The Use of ICT for the Development of Foreign Language Communicative Competence in Hospitality Industry Students

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Abstract: The article considers the didactic potential of the use of educational information technologies in the process of learning a foreign language for specific purposes by hospitality students. Based on the analysis of scientific works, the study proves the importance of introducing information and communication technologies in foreign language training of future specialists. With the help of a questionnaire and an interview clarifies the state of information and communication technologies in forming foreign language communicative competence of hospitality students. The paper specifies the peculiarities of foreign language communicative competence of hospitality students. Moreover, it highlights its components. The study presents the experience of introduction of information and communication technologies in foreign language training of future hospitality specialists. It proves that video hosting on YouTube, online presentations, mind maps, and educational blogs effectively influences the formation of students' foreign language communicative competence. Thus it increases motivation to master foreign language material and develops analytical, creative, speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills. The article describes the didactic possibilities of the authors' educational blog to organize independent work of students and partnership learning. Hence, it develops self-realization skills and improves foreign language communicative competence. Furthermore, the authors consider the didactic potential of mind maps in forming foreign language communicative competence and actualizing their mental activity. Finally, the paper experimentally tests the effectiveness of introducing information and communication technologies in learning a foreign language for specific purposes in hospitality students.

1 INTRODUCTION

Rapid and constant progress and improvement of the higher education system aim to train modern competitive professionals in various economic, social, and cultural fields to create a set of innovative educational and methodological training for students. The development of information and communication technologies (ICT) and their introduction into higher education institutions' educational process significantly contribute to acquiring knowledge and improving skills. It puts skills at a qualitatively new level, ensures creative personal growth, and highly qualified training for future professionals.

"Strategy for Higher Education in Ukraine for 2021-2031" highlights the significance of the informatization of education and modernization of information and resource provision. In addition, it outlines the importance of the digitalization of educational processes, continuous improvement of education on an innovative basis, and improving information training students. The priority of education lies in the use of ICT. ICT contributes to a new level of training for future professionals and ensures the availability and effectiveness of education, preparing the younger generation to function in the information society [1].

In recent years, there has been a tendency to increase the number of hours for foreign language training for students in most educational institutions, particularly for learning a foreign language in a professional field. A proper level of foreign language communication competence (FLCC) as a component of professional competence allows the future specialist to become a full-fledged competitive entity in the labour market and master modern technologies necessary for personal and

professional development. The effective development of the FLCC requires innovative methods and means of its formation in the modern education system. They allow to increase the motivational component of the educational process, promote the development of analytical skills and critical thinking, skills of independent work, and processing of a large amount of information in a short period. At the same time, according to our observations, in the frames of learning a foreign language, students use ICT mainly to create presentations on the topic, electronic translators in the Google system, and video conferencing during distance learning.

Thus, the importance and urgency of integrating ICT for the development of foreign language communicative competence among students as future professionals cannot be overstated. In today's interconnected global landscape, proficiency in foreign languages is a valuable skill that enhances professional opportunities and fosters intercultural understanding. Here's why leveraging ICT is crucial in this endeavour due to the following factors:

1) Access to Authentic Resources: ICT provides students with access to a vast array of authentic resources in the target language, such as articles, videos, podcasts, and social media platforms. Engaging with these resources exposes students to real-world language usage, enriching their vocabulary, comprehension skills, and cultural awareness.

2) Global Communication: ICT facilitates communication and collaboration with native speakers and language learners worldwide through video conferencing, social networking sites, and online language exchange platforms. Engaging in authentic conversations in the target language fosters linguistic confidence, fluency, and intercultural competence, preparing students to effectively communicate in diverse professional contexts.

3) Multimedia Integration: Incorporating multimedia elements such as audio recordings, videos, and interactive simulations into language instruction enhances engagement and comprehension. ICT enables the creation of multimedia-rich learning materials that cater to different learning preferences and stimulate multiple senses, leading to deeper understanding and retention of language concepts.

4) Adaptation to Technological Advancements: In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, proficiency in ICT is essential for professional

success across industries. Integrating ICT into language learning equips students with valuable digital literacy skills, including information literacy, critical thinking, and problem-solving, which are integral to navigating and thriving in the digital age.

