a flexible program, but also the opportunity to work at your own pace, to allocate a few hours a day for processing and training when it is possible and convenient: during breaks, after work, on weekends, etc.

The most important question was the question of quality. The distance form allows to work with the best teachers, according to the most perfect program, to achieve high results even without being on the territory of the educational institution. Of course, in this matter a lot depends on the student, on his ability to organize himself and master the material. However, for distance learning there are forms of control similar to the face-to-face form, it is possible to attend certain classes or sessions personally.

The period of the quarantine has shown us the flexibility and adaptability that gives a huge advantage to distance learning, it allows not only to optimize the time and program, but also to reduce the stress factor for all participants in the process.

More constant interaction and feedback from the teacher significantly increases the actual control over the development of the material, gives an additional opportunity to help the student, allows you to study the topic of interest more deeply.

In fact, distance learning in practice realizes what the traditional school seeks to do: to provide equal and comprehensive access to knowledge, to reveal abilities and talents, to instill the necessary skills and qualities. If we add to this the possibility of implementing all modern means of communication, innovative methods and advanced developments, we get the same form that can truly prepare a student, to give relevant and modern knowledge and skills.

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HOW TECHNOLOGIES CHANGE THE STUDY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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According to researchers [1], the e-learning market will grow to $ 252 billion by 2020. Gamification, edutainment, video chats, virtual reality and artificial intelligence: changes in education are especially noticeable in the study of foreign languages, where new technologies replace the cramming of irregular verbs, dictations and workbooks. Let’s consider how the IT industry helps to learn new languages faster and more efficiently.
According to a Technavio study [2], by 2021, the use of artificial intelligence technologies in the education market will grow by 47.5%. For example, Content Technologies’s (http://contenttechnologiesinc.com) Cram101 service makes learning materials an online course faster than you can create a playlist on iTunes.

Today, many adult students do not have time for classes with a teacher – in such cases, lessons moderated by artificial intelligence can help. For example, the Chinese developers of the Liulishuo application (https://www.liulishuo.com), having acquired the largest database of residents of the country studying English, have developed an engine that allows you to accurately recognize the voice of any student, evaluate its progress and build an individual learning path.

Artificial intelligence is also able to work on your accent. So, a platform from Cambridge Consultants (https://www.cambridgeconsultants.com) captures the pronunciation features of just one phrase and gives useful tips depending on how your English sounds.

The education industry has long borrowed pop cultural practices that help ease the learning process. According to the study [1], half of the educational institutions surveyed use edutainment and gamification in their curricula. Another 43% of respondents believe that such techniques can more effectively keep students’ attention on the material.

Today, educational services are fighting for the student’s free time with Instagram, Facebook, Telegram and other giants of the entertainment industry. In order to win (at least not for long), it is important to respond with content that does not lag behind in quality and degree of interactivity – passive viewing of video lessons is a thing of the past.

We think that for successful gamification two elements are needed – fascinating drama and proximity to real life. A video simulating a conversation in a cafe or a job interview will interest anyone who wants to use the language in everyday communication. And thanks to the mechanics of computer games and interactive series, the student becomes a real participant in the dialogue. Choosing answers to replicas, he determines the further development of events and moves from level to level.

According to the pioneer of audiovisual technology in education, Edgar Dale [3], students remember 10% of what they read, 20% of what they heard and 90% of information from situations that mimic real experience. It is not surprising that virtual reality technology is one of the largest investment areas in education. Researchers predict that by 2020, total investment in the industry will reach $ 200 million.

As is often the case with new developments, the effectiveness of VR in education confirms the interest of the military: not so long ago, U.S. Air Force aerodrome employees began to undergo training in virtual reality.

Today, VR technology helps to plunge into the cultural context and reproduce scenarios from real life where a foreign language is useful. For example, the Mondly app (https://www.mondly.com) offers VR-scenes from the real experience of a tourist in an unfamiliar country: train travellers in Berlin, dinner in a Spanish restaurant, etc.

Electronic lexicography and the entertainment industry have changed the approach to dictionaries and encyclopaedias. According to research¹, they become the same media products as social networks or cloud storage.

For example, the Abbyy service [4] scans a paper document, recognizes words and immediately offers translation options. And online dictionaries like Oxford’s Lexico [5] can divide vocabulary into semantic blocks, time of occurrence, etc.
Not so long ago, The New York Times released a sensational text about the digital gap between rich and poor with a disappointing conclusion: simple communication is becoming a new luxury. So, educational platforms that offer meetings with other students online or offline take on added value.

For example, the Blackboard project (https://projectbackboard.org) allows teachers and students to create an internal social network with online courses, checking homework and constant exchange of experience with other teachers and students.

The mechanism of social networks was also successfully used by Ted Magder, a lecturer in Business in Media at New York University (https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/people/ted-magder). He asked students to maintain daily blogs in order to immerse themselves into the language context, look for interesting formats and topics and of course get a constant feedback. This helped motivate students to work independently and communicate with each other.

University of Washington experts estimated that more than half of smartphone users between the ages of 18 and 34 use mobile visual communication. To date, Verbling (https://www.verbling.com) or Learnissimo (https://learnissimo.com) platforms have been able to attract more than a million users thanks to the familiar and promising video chat technology.

Video chat technology is useful for both students and teachers. Students can refer to the lesson notes to repeat the material they have learned and pay attention to the teacher’s advice. Teachers can double-check whether they pointed out all the mistakes to students and analyze the quality of their lessons. According to Harvard researchers [1], departments where teachers collectively view each other’s videos are an effective tool for working on bugs.

Video chats add additional value to the educational process: the student not only hears the speech of the language carrier, but sees his facial expressions and body language, learning the cultural features of speaking an unfamiliar language.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed our reality in many ways. The forced shift to teleworking and distance learning due to quarantine has become a huge challenge for our society, the consequences of which remain to be seen. However, this crisis could spark a boom in the eLearning environment. Investors hope [6] that the benefits of quality online learning will attract more students and teachers to this initiative in the near future over the long term.

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