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The Development of Media Education in the Context of Traditional and Distance Learning

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Abstract

The study is devoted to the introduction of massive open online courses (MOOCs) into the educational process. Currently, MOOC is considered an important tool for media education, opening new opportunities for students. The topic is relevant since the study identifies the key differences and advantages of traditional and distance learning models using the example of teaching *Russian as a Foreign Language* (RFL). The results of the study enhance the educational process, identify the best practices, including the application of interactive learning tools and multimedia, adaptation of content for students with different levels of language proficiency, as well as the introduction of active learning methods. It allows adapting the RFL course for the online model in the context of media education technologies, identifying its key differences and advantages. The authors suggest that the integration of both modes of study enhance the effectiveness of the RFL course, considering the individual needs and preferences of students. The conducted study is based on the methodology of data collection and analysis using questionnaires and a survey. As a result of the study, data have obtained that contribute to the development of more effective teaching strategies and optimization of the educational process using media education tools.

Keywords: traditional teaching technologies, distance learning, massive open online course, media education tools, continuous education.

1. Introduction

Modern education system is undergoing significant changes due to both socio-cultural and technological transformations. One of the key ones is the development of media education as an integral part of educational programs, given the rapid growth of digital technologies and changes in the media environment. In this context, it is important to analyze traditional and distance learning models, as well as their role in the development of media education.

Current trends of the global educational environment require universities to be flexible and ready to integrate into the international community. This is especially relevant for universities in Kazakhstan and Russia, which are traditionally focused on the development of national educational systems.

The leading trend of the current stage of development of global open education is to provide the most accessible environment for anyone to receive a quality education. Due to globalization, internationalization and informatization of education there is a need to organize the educational process to meet modern requirements for integration of traditional and distance learning.

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In the digital century the learning with technology paradigm is introduced (Marshall, 2002) and as a results multimedia and multimodal modes has come into our life.

Current studies have shown that integration of media into the university syllabus significantly increases the motivation and efficiency of learning. In this regard, media education is relevant (Fedorov, 2015). Media education is considered as "... a process of training and education aimed at developing students' skills of conscious and critical perception, analysis and creation of media content" (Chernov, 2007).

There is no doubt that the educational paradigm at the present stage presupposes the training and development of the personality, integrating into the media space Amidst the rapid transformations of the modern world and the continuous advancement of digital technologies, the significance of media education as a fundamental element of lifelong learning is steadily growing. It allows students to constantly update their knowledge, acquire new professional skills and qualifications (Gálik et al., 2024; Mikheeva, 2016).

Traditional and distance learning models play an important role in the development of media education, and their integration can significantly improve the quality of education (Makarova, 2018). Integrating these models allows the most effective use of their advantages, developing a flexible and dynamic educational environment ready for the challenges of the digital age.

In the context of media education, the traditional teaching model plays a key role in developing students' critical perception of media content, as well as in teaching them how to use traditional media formats. Distance learning in media education provides students the access to modern digital tools and the opportunity to master these technologies through online courses and practical assignments, which helps them develop the necessary competencies to work in modern media environment. Thus, massive open online courses are becoming an integral part of the modern educational environment for training future engineers.

Despite the widespread integration of digital tools into the educational process, traditional forms of instruction continue to play an essential role. Traditional education is typically understood as a format involving direct face-to-face interaction between educators and learners within institutional settings – such as classrooms or laboratories – through regular lectures, seminars, practical sessions, and assessment activities that support the achievement of learning outcomes (Laurillard, 2002). Furthermore, it is often conceptualized as a structured, hierarchical model of knowledge and skills transmission, grounded in standardized curricula and teaching methodologies (Siemens, 2005). Evidently, conventional education remains a relevant and effective pedagogical approach, offering students a coherent and holistic pathway toward educational attainment in contemporary academic environments.

2. Materials and methods

The study uses a set of general research methods, including theoretical analysis of the basic notions of the study, analysis of psychological, pedagogical and methodological papers on the issue of digital and traditional education including the theory of dialogue interaction (Fedorov, 2015).

To solve the research tasks, questionnaires and surveys have been used. These methods allow collecting data on the perception, preferences and experience of students, as well as assessing the effectiveness of each form of training.

