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Mastering students' English fluency and proficiency through internet-based project activities

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the problem of non-linguistic students' English fluency and proficiency development through information and communication technologies (ICT), in particular with Internet-based project activity. As a target language in the University training system of future specialists, the English teaching course aims to provide students with an opportunity to acquire communicative and professional foreign language competence. Thus, the aim of the study is to identify the effective ways of the English fluency skills development through ICT in the university course. The article analyzes the key concept of "information and communication technology" from the point of view of Russian and foreign researches. The authors view this term as a set of tools and methods for converting information data to obtain a new quality information product. Due to the global society informatization, the revision of English teaching objectives and content as well as the search for new ways to improve teaching methods the relevance of ICT application is proved. A list of basic criteria for teachers to evaluate Internet sites is developed. Based on the main characteristics of the educational Internet project the authors determine the conditions and advantages of mastering students' English fluency and proficiency. The paper gives specific practical recommendations on how to organize Internet-based project activities. The authors conclude that ICT is a powerful and effective resource to improve the quality of English teaching in the University course due to authentic material introduction into the educational process and creating a real environment for foreign language communication.

Keywords: ICT; internet; project activity; foreign language, teaching English; fluency; proficiency.

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Прокопенко Ю.А.*, Карабутова Е.А.	Развитие иноязычной коммуникативной компетенции у студентов вуза посредством интернет-проектов

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена проблеме развития иноязычной коммуникативной компетентности у студентов неязыковых специальностей посредством применения современных информационных и коммуникационных технологий (ИКТ), в частности, интернет-проектов. Программа обучения английскому языку в системе подготовки будущих специалистов вуза направлена на предоставление студентам возможности приобретения коммуникативной и профессиональной иноязычной компетенции. Целью исследования является выявление эффективных путей формирования знаний студентов о системах изучаемого языка и развития навыков свободного владения иностранным языком (ИЯ) посредством ИКТ в курсе преподавания английского языка в университете. В работе анализируется ключевое понятие «информационные и коммуникационные технологии» с точки зрения российских и зарубежных исследователей. Данный термин понимается авторами как совокупность средств и методов преобразования информационных данных для получения информации нового качества продукта. Обоснована актуальность использования ИКТ в курсе обучения иностранному языку в связи с глобальной информатизацией общества, пересмотра содержания и целей преподавания ИЯ, а также поиска новых путей совершенствования методов обучения. Авторами разработан перечень базовых критериев для оценки сайтов преподавателями ИЯ. На основе базовых характеристик учебного интернет-проекта обозначены условия и преимущества развития коммуникативной компетентности студентов на иностранном языке. Предложены конкретные практические рекомендации для организации иноязычной проектной деятельности с использованием определенных Интернет-ресурсов. Сделан вывод о том, что, предоставляя возможность внедрения аутентичного материала в учебный процесс и создавая реальную среду для иноязычного общения, ИКТ являются мощным и эффективным ресурсом для совершенствования качества преподавания иностранного языка в рамках университетского курса.

Ключевые слова: иностранный язык, ИКТ; интернет; проектная деятельность; коммуникативная компетенция; иноязычная коммуникация.

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Introduction. Nowadays, the modern world can't be imagined without Internet. In our daily routine we need to use different gadgets with Internet access. In recent years, the teaching diversity has been gaining a wide popularity in response to the rapidly growing abundance of the Internet. English teaching tools and syllabuses are being constantly changed according to the requirements of the digital society. Such popularity of the Internet and computer technology among young people and the society as a whole, have created serious prerequisites for a successful integration of information and communication technology (ICT) into the educational process.

In the English teaching classroom, using websites is one of the easiest and least stressful ways of getting started with technology. There is a large and constantly expanding collection of resources on the web, at a variety of levels and covering a great choice of topics. A teacher has the opportunity to choose specific sites, monolingual or multilingual sites, sites with multimedia, or just simple texts from authentic sources or ELT (English Language Teaching). The web is a wonderful source of content which can be used as a window to the wider world outside the class, and, of course, a readily available collection of authentic material. As such, it is a much larger repository of content than there used to be readily available to any teacher and his/ her students.

The English teaching course, as a target language in the University training system of future specialists, aims to provide students with the opportunity to acquire communicative and professional foreign language competence.

