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Practice of using GoToMeeting/Zoom in the study of foreign languages

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to analyse the perception of using GoToMeeting and ZOOM when learning foreign languages by students of different majors. The article analyses the answers of respondents and reveals a number of patterns between the perception of the practice of using GoToMeeting and ZOOM by students majoring in philology and students of other majors. The study involved general scientific methods and adopted Survey method. Statistics were processed using the average input value method and the Mann-Whitney test. The theoretical background for the questionnaire was the Davis technology acceptance model. The survey was conducted remotely. The results of the study showed an uneven subjective perception of the introduction of distance learning methods by students in both focus groups. However, according to an objective assessment of the level of students' knowledge, both groups showed high efficiency of the practice of using GoToMeeting and ZOOM in learning foreign languages. The article also presents the criteria that students have identified as necessary when learning a foreign language using GoToMeeting and ZOOM. In general, the use of this software allowed raising the level of knowledge of a foreign language both among students majoring in philology and among students of other majors. The search for optimal methods and models of using this software to increase the effectiveness of teaching foreign language is considered the field for further research.

Keywords: ZOOM, GoToMeeting, Foreign Language, Language Learning, Distance Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Research on modern methods of teaching foreign languages is very topical, as the existing free multifunctional services are little studied in terms of their educational potential. At the present stage of development of information technology, the need to combine information and software resources with the educational process is quite clear, because the content of foreign language learning changes, the amount of research material increases in the course of the development of society (Golonka et al., 2014). Programs like GoToMeeting and Zoom have a wide range of opportunities for the most productive learning. Computer technology helps teachers engage passive students, visualize lessons, provide the learning process with new materials to help students show their creative abilities (Correa, 2015).

The teaching method consists of the educational work of the teacher (teaching) and the organization of educational and cognitive activities of students (learning) in their relationship. The specifics of the work are to achieve educational, developmental and pedagogical learning goals. Based on the above, learning is, first, an activity with the purpose of training of the individual and solving the educational problems, and second, it is always a joint activity of the teacher and the student. Research of effective teaching methods with their further introduction into teaching practice allows increasing the level of knowledge of future specialists. This study was conducted in pursuing the goal of improving the quality of foreign language teaching.

There are many resources on the Internet that allow learning a foreign language on one's own, but this article is about teaching through GoToMeeting and Zoom, which have recently become increasingly popular (Kato, Spring

& Mori, 2016). The main form of classes of this type of training is web classes (conferences). An important aspect of distance learning is the communication of participants in the learning process (Balaman & Sert, 2017). In this regard, Polat (2000) identifies methods of synchronous and asynchronous learning. The method of asynchronous distance learning implies the impossibility of communication between teacher and students in real time — offline communication (web forums). The method of synchronous distance learning is to communicate between students and teachers in real time — online communication, which includes learning a foreign language using GoToMeeting and Zoom (Akiyama & Cunningham, 2018).

Let's look at the main benefits of teaching a foreign language using computer programs.

1. Low cost of the organization of work. Learning a foreign language through GoToMeeting and Zoom is not the most resource-intensive, because the teacher does not need to spend money on travel and renting premises for classes. As a bonus, both students and teachers save a lot of time (Ying, Paulina, Mulyadani & Lim, 2021).
2. Geographical independence. Online teaching allows teachers to work from any city or country, and students — to have access to classes even when they are sick (Teo, Huang & Hoi, 2017).
3. Flexible schedule. Learning a foreign language using Skype and Zoom allows teachers to make their own work schedule, as well as adapt the schedule to their plans and needs (Huang, Teo & Zhou, 2019)
4. Freedom of choice of materials. The teachers that practice online teaching have the opportunity to use those materials that they consider most appropriate for students (Ko & Rossen, 2010).
5. Ability to record a lesson and further play the recording for educational purposes. This advantage of online foreign language learning allows students to repeat the material at any time. The mobility and availability of any necessary learning resources facilitates and accelerates the learning process, which undoubtedly meets the requirements of modern learning (Pu, 2020).

However, this method of learning foreign languages has significant disadvantages, which will be discussed below.

