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DEVELOPMENT OF DIGITAL ETIQUETTE FOR EFFECTIVE INTERACTION BETWEEN 1ST YEAR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS: STRATEGIES FOR COOPERATION IN THE ERA OF DIGITALIZATION

Abstract: This article explores the importance of developing digital etiquette for effective interaction between 1st year students and their teacher in the digital age. The article uses a survey method using the Google disk platform, with the help of this research method, the author manages to determine the level of understanding by applicants of the «Concept of digital etiquette». The authors also propose rules of cooperation that will help participants successfully interact in an educational environment where digital technologies are playing an increasingly important role. To fully disclose the concepts of «Digital etiquette», the authors conduct a coaching session for applicants. As part of the research of this article, a literary analysis on the topic under study was carried out.

The authors emphasize that the Internet plays a central role in the daily lives of many people, is used to search for information, watch videos, read news, communicate on social networks and messengers, make purchases, listen to music, play games and communicate via mobile phones, tablets or computers. The article reveals the value and also provides recommendations for improving digital etiquette between students and their teachers, where the key element of successful work in modern education is the online environment.

Keywords: online environment, teacher, applicant, digital etiquette, rules, internet, social networks.

Introduction

People born in the digital age rely heavily on the Internet to access information and interact. According to the report of the innovative digital hub Wonder Digital, more than 17.3 million of the 19.5 million population use the Internet in Kazakhstan, which is approximately 89.2% penetration. According to the portrait of Internet users in Kazakhstan, 48% are men, 52% are women; 41% aged 20 to 41 years, 29% aged 6 to 19 years.

The Internet plays a central role in the daily lives of many people, it is used to search for information, watch videos, read news, communicate on social networks and messengers, make purchases, listen to music, play games and communicate via mobile phones, tablets or computers. Online education contributed to the spread of the Internet among these groups both during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Digital etiquette regulates the interaction between users in a digital environment, aimed at maintaining non-aggressive, polite, effective, comfortable and appropriate communication. The origin of digital etiquette is usually associated with the concept of «netiquette», which appeared in the environment of Fidonet echo conferences in the mid-1980s.

This type of etiquette is also known as Internet etiquette or network etiquette. These are not mandatory legal norms, but recommendations on how to behave on the Internet. Digital etiquette is mainly used when communicating with strangers in the online space. The rules of digital etiquette can vary greatly depending on the specific platform and its participants. Usually, the owner of a website or communication application determines the types and

amounts of digital etiquette. They are also responsible for ensuring compliance with these rules and punishing violations of them.

When interacting in an online environment, it is important to remember that communication takes place with real people, not just with devices. Just like in real life, there are certain norms of behavior on the Internet. Therefore, observing network etiquette plays an important role in preventing negative consequences.

However, excessive time spent on the Internet can have a negative impact on health. Insufficient digital literacy and ignorance of the rules of online behavior have led to problems such as cybercrime, cyberbullying, leakage of confidential information and Internet addiction.

The object of the study is students of the 1st year due to the fact that these are those who have just acquired the status of a «university student» and they have at least 4 years of undergraduate studies ahead of them, and good knowledge in the field of digital etiquette is necessary for effective communication with teachers, groupmates, fellow students and the university administration.

The purpose of this study is to identify the level of digital etiquette among 1st-year students, as well as to suggest ways to improve cooperation between students and teachers in the era of digitalization.

Participants. The empirical basis of the study was made up of students of pedagogical and creative specialties of the 1st year of the Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University and the Kazakh National University of Arts in the amount of 119 students.

Research methods and organization

Research methods: theoretical methods - analysis, comparison, citation, generalization. We also conducted an incoming and final survey on the Google disk platform for 1st year students.

Research in the field of digital etiquette is constantly growing and may become a key area of research in the field of human-computer interaction. Despite the fact that the concept of digital etiquette includes laws, rules and technological aspects, we propose to conceptualize it as digital social norms that regulate interactions carried out using digital technologies. In Figure one, one can clearly see how the number of scientific articles published in the Scopus database has been increasing over the past 10 years.

