



MODERN APPROACHES TO SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION AT TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITIES

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ABSTRACT

The rapid development of information technologies and the globalization of professional communication have significantly increased the importance of foreign language competence among students of technological universities. Modern specialists are expected not only to possess professional knowledge but also to communicate effectively in international academic and professional environments. In this context, autonomous learning has become a crucial component of foreign language education. This article examines contemporary trends in autonomous learning, the role of digital technologies in promoting learner independence, and the importance of creative activities in developing communicative competence. Special attention is given to learner-centered approaches, self-directed learning strategies, project-based learning, and innovative educational technologies that foster students' professional and personal development.

KEYWORDS: autonomous learning, foreign language education, technological universities, digital technologies, learner autonomy, creativity, self-development, project-based learning, communicative competence.

СОВРЕМЕННЫЕ ПОДХОДЫ К САМОСТОЯТЕЛЬНОМУ ОБУЧЕНИЮ В ОБЛАСТИ ИЗУЧЕНИЯ ИНОСТРАННЫХ ЯЗЫКОВ В ТЕХНОЛОГИЧЕСКИХ УНИВЕРСИТЕТАХ

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АННОТАЦИЯ

Быстрое развитие информационных технологий и глобализация профессиональной коммуникации значительно повысили важность владения иностранным языком среди студентов технологических вузов. От современных специалистов ожидается не только знание профессиональных знаний, но и умение эффективно общаться в международной академической и профессиональной среде. В этом контексте автономное обучение стало важнейшим компонентом обучения иностранным языкам. В данной статье рассматриваются современные тенденции в автономном обучении, роль цифровых технологий в повышении самостоятельности обучающихся и важность творческой деятельности в развитии коммуникативной компетенции. Особое внимание уделяется подходам, ориентированным на обучающегося, стратегиям самонаправленного обучения, проектному обучению и инновационным образовательным технологиям, способствующим профессиональному и личностному развитию студентов.

Ключевые слова: автономное обучение, обучение иностранным языкам, технологические вузы, цифровые технологии, автономия обучающегося, креативность, саморазвитие, проектное обучение, коммуникативная компетенция.

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century has witnessed unprecedented technological advancement, digital transformation, and international cooperation. These changes have reshaped educational systems worldwide and increased the demand for specialists capable of lifelong learning and intercultural communication. Consequently, foreign language proficiency has become one of the essential competencies required for future engineers, IT specialists, and other technical professionals.



Traditional teacher-centered instruction is gradually being replaced by learner-centered approaches that encourage students to assume responsibility for their own learning. Autonomous learning is now regarded as one of the most effective educational paradigms for preparing students to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing professional environment.

According to Abdurakhmanova and Sadykov (2025), “The most important direction of the modernization of the educational system of the 21st century is the creative self-development of the student.” This statement reflects the growing recognition that educational institutions should not merely transmit knowledge but also cultivate independent, creative, and socially active individuals capable of continuous self-improvement.

The Concept of Autonomous Learning

Autonomous learning refers to a learner’s ability to take responsibility for planning, monitoring, and evaluating their own educational activities. It involves self-regulation, goal setting, critical reflection, and independent decision-making. In foreign language education, autonomous learners actively seek opportunities to practice language skills, identify their learning needs, and employ effective strategies to achieve their goals.

The development of autonomy contributes to: Enhanced motivation and engagement; Improved critical thinking skills; Greater self-confidence in language use; Better academic performance; Lifelong learning competencies; Increased adaptability to professional challenges.

For students of technological universities, these skills are particularly important because technological fields require constant updating of knowledge and continuous professional development.

Digital Technologies as a Driver of Autonomous Learning

One of the most significant trends in contemporary education is the integration of digital technologies into language learning. Digital tools provide students with unprecedented access to authentic materials, interactive learning environments, and personalized educational resources.

Among the most widely used technologies are: Learning Management Systems (LMS); Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs); Mobile language-learning applications; Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered language assistants; Virtual and Augmented Reality platforms; Online collaboration tools; Digital portfolios and e-learning platforms.

These technologies enable students to learn anytime and anywhere, creating flexible learning environments that support individual learning trajectories. Personalized feedback, adaptive content, and real-time communication opportunities enhance learners’ autonomy and encourage active participation in the educational process.

Artificial intelligence has emerged as a particularly influential innovation in language education. AI-based tools can provide immediate feedback on grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary usage, and writing performance, allowing students to identify weaknesses and independently improve their skills.

Creativity and Self-Development in Foreign Language Learning

Creativity plays a fundamental role in autonomous learning. Modern educational theories emphasize that students learn most effectively when they actively construct knowledge rather than passively receive information.

A creative personality demonstrates the ability to generate original ideas, solve problems independently, and adapt to new situations. Creativity in foreign language learning encourages students to use language as a tool for self-expression rather than merely reproducing memorized structures.

Creative activities contribute to: Development of independent thinking; Formation of communicative competence; Enhancement of imagination and innovation; Strengthening of intrinsic motivation; Promotion of self-realization and self-actualization.

The learning process should therefore provide opportunities for students to engage in meaningful tasks that require original language production and critical reflection.

Creative Tasks as a Tool for Autonomous Learning

The implementation of creative assignments allows students to apply language knowledge in authentic contexts. Such tasks facilitate the development of linguistic, communicative, and socio-cultural competencies.

