KAPITEL 2 / *CHAPTER 2* [2]
**MODERNIZATION OF UKRAINIAN HIGHER EDUCATION:
INTEGRATION OF DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AS A MEANS OF
ORIENTATION OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING BY STUDENTS OF
HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**

2.1. The Importance of Modernization and Digital Integration: Digital Tools and Technologies in Foreign Language Teaching

The history of the Ukrainian education system is multifaceted, reflecting a complex history influenced by geopolitical changes, cultural dynamics, and different approaches to education. Understanding the evolution of the Ukrainian education system is crucial for understanding its current state and the efforts being made to modernise and integrate digital technologies, including in the teaching of foreign languages in higher education.

The Ukrainian education system has undergone significant changes throughout its history, reflecting the country's cultural, political, and socioeconomic context. Although it faces challenges, including financial constraints and quality issues, efforts are underway to modernise the system and better prepare students for the demands of the 21st century. The integration of digital technologies, including in the teaching of foreign languages in higher education institutions, is a key component of these modernization efforts aimed at providing Ukrainian students with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in an increasingly globalised world.

The importance of modernisation and digital integration in foreign language learning cannot be overestimated in today's interconnected world. As communication barriers continue to diminish and globalisation accelerates, foreign language

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proficiency has become a vital skill both for individuals and organisations. Upgrading foreign language learning through the integration of digital technologies offers numerous benefits, ranging from improved accessibility and flexibility to enhanced learning outcomes and intercultural competence.

Implementation of the online system in the educational process makes the content and organization of the educational process, the means of using digital technologies, and the socio-psychological features of interpersonal relationships: student - student, student - teacher more and more attracting. Nobody doubts that the successful organization of the students' online training involves its technical and technological support. Implementation of digital technologies in the educational process helps teachers and students to achieve the best results in knowledge acquisition.

According to Reinders, H. and White, C. J. (Reinders and White, 2011), digital technologies have become an increasingly important aspect of education in recent years. They offer a range of possibilities for teachers and students in choosing the means and forms of foreign language learning. The development of digital technologies, mobile technologies, computers, and Web 2.0 network services has led to growing attention to the problem of individualized learning and language learning. Digital technologies provide students with not only much wider access to resources but also accessibility for autonomous learning.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the foreign languages acquisition allows users to search online sites and applications for language learning, such as Duolingo, Carnegie Speech, Quizlet, Babble, Knowble, which teach foreign languages using the NLP and speech recognition system. They are designed in such ways that meet the right content and level of knowledge of students. Such applications measure data for information personalization; provide individual capabilities to anyone learning foreign languages in the form of materials that correspond their level. As other examples of using AI, we can mention such platforms and applications as Prezi, Kahhot, Google Classroom,

Sway, X-Mind, and Powtoon.

The use of the online systems in the educational process of higher education institutions and the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in online learning of a foreign language has already proved its efficiency. Practical classes in the audience have been changed by remote training with popular tools: Cisco Webex, Adobe Connect, Elluminate, Zoom, Google Hangouts, and Skype. While written tasks are the same but done in electronic form. To make the teacher's work easier, to master the material better with students, to perform tasks at any time, in this direction educational online platforms help: MyEngLishLab, Classtime and others that allow you to control easily the work of students, to check the work quickly, establish terms for tasks or tests in advance. This is a convenient online blended training tool that involves the use of a traditional tutorial (or electronic textbook), together with online interactive tasks. This format allows you to study a foreign language at anytime, anywhere and can be easily adapted to individual requirements of students. According to Godwin-Jones (Godwin-Jones, 2007), the rapid increase in internet resources, network services, and educational software together activates the search and desire of students to learn new things and self-improve.

Work with AI is also very useful for teaching teachers, since it is possible to track why the program changes the training plan, what factors are taken into account and cadets students' progress as a result. Alternatively, for example, the selections of participants for team work. If the teacher may be subjected to some emotional influence and, as a result, to release something from attention, underestimating or overestimating the level of knowledge and capabilities of the participants, then AI will make decision impartially and in accordance with the level of knowledge of participants, their capabilities and interests.

Despite the huge opportunities that AI can afford to support training and learning, new ethical consequences and risks arise with the development of AI applications in

higher education. AI has a potential for expanding analysts' capabilities but, on the other hand, such systems require a huge amount of data, including confidential information about students and teachers that violates serious issues of confidentiality and data protection.

Thanks to the use of AI in the field of education, significant changes will affect both the scope of the economy, and social and humanitarian life. The use of AI will completely change the techniques, approaches and training technologies; expand access to information and knowledge acquisition, will change the teachers training. AI has a capacity to accelerate the process of achieving global purposes in the field of education due to reducing obstacles to education access, automation of management processes, and optimization of methods to improve learning outcomes (Yefimova, Zhytska & Kolyadenko, 2021). In this comprehensive study, we will explore the multifaceted importance of modernization and digital integration in language learning.

