingly gained in popularity. The spread of the method of using computers with Internet access in

education has undoubtedly been the cause of many nationwide projects initiated, through which the use of the Internet as a knowledge tool has been extended. The last years of the 20th century represent the beginning of a new trend in the use of computers and the Internet in education – e-learning. This has allowed the distance education method to spread – learning, teaching foreign languages, participating in courses or studying at school have been given other features and many barriers have disappeared. ICT is becoming increasingly popular in most European countries. In many countries, ICT is an independent learning subject.

Materials and Methods

The contemporary era is often referred to as the "era of McDonald's" or the "time of the instant" [5], indicating an acceleration and simultaneous exhaustion, a simplification of all phenomena and relationships in contemporary societies. These concepts seem to perfectly illustrate the world in which especially young people function, but at the same time this is not the scheme into which higher education should fit. The modern education and modern teachers should not abandon the existing aims of education. The modernisation does not mean a complete break with tradition, a rejection of the values that have hitherto been promoted. Schools and teachers still have much to tell their students, often blindly greedy for the opportunities, the temptations that a quick and easy 'immediate-type world' creates. Their task is still to share their life experiences and knowledge, their values. However, the means, the ways, the methods by which the teacher addresses the student to impart this knowledge and experience must change. To do this, the teacher must become a participant in the world in which he works and which his pupil understands. This is the first step in building a bridge between the world of the learner and the world of the teacher.

All this means that the curricula of modern schools are reformulated to emphasise the skills and competencies acquired, crucial for functioning in the modern world, without abandoning the content of basic knowledge and values of cultural, civic and patriotic education. To effectively implement the assumptions of curricula built in this way and, above all, to establish a dialogue with the modern learner, the teacher must demonstrate not only excellent subject and pedagogical training, but also the ability to introduce and integrate innovative tools and methods into the didactic process as well as high competencies in information and communication technology [6].

The article used scientific research methods to fulfil its objectives:

1. To describe the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning in foreign language teaching.
2. To provide effective tools for each stage of the described form of teaching.

When searching for information and writing an article, scientific methods were used, which served as tools for the practical and theoretical development of the topic.

The comparison enables us to identify similarities and differences between objects and phenomena, theories, points of view, to identify what is common among two or more objects, and revealing similarities is a rung on the road to knowledge of patterns and laws. This method was used to identify the differences, disadvantages and advantages of different ICT tools.

Analysis and synthesis. Analysis involves breaking down the whole into its constituent elements, i.e., isolating features of a subject to examine them separately as part of a whole. A rigorous analysis is a strong guarantee of a coherent research narrative. Analysis and synthesis are fruitful methods of cognition only when used in tight unity. In order for analysis to be possible, a thing must be fixed in our minds as a whole, i.e., a holistic, systematic perception of it is a prerequisite for analysis. On the contrary, the synthesis occurs after the analysis, when certain sides and elements of the whole have been highlighted. Thus, synthesis represents the bringing together of the parts obtained in analysis into a coherent whole.

The study identified the main elements of ICT-based learning that require tools for effective learning and assimilation (teacher-student communication, activity platform, student assignments, assessment). Afterwards, the importance of providing each element with the proposed tool was emphasised.

The method of ascent from the abstract to the concrete is a process of cognition according to which thinking first ascends from the concrete in reality to the abstract in thinking and from the abstract in thinking to the concrete in thinking. The paper first examined the features of ICT and then the characteristics of each of its elements.

Results and Discussion

In the 21st century, a “digital” generation is growing up who are naturally exposed to new technologies from their first years of life. The generation that is hard to reach without the use of their natural multimedia tools. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to adapt the forms and methods of teaching to the real tools that the student uses in everyday life (computer, Internet), and the teacher should be an inspiration, academic adviser and guide for the student in the available Internet information structures. ICT (information and communication technology) is based on the use of so-called blended learning. The use of ICT tools during lessons involves the active incorporation of widely understood information and communication technologies into the learning process. An example would be a language course. The offering of foreign language teaching by traditional methods, supplemented by distance learning (e.g., e-learning, blended learning), contains various teaching methods that allow all language skills to be practised through various exercises and tasks, undoubtedly determines the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process of a foreign language as well as its quality and attractiveness. One of the possibilities for diversifying language lessons is the use of interactive computer games when learning a foreign language, hence introducing elements of learning through play. Here are

some relevant tools to offer to foreign language teachers for use in their lessons.