The article aims to explore didactic possibilities and potential of ICT tools to develop future hospitality professionals' foreign language communicative competence.

2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

Many outstanding scientists have already considered the advantages of ICT for educational purposes, namely V. Bykov, L. Fiorella, R. Gurevich, M. Zhaldak, M. Kademiya, N. Morse, R. Mayer, Y. Ramsky, V. Trainev, J. Anderson, K. Ratheesvari, D. Sharma and many others. According to K. Ratheesvari, ICT significantly changes and modernizes the educational process, providing teachers and students with more personal and professional growth opportunities, developing critical thinking, and expanding information potential and communication skills [2]. Implementing ICT in the educational framework of institutions fosters the enhancement of cognitive abilities such as critical thinking, memory retention, analytical aptitude, communication proficiency, creativity, research acumen, self-expression, and self-motivation [3].

ICT tools play a significant role in improving the educational process by providing various opportunities such as storing vast amounts of information, facilitating access to diverse data sources, delivering relevant information to students, and offering versatility in presenting information [3].

Significant research proves the benefits of ICT in the process of professional training of future teachers of various specialties, including philologists (S. Galetsky, T. Gorokhova, M. Zlativ, K. Klimova, G. Korytska, I. Kostikova, N. Ostapenko, T. Yatsenko, etc.), mathematicians (M. Zhaldak, Y. Trius), junior classes (D. Mazokha, L. Petukhov, I. Shaposhnikov). ICT tools increase motivational and cognitive activities through interactive content, provide individualization and differentiation of learning, and optimize time spent searching and analyzing information. Moreover, they develop research skills, ensure free access to global information systems and expand control over acquiring knowledge, skills, and abilities [4].

Scientists admit that ICT tools is an effective method of achieving educational goals which widens the teaching opportunities. They help to make the process of learning quicker and more interesting, provide absolutely new methods of teaching and studying [5].

The issue of introducing ICT tools in the process of learning foreign languages and forming the FLCC of students of non-language faculties is the subject of scientific research by S. Amelina, I. Gotsynets, S. Johnson, S. Kostrytska, O. Kraevska, V. Krasnopolsky, L. Rosencrance, I. Semeryak, O. Tinkalyuk, and many others.

Scientists are considering using the latest digital technologies to develop FLCC future professionals in various specialties: engineers, economists, lawyers, marketers, customs officers, etc. The scientific work of I. Skrill is of particular interest. It deals with forming professionally oriented English lexical competence of hospitality students using video materials. The dissertation substantiated the expediency of using YouTube, web forums, and video chats to effectively assimilate and reproduce foreign lexical material. According to the scientist, authentic videos provide student-centric, communicative, and interactive approaches to developing foreign language fluency. Thus, it promotes self-realization, self-assessment, and self-correction of learning outcomes taking into account future professionals' didactic interests and needs [6].

Despite the significant achievements in the study of innovative digital methods in the professional training of non-language students, the problem of using ICT in the foreign language practice of hospitality students requires more consideration. Moreover, observations of students learning a foreign language for professional purposes show that only a small proportion of teachers use modern ICT tools in their professional activities. Therefore, it is appropriate to find and use ICT for the practical study of a foreign language by future specialists in non-language specialties, particularly students majoring in hospitality.

Systematic ICT introduction in the process of professional training of future specialists creates opportunities to ensure the implementation of high-level educational activities. Moreover, it combines traditional and innovative education. Thus it allows participants to realize their abilities and learning needs following the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" [7].

Many outstanding scientists emphasize the relevance and effectiveness of ICT tools in students' foreign language training. For example, according to

V. Krasnopolsky, educational information technologies modernize the implementation of didactic principles and learning strategies and significantly improve the content and means of organizing future professional activities of students of different specialties [8].

When multimedia materials are thoughtfully chosen to align with learners' requirements, processing methods, and strategies, they yield particular results in shaping intricate skills and capabilities, fostering the development of the competencies they aim to attain. [9].

ICT learning is the purposeful unity of software methods, tools, and resources that provide joint activities for teachers and future professionals. It is the communication, creation, storage, and transformation of information to solve educational problems [3, 10, 11, 12].