1. Technical problems. Possible problems with learning through GoToMeeting and Zoom may include disconnection, audio lag from video, ambient noise, etc. Such technical nuances can negatively affect the learning process, irritate students, which in turn will affect motivation (Pourhossein Gilakjani, Leong & Hairul, 2013).
2. Lack of proper contact between student and teacher. This shortcoming of online learning directly depends on a particular personality of the student, teacher, the level of student's independence and self-motivation (Zhao, 2013).
3. Lack of possibility of a proper degree of control. This point cannot be called a disadvantage in the full sense of the word, but it implies some restriction on the age of students with GoToMeeting and Zoom (Berns, Isla-Montes, Palomo-Duarte & Doder, 2016).
4. Limited range of exercises. Unfortunately, a large part of the exercises for working out the training material is absolutely not suitable for online lessons. The teacher has to include a large number of conversational assignments, dialogues, monologues and games in a face-to-face format in the class (Taghizadeh & Hasani Yourdshahi, 2019).
5. Insufficient social interaction. This point is characteristic of both teachers and students (González-Carriedo & Esprívalo Harrell, 2018).

The above programs allow organizing synchronous distance online communication between teacher and students. The experience of using the program allowed developing a step-by-step algorithm for working on the platform online using various tools of the program to solve educational problems (Moorhouse, 2020). This algorithm of step-by-step work is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Algorithm for organizing step-by-step work in Zoom

Stages of work	GOTOMEETING / ZOOM tools	Types of work and learning activities
1 Learning the educational material	Message board; Screen demonstration; Chat for questions; Reaction (arm raising option)	Lecture, explanation of lexical and grammatical material, Q&A assignments
2 Training	Message board Screen demonstration Session room	Practice of educational material in training exercises (writing, speaking, listening)
3 Application	Message board Screen demonstration Chat for questions Reaction Session room	Practice of written and oral speech
4 Control	Session rooms Screen demonstration	Discussion, report with presentation, mini-project

Source: Polat (2000), Tallvid (2016).

Despite a number of didactic advantages of the program, such as synchronous interaction in different formats through web conferencing, chat, interactive whiteboard and session rooms, the program has a number of

difficulties that must be considered when organizing distance learning and online classes (Cheung, 2021). The free version of the program has a number of significant limitations on time, settings and number of participants (Kohn & Hoffstaedter, 2017).

Online interaction depends on the quality of the Internet connection and the willingness of online participants to use all the settings and tools of the program. A number of difficulties related to external factors should also be noted, such as: technical difficulties of connection and video broadcast; the need to register participants and provide access to each conference via a password or personal ID of the teacher; lack of experience with the program; emotional difficulties associated with students' stiffness to talk on the camera, ask questions in a chat, or connecting from their workplace due to different socioeconomic living conditions (Lee, 2016).

A number of domestic and foreign scholars deal with the introduction of innovative means of teaching a foreign language. Pineda (2017) considers the issue of speech development by means of synchronous and asynchronous means. Ivaniuk (2020) covers the use of digital educational environment by foreign language teachers. The article Ovcharuk and Ivaniuk (2020) presents the results of the online survey "Teachers' Needs to Improve the Professional Level on the Use of Digital Tools and ICT in the Context of Quarantine". Ahmadi (2017) dealt with the impact of motivation on reading comprehension. Pourhossein Gilakjani et al. (2017) provides literature review on the integration of technology into the process of teaching and learning English. Kohnke and Moorhouse (2020) considered facilitation of synchronous online language learning using Zoom. Kohnke (2019) dealt with the issues of encouraging participation and interaction in a virtual language class. In her article, Guzachchova (2020) discussed Zoom technology as an effective tool for distance learning in teaching English to medical students. The article by Manegre and Sabiri (2020) covers online language learning using virtual classes and provides the analysis of teacher perception. Godwin-Jones (2011) worked with the issue of independent language learning. Despite the fact that the issues of distance learning of a foreign language have been dealt with for a long time, the existing research does not address the difference in the perception of distance learning technologies by students majoring in linguistics and other majors.