Blended learning is a modern and flexible learning and teaching technique. It is based on combining and interweaving two or more educational strategies at the same time, e.g., e-learning and face-to-face. This is the use of modern teaching methods, i.e., working with a multimedia programme, most often on the Internet and with the support of a traditional teacher. The computer stimulates and accelerates learning, the teacher provides direction, motivates and monitors learning progress. However, the whole process is impossible without the involvement of an expert teacher. Especially in situations where e-learning methods do not meet the intended educational objectives. Blended learning is a mixture of learning methodologies, it uses several information channels at the same time, depending on the needs of the students [7].

A podcast (ang. Podcast, podcasting) is a form of online publishing of multimedia – sound or film, most often in the form of a regular series that can be automatically subscribed to using RSS technology (they can automatically download the latest "episodes"). There are many sites for downloading podcasts. Moreover, podcasts are often produced by radio services (e.g., www.bbc.co.uk), television and portals devoted to certain topics. We can also create our own podcasts. We can record them with Audacity (a useful programme for podcasts) and then use them in lessons. Podcasts can be played on any computer or phone, tablet, so they do not have too many hardware requirements. They are an invaluable tool for both language classes (records in the original language version) and non-language classes [8].

If we want to present an activity or process by looking at individual steps, we should turn to a tool called Screencast. It is nothing more than a film capturing events presented on a computer screen, an image that the computer user sees. Such a film, together with a commentary by the person performing the activity, has an instructional or presentational function – it is a kind of training film. This is a more modern version of screen shots and makes it easy to explain complex steps. It is a practical tool that can be used, for example, during IT classes (which illustrate how the programme works). Screencasts are usually published in SWF (Macromedia Flash), AVI or QuickTime formats [8].

Vodcast (Video-On-Demand BroadcastCAST) is a technology for transmitting video as files available on the Internet and catalogued in RSS format. Vodcasts are a form of Internet television similar to podcasts, which are a type of radio programme broadcast and offered by services in episodes. Due to a small technical difference, vodcasts sometimes qualify as podcasts. Vodcasts are very often used by thematic portals, including educational as well as media portals. We may encounter other names for the vodcast tool: videocast, vidcast, vcast [9].

The Internet is used in education in different ways: it can only be a source of information (and a search tool), supporting traditional teaching, it can also be an intermediary between students and the teacher in the learning process (e-learning), where communication between the subjects of education takes place exclusively through the Internet. VLE (Virtual Learning Environment)

is a learning method that uses more electronic media, including the Internet, audio/video, Interactive TV, multimedia programmes and e-learning. It complements traditional teaching methods. However, an internet connection must be available at high speed to make full use of e-learning. Learning through the use of e-learning platforms has many advantages: unlimited access to course content, the ability to return to parts of the material at any time convenient to the student, the ability to choose the pace of learning, participants can use the many electronic materials available on the e-learning platform.

The student's work is monitored by a so-called online tutor (e-mentor or e-coach), who supervises the login processes, the time spent on learning, and monitors the student's progress. When appropriate, he should remind the student of his lack of systematicity – that he has not used the platform for too long, that he spends too little time on the modules with which he is having problems. It is possible to consult, comment on and assess the work. The pupil is able to communicate not only with the teacher, but also with other members of his group or class. E-learning platform accounts, emails, online forums and chat rooms are used for communication. Importantly, the e-learning platform can be a supplement to lessons – some of the work (e.g., familiarising students with the material for the next lesson, homework) can take place over the Internet and be closely monitored by the teacher [8].

E-learning also provides the opportunity to use innovative learning methods, such as interactive games. Moodle is the most common tool for creating e-learning platforms [10]. A package designed for the creation of courses delivered over the Internet and for thematic websites (“distance learning”), distributed free of charge as open-source software. This is the tool for integrated science, using the latest technology, in teacher-student and student-student communication, to non-verbal presentation of material. Using the full capabilities of the e-learning platform, we contribute to enriching our own knowledge and gaining new practical skills.

For years, there has been a debate as to whether the e-book will beat the traditional book. Despite the convenience of using a paper book, e-books seem to be more pragmatic and, importantly today, much faster to use. The use of electronic dictionaries is increasingly encouraged by quick word searches, transcriptions, pronunciations – the possibility of listening to the lecturer, and numerous examples of word usage. By using good and reputable online dictionaries, you can be sure that the terminology will be up-to-date and relevant. The attractive graphic design of the online dictionaries is also a significant advantage. Visual learners find it much easier to acquire knowledge using sight. Interactive dictionaries also contain many links to other useful sites [8; 11; 12].

