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TEACHING LANGUAGES VIA SKYPE: ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

Now, in the conditions of increased foreign language communication, knowledge of a foreign language must ensure the ability to act in a modern

information environment, receive professionally relevant information from authentic sources and communicate confidently with representatives of foreign companies. That is why the formation of foreign communicative competence is an actual task of teaching a foreign language. The use of modern information technologies helps to realize this task in a better way. And distance learning plays a significant role here. It allows teachers and students to interact at a distance and reflects all inherent in the learning process components (goals, content, methods, organizational forms, teaching tools), but on the other hand it is implemented by specific means of the Internet technology to provide constant, systematic contact with the teacher and with other students.

One of the forms of distance learning, which is actively used to teach foreign languages at the moment, is Skype. It was created in 2003. Since then, it has become very popular and changed hands a couple of times before finally being acquired in 2011 by software giant Microsoft. Despite its popularity in the modern educational process (both in higher education institutions and in individual education), the use of Skype technology has its advantages and disadvantages.

Let's start with the pluses. First of all, this is flexibility and convenience. Comfortable conditions concern conducting classes practically everywhere (the main thing is the existence of the Internet and a computer), in convenient time and in a comfortable pace. This allows you to practice the foreign language skills even in conditions of lack of time and without interruption of work. Also, a student can choose a teacher that suits his or her needs. Skype gives the opportunity to use the services of an experienced specialist from any corner of the planet, so there is the opportunity to learn a foreign language under the direct supervision of the native speaker. Another important factor in favour of distance learning via Skype is its lower cost in comparison with traditional forms. It is important in the case of education, for example, in foreign countries, as all you need is the Internet and Skype.

However, leaning and teaching via Skype has its drawbacks. First of all, it is the limitation of physical interaction. This aspect is based on the inability of some

categories of people to absorb educational material effectively without a clear sense of reality. Also, there may be technical problems associated with the low speed of the Internet or its absence. When the quality of connection deteriorates, the lesson becomes impossible. Another drawback of such training is the lack of communication in groups that excludes work in pairs which is very effective in learning a foreign language. Also, when learning by Skype, a strong motivation for a student is necessary as a lot of information must be learned by himself and the result of training will directly depend on self-discipline.

So, it can be concluded that teaching foreign languages via Skype is convenient at the early stages, when it is necessary to master the theory and improve the grammar. In order to deepen students' knowledge and get more practical skills, traditional intramural forms of training will be more suitable.

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