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Technologies and Organization of Tests for Distance Learning in the Program "Translator in the Field of Professional Communication"

Tecnologías y organización de pruebas para el aprendizaje a distancia en el programa "traductor en el ámbito de la comunicación profesional"

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ABSTRACT

This article is devoted to the experience of using distance technologies in training for the program "Translator in the field of professional communication", it´s features in blended format and the organization of testing for distance learning. Testing is one of the most technologically advanced forms of conducting automated control with controlled quality parameters. In this sense, none of the well-known forms of student knowledge control can be compared with testing.

Keywords: Distance learning systems, full-time education, part-time education, professional retraining, testing.

RESUMEN

Este artículo está dedicado a la experiencia del uso de tecnologías a distancia en la formación del programa "Traductor en el campo de la comunicación profesional" sus características en formato semipresencial y la organización de pruebas para el aprendizaje a distancia. Las pruebas son una de las formas tecnológicamente más avanzadas de realizar un control automatizado con parámetros de calidad controlados. En este sentido, ninguna de las formas conocidas de control del conocimiento de los estudiantes puede compararse con las pruebas.

Palabras clave: Educación a tiempo completo, educación a tiempo parcial, pruebas, reciclaje profesional, sistemas de aprendizaje a distancia.

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INTRODUCTION

The current stage of development of the education system is characterized by the emergence of new educational technologies and the high rate of its informatization. Currently, considerable experience has been accumulated in the implementation of distance learning systems, which differ not only in methodology, but also depend on the characteristics of a particular country in which methods and approaches to the organization of distance education are practiced (Belozubov & Nikolaev: 2007; Kruchinin et al.: 2018, pp.666-668; Borisova: 2020, pp.91-92). The academic community of the Russian education system has recognized that an important and promising direction in the development of the education system is the widespread introduction of distance learning methods based on the use of modern pedagogical, advanced information and telecommunication technologies (Mikryukov et al.: 2020; Shushara et al.: 2020). Such technologies are particularly relevant in countries with large territories. Russia is among these countries. Building of effective distance learning systems creates the conditions of social access to quality education for a significant part of the population, contributes to solving the problem of education for people who, for various reasons, cannot use the services of full-time education (Krasnova et al.: 2001; Perova: 2015; Gagik: 2020; Prostova et al.: 2020, pp.707-714).

The steady trend of increasing the proportion of students combining study with work is accompanied by the rapid development and widespread use of a variety of information, computer and technical means. Many applicants consciously choose distance learning, guided by the opportunity to gain knowledge without interrupting their main job, as well as reasonable cost. As a rule, education through the Internet, compared with full-time and part-time education, is a more budgetary option (Andreev et al.: 2008; Semushina & Galeeva: 2013, pp.519-521; Zaborova et al.: 2017, pp.131-139).

In the context of increased requirements for graduates of universities, distance learning programs, allowing them to undergo professional retraining, are of particular relevance (Shindina et al.: 2020, pp.1-4).

In this article, we will talk about the experience of using online technologies in the course of program "Translator in the field of professional communication".

In Kazan (Volga) Federal University, to ensure an appropriate professional level of knowledge of a foreign language, the program "Translator in the field of professional communication" was developed. This program is implemented as part of continuing education in full-time format and it has been performed for more than 20 years (over 1,500 graduates) and in full-time distance learning for 5 years (70 graduates). The platform for the implementation of the program is the MOODLE e-learning platform used on the KFU distance learning website

In our article, we presented the results of the implementation of the program "Translator in the field of professional communication" in the full-time-distance learning format. This training format today is relevant and has a number of undeniable advantages:

1) Students of the program are adults and independent people, these are professionals who consciously continue their studies, having in most cases a specific practical goal expressed in the form of future prospects in their professional activity (for example, promotion). As a result of this, the motivation of students is extremely high and the percentage of deductions for academic performance is low.

2) The modern Internet contains a huge amount of information and provides listeners with an unlimited number of opportunities to improve the level of the language, for example, the opportunity to get acquainted with authentic texts and videos, take part in conversations with native speakers, etc. In addition, the use of computer technology is not difficult for modern specialists (Moiseeva & Visser: 2005; Gaevskaya: 2007; Semushina et al.: 2014, pp.641-648; Vershitskaya et al.: 2020, pp.611-621).