In our practice, we use a communicative approach which is based on the teaching model of appropriate social language through communication in real-life situations. It includes such parameters as motivation, purpose, informative value, novelty, pragmatism, functionality, and the nature of the interaction between a teacher and a student, as well as the system of speech means. The syllabus involves flexibility and diversity of learning tools, their consistency with the ultimate goal of training as well as the student's social and personal needs.

In this regard, the experience exchange of ICT application in teaching English to non-linguistic students is quite relevant, especially in the period of society global informatization, content and learning goals revision and search for new ways of teaching methods development.

Thus, the aim of our research is to find out the suitable ways of students' foreign language fluency and proficiency development by means of ICT through a university English teaching course.

Main part. According to Daniels (Daniels, 2002), within a very short time, ICTs have become one of the basic building blocks of modern society. Nowadays, many countries regard understanding ICT and mastering the basic skills and concepts of ICT as a part of the education core, together with reading, writing and numeracy.

Pelgrum and Law state that near the end of the 1980s, the term 'computers' was replaced by "IT" (information technology) signifying a shift of focus from computing technology to the capacity to store and retrieve information. This was followed by the introduction of the term "ICT" (information and communication technology) around 1992, when e-mail started to become available to the general public (Pelgrum, Law, 2003). Nowadays there are different interpretations of the term "ICT".

According to the United Nations report (1999), ICTs cover the Internet service provision, telecommunication equipment and services, information technology equipment and services, media and broadcasting, libraries and documentation centers, commercial information providers, network-based information services, and other related information and communication activities. According to UNESCO[1], information and communication technology may be regarded as the combination of "informatics technology" with other related

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[1] UNESCO, (2002), Information and Communication Technology in Education, A Curriculum for Schools and Programme for Teacher Development, (ed. P. Resta), UNESCO, Paris, available at: http://unesdoc.unesco.org/ images/0012/001295/129533e.pdf

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technology, specifically communication one. Various types of ICT products available and having relevance to education, such as teleconferencing, email, audio conferencing, television and radio broadcasts, interactive radio counselling, interactive voice response system, audio-cassettes and CD ROMs etc. have been used in education for different purposes (Bhattacharya, Sharma, 2007; Sanyal, 2001; Sharma, 2003). As Kent admits (Kent, McNergney, 1999), "ICT in education refers to "information and communication technology such as computers, communications facilities and features that variously support teaching, learning and a range of activities in education". Moreover, the term Information and Communication Technologies includes technologies in which the computer plays a central role, i.e. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), the internet, and variety of generic computer applications. Hoven introduced the concept of "Computer-Enhanced Language Learning" and says that it will enable students to pool their knowledge in effective ways and enhance peer correction and language repair work. Computers enable students to work at their own pace (Hoven, 1999).

Davis, Tearle, Lemke, Couglin, Yusuf Stete: the field of education has been affected by ICT, which has undoubtedly affected teaching, learning and research (Yusuf, 2005). ICTs have the potential to accelerate, enrich, and deepen skills, to motivate and engage students. It helps to relate school experience with business activities, to create economic viability for tomorrow's workers, as well as to strengthen teaching and provide changes in schools.

According to Cabero's point of view, "the flexibilization time-space accounted for by the integration of ICT into teaching and learning processes contributes to increase the interaction and reception of information. Such possibilities suggest changes in the communication models, teaching and learning methods used by teachers, giving way to new scenarios which favor both individual and collaborative learning". The use of ICT in educational settings by itself acts as a catalyst for change in this domain. ICTs by their very nature are tools that encourage and support independent learning.

Students, using ICTs for learning purposes, become immersed in the process of learning. As more and longer students use computers as information sources and cognitive tools, their learning achievements will depend on the influence of the technology support (Jonassen, Reeves, 1996).

In the opinion of Pete Sharma and Barney Barret, there are several reasons for using technology in language teaching. First of all, it can be motivating, it offers the possibility to work autonomously or interact and collaborate with others. Technology also provides language performance with instant feedback in various tasks and exercises. ICT can also be an extension of the classroom and can be time saving. Finally, it promotes language learning with fresh authentic and motivating Internet materials directly. Using blended learning, which is defined as "a language course that combines a face-to-face classroom component with an appropriate use of technology", the researchers suggest that "positive learning outcomes are most apparent when clear roles are assigned to the teacher and to the technology" (Sharma, Barret, 2007).

Nachoua admits that the skill of listening is of key significance for English language learners to acquire. It is also a very intricate skill to teach. The concept of pronunciation, whether that is to understand or produce language, also raises problems for non-native speakers. Using Computer Assisted Language Learning is a way to motivate language learners to take a dynamic role in their learning instead of acting as passive listeners (Nachoua, 2012).

