The role of digital technologies in the formation of communicative competence in teaching a second foreign language (Spanish) to bachelors in Economics and Finance

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Abstract — **In this study, an attempt was made to justify the use of digital technologies in the formation of communicative competence of bachelors in Economics and Finance who study Spanish as a second foreign language. Modern conditions for the development of education in the multicultural world form new challenges that require a change of approach in the teaching of foreign languages. The paper presents the results of a study of the level of integration of digital technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language and their effectiveness in the formation of various skills and abilities in the framework of the development of communicative competence. One of the main tasks of a modern university is to educate a highly motivated student who is ready to work in constantly changing economic conditions. The study identified the most effective motivational basis in the study of a foreign language.**

Keywords — digital technologies, communicative competence, Spanish language, multilingual personality, motivation, foreign language teaching, integration of digital technologies, digital competence.

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to justify the use of digital technologies in the process of learning a foreign language, in particular in the formation of communicative competence. Particular attention is paid to their use in the process of teaching in non-linguistic universities of such discipline as the "Second Foreign Language". With regard to the concept of "Second foreign language", it should be noted that the authors of this study use it to name the discipline itself in the curriculum of many Russian universities.

The relevance of the study is based on the concept of the formation of a multilingual personality as the defining approach of language policy in modern education.

The object of the research is modern digital technologies and the level of their integration into the process of teaching a foreign language.

The novelty of this study is determining the necessary level of integration of digital technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language as the second one for a Bachelor in Economics and Finance. The goal of mastering the "Second Foreign Language" discipline in most universities is to achieve a level of foreign (Spanish) language corresponding to levels B1-B2 according to the Common European Classification of Competences for Foreign Language, CEFR. The number of hours allocated in the curriculum for the development of this discipline is limited in most Russian universities. Thus, the teacher and the student are faced with the task of achieving the level of proficiency in a foreign language declared in the program, provided that it is learned from scratch, and with a limited amount of hours.

The purpose of the study determined the need to solve the following tasks:

- justify the relevance of the change of approach in the teaching of a foreign language
- study the concepts of "competence", "communicative competence"
- determine the levels of integration of digital technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language
- justify the need of use of digital technologies in the formation of communicative competence in teaching the second foreign language (Spanish) to Bachelors in Economics and Finance

II. METHODOLOGY

To solve the tasks, the following methods and techniques of scientific research were used: analytical, monographic, system analysis and comparisons, questionnaire survey. The method of expert assessments was also applied. The theoretical and methodological basis of the study was the scientific works of Russian and foreign scientists in the field of linguistics and methods of teaching foreign languages.

III. RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH

Currently, there is a huge number of approaches and a variety of methods of teaching foreign languages. In our opinion, one of the reasons for such diversity is the development of a new economic model, namely the knowledge economy. For the first time, this term was used by the Austro-American economist Fritz Machlup. (Machlup, 1962) In his work "The Production and Dissemination of Knowledge in the US" F. Machlup notes that even in 1958, the contribution of the

knowledge economy to the US GNP was about 29%. F. Machlup included the following five groups in this sector:

1. Education (44,1%)
2. Research and development (8.1%)
3. Mass media (radio, television, telephone, etc.) (28.1%)
4. Information technology (6.5%)
5. Information services (13.2%). (Machlup, 1962)

First of all, F. Machlup defined knowledge as a combination of scientific and everyday knowledge. Subsequently, he spoke of knowledge as a process of production and distribution. According to F. Mahlup's concept, information becomes knowledge when it is "communicated and used". Thus, it can be stated that the production of knowledge is a source of economic growth and competitiveness of any state. However, the transfer and use of knowledge in modern conditions is impossible without mastering the main tool, namely the "language", both native and foreign.

In this regard, we would like to pay special attention to the issue of teaching a foreign language in the modern conditions of development of the multicultural world.

