THE USE OF ONLINE TOOLS IN THE ACQUISTION OF A NON-NATIVE LANGUAGE

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Resume:

The development of information technology enables the use of free resources in learning foreign languages. In this paper, we will refer to the use of online tools and internet platforms (Moodle, Nicos Weg, Einstieg Deutsch, derdieDaF-Portal, Platform Gesprochenes Deutsch, Duolingo, LingoHut, Macedonian Language E-Learning Center, etc.) in the acquisition of German and Macedonian as a second language. Online tools can also be used in teaching, because they enable creative and modern creation of teaching units. Web 2.0 tools, which are free and facilitate mutual communication between students and the teacher, can also be used in German and Macedonian language classes.

Keywords: language, tools, internet, learning, teaching.

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The scientific field known as Second Language Acquistion consists of a series of hypotheses, theories and generalizations about how students create and build the new language system (Danilovska, Sulejmani 2011: 7). Van Patten and Williams (2015: 2), taking an example from psychology, pointout that there is a phenomenon that „some people read and comprehend written text faster and better than others. As researchers began to explore this question, a theory of individual differences in working memory evolved. That theory says that people vary in their ability to hold information in what is called working memory (...)". „Successful learning is throughout good examples (input examples) and not through rules, whereby simple examples with clear language structure should be learned first."[20]

For language learning, the input and acquisition of meaning is very important, which is more important than acquisition of form. „Input is defined as language the learner hears (or reads) and attends to for its meaning. For example, when a learner hears "Open your books on page 24" in a second language, the learner is expected to comprehend the message and open his or her book to page 24. The language the learner does not respond to for its meaning (such as language used in a mechanical drill) is not input" (VanPatten, Williams 2015:9).

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[20] Manfred Spitzer, z.n. Herbert, Fartacek, Grundsätzliche Überlegungen zur kognitiven Neurobiologie des Lesens, in: URL:http://www.leseratte.at

We should point out that learners, but also people who want to learn a second language "can be exposed to input both in a natural context (e.g. the social environment) and in an institutional and formal context (eg in a language class)". (Nikodinoska, Trajkova 2010: 17). In doing so, they may simplify input to facilitate communication. „For the input to be considered useful for the student, it should meet two main criteria: a) be understandable; b) carry a message that the students will notice, that is, it must be meaningful" (Nikodinoska, Trajkova 2010: 18). However, in Language Acquisition, the acquisition of grammar plays an important role, which will be aimed at exposing comprehensible input, recognizing grammatical forms, processing input and connecting form with meaning.

Also, the training for communicative application of language knowledge (listening, speaking, reading, writing) is of great importance. Van Patten and Williams will point out that „various aspects of language enter learners' minds/brains when they are focused on communicative interaction (including reading). In other words, with incidental acquisition, the learner's primary focus of attention is on the message contained in the input, and linguistic features are "picked up" in the process" (VanPatten, Williams 2015: 9). At the same time, for students, as well as for those who are exposed to Second Language Acquistion, the interaction that „tries to take into account learning through exposure to the language learner, language production, and feedback on that production and examines the relationship between communication and acquisition and the mechanisms (eg, noticing, attention) that mediate between them."[21]

Furthermore in the paper, we will point out several websites that support and facilitate Second Language Acquistion, but we will also pay attention to the online tools that can be used in the teaching of classes in which a non-native language is taught. For acquiring the German language, we will talk about: Der Die DaF, Duolingo and Moodle. According to the European Language Portfolio, the German language can be learned at six levels/degrees A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2. Online tools used to learn German as a foreign language allow students to reach each level gradually. In the starting levels, simple sentences are taught, and in the upper levels, more complex sentences are taught and contain more complex exercises.

Online platforms and online applications for learning German as a foreign language aim for students to master the language in a very short time, starting with learning new words, terms, concepts, as well as formulating simple sentences, then up to mastering the prescribed texts for the higher levels B2 / C1.Der Die DaF Portal is an online platform that offers foreign language learning. Also, on this platform teachers can find a variety of materials, and everything they need for their GFL/GSL lessons. Everything is available as a free download. DerdieDaF offers several language learning apps sorted by language skills.StudySmarter is a study application that allows you to create study sets for free. More than 50 million users can use already-created and shared learning materials, but they can also use more than 20,000 professionally created materials for school and study. Each learning set contains flashcards on a specific subject or topic. Students first learn the content, and then they can test their knowledge through quiz exercises.

