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THE USE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN THE PROCESS OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS TRAINING: EXPERIENCE AND PROSPECTS

Contemporary world depends to a great extent on the development of technology. The information society determines existence of a person in a technological environment in which today's experience is significantly different from yesterday's experience, and knowledge that has been actual and proficient recently may lose its significance and value or even find a denial the following day [1, 23]. Information technologies are introduced in various spheres of life, and that fact predetermines their active use by the overwhelming majority of the members of society in their routine activities.

At present, the use of up-to-date information and communication technologies (ICT) in education has become one of the most important and steady tendencies in the development of the educational process all over the world. Such process is considered to be the logical manifestation of the informatization of all the spheres of human activity [2, 139].

Modern ICT stand out as an effective tool that facilitates the mastering of knowledge, makes the process of learning communicatively oriented, active, visible and individual. Today, the use of ICT is one of the conditions of successful learning of a foreign language [3, 58]. At the same time, the above-mentioned technologies also play an important role in the process of training of future foreign languages teachers, in particular teachers of English, as the mastery of modern methods of their use should make an important component of the professional competence of today's teacher.

Such context hints that ICT could be used as an effective tool to engage in educational activities and to reflect on the content under study. Under these conditions desktops/laptops, tablets and smartphones become the mind tools, including the access to word processors, databases, spreadsheets, expert systems, multimedia and hypermedia construction, micro world learning environments and specific software for specific purposes. At the same time, the full integration of ICT in educational institutions isn't confined to a technological process. The participants of the educational process must feel the need and desire to use them, and teachers must know how to integrate them to the students' needs, which makes the whole problem of a cultural nature rather than of instrumental one [4].

The consolidated European and national experience of the use of ICT in the process of training of future English language teachers enables us to distinguish the following main lines of activities incorporating the above-mentioned technologies with the aim of development of professional competence of the students:

- design of program maintenance for classroom activities;
- approbation of electronic and informational teaching aids;
- work with testing programs;
- use of on-line resources, databases and dictionaries;
- work in the system of distance learning, etc.

In the process of training of future English language teachers, we use the majority of the above-mentioned technologies. Teachers design digital manuals, textbooks, digital complexes of educational disciplines; actively use presentation technologies; develop and implement on-line testing, etc. However, specific ICT implemented in the educational process deserve special attention. Thus, the students of our University have the access to the Moodle distance learning system, which contains digital versions of academic disciplines in accordance with the curriculum. While compiling these complexes, the specificity of the course, its theoretical or practical orientation are taken into consideration; the complexes are stuffed with the main and

additional material related to the course, the tasks for control and self-control are also included in order to give the students the necessary amount of learning autonomy.

In general, the work in the Moodle distance learning system is well received by the students, since it allows them to spend extra learning time when it is convenient to them, and also to have access to a greater amount of information. On the other hand, it also has drawbacks, such as the lack of information and technological competence of individual students in general, which causes problems while accessing the materials, or dishonest approach of individual students to remote testing when the time limits for the test are not set in particular.

All in all, digital versions of academic disciplines for Moodle distance learning system are designed in accordance with peculiarities and specific structure of educational activities of the students aiming at the solution of educational goals of a particular lesson. Moreover, a potential direction at this stage of the development of ICT in education and Moodle distance learning system in particular is the design of digital training courses for developing, teaching and assessment purposes that implement the idea of personally oriented education. The use of such type of education provides the organization of various types of educational activities aimed at development of autonomous cognitive activity, creative potential of the student, various types of thinking, training of memory, development of reaction to unpredictable situations, ability to make adequate decisions in difficult situations, etc. [5].

During the classes of English language practice within the framework of the institutional experiment, English native speakers are involved in the educational process via on-line communication. We use the Skype and Google Hangouts application software in order to maintain the technical side of the process, and the whole class is usually organized in the language laboratory which is equipped with all the necessary hardware. Such classes are held in the form of a webinar when students have the opportunity to hear useful information about the topic they are currently studying, ask questions and share their thoughts on the topic. The webinar is usually followed by the discussion and fulfilment of tasks in small groups.

This type of educational process organization with the use of ICT is extremely useful for the development of students' communication and cultural competence, allowing them to overcome the fear of the language barrier as soon as possible. Besides, it is popular in particular among the students of first and second years of bachelor program as for the majority of them such classes are the first and/or only experience to communicate with English native speakers, consequently it induces additional motivation to study English. Moreover, the students of third and last years of bachelor program and undergraduate students within such classes get an opportunity to integrate the knowledge, skills and abilities acquired during the learning of theoretical and professional disciplines into their communication competence.