3) Students have the opportunity to learn a foreign language in a comfortable environment, without leaving home and at a convenient time for themselves, which is an extremely important advantage of this form of training, since the pace of life as well as the situation in the world for the most modern people forces them to schedule their time in minutes. Working professionals do not always have time to attend full-time evening

classes. In addition, not every adult feels psychologically comfortable studying in a group, as he has certain knowledge gaps that he is embarrassed to demonstrate to others.

4) The duration of training is 2 years (4 semesters), since most of the material the student learns independently (Andreev & Soldatkin: 1999; Anisimov: 2009; Filippova: 2015, pp.348-353; Usubjonovna: 2020).

Full-time distance learning is based on the use of Internet technologies, electronic textbooks, webinars, tasks, tests, input and final controlling tests.

METHODOLOGY

The main controlling element for most subjects within the program is an online testing. Within the program and various courses, various types of tests are used. The advantage of most types of tests is the automatic verification of the results and elimination of the influence of the human factor.

The most important criteria for creating tests are:

- effectiveness of the test: completeness, comprehensiveness of the test, proportionality of the presentation of all elements of the studied knowledge, skills;
- reliability of the test: it is characterized by stability, stability of indicators during repeated measurements using the same test or its equivalent substitute. The reliability of tests significantly depends on the difficulty of their implementation, which is determined by the ratio of correct and incorrect answers to test questions;
- differentiation of the test: the ability of the test to separate those who have learned the material at the required level from those who have not reached the given level.

When compiling tests, you must be guided by the following rules:

- uniqueness of tasks: test tasks should not allow arbitrary interpretation;
- unambiguous answers: the possibility of formulating ambiguous answers should be excluded;
- compliance with the studied: you cannot include answers whose incorrectness at the time of testing cannot be justified by students;
- selection of distractors: incorrect answers should be constructed on the basis of typical errors and should be believable;
- uniqueness: questions should not repeat the wording of the textbook.

The MOODLE learning management system provides a wide range of possibilities for building various kinds of tests:

- customizable number of attempts to pass the test;
- customizable time delays between attempts;
- selection of the assessment method (in the case of several attempts): higher / lower assessment, first / last attempt;
- mixing both the questions themselves in the test and the answer options;
- teaching mode: the student will be able to answer the question several times in one attempt. It is possible to accrue penalty points for each incorrect answer;
- customizable mode of viewing the results: what (your answer, points, comments, all answers, general comment on the whole test) and when (right after the attempt, later, but before the test is closed, after the test is closed) can see student;
- customizable comments on the entire test, depending on the grade received;
- customizable comments for each answer option;
- customizable comment for each question;
- Test design based on a random selection of questions from categories.

RESULTS

As part of the professional retraining program, knowledge testing is carried out not only during training, but also at the very first stage - when students enter the program.

All who wish to study must pass the entrance test, which should assess the level of knowledge of the English language. The purpose of the test is not only to determine the level of grammar or vocabulary skills, but also to select only those students who can master the program. The complexity of the selection of material is also due to the fact that the test is carried out remotely without the participation of a teacher, and the selection of students should be quite strict due to the complexity of the program and high requirements for the level of training.

These factors became decisive in determining the form of the test. The test consists of two parts - lexical and grammar and text. Both parts are multiple choice tests.

At first the teacher must create a bank of questions for the first and second part of the test. These questions are structured in such a way as to capture the various difficulties from the sections of grammar and vocabulary. The answer options are designed in such a way that it is impossible to select one answer by the exclusion method, since all the answers look approximately the same.

Figure 1. Bank of questions for the first part of the test in edit mode

The second part of the test is a text with questions to it. In each question to the text, there are three possible answers - true / false / doesn't say (true, not true, it is not said). The third option was introduced by us not by chance, since the questions were posed in such a way as to answer it only by understanding the text.

Assessment of tests is carried out automatically, which greatly speeds up the process of checking and enrolling students in the program. It is worth noting that the stage of preparing the test, of course, takes a lot of time from the teacher, however, it saves a lot of man-hours in the future.

