# МІНІСТЕРСТВО ОСВІТИ І НАУКИ УКРАЇНИ ТАВРІЙСЬКИЙ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИЙ УНІВЕРСИТЕТ ІМЕНІ В. І. ВЕРНАДСЬКОГО

Журнал заснований у 1918 році

# ВЧЕНІ ЗАПИСКИ ТАВРІЙСЬКОГО НАЦІОНАЛЬНОГО УНІВЕРСИТЕТУ ІМЕНІ В. І. ВЕРНАДСЬКОГО

Серія: Філологія. Соціальні комунікації

Том 31 (70) № 4 2020 Частина 4



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Статті у виданні перевірені на наявність плагіату за допомогою програмного забезпечення StrikePlagiarism.com від польської компанії Plagiat.pl.

Рекомендовано до друку та поширення через мережу Internet Вченою радою Таврійського національного університету імені В. І. Вернадського (протокол № 4 від 26.11.2020 року)

Науковий журнал «Вчені записки ТНУ імені В. І. Вернадського. Серія: Філологія. Соціальні комунікації» зареєстровано Міністерством юстиції України (Свідоцтво про державну реєстрацію друкованого засобу масової інформації серія КВ № 15711-4182Р від 28.09.2009 року)

Журнал включено до Переліку наукових фахових видань України (категорія «Б») зі спеціальностей 035 — Філологія, 061 — Журналістика відповідно до Наказу МОН України від 17.03.2020 № 409 (додаток 1)

Журнал включено до міжнародної наукометричної бази Index Copernicus International (Республіка Польща)

Сторінка журналу: www.philol.vernadskyjournals.in.ua

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UDC 009. 378.1'004.9'81-2 DOI

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# DIGITAL COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TOOLS FOR FINAL QUALIFICATION ASSESSMENT IN ORIENTAL LANGUAGES PROGRAMS<sup>1</sup>

The global pandemic and subsequent quarantine measures and restrictions have posed a challenge to communicative skills development in the structure and procedure of university summative assessment process. Qualification assessment for Foreign Languages major programs in particular is a strict regimen process that involves different communicative stages (oral and written exams, final project viva, internal and external review) that derive the need to elaborate complex communication skills and use an array of targeted information communication tools. This study seeks to analyze the practices of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University digital qualification assessment for students of Asian (Mandarin, Japanese) Languages major programs, employed in the year 2020 due to quarantine measures. In the educational sphere, the result of the COVID-19 pandemic development was the need to take quick action in order to achieve such desirable results: 1) to adapt the existent educational scenarios to digital, remote and blended communicative formats; 2) to boost information and communication technology competence and digital literacy of all participants of the educational process. The investigation seeks to identify various groups of applied digital skills and communicative skills, utilized through qualification assessment process by all parties (students, faculty and referees). In a networked society of the early 21st century, structured methods of collaboration encourage introspection of behavior and communication. The survey and analysis of different information and communication technology tools is used to translate real life qualification assessment practices into online blended communicative format. Comparative results of ICT tools and communicative activity practices efficiency for respondents of Oriental languages programs are provided. Communication, collaboration and team work are evaluated as crucial soft skills in various combinations within the scenario of digital Final Qualification Assessment. Implementation of Final Qualification Assessment via various information and communication tools requires of participants of educational process elementary to intermediate digital literacy. These results corroborate the correspondence between communicative competence and digital technology competence components, adapted for Liberal Arts.

**Key words:** ICT Tools and Practices in education, digital communication, Final Qualification Assessment, digital literacy, blended learning.

Introduction. The global pandemic and subsequent quarantine measures and restrictions have posed an array of challenges to the structure and procedure of university summative assessment process. Qualification assessment for Foreign Languages major programs in particular is a communicative process of strict regimen that involves different stages

(oral and written exams, final project viva, internal and external review).

This study objective is to critically review the applied case and best practices of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University Digital Final Qualification Assessment for students of Oriental (Mandarin Chinese, Japanese) Languages major programs, employed in the year

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The research methodology leading to these results was elaborated within the framework of the IRNet project, funding from the People Programme (Marie Curie Actions) of the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme FP7/2007-2013/ under REA grant agreement No: PIRSES-GA-2013- 612536. Empirical findings and survey procedures have been conducted under the auspices of Integrated Research framework of Romance Languages and Typology Chair of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University European languages and literatures development in cross-communication context (0116 U 006607) and Integrated Research framework of Oriental Languages and Translation Chair of Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University Oriental Studies development in the framework of Higher Education Internationalization (0116U007073).