DuoLingo is an online portal that offers personalized foreign language learning. Since learners learn in different ways, this application has the ability to analyze how millions of people learn at once and has the ability to create effective ways and a system tailored to each student individually. DuoLingo's goal is to give everyone access, through technology, to the experience of learning with a private tutor.

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[21] „The interaction approach attempts to account for learning through the learner'sexposure to language, production of language and feedback on that production.As Gass (2003) notes, interaction research "takes as its starting point the assump-tion that language learning is stimulated by communicative pressure and examinesthe relationship between communication and acquisition and the mechanisms(e.g., noticing, attention) that mediate between them". (Gass, Mackey 2015: 181)

Lessons for learning a foreign language (e.g. German language) are divided according to the level of the language, and the category, that is, the model of the exercises. If the student wants to practice grammar, they can choose exercises from grammar, and the lesson with the tutor is of a certain duration. Also, this platform offers creative exercises, or language learning through games and online quizzes. However, each lesson with a particular tutor is paid. The advantage of learning with this application is that the student can learn with a teacher whose German is their mother tongue, and the pronunciation of the words is authentic.

„Moodle" can also be used in Second Language Acquistion. It is also known as a „Learning Management System" or „Virtual Learning Environment". With its help, „dynamic websites can be created (...)" (Dimova 2010: 75). Moodle was created out of a desire to empower educators to create high-quality educational experiences online. From its humble beginnings in 1999, Moodle LMS has continued to evolve through a strong commitment to education, a philosophy of accessibility, and a global community of like-minded educators and technologists. Moodle LMS is a platform that can be adapted for any course or teaching method.

Through this platform, teaching is improved, time is saved and students are actively engaged. Moodle offers several features, such as:

- provision of several task formats and contents for different ways of learning;
- students can be informed about the importance and conditions of each course, as well as the deadlines by which they have to complete their obligations;
- with the MoodleApp application you can learn from anywhere, at any time;
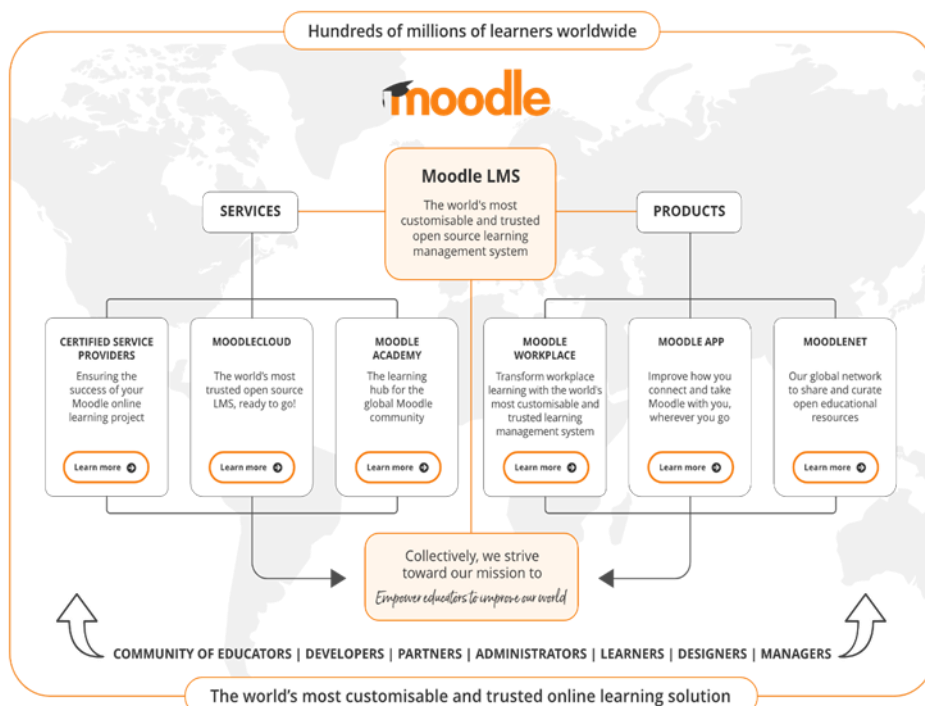- teachers have the opportunity to measure and manage the progress of their students through this platform.