Creative assignments in foreign language education can be classified according to several criteria. One of the primary criteria is their educational purpose. Depending on the learning objectives, creative tasks may be aimed at developing vocabulary, improving grammatical competence, enhancing speaking skills, strengthening listening and reading comprehension, or fostering intercultural competence.

Another important criterion is the number of participants involved in the activity. Creative assignments can be completed individually, in pairs, or in groups. Individual projects encourage independent learning and personal responsibility, while pair and group work promote collaboration, communication, and peer learning.

Creative tasks can also be categorized according to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT). In this regard, they may involve digital tools and online resources, such as multimedia applications and collaborative platforms, or they may be carried out through traditional non-digital methods.



Furthermore, creative assignments differ in terms of the learning environment in which they are implemented. Some activities are classroom-based and conducted under the teacher's guidance, whereas others are designed as independent homework projects or online collaborative tasks that allow students to work remotely and interact through digital platforms.

A wide variety of creative assignments can be integrated into foreign language instruction. Common examples include digital storytelling, podcast production, video presentations, blog writing, business simulations, product advertising campaigns, research projects, and intercultural communication projects. These activities not only enhance language proficiency but also promote creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and learner autonomy.

For example, within the topic "Advertising," students may develop a complete marketing campaign for a product or service. This activity integrates language learning with professional communication skills and encourages creative problem-solving.

Project-Based Learning and Professional Orientation

Project-Based Learning (PBL) has become one of the leading approaches in foreign language education at technological universities. This methodology places students in real-world situations where they must collaborate, research information, solve problems, and present outcomes in a foreign language.

Project-based learning plays a significant role in fostering autonomous learning in foreign language education. Through project activities, students are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning process by independently defining objectives, selecting appropriate strategies, gathering and analyzing information, and managing their time effectively. Such activities require learners to engage in self-directed decision-making and develop organizational skills that are essential for lifelong learning.

In addition, project work promotes collaboration and communication among peers. Students are often required to work in teams, negotiate ideas, share responsibilities, and solve problems collectively. These experiences contribute to the development of both linguistic competence and interpersonal skills. Another important aspect of project-based learning is the presentation and evaluation of results, which enables learners to reflect on their achievements, receive feedback, and identify areas for further improvement.

Furthermore, project activities create authentic learning environments that simulate real-world professional communication. By engaging in tasks that resemble workplace situations, students develop practical language skills and professional competencies relevant to their future careers. This is particularly important in technological universities, where foreign language proficiency is increasingly associated with international collaboration and professional mobility.

Examples of project-based activities include presentations on engineering innovations, simulations of international business negotiations, startup project pitches, technical report writing, and scientific conference simulations. These tasks integrate language learning with professional content, thereby enhancing both communicative competence and subject-specific knowledge.

Gamification and Simulation Technologies

Another important trend is the use of gamification and simulation-based learning. Educational games create engaging environments that increase student motivation and participation.

Common forms include: Role-playing activities; Business simulations; Virtual negotiations; Interactive case studies; Educational quests; Online competitions.

Game technologies simultaneously activate visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning channels, increasing the effectiveness of language acquisition and supporting the development of communicative competence.

The Role of Arts and Multimedia Resources

Authentic multimedia materials significantly enhance autonomous language learning. Videos, podcasts, films, music, and digital storytelling resources provide rich linguistic and cultural input.

Art-based activities encourage emotional engagement and creative expression. For example: Listening to music and describing emotions; Creating literary interpretations of songs; Producing short films; Writing creative narratives inspired by visual art; Participating in theatrical performances.

Such activities not only improve language proficiency but also contribute to students' emotional intelligence, cultural awareness, and creative thinking.

Emerging Trends in Autonomous Foreign Language Learning

Recent developments indicate several emerging directions in autonomous language education:

Microlearning

Short, focused learning activities allow students to study efficiently within busy academic schedules.

Personalized Learning Analytics

Data-driven educational systems help students monitor progress and identify learning gaps.

Artificial Intelligence Tutors

AI-powered assistants provide individualized support and continuous feedback.



Virtual International Exchange

Online collaboration with students from other countries promotes authentic intercultural communication.

Digital Learning Communities

Online networks enable peer support, collaborative learning, and knowledge sharing beyond classroom boundaries.

Lifelong Learning Ecosystems

Universities increasingly encourage graduates to continue language development through online platforms and professional learning communities.

Challenges of Autonomous Learning

Despite its advantages, autonomous learning also presents several challenges: Insufficient self-discipline among students; Limited digital literacy; Lack of motivation; Inadequate self-assessment skills; Unequal access to technological resources.

Therefore, educators must provide appropriate guidance, scaffolding, and support mechanisms to help students gradually develop autonomous learning competencies.

CONCLUSION

Autonomous learning has become an indispensable component of foreign language education in technological universities. The integration of digital technologies, project-based learning, creative assignments, and learner-centered methodologies contributes to the formation of highly qualified professionals capable of continuous self-development and effective intercultural communication.

Modern trends indicate a shift from knowledge transmission toward the development of independent, creative, and responsible learners. Through autonomous learning, students acquire not only language proficiency but also essential professional competencies required for success in the globalized knowledge economy.

The future of foreign language education in technological universities lies in the effective combination of innovative technologies, creative pedagogical practices, and personalized learning approaches that empower students to become lifelong learners and active participants in international professional communities.

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