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СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ МЕТОДИКИ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАННОЙ ЛЕКСИКИ

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CURRENT STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGE VOCABULARY

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Резюме. В статье представлены результаты опроса, в котором показано мнение студентов Белорусского государственного медицинского университета об использовании приложений с флэш-карточками для изучения иностранного языка. Результаты исследования указывают на то, что студенты, которые используют приложения с флэш-карточками, удовлетворены своими успехами. Самым предпочтительным приложением оказалось приложение «Quizlet».

Ключевые слова: образование, студенты, английский как иностранный, флэш-карточки.

Abstract. The article presents the results of a survey showing the opinion of the students of Belarusian State Medical University on using flashcard applications for learning a foreign language. The findings of the research indicate that students using flashcard applications are satisfied with their progress. The most preferable application was proven to be Quizlet.

Keywords: education, students, EFL, flashcards.

Relevance. Vocabulary acts as a solid basis for any language. Grammar knowledge cannot be employed in any discourse without the mediation of vocabulary which is crucial for effective communication. Therefore, vocabulary acquisition and word retention play an important role in successful foreign language learning.

Currently, the development of mobile technologies and the presence of smartphones have provided many advantages for English language learners due to the availability of a large number of electronic applications. To date, several studies have investigated potential benefits of using e-learning technologies which have greatly improved and expanded educational opportunities and have contributed to the shift of the traditional academic environment to mobile learning. However, they have mainly focused on the use of teacher-created material, and the information on the effect of student-generated learning material is scarce.

Aim: the study is aimed at evaluating whether e-technologies help learners to acquire new vocabulary in a more efficient way and how they influence learners' performance. It examines the role of smartphone application devices in vocabulary learning and how it can be incorporated into the students' learning experience.

Tasks:

1. To get a better insight into electronic applications for foreign language learning.
2. To conduct a survey on the effectiveness of using flashcard applications among students.

Materials and methods. Scientific publications and the Internet resources were analyzed to systematize the information on the problem; sociological and statistical methods were used to assess the effect of student-generated electronic Quizlet flashcards on vocabulary development and retention. 65 university students were questioned to learn about their awareness of mobile applications and to consider their perception and opinion on the use of this technique in the educational process.

Results and discussion. Vocabulary knowledge can be divided into receptive and productive skills, the first one referring to the ability to recall and recognize the word in reading and listening while the latter means the ability to use it in speaking and writing (Nation, 2001). A research has demonstrated that students creating their own flashcards sets using Quizlet not only contributes to widening their receptive vocabulary knowledge (Milliner, 2013), but also makes them produce the terms in a written or spoken form, which enhances their productive knowledge.

