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QUALIFICATION WORK

on theme "E-learning as a Suppport Tool for English Teaching to Young Learners"

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Introduction

In today's modern world people are expected to be skilled in many fields to become successful in their life. Among other abilities it is commonly accepted that an educated person should be competent in using at least one foreign language and be familiar with information and communication technologies (ICT) usage. Even though one's success doesn't stand purely on these skills, they are widely appreciated by society.

The value of foreign languages knowledge is accepted also by the Uzbekistan Ministry of Education and these are taught at basic schools as obligatory from an early age. As Crystal mentions, generally speaking, the most widely taught foreign language is English and, as will be explained in following chapters, English is a preferred foreign language also in the Uzbekistan educational system. Consequently, one would expect that the importance set upon this foreign language is reflected in the quality of its teaching. The truth is that despite the respect and recognition towards English, the school English classes are limited especially in terms of time and one can say that it is always possible to find there some small gaps offering space to improvement.

At the same time, computers together with Internet connection are getting more and more available among general populace. As will be described in following chapters, the Uzbekistan Ministry of Education are well aware of the ICT becoming a common part of everyday life and they try to implement these into basic school classes where ICT usage is not so common.

The topic of this qualification paper is "E-Learning as a Support Tool for English Teaching to Young Learners". This topic was chosen as the idea of e-learning as a support for face- to-face English classes for young learners doesn't seem to be explored in the Uzbek context. As Ulovec informs, e-learning is commonly used in academic and commercial area and although not so widespread yet, it is

possible to assume that it will sooner or later become a common tool at basic schools as well.

The aim of this qualification paper to investigate how an e-learning course can enhance the efficiency of the process of English teaching at basic schools and fight against its limits and to analyse what benefits and drawbacks an e-learning course used as a support for face-to-face English classes can bring to young learners at Uzbek basic schools. The young learners are chosen as a target group as the usage of e-learning in terms of this specific age group seems to be rather under-explored.

The Practical value of the research. To promote the usage of e-learning by basic school English teachers through showing them practically that it is possible for them to create such a course without serious complications, use it successfully in their classes and therefore offer their learners new possibilities to learn and improve. Consequently, the aim of qualification paper t is to follow an instructional design model theory and practically develop an example e-learning course which can be used by the seventh grade teachers as a support for their face-to-face English classes.

The structure of the research. The qualification paper will be divided into a theoretical and practical part. The theoretical part consists of two main chapters. The first chapter will introduce the scope of English teaching and specify the target group and requirements set upon them. In the second chapter it will be explained what e-learning is, what tools it offers and the attitude of the Uzbekistan Ministry of Education towards the ICT usage at basic schools will be described and a specific use of e-learning as a support of face-to-face English classes for young learners will be presented together with its pros and cons. Recommendations on a suitable e-learning tool choice will be given and in the second chapter it will be explained how a quality e-learning course should be created and what features it should have. The aim of the theoretical part is to offer a clear overview of the topic and its specifics and create a theoretical basis for the practical part. At the same time it will analyse what benefits an e-learning course support brings to young learners at basic schools and what the obstacles are.

The practical part shall stem from the theoretical findings and reflect them in practice. It will describe creation and development of a concrete e-learning course suitable for the fifth grade basic school English classes. The description will illustrate how the whole process of creation proceeds and it will offer also a developed course to try out and use. The course creation will follow an instructional design model and the course itself will be a physical outcome of the practical part. Thanks to the practical part basic schools English teachers will be given a concrete example of an e-learning course creation based on the theoretical findings, which may help them to get realistic insight into the whole process.

The qualification work as a whole will offer a theoretical overview of the topic, an analysis of advantages and disadvantages of an e-learning course used as a support for face-to-face English classes for young learners and a concrete e-learning course creation will be carried out and described. A specific e-learning course supporting English classes for young learners will be created. These steps shall lead towards better understanding of this complex topic and by giving a practical example to the basic school English teachers also towards encouragement of their own e-learning course creation and usage.   .

Chapter I.English Language Teaching at Basic Schools.

1.1 The Content of Language Teaching.

The concern of this work, as mentioned earlier, is English language teaching to the fifth grade basic school learners and its improvement and support. Before concentrating on how to make English teaching more effective it is necessary to realize what the language teaching consists of and what its scope is. At the same time it is essential to know well what kind of audience the fifth-graders are, what knowledge and skills these learners are officially required to get from the educational process and what characteristics these learners have. Knowledge of these facts is important for the educator to be well aware of what she teaches, with what goals, and in what way she can meet the needs of the learners.According to most of the authors dealing with a language teaching topic it can be assumed that the foreign language scope is divided into two main categories: "Language Skills" and "Elements of Language" or also "Language Items" (McKenzie-Brown)[1].McKenzie-Brown specifies language skills as "the mode or manner in which language is used", while Davies and Pearse further divide the language skills into "receptive skills", e.g. listening and reading, and "productive skills", which are speaking and writing. It is important to point out that the skills are interdependent and according to Davies and Pierce should be integrated as the language user naturally switches from one skill to another. The following paragraphs deal with the role of the skills taught in more detail[2].

Listening and Speaking

Listening and speaking skills have their importance individually but at the same time they are naturally combined in conversation and therefore shouldn't be treated separately but as interdependent elements.This fact is supported by Harmer's statement that "successful spoken communication depends not just on our ability to speak, but also on the effectiveness of the way we listen".Consequently, listening isn't taught only to improve the understanding of spoken word speech but

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[1] Cameron, Lynne. Teaching Languages to Young Learners. -Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.-138p

[2] Davies, Paul A., and Eric Pearse. Success in English Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. 145p

also because listening influences learners' pronunciation and their own speaking skills.In this respect Cameron formulates listening as a language "input" and speaking as an "output" of which we can deduce that a good quality output (speaking) requires as good quality input (listening). On the other hand, according to Harmer, a speaking practice gives the learner a possibility to activate and automate the knowledge she has acquired, which supports the separate role of speaking and at the same time links it to the language elements which it improves.

Reading and Writing

The relationship of reading and writing is similar to the previous two skills' relationship. Harmer explains that reading practice influences other language aspects such as vocabulary knowledge, spelling and punctuation. He says that "Reading texts also provide good models for English writing",which again means that reading functions as an input and results in or supports the writing output. Writing has also a role of "language processing" and supports thinking about language[3].

Harmer defines the elements of language as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation.Cameron explains that vocabulary is "a major resource for language use" which functions as a "stepping stone to learning and using grammar"and ads that pronunciation has a crucial role in terms of "word knowledge"supporting the process of learning new words and meanings.Furthermore, according to Cameron, grammar offers a form-focus and accuracy and gives precise meanings in discourse.Consequently, it is clear that every element of language has its importance and they directly influence each other. In addition, Pinter says that "Language users need to understand the complex interaction between vocabulary and grammar".This opinion supports the fact that the language elements are bound and interdependent and none of them should be undervalued.

1.2 English at the First Stage of Basic Schools

Having learned about the content of language teaching it is advisable to reflect

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[3] Imel, Susan, and Erik Jacobson. Distance Education and E-Learning: New Options for Adult Basic and English Language Education. -California Department of Education,2010.204p.

this on the background of the Uzbek educational system. The following section deals with the role of foreign language, with focus on English, in Uzbek basic schools. The target group of the qualification paper is the fifth grade of the first stage at basic schools (children of 10-11 years) therefore the requirements set upon the pupils of this age, in terms of English language, will be specified.

Teaching foreign languages, as well as other subjects, at Uzbek basic schools is based on "Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education" which highly evaluates their importance saying that:Foreign language skills help reduce language barriers and increase the individual's mobility in their personal lives and during their future educational and career paths. They allow pupils to learn about the different lifestyles and cultural traditions of people in foreign countries...promote an awareness of the importance of mutual international understanding and tolerance, create the conditions for schools' participation in international projects[4].

Based on this approach The Framework Curriculum timetable sets foreign language studies to be an obligatory part of basic schools' syllabi from the third to the ninth grade. Moreover, it gives explicit preference to English which shall be offered to the pupils on the first place. The evidence of English being a dominant and preferred foreign language in Uzbek basic schools is also the highest and continually growing number of its learners in comparison to other foreign languages.By offering English in preference, the Uzbek school system aims to achieve a continuity of foreign language studies from pre-school education through basic education to secondary education.

The foreign language specifics are involved in the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education in educational area "Language and language communication" together with Uzbek language and literature. The requirements pronounced in the Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education origin in the "Common European Framework of Reference for Languages" in which an A2.

The Framework Educational Programme specifies the educational content of

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[4] Kopecky, Kamil. *E-learning not only for Pedagogues.* -Olomouc: Hanex, 2006. Print. 208p

educational field "Foreign language" with expected outcomes of period 2 in stage 1which reflect the previously mentioned content of language. The expected outcomes are divided into "Receptive language skills", "Productive language skills" and "Interactive language skills"with the following specifics:

- Expected outcomes for receptive language skills (in the second period of stage 1) are based on understanding familiar words and simple sentences, authentic materials meaning comprehension and their use. Learners should be capable of fluent, phonetically correct reading of familiar vocabulary and texts being able to gain information from a simple text and answer questions. They are also expected to be able to use a bilingual dictionary.

- Expected outcomes for Productive language skills (in the second period of stage 1) are the abilities to convey simple written message or text and reply to a message all grammatically and formally correct, as well as to be able to complete a form with personal information. The pupils should be able to give a content of simple conversation or text in both written and spoken way and modify a short text without changing its meaning .

- Expected outcomes for Interactive language skills (in the second period of stage 1) are active participation in conversation, familiarity with common social phrases and ability to give required information.

The Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education gives also details of the stage 1 subject matter which shall involve these areas:

- language rules of communication in everyday situations
- simple practical messages
- orientation in theme-based areas
- vocabulary and word formation
- grammatical patterns and sentence types

1.3 Young Learners' Specifics.

The target age group of this qualification paper are the pupils of the fifth grade(10-11 years old)(first stage,second period) of basic schools. According to Scott and Ytreberg these pupils fit into a category of "young learners" who are described as

"relatively mature children with an adult side and a childish side".As such these children have their specific ways of learning and understanding and therefore some basic facts concerning their learning process should be kept in mind. The following points may seem obvious but at the same time they may play an important role in education of the target group of this qualification work.

Learning Through Senses

"Seeing, hearing and touching are just as important for understanding as the teacher's explanation"This statement illustrates the fact that young learners need to have all their senses engaged in the process of learning. Therefore, as Scott and Ytreberg point out,the teacher can't rely only on spoken words but she needs to support the teaching by visual and sensual aids, movement, games and different enjoyable activities.

