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MODERN APPROACHES TO DEVELOPING STUDENTS' CREATIVITY IN THE DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: The article highlights the organization of the distance education system in higher education and the essence of transforming the Internet system and information technologies into a means of acquiring, storing, transmitting new knowledge, as well as making practical decisions within the educational process. The possibilities of the purposeful use of distance education are also revealed.

Keywords: distance education, concept of the distance education program, flexibility, modularity, parallelism, wide accessibility, economic efficiency, social equality, internationalization.

Introduction. In the context of modern globalization and digital transformation, the education system is undergoing fundamental changes, where traditional forms of teaching are increasingly being replaced by modern, innovative, and technology-based approaches. In particular, the rapid development of the distance education system has enabled the educational process to move beyond the limitations of time and space, reaching a new stage of development. This process not only transforms the forms of knowledge delivery but also creates broad opportunities for developing students' independent thinking, creative approaches, and creative competencies. Today, one of the most important criteria for improving the quality of education is considered to be the formation and development of students' creative thinking abilities. Creativity is regarded as one of the key factors ensuring an individual's competitiveness in modern society, as it plays a significant role in solving problems through unconventional solutions, generating new ideas, and implementing innovative activities. Therefore, the need to develop and improve effective pedagogical approaches aimed at fostering creativity within the distance education system is becoming increasingly important [1, 2].

The distance education environment, through its interactive platforms, digital tools, and multimedia capabilities, enables the activation of students' independent activities, stimulates their creative thinking, and allows for the individualization of personal development trajectories. At the same time, modern pedagogical approaches – including competency-based, learner-centered, activity-based, and heuristic approaches – contribute to the effective formation of creative competencies within the distance education system.

The purpose of this article is to scientifically and theoretically analyze modern approaches to developing students' creativity in the distance education system and to substantiate their pedagogical effectiveness [10]. In the context of the modern information society, one of the main tasks facing the education system is the preparation of competitive specialists who possess independent thinking skills and creative potential. In particular, the widespread implementation of the distance education system has elevated this process to a new stage. After the pandemic period, distance and hybrid forms of education became an integral part of the educational process. This, in turn, necessitates the search for new methods and tools for developing students' creativity. In distance education, the flexibility, interactivity, and technological capabilities of the learning process create favorable conditions for the development of students' creative thinking. At the same time, the limited effectiveness of traditional approaches further increases the need for the

application of modern pedagogical technologies. Therefore, this topic is considered highly relevant from both scientific and practical perspectives today.

Literature Review

The issue of developing students' creativity has been studied by many foreign and local scholars. In particular, John Dewey promoted an activity-based approach in the educational process and emphasized the necessity of developing students' independent thinking and creative approaches [3]. Lev Vygotsky substantiated that learning through social interaction and collaboration with teachers plays an important role in creative development [4]. Furthermore, Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences demonstrates that creativity can be developed through the enhancement of students' diverse abilities [5]. Robert Sternberg also evaluated creativity as an essential component of intelligence and developed theoretical foundations for its advancement [6]. Issues related to distance education and the development of creative competencies have also been studied by local scholars, who particularly emphasized the importance of using modern pedagogical technologies, interactive methods, and digital tools.

Research Methodology

The following methods were used in this research: Theoretical analysis method – identifying the scientific foundations of the problem through the study of pedagogical, psychological, and methodological literature; Comparative method – comparing traditional and distance education approaches; Pedagogical observation – analyzing students' activities within the distance education process; Survey and testing methods – determining the level of students' creativity.

Results and Discussions

Distance education is an educational system based on tools for exchanging educational information remotely, in which teachers provide educational services to all segments of the population, including international learners, through a specialized information environment. Distance education is a process that connects teachers and students located in different geographical regions, where interaction is carried out through special technologies. Various methods are used to establish communication, including the exchange of printed materials via mail or telefax, audio conferences, video conferences, and virtual conferences through computers.