The main means of ICT in the educational activities of the higher educational institutions are multimedia (video conferencing, video devices for information design, Power Point presentations, YouTube video hosting), software (computer testing systems, virtual dialogue, computer simulators, electronic textbooks, virtual laboratories, cloud-based educational environment) and telecommunications (educational Internet sites and projects, virtual educational platforms Moodle, Whiteboard) [14].

The didactic potential of ICT in the context of ICC formation contributes to sustainable motivation to learn a foreign language through new forms of language development, individualization and creativity in learning language units and grammatical structures, and dynamic development of dialogic speech by simulating typical situations in future professional activities using multimedia technologies, effective control and reflection processes.

Scientific studies prove that the nature, structure, and ways of ICC formation of non-language faculties students are an integrative system of interconnected components, characterized by the ability to freely understand and produce speech to solve professionally important tasks [15, 16, 17, 18].

FLCC includes professional vocabulary knowledge and knowledge of professional subjects, a sufficient level of use of a common foreign language, its culture, and its features. Regarding the FLCC of hospitality students, foreign language knowledge and skills are relevant given Ukraine's entry into the European space and expanding the scope of foreign contacts and updated labour market requirements. Hospitality specialists should establish

contacts with foreign partners, communicate with foreign clients, and analyze and transform professionally relevant information from foreign sources. Thus, we view foreign language communicative competence as an integrative quality of a personality and system-value education [13]. It aims at obtaining and processing professionally relevant information in a foreign language. It also includes creative application in hotel and restaurant services and skills in freely conducting international activities to address professionally important issues.

Scientific works review [15, 17, 19] allowed to highlight the following components of FLCC hospitality students: motivational and value (motives, aspirations, goals, understanding of the importance of learning and using a foreign language in professional activities); cognitive-activity (lexical, phonetic, orthographic, linguistic knowledge and skills of their creative use in professional discourse); reflexive-evaluative (skills of self-assessment and further design of foreign language communicative activities).

3   METHODOLOGY

The aim of the study requires the use of the following methods:
- theoretical: analysis, synthesis, comparison, and systematization of scientific views on the problem of the nature and structure of the FLCC of non-language faculties students, content, and components of ICT for educational purposes in educational institutions;
- empirical: observation of the work of freelance teachers, the survey of teachers and students, pilot study to determine the frequency of ICT use in foreign language training of hospitality students, interviews, generalization of pedagogical experience in the professional training of future specialists to assess their level of ICC formation;
- Smirnov method of statistical data processing to determine the effectiveness of ICT in the formation of FLCC hospitality students.

The investigation presents the survey results with hospitality students of Zhytomyr Polytechnic State University. It includes 83 hospitality students of the 3d and 4th courses who answered the following questions:
1) What ICT tools do foreign language teachers use in the classroom?

2) What ICT tools do foreign language teachers use when conducting on-line classes?
3) What ICT tools do you use to learn a foreign language?
4) How do ICT help to increase motivation to learn a foreign language, better master the lexical and grammatical material of the topic and develop communication skills?
5) What ICT tools do you consider the most effective in learning a foreign language?
6) What ICT tools have you experienced as the most successful ones in developing communication skills?
7) What ICT would you like to use in foreign language classes?
8) What prevents you from using the ICT in foreign language learning?

4   RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study of ICT use in the formation of FLCC of future hospitality specialists undergoes three stages:
- orientation and search (determining the needs of students in theoretical knowledge and practical application of ICT tools to master a foreign language professionally);
- cognitive activity (formation of lexical-grammatical, stylistic, linguistic knowledge and their creative use in solving professional problems in a foreign language with the help of ICT);
- generalizing-reflexive (analysis, systematization and generalization of the results of experimental work, determination of further goals of formation of FLCC of future specialists).

