

E-learning in the process of developing the ability to communicate in a foreign language
as a key competence in academic foreign language teaching
(on the example of tertiary-level English language classes)

Abstract

The subject matter of this dissertation, considerations and investigations is acquiring the ability to communicate in a foreign language with the use of distance learning methods and techniques. The studied communicative competence was treated as one of the Key Competences recommended by the Council of Europe along with its components – receptive and productive language skills as well as linguistic competence. Moreover, taken into consideration was the perspective of a parallel development of other key competences, namely IT competence, learning to learn and social competence, in the same learning environment.

The dissertation consists of theoretical, methodological and empirical parts.

In the theoretical part of the work there is a presentation of scientific theories related to pedagogic determinants of the e-learning based process of acquiring communicative language competences. There is also an extensive discussion of the problems of communication as a competence and maximised possibilities of acquiring it owing to the application of distance learning methods and techniques, in particular e-learning. Also presented were the theoretical – pedagogical, psychological and glottodidactic premises of the use of e-learning in competence-oriented language instruction.

The methodological aim of the dissertation was to present a research procedure including – as the main method - the pedagogical experiment with two parallel groups. The experiment was conducted among university students attending English language classes as part of the curriculum. In the empirical part of the dissertation the procedure was described in detail and the analysis of the research was made. Based on the research results conclusions were formulated leading to finding the use of distance learning methods and techniques in academic foreign language teaching viable and practicable in supporting the development of key competences, including communication in foreign languages.

Key words: e-learning, Moodle, key competences, language skills, communicative language competence, English language classes