The educational process at our University is also connected with the sporadic use of massive open online courses (MOOCs), which have gained popularity throughout the world in recent years. Despite the fact that such courses are a purely distance learning form and were intended as a substitute for traditional university education, their elements can be easily integrated into the educational process, ensuring interactivity and relevance of the study material.

Since 2012 we have been observing the rise of popularity and development of MOOCs, which are provided by a large number of online educational platforms such as Edx, Coursera, Udacity, Futurelearn, etc. Experts mention the significant potential of this kind of distance learning, but also accentuate on the fact that MOOCs can hardly replace the traditional university education [6].

Global and European experience of design and marketing of MOOCs is also important for the development of Ukrainian society, including higher education, which should play its role in disseminating knowledge through the use of up-to-date technologies. As I. Prymachenko mentions: "The history of mankind knows only few technologies that were able to change the destiny of entire nations and civilizations. A lot of them were revolutionary innovations in the history of education: writing, university, Gutenberg printing press, Internet. This is quite logical, because the level of education in the society serves as an efficiency factor, which is multiplied by

all human activity. If MOOCs are one of these breakthrough technologies, their prompt implementation in Ukraine is a matter of national importance" [7].

MOOCs like "English grammar and style", "How to write an essay", "Conversational English skills", "Academic and business writing" contain information that complements the content of the corresponding courses provided by the University curriculum, gives opportunities for further learning of the language and culture, and development of cultural competence, and enables the students to communicate with peers from other countries who also go through such courses.

For instance, the MOOC "Academic and business writing" [8] enables students to apply in practice the skills they get during "English language practice" and "Business English" courses. Surely, students do practical writing assignments in the class or part of their homework, however doing tasks like "Writing business email messages", "Writing statements of purpose and cover letters", "Writing in response to reading" or "Creative writing about reading" enhances students' writing skills and overall communication competence, as they are supposed not only to create the writing of their own, but also check and assess the works of other students within the course, and be ready to discuss focal points of the tasks at the forum. We consider this type of activity as a good supplement to the content of the subjects, stipulated by the curriculum.

Another instance is the MOOC "Working with translation" [9] which supplements the compulsory professional training courses "Theory and practice of translation" and "Selected points of theory and practice of translation". Unlike in the previously mentioned MOOC, here the students first of all have the chance to extend their knowledge in history and theory of translation covering the points like "Metaphors of translation in the historical perspective", "Cultural translation: localization and recreation", "Translation profession and translation users", "Theoretical and industry approaches to quality", etc. The use of supplementary material from the MOOC develops students' skills of autonomous learning and proves to be useful for extension of student's mental outlook and improvement of professional competence.

Therefore, we consider it appropriate to emphasize the prospect of using the existing and organizing new massive open online courses on specific aspects of foreign languages teaching and teacher training with the aim of further learning of the language and culture, and development of cultural and professional competence of future English language teachers.

The above-mentioned experience of ICT use in the process of English language teachers training is not exhaustive and hints the prospects of re-evaluation and addition of new ICT and methods of their use in the future. University instructors and lecturers are actively working on expanding the list of technologies used, as well as their variability and applicability to the training of English language teachers. The competence of foreign language proficiency shows the tendency of being associated with ICT competence, and it makes the role of a teacher in such conditions even more responsible and important.

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Summary. Modern ICT stand out as an effective tool that facilitates the mastering of knowledge, makes the process of learning communicatively oriented, active, visible and individual. Today, the use of ICT is one of the conditions of successful learning of a foreign language. In the article the consolidated European and national experience of the use of ICT in the process of training of future English language teachers is presented. In particular, main lines of activities incorporating ICT with the aim of development of professional competence of the students are distinguished.

Keywords: information and communication technologies, English language teachers training, Moodle distance learning system, on-line communication, massive open on-line course.

Аннотация. Современные ИКТ являются эффективным инструментом, который облегчает овладение знаниями, делает процесс обучения коммуникативно ориентированным, активным и индивидуальным. В настоящее время использование ИКТ является одним из условий успешного овладения иностранным языком. В статье представлен консолидированный европейский и национальный опыт использования ИКТ в процессе обучения будущих учителей английского языка, в частности описаны основные направления учебной деятельности, включающие использование ИКТ в целях развития профессиональной компетентности студентов.

Ключевые слова: информационно-коммуникационные технологии, подготовка преподавателей английского языка, система дистанционного обучения Moodle, онлайн-общение, массовый открытый онлайн-курс.