In this challenging time and under the conditions of the covid pandemic, the scholars all over the world face the same problem connected with the rethinking and reconsidering the existing means and techniques of ELT. According to the CEFR the ultimate objective of language teaching is to promote methods of modern language teaching which will strengthen independence of thought, judgement and action, combined with social skills and responsibility. Thus, when designing English lessons, the teachers need take into consideration that the point of teaching is to enable students to study, develop their critical thinking, and make them independent thinkers who will not bend to the will of the teacher [1; 3].

In his book «How to Teach English» Jeremy Harmer [2] underlines that speaking gives the learners chances to practise real-life speaking in the safety of the classroom. In the present article we would like to illustrate an example of a discussion or brainstorming in a modified manner. The topic for the suggested speaking activity is chosen from the world’s largest face-to-face community creativemornings.com. New theme is announced every month by one city from the country that is the member of the mentioned community. The teachers have the opportunity to choose any topic they among the offered one, up two the present moment there are 92 topics announced on the website.

The procedure of organizing the speaking activity using creativemornings.com is the following. The teacher tells the students the topic for discussion in advance and gives them the task to analyze the meaning of it (in our case it was «serendipity») in dictionaries, find collocations, synonyms. When the lesson starts, the teacher presents the topic exploiting the description and understanding of it given on creativemornings.com by one of the city chapters. We want to stress that the introduction of the theme is presented not only an interesting manner but also in authentic way, which is extremely important for the learners. After this introduction the students share their findings from different dictionaries, compare the information about the word suggested by the teacher as the topic for discussion. The brainstorming itself is the second phase of the lesson. The learners are given the opportunity to express their own understanding of the topic, thoughts about it, they can agree or disagree with their groupmates. The difference between the known discussion or brainstorming lies in the fact that exploiting creativemornings.com’s themes the teachers give the students the opportunity to get into the topic, to select a really conversational topic for the learners which can engage them in taking part in the activity. In addition, the teacher may give the students extra tasks depending on
the topic discussed: to watch a 2001 American romantic comedy film directed by Peter Chelsom, «Serendipity» and write a film review.

To sum it up, we want to stress that speaking activities in the digital classroom are vital ones and scholars are supposed to elaborate new techniques for developing students’ speaking skills integrated with other language skills such as writing, reading and listening.

References:


EFFECTIVENESS OF DISTANCE LEARNING

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Distance learning is not a problem to be discussed any more. It is a new form of learning. The COVID-19 pandemic has given us the possibilities to point out the effectiveness of this form of education.

Distance learning is a form of education in which the teacher and student interact at a distance using information technology. During distance learning, the student studies independently in accordance with the developed program, looks through the records of webinars, solves problems, consults with the teacher in online chat and periodically submits his work for him to check. Distance learning has become popular with the advent of the Internet, opening up new development opportunities for residents of remote settlements and business people with a busy work schedule.

The distance form of learning is written as a separate form of education in article 9 of the law of Ukraine on education. According to the law distance form of education is an individualized process of education, which occurs mainly through the indirect interaction of distant participants in the educational process in a specialized environment that operates on the basis of modern psychological, pedagogical and information and communication technologies.

Distance learning helps to cope with many problems. The COVID-19 pandemic forced students to leave their universities and this form of education has helped to solve the problem of distance. This form of education offers much more than the traditional correspondence form. In addition to tasks and teaching materials, distance learning provides an expansion of the classroom framework for students and teachers, intensive interaction and an effective form of control.

The quarantine time helped to find out another plus - temporary restrictions. This problem is more relevant for those who combine work and study. In other words, for those who can't attend face-to-face classes, are and work in another city, but want to get more than a simple part-time form - this is an ideal option. It provides not only