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FORMING FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE THROUGH DIGITAL COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES

Abstract. The main direction of development of the modern system of education and teaching of foreign languages, in particular, is the system integration of digital technologies into the educational process. The evolutionary analysis of existing approaches to the issue of digitalization of foreign language learning presented in this study is the methodological basis of this study. The purpose of the research is aimed at developing a technique for the formation of foreign language communicative competence through the introduction of digital communication technologies in the process of teaching English in the university for non-linguistic specialties. The methodological basis of the study is the analysis of the digitalization process of learning English at the State Higher Educational Institution “Donbas State Pedagogical University”. The practical significance of the study lies in the developed technique for the formation of foreign language communicative competence using digital communication technologies, in a proven set of tasks aimed at the phased formation of competence. The results of the study demonstrate the possibility of using digital communication technologies in the process of forming foreign language communicative competence. The necessity of including digital products in the process of teaching foreign languages is proven. The study of the evolutionary development of the principles of digitalization in the process of teaching foreign languages and the approbation of the technique for the use of digital communication products at foreign language lessons at the university actualizes the need to include the latter in language education programs. The value of using digital communication technologies in the process of forming foreign language communicative competence necessitates the modernization of the entire system of language education in institutions of higher education.
Keywords: digitalization of education, digital communication technologies, foreign language communicative competence, means of synchronous communication, means of asynchronous communication, communication product, artificial language environment.

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ФОРМУВАННЯ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНЦІЇ ЗА ДОПОМОГОЮ ЦИФРОВИХ КОМУНІКАТИВНИХ ТЕХНОЛОГІЙ

Анотація. Основним напрямом розвитку сучасної системи навчання та викладання іноземних мов, зокрема, є система інтеграція цифрових технологій у навчальний процес. Методологічною основою цього дослідження є еволюційний аналіз існуючих підходів до питання цифровізації навчання іноземних мов, представлений у цьому дослідженні. Мета дослідження спрямована на розробку методики формування іншомовної комунікативної компетенції шляхом впровадження цифрових комунікаційних технологій у процес навчання англійської мови у закладі вищої освіти для нелінгвістичних спеціальностей. Методологічною основою дослідження є аналіз процесу цифровізації навчання англійської мови в ДВНЗ «Донбаський державний педагогічний університет». Практична значущість дослідження полягає в розробленні методиці формування іншомовної комунікативної компетенції з використанням цифрових комунікаційних технологій, в апробованому комплексі завдань, спрямованих на поетапне формування компетентності. Результати дослідження демонструють можливість використання цифрових комунікаційних технологій у процесі формування іншомовної комунікативної компетенції. Обґрунтовано необхідність включення цифрових продуктів у процес навчання іноземних мов. Дослідження еволюційного розвитку принципів цифровізації процесу навчання іноземних мов та апробація методики використання цифрових комунікаційних продуктів на заняттях іноземної мови в університеті актуалізує необхідність включення останніх до програми мовної освіти. Значення використання цифрових комунікаційних технологій у процесі
формування іншомовної комунікативної компетенції зумовлює необхідність модернізації всієї системи мовної освіти у навчальних закладах вищої освіти.

**Ключові слова:** цифровізація освіти, цифрові комунікаційні технології, іншомовна комунікативна компетентність, засоби синхронної комунікації, засоби асинхронної комунікації, комунікаційний продукт, штучне мовне середовище.

**The relevance of the problem.** The real indicator of the level of development of any economic region or society is the priority of the education system [1, 2]. It should not only be of high priority but also aimed at the timely implementation of relevant innovations and changes in the educational process. To do this, it is necessary to introduce new digital technologies, including in the process of learning English [3, 4].