Meaningful Context

According to Harmer "Children usually respond well to activities that focus on their lives and experiences", which means that in case of young learners it is advisable for the teacher to learn about their likes and dislikes, their interests and hobbies and reflect them in creation of a meaningful context which, according to Pinter, supports the whole process of learning .

Abstraction and Symbols

Another positive point is that, with reference to Scott and Ytreberg, young learners are already able to understand abstracts and symbols.On the other hand the claim of Harmer informs that this ability is not on the level required for understanding of complex grammar rules yet . Therefore one can profit of this skill only with limits.

Responsibility and Independence

As mentioned earlier, young learners are seen by Scott and Ytreberg as "relatively mature with an adult side and a childish side....able to make some decisions on their own learning".Therefore children of 10 or 11 years can't be seen as fully independent learners but importantly enough, they have already acquired a certain level of responsibility which enables them to some extent to decide for

themselves about their learning and makes them ready for becoming independent learners[5].

Attention Span

Scott and Ytreberg,as well as Harmer, agree on the fact that the attention span of young learners is rather short and their ability to concentrate is limited. To deal with this disadvantage the teacher needs to offer a wide range of enjoyable activities, a change of rhythm of work in class and a variety during the class.

Recycling and Revision

Even though it doesn't seem to be a specific feature of young learners only, Harmer points out that young learners tend to forget the acquired knowledge with great ease. To avoid this, the teacher needs to involve a sufficient amount of revision and recycling into his/her classes.

Pace and Organisation

Despite the requirement of variation for the sake of the attention span support it is very important to keep also a clear system in the learning process. Scott and Ytreberg say: "Children benefit from knowing the rules and being familiar with the situation".It is therefore possible to assume that an involvement of systematic work,routines,good organisation and good planning can support young learners' memory and confidence, while the contrary can confuse them Pinter describes as essential allowing the learners to progress at their own pace.This idea supports the fact that every child is individual in his/her needs and abilities and should be provided enough space to progress in his/her own way.

Feedback

One of the elements supporting motivation for further learning can be a positive feedback given to the young learner. Scott and Ytreberg advise the teacher to inform the learners about their work regularly and to stress the positive aspects of learning. They say that the teacher "should be talking to the children regularly about their work and encouraging self-assessment".

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[5] Rosenberg, Marc Jeffrey. Beyond E-learning: Approaches and Technologies to Enhance Organizational Knowledge, Learning, and Performance.- San Francisco: Pfeiffer,2005.Print.234p.

In this chapter the scope of foreign language was described and the importance of English in the high educational system was explained. With reference to these findings it can be further investigated how the process of English teaching to young learners, whose specifics were defined, can be supported and enriched.

The aim of this qualification work is to investigate, whether the use of e-learning can bring any benefits to English classes for young learners of the fifth grade at basic schools. Before actually analysing these options it is necessary to learn whatthe term "e-learning" represents and what its advantages and disadvantages are on a general level. Furthermore it can be useful to be familiar with the current usage of e-learning by Uzbek basic schools and to know the approach of the Uzbekistan Ministry of Education towards the usage of ICT in this area.

1.4 E-Learning.

The purpose of this section is not a complex list of definitions and terms connected to e-learning. Instead it wants to offer an insight into basic terms and principles connected to e-learning to support reader's orientation in the topic as well as in the next chapters.

E-learning can be approached from two basic angles - it can be seen either as an "educational process" or as a "set of tools supporting the educational process". Consequently there is a wide range of definitions which may differ according to organisation and the way of e-learning usage. For the purpose of this thesis, the term e-learning can be illustrated by comparing and combining the following definitions:

"E-learning is understood as a multimedia support of educational process using modern information and communication technologies usually implemented through computer networks. Its main task is free and in time and space unlimited access to knowledge"[6].

"E-learning is the use of Internet technologies to create and deliver a rich learning environment that includes a broad array of instruction and information resources and solutions, the goal of which is to enhance individual and organizational

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[6] Kopecky, Kamil. E-learning not only for Pedagogues. Olomouc: Hanex, 2006. Print.218p.

performance".

In these definitions a shared opinion is that e-learning is delivered through modern information and communication technologies which create a rich learning environment. The first definition describes the goal of e-learning as an unlimited access to knowledge whereas the second definition says that the main goal is the improvement of the learning output. It is possible to combine these goals and say that thanks to the rich learning environment and the unlimited access to information e-learning helps to achieve better results in an educational area.Furthermore,Kveton sets the aim of e-learning to be higher access to education of suitable quality and acceptable cost . As such, e-learning has without doubt its place in modern education. When investigating e-learning issue in various sources one can find out that the term "e-learning" is often connected or even equated to the following concepts:

Distance education (or also Distance learning)

According to Willis distance education "takes place when a teacher and student(s) are separated by physical distance, and technology (i.e. voice, video, data and print) is used to bridge the instructional gap"[7].

Online learning

White describes online learning as "an approach to teaching and learning that includes the use of Internet technologies for learning and teaching. Learners use the online learning environments not only to access information and course content but also to interact and collaborate with other online participants within the course" [43.

Blended learning

Blended learning, according to Sharma and Barrett, refers to "a language course which combines a face-to-face classroom component with an appropriate use of technology".

Forms of E-Learning

Education through e-learning can be held in several different ways. Kopecky calls these ways "the basic forms of e-learning".These,he further divides into two

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[7] Willis, Barry. Distance Education: a Practical Guide. New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications, 1993.160p.

categories:

1.Online e-learning

Online e-learning requires local or global computer net connection to access the educational content.

2.Offline e-learning

Offline e-learning doesn't require Internet connection. Instead it works with media such as CDs or DVDs containing educational content.

Basically it is possible to say that these two forms differ in the way of mediation of the educational content.More importantly,Kopecky divides online learning into two more forms: "synchronous" and "asynchronous". These two terms can be useful to be familiar with as they are often mentioned in relation to e-learning tools in various sources.

Synchronous learning

White describes synchronous learning as learning which "uses technologies that allow for communication in 'realtime', for example by telephone or chat rooms. The time and opportunity for learners to participate is controlled".

Asynchronous learning

"Asynchronous delivery offers flexibility to learners in that access to the course content or communication can take place at any time, and from different places".

Based on these definitions one can imagine asynchronous learning as e-learning course participants accessing the online educational content at different time and from different places, whereas synchronous learning offers to the participants a real-time experience, which means that they can interact only as far as they "meet" online at the same time. The concern of this thesis will be especially the online form of e-learning using mostly asynchronous media.

Advantages and Disadvantages of E-Learning

This section aims to introduce some of the general advantages and disadvantages connected with e-learning. These advantages and disadvantages will be analysed in more detail in chapter 2.1 confronted with the specific context of this qualification paper,which is e-learning used as a support of face-to-face English classes for young

learners.

Advantages

Time and place unlimited access to information. Participants can access the e-learning course content from any computer with Internet connection (or other necessary equipment) and are not limited by time (note that a time limitation may occur in case of synchronous communication and activities which require the learners to access the course at the same time).

Enhancement of educational process

Kopecky praises the possibility of multimedia resources usage pointing out that these involve multiple senses engagement in the process of   learning.   Moreover, Egerova connects the use of multimedia with higher level of interactivity.Multimedia and interactivity are seen by these authors as beneficial towards the efficiency of the learning process and information remembering.

Possibility of immediate innovation

Timkova names as an advantage the possibility to modify the content of already created course.The importance of this possibility is that the e-learning course can follow any changes of the educational field and, moreover, immediately reflect learners' specific needs.

E-learning courses based on asynchronous learning respect each learner's individuality where everyone has his/her own speed of learning which can change through the time. As Kruse points out, consequently the learners don't get under any pressure caused by lack of time[8].

Kruse says that "e-learning promises to provide a single experience that accommodates the three distinct learning styles of auditory learners, visual learners, and kinesthetic learners". As such, it can address a wide range of learners through a variety of different activities and avoid discrimination of any of these three groups.

Iowa State University advert to the fact that through e-learning course usage, except for learning the target area subject matter, the learner improves his/her ICT

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[8] Kruse, Kevin. "The Benefits and Drawbacks of E-Learning."2010. New York: Longman,. Print.2010.-188p.

skills ("ELearner - Advantages and Disadvantages") which are generally prised in nowadays society.

Disadvantages Dependence on technology

Technology issues may represent an obstacle for the course provider as well as the learners.Getting sufficient and compatible equipment can still represent a financial problem.Moreover,slow Internet connection combined with various media such as audio, video, or advanced graphics can complicate the whole use or access to the educational content ("ELearner- Advantages and Disadvantages").

Iowa State University say that an e-learning course may be difficult to handle for learners with low computer skills ("ELearner- Advantages and Disadvantages").Kruse adds that among the learners there may also exist technophobia.However,the low ICT skills and technophobia may occur also among the teachers, which can represent a serious obstacle as well.

The appealing possibility to deliver learning content through multimedia can lead to its overuse which may result in learners' concentration on the multimedia effect rather than on the educational content itself. Kopecky refers to this state as "hypermultimediality".

To create educational content of sufficient quality may be demanding in terms of time, finance and methodology and may require training for the course creators.

Unless well-structured and organised, an e-learning environment can seem unclear and confusing for the learner("ELearner-Advantages and Disadvantages"). Consequently the learning process becomes complicated and the learners may get discouraged.

Egerova suggests that without a physical presence of the teacher and classmates the learner may feel socially isolated.Such a situation may consequently cause the learner's loss of motivation to study through the course.

Kopecky stresses that students with low motivation, wrong learning habits or those who stick to classical paper form of materials may not receive so much profit from e-learning.Consequently, there is no point in the whole process unless the learner works regularly and actively participates on the course tasks.

With regard to the great number of various e-learning tools and to the scope of this qualification work it is not advisable to name all of them. Nevertheless, this section aims to offer several common examples for illustration and for easier understanding of the next chapters.

Dalsgaard implies that e-learning tools "cover a wide range of different applications ...used to support different activities involved in learning process." As an example he offers "discussion forums,chat,file sharing,video conferences, shared whiteboards, e-portfolios, weblogs and wikis"[9].

Furthermore, the tools can be categorised into three groups according to Zelenak:

1)"a content course or learning management system (CMS/LMS)"

Examples: Moodle,Blackboard,Silverchair.

2)"synchronous collaboration applications"

Examples: chat, audio-video conferencing, instant messaging.

3)"other computer tools-applications including asynchronous collaboration applications"

Examples: e-mail, forums, websites, blogs, wikis.

At first, e-learning was used mostly in academic area, later its influence expanded also into commercial companies and public sector and nowadays it is entering the area of basic and high schools too.