The aim of the work is to study the difference in the perception of the practice of using GoToMeeting and ZOOM in learning a foreign language by students majoring in linguistics and other majors.

Based on the research topic, the following research objectives were identified:

1. Study the subjective attitude of students majoring in linguistics and other majors for learning a foreign language through GoToMeeting and Zoom.
2. Examine the level of respondents' knowledge of a foreign language in order to objectively assess the effectiveness of the use of GoToMeeting and Zoom.

METHODS

Learning a foreign language using GoToMeeting and Zoom is a form of distance learning, which is now considered as an independent learning system. Current studies of the effectiveness of educational means implemented in connection with the pandemic require a more developed research background and infrastructure.

Research Design

Research design is visualised on Figure 1.

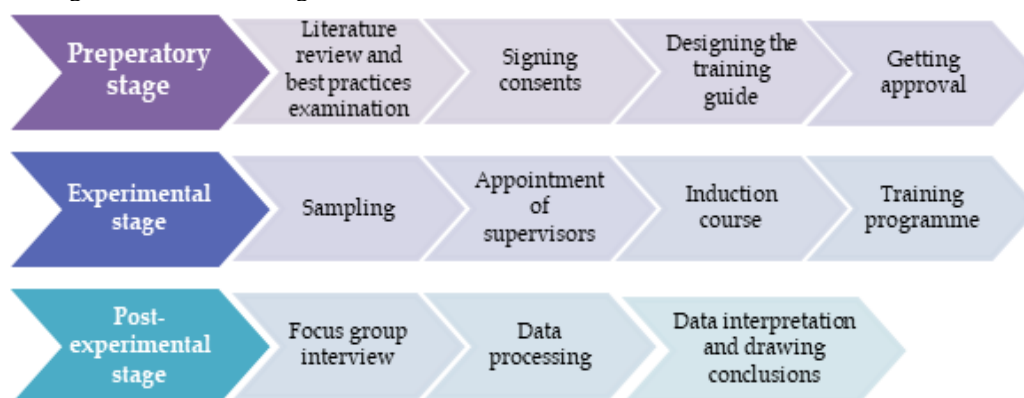


Fig.1: Visualised research design

Objectives

The aim of the study is to analyse the perception of the practice of using GoToMeeting and ZOOM in learning a foreign language by students majoring in linguistics and other majors.

Sample

An online anonymous survey of 120 students of Borys Honchar Kyiv University with different (linguistic and non-linguistic) majors of the bachelor's program to find out the opinion of students about the experience and effectiveness of the program in the organization of education. Those students were divided into two groups of respondents: 60 students majoring in linguistics and 60 students of non-linguistic majors. This number of respondents allows for a representative survey. And the division into two groups of respondents will allow for a comparative analysis.

Methods

For each participant in the experiment, the average input rating value was calculated by the following formula:

$$R_i = k_1 * m_1 + k_2 * m_2 + k_3 * m_3 + k_4 * m_4, \quad (1)$$

where k-coefficient of weight of the indicator, m-mark of the student according to a certain criterion, R — rating indicator. As the evaluation criteria were assumed to be equal, the weighting factor for each of the indicators is 0.25.

Let us calculate the sums of the ranks of the considered samples to calculate the Mann-Whitney criterion. The sums of the sample ranks are calculated by the formula:

$$U = n_1 * n_2 + \frac{n_x * (n_x + 1)}{2} - T_x, \quad (2)$$

where n_1 – the number of students in Sample 1, n_2 — the number of students in Sample 2, T_x — the greater of the two rank sums of the first and second samples; n_x — the number of students in the sample with the higher rank sum.

The questionnaire was developed using Google Forms. The theoretical background was the technology acceptance model developed by Davis (1989), which allows analysing how students accept and use technology in learning. This model determines the degree of user acceptance of technology through the criteria of perceived usefulness and the criterion of perceived easiness, where more importance is given to ease of use without additional effort. The questionnaire consisted of questions that included the following points: year of study and faculty, frequency of use in the educational process; ease of access and use of the program; usefulness and efficiency in the educational process.