The aim of the study is a comprehensive analysis of two approaches to teaching RFL with an emphasis on their effectiveness, features, advantages and disadvantages.

The type of study is a comparative analysis that allows us to identify the effectiveness of traditional and distance learning (using MOOCs) in the process of studying Russian as a foreign language. The study analyzes such aspects of learning as the level of material acquisition, students' motivation, satisfaction with learning, as well as technical and organizational features of each form of learning.

The research process includes several stages:

1. The preparation stage clarifies the key goals of the research, and specific tasks that need to be solved; selection of participants; development of teaching materials.

2. The stage of conducting the experiment includes the choice of the training formats).

3. The stage of collecting data using a survey and questionnaire.

4. The stage of data analysis includes a comparison of the results of the survey and questionnaire of both groups to assess the level of acquisition of the material, analyzing students' feedback, preferences and problems they encountered during the course of training.

5. The stage of conclusions based on data analysis allows us to draw conclusions about which of the teaching methods is more effective for teaching Russian as a foreign language.

3. Discussion

The modern education system, along with traditional technologies, uses digital ones as an integral component of media education. The concept of media education goes back to the ideas of Canadian philosopher and communication theorist Marshall McLuhan, who laid the foundations of understanding media as extensions of human faculties.

Many national and foreign researchers have addressed the problem of defining, developing, implementing, and evaluating massive open online courses. Canadian scholar G. Siemens (Siemens, 2005), known for his connectivist theory, and S. Downes (Downes, 2011) introduced the first MOOC, combining media literacy and technology-enhanced learning. American researcher M.J. Israel (Israel, 2015) analyzed the effectiveness of integrating MOOCs into traditional learning for undergraduate students.

In recent years, Anglo-American literature has paid increasing attention to the role of MOOCs and media education in cultivating critical thinking, digital literacy, and equitable access. For example, Veletsianos (Veletsianos et al., 2021) emphasized how MOOCs shape public perceptions of education during crises. Jordan (Jordan, 2020) explored learner engagement in MOOCs, while Kovanović (Kovanović et al., 2020) focused on media analytics and predictive models to enhance online learning.

Studies by Clark, Luckin, and Selwyn (Clark et al., 2020) stress the pedagogical design of digital education and its implications for reflective learning. Buckingham (Buckingham, 2022), one of the leading British scholars in media education, highlighted the challenges of commercial platforms and the need for critical media pedagogy. Similarly, Jones and Sefton-Green (Similarly et al., 2023) address the integration of media literacy into digital curriculum design. American researcher Hobbs (Hobbs, 2021) underlines the importance of media literacy in democratic education, especially when using open access media content.

The study of organizational and pedagogical characteristics of open educational resources and MOOCs justifies their priority status in the development of modern education. As Grinshkun (Grinshkun, 2018) argues, MOOCs significantly increase students' motivation to acquire digital skills necessary for professional activity and contribute to engagement with theoretical and practical material.

Moreover, the principle of “maximum information immersion in a narrow subject area” fosters the development of critical thinking and independent knowledge systematization (Loginova et al., 2015). Students are granted autonomy in choosing the mode and intensity of their engagement with media educational resources.

However, traditional education methods remain essential. Hattie (Hattie, 2009) systematically reviewed evidence on teaching effectiveness and emphasized the value of teacher-student interaction. Darling-Hammond and Berliner (Darling-Hammond et al., 2015) showed how traditional learning environments contribute to student achievement, especially through personalized instruction. Empirical evidence supports the view that traditional methods promote stable learning trajectories.

New forms of digital assessment and media tools, as discussed by Collison (Collison, 2021) and Langenfeld et al. (Langenfeld et al., 2022), expand the possibilities for evaluating students’ competencies. MOOCs offer flexible access to diverse content and international expertise, yet they also present challenges such as reduced motivation, lack of personal contact, and low self-discipline among learners (Alhazzani, 2020; Liu, 2016).

Therefore, integrating MOOCs within traditional media education frameworks enriches instructional design, fosters digital and media literacy, and addresses the diverse learning needs of students in a global context. The combination of both models – traditional and digital – appears to be the most pedagogically sound strategy, ensuring balanced acquisition of knowledge, critical engagement with media, and continuous educational development.