It is obvious that the Ministry of Education are well aware of the growing importance of digital content and online services. They see the implementation of ICT in the Uzbekistan education as an inevitable step in the modern world. It is stated that it is commonly known and accepted that ICT should be a part of most of the classes. The obstacle is though seen in a low self-confidence of teachers and their lower proficiency in the ICT area in comparison to their pupils.Furthermore,the Uzbek School Inspectorate in its report of year 2009 states that the actual usage of ICT in class is practiced by only 11% of the teachers. It is further explained that the teachers give as the most often reason the lack of methodology support for effective

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[9] Dalsgaard,Christian."Social Software:E-Learning Beyond Learning Management Systems." EURODL: European Journal for Open, Distance and E-Learning, 12 June 2006. Web. 23 Dec. 2010.

ICT implementation.Consequently, the Ministry in their Action plan "School for 21st Century" set a long term aim to optimise the use of technology tools in the educational process.The Action plan expresses the need for continuous education of the teachers in the area of ICT; availability of technologies, Internet connection and software at schools; methodology support, support for creating digital materials, and accessibility of primary sources to reach the improvement.

In this chapter the term e-learning was explained and a brief overview of its scope was offered. General advantages and disadvantages were presented showing that e-learning is not a perfect tool solving every educational problem but an option with positive as well as negative features. It was also revealed that despite the fact that e-learning isn't seen as a common tool at Uzbekistan basic schools there are several examples of its usage in this area. Importantly, it was also specified that the Uzbekistan Ministry of Education is in favour of ICT implementation into basic school classes and it is actively participating on this process. Based on these facts it is possible to assume that Uzbekistan basic schools are slowly familiarising themselves with e-learning involvement in the educational process and they need encouragement and support on their way towards its effective usage.

Chapter II.E-Learning as a Support Tool of English Teaching at Basic Schools

    2.1 Advantages and disadvantages in Context.

Based on the general findings presented in chapter 1 it is now possible to analyse the general advantages and disadvantages of e-learning in context of this qualification paper. The aim of this chapter is to introduce a specific use of e-learning as a support tool for face-to-face classes of English for young learners at basic schools and to investigate what benefits and drawbacks such a support can bring. Afterwards, this chapter describes what tools for the course creation are currently available and a choice of a specific tool is made together with its basic functions presentation.

    <u>The Only Means of Education or One of the Tools?</u>

As Imel and Jacobson say, e-learning can be "commonly thought of as a model in which teachers and students are separated by time and/or space", i.e. when the term is presented to a lay person, she/he can imagine a delivery of knowledge and information to learners unable to attend regular classes and interact with the teacher and classmates. In such a case e-learning represents the only or main means of accessing the educational content and the only way to communicate with the teacher and other participants"Key Advantage of Open Source Is Not Cost Savings." *Computer Economics: IT Metrics, Ratios, Benchmarks, and Research Advisories for IT Management.* N.p., 12 May *Web. 7 Feb. 2011.*

However, the target group of this thesis are young learners attending face-to-face classes at basic schools and despite their possible secret wishes it is not advisable to implement e-learning as the only means of study in this environment. The reason is simply because young learners at the first stage of basic schools don't learn only new facts and information in their face-to-face classes but they socialise, learn how to communicate and cooperate -skills of high importance for their future lives.Therefore the parents might not accept the idea of their children learning these skills only through e-learning environment as convenient.Moreover, e-learning at a distance requires a great deal of motivation and discipline, which young learners may not

have[10].

What this qualification paper wants to offer is an idea of an e-learning course as one of the educational tools supporting and enriching usual face-to-face classes - an idea generally not new in fact. E-learning courses have been used as a complement of face-to-face classes for example at the Faculty of Education at Masaryk University in Brno where the teachers themselves create the course content and decide whether they want to unify it with their lectures by using some content of the course directly in class or if they want their students to use it only as a source of additional materials and homework environment.The question here is what profits can such an e-learning course used as one of the educational tools bring to young learners in English language classes.

This section aims to confront the general e-learning advantages and disadvantages described in chapter 2 with the specific context of this qualification paper: the use of e-learning course as a complement of face-to-face English classes at basic schools - specifically in teaching young learners. This confrontation shall help to evaluate to what extent it is useful and beneficial to use an e-learning course as a complement tool of face-to-face classes for young learners at basic schools. The following points therefore aren't a simple repetition of the previously mentioned advantages and disadvantages but their analysis on the background of young learners' needs and the specific use of e-learning as a face-to-face class supportive tool.

Advantages in Context Time and place unlimited access to information. Breaking the limits of time and place definitely is an advantage also in the newly pronounced context. The possibility to offer young learners a contact with English language through computer technology stretches the educative influence also behind the limited face-to-face class time. With respect to Harmer's statement that "A crucial characteristic of young children is their ability to become competent speakers of a new language with remarkable facility, provided they get enough exposure to it" it is highly advisable to extend the language influence also into learner's free time at

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[10] Mougalian, Catherine, and Alicia Salazar. "Moodle, the Electronic Syllabus, Lends Itself to ProCALL." CALL me *A Computer Assisted Language Learning & Pedagogy Webzine*. N.p., 2005. Web. 9 Feb. 2011.

home whenever she/he feels ready for it. Furthermore, the class educational content offered also through e-learning course can, as Ulovec points out, support those learners who get ill or who suffer from a long term illness or a handicap and would otherwise be excluded from the educational process or fall behind[11].

Enhancement of educational process

The fact that e-learning courses enable the usage of multimedia and offer interactivity is an important advantage also in terms of teaching young learners. They can be offered various interactive games or exercises as well as multimedia such as video and audio.These tools can convey enjoyable activities and variety, and therefore help the young learners to prolong their shorter attention span and at the same time engage several of their senses, which, as was mentioned in chapter 1.3, is beneficial for young learners' learning. Moreover, the fact that the learning process is conveyed through computers and Internet may motivate those learners who are keen on using these devices and again support the process of learning.

A possibility of an immediate innovation and change of the educational content is beneficial not only in terms of the learners but also for the teacher who can easily reflect needs of the slower or less skilled learners who may need more practice, as well as offer more sources, additional materials and practice to gifted or advanced learners. S/he can add various materials to the course and change or modify them during its run according to learners' preferences or changes in syllabus, which is not so easy for example in case of textbooks.

Individual learning pace is an appreciated advantage especially in the environment where the teacher gets pushed forward by a curriculum and cannot lose much time with individual learners who meet an obstacle while the rest of the class need to proceed continually forward through the subject matter. Although the learners in the class are supposed to learn new information at the same time, the pace requirements are individual. With e-learning support the teacher can instruct a learner in difficulty to go through additional practice. Similarly to the previous point, slower learners can

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[11] Harmer, Jeremy. How to Teach English. Harlow: Pearson -Education Limited, 2007. Print.188p.

revise and go through the educational content at their own speed and as many times as they need, whereas the faster ones can investigate further materials and exercises.

The young learner who prefers acquiring information from seeing and reading may work with a file or a website illustrated by pictures or watch an educational video. Those who need to hear the new information can listen to audio files or watch the video. Learners who learn best by interaction or cooperation may use interactive exercises, educational games or cooperate on a creative project. E-learning environment offers a wide choice and the teacher can therefore offer something to everyone.Young learners,though,may not have a clear idea about their preferred way of learning and the advantage of e-learning is that they can use all of the mentioned options.

Disadvantages in Context Dependence on technology and equipment.

The problem seems to dwell in the obsolescence of the equipment leading to impossibility of applying modern software.In this situation the e-learning course dependence on technology and equipment may represent a great disadvantage as the school which aims to include such a course into its educational process needs to provide the learners with an access to the course delivery means (a computer with Internet access and necessary software) in case they don't have this possibility out of school.

Demanding content creation

The course content creator is required to have necessary ICT skills and be well aware of the methodology rules for e-learning educational content creation. She/he is also supposed to know well the area of education for which the course is intended and the syllabus of this area. To meet these requirements the course can be created by a team of professionals, which may be demanding on finances as well as time. Moreover, it can also be a task given to a teacher. In addition to the course creation the teacher can be in charge of facilitating it; s/he is also supposed to lead face-to-face classes and fulfil his/her everyday duties. In such a situation the course creation may represent a very demanding goal not only in terms of time.

In context of young learners the risk of overuse of multimedia may represent a

disadvantage. In chapter 1.3 it was described how fragile the attention span of a young learner can be and too many multimedia components might draw it away from the educational content, which wouldn't support the learning process at all.

Lack of structure leading to confusion.Lewis says that the more explicit the teacher's instructions are,the easier it is for the young learners to understand the task.This opinion can be applied to the e-learning course environment as well. With respect to chapter 1.3, in case of young learners it is very important to imply exactly what the teacher wants the learners to do, when and in what order and the course content should correspond to young learners' needs by its clear organisation and explicit instructions. Otherwise the young learners may meet difficulties.

Risk of isolation

In the context of this qualification papert,when e-learning course is used as one of the tools complementing face-to-face daily classes, there shouldn't occur any social isolation caused by the course as the pupils regularly meet in their usual classes. On the other hand one can argue that encouraging young learners to study in their free time through an e-learning course may result in even reinforcing the negative influence of computer popularity among young generation,i.e. children sitting in front of the screen all day long.

Not suitable for every student

The mentioned wrong learning habits and lack of motivation can be an obstacle. On the other hand, the offer of various activities and resources delivered in an attractive way such as video, or other multimedia offered by the course, can help the teacher fight against the low interest of learner and a well structured and organised course may help him/her to acquire more effective system in his/her learning.

Based on this analysis, it is possible to say that e-learning as a support tool for face-to-face English classes for young learners at basic schools can definitely bring benefits to the learning process.An e-learning course can extend the educational process behind the face-to-face class limits catching the learners' attention and provoking their active participation on the learning process. It is also possible to say that an e-learning course supports young learners' needs by respecting every learner's

individuality and preference.At the same time it helps the learners to become confident ICT users and leads them to use ICT for educational purposes[12].

On the other hand,there are some limits standing against the usage of e-learning course.The most serious obstacle can be seen in the necessity of a sufficient level of computer literacy. The teachers facilitating the course are expected to have sufficient skills to use the course and support the learners' independent and easy use of it. At the same time they need methodology support to implement the course correctly. Therefore, without the teacher being a competent ICT user, the course cannot be used successfully. However, provided that a teacher with low ICT skills level and insecure in the methodology area is willing to improve, a solution in a form of training on ICT usage and implementation offered by the portal of methodology http://elen.pechal.net/, or any other provider, is available. The literacy of the learners needs to be on a sufficient level too but, as was explained earlier, if the teacher is competent s/he can give the learners initial group training on using the basic elements of the course and they can further improve their skills by actually using the course and overcoming difficulties. Therefore this is not seen as a grave obstacle.