Naturally, the demand for obtaining knowledge and education remotely is increasing among individuals who live far from educational institutions, those who do not have the opportunity to attend classes regularly, professionals seeking advanced training, persons with disabilities, and others who, for various reasons, are unable to study directly at higher educational institutions. Distance education provides highly convenient conditions for people who cannot study in traditional settings, individuals whose opportunities are limited due to medical conditions, prospective specialists wishing to study at educational institutions in foreign countries, as well as personnel seeking to obtain a second specialty.

There are various models and forms of distance education within the educational system, which differ according to the following application conditions:

– geographical conditions (for example, the size of the country's territory, remoteness from central areas, and climate);

– the general level of informatization and computerization of the country;

– the level of development of communication and transportation systems;

– the degree of application of information and communication technologies in the educational process;

– educational traditions used in teaching;

– the availability and professional competence of scientific and pedagogical – personnel for the distance education system, and others.

In general, the objectives of distance education include the following:

providing equal educational opportunities for all pupils, students, and individuals wishing to receive education across all regions of the country as well as abroad.

The application of information and communication technologies in the educational process, particularly in distance education, is mainly implemented in two forms. The first condition is the availability of technical equipment, while the second condition is the provision of specialized software support.

1. **Technical equipment:** computers, network devices, high-speed Internet networks, video conferencing equipment, and similar technologies.
2. **Software support:** this includes software used to operate existing devices as well as specialized software packages designed specifically for this field. In recent years, the form of education delivered electronically through Internet or Intranet networks, widely used in the management of educational systems in Western countries, has become known under the term **E-learning (electronic learning)**.

Distance education differs from traditional forms of education through the following characteristic features:

Flexibility – providing learners with the opportunity to study at a convenient time, place, and pace.

Modularity – the possibility of creating individual or group-oriented curricula from independent educational courses, known as modules, which are not directly interconnected.

Parallelism – enabling learners to combine educational activities with professional work simultaneously, without interrupting their employment or production activities.

Wide accessibility – allowing a large number of students to simultaneously access extensive educational resources, such as electronic libraries, databases, and knowledge repositories. It also provides opportunities for interaction among students and communication with instructors through modern communication technologies.

Economic efficiency – effective use of educational facilities, technical equipment, transportation resources, and learning materials; centralization and systematization of educational resources; and the possibility of providing access to a large number of users.

Social equality – ensuring equal educational opportunities for all learners regardless of their place of residence, health condition, or financial status.

Internationalization – creating opportunities for the import and export of educational achievements that meet internationally recognized standards in the field of education [8].

In the modern education system, the concept of distance education is emerging as an important pedagogical system that serves to digitalize the educational process while ensuring its openness and effectiveness. In particular, the processes of global informatization, the rapid development of digital technologies, and the changing needs of learners require further improvement of the content and essence of distance education. From this perspective, the concept of distance education is not merely a set of technical tools, but rather a complex innovative system that integrates pedagogical, psychological, and technological approaches.

Concept of Distance Education

MAIN OBJECTIVE To ensure openness, flexibility, and high-quality teaching within a digital educational environment.		
CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS		
Pedagogical Approach	**Psychological Approach**	**Technological Approach**
Competency-based, learner-centered, and activity-based approaches.	Motivation, independence, reflection, and creativity.	LMS platforms, AI technologies, multimedia, and virtual environments.

COMPONENTS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION		
Teacher	**Student**	**Digital resources**
Facilitator coordinator mentor appraiser	independent active subject researcher is creative	video lessons electronic textbook online test virtual laboratory
EDUCATIONAL PROCESS TECHNOLOGIES		
Synchronous	**Asynchronous**	**Interactive**
Zoom Google meet Online lessons webinar	Moodle Telegram Video course e-portfolio	Forum Webinar Cace-stady PBL
RESULTS		
Creative competence is developed Independent learning skills are formed Digital literacy increases Educational effectiveness is ensured Innovative thinking is enhanced		

As can be seen from the table, competency-based, learner-centered, and activity-based approaches serve as important methodological foundations in this process. Such approaches contribute to the development of students' independent thinking, creative activity, and practical competencies. In the distance education environment, the student acts as an active subject of the educational process, acquiring skills of independent research, analysis, and effective use of digital resources. The psychological basis of the concept includes such factors as motivation, reflection, and independence. Distance education requires students to possess a high level of self-discipline and self-management skills. Therefore, supporting students' psychological activity and fostering creative and critical thinking within the educational process are of great importance. This not only increases the effectiveness of education but also contributes to the development of students' creative competence.