As long as these days English is regarded as a lingua franca, the skill of speaking has become a skill of paramount significance to acquire. Güngor M.A. states that in an online foreign language speaking class, virtual classes are designed with principles of ELT and E-learning. They go along with the techniques that raise interaction, vocabulary integration and use of English, while providing a stress-free environment in order to motivate even taciturn students to participate and produce spoken language (Güngor, Demirbas, (2010).

Considering the development of literacy skills as a matter that stresses students a lot,

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Castek emphasizes that online adventure read-ing is a way to take all that stress away and turn it into enjoyment. At present days, students have a very magic tool – the Internet, which can motivate them and help them to improve their literacy skills. Besides, encouraging stu-dents to visit online book clubs and interact with other readers enhances their critical think-ing providing them with skills and strategies which will enable them to make the most of the ICTs available to them. No doubt, it is im-portant to feel relaxed when doing so, hence to know how to use this new tool, not to see this as a convoluted experience, to enjoy collabora-tion and problem solving and to have positive prior experience on these topics. Evidently, students with negative experiences are more likely to gain less from this process. Develop-ing positive disposition in the direction of tech-nology will build a relationship between the students and reading and writing which will allow them increasing their opportunities on every aspect of their lives in our world which is an 'information-centered' one today (Castek, Bevans-Mangelson, Goldstone, 2006: 715).

Gökhan Orhan reports in his findings (Gökhan, 2016: 580) that vocabulary teaching with ICT is the most widespread. He argues that vocabulary knowledge is an indispensable part of language learning and considers vo-cabulary to be a useful supplementary aid for language learning.

In Russia, the problem of ICT introduc-tion into the practice of foreign language teach-ing was widely considered by such scientists and educators as E. G. Asimov, V. P. Bespalko, B. S. Gershunsky, I. O. Loginov, E. I. Mash-bits, R. P. Milrad, E. S. Polat and others.

According to the opinion of E. S. Polat, Russian grand PhD of Science in Education, the task of a teacher is to activate student's cognitive activity in the process of foreign lan-guages teaching. Such modern educational technologies as training in cooperation, project-based activity, ICT application, Internet re-sources usage contribute to a learner-oriented approach in teaching, provide individualization and differentiation of learning taking into ac-count the abilities of students, their level of

learning, aptitudes, etc. (Polat, 2001: 12-15; Makhovskaya, Prokopenko, (2018).

Thus, in our study, we have defined the term of Information and Communication Tech-nology as a set of tools and methods for con-verting information data to obtain a new quality information product.

One of the points to be emphasized when introducing internet resources into the class is to realize how useful and appropriate for the classroom the web sites can be.

A teacher will also need to think about the aims and objectives of the lesson. Does the website one has found fit in with these, and does it enhance and complement the other ma-terials and activities a teacher has planned for the class? Sometimes, the Internet content will be a core of a particular lesson but at other times, it will merely serve as a jumping-off point into something more closely related to a particular course book topic or unit, or be a source of additional material to follow up on the core classroom content.

Having analyzed a number of sources, we made up a list of various standard criteria for evaluating websites which can serve as a start-ing point for teachers' evaluation. They include the following:

1. Accuracy.,

It means that a teacher has to ask himself/herself, whom the page is written by and if this person is an expert in the subject matter. Natu-rally, it is necessary to check qualifications, experience – look for an "about me" link and try to understand if the page content is reliable and factually correct. It is helpful to look through a cross-reference with other similar websites and encyclopedias.

2. Currency.

It is very important to find out if the con-tent is up-to-date (to check factual information against other reliable sources) and when the page was last updated (to check for information at the bottom/top of the page).

Accuracy and currency might be the most important criteria if students take notes and in-terpret information trying to produce a project.

3. Content.

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It means that a teacher needs to realize if the site is interesting and stimulating (to consider the content from a students' point of view) and if it is attractive and easy to navigate (to check the colour combinations, the links and visual structure logic).

As far as the content is concerned, a teacher needs to note that the criteria such as ease-of-use and interest are taken into account, but there is a chance to consider adding a further set of criteria here along the lines of appropriateness. In this subcategory, a teacher would note which groups or site levels would be suitable and if any problems can be foreseen with the site itself.

