


*The originality lies in the comprehensive empirical analysis of the integrated English preparation for social work students, quantitatively demonstrating a critical mismatch between students' awareness of the language's importance and the inadequate professional focus, volume, and methodological quality of the current teaching process, thus identifying key deficiencies.*


*Further research must prioritize the systematic analysis of the existing curricular and methodical framework. This analysis will serve as a foundation for developing*

*and implementing new, highly effective integrated teaching methodologies to elevate the level of English proficiency among future social workers.*

**Keywords:** *integrating teaching, English for professional purposes, social worker, professional English language preparedness.*


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## **DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING FOR FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHER TRAINING**

*The professional realization of foreign language (FL) teacher-trainees is fundamentally related to the level of competitiveness of their professional training. This competitiveness is largely conditioned by the development of specific competencies, most notably the pedagogical activity competence. Consequently, effective training is supposed to prioritize creating conditions that allow students to practice and achieve professional realization as FL instructors.*

*The shift to mandatory distance learning caused by the prolonged pandemic necessitated the adjustments to all educational activities. This, in turn, highlighted the need for specialized training that prepares students to teach effectively within blended and distance learning contexts. Indeed, distance learning has become one of the most prominent trends in modern education, with the COVID-19 pandemic precipitating a significant transition from classical in-person instruction to these new modalities.*

*The purpose of this paper is to examine the prospects of higher education and analyze the core principles of professional training for FL teacher-trainees within distance and blended learning frameworks.*

*The major research methods employed to achieve the above purpose embrace monitoring, systemic and situational logical analysis, and theoretical research. The study was conducted through a comprehensive literature review on the topic, utilizing relevant keywords and synonyms. Furthermore, the analysis and summarization of higher education prospects prioritized the importance of FL teacher-trainees' professional development, specifically accounting for the unique characteristics of distance and blended learning environments.*

*The conducted research revealed that the main goal of professional training for higher education teachers should focus on conscious mastery of information technology (IT) tools, activation of pedagogical self-organization, and development of the ability to self-improve it skills.*

*It is further emphasized that individual distance learning constitutes a comprehensive pedagogical concept. This approach encompasses the goals, structure, content, and process of learning, is based on an evaluative approach, and ultimately contributes to shaping "design thinking". Such thinking integrates individual preferences, knowledge, and opportunities for applying information and communication technologies.*

*The study concluded with clear definitions for the learning modalities: blended learning is finalized as the effective combination of traditional face-to-face instruction with online components, implemented using modern internet tools; distance education provides students with the flexibility to study from home according to a convenient schedule and in optimal comfort.*

*In the distance education system, knowledge assessment is also carried out remotely. Students can complete research projects, take electronic final tests, and participate in exams with instructors via video conferencing. Finally, the use of interactive methods in FL classes is crucial, as it ensures an intensive creative process of interaction between the teacher and students, stimulating cognitive activity both during and after the lesson.*

**Keywords:** *professional training; distance and blended learning; pedagogical competence; IT competence of teachers; foreign languages.*

**Introduction.** The competitiveness of professional training for future foreign language teachers is determined by their potential for professional realization. These opportunities depend on developing specific competencies, most crucially, pedagogical competence. This highlights the importance of creating conditions that enable students to achieve professional realization in their practical work as foreign language teachers.

The prolonged pandemic necessitated changes in all educational activities due to the mandatory shift to distance learning. This, in turn, requires specific training for students to teach effectively within blended and distance learning contexts.

Distance learning has become one of the most prominent trends in modern education. The COVID-19 pandemic precipitated a significant transition from classical in-person instruction to these new modalities, known as distance learning. The purpose of this paper is to examine the prospects of higher education and analyze the core principles of professional training for future foreign language teachers within distance and blended learning frameworks.

A review of recent literature on the methodology and implementation of distance learning indicates that while the late 20th century saw the initial emergence of scientific inquiry into the informatization of society and the use of Information Technologies (IT) in education, the 21st century has been defined by a sustained focus on integrating distance learning as an essential component of the educational system.