Figure 1
Number of scientific articles on digital etiquette in the Scopus database (2013-2024)
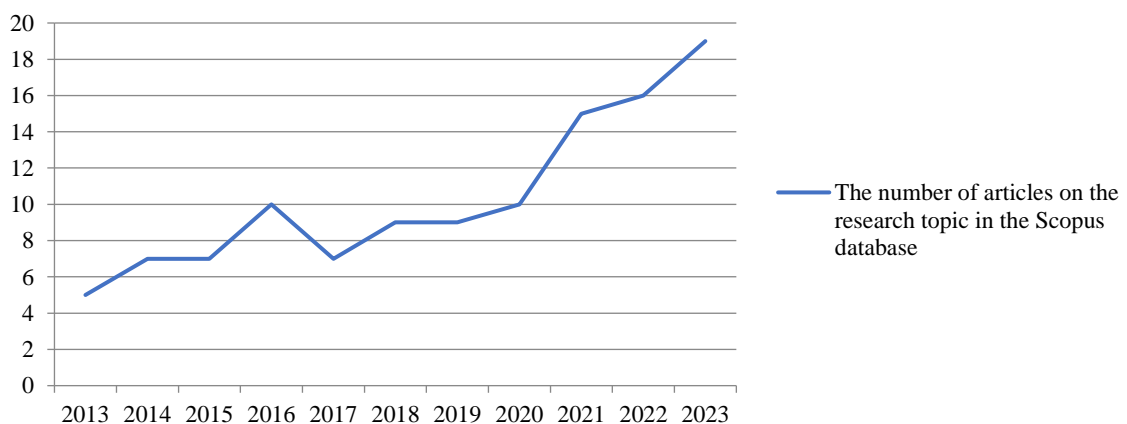
It is impossible to exclude digital technologies from the lives of the younger generation in order to reduce risk. As research by Krutka & Carpenter (2017) indicates, people in this age group were born and raised in the era of information technology, which is the driving force of

our globalized society. A group of scientists led by Martin (2022) recommends teaching the younger generation to use the Internet wisely. The concept of digital citizenship reflects the norms of responsible use of digital technologies. Mangkhang & Kaewpanya (2021) agree with this statement, emphasizing that appropriate education is required so that students are aware of the opportunities and threats associated with the digital world and understand their rights and responsibilities on the Internet.

Etiquette is the application of appropriate norms of behavior in various situations as a manifestation of politeness. As noted by Kongjan and colleagues, this is a system of social practices and relationships between people, approved and passed on to the next generations in the form of accepted behaviors (Kongjan et al., 2021). Etiquette is part of a culture that can evolve over time, as well as adapt to changes in society, including the post-digital era. Heitmayer & Lahlou (2021) point out that in recent years, for most people, interaction using digital technologies has become more common than face-to-face communication.

According to Mangkhang &Kaewpanya (2021) digital etiquette is an important social norm that needs to be introduced into the consciousness of citizens of the new social reality. They emphasize that living in a hybrid world of digital citizens can lead to confusion in the application of digital etiquette and skills between offline and online spheres, so it is important that educators help citizens develop as high-quality digital personalities and contribute to the creation of a safe and constructive society in the future. It is also important to conform to the social norm of interaction, which includes respect for the privacy of others and the ability to choose the right time for communication. For example, in the modern world, communication has become extremely convenient, but despite this, it is important to be able to choose the right time for contacts, which contributes to a more effective use of communication technologies.

According to Ribble (2021), digital etiquette is the foundation of digital citizenship, describing «an electronic standard of behavior or procedures related to the process of thinking about others when using digital devices». This type of etiquette defines the use of technology and includes positive attitudes and actions aimed at reducing the number of offenses in cyberspace. People with digital literacy are ready to address issues such as cyberbullying, cybersecurity, and digital footprints. Therefore, literacy in the field of digital etiquette should become a priority in the education of young people, including students of higher educational institutions.

