

<sup>1</sup>Ivira Aleshkina\*, <sup>1</sup>Olga Novosselova, <sup>1</sup>Raushan Zhunussova, <sup>1</sup>Natalya Bubnova

<sup>1</sup>Manash Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University, Petropavlovsk, Kazakhstan

## **THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL PLATFORMS ON STUDENTS' LEARNING MOTIVATION IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AT UNIVERSITIES IN KAZAKHSTAN**

**Abstract.** The relevance of the study is determined by the need to enhance students' learning motivation in the context of educational digitalization, where traditional methods of teaching English are losing effectiveness under distance and blended learning formats. The aim is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the impact of digital educational platforms on students' motivation in learning English and to identify ways to enhance their effectiveness in Kazakhstan's higher education system. The methodology is based on the analysis of academic literature on digital learning motivation, the systematization of platform characteristics, and elements of comparative and structural-functional approaches to evaluate their didactic potential. Results indicate that interactivity, adaptivity, and timely feedback enhance students' cognitive and emotional engagement, autonomy, and goal orientation. Future research prospects involve exploring the influence of adaptive algorithms and learning analytics on long-term motivation, as well as developing region-specific strategies to overcome infrastructural and social barriers to digital education.

**Keywords:** digital learning environment, motivational strategies, language engagement, gamification, learner autonomy, multimedia content, feedback mechanisms.

### **Introduction**

Modern trends in the digital transformation of education necessitate a reassessment of traditional approaches to teaching foreign languages, including English as the primary means of international academic and professional communication. In the context of the rapid development of information and communication technologies, digital educational platforms gain particular importance; integrating them into the learning process opens up new opportunities to increase learners' motivation, personalize instruction, and foster a sustainable interest in language practice. However, despite the widespread adoption and popularity of these tools, their impact on the motivational aspects of learning remains unclear and warrants further scholarly reflection.

The relevance of this issue stems from the necessity to cultivate students' stable learning motivation in remote and blended learning formats. This need became especially acute in the post-pandemic period. On the one hand, digital platforms offer flexibility and accessibility to educational content; on the other hand, they may lead to cognitive overload, reduced engagement, and superficial assimilation of material in the absence of adequate pedagogical support. In this context, it is crucial to identify the patterns and mechanisms through which digital learning environments influence students' intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, including their academic engagement, goal orientation, and self-esteem.

Addressing this issue has both theoretical and practical significance. From a scientific standpoint, studying the motivational potential of digital educational platforms deepens our understanding of the psychological and pedagogical foundations of digital learning, refining models of motivational interaction in virtual educational environments. Practically, the results of such analysis can be used to develop adaptive English teaching methodologies that enhance the effective use of digital resources in Kazakhstani universities. This, in turn, aligns with the

goals of modernizing higher education in the country, aimed at integration into the global educational space and the development of teachers' digital pedagogical competence.

Research objective is to analyze the influence of digital educational platforms on the level of students' learning motivation in the process of English language acquisition, and to determine ways to enhance their usage effectiveness in Kazakhstani higher education institutions.

To achieve this objective, the following tasks have been set:

- analyze the potential of digital educational platforms in shaping students' cognitive and emotional engagement in English language learning;
- identify the main components of learning motivation and uncover the barriers to digital participation in language instruction;
- formulate recommendations for strengthening the motivational impact of digital platforms within the system of higher language education.

### **Literature review**

Analysis of current studies dedicated to the impact of digital educational platforms on students' motivation in learning English reveals four thematic directions:

The first direction involves analyzing the educational potential of digital platforms in fostering students' cognitive and emotional engagement. K. Zh. Karabaeva and B. A. Abdraimova emphasize the role of the informational space created by digitalization as an environment for the development of language competence, directly affecting motivation in linguistic universities (Karabaeva & Abdraimova, 2020). E. S. Burdina demonstrates that platforms enable individualized approaches in teaching English, thereby increasing students' interest and facilitating knowledge acquisition (Burdina, 2023).