Wikipedia is an international, multilingual, widely known and recognised free encyclopaedia. Using the Wikipedia wealth of terminology is a very handy form of knowledge acquisition. Thanks to an extensive content control system, the information contained therein is up-to-date and comprehensive through links to other, thematically related entries. Wikipedia was officially launched on January 15, 2001. Initially, it was an addition to Nupedia (a free encyclopedia created in 2000, where everyone could publish their articles). Then it became an

independent project that exists in several dozen language versions. Today, there are almost 2.5 million articles on the English Wikipedia [13].

Thanks to the wiki model, almost anyone can edit a website. Editing website content is possible using a language called Wikitekst, a simplified version of standard HTML. Wikipedia is associated with similar network projects. In 2002, a Wiktionary with synonyms and translations was launched. In 2003, Wikiquote, a Wikibooks project (specialising in free textbooks, guides, educational research) and Wikisource (source code) was created. The following year saw the launch of Wikispecies (a database of living organisms), Wikinews (a site for citizen journalism) and Wikimedia Commons (a catalogue of multimedia material). Wikipedia's youngest sister project is Wikiversity (it has been around since 2006). It collects training materials and runs its own training projects. Together with other websites, it perfectly complements the content of the main site and makes it easier to find additional information [13]. In this way, Wikipedia becomes a multidimensional repository of knowledge that not only provides the necessary data, but also helps to understand it. Thanks to Wikipedia, interest in editing services on the Internet has grown considerably – today we have many services for creating a private Wiki.

Edutainment (entertainment-education) refers to the concept of transferring knowledge electronically while making use of recreational elements. Providing online and offline learning content and combining it with the form of play is one method of enhancing learning, increasing his/her motivation to learn, facilitating learning and memorisation, increasing the effectiveness of both processes and enabling the learner to succeed faster. Virtual Trips is an exercise based on visiting websites to access places and view objects in virtual reality. Ask-an-expert – an exercise based on gathering information from specialists and experts in the field. Information Gap – an exercise based on finding information needed to perform a task, text or audio exercise.

The educational computer game combines the form of a game with educational content, aimed at clearly defined didactic objectives, its use supports the learning process and greatly facilitates it. Games also allow you to solve various interactive tasks such as crosswords, puzzles, charades, jigsaw puzzles, quizzes, picture and expression dominoes, etc. They increase learners' concentration and attention levels, contribute significantly to maintaining interest in the didactic content and increase learner motivation. They affect the assimilation activities (assimilation, especially memory) of students. Furthermore, because they focus on learning foreign languages, they enable all four skills (speaking, reading, writing, listening) to be taught simultaneously [14].

A blog (from weblog – online journal, diary) is a type of website on which the author posts dated entries, reflected consistently. However, not only individuals can run their blog. It can be used as a portal dedicated to a specific topic. This is a great way to organise information chronologically, using additional ICT tools such as podcasts, screencasts or RSS. Using the diary, we can get more information on a certain topic. Bloggers tend to follow and link to other blogs and establish contact with their authors, so that the blog network begins to function

as a larger, interconnected unity, i.e., a blogosphere. Blogs' popularity has led to various mutations of traditional diaries: photoblog, videoblog, moblog (augmented by the use of mobile devices, mobile phones and PDAs), audioblog (acting as a podcasting service) [15].

The resources of virtual archives are now so rich and so easily accessible that they can successfully replace costly and time-consuming trips to museums and libraries, especially those geographically inaccessible to most students. On the Internet, students can surf the centuries' documents (e.g., via the European portal), view current and old photographs from almost every country in the world, presenting major historical events and the daily lives of people over the previous two centuries, and artworks from almost every gallery and museum in the world. The databases are mostly multilingual, so their resources can be used not only for teaching English or history. This type of material can be interwoven within the lesson in different ways – as a source of discussion or as a problem to be commented on [16]:

New forms of communication in training – videoconferencing, online broadcasting, chatting, Skype conversation. Modern communications technologies are a real revolution for the school – they allow teaching to go beyond the architectural boundaries of the school and beyond the geographical boundaries of the city or country with a minimum of own resources [17-19]. A computer with Internet access, simple devices in the form of a microphone, loudspeaker, webcam and software downloaded for free create almost unlimited possibilities for a teacher who wants to enable his or her students to participate in scientific activities, to have direct contact with experts in this field of science, finally to collaborate with peers from a neighbouring school, city and any country in the world, or to study separately [4]. Online streaming allows students to virtually participate in political, social, scientific and cultural events (e.g., the first launch of the Hadron Collider at the CERN laboratory near Geneva), lectures and scientific conferences that are important (from a subject teaching point of view). In the same way, student activities that take place in the classroom or school can be broadcast (broadcasting a special lesson prepared by the class, a school performance, a student concert).