Other tests of the program are constructed the same way.

According to the curriculum of the program students are supposed to master a number of linguistic disciplines. Since training is carried out using distance technologies, the development of the material takes place independently and the teacher's task is to conduct a control slice of knowledge so that knowledge assessment is carried out as adequately as possible. The teacher must understand not only how well the student remembered the material, but also how well he understood it in order to put it into practice. The latter

factor is especially important when studying under this program, since our main goal is to provide such a level of knowledge that the student can carry out practical activities, as this is a professional retraining program. We believe that testing is the most convenient and successful form of knowledge control in this situation, as it allows not only to check the assimilation of theoretical material, but also to evaluate how much the listener is ready to apply the knowledge gained. In the MOODLE e-learning system, as mentioned above, there are many types of tests that allow you to make the test automatic, complete and low power consumption.

For example, theoretical grammar of the English language test contains questions and tasks of various types. These are questions with multiple choices, as well as questions where you need to pick up the missing words. The questions are based on theoretical material, for example, a definition of the term should be given; also in some tasks there are examples of sentences containing difficulties from the point of view of grammatical analysis.

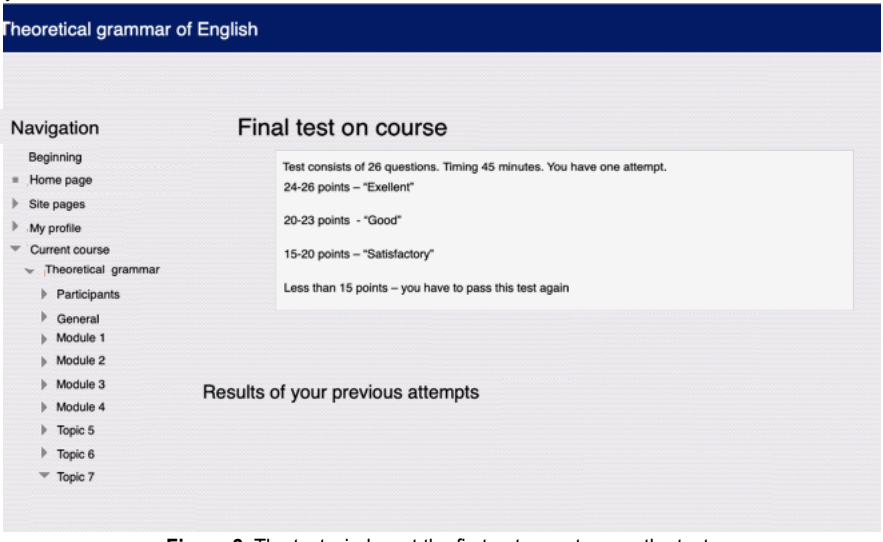

Figure 2. The test window at the first entrance to pass the test.

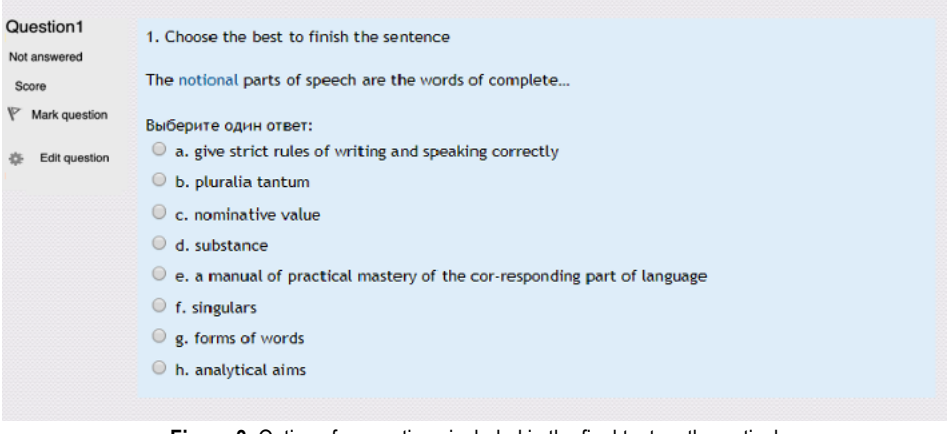

Figure 3. Options for questions included in the final test on theoretical

DISCUSSION

Tests in another theoretical subject “Country Studies” also contain questions that need to be answered independently, in your own words. The inclusion of this type of questions allows us to assess the level of understanding of the course as a whole, although it complicates the work of the teacher, who in this case has to evaluate the answer manually.

