



# DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES IN STUDYING ENGLISH AT UNIVERSITY: TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS

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## ANNOTATION

*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 aim of the study is to develop a methodology for the formation of foreign language communicative competence in the process of using digital communication technologies in a non-linguistic university. The study of the evolutionary development of the principles of digitalization of the process of teaching foreign languages and the approbation of the methodology for the use of digital communication products in foreign language lessons at the university actualized the need to include the latter in the language education program.*

**KEY WORDS:** *digitalization of education, foreign language communicative competence, principles of connectivism, means of synchronous communication, means of asynchronous communication, communicative product, artificial language environment.*

Proficiency in a foreign language makes the professional portrait of a modern specialist harmonious and complete, bringing to it such personal and professional qualities as sociability, curiosity, erudition, the ability to think creatively, respond to changes in a timely and adequate manner, work in a team, make independent non-standard decisions, generate new ones, original ideas, solve creative problems. In modern conditions, teaching a foreign language, along with basic linguistic knowledge, should ensure entry into a foreign culture and practice, be aimed at developing adaptation, socialization and professional mobility of a future specialist. To do this, it is necessary to introduce new digital technologies, including in the process of learning English, and also to create the necessary condition for creating students' interest in comprehending spiritual and moral qualities - the opportunity to express themselves in public life, self-determine and present themselves, show mental independence and initiative [9, 10].

To date, in the domestic and foreign methodology, there is a sufficiently developed base for the use of digital educational technologies in the process of teaching foreign languages [1-10]. Most authors note that the use of digital technologies contributes to the formation of foreign language communicative competence of students 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 and the questioning of teachers and students showed 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 non-linguistic universities remain open. This situation is justified by the following reasons:

- Insufficient material and technical equipment of universities, which hinders the organization of the educational process using digital communication technologies;
  - Insufficient level of proficiency in the methodology of work on the use of innovative communicative technologies among teachers;
  - The complexity of the selection of digital communication technologies associated with their great diversity;
  - The focus of most digital communication technologies on in-depth study of the language;
  - A relatively small amount of classroom time allocated for learning a language in a non-linguistic university.
- As a result, the following contradictions arise:
- Between the social order of society for the digitalization of education and the unpreparedness of higher education for the use of innovative teaching aids;
  - Between a wide variety of digital educational technologies and the inability of teachers to correctly select them;
  - Between the desire of students to use innovative educational products and the insufficient amount of classroom time for their application.

Digital educational technologies were first introduced into the learning process abroad. In foreign methodological literature, the term digital technologies describes information and communication cloud, mobile and smart technologies.



The process of introducing digital technologies into language teaching, according to Warcher computer assisted language Learning, went through the following stages of development: behavioral, communicative and integration [2]. Let us analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each stage in relation to the communicative significance.

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 in teaching foreign languages. One-way work with a computer did not provide the opportunity to communicate in the target language.

Under the traditional technologies (methods, techniques) of learning, we will understand those that do not provide for the interaction of the subjects of the educational process with the digital environment.

At the moment, the semantic field of the concept of "digital technologies" (including in teaching a foreign (English) language) remains blurred. Many researchers give conflicting interpretations.

So, M. V. Kuzminova, in fact, identifies digital technologies for teaching English with IT technologies associated with the use of the web environment and the formation of "digital literacy" [3].

T. Yu. Kizilova under digital technologies for teaching a foreign language means the use of electronic dictionaries and online lectures [4]. There is also the concept of digital technologies as learning technologies associated with the use of computer technology [5].

In our opinion, these and other interpretations of the term should be associated with narrower concepts of computer learning, computer technologies, etc., still used in pedagogy and teaching methods, but not with digital technologies. I. V. Robert [6] interprets the concept of digital technologies differently. She notes that digital technologies allow you to create a kind of copy of the physical world, while the word "digital" reflects the trend towards the intellectualization of learning and is used to refer to any object that works with discrete values.

The communicative stage set as its goal the creation of communicative products based on their own 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 student-computer, computer-student system.