In an era characterized by globalization, effective communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries has become important. Companies, governments and organizations work internationally, requiring individuals who speak foreign languages to promote cooperation, negotiation and exchange of ideas. The modernization of foreign language teaching ensures that students acquire the linguistic skills and cultural competence necessary to thrive in a globalized world.

Foreign language training of specialists is an important component of the system of modern higher education. Studying a foreign language is a way to discover new opportunities in a future specialist's life, to enrich his spiritual world, to increase his social status due to increased competitiveness in obtaining a highly paid, prestigious position. Studying a foreign language as a kind of guarantee of quality progress in the educational process involves taking into account private needs, interests and individual psychological characteristics, general intellectual development of the student (Byram, 2008).

The rapid development of digital technologies has revolutionized the field of education, including the teaching of foreign languages. Digital tools and platforms offer innovative ways to engage students personalize learning and provide access to authentic language resources. From interactive multimedia content to online collaborative tools, technology enriches learning experiences and enables students to interact with language in a variety of contexts.

The European conceptual and reference model created for EU citizens served as the foundation for the 2021 project "The Digital Competence Framework for Pedagogical and Scientific-Pedagogical Workers", which was developed in Ukraine – "The Digital Competence Framework for Citizens with eight proficiency levels and examples of use". The project includes 5 levels of digital competence:

Level A 1 "Novice in using digital technologies". Despite understanding the importance of using digital technologies, the teacher uses them rarely, under pressure from management or during distance learning.

Level A 2 "User of digital technologies". The teacher realizes the potential of digital tools, is interested in their application, but does not use them consistently and systematically.

Level B 1 "Integrator of in-depth use of digital technologies". The teacher applies technologies in various fields and for different purposes, creatively introducing them into practice. However, there is no clear understanding of which tools are most effective in different situations and how to adapt digital technologies to them.

Level B 2 "Creator-experimenter in the use of digital technologies". The teacher confidently and creatively operates a range of technologies, carefully selecting only those that are necessary for a specific learning situation. A key characteristic is an openness to new ideas and a recognition that there is still much to learn.

Level C "Leader-innovator in the use of digital technologies". The teacher consistently and comprehensively approaches the application of technologies, having

a significant range at his disposal; he always finds the most appropriate solution for any learning task. The leader-innovator employs the latest and most complex technologies and develops new methods and techniques (Project: Conceptual-reference framework for the digital competence.., 2021).

The teacher's use of various electronic educational resources, which are an integral part of online education, contributes to the formation of motivation and readiness for learning. The use of information technologies in various modes of organizing the educational process contributes to the creation of a comfortable educational environment and enables students to plan and organize their activities independently. Experiments conducted by American psychologists have shown that a shift in focus from behavioural regulation and academic success of students to how students plan their educational process and how they are able to assess their achievements and results independently leads to the fact that a larger percentage of students cope with the task successfully and get involved in the process. As a result, fewer outsiders remain (Anahid S. Modrek, Deanna Kuhn, Anne Conway & Toi Sin Arvidsson, 2019).

Digital integration in language learning increases accessibility and flexibility, removing traditional barriers to learning. Online language courses and resources allow students to study anytime and anywhere, taking into account a variety of schedules and preferences. This flexibility allows busy professionals, students and individuals with different learning needs, democratizing access to language education.

Digital technologies allow you to personalize the learning experience, adapted to individual preferences, abilities and learning styles. Adaptive learning platforms use data analytics and artificial intelligence to evaluate students' qualifications, identify areas to improve and provide targeted instruction. Students can develop at their own pace, get instant feedback and access customized learning materials that optimize their journey to language learning.

Universities are completing their curricula with online tools and are satisfied with the results. The educational system has evolved into a huge industry with hundreds of different approaches and methods. Full-time practical sessions were replaced by online sessions with the help of well-known distance learning programs: Webex, Adobe Connect, Elluminate, Zoom, Google Meet, Skype, and– the students have the same assignments in a digital mode instead of written home tasks.

Studies in educational technology prove the fact that online learning is based on a carefully structured and planned learning process. Barbara Means, Marianne Bakia and Robert Murphy proposed the main parameters that must be considered when creating a course, with alternative options for implementing online learning:

• learning model (exclusively e-learning, blended learning with a different ratio of face-to-face and online modes, e-learning with the inclusion of webinars);

• the rate of mastering (learning at any convenient rate, the rate of mastering set by the teacher, the set rate of mastering with the ability to complete part of the course at an arbitrary rate);

• Pedagogical technology (explanatory course, practice-oriented course, research course, course for organizing joint collective activities);

• the purpose of the assessment in the course (determining the student's readiness for a new material, organizing adaptive learning, diagnosing the achieved learning results, cumulative assessment system, identifying students with low progress);

• the role of the teacher (active interaction with students online, little online presence, absence of a teacher in the online environment);

• the role of the student (he reads and listens; solves problems and answers questions, active experimentation through simulators and other tools, interaction with other students);

• synchronization of interaction (only asynchronous, only synchronous, mixed interaction mode);

- feedback (automated system feedback, feedback from the teacher or from other students) (Barbara Means, Marianne Bakia & Robert Murphy, 2014).