Consequently, as early as the 1980s and 1990s, international scholars began to investigate the role of information technology in education. Specifically, concepts of computer-based learning environments emerged (Nicholas Negroponte, 1995; Larry Cuban, 1997), and constructivist learning ideas supported by digital tools were introduced (Mark Prensky, 2009). During this period, priorities for the development of e-learning were established within the context of educational reform, particularly focusing on cognitive, social, and teaching presence (Thomas Russell, 2002; Garrison, Archer, & Anderson, 2003).

Subsequent research focused on the didactic potential of information and communication technologies, particularly on interaction models that engage all participants in language activities and promote opportunities for speaking, listening, reflecting, and responding (David Johnson & Roger Johnson, 1994; Spencer Kagan). Scholars also explored the potential of online education and the significance of self-discipline as a predictor of academic success (Angela Duckworth & Martin Seligman, 2005).

Other studies addressed factors influencing students' perceived learning outcomes and satisfaction with online education in higher education (Eom & Ashill, 2016), as well as the use of the Internet for developing open educational resources and supporting distance learning (Linda Harasim, 1990). Additionally, research has examined educational design and digital infrastructure in the context of technical support for education (Victoria Marin & Melissa Bond, 2020).

**Purpose.** The aim of this paper is to examine the prospects of higher education and analyze the core principles of professional training for future foreign language teachers within distance and blended learning frameworks.

**Methods.** The primary research methods employed in this study include monitoring, systemic and situational logical analysis, and theoretical research. To achieve this goal, we conducted a comprehensive literature review using relevant keywords and synonyms. Furthermore, we analyzed and summarized the prospects of higher education development, emphasizing the significance of professional training for future foreign language teachers, specifically considering the unique features of distance and blended learning.

The study materials consist of a review, synthesis, and analysis of existing research regarding the prospects of higher education and the core principles of professional training for future FL teachers under the imposed conditions of distance and blended learning.

**Results.** The main goal of professional teacher training in higher education should focus on: conscious mastery of IT (information technology) tools, activation of pedagogical self-organization, and development of IT self-improvement skills. This also involves developing the preparedness of future teachers (including computer science instructors) to effectively utilize IT in their professional work (Hurzhii, Kartashova, & Lapinskyi, 2013).

Personalized distance learning is a complicated pedagogical concept that includes learning aims, structure, content, and process. It defines the efficiency of foreign language learning and demands a specific level of learner's maturity. This stage of maturity is determined by the following characteristics: a) relative autonomy from the teacher and learning resources; b) capability to identify issues; c) problem-oriented approach; d) capacity to adapt existing skills to individual interests and conditions; e) self-awareness and self-diagnosis; f) possibility to control and monitor not only one's own studying process but also one's own intercultural interaction; g) feeling of responsibility; h) being

able to project one's knowledge to future occupational activities (Muntyan, & Valentynova, 2011).

Distance learning in the area of foreign languages involves an evaluative mindset, the development of the so-called design mentality, oriented towards the combination of individual preferences, knowledge and the possibilities of information and communication systems, and the recognition that it is not possible to stop the innovative progress of learning, the implementation of modern learning technologies and technological advances. It is essential to upgrade one's professional skill level, adapt to new work environment, continuously observe the intelligent potential of mobile gadgets, and monitor the appearance of innovative mobile education tools on the Internet (Stezhko et al., 2021).

The usage of distance learning tools in the current educational experience of a pedagogical institute needs to change the ways and forms of preparing future elementary school teachers - from the explanatory to the research, problem solving, project, and investigative ones, which are focused on students' independent thinking, information processing, and practical habits and skills (Mukoviz et al., 2018).

The cognitive learning approaches are aimed at helping students absorb new material with their previous knowledge and modify their mental framework to integrate it. For instance, cognitive teachers allow the learners to describe new content in their own terms, ask them questions to structuring the new information, assist them in making meaningful connections to what they have studied, and arrange the material in a logical organizational way (Shandruk et al., 2019).