One of the notable strengths of online learning lies in the diversity of instructional resources available. Engaging independently with textual content, video materials, audio recordings, and visual presentations enhances students’ cognitive engagement and facilitates more efficient processing and assimilation of information into structured knowledge.

Although massive online courses have many advantages, they also have some disadvantages. We believe that these include: lack of motivation and self-discipline, limited contact with teachers, insufficient personalization, some technical problems.

4. Results

A comprehensive review of contemporary pedagogical studies has made it possible to identify a structured algorithm for MOOC development, as outlined by Blinov (Blinov et al., 2021). The process is divided into distinct stages, each implemented by a specialized team and oriented toward solving specific tasks in a sequential manner. The initial, preparatory phase focuses on defining the course objectives, outlining the instructional design, and selecting appropriate tools. The production stage involves the creation of educational content and accompanying methodological guidelines. During this phase, digital resources are integrated, the course undergoes testing, and technical inconsistencies are addressed. The concluding stage entails expert evaluation of the course's pedagogical and substantive integrity, with subsequent refinement of components based on the assessment results, where required.

An online course *Russian as a Foreign Language* has been developed. The structure includes modules with various components: a text page, a link to a file or web sheet, a lecture, a video presentation, exercises, a glossary, tests, etc.

The main elements of the MOOC are the following:

– The introduction includes the title, an overview of the course, its goals, and expected results.

– The course content has educational theoretical resources, video lectures, texts, presentations.

– The practical part includes assignments, tests, and exercises that help students consolidate the learned material and demonstrate their knowledge.

– Assessment and feedback involve both automatic assessment methods (for example, automatic test checks) and assessment conducted by teachers based on the results of completed assignments. Feedback helps students understand their strengths and weaknesses and improve their performance.

– The additional resources section contains supporting education material, recommended literature, links to external resources, etc.

This course is intended for students who have mastered the elementary level of Russian language learning (A1-A2) and continue to study the language at level B1.

The MOOC for *Russian as a Foreign Language* contains ten main sections: "Russian Language in the Modern World", "Problems of the Modern Family", "Lifestyle", "Recreation, Interests, Hobbies", "The role of Art in Human Life", "State and Religious Holidays in the Republic of Kazakhstan", "Geographical Position of the City of Karaganda, "History of the City of Karaganda", "At the Airport, at the Railway station", "Healthcare".

The innovative nature of the MOOC is proved by, firstly, step-by-step explanation of lexical and grammatical units of the Russian language, which helps to eliminate the language barrier and facilitate the study of the Russian language; secondly, the presentation allows students to get acquainted with the traditions and customs of the country in which they are studying, to learn the national identity and culture of the people.

Sixty first-year students at the Abylkas Saginov Karaganda Technical University took part in the experiment. They were studying *RFL* both in online courses and in traditional classes. To reduce the influence of factors not related to the form of study, thirty participants were assigned randomly to each group. The experimental group studied Russian using MOOC and the control group studied Russian using traditional teaching methods (textbooks, practical classes and exercises). The participants of the control group had the traditional face-to-face format classes, did homework and interacted with teachers.

The participants of the experimental group studied in a remote mode and used resources and assignments posted on the online platform. Throughout the entire training period, both groups are monitored to complete assignments, and receive regular feedback (surveys, discussions) to assess students' engagement and motivation.

The participants were divided into two groups depending on their initial level of Russian language proficiency. A minimum level of language proficiency was set for each group (B1). This

allowed us to exclude the influence of initial language proficiency on the results of the study and ensure that all participants had a similar level of initial knowledge.

The study sample consisted of students aged 17-18, which allowed for the formation of a relatively homogeneous group in terms of their perception of educational technologies. To ensure balanced grouping, a preliminary survey was conducted in which participants indicated their preferred mode of learning-traditional or distance-based. This approach made it possible to account for individual learning preferences and reduce potential bias or resistance from students unfamiliar with MOOCs or inclined toward conventional formats.