Interactive digital tools and multimedia resources help to engage and motivate students to learn a foreign language. Elements of gaming, such as quizzes, calls and rewards, turn language learning into an exciting and enjoyable experience. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) programs model real-world language contexts, encouraging active participation and internal motivation among students.

Introduction of interactive methods and techniques, such as project work, brainstorming, case studies, etc., promotes active involvement of cadets in the learning process, increases their motivation to learn a foreign language and develops their creative thinking skills. One of the most effective ways to attract cadets' attention and increase their motivation to learn a foreign language is to use various video materials in the learning process. The use of videos, documentaries, news reports, etc. allows cadets not only to improve their listening comprehension skills, but also to expand their vocabulary, get acquainted with the peculiarities of the lifestyle and culture of other countries, develop their communication skills and cognitive interests (Yefimova & Zhytska, 2023).

In addition, application of multimedia presentations, virtual laboratories, simulators, and distance learning systems allow future specialists to acquire new knowledge and skills in a short time, consolidate them with the help of practical exercises and tests, and develop their research abilities.

Introduction of innovative educational technologies into the educational process requires training of qualified teachers who are able to use these technologies effectively in their work. A teacher is not only an organiser of the educational process, but also a guide and assistant to students in mastering a foreign language. In addition, the teacher should be able to create a positive psychological climate, encourage students to actively participate in the learning process, and provide them with the necessary methodological

support.

Training of such specialists requires development of special teaching and learning materials that take into account the peculiarities of their future professional activities: the need to master a large amount of specialised vocabulary, the ability to understand and convey information quickly and accurately, and the ability to make quick decisions. Such teaching materials should be based on the principles of authenticity, relevance, and interactivity.

Digital integration makes it easier to use authentic speech through multimedia content, online communities, and real-time communication platforms. Students can access authentic materials such as videos, podcasts and articles to develop listening, reading and context understanding skills. Social media platforms and language-sharing websites provide opportunities for genuine interaction with native speakers, improving communicative competence and cultural understanding.

Moreover, the ability to acquire new knowledge and skills independently is one of the main conditions for the successful professional activity of modern specialists. Developing the ability of future specialists to learn foreign language independently should be one of the main goals of the educational process.

According to students' views on self-directed learning with digital tools, the role of teachers is changing. Students perceive them as advisors who help oversee the learning process by providing guidance on effective learning methods, fostering a conducive environment for self-directed learning, offering appropriate resources, and encouraging active engagement with these resources.

Nowadays online learning is considered as part of distance learning where students and teachers are at a distance, and communication is achieved through the Internet. However, online learning can be both distance and blended learning. It is no coincidence in the fact that the vast majority of educational institutions have announced plans to implement Blended Learning when classic face-to-face classes are

supplemented by work at an online platform. The market for online learning is very diverse – there are mass open online courses (Coursera, EdX, Udacity, Udemy), educational platforms of general profile (Nearpod, Kahoot, Quizlet, Prezi, Padlet), educational mobile applications (MobileApp) and training computers games (Tinybop, ABCya, Ozobot, Puzzlets), tools for video conferencing, virtual classes with teachers. The representatives of the global educational platform Udemy state that the classes via video conferencing in Zoom are among the most popular (Yefimova, Zarivna, Khymai & Shalova, 2021).

Digital technologies facilitate collaboration and communication opportunities while learning foreign languages. Online forums, discussion boards and virtual classes promote high-level interaction, joint projects and cultural exchange. Students can interact with language partners around the world, practice language skills in an authentic context, and build global networks for personal and professional growth.

Digital integration provides continuous learning and vocational development in foreign language learning. Online courses, webinars and self-learning modules offer opportunities for lifelong learning and advancement. Professionals can update their language skills, explore specialized topics and be up to date with global trends and developments in their field, enhancing career prospects and competitiveness in the global labour market.

Nowadays, blended learning is implemented online, through synchronous and asynchronous sessions. Synchronous and asynchronous e-learning is an online learning environment where students are actively involved in their own training and where learning activities and expectations are similar to those found in a traditional classroom. Synchronous learning is online or distance learning that takes place in real time. Students can ask questions and receive instant answers from their classmates or teachers thanks to synchronous learning.