2020 due to quarantine measures through the prism of digital communication management in. The survey and analysis of different ICT tools is used to translate real life qualification assessment practices into online blended communicative format.

The investigation seeks to identify various groups of applied digital skills [5; 7; 8; 11] and soft communicative skills [1; 2; 9; 12], utilized through qualification assessment process by all parties (students, faculty and referees). In a networked society of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, structured methods of collaboration encourage introspection of behavior and communication [14]. These methods aim to increase the success of teams and groups as they engage communicatively in problem solving. Communication exists in two main temporal forms:

- Synchronous models: Same Place <=> Same Time, Different Place <=> Same Time;
- Asynchronous models: Same Place <=>Different Time, Different Place <=> Different Time.

Principle models and corresponding features of communication are: 1. Same Time, Same Place: Discussion, Brain storm, Communicative skills, Access to documents, Access to educator, Polling, Project/task management, Rosters of multiple types, Calendaring/scheduling 2. Same Time, Different Place: Lecture, Discussion, Workshop, Research, Tutoring, Conference, File sharing, Resources.

3. Different Time, Same Place: Resources, Control.

4. Different Time, Different Place: Message exchange, Review, Assessment, Resources.

Participants of reciprocal educational communication include universities, educators, students. In its turn, a student's collaboration environment includes: 1) Students from University, 2) Teaching staff of University, 3) Administrative staff, 4) Experts, 5) Peers, 6) Tutors (MOOC), 7) Family, 6) Employers [12, p. 357].

In the educational sphere, according to our estimations, the result of the COVID-19 pandemic development was the need to take quick action in order to achieve such desirable results: 1) to adapt the existent educational scenarios to digital, remote and blended communicative formats; 2) to boost information and communication technology competence and digital literacy of all participants of the educational process.

The study aims to identify, among other parameters, challenges for actual and underdeveloped skills (hard, technical and communicative), that participants of the educational process encountered through Final Qualification Assessment in programs of Oriental Languages.

The study **design** included the following elements:

- 1. Finale Qualification Assessment activity profiling;
- 2. The online survey method [4] applied to assess The Final Qualification Assessment for Oriental languages programs, performed in digital and blended format;
- 3. Final Qualification Assessment ICT tools efficiency ranking. Namely, communication as an educational activity ranking, implemented via various types of ICT tools.

According to the Law of Ukraine "On Higher Education" [10], the format of state certification of students is defined by the state standards of education and is reflected in the curricula of the Free Economic Zone. Usually state certification has two forms:

1) State exam; 2) Defense (viva) of qualification (bachelor's) paper.

In the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown all elements of the Final Qualification Assessment at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University for Oriental Languages programs have been transformed to the digital, remote or blended format with the use of ICT tools.

The qualification assessment regimen was adapted to digital format as a framework (a legal procedure that results in the degree confirmation of a student), the string of consecutive activities according to the legal procedure described in the profile above, the "ritual" scenario (and experience for the student that is emotionally uplifting and somber in nature, connects with the traditions of the university culture worldwide).

According to the law mandate, the following Qualification Assessment activities for Oriental languages programs at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv university have been transferred to digital remote mode: State exam conduct (introduction, oral answers, grading, discussion, results); State Exam card selection; State Exam assessment; State Exam results declaration and appeal; Bachelor's project submission; Bachelor's project review; Bachelor's project assessment; Bachelor's project results declaration and appeal.

Information and Communication Tools for Final Qualification Assessment in Oriental Languages: Survey study. Based on the activity profile (Final Qualification Assessment) a survey was conducted among the participants of the Final Qualification Assessment at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv University Foreign Oriental languages programs (Mandarin Chinese, Japanese major, English minor) in order to assess the efficiency of qualification assessment transfer into digital format via various ICT tools employed.

The survey comprised of 12 questions total (multiple choice and scoring), divided into such categories: 1) questions on overall communicative experiences of Final Qualification Assessment participants in all procedures, conducted via ICT tools; 2) questions on digital literacy skills, required of Final Qualification Assessment participants; 3) questions on soft communicative skills, required of Final Qualification Assessment participants; 4) questions, aimed to conduct Efficiency Ranking [6, 12] of most widely used Final Qualification Assessment ICT tools.

The following participants of the digital Final Qualification Assessment were respondents of the survey: students of senior year of bachelor's program; assessment board members; faculty members (who took part in digital qualification assessment preparation and conduct); Bachelor project referees and supervisors.