To date, in the domestic and foreign teaching methods, there is a sufficiently developed base for the use of digital educational technologies in the process of teaching foreign languages. Most authors note that the use of digital technologies contributes to the formation of foreign language communicative competence of applicants in the absence of a natural language environment. With their use, it becomes possible to create a situation of communication with a verbal and non-verbal communicative product. However, the analysis of practical classes in English at the State Higher Educational Institution “Donbas State Pedagogical University” and a survey of lecturers and applicants have shown that today there is some discrepancy between the modern theory of digital education and the practice of implementing digital educational technologies in the process of learning English.

Most of the studies conducted are focused on specialized language training programs. The problems of using digital educational technologies in universities with non-linguistic specialties remain open. This situation is justified by the following reasons: 1) insufficient material and technical equipment of universities, which hinders the organization of the educational process using digital communication technologies; 2) insufficient level of proficiency in the technique of work on the use of innovative communication technologies among lecturers; 3) the complexity of the selection of digital communication technologies associated with their great diversity; 4) the focus of most digital communication technologies on the in-depth study of the language; 5) a relatively small amount of classroom time allocated for language learning in a university with non-linguistic specialties.

**Analysis of last studies and publications.** The use of information and communication technologies in the educational process to improve the quality of
professional training of applicants in institutions of higher education has become the subject of research by many scientists, such as Andrushchenko V. P., Buinytska O. P., Vovk L. P., Haluzynskyi V. M., Yevtukh M. V., Kuzminskyi A. I., Ortynskyi V. L., Ruban L. M., etc. Elucidation of the mission of digital communication technologies (DCT) in the training of foreign language teachers is contained in the works of Antoniuk S. M., Batsevych F. S., Biduk N. M., Volfovska T. O., Drach I. I., Sura N. A., Fedorenko Yu. P. and others. Articles and monographs of famous foreign educators, psychologists, philosophers, and sociologists are of great importance for a comprehensive study of the problem of using ICT and DCT as an important condition for raising the professional level of training and retraining of teaching staff (R. Alexander, P. Barlow, B. Barthes, K. M. Bailey, D. Berliner, N. Cober, B. Loyd, L. Makneil, A. D. Pelligrini, V. Wright, M. Smith, V. Stabs, etc.).

However, even recently, there are practically no works and studies devoted to the formation of foreign language communicative competence through digital communication technologies.

The purpose of the research is aimed at developing a technique for the formation of foreign language communicative competence through the introduction of digital communication technologies in the process of teaching English in the university for non-linguistic specialties.

Presentation of the main material of the research. Digital educational technologies were first introduced into the learning process abroad. In foreign methodical literature, the term “digital technologies” describes information and communication cloud, mobile, and smart technologies. The process of introducing digital technologies into language learning, according to Warschauer’s “Computer Assisted Language Learning”, has gone through the following stages of development: behavioral, communicative, and integration [5].

The main goal of the behavioral stage was the development of skills (drill and practice). The computer as a learning tool provided opportunities for objective assessment and choice of one’s own pace of work. However, the significance of this stage was lost due to the emergence of a communicative approach to teaching foreign languages. One-way work with a computer did not provide the opportunity to communicate in the target language.

The communicative stage set as its goal the creation of communicative products based on their judgments, and not on the use of ready-made speech patterns. In this regard, it became possible to maximize the use of a foreign language in the learning process and enhanced interaction in the applicant–
computer, computer–applicant system. The communicative stage served as a theoretical basis for the creation of new computer programs aimed at the independent search for material, self-reflection, and interaction between applicants. There were programs that involve the discussion of issues in writing, which, of course, also contributed to the development of critical thinking. However, practitioners in the field of teaching foreign languages noted the insufficient use of the potential of information technologies.

The widespread ubiquity of the Internet and the development of multimedia technologies have caused the formation of an integration stage based on the use of a foreign language in a real communication situation and the simultaneous development of all four types of speech skills. Applicants have got the opportunity to interact synchronously or asynchronously, and, importantly, for free. The conditions of the language environment have expanded their boundaries and functionality. It has become possible to conduct joint scientific, scientific-methodical, and educational-research activities.

