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INTEGRATING ONLINE EDUCATIONAL APPLICATIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

Problem setting. Most researchers agree that the foreign language training in higher institution requires constant improvement of education, creation of effective didactic systems, new technologies, forms and methods that could provide intensive mastery of the knowledge system, and on this basis – a significant increase of the level of student's activity. Information technology opens as for students as well as for the teacher new opportunities: the presence of professional and everyday information in foreign language promotes the world outlook and open resources for creating interactive tasks increase the efficiency of students' work and their motivation. By the way, this persuasively proves the efficiency of the BYOD method (Bring Your Own Device), directly related to blended learning, that is a combination of classroom activities with online communication. The world practice shows the effectiveness of educational work in blended learning format, in particular, the teaching of foreign languages. Blended learning allows implementing interactive technologies, improving the quality of education and attracting more students.

The purpose of this article is to review existing online applications and appropriateness of their use as for independent and classroom work. "Effective integration of technology is achieved when students are able to select technology tools to help them obtain information in a timely manner, analyze and synthesize the information, and present it professionally. The technology should become an integral part of how the classroom functions -- as accessible as all other classroom

tools." -- National Educational Technology Standards for Students, International Society for Technology in Education [5].

The foundations of the theoretical research. It is sometimes difficult to describe how technology can impact learning because the term "technology integration" is such a broad umbrella that covers so many varied tools and practices; there are many ways technology can become an integral part of the learning process. Just a few of these ways are listed below -- but new technology tools and ideas emerge daily.

To get the most out of the online learning experience both the teacher and the student should take full advantage of the great amount of resources that are available online. There are hundreds of online services that offer access to information, with Wikipedia being a prominent example [1].

Kahoot! https://getkahoot.com is one of my favorite tools to use in the classroom. Students love it, and they are always engaged when I use it. Kahoot! is a free game-based response system played by the whole class in real time. The teacher displays the questions of a quiz or survey on the screen and students can answer then using all kinds of devices. Students can use any web-enabled device to connect to the game using a unique code. The website is very simple and user friendly. Besides it gives the opportunity to create quizzes and surveys about any subject area.

How you can use Kahoot! in your classroom.

- Introduce a New Topic or Unit. At the beginning of new unit, I like to create a quiz to spark an interest with my students. Instead of boring pretests or old chart, have students participate in a Kahoot! quiz to measure their knowledge. I turn off the "points" for a game like this so students aren't worry about making a mistake. Instead of providing new information by lecture method, start with a Kahoot and then discuss each question in details.

- Play Towards Mastery. The "Ghost Mode" in Kahoot allows students to play the same quiz multiple times. It can be helpful in reinforcing learning through

repetition. Students will work towards their own mastery and see the growth along the way.

- Create a Survey. Kahoot! also allows you to create surveys and discussions through the platform. This gives students an active voice in the classroom, helping them to feel important and involved. Having students participate in a Kahoot survey is a great way to collect student voice. Unlike a quiz, surveys don't have right/wrong assigned to answers, and there is no points system or scoreboards. You will still see a bar graph between questions showing how many chose each answer. Surveys can be used to find out what participants already know (or just learned) without competition, and you can use the bar graphs to guide conversation. If you're in the middle of a lecture/presentation and want to quickly ask a spur-of-the-moment question (and record responses for later analysis), consider creating a discussion. This is identical to a survey, but with a limit of only one question. Discussions aim to get you through building the question and into hosting it quickly.

- Springboard a Class Discussion. Powerful learning can happen after a quiz, so explore together the correct and incorrect answers on Kahoot. Ask students "why?" as a follow up question. Kahoot! brings the new dynamics between players.

- Challenge learners to make their own Kahoots!. Students could take the material from a particular unit and create their own Kahoots!. You could then spend the review day playing each of the Kahoots! as a class or in smaller groups. Students need a solid understanding of the content to be able to create questions and answers (where the wrong answers are also fairly realistic), so the process of creating the quiz reinforces the information that they have learnt.

Kahoot was made to show multiple choice questions on a large screen, and students answer by their web-enabled device. Quizizz https://quizizz.com/ takes a different approach.

No projector is necessary because players see questions and answer options on their own screens. Quizizz allows you to create multi-player quizzes that work on almost any device. The question order is randomized for each student, so you

wouldn't worry about cheating. With Quizizz, players don't have to wait for the whole class when they finish answering a question before they continue to the next one. If you prefer to stop after each question, then Kahoot is better. You can stop and discuss after each question, immediately checking the understanding. With Quizizz, players finish through questions at their own pace limiting all discussion to after all questions have been answered.

Quizizz gives the opportunity to complete the quiz with music and silly "correct" or "incorrect" images drawn from popular media. These pictures with fun/funny messages are a treat. They're displayed after a question is answered to show whether it's right or wrong. Quizizz even lets you create your own (see image at right). You can use their pre-loaded images or upload your own. As the teacher, once the quiz is over, you have access data and analyze reports. You can see the overall class performance on a particular quiz, or the individual student breakdown as well.