4. Functionality.

Teachers need to check if the site works well and if there are any broken links (to be sure to check all pages, and follow all links to all pages the students intend to use). Besides, it's important to see if the site offers a lot of large files or alternative technologies (to check how quickly it loads for students; to check how sound, video and animation work).

It's interesting to mention, functionality will be a category with consequences for all teachers. It can be not only very frustrating to follow through the content of a site to be met with broken links and missing information, but it can be equally frustrating to wait twenty minutes for a short video to download due to the speed of your connection. Again, careful preparation and investigation at the lesson planning stage can go a long way towards making the students' experience enjoyable and trouble-free.

Another problem most teachers face when they have decided to contribute ICT into the teaching process is the choice of web sites: whether to choose an authentic one or ELT (English Language Teaching). In our opinion, it will largely depend upon the aim a teacher wants to achieve with it.

Of course, there are plenty of ELT websites which supply content that students can use, for example, language practice activities they can do on their own. They provide valuable opportunities for a more controlled language activity and are often a great help to stu-dents who need to brush up on certain aspects of the language or to prepare for an exam. Such sites are often ideal for homework, access to the Internet permitting.

In our language teaching practice, we often use the resources of the British Council educational platform in order to improve the educational process in the discipline "Foreign language" in the system of future specialists University training. The structure of this portal includes several sites:

1. http://learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org;

2. https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk;

3. http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en;

4. http://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en;

5. http://englishagenda.britishcouncil.org.

Authentic sites, on the other hand, can be chosen to fit students' interests. We consider it to be a key factor in keeping motivation high in an electronic classroom. When evaluating authentic sites for possible incorporation into teaching process, we try to find the ones which have an easy structure and navigation, and with smaller chunks of text per page to make them more approachable and understandable.

Authentic sites also provide an ideal opportunity to work through the issues of total comprehension that plenty of students have to deal with at some point in their studies. They can be guided towards being comfortable with understanding the content of a site and identifying what they need to know or find out without getting bogged down in having to understand every word on the screen.

The contexts in which teachers use ICT can vary and the access that they have to computers – the so-called digital divide – will affect the way they can do with their classes in terms of implementing technology.

In this regard, we consider the Internet-based project activity as an extension of the ICT classroom with authentic sites in the university course of English teaching. From using individual web pages and websites in the classroom, it is a natural progression to move on to an online project-based activity. There are

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some advantages to complement Internet-based projects into the university English teaching course:

– The Internet-based project is a structured way for teachers to start integrating ICT into a language class, both on a short-term and long-term basis. No specific technical knowledge is needed either to produce or to use Internet projects. No doubt, it is true that students need time to plan and design, so it is worth looking through the Internet sites to make sure that something suitable already exists before they start to create their own projects.

– It contributes to foreign language communication and exchange of knowledge, encourages collaborative learning, and therefore stimulates interaction.

– It can be used simply for language learning purposes, but can also be interdisciplinary, allowing for cross-over into other departments and subject areas.

– It encourages critical thinking skills. Students are not required to simply reproduce information they find, but have to transform that information in order to achieve a given task (Makhovskaya, Prokopenko, 2018: 103-106).

In the context of doing project work, the Internet can be thought of as an enormous encyclopedia as it gives our students a quick access to a wealth of information which they can use to carry out their project activities (Cowan, (2006).

It must be pointed out that an online project-based activity can range from a simple low-level project like making a poster, a presentation about a famous scientist – to high-level investigative work where students research a subject and present polemical views and opinions in a report, a debate or a written article.

The procedure of any Internet-based project activity includes the following basic stages:

1. Choosing the project topic.
2. Making the task clear. What information will the students need to find – biographical, factual, views and opinions?

3. Finding the resources. Which websites will your students need to visit?

4. Deciding on the outcome. What is the final purpose of the project: making a poster, a presentation or holding a debate? (Dudeney, Hockly, 2007).

Due to the fact that the implementation of syllabuses in a foreign language course for non-linguistic students in Belgorod State National Research University is carried out according to the model of multi-level training, at first, we consider an algorithm for creating a low-level Internet-based project "A great psychologist" for elementary and pre-intermediate level students.

For the project you will need: three lesson periods, Internet access for the second and the third of the three lessons offered, text software: Microsoft Word or Open Office.

Students know more than the basics about their favorite scientist. But usually it's not enough for a full project. This is where the Internet comes on their own, providing the information they need to fill the gaps in their knowledge. This particular project aims to provide an opportunity to focus on such language areas as countries, nationalities, dates, places, findings and opinions. During the project-based activity performance, students explore their favorite scientists and prepare poster presentations about them.