The questions were structured with answer options from 1 to 5 using the Likert scale of overall scores, where 1 is the least agreement and 5 is the highest. All questions were closed-ended and had similar wording, such as: "Is it easy to access the program?". Other questions had similar formulations, where it was proposed to assess the ease and usefulness of the system in learning (Hung & Higgins, 2016).

Instruments

Google Forms were used for the survey. Data entry and processing was performed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS Statistics 16.0. All data are given in absolute (number of choices of answers) and relative (% of the number of respondents) values.

RESULTS

Statistical differences between the main (students majoring in linguistics) and control (students of non-linguistic majors) were checked at the summative and final stages of the study using the Mann-Whitney test, which allows assessing the differences between two small samples (sample size — 60 people) by the level of quantitatively measurable attribute.

The result of the summative stage: $U_{emp} = 241.5$

In the ranking process, we combine two samples into one. The lowest rank is given the lowest score. Thus, for example, 1 point was given to 6 students in the main and 9 students in the control group, so 1 point will take the positions of the first 15 lines. It follows that rank 1 is the arithmetic mean for positions 1 to 15, which is equal to 8.

Thus we find the Mann-Whitney test:

the sum of ranks for Sample 1 (Main) is 634.5, the sum of ranks for Sample 2 (control) is 541.5. Let's denote the largest sum for T_x , which is equal to 634.5.

$$U_{emp} = 24 * 24 + 24 * (24 + 1) / 2 - 634.5 = 241.5. \quad (3)$$

We find the critical value of the criterion, which is given in a special table. We take a value equal to 0.01 as the level of significance. Calculations showed that $U_{emp} = 241.5$, with $U_{crit}(0.01) = 174$. Thus, $241.5 > 174$, we claim that at the beginning of the experiment EG does not exceed CG in terms of the level of foreign language competence (Table 2).

Table 2: Critical value of the Mann-Whitney test

U_{crit}	
$p \leq 0.01$	$p \leq 0.05$
174	207

Source: Polat (2000)

The value of our set of exercises is also that they form knowledge about some features of education systems of the two countries, methods and techniques of learning, differences in the organization of the process of learning a foreign language (English), emphasize the importance of continuous development of professional skills and abilities to correctly build a line of behaviour in different situations of intercultural communication, etc.

The necessary information is offered for the successful communication in a given communicative situation at the beginning of each assignment. The teacher may convey some rules in the form of a conversation or discussion, or offer this material for self-study at home or during the class. Each assignment contains the objective, the necessary equipment; handouts (if any) are also included in the set of exercises. The developed set of game exercises can be used in practical classes of a foreign language (English) on the topic “Education”. Due to the fact that the assignments are aimed at studying educational systems, some exercises of our complex can be useful for teachers of various subjects who want to learn some aspects of education in the UK from students.

At the beginning of the study, we set a goal to trace the dynamics of the development of communicative competence in students. At this stage, the goal was to prepare for the study, which includes the selection of the research base, taking tests to identify the level of knowledge of students; selection of a set of assignments on a particular topic, as well as compiling syllabi using different methods. Besides, a survey was conducted. According to the results of the survey, not only the difficulties of adaptation to distance learning were found, but also the attitude of students to the process of learning English, as well as related academic problems in learning the professional language (Figure 2).

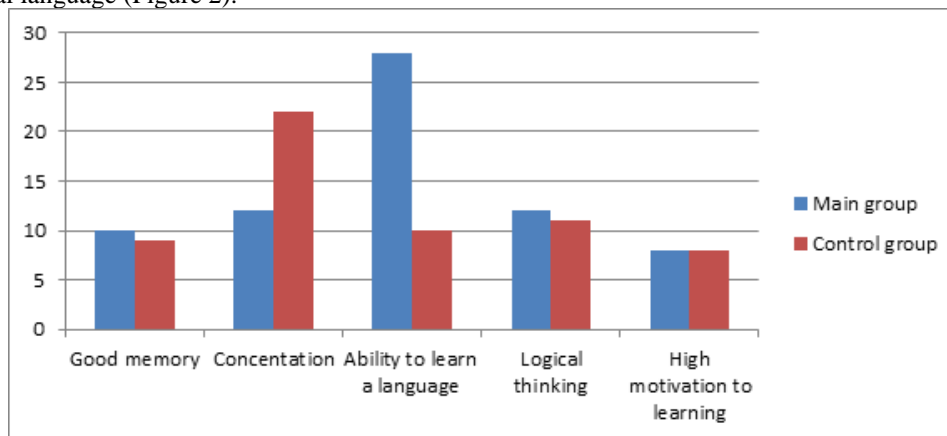


Fig.2: Which students think helps them learn the language through GoToMeeting and ZOOM