According to researchers Heitmayer & Lahlou (2021) and their colleagues, digital etiquette is not just a derivative of traditional rules of behavior. It develops independently, forming new norms of interpersonal communication specific to the digital environment. These norms are also beginning to have an impact on communication outside the digital space, given the increasing intensity and directness of our online interactions. In fact, in recent years, online communication has become more common for many people than face-to-face meetings.

As researches by Ponce et al. (2022), Soler-Costa et al. (2021) indicate, digital etiquette is often associated with the development of specific rules, such as determining the time interval for responding to an email, the possibility of adding an organization's head to friends on Instagram, or expectations regarding clothing or the background of a video call when working remotely.

In a study conducted by Zheng (2024) and co-authors, an analysis of the current state of digital literacy education in China is presented, which notes its lagging behind developed countries. The practice of teaching digital literacy has not yet become widespread in primary schools, and research in the field of digital etiquette is not conducted thoroughly enough. Existing content is usually presented in the form of academic lectures, thematic classes, or educational materials focused on safety aspects, which limits learning and causes low motivation and interest on the part of students. Therefore, offering Chinese students in the field of digital literacy, especially with a focus on digital ethics, seems to be a difficult task. As one

of the solutions, they developed and implemented a course in one of the schools in China based on digital games, which aims to develop students' skills in the field of digital etiquette in order to improve their understanding and behavior on the Internet. It is believed that when students show politeness in their speech on social networks and learn to respond effectively to verbal violence in online games through the use of suggested games, they not only improve their awareness of digital etiquette, but also form positive behavior in an online environment. However, such a study requires more detailed study in the future.

Digital etiquette, reflecting the specifics of Web 3.0, covers the following areas: communication on the web (social networks, messengers, e-mail); user interaction with modern gadgets (smartphones, tablets, etc.); self-presentation in the virtual space of digital reality.

Students in higher education institutions at the bachelor's level are people aged about 17 to 25 years old, who make up the first generation, who have been actively using the Internet and digital technologies since childhood. Data collection took place between January and February 2024 using the Google disk platform. With the help of this platform, 119 students of pedagogical and creative specialties of the 1st year of the Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University and the Kazakh National University of Arts took part in the survey «How well do you know digital etiquette?». The survey consisted of 13 questions, where the main goal was to determine the level of knowledge of the theoretical foundations of digital etiquette.

To the question «Are you familiar with the concept like «Digital etiquette?» 93 (78.2%) of respondents replied that they are familiar, but 26 (21.8%) replied that they do not know what digital etiquette is and may be hearing it for the first time. That is, there is a need to familiarize students of the 1st year with this concept (Figure 2).

Figure 2
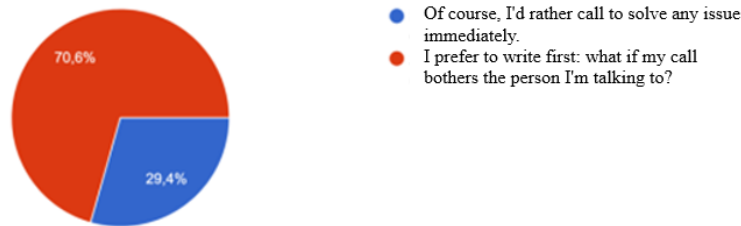*Results of the question about knowledge of the concept of «Digital Etiquette»*
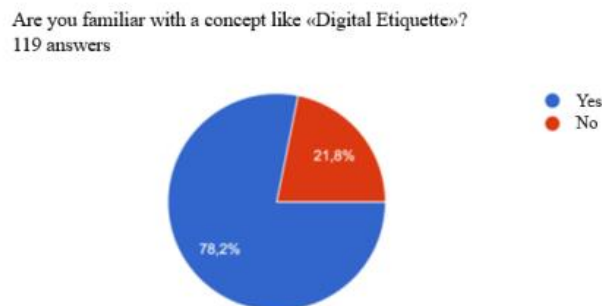
84 respondents (70.6%) prefer to write on Whatsapp before calling a teacher, so as not to bother them once again. However, 35 students (29.4%) prefer to call in order to immediately get an answer to their question (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Results of the question about students' preferences when contacting a teacher in an online environment

