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Distance learning: from an online lesson to a digital preparatory faculty

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Abstract. *Introduction.* Due to the epidemic of coronavirus infection, the forced conversion to distance learning has forever changed the format of education for foreign citizens. The modern educational situation requires adequate methods and techniques of teaching from the teacher and from the educational institution. In these circumstances, online classes have become particularly relevant. The organization of a digital preparatory faculty can positively influence the practice of distance teaching of Russian as a foreign language and other disciplines necessary for admission to Russian universities. *The purpose* of the article is to identify the possibilities of distance teaching of Russian as a foreign language and the prospects for the development of online courses within the digital preparatory faculty**.** *Content and methods:* in the article we use the analysis and synthesis of methodological literature and normative documents, comparison, abstraction, modeling and forecasting of the online learning process and its results, as well as pedagogical observation, testing and analysis. The material for the study was the works of linguists and methodologists on relevant topics, the materials of practical work of teachers, the results of distance teaching Russian as a foreign language by the teachers of the Department of Russian Language and Intercultural Communication of Shukhov Belgorod State Technological University. *Results:* the article presents the results of the distance work of teachers of Shukhov BSTU during distance learning, the structure of the digital preparatory faculty of this university is given, the main content of the basic online course "Russian as a foreign language" is reflected. *Conclusion:* online courses as a basic part of the digital preparatory faculty require further development, implementation and consideration of many factors.
Keywords: distance learning; online course; Russian as a foreign language; platform; digital preparatory faculty; videoconference; types of speech activity

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Дистанционное обучение: от онлайн урока к цифровому подготовительному факультету

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Аннотация. *Введение.* Вынужденный переход к дистанционному обучению в связи с эпидемией коронавирусной инфекции изменил формат обучения иностранных граждан. Современная образовательная ситуация требует от преподавателя и учебного заведения адекватных методов и приемов обучения. Особую актуальность приобрели онлайн занятия. Организация цифрового подготовительного факультета может положительно повлиять на практику дистанционного преподавания русского языка как иностранного (РКИ) и других дисциплин, необходимых для поступления в вузы России. *Цель статьи* – обозначить возможности дистанционного преподавания РКИ и перспективы развития онлайн курсов в рамках цифрового подготовительного факультета. *Материалы и методы:* анализ и синтез методической литературы и нормативных документов, сравнение, абстрагирование, моделирование и прогнозирование процесса обучения онлайн и его результатов, а также педагогическое наблюдение, тестирование и анализ. Материалом для исследования послужили работы лингвистов и методистов по соответствующей тематике, материалы практической работы преподавателей, результаты дистанционного обучения русскому языку как иностранному преподавателей кафедры русского языка и межкультурной коммуникации Белгородского государственного технологического университета имени В.Г. Шухова (БГТУ имени В.Г. Шухова). *В результате* в статье приводятся итоги дистанционной работы преподавателей БГТУ имени В.Г. Шухова в период дистанционного обучения, дана структура цифрового подготовительного факультета данного вуза, отражено основное содержание базового онлайн курса «Русский язык как иностранный». Исследование показало, что в сложившихся условиях дистанционное обучение является эффективным и оптимальным форматом обучения. *Выводы.* Онлайн курсы как базовая часть цифрового подготовительного факультета требуют дальнейшей разработки и внедрения с учетом многих факторов.

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Introduction. Russia is one of the countries that young people around the world choose to receive or continue higher education in various fields. About 500 universities of the country are ready to accept foreign applicants. In addition, we need to remember one of the goals of the national project "Education": by 2024, the number of foreign students in the country's universities should increase to 425 thousand people, and by 2025 – to 700 thousand. The stated goal becomes difficult to achieve if we analyze the current situation in the educational space.

The coronavirus pandemic, which unexpectedly came to Russia in the spring of 2020, has changed the format of foreign citizens' education beyond recognition in a few months. In the face of the threat of the coronavirus infection spread, most universities and colleges have decided to switch to distance learning on the recommendation of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation. Forecasts of stabilization and improvement of the situation did not come true. Forced distance learning of the overwhelming number of foreign citizens, constant transitions from one training format to another and back continue to persist.

Due to the above factors, all face-to-face classes were moved online. Teachers were forced to organize the learning process through distance learning technologies based on various ways of delivering electronic content and available communication tools for students and teachers.