M. V. Zakharova notes that digital tools provide content visualization, enhance emotional engagement, and support the sustainable formation of learning motivation (Zakharova, 2020). N. S. Dotsenko emphasizes how digital technologies alter the structure of motivation, shifting the focus toward cognitive and professionally oriented interest (Dotsenko, 2024). H. M. Alakrash et al. prove the effectiveness of digital platforms in creating flexible educational environments adapted to individual student needs, thereby activating their intrinsic motivation (Alakrash, Razak, & Krish, 2022). Further study of the relationship between platform type and cognitive engagement, especially regarding academic autonomy, is warranted.

The second direction investigates mechanisms by which digital learning environments shape motivational attitudes toward English as a second language. M. A. Bhatti and S. A. Aldubaikhi explore the role of informal digital learning in fostering positive attitudes and self-determination in English learning (Bhatti & Aldubaikhi, 2023). F. Masitoh, I. Fitriyah, and I. K. Mumtaza highlight the significance of flexible online learning formats in promoting inclusivity and positively affecting academic motivation (Masitoh, Fitriyah, & Mumtaza, 2024).

N. Natasha and M. Jannah show that convenience, instant feedback, and adaptive content are key motivational drivers in digital learning (Natasha & Jannah, 2024). J. Jerković, B. Komaromi, and D. Rakić compare motivational effects of online courses with traditional learning, revealing that digital formats better support academic engagement (Jerković, Komaromi, & Rakić, 2022). Further empirical research should focus on changes in motivation structure as a function of the duration and intensity of platform usage.

The third direction concerns the influence of social-media platforms as tools for informal language learning. A. Meirbekov, S. Nyshanova, A. Meirbekov et al. compare the effectiveness of educational blogs on TikTok and Instagram with traditional formats, noting that visually rich, socially relevant content significantly enhances student motivation (Meirbekov et al.,

2024). I. Shakhmalova and N. Zotova emphasize the effectiveness of educational games in digital learning, combining emotional engagement with grammatical accuracy and encouraging repeated practice (Shakhmalova & Zotova, 2023). T. Meng, A. Faizan, B. Qu, and C. He highlights the role of subjective satisfaction with the platform as a determinant of intrinsic motivation and sustained participation (Meng et al., 2024). Future studies should explore blended approaches that combine informal and formal digital sources for English language learning.

The fourth direction addresses behavioral and cognitive consequences of using digital platforms for English learning. M. Lamb and F. E. Arisandy show that frequent use of English in digital environments boosts students' confidence in language communication and fosters a sustained interest in the language (Lamb & Arisandy, 2020).

U. Noor, S. Ali, N. Yousaf et al. identify that students' behavioral strategies in digital space are predictors of their learning motivation and success (Noor et al., 2022). N. P. Harvey Arce and A. M. Cuadros Valdivia study the role of gamification in supporting competitive interest and increasing cognitive engagement in language learning (Harvey Arce & Cuadros Valdivia, 2020). Future work should consider the neuropsychological effects of digital learning on memory, attention, and the regulation of motivation.

### **Materials and methods**

The study is based on the analysis of functional characteristics of the most widely used digital educational platforms in English teaching at Kazakhstani universities: Moodle, Google Classroom, Quizlet, Microsoft Teams, and Duolingo for Schools. The empirical foundation includes data on their use in various national and regional universities, obtained from open sources and summarized in institutional reports and educational portals.

Empirical data was taken from official documents of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan (2024), as well as from publicly accessible institutional reports and materials presented on the official websites and methodological centers (e.g., Nazarbayev University CiLT, Al-Farabi Kazakh National University Smart Learning Lab, M. O. Auezov South Kazakhstan University). Their selection was related to their credibility, recent publication, and practical applicability for the research problem.

Inclusion criteria for the literature review were the scientific publications, peer-reviewed journal articles, official reports, empirical studies, and the materials of conferences published between 2020 and 2025. All such sources directly addressed the motivational aspects of digital educational platforms in English language learning. Also, they were related to the usage of digital education platforms in higher education and their contribution to students' motivation, interest, and learning autonomy when learning English language.

Exclusion criteria for the literature review were the sources that dealt only with general ICT use in education without a focus on motivation or language acquisition. Only cases providing documented evidence of platform integration into English teaching were included, while general digitalization initiatives without explicit reference to language instruction were omitted.

Methodology consisted of an integration of content analysis and a structural-functional approach. Utilization of content analysis consisted of the coding, identification, and incorporation of motivational factors within the literature and institutional materials chosen for the analysis.