Thus, during the first stage of the study, students took part in a questionnaire, group, and individual survey on the use of ICT in foreign language teaching for professional purposes both in practice and in independent work, and their interest in using innovative ICT to improve language practice. The results show that teachers often use ICT in foreign language classes, but mainly during distance learning (videoconferencing, uploading tasks on the University educational portal, using Viber and Telegram to send tasks to students and get feedback). During the classes on campus, not many teachers use ICT to teach foreign languages. For example, only 28% of foreign language teachers use a multimedia projector and 26% of them provide YouTube videos to design lexical and grammatical

tasks and 32% create computer module tests (Figure 1). Instead, most teachers use e-versions of the textbooks and audio recordings downloaded to their phones, tablets, and laptops.
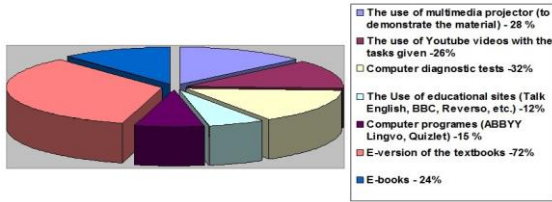

Figure 1: The use of ICT by foreign language teachers.

When preparing foreign language assignments, 88% of respondents always use on-line dictionaries, mainly Google Translate and Cambridge Dictionary, to translate words and phrases, select synonyms and successful stylistic units. 64 % search for information on Google and create multimedia presentations. However, a small percentage of students (6%) use on-line apps in learning a foreign language (Figure 2). Among the reasons for not paying a decent attention to on-line apps for solving educational tasks in a foreign language, the respondents mentioned their ignorance in using them, and they didn't understand their role in the development of their foreign language communicative competence.
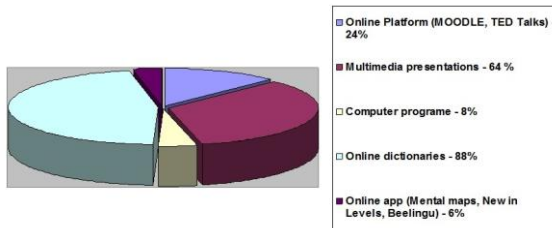

Figure 2: The use of ICT tools by students in foreign language classes preparation.

Most future hospitality specialists think that ICT increases motivation to learn a foreign language, master topic lexical and grammatical material, and develop communication skills. However some students do not consider the importance of ICT tools in developing their FLCC, believing that traditional tools (textbooks, dictionaries, communication with native speakers) have a better effect on language acquisition. The only problem is that it is not easy to come across a native speaker to practice the necessary skills. It is quite convenient to find such a person on-line, searching for some blogs, educational and entertainment sites.

The respondents name the most effective electronic means of forming FLCC (Figure 3). They are: videos (with designed tasks); blogs providing an opportunity to communicate with the teacher and other participants in the learning process; an educational portal with relevant materials and assessment tasks posted; cloud services; applications, computer tests. It should be mentioned that all the apps and other tools are numerous but are aimed at learning and mastering general and business English. When analyzing the ICT tools for developing communicative competence of hospitality industry students we haven't found much. That's why we decided to create some educational tools for them.
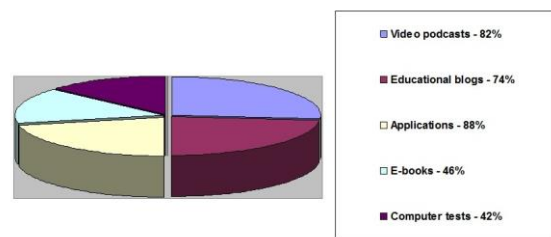

Figure 3: The most effective ICT tools in forming FLCC of hospitality students (according to their opinion).

The cognitive-activity stage of the experiment is aimed to form and develop lexico-grammatical, stylistic, and linguistic knowledge and skills of hospitality students with the help of ICT. One of the effective means of developing FLCC for future professionals is YouTube video hosting, which provides the ability to select, download and watch videos on the selected topic, create educational products, and communicate with teachers and other students [6, 16].

The YouTube channel has many authentic podcasts for teaching students of different levels, created by native speakers in many training courses. However, most videos outline general topics. Therefore, in preparation for professional foreign language classes, we have selected videos from the YouTube channel and developed tasks for mastering and creatively reproducing the necessary topic vocabulary, training dialogical and monological speech and writing skills. Authentic videos help to understand different situations of a professional nature, reproduce, model the necessary verbal behaviour, and learn communication skills in a foreign language environment for students with different levels of training. In addition, visual support helps to understand the communicative goals of the individual, the means to achieve them, and models of nonverbal behaviour [21].

One of the post-watching tasks was to complete the project and present it in the form of a presentation about the hotel's service, its premises, and its facilities. Students used alternative PowerPoint free versions of Google Docs and Haiku Deck to make their presentations. In particular, Google Docs makes it easy to create presentations using text, images, video, and audio.