Another rather serious problem is the dependence on technology.Despite the mentioned claim of the Uzbekistan School Inspectorate it is possible that some learners won't be technically equipped to access the course and a school with insufficient equipment to provide such a learner an access to the course may be forced to invest into its upgrade, which may be a serious problem for some schools with limited finance.

The course content creation is also seen as demanding and therefore disadvantageous, however, this qualification paper wants to demonstrate that a sufficient course can be created by a very limited number of people and with acceptable expenses. The rest of the disadvantages are seen as rather minor and they don't represent any grave danger for course creation and use.

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[12] Cowley, Jennifer,"Preparing Students for Elearning." Elearn Space.-Cambridge: Cambridge University Press "2011.-212p.

2.2Choice of an E-Learning Tool

If the opinion that an e-learning course can be a useful tool to support the face-to- face English classes for young learners is accepted, the next consideration is the choice of a suitable e-learning tool.The basic division of e-learning tools was described in chapter 2.2 and this section describes selection of one of these tools. The following sections give basic characteristics of the chosen tool and its features, as well as several elementary recommendations on choosing its specific software. With respect to these recommendations concrete software for an e-learning course creation, in the scope of this thesis, is chosen and defined.

Dalsgaard says that "Tools used to support e-learning cover a wide range of different applications. Such tools can be used to support different activities involved in the learning process." It is therefore possible to choose from the range those tools which best fit the educational purpose and these tools can be offered to the learners separately. Dalsgaard describes that this way the tools can be "separated in a number of distributed and independent applications used for different purposes." The question is to what extent it is possible to keep the separate tools of the course organised so that the young learners working with the course at home, without the teacher's direct guidance, know exactly what to do and in what order. To reduce the young learner's confusion and to make the orientation in the course easier and clear, it is possible to use a so-called "Virtual Learning Environment" (VLE) which can, according to Dalsgaard "integrate different tools in a single stand-alone system." Weller further defines a VLE as "a software system that combines a number of different tools that are used to systematically deliver content online and facilitate the learning experience around that content"[13]. Practically it is possible to imagine the Virtual Learning Environment as a box in which all the tools are placed in perfect order and when the learner needs to work with the tools s/he simply opens the box and finds all s/he needs at one place. This can offer the young learners structure and organisation of the

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[13] Dalsgaard,Christian."Social Software:E-Learning Beyond Learning Management Systems." EURODL: European Journal for Open, Distance and E-Learning, 12 June 2006. Web. 23 Dec. 2010.

educational content and support their security about where they can find what they need, which is highly beneficial with regards to findings mentioned in chapter 1.3.

In this section a Virtual Learning Environment is presented in more detail to give the reader an overview of the specifics of this area and to inform about the possibilities this tool offers. The following facts shall help the reader to understand the complexness of the topic and support his/her orientation in the following chapters.

Virtual Learning Environments are connected in various sources with other terms described as synonymous or equal to a VLE. For example the IADT Website names as the related terms the following: Managed Learning Environment (MLE), Course Management System (CMS), Learning Management System (LMS) ("Section1: What Is a Virtual Learning Environment"). Kopecky equates a VLE to a LMS as well.

Similarly, Sharma and Barrett state that a VLE is "sometimes referred to as an LMS (Learning Management System) or a CMS (Course Management System)"[35]. Although the various sources and authors differ in their opinions on these terms and their similarity to the VLE concept, for the purpose of this thesis the opinion of Sharma and Barrett, as a reliable source, is accepted.

Sharma and Barrett describe a VLE as "a sophisticated learning platform" which engages benefits of individual synchronous and asynchronous tools by bringing them together in one system [35,108]. Furthermore,the VLE is characterised as follows: "A Virtual Learning Environment is a collection of integrated tools enabling the management of online learning, providing a delivery mechanism, student tracking, assessment and access to resources" ("Tools in a Virtual Learning Environment"). This definition offers a brief preview of some of the basic VLE tools which can be further categorised following an overview created by Kopecky[14]:

- "tools for creation and management of the courses",
- "tools for verification and feedback" ,
- "tools for the administration of the courses",

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[14] Kopecky, Kamil. E-learning not only for Pedagogues.- Olomouc: Hanex, 2006. Print.-218p.

- "tools of communication",
- "tools of evaluation" .

Thanks to the engagement of the tools a VLE can function as "an organized and searchable repository of content" (Finnis) offering "authenticated access to various sections of the environment (eg. courses) on an individual basis" (Finnis). The teachers are therefore able to store the course content which can be used by learners, whose steps can be controlled and watched by the teacher through so-called "tracking facilities".Moreover, the course content release can be timed thanks to "intelligent access controls".

As Finnis mentions, a VLE enables communication through synchronous as well as asynchronous communication tools and the VLE assessment tools are equipped with automatic grading which gives the learners instant feedback. The administration functions, according to Sharma and Barrett, offer the teacher a possibility "to organize groups in terms of enrolling learners to courses, form groups and allocate teachers". Based on these claims it is clear that the possibilities and functions VLEs offer are wide.

Types of VLE

VLEs are generally provided either by commercial companies or as free Open Source software. IADT Website describes the difference between these two as follows: "A commercial package is one developed and sold by a commercial company, whereas an open source packages [sic] is usually developed by an online community and is available for free..."[15].

Both of these two options have some pros and cons. Trinick says that "Open source software is cheaper because it is free to download from the internet and unlike the commercial VLEs like Blackboard it doesn't charge a license fee". On the other hand, Kopecky explains that the payment-free Open Source doesn't really mean a completely cheap option.The commercial VLEs provide their clients with necessary support and upgrade which are not included in Open Source service. It is necessary to

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[15] Scott, Wendy A., and Lisbeth H. Ytreberg. Teaching English to Children. -New York: Longman, 1990. Print.-256p.

ensure this support and run the course by one's own means which can, according to Kopecky, cost almost the same sum of money as a ready-made supported course offered by a commercial company.This opinion is supported also by a statement that: "administration and support costs overshadow initial software license cost and annual maintenance fees--the costs that are minimized by open source".

Trinick explains that Open Source software "has the advantage that users can adapt and modify it to suit their learning or teaching needs, making it the most flexible VLE option" .Therefore the real advantage of Open Source VLEs dwells in their flexibility and, as Computer Economics imply, in the independence from the commercial companies.Therefore the suitability and preference of any of the two options is dependent on individual needs and it's up to the client to judge his/her educational aims as well as financial possibilities and staff readiness.This table presents concrete examples of commercial as well as Open Source providers.

Examples of Commercial and Open Source VLEs

The choice of VLE software should reflect individual needs of the client (the course owner/school) therefore there are no strict rules defining how to make the best choice. However, there are some points which should be considered on the way to the ideal VLE tool. The following points are a combination of recommendations offered by Trivantis website and Kopecky :

Accessibility

The Trivantis states that "elearning courses must be accessible by all of your end users".Therefore the technical equipment required to access the course should correspond with the learners', teachers' and the school's possibilities. There is no point in acquiring high-tech demanding software when neither the school nor the users have it and are able to acquire it.

Compatibility and Transferability

According to Kopecky the chosen VLE (LMS) should be "compatible with currently used database systems..." and its content should be transferable.Obviously, if the VLE isn't compatible, technical complications can occur. When there is a sudden need to change the VLE software the transferability avoids loosing the course

content and makes the change easier.

Usability

Trivantis point out that the software should be easy to use and familiarize with for the learners as well as the course creators.Kopecky adds that the course environment should be easy to modify, logically organized and there should be tools for its administration.

Maintainability

According to Kopecky the commercial provider should offer service support and upgrades which, as the Trivantis point out, are important for a long term course running.Kopecky also proposes to consider whether the provider ensures trainings for administrators, tutors and course authors.

Price

As Kopecky says, in case of commercial providers the price of the VLE product should be acceptable according to its quality and service.

2.3 Moodle as a VLE Tool and its Profits for English Teaching at Basic Schools

For the purposes of this thesis, where the VLE is in position of a complementary tool for face-to-face classes, the chosen VLE is Moodle. The following section gives reasons for this choice and describes some of the basic Moodle tools and functions with stress on their usefulness for English teaching to young learners.

The word "Moodle" is in fact an abbreviation which stands for Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment and is defined as "a course management system designed to help educators who want to create quality online courses.used all over the world by universities, schools, companies and independent teachers".

The reasons for this choice are several. Firstly, it meets the previously expressed requirements on accessibility, compatibility and transferability. It meets also the required usability condition, as the course creator (in this case the author of this thesis) is already familiar with its basic usage and tools.

Even though Moodle is not a commercial product and there is no support and service expected, teachers as well as course creators can use a Moodle support centre

and Moodle users' community forums at a home website http://moodle.org/ to deal with any possible obstacles, to seek advice and use various resources.

Furthermore, Moodle is Open Source software, which means no licence payment, which may play an important role in terms of small basic schools with limited finance. Moodle is created under a social constructivist philosophy which emphasises a student-centred environment with independent as well as collaborative work of the learners.This underlines the product's educational value and shows that the course was created with the learners in mind, which is positive[16].

Moodle is also said to be able to work for all age groups but the target age group of this thesis are young learners of the first stage of basic schools - a group of learners with rather specific needs. It is therefore advisable to learn whether the chosen VLE is suitable even for the specific context of this thesis. The official Moodle website states that it can be applied also at primary schools:

In primary education settings,Moodle can be particularly useful as a very safe entry-point to the online world. Easy addition of multimedia, links to useful resources, scaffolding of learning activities, fun quizzes, easy insertion of engaging learning objects and catering for parental involvement are just some of the highlights of existing Moodle use in the early years of formal education.

Al-Ajlan and Zedan claim that Moodle software is widespread and often used not only by schools or universities but also by independent teachers. Such information underlines the reliability of Moodle as a product and it is possible to assume that the usage of Moodle is not overwhelmingly difficult[17].

"The tools and functionality available to the student and tutor vary from VLE to VLE" ("Tools in a Virtual Learning Environment"). With regard to this statement the following section wants to specify what concrete tools Moodle as a VLE can offer to its users.

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[16] Moore, Michael G., and Greg Kearsley. Distance Education: A Systems View. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2005. Print.-144p.

[17] Al-Ajlan, Ajlan, and Hussein Zedan."Why Moodle." Future Trends of Distributed Computing Systems, *2008. FTDCS '08.* 12th IEEE International Workshop on Future Trends of Distributed Computing Systems, Feb. 2011.

The Moodle environment can be briefly divided into three main sections: "Activities", "Resources" and "Administration"; and the whole course creation is supported by a set of editing tools.