Respondents of all groups took part in the survey (Figure 1) – 34 total. The choice of respondent groups corresponded to the variation or similarity of tasks, performed throughout Final Qualification Assessment by representatives of Oriental languages programs and, subsequently, the variation and similarity of ICT tools used.

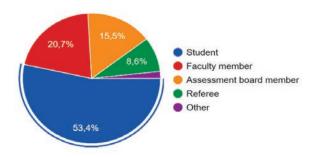


Fig. 1. Respondent status in digital qualification assessment

Respondents of all groups spanned the Oriental Language Bachelor's programs in proportional distribution measures:

- − Japanese major program − 47,6%
- Mandarin Chinese major program 52,4%

The overall digital qualification assessment experience on the scale of 1 to 5 was defined as mostly agreeable (4) by 50% of respondents, most agreeable (5) by 11% of respondents and less agreeable (3) by 27% of respondents across foreign language programs surveyed. Digital activities got overall rankings 4-2 from respondents of Oriental languages programs.

The respondents identified all the ICT digital tools that they have to employ the most in digital qualification assessment process (Figure 2). The highest scoring ICT tools by all the groups of respondents of Oriental language programs were:

- e-mail (93% of respondents),
- Google services (76% of respondents),
- videoconferencing services (84% of respondents),
  - social media platforms (77% of respondents),
- automated testing systems and learning management systems (31% of respondents).

The ranking 1-5 of the ICT tools employed through digital qualification assessment process yields following tools getting the highest scoring (5 – most agreeable) among all ICT tools identified and used: email services; google forms; Zoom video conferencing services; screen sharing services; Microsoft Office tool-kit and various social media platforms.

The respondents identified the following most prominent activities across all ICT tools used throughout the digital qualification assessment process (Figure 3): Communication (synchronous); Communication (asynchronous); Collaboration; Information/file sharing; Summative assessment; Formative assessment; Peer review; Presentation; Speech quality assessment; Brainstorming.

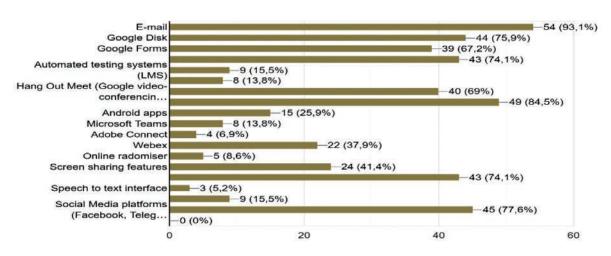


Fig. 2. ICT tools identification through the digital qualification assessment

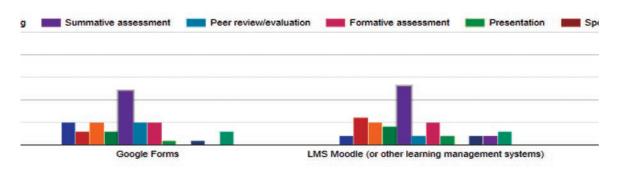


Fig. 3. ICT tools used throughout the digital qualification assessment. Sample evaluation card

For respondents of Oriental languages programs Speech quality assessment features as prominent as Information sharing across identified ICT tools (Figure 4). The following is inferred as being due to the phonetical and tonal features of Mandarin Chinese and Japanese languages being essential to meaning comprehension and decoding, which is hard to recreate and evaluate in a digital communicative environment.

Information sharing and presentation are considered prominent for such types of tools as email, Google services, Microsoft Office Toolkit. Both synchronous and asynchronous communication and collaboration is distributed proportionally among email services, learning management systems and various video conference services.

The tools that feature summative assessment as a prominent activity are Google forms and LMS Moodle. Formative assessment as a type of activity features but does not dominate evaluation of ICT tools used qualification assessment process.

The following technical and user communication requirements, most prominent for information communication/digital tools employed throughout

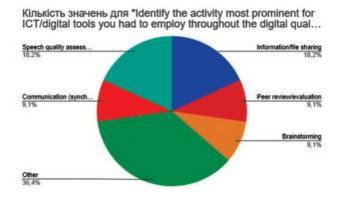


Fig. 4. Activities prominent for ICT tools in Finale Qualification Assessment. Oriental languages program

the digital qualification assessment process were identified (Figure 5): Bandwidth; Specialized software; Specialized hardware (webcam, mic, PC type etc.); Intuitive interface; Advanced digital literacy; Intermediate digital literacy; Elementary digital literacy; Customized training before use.