Whether working with experts in a particular field or with students from another school, video conferencing, a Skype call has the invaluable educational value of allowing interaction between the student and his interlocutor. The teacher can use this channel of communication to organise a class meeting with an expert, an authority in the field, which in real life would be very difficult to conduct. This can also be a form of cooperation between students from different schools (including international cooperation), carrying out a joint research project. Especially in the case of foreign language teaching, this can be a unique opportunity to provide students with the opportunity to interact with the 'live' language of their peers [20; 21].

An important technological tool is chat. The advantage of chat is high functionality – no assistive devices other than a computer with internet access are needed for this type of conversation. However, this mode of communication works much better in individual teacher-student and student-to-student contact, rather than as a

forum for discussion in a wider group. Chat can be used perfectly well as a tool to support the implementation of an educational project – students who collaborate with it (especially if they study in different schools, in different countries) can thus exchange comments, ask questions to the person who coordinates the project, discuss tasks with the people involved as partners (in this case the task of the teacher is to organise a chat consultation in a prearranged form) [22].

Educational platforms are systems that organise and support teaching via the Internet [4]. A teacher can set up such a platform in school in case the institution has its own server, or use, for the needs of the subject, educational platforms available to users on the Internet (e.g., Moodle and OLAT). Access to the learning platform is limited by logging in. After entering a username and password, students usually receive limited access – to the materials, tests and exercises available on the platform. Once logged in, teachers and administrators have wide access – both to the didactic part available to students and to information about student performance on the platform – their work, test results, etc. The teacher is in constant contact with students via email, chat room and forum. The platform's content creator is a teacher. Here he can post any kind of material – text files, audio and video recordings, links to relevant websites on the internet. However, the functionality of the platforms also lies in the possibility of interaction between the teacher who runs the course and the participants. Thus, while the author himself decides the formal aspect of creating and running the course himself, his co-authors can also be participants – by posting their materials, links, creating public galleries and databases on the platform (within the limits set by the teacher and taking into account the technical capabilities of the platform).

This content can be placed on the platform depending on its structure – you can either attach ready-made files prepared in advance by the teacher (or student) of their choice, or enter this content using tools specially prepared by the creators of the platform. A solution of this kind enables tests to be easily created on the platform, the results of which are automatically verified by the system [23-25]. The teacher decides to what extent e-learning, which is implemented through an educational platform, will enrich his work with the student.

1. The materials collected and disseminated on the platform, and the student activities carried out through this tool, can be an additional form of student activity – in this way the teacher can invite readers to supplement their knowledge, tasks that require additional assessments, etc.

2. The learning platform can become part of the learning process if the teacher ensures that every student in the classroom has access to it beyond school hours. Therefore, platform resources can be used as a basis for, for example, homework for all students – students post answers to questions or solutions to exercises on the platform where the teacher has access to them; they can also provide materials here for pre-test review, together with quizzes for checking.

3. The platform can be a place for organizing and archiving information received by students during lessons. Here, the teacher can collect and share material and tasks that are also performed during lessons. In this way, students have a ready-made database to use before each

test. The teacher is confident that students who are absent from school will also have access to the lesson content and exercises they can do (losing the convenient excuse of not being ready for lessons because of non-attendance).

4. The platform can be a forum and a base for a common students' project – they can collect their materials and share links here. The platform can be part of this project if, for example, using the Wiki mechanism, students work together to develop and make available on it a specific topic, slogan, multimedia content about it for other users [26].

5. A teacher can create digital courses on an educational platform. With a complete database of materials, exercises and tests, the participant in such a course completes the programme set by the coordinator on his own and the results are checked by the system itself or by the teacher conducting the course [16].

Consider some of the most popular educational platforms, which are actively used in the field of education. One of them is the Moodle platform. Today, it is one of the most popular e-learning course management systems among teachers in Europe. Its greatest advantage is its simple structure, which also allows younger students who have basic knowledge of using a web browser to work with it; the advantage of the system is also the ability to effectively and quickly communicate between students and the teacher through mail, forum and chat. An advantage of Moodle compared to other systems is that video conferencing can be organised for course participants. The platform follows a closed-course formula, with the author managing the teams and the amount of access to the individual participants' materials. This means that the materials posted here by the teacher are only available to participants in a particular course – and it will not be possible to share and exchange the materials across the platform, or use them in another course.

