

USING THE MOODLE DISTANCE LEARNING SYSTEM IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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ABSTRACT:

Educational process of modern times is undergoing significant changes due to various reasons such as active development of Internet resources, diverse e-learning platforms application, new objectives of education and evolved requirements for the up-to-date specialists. Modern educational process needs to fall outside the limits of the traditional practices of a chalkboard inside the four walls of a classroom and apply new technological advancements capable of enriching the teaching-learning process and propel it to the next, more complicated and advanced level. Moreover, students of the modern generation are capable of getting, studying and learning digital information and partaking in engaging interactive activities within the contemporary digital world.

KEYWORDS: Moodle, e-learning, assessment, interactive study.

INTRODUCTION:

They are able to use the ever changing and advancing technology being actively implemented in the process of education, which concerns all the subjects. It has become possible thanks to active using new technologies, Internet, electronic educational books and programs since their early childhood. Thus, the process of education of the modern times needs to meet all the requirements stated above and demands from teachers the implementation of modern developments in the learning process. For that reason, e-learning professionals are constantly

looking for new ideas and for successful online learning solutions, especially cost-effective ones. The open source software community claims to have a great, low-cost system for learning. It is called Moodle (an acronym for Modular Object Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) being one of the open source Learning Management Systems (LMSs) available today and it is an enormously versatile system for course and learning management [1].

METHODS:

This interactive study platform can be used as a rather effective organizational tool. Moodle has a number of advantages for delivering course content whether it is for an online course or an instructor-led course

Let us consider them in a greater detail.

Moodle benefits the students with a learning environment which:

- Is fun, innovative and creative, and filled with purpose (to enhance their knowledge and help them in taking-up as well as completing assignments on-the-go);
- Allows collaborative interaction among students as a standalone or in addition to conventional classroom instruction;
- Enables focusing on sharing of opinions, ideas, and other social artifacts;
- Generally involves discussion groups and building knowledge through activities closer to the real world;
- Develops learners' communicative skills in language;

RESULTS:

One major benefit of Moodle is its enormous economy in terms of time and resources. Instead of having classrooms filled with worksheets, books, and audio and video cassettes, all these can be supplied electronically.

Termez State University has a wide range of Moodle courses and we would like to share our experience in developing and implementing one. The course Integrated Course for first-year students is developed for learning English for General Purposes by the first year students of the TerSU. The required level of English is B2. The course is intended for developing listening, reading, writing and speaking skills, revising and learning grammar material and increasing vocabulary on the topics concerned. The materials of the course are rather relevant nowadays as they deal with urgent problems and challenges of modern society and help to develop skills of cross-cultural communication. The course includes the tasks of various difficulty levels, which gives opportunity to develop for students with higher level of English in comparison with their groupmates and a desire to increase it.

The course consists of five modules:

1. Arranging a holiday,
2. Types of transport and accommodation,
3. Shopping and money,
4. Natural world and natural disasters,
5. Ecological problems.

Each module contains 6 sections to develop various skills:

- Module overview (gives information about the skills students can get in this module and points for each task);
- Coursebook (contains theoretical material on the module topic);
- Supplementary materials (consists of the material useful for preparing creative tasks and provided for the reference only and is

not additionally assessed towards the final grade);

- Reading (includes texts with activities to check understanding);
- Vocabulary and grammar (is made in the form of quizzes or tests aimed at mastering vocabulary and grammar material);
- Listening and video (contains multimedia authentic materials and quizzes to check students' understanding);
- Creative tasks (make students write for and against essays or informal letters, prepare oral presentations on the situations given, or discuss proverbs or statements provided, watch additional video, etc.)

Analysis Let us describe the course constituent parts in greater detail:

Module 1 "Arranging a holiday" considers the problems that can occur while arranging a holiday, tells about different types of holidays and holidays in different countries, and gives advice on how to have a perfect holiday. The module includes: 2 reading activities, 4 tasks to practice vocabulary, 2 grammar activities on the topics Order of adjectives and adverbs, 2 video and 2 listening activities, 2 creative tasks and a number of supplementary materials on the topic.

Module 2 "Types of transport and accommodation" deals with different types of transport in various countries, and considers the best type from the points of safety, comfort, speed, price, etc. The module includes: 2 reading activities, 2 tasks to practice vocabulary, 3 grammar activities on the topics Degrees of Comparison (adjectives and Adverbs), 1 video and 1 listening activity, 2 creative tasks and a number of supplementary materials on the topic.

