

# Using the Moodle Platform in English Teaching

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**Abstract** – The study should promote general and transferable skills in accordance with the priorities of university education. It means to teach students how to learn and at the same time prepare them for the implementation of their future careers. Currently, the trend is that graduates are skilled in their abilities and capabilities not only within a single profession, but the possibility is emphasized to equip and support them with more skills within the educational process. Diverse concepts often promote social constructivism within the framework of providing multiple advanced courses and so they take into account the changes that can be observed in the world of large international companies. They place emphasis in particular on superior professional qualifications and good language skills during their entry into a professional career. They support both individual and corporate objectives, as well as soft skills.

**Keywords** – e-learning, Moodle, foreign languages, education.

## 1. Introduction

In today's globalized world, including Slovakia, not only companies but also universities and higher education establishments as well as lower educational establishments must compete for their clients. I take the view that if the above-mentioned

institutions want to acquire respect, prestige and a sufficient number of admitted pupils and students, many of them will have to change their educational offers, which should be adapted to the new profile of pupils and students. First of all, they should teach them the skills and abilities that they will need for their future career and employment. This is particularly the ability to work in a group to create and participate actively in any community, and be ready to receive changes constantly. We began to actively use the knowledge from the project "Application of e-learning in foreign languages teaching at the Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies," to increase topicality and knowledge in university education and the professional labour market [1].

At first it was a difficult task not only for the participants, and later the users of the project - students who until recently were not used to e-courses on the use of information and communication technologies, despite the fact that they are students of a Technical University. We overcame initial concerns and expectations resulting from the changes in the educational process and also some unexpected ones thanks to the fact they were anticipated during project preparation. Thus I present the advantages of the project, which presented students from the Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies in Prešov with challenges that we still have to work on and improve in the future. This is a very challenging task that requires investment consisting of the form of investments in both the quantity of time, energy but also financial resources. Currently, several representatives of educational institutions have begun to realize one of the best and fastest ways to improve the quality of training courses which offer the use of new information and communication technologies; tools and skills that university students like to use in their daily lives, particularly if they are students of a Technical University, which was also our case. Of course, at present, several doubts are emerging about whether teachers have the opportunity to experiment with students using technology applications within formal education and that some of them, in many cases, are

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underutilized. However, stagnation and no change in attitudes and opinions never produce very good results. Therefore, I suggest that all teachers should improve training and general education at all levels of education in this new century of modern technologies.

## 2. Project description

The aim of the course is to prepare students as proficient users of technical English at B2 and C1 level in accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the language framework educational programmes for teaching foreign languages at Technical University, Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies in Prešov. Students should be able to develop self-discipline and habits to work independently with a foreign language after passing the course – it means

The screenshot shows the EngERu Moodle platform interface. At the top left is the EngERu logo with the tagline 'for Technicians'. At the top right are flags for English, German, and Russian, and navigation links for Home, About, and Contact. Below the header is a green banner with the text 'ENGLISH • GERMAN • RUSSIAN for Technicians'. On the left side, there is a navigation menu with the following items: Overview, English language, German language, Russian language, About project, and Contact. The main content area is titled 'Manufacturing processes' and contains the text: 'Texts contain language material needed for each sequence of operations in manufacturing processes.' Below this text is a table listing various manufacturing processes, each with a corresponding Moodle link.

Drilling	<a href="#">Moodle</a>
Milling	<a href="#">Moodle</a>
Milling cutters	<a href="#">Moodle</a>
Turning	<a href="#">Moodle</a>
Cutting	<a href="#">Moodle</a>
Grinding	<a href="#">Moodle</a>
Shaping	<a href="#">Moodle</a>
Advanced machining processes	<a href="#">Moodle</a>
Electrical discharge machining	<a href="#">Moodle</a>

Figure 1. Manufacturing processes in Moodle platform - examples

recognizing the need for separate self-study without the help of a teacher; to develop the ability to learn through the integration of formal (regular courses and content uploaded on the Moodle platform), [2] informal learning outside of the classroom and learning beyond the control of the teacher - to know how to orientate oneself in the overall problem, choose the basic tools you need, for example for the preparation of the project (projects, blogs, recording, web quests, case studies). They should also develop the ability to cope with obstacles and problems at work, academic and other official and formal settings - the school and future place of employment still bring many unexpected stimuli, sometimes obstacles which the student must be well prepared and be able to deal with; to extend knowledge and cultural diversity in the academic and professional field - in today's globalized world and multicultural environment we must have enough information on how to behave and deal with many situations; to develop receptive and productive language skills - it is very important for engineers and technically-oriented individuals who are often interested in the problems of his department and the problem, while

the knowledge of technical terminology is often insufficient to express complex processes and procedure; develop the ability to carry out logical, accurate and persuasive oral and written statements - it is important to teach them how to properly and logically know how to strive to resolve problems; to develop related language and communication competencies - to develop communication skills; vocabulary and language functions within the thematic areas on various aspects of life and from various study branches [3].