Source: Polat (2000)

The diagram makes it clear that both groups are convinced of the need to learn English in the modern world, that is motivation is at a fairly high level. Students in the main group can spend enough time studying English, have a good memory, which is important in the learning process, and assess their ability to think logically at a medium level. EG students also have a good memory and a fairly high level of language skills (Figure 2).

The ability to understand and speak, even if they make linguistic mistakes, is the most important for the main group of students. This data can be interpreted as the desire of students to acquire communication skills for the practical use of language in real communication situations. Understanding of the meanings of grammar in the study of a foreign language is also at a fairly high level, which can also be an incentive to increase the level of literacy (Figure 3).

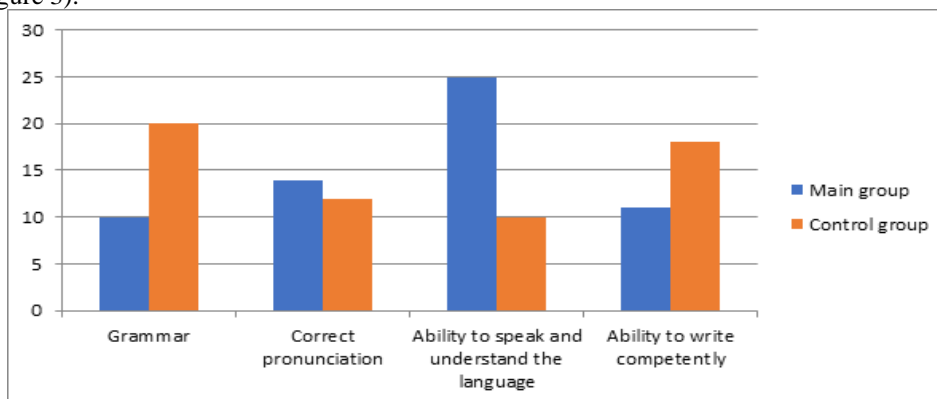


Fig.3: The most useful criteria for learning a language using GoToMeeting and ZOOM

Source: Polat (2000)

Almost all surveyed students note significant differences in distance and in-class forms of education (Figure 4). By joining distance learning, students experience differences in the methods and approaches used by teachers, as well as problems in the organization and the conditions of learning. The lack of adapted educational materials is one of the problems, due to the fact that much attention is paid to work with textbooks in-class. The textbook for students is a guarantee that at any time they can repeat the material studied and find all the necessary information.

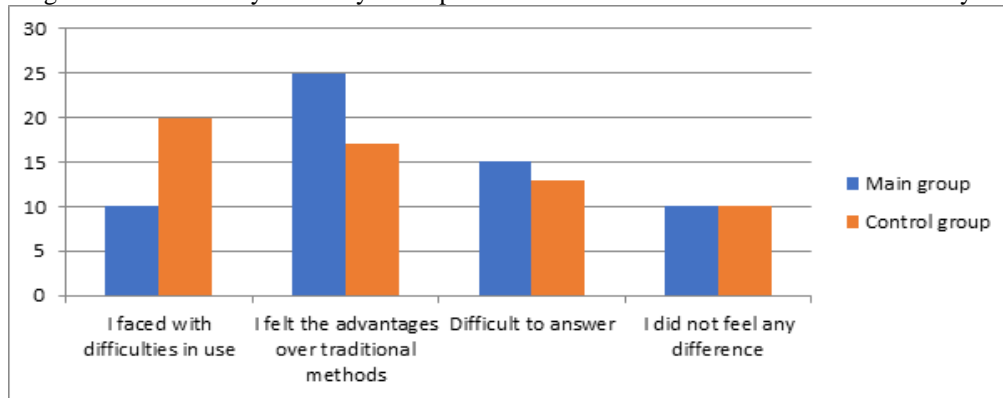


Fig.4: Attitudes towards the use of GoToMeeting and ZOOM in foreign language learning

Source: Polat (2000)

Students note that in the distance format they have more free time, the requirements of teachers, in their opinion, were lower than expected, so students do not seek to devote more time to study, that is, there must be a psychological factor.

