

**USAGE OF DISTANCE LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES FOR THE FORMATION
OF INFORMATIONAL COMPETENCE OF STUDENTS
OF LANGUAGE SPECIALTIES**

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Abstract: The implementation of language policy in the Republic of Kazakhstan directly depends on what kind of personnel we are preparing. It is very important that foreign language specialists have informational competence, can be trained in the conditions of distance learning, using digital technologies, which will allow them to become a specialist meeting relevant requirements of the modern informational society.

Keywords: distance learning, digital technologies, e-learning course, electronic content, massive open online course.

Introduction

At present, there is rapid and fast development of digital and information-communication technologies all over the world, and their introduction into all spheres of public life, including the educational process. In this connection, the problem of the formation of informational competence of future specialists of a foreign language becomes very relevant. The use of computer technology and electronic educational content, including electronic textbooks and digital educational resources, showed effective results in teaching a foreign language to students. New informational technologies are not only new technical means, but also new forms and methods of teaching, a new approach to the learning process, new technologies to improve the quality of education, including foreign-language education. [1, p. 389].

Today, the digital revolution is taking place all over the world, characterized by a large flow of information and its constant updating. In the period of rapidly developing digital and informational technologies, the ability to navigate this huge flow of information becomes important for any specialist, and this is especially relevant for the future teacher of a foreign language due to the specifics of one's professional activity. The use of modern e-learning tools by teachers for the active involvement of students into the learning process is one of the most

promising areas for the development of foreign-language education.

The priority direction of the country's social policy in the field of education is the integration into the global and European educational space, informatization, humanization and continuity of the educational process against the background of strengthening the function and role of self-education.

The new goals of higher education include ensuring the competitiveness of university graduates, which has become extremely important in socio-economic conditions based on market principles. In this regard, not only the volume and quality of knowledge given at the university is crucial, but also the level of competencies that should ensure that graduates' preparedness for life in modern society. The educational content of students of all specialties, including the linguistic direction, must be such that, in the process of its organization, the learner will qualitatively master functional literacy, and possess methodological, professional and general cultural competence. At the same time, in connection with the formation of the informational society, one of the most important competencies of which a modern specialist should master is informational competence.

The transition to the informational society makes changes in all spheres of human

life, including in the field of education. A modern graduate should be a professional not only in his field of knowledge, but also be able to work with information-and-communication technologies (ICT), have practical skills in using modern computing equipment, communication and information transfer systems, be able to evaluate informational resources for making professional decisions, by other words he should possess an informational culture of the personality and informational competence.

Today, the education system is still mainly focused on the transfer of a certain amount of knowledge. As a result, a specialist is released who cannot always realize himself in his professional activity. The success of solving this problem is determined by the competence of a specialist and, of course, his informational competence.

Informational competence implies, in particular, knowledge both in the field of ICT and in the field of their effective use in the process of distance learning (DL), focused on the use of an informational resource. DL technologies allow creating an educational environment for the formation, development and manifestation of competency. Informational competence of students, enrolled on the basis of the use of distance technologies is formed through the use of informational-and-educational environment of DL.

Summarizing the views of specialists

exploring the essence of informational culture

and the problems of its formation, we can say that informational culture is qualitative characteristic of a person, suggesting a high level of development of skills for receiving and processing information. Informational culture of personality is one of the components of general human culture, a set of informational outlook and knowledge and skills systems that provide targeted independent activities to optimally satisfy individual informational needs using both traditional and new informational technologies (the so-called functional level of informational culture). In its turn, informational literacy of students is the basis, the initial level of informational competency formation and it includes a set of knowledge, skills, habits,

In his Message of January 31, 2017, the President of Kazakhstan noted: “The Fourth Industrial Revolution has begun in the world. The widespread digitalization of the economy will lead to the disappearance of entire industries and the creation of fundamentally new ones. We must cultivate new industries that are being created using digital technologies. It is necessary to develop in the country such promising sectors as 3D- printing, online-trading, mobile banking, digital services, including in healthcare and education, and others. First of all, the role of the educational system should change. Our task is to make education the center of a new model of economic growth.

behavioral qualities of the student, allowing to effectively find, evaluate and use information for successful inclusion in various imaginative activities and relationships. Informational culture and informational competence in the modern informational environment is an integral part of the general culture of a person.