When is the option of contacting the teacher preferable for you? First write a message on Whatsapp or call straight away?
119 replies

● Of course, I'd rather call to solve any issue immediately.
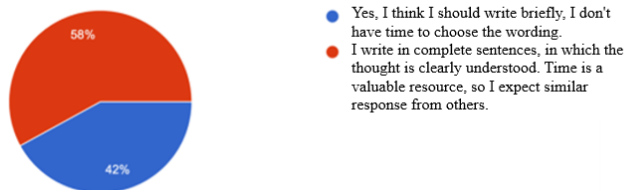● I prefer to write first: what if my call bothers the person I'm talking to?

70,6%
29,4%

69 respondents (58%) prefer to write to the teacher in complete sentences in which the purpose of the appeal is clearly understood, in addition they expect the same answer. On the contrary, 50 first-year students (42%) want to write briefly and divide the message into several small ones (three to five short ones), which does not correspond to etiquette (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Results of the question about the volume of messages when a student contacts a teacher via messenger

Which is your preferred way of communicating with your teacher: sending one big message or breaking it up into how many and making the correspondence more meaningful?
119 answers

● Yes, I think I should write briefly, I don't have time to choose the wording.
● I write in complete sentences, in which the thought is clearly understood. Time is a valuable resource, so I expect similar response from others.

58%
42%

The answers to the question show almost the same result. «What is your opinion about the number of emojis and stickers in messages to the teacher: do you prefer to use them less or do you think that more is better?». 59 respondents (49.6%) replied that emojis and pictures, on the contrary, enrich and make the message interesting. This is the very essence of virtual communication. 60 students (50.4%) agree with the opinion that it is better not to overload the message and observe business ethics in communicating with the teacher.

When asked about sending screenshots, links and videos to the teacher, 82 students (68.9%) replied that they send the information that is relevant to the conversation, as well as explain the nature of this information. 37 respondents (31.1%) replied that they send links with information related to the conversation. And they try to immediately explain what is on this link. The numerous notifications in the messenger are extremely frustrating.

86 students (72.3%) believe that it is advisable to avoid sending screenshots of information that the teacher will have to retype manually. In their opinion, it is necessary to respect and appreciate the time of the interlocutor, that communication should be based on the principles of respect for each other. However, 33 students (27.7%) do not share this opinion, they believe that this is not their problem, since in the digital age, the most important thing is the speed of sending information.
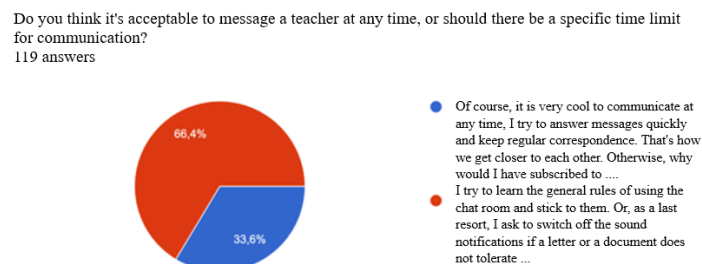
66 students (44.5%) believe that it is very important not to pile up meaningless streams of information when sending a message to a teacher, as this is one of their important rules for environmentally friendly and high-quality communication. If you use this rule, it will become easier and more efficient to work and communicate in a network environment. 53 students (44.5%) have a completely opposite opinion. According to them, during correspondence with the teacher, you can freely move from one topic to another, since this action enriches the conversation, makes it more lively and interesting.