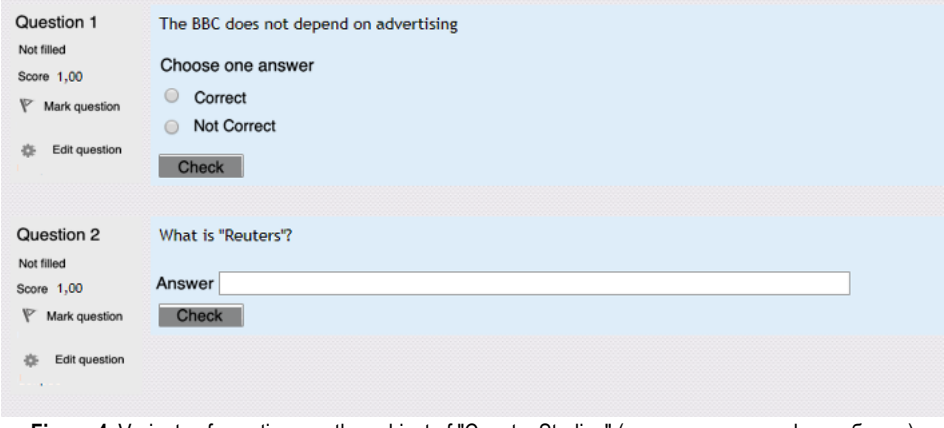

Figure 4. Variants of questions on the subject of "Country Studies" (русскую часть графики обрежь)

An important issue during testing is the honesty of students in the performance of assignments. In our opinion, objectivity of the assessment can be achieved using special test settings.

When forming the test, the teacher can indicate the timing of the test, time, number of attempts, as well as determine what information the student will see after the test is completed. We advise you to offer only one attempt to perform the test, if the test is a final test, having control function, limit the time depending on the number of questions of their complexity, based on a certain time that the listener can spend on one question. It is worth noting that the MOODLE system should disable the ability to view your errors and the correctness-incorrectness of completed tasks.

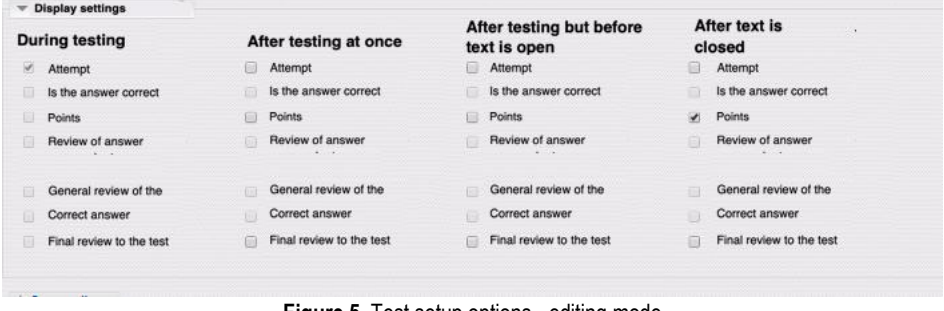

Figure 5. Test setup options - editing mode

CONCLUSION

Blended format is a new educational paradigm, the emergence of which is due to the sociocultural processes of modernity, primarily communication. It implies a more active feedback for the student, which determines the specific learning trajectory, and ultimately involves him in learning throughout life. Education ceases to be monologous, the student becomes an active subject in the learning process.

Thus, we can conclude that the use of various types of online tests allows you to adequately assess the knowledge of students of the program. However, it is worth noting that the objectivity of the assessment will depend on many factors, including:

• Careful selection of questions and answer options. The answer options should not be too obvious, should be put in such a way as not to repeat information from theoretical material.

• Test settings, which are of great importance in order to ensure the honesty of students performing tasks.

• Tests should be conducted to control knowledge regularly.

• Tests must comply with didactic standards and take into account the characteristics of students and the program.

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