The unplanned transition to distance learning was an emergency, forced measure. As practice has shown, the vast majority of Russian universities were not ready for this radical restructuring of the educational process. According to the general opinion, this situation was the result of objectively different levels of development of the information infrastructure of universities, the provision of certain disciplines with electronic educational resources and the preparedness of teachers to use digital platforms and services in the educational process.

The repetition of last year's situation, the lack of favorable forecasts lead us to think about the transition of foreign citizens' education to a new digital level.

The concept "distance learning" has been known for a long time, has been successfully used in correspondence courses, organization of advanced training courses and has a long methodological tradition (Mayer 2001; Polat, E.S., Bukharkina, M.Yu. and Moiseeva, M.V. 2004; Benta, Bologa, Dzitac 2014; Beloglazov, Beloglazova, Mokashov, Kopylova 2018; Goncharova, Artyukhova 2020; Ilyina, Ivanova 2021).

A detailed review of domestic and foreign literature on the field of distance learning is given in (Sadykova, 2020). The author emphasizes that "the rich scientific and methodological experience mainly concerns asynchronous distance learning, while online lessons are still insufficiently developed" (Sadykova, 2020:43).

Reviewing the literature on the organization of education of citizens located in another country, in addition to the concept "distance learning", we also came across such designations as "online learning", "correspondence learning", etc. Let's focus on the familiar concept "distance learning".

In our article, we will consider the concept of distance learning as a basic one that requires its clarification and modification due to the changed educational space, the rapid development of information and educational technologies. In our article, we will consider the concept of distance learning as a basic one that requires its clarification and modification due to the

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changed educational space, the rapid development of information and educational technologies. When analyzing the content, methods and forms of distance learning, it seems relevant to turn to the practice of systematization of online courses within the digital preparatory faculty.

Main part. Research purpose. The research purpose is to identify the possibilities of distance teaching of Russian as a foreign language, to analyze the possibilities and prospects of using an online course in Russian as a foreign language as a basic component of the digital preparatory faculty.

Theoretical basis and methodology. Distance learning is a learning process in which the teacher and the student are geographically separated and therefore rely on electronic means and printed manuals for the organization of the educational process (Theory and practice of distance learning, 2004: 11). So, distance learning was defined back in the early 2000s.

In our opinion, the definition formulated by us on the basis of S.S. Pashkovskaya's research meets the most fully and adequately the current state of education (Pashkovskaya, 2021). So, distance education is an educational paradigm that assumes:

1) distance interaction of subjects of the educational process;

2) application of modern information technologies and interactive teaching methods;

3) organization current types of control and final certification, correcting the mistakes of learners and online consulting.

Distance learning needs to be built based on certain principles. Based on the work of E.N. Popova and P.A. Kopylova (Popova, Kopylova, 2021), we include the following:

− key role in the educational process here belongs to the foreign student, whose training takes place on an individual educational trajectory;

− educational process involves a large amount of self-study of the student, in addition, an important component is regular communication with the teacher and other students through videoconferences;

− active use of the latest technologies, including interactive ones, facilitates the learning process and increases the motivation of the listener;

− among all types of speech activity, speaking is the main one, so direct interpersonal communication is the most effective;

− obligatory component of distance learning is electronic dictionaries, reference books, textbooks with an unlimited amount of theoretical information presented in various forms (diagrams, tables, figures, etc.), as well as practical information in the form of certain tasks of various types;

− control is regular, objective and provides prompt feedback.

Content and methods of research. For this research we have chosen a combination of theoretical and practical methods. Among the theoretical methods used are the analysis and synthesis of methodological literature and normative documents, comparison, abstraction, modeling and forecasting of the online learning process and its results, practical methods such as pedagogical observation, testing and analysis were also used in the research.

The content of the article has linguists and methodologists researches on the corresponding topic, data of practical work of teachers, results of distance learning of Russian as a foreign language at the Department of Russian Language and Intercultural Communication of Belgorod State Technological University named after V.G. Shukhov, as well as data and results of controls in the discipline "Russian as a foreign language" and final certification in this subject.

Research results and discussion. The unplanned transition to distance learning was an emergency, forced measure. As practice has shown, the vast majority of Russian universities were not ready for this radical restructuring of the educational process. According to the general opinion, this situation was the result of objectively different levels of development of the information infrastructure of universities, the provision of certain disciplines with electronic educational resources and the preparedness of teachers to use digital platforms and services in the educational process.