Informational competence of an individual implies active informational activities (human activities associated with the processes of receiving, transforming, accumulating and transmitting information), the need for independent search, information processing, formed selection skills, creative rethinking of necessary information, which will allow to effectively carry out their educational and professional activities.

Training programs should be aimed at developing the ability of critical thinking and skills of independent information search” [Message of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan N.Nazarbayev to the people of Kazakhstan dated January 31, 2017 “Third modernization of Kazakhstan: global competitiveness”. <http://www.akorda.kz>.]

The goal of any educational institution, and, first of all, universities engaged in the training of professional specialists, is the formation of a personality capable of independently building up his educational and cognitive activity and gaining knowledge. The use of ICT in the educational process contributes to the achievement of the established goal and

not only enables self- education, but also leads to the modernization of education, that is, improving and enhancing

the quality of education, increasing access to education and ensuring personal development.

According to the state program “Digital Kazakhstan” for 2017–2021 years, digital society is defined as the modern stage of civilization development, characterized by the dominant role of knowledge and information in all spheres of society, the decisive impact of ICT on people's lives, their education and work, as well as interaction of state, business and society "[2].

Certainly, education cannot exist outside the society in which a person lives; therefore digitalization has actively penetrated all spheres of education, including foreign- language education, which has been undergoing dramatic changes in recent years. These changes are more associated with higher demands of the labor market for specialists of professional foreign-language education.

Professor Kunanbayeva S.S. believes that speaking of the modernization of the system of foreign-language education (FLE), which presupposes the preservation of the social and methodological foundations with the introduction of operational changes to meet the new quality requirements and the professional level of the trained specialists, one cannot deny the role of digital and information-communication technologies, which are used not only for receiving information, but also for the modernization of

education in general, including foreign-language education (FLE) [3].

Teaching foreign languages in higher education today very closely integrates traditional approaches with distance learning, based on the use of ICT and digital technologies in the learning process. The concepts of “digitalization, digital technologies and digital educational resources in foreign-language education”, in the educational-methodical literature are understood as methods, technologies, ways and algorithms for collecting, using, presenting, structuring and transmitting information using digital and information-communication tools, animation, video-and-audio-means of software and computer equipment and telecommunications, video conferencing, means of communication in a foreign language in real time, etc. for learning a foreign language. Informational and digital technologies, as a rule, represent such technical means as audio, video, computer, Internet.

It is not a secret that students show a keen interest in informational and digital technologies in the foreign-language educational field and, in this situation, of course, ICT and DER have a number of positive elements that significantly affect the learning process, and in particular, the process of learning a foreign language.

The widespread use of information,

communication and digital technologies in the process of learning a foreign language

determines their rapid introduction into the educational process and contributes to the modernization of the educational space of higher education. An important component of the teacher's pedagogical skills in modern conditions of society's development is his relevance to the level of science and technology development, his ability to solve professional tasks using ICT and digital technologies.

The use of computers in foreign language lessons significantly increases the intensity of the foreign-language educational process. Interactive foreign language learning with the help of computer-aided learning programs facilitates the implementation of a whole

Digital and ICT technologies in foreign-language learning allow us to present the subject being studied more colorfully using animations, which makes it possible to understand it better and that it is important to motivate students to learn foreign language material. Digital and computer technologies change our way of life, ways of communication, style of thinking and way of thinking, feelings, channels of influence on other people, social and professional skills and behavior. The high-tech environment — computers, smartphones, video games, Internet search engines — reshapes a person's brain and enables him to independently find any information he or she is interested in. Therefore, raising digital

complex of methodological, pedagogical, didactic, and psychological principles, makes the process of foreign language learning more interesting and alive. This method of foreign language training makes it possible to take into account the pace of work of each student. At the same time, the value-semantic sphere of the student is transformed, his cognitive activity increases, which undoubtedly contributes to an effective increase in the level of knowledge and skills when learning a foreign language. However, it must be remembered that the computer cannot completely replace a foreign language teacher in the educational foreign language process. It requires the integration of traditional classes with the teacher and self-study work with digital technology.

