
Distance Learning of Foreign Languages for Students of Economic Specialties

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Abstract

Distance education at lightning-fast speed has become the only possible form of education. Distance learning of a foreign language for students of higher educational institutions has a number of advantages due to the fact that we are talking about pedagogical interaction with the age group of psychologically mature individuals with relatively formed mechanisms of motivation and outlined personal and professional orientation. The purpose of the present research is a comprehensive analysis of the process and results of distance learning of a foreign language (English) for students of economic specialties. The research methods are as follows: the analysis of modern opportunities for organizing distance learning; study of theoretical and methodological papers on the subject matter; method of experimental teaching of foreign languages with an emphasis on tactics of stimulating the personal and motivational sphere of students' educational activities; development of author's diagnostic models in order to reveal the dynamics of development of knowledge and practical skills in a foreign language of students of economic profile; qualitative and quantitative analysis of empirical data; statistical and mathematical interpretation of results, their functional analysis; method of generalization and abstraction. According to the data obtained, the hypothesis of the research has been confirmed. It lies in the fact that the students with higher indicators of motivation have shown higher results of academic achievements in mastering a foreign language. The results obtained are not so unambiguous. After all, it is difficult to see obvious progress in the diagnostic results; however, it is more noticeable at the level of individual respondents. Relatively low results of academic achievements in a foreign language (for vocational purposes) are sometimes a consequence of a sharp transition to the format of distance learning and insufficient training of skills of working independently.

Key-words: Online Education, English Learning, Teaching Model, Communicative Competence, Motivation.

1. Introduction

Under the conditions of the Covid-19 pandemic and the quarantine measures caused by it, distance learning from the up-to-date pedagogical tendency has passed into the category of compulsory educational norm. Approaches to distance education have been significantly transformed. From an auxiliary form of education, distance education at a lightning fast pace has become the only possible form of education and training. Teaching any subject remotely has its own features compared to the traditional form of full-time education. However, the academic disciplines of the higher school curriculum, requiring the formation of students' deep practical skills, have undergone significant changes in the way of organizing the educational process, its quality, effectiveness, the manner of delivering educational material, control over the level of knowledge, etc. In the case of teaching a foreign language for students of non-philological specialties, the point at issue is a holistic formation of communicative competence with a clear profiling in accordance with the direction of professional training of degree-seeking students.

Distance learning of a foreign language for students of higher educational institutions has a number of advantages due to the fact that we are talking about pedagogical interaction with the age group of psychologically mature individuals with relatively formed motivation mechanisms and a defined personal and professional orientation. In the ideal case, the main motivation for non-philological students to learn a foreign language is to meet current educational needs, potential professional needs (solving problem situations in business communication) and personal communication needs. However, despite the listed numerous advantages of the age group of HEIs' degree-seeking students, taken into account, as teaching practice shows, the format of distance learning requires constant control over the mechanisms of conscious learning and motivating students to study activities, forasmuch as educational interaction with the teacher becomes possible only through web communication and often not even in real time mode. Thus, the essence of the subject matter of the present research is to identify effective mechanisms for stimulating the motivation of students of economic specialties to learn a foreign language (English) in the paradigm of distance learning. It is the emphasis on the motivational sphere and the conscious attitude of degree-seeking students for economic specialties to their own level of formation of foreign communicative competence, according to the hypothesis of current research, are obvious prerequisites for successful foreign language learning activities in the format of online education.

The purpose of the present research is a comprehensive analysis of the process and results of distance learning of a foreign language (English) for students of economic specialties. The

implementation of the goal outlined involves the fulfillment of the following research objectives, namely:

1. to study and systematize the theoretical fundamentals of teaching foreign languages to students of economic profile in the format of distance learning;
2. to develop an experimental empirical model of conducting foreign language classes online and to provide a methodological complex for the organization of extracurricular activities of degree-seeking students (individual and independent work of students – economists);
3. to implement to the developed model of teaching a foreign language distance-based learning methods and techniques for stimulating the motivational-conscious sphere of the personality of the degree-seeking student of economic specialty in order to facilitate educational activity and improve learning outcomes;
4. to develop a model of final diagnostics of academic achievements in a foreign language for students of an economic specialty;
5. to organize an empirical study among the selected group of respondents, to analyze the process of their educational activities during distance learning, to determine the qualitative and quantitative indicators of the success of their foreign language training programs according to the professional direction;
6. to determine the level of formation of the educational activity's motivational component of students – future economists during foreign language distance learning (by professional direction) and to find out the hypothetical connection of results with the level of academic achievements of respondents;
7. to summarize the results obtained as well as outline the prospects for further research on the topic.