Lectures, practical classes, etc., take place at a certain time determined by the

schedule. Asynchronous learning, unlike synchronous learning, takes place through online channels without real-time interaction. Thanks to asynchronous learning, students have much more time to comprehend the material they are studying which means that they are more likely to understand it more carefully. During asynchronous learning, the lecture can be conducted offline (Yefimova, Zarivna, Khymai & Shalova, 2021).

Conclusions

Modernization and digital integration of foreign language learning are essential for preparing people to succeed in a globalized world. Using the power of digital technology, teachers can increase accessibility, flexibility, engagement and efficiency in language learning, enabling students to communicate confidently and competently across linguistic and cultural boundaries. As technologies continue to evolve, the integration of digital tools and platforms will play an increasingly key role in shaping the future of foreign language education, promoting meaningful intercultural exchange and promoting global citizenship.

In today's dynamic and competitive labour market, people need to take a proactive approach to learning and acquiring skills to stay relevant and adaptable. This requires a shift in mind-set from viewing education as a one-off event to seeing it as a continuous journey characterised by ongoing learning and self-improvement.

2.2. The Importance of Teaching Foreign Languages in Educational Institutions: Formation of Professional and Cultural Competence and Promotion of Intercultural Understanding

In the modern globalised world, the ability to communicate in multiple languages is becoming increasingly important. Educational institutions play a crucial role in

teaching foreign languages to students, aiming not only at language proficiency but also at the development of general competences. This chapter considers the different aims of language teaching in educational institutions, focusing on the development of professional and general cultural competence and intercultural awareness.

The process of learning a foreign language has a positive effect on the mental activity of people of different ages; it is useful both for young people and for the elderly. When learning a language, one develops the ability to listen carefully to the interlocutor, to understand his point of view, which helps a lot in communication. The essential difference lies in the fact that a foreign language serves as a means not only of interpersonal, but also of inter-ethnic, inter-state, and international communication (Crystal, 2003).

The development of professional education and training is a multifaceted phenomenon, deeply intertwined with the ever-evolving technological progress and the need for people to constantly improve their skills through lifelong learning. This transformational journey in education is being driven by the accelerated pace of technological advancement, which requires a workforce equipped with advanced knowledge and a commitment to continuous personal development.

At the foundation of this evolution is the recognition that traditional forms of education are no longer sufficient to meet the requirements of modern, rapidly changing technological processes. As industries embrace digitalisation, automation, artificial intelligence and other advanced technologies, the skills needed to thrive in these environments are constantly evolving. Consequently, there is an increasing emphasis on cultivating specialist knowledge and expertise to effectively navigate these complex technological environments.

Modernisation of foreign language learning contributes to the development of cultural competence and global citizenship among students. Knowledge of different languages, cultures and perspectives promotes intercultural understanding, empathy

and respect for cultural diversity. By working with authentic cultural materials and communicating with native speakers from around the world, students develop intercultural communication skills and become informed, responsible global citizens.

Professional education serves as a cornerstone for empowering people with the necessary skills and abilities to succeed in their chosen field. Whether it's STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) disciplines, healthcare, business or the arts, the demand for specialist knowledge continues to rise. Institutions offering professional education programmes play a key role in meeting these demands by providing tailored curricula designed to equip students with the latest industry skills and knowledge.

In addition, the concept of continuous personal development has become a fundamental principle underpinning vocational education in the 21st century. Investing in modernizing foreign language education brings significant economic and societal benefits. People with multiple language skills are better positioned to pursue international careers, facilitate global business, and drive innovation and competitiveness in the global marketplace. In addition, language skills improve intercultural communication, foster diplomacy, and promote mutual understanding in an increasingly interconnected world.

The emergence of digital learning platforms, online courses and virtual classrooms has democratised access to vocational education, breaking down traditional time and geographical barriers. Students can now engage in learning anytime and anywhere, allowing for greater flexibility and customisation of the learning process. In addition, the proliferation of massive open online courses (MOOCs), webinars and educational resources has expanded the breadth and depth of available learning opportunities, catering to a variety of learning styles and preferences.

In addition to formal education channels, informal learning pathways such as self-study, mentoring, peer-to-peer and experiential learning also play a crucial role in

fostering continuous personal development. These complementary approaches enable individuals to acquire practical skills, gain real-world knowledge and stay abreast of new trends and best practices in their respective fields.

The symbiotic relationship between technological innovation and vocational education is evident in the growing integration of experiential learning methodologies, such as project-based learning, internships and apprenticeships, into curricula. These hands-on learning experiences not only give students practical skills and exposure to the industry, but also develop the critical thinking, problem-solving and teamwork skills needed to succeed in today's fast-paced work environment.

A large number of pedagogical research emphasize the benefits of developing media and information literacy skills, which are related to critical thinking skills, and emphasize the need to integrate strategies for mobile and e-learning into the educational process (Kim, Shumaker, 2015).