The activity module consists of various media and tools conveying a range of learning opportunities - the course creator (the teacher) can apply chat, blog, forum, glossary, choice activity, quizzes, wikis and several others.

The resource module consists of tools conveying lesson content in various forms such as uploaded files, web pages links, text pages, media content and others.

The administration block serves to the course creator/teacher to "manage course settings, student and teacher enrollments and their groups, view the course gradebook, create custom grading scales and access the teacher forum".It is equipped with tools for grading, controlling the learner's activity, restoring and backup tools and many others.

Even though a detailed description of Moodle isn't the scope of this thesis, the following section wants to underline how some of the advantages of e-learning course, in the context of this thesis, come alive through some of the Moodle tools.

The course is organised in "Course Sections" which can be structured according to time plan in "Weekly Format" or, if the time plan is variable, in "Topics Format". The course section is situated in the centre containing the educational content and it can be framed by administration blocks with utilities like calendar, online users list or recent activities tool. The structure of the course is therefore not only flexible but also clear and well organized, which is highly beneficial in terms of young learners as the course users. The importance of good organization of educational content in case of young learners was already stressed in chapter 1.3.

Of the wide range of activity tools there are some particularly interesting for language teaching. For example a "Glossary" can support vocabulary learning and collaboration by enabling the learners to create their own class dictionary or vocabulary collection on various topics.The official Moodle website states that: "A forum can contribute significantly to successful communication and community building in an online environment".Besides this function, the learners can practice

and improve their reading and writing skills in a natural and meaningful way and the teacher can watch and correct the language accuracy of each learner through this device.

"File or website link" tool gives the teacher a great opportunity to offer the learners an access to various exercises, useful websites, media like audio or video which can support and improve listening skills, grammar, vocabulary and provide the learners with exposure to the target language. At the same time the sources are chosen and checked by the teacher and well organised in Moodle environment, therefore the learners don't get lost while searching for the right source.

Grammar and vocabulary overviews can be provided in form of imported files in various formats such as Word, Power Point or PDF files which can be created directly by the teacher to fit the needs of individual classes. The learners can work with such handouts and exercises either online or print them out. The knowledge and understanding can be checked thanks to a "Quiz Module" equipped with variety of question types such as matching, multiple choice, short-answer questions and many others. The quiz informs not only the teacher but it also gives feedback to the learner. The teacher can set a team or project work through "Wiki" or "Workshop" modules.

There are many Moodle tools and it is not necessary to use all of them. It depends on the teacher and his/her creativity what tools s/he uses to liven up or extend his/her English teaching and what skills will be improved through which tools. Definitely, there are several options for practicing of grammar, vocabulary, listening, reading and writing. As it seems, a tool for synchronous voice communication which would provide further speaking skills practice isn't included in Moodle environment yet. With regard to the aim of this thesis - to implement an e-learning course as a complement of face-to-face classes, it doesn't seem to be a problem as speaking skills can be practiced during regular school classes. Moreover, the teacher can dedicate more time to speaking activities in class provided that some of the other skills and language elements are systematically practiced through Moodle course in learners' free time.

In this chapter the points in favour and against an e-learning course used as a

support of face-to-face English classes for young learners at basic schools were defined.Furthermore,the Virtual Learning Environment was introduced as a suitable e-learning tool for the course creation. With regard to the offered recommendations on the choice of a suitable VLE, the Moodle software platform was chosen and its characteristics and tools presented. Consequently, a course can be created through the chosen tool. However, before actually beginning the practical course creation some basic rules need to be set.

2.4 E-Learning Course Creation.

To create a successful e-learning course it is necessary to learn how to proceed and what to keep in mind. This chapter offers basic rules for an e-learning course creation and specifies what features a good course should have. Furthermore, some specific requirements set upon the course facilitators and learners are explained.

The information included in this chapter can be approached as generally valid and it can be applied as well on the specific context of this thesis, which is creation of an e-learning course used as a complementary tool for face-to-face English classes for young learners at basic schools.

General Rules for E-Learning Course Creation

According to Kopecky it is necessary for the author to follow specific steps during the process of e-learning course creation which support the course quality level . Such steps are usually concentrated in so-called "Instructional Design". This term refers, according to Smith and Tillman, to "systematic and reflective process of translating principles of learning and instruction into plans for instructional materials, activities, information resources, and evaluation"[18].

ADDIE abbreviation stands for five phases of the model: Analysis, Design, Development, Implementation, Evaluation.The following section wants to offer a brief description of each phase. This thesis focuses especially on phases of Analysis, Design and Development as these steps are essential for successful course creation in the practical part, whereas the Implementation and Evaluation phases may serve for

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[18] Kopecky, Kamil. E-learning not only for Pedagogues. Olomouc: Hanex, 2006. Print.218p.

further future research in scope of a master's thesis and won't be included practically in the scope of this work.

Analysis Target group

It is essential to analyse the characteristics of the learners and define their needs as well as their existing skills and knowledge.It is also good to know the hardware and software equipment available for the learners to access the course. Equipped with this knowledge the course creators can design educational materials properly fitting to exact needs of the learners and also decide about the media used to deliver individual learning experiences[19].

Kopecky implies that by learning what is necessary to teach the learners one can also plan the way of achieving it.Moreover, Shoemaker points out that knowing the expected outcomes is helpful "in determining the structure, content, and format of the course or training." Therefore, one needs to know what the course purpose and goals are so as to be able to specify the best way how to achieve them.

Delivery options

Kopecky recommends the analysis of available ways of course content distribution.Analysis of delivery options helps to discover currently available software tools through which the course can be conveyed to the learners with respect to the financial and technical possibilities of the course owner and users, as well as the educational goals.

Possible obstacles

Strickland recommends checking whether there are any constrains limiting the course realization. Defining any complications early in the creation process may be useful as it enables the creators to find an effective solution.

Timeline and financial issues

Creating a time plan is another useful component which Strickland recommends to include into the analysis phase. As the whole process of the course creation is

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[19] Sharma, Pete, and Barney Barrett. Blended Learning: Using Technology in and Beyond the Language Classroom. Oxford: Macmillan Education, 2007. Print.174p.

rather complex, it can be useful to follow a specific timeline to avoid protractions and consequent complications. Similarly, as is mentioned by Castagnolo, it is useful to analyse the available finance to avoid any inconveniences such as a sudden lack of money.

Design

Culatta explains that the design phase is systematic, specific and pays attention to details. This phase is based on specific outcomes of the analysis and consists of proposing concrete solutions in areas of:

Course layout and structure

In this area it is identified how the whole course is structured and in what sequence the learning steps follow.

Lesson and activities planning

The individual lessons in the course and the included activities are designed.

Course content design

In this area a design of concrete materials is offered respecting their use in an interactive electronic environment.

Development

Strickland explains that "The development phase is the process of authoring and producing the materials needed to meet the objectives." This means that at this point the solutions proposed during the design phase are practically realized and the course is physically produced.

Implementation

"With the project ready for delivery, the learning environment is prepared by training the facilitators and learners". Based on this opinion it is possible to say that the early implementation phase should reflect the level of ICT competence of the teacher and the learners with regard to the course. The teachers as well as the learners ought to be familiar with the course content, functions and tools. If training is required to achieve the necessary ICT level, it should preferably take place before the actual introduction of the course to avoid complications. When the course and its users are ready, the course is delivered and introduced to the learners who begin the

process of familiarising with it. (The implementation phase won't be practically included in the scope of this thesis).

The evaluation process judges the effectiveness of the course and meeting the course aims[1]. It should serve to further improvement of the course so that it fits the pronounced needs of its users. Strickland describes two types of evaluation:

"Formative evaluation is part of each proceeding phase and determines effectiveness and quality of each stage".

An evaluation performed at the end of the whole process, involves also the feedback from the users for example through a questionnaire survey. (The evaluation phase won't be practically included in the scope of this thesis)[20].

In the context of e-learning used as a complement tool in face-to-face classes, going through the ADDIE model may seem a useless and long process. The truth is though, that the time invested into planning is worth it and helps to discover and solve obstacles and inconveniences at the very beginning of the process. Following the ADDIE model may therefore save money and time otherwise spent on solving sudden problems.

From the model complexity it is assumable that the process of the course creation may require a team of several experts, depending on how elaborate the course is supposed to be. According to Moore and Kearsley the team can consist of the following members:

"Content specialist, instructional designer, graphic designer, web producer, audio/video producers, editor, evaluator, course team manager".

At the same time Moore and Kearsley point out that, even though it is not an optimal state, the division of the course development tasks among individual experts isn't very common practice in area of education. They say that: "individual teachers develop and deliver their own courses". In fact,this qualification work expects the same situation in case of common Uzbek basic schools with limited finance and unwillingness to invest into unknown areas.Consequently, it is the aim of this thesis

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[20] "ADDIE Model at Learning Theories." Learning Theories Knowledgebase. Learning Theories, 2008. Web. 20 Feb. 2011. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.-162p.

to show that it is possible for the teacher, with elementary user ICT skills, to occupy a role of not only a course facilitator, but also a content specialist, an instructional designer, and/or a course team manager.

Introductory Information

Wright suggests that the learning goals and objectives be involved at the beginning of the course.It is therefore a good idea to include also general information about the requirements and expectations set upon the learners at the very beginning of the course to make it clear why the learners are working with the course and what outcome is expected. It might also be useful to present the course structure and its content to the learners and instruct them how to use it and how to deal with possible obstacles. Moreover, Wright considers as beneficial a state where "Every section of the course or module begins with a preview". This opinion implies that the introductory information should be placed not only at the beginning of the course as such but also at the beginning of individual course sections/lessons[21].

The main aim of the course is to keep the learner's attention and interest so that s/he actively participates on the course activities and gets the profits of learning experience. There are various options how to get the learner engaged. Kveton says that the course lessons should be short.Definitely, avoiding long and complicated tasks may help to avoid the learner's boredom and loss of interest.

Wright advices the use of multimedia,frequent feedback and enough practice opportunities.These can encourage the learner's activity and give him/her confidence by showing his/her progress. What may also promote the attractiveness of the course is including games and appropriate level of interactivity. Wright says that the course content should be illustrated by examples and purposefully used pictures are also seen as a useful element.

Wright says that the course content should respect the subject matter and the learner.Therefore the course creators should always put the learner on the first place and create a course respecting learners' characteristics, needs and possibilities.

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[21] Weller,Martin. Virtual Learning Environments:Using, Choosing and Developing Your VLE.-London: Routledge, 2007.-188p.