Quizizz also has an integration with Google Classroom. So if you are using that learning management system you can easily push out your quizzes to your students, and they will already be authenticated using their school emails. Some of the features of Google Classroom integration include the following: 1) Quizizz reports will show the actual names of your students; 2) Student safety is enhanced since they are logging in with their Google accounts; and 3) Facilitate assignment tracking since completion reports are available in Google Classroom.

Quizizz is definitely fun. But when everyone is answering different questions at different times, you lose a bit of the excitement. When a Quizizz game is over, you can review all the questions all at once, and you lose that isolation.

"Plickers" https://plickers.com are another wonderful and free resource for introducing a classroom response system.

With the help of it you can quickly check your student's knowledge through multiple choice or true/false questions. Students are given a set of QR codes on large index cards. The codes are assigned to proper students. The codes are unique. Each code card can be turned in four orientations. Each orientation gives a

different answer. When the teacher is ready to collect data, he or she uses the Plickers mobile app to scan the cards to see a bar graph of responses. Recording answers of an entire class takes few seconds, and the cards can be scanned from almost anywhere in the room.

How you can use Plickers in your classroom.

- Instant Questions. This is perhaps the most popular use for Plickers. Ask a multiple-choice or true/false question and instantly get class feedback. When you show the questions for the class, students decide what their answer is and they hold up their card. The best thing of these cards is that each image looks almost different, so students cannot look to their neighbor for the answer. Also, because of the unique of the images students won't feel uncomfortable when others will judge them for their answers– the anonymity makes this a safe way for all students to participate.

- Entrance and Exit Level of Knowledge. Need a quick way to check prior knowledge or lesson comprehension? It's as easy as asking a multiple-choice question. You can take the pulse of the class during the lesson. Ask your students, "Do you get this?" and have them hold up their cards to indicate yes or no. You will get the results in few minutes.

- Choosing Groups or Topics. If you have a problem with students choosing project groups or writing topics based on what their peers choose, use Plickers to keep the results private until you are ready to share the results. Students are far more likely to choose what they want to do and not what their friends are choosing.

Speaking about the technology integration into the language teaching, Padlet (padlet.com) should be mentioned being a web application which is widely used in

order to refresh a language classroom and provide a creative learning

environment.
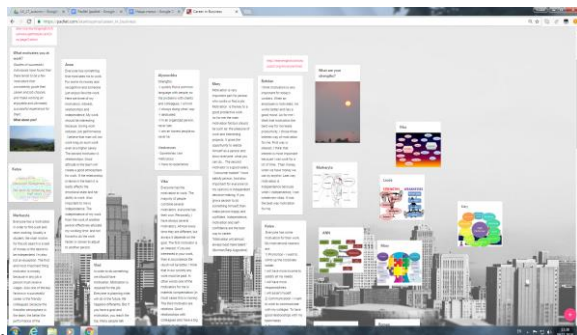
Pic.1

This online board (or "wall") allows a teacher and students to post texts, images, videos, audio recordings and other file types, including Word documents and PDFs. It should be mentioned that Padlet works in any browser and does not require students to have an account, so they can share their ideas without any technical barriers.

This application can be used for such purposes as brainstorming (typing short texts during the lesson), giving food for thought for a discussion (sharing photos or PDF documents, speaking assessment (students can post self-created videos), etc.

The teacher has the possibility to modify the wall, moderate all the posts and set the tools for students (e.g. possibility to moderate other posts or just make their own ones). Besides, last but not the least, the design of the wall (for instance background) should also be taken into account as far as it can be used for creating a certain atmosphere, either formal or informal. This can be an important factor in the process of connecting the classroom to a wider world that is adding a personal touch and bringing the material closer to life. The above-mentioned opportunities make it easy to combine Padlet wall with using the other applications.

Speaking about the free online tools, which can be applied in the process of language teaching and learning, Tagul (tagul.com), an online word cloud generator, should be mentioned, being one of the most popular applications among the language teachers. It enables a teacher or students to create word clouds of any shape, size or color without any prior knowledge of graphic design. The pictures

below represent the clouds made by the Business English students (pic.) and the beginners of French as the second foreign language (pic.). The first had the task to name the skills of high-performing employees; the second had to name the things

they associate with this or that colour.

Pic.2

Thus it can be used, for instance, when introducing and memorizing new vocabulary (the words can be linked to the other web resources, such as dictionaries or related articles), developing grammar, writing skills, brainstorming the ideas etc, at the same time developing the students' creative thinking and giving them a chance to share the result of their work with the others (e.g. by posting the image of the self-created cloud on the Padlet wall), that can be, in its turn, the material for further speaking competence development, for example, using the same vocabulary in oral speech.

Another way of bringing technology to the language classroom is integrating the relevant open educational resources (e.g. by placing the links on a Padlet wall), into the teaching and learning process.

As it is stated by the experts, "learners often find it difficult to hold their attention long enough once they are exposed to long conversations or passages without visual aids. Videos can provide much more information for listeners and can keep them attention focused on the aural material. On the other hand, authentic video materials can create more realistic language learning environment and stimulate EFL learners' interest in English learning and enhance their comprehensive linguistic competence. Using video content as one of the main sources of authentic language learning materials can not only contribute much to the improvement of students' listening and speaking skills, but to their motivation as well.