Consequently, the review of educational curricula for future foreign language educators has led to the general conclusion that the content of their studies is slowly changing to meet the contemporary requirements for training of competitive, communication competent professionals characterized not only by professional skills but also by leadership capabilities, psychological resilience, imaginative engagement, self-confidence, and the adaptability to distance learning (Tkachenko, 2020).

By adapting the author's specifications to the topic of our paper, we arrive at the following summary: diagnostic research is focused on the examination of individual characteristics of young specialists, their occupational competence, and the recognition of challenges in the academic field; educational and methodical activities are intended to organize and conduct seminars on methodological approaches to the study of disciplines, devel-

opment and application of innovative pedagogical technologies; psychological and coaching activities are designed to enhance communicative behaviors with students, parents, and educators (Shalivska, 2020).

The teacher's goal is to remain in a powerful role in shaping and maintaining desirable behaviors or actions in students, and to keep the journey to them direct and simple. Accurate appreciation, founded on the observation that people who are complimented for permanent attributes (intelligence, giftedness) end up studying less well than those who are praised for diligence, effort, and persistence (Belmaz, Serhieieva (2019).

Electronic resources in a foreign language can be divided into the next types according to their meaning and functionality:

1) information and referencing works (encyclopedias, reference guides, glossaries, journals, newspapers); 2) e-books for the reading; 3) videos, clips and videos on YouTube; 4) digital collections and repositories; 5) methodological works on electronic media (plans of seminars and practical sessions, lecture summaries, methodological guidelines for training aspects of language and kinds of communication activities, quizzes and other control and measurement tools); 6) Internet sources; 7) combined e-learning materials (educational programs, e-textbooks, activities and educational games); 8) learning and methodological program tools to assist lectures (demonstration works, presentations, projects, computer applications for seminars and practical lessons, etc.) developed by academic staff for a specific theme), prepared by teachers for a certain subject (Osova, 2018).

Since the primary purpose of learning a foreign language is to communicate, this common feature is important for our study, so we carefully studied it and found that from a psycholinguistic point of view, communication can include the following components: motivational and cognitive component, analytical and technological component, integrative and personal component, sociocultural component, reflective component, and emotional and evaluative component (Kostikova et al., 2020).

At this stage of distance learning, IT resources are therefore the key lever in the development of future foreign language teachers' IT competencies, and "the acquisition of information literacy by IT resources permits the use of knowledge, abilities and skills in their activities in the area of information and communication services, which is a measure of professional readiness to enhance the quality of teaching and learning in distance education" (Lebedieva, 2018).

The implementation of individual curriculum, as well as the specifics of constructing a student-oriented syllabus, were examined in the study by Iyer (Iyer et al., 2020). Bazelais explored pedagogical and psychological instruments to enhance the students' motivation for distance learning (Bazelais, 2018). Perspective methods of raising students' engagement in the distance learning experience, as well as ways to stimulate them in this mode, were described by Castro (Castro, 2019).

The major characteristics of the "individualized trajectory" concept, namely the possibility of studying at one's personal style and pace, were considered by Rizaq (Rizaq et al., 2021). Enhancing learner productivity and academic achievement via online learning Serrano investigated (Serrano et al., 2019). The growth of critical reflection abilities of the students of humanitarian professions in the environment of distance education was the topic of Lackovic's research (Lackovic, 2017). Types of implementation of personalized training in the format of blended learning were reviewed by Mata (Mata, 2016). The group interaction and engagement of learners in the distance learning context was explored by Dabbagh (Dabbagh, 2012). The specifics of feedback as a psychological effect in online education were discussed by Nambiar (Nambiar, 2020).

