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### THE METHODOLOGY OF USING ELECTRONIC LEARNING TOOLS IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGE GRAMMAR ON THE EXAMPLE OF STUDENTS OF THE SPECIALTY “SPORTS-PEDAGOGICAL ACTIVITY”

*The article is devoted to the description of the methodology for the use of electronic learning tools (ELT) in teaching grammar of a foreign language. The presented methodology is applicable for higher educational institutions in specialties where a foreign language is not the main subject. It was revealed that the application of the methodology using ELT in foreign language lessons in the group of students of the specialty "Sports-Pedagogical Activity" had a positive effect on their level of motivation to study grammar, as well as on the overall level of mastering the material, which contributed to improving the efficiency of learning.*

The inclusion of modern technologies in the educational process is the result of the so-called *digital transformation of education*, which brings a fundamental change in the implementation of the learning process itself. Modern teachers need to develop themselves together with the technology and adapt to the rhythm of the ever-changing world, which is why the modern learning process cannot be imagined without the use of information technologies.

One of the ways to include modern technologies in the process of teaching any subject, including foreign languages, is **electronic learning tools** or *e-learning tools (ELT)*, which include such learning tools as electronic testing systems, electronic simulators, information and reference systems, didactic computer games, multimedia resources, electronic teaching aids, mobile applications, etc. According to D. V. Nakhaeva, ELT have many undeniable advantages that not only positively affect the degree of knowledge acquisition by students, but also increase their cognitive activity and motivation to learn the subject [1, p. 197]. In addition, with the help of ELT, any teacher can successfully diversify and modernize the educational process, thus increasing the efficiency of teaching and learning. It is also important to use ELT to provide students with remote access to educational materials, which has recently become of particular relevance due to the speedy development of online classes system.

However, the use of modern information technologies, in particular electronic learning tools, is especially relevant when teaching foreign languages. The expediency of introducing ELT into the process of teaching a foreign language is confirmed by the following reasons: firstly, with the help of ELT such activities in a foreign language class as working with audio and video text can successfully be carried out, and therefore, the speech activity of students is activated and their speech competence develops; secondly, through the use of ELT, it is possible to expand students' knowledge about the country of the language studied, increase the amount of linguistic knowledge, which is carried out by

introducing students to authentic sources and participating in electronic communication [2, p. 61]; thirdly, the clear advantages of using ELT in a foreign language lesson are the motivational potential of these teaching tools, ensuring the diversity of the educational process and its modernization. Thus, the use of ELT has become an integral part of modern foreign language class.

One of the most difficult aspects of learning any foreign language is grammar, which most teachers habitually teach using traditional teaching tools. However, the use of ELT can not only simplify the process of mastering grammatical knowledge by students, but also make it more interesting and even exciting for them.

It is known that nowadays almost all curricula of higher educational institutions of the Republic of Belarus include the study of a foreign (mainly English) language. However, foreign languages are an important part of the educational process not only of the specialties directly related to their study, such as “Foreign Languages” or “International Relations”. The study of a foreign language is also a component of the educational process of other specialties, in particular, of specialties related to sports activities. According to A. V. Levchenko and N. V. Mayorova, knowledge of at least one foreign language is a necessity for athletes, Physical Education teachers, coaches of various types of sport, due to the following factors: firstly, representatives of the professions mentioned above need to constantly improve their knowledge and experience, which is impossible without getting acquainted with new international achievements in the field of theory and practice of physical culture and sports [3, p. 74]; secondly, competitive practice, in which all professional coaches and athletes are involved, implies communication in a foreign language, constant international contacts; thirdly, participation in international seminars for coaches and judges of various sports, the implementation of written contacts in order to participate in competitions, the need to study constant changes in the rules of competitions, the opportunity to participate in international congresses, symposiums, seminars and conferences on the development of physical culture and sport in the world are also the reasons for the importance of knowing a foreign language for the professional development of athletes, coaches and specialists in the field of physical culture and sports [3, p. 74]. All of the above-mentioned factors determine the relevance of research aimed at finding the most effective methods of teaching a foreign language for students of the Faculty of Physical Education, especially of the specialty “*Sports-Pedagogical Activities*”, which implies fairly frequent communication in a foreign language due to promising participation in various international competitions.