Participants with previous MOOC-based learning experience were excluded from the study to avoid possible distortion of the results due to bias or habits of distance learning. All participants were informed about the ethical aspects of the study and gave written consent to participate, including consent to the processing of personal data as part of the scientific study. These criteria allowed us to form two groups homogeneous in characteristics and expectations of the participants, which contributes to a more objective comparative analysis of traditional and distance learning methods.

The main criteria to assess the effectiveness of learning the material were the analysis of the results of tests in the Russian language. To assess knowledge, a scale from 1 to 10 has been used, where 1 is very poor and 10 is excellent.

The study was conducted during the academic year. The knowledge of participants was assessed at the initial stage, at certain time intervals (after 3 and 6 months) and upon completion of the study.

The results of placement test have shown that the students have almost the same level of language proficiency. The intermediate knowledge test has showed a slight advantage of the group studying using the MOOC. Knowledge testing at the final stage, on the contrary, has showed the superiority of the traditional form of education over the MOOC. Figure 1 shows the results of testing the respondent's knowledge.

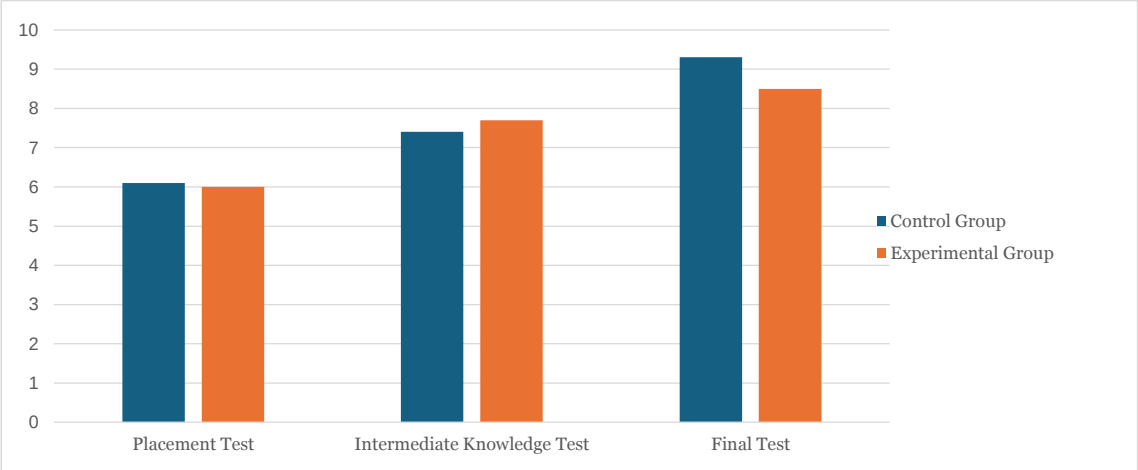

Fig. 1. Test results to determine the level of knowledge of respondents

To assess the effectiveness of traditional learning and MOOCs, a survey method was used. Respondents were asked to rate the criteria that they consider most important when choosing a learning method on a 10-point scale (Table 1).

Table 1. The importance index of criteria when choosing a teaching method

Criteria	*Traditional method*	*MOOC*
Learning effectiveness	9	7
Differentiation of task levels	7	9
Availability of resources	8	8
Application of digital technologies	6	10
Self-organization and independence	6	9

Criteria	*Traditional method*	*MOOC*
Motivation to learn the language	9	6
Interaction of participants of the educational process	10	5
Feedback of the teacher	10	6
Method effectiveness (average score)	8,1	7,5

The analysis of the survey data (Figure 2) indicates that massive open online courses (MOOCs), as an alternative approach to language education, were rated highly by participants across several key parameters:

– differentiation of task complexity, which reflects the adaptation of instructional materials to varying levels of students' language proficiency;

– use of digital technologies (use of modern digital technologies including interactive tasks, video lessons, audio materials, online testing, discussion forums);

– self-organization and independence (independent management and planning of learning process: pace, time of study, topics).

