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USING INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES IN CAREER GUIDANCE FOR GENERAL EDUCATION SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract: *this article discusses the importance and possibilities of using information and communication technologies (ICT) in guiding general education school students toward professional orientation. It analyzes the role of electronic platforms, virtual career selection tests, online counseling systems, and multimedia resources in developing students' professional interests. Practical recommendations are also provided to enhance the effectiveness of career guidance through ICT tools.*

Keywords: *career guidance, information and communication technologies, e-learning, online platform, student, professional orientation, digital technology.*

INTRODUCTION

Global informatization is one of the main trends in the development of 21st-century society. Due to the rapid growth of information and communication technologies (ICT), a new information environment emerges and the information society takes shape. In this context, the education system must respond effectively to new challenges and prepare the younger generation for choosing their professional careers. Various technologies (including ICT) and teaching methods can be used in career guidance activities.

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Rapidly developing computer technologies and the Internet have become real resources for updating the forms and principles of career guidance work. By using the Internet, people can comprehensively address issues related to self-determination. Here, an individual can take a career guidance test to identify their abilities and personal qualities, receive recommendations on suitable professions, and explore websites containing descriptions of these professions.

Websites that provide information about educational institutions, admission requirements, and training features, as well as those that offer institutional rankings and assess the demand for their graduates, are of particular importance.

The most visited and interesting career-oriented online resources include:

- **https://proforientator.ru/** – a site containing numerous thematic articles on career choice, as well as descriptions of many professions, taking into account their relevance in the modern labor market.
- **https://www.ucheba.ru/** – a website with up-to-date information about the best universities in Russia, education abroad, and educational institution rankings.
- **www.examen.ru** – a database for educational institutions providing information on entrance exams, preparatory courses, specializations, as well as publications, regulations, and news related to higher education.
- **http://www.moeobrazovanie.ru/** – a useful website for both students and teachers.

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Choosing a profession is one of the most important decisions in life. How can one avoid mistakes in choosing a career? Where can one get career guidance advice? Which profession is the most suitable? A student can find answers to these and other questions in a virtual career guidance office.

The virtual career guidance office is a new form of organizing career guidance activities. It is created as an interactive communication platform on the website of an educational institution and serves as an electronic information resource. The work of the virtual office aims to activate students' motivation, develop their desire to make independent career choices based on their abilities, and understand the prospects of their professional paths.

In addition to electronic resources and software, ICT enables the use of new tools in career guidance, such as gamification.

Gamification is a modern educational trend that involves engaging students through game-based activities, allowing them to model their future. This approach is clear and engaging for the "digital generation." In a game-like environment, by completing various tasks and tests, students become familiar with the world of professions, their descriptions, and related universities in a more interesting way.

Thus, ICT can complement traditional forms of educational activity, such as virtual excursions to production enterprises or participation in online conferences with company leaders or successful entrepreneurs. Such experiences help elevate learning to a qualitatively new level by fully immersing students in the cognitive process. The result of a virtual excursion is a sense of full participation in

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real events, clearer understanding of the material, and the ability to assess knowledge through tests.

New educational technologies, including ICT, are constantly being introduced and improved in the education system. ICT is increasingly penetrating various areas of educational activity every day. This is facilitated by external factors such as the widespread informatization of society and the need to train specialists accordingly, as well as internal factors such as the distribution of modern computer technologies and software in educational institutions, the adoption of state and international programs for informatization of education, and the accumulation of necessary experience in this field.

In most cases, the use of informatization tools helps to intensify teachers' work and positively affects the efficiency of students' learning.

One of the ICT-based tools applicable in education is the specialized educational web forum, where participants can obtain information on a specific topic and exchange experiences. This form is actively used by methodologists of career guidance and post-internship support centers.

To address issues of career guidance for students and professional development for teachers, career guidance specialists at various educational organizations annually conduct regional web forums for students, children from different types of educational institutions, and children deprived of parental care under the theme "Choosing a Profession — Choosing My Future."

A child's entry into the social world is impossible without mastering initial social concepts, including familiarity with professions. Everything in a person's life, including career orientation, begins in childhood. The relevance of early

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career guidance for preschool children is determined by the fact that preschool age is the most favorable period for developing an interest in professions. It allows forming an active interest in various types of work.