Based on the above concept, distance education creates opportunities for all individuals who wish to continuously improve their qualifications and professional skills. In this type of learning process, students independently master educational and methodological materials in an interactive mode, undergo assessment, complete assignments under the direct guidance of instructors, and communicate with other learners within the "Vertical learning group." Distance learning utilizes various information and communication technologies. For example, traditional print-based learning tools (study guides, textbooks, and manuals) are mainly aimed at introducing students to new material, while interactive audio and video conferences provide opportunities for real-time communication. E-mail technologies are designed to establish direct and feedback communication, enabling the sending and receiving of messages. Pre-recorded video lectures allow learners to listen to and watch lectures at their convenience, whereas facsimile communication, messaging systems, and the rapid exchange of assignments through networks provide opportunities for interactive learning through feedback mechanisms.

The concept of distance education is considered one of the important directions of digital pedagogy as an innovative model of the modern education system. Through this concept, the effectiveness of the educational process, students' creative and digital competencies, as well as their independent learning skills, are enhanced. As a result, opportunities expand for preparing

competitive specialists who are capable of innovative thinking and meet the demands of the modern labor market.

The objectives of distance education include the following:

– Providing equal educational opportunities for all pupils, students, and individuals wishing to study across all regions of the country and abroad;

– improving the quality of education through the effective use of the scientific and educational potential of leading universities, academies, institutes, training centers, retraining institutions, professional development institutes, and other educational organizations;

– creating opportunities for obtaining additional education simultaneously with formal education and professional work activities;

– satisfying learners' educational needs and expanding the educational environment;

– creating opportunities for lifelong learning;

– ensuring a new qualitative level of education while maintaining educational standards.

Based on the above-mentioned considerations, the advantages of distance learning within the education system include the following:

– distance learning is open and provides educational opportunities for everyone who wishes to study;

– distance learning enables the use of educational programs at various levels;

– distance learning satisfies learners' educational needs and contributes to the enhancement of their intellectual potential;

– distance learning creates opportunities for individualized and differentiated instruction;

– distance learning allows learners to study without changing their place of residence or interrupting their professional activities;

– distance learning improves the professional competence of tutors, helps compensate for the shortage of specialists, and reduces the need for repeated delivery of educational courses;

– distance learning provides broad access to both local and international electronic educational resources;

– distance learning supports all stages of the lifelong education system and enables the continuous acquisition of knowledge necessary for solving real-life problems.

– it creates opportunities for learners to organize independent study at a convenient time and place, as well as to freely choose and access the educational resources they need;

– it enables learners to independently manage their educational process either continuously or periodically according to their learning needs;

– regardless of the learner's age, it provides unlimited access to various educational resources and information sources;

– it allows the integration of unique educational programs developed by different educational institutions;

– it creates opportunities to improve the quality of education and raise the educational level of society;

– it expands opportunities to meet the demand for highly qualified and competent specialists;

– it enhances the social and professional adaptability of the population, as well as their entrepreneurial awareness, social activity, and independent thinking abilities.

Conclusion. In conclusion, it can be stated that a distance-oriented approach to education not only promotes students' independent learning but also develops their creative skills, strengthens interpersonal communication processes, encourages independent decision-making, and teaches them to draw conclusions and analyze results. It is necessary to develop a comprehensive concept for distance education. This document should define the scientific foundations of distance education, improve its innovative educational and methodological systems, effectively utilize the advanced experiences of foreign countries in this field, and develop organizational and legal

"roadmaps" aimed at increasing the effectiveness of distance education. The application of new digital technologies in education requires the continuous improvement of its regulatory and legal framework. In turn, this will contribute to the unification of legislation related to innovative distance education and increase the effectiveness of its direct implementation in practice.

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