Figure 1: https://moodle.com/de/solutions/moodle-lms/

For the acquisition of the Macedonian language as a non-native speaker, you can use the website Macedonian Language E-Learning Center[22], which offers learning the Macedonian language for beginners and online lessons for children (there are four levels with a certain number of lessons that take place over several weeks). At the same time, it is possible to listen to the audio of the teaching units, and several videos can be found ("The man with the happiness in the hollow cherry", "For your birthday", "The three fairy sisters" and "Altanini bridge").

For independent learning of the language, the website Learn Macedonian Language for FREE[23] can be used, which is a free web school where elementary knowledge can be acquired through 8 lessons. Starting with learning the graphemes from the Macedonian alphabet, words from the lexical fund of the Macedonian language, but also morphology (nouns, verbs, tenses, etc.). Free online lessons (5 minutes a day) in the Macedonian language can be attended at LingoHut. Activities and games make learning more effective and fun. The site offers 125 free lessons. This free resource offers the opportunity to learn the Macedonian language, but also to practice the correct pronunciation.

Easier mastering of the Macedonian and Albanian languages, especially for elementary school students, is made possible by the two tools: Macedonian-Albanian and Albanian-Macedonian dictionary[24] (by the authors: Veselinka Labroska, Berton Sulejmani, Haki Imeri - Bina, Petar Atanasov) and the four-way conversation book[25] (a fun learning platform for basic conversational expressions in Macedonian, Albanian, Turkish and Serbian) by the authors Labroska and Sulejmani. The dictionary was „prepared to facilitate the acquisition of Albanian and/or Macedonian as a non-native or foreign language and for a wider number of users" - the authors[26] will point out. The total fund of words in both languages contained in the dictionary is 9000 and is available in electronic and printed versions.

In fact, the lexical fund is covered „from the Macedonian language textbooks from the fourth to the ninth grade in elementary schools with the Albanian language of instruction, i.e. the vocabulary covered by the Albanian language textbooks from the fifth to the ninth grade in the elementary schools with the Macedonian language of instruction".[27] The dictionary also contains a short grammar of both languages and abbreviations. The phrasebook contains: 1. Basic words (Numbers, Greetings, Expressions of polite address, Days of the week, Months of the year, Holidays, Names of cities in the Republic, North Macedonia, Names of larger cities in the nearby region, Names of countries); 2. Daily audio conversations, a total of 42 (In a taxi, At a train station, In a train, In a kiosk, By city bus, In a gymnasium, In the post office, To the airport, Information, Dating, In the summer camp, In the registrar's department, At the shoemaker's, In a restaurant , In the market, Walk, Boat trip, In a fish restaurant, Visiting the water museum, On Galichica, In the library, In the pharmacy, etc.); 3. We learn languages through games (Guess the word, Riddles, Learning numbers, Complete the dialogue, Sort the words, What's in the picture, Broken phone, Quick grammar, Memory); 4. Two-way dictionary (Macedonian-Albanian, Albanian-Macedonian) and brainstorming. The application can be downloaded and used on mobile phone and computer.

Online tools can also be used in teaching, because they enable creative and modern creation of teaching units, that is, their use can serve as a complement to teaching content. Web 2.0 tools can also be used in German and Macedonian language classes. They help to master new content more easily and more effectively, to increase interaction between students.

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[22] https://macedonianlanguage.org/

[23] http://www.learn-mk.com/

[24] https://hcnm-ndc.org/

[25] https://fraza.mk/

[26] https://hcnm-ndc.org/za-recnikot/

[27] https://hcnm-ndc.org/za-recnikot/

Digital tools, such as Quizlet, Mindmeister, Gnowledge, etc., encourage students to be more creative and provide new opportunities to practice and revise language material. Bringing modern technology into the class is not easy, but, this kind of classroom represents a creative environment for learning, brings freshness to the lessons, they are more interesting for the students. We can conclude that the use of online tools in Second Language Acquistion makes teaching easier and more fun. Several free electronic language learning resources can be found on the Internet, and their use is very simple.

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