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ORGANIZATION OF ONLINE LEARNING IN THE INFORMATION AND EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT OF UNIVERSITIES

ORGANIZACIÓN DEL APRENDIZAJE EN LÍNEA EN EL ENTORNO INFORMATIVO Y EDUCATIVO DE LAS UNIVERSIDADES

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ABSTRACT

The paper explores the key directions for improvement of the system of education and training in universities of the socio-cultural sphere in the context of digitalization and the use of online learning. Particular attention is paid to information technologies that expand opportunities for building individual educational trajectories based on the creation of models of general professional disciplines and variability in the set of individual characteristics of students. The study emphasizes the importance of developing students' skills in online learning technologies and analyzes the issues of the influence of online learning on students' learning outcomes, their perception of online teaching, the effectiveness of the method of teaching online courses, and the time devoted by teachers to prepare for online classes.

Keywords:

Online learning, digitalization, humanities and special disciplines, students, sociocultural universities.

RESUMEN

El documento explora las direcciones clave para la mejora del sistema de educación y formación en las universidades del ámbito sociocultural en el contexto de la digitalización y el uso del aprendizaje en línea. Se presta especial atención a las tecnologías de la información que amplían las oportunidades para la construcción de trayectorias educativas individuales a partir de la creación de modelos de disciplinas profesionales generales y la variabilidad en el conjunto de características individuales de los estudiantes. El estudio enfatiza la importancia de desarrollar las habilidades de los estudiantes en tecnologías de aprendizaje en línea y analiza los problemas de la influencia del aprendizaje en línea en los resultados de aprendizaje de los estudiantes, su percepción de la enseñanza en línea, la efectividad del método de enseñanza de cursos en línea y el tiempo dedicado por los profesores para prepararse para las clases en línea.

Palabras clave:

Aprendizaje en línea, digitalización, humanidades y disciplinas especiales, estudiantes, universidades socioculturales.

INTRODUCTION

Intensive introduction of online learning in the educational process and the development of information space in universities of arts and culture brings about the need to comprehend the necessity of developing scientific and pedagogical ideas on the organization of the educational process in higher education and on intensifying and accelerating the pace of learning on the basis of digital and information technology. The advent of information technology results in the modernization of the educational space and the development of new methods. There has emerged distance learning, which presupposes studying in educational programs remotely and inescapably displaces traditional forms of teaching.

In the sphere of arts and culture, however, the introduction of online learning is rather complicated. Actively employed in the educational practice are online schools, which promise outstanding results in a short time. For example, popularity is enjoyed by training programs in fine arts, cultural studies, art history, etc., which may be effective in an online learning environment as a supplemental educational resource to the fundamental basic training.

Studies of Russian scholars that reflect the need to create a digital educational environment in universities (Gasumova, 2015; Andriukhina, et al., 2020; Kurganskii, et al., 2020; Novoselestskaia, 2020; Korotaeva & Kapustina, 2021) identify the need for the digitalization of education, including the accelerated introduction of digital technologies, the creation of a modern and safe digital learning environment, and the development of educational programs. The pandemic and the battle against it have formed urgent demand for the organization of online learning in electronic information and educational environments and the introduction of digital technology creating additional opportunities for students in universities of the socio-cultural sphere.

The rising interest in online learning contributes to the development of practical recommendations for its implementation in the practice of teaching university students. Improvement of the quality of training of students in socio-cultural universities presupposes taking into account the characteristics of students from different directions of training (cultural researchers, art historians, musicians-performers, actors, choreographers, music teachers, etc.). In the organization of the educational process, digitalization brings considerable opportunities to create individual educational trajectories for students based on the creation of models of general professional disciplines and consideration of the individual characteristics of students.

Online learning as an embodiment of the principle of anticipatory learning is widely used in distance education relying on the Internet and digital technology. Online learning has been in use since the 1990s but has become most popular in the 21st century, allowing for integration into the educational environment on the basis of e-learning (electronic learning). This type of learning allows students to study through audio and video learning tools, programs, games, etc. and provides individual pacing, access to necessary materials, mobility, and effective feedback.

The practice of online learning in sociocultural universities allows a choice between its various forms, between online learning in the form of stand-alone courses and using case technology, and between different video conferencing resources. The existing classification of these forms, which includes face-to-face communication, email correspondence, the Internet, and online learning management systems (LMS) (Solovov, 2006), is quite effective in the study of humanitarian, general, and special disciplines. For instance, such disciplines as "Pedagogy of Higher Education", "Art History", and "Pedagogy and Psychology" combine online and face-to-face courses, which differ in the method of teaching, the form and type of lessons, the features of academic disciplines, and the degree of using the Internet (Karaseva, 2020).

In the process of the implementation of online learning for students in sociocultural universities, there arise the problems of creating e-learning infrastructure, developing software, and recruiting a competent group of specialists who can act as experts in assessing the effectiveness of educational and methodological support. Important issues to consider as part of the implementation of online learning include the duration and strategic goals of educational programs and the number of students who have the skills of online learning. The conducted research addresses the issues of whether online learning affects students' learning outcomes; how teachers perceive online teaching; which methods are the most effective in teaching online courses; how much time is devoted to preparation for online classes by teachers.