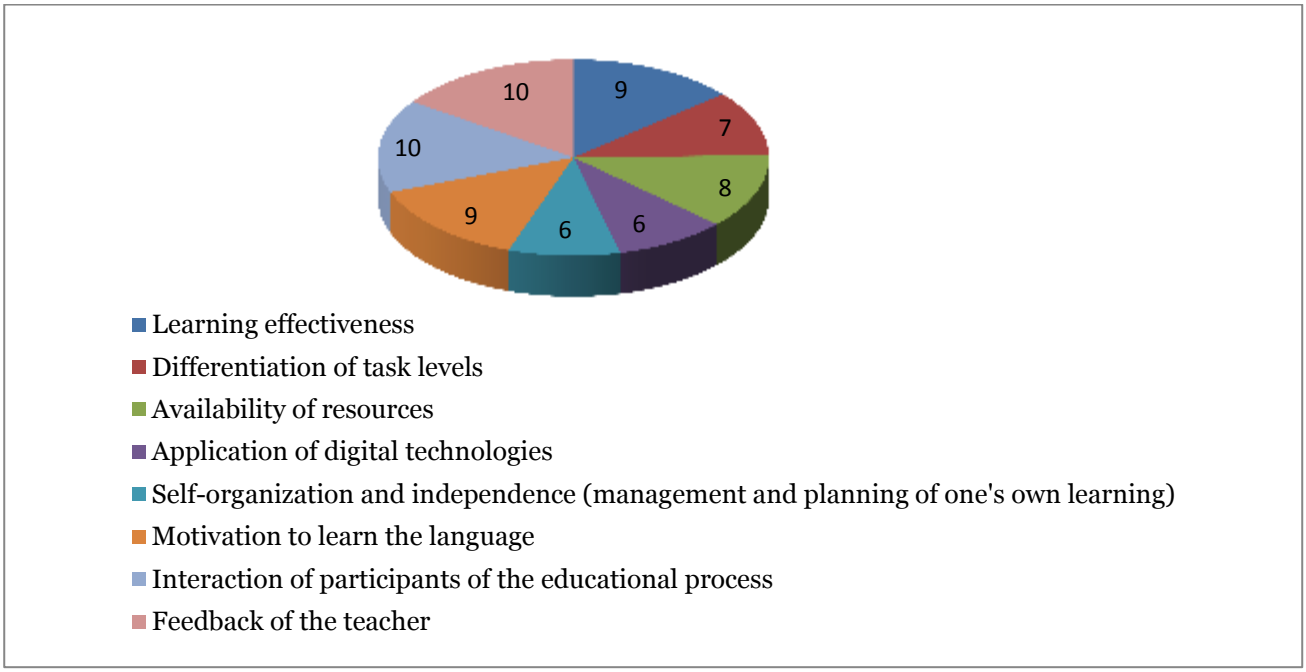

Fig. 2. Performance indicator of MOOC criteria

At the same time, the traditional format of language instruction continues to be perceived by students as the most favorable option, based on the following criteria (Figure 3):

– effectiveness of learning – structured and systematic acquisition of language skills under the supervision of an experienced educator, personalized adaptation of content, and real-time support with error correction;

– learning motivation – collaborative activities, peer interaction, and social dynamics that encourage goal-oriented engagement;

– participant interaction – the establishment of a supportive environment for dialogue, opinion exchange, and discussion of relevant topics;

– teacher feedback – the availability of immediate, individualized responses to learner errors, implemented through a learner-centered instructional approach.