2. Literature Review

Numerous works of modern researchers are devoted to the issue of distance learning of foreign languages, in particular, English. Research and development of distance learning opportunities at numerous points within Europe is initiated by EADTU – European Association of Distance Teaching Universities. This topic is relevant and has a wide field for specific problem-based vectors in the framework of the general subject matter. Investigations try to outline this topic both in terms of the learning process (on the part of the student) and teaching (on the part of the teacher). For instance, the article of Albiladi and Alshareef (2019) is of summarizing and generalizing nature. The

researchers have concluded that blended learning is the ideal format for learning and teaching a foreign language. Its advantage lies in the ability to effectively combine traditional face-to-face form and online learning with an emphasis on the benefits of each of these two separate (sometimes oppositional) forms of organizing the pedagogical process. The authors have emphasized that the blended learning format with organic use of online and offline pedagogical tactics, among other benefits, helps stimulate the motivational component of students' learning activities and switches them to a more active self-centric model in a foreign language learning. A similar viewpoint is held by Ghazizadeh and Fatemipour (2017), Riel et al. (2016), Zhang and Zhu (2018). It should be noted that although such an integrated direction of scientific attention goes beyond the scope of research's topic, it is, however, the most promising one. After all, distance learning as a monoform of the organizing the educational process is a forced step during the Covid-19 pandemic and potentially during the action of other factors that may contribute to the mass transition to a remote pedagogical interaction "teacher – students". However, world experts are convinced that the world of teaching / learning will never be the same as it has been before the coronavirus pandemic. In this regard, the undulous dynamics of the spread of Covid-19 is still dominant. It is self-evident that it underlines the expediency of eventually complete replacement by the category of blended learning of the categories that are still dominant, legally regulated by traditional offline education.

Yang (2021) emphasizes the possibilities of attracting the advantages of virtual reality, digital teaching, distance education and other network eras in the format of distance education of a foreign language, which are summarized in the so-called multimedia network. White (2014) draws attention to the fact that the sphere of distance language learning is much broader than the concept of technology-mediated language learning. The identification of these two concepts is erroneous. In fact, they are in species-generic relations: technology-mediated language learning is the basis for the implementation of distance learning of foreign languages, however, the latter concept is not limited to only multimedia means through which it is implemented. In a number of scientific articles, the authors focus on the formation of students' individual communication skills in accordance with one of the four classical forms of language activity. For instance, Sritulanon et al. (2018) studies the possibilities of distance education in the direction of the formation of language skills of degree-seeking students through the intensive use of videoconferencing technology. The study of Yen and Nhi (2021) on the didactic capabilities of Microsoft Teams is similar in nature to the implementation of the topic. Jabbarova (2020) emphasizes the effectiveness of interactive methods in the format of distance education.

Halimi et al. (2020) explores the social-psychological and cultural dimensions of motivation to learn English. The author emphasizes that when teaching a second language, it is important to know the experience of students and the context of their learning activities, which is problematic in the format of distance learning. Li (2020) presents a one-year three-dimensional English (foreign language) teaching model based on modern network technology. From the viewpoint of the current research, the most interesting fact is that the proposed model of foreign language learning, according to the author's research, improves students' enthusiasm for learning and learning efficiency. It has been especially revealed in the context of teaching a foreign language to students of non-philological directions. It is proposed to use distance classes, large in terms of the number of students, for teaching reading and writing and cross-cultural background knowledge. On the other hand, training in small groups is effective for teaching students the skills of listening and speaking ability, and answering questions. The outlined approach has been also applied by us when modeling classroom lessons in a distance form.

3. Materials and Methods

In the process of preparing the present investigation, the following research methods have been applied, namely:

- analysis of modern opportunities for organizing distance training for the purpose of learning a foreign language by students of economic specialties;
- studying theoretical and methodological papers on qualification and directly the practice of implementing didactic approaches to teaching a foreign language to students – economists through methods of remote pedagogical interaction;
- method of experimental teaching foreign languages with an emphasis on tactics of stimulation of personal-motivational sphere of students' educational activity;
- development of author's diagnostic models for revealing the dynamics of development of knowledge and practical skills in a foreign language of students – future economists;
- qualitative and quantitative analysis of empirical data, testing of the research hypothesis;
- statistical and mathematical interpretation of results, their functional analysis;
- method of generalization and abstraction – preparation of the conclusions based on the research, outlining of prospects of further researches on a subject matter.