Once the appropriate course format has been selected (temporary – time-defined individual units, thematic – providing access to a specific thematic or social area at an unspecified time, allowing for freely linked materials on various topics), the teacher can begin to develop the content of the course [27-30]. He can post finished materials in image files, Word or PDF documents, and create materials using the modules available on the platform. We should especially recommend those that make it easy to create tests and problems, and the results of which are automatically reported to the student who does it. Two features of the Moodle platform that can be of particular use in foreign language teaching, but certainly not only, are the Wiki and Dictionary modules. In both cases, students become course creators – they can create vocabulary bases in their user groups for the course and develop documents and galleries themselves, subsequently available on the platform.

Another equally popular platform is OLAT [31]. In terms of the technological solutions used, this platform is not much different from the one discussed above. However, the slightly wider capabilities in the area of building and managing e-learning courses make OLAT a competitor to the Moodle platform. The biggest difference between these systems is the greater openness and flexibility in sharing and using learning materials in the case of the platform in question. OLAT is an open learning

environment for users, not a closed course system. Materials are available (depending on the author's intention) solely to participants in a given course or to all users of the platform, they can be used in different courses (an instructor can create their course material or import a text or image publication available in the platform's database for their course). The tools for creating and assembling individual course elements are very broad in this system – in addition to the wide room for manoeuvre when creating course components, the author is also able to differentiate access for individual users.

The communication between students and teacher can be similar to the Moodle platform, i.e., via forum or chat, but in the case of the OLAT system the built-in internal communicator is particularly functional. The OLAT, compared to the Moodle platform, is equipped with slightly more tools to enhance the functionality of this system, and its interface is somewhat more advanced and therefore more complex – this suggests its use with older learners (at least below mainstream school level).

In addition to the two most popular platforms discussed above, teachers can choose from a wide range of systems and tools to help them design and create e-learning materials. Depending on individual preferences, they are free to choose the platform that best suits the characteristics of the group of students they are working with and the specifics of the subject they are teaching.

Claroline [32] is a platform available free of charge and offers a range of tools for managing e-learning courses, similar to the systems discussed above. However, its serious weakness is the possibilities for communication between members, limited only by the forum and the chat room [33; 34].

ATutor [35] is a very simple system that does not give the author too many possibilities to design and modify the didactic materials included in the course. Nevertheless, for users who prefer simplicity of form, this can be an interesting offering of an e-learning tool.

Docebo [36] is a proposal for teachers who like challenges and those who don't like making things easier for their students. Docebo is a system that creates opportunities not only for creating and managing e-learning courses, but also for creating web portals. The potential of this tool is, therefore, very large, but its use also requires much greater skills and, of course, knowledge of English, as the programme does not support the Ukrainian language [9].

Hot potatoes [37] is not an educational platform, but a very interesting programme for creating interactive tasks, exercises, tests, quizzes, which can then either be imported into an educational platform or used as a stand-alone task for students (e.g., during a lesson using an interactive whiteboard). The range of possible formulas for developed tasks is wide, as are the colour and graphics control options. Undoubtedly, an instrument worth recommending not only for users of educational platforms [7; 38-40].

In assessing the potential of educational platforms, attention should also be paid to their shortcomings:

– the student, while working within an e-learning course through an educational platform, is moving in a closed environment – using the materials and exercises presented here, without being motivated to independently seek other sources of knowledge, alternative opinions;

– students may be unwilling to accept the e-learning formula solely – often, instead of taking the opportunity to communicate online, they often report directly to the teacher with great hesitation, asking to perform tasks on the platform during the lesson – this does not negate the idea of distance learning and causes a double involvement of both parties to the problem, which is discussed and solved on the platform and the second – in the lesson.

When analysing the threats and opportunities that distance learning and educational platforms offer to teachers and students, it should certainly be noted that the advantages of this type of educational solution certainly outweigh their disadvantages. The ability to simultaneously impart subject knowledge and form key competences for information societies, regardless of architectural, geographical or cultural constraints, and the possibility of maximum individualisation of learning is an undeniable advantage of e-learning over traditional education [41; 42].