For instance, ESP students will find it useful to consult such platforms as Australia Plus: Learn English/The Business of English (http://www.australiaplus.com/international/learn-english/the-business-of-english-series/7388288) or British Council (http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/business-and-work?_ga=1.26239229.1901509428.1472387770).

Both resources provide series of video and audio podcasts (the second one together with corresponding online or downloadable tasks) helping students to develop their language skills in making presentations, holding meetings, taking part in job interviews etc. Another platform which should be mentioned in this context is BBC Learning English (http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/general/), which, though being no longer updated, provides a number of online quizes.

One more platform providing the variety of video podcasts and online quizes for developing language skills is engVid: Free English Video Lessons (engvid.com). The main advantage of it is the great choice of topics and possibility to choose the necessary level, so the platform is convenient for different learners.

Pic. 3

Students and teachers of French are quite familiar nowadays with such open educational platforms as TV5 Monde (http://apprendre.tv5monde.com/fr/apprendre-francais/moi-je-suis?exercice=1) and BBC Ma France (http://www.bbc.co.uk/languages/french/mafrance/), which provide a great range of activities giving the chance to improve grammar, listening, speaking and writing skills without getting bored.

Besides that, among the numerous open educational resources one can easily find platforms for creating new content, tests or quizes in particular. Thus, such

tasks as multiple choice tests or matching can be created and performed by using Google Forms, having the advantages of simple algorithm and user-friendly interface. This tool allows the teacher to modify tests' settings, choosing the way the students will get the tasks and results, to keep a record of results, to make the statistic analysis of results.

Different kinds of online tasks seem to be rather appealing to the students, as far as they can be useful for different kinds of learners, that is visual, who like to see the relationship between the things they learn, auditory, who prefer listening tasks, reading and writing oriented learners, who need to make notes of what they are learning, before they remember it and, surely, kinesthetic ones, who learn by being part of what is going on, not from the book.

The thing is that not only technologies as they are, but gamification, based on these technologies, are being integrated in education, and teaching foreign languages is not an exception. The positive impact of using web applications on students' motivation can hardly be overestimated, but the other side of the medal should be mentioned as well: some students just do not see the aim of a task, perceiving it as one more computer game. So, being "homo ludens" can cause such problems as lack of cognitive activities.

It goes without saying that Padlet boards, as well as the other applications, can be used for sharing resources and ideas both during the classroom lessons and in terms of blended or flipped learning. These approaches let the teacher the opportunity to implement problem-based learning, the basic principle of which is the fact, that the language learning is strengthened by the students' experience in the other fields. Students not only acquire language competences, but become proficient in problem-solving, logical thinking and teamwork, thus becoming more competitive in their future career. Innovative technologies, in their turn, give both the teacher and the students not only the opportunity to get access to the unlimited sources of information, but to find the new ways of interaction, to see the language course relevance and possibilities of its practical use, that is to improve the

interdisciplinary connections. The role of the teacher in this case is that of a facilitator, helping students with the activities they do themselves.

Analyses of the survey findings. With the development of information and communication technology, especially computers, a number of researchers (Morrison et al., 2010) were trying to see the benefits and the effect of their use compared to older traditional learning. For many years, we tried to give answers to the question of advantages and disadvantages between traditional and modern teaching where the prevailing educational technology [2]. Bill Ferster, research professor at the University of Virginia's Curry School of Education, has written a historical overview of educational technology. His book, *Teaching Machines: Learning from the Intersection of Education and Technology* is first and foremost a history, with a focus on the people behind the innovations leveraging technology to transform the educational landscape with improved quality. Zawacki-Richter and Anderson base their own treatment of online distance education (ODEL) on a 2009 Delphi study conducted by Zawacki-Richter himself. Among the first studies on the comparison of the traditional and modern ways with the help of educational technologies research was Clark Richard (Clark, R. 1983). He tried to compare research between lectures and computer guidance and instruction to determine which the better way of learning is. He came to the conclusion that they are both effective depending on the ways they are used.

Conclusions and prospects for further research. The application of educational technology enhances skills and cognitive characteristics. With the help of new technology comes an explosion of learning and receiving new information, especially on mobile devices. We can see that the quality of educational applications has some far reaching benefits and can do a great deal for a learner. It is evident that such applications could accumulate success amongst personal development and achievement. Continuous use of the applications could help students to improve their progress within their studies emphasizing a much more positive mentality towards education overall. The application and development of new technologies increases rapidly and the question is whether

teachers are trained to keep up with them. In order to get a better knowledge in the use of educational technology teacher should have more professional trainings through a variety of courses, seminars, conferences and presentations.

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Abstract

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Integrating online educational applications in the classroom. *The implementation of information technologies is a must for effective teaching of foreign languages nowadays. Innovative technologies give both the teacher and the students not only the opportunity to get access to the unlimited sources of information, but to find the new ways of interaction, to see the language course relevance and possibilities of its practical use. In this paper we try to give an overview of the importance and use of online educational applications in the classroom.*

 Keywords: *information technologies, foreign languages, educational resources, innovative, e-learning, Internet*