Utilization of the structural-functional approach allowed for an analysis of the interaction of the functional features of digital platforms with the formation of cognitive engagement, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation. It allowed to assess the didactic potential of platforms in shaping cognitive and emotional engagement. Systematization of motivational components

was performed via content analysis of psychological and pedagogical studies on digital learning.

Comparative analysis methods were used to contrast factors affecting student motivation in digital environments. Logical generalization and graphical systematization methods were employed to identify links between platform types, digital interaction forms, and levels of learning engagement.

These methods also carried out for the purpose of establishing convergences and divergences of the integration of digital platforms among universities within different locations within the nation of Kazakhstan, for the purpose of forming a more nuanced understanding of motivating factors among students.

The choice of these methods is driven by the need for a comprehensive examination of both technological and motivational-psychological aspects of the problem studied.

### Results

Digital educational platforms have become an essential tool for transforming the traditional learning process in higher education in recent years. Against the backdrop of rapid advances in information technology and the shift toward blended and distance learning formats, their use in teaching English is particularly pertinent. This is explained not only by the need to provide flexible access to instructional materials but also by the desire to increase students' learning motivation through interactivity, multimedia capabilities, and the personalization of educational content. Digital platforms offer extensive opportunities for organizing independent study, monitoring knowledge acquisition, implementing formative assessments, and delivering feedback, making them especially valuable in foreign language instruction. Within Kazakhstan's higher-education landscape, both global and local digital solutions are being gradually adopted and tailored to meet institutional needs, technical infrastructure, and instructors' varying levels of digital competence. The comparative table below outlines the most widely used digital educational platforms for teaching English (Table 1).

**Table 1.**

*Comparative characteristics of digital educational platforms used for teaching English in Kazakhstani universities*

Platform Name	Primary Purpose	Functional Capabilities	Degree of Adaptation to Higher Education	Advantages of Learning English
Moodle	Learning Management System	Integration of videos, quizzes, forums, and flexible course customization	High	Structured learning, convenient for independent study
Google Classroom	Distance-learning organization	Cloud storage, integration with Google Docs, comments	Medium	Simple interface, fast feedback
Quizlet	Vocabulary study	Flash cards, quizzes, and gamification elements	High	Vocabulary expansion, motivation through game formats
Microsoft Teams	Communication platform + LMS	Video calls, file sharing, assignments, and integration with OneNote	Medium	Synchronous learning, support for teamwork
Duolingo for Schools	Individual language learning	Adaptive exercises, point system, feedback	Limited	Autonomous reinforcement of basic skills in game form

*Source: compiled by the authors from materials. (Moodle, 2025; Google Classroom, 2025; Quizlet, 2025; Microsoft Teams, 2025; Duolingo for Schools, 2025)*

The use of digital educational platforms in Kazakhstan’s higher education demonstrates a stable trend toward integrating hybrid and distance learning formats into English-language instruction. The most functionally rich and versatile system is Moodle, which enables instructors to create comprehensive courses with modules, testing, and analytics, providing comprehensive management of the learning process (Moodle, 2025).

In situations that require prompt action and minimal digital barriers, Google Classroom is widely used due to its ease of setup and synchronization with Google accounts (Google Classroom, 2025). Quizlet has established itself as an effective tool for vocabulary practice and short test formats, especially in individual and pair work (Quizlet, 2025).

Microsoft Teams is used primarily as a synchronous environment for video sessions and group projects, offering enhanced communication capabilities (Microsoft Teams, 2025).

Duolingo for Schools plays a supportive role in forming students’ language habits through the regular completion of mini-tasks and instant feedback (Duolingo for Schools, 2025).

The practical application of these platforms demonstrates that the motivational effect is most pronounced when multimedia, interactive, and trackable formats are combined, which not only increases student engagement but also enhances the autonomy of their learning activities. The effectiveness of platforms directly depends on course instructional design, the instructor’s level of digital literacy, and support from university administration.

Learning motivation is a complex, multi-component system that encompasses both the learner’s internal attitudes and external stimuli, ensuring a sustained drive to acquire knowledge and achieve learning goals. In the context of educational digitalization, the traditional structure of motivation is transforming, as the digital environment imposes new demands on student activity, self-organization, digital literacy, and the perception of virtual content. At the same time, motivational mechanisms in online learning largely depend on the quality of the digital interface, the availability of interactive content, platform adaptability, and the level of feedback and personalization of the educational experience. In the digital environment, such components of motivation as autonomy, intrinsic interest, a sense of competence, and the ability to monitor progress become especially important.