Thanks to the various recommendations it is clear that the course and its content should be uncomplicated, well structured and equipped with clear instructions so that the learners can work with it independently. Concrete goals should be expressed to give the learner purpose and motivation for learning. The course should evoke the learners' active participation so that they can get the profits of the learning experience which the course conveys.

Requirements on the Teacher

In chapter 2.5 it was specified that during the course instructional design the teacher may play several roles at a time. It might be useful to point out what is expected from the teacher during the course implementation phase when his/her main role is that of the course facilitator.

In the context of an e-learning course environment the teacher is often referred to as a tutor.Kopecky defines the tutor as a person who "supervises the e-learning learners' activity, regulates and directs it. At the same time, he verifies the learners' knowledge and skills, evaluates them". The Australian National Training Authority, who refers to the teacher in online environment as an online facilitator, say that "The role of the online teacher or facilitator is both special and crucial for effective learning outcomes and enjoyable learning experiences". As such, the teacher in role of an e-learning course facilitator is supposed to be equipped with specific skills and has different roles. The following section offers a list of some of the roles the teacher in e-learning environment shall manage:

Mobbs mentions that the course facilitator is supposed to "Describe what hardware and software learner will require access to, and level of IT competency required to learn online" and adds that the teacher should "Provide learner with technical support".

This should probably be one of the first tasks set upon the teacher when implementing the course. S/he should not only inform the learners about the skills and equipment necessary to access the course but also analyze the current situation and teach the necessary skills to the learners who might not have them.

S/he should as well inform the learners where they can access the course if they

don't have the sufficient equipment at home. During the course itself the teacher is supposed to help the learners to overcome any technical obstacles and deal with possible problems. This doesn't mean that the teacher necessarily must be an ICT expert.S/he is, however, supposed to be familiar with the course technical aspects and to have the ICT skills on the level sufficient to use the course. For these purposes it may be necessary for the teacher to go through training.

Denis et al. imply that "the e-tutor intervenes sometimes as subject expert, sometimes as interpreter and guide through the concepts of study". Therefore, the teacher is expected to be an expert in the subject matter of the course to be able to explain it to the learners, answer their possible questions and overcome possible difficulties.

Moreover, the teacher is in position of a coach who watches the learning process and gives the learners advice on how to proceed and supports the learners throughout the course helping him/her to find and use the right resource at the right time and in a right way. As Goodyear et al. say, such an advisor helps the learners to "get the most out of their engagement in a course".

Denis et al. imply that it is the teacher who "identifies and locates, develops and produces resources to provide „just in case' or „just in time' learning support", which means that the teacher is responsible for the course content and s/he should be able to find or create and convey additional materials for learners who may happen to need them. The teacher thus needs to be able to create and change the course content (in terms of individual resources and activities) to reflect actual needs of the learners.

The teacher "supports learners' learning strategies,and time management") which means that it is up to the teacher to check whether the learners work on regular basis, fulfil their responsibilities, take the course seriously and don't fall behind. If such a problem occurs it is the responsibility of the teacher to deal with it. The process facilitator, according to Goodyear et al., has in competence also such tasks as "familiarising learners with the environment.", "Establishing ground rules", "Creating community", "Managing communication" and other.

Mobbs states that the teacher "Respond[s] to learner's work with detailed and

constructive feedback within an agreed time-scale". Thus the teacher is expected to reflect regularly on the results of exercises, assessments, quizzes, and any other activities providing the learning experience; to correct the learners' mistakes and explain the right answers. More importantly, the teacher should also act as a motivator and encourage the learners, helping them to overcome any difficulties and problems.

The previous points were mentioned as they may be useful to realize. The teacher who is in position of a facilitator only (by which is meant that s/he doesn't participate in other parts of the course creation) might get a wrong idea that his only competence is to convey the subject matter. The role of a course facilitator though, is much more complex.

Requirements on the Learners

It is important to be aware of specific requirements set on the teacher in context of e-learning course. As well it is advisable to realize that the position of the e-learning course learners is also slightly different than it would be in case of face-to-face classes. The participant of an e-learning class is expected to have or obtain some necessary skills to manage the course successfully and get the offered profit. The following points aim to give several examples of the conditions which the learner ought to complete.

ICT Skills

First of all it is obvious that the learner needs to have a certain level of ICT skills to be able to use the course and work with its content. This condition is connected also with the need of appropriate equipment in terms of software and hardware required to access the course. In the context of this thesis the young learners, i.e. the children of the first stage of basic schools, are being talked about. Such learners may have lower computer skills than older learners therefore they may require training on how to use the course and its most important tools. Furthermore, the course needs to be easy and uncomplicated to use and reflect the learners' possibilities. As was mentioned in chapter 3.2, some of the learners may not have sufficient equipment to access the course from home and therefore the access to the course should be

provided to them at school.

Discipline

Cowley et al. say that the e-learning student should be "organized", "disciplined", "self-directed" and "motivated". Such skills are important for regular work and task fulfilment in an environment without direct control of the teacher - i.e. at home. The learner is expected to work systematically and independently on the tasks set in the course. As was described in chapter 1.3, it is possible though, that in case of young learners these abilities may be on a lower level and therefore it is the responsibility of the teacher to control, guide, motivate and lead the work of the learners and help them to gradually gain these skills.

Even though these requirements may seem to be useful mainly in context of distance course, they play important role also in the context of this thesis where the course is a complement of face-to-face class of English taught to young learners whose main usage of the course takes place independently at home.

In this chapter it was described what one can expect when having decided to create an e-learning course. The ADDIE model was presented as a systematic way of going through the whole process of creation successfully. It was explained that a course creation has its rules and the course and its content should meet some basic requirements. To give clear expectations, it was also explained what roles the teacher as a course facilitator shall fulfil and requirements set upon an e-learning course learner were stressed. Consequently it is possible to go through the process practically and produce a concrete course.

The aim of the theoretical part was to offer an overview of the individual specifics of the complex topic of this qualification paper. In the first chapter the scope of English as a foreign language was described and the target group of this qualification paper,as well as its characteristics and the requirements set upon it, were defined. The second chapter defined the content of the e-learning concept and the current situation of ICT and e-learning at Uzbek basic schools was described. In the tfollowing chapter the idea of e-learning course as a support of face-to-face classes was offered and its benefits and drawbacks towards young learners at basic schools

were analysed and evaluated. Afterwards, the Virtual Learning Environment was presented and, with regard to the offered recommendations Moodle, as concrete VLE software, was chosen and described. In chapter two, the rules for the course creation were established and it was explained what elements should be present in a good course, what roles shall a course facilitator fulfil and what is expected from the learners in e-learning environment. The theoretical part gave a complex insight into individual areas of the topic which are necessary for its understanding and realistic view. At the same time it prepared the ground for the practical part which will be based on the findings and decisions involved in the theoretical part.

Chapter III. Practical Part
3.1 Aims of the Practical Part.

In the practical part a concrete course is created following the findings of the theoretical part. The course creation is described in detail to give the basic schools' teachers as exact an idea as possible and to demonstrate that it is possible to create an e-learning course of sufficient quality also for a teacher inexperienced in this area. The description can therefore serve as a manual for the teachers to create their own course. The topic of this qualification work became interesting for me as, during my private classes of English, I meet parents of young learners seeking private tutorage for their children declaring that they feel their children "might learn more" than what is offered to them by school English classes.Furthermore,my teaching practice revealed to me that some English classes are taught by teachers not specialised in English teaching and therefore without proper education in this area. Some of these teachers claim that they feel insecure and unsupported. It is also overt that in some English classes there are pupils not very interested in the subject matter. These learners tend to be passively waiting for the end of the class and there is no other opportunity to learn English behind the school class limited boundaries[22].

Consequently, I have decided to engage the basic school English classes for young learners with an e-learning support to investigate the possible benefits of this combination.

With regard to the theoretical part findings concerning advantages and disadvantages of e-learning support for young learners,which were described in chapter 2.1, my belief is that e-learning used as a complement tool for regular face-to-face English classes might be an interesting and enriching option to solve the previously expressed difficulties and offer some positives for the teachers, for the learners and also for the parents. The teachers can concentrate the subject matter and useful resources in an e-learning environment giving it a clear structure and attractive form which may catch the learners' interest. At the same time the parents have a clear

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[22] Willis, Barry. Distance Education: a Practical Guide. -New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications, 1993.-160p.

idea about what is currently going on in the English classes and can encourage their children to use additional resources if they feel the children need to learn more. Children therefore get the possibility to improve their English skills even outside the limited school classes.

The practical part stems from the findings of the theoretical part and its aim is to show by an example course creation that it is possible to design and create an e-learning course support for face-to-face English classes for young learners (fifth grade) even with basic user knowledge in ICT area, which may be the case of many basic school teachers and which is the case of the author of this qualification paper. The aim of the practical creation of the course is to show the teachers how such a creation proceeds, and therefore help them to understand better the whole process, which may encourage them to adopt measures towards their own course creation. Following the practical part example, the teachers can begin with their course creation with realistic expectations and more confidence.

Another goal of the practical part is to offer the teachers a ready-made course which they can try out in their own face-to-face English classes. Consequently the teachers can see that there is no need to be afraid of using such a course and they can judge, according to their own experience free of prejudice, to what extent the course can be useful and beneficial for their classes.

3.2 The Instructional Design of the Course

To meet the previously stated aims of the practical part, in the following chapters the process of a specific course creation is described and the course is practically produced.

This process reflects the phases of the ADDIE model described in chapter 2.4, therefore the analysis for the course is carried out and the course is designed and developed. The course implementation and evaluation isn't included in the scope of this thesis and these areas are left open for further research. The individual steps are described to offer a specific example which can be followed in practice.

The analysis of the current situation creates a basis on which the following phases are built reflecting specific findings of the analysis and therefore it

investigates in detail all areas important for a perfectly fitting course creation, reflecting the target group as well as the actual material possibilities.

As the course won't be implemented in practice,the analysis stems from an example target group defined for the purposes of the qualification paper.

Based on the specifics given in chapter 1.3, the target group of this course are pupils of the first stage of basic schools, specifically the second period, fifth grade. Such pupils are, as was specified in detail in chapter 1.3, categorised as young learners and as such they have more specific needs than older pupils or adult learners. Some of the most specific characteristics are shorter attention span, need for practice, frequent revision and enough exposure to the target language (i.e. English) and preferably a multiple engagement of the senses.It is necessary to keep these characteristics in mind during the course creation and include enough exercises, authentic language resources, picture illustrations, audio and video resources in the course and revise the information regularly.

The Existing Knowledge Level

The acquired level of English of the beginning fifth grade pupils is based on what they have learned during their fourth grade studies.Therefore,their knowledge corresponds to content of Chit Chat 1 - a textbook approved by the Ministry of Higher and Secondary special Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan developed for the fourth grade English classes. The content of Chit Chat 1 was successfully completed and the course content is going to build on information included in this textbook.