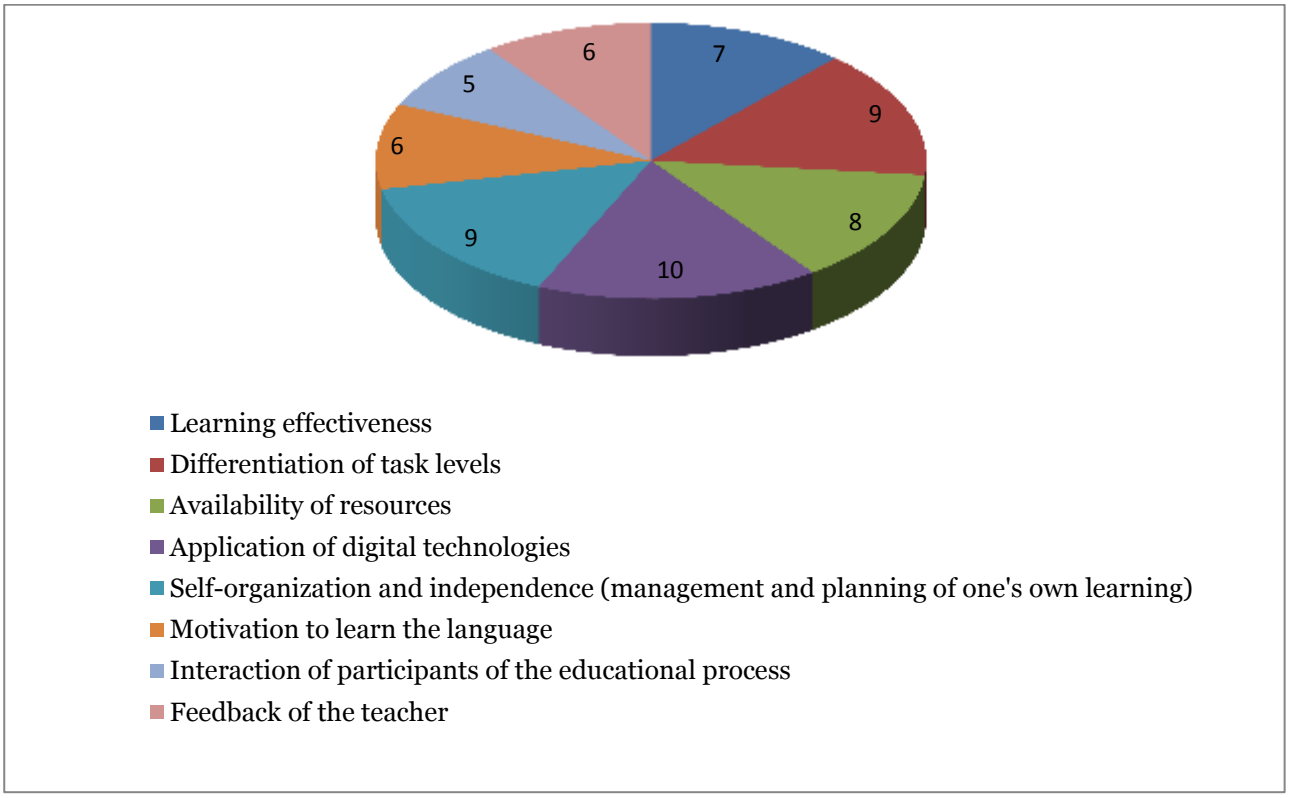

Fig. 3. Performance indicator of the criteria of the traditional learning form

Empirical results demonstrate that the use of MOOCs provides accessibility and flexibility, the ability to choose learning materials, self-organization and independence. It was found that such skills as language, communication, information and technological literacy are being developed. However, most students prefer the traditional learning mode, noting the following difficulties in learning through MOOCs: limited interaction and feedback, low motivation and self-discipline, limited access to technology and the Internet, lack of an individual approach and personalization, lack of special skills in using the digital platform.

The use of MOOCs in the context of higher education allows us to present the educational process on a global scale, adapting the learning process to modern requirements. In addition, it provides opportunities for professional development in various fields and creates a platform for exchanging experiences and collaborating with students from different regions and countries.

Thus, the integration of MOOCs within the modern education environment expands the opportunities of traditional learning, promoting the development of critical thinking and technological literacy, which is a necessary component of the development of a high-skilled specialist.

To present more detailed results to determine the effectiveness of the model of training used, an experimental research method – a focus group – has been used. The number of focus group participants was 12 students.

To implement this research method, a series of questions were developed to cover the issues of technologies under consideration:

1. What did you like about this method?
2. What did you find difficult?
3. How do you rate the quality and relevance of the teaching materials?
4. Do you receive sufficient support and feedback from teachers?
5. What changes or additions to the use of these methods would you like to make?

During the study the authors have maintained group dynamics, which encouraged participants to discuss issues on the topic being studied. Some of the participants studying the MOOC positively assessed the quality of the video lessons and the convenience of independent time management. For instance, students commented on the clarity and accessibility of the video materials, as well as the opportunity to organize their learning process individually:

– “The video lessons were well-structured and easy to follow. I appreciated the flexibility to study Russian whenever it was convenient for me.”