Based on an analysis of contemporary pedagogical and psychological literature, as well as the practical functioning of digital platforms, several key components of learning motivation relevant specifically to the digital educational space can be identified. They are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2.**

*Key components of learning motivation in the digital educational environment*

Motivation Component	Content in Digital Context	Significance for English Language Learning
Autonomy	Ability to independently control the pace and trajectory of learning	Increases responsibility for results, stimulates regular practice
Competence	Awareness of progress and successful completion of tasks	Builds confidence when performing speaking and grammar exercises
Goal-setting	Clear understanding of learning goals and stages	Helps plan a study better and achieve interim results
Feedback	Availability of instant or periodic evaluation of results	Clarifies errors, reinforces correct actions
Emotional Engagement	Interest, aesthetic appeal, and gamification elements	Maintains sustained attention and desire to return to activities
Social Interaction	Opportunity for communication and collaboration with the instructor and peers	Enhances sense of belonging and reduces anxiety when learning the language

*Source: compiled by the authors from materials. (Bhatti & Aldubaikhi, 2023; Meng et al., 2024; Masitoh et al., 2024; Noor et al., 2022)*

In practice, the successful engagement of learning-motivation components in the digital educational environment requires thoughtful instructional design in which each component performs a specific function.

The autonomy component is implemented through anytime access to materials, the ability to choose task sequences, and independent workload planning – particularly effective in English learning, where regular yet flexible practice is essential.

Competence is reinforced by progress-visualization tools: digital platforms display task-completion statistics, error levels, and topic-mastery indicators, giving students a sense of growth and boosting confidence, which is vital for productive tasks (essay writing, oral activities).

Goal-setting is realized via a modular course structure: each module has its own objective, skill set, and success criteria, allowing students to view the learning process as a manageable pathway rather than an endless information stream. Instant feedback – one of digital platforms' strongest features – must be substantive as well as automatic, explaining errors and suggesting additional resources or tasks, thereby promoting meaningful learning rather than merely formal test completion.

Emotional engagement is heightened through unconventional tasks (quizzes, gamification, video work) and visually appealing interfaces; students more readily engage in activities that elicit an emotional response and provide enjoyment.

Social interaction is especially critical in learning English: forums, discussions, pair work, and online role-plays create a motivational environment in which students are included in a learning community rather than isolated. Digital technologies support such communication regardless of physical presence, increasing engagement and reducing anxiety in speaking tasks.

Kazakhstan's digital transformation of education has recently gained strategic importance, driven by the COVID-19 pandemic and state programs aimed at digitalizing higher education. Digital educational platforms have become key tools for maintaining and updating the learning process, including English instruction. Yet their integration into teaching practice remains uneven, depending on infrastructural, organizational, and methodological factors such as access to ICT, instructors' digital competence, university administrative support, and the availability of adapted materials.

Reports from the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan indicate that digital platform implementation is often mandated administratively without prior pedagogical expertise or evaluation of effectiveness within specific disciplinary contexts (Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2024; Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Aerospace Industry of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2020). Consequently, platforms are sometimes used formally, integrated without regard to subject specifics, learning goals, or student needs.

This is particularly problematic in foreign-language instruction, where active interaction, prompt feedback, individualized tasks, and gamification are essential for success. Without these components, the digital environment loses motivational potential and teaching devolves into simple information transmission. Therefore, identifying factors that genuinely facilitate or hinder the effective didactic integration of digital platforms into English teaching at Kazakhstani universities becomes a crucial task (see Table 3).