Respondents of the Oriental languages program have assessed the prominent information communication tools requirements (Figure 6) being Intuitive interface (31,8%), elementary digital literacy (31,8) and bandwidth and advanced digital literacy (9,1).

It bears pointing out, that according to the status criterion in Final Qualification Assessment, different technical requirements are attributed importance by different respondents, regardless of the foreign language program (Figure 7 and Figure 8).

As can be seen on Fig. 7, students rate Intuitive interface (44,4%) and Elementary digital literacy (25.9%) as highest necessary requirements. Assessment board members, Faculty members and referees (Fig. 9) rate Advanced Digital Literacy (16,7%) and Intermediate Digital Literacy (12,5%) as proportionally prominent requirements to engage with the technical interface of ICT tools for Final qualification assessment. Intuitive interface ranks significantly lower as a requirement (12,5%) with Faculty and Staff than it does with students (average age 21-22 y.o.) Such distribution of technical requirement assessment testifies to the phenomenon of digital divide [16], pervasive in various areas educational communicative activities the framework of Covid-19 lockdown.

Across various ICT tools for the digital qualification assessment process the following skills and competences most widely implemented and practiced, drawn from various relevant 21<sup>st</sup> century skills frameworks [3; 5; 8; 9; 15; 17] have been identified: Communication; Collaboration; Team work; Digital literacy; Emotional intellect; Interdisciplinary skills; Critical thinking; Leadership;

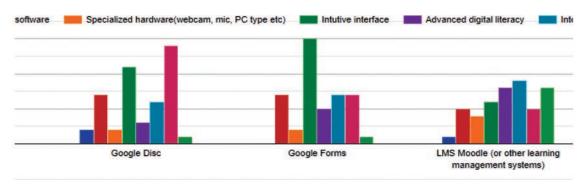


Fig. 5. Technical and user requirements, for ICT tools digital qualification assessment process

Кількість значень для "Identify the technical requirements most prominent for ICT/digital tools you had to employ

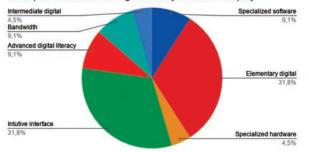


Fig. 6. Technical and user requirements, for ICT tools digital qualification assessment process for Oriental languages program

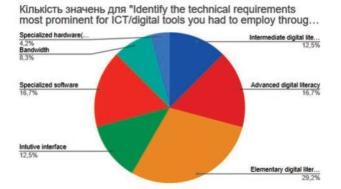


Fig. 8. Technical and user requirements, for ICT tools digital qualification assessment process for Assessment board members, Faculty members and referees

Flexibility and Adaptability; Decision making; Learning and Innovation skills.

Different priorities in soft skills are identified for participants of digital Qualification assessment of Oriental languages program (Figure 9).

Communication is identified as an overwhelmingly important soft skill for fulfilling Final Qualification Assessment via digital format (57,9% of respondents of Oriental languages programs). Collaboration

Кількість значень для "Identify the technical requirements most prominent for ICT/digital tools you had to employ throug...

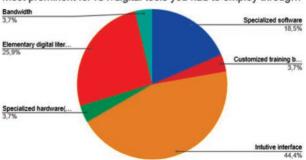


Fig. 7. Technical and user requirements, for ICT tools digital qualification assessment process for students

Кількість значень для "Identify soft skills most prominent for ICT/digital tools you had to employ throughout the digital qual...

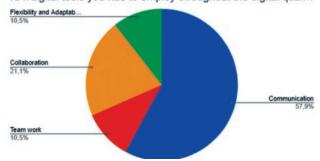


Fig. 9. Soft skills for ICT/digital tools in digital qualification assessment process for Oriental languages program

as a skill ranks proportionally second (21,1% of respondents of Oriental languages programs).

Respondents of Oriental languages programs distribute such additional soft skills of communicative nature as Team Work (10,5%) and Flexibility/ Adaptability (10,5%) as proportionately activated in digital Final Qualification Assessment.

Communication and collaboration rank as a type of skills most widely applied by respondents

of all Oriental language programs for the use of such instruments as email, Google services, video conferencing services and social Media platforms. Team work ranks second most prominent skill employed via the use of Google disk, learning management systems and video conferencing services. Team work and flexibility feature as top 5 priority skills among respondents of the Oriental languages program.