Based on Chit Chat 1 the learners should be familiar with these areas of grammar and vocabulary:

Verbs TO BE, TO HAVE, TO LIKE, personal pronouns (I, you, he...), possessive pronouns (my, your...), THERE IS/ARE phrase, this/that, basic adjectives (little, happy, thirsty, big...), plural of nouns (dogs, cats), verbs describing activity, possessive 's.

Vocabulary

Colours, numbers from 1 to 12, classroom language (open your book, sit

down...), school accessory (ruler, pen, bag...), basic furniture in the classroom, animals, parts of body, parts of face, family members, clothes, food.

Social English

Introducing - Hello, I am..., My name is., What's your name., My favourite colour/animal is.

Greetings - Good morning/evening/afternoon, How are you..

The ICT equipment of the example target group is estimated to be on a level sufficient to access the course and use its basic components. It is expected though that there will be a small percentage of underprivileged learners who will need support in this respect. As was already mentioned in chapter 2.5, this group of unequipped learners should be given substitute solution in form of an access to the course through a school computer, to avoid inequalities among the learners.

The ICT skills of the example group of learners are elementary, on a basis of social networks (Facebook, ICQ) and games usage level.Consequently,the course tools can't be too technically complicated or demanding on usage, the structure of the course needs to be clear and repetitive and the learners will need some initial instruction and support to get used to the course usage and tools.

In a non-example situation the actual level of knowledge may not be ideal, the learners may have not managed to finish the whole recommended textbook and the knowledge and skills level can vary from learner to learner. It is therefore necessary to investigate the situation. The ideal provider of such information is an English teacher of the individual class who is in a regular contact with the learners, has more specific idea about the knowledge of the class and can further investigate the strong and weak features of the learners' knowledge[23].

As was already mentioned in chapter 2.5, the skills and equipment of the learners in ICT area may also be various, therefore the course should be designed as simple as possible, equipped with clear and detailed instructions, have repetitive and simple structure and apply tools easy to use, so as to respect the actual needs of the learners.

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[23] Pinter,Annamaria. Teaching Young Language Learners.-Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2006.198p.

There should be also a substitute option how to access the course content for those learners who cannot do so through their own equipment.

Educational Goals

The course is going to serve as a complement of face-to-face classes of English. The educational goals of this course are to:

- offer the learners regular contact with the target language (i.e. English) which would extend the educational process behind the limits of face-to-face school classes and encourage the learners' systematic home preparation;
- provide the learners with practice opportunities to make them more competent in areas of listening, reading and writing skills and to make them more confident and experienced in terms of grammar and vocabulary use;
- give the learners (and their parents) an environment where they can find all necessary information concerning the subject matter of the face-to-face classes in a clear and well organized form;
- engage the learners' interest in English and provide them with additional resources and enjoyable activities;
- help the learners to become familiar and comfortable with using ICT for self-educative purposes;
- provide the learners with a meaningful link between the course and the face-to-face classes;
- encourage the learners' active participation in the learning process;
- enlarge the learners' range of vocabulary and support their understanding of grammar rules and their application;

Delivery Methods

The e-learning course is going to be delivered through an Open Source Moodle platform, which was in chapter 2.5 already chosen as a suitable delivery tool for the purposes of this thesis and described as one of the most used LMS in the area of the Uzbekistan Republic which offers a strong support community for the course developers and teachers.

Possible Obstacles

With regard to chapter 2.1, where the dependence on ICT literacy was pronounced as one of the disadvantages of an e-learning course support, one of the possible obstacles standing against the course successful creation may be the elementary ICT knowledge of the course developer (the author of the research). This can cause complications during the Moodle software installation on the server. The obstacle is solved by using help of an ICT-skilled person who is at the same time also the owner of the host server which will be used for the installation, and therefore able to install the necessary components safely. This solution deals at the same time with another obstacle which is the absence of an own server[24].

The course can be refused by the learners not engaging their interest and willingness to try a new way of learning or seen as too difficult to use in terms of ICT skills and equipment needed for the course content access. As stated earlier in the analysis of The Existing Knowledge Level, to avoid any of these obstacles the learners need to go through introductory training, where the course usage and tools are presented to them in detail, a sufficient opportunity to access the course needs to be provided to the unequipped learners and the course itself needs to be as easy to use as possible.

Timeline and Financial Issues

The estimated time capacity for the course creation is two months.The planned expenses on the course creation and maintaining stem from the number of people involved in the process of the course analysis, design and development. To manage these the author of this thesis, who occupies all necessary roles and functions as the course instructional designer, the content specialist as well as the course team manager, cooperates with an external ICT-skilled person in charge of installing Moodle platform on the server and providing an ICT support and web-hosting service to the course. Therefore the financial investments involve only the area of web-hosting and ICT support.

For the phases of implementation and evaluation, which are not included in the scope of this thesis, it is necessary to count also with investments into software and

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[24] Kruse, Kevin. "The Benefits and Drawbacks of E-Learning."-New York: Longman,. Print.2010.-188p.

hardware equipment if these are on insufficient level, teachers' and learners' initial training on using the course, and the course evaluator's service.

Design

After analysing the specifics of the target group, the current knowledge level and the actual possibilities and needs the course and its content is designed. This section describes how the final product shall look like and what features it shall have to respect the outcomes of the analysis phase and to achieve the previously pronounced educational goals. The design of the Course Layout and Structure as well as Lesson and Activities Planning and Course Content Design sections respect the findings described in chapter 2.5.

The structure of the course is thematic, following the topics covered in the first six chapters of the Chit Chat 2 textbook which will be simultaneously used in the face-to-face classes.Consequently, the course content is organized from more simple topics and language areas, to more complex subject matter. The interplay of the course content and the face-to-face classes aims to fulfil one of the earlier defined educational goals of the course, i.e. to provide a meaningful link between these two components of the whole learning process.

The content of the course is divided into ten lessons. These consist of six thematic lessons corresponding to the syllabus of the Chit Chat 2 textbook and two revision lessons placed after each three thematic lessons. The revision lessons are included to reflect the findings of chapter 1.3 where regular feedback was described as beneficial for young learners.

The usefulness of introductory information was described, an introductory "zero" lesson is placed at the very beginning of the course. At the end of the course there is a final lesson offering space for pupils' feedback on the whole course, which can be used for the purposes of the future evaluation phase.

There is no strict time limit on using each lesson and its resources, although the progress in the course should be in harmony with the face-to-face class proceedings. It is also expected that the learners will follow the given structure of the course and activities within each lesson and they will proceed through the course step by step.

The course is a modifiable tool and as such it can be complemented or adjusted according to current needs of the learners.

The materials within each lesson are intentionally structured in the same way to provide the learners with confidence and routine when proceeding through the course. Each lesson consists of introductory information and instruction how to go through the lesson and its components and how to complete the tasks.

The introduction is followed by a set of vocabulary resources and exercises. These are followed by grammar materials and exercise so that the learner can apply the new vocabulary while practicing the grammar rules.

The structure and sequence of the resources and activities enables the learners to learn new information and apply it practically through various tasks. After the vocabulary and grammar resources there follow reading, listening and writing activities, interactive games and exercises. Every lesson ends with a glossary for learners to create and a quiz to give the learners a feedback on their learning[25].

The course covers the subject matter of English in the first semester of the 5th grade school year. It corresponds to the Chit Chat 2 textbook content and it supports and enriches the face-to-face lessons during which this textbook shall be used.

The aim of each lesson is to cover current grammar and vocabulary dealt with in face-to face class, offer a set of activities to practice listening, writing and reading skills reflecting the current subject matter and to provide the learners with feedback.

Introduction Lesson

The initial revision lesson of Chit Chat 2 called "Hello again!" isn't included in the course, instead the course begins with an introductory lesson which contains information describing the learning objectives and the structure of the course, which should help the learners to get familiar with the course environment and structure. The included introductory lesson reflects the previously mentioned importance of giving clear guidelines at the beginning of the course as described in chapter 2.4.

In this introductory "zero" lesson there is the first task for the learners which

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[25] Dudeney, Gavin, and Nicky Hockly. How to Teach English with Technology. -Harlow: Longman, Pearson Education Limited, 2007.156p.

requires them to introduce themselves briefly in English by simple, already familiar phrases. This is in fact a beginning of the learning process as the learners get provoked to use their current knowledge in written English communication. There is also a chat room for the course participants to encourage them to communicate and socialise with each other through the course during their work with it. The chat communication is synchronous and therefore limited by time, but the hope is that the learners will find this option attractive and start to meet in the course on purpose, which might make the whole course usage more pleasant and shared activity.

The thematic lessons of the course are structured, as mentioned earlier in the section, in the same way and they differ from each other only in the topic and subject matter.

Every lesson begins with introductory instructions which aim to help the learners to use the resources and activities without obstacles. The initial set of resources covers the current vocabulary of the lesson. The set consists of a list of vocabulary covered in the corresponding lesson of Chit Chat 2. Thanks to the list of vocabulary the learners have a clear idea of what words are important to learn and remember in every lesson.

Furthermore, there is a list of additional vocabulary related to the lesson topic which meets the educational goal to offer the learners also additional information. To enhance the learners' memory a picture dictionary with important words is added. The aim of the vocabulary set is to provide the learners with useful vocabulary which they can further apply when practicing the new grammar and working with the lesson activities.

The usefulness of regular feedback described in chapter 1.3 is reflected not only in the revision lessons but also within the individual thematic lessons where every new vocabulary and grammar item is followed by a short exercise to inform the learners about their progress.

Grammar is presented in form of well organized handouts which aim to present clear rules and models showing the learners how to create new types of sentences (according to the lesson subject matter).

The set of vocabulary and grammar handouts is involved in the course to meet one of the educational goals, i.e. to give the learners all necessary information concerning the subject matter of the face-to-face classes in a clear and well organized form, and provide the learners with a well structured basis of the subject matter dealt with in the face-to-face classes, to which the learners can return whenever they need. The vocabulary and grammar are further practiced through a writing task, where the learners answer questions related to the lesson topic using the newly learned verb or tense and vocabulary. These questions with short answers function as a warm-up for the following reading-writing activity and cultivate the learners' writing skills[26].

As a reading activity a letter from a friend or a conversation between two people is presented. The learners are supposed to read the letter, answer a set of questions which check on the text understanding and write an answer to the letter. In case of the conversation, the learner is required to translate it into Uzbek. This way the learners see the new grammar and vocabulary in context when reading the text and are provoked to use it actively when writing their answers; they can also think about the language and its features when translating.