Currently, the Council of Europe's approach to learning foreign languages is determined by the concepts of multilingualism and intercultural communication. So, it's not just about learning one or more foreign languages, it's necessary to create a language environment where the student could demonstrate all their linguistic knowledge and skills. The purpose of the educational process is the formation of communicative competence based on full knowledge and language experience, where languages are interconnected and interact with each other. Training a specialist who speaks one or more foreign languages in the system of higher vocational education "should contribute to the formation of graduates of such abilities that will enable them to use a foreign language as a tool for communication in the dialog of cultures, as well as a means of scientific and technical (professional) communication". (Кобзева, 2011)

So, the concept of "communicative competence" is put forward.

The concept of "competence" is multivalued and include a wider range of meanings than the traditional "knowledge", "ability", "skill", due to the fact that it covers motivational, social and behavioral aspects. According to A.V. Khutorskiy "competence is a set of qualities that are necessary for their use in any industry". (Хуторской, 2015)

The presence of competence is expressed in the ability to use knowledge and skills, in success in solving certain problems of a wide range on the basis of practical experience. If we consider the definition of competence more accurately, indicating the relevant sources, the competence means:

- a set of abilities and personal qualities necessary for the successful performance of their work, their description in behavioral terminology;

- certain character and abilities, which are prerequisites that internally determine the effectiveness of a person performing actions;

- characteristic of a person, which consists of knowledge, skills and behaviors necessary for the activity.

Consequently, competence, depending on the training of a specialist, explains a given social norm, which is considered necessary for high-quality and productive activities in the relevant field.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, competence is more than knowledge and skills, it is the ability to withstand the mobilization of psychosocial resources and complex requirements in specific situations.(OECD, Organización para la Cooperación y Desarrollos Económicos, 2006). For example, the ability to communicate effectively is a competence that is based on a person's knowledge of the language, practical skills in applying technologies and information when communicating with people. Exploring the ideas of N. Chomsky's language competence, (Хомский, 1972)D. Himes introduces the term "communicative competence", thus linking linguistic competence with its applicability in various communication situations.(Hymes, 1972) Thus, an individual's ability to behave adequately and effectively in a single, concrete situation is a communicative competence. Exploring the concept of foreign language communicative competence, D. Himes divided it into the following components: linguistic; sociolinguistic; discursive; strategic. (Hymes, 1972)

The authors of the study consider it expedient to single out another component of communicative competence, namely "digital competence". According to the Council of the European Parliament, "digital competence is the confident use of technology for work, leisure and communication". (Parlamento y el Consejo Europeo, 2006)

Thus, learning a foreign language is becoming increasingly practical and is characterized by the integration of digital technologies into traditional teaching methods.

As mentioned above, modern society is developing in a new type of economy, namely the knowledge economy, the consequence of which is undoubtedly the development of digital competence.

New technologies, social networks and global digitalization have changed our approaches both in the business world and in the educational environment, where training requires a new teacher prepared for new challenges. As known, the modern digital young generation grew up surrounded by electronic devices: computers, video games, digital music players, tablets, webcams, digital television, mobile phones, the Internet, email and SMS, requires training conditions different from those of the last century.

Kh. Casado and G. Bermejo define modern youth as people "whose culture, psychology and values are subject to the influence of information technology". (Casado, 2000) The key characteristics of the digital generation in the educational environment are immediate action, multitasking, the game aspect, which explain why the modern student is no longer satisfied with the traditional forms: lectures, long theoretical presentations or classical methods, in other words, he does not agree with the passive role in the audience.

Taking into account the above stated goals and objectives in teaching a foreign language, it becomes necessary to change the approach to teaching. The digital environment is now an integral part of our life, and accordingly the use of digital technologies in the teaching of foreign languages has recently become one of the components of the educational process.

In our opinion, the inclusion of digital technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language is advisable regardless of

the method chosen. This may be the fundamental (classical) method, and the lingua-sociocultural, and communicative. The main question that arises is how to use modern digital technologies most effectively.