Relevance is attributed to learning and Innovation skills in the use of such ICT tools as a learning management system (ranking second after interdisciplinary skills), automated Testing System (offline, online and cloud based), Android apps and Microsoft Office tools. Creativity as a skill ranks 3rd in the use of Google services and ranks 1st in the use of Microsoft Office tools.

The Final Qualification Assessment information communication tools were subjected to Customer Satisfaction Evaluation Ranking [5; 6; 13]. This ranking method features the efficiency of ICT tools per activity as the main criterion. The CSER, as applied to various types of ICT tools in education process was approbated through the run of the IRNet framework project [12; 13], funded by the People Programme (Marie Curie Actions) of the European Union's Seventh Framework FP7/2007-2013/.

For the ranking purpose the Final Qualification Assessment ICT tools were divided into 4 groups according to technical types and communicative purpose in the Final Qualification Assessment process:

- 1. Google cloud services (Google Disc, Google Forms, G-mail);
- 2. Video conferencing services (Google Meet, Zoom, Webex);
- 3. Learning management systems (LMS Moodle, Automated testing systems);
  - 4. Microsoft Office tools (Word, PPoint, Excel).

All respondents had to rank the activity importance 1-5 (1 = least prominent for the use of a tool type, 5 = most prominent for the use of a tool type) for the selected ICT tools type used. The activities, scored for each type of ICT tool for Final Qualification Assessment were presented in the following order: Communication (synchronous); Communication (asynchronous); Collaboration; Information/file sharing; Summative assessment; Formative assessment; Peer review; Presentation; Speech quality assessment; Brainstorming.

Figures 10–13 below exemplify the discrepancy in ranking score for one activity type – Communication (synchronous) – across all types of ICT tools for Final Qualification Assessment.

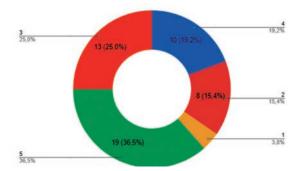


Fig. 10. Evaluation of Tool Type 1 (Google Disc, Google Forms, G-mail). Sample ranking score card for Communication (synchronous)

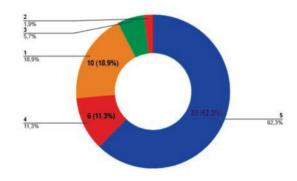


Fig. 11. Evaluation of Tool Type 2 (Google Meet, Zoom, Webex). Sample ranking score card for Communication (synchronous)

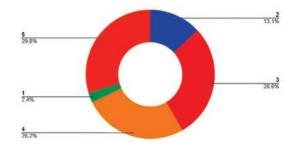


Fig. 12. Evaluation of Tool Type 3 (LMS Moodle, Automated testing systems). Sample ranking score card for Communication (synchronous)



Fig. 13. Evaluation of Tool Type 4 (Word, PPoint, Excel). Sample ranking score card for Communication (synchronous)

As apparent, Video conferencing tools and platforms (Google Meet, Zoom, Webex) score the highest efficiency ranking for synchronous communication (62.5% for top score 5), but get a surprising ratio of lowest score as well (18.9%)

for lowest score 1). Learning management systems (29.8% for top score 1) and Google services (25%) get a proportional highest score 5 for efficiency in Synchronous communication in the framework of Final Qualification assessment across Oriental languages programs. This sample ranking testifies to the following suppositions: a) the specificity of ICT use for transference of Final Qualification assessment into digital mode for foreign languages programs that may not be encountered outside of this activity framework; b) the specificity of digital literacy, featured by participants of Final Qualification assessment for foreign languages programs.

Conclusions. All procedures and scenarios of the Final Qualification Assessment activities for foreign languages at Borys Grinchenko Kyiv university have been successfully transferred to digital communicative remote format with the use of various sets of ICT tools in the framework of the COVID-19 pandemic adjustments. This transference could serve as a best practice model for other universities of Ukraine and countries of Europe and Asia both as an adaptable measure for prolonged lockdown and as a way to further advance of blended learning and further digitalization and democratization of educational process.

The survey results conducted among all groups of participants of Final Qualification Assessment for Oriental foreign languages have yielded representative data as to the efficiency of various ICT tools implementation for rigorous communicative assessment procedure scenario. Microsoft Office toolkit ranks highest in efficiency among respondents, presumably, due to the least digital literacy level adjustments required of users at a short notice to carry out the full spectrum of necessary activities for Final Qualification Assessment.