Learners have more opportunities to control their timetables and academic programs using online instruments. This provides participants with the possibility to simultaneously learn using online classes and live in the same way without risking their lives, sacrificing their jobs and home routine for the benefit of their studies. Distance learning keeps students in psychological balance in their lives, which is an essential element of successful education. It also offers students the chance to upgrade their knowledge and skills without leaving their working place. Some researchers (Ching et al., 2020) think that online learning is now the only way to include education in the busy work schedule of an ordinary human being. Minimum demands on the educational space, which can be transformed into a cozy home atmosphere (Nahaev & Hrynova, 2020). With necessary technical tools, learners have the chance to learn from any secure and convenient location in the world, which in turn boosts the volume of educational flows and reduces the cost per pupil. The same applies to academic staff, who can set up their own offices in any place they wish. The initial capital cost is high (particularly for technical assistance), but it is a one-time purchase, while the reve-

nues will pay for themselves in the next few months.

At the very same time, online learning has a range of downsides that are worth highlighting: online learning is highly demanding on a university student's self-discipline, as it is controlled by a much larger amount of circumstances in a distance learning environment, whereas in a traditional full-time education, the situation is set by the administration of the institution. A high level of self-discipline is one of the characteristics of a mature human being, so there is a certain risk of decreased effectiveness of online learning in the early years of university studies due to the lack of essential skills for controlling and managing one's learning processes (Huiwen Gao, 2021). Learners can formally engage in an academic online conference by muting their video and audio, which is a comfortable choice for students (it helps them to deal with private or domestic matters that may distract them from the learning activity), but has a disruptive impact on other members of the process. This causes other students to become less involved in the learning environment, dropping out of the main conversation, and lecturers are required to stop and bring back inactive learners (Seethal et al., 2019).

Blended learning is a combination of face-to-face training in its traditional form and online study with the use of Internet tools, which enable students to blend self-education, powerful online resources (virtual labs, distance learning internships, communication and sharing of experience with teachers and professionals from all over the world), and face-to-face study at the institution. Therefore, some scientists call adaptive blended learning hybrid education (Smith, & Hill, 2019). Blended learning is the perfect response to the needs of contemporary students for flexibility in choosing what they wish to explore, when, where and in what way, and in accordance with a learner-centered teaching approach. Blended learning solutions will help reach more learners worldwide and achieve sustainable education goals (Jdaitawi, M. 2020).

Blended learning empowers students to construct their individual, flexible learning paths and styles, enabling them to learn at their personal pace, maintain their own educational trajectory, and accommodate their studies to challenging or unpredictable life circumstances. Blended learning also offers a high degree of accessibility, allowing students to access materials from any location and at any time, while retaining the benefit of a tu-

tor's personal assistance and advice (Brugeman et al., 2021).

Contemporary education must respond to students' requirements in order to efficiently utilize the appropriate technologies. As part of the remote blended learning component, creating, formatting, storing, recording, sending, distributing, and testing learning resources is completely dependent on technical assistance. Technology is the major condition for a smooth transformation from the classroom to blended learning (Lazar et al., 2020).

The effect of individualization of future foreign language teacher's education in the conditions of distance formation is the development of skills for professional advancement of future foreign language educators. Such attributes include the capacity to achieve aims, make appropriate solutions, willingness to teaching, gain professional expertise, ability to establish social relations, self-assessment, self-education, self-development, and self-perfection.

In our opinion, distance learning allows future educators to develop new techniques and methods of teaching a foreign language, establish their personal visions of the foreign language learning experience, design an e-learning program, improve their IT proficiency, master IT instruments in foreign language teaching, improve professional foreign language interaction, and raise their level of professional communication literacy.

The implementation of distance learning strategies in the current educational environment of a pedagogical university necessitates changing the ways and methods of educating future foreign language educators - from demonstration and explanatory to research, problem-oriented, project-oriented, research, focused on students' self-directed cognitive efforts to receive and process data and gain practical knowledge (Mukoviz et al., 2018), although all the abovementioned issues should be considered.