In connection with the expansion of the field of application of digital technologies in education, the current stage can be called social-interactive. It involves active social interaction of users. This stage is due to the rapid development of Web 2.0 social services and their mobile applications, which has served as the basis for the formation of an online collaboration system and provided instant access to educational material. At the social-interactive stage, digital technologies become an integral tool in the learning process.

Based on modern teaching principles, G. Siemens formulated the principles of connectivism of the social-interactive stage: a) the principle of diversity of opinions; b) the principle of semantic association of units of knowledge or sources of information; c) the principle of the predominance of the opportunity and ability to learn over today’s knowledge; d) the principle of lifelong learning; e) the principle of finding up-to-date information [6].

In the domestic teaching methods of foreign languages, the social-interactive stage marked the beginning of a competence-oriented concept. This concept implies the development of skills to search for the necessary information independently, to identify problems and search for their solutions, critical analysis of the data obtained, and the ability to apply them in practice. At the social-interactive stage, all components of the pedagogical process are subject to transformation: gaining access to teaching aids, expanding the forms of implementing integration in the study group, and ways of presenting educational material. The leading principles of teaching foreign languages at the social-interactive stage of education are: a) the principle of multimedia – the presence of visual clarity at the lesson in the
format of listening to audio and video recordings; b) the principle of interactivity – the involvement of all participants of the educational process in vigorous activity; c) the principle of personification – a focus on the applicant.

Within the framework of the study presented, the most interesting is the social-interactive stage of teaching foreign languages. In the context of this stage, it becomes possible to move from a descriptive study of the realities of a foreign language to independent modeling of the essential properties of the objects under study using games and the construction of additional reality.

Today, for higher education, the task of using digital educational technologies to model professional research activities is of particular importance. Social learning contributes to the formation of such a learning system that allows implementing the principles of learning foreign languages described above and applying them throughout life, constructing an individual learning trajectory. Thus, the main direction of development of the modern system of education and teaching of foreign languages, in particular, is the system integration of digital technologies into the educational process. The presented evolutionary analysis of existing approaches to the issue of digitalization of foreign language learning is the methodological basis of this study.

The development of innovative technologies has necessitated a change in the methods and means of teaching English. Digital communication technology is a special form of educational activity that demonstrates the visual support of a foreign language sound and visual range and contributes to a more accurate understanding of the intent of what is seen or heard [7, 8]. The traditional use of digital communication technologies involves the creation of an artificial foreign language environment and the stimulation of applicants’ independent speech activity. Digital learning technologies are designed for the auditory, visual, and visual-auditory perception of information.

In the context of the study presented, digital communication technologies are understood as educational products posted on the Internet and aimed at creating conditions for an artificial foreign language environment, the result of which is an independent communication product. According to the classification of audiovisual teaching aids, digital communication technologies are screen-sound teaching aids that demonstrate the process of real communication. The didactic value of these communicative learning technologies lies in the high information content, in the rationalization of the presentation of educational material, in the
demonstration of the studied phenomena in dynamics, and the illustration of the reality of a foreign language context.

At the present stage of development of education, digital communication technologies can be classified based on various criteria. According to the source of information, phonograms (audio products) and video products are distinguished. According to the information carrier, authentic and non-authentic specially created products are distinguished. According to the speed of presentation of information, fast, medium, and slow innovative audiovisual means are distinguished. Based on the presented classifications, it is possible to organize the selection of relevant digital products, taking into account the stage of learning a foreign language.

The main digital communication technologies can be divided into two groups: 1) means of synchronous communication (synchronous communication tools – Skype, Google Meet, Viber); 2) means of asynchronous communication (asynchronous communication tools – Podcasts). The named digital tools expand the possibilities in improving the skills of oral foreign language speech.

It should be noted that synchronous and asynchronous communication technologies have the great methodical potential for learning a foreign language for the following reasons: a) ensuring the implementation of a differentiated approach in the study of a foreign language, depending on the individual characteristics of applicants; b) providing the opportunity to listen to the material repeatedly in slow motion or original tempo without time limits; c) offering a choice of materials customized for lecturers and applicants; d) organizing autonomous learning thanks to the didactic integration of modern technologies; e) suggesting the possibility of audio and video recording; f) allowing applicants to work with educational material at any time convenient; g) being constantly updated.