The research has been conducted within the framework of the department (specify the department) of the university (specify the university). Two academic groups of students with a total

number of 62 people have been involved. The duration of the experiment has been 4 months (March-June 2020). During the quarantine, the Moodle / Classroom / environment (select the desired) was the only university platform for organizing the educational process. One of the central hypotheses of the research is the thesis that students with higher indicators of motivation will obtain higher results of educational achievements. Two-component diagnostic model has been developed in order to test the hypothesis outlined. During the first stage of diagnostics, the actual level of proficiency of students of an economic specialty in English was ascertained as a result of distance learning. At the second stage of diagnostics, testing was carried out in order to identify the level of motivation of students of an economic specialty to fulfill the curriculum for learning English online as the only form of organizing the educational process in conditions of distance education during the forced quarantine. Also, the assessment of each student by the teacher of a foreign language individually for the implementation of the curriculum, the success of its mastering, the fulfillment of tasks, etc. was also taken into account. The third component considered was the student's essay self-reflection. The model of the first stage of diagnostics is reflected in Table 1.

Table 1 - Determining the Level of Formation of Foreign Language Professional Communicative Competencies of Students of Economic Specialty

| | Professionally oriented lexical and grammatical test | Reading | Listening | Speaking | Writing |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Source and Brief Description | Annex A <i>50 multiple choice quiz questions*</i> | Annex B The sharing economy (text)** <i>20 quiz questions</i> | Annex C Business email writing (Communication)*** <i>5 quiz questions</i> | - Triade: Me, My Future Profession and Lifelong Learning (<i>Student Project: Speech and Presentation</i>) | - Essay Writing "Economy in Globalized World" |
| Duration | 60 min | 45 min | 30 min | 10-15 min | 60 min |
| Scores | 50 points | 20 points | 30 points | 50 points | 50 points |
| Total | 200 point | | | | |
| Verbal Ranking | 180-200 – High Level 165-179 – Good Level 150-164 – Rather Good Level 130-149 – Satisfactory Level 120-129 – Low Level ≥119 – Completely Unsatisfactory Level | | | | |

Source: *Compiled by authors based on BBC (2021); Nabyeva et al. (2010); **British Council (2021); ***Ligua.com (2021).

In order to determine the dynamics of progression, the data obtained by applying the method described in Table 1 were compared with the academic achievements of students based on the results of studying the discipline “Foreign language (for vocational purposes)” in the first semester of 2019-2020 academic year. The model of the second stage of diagnostics (motivational) is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 - Determining the Motivational Component of Educational Activities of Students of Economic Specialty during Distance Foreign Language Learning (for Vocational Purposes)

| | English Learning Motivation Test | Assessment of the progress dynamics of the student's academic achievements during distance learning by the teacher | Essay self-reflection “Advantages and disadvantages of learning a foreign language in the format of distance learning” |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Source and Brief Description | Annex D 50 quiz questions (YES answer = 2 points, NO answer = 0 points)* | - The following factors were taken into account: 1) regular attendance of video classes (0-5 points); 2) systematic implementation of educational tasks (0-5 points); 3) timely delivery of homework and individual assignments (compliance with deadlines) (0-5 points); 4) performance of individual tasks; 5) initiative (0-5 points); 6) correctness of linguistic and language tasks (7-5 points); 7) student's activity during online classes (0-5 points); 8) scientific and research aspect of the student's activity (0-5 points); 9) creative and innovative approach to the organization of own educational activities for mastering a foreign language (0-5 points); 10) the ability to independently solve problematic learning situations (0-5 points). | - |
| Duration | 60 min | - | 60 min |
| Scores | 100 points | 50 points | 50 points |
| Total | 200 point | | |
| Verbal Ranking | 180-200 – High Level 165-179 – Good Level 150-164 – Rather Good Level 130-149 – Satisfactory Level 120-129 – Low Level ≥119 – Completely Unsatisfactory Level | | |

Source: *Developed by the authors.

In general, the developed diagnostic model was aimed at a comprehensive, multi-vector study of the factors of effectiveness of students' learning foreign language in the format of distance learning and their formation based on the factors of foreign language communicative competence as a key indicator of success in mastering a foreign language (for vocational purposes). The use of a test

questionnaire and essay at the second stage of diagnostics was aimed at revealing the level of students' understanding of the features of the English learning process and the importance of understanding the students by themselves, their goals of learning a foreign language (and forming self-centric model of learning) in the paradigm of remote pedagogical interaction.