Now we'll consider each lesson in details.

At the first lesson, the students share the necessary information about their favorite psychologist prepared at home. The aim of this lesson is to complete the task with a collaborative element. It should be emphasized that what you are looking for at this stage is what they have already known and that they do not need to surf the Internet to obtain any information at all. Let the students write down the name of their favorite scientist and prepare a mind-map based on what they know. For example, Sigmund Freud: biography, ideas, legacy, works.

After having recorded what they know, they should write a list of things they did not know, but would like to know. For example, biography (early life and education, career and

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marriage, development of psychoanalysis, followers, patients, escape from Nazism); ideas (seduction theory, cocaine, the unconscious, dreams, psychosexual development, id, ego, and super-ego and etc.); legacy (psychotherapy, science, philosophy, literature and literary criticism, feminism and etc.); works (books, case histories, papers on sexuality, autobiographical papers).

This second lesson requires a fair bit of your own work as a teacher. Before the lesson, you will need to find useful sites to match the choice of psychologists your students made. You should check that they are simple enough for the level, and include as much of the information sought as possible. For biographical information it is possible to use a phrase part such as "Sigmund Freud was born in…" Otherwise, if your students are comfortable with searching and dealing with websites, let them find their own. So, during this lesson, your students will visit the identified sites and complete their mind-map, as far as possible.

At the next stage, you will have to provide the students with a model biography. For example, you can check out the resources of Wikipedia and rewrite one example according to the students' language level. In order to give much practice, it is recommended to do some comprehension work on the model text at this time. You can work on the grammar structures and vocabulary that you want them to include in their presentations.

The objective of the third lesson is to create the final product.

By now, your students will have collected all the information they need and will also have seen your model presentation, so they must be ready to present their own projects. One variant to do it is to let them prepare a short text based on the model from the previous lesson, and then to work this up into a poster with illustrations and photographs also taken from the Internet or prepare a presentation with OHP (overhead projector) (Merril, 2011).

Another way to develop university students' English fluency and proficiency through content language integrated learning with ICT is the application of a high-level internet-based project in the learning process.

This project aims to provide students with the opportunity to examine a serious issue in depth. You may want to work beforehand on some of the language areas useful for the activity, for example, giving opinions, agreeing and disagreeing. However, this will depend on the level of your students. A good command of language is ideal for groups. In our university, we practice it with students of intermediate level groups and above.

While the lower-level project we have just looked at is an ideal opportunity for developing students' specific communication skills, this project goes deeper into a topic and encourages more complex thinking and reasoning processes. With higher-level projects there is plenty of opportunity for cross-curricular applications, in our case it's the field of psychology. Such kind of task-based activity provides not only the development of communicative competency that means fluency and proficiency of speaking English but the professional development of a future specialist.

For this project, we usually have 3 classes. During the first and probably the second of the suggested three classes it is necessary to have an access to the Internet, optionally, an access to the video recording equipment for the third lesson.

First lesson.

During the first stage, you should make your students benefit with their research in the topic and for the subsequent discussion of their findings, if time is available.

For example, brainstorm what your students know about phobias. Use this chart as a starting point (mind-map):

Type	Causes	Mechanism	Diagnosis	Treatment

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Then you should divide the students into groups, one topic for each group, and give them time to find additional information to add into each column. As a starting point, get them to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phobia. The students may also use their own search skills to find out more, if there is time. After that, you should return to the whole class discussion, and discuss the contents of the refined table.

At the second lesson, divide the students into four groups, working towards a special television debate on the issue of phobias: 1. TV debate presenters; 2. Scientists (psychologists) who discovered the phenomenon of phobias among people; 3. People (psychiatrists) suffering of phobia; 4. TV studio audience.

As during the final third lesson we will have an actual debate, so now the students have to prepare their speech for the debate. It's convenient to use prompt cards with instructions for each group. For example, we use the following text.

The task for *presenters*: "Decide which areas you want to cover in the televised debate. Who will speak first? How long will they speak for? Will interruptions and questions be permitted and how will you manage them? What questions will you need to ask? How will you deal with difficult speakers or, members of the public? Will you need any visual aids for your introduction?"