**Table 3.**

*Factors influencing the effectiveness of implementing digital platforms in teaching English in Kazakhstani universities*

Factor Group	Typical Manifestations in Kazakhstani Universities	Potential Impact on Learning Effectiveness
Infrastructure	Availability of stable Internet access; presence of computers and digital classrooms	Without a technical base, even the best platforms cannot operate effectively
Organizational-managerial	Administrative support, presence of standards, stimulation of digital activity	Shapes sustainability and institutional motivation
Methodological	Instructors' readiness to adapt content and lesson formats to the digital environment	Determines how fully the platform is integrated into the learning process
Staffing	Level of instructors' digital and language competence; participation in training	Affects the quality of material delivery and interaction with students
Student-centered	Students' readiness for self-directed learning, digital literacy, and motivation	Conditions for the actual use of platforms outside the classroom

*Source: compiled by the authors from materials. (Karabaeva & Abdraimova, 2020; Dozenko, 2024; Burdina, 2023; Natasha & Jannah, 2024)*

An analysis of official reports (Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 2024; Government of Kazakhstan, 2024) and faculty interviews shows that the level of integration of digital platforms into English-language teaching at Kazakhstani universities differs not so much by the type of platform used as by the depth of their didactic application.

At Nazarbayev University, Moodle serves as the primary learning environment, providing a modular course structure, automated assignment checking, integration of interactive video via Edpuzzle, as well as tasks with elements of self- and peer-assessment, indicating a high degree of integration (Nazarbayev University, 2025).

At Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, Moodle and Microsoft Teams are also utilized; however, instructors note a lack of methodological support, resulting in the irregular use of tools such as adaptive tests and gamification, which suggests a medium level of integration (KazNU, 2025).

In regional universities, such as M. Auezov South Kazakhstan University, platforms (primarily Google Classroom) function mainly as file repositories: assignments are posted as documents, while interactive and game-based formats are scarcely used, indicating a low level of didactic integration (M. Auezov University, 2025).

Thus, differences in the level of integration lie not in the mere presence of a platform but in the extent of its functional and methodological mastery – ranging from simple file exchange to the whole organization of adaptive, motivation-rich learning.

The actual effectiveness of digital platforms depends less on their technical availability than on instructors' level of digital pedagogical readiness. University centers for methodological support play a significant role in this process, such as the Center for Innovation in Learning and Teaching at Nazarbayev University and the Smart Learning Lab at Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, where training is offered in LMS use, digital course design, and the integration of interactive tools into language teaching (Nazarbayev University, 2025; Abai KazNPU, 2024).

The experience of these universities confirms that merely having a platform does not ensure high student motivation – the decisive factor is the quality of didactic integration and the institutional support for its implementation.

## **Discussion**

Despite the widespread adoption of digital educational platforms and their evident potential in teaching English, the actual level of student engagement remains unstable, pointing to barriers to digital participation arising from a combination of external and internal factors (Karabaeva & Abdraimova, 2020; Burdina, 2023). Analysis reveals that these barriers arise within a complex sociocultural, institutional, and psychological context, necessitating an interdisciplinary examination (Dotsenko, 2024; Masitoh, Fitriyah, & Mumtaza, 2024).

One key reason for the low degree of student engagement is the fragmented nature of the digital experience, where platforms are used merely as auxiliary shells without deep didactic content. Such “surface-level integration” limits the perceived value of the digital environment and demotivates students (Zakharova, 2020; Natasha & Jannah, 2024). Additional self-management difficulties are exacerbated by the absence of external control and constant distractions, which diminish concentration and impair the quality of language practice (Bhatti & Aldubaikhi, 2023; Meng et al., 2024).

Cognitive and emotional barriers play an equally significant role: anxiety during asynchronous speaking tasks and audio recordings hampers active participation and undermines confidence in verbal self-expression (Lamb & Arisandy, 2020; Shakhmalova & Zotova, 2023). A low level of digital literacy among some students (especially in the regions) heightens dependence on the instructor and impedes self-directed learning (Noor et al., 2022). In Kazakhstan, the problem is exacerbated by infrastructural inequality, as differences in internet quality and device availability between regions and major cities hinder equitable access to educational resources (Meirbekov et al., 2024).

Empirical data indicate that overcoming these barriers is possible given systematic institutional support. Effective measures include not only technical provisioning but also the creation of adaptive digital scaffolding, such as online mentoring, regular consultations, group collaboration, and formative assessment (Masitoh, Fitriyah, & Mumtaza, 2024; Jerković, Komaromi, & Rakić, 2022). Training students in digital self-regulation skills (planning, progress monitoring, and reflection) also reduces psychological barriers and increases responsibility for outcomes (Alakrash, Razak, & Krish, 2022; Harvey Arce & Cuadros Valdivia, 2020).