8th question is related to voice messages sent by students to the teacher. 89 students (74.8%) believe that it is better to clarify beforehand whether it will be convenient for the teacher to receive such messages. The main rule of etiquette, including electronic etiquette, is respect and politeness in communication. But we cannot exclude that 30 first-year students (25.2%) believe that it is very convenient to send voice messages to a teacher, since there is no need to spend time composing the text of the message and there is an opportunity to speak quickly.

To question 9, 79 students (66.4%) replied that they try to learn the general rules of use at the very beginning and adhere to them throughout the existence of the chat. However, 40 respondents (33.6%) replied that it is normal for them to write to a teacher at any time to conduct regular correspondence. Thus, in their opinion, this is how the teacher and the student become closer to each other (Figure 5).

Figure 5

Results of the question about the acceptable time to send a message when a student contacts a teacher via messenger

Do you think it's acceptable to message a teacher at any time, or should there be a specific time limit for communication?
119 answers

● Of course, it is very cool to communicate at any time, I try to answer messages quickly and keep regular correspondence. That's how we get closer to each other. Otherwise, why would I have subscribed to ....
● I try to learn the general rules of using the chat room and stick to them. Or, as a last resort, I ask to switch off the sound notifications if a letter or a document does not tolerate ...

More than half, namely 87 students (73.1%) answered 10 questions as follows: they try to adhere to a friendly or more businesslike style in conversation, and that it is very important not to get personal, observing proper boundaries. They consider it appropriate to use phrases like: «Good afternoon!», «Hello», but 32 students (26.9%) have the opposite opinion.

66 respondents (55.5%) believe that a huge number of punctuation marks are perceived as raising the tone and shouting. They try to use the text in all capital letters only in abbreviations. However, with a small difference, 53 of the students (44.5%) believe that they
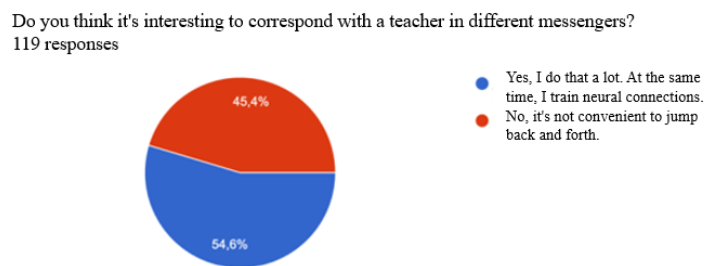
are emotional people, the use of punctuation marks helps them to attract the attention of the interlocutor.

88 respondents (73.9%) try to switch their phone to silent mode in the classroom, they consider this a rule of good manners, as in the theater. In their opinion, this shows respect for the interlocutor. During the lesson, extraneous sounds are very distracting and cause collective negativity of all those present. 31 respondents (26.1%) have a different opinion, they believe that a girlfriend or a friend can call him, and there is a chance that they will not hear the call, and therefore the phone is not put on silent mode.

65 first-year students (54.6%) find it interesting to enter correspondence with a teacher in various messengers, such as Whatsapp and Telegram. 54 out of 119 respondents (45.4%) consider it not convenient to jump from one messenger to another (Figure 6).

Figure 6
Results of the question about communication between a student and a teacher through various messengers

Do you think it's interesting to correspond with a teacher in different messengers?
119 responses

- Yes, I do that a lot. At the same time, I train neural connections.
- No, it's not convenient to jump back and forth.

45,4%
54,6%

Research results and discussion
Based on the results of the survey, we came to the conclusion that 70% of students are familiar with the concept of digital etiquette, but 30% have gaps in some issues. In this regard, for the further development of digital etiquette, we held a coaching session, where we identified the expectations of students, what kind of help they want to receive from a teacher and an adviser.

According to the results of the coaching session, it was revealed that the majority of students believe that the teacher is an employee who can answer any questions about the university 24/7.

Next, using the Grow model, to identify a clear goal for students, where thoughts flow from setting goals to understanding reality. In this model, students consider options for actions that will help them achieve their goals. Ultimately, it is a choice of actions that will be implemented in the near future.