4. Results

In accordance with the implementation of the research plan presented in the previous sections, after careful studying modern literature on the theory and practice of distance foreign language learning for students of economic specialties, an experimental empirical model of the organization of classroom (online) and extracurricular forms of educational activity was developed; they meet the requirements of distance learning during the period of forced quarantine. Consequently, when developing the structure of educational activity, the possibility of interaction between participants in the pedagogical process not mediated by means of online communication was absolutely excluded, as well as the possibility of direct involvement of third parties for educational purposes (for example, face-to-face meetings with native speakers, participation in conferences, study tours, etc.). When developing an experimental empirical model, the emphasis was placed on the methods of students' interest, general stimulation of their activity in professionally oriented mastering of a foreign language. The applied methods and forms of educational activity are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3 - Motivation-oriented Methods of Stimulating Students of the Economic Specialty in English Learning Activities in the Process of Distance Education

| No | Method/Form | Source / Example of Learning Activity |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Working with a set of pdf textbooks for learning a foreign language, but not with one (the possibility of combining various work tactics, alternating methods of presenting material and complexes of training exercises / tasks, allows implementing a multicultural approach) | Roberts and Phillips (2020) Shpak (2003) Nabiyeva (2010) Knyazeva et al. (2006) |
| 2 | Working with authoritative economic and business publications (reading, discussion of articles) | Economist (2021) Forbes (2021) Harvard Business Review (2021) |
| 3 | Mastering the applied rules of business etiquette | GCF Global (2021) Passport to Trade 2.0 (2021) DeskTime (2021) |
| 4 | Skype and Zoom meetings with business persons from abroad | Organized by teachers and university authorities. Chance to enhance business communication tips. |
| 5 | Histories of Success – The 10 Greatest Entrepreneurs | Investopedia (2021) |
| 6 | Economy museum video tour | Economy museum video tour (2020) |
| 7 | Business TV shows watching | Business TV shows: A list of 20 you CAN'T miss (2020) |
| 8 | Watching film/series of economic direction/ | 10 series every entrepreneur should watch (2018) |
| 9 | Business news tracking | CNBC (2021) BBC News (2021) Reuters (2021) Cable News Network (2021) |
| 10 | English learning self-reflection individual project | My reflection on learning English (2020) +Power Point Presentation |

Source: Developed by the authors.

The above listed forms and types of activities potentially stimulate motivation mechanisms for learning English, intensify the process of practical mastering foreign business communication, attract mechanisms of interest and conscious attitude to their own foreign language communicative competencies, and prioritize the dominant self-centric language learning. In addition to implementing their traditional foreign language learning program, respondents and teachers at the end of each lesson (10 minutes prior the end) conducted self-reflective learning practices (question: What have I learned? What new things have I learned? Why do I need it? What is the zone of difficulties? etc.). After completing the training experiment, the first stage of diagnostics was performed. The results obtained are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4 - Determining the Dynamics of Formation of Foreign Language Professional Communicative Competencies of Students of Economic Specialty

| | Professionally oriented lexical and grammatical test 50 points max | Reading 20 points max | Listening 30 points max | Speaking 50 points max | Writing 50 points max | Total 200 points max |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Average Group Result | 39.1 | 15.4 | 24.6 | 37.5 | 40.4 | 157 |
| % Level of Mastering the English Learning Material | 78.2% | 77.0% | 82.0% | 75% | 80.8% | 78.5% |