Thus, sustainable digital student participation requires a blend of technological solutions with pedagogical strategies aimed at systematically lowering cognitive, emotional, and organizational barriers. Further research should focus on a comparative analysis of institutional support models and the development of metrics to assess the impact of digital interventions on motivation and academic outcomes.

Building lasting learning motivation for English in a digital environment demands not only the use of appropriate platforms but also the application of well-designed pedagogical strategies that enhance student engagement and interest. Achieving this requires moving from the formal use of digital solutions to their meaningful integration into the course’s didactic model. First, it is advisable to provide a modular digital course structure in which each thematic block includes clearly formulated objectives, success criteria, and progress visualization elements. Such a structure promotes intrinsic goal-setting and helps students track personal achievements. Second, the motivational effect is strengthened through multimedia content: video tasks, voiced dialogues, audio podcasts, and interactive simulations stimulate emotional involvement and activate various channels of perception.

Particular attention should be paid to gamification elements such as point accumulation, ranking systems, achievement badges, and challenges, which create a competitive element and heighten interest in completing assignments regularly. Personalized tasks adapted to a student’s language proficiency and learning pace are likewise practical. It is also important to implement tools that foster and support learning autonomy. The course should include options for task

selection, scheduling, and training blocks on digital self-organization and planning. This fosters a sense of control over the learning process and boosts intrinsic motivation.

Digital feedback is of special importance: it should be timely, constructive, and multi-layered – from automated checks to detailed instructor comments or individual video reviews. Digital feedback reinforces a sense of recognition and the value of student effort, especially in productive language activities (speaking, writing).

Finally, digital interaction among students should be encouraged through group work, discussions, online projects, and pair assignments. This creates a learning-community atmosphere, reduces isolation, and nurtures the sense of belonging that is vital for sustained motivation in distance or hybrid learning. Hence, enhancing the motivational impact of digital platforms is achievable when they are used on a didactically sound basis, adapted to the real needs of students, and embedded in a supportive educational environment in which technological tools serve concrete pedagogical goals.

### **Conclusion**

The study established that digital educational platforms possess significant potential to enhance students' learning motivation when studying English. Their use promotes the development of learners' autonomy, cognitive and emotional engagement, goal setting, and self-regulation. Platforms that provide interactivity, adaptivity, and prompt feedback prove particularly effective, provided they are didactically integrated into the instructional process.

At the same time, key barriers to digital participation were identified, including insufficient digital literacy, fragmented platform use, students' psychological insecurity, and infrastructural constraints, particularly in regional universities. These factors diminish the motivational impact of the digital environment and necessitate comprehensive pedagogical solutions.

The recommendations proposed include modular course organization, the introduction of multimedia and gamified tasks, enhanced feedback, and the development of students' digital autonomy. A promising avenue for further research is to assess the impact of specific platforms and formats on students' motivational indicators, taking regional and institutional differences into account.

### **Conflict of Interest Statement**

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

### **Author Contributions**

Ilvira Aleshkina: Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision. Olga Novosselova: Data Collection and Curation, Resources, Validation, Writing, Original Draft. Raushan Zhunussova: Data Analysis, Visualization, Writing – Review and Editing. Natalya Bubnova: Literature Review, Proofreading, Final Editing.

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#### Information about authors

**Aleshkina Ilvira Khasambayevna** - Senior Teacher, Master of pedagogical sciences, Manash Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University, Petropavlovsk, Kazakhstan, [ilviraaleshkina@mail.ru](mailto:ilviraaleshkina@mail.ru), <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9565-7495> (corresponding author)

**Novoselova Olga Victorovna** - Senior Teacher, Manash Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University, Petropavlovsk, Kazakhstan, [novoselovaolga@mail.ru](mailto:novoselovaolga@mail.ru), <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-4264-2864>.

**Zhunussova Raushan Shayakhmetovna** - Senior Teacher, Manash Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University, Petropavlovsk, Kazakhstan, [raushanzhunussova7@mail.ru](mailto:raushanzhunussova7@mail.ru), <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1063-6233>.

**Bubnova Natalya Vasilyevna** - Senior Teacher, Manash Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University, Petropavlovsk, Kazakhstan, [nkapitanskaya@mail.ru](mailto:nkapitanskaya@mail.ru), <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-7006-9461>.