METHODOLOGY

The study is based on the analysis of online learning in the discipline "Pedagogy of Higher Education" studied by postgraduate students in all directions of training at the university. The structure of the lessons includes:

- theoretical training, which takes place in the form of webinars using the Mirapolis LMS. Statistics show that between 65 and 72% of students attend this form of class. As a rule, smartphones and tablets are used;

– Practical classes are held in the “Conference” mode using the Padlet platform, which allows sharing the necessary links, using video and audio materials, and posting presentations and additional materials. Assignments for the studied sections of the course involve tests, the use of which is aimed at the individualization of the learning process, the development of students’ independence, and ensuring self-monitoring, which is crucial for the study of the discipline. In addition to the use of the “Conference” mode, it is advisable to use the possibilities of “mail”, which facilitates feedback;

– tests and control assignments are performed in accordance with the methodological recommendations. Credit assignments and the exam are held in the form of electronic testing at a specific time.

Comparative analysis of the level of organization and responsibility of postgraduate students in online and offline learning shows that online learning is associated with higher student motivation and engagement. Specifically, over 80% of postgraduates use the “mail” function to turn in control assignments and tests. Of note is the particular interest in online technologies, especially as part of knowledge control through tests. Aside from testing, the depth of knowledge assimilated was assessed by assignments involving independent information search and drawing attention to problematic or little-studied areas in the course “Pedagogy of Higher Education”. For instance, at the present stage, universities are starting to compete in the market of educational services, which prescribes the need to develop and implement university branding focused on promoting higher education and increasing its role and significance in the current socio-cultural situation. Consideration of this problem calls for reference to scholarly sources in the sphere of marketing, management, and image-making in education.

DEVELOPMENT

The introduction of online learning in the educational process of universities in the socio-cultural sphere contributes to the acquisition and improvement of knowledge on the use of information technology, which is especially valuable in training instrumentalists, vocalists, choirmasters, actors, choreographers, etc. The implementation of online learning presupposes varied programs aimed at the development of creative and communicative competences and opportunities to promptly address the problem of self-education. A number of scholars argue that online learning is difficult for students in creative specialties (Shinkina & Shankin, 2021), which is certainly valid. Nevertheless, practice demonstrates that optimally reconfigured work ensures the formation of both a theoretical

foundation and practical skills. Features of the use of online learning relate to the need for its systematization and consideration of the structure and content of students’ future professional practice.

A few studies (Marchuk, 2013, Averina, 2021) concerning the use of the Internet to train students in creative specialties in the framework of online learning focus on the provision of interaction between students and teachers, although the problem of the methods of organizing this form of interaction is not disclosed in full. In need of attention today is the problem of online learning associated with individualized forms of training, conveying the fundamentals of the craft, and determining the practical orientation of distance learning as a method of working with students. Some broadly recognized trends in online learning are broadcasts of the top examples in performing arts, open lessons of masters, and webinars and lectures revealing the “secrets” of the art. A considerable part of the training of students in creative specialties is the independent acquisition of theoretical knowledge through the study of periodical journals, electronic library resources, museums, theaters, and exhibitions of artists. Multimedia didactic materials used in online learning motivate students to master information technology. There is a positive experience in developing a “Music Pedagogy” course that includes illustrative material in the form of recordings of masterclasses by prominent teachers-practitioners. It should also be pointed out that online learning of students in creative specialties effectively addresses the tasks associated with great informativity. First and foremost, this concerns the materials requiring historical and cultural context, consideration of historical facts, and analysis of the historical mission of the legacy of prominent educators of the past. The implementation of online training employs Internet services, cloud platforms, messengers, and applications to host webinars and conferences (VKontakte and Facebook social media platforms, Viber and WhatsApp messengers, Zoom, Skype, and Discord platforms, etc.).

The intensive introduction of online learning in art education and the formation of educational information space give rise to new scientific and pedagogical ideas about the organization of the educational process for students in universities of the socio-cultural sphere. The widespread introduction of digital and information technology into the education system and learning process is one of the most significant developments in the education system in recent times. Digitalization of art education becomes a method of “getting ahead of the curve” when independent online work is carried out in the electronic information and educational environment beforehand, which provides for an improvement of learning outcomes. This kind of prefacing

online work involves studying a section of the course with control of the results of knowledge assimilation.

CONCLUSIONS

Today's digitalization of education in the sociocultural sphere and the development and implementation of online learning consider the specifics of universities: educational programs increasingly emphasize the development of an independent, creative personality. Online learning presupposes visual contact of the teacher and students with a focus on anticipation and continuity, in which of importance is the orientation of the independent forms of learning. This kind of approach facilitates the development of thinking, creative skills, and self-control. Special significance is attributed to the methodological recommendations developed by the teacher that contribute to the development of an algorithm for action and knowledge of the digital environment and information technology.

The prognosis for the development of education in universities in the socio-cultural sphere suggests that the proportion of the use of online learning will continue to grow, as will the demand for software and information and communication technologies. At present, we cannot yet see the widespread use of such programs, as well as of online learning itself, in large enough volumes and of good quality. In the meantime, the digitalization of education in the sphere of culture and arts brings inescapable consequences that lead to a reconsideration of many constructs in different communication spaces. In the field of education in the sociocultural sphere, changes touch upon such fundamental issues as the value and selection of information, the relationship between information and knowledge, the role of the teacher in the availability of any information, etc.

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