In addition, the emergence of interdisciplinary fields and hybrid roles underscores the importance of cultivating a diverse skill set that encompasses both technical and soft skills. In addition to technical skills, employers increasingly value qualities such as communication, creativity, adaptability and emotional intelligence, which are essential for effective collaboration and innovation in interdisciplinary settings.

As professional education continues to evolve, stakeholders must work together to ensure that it is relevant, accessible and effective in preparing people for the challenges and opportunities of the future. This involves developing partnerships between educational institutions, industry leaders, policy makers and community stakeholders to align curricula with the changing needs of the industry, promote lifelong learning initiatives and expand access to educational resources for all.

Modern foreign language classes involve activities performed in pairs, groups or mini-groups. During the performance of such tasks, such team qualities as interaction in a foreign language with people who also speak other languages is involved. It is

believed that team qualities formed in this way are particularly effective in professional activities (Paslavska, 2020) because students are taught cooperation to achieve common goals, assist and support their group mates, listen to and understand, give reasons and persuade each other.

Furthermore, closing the digital divide and promoting inclusivity in vocational education are critical imperatives to ensure equitable access to learning opportunities for people from different socio-economic backgrounds. Efforts to bridge the gap through initiatives such as subsidised tuition, scholarship programmes, mentoring networks and community initiatives are important to promote a more inclusive and diverse workforce.

Language is the primary medium through which people communicate, convey ideas and express emotions. A foreign language is any language other than your mother tongue. While proficiency in one's mother tongue is essential for effective communication in a community, acquiring foreign language skills extends people's communication abilities beyond their immediate cultural and linguistic boundaries. Therefore, foreign language learning is essential for preparing people for the challenges and opportunities of an interconnected global society.

One of the primary objectives of teaching foreign languages in educational institutions is to improve students' professional competence. In today's globalised labour market, multilingualism is increasingly valued by employers in various sectors. Not only does foreign language proficiency facilitate communication with international partners and clients, but it also demonstrates adaptability, cultural awareness and cognitive flexibility - all of which are highly desirable in the modern workplace.

In addition, some professions require certain language skills to be effective. For example, in the fields of diplomacy, international business, tourism and translation, fluency in several languages is often considered a prerequisite. By providing students with the opportunity to learn foreign languages, educational institutions provide them

with a competitive advantage in the labour market, thereby increasing their employability and career prospects.

Modern specialists, as we can see nowadays, need to be trained in accordance with general requirements, which include 'hard skills' and 'soft skills'. We can state that our graduates acquire 'hard skills' or their jobs, however, being a highly qualified specialist means having also developed 'soft skills'. The most common 'soft skills' include critical thinking, creativity, team work, effective communication, consolidation, and collaboration. These skills can be developed not only during professional training but while studying humanities and foreign languages in particular on the basis of professionally oriented skills and knowledge. 'Hard skills' are formed in the process of training specialists by studying certain academic disciplines (Zhytska & Yefimova, 2022).

'Soft skills' are character traits that improve a person's ability to interact with other people's ability to work and prospects for career growth (Paajanen, 1992). 'Soft skills' are personal qualities, characteristics, talents or enthusiasm for professional activities that distinguish this personality from other people with similar skills and competence (Robles, 2012). All these skills can be combined into four groups: social, mental, organizational and personal skills.

Lack of critical thinking is especially noticed nowadays during the wartime in Ukraine against Russia, whose citizens are not able to analyse information they are given by Russian officials and state propaganda. On the other hand, most of Ukrainians and especially our Armed Forces demonstrate very efficient team work, collaboration, consolidation and communication skills, due to which we can fight against one of the biggest armies of the world and defeat them successfully. Thus, we can state the importance and necessity of 'soft skills'.

Thus, 'soft skills' highlight students' abilities to education, in particular the study of academic discipline and thorough mastering educational material, acquiring skills

and abilities professionally oriented, which will contribute to competitiveness in the modern labor market. 'Soft skills' include: professional abilities, knowledge of the academic discipline, creativity and critical thinking, responsibility, ability to work in a team, positive attitude to the execution of assignments, politeness and humanity in the process of communication, e.g. negotiations, and agree on solutions to problems, situations and elimination of conflicts, use of expressions and quotes. Teaching foreign language, we want to develop collaboration, increase engagement, encourage risk taking, spark creative thinking, improve critical thinking due to the modern approaches, methods and techniques (Zhytska & Yefimova, 2022).

In addition to professional considerations, teaching foreign languages is also aimed at developing students' general cultural competence. Language and culture are inherently interconnected - each language reflects the unique worldview, traditions and values of its speakers. Thus, learning a foreign language gives students the opportunity to understand different cultural perspectives, norms and practices.