The students can share their presentations with others to collaborate on. The teacher and other students can also add their comments by monitoring and evaluating the work on the project. They can set tasks directly in the files. The participants of the team are able to paste graphics from Google Sheets and sent their comments directly from Gmail. Besides, students can search for the necessary content and pictures on the Google Disc and on the Web not leaving Google Slides. Performing professionally-oriented tasks in a foreign language with the help of presentations in Google Docs improves lexical and grammatical skills of both oral and written speech.

Mental maps (knowledge maps) are an effective method of data synthesis and analysis and the construction of logical connections. For educational purposes, they are used to present information, conduct research, present opinions, develop projects, plan essays, improve writing skills, etc. In addition, mental maps are a powerful graphic technology that helps discover mental activity's potential and visual representation of hierarchical information that contains the central idea and associative connections [22].

Knowledge maps use various platforms for presenting ideas, building diagrams, and charts: mindmeister, lucidchart, zapmeta, mindmap, bubbl.us, coggle, gitmind, canvas, and others. Each of these software has advantages and disadvantages. For example, the web application mindmeister helps capture, structure, distribute ideas, and add context to each topic with links, tabs, and media files.

Mental maps can serve as a visual ground for memorizing new vocabulary or grammar phenomena. They give the possibility to return to the information, fixed in the picture, with the aim to specify and edit it, add new information and make corrections. They also provide the opportunity to quickly generalize ideas and rules, stimulate imagination and memory, to plan further steps in completing the task.

However, it is impossible to save mental maps in free versions of the application. The alternative is to take screenshots. Hospitality students created mental

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[1] https://horecaeng.blogspot.com

maps for projects, essays, and resumes. Figure 4 shows a mental map for writing resume.

An effective didactic tool for forming FLCC is the blog[1] "English for Hospitality Students" (Figure 5), created by the authors of the article for teaching students in rooms and studying individually. The blog has several sections: to develop reading, vocabulary, writing, and listening skills. There are also links to additional online resources and electronic dictionaries. Feedback between students and the teacher is held through questions. The developed tests help to assess students' progress.
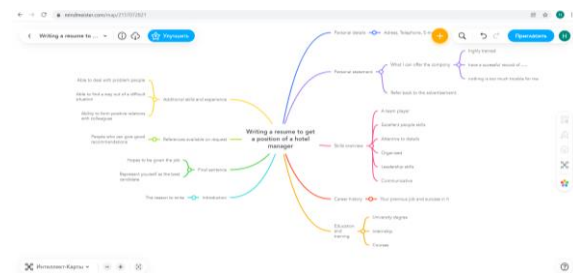

Figure 4: A mental map by a 3rd-year hospitality student.

Using the blog the students improve FLCC being surrounded not only by the English environment but also by an interesting and inspiring content, which they can use at any time available. There are authentic texts and developed tasks aimed at mastering speaking skills and vocabulary knowledge. Video podcasts are of great help for enriching the vocabulary and listening skills. The content of the blog is created to help students improve their knowledge not only of the English language but also their majors.
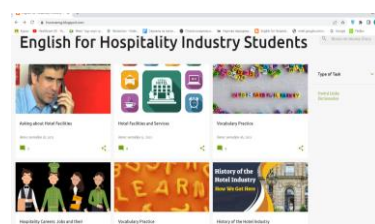

Figure 5: Home page of the blog[1].

The third stage of the research deals with analyzing the formation of FLCC components of hospitality students by ICT to compare the educational activities of future professionals in control (CG) and experimental (EG) groups. To define the development of the components of foreign language communicative competence of hospitality students by means of information communication technologies we processed and analyzed the answers

of the students to the following questionnaire (at the beginning and the end of the experiment):

A) *Section 1. Motivational and Value Component:*

1) Are you motivated to learn a foreign language for your career in hospitality? Rank from 1 to 5 (1- not motivated at all, 5- highly inspired).

2) How important do you think foreign language proficiency is in the hospitality industry? Rank from 1 to 5 (1-not important at all, 5-extremely important)

3) How do you perceive the role of foreign language proficiency in achieving your professional aspirations in the hospitality sector?