The authors of this study applied the ideas expressed in the works of the American professor Ruben Puetendur (Puetendura, 2009) to the process of using information technologies in the teaching of a foreign language. In particular:

1.	Substitution stage. In this case, we are talking about the use of computer technology as a "substitution" for previously performed actions. For example, using a computer instead of a typewriter, or using a text editor for typing. In this case there are no functional changes in the process of teaching and learning. The teacher still remains the central figure.

2.	Augmentation stage. At this stage, the computer and various digital resources are a tool for solving specific tasks. Various tests (lexical, grammatical, cultural studies) developed by the teacher on the basis of such platforms as Edmodo, Google-forms and others can serve as an example of tasks at this stage. At this stage, we can already talk about some changes in the educational process, namely, the student receives instant feedback, as a result of which he begins to take an increasingly active part in the learning process, i.e. the focus of learning shifts somewhat towards the learner.

3.	Modification stage. At this stage, students perform tasks using digital technology. As an example, one can cite such a type of assignments as writing an essay with the use of a hand-written schedule as illustrating, supporting materials, or links, with a further presentation of the result of the work to other teachers, to their colleagues, i.e. wider audience. Or, this essay should be published in a blog with the possibility of further commenting by other students or by any user of the Internet space, i.e. at this stage, digital technologies are used to transform, redesign the task. The motivation of the student increases primarily because of the presence of a real audience and the quickness of the feedback from the teacher and other students.

4.	Redefinition stage. At this stage, digital technologies are becoming a tool for setting new pedagogical tasks that were previously impossible. For example, creating a digital story instead of a regular essay using the entire spectrum of multimedia tools, followed by publication on the world wide web. Another example would be a team assignment to create an advertisement for a particular product or service. At the same time, within the team of students, individual tasks and functions are distributed in order to create a single final product. Students access external sources for information and the assignment itself. At this stage, digital technologies exist as a means for learning, at the center of which is the student themselves.

According to Ruben Puetendura, all four levels of integrating digital technologies into the teaching process are effective, but the first two contribute to the effectiveness of the lesson, while the last two transform the learning process itself, contribute to the development of new qualities in the student, i.e. the higher is the level, the deeper we immerse ourselves in technology.

However, the use of digital technology should not be the purpose itself. The main thing, according to Puetendura, is the forethought and awareness. HOW, WHY and WHAT, these are the three main questions that the teacher must answer before integrating digital technologies into the learning process.

With regard to foreign languages, in particular, for the formation of communicative competence, in our opinion, it is advisable to use all 4 stages of the integration of digital technologies, depending on the following factors:

1.	What kind of speech activity is involved (speaking, listening, writing, reading).

2.	The required level of language acquisition (including professional tasks).

3.	The basic technique used for learning a foreign language.

As part of the communicative competence of the student, it is necessary to develop such skills and abilities as phonetic and phonological, dialogic and monologue speech skills, grammatical skills, writing and speech skills, oral speech skills, and lexical skills.

The authors conducted research on the effectiveness of various digital technologies in teaching Spanish as a second foreign language among students of the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation and students of the National Research University Higher School of Economics. The examples of the most successfully used digital technologies with a description of a number of tasks, as well as the skills and abilities they form are shown below.

For the formation of phonetic and phonological skills, we use web resources that translate speech into text. As an independent work, the student can record a small fragment of speech and then view the correctness of the spoken fragment, comparing it with the original. These may be tools available on PCs, mobile applications and online services. As an example, such resources as speechpad.ru, dictation.io and others can be given. Another version of the task for practicing phonetic and phonological skills is web resources that allow you to record your own voice. Having made an audio recording of a piece of text or dialogue offered by a teacher, the student should share it with other students of his group, for example, on an online padlet-type board with the possibility of listening to each other and online commenting on both the advantages and disadvantages of the work done. Resources for the creation of comics were effective (wittycomics, toondoo). In this type of tasks, independent work is combined with the need to voice comics in pairs in the classroom.