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We will try to define the current situation with distance learning of foreign citizens at the V.G. Shukhov BSTU. Following the methodological recommendations of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Russian Federation, universities, including BSTU, have developed scenarios for the implementation of distance learning and requirements for the formats of the educational process that are acceptable for their level of IT infrastructure development, taking into account available external resources.

At the preparatory faculty for foreign citizens of BSTU, online classes were organized in a short time in video conferencing systems Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype, etc. The usage of these systems made it possible to monitor the involvement of students in the educational process, quickly and promptly solve emerging learning difficulties, maintain the necessary personal contact, actively interact (like face-to-face training), and quickly exchange information.

Zoom has become the most popular service at the preparatory faculty for foreign citizens of BSTU. As its advantages, teachers noted: ease of installation on any gadget, ease of use of basic functions, individual and group connection to a video conference, the ability to enable / disable video and microphone participants depending on the working situation, the possibility to use interactive teaching methods.

To organize self-study process of foreign students, maintain stable feedback, solve educational problems, the capabilities of Google Classroom, VKontakte platforms, WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram messengers were used.

Preparing for online lesson, the teacher ideally had to think through a set of exercises for the development of all types of speech activity. Just like in a traditional lesson, phonetic warm-up was used. In the distance format, it acquired an important stimulating value, served as an activator of the learning process, allowing the foreign listener to quickly get involved in the working atmosphere. The types of phonetic warm-up remained the same, for example, pronouncing tongue twisters with different intonation. The teacher could also use ready-made audio content of varying level of complexity from the Internet.

Lexical and grammatical material was most often presented to students in the form of presentations. Visually presented in the form of pictures, diagrams and tables, grammatical information was absorbed by students much faster and more efficiently than from textbooks. Thanks to the "Screen Demonstration" function, which, by the way, is available in most services, the presentation could be broadcast during an online lesson, as well as transmitted for further repetition and assimilation to students via messenger or e-mail (Ilyina, Ivanova, 2021: 110).

Here it is necessary to dwell on such an important methodological point as the development of the above-mentioned presentations for foreign students in the framework of distance learning. We consider it necessary to note that the preparation of materials for this kind of presentation is a very responsible work. It should be compiled in such a way as to organically complement the teacher's own speech, systematize the proposed theoretical and practical knowledge, while at the same time interesting and motivating the student to continue studying (Chikileva 2019: 481). An important point is the careful selection of pictures, diagrams and tables with a minimum of textual information. In addition, the number of slides in each of them should optimally correlate with the complexity of the topic being studied and the level of training of listeners.

Teachers organize listening in a distance learning format in several ways:
− the text was read by the teacher, and the questions were shown on the screen, being a visual support for audio material. This submission of the task corresponds to the traditional version;
− ready-made audio material was presented, prepared by the teacher or found on the Internet, tasks were broadcast to students in some way;
− audio recording and test questions were placed in the Test Pad Online, the result was calculated automatically.

The work on developing reading skills in the distance learning format has undergone some changes. At the stage of the introductory

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phonetic course in the format of an online lesson, pronunciation and rapid reading skills were developed. Then the traditional form of working with the text was carried out. At the same time, the latter was displayed on the screen, the usual pre-text, pre-text and post-text tasks were performed, which were no different from traditional classroom tasks. Then this type of activity acquired more and more independence. It made sense to give voluminous texts to learners as homework, and to work out exercises of various types directly online. Exercises like "Make a plan of the text", "Retell according to the plan" and gradually brought learners to speaking.

Developing speaking skills, depending on the goals of a particular lesson, interactive methods such as:

−role-playing scenes, themes of which corresponded to the requirements of a particular level of language proficiency (well-known "At the doctor office", "In the store", "In a café", etc.);

−discussions on various topics. The reason for the discussion could be a read text, current news, viewing video content;

−self-presentation, presentation of the country, national cuisine, etc. (Bagramova, Vasilyeva, 2020: 176).

The distance format of working with learners entailed the transfer of the control system to a distance format. We analyzed such learning management systems as Canvas, Adobe Captivate Prime, Open edX, Mirapolis LMS, Start Exam, E Learning Server 4G, and took into account the opinions of domestic and foreign methodologists (Ranieri, 2005; Benta, Bologa, Dzitac, 2014; Oproiu, 2015). As a result, the Online Test Pad test constructor was chosen as the main one.