Various levels of digital literacy have been identified in the survey. *Advanced digital literacy* as the requirement for qualification assessment efficiency is attributed to such information communication instruments as learning management systems,

Microsoft Office toolkit and social media platforms. *Intermediate digital literacy* is required predominantly for such information communication instruments as Microsoft Office Toolkit, screen sharing interface, online randomizer, automated testing system, learning management system. Elementary digital literacy level is assessed as dominant for such communication tools as email, google disc, video conferencing, speech to text interfaces and social media platforms. Across the board, implementation of Final Qualification Assessment via various ICT tools requires of participants of educational process elementary to intermediate digital literacy. There's no significant discrepancy in digital literacy and ICT competence requirements between Final Qualification Assessment participants of Mandarin and Japanese languages program.

Communication, collaboration and team work are evaluated as crucial soft skills in various combinations within the scenario of digital Final Qualification Assessment. This results corroborate correspondence between communicative the competence and ICT competence components, adapted for Liberal Arts. Namely, the following components prove indispensable for all participants of Final Qualification Assessment in digital format: participation in group ICT initiatives, creating e-learning tasks, system using of ICT, presentation to the community the results of one's own research activities through the use of ICT.

The survey results will be furthered and elaborated in assessment of ICT tools efficiency and digital skills adaptability for separate groups of Final Qualification Assessment (students of foreign languages programs, Assessment board members, staff members, reviewers) according to roles and tasks performed in communication, as well as according to age and entry digital literacy level (the distinction in efficiency assessment among digital natives and digital immigrants). The perspective of the study is in corresponding survey of digital qualification assessment experiences of students and faculty members of Asian (Oriental) countries and countries of Europe.

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# Семеніст І. В., Махачашвілі Р. К. ЦИФРОВА КОМУНІКАЦІЯ ТА ІНФОРМАЦІЙНО-КОМУНІКАТИВНІ ІНСТРУМЕНТИ ДЛЯ ПІДСУМКОВОГО КВАЛІФІКАЦІЙНОГО ОЦІНЮВАННЯ У ПРОГРАМАХ ЗІ СХІДНИХ МОВ

Глобальна пандемія та карантинні заходи та обмеження створили виклик розвитку комунікативних навичок у структурі та процедурі підсумкового оцінювання в університетах. Кваліфікаційне оцінювання навчальних програм, з іноземних мов зокрема, є регламентованою процедурою, що включає різні комунікативні етапи (усні та письмові іспити, захист підсумкового дипломного проєкту, внутрішнє та зовнішнє рецензування), які зумовлюють необхідність випрацювання комплексних навичок комунікації та використання масиву цільових інформаційно-комунікативних інструментів. Мета нашого дослідження – проаналізувати практику цифрового кваліфікаційного оцінювання Київського університету імені Бориса Грінченка для студентів навчальних програм зі східних (китайська, японська) мов, застосованих у 2020 році через карантинні заходи. В освітній сфері результатом розвитку пандемії COVID-19 стала необхідність швидко вжити заходів для досягнення таких бажаних результатів: 1) адаптувати освітні сценарії до цифрових, віддалених та змішаних комунікативних форматів; 2) підвищити компетентність у галузі інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій та цифрову грамотність усіх учасників навчального процесу. Дослідження має на меті виявити різні групи прикладних цифрових навичок та комунікативних навичок, які використовуються в процесі кваліфікаційного оцінювання усіма учасниками (студентами, викладачами та суддями). У мережевому суспільстві початку ХХІ століття структуровані методи співпраці спонукають до самоаналізу поведінки та комунікації. Опитування та аналіз різних інструментів інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій використовується для трансляції практик кваліфікаційного оцінювання з реального життя в змішаний онлайн-формат. Надано порівняльні результати ефективності ІКТ-інструментів та практики комунікативної діяльності для респондентів програм зі східних мов. Спілкування, співпраця та робота в команді оцінюються як найважливіші м'які навички в різних поєднаннях в рамках сценарію цифрового підсумкового кваліфікаційного оцінювання. Здійснення підсумкового кваліфікаційного оцінювання за допомогою різних інформаційно-комунікаційних інструментів вимагає від учасників навчального процесу рівня цифрової грамотності від елементарного до середнього. Ці результати підтверджують відповідність комунікативної компетенції та компонентів компетентності з цифрових технологій, адаптованих для спеціальностей гуманітарного профілю.

**Ключові слова:** ІКТ-інструменти та практики в освіті, цифрова комунікація, підсумкове кваліфікаційне оцінювання, цифрова грамотність, змішане навчання.