Having heard the expectations of students from the work of a teacher, we jointly developed common standards, which prescribed the norms and rules of digital communication between students and teachers, that is, working hours, information exchange format, etc.

Thirdly, we jointly discussed the use of corporate mail and WhatsApp messenger for effective communication and information exchange between students and the teacher. To achieve this goal, we conducted a training seminar on the topic «Electronic business letter. Rules of writing», and also talked with students using the «open microphone» method about etiquette in WhatsApp. It is very important to learn how to conduct a conversation online correctly, since the tactless behavior of one person can cause a lot of inconvenience to another.

Fourth, to hold regular meetings to assess the level of satisfaction and effectiveness of digital interaction between students and teachers, as well as to identify possible problems and suggestions for their solution. For example, Pizza time is often held in foreign universities, where you can talk more informally, discuss students' concerns with their teachers.

Fifth, to improve work with first-year students during the career guidance week at the very beginning of the academic year, where it is clearly possible to explain and teach ways to effectively cooperate with a teacher.

At the end of the coaching session, a survey control method was conducted with applicants using the Google disk platform to identify the level of mastering of the material provided in the coaching session (Figure 7).

Figure 7
The results of applicants at the end of the coaching session
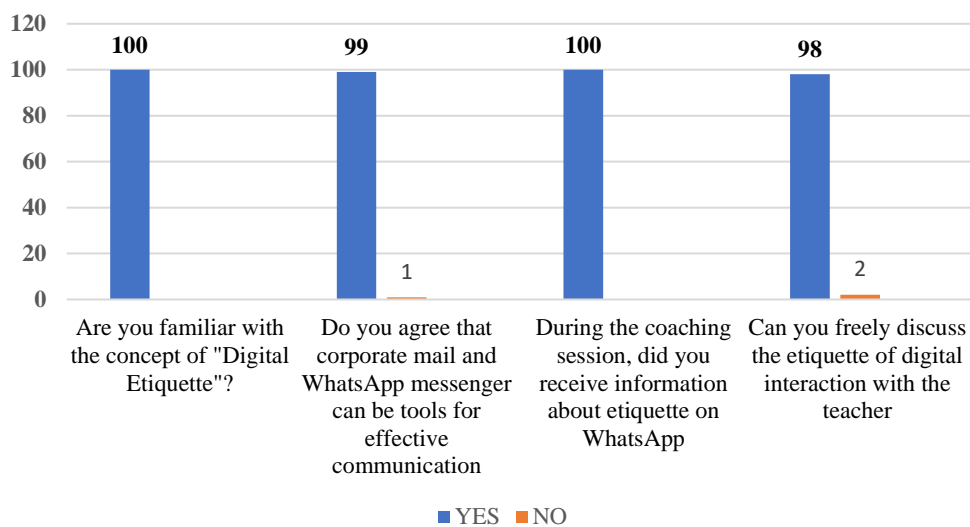
Conclusion

Having analyzed the research method of this article, the authors emphasize the importance of conscious use of digital technologies in modern education. Effective interaction between students and their advisors requires not only technical literacy, but also the development of digital etiquette.

Based on practical research, it can be concluded that successful cooperation in the era of digitalization requires respect, clarity of communication, trust and the ability to effectively manage information in an online environment. The development of digital etiquette is necessary for both students and teachers to ensure high-quality interaction and the achievement of common goals.

Emphasizing the importance of digital etiquette in the educational process, attention should also be paid to the constant updating of knowledge and skills in the field of digital technologies in order to effectively adapt to a changing environment. Only ethical and conscious behavior in the digital space will create favorable conditions for successful learning and development.

Thus, the development of digital etiquette is a key element of modern education, contributing to improving the quality of interaction between students and teachers. Understanding and practicing digital etiquette opens up new opportunities for collaboration and the successful realization of educational goals in the digital age.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no potential conflicts of interest regarding the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

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