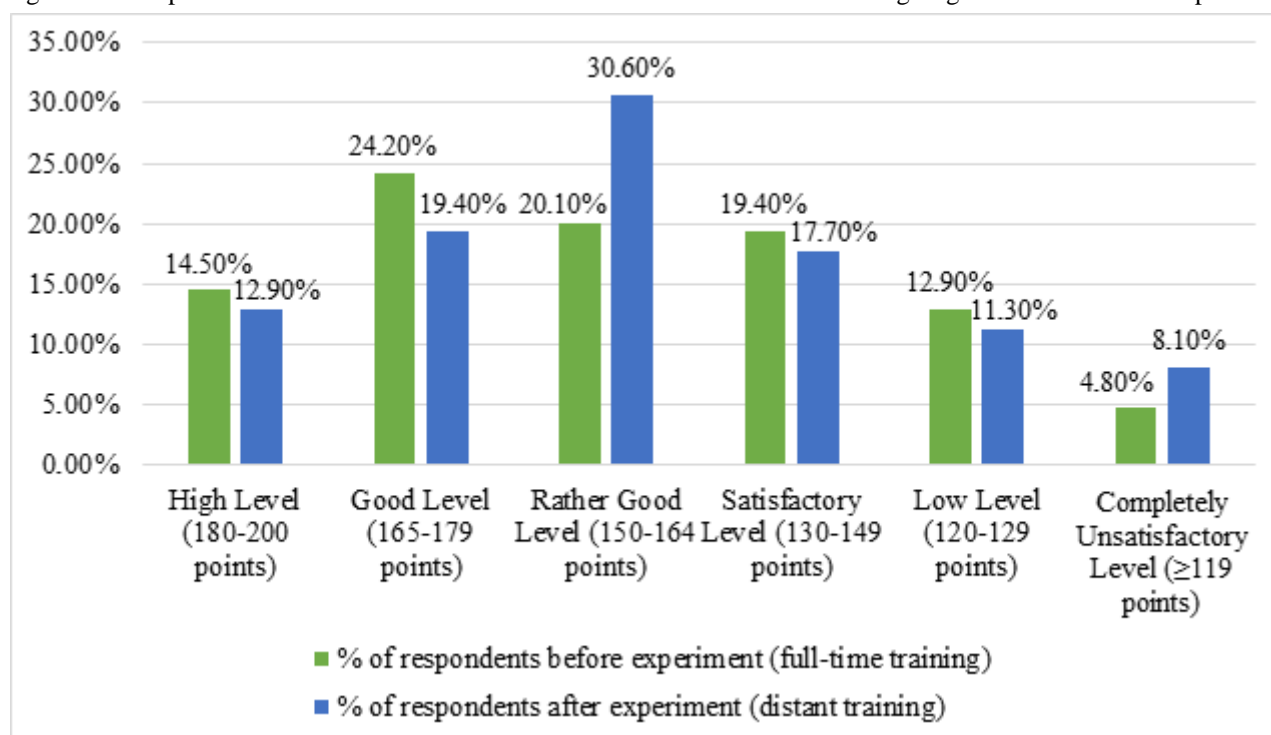
As Table 4 shows, the lowest level of mastering speaking skills was the lowest at the level of the group of respondents, while the results of Listening Comprehension are the most successful. Such a dichotomy was formed at the level of conditionally antonymous pairs. In general, the situation is clear: the format of distance learning minimizes the possibility of direct spoken interaction. Also, during online communication, the effect of communicative noise is aggravated, which again complicates the process of educational interaction. Herewith, the skills of listening perception, on the contrary, are activated. In order to determine the dynamics of the success of knowledge and practical skills' acquisition in a foreign language by a group of students – future economists during distance learning, the academic performance of respondents in the discipline “Foreign language (for vocational purposes)” was previously analyzed for the first semester of 2019-2020 academic year (when the training took place in the traditional full-time form). A comparative distribution of respondents according to the results of achievements prior and after the experiment is reflected in Table 5.

Table 5 - Distribution of Respondents by Levels of Acquisition of Learning Material and the Formation of Foreign Language Communicative Competence after the Experiment

| | High Level (180-200 points) / A level by ECTS | Good Level (165- 179 points) / B level by ECTS | Rather Good Level (150- 164 points) / C level by ECTS | Satis-factory Level (130-149 points) // D level by ECTS | Low Level (120-129 points) / E level by ECTS | Completely Unsatisfactory Level (≥ 119 points) / Fx or F level by ECTS |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Number and % of respondents prior the experiment (full-time training)</i> | | | | | | |
| 1. Total (taking into account all kinds of activity) | 9 | 15 | 13 | 12 | 8 | 3 |
| 2. % of general amount of respondents | 14.5% | 24.2% | 20.1% | 19.4% | 12.9% | 4.8% |
| <i>Number and % of respondents after experiment (distance training)</i> | | | | | | |
| 1. Total (taking into account all kinds of activity) | 8 | 12 | 19 | 11 | 7 | 5 |
| 2. % of general amount of respondents | 12.9% | 19.4% | 30.6% | 17.7% | 11.3% | 8.1% |
| Dynamics | No | -1 | -3 | +6 | -1 | +2 |
| | % | -1.8% | -4.8% | +10.5% | -1.8% | +3.6% |
| | Positive / Negative | Negative | Negative | Positive | Positive | Negative |

Visualized indicators of success in foreign language learning by students – future economists are shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Comparative Distribution of the Results of Academic Success of Learning English Prior and after Experiment