**Conclusions.** The primary advantage of distance learning is accessibility and convenience: travel and accommodation expenses are minimized, and all necessary self-study materials, laboratory resources, and links to webinars are readily accessible online. Another crucial benefit is mobility, which aligns with the flexible nature of modern life. This allows for diverse skill expansion through various modalities: working with an instructor, participating in a speaking club, engaging in immersion in the target language country, utilizing social networks, or enrolling in free language courses. Additionally,

distance learning (particularly online versions) offers technical advantages and contributes to savings on printed resources. It is also important to emphasize the democratic nature of distance learning, as it provides the opportunity to receive education from any university worldwide.

Drawbacks include the loss of in-person interaction, reduction in the unique student experience, lack of necessary computer skills, and the absence of professional technical assistance. Nonetheless, the advantages of distance learning generally outweigh the disadvantages.

In conclusion, incorporating a distance learning approach into the professional development process for future foreign language instructors will enhance the continuous learning opportunities for modern university graduates and improve their educational outcomes.

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## ДИСТАНЦІЙНЕ ТА ЗМІШАНЕ НАВЧАННЯ В ПІДГОТОВЦІ ВЧИТЕЛІВ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ

**Анотація.** У статті проаналізовано, що рівень конкурентоспроможності професійної підготовки майбутніх учителів іноземної мови залежить від можливостей професійної реалізації. Ці можливості зумовлені формуванням специфічних компетентностей, найважливішою з яких є компетентність педагогічної діяльності. Цей фактор зумовлює створення умов для здобуття студентами можливостей професійної реалізації у практичній діяльності вчителя іноземної мови. Тривалий перебіг пандемії вимагає коригування реалізації будь-якого виду освітньої діяльності через її вимушене переведення у форму дистанційного навчання. А це, своєю чергою, вимагає спеціальної підготовки студентів до викладання в умовах змішаного та дистанційного навчання в навчальному закладі. Дистанційне навчання набуло статусу одного з найпопулярніших напрямів у сфері освіти сучасного століття.

Встановлено, що пандемія COVID-19 внесла значні зміни в класичне навчання та викладання предметів, які називаються дистанційним навчанням.

Метою цієї праці є вивчення перспектив вищої освіти та аналіз основ професійної підготовки майбутніх викладачів іноземних мов у форматі дистанційного та змішаного навчання.

Основними методами дослідження є моніторинг, системний та ситуативно-логічний аналіз, а також теоретичний метод. Для реалізації мети дослідження було проведено огляд літератури з обраної теми з використанням ключових слів і синонімів, пов'язаних із темою роботи; здійснено аналіз та узагальнення перспектив вищої освіти; акцентовано важливість професійної підготовки майбутніх викладачів інозем-

них мов з урахуванням особливостей дистанційного та змішаного навчання.

Дослідження виявило, що основною метою професійної підготовки викладачів вищої освіти є зосередження уваги на свідомому оволодінні інструментами інформаційних технологій (ІТ), активізації педагогічної самоорганізації та розвитку здатності до самовдосконалення ІТ-навичок.

Підкреслено, що індивідуальне дистанційне навчання є комплексним педагогічним поняттям, яке охоплює цілі, структуру, зміст і процес навчання. Встановлено, що дистанційне навчання іноземних мов базується на оцінному підході та сприяє формуванню «дизайнерського мислення», яке поєднує індивідуальні вподобання, знання та можливості застосування інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій.

Зроблено висновок, що дистанційна освіта надає можливість навчатися вдома за зручним графіком і в найкомфортніших умовах. Крім того, контроль знань у цій системі освіти також може здійснюватися дистанційно – студенти проводять дослідження, складають електронні тести та іспити для викладачів за допомогою відеоконференцій тощо. Використання інтерактивних методів на заняттях з іноземної мови забезпечує інтенсивний творчий процес взаємодії між викладачем і студентами, а також сприяє стимулюванню пізнавальної діяльності під час і після занять.

**Ключові слова:** професійна підготовка; дистанційне та змішане навчання; компетентність педагогічної діяльності; ІТ компетентність викладача; іноземні мови.

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