Intercultural communication is the exchange of information, ideas and emotions between people from different cultural backgrounds. It transcends language barriers and encompasses a range of cultural nuances, including values, norms, beliefs and communication styles. In today's globalised world, where people are often exposed to diverse cultural contexts, intercultural communication skills are indispensable for successful interaction in a variety of fields, from business and diplomacy to academia and tourism.

Acquisition of knowledge, development of behavioural strategies in intercultural communication and their implementation in the educational process are all important tasks in the system of foreign language teaching. Intercultural communication involves interaction with a foreign language culture (Guilherme M., 2002).

The main goal of foreign language teaching in educational institutions is to develop communication skills adapted to intercultural contexts. Language acquisition

goes beyond the mechanical memorisation of vocabulary and grammatical rules; it involves improving the ability to understand, articulate and negotiate meaning in a variety of cultural settings. By engaging in communicative activities such as dialogues, debates and role-playing, students learn to adapt their language use and communication strategies to the cultural preferences and expectations of their interlocutors.

Students of higher education institutions can be introduced to country studies information in various ways. The thematic method is effective in which the students are informed about the history, geography, state system, culture of the native speakers of the country being studied, systematised according to the relevant topics. On the other hand, the philological method is based on the selection of country-scientific information from foreign language structures. These are words, phrases, texts, poems, songs, etc. Moreover, foreign language samples of fiction are used, which are not directly related to the issues of country studies (Yefimova &Zhytska, 2022).

As practice shows, the above named methods of providing educational information to students are typologically related. As we can see, the philological approach is aimed at solving various tasks. In particular, it is about the study of cultural information based on language units (House, 2002). In this case, the focus is on culture as the core task of study. It is this method that is dominant in the methodology of teaching a foreign language.

In addition, working with authentic materials such as literature, films and multimedia resources gives learners an insight into the cultural subtleties embedded in language. Analysing these materials not only improves linguistic knowledge, but also promotes cultural empathy and awareness, enabling learners to navigate intercultural encounters with patience and respect.

In educational institutions, foreign language teaching often moves beyond standalone language courses to integrated language and content learning. This approach, commonly known as content and language integrated learning (CLIL),

combines language learning with subject content, thus facilitating interdisciplinary learning and promoting a deeper understanding of both linguistic and academic concepts.

Another aspect is learning the reception and presentation of a language unit against the background of an image that is similar because it is present in the mind of the speaker of the language and culture. Such an image is constructed on the basis of codified national associations, that is, it does not include individual associations. At the same time, the image, on which the semantics of a word or a phraseological unit is built, is created in the process of a student's work on the meaning of a linguistic or speech unit. With such an approach to teaching and learning a foreign language, as well as to the assimilation of the national-cultural component of semantics, the language itself comes to the forefront.

The array of lexical units, which are characterised by pronounced national and cultural semantics, include, in particular, the names of realities. It is about the designation of objects, phenomena characteristic of one culture and absent in another culture. In this sense, we should also mention the connotative vocabulary, which includes words that are consonant with the main meaning but at the same time differ in terms of cultural and historical associations. In turn, the background vocabulary outlines objects and phenomena that have analogues in different cultures but possess certain national peculiarities of functioning. An important role is also played by phraseologisms and phrasal verbs, which reflect the national uniqueness of history, culture, traditional way of life, mentality of the people (Baran, Zymomria M., Bilous & Zymomria I., 2008).

The goal of learning the basics of culture in higher education institutions in connection with learning a foreign language is to transfer to students a minimum of background knowledge possessed by a native speaker (Petrenko, 2011). In other words, it is the process of knowing the elements of another culture by a person who grew up

in the conditions of one culture. Of course, the student remains a carrier of his native culture but his background knowledge is enriched by elements of the culture of the country whose language is being studied.

It is especially advisable to draw students' attention to the study of non-verbal language. Consequently, language is a form of behaviour, an organism's reaction to the social environment, and the components of this reaction are communicative gestures, facial expressions, postures, facial expressions, etc. There is also a relative inconsistency when moving from one community of people to another. Thus, background knowledge serves as an indicative basis for the formation of abilities and skills of using the national-cultural component of vocabulary or language etiquette for the purpose of communication. The ultimate goal of learning a foreign language is aimed at forming students' readiness and ability for intercultural communication, practical mastery of foreign language communicative competence, that is, the ability to match language means with specific goals, situations, conditions and tasks of communication (Yefimova, Zhytska, Khymai, & Braievska, 2021).

Thus, when learning a foreign language at a higher education institution, it is necessary to involve information about the nature, society, thinking, ways and methods of activity of the people whose language the students study. In this sense, we consider the importance of referring to the non-equivalent and background vocabulary, which is filled with an original content-cultural component.