There are such advantages of Online Test Pad as:

1) setting a mandatory answer to all test questions, as well as for a single question, so the student will not be able to ignore the proposed questions;

2) mixing of questions and/or answer options in random order, which makes it possible for the compiler not to prepare an excessive number of test options;

3) setting a time limit for passing the test, as well as for answering a single question, which helps to clearly plan the passing of the test;

4) the ability to export text to a PDF file and an HTML file;

5) a very good statistics tool. You can view each result, statistics of answers and points scored for each question, statistics for each result. All results, registration parameters, answers to all questions that can be saved in Excel in tabular form (Goncharova, Artyukhova, 2020: 75).

The above-mentioned service made it possible to control knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, as well as reading and listening skills. The designer of dialog simulators offered by the same program could act as a tool for controlling oral speech. This is a simple and convenient service for creating interactive simulators for various purposes. The dialog designer provides a large number of different dialog settings. You can quickly and conveniently create a dialog for any purpose. You create dialog situations with virtual characters clients, colleagues, partners, friends, etc. Dialogues can be of any complexity, branching, duration and depth of study. For a character's remark, the user must choose one answer option from several suggested ones, it is from the chosen answer that the further storyline of the dialogue will depend.

The Zoom platform was also used to control speaking skills. The teacher organized tasks for verification in real time. If necessary, a dialogue with the student can be recorded.

So, among the advantages and achievements of distance learning, we can note:

− availability anywhere in the world (if there is a good quality internet connection);

− possibility of inclusion in the learning process using a desktop computer, laptop, tablet, smartphone;

− interactivity of this form of training;

− rapid interaction between participants of the educational process;

− usage of modern technologies in the educational process;

− variety of forms and methods of teaching.

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− It is impossible not to mention some of the shortcomings and problems that have arisen during the distance learning format:

− difficulties due to poor internet connection quality;

− inability to download and install certain programs and services necessary for the organization of training;

− weakening of discipline in the classroom, since the learner is actually at home;

− deterioration of students' motivation;

− lack of live communication between participants of the educational process;

− organization of a fast communication channel between the teacher and the student.

The unclear prospects for the development of the situation with the spread of coronavirus in the world, the possibility of new threats to health and safety, the successful testing of new formats, methods and technologies of training, various forms of distance work and training have confirmed us in the idea that further education of students from around the world in Russia is impossible without the creation of the digital preparatory faculty.

By the digital preparatory faculty, we mean such a model of teaching foreign citizens according to the programs of the preparatory faculties of Russian universities, which is implemented in whole or in part using modern distance technologies.

So, the learning process is conducted entirely through any digital platform. The implementation of such a project involves unhindered enrollment of students throughout the calendar year, the possibility of choosing the duration of training and passing modules separately.

The first project of this type was presented by the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (https://info.langrus.rudn.ru/). Other universities in Russia only declare distance learning, without providing data on the platform, methods and types of training. The Preparatory Faculty for foreign citizens of V.G. Shukhov BSTU is in the process of creating and testing a digital Preparatory faculty.

Let's focus on the main details of the project. Its main goal is to provide an opportunity for foreign students to learn Russian online and gain knowledge in general education disciplines even before arriving in Russia. The resource can also be useful for work, tourist purposes, business.

Digital faculty training involves a modular system. The training program consists of several modules: in the Russian language, in general education subjects (mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology), a module on the scientific style of speech in the chosen specialty, a linguistic and cultural module. Russian as a Foreign language module includes 4 parts corresponding to the levels of proficiency in Russian as a foreign language: introductory phonetic course, elementary level, basic and first certification. Modules in general education subjects are chosen by the student, based on the requirements for admission to a particular specialty.

The structure of the lesson in the discipline includes: explanation of the material with the usage of presentation tools, audio and video content, training of knowledge and skills, control and various types of contact work with the teacher: webinars in the format of video conferences, individual conversational workshops with a native speaker.

During the entire educational process, each student is assisted by a tutor, who monitors student results, advises and solves issues of technical and organizational support.

The structure of the digital preparatory faculty of V.G. Shukhov BSTU practically repeats the model proposed by the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia. Since our university has a technical orientation, the list of modules includes: Russian as a foreign language, physics, mathematics, history, social studies, computer science and country studies.