The main difficulty of career guidance is that a large part of this work cannot be directly observed. ICT helps to model various professional situations that cannot be reproduced in a kindergarten setting. For example, preschoolers cannot directly observe the work processes at a car factory or a shoe production plant. Therefore, using ICT in the educational process is recommended to form ideas about different professions among students. This not only makes the career guidance process more engaging but also helps overcome intellectual passivity in the classroom.

The following ICT tools can be used to develop early career orientation in students:

- **Multimedia presentations.** These materials attract children's attention, activate their visual and auditory perception, and serve as an excellent tool for demonstrating the diversity of professions. Multimedia-based lessons increase the speed of information transfer, improve understanding, and contribute to the development of all forms of thinking.
- **Virtual excursions.** With virtual excursions, children can learn about professions and workplaces in enterprises, factories, and organizations. Such excursions create the illusion of a real trip. By observing the conditions and tools of a specific profession, children apply their knowledge in independent activities, making role-playing games richer and more effective. The search method plays a major role in activating students'

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activity during virtual excursions. Children not only get acquainted with professions but also actively search for information. This can be achieved by asking problem-based questions or assigning creative tasks before the excursion. Virtual excursions make memorization easier, make the learning process more dynamic and engaging, immerse students in a specific environment, and help form vivid and lasting ideas.

- **Interactive games.** These help develop career orientation skills in preschool children. They allow information to be presented playfully on a screen, which evokes great interest among children because it corresponds to their primary activity — play. The use of animation effects enhances children's engagement with the material. Such games increase students' enthusiasm for solving problems, foster curiosity, and develop cognitive abilities such as theoretical thinking, the ability to predict outcomes, and design-based reasoning.

The advantage of using ICT in early career guidance lies in the availability of relevant didactic materials, opportunities for repetition, visual clarity, and the integration of interactive tasks.

During such lessons, it is important not only to familiarize students with the world of professions but also to help them connect their interests and hobbies with possible career paths. The more professions a child "tries," the more knowledge they gain and the better they can assess their own abilities.

Thus, the use of information technologies in career guidance work with secondary school students significantly enriches the educational process, enhances its quality and effectiveness, and renews its content.

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Based on the objectives of career guidance work, analysis of scientific and pedagogical literature, and results of practical activities, the following key didactic principles can be highlighted: scientific approach in education; alignment of career guidance content and organization with modern economic needs; students' consciousness and activity; visualization; systematization, consistency, and complexity; retention of acquired knowledge; and individual approach.

Overall, many factors influence the effectiveness of the career guidance process, including:

- individual psychological characteristics of students;
- students' general education level and worldview;
- adherence to didactic principles of teaching;
- teachers' professional competence and methodological skills;
- availability of sufficient technical teaching tools;
- planning and control of career guidance activities;
- use of new information technologies.

Taking the above into account, it is clear that a teacher's professional activity has its own specific features and requires a high level of qualification in the field of information and communication technologies. This qualification implies that the teacher knows how to use modern technical tools (such as computers, audio and video devices), understands methods of working with computer technologies, and is able to apply them effectively in professional activities.

CONCLUSION

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In conclusion, it should be noted that the importance of mobile applications for education is growing not only because of the availability and attractiveness of new technologies, but also due to the opportunities they provide: collaborative work on assignments among students, learning outside the classroom, and enabling everyone to speak and participate (rather than simply raising a hand).

For educational institutions, the use of mobile applications makes it possible to:

- facilitate foreign language learning for future IT specialists through mobile apps;
- create tests for teaching foreign languages;
- develop exercises for foreign language learning;
- use mobile devices as personal media libraries containing educational, methodological, and reference materials;
- connect mobile devices to institutional networks for educational and research purposes.

When discussing mobile applications for education, it is essential to highlight their integration with cloud services that serve as unified information platforms for storing data about students, teachers, and educational performance indicators. At present, there are many types of mobile applications — from alphabet-learning tools for children to self-study, communication, and mobile learning apps.

Thus, it should be emphasized that the widespread use of mobile technologies is driving constant changes in the field of education. Using mobile devices in the learning process is one of the effective ways to increase learning

motivation. These devices help fulfill fundamental human needs — communication, learning, and self-development. Integrating them into the educational process, especially for independent foreign language learning, significantly enhances learning efficiency.

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