By combining language learning with disciplines such as science, history or economics, students acquire specialised vocabulary and discourse patterns relevant to their field of study while developing their intercultural communication skills. For example, a student studying international business in a foreign language will not only learn business terminology, but also gain insight into the intercultural negotiation strategies and communication protocols required to do business in global market

Cultural competence involves not only awareness of one's own cultural

background, but also empathy and understanding of diverse cultural perspectives. Through exposure to authentic cultural materials, interactive exchanges with native speakers and immersive experiences such as study abroad programs, students expand their cultural horizons and develop the ability to navigate cultural differences with openness and flexibility.

In addition, fostering an inclusive culture and respect for diversity in educational institutions creates an environment conducive to intercultural learning. Acknowledging diversity in all its forms - linguistic, cultural, ethnic and ideological - educational institutions promote a sense of belonging and mutual respect among students, laying the foundation for constructive intercultural interaction both in the classroom and beyond.

Cultural competence develops a sense of global citizenship and encourages people to interact with the world as informed and responsible members of society. Through exposure to diverse cultural norms and experiences, students develop a broader understanding of the richness and complexity of human civilization, moving beyond ethnocentrism and fostering a more inclusive worldview.

In today's interconnected world, foreign language skills and intercultural communication skills are increasingly valued in the global labour market. Educational institutions play a key role in preparing students for success in a global professional environment by equipping them with the necessary language and intercultural skills.

Professionals who speak a foreign language have a competitive advantage in the labour market because they can communicate effectively with international clients, collaborate with colleagues from different cultures, and conduct international business transactions. In addition, intercultural communication skills are essential for building trust, fostering collaboration and conflict resolution in multicultural work environments, thereby increasing organizational effectiveness and fostering cross-cultural synergy.

By integrating real-world applications and experiential learning opportunities into their language programs, educational institutions bridge the gap between theory and practice, preparing students for the complexities of a globalized professional environment. Internships, learning projects and simulated business scenarios provide students with practical experience in applying their language and intercultural communication skills in a real-life context, thereby improving their employability and career readiness.

Thus, the purpose of teaching a foreign language for specialists in educational institutions goes beyond simple language proficiency; it covers the formation of communication skills adapted to the intercultural context in various spheres of activity. By providing opportunities for students to develop linguistic competence, cultural awareness and intercultural communication skills, educational institutions play a key role in preparing them for success in today's globalized world. Through integrated language and content instruction, engaging cultural experiences, and preparation for a globalized professional environment, the institutions empower students to become effective communicators and cultural ambassadors in an increasingly interconnected and diverse society.

In addition to the professional and cultural aspects, foreign language learning offers numerous cognitive benefits that contribute to students' intellectual growth and academic success. Studies have consistently shown that learning a foreign language improves cognitive abilities such as problem solving, critical thinking and memory retention.

Knowledge of a foreign language makes a person more confident, increases his self-esteem. Learning a language has many important advantages: it helps to develop attention and improve cognitive abilities; significantly expands cultural horizons; helps develop intelligence and memory; slows down the ageing process of the brain. Learning a foreign language is based on situations that are considered at the level of

the system of mutual relations. A situation, in turn, is defined as an integrative dynamic system of social-status, role, activity and moral relationships of communication subjects. It appears as a universal form of functioning of the learning process, that is, it becomes a way of organising language means, as well as motivation of speaking activity (Finegan, 1989).

Teaching a foreign language means more than just memorizing vocabulary and mastering grammar rules. As educators, we must also focus on developing high order skills in our students, which will enable them to communicate effectively and think critically in the target language. High order thinking skills (HOTS) are cognitive processes that involve critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, and creativity. These skills are necessary for success in academic, professional, and personal activities. Language learning requires learners to use these cognitive processes in order to communicate effectively in a foreign language. For example, learners need to use critical thinking to analyse and interpret the meaning of new words and phrases. They also need to use problem-solving skills to navigate unfamiliar language structures and syntax. Decision-making and creativity come into play when learners must decide how to express themselves in the foreign language in order to effectively communicate their thoughts and ideas.

One of the most important high order skills that foreign language teachers should develop is critical thinking. Students who are able to think critically can analyse and evaluate the language they are learning, making them better language learners. Besides, they need to think critically in their professional training and activities. Teachers can encourage critical thinking by asking open-ended questions, challenging cadets to analyse complex texts, and encouraging discussion and debate. Another high order skill that is essential for foreign language learners is creativity. Students, who are creative, can use language in new and innovative ways, take risks with the language, experiment with new vocabulary and structures, and use authentic materials that reflect the target

culture, which makes them better communicators.