According to data of Table 5, indicators towards increase (with a + sign) to high level, good level, rather good level are a manifestation of positive dynamics. Herewith, indicators in the direction

of decrease (with a – sign) to satisfactory level, low level, completely unsatisfactory level are also a manifestation of positive dynamics. Thus, as a result of the mono-distance form of training as the only one possible for the period of forced quarantine, the number of students with High Level proficiency of a foreign language decreased by 1.8%, and the number of respondents with Good Level decreased by 4.8% (negative trend); on the other hand, the number of students with Rather Good Level increased by 10.5% (a positive trend). Along with this, the number of students with Satisfactory Level and also with Low Level decreased by 1.8% (positive trend); however, the Completely Unsatisfactory Level's indicators immediately increased by 3.6% (a negative trend). In general, a clearly positive trend can be observed only at Rather Good Level, however, it is obvious that it has increased mainly due to a decrease in the number of respondents at High Level and Good Level. It must be said, this level of fluctuation is not a critically alarming signal, however, still undesirable. Further, according to the plan, the study was carried out to diagnose the motivational component of the educational activity of students of the economic specialty in distance learning. The obtained results are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6 - The Results of Determining the Motivational Component of Educational Activities of Respondents

| | English Learning Motivation Test (100 points max) | Assessment of the progress dynamics of the student's academic achievements during distance learning by the teacher (50 points max) | Essay self-reflection (50 points max) | Total |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------|
| Average Result of all Respondents | 82.5 | 37.7 | 39.6 | 159.8 |
| % Level of Motivation | 82.5% | 75.4% | 79.2% | ~79.9% |

Thus, in general, the average result of motivation is relatively high. The lowest average score was given to the work of students by the foreign language teacher, whereas the highest score was obtained for the English Learning Motivation Test. This may also indicate the lack of formation, immaturity of motivational mechanisms: theoretically, the student is motivated to work towards improving the level of foreign language proficiency, however, when switching from the idea to its implementation (this requires real time and energy, rational organization of time, which is a serious problem during distance education), failure of educational activity often occurs. Further, in order to establish the interrelationship between *Level of Professional-Oriented English Mastering* and *Level of Motivation* as well as to test the hypotheses that the results of educational achievements will be higher among students with higher rates of motivation, students were divided into the corresponding

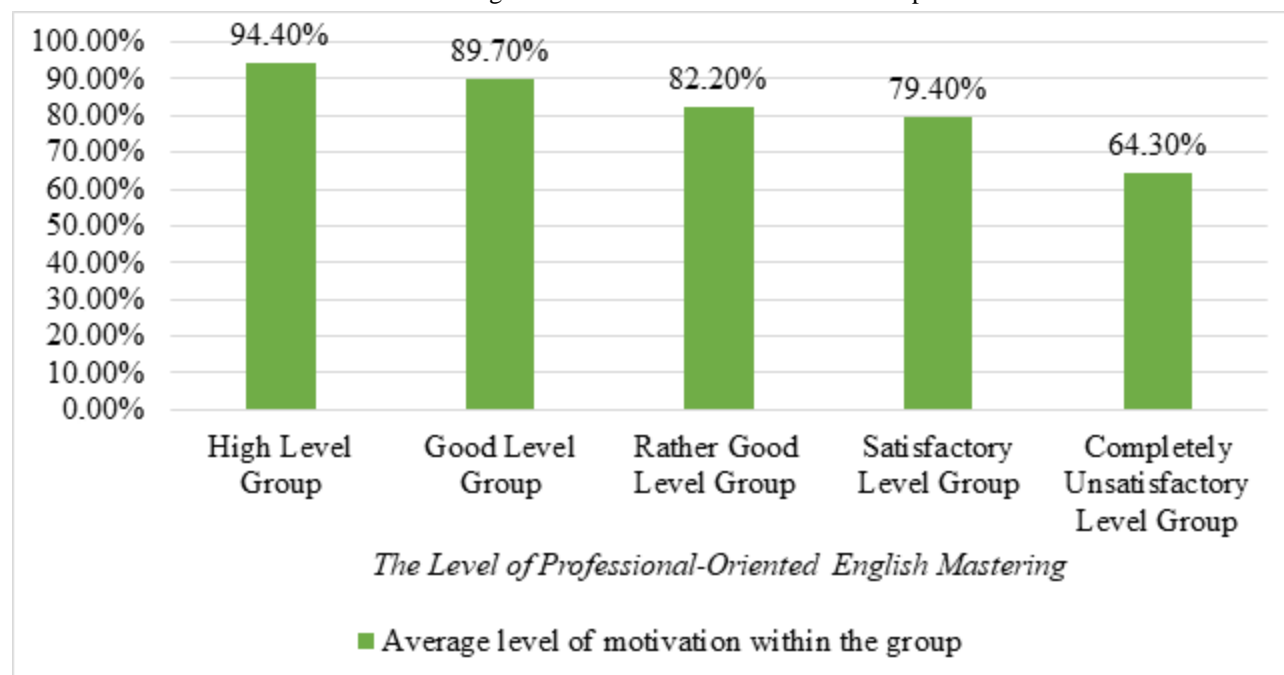
groups of success. After that, the results of diagnostics of students' motivation were generalized already according to these groups (within success groups) (Table 7).