We are trying to raise the level of vocational education in foreign languages through innovative forms of e-learning and on the use of the Moodle learning platform on the one hand, as well as the latest trends in information and communication technologies in foreign languages teaching on the other. Our project "Application of e-learning in foreign languages teaching at the Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies" is an attempt to fulfil the current institutional requirements of university education solved.

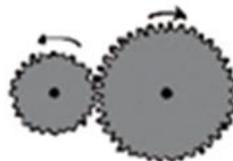
**How gears work**

**Read and study.**

Gears can be found in many machines in a workshop or factory and at home they are often an important part of mechanical devices. In a car the gears help the driver to increase and decrease speed as he/she changes the gears with the gear stick.



A gear is a modification of the wheel and axle. It just has teeth around it. Like all simple machines, gears may change the direction in which a force is applied; or increase or reduce a force or the distance over which a force is applied.



Gears work in teams. Two gears working together is called a gear train. The gear on the train to which the force is first applied is called the driver. The final gear on the train to which the force is first applied is called the driven gear. Any gears between the driver and the driven gears are called the idlers.

The diagram below shows five meshed gears. The first gear that the force is applied is called the driver gear. Every other gear is turning clockwise. The very last gear is the driven gear. All of the gears in between are called idlers.

*Figure 2. How gears work – exercise*

We expect that this should help students acquire skills on the basis of information using new information technologies. The project is based on a heuristic approach, which emphasizes the active role of the student in the foreign language learning process. Additional study material for the foreign languages teaching - English, German and Russian is ready on the Moodle university platform [4] as well as it is focused on developing the training skills of students, involving single acquisition, processing and selection of information, that is, information of which a student has control versus knowledge that he is able to obtain. Furthermore, it allows collaboration within the web community, thereby encouraging the acquisition of skills required in the process of lifelong learning. In addition, this form of additional material study enriches the use of teaching methods which develop critical thinking and independence of the students. It can be assumed that we have prepared tasks, assignments and other exercises for the needs of new student profiles in newly accredited study programmes, for the so-called Net Generation [5]. This generation of students is characterized by the ability to perform several tasks at the same time and they prefer to learn through visual cues and interactive cooperation. I think that students who have access to multimodal ways of learning perform better than students on the unimodal level study. The use of various forms of learning increases the intrinsic motivation of students and hence promote

independent creation and dissemination of their knowledge horizon. Study has to support the general and transferable skills in line with the priorities for higher education, that is, to teach students how to learn, to prepare them to perform their duties, but preferably not only within a single profession, but to equip their habits for variable employability and encourage the commitment of students to the educational process. Many authors stress the fact that blended teaching is much more effective. It means using e-learning classes and face-to-face work with students, which undermines traditional forms of teaching, which for today's students is not very attractive [6].

The intention of the project „The application of e-learning in foreign languages teaching at the Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies“ is the implementation of modern technologies and the improvement of teaching in the new accredited study branches and study programmes at the Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies. The project is aimed at promoting pedagogical models of education, new technologies, forms and methods. E-learning is applied within the learning a foreign language - especially English (because many students are logged into this course), German and Russian in full time as well as part-time studies within compulsory and optional, and also elective subjects at both bachelor and engineering level under supplementary teaching in the Moodle system. The mentioned project

Krstné meno / Priezvisko	Test bol začatý	Čas vyprál	Použitý čas	#1	#2	#3	#4	Známka/24,00
Pavol Fejerečák Priezvisko pokus	10 March 2014 11201	10 March 2014 11211	10 min 13 sekundy/sekund	100%	100%	100%	100%	12,43
Jozef Tkáč Priezvisko pokus	10 March 2014 11203	10 March 2014 11212	8 min 49 sekundy/sekund	100%	100%	100%	100%	14,29
Tomáš Šás Priezvisko pokus	10 March 2014 11216	10 March 2014 11220	3 min 44 sekundy/sekund	100%	100%	100%	100%	18,00
Matúš Kmeč Priezvisko pokus	10 March 2014 11204	10 March 2014 11215	13 min 28 sekundy/sekund	100%	100%	100%	100%	14,29
Peter Kolesár Priezvisko pokus	10 March 2014 11217	10 March 2014 11225	8 min 1 sekunda	100%	100%	100%	100%	12,00
Stanislav Vámoš Priezvisko pokus	10 March 2014 11203	10 March 2014 11222	19 min 15 sekundy/sekund	100%	100%	100%	100%	15,14

Figure 3. Feedback

“Application of e-learning in foreign languages teaching at the Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies” will be extended to new topics related to newly accredited programmes from the new academic year. The project team consisted of foreign language (English, German, Russian) from the Department of Humanities lecturers, whose task was to prepare suitable additional foreign language study material. Experts for the technical implementation of the project from the Department of Manufacturing Management tackled the professional aspect of the

project by inserting the prepared text in the Moodle system [7].