In addition to the difficulties in learning English, in terms of the organization of the educational process, students analysed and identified gaps in knowledge by type of speech activity (Figure 5).

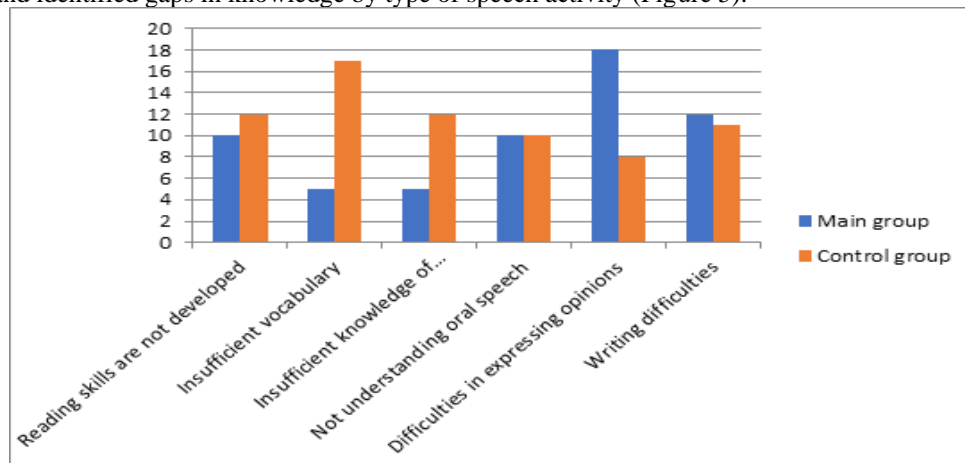


Fig.5: Problems of learning a foreign language through GoToMeeting and ZOOM

Source: Polat (2000)

According to the diagram, we can draw the following conclusions:

- 1) When teaching the main group, due attention should be paid to the development of almost all activities: speaking, writing and listening.
- 2) Students of the control group note the difficulty of expressing opinions orally. Insufficient vocabulary and knowledge of grammar also complicate the development of communication skills.
- 3) Students of the main group adequately assess their abilities and understand the existing problems, which gives hope for successful interaction with teachers and classmates to fill existing gaps (Figure 5).

The preparatory stage of our study, as mentioned above, in addition to the questionnaire, included the selection of tests for input and final control, as well as a set of exercises that can be used during the lesson to improve the level of language communication competence. In addition, we drew up the following work plan:

1. Making notes and conducting classes using various methods aimed at developing communicative competence;
2. Conducting input control to determine the level of proficiency in a foreign language;
3. Organization of classes on the topic “Education” with the inclusion of exercises from the complex that we developed, as well as intermediate control;
4. Final control;

5. Processing of results.

The input test included a test of Chinese students' knowledge in five sections: listening, speaking, reading, writing, lexical and grammar assignments (English in use). For each correctly completed assignment they could get 1 point.

Criteria for completing assignments of the written part were the following: solving a communicative assignment, text organization, lexical presentation, grammar, spelling and punctuation. The assignment of the oral part involved statement on the problem. The volume of statement, the use of means of communication, the variety of lexical units and grammatical structures, the logic of utterance were evaluated. The main criterion was the completion of the communicative assignment. Table 3 presents the test results.