In the formation and development of grammatical skills, educational platforms are the most effective, allowing teachers to develop grammatical tests with a choice of tasks in the form of: yes-no; alternative test; test with missing keywords; conformance test. Some resources allow you to attach to each question / answer links or files with the necessary comments, which at the request of the teacher can be prompts for the assignment or comments for grammatical material. Resources like Edmodo, Google Forms can be an example. It is noteworthy that such resources allow you to organize an online discussion of the controversial or most difficult aspects both between students and between the teacher and students.

Particular attention should be paid to the verification and evaluation capabilities these resources provide. In most cases, the student sees their result instantly and has the opportunity to discuss them with the teacher. Thus, an effective "student-teacher-student" feedback is established, in which the student

has the opportunity to carry out an independent error analysis, discuss them with the teacher and/or with other students, and the faster the teacher's response occurs, the higher is the result of mastering the material. In addition, the teacher has the ability to conduct analytical work on the nature of errors, review the frequency of errors, track statistics by groups, and thus make appropriate adjustments to the educational process, devoting more time to problem issues in each specific group or individual student. In other words, there is a technology of student-centered learning in close cooperation. This approach is consistent with modern goals in teaching foreign languages.

In the formation of lexical skills within the framework of the development of communicative competence among students of non-linguistic universities, learning a second foreign language from scratch, special attention was paid to the study of professional vocabulary from the very beginning of study. The most effective in this section are ICTs that allow to create lexical tests with elements of gamification (for example, quizlet), crosswords (for example, puzzle.crossword). It is worth paying attention to the fact that the specificity of universities teaching students a foreign language as an auxiliary tool in their main professional activity consists in the simultaneous study of professional vocabulary both in the first and second foreign languages, and in their native language. In this regard, drawing up crosswords using professional terminology is useful both for learning a foreign language and for deeper mastering the semantic content of the term itself. When giving a definition to the term, the student interprets its content once again. The tasks on creating a cloud from words on a specific topic, creating glossaries in the professional field using wiki or other resources are of similar effectiveness.

All the above tasks, in addition to the formation and development of phonetic phonological, grammatical and lexical competencies, also contribute to the development of other professional and systemic competencies. For example, they develop the ability to use digital technology tools for professional activities, the ability to find, understand and transmit new information when working with reference materials in the target language, the ability to work in a team, as well as the skills of independent remote work, the ability to select and use materials for independent study based on from their capabilities and more.

In addition to the previously considered skills and abilities, an integral part of communicative competence is also the speech activity. There are 4 types of speech activity: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Listening and reading are receptive, and speaking and writing are productive types of speech activity.

For students of economic specialties studying a second foreign language, the development of analytical reading skills is necessary and extremely effective. As an example, we can consider the following type of task: the teacher places text on a Google Drive type sharing resource. The subject of the text should, if possible, coincide with the topic that students study in the framework of their main specialty. Next, students are invited using the function suggesting to comment and discuss the selected terms, phrases. Give them Russian equivalents using online dictionaries. If the text contains digital, statistical or other indicators, students may be asked to build a graph based on the material they read. As a result, the student is able to find,

understand and transmit new information, effectively use reference material in the target language, highlight the main idea, highlight supporting words, use a language guess, establish a text hierarchy.

The resources for visualization of chronological events using the time axis, geolocation, photo, video, graphs are interesting (timeline.knightlab or myhistro). For example, on the basis of the read text about the history of a company, students are invited to create an interactive history with a time axis, geolocation, photos and other tools. This type of task allows students to comprehend the content of the text, to draw a conclusion based on the facts contained in the text; evaluate and interpret the facts. You can also invite students to create a questionnaire based on the read text using a resource like surveymonkey.com, post a link to the Padlet board and invite other students of the group to answer questions.

When forming the skills and abilities of writing, the teacher is faced with the task of teaching the student to create language constructs in accordance with the grammatical, lexical, syntactic and spelling norms of the language being studied; use techniques of language compression, logical consistency and connectivity; use cliché, stable formulas for various forms of written communication. For students of economic universities who study a second foreign language, the most relevant type of written communication is business correspondence. This study revealed the effectiveness of resources, allowing you to create a text on a template, for example, IEW Writing Tools Lite, resources for creating a resume, infographics.