The communicative stage served as a theoretical basis for the creation of new computer programs aimed at independent search for material, self-reflection and interaction between students. 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 technology.

The widespread ubiquity of the Internet, the development of multimedia technologies 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. Students have the opportunity to interact synchronously or asynchronously, and, importantly, for free. The conditions of the language environment have expanded their boundaries and functionality. It became 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 socially 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 served as the basis for the formation of an online collaboration system and provided instant access to educational material. At the socially interactive stage, digital technologies become an integral tool in the learning process. On the basis of modern teaching principles, J. Siemens formulated the principles of connectivism of the socially interactive stage [7]:

- The principle of diversity of opinions.
- The principle of semantic association of units of knowledge or sources of information.
- The principle of the predominance of the opportunity and ability to learn over today's knowledge.
- The principle of lifelong learning.
- The principle of finding up-to-date information.

In the Russian method of teaching foreign languages, the social-interactive stage marked the beginning of a competence-oriented concept. This concept implies the development of skills to independently search for the necessary information, 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 socially interactive stage of education are:

- The principle of multimedia
- The presence of visual clarity in the lesson in the format of listening to audio and video recordings
- The principle of interactivity
- Involvement of all participants in the educational process in vigorous activity;
- the principle of personification
- Student orientation.

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 you to implement the principles of learning foreign languages described above and apply 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.

At the present stage of development of education, digital communication technologies can be classified based on various criteria. Consider possible classifications.

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:

- means of synchronous communication (synchronous communication tools);
- means of asynchronous communication (asynchronous communication tools).

Synchronous communication tools are digital communication tools that enable real-time communication (chat, video chat or audio chat). Examples of such tools are Skype and Yahoo, Messenger.

Asynchronous communication tools are digital communication tools that provide the ability to communicate with a time delay (forums, and audio and e-mail, websites, blogs, etc.). An example of asynchronous tools are podcasts (from the English. Podcast). These digital tools expand the possibilities in improving the skills of oral foreign speech [8]. It should be noted that synchronous and asynchronous communication technologies have great methodological potential for learning a foreign language for the following reasons:

- ensure the implementation of a differentiated approach in the study of a foreign language, depending on the individual characteristics of students;
- provide the opportunity to repeatedly listen to the material in slow motion or the original pace without time limits;
- offer a choice of materials tailored to teachers and students;
- organize autonomous learning through the didactic integration of modern technologies;
- suggest the possibility of audio and video recording;
- allow you to work with educational material at any time convenient for the student;
- constantly updated.

Let us describe the stages of work with digital communication technologies in the process of formation of the named competence.

The first stage of work is preparatory. This is a preliminary briefing, during which the development of lexical units is organized in order 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 on the basis of 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 your opinion about the content of audio and video recordings;
- Discussion of the content of created communication products;
- creating an oral diary;
- Presentation of the results of the group product;
- Oral summarizing of the written text;
- swarm games.

It should be emphasized that digital communication technologies have a number of advantages in relation to the communicative attitude towards 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. In an effort to be heard all over the world, a modern student is more attentive to both the external and internal side of a foreign language speech. Digital technologies allow the teacher to implement the principle of differentiation by organizing work in microgroups in accordance with the levels of students.

The introduction of digital communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language contributes to the formation of competencies in all types of educational activities:

- in the actual learning activity (elimination of gaps in knowledge, the formation of internal motivation for learning the language and independent learning activities)
- in the independent cognitive activity of students (search for information; its study, development of language and speech skills; creation of the final product);
- in educational activities (formation of the correct ways of using the Internet, the formation of rules of conduct on the network).

The practical significance of the study is in the developed methodology 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 [11,12].

Thus, we can note that the introduction of digital communication technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language forms students' professional IT skills. By participating in the creation of their own communicative 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 higher educational institutions. The advantages of modern technologies are reflected in the formation of internal motivation of students for independent study of a foreign language and, as a result, more formed skills of foreign language communicative competence.

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