As an example, we will give the discipline "Russian as a foreign language". The table shows the main content of the online course in the above-mentioned discipline. This course is designed for 626 academic hours, of which 144 hours are provided for classroom work in the video conference format, 468 hours are given for self-study, 14 hours are allocated for control.

The course is made for 25/38 weeks of training with an average load of 30 academic hours per week.

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Table

Structure of the online training course "Russian as a foreign language"

Таблица

Структура учебного онлайн курса «Русский язык как иностранный»

Module of the training course	Brief description of the module (grammatical content)	Purpose of studying the module
Module 1. Learning to read and write in Russian!	Alphabet, basic vocabulary, numerals	Learn to enter into communication in Russian in elementary situations of everyday communication
Module 2. Let's speak Russian!	Etiquette formulas, pronoun, adjective, prepositional and accusative case of noun, verb tense, verbs of movement without prefixes	Learn to enter into communication in Russian in elementary situations of everyday communication, using the knowledge of grammar corresponding to the level of proficiency in Russian as a foreign language A1.
Module 3. Designation of the subject of action	Repetition of grammatical material, actualization and study of new vocabulary, category of animateness and gender of the noun	Learn to designate the subject of an action expressed by a noun and a pronoun
Module 4. Designation of the subject/object characteristic	Gender and number of adjectives, updating of the studied vocabulary, expansion of vocabulary on the topic "Adjective"	Learn how to characterize an object in everyday communication situations
Module 5. Action designation	Tense and type of verb	Learn to designate the action of the subject in situations of everyday communication
Module 6. Designation of the place of action and the object of thought	Prepositional case of noun, adjective and pronoun in singular and plural	Learn to designate the place of action and the object of thought in situations of everyday communication
Module 7. Designation of the object of action and direction of movement	Accusative case of noun, adjective and pronoun in singular and plural	Learn to designate the object of action, as well as the direction of movement
Module 8. Designation of the absence of the object, the belonging of the object and the number of objects by counting	Genitive case of the noun, adjective and pronoun in the singular and plural	Learn to denote the absence of an object, the belonging of an object to a subject, as well as the number of objects by counting
Module 9. Designation of the addressee of the action and its status	Dative case of the noun, adjective and pronoun in the singular and plural	Learn to designate the addressee of the action, age, condition of the subject

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Module of the training course	Brief description of the module (grammatical content)	Purpose of studying the module
Module 10. Designation of joint action	Instrumental case of the noun, adjective and pronoun in the singular and plural	Learn to designate joint actions in speech, to use words with the meaning of instrument and profession
Module 11. Designation of the characteristics of the subject and object by action	Participles of the present and past tense	Learn to characterize the subject and object by action
Module 12. Designation of a feature of an object by action	Short participles	Learn to give a brief description of subject and object actions
Module 13. Expression of subjects and objects comparison	Degrees of comparison of adjectives and adverbs	Learn to express the comparison of subjects and objects in different communication situations
Module 14. Designation of a temporary characteristic or feature in relation to something	Short form of adjectives	Learn to give temporary characteristics or express a sign in relation to something
Module 15. Expression of determinative relations in speech	Simple and complex sentences with the meaning of the definition	Learn to express the sign of the subject in speech
Module 16. Designation of movement in Russian	Verbs of movement with and without prefixes, features of their use in speech, figurative meanings of verbs of movement	Learn to designate different types of movement
Module 17. Expression of spatial relations in speech	Simple and complex sentences with the meaning of space	Learn to designate a space in speech
Module 18. Designation of quantity in speech	Numerals, its types, features of use in speech	Learn to designate quantity in speech
Module 19. Designation of an additional action in speech	Adverbial participle, its types, features of use in the sentence	Learn to express an additional action in speech
Module 20. Expression of measure and degree in speech	Simple and complex sentences with the meaning of measure and degree	Learn to express the measure and degree of the measure or degree of what can be measured in terms of quantity, quality, intensity.
Module 21. Expression of temporal relations in speech	Simple and complex sentences with a time value	Learn to express the time of the action that is being talked about
Module 22. Expression of conditional relations in speech	Simple and complex sentences with the meaning of the condition	Learn to express the condition necessary to accomplish what is in question
Module 23. Expression of cause-effect relations in speech	Simple and complex sentences with the meaning of cause and effect	Learn to identify the cause and effect of what is being said