literacy among students, starting at school, is one of the most important conditions for the formation of a modern personality. [4, p.282]

The introduction of ICT has changed the nature of educational communication from direct to indirect, shifted the focus from overcoming the distance between subjects of education to finding ways to effectively use modern communication tools in learning and establishing feedback in interpersonal interaction of participants in the educational process at a distance.

Kazakh Ablai khan University of International Relations and World Languages (KazUIR&WL) has actively involved in the implementation of electronic and distance learning, which, of course, contributes to the

developed scientific and methodological base.

In recent years, a rather large number of works on the informatization of foreign language education, the use of computer and distance learning technologies in the educational process have been defended in the dissertation council at KazUIR&WL.

At Abylai Khan KazUIR&WL there is implemented an e-learning system operating on the basis of several platforms:

1) Educational Portal:

- Personal account of the student (Individual schedule, electronic journal)
- Personal account of the teacher (Individual schedule, electronic journal)
- Control (current, midterm)
- Knowledge control (computer testing)
- Questioning
- Applications for obtaining transport cards “Onay”.

2) E-Learning Management System based on «**Moodle 3.3**» contains:

- Full electronic courses in all disciplines (*Syllabus, Performance monitoring, Current control, DER – digital educational resources, links to MOOC and other electronic resources*)
- Toolkit to ensure interactive interaction of participants in the learning process (Student <-> Teacher).

3) The management system of the educational process **1C v8** contains:

- The main tool to support the management of the educational system;

- The tool for monitoring an educational system with a centralized accumulation of information;

- Tools for reporting and collecting statistics [5, p.17].

The used e-learning management system Moodle is based on the works of scientists such as Lev Vygotsky, John Dewey, Jean Piaget, Jan Amos Kamensky, Konstantin Dmitrievich Ushinsky, Ernst von Glaserfeld. Moodle system provides a huge range of opportunities for organizing distance learning, such as:

- forums and blogs that allow you to organize a space for the presentation and discussion of the results of their activities;

- wiki with the help of which one can organize teamwork with documents;

- creation of glossaries, allowing to organize a collective work on the list of terms that will be automatically linked throughout the course content;

- create web-pages with the ability to insert graphic objects, audio and video;

- creation of electronic tests for self-control;

- placement of files of any format;

- databases, which are an extension of the idea of glossaries to work on any structured entries;

- interactive lectures;

- seminars, allowing to organize a multi-item, multi-criteria evaluation of students' works;

- tracking the process of formation of the student's competence;

- discussions in the form of chats and forums, etc.

It should be noted that Moodle system provides interactivity and interaction of students with the teacher, which is one of the most important principles of learning.

Speaking of foreign-language education, it should be borne in mind that combining distance technologies with the traditional learning process can achieve better results. In theory and practice of modeling, in the study of any complex systems, it is customary to be guided by specially developed principles. When developing a model for the formation of informational competence in the process of self-study work of students of language specialties in the conditions of distance education, we relied on certain principles, bearing in mind that "principles" are "initial positions that are realized in the content, organization, methods and techniques of teaching, determine its strategy and tactics". They are among the basic categories of the methodology, the implementation of which in the educational process ensures its effectiveness [6].

Speaking about the principles in the first place, it should be noted that the principles are fundamental requirements that determine the general direction of the pedagogical process, its goals and the content and methodology of the organization.

It should be noted that the concept "learning process" and, in particular, "distance learning" imply regular interaction of the teacher (tutor) and the student. The concept of self-education as a separate element of education means the student's independent work in acquiring knowledge and skills, in other words, competencies necessary for self-education. This is the fundamental difference between distance learning as a whole pedagogical process and the systems and programs of self-education.