As an example, the technique for the formation of foreign language communicative competence in the context of the implementation of digital communication technologies in the process of learning English is presented. This technique was tested at English lessons in the groups of the 1st and 2nd courses at the State Higher Educational Institution “Donbas State Pedagogical University”. The stages of work with digital communication technologies in the process of formation of the named competence are described. There are seven stages of this technique.

The first stage of work is preparatory. This is a preliminary briefing, during which the development of lexical units is organized to form conditions for a favorable perception of speech material and setting a communicative attitude. The second stage is the initial presentation of the
material, followed by comprehension and initial discussion of its main idea. The third stage is a repeated presentation of the material, aimed at detailing and subsequent control of understanding. The fourth stage is discussion and exchange of opinions based on the proposed content. The fifth stage is the creation of an independent communicative product based on the presented material. The sixth stage is a reflexive analysis of the degree of mastering the material based on the created communicative product. The seventh stage is the setting for further independent improvement of foreign language communicative activity. In the process of gradual formation of foreign language communicative competence with the help of digital communication technologies, it is advisable to use the following types of tasks: reading aloud; expressing an opinion about the content of audio and video recordings; discussing the content of created communication products; creating an oral diary; presenting the results of the group product; oral abstracting of the written text; role-plays.

It should be emphasized that digital communication technologies have several advantages concerning the communicative attitude to language learning. Communication products created in the process of using digital communication technologies become available not only for use in the classroom but also for a global audience. This factor largely determines the motivating function of digital technologies in learning a foreign language. To be heard all over the world, a modern applicant is more attentive to both the external and internal sides of a foreign language speech. Digital technologies allow the lecturer to implement the principle of differentiation by organizing work in micro-groups in accordance with the levels of applicants.

However, it should be noted that the process of forming a foreign language communicative competence can be associated with some objective difficulties that impede the solution of communication problems in the process of working with digital communication technologies: the conditions for the perception of foreign speech; the perception of linguistic forms; the content of audio and video texts; the form of presentation of audio and video material; the perception of a certain type of speech activity and type of utterance; the level of formation of sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence. Many of these difficulties can be leveled with the help of preparatory exercises before listening to or watching digital content.

Thus, new digital technologies have great potential both in the field of education in general and for teaching a foreign language in particular. Taking into account all of the above, it can be concluded that today the means of digital communication technologies as media carriers of information are an
integral technical means of teaching a foreign language, which allows solving the complex problems of foreign language education.

**Conclusions and prospects of the research.** The significance of the study lies in clarifying the concept of digital communication technologies as educational products posted on the Internet and aimed at creating conditions for an artificial foreign language environment, the result of which is an independent communicative product. The presented classification of digital communication technologies allows introducing them into the process of teaching a foreign language at any stage of the formation of foreign language communicative competence. The introduction of digital communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language contributes to the formation of competences in all types of educational activities: in the actual learning activity (eliminating gaps in knowledge, the formation of internal motivation for learning the language, and independent learning activities); in the independent cognitive activity of applicants (search for information; its study, development of language and speech skills; creation of the final product); in teaching and educational activities (the formation of the correct ways to use the Internet, the formation of rules of conduct on the network).

Thus, it can be noted that the introduction of digital communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language forms applicants’ professional IT skills. By participating in the creation of their communication products in English, students get the opportunity for self-realization and professional identification, as well as the opportunity to improve their English language proficiency for professional purposes. The value of using digital communication technologies in the process of forming foreign language communicative competence necessitates the modernization of the entire system of language education in institutions of higher education. The advantages of modern technologies are reflected in the formation of internal motivation of applicants for independent study of a foreign language and, as a result, more formed skills of foreign language communicative competence.

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