Table 7 - The Interrelationship between the Level of Foreign Language Acquisition and the Motivational Component (during Distance Learning)

| | | <i>Group according to the Level of Professional-Oriented English Mastering</i> | | | | | |
|----------------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | High Level Group (180-200 points) | Good Level Group (165-179 points) | Rather Good Level Group (150-164 points) | Satisfactory Level Group (130-149 points) | Low Level Group (120-129 points) | Completely Unsatisfactory Level Group (≥ 119 points) |
| Number of respondents within the group | | 8 | 12 | 19 | 11 | 7 | 5 |
| Average level of motivation within the group | Scores | 188.8 | 179.3 | 164.4 | 158.7 | 139.2 | 128.6 |
| | % | 94.4% | 89.7% | 82.2% | 79.4% | 69.6% | 64.3% |

Graphically obtained results of the interrelationship between the Group according to the Level of Professional-Oriented English Mastering and the Average level of motivation within the group are shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - The Interrelationship between the Group According to the Level of Professional-Oriented English Mastering and the Average Level of Motivation within the Group



The results of academic achievements in a foreign language have been distributed as follows: High Level – 12.9%; Good Level – 19.4%; Rather Good Level – 30.6%, Satisfactory Level – 17.7%, Low Level – 11.2%, Completely Unsatisfactory Level – 8.1%. The results of motivation to learn a foreign language by groups of academic achievements are as follows: High Level Group – 94.4%, Good Level Group – 89.7%, Rather Good Level Group – 82.2%, Satisfactory Level Group – 79.4%, Low Level Group – 69.6%, Completely Unsatisfactory Level Group – 64.3%. Thus, the outlined hypothesis was fully confirmed. A stable interrelationship has been established between the mechanisms of motivation towards educational activity and the directly revealed level of a foreign language proficiency by students – economists in the framework of the current research.

5. Discussion

The conducted research makes it possible to assess the situation of abrupt transformation of the learning environment due to the introduction of distance learning. The situation is expectedly tense and such a substantial instant change in the format of the educational process is a priori dangerous for any educational discipline. However, in a special way, the danger of losing control over the educational process by the teacher concerns teaching non-major subjects. In particular, this refers to teaching a foreign language for students of economic specialty. Teaching a foreign language as a university discipline at the stage of professional training of degree-seeking students has an expressive professional marking. However, students usually ignore or underestimate the importance of foreign language communication in achieving career success in today's globalized and highly integrated paradigm (Bykonja et al., 2019; Vigouroux and Mufwene, 2020). It is expedient to minimize the destructive effect of the transition to an exclusively distance-based (therefore, remote in space and sometimes in time) form of education by stimulating the motivational mechanisms of students' learning activities, which has been implemented within the developed experimental model. In particular, it has been carried out through a system of verbal and evaluative incentives and directly through the implementation in the curriculum of teaching methods and tactics for organizing the pedagogical process in such a way as to interest the degree-seeking student. Thus, in the course of the present research, methods of a foreign language online learning are used, the involvement of which in the educational process actively develops the general outlook of the student, economic and business competence, communication skills of speaking, listening, writing, reading. The creative approach and research and journalism have been also foregrounded. All this has been carried out within the framework of economic issues.

Admittedly, the results obtained are not so unambiguous and it is difficult to observe obvious progress in the diagnostic data. However, the results of students' learning activities have not deteriorated, which is already a good indicator. In addition, students who received a negative score for mastering a foreign language (for vocational purposes), in the process of individual online conversation motivated their learning failures in a foreign language by personal problems and sometimes significant difficulties. They also connected their failures with instability and generally critical quality of Internet communication.

In fact, the success of the process of foreign languages distance learning, which consists in the level of mastering by students of foreign language communicative competencies, depends largely on the skill of organizing remote interaction between the participants of the pedagogical process (Rohmah and Isnaini, 2017; Sritulanon et al., 2018). It must be said that this always implies the risk of communicative pedagogical failures due to the lack of direct interaction with students, which significantly weakens such psychological prerequisites for pedagogical success as suggestion, empathy and other components of neuro-linguistic programming involved in the communicative pair "teacher – student". Although neuro-linguistic programming is nowadays officially considered a pseudoscientific term (due to unproven mechanisms of action), more and more scientific papers are appearing in its favor. In particular, numerous investigations concern the mechanisms of application of neurolinguistic coding of the human psyche in the process of learning foreign languages (Alroudhan, 2018; Farahani, 2018; Kotera et al., 2019). Richard Bandler and John Grinder, theorists of neuro-linguistic programming, have considered helping to students with a low level of learning perception to be one of the five main areas of application of human behavior modeling mechanisms (Bandler and Grinder, 1975). The situation of distance learning with numerous factors that weaken the mechanisms of language and psychological influence on the student in order to stimulate his learning activity and conscious attitude to learning in general, can be qualified as a pedagogical environment where low receptivity to learning is a regularity. In the paradigm of remote pedagogical interaction, neurophysiological filters are significantly deformed; they are connected with natural channels for receiving and processing information – representative systems / modalities (kinesthetic, audiovisual modalities).