Modern teachers have to develop the content of the course, taking into account the needs of both ordinary students and those who study online. Students studying distantly, online, must have flexibility in time and be able to log in at any time to access the course materials. Unfortunately, the lack of direct student contact with the teacher can significantly affect the effectiveness of the learning process. In this regard, the use of online video-conferencing, webinars and chat rooms to simulate the real environment in the

classroom is very useful, but they have several inevitable limitations and shortcomings that negatively affect the learning process in distant form, especially with regard to problems with connecting to Internet and quality of communication channel.

Our university has chosen to implement the distance learning platform Moodle. The open-source learning platform Moodle, released in 2002, competes on equal footing with the world flagships of the distance learning systems market. Moodle combines a wealth of functionality, flexibility, reliability and ease of use, thanks to the fact that an international development team has been working on the system for more than 10 years, under the guidance of the Moodle Foundation in Australia [<https://docs.moodle.org>].

The system is widely known in the world and according to official statistics, it has more than 70,000 installations in more than 100 countries, translated into several dozen languages

[<https://docs.moodle.org>].

Table 1 - Top 10 countries, using the system MOODLE

Country	Number of registered Moodle systems
United States of America	10,404
Spain	7,270
Brazil	4,463
Mexico	3,957
United Kingdom	3,445
Italy	2,800
Germany	2,569

Australia	2,377
India	2,367
Colombia	2,255

As can be seen from the above table №1, the demand for the MOODLE system clearly demonstrates its effectiveness in creating and conducting high-quality distance courses. The system has good scalability: there are installations with hundreds of thousands of users.

All of the above, along with extensive functionality, as well as integration with various third-party applications, gives university professors and school teachers the opportunity to significantly improve the learning process.

The very name of the MOODLE system is an abbreviation of “*Modular Object Oriented Digital Learning Environment*”, which translates as “Modular Object-Oriented Digital Teaching Environment”.

Open source system is a great advantage because it allows the educational institution to significantly reduce the cost of system deployment and integration with other systems and databases. The system imposes rather modest system requirements to the characteristics of the equipment. The modern programming language PHP is used, and it supports many database formats (MySQL, PostgreSQL, MSSQL, Oracle, Interbase, DB2 and ODBC) which reduces the requirements for system administrators. All of this in general provides educational

institutions with the opportunity to effectively implement distance learning, develop distance educational courses and provide feedback between subjects of education.

The process of distance learning involves a variety of organizational forms of educational and cognitive activity of students, as well as ways of interactive interaction with the teacher. Moodle system allows you to realize the joint work of students and teachers, separated by distance and time zones.

The new version of the system Moodle 3.2 is radically different from the previous version of Moodle 2.1. The main advantage is the updated system interface. Using the modern framework Bootstrap makes it possible for all users of the system (teachers, students) to work as comfortable as possible on any digital device, be it computers, tablets or smart-phones. Another innovation of this system is that it has become possible to create characterized by a set of already studied competencies. Having set the targeted set of competencies, the learner receives from the system the recommended set and sequence of courses. The student can see current and targeted competencies in his personal account. They are available to the administrator through the profile of each user. The system calculates the level of each competence on the basis of the final grade for the course and the time that has passed since its passage. After that, the learner will be able to view the recommended learning path on his homepage. The functional management of educational trajectories for competencies in the LMS

interactive virtual tours of the system. A feature of the Moodle 3.2 version is the ability to determine the competence of students in the course as a whole, as well as on the various elements of the course (*lectures, seminars, SSS – students' self-study, etc.*).

A feature of the Moodle 3.1 version is the ability to determine competence in the course as a whole, as well as on the various elements of the course (lectures, seminars, SSS, tests, etc.). The tool is based on the concept of accumulation of competencies, formed during the course study. For each course, there are given the output competencies that the trainee of this course receives after its successful completion and the input competencies that are required to subscribe to this course. Each student is Moodle allows you to organize adaptive learning in Moodle. It can be used for self-preparation for exams, for training, certification and retraining of specialists, as well as for the organization of continuing education and in many other areas.