– “I felt at ease because I could manage my own learning pace-revisiting complex topics and skipping those I had already mastered.”

However, there were also those who noted the disadvantages:

– "I encountered some difficulties when studying the MOOC. This is primarily due to the lack of direct contact with the teacher and other students."

– "Independent learning requires a high degree of self-organization and discipline, which was very difficult for me."

Respondents who studied in the traditional mode highly valued the opportunity to interact with the teacher and group members. For example, most focus group participants emphasized the importance of the teacher’s role:

– “As for me, face-to-face communication with the teacher and classmates helps develop communication skills and teamwork skills.”

– “I believe that in the traditional format, teachers can better control the learning process, ensuring a high level of teaching quality and assessing student progress based on their interactions.”

– “In my opinion, attending classes in person requires compliance with certain rules and regulations, which contributes to the development of discipline and responsibility.”

Some participants noted the disadvantages of traditional mode of studying:

– "For me, as a student with disabilities, the need to be physically present at classes is a significant obstacle."

– "For me, group classes cause psychological discomfort associated with a feeling of uncertainty about the "correctness" or "incorrectness" of the answer."

Based on the results of the experiments, we came to the following conclusion. Firstly, the traditional method of studying Russian as a foreign language remains a priority according to the following criteria: learning outcomes; motivation to study the language; interaction of participants in the educational process; feedback from the teacher.

Secondly, MOOCs are an important element of modern language education as an additional resource integrated into the traditional teaching format, according to the following criteria: differentiation of the level of assignments; use of digital technologies; self-organization and independence. The integration of MOOCs into the educational process makes education process more accessible, flexible and diverse for students around the world, and contributes to the development of new approaches to learning and teaching.

Thirdly, the authors note the undeniable role of the teacher in the education system as a moderator who directs the educational process, promotes active participation of students, ensures high-quality acquisition of material, knowledge monitoring and supports educational motivation.

Thus, the traditional form and massive open online courses have their own specific features. For the traditional model the role of the teacher is important to manage the educational process: planning classes, conducting classes and ensuring high-quality acquisition of the material studied by students. And this, in turn, ensures deeper and more personally oriented learning, since the teacher can individually approach each student, evaluate their progress and adjust the educational process depending on the needs of the group or a specific student.

The authors of the study integrate MOOC into the traditional model of education, using the advantages of each approach:

– combining online courses with face-to-face classes, which allows students to gain theoretical knowledge online and develop practical skills in the classroom;

– using MOOCs as an additional resource for in-depth study of material for discussion in traditional classes environment.

– recommending MOOCs as an optional course for students wishing to expand their knowledge of the language;

– recommending MOOC elements as homework.

Thus, the integration of approaches to teach *Russian as a Foreign Language* enriches educational practice and contributes to improve the quality of education in general.

5. Conclusion

Analysis of the effectiveness of using traditional and models of teaching *Russian as a Foreign Language* based on a study has shown that each of these forms has its advantages and disadvantages. The traditional form of education remains an important and effective method of transferring knowledge and skills, providing structured and disciplined learning. It provides more intensive and direct interaction between the teacher and students, which contributes to better assimilation of the material, development of communication skills, a structured and consistent approach to learning, maintaining high motivation and discipline of students.

On the other hand, distance learning, including MOOCs as a media education tool provides greater flexibility, accessibility and the ability to learn at an individual pace. However, students of distance courses often face technical problems, insufficient motivation, low self-organization and lack of personal interaction with the teacher.

Consequently, the selection of either traditional or distance learning formats for teaching Russian as a foreign language should be guided by clearly defined educational objectives, learner preferences, and the availability of institutional and technological resources. A blended model that integrates elements of both approaches appears to be the most effective strategy, as it aligns with contemporary educational demands while preserving the core pedagogical principles and values of language instruction. This learning mode will combine the best practices of both models, providing students with a variety of opportunities for effective language acquisition, independent learning, deep understanding of the material, and a successful career in future professional activity.

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