The modern world requires a teacher and a scientist to study and consider multimedia as a means of interactive and creative teaching of a foreign language to students of higher educational institutions. The introduction of ICT in the learning process has been the subject of study by many Western European researchers, including P. Benson [2], E. Gajek *et al.* [3], S. Guth & F. Helm [7], I. Janowska [8], S. Bax [23] and others have noted the innovativeness and effectiveness of information and communication learning technologies, which intensify the learning process, stimulate interest and increase motivation of students to master a foreign language. The development of foreign language teaching methods based on information and communication technologies, the solution of basic didactic tasks with the help of Internet resources, etc. require detailed study.

The use of information and communication technology contributes to a new model of learning in which the student has an important place, and the essence of learning is not only the transfer of information, but also the formation of the ability to gain knowledge independently, to improve his communication skills and abilities. ICT-supported foreign language lessons are dynamic, engaging, visual, self-confident, highly productive and effective. During foreign language teaching, the use of ICT is a multifaceted solution to the lesson's problems: improving the learning process, providing opportunities to give more information, developing student activity, individualisation and differentiation of learning; variety of forms of work,

increasing student interest in subjects, themes studied; development of independence and logical thinking; control of knowledge, skills and abilities.

Conclusions

The demands of the reality in which modern society functions – dominated by advanced electronics, globalisation, multiculturalism – make a decisive reassessment of the learning and teaching objectives of the 21st century school. More than anything else, however, they require today's teachers to move away from conservative teaching methods and form predominantly broad-based student knowledge, in favour of forms of learning that will provide school students with the comprehensive skills and competencies needed to function effectively and efficiently in the labour market. Therefore, nurturing future teachers in an innovative and creative approach to their future work in the school is very essential. They will face various barriers in their professional practice, arising from the limited technical and financial base of schools. The more important for them should be a creative approach to methods and available didactic resources, so that even in the unfavourable conditions of poorly equipped schools they can build an attractive and cognitively effective didactic and educational process.

Financial constraints of schools cannot be an explanation for skipping in the curricula to teach students competencies in the use of ICT tools. Students' effective use of modern digital and communication tools is a prerequisite for their success in their future professional careers and, therefore, also a necessary element of teaching in an innovative school. However, to achieve this goal, teachers need to master (firstly) the use of modern technologies and tools which, on the one hand, can enrich and make their workshop more attractive and, on the other hand, this will certainly contribute not only to didactic tasks, but also to organisational and evaluative ones related to learning activities.

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Conflict of Interest

None.

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ІКТ як інструмент оптимізації викладання іноземних мов у вищому навчальному закладі

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Анотація

Актуальність. Всього за два десятиліття наш світ змінився настільки, що так звані відмінності між поколіннями вже не обмежуються лише різним світоглядом і панівними суспільними відносинами – сьогодні часто трапляється так, що члени однієї родини, які представляють різні покоління, функціонують у зовсім різних реаліях. Покоління епохи глобалізації навчене цінувати зовсім інші цінності: відкритість і толерантність, які формуються завдяки Інтернету та відкритим міжнародним кордонам; гнучкість і мобільність – у роботі та освіті; нарешті, краще розуміння роботи з технологіями, насамперед електронними, інформаційними та комунікаційними, оскільки без цієї компетенції неможливо увійти функціонування в сучасному світі. Ці зміни вимагають від освітян адаптації до використання сучасних цифрових інструментів, щоб відповідати вимогам різноманітного, технологічно інтегрованого світу.

Мета. Мета дослідження – допомогти майбутнім учителям усвідомити важливість модернізації та постійного розвитку своєї професійної майстерні протягом кар'єри, а також запропонувати пропозиції щодо вдосконалення своїх уроків шляхом використання досягнень та інструментів ІКТ (інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій) у своїй освітній діяльності та впровадження інновацій у традиційні та добре відомі методи викладання та навчання.

Методологія. При написанні дослідження використовувалися такі наукові методи: порівняння, аналіз і синтез, сходження від абстрактного до конкретного.

Результати. Результати дослідження показують, що впровадження ІКТ не лише збагачує освітній досвід, але й робить його більш динамічним і доступним. Конкретні інструменти ІКТ, такі як платформи електронного навчання та методи змішаного навчання, продемонстрували значні покращення у залученні студентів та покращенні навчального процесу.

Висновки. Практичне значення роботи полягає у прикладному використанні матеріалів дослідження викладачами іноземних мов, вищими навчальними закладами, які прагнуть вдосконалити свої лекції, а також усіма, хто цікавиться подібною тематикою.

Ключові слова: мовна освіта; інформаційно-комунікаційні технології; вивчення іноземних мов; засоби навчання; освітня платформа.