In addition to the above, system Moodle 3.3 has been updated with new functions and types of tasks. For example, such as “Choice of missing words”, “Dragging into text”, “Dragging markers”, “Dragging onto an image”, etc. In addition, system Moodle 3.3 allows you to keep an electronic journal that takes into account students' attendance. The “Attendance” module is responsible for this, which allows the teacher to keep records of class attendance, and students

to see information about their own attendance. This system allows you to automatically receive an electronic certificate upon completion of the

courses, which serves as an additional motivating incentive for students.

The work on the organization and implementation of the distance learning process can be divided into 2 stages:

I. Preparatory. At this stage, the teacher creates and fills the e-course with logically structured educational information taking into account the specifics of the subject, provides for the possibility of advising students, and plans the educational activities of all subjects;

II. Main. Organization of student learning activities in strict accordance with the curriculum, as well as the adjustment of educational material and the structure of the e- course.

By organizing distance learning in the system Moodle, it is possible to carry out: processing, storing, structuring and filling the electronic course with educational information. It uses modules for acquiring and controlling knowledge and skills (*Lecture, Web Page, Task, Test*), organizing interactivity (*Forum, Chat*), as well as modules containing explanatory information (*Glossary*).

Based on the experience of working with e-courses at Moodle, conducted with undergraduate students, as well as with undergraduates and doctoral students at the Kazakh Ablai khan University of International Relations and World Languages, it is safe to say that the system

MOODLE provides the teacher with all the necessary

tools for conducting educational process as in the distant form, so mixed one.

The Moodle platform integrates and joints various software (*Hot potatoes, Audacity, Translation Tester, etc.*) and it is a connecting element in the system of continuous distance education of specialists with a foreign language in the field of intercultural communication, who are being prepared in Ablai khan KazUIR&WL.

To conduct distance learning, you must first create an e-course. The e-course, as an important didactic tool, significantly enriches the traditional forms of education and can implement non-traditional, mixed or fully distance learning. In this article, we only briefly review the general approach to the educational and methodological organization of electronic theoretical and practical courses on the Moodle platform.

The problem of creating high-quality electronic courses based on modern computer technology is a very urgent task. E-learning course (ELC) is a remote e-learning resource that allows you to conduct training, self-study and assessment of the knowledge gained in the discipline. Therefore, the quality of the education received depends on how well it is prepared. A modern e-learning course (ELC) is a holistic didactic system consisting of various e-learning materials and organizing the process of teaching and

managing students according to individual and optimal curricula [7, p.163].

An important link in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of the educational process in Moodle is the educational and methodological organization and formalization of the course. A review of the literature on the system Moodle indicates that it describes in sufficient detail the technological side of the Moodle platform [8, p.360].

Regarding the issue of structuring electronic courses, including foreign-language education in the Moodle system, the following should be noted. Designing an e- course is a complex technological and organizational process. The basic elements for the course are the standards implemented on the basis of the electronic platform Moodle 3.2.

The use of the Moodle system for distance learning will allow teachers and students to ensure the quality development of training courses, monitor their learning and enhance students' cognitive activity using the principle of independence, interactivity and competence-based approach in teaching, and

of specialization, credit technology of education (CTE). The total amount of EC, the volume of the main content and additional material is determined by the author, based on the curricula and syllabi.

Summarizing all the above, it can be noted that the system of distance learning **Moodle**, in particular version 3.2., is a modern innovative means of the educational process, allowing to conduct learning distantly in distance form. The technological capabilities of the Moodle system comply with the requirements of the credit technology of education in respect of the educational and methodological organization of distant theoretical and practical electronic courses. All compulsory forms of education (lectures, seminars, SSS) find their place and are

also allows monitoring and managing distance learning at all stages of educational process.

Thus, distance learning will only be effectively implemented in a foreign-language education, when ICT and digital technologies will be used in the course of training that will allow the future specialist to form informational competence.

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