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Module of the training course	Brief description of the module (grammatical content)	Purpose of studying the module
Module 24. Expression of target relations in speech	Simple and complex sentences with a goal value	To learn to express such conditionality, in which one of the correlated situations is presented as a potential or real result of another situation
Module 25. Expression of concessionary relations in speech	Simple and complex sentences with the meaning of assignment	Learn to describe a fact, a phenomenon, in spite of which an action is being performed, which is being talked about

Each module contains from 3 to 6 video lectures, after which the current control is provided. By video lecture we mean here voiced presentations containing vivid theoretical and practical information about the Russian language. Taking into account the fact that we consider the communicative method to be the fundamental method, special attention is paid to the formation of students' speaking skills, skills of independent production of coherent utterances in accordance with the proposed topic and a communicatively set attitude; understanding the interlocutor's utterance, determining his communicative intentions in a limited number of speech situations.

As types of work, the module offers practical tasks with direct verification, control tests on each topic, tasks for a video conference, control tests for the module and the final test. In the structure of the online course there is also a grammar reference book that allows you to return to a particular grammatical topic at any time.

Unlike distance learning, which has already become familiar, where the lesson lasted an average of 45-70 minutes, within the framework of the online course of the digital faculty, direct communication between the learner and the teachers takes place only in a videoconference at the rate of 3-6 academic hours per week. The tasks for the videoconference are known to the student in advance, theoretical preparation for it is contained in a video lecture and a grammar reference.

Thus, the developed online course model includes the following components:

−   actualization and verification of the studied phonetic, word-formation, lexical and grammatical material at the communicative level;

−   introduction and consolidation of a certain linguistic and cultural material that adapts the student to everyday and life situations, introduces the student to historical events and geographical realities of a foreign country;

−   video and audio contact between a teacher and a student, as well as between students.

The learning outcomes are: Russian language proficiency at the I certification level, mandatory for admission to higher educational institutions of the Russian Federation; the ability to meet the basic communicative needs when communicating with native speakers in the socio-household and socio-cultural spheres; the possibility of carrying out professional activities in teams where the working language is Russian.

This online course, mentioned earlier, is posted on the Bolid platform of V.G. Shukhov BSTU, is available only to students of the Preparatory Faculty for foreign citizens of V.G. Shukhov BSTU who have paid tuition fees.

In the process of working on the above-mentioned resource, its placement and testing, we encountered the following problems:

1)   difficulties in selecting a suitable educational platform for the placement of materials. The obstacle was the volume of the course and the non-standard nature of its structure, the variety of components, the heterogeneity of the content;

2)   features of the application of the copyright law in this project, because most often the

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author of the course took someone's intellectual property as a photo, video and audio material, albeit posted in the public domain;

3) organizing access to the course, there was a problem of correct registration and identification of the project participant. Despite the possibility of changing the language of the Internet page, not all information remained understandable to a foreigner;

4) the need for clear control over the passage of blocks of the educational program, its maximum automation, openness and objectivity faced the limitations of the educational platform, the peculiarities of placing information of various types on it;

5) typing and structuring of materials of different blocks and modules, unification of the entire course;

6) the complexity of creating a well-thought-out system of independent work of students;

7) difficulties in organizing adequate and timely feedback between participants in the educational process.

Conclusion. Summing up, we can conclude that the development of distance learning in all its forms is inevitable. The events taking place before our eyes have shown that, despite all the shortcomings, it is relevant and in demand. Globalization, the penetration of information technologies into all spheres of life, rapid changes in political regimes and the economic situation contribute to the victory of distance learning over full-time education, especially at the pre-university stage. The applicant gets the opportunity to prepare for study and life in Russia, "without leaving home", saving energy, time and money.

Flexibility, complexity, varying the pace of mastering the educational material, the choice of an individual educational trajectory (everything that is especially important when working with an adult audience) makes online courses in various disciplines within the digital preparatory faculty one of the best distance learning options.

The prospects for further scientific research are the development of various distance courses, including teaching Russian as a foreign language, taking into account the contingent of

students, the level of language they aspire to, etc. Teachers of preparatory faculties and departments are faced with the task of organizing as high-quality as full-time training of a foreign applicant. In addition, the issue of organizing the online adaptation of foreign students has not been resolved, so that, after enrolling in the first year of higher education and arriving in Russia, they quickly become full participants in the educational process.

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