The current subject matter is further practiced through interactive games equipped with sound and pictures. These not only confront the learners with the current grammar and vocabulary, but also stimulate the listening skills and offer correct pronunciation model. Listening skills are further developed through video stories or songs where the learners are expected to use these resources, try to understand their content and, if necessary, use it repeatedly.

These activities bring to the young learners enjoyment and interactivity which may motivate them into further learning, offer multiple engagement of their senses and provide the meaningful context; features which were defined in chapter 1.3 as beneficial. At the same time these tasks require the learners to participate actively on the learning process, which was described as one of the important features of an e-learning course content in chapter 2.4

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[26] Cameron, Lynne. Teaching Languages to Young Learners.-Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.-238p

At the end of the lesson there is a glossary which provokes the learners' active reflection of what they have learned. Their task is to fill the glossary with their favourite or difficult words. To provide the learners with feedback on their learning a final quiz is placed at the very end of each lesson covering the current grammar and vocabulary.The quiz gives feedback also to the teacher showing the level of understanding and managing the subject matter of the current lesson. The quizzes together with the revision lessons can be further used for the purposes of the course evaluation, which is left open for future research.

After every three lessons there is a revision quiz covering their content and giving direct feedback to the learners as well as the teacher. If the quiz reveals a lack of knowledge in any area, additional practice activities can be created and added.

The ending lesson doesn't deal with any subject matter. It is designed to be a place for sharing the learners' experience with the course and their opinion on the learning through the course. This part of the course can as well serve as one of the tools of the summative evaluation during future research.

Except for other important roles and tasks defined in chapter 2.3, the teacher in role of the facilitator is supposed to cooperate with the course, control the learners' regular work and check on its results. The teacher complements the course by encouraging the learners to use the course resources actively, s/he gives them feedback on their progress and supervises the learners.

An Overview of the course structure and lessons' subject matter

Course structure overview

Introduction	Introduction
Lesson 1	SPORTS
Topics to cover	The use of verb CAN - use in positive, negative sentences and questions; vocabulary of sports and activities.
Lesson 2	MY HOUSE

Topics to cover	THERE IS/ARE phrase - use in positive, negative sentences and questions; prepositions of place; house and furniture
Lesson 3	HEALTH

Topics to cover	Imperative - use in positive and negative sentences; health and illness vocabulary.
Lesson 4	Revision lesson - quiz covering lessons 1, 2, 3 grammar and
Lesson 5	MY TOWN
Topics to cover	Prepositions of place (revision); town shops and buildings
Lesson 6	HOLIDAY
Topics to cover	Present continuous tense - used in positive and negative sentences, verbs describing activities.
Lesson 7	WEATHER
Topics to cover	Present continuous tense - use in questions; weather vocabulary, weather phrases.
Lesson 8	Revision lesson - quiz covering grammar and vocabulary of
End lesson	Feedback from the learners.

Course Content Design

In chapter 2.4 it was explained that the course and its content should be not only well organized and activity provoking but also attractive and respectful towards the learners' needs and subject matter. The course content is designed to meet these demands.

The grammar handouts are designed so that they can provide the young learners with the necessary information and rules in as clear way as possible, therefore colourful tables and diagrams with descriptions are used and only the most important information is involved. The vocabulary lists are organized in tables with pronunciation and Uzbek meaning. The vocabulary handouts use same colours to divide optically different topics. The handouts as well as the whole course content are provided with a suitable amount of pictures gained from a free source reflecting the age of the learners[27].

When the learners are already confident in working with the course materials and know well where they can find what they need, it is possible and advisable to gradually change the Uzbek labels and instructions of the activities into English ones. This is not recommended though until the learners overcome the initial confusion and

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[27] Smith, Patricia L and Tillman J. Ragan. Instructional Design.-San Francisco: Pfeiffer,2009.-234p.

difficulties with the course usage.

Media Selection

The media selection is again given by the delivery tool. Of the wide range of media offered by Moodle, the following will be practically used in the course.

Link to a website

The links used in the course lead to interactive resources such as videos, songs, games or exercises placed on various websites. They are used in every lesson to offer the necessary amount of interactivity, enhance listening skills, practice the current subject matter and motivate the learners giving them an enjoyable activity.

Chat

Chat is used to provide a synchronous communication in the course and, as was already mentioned, it enables the learners to communicate and help each other with possible obstacles during their work in the course provided that they meet in the course at the same time.

Forum

Forum is involved in every lesson to provoke the learners to express themselves in written form. The forums are illustrated with pictures and contain questions or writing tasks related to the grammar and vocabulary of the lesson.The learners can not only directly add their answers but also read the answers of their classmates and react to them, ask them questions and communicate.

Glossary

Glossary is at the end of each lesson to catalyse the learners' activity and interest in what they learn. Each learner is expected to add to the glossary his/her favourite word or words, which were introduced in the lesson.

Quiz

Quizzes are used in each lesson to provide the learners with feedback and motivate them to learn further. It also informs the teacher about the individual results and checks how well the learners understand the subject matter. In the revision lessons there are quizzes reflecting the subject matter covered in the previous three lessons.

The E-LEARNING course is therefore equipped with lessons consisting of small learning steps systematically structured in a way which is same in each thematic lesson and equipped with a combination of visual aids such as picture illustrations, interactivity and mutlimediality, which provokes the learners' activity and supports their confidence. The individual lessons aim to give the learner clear guidelines for independent work and enough opportunities to practice their newly gained knowledge in an enjoyable and engaging way and cultivate their skills. The technical features of the course are chosen to be as easy to use as possible to teach the learners how to work with ICT without frustrating them[28].

Development

Based on the course design the concrete course was practically produced and the steps taken during its development are described to demonstrate how to proceed and what to expect when creating such a course.

Summary of the practical part

The aim of the practical part was to produce a Moodle course suitable for the fifth grade English learners. Such a course can be further offered to basic school English teachers to try it out in their face-to-face classes and discover its potential and usefulness which was discussed in the theoretical part.

The course was successfully developed and the whole process beginning with the analysis and ending by the development phase was described in detail. This description can serve as a manual for their own course creation by basic schools English teachers whom the practical part wants to inform about the specifics of such a process.It is believed that after understanding the process the teachers get encouraged into trying and creating their own course which can serve them as a useful tool supporting their face-to-face classes and more importantly, which can help their pupils to become more experienced and competent English learners.

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[28] Siemens,George."Instructional Design in Elearning." Elearn Space. Northumbria University 2010.212p.

Conclusion

Education is an important value of modern society and its quality should be therefore gradually improved. New modern ways and possibilities for teaching and learning are discovered and offered to teachers and learners, and e-learning is one of them. With the development and increasing accessibility of ICT, education through e-learning is becoming more and more common.

This qualication work presented e-learning in a specific context, used as a support tool of English classes for young learners at Uzbek basic schools. As this is a complex topic, it was the aim of this work to introduce its individual components so that the reader would become familiar with all information necessary to understand the issue well. Consequently, in the theoretical part the scope of language teaching was defined at first and the target group, young learners of the fifth grade of basic schools, was characterised so that the benefits and drawbacks brought by e-learning to the target group could be analysed. The specific needs of the target group and the requirements set upon their knowledge and skills were further reflected in the practical course creation. The scope of e-learning was investigated and its advantages and disadvantages were analysed on the background of its specific use. In the scope of the theoretical part a suitable e-learning tool was presented and software for the course creation was chosen and defined reflecting its usefulness for English teaching. Following this, it was explained what e-learning course creation involves and what features such a course should have. It was also pointed out that the teacher, as well as the learners, acquire new roles in an e-learning environment and these were further described.

This qualification work also set down as its goal to investigate whether e-learning could bring some profits if used as a support tool of face-to-face English classes for young learners at basic schools. The general advantages and disadvantages of e-learning were contrasted with an e-learning course usage in form of a supplementary tool supporting English teaching to young learners. Based on this analysis it was assumed that, despite the fact that there can occur some obstacles complicating the

course implementation and use, e-learning can bring new options and benefits to English teaching to young learners and through its benefits enhance their learning process.

The practical part aimed to present a concrete e-learning course creation which would help the basic school English teachers to understand this complex process and encourage them towards their own course creation and/or its usage. In the scope of the practical part, an example e-learning course for the fifth grade English classes of basic schools was successfully produced and the process of its creation was described in detail. The practical course creation stemmed from the findings of the theoretical part. The course creation followed the ADDIE instructional design model presented in the theoretical part and it reflected the defined needs and specifics of the young learners. The course itself offers a clear repetitive structure and it is equipped with instructions in every lesson. The content of the course exceeds and enriches the scope of a textbook used in the face-to-face English classes. The learners can go through clearly structured grammar and vocabulary overviews and work on various activities providing a practice of English skills behind the face-to-face class boundaries.

The contributions of this research are several.First of all it provides a theoretical overview of the topic which in fact combines the areas of e-learning support, foreign language teaching and young learners. This qualification work sets the ground for further research of this topic which currently seems to be rather under-developed. Moreover, the practical application of the theoretical findings promotes the usage of e-learning among basic school English teachers by showing them that it is possible to create a sufficient course with elementary ICT skills and acceptable financial expenses. Following the example course creation,the teachers get a realistic idea about the process and hopefully get rid of possible prejudices or fear of their own course creation and usage. The produced course is available to teachers at http://elen.pechal.net/, enabling them to experience the course usage benefits and drawbacks in their own classes, which again can help them to discover the advantages such a course can offer to them and their learners.In addition, the qualification work supports the implementation of ICT in basic education, which is in

harmony with the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education of the Republic of Uzbekistan strategy in this area.

The future research of this topic can be concentrated on the e-learning course implementation in a concrete English class. The approach of the learners, teachers and the school management towards the course usage and their experience with it can be further investigated. The efficiency and success of the course can be evaluated and solutions to possible obstacles and drawbacks can be proposed. In relation to the topic,it can be also useful to investigate and analyse in detail the current level of ICT skills among the Uzbek basic schools' learners.

With regards to the continuous evolution in the ICT area, it is expected that in the future the use of e-learning will gradually expand into all areas of education where its potential can be fully used. Consequently, also young learners and their teachers should become familiar with this useful device and involve it in their learning and teaching process. The tools and functions of the e-learning courses are likely to become more advanced and effective and learners of all age groups will be offered new appealing ways and options for learning and self-improvement. However, despite the predicted evolution it should be kept in mind that, as the title of this qualification paper implies,e-learning is firstly a tool which should respect the requirements, needs and abilities of the target group.

The list of used literature

1. "ADDIE Model at Learning Theories." Learning Theories Knowledgebase.-Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.-162p.

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