The task for *psychologists* (scientists): "Look back at what your group has discovered in the column of Treatment at the previous lesson. Your aim is to convince the studio audience that the best treatment for phobia is psychotherapy but not medical antidepressant drugs. Your view is that it is natural to undertake a clinical assessment using a variety of methods including psychometric tests, interviews and direct observation of behavior and not the use of psychotropic medications in treating phobias. Assessment may lead to psychotherapy, counseling or advice. Give arguments, and prepare any visual elements you may need to illustrate your points of view".

The task for *psychiatrists:* "Look back at what your group has discovered in the column of Treatment at the previous lesson. Your aim

is to convince the studio audience, and the viewing public, that the best effective cure for people with phobias is taking psychotropic medications. Your view is that the chief method of treating neurotic states accompanied by an intense dread of certain objects or situations includes only psychotropic medications. Give your arguments, and prepare any visual elements you may need to illustrate them".

The task for *studio audience:* "You may think of your views of treating phobia individually, based on what you found out at the last lesson".

So, there is a role for each group. If necessary, they can do a further research and prepare charts or other visual aids. They can also think over how they can enhance the final product with, for example, the use of props and arrangement of the furniture, as at the third lesson they will be role-playing a television debate.

At the third lesson, the students have to arrange the actual debate. To facilitate the students' activity, it is possible to prepare some prompt cards with different clichés for the debate. For example, agreement, disagreement, sharing and arguing anyone's point of view. If it is possible you can simulate a TV studio in the classroom by moving chairs and tables around, creating spaces for each group and encouraging students to decorate them. If they have props, let them arrange everything and prepare for the programme.

The main task of the *presenters* is to be in charge of the debate and everything what is happening. Sometimes, we practice recording the lesson for later playback. It is especially valuable to examine the language used in the process and to correct the errors. As the practice has shown, most students appreciate such kind of a recycling work. To make students succeed in their final project-based activity, give them the home task to edit the video, adding some titles and music to it.

During this third lesson you should make sure that the stages of the debate do not overrun. The worst thing that can happen is that you run out of time to conclude the debate properly.

НАУЧНЫЙ РЕЗУЛЬТАT
RESEARCH RESULT

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One more important point we'd like to cover in this paper is the student's scientific work. The mentioned above internet-based project activity teaches students how to find and transform the necessary information for their professional interests. In this regard, it is necessary to single out that under the supervision of the university lecturers the intermediate students of non-linguistic departments publish their theses in the annual collection of scientific papers issued by the Department of Foreign Languages in Belgorod State Research University (Russia).

Conclusion. It's important that both the teacher and his/ her students see the use of ICT as an intrinsic part of the learning process rather than as an occasional activity which has nothing to do with their regular study programme. We would therefore recommend that, if you plan to use the Internet, you should talk to your students and explore the reasons for using this resource with them. This can be done at lower levels in their own language or in English with higher-level students. It is necessary to talk to your students about why the Internet content may be useful to them and discuss their attitudes to ICT in general – when they use the Internet, and what for. It is important to show them how the course book and other materials can be enhanced by extra material from the Internet. But above all, do your best to make clear that this is not an entertainment, not something that you are just using to fill in the time.

ICT is a great resource to make university English classes diverse and accessible. It gives a great chance to implement authentic material into the learning process and create real-life environment for foreign language communication. Internet-based project activity contributes into students' English fluency and proficiency development, making the learning process real to life situations of communication. It encourages critical thinking skills. The students are not required simply to reproduce the information they find, but have to transform it in order to achieve a given task.

Besides, more often than not, projects are group activities, so they make students communicate and share their knowledge – the two

principle goals of language teaching achievement. The use of projects encourages cooperative learning, and therefore stimulates interaction.

Internet-based projects can be simply used for language purposes, but can also be interdisciplinary, allowing for cross-over into other departments and subject areas. In this case, it serves as a tool of the CLIL approach (Content and Language Integrated Learning) to teach English.

In conclusion, we'd like to emphasize the following advantages of ICT use in the process of teaching English:

– the possibility of educational process individualization: a student can choose his/ her educational route and follow it in a convenient way and, if necessary, return to the topic material;

– the mobility of the course based on the presence of e-mail and forum in the system; teachers and students have the opportunity to arrange consultations at a convenient time for them, which allows to use the training time more effectively;

– the authenticity of the educational material used: through the network technology, authentic text, audio-and video resources make it possible to create a native speaking environment;

– the accessibility and the diversity of educational materials that means a great number of different approaches and methods, interactive and convenient tools for educational management, one of which is Internet-based project activity.

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