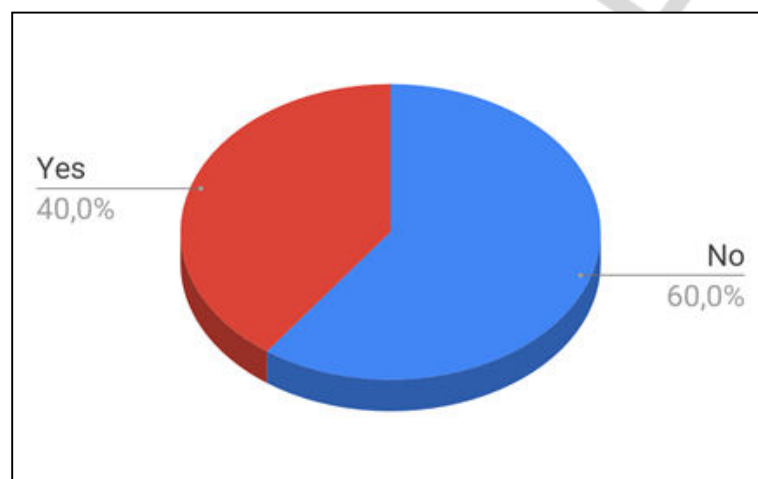


Fig. 1 – Use of flashcard software by students

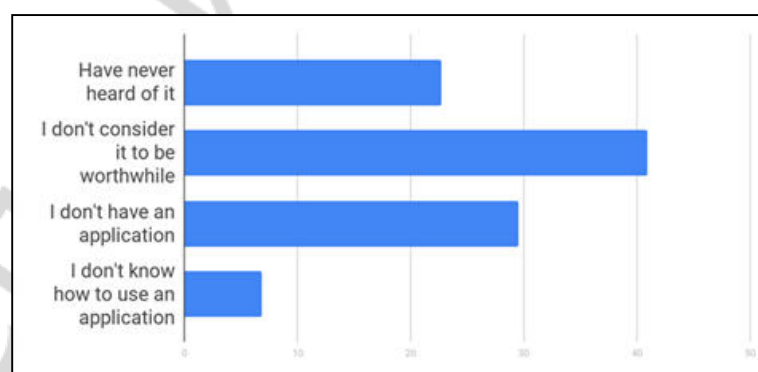


Fig. 2 – Reasons for not using flashcard software

Quizlet is an application that enables students to create their own digital flashcards and offers different learning modes for students to practice and study the flashcard sets. These learning modes include 1) flashcards to review the vocabulary items and their meaning; 2) choosing the correct term or definition out of three options; 3) writing the

word or expression they hear; 4) doing different tests based on the student's flashcard set; 5) matching terms with the corresponding definition etc.

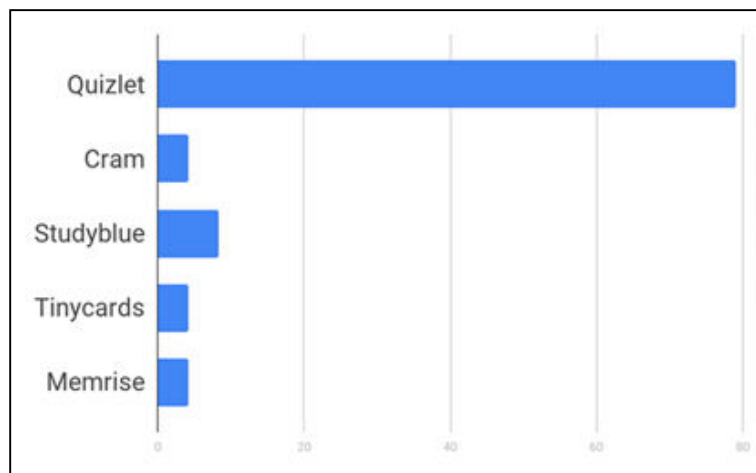


Fig. 3 – Students' preferences in using flashcard software

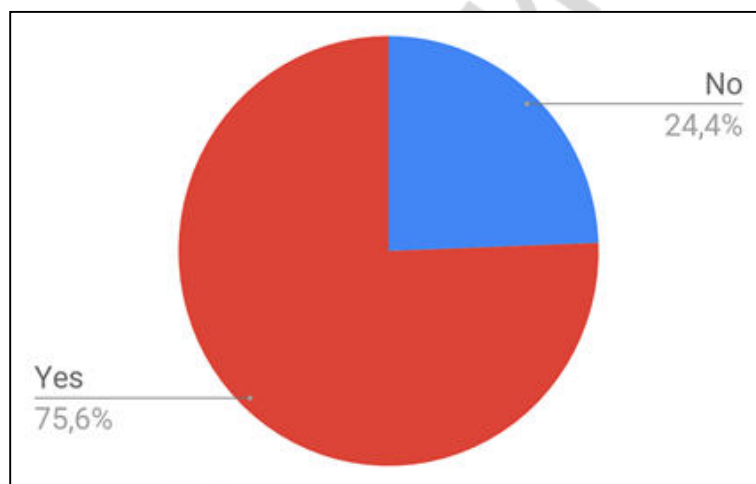


Fig. 4 – Effectiveness of learning new vocabulary with the help of online flashcard apps

The results of the survey revealed a positive general attitude of the students to the use of mobile applications in education. Most of the students who use flashcard applications prefer Quizlet. The questioned students admit that flashcards they create contribute to learning new vocabulary faster and more effectively by reviewing it regularly and consistently, which facilitates the process of transferring the knowledge into long-term memory. The questionnaire analysis indicates that the use of the applications may help the students to increase the vocabulary and enhance confidence in class participation.

Conclusion:

1 The findings prove that this technology is a useful tool to support and motivate students to learn vocabulary and improve learners' performance. Both EFL teachers and students should be involved in using mobile technologies as modern educational tools to achieve better results.

2 Incorporation of electronic tools facilitates the educational process and makes it more efficient.

Literature

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