Writing is closely related to listening. Modern digital technology offers a huge range of resources that allow you to form and develop the ability to listen and recognize foreign speech: viewing and listening to news messages, podcasts, resources that translate written texts into audio files. In addition, there is a huge amount of resources in foreign languages with audio or video materials and tasks developed for them, in the form of tests of various forms. In case of Spanish language, these resources are practicaespañol.com, profedeele.com.

Speaking is a type of productive type of speech activity, through which oral verbal communication is carried out, which is an integral part in the formation of communicative competence in a student of foreign language speech. The purpose of teaching this type of speech is the formation of such skills and abilities that will allow the future specialist in the field of economics and finance to effectively use their knowledge to carry out oral communication both in the household and professional fields. The most effective method of teaching this type of speech activity is a communicative situation. Modern digital technology is one of the most effective ways to implement this method. So, for example, training platforms like Rosetta Stone offer tasks for creating interactive dialogue, i.e. the student verbally builds a dialogue using the microphone by answering questions that appear on the screen. Further, the program gives an assessment of the adequacy and correctness of the answers. The theme of the dialogue is determined by the teacher. Also, the present study revealed the effectiveness of such a task as creating a video resume, with the need to view the result with other students in the group. Tasks for describing graphs, infographics, creating business cases and quests are effective for training both dialogue and monologue speech.

As part of the study, the authors conducted a survey on students, in order to identify the motivational grounds for learning a foreign language. The most effective motivations for students were: the ability to use the language, especially the second one, in the professional sphere, quick feedback, and awareness of their own progress. In our opinion, the integration of digital technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language contributes to the development of the above-mentioned motivations.

IV. CONCLUSION

Summing up the above, it should be noted that:

1. Modern principles of education, namely the principle of continuity, openness, network relations, individualization and personalization allow to build the process of learning foreign languages following the basic principles of the modern model of the economy, namely the knowledge economy. Digital technologies act as a link in this process.

2. In order to effectively integrate digital technologies into the process of teaching a foreign language in order to form communicative competence in teachers, it is necessary to form, develop and improve "digital competence" both in the teacher and the student.

3. There are 4 stages (levels) of the integration of digital technologies in the process of learning a foreign language: substitution, accumulation, modification, redefinition (according to the terminology introduced by Ruben Puetendur).(Puetendura, 2009). All four stages of integrating digital technologies into the teaching process are effective, but the first two contribute to the effectiveness of the lesson, while the last two transform the learning process itself, contribute to the development of new qualities in the student, i.e. the higher is the level, the deeper we immerse ourselves in technology.

4. This study showed that the integration of digital technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language as a second for students of non-linguistic universities is effective for the formation of phonetic, lexical, grammatical skills, as well as the skills and abilities of writing and speaking.

5. The goal of mastering the Second Foreign Language in most universities is to achieve a level of foreign (Spanish) language corresponding to levels B1-B2 according to the Common European Classification of Competences for Foreign Language, CEFR. (Council of Europe, 2018) The number of hours allocated in the curriculum for the development of this discipline and achievement of the above level of knowledge of a foreign language is limited in most Russian universities. Thus, the teacher and the student face the task of achieving the stated level of proficiency in a foreign language "from scratch" with a limited amount of hours. Taking into account the above circumstance, to the authors of this study it seems to be the most effective use of digital technology for homework and self-study of various language aspects, subject to the availability of quick feedback from the teacher.

6. The use of digital technologies in practical classes is most effective for the development of verbal and speech skills.

7. The integration of digital technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language helps increase the motivation of students to learn the language.

8. However, the significant shortcomings of the introduction of digital technology in the educational process include the complexity of the process of drawing up, updating and renovating tasks, methods and resources.

This study showed that the integration of digital technologies for the formation of communicative competence in teaching the second foreign language (Spanish) for Bachelors in Economics and Finance has more advantages than disadvantages.

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