Finally, foreign language learners must also develop problem-solving skills. Students, who can solve problems, can navigate real-life situations in the target language, which is the ultimate goal of language learning. Teachers can help students develop problem-solving skills by creating tasks that require them to work collaboratively, encouraging them to use critical thinking skills to find solutions, and providing them with opportunities to practice in authentic situations. To further develop high order skills, teachers can also incorporate technology into their teaching strategies, e.g. online discussion forums can be used to encourage critical thinking and debate among cadets. Interactive language learning apps and games can foster creativity and provide opportunities to practice problem-solving skills in a fun and engaging way. Furthermore, teachers can also design project-based learning activities to apply and integrate the skills they have learned in a real-life context. For example, students can work together to create a video or podcast in the target language, conducting research and presenting their findings in a creative and innovative way (Zhytska & Yefimova, 2023).

The process of learning a new language involves the development of a variety of linguistic skills, including listening, speaking, reading and writing. These cognitive challenges stimulate neural pathways and improve overall cognitive function, which also leads to improved academic performance in other subject areas. In addition, bilingual or multilingual people have been found to exhibit greater cognitive flexibility and creativity as they are used to navigating between different linguistic and cultural frameworks.

Learning a foreign language encourages metacognitive awareness - the ability to reflect on and regulate one's own learning process. Learners become more adept at setting goals, monitoring their progress, and applying effective learning strategies, which are transferable skills that can be applied to different areas of life.

In addition to the practical benefits of learning foreign languages, there is an intrinsic value in preserving linguistic diversity and cultural heritage. Languages are not just a means of communication; they are a repository of collective wisdom, folklore and identity. Each language contains the unique history, traditions and worldview of its speakers, serving as a means of passing on cultural heritage from one generation to the next.

However, globalisation, urbanisation and the dominance of a few major languages on the world stage are increasingly threatening linguistic diversity. Many indigenous and minority languages are endangered, resulting in the loss of invaluable cultural knowledge and linguistic diversity. Thus, foreign language teaching in educational institutions contributes to the preservation and revival of endangered languages, thereby preserving cultural heritage for future generations.

In addition, exposure to different languages enriches students' language repertoire and deepens their appreciation of the beauty and complexity of human communication. By celebrating linguistic diversity, educational institutions promote inclusiveness, respect for cultural differences and a sense of global solidarity.

In order to achieve the above goals, educational institutions need to adopt effective language teaching strategies. While the specific approach may vary depending on factors such as learner age, skill level and learning objectives, certain principles are universal.

First and foremost, language teaching should be communicative and knowledge-based, focusing on real-life communication skills rather than memorising grammar rules and vocabulary lists. Learners should be given ample opportunities for meaningful interaction in the target language both inside and outside the classroom. This can include activities such as role-playing, simulations, debates and collaborative projects that simulate authentic communicative contexts.

In addition, language learning should be integrated into the wider curriculum,

allowing students to make connections between language learning and other academic disciplines. For example, foreign language classes can incorporate interdisciplinary topics such as history, geography, literature and current events, thereby enhancing students' understanding of the cultural context in which the language is spoken.

Technology can also play an important role in language teaching by providing learners with access to authentic materials, multimedia resources and online language learning platforms. Digital tools such as language learning apps, virtual reality simulations and social media platforms allow learners to interact with the language in diverse and engaging ways, increasing motivation and autonomy.

One of the advantages of technology-based language learning is the ability to present the authenticity of the language in various contextual variations, from which students learn how the language is used idiomatically and how it changes depending on the context, registers, or speech acts (Sockett, 2013).

In addition, language learning should be adapted to the diverse needs and interests of learners, taking into account factors such as individual learning styles, language backgrounds and cultural experiences. Teachers should use differentiated teaching methods, supportive feedback and feedback that promotes continuous improvement and self-reflection.

Conclusions

The development of professional education is closely linked to the rapid pace of technological change and the need for people to develop themselves continuously. By equipping learners with specialist knowledge, transferable skills and a growth mind-set, vocational education serves as a catalyst for empowering people to thrive in today's dynamic and competitive global economy. With lifelong learning as a guiding principle, stakeholders must work together to ensure that vocational education remains responsive, accessible and inclusive, enabling individuals to realise their full potential and make a meaningful contribution to society.

Online education is a form of distance education that uses internet technologies to enable controlled interaction among teachers and students while preserving all components of the educational process, such as goals, content, methods, and organizational forms. Teachers create distance courses that are structured information products designed to help students acquire the content and skills needed in specific academic disciplines (Polat, Kuzu & Yilmaz, 2004).

The purpose of learning foreign languages in educational institutions goes far beyond the acquisition of linguistic knowledge. By developing professional and general cultural competence, a foreign language equips students with the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to thrive in an interconnected world. Through the development of linguistic, intercultural and cognitive competence, students become informed global citizens who are able to navigate the complexities of our multicultural society. As educational institutions continue to recognise the importance of foreign language education, they contribute to the promotion of linguistic diversity, cultural understanding and international cooperation, which makes a significant contribution to the development of human civilisation.