Module 3 "Shopping and money" considers the problem of shopping victims (shopaholics), presents useful information on shopping for different purposes, currency,

types of payment and purchasing, deals with different types of shops and gives advice on how to plan your own budget. The module includes: 2 reading activities, 6 tasks to practice vocabulary, 5 grammar activities on the topics Degrees of Comparison (adjectives and Adverbs), 3 video and 2 listening activities, 2 creative tasks and a number of supplementary materials on the topic.

Module 4 “Natural world and natural disasters” comprises a wide scope of topics such as: seasons, weather, animals, plants, climate, global changes, natural disasters, etc. it even gives advice on how to survive in a natural disaster. The module includes: 3 reading activities, 2 tasks to practice vocabulary, 3 grammar activities on the topics Passive Voice, 2 video and 1 listening activities, 5 creative tasks and a number of supplementary materials on the topic.

Module 5 “Ecological problems” attracts attention to a number of ecological problems in the world, its negative effect and possible consequences and deals with the ways to identify how environmentally friendly each of us is, what our ecological footprint is and describes thing we can do to protect environment. The module includes: 3 reading activities, 2 tasks to practice vocabulary, 2 grammar activities on the topics Cohesion devices and Prepositions, 4 video and 1 listening activities, 3 creative tasks and a number of supplementary materials on the topic. The supplementary materials section includes additional activities to be studied individually or in class and theoretical material giving tips on how to write a for and against essay, different types of letters, how to arrange a holiday, prepare a travelling guide, plan the budget, agree or disagree in English, survive in a natural disaster, what to do to protect the environment and be environmentally friendly. It also provides theoretical material on

grammar (the order of adjectives, degrees of comparison of adjectives and adverbs, word formation, passive voice). This section also includes videos, questionnaires, interesting and useful cross-cultural information. As it was described above, each next module proceeds in the similar fashion that is why we call it a topic format, until students reach. The FINAL ASSESSMENT section that contains only one assignment made up of twenty questions on vocabulary and grammar used in the course. This one is a part of fail-pass exam. The last section WORKING MATERIALS includes various assessment criteria which are automatically linked to exercises, so, you do not need to go to this section, actually. On the main page of the course there are NEWS FORUM and COURSE FEEDBACK as well. All the tasks in the course are restricted by the time limit and provide a fixed number of attempts you have to complete them. Students can see the starting date and the deadline in the CALENDAR in the right upper part of the main course page. The latter option makes using the course more convenient as it helps teachers to organize students’ work and control their results.

In this course students will acquire skills that will let them:

- Get the subject matter of authentic texts on the topics discussed;
- Get the main concept of authentic radio and TV programmes, lectures and conversations on the urgent problems and events;
- Prepare a public speech to solve and intercultural tasks; work in teams;
- Define own opinion via reasoning;
- Write informal personal letters;
- Write For and against essays on the topics discussed. The course developers expected to have the Following key learning outcomes:

- Development of oral and written communication skills in English to solve intercultural tasks;
- Listening and reading skills development;
- Grammar introduction, practice and revision;
- Vocabulary increasing;
- Teamwork skills development;
- Self-organization and self-education [3].

DISCUSSION:

Thus, we can state that implementing the interactive platform Moodle into the process of teaching foreign languages is a rather helpful tool for teachers while it is controlled by teachers, and makes teaching staff lives' easier, having one central location accessible anywhere; with a massive array of tools for aiding the delivery, marking and providing feedback for all courses. Because of its ease of use, Moodle is excellent for distance learning, but it is really designed to work best along with face to face classroom teaching. The more important reason why teachers like to use it is that it enables students to learn more independently — that is, have more control over their learning — and also more co-operatively — which means they can fulfill some of the tasks together. Moodle has a large number of optional modules as well, which enables students to spend as much time as they

need on lessons they find difficult. To make a conclusion we can state that our personal experience of applying Moodle for teaching students a foreign language has been successful due to various advantages of the system mentioned in the paper but we are sure that the described platform is successful for mastering all kinds of skills contributing to obtaining a high level of a foreign language apart from communication skills which should be developed during the lessons and guided by a professional teacher.

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