4) On a scale of 1 to 5, how important do you believe it is to be proficient in a foreign language for success in the hospitality industry?

5) Have you set specific goals regarding your foreign language learning? If yes, please describe them.

B) *Section 2. Cognitive-Activity Component:*

1) How often do you use online resources (websites, apps, etc.) to practice vocabulary related to hospitality in a foreign language?

2) Can you give an example of how you creatively use linguistic knowledge in professional discourse in a foreign language?

3) How confident are you in your pronunciation of foreign language words related to hospitality? (Rate on a scale of 1 to 5)

4) How comfortable are you with using information communication technologies to enhance your foreign language learning experience? (Rate on a scale of 1 to 5)

5) What specific ICT tools or platforms do you find most useful in improving your foreign language skills for hospitality?

C) *Section 3. Reflexive-Evaluative Component:*

1) How do you assess your current level of foreign language communicative competence?

2) Describe a recent instance where you evaluated your own foreign language communicative performance.

3) What strategies do you employ to enhance your foreign language communicative skills after self-assessment?

4) How do you plan your foreign language communicative activities for further improvement?

5) Are there any challenges you face in using ICT for foreign language learning? If yes, please describe.

We used the method of O. Smirnov to calculate the results of how many students of the two groups are at each level of the formation of FLCC components. Accordingly, at the beginning of the experiment in CG and EG, students were at approximately the same level of foreign language proficiency according to a diagnostic test and an oral interview. There were 42 students in EG and 41 in KG. In KG, the teachers used the traditional method, and in EG, they used the ICT as mentioned above tools. We have used a test, creative tasks and a questionnaire to evaluate the levels of FLCC formation of hospitality students at the beginning and the end of the experiment (Table 1).

Table 1: The results of the experiment in EG and CG.

Levels of ICC formation		ICT Components					
		Motivational and value		Cognitive-activity		Reflexive-evaluative	
		EG	CG	EG	CG	EG	CG
		%	%	%	%	%	%
Low	Before the experiment	28	30	24	26	36	36
	After the experiment	4	18	10	16	14	30
Average	Before the experiment	44	46	48	46	42	44
	After the experiment	30	48	22	48	34	40
Sufficient	Before the experiment	22	18	20	22	18	14
	After the experiment	38	22	50	28	38	20
High	Before the experiment	6	8	8	6	4	6
	After the experiment	28	12	18	8	14	10

As a result, ICT increased the sufficient FLCC motivational and value component level from 22% to 38% and from 6% to 28%. Accordingly, in the CG, this indicator increased from 18% to 22% (sufficient level) and from 8% to 12% (high level). EG's low motivational and value component level decreased from 28% to 4%. Indicators of the formation level of the cognitive-activity component of FLCC in EG also had significant positive dynamics. Sufficient level rose from 20% to 50%, high – from 8% to 18%. The low level of the reflexive-evaluative component of FLCC in EG decreased from 36% to 14%, and the sufficient one increased from 18% to 38% (Figure 6).
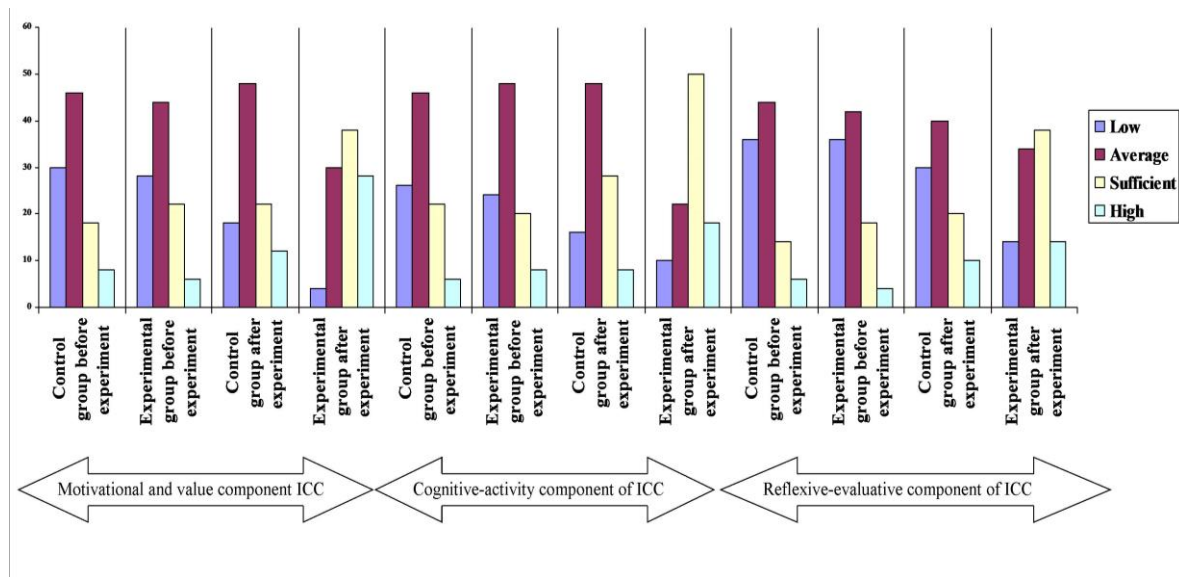
Figure 6: The comparative analysis of FLCC in EG and CG at the beginning and the end of the experiment.