Table 3: Test results

	Percentage of assignments completed (%)	
	Main group	Control group
Speaking	79.5	42.4
Listening	66.3	23.9
Reading	95.8	26.7
English in Use	54.8	67.8
Writing	48.9	56.3

The obtained results confirm that at the initial stage of our research the students of the control group have a low level of listening skills, knowledge of grammar and vocabulary; monologue skills are also underdeveloped. The results of the students of the main group differ significantly. First, we should not lose sight of the fact that these students study at the linguistic faculty, so it is obvious that the level of language proficiency should be higher. Second, we shall not forget about the difference in the number of linguistic subjects and hours taught to students of linguistic and non-linguistic majors.

As a result of the study, answers were received from 2nd and 3rd year students of different faculties of linguistic and non-linguistic majors.

When asked about the particular use of the program for teaching and learning, 52% answered that they use the program every day, which once again confirms the topicality of the study to identify student opinion on the intensive implementation of the program in the educational process. The results of the survey are presented in Table 3, which shows the percentage distribution of respondents' opinions on the main criteria of ease and usefulness of Zoom and GoToMeeting in terms of distance education, where 1 shows complete disagreement and 5 complete agreement.

DISCUSSION

Learning a foreign language using GoToMeeting and Zoom has significant advantages. Working online is definitely a resource saving, self-planning of working hours and the opportunity to work with people from all over the world. In contrast, teachers have increased responsibility (only a teacher is responsible for the working conditions and learning outcomes), there is the need to take into account the negative factors that cannot be influenced (connection quality, program failure), as well as lack of professional communication, which implies a lack communication with colleagues for sharing experiences.

The use of different teaching methods is one of the main ways to increase the effectiveness of foreign language teaching for students of both linguistic and non-linguistic majors. Pourhossein Gilakjani et al. (2017) hold the same opinion in his research. In our opinion, it is impossible to achieve high results constantly using the same method in terms of distance and full-time education. Competent combination of traditional teaching methods used in full-time form with modern active telecommunication methods will allow students to form new learning strategies, increase the level of motivation to learn a foreign language, as well as solve a number of problems related to learning in a new educational environment, which is sharply different from the usual conditions for them. Ovcharuk and Ivaniuk (2020) expressed the same opinion in their research.

The study revealed a very heterogeneous attitude to the introduction of forms of distance education with the help of GoToMeeting and ZOOM programs both among students of linguistic and non-linguistic majors, as Kohnke and Moorhouse (2020) noted in their studies.

In contrast to the research of Pineda (2017), respondents who participated in the survey generally showed high competence in foreign language proficiency (English), which can certainly indicate the positive results of the experience of using GoToMeeting and ZOOM in foreign language teaching. High results were obtained in both the main and control groups, which indicates the positive impact of innovative technologies on both students of linguistic and non-linguistic majors.

Based on the above, we drew up the following action plan:

1. Choose teaching methods that promote the development of communicative competence of students, taking into account the peculiarities of students;

2. Prepare the necessary exercises for the development of students' language skills;
3. Conduct classes using the above teaching methods on the topic "Education";
4. Analyse the results obtained by observing the work of students in classrooms.

We are faced with the question of finding the most universal methods and forms of teaching a foreign language using GoToMeeting and ZOOM. Further research on a given topic provides a search of answers to this question.

CONCLUSION

Thus, it should be noted that programs such as GoToMeeting and Zoom are unique and promising tools for learning a foreign language. The capabilities of these programs allow using them quite effectively in the process of learning various aspects of a foreign language, making the educational process individual and mobile, thus increasing the motivation and learning activity of students. Despite all the above advantages, online learning has a number of disadvantages that may arise in the process. However, this method of learning a foreign language is very relevant and popular now (Ovcharuk & Ivaniuk, 2020).

The dynamics of the development of communicative skills in Chinese students was also traced, and it was found that the use of active teaching methods in practical English language courses is one of the effective conditions for the development of speech skills. The use of active methods also helped to improve skills of mutual understanding, empathy, tolerance for each other, a sense of support and mutual assistance. Completing assignments with the use of GoToMeeting and Zoom of communicative orientation provided new experience in solving communicative assignments that occur in real communication situations (Ivaniuk, 2020).

The results and methods of the study can be used to improve foreign language teaching through GoToMeeting and Zoom. Further research on this issue should be aimed at finding the best methods and techniques of teaching a foreign language in GoToMeeting and Zoom.

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