Students perform simple exercises that include listening, reading, vocabulary and grammar in part by typing in various specialized topics and assigned tasks in three languages. They are assessed primarily via the Moodle system. Some parts have open and writing tasks that teachers have to evaluate. The advantage of the Moodle platform is that course participants and teacher can communicate through e-mails, chats and forums. The content of individual topics is not available for participants who do not

belong to that group. E-learning additional tasks and exercises within the English [8], German and Russian languages are designed for students of the Faculty of Manufacturing Technologies in the accredited study branches and study programmes, such as Manufacturing management, Computer-aided manufacturing technology, Manufacturing technology, Monitoring and diagnostics of technical equipment, Operation of industrial technology, Recycling technology and the like, in full time and also part time form of study. The groups of students are 20-25 years old, part-time students and older ones and they have practical experience, most of them are from Eastern Slovakia. Additional online language courses are compulsory or optional; therefore instrumental motivation is dominated mainly among students. Face-to-face teaching in the traditional way is supplemented by online course with prepared additional curriculum within the mentioned project.

### 3. Results

Students have the opportunity to choose from a diverse range of evaluated tasks, from soothe seemingly simple which allows the best use of their potential and possible tasks to difficult and more time consuming. Furthermore, the content of open web activity was disclosed to those participants willing to contribute to activities, discussions and presentations by students. Then not only students but also teachers could see the results of their work.

The very knowledge that their work was monitored and overseen by someone seems to motivate students to work much harder to complete the desired task. On the other hand, occasional input or observation of the environment of other participants of the course were to blame that experts in the field of discussed and prepared themes accede to the task much more responsible and then they are ensuring more greater support and industrious approach by students [9]. Results in the processing of individual tasks have the ability to see and monitor individually in the Moodle portal. Similarly, the teacher can generate individuals to see which tasks and with what result has met the student.

Teachers and students are working in a virtual learning environment which is not only friendly to its users, but it is based on their characteristics, habits of learning, prior knowledge and learned methods. I believe that focusing not only on high quality content of the supplementary course materials, but primarily on the development of learning techniques which help students to improve professional language competences, general and transferable skills and so on is an important fact. That is why we put so much emphasis on active participation in the preparation and delivery of course content. We "created" not only independent thinkers and students, but also those who are interdependent in their work; students who rely primarily on themselves at work, and I believe that so they become more responsible [10], [11]. and become more aware.

Výber všetkých alebo jedného používateľa Marek Adamčík

Poloha známokovania	Známka	Rozsah	Percentuálna hodnota	Komentár
<b>Anglický jazyk</b>				
Writing	-	0-33	-	
Information about a company	30,00	0-33	90,91 %	
Writing	-	0-10	-	
Company structure	21,30	0-24	88,75 %	
Writing	23,00	0-25	92,00 %	
Company ethics	20,00	0-30	66,67 %	
Typical language for talking about your job	-	0-30	-	
The most frequent job interview questions	-	0-21	-	
Talking about deadlines	-	0-10	-	
Notes to employees	-	0-20	-	
Letter of apology	-	0-10	-	
Letter of complaint	-	0-10	-	
Writing a report	-	0-10	-	
The Three K's	25,00	0-27	92,59 %	
Recycling materials	10,00	0-10	100,00 %	
Innovation plant	50,00	0-50	100,00 %	
CAD	-	0-17	-	
How Gears Work	-	0-10	-	
Polite Language in Emails	17,00	0-17	100,00 %	
Formal and Informal Emails	10,00	0-10	100,00 %	
Good Invitation & Email Response	20,00	0-20	100,00 %	
CAM	-	0-41	-	

Figure 4. – Evaluation

#### 4. Conclusion

Overall, the new approach presented in the mentioned contribution has proven to be successful. It is visible after a period of testing and course evaluation. Most students reported greater satisfaction from, engagement in and motivation for learning. Thanks to the innovative form, the difference between the outdated and existing language training materials and resources could be linked to new content so the students stimulated great interest in foreign professional issues. The students recognized that the application of the latest technological achievements is very attractive and practical [12], [13], because the language and form meet and are used in everyday life. There is no doubt that in today's world openness, curiosity, efforts to gain knowledge, pleasure in learning, adoption of the ability to critically evaluate incoming information are essential. Our course will therefore be a long term process of promoting these values together with professional language skills.

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