The results prove the effective use of ICT for the development of FLCC hospitality students. Therefore, the formation of all FLCC components is at a sufficient and high level.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the review of the scientific work makes it possible to clarify the concept of FLCC hospitality students. It is a complex unity that contributes to obtaining and analyzing professionally relevant information in a foreign language and using it to solve professional problems. The paper outlines the peculiarities of ICT use in foreign language teaching to future hospitality specialists. The analysis required conducting questionnaires, observations and surveys. Thus it proves the didactic potential of ICT. However, teachers use ICT insufficiently. Consequently, they do not contribute to the full extent to the effective formation of students' FLCC.

The study proves that integrating ICT tools in learning a foreign language for professional purposes increases the motivational and value aspect in the formation of FLCC. After the implementation of ICT technologies (mainly professionally oriented Youtube podcasts, blogs, the creation of mind maps) into the language learning process more students started to set specific goals in their language learning: expand general vocabulary to facilitate effective communication with international guests and colleagues; gain cultural insights into the countries or regions where the target language is

spoken; to access industry-related resources, such as online articles, podcasts, webinars, and forums to stay updated on hospitality trends and best practices; learn and regularly review industry-specific vocabulary related to different departments within the hospitality sector. At the beginning of the experiment the students couldn't properly define the goals for language learning. Mainly the respondents didn't set the goals at all or they just wanted to improve the level of speaking skills.

The importance of a foreign language learning proficiency increased as well, as more students started to rank it 4 and 5 on the scale, instead of 2, 3 at the start of the learning process. They also admitted that they started to be more persistent in the language learning and get more interested in the process itself after the implementation of the ICT tools. They contributed greatly to their desire to learn a foreign language.

As for the cognitive-activity component of the FLCC the number of students using ICT for mastering the language increased. The rates on the scale in the answers to the question about using information communication technologies to enhance a foreign language learning experience were mainly 4 instead of 2, 3 at the beginning of the experiment.

In addition, the use of ICT in a foreign language learning of hospitality students promotes the formation and development of language skills and stimulates thinking, creativity, self-realization, and self-improvement. Furthermore, using YouTube video hosting resources, mental maps, educational blogs, etc. helps students realize their educational

potential and provides access to up-to-date professional information, communication, and cooperation of participants in the learning process. In particular, working on authentic videos contributes to mastering lexical and grammatical material and developing communication and listening skills.

Watching videos contributes to a better understanding of professional sphere realities, the behavior of communicators in different situations, and the mastery of models for solving professional problems. With the help of mental maps, it is possible to realize the creative potential, train critical thinking skills, and update and systematize vocabulary. Educational blogs are an effective means of forming FLCC, contributing to developing communication skills, self-esteem, and self-reflection.

After watching authentic podcasts and creating mental maps more hospitality students started to consider their achievements in the language learning, especially in speaking and pronunciation. Though the respondents still experience difficulties in planning their communicative activities for further improvement in a language learning.

We see the prospect of further research in the study of pedagogical conditions of ICT usage in teaching foreign languages to future specialists, including postgraduate professional training, incorporating the applicable criteria that follow.

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