In order to support and improve the mechanisms of stimulating students' learning activities, it is recommended to receive monthly feedback in the format of a group conversation, brainstorming or mini-notes concerning the system of learning English, proposed by the teacher, as the organizer of the educational process (Li, 2020). Under such conditions, students will feel the importance of themselves as an equal party in the organization of educational interaction, and the learning process

itself will be perceived as an act of co-creation and mutually beneficial collaboration. The organization of such a conversation in a foreign language in this case will have both organizational and generalizing, prognostic, and the actual training effects. Relatively low results of academic achievements in a foreign language (for vocational purposes) are the result of a sharp transition to the format of distance learning and insufficient training of skills of working independently (White, 2014). The unprecedented development of information technology at the turn of XX-XXI centuries has led to a bumper increase in opportunities for the use of information resources in scientific, financial, economic, social and other spheres of the society. It should be clear that a foreign language distance learning (for vocational purposes) as the latest form of organization of the pedagogical process, which has just enabled remote pedagogical contact, is based on the wide and diverse use of information and communication technologies (White, 2014).

Until recently, it has been considered axiomatic that the communicative goals and objectives of a foreign language course can be achieved and solved only under the condition of obligatory and constant interaction of participants in the educational process within the framework of an interactive form of training – face-to-face practical training. However, as the conducted empirical research has shown, online technologies for organizing distance learning of a foreign language can also be effective means of stimulating the English language learning (Bykonina et al., 2017). In the course of the research it has been established that effective foreign language distance learning should be based on a specially designed concept of using a virtual language environment. It contains a set of electronic educational, applied, instrumental and communication tools that allow organizing the most complete learning interaction. It also helps diversify, enrich the process of learning the language with not only cognitive resources but also entertaining and exploratory ones. They, in turn, have a positive effect on maintaining the level of motivation of degree-seeking students for economic specialty. Foreign language, being one of the most relevant subjects of study, is also the object-matter that is most worked out by the developers of distance learning programs. However, in authors' viewpoint, the teacher in the teaching process should adapt any commercial or non-commercial educational product to his own teaching style, as well as adapt it to the level of ease of perception of the students' audience. In general, the development of the principle of building a system of teaching a foreign language in the context of distance education by using the examples of integrated systems of teaching foreign languages is very promising both commercially and in fulfilling a practically communicative goal (Sritulanon et al., 2020).

6. Conclusions

Thus, distance learning of foreign languages for students of economic specialties is an important area of research in modern pedagogy of distance education. The organization of educational activities in the virtual online space, like any other form of pedagogical interaction, has a number of features. First of all, the danger centers around losing the direct control over the students' audience, the emergence of man-made obstacles that may interfere with the conducting classes, sometimes unregulated time for educational activities, due to which students with poor motivation and process orientation may have a false illusion of freedom from learning. The success of educational activities in the framework of distance learning of foreign languages directly depends on the mechanisms of interaction, pedagogical empathy, mutual understanding between teacher and students, attention to the mechanisms of motivation and self-reflection of students' own progress in mastering foreign language communicative competencies.

In the course of organized empirical research it was possible to identify and prove out the interrelationship between students' achievement and the level of motivation of respondents to mastering a foreign language. Involvement of tactics of control over motivation, diversification of forms of online activity, regular conversations – reflections, application of holistic methods of stimulation of educational activity in general give a positive result, though not brilliantly successful. However, four experimental months could hypothetically be a short time to identify all the features of distance learning. In the future, neither an exclusively full-time form of interaction in a pair of “student – teacher”, nor an exclusively distance-based one will hardly enjoy the right to undisputed dominance. The world has changed, and now the future lies in blended learning. Further investigations on the topic may relate to the application of the models of implementing foreign language educational programs developed by the authors in the original or adapted form and diagnostics of the level of acquisition of foreign knowledge and practical skills of communicative interaction. It is also appropriate to review trends in foreign language learning in the same group of respondents but in the paradigm of blended learning.

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