Based on the above-mentioned, the teaching of a foreign language to students of the specialty “*Sports-Pedagogical Activities*” should be organized taking into account the peculiarities of the development of modern pedagogical technologies, and therefore, should include e-learning tools. The process of teaching a foreign language, in its turn, includes classes devoted to the introduction, practicing and control of the understanding of studied grammatical material. The grammar aspect of learning a foreign language causes particular difficulties for students of specialties where a foreign language is not the core subject. Thus, *the purpose of this study* is to develop a methodology for using ELT in the process of teaching foreign language grammar to students of the specialty “*Sports-Pedagogical Activities*”.

To test the methodology of using ELT in teaching the grammar of a foreign language two groups of the first-year students of the Faculty of Physical Education of the Gomel State University named after F. Skorina of the specialty “*Sports-Pedagogical Activities*” were picked out for participating in this research: SPD-14 (1) (12 students) and SPD-14 (2) (13 students). In both groups, according to the curriculum, there are two foreign language lessons per week during the semester. During the first semester of the 2022-2023 academic year, in the SPD-14 (1) group, the above-mentioned classes were conducted using the ELT: there was a combination of traditional teaching tools and e-learning tools, with the predominant use of the ELT. In the SPD-14 (2) group, classes were conducted with the predominant use of traditional teaching tools.

Before the start of the semester the knowledge of the basic topics of English grammar was tested in both groups in order to determine the students' level of understanding the material taught in school. The following topics were included in the test: the group of tenses (active voice and passive

voice), the use of definite and indefinite articles, singular and plural forms of nouns, degrees of comparison of adjectives in English, the use of groups of pronouns in English. The above-mentioned grammatical topics are also included in the curriculum of the classes held in the first semester for both groups that took part in testing the methodology. After taking the grammatical test both groups showed approximately the same level of proficiency in grammatical material: on average, the students of the groups received a result of 40-50% correct answers.

Thus, during the semester, when teaching English grammar in the SPD-14 (1) group, the following types of electronic learning tools were used:

1. *Demonstrative software* – provide a visual representation of educational material, its visualization. This type of ELT was used to introduce new grammatical material and do exercises on it. In particular, for the introduction of grammatical material a multimedia presentation (*Microsoft Power Point, Canva*, etc.) was used, which simplified the presentation of grammatical diagrams, graphs, tables. Grammatical schemes as well as examples that contribute to a better perception of the material were presented on the slides of the electronic presentation. According to M. V. Eremenko, the use of multimedia tools during class improves the memorability of the studied language constructions and the relationships between these constructions, contributes to the successful training of certain skills and abilities, which occurs due to the visibility and clarity of the demonstrated material [4, p. 37].

The use of electronic presentations in class to explain new material received positive reaction by the students of the group. The multimedia presentation of the material contributed to the visualization of information at a pace, sequence and form convenient for students, which was especially effective when explaining new grammatical rules. The introduction of grammatical constructions was carried out with the display of examples on slides, including vocabulary related to the professional orientation of students of the Faculty of Physical Education, which was also perceived by them with enthusiasm. In addition, the use of demonstrative software reduced the need for printed materials and additional handouts: students could take notes on their own, at their own pace. These advantages contributed to a more productive and speedy assimilation of grammatical material during foreign language lessons.

2. *Electronic textbooks and interactive materials*. According to M. V. Shirobokova, for effective assimilation of the material an electronic textbook should include three blocks: informational, training and controlling [5, p. 25]. That is why with the help of this type of ELT, not only the introduction of new grammatical material can occur, but also its training (practicing), as well as the control of mastering the material. During classes with the group SPD-14 (1) grammatical material (examples of grammatical structures, theoretical material, various exercises) was taken from electronic textbooks and other electronic materials (for example, such electronic textbooks as “Language in Use”, “Grammarway”) and were presented by the teacher using the above-mentioned demonstrative software.

The use of electronic textbooks and other interactive materials allowed students to use their own electronic devices (tablets, laptops, etc.) in class, make notes and highlight the information they need, which contributed to the development of students' independence, self-organization of their educational process.

3. *Educational and game software* (game simulators). To practice and test the knowledge of the material game software simulators were used during classes. Such ELT gives users the ability to create their own quests or tasks that can be solved by students with the current or subsequent supervision of the teacher. In particular, the interactive program “Kahoot!” allowed to create a game environment during class, which is rarely possible when learning a particular grammatical structure of the language. With the help of this gaming simulator the teacher creates an online-test or survey, to which students respond in real time from any device connected to the Internet. In the course of the lesson, students perform tasks on a particular topic and compete in getting the maximum set of points. The whole process is accompanied by various animations, images or audio and video materials. For example, to study the topic “*plural forms of nouns*” an online-test in the above-mentioned game

software was created, where students had to type the correct plural form of a noun in each question. Each stage of the test was limited in time and accompanied by an image. After completing each question intermediate results were displayed on the screen, with the award of first, second and third places, according to the number of correct answers. The competitive element of this game received a particularly positive reaction from students, and atypical tasks designed in the form of a game increased students' motivation to study grammar. Thus, the interactive program “Kahoot!” introduced diversity into the educational process, and consequently, improved the quality of learning the grammatical material.

4. *Educational gaming applications* – electronic (most often mobile) applications that are used to practice the learned material. Work in such applications was carried out as homework or independently organized extracurricular work of students. In particular, during classes, the “Quizlet” educational and gaming application for learning a foreign language was used, which allows to master subjects using the so-called “cards” (memory cards, flashcards) and tests. Cards for memorizing the material can be created by the teacher and by the students themselves. In addition, the application has pre-created modular sets of cards that can be used by students to study or review topics. This application has become particularly popular among those who study foreign languages, since the method of learning new vocabulary using memory cards is one of the most convenient and effective, especially for beginners. To study grammar in this application, there are ready-made modules with terms and structures for memorization, as well as convenient tests on various grammar topics. For example, a set of memory cards with nouns that have a special plural form was created by us using the “Quizlet” app and was offered to students for practicing this topic.

5. *Software tools for monitoring and measuring the level of knowledge*. This type of ELT is used to conduct current or final control on a particular grammatical topic in a test or open questions format (for example, the dot3 system, Google Forms). Such software tools help to optimize the system of control and self-control, facilitate the work of the teacher, and also develop the independence of students.

The table below describes the stages of the process of teaching students the grammar topic “Plural forms of nouns” using e-learning tools (*Table 1*).

Table 1 – The stages of the process of teaching students using e-learning tools

Stage of the learning process	Type of ELT used	The method of introducing ELT into the educational process
The stage of introducing new grammatical material	Demonstrative software (Power Point Presentation)	Casting of grammar rules and examples on presentation slides.
The stage of practicing and revising the grammatical material	Electronic textbook “Grammarway”, educational game program “Kahoot!”, Demonstrative software	Using exercises from the electronic textbook and educational game program for practice. Using demonstrative software tools for revising the material ( <i>Power Point Presentation</i> ).
Homework and extra-curricular work of students	Educational game application “Quizlet”	Practicing new material with an electronic set of memory cards
The stage of control of the understanding of the material	Software tool for monitoring and measuring the level of knowledge ( <i>Google forms</i> )	Electronic test on the studied topic (open questions)

Thus, during the first semester of 2022-2023 in the SPD-14 (1) group foreign language classes devoted to grammar were carried out in the manner indicated in *Table 1*, and in the SPD-14 (2) group

with the minimal use of ELT. At the end of the semester a grammar test was conducted in both groups, aimed at assessing the effectiveness of the presented methodology. The final test included the same topics as the primary test, taken by both groups before the first semester. The results of both tests are shown in the table below (*Table 2*).

Table 2 – The results of primary and final grammar tests

Group	The number of students, n	The average percentage of correct answers for the <b>primary test</b> , %	The average percentage of correct answers for the <b>final test</b> , %
SPD-14(1)	12	47	84
SPD-14(2)	13	45	65

Thus, from the results of both grammatical tests in SPD-14 (1,2) groups, it can be seen that during teaching grammar of a foreign language, the use of ELT (such as demonstrative software, electronic textbooks and interactive materials, educational and game software, educational gaming applications, software tools for monitoring and measuring the level of knowledge) helps to increase the effectiveness of learning through its individualization and differentiation, positively influencing the level of students' motivation to study grammar and also contributes to the organization of new forms of interaction in the learning process and changes in the content of activities during the class. In addition, the use of ELT greatly facilitates the work of a teacher, allowing the constant professional development using new ways of learning in the process of work. All of this determines the relevance and expediency of introducing ELT into the process of teaching grammar of a foreign language.

However, for the methodically correct use of the above-mentioned electronic learning tools, it is necessary to comply with some important conditions, such as the technical equipment of the classrooms, as well as the readiness of the teacher to work using modern technologies. In addition, it is important not to resort to excessive use of ELT: it is most advisable to alternate them with traditional teaching methods. In this case, it is possible to fully realize the advantages of ELT in a foreign language lesson when teaching its grammatical aspect.

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